

A Guide to Music

THE APPRECIATION SERIES

DANIEL GREGORY MASON
OLIN DOWNES

A Guide to Music

Daniel Gregory Mason
Olin Downes

Libraries of Hope

A Guide to Music
Appreciation Series

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A Guide to Music

For Beginners and Others

By Daniel Gregory Mason

CHAPTER 1
The Listener's Part in Music

I wonder if you have ever heard the story of the great nature-lover Thoreau and the Indian arrowhead. It was told by a friend of his who went with him on one of those long walks which he so loved to take all about the country near Concord, and in the course of which he saw and heard such wonderful things. The two men fell to talking of those rude arrowheads, chopped from stone, which are almost the only relics now to be found of the Indian tribes that used to hunt in that region; and Thoreau's companion expressed his surprise that anyone could ever see, in those wide fields around them, such mere chips of quartz. "Here is one now," replied Thoreau, stooping and picking one up at his friend's very feet. Thoreau was justly proud of his keen powers of observation, and used to explain it by saying that he knew what to look for. "Nature," he writes in one of his books, "does not cast pearls before swine. There is just as much beauty visible to us in the landscape as we are prepared to appreciate — not a grain more… There is no power to see in the eye itself," he insists, "any more than in any other jelly. We cannot see anything until we are possessed with the idea of it, take it into our heads." And later in the same passage he cries: "Why, it takes a sharpshooter to bring down even such trivial game as snipes and woodcocks; he must take very particular aim, and know what he is aiming at… And so is it with him that shoots at beauty; though he wait till the sky falls, he will not bag any, if he does not already know its seasons and haunts, and the color of its wing."

What is here so well said of the eye is equally true of the ear. As there is indeed no power to see in the eye itself, so there is no power to hear in the ear itself; and we have all read of those "that have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not." We cannot see until we know what to look for; we cannot hear until we learn how to listen. Yet

how few people realize what care and study, what love and enthusiasm, are needed to make a good listener, especially to that rarest, subtlest form of sound — music! How many go out to shoot that kind of beauty without the vaguest idea of its "seasons and haunts, and the color of its wing," and, naturally, come back emptyhanded!

We often hear people say, for example, that they are fond of "popular music," but that what they call "classical music" is too "dry" and "heavy" for them. They say this complacently, as if it were entirely the fault of the music, and their state of mind couldn't possibly have anything to do with it. Yet the reason for their preference is that while their ears can catch the commonplace swing of the rollicking march-tune or the swaying waltz, they are not yet trained to seize the more delicate beauty of a melody by Schumann or Chopin. Let them cultivate their powers of hearing by listening with their minds as well as their ears, and these rarer, finer beauties will charm them more each day, while the old favorites will in the same proportion grow to seem more and more noisy, meaningless, and stale.

Mind you, I don't say there is anything to be ashamed of in being fond of the "popular" tunes, provided you admit that there may be beauties in the other things that you don't yet see. Indeed, I think that the love of a good vigorous march, or of a graceful waltz-tune or a tender love-song, is an excellent foundation for a fine taste in music. It is genuine and honest, at any rate, and much more promising than the make-believe exquisiteness of those who shudder at a discord and close their ears as if in agony when they hear a hurdy-gurdy. But it is only a foundation, and if we would build on it a love of the best, we must keep open minds and attentive ears. There is no use in refining one's tastes if they are not sincere to begin with; but if they are sincere, it is very desirable that they should be cultivated.

Another way people unconsciously confess themselves poor listeners is in preferring operas and oratorios to symphonies and quartets, as so many of the half-musical do. They are so little trained in listening to music for itself, that they like to have words to tell them "what it is all about." In opera they have also the scenery and the actors to look at; and these not only help to explain what is going on, but give them something to focus their wandering attention. And so they decide that opera is a higher form of art than instrumental or

"pure" music, as it is called, because they cannot follow the latter. But anyone who can follow it knows that the truth is just the other way about. The better one comes to understand music, the more clearly one sees that it has its own meaning, quite independent of words, and that words actually interfere with this meaning by distracting one's attention from it. The true music-lover loves a symphony even better than an opera.

If, now, you find on questioning yourself that you are one of those who care more for "popular" than for "classical" music, or one of those who like an opera better than a good concert, I hope you will begin to realize that you may improve your taste by hearing all the music you can, and by listening to it attentively, as Thoreau looked for arrowheads.

You have your part to do, you see, as well as the musicians. Indeed, music can exist only when three persons work together for it in sympathy. First, there is the composer, who must make his piece as beautiful as he can, no matter how many years of study and hard work that may require. Then there is the performer, who must unselfishly try to give the composer's meaning, resisting the temptation to show himself off or to "interpret" something that isn't there. And thirdly, and just as important as either of the others, there is the listener, who, instead of sitting there lazily and enjoying what is easiest to understand, must be willing to do his share by really attending, and thinking, and trying to appreciate the best.

This book is intended to help you to listen in this thoughtful, active way, by showing you some of the thousand little differences in pieces of music that, left to yourselves, you might miss. These differences, taken one by one, may seem very slight; but taken altogether, they make up what separates the noble and everlasting works of genius from the trivial and meaningless jingles of the vaudeville theater, the hurdy-gurdy, and the phonograph.

As music appeals to us in a variety of ways, some of it especially in one way and some in another, we shall find it helpful to take up these different kinds of appeal one by one, and study each with some care.

Why is it, to begin with, that we so much prefer a clear, mellow voice to a hoarse, cracked one, or the tone of a fine old Italian violin

to that of a cheap fiddle? They may both sing or play the same tune, yet there is a great difference in the pleasure they give us. The sound of a good tone pleases our ear as much as a bit of brightly colored ribbon pleases our eye, or a piece of velvet our sense of touch. Now this pleasure that clear, mellow, rich tones gives our sense of hearing is the first and the simplest appeal that music can make to us. Even animals like to hear musical sounds and some of them dislike discords and rough noises. As this appeal of music is to our sense of hearing only, and not to our minds or feelings, we shall call it the "sensuous" appeal of music; and we shall study it in the next chapter.

But you must all have heard, sometimes, melodies sung by poor, thin voices, or played on cracked old pianos, that nevertheless charmed you by their own beauty. With very little of the appeal to the sense of hearing they yet delighted you. What, then, was their fascination, and to what part of you did it appeal? *It was a beauty of shape, and it appealed to your minds.* Let me explain.

Here are two vases. One is of finest porcelain, a translucent blue white, with all sorts of delicate reflections of the light playing on its surface; but it is too short for its width, it bulges out in awkward shoulders, and all its outline is graceless and without elegance. The other is of common crockery ware — but how beautifully slender and symmetrical! How the slight flare of the mouth is echoed in the gentle curve of the body! How the outline carries the eye from point to point, never shocking it with a sudden angle or an unwelcome curve! Of the two vases, one of which has beauty of color and the other beauty of form, I should choose the second without a moment's hesitation.

Well, so it is with melodies. One, played on the finest violin, leaves us unmoved because its shape is ugly — its curves are heavy, there is no elastic, constantly changing life in it. Another has such a rare and delicate shape, each rise and fall harmonizes so perfectly with all the others, and the whole tune, while quite natural and simple, is so individual, so different from any other, that even a hurdy-gurdy cannot wholly spoil it.

This value of shapeliness in music cannot be felt by the ear alone, because all the ear can get is single sensations, now one and now another, as moment follows moment. In order to feel all these sensations

in relation to each other, making up a melody of definite shape, we have to use our minds; it is not enough merely to hear, we must "perceive" the form or shape of what we hear. The old Greeks had a word for this kind of perceiving, from which we get our word "aesthetic," which means "having to do with beauty, or the perception of beauty," and which we may apply to this second kind of musical value. The aesthetic appeal of music, then, is the appeal it makes to us through its shapeliness or beauty. This appeal, in many ways the most important of all, we shall study in the third and following chapters.

Then, in the third place, there is the appeal which, music makes to our feelings or emotions; one piece makes us sad or wistful, another is glad, or merry, or exultant, another is noble or sublime; and so important is this emotional value of music, by which it expresses our inmost feelings, that we often hear the saying: "Music is the language of the emotions." I shall try to show you, as we go on, that this expressive value of music is really due very largely to its beauty, so that the third of our appeals depends largely on the second. We shall also find, however, that there are other ways in which music moves us, and these we shall study in the proper place.

For the present, all I want to show you is that music makes these three different appeals to us: the sensuous appeal to the ear, the aesthetic appeal to the mind or intelligence, and the expressive appeal to the emotions. "There is in music," says the French composer, Saint-Saens, "something which traverses the ear as a door, the mind as a vestibule, and which goes yet farther."

Yet even now that we have our plan of study together mapped out, and are all ready to begin, I am afraid some of you may still be trembling on the brink, and may be saying to yourselves: "After all, what is the need of so much trouble? Isn't music meant to be enjoyed rather than to be worked and worried over? Why shouldn't I enjoy the music I like, and let the rest go?"

This way of looking at music as merely an entertainment is very common, and has brought upon it a great deal of contempt, so that many do not consider it an art at all. I cannot hope to argue you out of it, but I should like to tell you a true story to show you how Mozart, one of the greatest of musicians, regarded his work.

The last ten years of his short life Mozart spent in the great

pleasure-loving city of Vienna, in extreme poverty. He had to earn what he could by playing at concerts and giving piano lessons, and could make hardly anything out of what he wrote, because people didn't understand it and wouldn't buy it. He was so poor that sometimes he could not get food, or even coal in winter, and one cold morning he and his wife were found, by a friend who went to call on them, waltzing together to keep warm. And yet, when his publisher said to him: "Write in a more easy, popular style, or I will not print a note or give you a cent," he replied: "Then, my good sir, I have only to resign myself and die of hunger."

Now if Mozart could willingly face starvation rather than lower his ideal of what good music should be, and if not only he, but Bach, and Beethoven, and Schubert, and Schumann, and Wagner, and scores of others, could even glory to be poor, and unknown, and overworked, for the sake of making music, oughtn't you and I to be glad to take some trouble in order to appreciate it?

And one thing more. It is not only for your own pleasure, nor even for your own improvement, that you are working. It is also for the improvement of musical conditions among us, for which we ourselves, as members of the American public, are responsible. Whether you will or no, you cannot help but influence our operas, our concerts, the work of our composers. Will you then give the singer who can touch the highest note a fortune, and let the true singer of your joys and sorrows starve? Will you applaud the pianist with the liveliest fingers, and let him who devotes himself to beauty go unheard? Will you encourage the empty music of the street, rather than the music in which deep feeling and a noble sense of beauty are embodied? Or will you do your part toward making our country as great in music, and in the other arts, too, as it already is in business, science, and invention?

CHAPTER 2
What Music is Made Of

It is odd how easily we assume that things must always have been as we are used to them now. Because we can get a drink of water by turning a faucet, and get a light by scratching a match, we are apt to forget how for ages men had to fetch their water from springs or dig wells for it, and to make fire by rubbing sticks together or striking flint with steel.

In the same way, because we hear so much music sung, whistled, or played, and because it is all made out of the same tones, we are apt to think these tones as natural as the everlasting hills. We take it for granted they must always have been as they are now. And so it surprises us when we find that these tones have really been got together and arranged as we know them only after ages of patient work by musicians; that they have been tested, and selected, and combined and recombined, with the utmost pains; and that they are thus a work of art rather than of nature. They are indeed as small, but as perfect, a part of all possible tones, as a carefully made bouquet of wild flowers is a small but perfect part of the fields from which it is culled.

How careful must have been this long process of selecting the tones, and what exquisite taste and sense of harmony the musicians who carried it on must have had, you will dimly realize when I tell you that out of eleven thousand tones which scientists have found that we can tell apart only ninety are used in our music. Think of it! Only ninety different tones, out of which Beethoven was able to make his symphonies and Wagner his music dramas, without beginning to exhaust their possibilities.

Practically all of these ninety tones (eighty-eight of them, to be exact, as you can find by counting the keys) can be sounded on the piano; and with the help of a piano we can find out a good many curious things about them. Suppose you begin by pressing, first the key at

the extreme left of the keyboard (this is called the *lower* end or *bottom* of the keyboard), and then a key near the middle, and then the key at the extreme right (*upper* end or *top* of the keyboard). Do you notice how different the tones are? The first is heavy, full, thick, the last is light, empty, thin, and the second is betwixt and between. They are just as different as the Big Bear, the Little Bear, and the Middle-sized Bear in the story. But instead of calling them big and little we call them "low" and "high," or we say that they differ in "pitch," the farther toward the right or upper end of the keyboard we go the higher being the "pitch" of the tones.



FIGURE I.

Looking more closely now at the keyboard you will notice that the black keys are arranged in regular groups, first of two and then of three, all the way up. This regular arrangement makes the white keys look equally regular, *so that every seventh white key looks the same.* For instance, beginning at the bottom (left) of the keyboard, you will notice that the first white key lies just below the topmost of a group of three white keys (two of which, however, are missing, because the keyboard stops just where it does). Calling that key *one*, count seven white keys to the right. The next white key will then be like the one you started with; that is, it will lie just below the topmost of three black keys. Call it one, count up seven, and the next key will be in a similar position. Taking advantage of this similar appearance of every seventh key, we can name all the white keys after letters of the alphabet, without having to use more than seven — A, B, C, D, E, F, G. If we keep on repeating these over and over again till every white key is named we shall find when we get through that all the A's look alike, all the B's look alike, all the C's look alike, and so on for each letter.

All this will become clear to you if you will look at the picture of the keyboard (Figure I). You will

also see there how we tell apart the many keys named after the same letter, by using both capital and small letters and a certain number of strokes at the right of the letters. Notice that the key marked c', which is the fourth C from the bottom, is called Middle C.

Now comes a curious thing. If you will strike all the different keys named after one letter — all the A's, for instance — you will find that besides looking alike they *sound alike!* Not exactly alike, of course, for as you go to the right they are higher — they differ in "pitch" — but nevertheless there is a striking likeness between them all. It is somewhat as if they were different tints of the same color, all red, say, but graded from the dark rich crimson of the lowest A to the light pink of the highest, while all the B's were of a color quite different, though similarly graded from dark to light, and all the C's still a third color, and so on. And since the musician is a sort of painter in tones, you can now understand that for him all the tones named by one letter, whether high or low in "pitch," have the same "color" or "individuality," and that when he wishes to make a tone-harmony he must mingle together *different* tones.

We can examine these tone-harmonies for ourselves. Suppose you strike Middle C (the key marked c' in Figure I) with the forefinger of your left hand, hold it, and then strike the next C to the right of it (c") with the forefinger of your right hand. Don't you feel that you have added no new color by this second tone? What you have added is merely a brighter tint of the same color. But now, keeping the left hand as it is, play G (g') with the right. Ah! Here is something new, this is no longer only a brighter tint of the same color, it is a different color, and the two colors together now make a color-harmony, or, as musicians, say, a "chord."[1] And how different it sounds from the two C's together, fuller and richer because of the merging of two separate colors in it, yet at the same time pure and clear, because these two colors go together well.

This chord we will call a "fifth," because there are five tones between the C and the G, counting themselves — C, D, E, F, G. In

[1] "Chord" is commonly used only for combinations of three or more tones, those of two being given the inaccurate and misleading name of "interval." It seems simpler here to use only the one word, "chord."

the same way, as there are eight between C and the next C (C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C) we will call the C's together an "octave," a word taken from the Latin for eight.

Now let us try another combination. Can you find a "fourth"? Count four from your left hand C, that gives you F for the right hand. Well, what do you think of that chord? A good deal like the "fifth," isn't it? — pure and clear, the two colors mingling well.

Next, a "third" — C and E. Ah, how pleasant that is! Pure like the fourth and fifth, yet richer, fuller, than they, and without their strange hollowness and emptiness. If you don't feel the difference at once, play the third, fourth, and fifth, over and over again several times. I am sure you can hear how different they are, after a little trying, and it is worth while, for you are getting acquainted with the simple but important facts on which the whole art of music is based.

The next thing to try is the "second" C and D. Ouch! haven't you made a mistake? No, those are the right notes; but what a thick, *burr-y*, harsh chord they make; how different from the mild and smooth third; how the two tones stand separate and refuse to mix. And how restless and uneasy the chord makes us feel: those two notes seem like bitter enemies tied together; they are constantly quarreling, and yet they can't get apart, and it makes us uncomfortable to hear them. They are certainly far from being the good friends that C and E are.

There is another tone that can't seem to get on pleasantly with C, and that is B. Try them together and you will see that they fight almost worse than C and D, in spite of the fact that they are so far apart.

Not so is it with A, which is as friendly with C as E was. Indeed the "sixth" (C — A) has all the pleasant fullness of the third (C — E) without the hollowness of the fourth and fifth.

We have now tried all the tones we can make with white keys, in combination with C (I shall speak of the black keys farther on) and we may as well put down what we have discovered.

The Fifth (C — G) and
The Fourth (C — F) are clear and pure, but a little thin.
The Third (C — E) and
The Sixth (C — A) are clear, rich, full, agreeable.

In all the above four, the two tones mingle and harmonize well,

they *sound together;* therefore we will call them "consonances," from the Latin words *con,* together, and *sono,* to sound.

The Second (C — D) and

The Seventh (C — B), on the contrary, are harsh and rasping. Their tones do not merge, but "quarrel," as we say of inharmonious colors. Therefore we will call these "dissonances," because the two tones in them sound *apart.*

If, now, remembering the difference between consonances and dissonances, and how much pleasanter to our ears are the former, you can imagine yourselves in the place of the early musicians, you can understand how they went to work to arrange the tones as we have them to-day. Remember, they could sound with their voices or on their quaint, old-fashioned instruments, not only all the tones we use, but a great many others that lie in between these — for, as I have said, there are no less than eleven thousand tones that we can tell apart, and therefore might use if we wished. Their problem was to throw out all of these possible tones that *would not work well,* and save only those that would. They were pioneers in the forest of music, and they had to clear out the tangled undergrowth, while carefully saving the good trees.

Now, what were the tones that, as I say, would not work well? Why, they were the tones that *would make dissonances* with the first tones chosen. And contrariwise the tones that would work well were those which would make the greatest number of *consonances* with other tones already in use. And so those old musicians simply tried and tested the tones, patiently, day by day and year by year, and very gradually worked out the plan of arranging them in the series of seven that we now use. Of course they couldn't keep out the dissonances altogether. The two tones that go best with C, for example, G and F, make the dissonance of a second when sounded together. But they could choose tones that on the whole agreed more than they disagreed, and the result was that on the whole our seven tones form a fairly happy family.

It was not long, however, before a new difficulty arose to trouble these brave discoverers. The seven tones worked very well so long as they always began with C (this series of tones from one C to the next, going step by step through D, E, F, G, A, and B is called a "scale,"

from a Latin word meaning a ladder), but it was monotonous always to begin in the same place, and if they began anywhere else they could not get the same kind of a scale.

You can see this for yourselves, if you will begin with G, say, and go along key by key to the next G to the right. Do you notice that the F is not the tone you want? It is not high enough. To remedy this they added a tone a little higher than F, which you can get by using the black key just to the right of the F, and as this sounded keener or sharper than F they called it F-*sharp*. Try the scale of G again and see how much better it is with F-sharp than with F. Again, if you will play a scale beginning with F, you will find that one tone is wrong there also. Can you tell which it is? Yes, the fourth tone, or "step" as we call it, B, is too high. We must put in its place a tone a little lower or flatter, and you will find that the black key to the left of B will give just the right tone, which we will call B-*flat*. So it was that the black-key tones were gradually added, each black key being able to give us either a "sharper" form of the tone just below it, or a "flatter" form of the tone just above it.

For a long time musicians could not find out the best and simplest way to tune these additional tones, but the great Johann Sebastian Bach showed how practicable was the way that ever since his day has been in use. This way of tuning, called "equal temperament," "tempers" or tunes the tones within any one octave — say from C to C — so that they make twelve exactly equal steps, with the result that we can begin on any tone we wish, and, by using the right "sharps" or "flats," get our scale of seven tones (or eight if we count the upper one, which is like the one we start with) just as they are when we start with C. We shall see later how important it is to be able to do this. If Bach had done nothing else but fix this equal temperament he would deserve our everlasting gratitude.

But you may be asking, how is all this going to help us to appreciate music? That is a sensible question, but I can't give you the entire answer to it until we get a good deal further along. I can now answer it partly, however, by reminding you that all music is made up of consonances and dissonances, and that if you can feel the difference between them when you hear them you will get a more vivid impression of music than before. Music that is mostly "consonant" is

sweet, mild, smooth, pleasant to the ear. The old church music of Palestrina is of this kind, and you must realize that it is in order to appreciate it.

In other kinds of music there is much more dissonance. Why? Because, since Palestrina's day, musicians have gradually found out many new effects which appeal to them strongly. Do you like to eat nothing but sugar, to smell nothing but sweet flowers, to see no colors in a painting but quiet, soft ones, no forms but graceful curves? Not at all; you want some variety, some contrast, some striking impressions. We like some saltness and bitterness in our food (more as we grow older), some pungency in odors, some vivid reds and yellows, and some sharp, bold angles in pictures. Well, just so we like dissonances in music because they keep the consonances from becoming insipid; and all modern music is plentifully seasoned with them. The next time you hear any music, see if you can detect some of the dissonances, and notice how exciting and refreshing they are.

CHAPTER 3
Meter and Rhythm

So far we have been studying nothing but the effect of musical sounds on our physical ears. We have seen how certain combinations of sounds (consonances) differ from others (dissonances) in much the same way that quiet rich greens and blues differ, for the eye, from screaming reds and yellows, or velvet differs, for the touch, from sandpaper. These are all differences for the *senses* alone — ear, eye, or touch — and the mind has nothing to do with them. From now on, however, we are going to study some of the qualities of music which can be appreciated only by the mind, or rather by the mind and the senses together.

The way we can tell whether the mind is concerned or not is by noticing whether the order in which our impressions are received makes any difference in them. Are they just the same backward as forward? If so, they are purely sensuous (that is, of the senses) and do not appeal to the mind. You can play music backward without losing the purely sensuous pleasure of its consonant chords. You can read poetry backward and still enjoy the sounds of its letters — the K's in Coleridge's verses about Kubla Khan, for example. Or you can look at a picture upside down without marring its color-harmonies. Indeed painters sometimes purposely bend down their heads and look at a landscape upside down, so that they may have all their attention to give to the color, without being distracted by having to notice what is a tree, and what is a hill, and what is a cloud. Try it some day, and you will be amazed to see how vivid the colors look.

But you cannot play music or read poetry backward, or look at a picture upside down, without losing an immensely important part of your pleasure in them, as you can easily see for yourselves by making the experiment; and the seriousness of this loss shows us how important a part the mind plays in all artistic enjoyment. Those who

make a study of these matters have found, indeed, that the *relations* between sensations, which can be felt only by the mind, are of far greater importance than the sensations themselves, and that the keenest of all the pleasures connected with art is the mental pleasure of *arranging in order,* according to these relations, the impressions of the senses. The important question that we have next to answer is, then, this: What relations are there between different tones and chords, by perceiving which our minds can arrange them in order?

If you will sing over to yourselves the first part of the tune of "Yankee Doodle," up to the word "macaroni," I think you will notice that you do not make all the tones equally heavy or emphatic, but that you put a special accent on every other tone; so that if instead of singing the words you sing "One, two, one, two," and so on, the ones will all be heavy, and the twos light; or if you beat time by moving your hand down and up, the down beats will be heavy or accented, and the up beats light or unaccented. Also notice, please, that although most of the tones occupy just one beat, the tones that come on the first syllable of "pony" and on the last two syllables of "macaroni" occupy two beats each. I shall explain why this is in a moment.

This plan of measuring off the music, as it flows along, by means of beats that are equal in length but differently accented ones is at once a kind of orderliness and regularity pleasant to our minds, and all music has some kind of "meter," as it is called from a Greek word meaning "measure." The word "measure" is itself used as the name of the little group of beats that is made by each accented beat and the unaccented beat or beats that follow it. I say "unaccented beat or *beats*" because sometimes there are two light after each heavy beat, in which case we count. "Heavy, light, light," or "One, two, three." Try to count to "My Country, 'tis of Thee," and you will find that you have to make *three* beats to each measure in this way.

It will amuse you to sing over several melodies, trying to decide for yourselves whether the accent comes once every two beats (called duple measure) or once every three beats (triple measure). It can't come any other way. It is true that we find in music measures with four, six, nine, or even twelve beats, but they always consist merely of two or more duple or triple measures thrown into one.

Without meter, music would be vague and formless; our minds would have nothing to take hold of in listening to it, and would end by being thoroughly confused and bored. But on the other hand, if the tones always corresponded exactly to the beats, one to each beat — no more and no less — we should soon become, perhaps not so confused, but equally bored by that relentless *dum, dum, dum.* We should dislike such a rigid mechanical regularity almost as much as utter irregularity. We are evidently critics hard to please; we want balance, order, arrangement, but we want it made freely and elastically; in a word, here as in so many other artistic matters, we want *variety in unity.*

If you are fond of poetry you must have felt this often in your reading. Take these lines from Pope as an example:

> A little learning is a dangerous thing;
> Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
> There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
> And drinking largely sobers us again.

The general plan of the meter here is to place light and heavy syllables one after the other, until there is a line of five of these groups of one light and one heavy. These groups, corresponding to the measures in music, are called "feet"; but the line is called a "pentameter," which means "five measures." Pope, however, is too good an artist to follow out his scheme mechanically, well knowing that if he did we should soon tire of his verses. What he does instead is to place his important words in such a way that they shall pull the accents a little away from the places where we expect them, without doing so enough to confuse our idea of the meter. In the second line he weights the first light beat by putting the important word "drink" upon it, he throws out the third accent entirely by placing the unimportant word "the" where we expect it, and he induces us to make up for this by lingering on the E in "Pierian":

> Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.
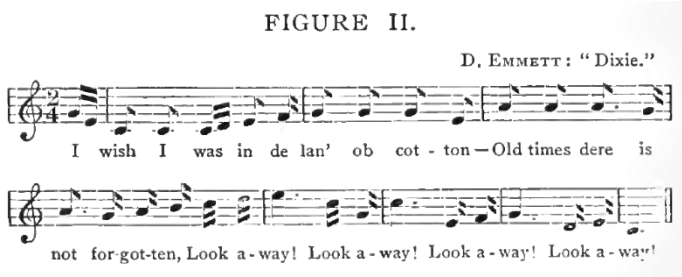
Don't you see what a charm of irregular regularity that altering of the meter by the words gives this line, how it avoids the monotony of the Te-dum, Te-dum, Te-dum, Te-dum, Te-dum? If you don't feel it

at once you soon will if you will try to notice this kind of effect in all the poetry you read. Pope himself had his little laugh at the poets who do not vary their meters when he wrote of them, mimicking their style:

> And ten low words oft creep in one dull line.

You will now understand how musicians take advantage of the orderliness of meter without letting it lead them into monotony. As the poet, within his regular lines, constantly varies his patterns of words, so the musician, within his regular measures, constantly varies his patterns of tones, sometimes dividing a beat into many short tones, sometimes holding one tone through many beats. Even in "Yankee Doodle" we saw that some tones occupied two beats; but no amount of patriotism can make us find much variety or charm in that too regular tune. Take another of our national airs — one of the finest in the world, "Dixie" — and see the difference (Figure II).

FIGURE II.
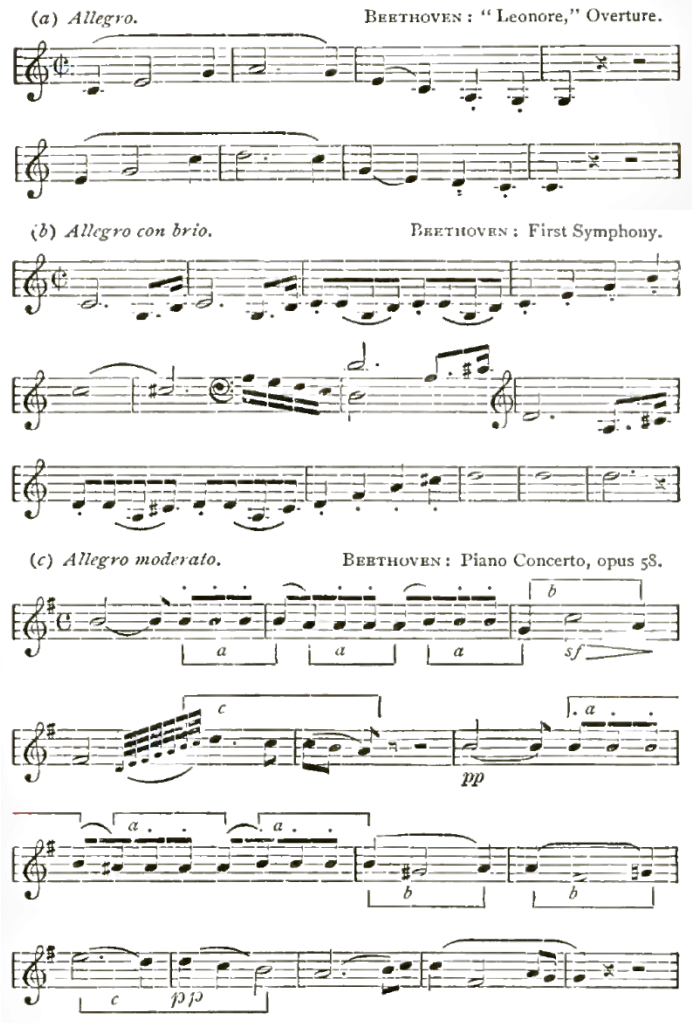


How inspiring are those long notes on "Look away," and what life and movement there is in every note! Yet the beats go "One, two, one, two," just as in "Yankee Doodle."

It is really marvelous what endless variety composers can get, within perfectly regular measures, by managing skillfully their long and short tones. In order to show this I have taken three melodies from Beethoven, all in duple time (that is, with four beats in a measure, the first and third accented), and set them side by side in Figure III (I am going to assume that you can either play the examples I shall give from time to time, or get some one to play them for you).

The first is the chief melody of his overture for orchestra "Leonore," written to be played before his famous opera, "Fidelio." The only measures of this example that have one tone to each beat, as in

FIGURE III.



"Yankee Doodle," are the third and the seventh. The first and the fifth measures divide the beats among the notes thus: 1,2,1; the second and the sixth thus: 3, 1; and the fourth and the eighth measures have tones only on one beat, and the others are silent. Don't you see what variety Beethoven thus gives his melody, how individual and unlike anything else he makes it? It has its own particular "rhythm," as we say — that is, its particular order of long and short notes, just as Pope's "Drink deep" line had its own particular order of syllables; and as there the important words pull the accents away from where

we expect them, so here, if you will listen carefully, you will notice that the second note, twice as long as the first and therefore much heavier, robs it of a good deal of its accent, and moreover by occupying the third beat keeps us from feeling any accent there at all.

Now look at the second melody, the main theme of Beethoven's First Symphony. Here is an entirely different rhythm. What a strong contrast between those long, heavy tones taking up three beats, and the two little jerky short notes that divide the fourth beats between them. Then in the third measure there are eight short notes, in the fourth four not quite so short, and the fifth measure, in marked contrast, gives all its beats to one emphatic chord. Although these two melodies are both in duple meter, you would no more confuse them than you would two of your friends because both have the same number of eyes, ears, noses and mouths. *The rhythm is the face of each tune, by which we know it.*

Turning now to the third melody, the opening of Beethoven's Concerto for piano and orchestra, opus 58, we find an even greater variety of rhythm, still on the same simple basis of duple meter: a variety so great that we shall need a new word in order to talk about it. This word, "motive," borrowed from the German and therefore pronounced *moteeve*, means any small group of tones that are so peculiar and striking in their rhythm that we easily remember them, and recognize them whenever they come in. We shall learn gradually, as we go on, how important are the motives in all music, making it move and grow as it goes on.

There are several different motives in the concerto melody: first of all the group of three light notes and one heavy which extends over the first bar-line, and is twice repeated. It is interesting to observe that this idea of three lights and a heavy is also found in each of the four movements[2] of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, which he was writing at the same time as this concerto. His mind must have been running on that rhythm just then. It has been suggested that he may have got it from one of the German birds, the yellow-hammer, which sings three short notes and one long. I have often heard an American bird, perhaps a distant cousin of the German one, whose song is *four* shorts

[2] A movement is a complete piece forming part of a large work such as a sonata or symphony.

and one long.

The second motive is found in the third measure — three tones, of which, you will observe, the second is the longest and most important, taking for itself the accent which we expect on the third beat. Let us call this motive *b*, and the first one motive *a*. Then there is still one more motive (call it *c*), the peculiar group of five tones led up to by the quick run in the fourth measure.

So much of the melody is given out by the piano. Then, after a slight pause, the orchestra comes in, answering the piano by sounding motive *a* three times. It goes on with motive *b* in the eighth measure, and rather surprises us by repeating it in the ninth. Next comes a very curious thing. Play measures 10 and 11, and see if you can tell what they come from. You will soon see that they are really motive *c*, *stretched out* so that it is twice as long as at first. How pleasant it is to recognize an old friend thus in a new dress, or, so to speak, under a new light! We shall study later how composers thus follow their motives through a piece, constantly putting them in new situations, just as writers follow their people through a novel. The concerto theme ends with two measures that don't come from any of the motives, but bring it to a satisfactory close.

The wonderful thing about this tune, the thing that I want you especially to notice, is the great variety of rhythm that Beethoven gets in measures all having the same meter, and using only three motives — the great variety, and at the same time the perfect unity. Only a master-composer can do this, and only the listener who appreciates such variety in unity can appreciate the masterpieces, and see how much finer they are than the empty little times we hear whistled in the streets and sung in vaudeville.

We have talked about so many things in this chapter that we'd better go over them briefly in closing it. We have seen that music, like poetry, is measured off in time by a scheme of regular heavy and light beats grouped in "measures." We have seen, nevertheless, that only the bad or careless poet makes his words correspond exactly to the set "meter" — makes

> ten low words oft creep in one dull line,

— the good poet taking care to arrange his words so that they will

pull the accents this way and that from the places where we expect them, and so give his lines variety of rhythm. In the same way we find that only the bad or careless musician gives one beat to each tone, as in "Yankee Doodle." The skillful composer so divides his tones among the regular beats that they fall into striking and interesting rhythms, each particularly impressive group of them making a motive.

Both the poet and the composer are really doing, with their materials, just what we have all of us done in kindergarten with colored worsteds and perforated cardboard. You must all remember those pieces of cardboard, with holes at regular intervals, on which you made various designs in worsted by taking stitches of various lengths. Well, the composer has instead of holes in the cardboard, beats of equal length, and instead of colored worsted, tones; and by varying his stitches (rhythms) he makes the most beautiful and interesting designs (motives). We shall examine his handiwork still more carefully in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4
Phrases and Phrase-Balance

When, in that kindergarten work that we were speaking of, you got your design made, with its various long and short stitches, what did you do next? I think I know; you skipped a certain number of holes, so as to leave a clear margin around the figure, and then made another figure of the same kind, to "match" it or balance it; and before you were done with that cardboard you had it pretty well covered with similar figures thus balancing one another. In a word your instinct for balance or symmetry was not satisfied with arranging the stitches in order in the figures, but wanted the figures themselves to be arranged in a still larger kind of order.

It is quite the same way with the poet, as you will see by turning back to the Pope quotation, and noticing how the lines as a whole balance each other, you will see that the second line balances the first, the fourth balances the third, and the last two taken together balance the first two taken together. And what is more, if your ear is sensitive you will feel that this balance is so regular as to be almost mechanical: down goes your voice at the end of each line, as if it were run by clockwork. In fact, Pope is here falling into the very monotony for which he blamed those poets who made their words correspond exactly with their "feet" or measures: he is making his sentences correspond exactly with his lines.

Compare with his verses these wonderful lines from one of the greatest masters of poetic rhythm — Keats; they are taken from the beginning of his "Endymion."

> A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
> Its loveliness increases; it will never
> Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
> A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
> Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.

Here the phrases and sentences balance as in the Pope, but in a much freer, less mechanical way, because Keats has taken pains that they shall not correspond exactly with the lines. In the first line, to be sure, where it is important to give the reader a clear idea of the swing of the verses, idea and meter do exactly match, both ending at the word "ever"; but after that, what fascinating variety! The lines end at "never," "keep," "sleep," and "breathing," as the rhymes clearly show us; but the *ideas*, the sentences or phrases, end at "increases," "nothingness," "us," and "breathing," at which points, therefore, the voice naturally falls and pauses. In this way a new beauty arises, a beauty again of variety in unity: the unity now lying in the equal length of the lines, the variety in the constantly changing length of the sentences, and in the resulting irregular rise and fall of the voice.

If you have been following what I have said, two questions will now occur to you. Is there anything in music like the balancing of the lines and of the sentences in poetry? And if so, is music, like poetry, more beautiful when this balancing is somewhat irregular? If you will look at Figure III once more, Beethoven will answer both these questions for you.

Nothing could be clearer than that in the theme from the "Leonore" Overture, the melody of the first four measures makes as complete a statement as Pope's first line

> A little learning is a dangerous thing;

and nothing could be clearer than that this sentence, or phrase, as it is usually called, is answered and balanced by what follows it just as definitely as Pope's line is balanced by

> Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.

Here are, then, two phrases, of equal length (four measures), each felt to have a certain completeness, yet both felt to hang together and balance each other like the lines of the poem, or like the figures of the worsted-work. *All our modern music is thus made up of phrases which in one way or another balance each other.*

That is the first thing that Beethoven shows us. The second is that although phrases always balance somehow, there is great variety both in their lengths, and in the ways they may be made to balance.
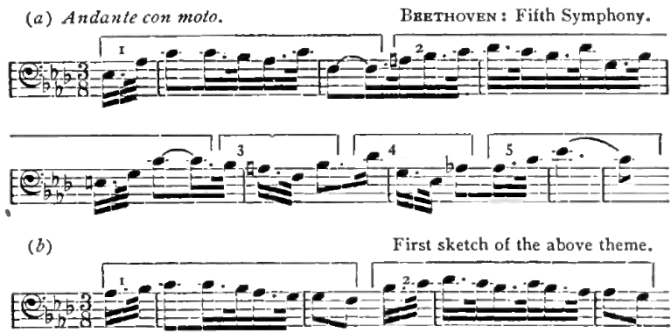
In the theme of the First Symphony, for example, you cannot stop after the fourth measure, the phrase runs on, and is complete only at the end of the sixth measure. This *six-measure phrase* is then answered quite regularly by another of the same length. Here the phrase length is a little unusual (the average phrase being either two or four measures long) but the balance is exact.

The Concerto theme is less regular. In the first place, the first phrase is five measures long — an uneven number. Secondly, as we saw in the last chapter, Beethoven extends his second phrase, by repeating one motive, stretching out another, and adding two measures at the end, to no less than eight measures. Yet in spite of all this irregularity there is not the least doubt in our minds that the second phrase balances the first, and balances it most satisfactorily. Indeed, the varying lengths of the phrases add a new beauty to the music, an elastic gracefulness akin to that of Keats's verses. Our second question is thus answered: phrase-balance is most beautiful when the phrases have a fair degree of variety, and tends to become "set" when they seem as if all turned out of the same mold.

You would be astonished if you knew how much loving thought and patient labor the great composers, especially Beethoven, gave to making their rhythms strong and supple, like the muscles of a well-trained athlete, Beethoven, when he walked in the fields and woods, as he was fond of doing, always carried in his coat pocket a little blank sketch-book of music paper, in which he could jot down his ideas. The bits of melody thus set down were then worked over and over, for days, weeks, and months, in sketch after sketch, so that sometimes we find a dozen or twenty forms of the same tune between the original germ and the completed theme. The first idea is often commonplace and lifeless; and it is wonderful to see how Beethoven, striking out some needless notes here, lengthening an important one there, now by a simple touch making two phrases balance each other freely instead of mechanically, gradually transforms it into the immortal melody we know and love.

One of the loveliest of these melodies, the theme of the Andante of his Fifth Symphony, shown in Figure IVa, owes its beauty largely to the charming irregularities of its rhythmic ebb and flow. To help you feel this for yourselves I have marked off the phrases by brackets.

FIGURE IV.
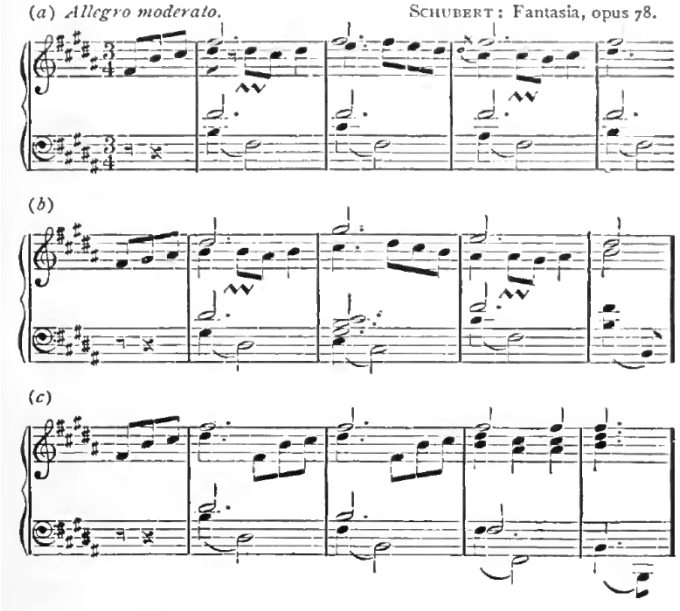


There are altogether, you will see, five phrases: two long ones, then two short ones, and then one final long one — a scheme which happily avoids too rigid a balance. But happier still is the freshness the second phrase gets from having its final long note delayed until the second beat of the measure, to which it pulls the accent expected on the first beat. Just listen to this several times, until you feel its magical charm. The pair of short phrases, too, are managed so that their balance is inexact — this being done by letting the second of the two give one of its beats to the final phrase. And this last phrase is made to take a different shape from any of the others by that long tone in it (three whole beats) which gives us a sense of completion, of coming to rest.

A beautiful melody, indeed; and now see the original idea, found in one of the sketch-books, out of which it was developed (Figure IVb). Do you observe how set, how inflexible, how sing-song, is the exact echoing of one phrase by the other? Do you see how much the second phrase loses by landing *kerflump* on the first beat instead of soaring over to the second? Do you notice that the tones leading up to the first accent are the same in number in the two phrases, while in the finished tune there are two of them in the first phrase, and three in the second? If you see these things, and think about them, you know already one of the most important differences between good music and bad.

One other example of delicate variety in phrase-balance will have to be enough for the present, though it is a subject we could study for years. Schubert begins the middle part of one of his minuets with the delicious phrase you will find in Figure Va. Suppose, now, if it isn't

FIGURE V.



too much of a stretch for your imagination, that you had written this phrase, and were casting about for something to balance it. I think the chances are nine out of ten that you would hit upon another four-measure phrase, something like what I have put down at Figure Vb. And it wouldn't be bad, either. We might even be rather pleased with it, until we saw how Schubert solved the problem (Figure Vc). Once we had heard that fascinating group of phrases, two of one measure each, and one of two, making so unexpected yet so natural a balance for the first phrase, I hope we should have good taste enough to wish never to hear again our own flat and vapid answer.

If after this example you still have any doubts as to the charm of variety in phrase-balance I can only advise you to take as a contrast some very monotonous series of phrases and feel their monotony for yourselves. Robert Schumann, great composer though he was, did not always avoid this pitfall of monotony, and if you will look at the theme of his very first published piece, the "Abegg Variations," opus 1, you will see an example of it. The motive is made out of the five tones A — B — E — G — G (in honor of a lady of that name), and the tune consists of no less than sixteen repetitions of this motive of five tones. It is true that the tones and the chords change, but the rhythm does

not. Sixteen times, the same thing! It grows tiresome.

I don't want you, however, to get the impression that no music is good unless its phrases are of uneven lengths. There are so many kinds of variety possible in music that a skillful composer can keep up our interest in a long series of phrases of exactly similar length. In all simple music, indeed, like the folk-songs found among the uneducated people of all nations, or the popular airs we hear in our streets and music halls, the phrase-balance is very simple and regular — just as the meter is apt to be "sing-song" in popular poetry. In such music the necessary variety is got by other means.

We have now seen how single tones are grouped into motives of definite rhythm, how motives are built up into phrases, and how phrases are in turn balanced in still larger groups something like the "couplets" (two rhyming lines) of poetry. There remains only one more step in this part of our study; we must see how these phrase-groups or couplets are built up into complete melodies. The principle in this last step in the composition of a tune (you remember that "composition" is simply the Latin for "putting together") is just the same as in the earlier ones: we try for as much variety as is consistent with perfect unity. Long experience has shown composers that the best way to get this is to put one or two contrasting phrases, for variety, in the middle of the tune, and then at the end to come back, for the sake of unity, to the phrases they started with.

The familiar old tune of "Nearer, My God, to Thee" will show you this plan of "statement, contrast, and restatement," as it is called. It consists of eight phrases, all exactly the same length. The third and fourth of these balance the first and second, all four together making up the first part of the tune — the statement. Notice, now, that the fifth phrase, which is answered by the sixth, introduces a little pleasant variety, by going higher in pitch and being more earnest in expression. These two make the contrast. Then finally, the seventh and eighth phrases restate the melody of the third and fourth, and thus bring us back to the point from which we started. You cannot fail to notice what satisfaction they thus give that part of your mind which cares for unity.

So simple and natural, and so delightful in its balance and orderliness, is this arrangement, in fact, that we find it used in a most sur-

prising number of tunes, of all nations and all times. In "Way Down Upon the Swanee River" and in "My Old Kentucky Home," for example, you will find it used almost exactly as in "Nearer, My God, to Thee," except that the statement (first four phrases) is repeated before the contrast comes. In "Jerusalem the Golden" and the "Austrian Hymn" it is very clear. You will find it in "The Campbells are Comin'," "John Highlandman," "Auld Lang Syne," and many more.

In others you will find the arrangement of the phrases more complicated, less regular in balance, and yet clearly growing out of the idea of contrast and restatement. Just as the preacher first announces the text of his sermon, then discusses it, and at the end repeats it in all its simplicity, so the composers of all countries have used this "three-part form" as the ground plan of most of their tunes.

We have now followed the process of musical composition from single notes up to complete short tunes, seeing how at each step the aim of the composer is to get as much variety in his patterns as is possible without endangering their unity. Before we can follow this process any further, so as to see how tunes are combined in larger pieces, we shall have to go back to the seven tones of the scale that we were studying in Chapter II, and examine their ways a little more closely. They make an odd family, those seven tones, each different from the others, yet all getting on comfortably together.

Allow me to make you a little better acquainted with them.

CHAPTER 5
The Key-Family and Its Seven Members

You remember we found out in Chapter II that the eighth step of any scale brings us back to the same tone as the first step, but that before getting to it we have to go through seven different tones. These seven tones, taken together as a group, form a sort of tonal family, called by musicians a "key," and named after the first step of their scale, which is the most important member of the family. Thus the tones C, D, E, F, G, A and B are said to make up the "key of C." Of course there are as many keys as there are different tones — that is, twelve — but for simplicity's sake we shall stick to this key of C for the present.

By far the most important member of the key of C is the tone which gives it its name, C, which is the first step, and also the eighth step, in the scale. It is, so to speak, the father of this particular family, and rules it with an iron hand. He always has the last word in any discussion (tune) and generally takes the first as well, or else gives it to his special favorites, E and G (Three and Five). Play over almost any tune in which only the white keys of the piano are used and you find that it ends with C, and begins with either C, E or G. The first step or One of the key is thus its point of rest, to which we must return after our excursions among the other notes. It is the axis about which the key revolves; and all the other tones are important or unimportant, restful or restless, only because of their relations to this central tone, the One.

We said a moment ago, for instance, that tunes sometimes begin with Three or Five (that is, in the key of C, with E or G), but seldom with any of the other steps of the scale. You can easily see for yourselves why this is.

Striking C with your left hand (see Figure I) try all the combinations of two other notes with it, played by your right hand, that you

can think of, just as in Chapter II you tried single notes. You will soon find that no other pair will "agree" with it so well as E and G. No others will sound so pleasant, so restful. F and A are the next best, but you won't be satisfied to stop with them — you won't wish to stop until they have moved down into E and G.

This kind of chord, got by sounding the One, Three and Five of any scale, and called a "triad" because it contains three tones, is the very backbone of all music. So common is it that we call it the "common chord"; yet so agreeable to the ear, and so restful to the mind, thanks to the "consonance" of its tones, that we can never get enough of it. The perfect blending of the three tones in it is one of nature's miracles, the more wonderful the more we think of it. Well says the poet Browning:

> Here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,
> Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are!
> And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
> That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star.

One, Three, and Five, then, are very intimate companions, because they dwell together in such perfect harmony; and Three and Five therefore share the restful character of One. You can even end an entire tune on Three or Five without any feeling that you have not really got to the end; and though not many melodies thus end on Three or Five, some do, and a good many begin with them ("Nearer, My God, to Thee" begins with Three; "Onward, Christian Soldiers" begins with Five). On the contrary, it is the rarest thing in the world for a melody either to begin or to end with any of the other members of the tone-family. Two, Four, Six, or Seven. Why?

Because they do not blend with One and its common chord, the restful part of the key, but stand outside of it, and are therefore never satisfied, never quiet, but always energetic, striving, restless. Like top-heavy things that haven't anything solid to rest on, they tend to topple over into the nearest restful tones; or we may compare them to bits of iron which the restful tones attract like magnets.

Play C, E, G, and B and you will feel at once the striving and pushing of B (Seven) to get up to C. You positively cannot be comfortable until you take it there. So strong is this tendency of Seven to

lead into Eight (which, you remember, is for the harmony student the same as One) that it is often called the Leading Note.

So it is with the other active tones. Six tries to get down to Five, as you will feel if you play C, E, and A together; Four tends toward Three (play C, F, and G, and feel the F pulling to E); and Two — well, Two isn't particular whether it goes to One or to Three, so long as it finds rest somewhere.

Now, the great advantage to the musician of all these pulls and pushes of the active tones is that they enable him to make his tunes press on and on, keeping our interest as they go, and never completely satisfying us until, at the end, they come to rest on One. When we get back to that One, we feel all the comfort of reaching home after a long journey; and, meanwhile, we have thoroughly enjoyed our adventures abroad. That is the double pleasure that the contrast of active and restful tones makes possible to us — the pleasure of motion, action, play, and the pleasure of quietude, inaction, rest. Life would be terribly monotonous if we had to sit at home in an easy-chair before the fire all day long; and on the other hand it would be very fatiguing if we had no home, and, like the tramps who live in the streets, were always obliged to "keep moving." So music would be stupid if all its tones were restful, and exceedingly uneasy and trying to our nerves if they were all restless: it is the contrast of the two kinds which makes it both stimulating and quieting.

This contrast is brought out with the utmost vividness at the very end of a tune, in what is called the "cadence," from a word meaning "fall," and first applied to the fall of the voice at the end of a sentence. The object of the cadence is to close a tune just as the fall of the voice closes a sentence; and it does this by combining two chords, the first containing several active tones and being therefore very energetic and pushing, and the second containing nothing but restful tones. Did you ever hear of the trick that was played on Mendelssohn, the great composer, with, a cadence of this kind?

It seems that a friend of his, a practical joker, learning that he was fond of lying late in bed, played loudly on his piano, early one morning, the following chord: with the left hand, G and B below middle C; with the right hand, F and D above middle C. Just that one chord he played, and then sat down to see what would happen. Poor

Mendelssohn, trying to get his morning nap, heard that unhappy Seven, and Four, and Two, and waited eagerly for them to find rest in the restful tones near them. In vain — nothing more was heard. He grew more and more uneasy, he fidgeted about in bed, he tried to forget that chord. No use! He seized a dressing gown and rushing down stairs to the piano, played — but wait: I'm not going to tell you what he played, for I want you to find it out for yourselves.

Just as in sentences there are commas, semicolons, and so on, as well as periods, so there are chords in music that make a slighter stop than the tonic chord (that is, the chord on One) does. These are called half-cadences, and serve to close the middle phrases of a tune: the most important of them are the "dominant chord," consisting of Five, Seven, and Two, and the "subdominant chord," consisting of Four, Six, and Eight (or One). As each contains active tones, neither can ever give complete rest; but the tune may poise upon such a chord for a moment with good effect. Thus for example the first, third, and seventh phrases of "Nearer, My God, to Thee," end on the subdominant; the second and sixth on the dominant; the fourth, fifth, and eighth on the tonic, or chord of rest. (The fifth, however, is less restful than the others because the melody stops on Five instead of on One.)

Have you ever noticed how a canary bird in a cage will fly from his perch to the side of the cage, linger a moment on one of the bars there, flutter to another opposite, and another and another, and finally go back to the perch? Well, that is the way a tune flies. The tonic chord is its perch from which it starts, and to which it returns; the other chords in the half-cadences are the bars that afford it brief resting places during its flight.

This plan of ending the different phrases of a tune on different chords, while the One chord, the center and resting point of all the chords, is saved for the end of the tune as a whole, gives us still another kind of variety in unity, different from any we have yet studied. It is the special kind of variety in unity made possible by *harmony*, and depends on *using as contrasting centers the different chords of a key.*

We have next to study a still more interesting kind of variety in unity which naturally grows out of this: the kind in which, instead of merely contrasting chords, all in one key, we contrast *whole keys,* one
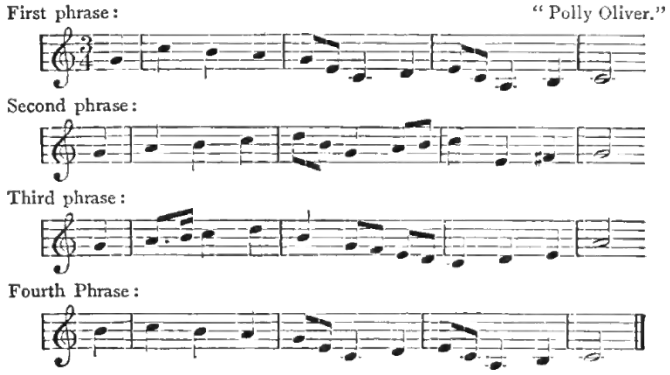
with another. In order to do this we have to be able to pass from one key into another. As a help to understanding how this is possible, I want to talk a moment about something that you may think has nothing to do with music — and that is, kaleidoscopes, those toys through which you see the loveliest figures, made of bits of colored glass.

Do you remember how the bits of glass group themselves in certain ways? Here is a triangular blue bit, we will say, which makes the center round which everything hangs; nothing else is so important as that. But now turn your wrist just the tiniest bit, and, *Presto, change!* the whole figure melts and reforms itself, and now that blue triangle is only an unimportant speck on the outer edge. And so on for every turn of your wrist: the pieces of glass are always the same, but the figures are always different. Why? Because these bits of glass keep getting into new relations to each other.

Just so is it in music. The twelve tones (represented by the seven white keys and the five black of the piano) are the bits of colored glass, and the keys or tone-families are the figures they make as the composer turns his wrist and jostles them about. For a while C may be One, the center of the whole figure, called the key of C, and everything else will be grouped about it; then it may become, say, only Four, no longer the center of rest, but restless until it can get to B — the One, or center of the key, now being G; another turn of the kaleidoscope, and C may be Seven, in which case we shall be in the key of D-flat. In itself, you notice, C is no more important than the bit of blue glass: all depends on the grouping, on the relations of the tones or of the pieces of glass, as the case may be. Musicians have a special name for this change of grouping in the tones; they call it "modulation," and say that they "modulate" from the key of C to the key of G, for example, when they change from considering C as One to considering it as Four,

The old English folk-song, "Polly Oliver," shown in Figure VI, will make this clear. It consists, you see, of four phrases, each four measures long. The first is plainly in the key of C, and ends solidly on One with a good, strong, full cadence. The second, however, though it begins in C, doesn't stay there; when you get to the C in its third measure you don't feel that that is a One, satisfactory to end on; you feel

FIGURE VI.



it rather as a Four and are not satisfied till it is followed by E (Six), F-sharp (Seven), and G (Eight). In fact, the tune has modulated to the key of G, in which this second phrase ends with a full cadence. The third and fourth phrases are in C again, the third ending with a half-cadence on the chord of F ("subdominant"), and the fourth ending the tune satisfactorily with a full cadence on C as One.

You will feel, I am sure, after playing or singing the tune through once or twice, how much charm there is in this new kind of variety in unity that modulation gives us. Although practically the same tones are used in all these four phrases, they sound quite different in the second from what they do in the others, because our minds group them differently. You must have noticed how some wall papers and carpets can be looked at in different ways: one moment you see blue figures on a red background, let us say, and the next you see red figures on a blue background — it all depends on how you look. In the same way tones actually sound different when you change your way of hearing them. Hear C, E, G, as One, Three, and Five, and they are restful, satisfying, quiet. Hear them as Four, Six, and Eight, and they are restless, because Four and Six pull toward Three and Five. Hear them as Five, Seven, and Two, and they still pull, but in a different direction (Seven to Eight, and Two to Three). By modulation, accordingly, the effects possible to the musician are much enriched. Each of his twelve tones may now have any one of twelve different relationships, and by it may take him into any one of twelve different keys. Yet by taking care to end his time in the key he started out in,

he can bind all this variety into thorough unity.

This variety produced by contrasting different keys, or "tonalities," as they are sometimes called, is one of the composer's most helpful means for avoiding monotony. Though short pieces may get on without modulation, a long piece all in one key would grow frightfully tiresome. Indeed, the longer the piece, the more keys will generally be made use of. Let me warn you, however, against fancying that the composer picks out these keys at random. I hope you are beginning to feel by this time that nothing goes at random in music, all being governed by laws which we feel, even when we cannot put them into words.

The law which governs the composer's selection of his keys is this: The more tones any two keys share between them the more nearly related they are, and the greater will be the impression of unity we get from their use. The fewer tones they have in common, the less nearly related they will be, and the greater will be the impression of variety they give. G is nearly related to C, because F-sharp is the only tone in it which is not also in C. D-flat is remote — far away — from C, because F and C are the only tones we find in both. Whether the composer uses a near or a remote key at any particular place, depends on just what effect he wishes to produce.

Besides change of key, there is one other means of variety which we may as well speak of here. By *lowering* Three and Six, in any key, we get a modified form of it, a different *mode*, as we say, strikingly different in effect. It is called the minor mode, because the distance from One up to Three or to Six is *smaller* than in the ordinary or major mode of the key. Thus in the key of C, the minor mode is obtained by lowering E to E-flat, and A to A-flat. The minor mode has a darker, more gloomy color than the major mode, and affords a fine contrast to it, within the limits of the single key.

CHAPTER 6
How Melodies Are Built Into Pieces

We are now ready to attack that question of how times are combined into complete pieces, a question very important to us, since only by understanding something of it shall we learn how to follow the music we hear at concerts. Those who know nothing of "form," as this building up of tunes into pieces is called, cannot "make head nor tail," as we say, of a symphony or a sonata, and naturally prefer a song or an opera. Form is to music a good deal what plot is to a story: it is the order in which things happen.

Now there is no limit to the number of ways in which tunes may be built up into complete pieces, and if we were to try to examine them all in detail it would be like trying to describe all the horses in the world in detail — just how long each one's tail was, and just how many hairs he had on his left ear. But fortunately that isn't necessary in order to get a good working idea of a horse; and no more is it necessary to describe all pieces in order to get a good working idea of musical form. All that is needed is a description of certain general qualities that we find in all horses, or pieces, as the case may be. However much horses' tails may differ in length, we find that every horse has, for example, four legs that "match"; a horse with legs that didn't match would tip over, and a horse that couldn't stand up would be a pretty poor apology for a horse! In the same way, in spite of the thousand small differences in pieces of music, we find that all the great composers have agreed on certain general ways of writing, the neglect of which would make their music either monotonous or hotchpotch; and monotonous or hotch-potch music is as bad as a horse that can't stand up.

It is these general ways of stringing tunes, like beads, on to a thread of musical form, that we have to study in this chapter. A good way to study them will be to make believe that we are ourselves

composing music.

Suppose, then, that a musical idea, a short motive of several tones, has occurred to us. What shall we do with it? First, of course, we shall add more to it until it makes a phrase; and we shall make other phrases somewhat like it, that balance it. In this way we can build up a short tune like "Polly Oliver" (Figure VI). Then will come the question: What next? It would be tiresome to repeat it right over again; we want a change — something new: very well, then, why not write another tune on a different motive? And as we are trying for contrast, let us also use another key, though one not too far away.

Here are our two tunes, now; shall we keep on and write a third? Well, don't you think that would seem rather wandering, and make our hearers wonder whether we were going on that way all day long? I think it would be much better, now we have got our variety, to go back and have the first tune over again: that would satisfy our feeling for unity, both of idea or musical motive, and of key. In this way we get a complete little piece, consisting of first tune or statement, second tune or contrast, and first tune over again or restatement. You will notice that this was just the way the *phrases* were arranged in "Nearer, My God, to Thee" and other tunes we studied in Chapter V; the only difference is that now we are arranging whole tunes in a piece, instead of phrases in a tune. The fact that the arrangement is the same shows how deep-seated in our minds is the desire for variety in unity which this arrangement satisfies more easily and simply than any other. So natural is it to arrange musical thoughts in this way that this Three-part form or Three-part songform, as it is called, is found in thousands of songs, dances, operatic arias, and instrumental pieces.

Looking at our little piece more carefully, one or two changes occur to us. Rather than have the first part come to so complete a stop we may prefer to have it "modulate" to the key in which the second part is to be, thus binding the two more closely together. Or again, we may think it unnecessary to repeat the whole of the first part after the second, finding it better to shorten and combine the second and third parts. In that case the first idea will not be so definitely repeated, but its ending will be kept, and will give the needed feeling of unity. Our piece will then consist of only two instead of three parts, of which the second begins in the key of contrast but
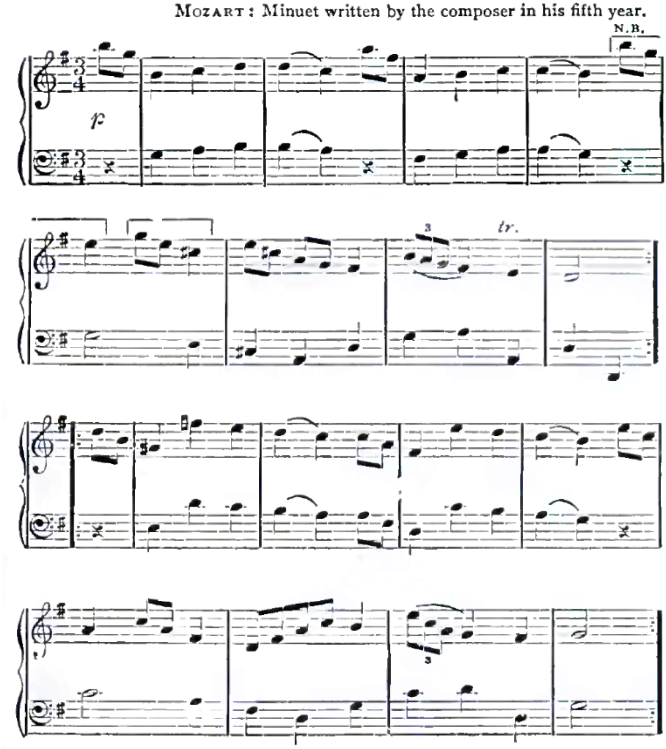
modulates back to the home key and ends there with the same cadence (ending-passage) that we heard in the first. This Two-part form is also very popular with composers of all countries and times.
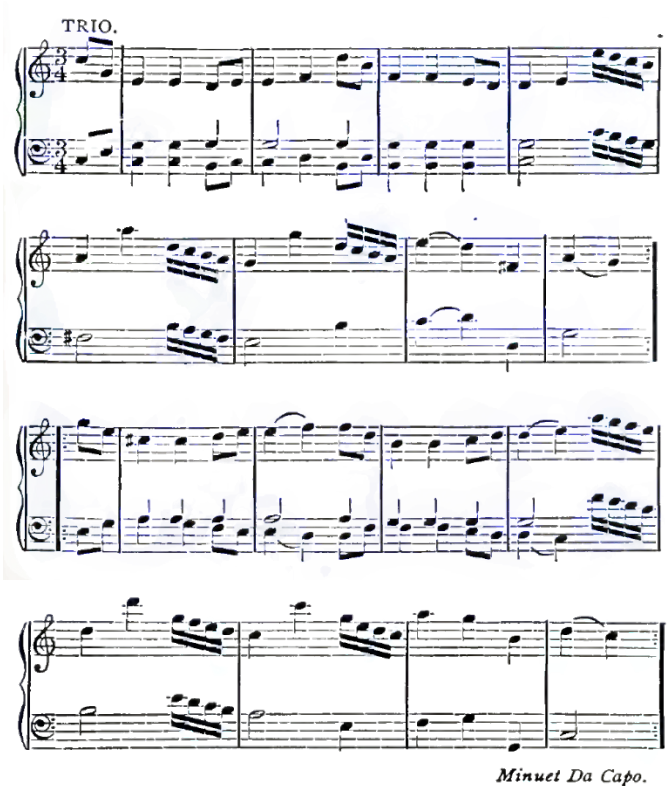
If our piece is now too short to please us, all we have to do is to apply again the same plan of arrangement, and write a second piece which will serve as a contrast to the first, after which we can repeat it. For this we shall naturally choose some other key of contrast than that already used. This plan gives us the form used in hundreds of minuets, from those written in the eighteenth century down to those found in modern sonatas and symphonies. The second piece in the minuet is often marked "Trio," or "Minuet II," and at the end of it is written "Minuet da capo"— that is, the minuet (first piece) to be played again "from the beginning."

When Mozart was only five years old he wrote a little Minuet, very simple but in excellent form, which many of you will be able to pick out on the piano (see Figure VII). The first minuet, in the key

FIGURE VII.

MOZART: Minuet written by the composer in his fifth year.





of G, is in two-part form. Part I consists of two two-measure phrases, balancing each other, and both together balanced by a single four-measure phrase in which the music modulates to the related key of D. This part (as well as the second) is repeated, which was often done. The second part has phrases of just the same lengths, and returns to the home-key of G. Notice how alike are the endings of both parts. The second minuet, or Trio, is in the contrasting key of C, with a modulation at the end of the first part to G, and return in the second part. After it, the first minuet is played again, so that we end as we began in the "home-key" of G.

Mozart, Haydn, and the other composers of the eighteenth century wrote most of their minuets either practically just like this one, or else with one or both of the contrasting pieces in Three-part form; the parts were, of course, a little longer and more complicated than they are here. With Beethoven the minuet kept the same general outline, but took on still larger proportions; and sometimes he repeated

the Trio again after the Da capo and ended with the first minuet played for the *third* time. Schumann, taking a hint from this, sometimes used his minuet three times, but made a new and different Trio for his second contrast, so that the order of the whole was: Minuet, Trio I, Minuet, Trio II, Minuet. In spite of all these changes, the idea underlying the minuet is always that of presenting short tunes so that they will contrast well, and of binding them together by repeating the first at the end.

But there is another way of getting variety besides changing the tune. Keeping the same tune, we can repeat it several times, *each time with a different accompaniment.* If, for instance, we have first used solid chords for it, the second time we will have a rippling figure, the third time staccato chords, the fourth time scales and runs, and so on as long as we care to keep it up. This is what is called making variations on a Theme, and has always been popular: composers like it because it calls all their ingenuity into play, performers like it because the rapid passages give them a chance to play brilliantly, and audiences like it because it is easy to follow, the theme remaining the same throughout.
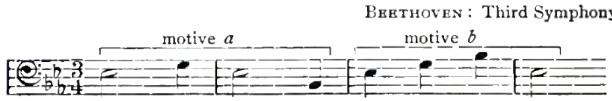
The chief fault of the Theme-and-Variations form is that unless it is most cleverly managed it grows monotonous, since the contrast is all in the dress which the theme is made to wear, and not a bit in the theme itself. It is a musical masquerade in a hundred different costumes — the person under the disguise is always the same. What would interest us far more than such changes in the *outside* of the music would be a real *inward* change — a growth and development in the melodies themselves.

And so the most interesting of all musical forms, when we rightly understand them, are neither those in which times are merely repeated one after another, as in the songforms and minuet, nor those in which a single tune is decked up in finery like a doll, as in variations, but rather those in which the melodies are like seeds from which grow, gradually, and by a law of their own nature, the most rare and beautiful plants. Of all the kinds of study which music offers, perhaps the most fascinating is this tracing of a long movement of a sonata or symphony back to a few short motives of half a dozen tones each, out of which it has grown just as slowly and surely, and just as wonder-

fully, as "great oaks from little acorns grow."
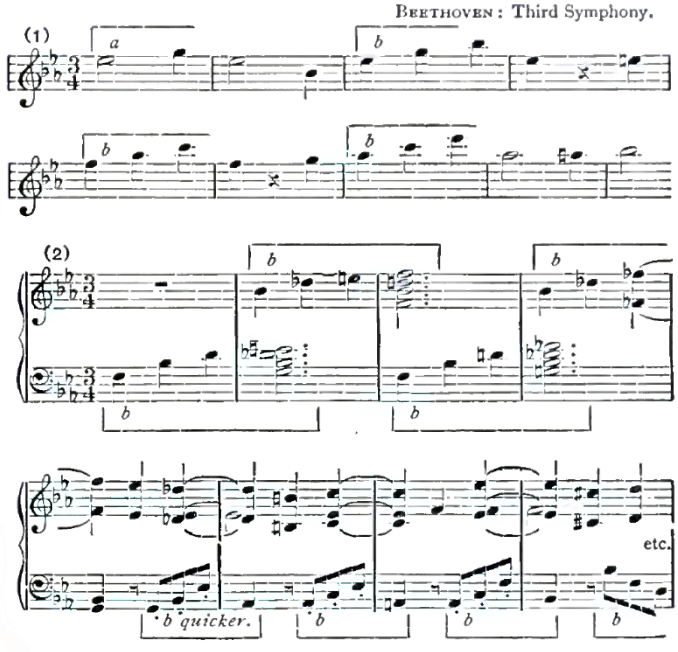
One of the greatest masters of this art of developing themes is Beethoven; and we can learn more about it by looking at a few examples from him than by any amount of description. Here are the little germs of melody, or motives, out of which grows most of the first movement of his splendid "Eroica" Symphony: two of them, you see, both of four notes, but easily told apart by their rhythm (Figure VIII).
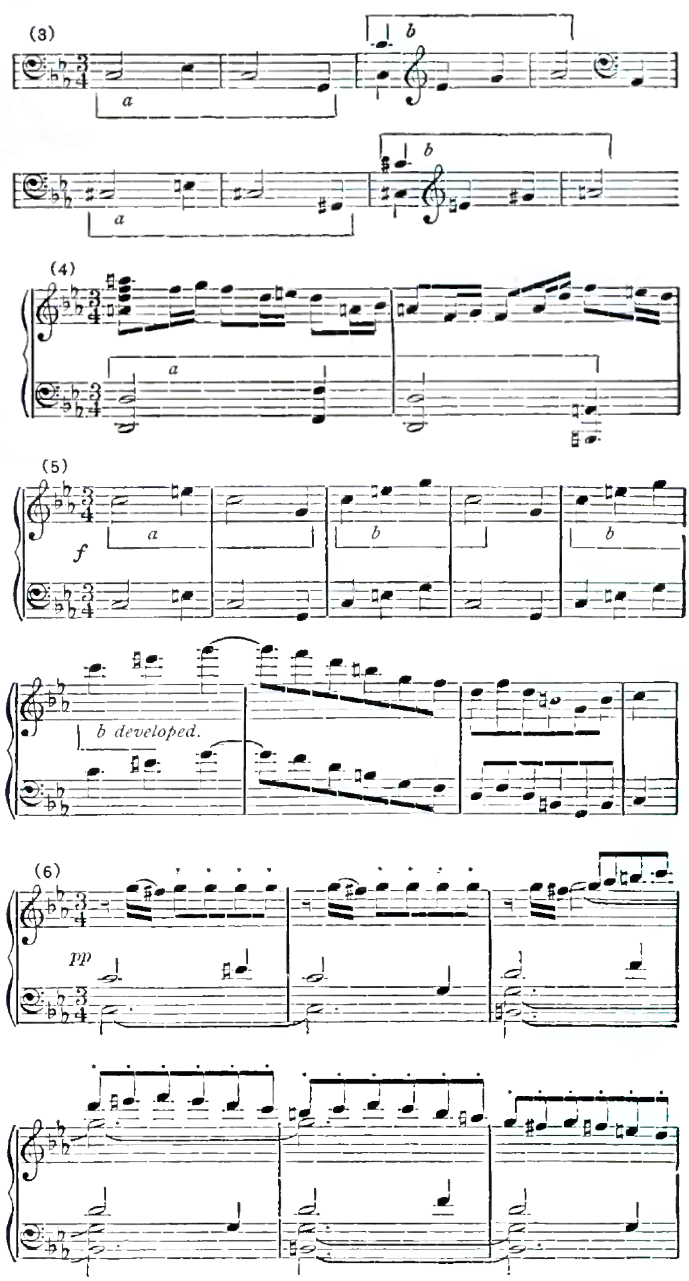
FIGURE VIII.



In Figure IX I have put down a few of the developments that these short motives go through, and I think if you will examine them carefully you will agree with me that it is almost miraculous how much Beethoven makes out of so little.

FIGURE IX.





In No. 1 he repeats *b* several times, putting it higher and higher each time, and thus making it more and more exciting. *b* is also used in No. 2, but here it makes a sort of conversation between a lower

voice[3] and a higher, one taking it up before the other is through with it. Later it comes in in the bass in a time twice as quick as before; notice how lively and elastic this change makes it — it seems fairly to "hop, skip and jump." Variety of key is added to the other kinds of variety in No. 3; we get *a* in the bass and *b* in the treble (slightly changed) first in the key of C minor, and then in C-sharp minor. You don't have to recognize the keys to feel the effect of pushing on that this modulation gives.

In No. 4 Beethoven combines with motive *a* in the bass a new and more restless rhythm in the treble. No. 5 presents the motives in the major, loud and bold, and extends them by adding four measures of great energy that grow naturally out of *b*. The final example, No. 6, shows *a* in the middle, soft and mysterious, long-held notes in the bass, and a new melody, dainty, tripping, staccato, at the top. All of these contrasting ideas you will notice grow out of the original germ quite simply and spontaneously, and are enough like it so that we feel they all belong together.

Once composers had learned how to develop their themes in this way it was easy to make pieces much longer and more interesting than minuets; and there grew up for such longer pieces a good many different forms, of which the most important were the sonata-form and the rondo. These are built, just as much as the smaller forms, on the plan of statement, contrast, and restatement. This simple and natural scheme is applied both to the order of the themes or melodies, and to the order of the keys used (beginning in the home-key, modulating more or less widely in the middle, and returning home at the end), and can be traced in a Beethoven symphony quite as clearly as in a Mozart minuet. The difference is that in the larger works there are more separate themes, each theme is longer, and all are developed more thoroughly. The *dimensions* are greater, but the *shape* is the same.

In this last combination, then, of the long series that we have followed out together (tones into motives, motives into phrases, phrases into groups, groups into tunes, and tunes into complete pieces) the

[3] Each distinct line of melody in the music is called a "voice," even if it is played instead of sung.

composer aims just as much as in any of the others at variety in unity. The greatest masters of form, like Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, are those who succeed in combining the most contrasting melodies, rhythms, and keys in such a way that they clearly *belong together,* and we feel that we could not take out a single block without bringing down the whole house. To make music so perfect in form as this is the most difficult of all the tasks of the composer; for the larger the blocks he has to build with, the harder it is to fit them together both ingeniously and solidly, the more danger is there that his building will be either heavy and "chunky," or insecure. It is comparatively easy to give a short tune plenty of variety; but in giving a symphony enough variety to keep it from becoming tiresome, you will make it a mere bundle of fragments unless you are a really great artist.

Moreover (and this is what is particularly important to us as listeners), the larger forms are not only harder than the small to write, they are also much harder to hear. A piece of music, you see, is never given to us all at once, in a single instant of time, as a picture or a statue is; it is doled out to us bit by bit; when we get to the middle of even the shortest tune we can no longer hear the beginning, and when we get to the end we can no longer hear the middle. We hear nothing but single tones, one at a time; only by remembering them and connecting in our minds what we remember with what we now hear do we grasp the tune, which is a line rather a series of dots. Therefore the longer a melody is the more of a strain is put upon our memory to hear it as a melody. We are likely, especially if our ears are inattentive or untrained, to forget the beginning before we hear the end. In this case we no more hear the melody than we should see a picture of which we covered up one half, while we looked at the other.

If this is the case with a short melody, how much more with a movement from a sonata or a symphony lasting ten or fifteen minutes! Here we have to listen to and remember perhaps half a dozen different themes, to notice the changes made in each as it is developed, and to recognize any one when it is repeated, after a space of several minutes filled with other things. Only in this way can we get a clear picture of the beautiful panorama of tones that has been unrolled before our ears. It is easy to see why so many of us enjoy a

simple tune, and so few a symphony of Beethoven. Most of us have never trained our musical memories enough to grasp the symphony — we don't really perceive its shape at all, any more than a fly walking on an orange perceives that it is round.

But is it worth while, you ask, to work one's memory so hard, simply in order to feel the shape of a piece of music? Why not just enjoy the separate tunes, one after another, as they come along? Well, you would only have to push that idea one step further to ask: Why feel the shape of even a short tune, why not just enjoy the separate notes, one after another, as they come along? And this is doubtless as far as some people ever get toward enjoying music. Like Charles Lamb, they are "sentimentally disposed to harmony, but organically incapable of a tune." But if you can grasp a tune you will surely insist that your pleasure in music is keener than theirs. Why not make it as much keener again by learning to grasp a whole group of tunes?

CHAPTER 7
The Feelings Aroused by Music

What I called the "sensuous" and the "aesthetic" appeals of music we have now studied with some care. There remains the emotional appeal, the power that music has to arouse our feelings; this we shall discuss in the present chapter. The next chapter will continue this part of our subject by showing how certain pieces of music (not by any means all) not only call up feelings but give us definite ideas or even tell us stories. In reading both these chapters about expression I hope you will constantly bear in mind how important to this third or expressive value of music is the second, aesthetic value we have been studying. Without beauty music cannot be deeply expressive.

Have you ever, at a concert, when a march, or some such strongly rhythmic piece was being played, happened to notice the audience all keeping time? — the heads bobbing and the feet tapping? Have you found yourself at it, and realized how pleased and excited you were by the regular motions? If you have, you will hardly be surprised when I tell you that however little your body may have been moving, however proper and dignified you may have looked, your mind was dancing. By sympathy with the music your muscles pulled and pushed as if they would force you to dance. You were too polite to do that; you kept almost perfectly still, only the nodding head or the tapping fingers or toes betraying you; but your mind, just the same, was dancing, and the delightful exhilaration of dancing filled it as you listened to the swinging, swaying music.

This example gives us a glimpse of the way in which all music rouses our feelings, and shows how different it is from the way paintings and statues make their appeal. A picture or a statue shows us something outside ourselves; we think first of this object — say a group of soldiers charging the enemy; and the feelings of activity, courage and adventure which it suggests come to us only gradually as

we think about it. Critics call this kind of expression "objective," because it leads from the object or thing to the feelings that that thing calls up. Now music does not thus show us anything definite. A military march, for example, does not present a picture of some particular battle — Gettysburg or Bull Run. It works just the other way. It begins by churning up our feelings, plunging us without our knowing how or why into an energetic state of mind, working directly on us, the "subjects" or persons acted upon. This "subjective" excitement may then arouse definite ideas in our minds; but these ideas will come second, not first as in the case of the picture. Music must always start by making us feel "queer inside."

In order to understand how mere sounds can so powerfully stir us, we have only to consider how short a step it is with us from feelings to movements, and how closely feelings and movements are therefore connected in our minds. Even the oldest and most sedate of us can remember, I am sure, how, as small children, we used to jump and clap our hands when we heard any good news. Our feelings of delight had to vent themselves in such bodily movements, or we should "burst." In the same way savages, who have in grown-up bodies the minds of small children, express joy by all manner of leaping and skipping and kicking. To dance, in short, is natural to every man in his moments of energy and health; it is only the fear of making fools of ourselves in public that keeps our feet glued to the earth and our arms fastened to our sides on a fine spring morning.

If vigorous bodily movements are thus the natural companions of happy energetic feelings, it is not hard to see how such movements, even if only suggested and not carried out, will arouse these feelings. When we hear music in the rhythm of the march or two-step we have a strong impulse to go through the actual steps with it; this impulse we fight, and allow ourselves only the tapping and bobbing I spoke of; but even this slight imitation of the dance movements fills our minds with the excitement, the energy, the joy in living, that we associate with such motions. Listening to dance music is almost as exhilarating as actual dancing.

On the other hand, when we are sad we no longer make quick or energetic movements; our sorrow, which is a sort of weariness of the heart, makes all our motions heavy, slow, and unwilling. As a result,

we connect in our minds such slow motions with sadness, just as we connect quick ones with joy; and music that suggests slow motions — a funeral march, for instance — plunges us at once into a mood of sadness.

Feelings of sorrow, however, express themselves not only, or even chiefly, in movements, but rather in meanings and wailings of the voice; and this brings us to another element in musical expression. Our moods of sadness probably find quite as natural an expression in groans and cries as our joys find in bodily motions: familiar examples are the bawling of very small babies, and the crooning and chanting of the funeral ceremonies of savages. It is a little harder to show how music suggests such cries than it is to show how it suggests motions. But I fancy you must sometimes have noticed, after hard listening to music which moved you deeply, a sense of aching fatigue in the muscles of your throat. This shows, when we stop to think of it, that songlike music gives us an impulse to sing just as dance-like music makes us want to dance; in each case we tend to "imitate," to do just what the music is doing; we nip this tendency in the bud, but not before we have got the same *feelings* that we should have got by carrying it out.

Here is what we have so far learned, put into a few sentences:

1. *The expression of joy in music is due largely to its suggesting by strong accents the bodily motions we make when joyful, although*
2. *These motions are only suggested, not carried out.*
3. *The expression of sorrow in music is due largely to its suggesting by rising and falling tones the cries we make when sorrowful, although*
4. *These cries are only suggested, not actually uttered.*

Looking now a little more closely at these two elements of expression, which we may call the dance element and the song element, we shall be surprised to see how close is the connection between what the music does and how it makes us feel. Great rapidity of movement, for instance, always agitates us — so much so that after a rushing *allegro vivace*, although we have been sitting quite sedately in our seats all through it, we sometimes feel fairly breathless. Slow, even, stately movement gives us a sympathetic sense of deliberateness and solidity, or fills our mind with noble feelings. *Regular* motion, in which the

tones are all of the same length, marching on irresistibly, gives an impression of over-whelming power, as we see in some of the grand climaxes of Tschaikowsky's "Pathetic Symphony." The process of gradually going faster and faster, called the "accelerando," is always stimulating; the "ritardando" (a getting slower) is usually quieting and restful. It is interesting to notice, however, that sometimes a slowing of the motion is just the reverse of quieting, as for instance, when at the end of a long climax the pace becomes more deliberate and majestic. This may be because such deliberateness suggests the calm energy with which we move when we are intensely in earnest.
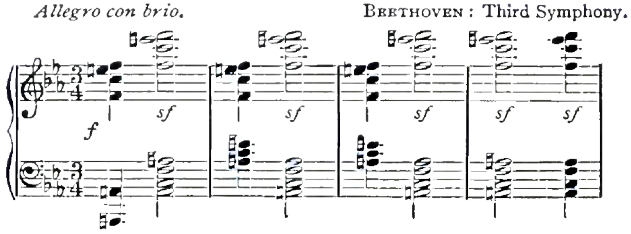
Passing next to the song element in expression, we find that a general rule is this: The greater the effort that would be needed to produce a sound by our own voices, the more exciting to our feelings will be that sound, however it is produced. Accordingly, loud sounds are more exciting than soft, and high sounds are more exciting than low; for to sing loud requires more breath, and therefore more activity of the chest muscles, than to sing softly, and to sing high requires more tightly pulled vocal cords, and therefore more activity of the muscles that operate these cords, than to sing low. Increasing the volume of a tone from soft to loud, called *crescendo,* is always stirring, and the *diminuendo,* or diminishing force, always quiets and calms the hearer's mind. As a usual thing, a climax is produced partly by the crescendo and partly by making the melody climb higher and higher, while the opposite of the climax, a "letting down," combines the diminuendo with melody going ever lower.

Furthermore, a *sudden* rise or fall in pitch, in other words, a leap, is more powerful in expression than a *gradual* rise or fall by steps. Melodies that go up and down along the scale line are not so striking as those in which there are wide jumps; they arouse in us quieter, more restrained feelings. One reason why "Dixie" has so much more "go" than "Yankee Doodle" is that the line of its melody is so much bolder. It would be interesting to make a large collection of melodies from different composers, and see whether those with lively active dispositions didn't use more large jumps than the more meditative, timid ones. Beethoven, who was a man of tremendous energy, makes many melodies of bold outline; and in our own day Richard Strauss's tunes are as full of jumps as a flea.

The last kind of expression that I shall speak about in this chapter is that which depends on consonance and dissonance. If you have forgotten what these are, look back to Chapter II, and you will see that two or more tones which mix together well and seem "smooth," are said to be "consonant"; while those that refuse to mix, and sound harsh, sharp, and grating, are said to be "dissonant." C and E are consonant with one another; C and D are dissonant. Moreover, you will see at the end of that chapter that dissonances have a great use in our modern music; and this use is largely due to their expressive power.

Dissonances are expressive in two distinct ways. In the first place, since very strong dissonances really hurt our ears, we readily connect them in our minds with painful feelings and thoughts, and so they may give great eloquence to music that is sad or tragic. Our ears revel in them in certain moods, as our hearts revel in sorrow. Thus Beethoven ends one of the great climaxes in his "Symphony Eroica" with these harsh chords:

FIGURE X.
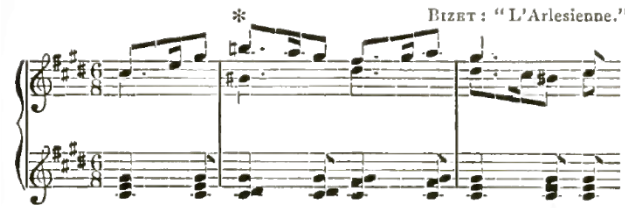


Play them alone and they are merely disagreeable; but play them in their proper place in the agitated first movement of the symphony, and they are felt to hammer home the passionate mood of the music as nothing else could do.

In the second place, when dissonances are clearly felt to result from the free motion of two or more melodies going along together, they may add greatly to the expressiveness of these melodies by calling attention to their differences. In every family the various members, if they have any individuality, will not always agree perfectly: life would be terribly flat if they did. And since each melody in a piece of music is like a person, with its own habits and ways, if several are put together there are bound to be some clashes. These clashes are

the dissonances; and if they are not too harsh they add greatly to the effect of the music, because they bring into clear relief the independence of the melodies, and emphasize by contrast the character — I might almost say the personality — of each. Sometimes such dissonances are only piquant and interesting; at other times they give a wonderful strength and rude force to the music.

In Figure XI are some dissonances of the piquant kind. The

FIGURE XI.
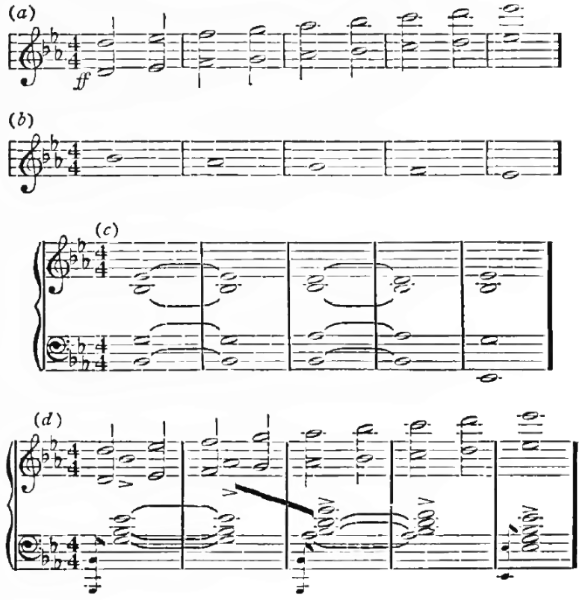


passage is from a suite for orchestra by Bizet, the composer of the beautiful opera, "Carmen." The two melodies (played by the right hand) are sung by two flutes; the accompaniment is given to the stringed instruments. If you will first play the top melody with the accompaniment, and then the second melody, in the same way, you will see that all goes smoothly. Now play both, and notice what a harsh dissonance there is at the point marked *; yet this dissonance is not only allowable, but delightful, because it brings out so clearly the differences in the two melodies. It is like a lover's quarrel, that only lasts a moment, and makes the two lovers all the more devoted in the end.

When dissonances result from the irresistible onward movements of two or three voices, each minding its own business energetically, they sometimes make the music almost brutally strong. Such effects may be trying to the ear, but they are most stimulating to the mind. A single illustration, from one of the greatest of living composers, Richard Strauss, will make this clear. At the end of a magnificent climax in his "Ein Heldenleben" ("A Hero's Life"), Strauss divides the orchestra into three parts: the violins, violas, flutes, oboes, clarinets, and one trumpet take the vigorous rising scale shown at Figure XII (a); *at the same* time no less than eight French horns play loudly the falling scale shown at (b); and for a foundation to the whole the trombones and tubas play the chords at (c). Now it is hard

FIGURE XII.

STRAUSS: "A Hero's Life."



to play these all at once on the piano, but at (d) I have combined them as well as I could, and if you will play them you will notice two things: first, that the different melodies "step on each other's toes" at several points; second, that once your ear can follow the melodies, this very harshness makes them only more stirring, emphasizes the noble dignity of their movement, and gives the passage a matchless brilliancy and force. Thus does well-used dissonance intensify expression.

We have now studied some of the means by which music arouses sympathetic states of mind in us, through the interplay of quick and slow, loud and soft, high and low, harsh and smooth. These states of mind, we have seen, are not very definite. The sense of powerful life aroused by a march may suggest to one of you, soldiers; to another, mountain-climbing; to a third, Abraham Lincoln; and critics have often lamented that music has to leave things so vague. But I have tried to show you that for this very reason it is more powerful, it moves us more deeply than the other arts. Instead of working from the outside inward, as they do, it works from within outward; it is a "subjective" rather than an "objective" art; and it can set all our emotions

a-boiling as it does just because it appeals to us *directly;* it forces us to throw ourselves into it, and to live and breathe and have our being in unison with it.
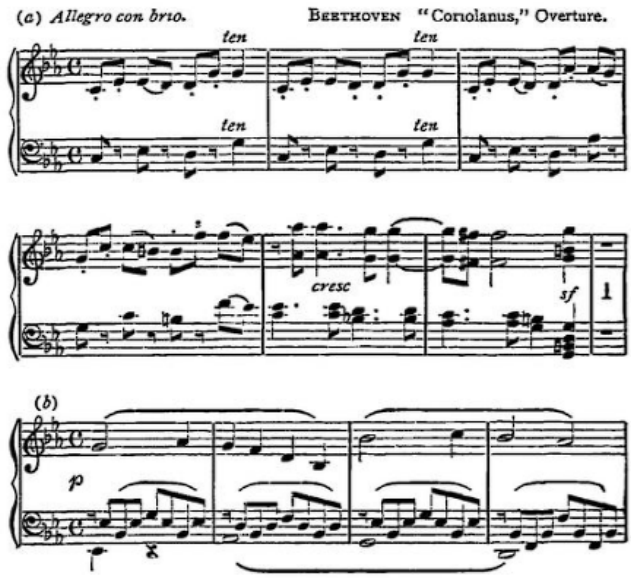
CHAPTER 8
Music That Tells Stories

Richard Strauss introduces into his "Ein Heldenleben" ("A Hero's Life"), various themes or melodies which are supposed to represent his friends and enemies — for this "Hero," it seems, is no other than the Herr Doctor Richard Strauss himself. Fran Strauss is pictured by a long solo for a single violin, in which her coquettishness is suggested by many little twists and turns; and Strauss is so sure that he has painted his wife's portrait clearly in this passage, that he said to a friend: "You have never met my wife, but now [that is, after hearing the solo] you know her quite well, and when you go to Berlin, you will be able to identify her." He has insisted, also, that in another of his works he has given us a picture of a woman with red hair; and he believes that the tone language is getting so definite that some day it will be possible to compose in music a tablespoon so that the audience will have no difficulty in telling it from the rest of the silverware. Can Strauss be making fun of us, or is he really convinced that music can describe objects as well as arouse emotions? And if he is, how far is he in the right about it?

Well, without going quite to the length of tablespoons, I should say that music can certainly suggest outside objects and events, provided we listen to it in a certain way, and provided certain clues as to its meaning are given us; but that this way of listening is not the most natural way, and that without the clews given by something else than the music itself, it can do little towards telling a definite story. An example will make all this clear.

Beethoven's "Coriolanus" Overture is made almost entirely out of the two themes shown in Figure XIII. The first, (a), is quick, restless, agitated; there is a nervous uneasiness about it, due to its movement and to the rise in pitch in the third and fourth measures; and yet there is energy, rude strength, in the emphatic ending. The second

FIGURE XIII.



theme, (b), on the contrary, is softer, smoother, gentler; it is in clear major instead of dim minor; and the curve of the melody gives it a pleading, wistful expression. If we were to hear these two melodies without knowing anything about them, they would simply stir up certain states of mind in us, in the way described in the last chapter; their expression would be what we called "subjective"; and if anything more definite came into our minds on hearing them than these subjective feelings (of restlessness, and of tender longing), it would not be the same thing, probably, in any two of us.

But Beethoven has given his music a title — "Coriolanus"; and the moment we know this title, it gives us something particular to hang our feelings of restlessness and tender longing upon. Coriolanus, we know, was a Roman, who was so angered at his banishment from his native city that he conspired with one of its enemies to humble it. He brought his army to within five miles of Rome, and would have attacked it had not the piteous prayers of his wife and his mother finally proved stronger than his hate. With this key to help us we easily see pictured in the first theme Coriolanus's bitter and vengeful feelings, and in the second we hear the tearful pleading of the two women. We may even follow the story along in imagination right

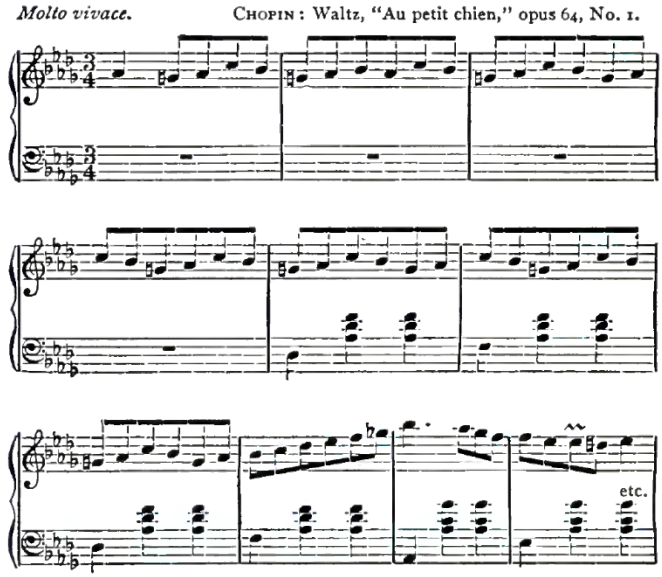
through the whole overture, and at the end, when theme (a) appears in slower and slower notes, and at last dies out altogether, we may get as vivid an idea as we could from a book of Coriolanus's unwilling abandonment of his attack on the city.

Notice, however, that the music itself does not tell us all this. It is only in the light of the title that we read just this particular story into the overture. Had Beethoven called it "The American Revolution," for example, we should have been quite sure that theme (a) showed us the colonists' preparation for war, and theme (b) their sorrow at fighting their own fatherland. And so I say that the most natural and usual effect of music is to set up what I called subjective moods or states of mind in us; and that we are led to couple it with objects outside ourselves only by a title or other such hint. Nevertheless it can, within limits, suggest objects and tell stories about them; and this objective side of musical expression is what we must now study.

Just as music can suggest bodily motions, as we have already seen, thus arousing the emotions that go with them, so, if we can be induced to connect it not with ourselves, but with the outside world of things, it can suggest motions in this outside world. When Beethoven, in the slow movement of his Pastoral Symphony, called "Scene by the Brook," wishes to suggest the even rippling motion of the water, he makes the accompaniment of the melody out of a wavy figure of tones all of the same length. This gently rocking accompaniment keeps up through most of the movement. Mendelssohn in his overture, "The Hebrides," descriptive of the Hebrides Islands off the coast of Scotland, imitates the grand slow rise and fall of the ocean surges. Wagner paints the rippling of the Rhine in the overture to "Das Rheingold," and the lapping of flames in his wonderful "fire-music."

Have you ever noticed the funny twistings of a dog or a cat trying to catch its own tail? Chopin saw one day a little dog spinning about in this ludicrous way, and translated the motion into music, making out of it the theme for his waltz in D-flat called "Valse au Petit Chien," or "Waltz of the Little Dog." You won't fail to notice the laughable effect produced by the figure of four notes, which, since it does not quite fill the measure, gets a new accent each time it appears.

FIGURE XIV



In somewhat similar fashion an old German composer, Schütz, setting to music the words "and roll away the stone," does it in this realistic way:

FIGURE XV.



Again, just as what I called the song element in music can suggest to us our own cries, so if we listen "objectively" this same element can suggest the cries of others. We often hear musical phrases which vividly suggest that some one is pouring out his joys or his sorrows in speech — we can almost hear the words. The theme of the two women in "Coriolanus" is an example; how their hopes and fears seem to find voice in that pleading bit of melody!

Beethoven is a great master of this method of suggesting actual speech or utterance in the musical phrase. In the "andante con moto" of his fourth piano concerto, for instance, he gives us a sort of dialogue or conversation between the orchestra and the piano, in which each is kept as distinct as a character in a play. The orchestra seems to represent some cruel, heartless tyrant, grim, unyielding, without

mercy. Its phrases are short, nervous, and positive, like the verdict of a stern judge on a condemned criminal, from which there is no appeal. There is a proud nobility about them that suggests some force more than human. The piano, on the contrary, speaks timidly, hesitatingly, almost apologetically. The chords sound thin and weak after the thundering tones of the orchestra. It is a voice of pleading, a human voice crushed and helpless in the presence of a power so much greater than itself…

Or take the famous recitatives (speeches) for the double-basses and the violoncellos in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The very idea of making these big, unwieldy bass instruments speak important lines of the music was daring; before Beethoven's day they had always been humble members of the orchestra, content to play the bass. But Beethoven was original in everything he did, and few things in music are more dramatic than these speeches by the bass instruments. They occur near the beginning of the finale or last movement of the symphony, and seem to say something almost as definitely as words could; indeed, Beethoven himself said that they were to be played "as if they had words." As we hesitate on the brink of the finale, not knowing what its main theme will be, the themes of the first three movements are one by one suggested by the orchestra; first, that of the opening *allegro*; then that of the *scherzo*; then that of the *adagio*. Each is interrupted, scornfully, almost violently, by the bass instruments, which seem to cry: "No, no; that will not do at all!" A little reluctant they are, to be sure, to refuse the beautiful melody of the *adagio*, but it has to go. Then a new theme is suggested, the theme known as the "Hymn of Joy." This is enthusiastically accepted in a final speech by the basses, and becomes the subject of the finale. The whole passage (it comes at page 310 of the piano arrangement of the symphony in the Litolff Edition) is a wonderful example of how tones can be made to talk almost as plainly as people.

The suggestions of motions and of speech by music are the most important means the composer has of making it tell a story, just as the dance and the song elements are the most important means for making it arouse emotion. There are, however, one or two other ways in which the suggestion of outside things can be managed, which deserve a word or two. The contrast between consonances and disso-

nances can be made to suggest the contrast between pleasant and unpleasant things. Thus in the part of "A Hero's Life" called "The Hero's Helpmeet," Strauss uses clear, mellow chords, while in the section devoted to the hero's enemies the dissonances fairly hurt our ears.

The suggestion of "high," "light," and "bright" by high notes, and of "low," "heavy," and "dark" by low notes has been used by many composers, but never so poetically as by Wagner in the prelude to "Lohengrin." The appearance of the theme in the thin, clear tones of the violins, in the highest part of their register, its gradual descent to the lower instruments and increase in loudness as well as fullness during the long climax, and its equally gradual rise again, higher and higher, as if into thinner and thinner air, until it finally dies away like a melting cloud: all this tells us the story, or rather paints us the picture (so vivid is it) of a company of angels, bearing the sacred Grail, descending to earth, and after consecrating mankind to the service of Christ, "soaring up again," as Wagner puts it, "to the ethereal heights."

Finally, the composer may actually imitate with the instruments the sounds of the outer world, as Beethoven makes flute, oboe, and clarinet imitate the cries of the nightingale, quail, and cuckoo in his Pastoral Symphony; as Mendelssohn, in his overture to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (in which play, you remember, Bottom is turned by the fairies into a donkey), imitates the bray of an ass; as Berlioz, in his "Symphonie Fantastique," makes thunder by means of four kettledrums. Some of our composers to-day go to great lengths in this matter. Tschaikowsky directs that cannon be fired during the playing of his Overture "1812," which celebrates the victory of Russia over Napoleon. Richard Strauss uses a specially invented "wind machine" to give the sound of the rushing wind in his "Don Quixote." Such methods are very well in their way, but they are easily abused. The true artist never imitates nature exactly: to paint a basket of fruit so that it looks real enough to eat is nothing but a clever trick; and to make a musical "battle" or "storm" is not much better.

These methods of making music refer to something outside itself have been pushed much farther by composers of our own day and of what is called the "realistic" school, than they were by those who first

used them. Beethoven, whose greatest works date from about the beginning of the nineteenth century, set the fashion for the "romantic" school, which bridges the gap between the classical music of the eighteenth century and our modern music. In his overtures "Coriolanus," "Egmont," and some others, he wrote music which might well be listened to, like the older works, for itself alone, but which, once we have the key afforded by the title, is seen to suggest a more definite story. The story, nevertheless, is hardly more than suggested; the main feelings it inspires are reflected in the music, but it is not told in detail. The musician does not begin at the beginning, like a novelist, and go through to the end, telling us how the hero and heroine met, how their love did not run smooth, and how they were at last nevertheless "married, and lived happily ever after." He gives us not the events, but the feelings they aroused; he is not a story-teller, but a poet.

Such "poetic" or "romantic" or "descriptive" music (it has been given many names) is found in many of the works of the composers who followed after Beethoven; in Schubert's songs; in Schumann's "Manfred" and "Genoveva" Overtures and his "Spring" Symphony; in Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream," "Hebrides," and "Ruy Bias" Overtures, and his "Scotch" and "Italian" Symphonies. In all these important works of the Romantic School the form of the music is based on the old principles of contrast and return to the earlier melodies, and of development of themes, which we studied in Chapter VI, and the only clews to particular meanings are given us in the titles.

But gradually it occurred to musicians that they could be more definite than this — they could tell the stories just as they happened, event by event — in a word, they could make music "realistic." And so first Berlioz in France and Liszt in Germany, about the middle of the nineteenth century, and later a great many other composers, such as Tschaikowsky, Saint-Säens, and Richard Strauss, developed what is called programme music. This differs from merely poetic music in the following ways: In the first place, as the name shows, each piece is provided with a programme, a brief account in prose or poetry of the "plot." The programme of Strauss's "Ein Heldenleben," for example, consists of the following six headings: "The Hero"; "The

Hero's Antagonists"; "The Hero's Helpmeet"; "The Hero's Battlefield"; "The Hero's Mission of Peace"; "The Hero's Escape from the World."

In the second place, the composer uses all the means of describing things in the outside world that we have been discussing, in order to make his story as clear and as detailed as possible. In some cases, also, he uses a method invented by Berlioz for making clear to us the various people of his story. Each person has what is called a *leit-motiv* or leading motive, a short melody that we learn to connect with him and that reminds us of him every time we hear it. By all these methods the story is made definite.

Finally, instead of using the old forms of classic music, the programme composer takes up and drops his various themes just where he pleases, being guided only by his story. Unimportant themes may come in for a moment and then vanish entirely, just as unimportant characters in a play walk across the stage and disappear; the important themes, of course, will be made much of, and developed as in classical music. The composer who did most to introduce this free form, called Symphonic Poem or Tone Poem, was Liszt.

Such, then, are the chief kinds of expression in music, and the schools founded upon them. The classic school, represented in our own day by Brahms, aims at the expression of emotion and at pure beauty. The romantic or poetic school adds to these aims a somewhat more definite suggestion of a person, place, or idea, indicated by a title, and uses the classic forms. The realistic or programme school aims at definite story-telling, and plans the form according to the story.

CHAPTER 9
The Inside of a Piano

There are very few houses nowadays in which a piano is not to be found; the highly polished black box, either standing upright or placed flat on three legs, has become a familiar bit of furniture; yet although it contains almost as many marvels as that famous box of Pandora's, few of us ever take the trouble to peep inside it. To examine the inside of a piano is, however, not only an interesting experience in itself, but one which throws a great deal of light on the peculiarities of piano music.

Here is a "baby grand" piano, the top of which is opened and the music-desk removed, so that we can get a clear view of its works. (If some of you can find no grand piano to examine, you can easily make out in an upright the various parts I am going to describe. They are differently placed, but their use is the same.) We notice first of all a solid iron plate, across which are stretched many strings. These are fastened at the back of the piano to pins, passed over a wooden bridge which is glued to a board called the "sounding board," and wound around pegs by turning which they can be loosened or tightened. You can see lying underneath the strings in a row the felt hammers, ready to dart up and strike whenever you press the keys; also you will notice a line of similar hits of felt-covered wood resting on the strings, and called "dampers" because they damp or stop the vibrating of the strings.

Now strike a key, say middle C (see the picture of the keyboard in Figure I). What happens? The hammer darts up and strikes the strings, falling back slightly so as not to interfere with their vibrating. At the same time the damper belonging to these strings is lifted, that they may be free to vibrate, and stays so as long as you hold down the key. The three strings have been stretched to exactly the same tightness by the piano tuner, and as they are also of exactly the same

length they make just the same number of vibrations, or swings up and down, in the same time — no less, if you can believe me, than two hundred and fifty-six swings each second, or fifteen thousand, three hundred and sixty each minute!

But these motions of the strings are so slight, and the strings themselves so thin, that very little sound would be thus produced if it were not for the sounding board, which is often called "the soul of the piano." This light yet strong sheet of wood is so made that it takes up and greatly increases the vibrations carried to it from the strings through the bridge on which they rest, as you can feel for yourselves by lightly touching it through one of the holes in the iron plate when someone is playing. Thus increased by the sounding board, the vibrations next pass out into the air in the form of "waves" or little puffs, which striking upon our eardrums give us the sensation of this tone, middle C. How wonderful it is that, though we should never dream of trying to count two hundred and fifty-six in a second, our eardrums know without counting what tone they are hearing, and at once notice a change of even two or three vibrations.

Whatever key you strike you set in motion a set of strings[4] which has been tuned to vibrate at a certain rate. The faster the vibration the "higher" will be the tone. If you remember that the longer, heavier, and looser a string is, the slower will be its vibration, and the shorter, lighter, and tighter it is, the faster will it vibrate, you will understand the arrangement of the piano strings at a glance. They are carefully graded from the long and heavy one (wound with copper wire to increase its weight) of the lowest bass tone, vibrating only twenty-six times a second, to the set of three slender wires not much over two inches long, which make the four thousand and ninety-six vibrations per second, of the highest tone in the treble. The tightness you cannot see, but you all know how the tuner raises a tone by

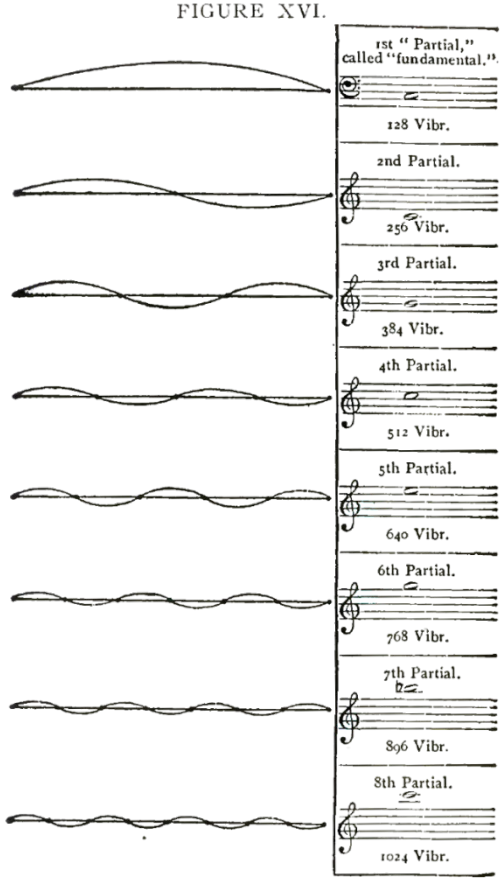
[4] Each set of strings sounding the same tone is called a "unison" — "one sound." From the C below middle C downward, twenty tones in my piano have only two strings to each unison, and the last eight tones in the piano have only one string apiece. This arrangement is to make the volume of tone as equal as possible through the whole range — a single long and thick string producing as much sound as several short, thin ones.

tightening the string. The great brilliancy of the tone of modern pianos is largely due to the tightness of the stringing, all the strings together being said to exert a constant pull of forty thousand pounds on the iron plate, the object of which is to bear this enormous strain.

We now come to a matter hard both to explain and to understand — the queer habit strings have of vibrating in several different ways at once! I wish we could pass on without troubling ourselves about this, but it is so important, and it throws so much light on many other important points in music, that there is nothing for us to do but grapple with it and conquer it once for all. A little close attention now will pay us well in the long run.

It is the queer habit of a stretched string when struck to vibrate not only as a whole, but to divide itself up into halves, thirds, fourths, fifths, and so on, which also vibrate in as many different ways. Look at Figure XVI, and you will understand. There, in the column at the left, you see all these different kinds of vibration. Now it is a rule that half a string vibrates just twice as fast as the whole, a third just three times as fast, and so on. Therefore, if we take a string of such length, weight and tightness that it will vibrate as a whole one hundred and twenty-eight times a second — which is just what the strings of the C an octave below middle C do — its halves will vibrate two hundred and fifty-six times a second, its thirds three

FIGURE XVI.



hundred and eighty-four times, and so on, and so on. (These numbers of vibrations are shown in the right hand column.) Furthermore, each of these rates of vibration will produce its own tone (middle C, the G above it, etc.).

In fact, when we make those strings vibrate, they really do not produce just one simple tone, but a whole series of tones, which our ears hear as one because it is their habit to. Each of these tones is a part of our impression (and for that reason called a "partial tone"), but we call them all by the name of the first or "fundamental" one — the foundation of all the rest — which is also the strongest of all. At the right of Figure XVI you see the first eight "partials" of the C we started with.

Some of you may find it hard to believe that our musical tones are really made up of so many parts — they sound so simple and "single." But what, let me ask you, tastes more "single" than lemonade? — yet you know that lemonade is made of lemon juice and sugar, little as it tastes like either lemon juice or sugar. The two mixed together make a new thing. In similar way, we know that ordinary sunlight is made out of the colors of the rainbow.

That there are all these different partial tones in our C, moreover, we can prove by a simple experiment on the piano. We can analyze the tone into its parts, just as a prism analyzes sunlight into red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet. The experiment depends on what is known as sympathetic vibration, or the starting into vibration of a string by the motions of another string which is in tune with it. It is truly marvelous how much can be done by exerting a very little force at just the right moment. Have you ever noticed, in "swinging" some one, how the least touch applied just as the swing forward begins, is enough to make him go ever higher and higher, while twenty times as much effort, applied a half second too soon, will not only not make him go, but will actually stop him? Well, so it is in sympathetic vibration. If two strings, A and B, are exactly in tune, so that they will vibrate just the same number of times per second; and if then we start A a-going, the little puffs of air it sends over to B, absurdly weak as they are, will be enough to start it going, too, because they strike it just at the right moments. Change the pitch of B by five vibrations a second, and it will not respond to A in the least.

Well, if the *halves* of that string shown in Figure XVI are vibrating exactly two hundred and fifty-six times a second, they ought to correspond exactly with the *whole* of the string that sounds middle C, for we found that that tone had the vibration rate two hundred and fifty-six. Here is our experiment, then. Press down, without striking, with your right hand, middle C. This will raise the damper from its strings, leaving them free to vibrate. Now strike, with your left hand, with a strong, brisk stroke, the C below middle C, letting it go immediately. You will hear the tone middle C singing clearly. Repeat the experiment, striking B or D instead of C, and you will hear no "sympathetic" tone. This proves that in C there is a series of vibrations that exactly correspond with those of middle C (that is, the vibrations that make the second partial), while in B and D there are no such vibrations.

In the same way, holding down without striking the G above middle C, we can make it sound by sympathy with the *third* partial of the low C; and we can similarly get the C above from the *fourth*, the E above that from the *fifth*, and the G above that from the *sixth* partials. You will notice, however, that the fifth is very much fainter than either the fourth or the sixth. This is because, ever since the time of Bach, a system of tuning has been in use (the so-called Equal Temperament) which purposely puts certain tones a little out of tune. The E is one of those tones. The absolutely true E would have exactly five times one hundred and twenty-eight, equals six hundred and forty, vibrations per second. The E, as we tune it, has six hundred and forty-five. This little difference is enough, to destroy the sympathy: the hundreds of little pushes through the air from the lower strings come just a little too late, and move the upper ones only slightly.

The same thing is even more clearly seen in the case of the seventh partial tone, B-flat. This does not correspond with the B-flat used in our system of tuning, one having eight hundred and ninety-six vibrations, the other nine hundred and twelve: therefore you cannot make the B-flat sound by sympathy at all. Isn't it wonderful that these little differences, which the keenest ears would hardly perceive, are never missed or ignored for a moment by the great natural law of sympathetic vibration!

Of course it is possible to vary the experiment in countless ways. For instance, middle C is not only the second partial tone of the C

below it, but also the third partial of the F below that: and you can accordingly make it sound by sympathy with that tone. All you have to remember in planning an experiment is that the distances from partial to partial are always as follows: From 1 to 2, an "octave"; from 2 to 3, a "fifth"; from 3 to 4, a "fourth"; from 4 to 5, a "major third"; from 5 to 6, a "minor third"; from C to 7, a "minor third"; from 7 to 8, a "major second."

Interesting as all this theory of partial tones is, especially to those fond of science and mathematics, you probably do not yet see its bearing on music. It is this. If we could get some way of lifting the dampers from all the strings at once, leaving them free to vibrate, then when we struck a key, or several keys, we should not only start just those particular strings, but all the strings that corresponded with their partial tones (by sympathetic vibration). Now we have such a means of lifting all the dampers at once in the "damper pedal," usually but wrongly called the "loud pedal" — the one farthest to the right. The purpose of this pedal is not only to increase the loudness of the tones played, but to add to the strength of their partials, and thus to enrich their quality — to make them fuller, richer, mellower. Play the simplest chord, such as C — E— G, first without and then with the pedal, and you will feel the difference. The first is like a bare tree on a desert, hard, sharp, definite. The second is like a tree covered with delicate shimmering leaves, and seen through a slightly misty air — it has what painters call "atmosphere." Try this until you can feel vividly the difference.

No other instrument, or group of instruments, has such a power of mixing and deliciously blurring its tones as the piano gets through the damper pedal. What lovely effects of melting, rainbow-colored sound Chopin gets by a skillful use of it! Writing of his Etude in A-flat, opus 25, No. 1, Schumann asks us to imagine "an Æolian harp that had all the scales, and that these were jumbled together by the hand of an artist into all sorts of fantastic ornaments"; and Liszt tells us that Chopin "imprinted on all his pieces one knows not what nameless color, what vague appearance, what pulsations akin to vibration," and that "his modulations were velvety and iridescent as the robe of a salamander."

Of course, on the other hand, the power of the pedal can be

terribly abused. There is only one thing worse than not using the pedal when we ought, and that is using it when, as a young friend of mine says, we "ought to not." I still wince when I remember the playing of a gentleman I heard years ago, who had solved the problem of the pedal by the simple plan of putting it down when he began a piece, and not lifting it until he stopped. Few pianists go to that extreme, but there are many who press the pedal at the exact moment they strike a chord, instead of a lightning-flash afterwards, with the result that every chord "runs" into the next like the colors in a bad water-color, and the music is a botch, a mess.

The pedal at the left, the "soft pedal," is used not only to soften the tone, but to give it a slightly different "tone-color," by shifting all the hammers a little to the right, so that they strike only two strings, instead of three, of each unison. In the early pianos they could be shifted still farther so as to strike only one, which gave the "una corda" (one string) effect so often marked in Beethoven. The old-fashioned square pianos, such as used to be common thirty years ago, but are now seldom seen, had a trick of getting out of order in such a way that the hammers shifted too far to the right and struck one string of the next tone, with truly horrible effects of discord. In up-right pianos the soft pedal moves all the hammers nearer the strings instead of to one side, so that they get less stroke; but this merely softens the tone, having no effect upon its quality.

Just one final word on an unfortunate result that has followed the great popularity of the piano. It is so convenient to get an idea of all sorts of music, whether for orchestra, voices, organ, or string quartet, by arranging it for the piano, that we are in danger of making this instrument a mere musical maid-of-all-work, and forgetting that it has a quality all its own, a "character," so to speak, just as the violin, the flute, the organ have. We ought to love the piano best for what it can do best, just as we love a poet for his poetry and a shoemaker for his shoes, and not think that because it can give a rather poor imitation of an organ or an orchestra that is its truest use. I have tried to show you in this chapter that the piano can do some things better than any other instrument. Let us enjoy these things in it most of all, and learn to demand them from composers and players.

CHAPTER 10
At a Piano Recital—Bach's Fugues and Suites

If you look at the programme of a recital by any of the great pianists of the day you will very likely find that the first name on it is that most noble and honorable of all musical names — Johann Sebastian Bach. The first piece on such a programme is apt to be one of the fugues, with its prelude, from his collection called "The Well-Tempered Clavichord," or perhaps an arrangement by Liszt of one of his great fugues, toccatas or fantasias for organ. And this is as it should be: for Bach is in a sense the fountain head from which flows all our modern music, standing, to our view, at the beginning of things musical, somewhat as Chaucer, to us English speakers, stands at the beginning of things literary. Both the musician and the poet were such true men, so simple, sincere, and human in all they felt and said, and at the same time such great artists, that the essence of their art is immortal, and remains to-day, when so much that was done at a later time is already musty and crumbling, as fresh and strong as ever.

On the other hand there are so many strange words and phrases, so queerly spelled, in Chaucer's poems, that it is hard for us of to-day to get their meaning; and in the same way Bach's music is written in a style so different from what we are used to that we cannot understand it without a little special study. Both are locked treasure-houses, to which it is well worth our while to find the keys.

Now the chief reason that Bach is hard for us to understand, and that some of us lose patience and pronounce him "dry," is that his idea of melody, which is the essence of music, is different from ours. We are used to hearing only one melody at a time, and that "on top" or above all the other tones, where it is very prominent; and we expect it to be measured off in regular phrases, such as we studied in Chapters 2 and 3, with a little pause at the end of each. The rest of the tones we don't expect to make "tunes": they are merely "accom-

paniment," such as a guitar or a mandolin makes for a song. Musicians call this kind of music "homophonic," from Greek words meaning "one-voiced."

In Bach's day, on the contrary, music was still under the influence of the style of Palestrina (1528-1594) and other old masters, who wrote their pieces not to be played on instruments, but to be sung in church by choruses consisting of many different groups of voices, like the sopranos, altos, tenors and basses of our choirs. The aim of such composers was to make a separate melody or "part" for each group of voices, and to make each one interesting. In short, their music was "polyphonic" or "many voiced."

Now there are two reasons why such music is difficult for us to hear intelligently. In the first place, we have to listen to four or more things at once instead of only one, since the lowest and the middle voices are almost as important as the topmost. In the second place, the pauses at the end of the phrases, which divide up a melody as commas and semicolons do a sentence, and so make it easier to follow, are in this style covered up by the flow of the other voices, so that instead of being a string of beads, as it were, with a space after each, the music is an intricate basket-work, its many strands crossed and interlaced in the most baffling way. To the trained ear this inweaving is a supreme beauty. Think of it! not merely one melody, and the rest mere accompanying tones, but a whole bundle of melodies winding in and out like the many-colored threads in some rich old tapestry. Not a note that is not a necessary part of the pattern, and no ends showing.

Of all the compositions that Bach wrote in this many-voiced style, so difficult and yet so well worth while for us to learn to appreciate, none are finer than his great fugues, for the organ and for the clavichord, an instrument like our modern piano, but smaller and of weaker tone. The organ fugues were written in his youth, while he was organist at the ducal court of Weimar, a post which he held from 1708 to 1717 (he was born in 1685). To a later time belongs his series of forty-eight preludes and fugues for the clavichord, called "The Well-Tempered Clavichord," and written partly to show the advantages of the new method of tuning known as Equal Temperament, introduced by him and still in use. It would puzzle you too much if I

were to explain this system of tuning. All that you need to know about it is that it made it for the first time possible to play in any key, and to modulate or pass from one key to another freely. To show this, Bach took the twelve keys in order, and wrote a prelude and fugue in each, first in major, then in minor, making twenty-four in all. This made the first book of his work; in the second he did the same thing over again, writing new music, but using the same order of keys. Thus there are altogether forty-eight preludes and fugues, and the work is sometimes called "The Forty-Eight."

Fugue number sixteen, in the first book, in the key of G-minor, is a good example to show how interesting and beautiful such a piece can be.[5] It is written for four "voices," which we may call soprano, alto, tenor and bass. Like all fugues, it grows entirely out of a little germ of melody, called the subject, just as a plant grows from a seed. In this case the subject consists of two motives, one of five tones, the other of six, and is announced all alone by the alto. It is then "answered" by one voice after another — each repeating the subject — the soprano at the end of the second measure, the bass at the beginning of the fifth, and the tenor at the end of the sixth. The other voices meanwhile go on with other fragments of melody, yet so like the subject that they all seem to grow out of it.

As the musical story goes on, the "plot thickens"; the subject is heard bandied about from voice to voice, and in new keys, and there are "episodes" made from a few notes of it built into new patterns. You will find it interesting to play through the whole piece and see if you can recognize the subject every time it appears, and count its entrances — there are altogether sixteen of them in two short pages! In the seventh measure from the end you will notice how excitingly they are crowded together; the tenor is too impatient to wait for the soprano to finish, and the bass comes in when the tenor is only half done. Yet so cleverly managed is this "Stretto," or "crowding together," as it is called, that the voices, though all talking at the same time, make perfect harmony. There is all the excitement of a debating club arguing an important question, but none of the noise and con-

[5] Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavichord," Peters Edition, Book I, page 62.

fusion. In some fugues we find the subject treated in other ingenious ways: lengthened out to twice its original length, or squeezed together to half; or turned upside down; or even sounded backwards; but Bach never does these things merely for display, but only when they seem natural.

The wonderful things about a fugue, the things you should try to feel whenever you hear one, are the way it all grows out of the little subject, and the way each voice, played alone (which you should try), is a melody, and at the same time all agree and make harmony together. Only the greatest works of art are thus perfect not only as a whole, but in every minutest part.

Another remarkable point is the expressiveness of all these fugues, and the contrast between them. This one in G-minor is earnest and sad; No. 2 is dancing, merry, delicate; No. 12 is nobly thoughtful; No. 17 is vigorous, energetic; No. 15 is full of whim and humor; No. 22 is melancholy, tragic, almost heart-broken; and so on through the list, and Book II shows an equal variety. In fact, as I have said in another place,[6] "Bach might have boasted, had it been in his nature to boast, that in this work he had not only written in every key known to musicians, but in every mood known to men."

When he was thirty-two Bach moved from Weimar to the town of Cothen, where he had been offered the position of director of music to the prince of that region. Prince Leopold himself played the violin and the clavichord, and was more interested in instrumental music for the drawing-room ("chamber music") than in the serious organ style that Bach had previously studied. The result was that the composer now turned his hand to writing sonatas and suites for stringed instruments like the violin, viola, and violoncello (most of which have been arranged for piano) and for the clavichord and another piano-like instrument, the harpsichord.

In works of this kind he is much less influenced by the old church music for voices (polyphonic) than by the dance tunes which had for many years been played and loved by the German peasants, poor people who knew little of the complications of fugues but appreciated a simple tune of strong rhythmic swing. The sonatas, suites, partitas,

[6] "The Appreciation of Music," page 45.

etc., of Bach's day are nothing but collections of five or six such dance tunes with one or two pieces or "movements" of a more learned kind. The chief dances used were the gavotte, the minuet (a stately and graceful dance which the court lords and ladies did not consider beneath them) the bourree, courante, allemande, and other dances now out of fashion, the slow, serious sarabande and the lively jig or "gigue." Bach's sets of six "English Suites" and six "French Suites," and his suites and sonatas for violin and for violoncello, are the finest compositions of this kind that we have, and are still heard in our concerts.

The English Suite No, 3, in G-minor, may be taken as an example. The first movement, although a lively allegro, is in the polyphonic style, each voice making a melody by itself, and is worked out with all the ingenuity of Bach the fugue writer. It is followed by an "allemande" and a "courante," both dance-like in rhythm. Next comes a beautiful sarabande, full of deep feeling, and more like our modern music than any of the preceding movements, in that it has only one chief melody, and that "on top." Nevertheless even here we can feel Bach's impulse to make all the parts sing; one of the loveliest melodies, fairly vibrating with emotion, is found in the bass at the fourth measure from the end.[7]

You will notice after the sarabande a movement marked "Agrenients de la menie Sarabande" — "Ornaments of the same Sarabande," and consisting of what is really the same music decked out with trills, turns, and other such finery. The eighteenth-century people, you see, were so fond of show and decoration that they dressed their very tunes, and even so sober a man as Bach was unable to resist the fashion.

It must be said in fairness, however, that these decorations had one genuine use. The tone of the clavichord and the harpsichord was so faint, though sweet, that it died out almost as soon as it was produced. There was, moreover, no damper pedal by which it could be eked out through sympathetic vibration. The only way to keep a tone sounding was to strike the key over and over again; and this is just what the ornaments, with their many short notes on the same tones,

[7] Bach's English Suites, Peters Edition, page 37.

provided for excellently. You can notice a similar arrangement in any modern piano piece, in the accompaniment, where the composer, instead of writing the chords for the left hand in long-held tones as he would do for the organ or for voices, breaks them up into patterns of short tones constantly repeated.

The fifth movement of Bach's Suite is a gavotte — or rather two gavottes, arranged just like the two minuets of Mozart in Figure VII, the second serving as a Trio or contrast, after which the first is repeated. The first is in the two-part form explained in Chapter 6, and the second in three-part form, the first strain being repeated at the end. You will find it interesting to study for yourselves the contrasts of keys Bach uses here, and his ways of building the whole piece out of one or two simple motives. In the second gavotte Bach keeps the same bass-note — G — sounding right through. This is in imitation of an instrument called the musette, which like a bagpipe keeps droning the same bass-tone, while the tune skips about in liveliest fashion.

The Suite ends in highest good humor with a gigue — a merry dance of the Virginia reel or sailor's hornpipe kind, named after the old Trench gigue or violin, because it was in the old days played by village fiddlers. In spite of its almost boisterous gayety there is a good deal of real music in the gigue as Bach writes it. This one is a model of clear two-part form, the division coming at the double-bar in the middle; it is cleverly written in the polyphonic style, for three voices, which announce a subject one after another, answering or imitating one another as in a fugue; and what is an even greater sign of musical learning, the second half is made from the subject of the first, *turned upside down* ("inverted"). This arrangement is found in many of Bach's gigues.

After staying at Cothen six years. Bach moved in 1723 to the large city of Leipzig, where he taught in the St. Thomas School and took charge of the music in four of the chief churches. He continued there for more than quarter of a century (he died in 1750) composing much for voices and organ — masses, motets, cantatas, and Passions, or musical settings of the story of Christ's sufferings and death. He lived quietly, troubled by no desire to be famous or rich like the other great musician of his day, Handel, but striving only to make his music

as beautiful as possible. His happiness was all in steady patient work and in the society of his wife and children, of whom he had a large family, almost all musical. By the outside world he was not understood. Unable to find a publisher for his great work "The Well-Tempered Clavichord," he is said to have ruined his eyes in the task of engraving it himself. At his death he was so poor that his children had to be sent to their uncles and aunts to be educated, and their devoted mother died in a poor-house. Even his music was neglected for many years after his death. It was not until 1829, for example, that his "St. Matthew Passion" was revived by Mendelssohn.

Yet in spite of all this neglect and misunderstanding Bach must have had great happiness in his work. His aims were absolutely sincere and unselfish; he wrote not for money or for fame, but for love of beauty and the impulse to express his deep religious faith; and his skill matched his ideals. If there ever was a musician who could afford to let his music stand on its own merits, who had no need for anxiety about it, it was Bach, who learned as fully as any other composer I know of that lesson of which Matthew Arnold writes:

> One lesson of two duties kept at one
> Though the loud world proclaim their enmity,
> Of toil unsevered from tranquillity,
> Of labor that in lasting fruit outgrows,
> Far noisier schemes; accomplish'd in repose.
> Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.

CHAPTER 11
At a Piano Recital—Beethoven's Sonatas

If the second piece on our programme is a sonata of Beethoven, as is very likely, we shall be struck by the complete contrast it presents to the Bach fugues. Beethoven was born only twenty years (1770) after Bach died, and in the same country, Germany; yet so rapidly had music been developing in the mean time that the style of writing in which he grew up shows little resemblance to that of Bach. All these changes were largely due to three men: Bach's own son, Philip Emanuel Bach, who lived from 1714 to 1788; Joseph Haydn (1732-1809); and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91). What they were you will see for yourselves if you listen attentively to the music.

Suppose it is the so-called "Sonata Pathetique" (opus 13) that the pianist has chosen: the very first strain will take you into a different world from Bach's. There is an energy about this phrase, with its odd rhythm to which the short tones give such a feeling of excitement, and with the complete silence at the end of it, that we do not find in Bach's tranquil, even-flowing music. It sounds like a cry of sorrow, straight from the heart. And at the beginning of the part marked "Allegro" what strength and impatience is voiced in that upward sweep of the melody through two octaves! This music is like a young man of noble, but intense passions — proud, hot-blooded, self-willed. It does not speak to us with distant politeness and a formal bow: instead it rushes at us, seizes us by the throat, and compels us to listen.

This roughness of manner and earnestness of expression, which you will find in almost everything Beethoven wrote, has been explained by some writers as due to a tendency of all the musicians, poets, and other artists of his day toward what is called "Romanticism." The earlier "classic" artists, these writers say, tried above all to make their work clear, quiet, and calm, and did not "wear their hearts on their sleeves," as we say, that is, did not try to put their

private, personal feelings into their work. Such a poet as Alexander Pope, always correct and always reserved, is an example of the "classical" way of looking at art. But toward the beginning of the nineteenth century the artistic fashion changed, and it became the custom to be just as "romantic" as one could, to express one's most private and deepest feelings, as Keats does, for example, in poetry, and as Beethoven does in music.

There is a good deal of truth in such a theory, for art certainly has its changing fashions from age to age: but we must also take into account Beethoven's peculiar personality. He was an extraordinary man. He felt deeply, loved and hated with all his might, judged everything for himself, could never bring himself to "follow the leader" tamely as most of us do, but strove always for truth and for beauty as he saw them. Of course he found few to agree with him; and being both impatient and proud he would not explain himself; and year by year he lived more alone with his ideals, and others thought him more eccentric, and willful, and masterful. They were right in a way: he was willful; but it was the willfulness of a man who knew that he had a great work to do, and that he understood how to do it better than anyone else.

It is natural that everything connected with Beethoven should show in its own way this masterful nature of the great man not understood. We see it in his face, with his deep-set steady eyes, firmly held lips, and square jaw. We read it in the stories of him — how he would not humble himself before the emperor when he met him out walking; how when he was asked if he had noble blood, he replied proudly that his nobility lay in his head and in his heart; how when some one told him that a certain harmony in one of his pieces was "not allowed," he answered: "Very well, then, *I* allow it." And above all we hear it in his music, in those bold, commanding phrases, in those long, deliberate climaxes, in those sudden changes from soft to loud or from slow to fast, that seem often the result of mere whim.

Besides the more intense expressiveness that marks off Beethoven from Bach, however, you will also feel a difference in the very stuff of the music — in the way it is put together. Bach's is usually polyphonic, woven out of several equally important melodies. At the opening of the "Sonata Pathetique," on the contrary, you will hear

but one melody, with an accompaniment; the music is "homophonic," or "one-melodied"; and most of Beethoven's music, as well as most of Haydn's and Mozart's, is in this simpler style. It is true that among Beethoven's later works we find several fine fugues, but they do not sound like a quite natural expression of his thoughts. The fact is that in his day the influence of instruments on musical style had become even more important than that of voices; and the single melodies rather than their interweavings had become the important matter.

All through the years when Haydn and Mozart were preparing the way for Beethoven, the order in which these single melodies or themes could best be made to follow each other had been deeply studied, and a scheme had been slowly worked out, which for simplicity and clearness, combined with endless chances for striking contrasts, has never been beaten. This scheme was called "Sonata-form" — a word which I hope you will not confuse with "Sonata." Sonata-form means a definite plan or order in which the melodies follow each other in a piece or movement; a Sonata is a composition for one or two instruments, having one or more of its movements, usually the first one, in this form. If written for more than two instruments it is called a Trio, Quartet, Quintet, and so on, as the case may be; if for a whole orchestra, it is a Symphony; if for a solo instrument with orchestral accompaniment, it is a Concerto.

The sonata-form, the most perfect form we have, is the result of carrying out our natural ideas of orderliness in music, which we studied in Chapter 6, as far as they will go. It is hardly more than a three-part songform magnified. You remember that this form is based on the plan of Statement, Contrast, and Restatement. Well, so is the sonata-form; but here each part, instead of being just one melody, is a bundle of different melodies; and these are themselves arranged in the parts in much the same way.

Part I, the Statement, is called the Exposition, which is only a high-sounding name for the same thing, taken from the Latin. Part II, the Contrast, is called the Development, for reasons we shall presently see. And Part III, the Restatement, is again Latinized into "Recapitulation" or "Reprise" — of which words we will choose the shorter.

If you will now open Beethoven's Sonatas at the "Pathetique," opus 13, we can examine it together. The first movement is a fine example of sonata-form. It begins with a slow introduction, marked "Grave," which is not a regular part of the plan. The first section proper, the Exposition, begins at the marking *Allegro di violto e con brio* and extends through one hundred and twenty-one measures.[8] You will notice that it is marked to he repeated. This was a custom in Beethoven's day. As the Exposition contains all the themes of the movement, it is necessary that it be thoroughly understood. Nowadays composers usually trust to their hearers' grasping the themes in one hearing, but in the days when the sonata was new and strange the repetition was needed. Looking now more closely, you will see that this section has several distinct parts, as follows. Measures 1-40: energetic, stirring, mostly in key of C-minor; 41-78: quieter, rather wistful melody, mostly in E-flat minor; 79-121: one or two new melodies, with something of the energy of the first part, but on the whole giving us the feeling of calming down, of reaching an end. At 110 you will see a phrase or two of the first melody repeated. This part is mostly in the key of E-flat major. Let us call the energetic melody the First theme, the quieter melody the Second theme, and the two ending melodies the Third or Closing themes. You will find in every movement in sonata-form this general plan of themes. The first theme is the most important, and gives its character to the whole movement. The second is planned chiefly to make a good contrast with it. The closing themes, of which there may be several, are to notify us that the section is drawing to an end, and often contain, as in measure 110 here, a short reminder of the first theme. You will notice also the contrast of *keys* as well as of melodies; in measures 1-40 C is the central tone; in all the rest it is E-flat.

The second large section, the Development, so called because its business is to develop the hidden possibilities of the themes in the ways we discussed in Chapter 6, extends, from the point we have now reached, up to measure 186. It begins by reminding us of the solemn introduction, but quickly passes to an unexpected key and a long

[8] It will be worth while for you to number the measures as far as 186, in pencil, so that you can easily follow the references.

A TABULAR VIEW OF THE SONATA-FORM

SECTIONS	THEMES	KEYS	REMARKS
Introduction		Home key	Not a part of the form. Often lacking.
I. Exposition	I. II. Closing themes	Home key Contrast key " " 	 Contrasts in mood with I. Often contains suggestions of I.
II. Development	On any or all of the themes	Many keys	Aims at variety in all ways.
III. Reprise	I. II. Closing themes	Home key " " " "	May be shortened. " " " " " "
Coda			Not a part of the form, but may be long and important.

mysterious, held chord. The racing speed returns, and we hear a phrase of the first theme, which was first given us in measures 25-26, followed by the motive from the introduction, taken much faster (131-132). The music slides restlessly from one key to another, but at last settles down to a steady G in the bass (158). From vague rumblings shoot up bits of the first theme, preparing for its return.

The Reprise is, as its names implies, a repetition of the Exposition section, and corresponds with it, as you will see, pretty closely. There is, however, one important difference: while the Exposition presents to us a *contrast* of keys, C being pitted against E-flat, in the Reprise we have unity of key, C keeping everything for itself. The arrangement of keys is one of the most delicate beauties of the Sonata-form. Beginning with a simple contrast of *two* keys in Section I, we have a bewildering confusion of *many* keys in II; and in III we come out of the woods, so to speak, and find ourselves altogether in the *one* home key.

The last fifteen measures of this movement do not belong to the Reprise. They form a brief tailpiece or "Coda," to end all with just the right effect. In some of Beethoven's later works the codas are almost as long and intricate as the developments, but here he gives us only brief reminiscences of the introduction and the first theme.

After the strain on our attention of listening to a movement so

carefully dovetailed together as this, we need a change, a rest; and the composers of sonatas usually provide us with one by making the second movement slow and full of feeling, and simple in form, having only one or two themes, not elaborately developed. Beethoven's slow movements are earnest, noble, large: they are built on songlike themes so appealing that they fairly seem to speak to us; and what they say is always inspiring, a message of peace, or hopeful courage, or religious comfort. Like everything that he writes, their form has beauty of proportion and the lovely wide curves of melody that remind one of the arches in a great cathedral; but in the slow movements this beauty lies less in the combining of the themes than in the themes themselves. The *Adagio cantabile* of the Sonata Pathetique is an example; its form is simple — chief theme, contrasting theme, chief theme repeated, another contrast, chief theme once more (each time with a different accompaniment), and a short coda; but how calm and wide is the sweep of this melody! how much it has of that variety of meter we studied in Chapter 3!

Then after seriousness comes play; in the third movement we find the motion and the mood of the dance: either it is a courtly minuet, modeled after those of the old suites, or else Beethoven's high spirits turn it into a carnival of fun, and it receives the name of "scherzo," the Italian for a "joke." In his scherzos you will find Beethoven in what he himself called his "unbuttoned" mood: not on his good behavior, that is, but ready for the wildest pranks, delighting to startle us by sudden changes of loudness, speed, or key, by horrid discords, by clumsy antics as of dancing bears, by unexpected turns of melody — by anything and everything, in a word, that gets the music out of the beaten track and gives the pleasure of surprise. There was always a good deal of the naughty boy in this great man, as we see from stories such as that of his sending to a lady who had begged for a lock of his hair, a snippet from a goat's beard; and it is this bad boy of a Beethoven that plays tricks on us in the scherzos.

The same spirit of high good humor is usually felt also in the last movements or "finales" of the sonatas; but these, a little more elaborate than the two middle movements, are as a rule either in the sonata-form, or in a similar form called the rondo. "Rondo" is the Italian for "round," and refers to the way the music has of constantly

coming around again to the chief theme, however often it may seem to have got away from it.

The third movement of the Pathetique Sonata (which has no minuet or scherzo) is a good example. The main theme, striking in at once without any introduction, bustling and energetic, comes to an emphatic stop in the seventeenth measure, as if to say "There, that's the whole story!" Presently, however, a new melody is heard, soft, tranquil, graceful, in the contrasting key of E-flat (measure 25), and a little later, still in the same key, a third theme (measure 44), which leads gradually up to a climax in (58) and a pause at (60). So far everything looks like "sonata-form"; we have our three themes and just the proper contrast of keys. But if it were sonata-form we should now have the "Development," and instead of that we have what? Why, the first theme over again. We have come around to where we started from, and the piece is a rondo.

Continuing our analysis we find:

(61-78), first theme.

(79-107), *another* contrast, in still another key.

This theme, you will notice, is in the "polyphonic" style — it has two equally important melodies.

(120-134), first theme, third time.

(134), contrasting theme first used, now in the "home-key."

(154—170) third theme, home key.

You will notice that (120-170) is treated exactly as it should be in the Reprise of a sonata-form — all the three themes in the home key. We often find these striking resemblances in the two forms.

(171-182), first theme, fourth time.

(182-end), a coda. We get two final hints at the theme again in measures (202-206).

I cannot leave this movement without asking you to admire the skill with which Beethoven draws out what is hidden in his third theme, in measures (154-170). This is a fine example of true development of a theme.

Bach's Well-Tempered Clavichord has been called the musician's Bible; Beethoven's Sonatas might be called the musician's Shakespeare. Like the plays of the great Englishman, they are so many-sided, they express such deep and various feelings, and with such

constant beauty of form and style, that we might study them all our lives without exhausting them. What I have said here about their forms is meant to help you in this study. Not that it is important for you to label all the melodies "first theme" or "second theme," or know just which key each one is in; this would lead only to a scientific knowledge such as the botanist has of the number of petals in a flower. What you want is rather the loving interest of the artist in beauty. But this interest, different as it is from the scientist's, can be satisfied only by an equally patient study. If you wish to perceive the elastic meter, the constantly shifting outline, the endless variety of rhythm, resulting in perfect unity, of Beethoven's melodies; if you would grasp the wonderful symmetry of his pieces as a whole, seeing the relation of part to part, binding together in your memory what comes to your ear only a bit at a time; if you would feel at home in these temples and cathedrals of tone, where every column has its purpose and the curve of each arch is answered in another; if, in a word, you would understand that beauty of form which is to the emotions of Beethoven's music what a perfect body is to a noble soul, you must listen with your minds as well as your ears, and you must return again and again to the same piece as we return again and again to the words of a great poet, and find each time in them a new depth of meaning.

CHAPTER 12
At a Piano Recital—Chopin, Schumann, Liszt

Almost perfect as are the single melodies and their arrangement in order, or, in other words, all that has to do with form, in Beethoven, his piano music leaves our modern ears a little unsatisfied so far as its color-effects are concerned. You may be surprised to hear me speak of "color" in music. But just as in painting those effects which depend on the shapes of objects, and appeal especially to our perceiving minds, are called effects of form, while effects which depend on the material of which the objects are made, and appeal to our sense of sight, are called effects of color, so in speaking of music we may borrow these words, and say that the curve of a melody has beauty of form, and that the tones out of which it is made, taken by themselves, have beauty of color, meaning that the tones, as they impress our sense of hearing, are "rich," "warm," "mellow," "clear," and so on. In the very first chapter we considered three different appeals music may make, the sensuous, the aesthetic, and the expressive. Well, "color" and "form" are merely names for qualities that make the sensuous, or the aesthetic, appeal; color pleases the ear; form pleases the mind.

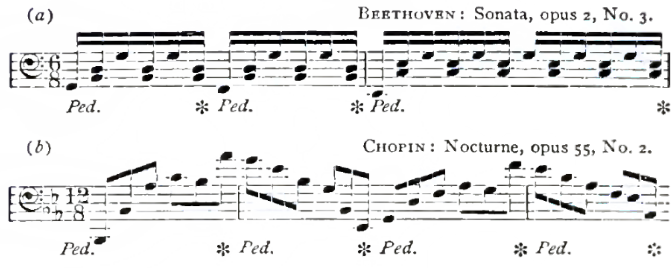
When we say, then, that marvelous as Beethoven's form is, his color leaves us a little unsatisfied, we mean that he satisfies our minds but not our ears. The sounds his piano music gives us, merely as sounds, are often either thin and hollow or thick and "muddy," because they are close together, either high up or low down, instead of spread widely over the keyboard. The reasons for this were, first, that Beethoven was thinking so hard about the music itself that he didn't stop to consider how to make it sound its best, and second that the damper pedal, so immensely important to the effect of all piano music, was comparatively new in his day, and its possibilities were not realized.
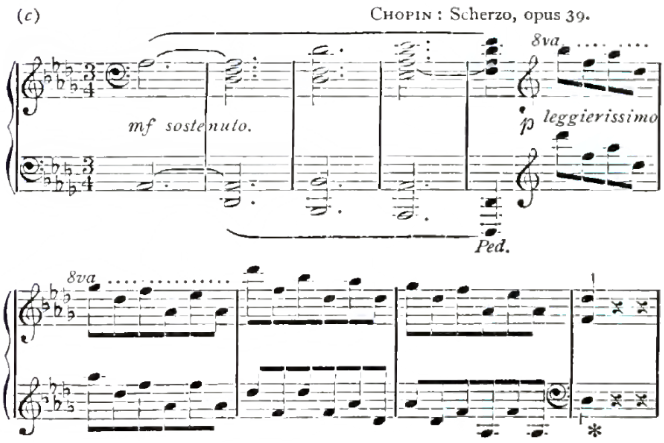
It therefore remained for later composers, who could not equal Beethoven in formal beauty, to excel him in beauty of color. Their canvases glow with rich, full tones, and shimmer with delicate filigree; their sounds are as full of variety, of light and shade, as a landscape on a day of racing clouds; and the skillful use of the pedal blends together all the effects, smooths over all the sharp angles. Of the masters of this glowing modern style, the greatest is without doubt Frederic Chopin (1809-1849).

Though born in Poland, and a patriotic son of that country so long and cruelly downtrodden by Russia, Chopin lived most of his life in Paris, where he was a fashionable teacher and pianist, petted by the duchesses and princesses of that brilliant society. He was always delicate in health, haughty and reserved in manner, and most particular about his surroundings; he had his rooms papered in soft greens and dove-colors and filled with flowers; he always wore white gloves and rode in a carriage to his lessons, and he was as fussy about his clothes as if he had had nothing else to think about. Exquisite taste, a sensitiveness almost unhealthy, a love of perfection, and dissatisfaction with anything short of it — these were the chief characteristics of Chopin.

You can readily understand how such a man would spare no pains to make his music as perfect in coloring as possible. He early found that by using the damper pedal freely and making the hands move back and forth over wide spaces, he could get at wonderfully rich and at the same time clear effects. If you will compare the two bits of accompaniment shown in Figure XVII (a) and (b), using the pedal as marked, you will notice how much better Chopin's "sounds" than

FIGURE XVII.





Beethoven's. The reason is that Chopin, instead of "bunching" the tones so that they can be played with little motion of the hand, spreads them widely, and blends them by means of the pedal.

In this case nearly all the tones in each chord *belong to the chord* and are parts of it; but Chopin soon found that by putting in a few tones that are not parts of the chord, but make "dissonances" with it, he could still further deepen and enrich the "color." Figure XVII (c), from his Scherzo, opus 39, is an example. By holding the pedal from the moment the chord in the fifth measure is struck, he makes all the following tones merge with it. Many of these tones are dissonant with the chord; but for this very reason, if they are properly played, softly, lightly, they make, so to speak, a glistening veil over the hard outline of the chord itself. Such a use of dissonances, blended by the pedal, is found in hundreds of passages by Chopin and other modern piano composers, producing a vague richness of color that may be compared with that of modern paintings of the "impressionistic" school, such as those of Monet.

Some composers, indeed, often overdo these rich effects of mixed tones, giving our ears such a constant diet of them that they rebel as our stomachs would against a steady diet of plum pudding and mince pie. We actually long for a piece of plain bread. But Chopin had too fine a taste to make this mistake. Notice how strong, pure, and simple are the opening chords in the passage from the Scherzo. In nothing does Chopin show his greatness more than in his keen sense for variety of color. Before we tire of his royal purples and deep reds, his

sparkling webs of gold and silver, he relieves them with a wide space of clear green or gray.

It is in beauty of form that he falls short. He wrote only three sonatas and two concertos (for piano with orchestral accompaniment) in the larger forms that Beethoven uses so splendidly, and these will hardly bear comparison with Beethoven's. If you listen closely to the first movement of his Sonata in B-flat minor, for instance, you will feel that it does not hold together, that there is too great a contrast between the stormy, agitated first theme and the quiet second theme. Beautiful as this is, it seems more like the beginning of a new piece than the continuation of the same movement.

He probably knew by instinct where his weakness lay, for he confines himself in most of his work to short pieces in simple two-part or three-part forms, for the most part dances. These pieces he does not make suitable for actual dancing: he "idealizes" them, as we say; that is, his ideal of musical beauty leads him to introduce delicate changes of speed (called "tempo rubato," "stolen time," because one part of the melody steals some of the time of another) and to vary the lengths of the phrases in a way that would throw dancers out of step, but that makes the music more interesting.

He uses for this purpose some of the dances for which his native country is famous, particularly the Polonaise, a stately dance with which the ancient Polish nobles used to celebrate the election of their kings, and the more lively Mazurka, which he knows how to make now melancholy and tender, now wildly gay. He also wrote many waltzes, graceful or brilliant, and other dances such as a tarantelle, a bolero, a krakowiak.

The deeper emotions which naturally express themselves in song rather than dance, are found in his matchless nocturnes and preludes, and in a few larger, more ambitious pieces — impromptus and ballades. The twenty-seven etudes or studies are not merely exercises for the pianist, as their name might make us think, but like everything he wrote are full of poetic feeling and delicate beauty.

The music of Robert Schumann (1810-1856) is less exquisite but more full of vigor and health than that of Chopin; Schumann, moreover, did not confine himself to the piano like Chopin, but wrote much for other instruments and for orchestra. He began, it is true, as

a pianist, and might never have become anything more had it not been for an odd accident, which throws so much light on his enthusiastic and impatient disposition that I must tell you about it.

It happened in Leipsic, when, as an eager young student, he was trying to make enough progress as a pianist to persuade his mother to let him give up studying law, which he hated, and devote himself entirely to music. How hard he tried to curb his headlong nature, to be wise and patient! "To bring to light anything great and calmly beautiful," he writes his mother, "one ought only to rob Time of one grain of sand at a time; the complete whole does not appear all at once, still less does it drop from the sky." Yet in spite of this good sense, Schumann found the drudgery of piano practice so trying that he invented a machine to shorten it. He tied a string to the fourth finger of his right hand (that bothersome finger that never learns to mind its own business) passed it over a pulley on the ceiling, and fixed a weight at the other end. He thought that by practicing with the finger thus separated from the others he could make it independent; but instead he lamed his hand forever, and had to give up all his ambition to become a concert pianist. In this seeming misfortune, however, was hidden a blessing: having to put all his energy into composing, he became one of the greatest of musicians.

One so eager to follow his ideals, so impatient of dullness and the ruts that most people plod along in, found much to find fault with in the music of his day. Most of his fellow musicians cared little for deep feeling, for poetry, for all that depends on imagination; they hadn't enough spirit to break any rules, or to find new beauties out of the beaten path. Schumann contemptuously called them Philistines, after those dull people in the Bible, and made his friends into a club, the David-club, to fight them. His imagination, his love of "making believe," showed itself here, too, for most of the members of this club were not actual people at all, but creatures of his fancy. There was Florestan, who was the active, energetic side of himself, and Eusebius, who was the thoughtful, dreamy side; Felix Mentis was his friend Mendelssohn; Chiarina was his teacher's daughter, Clara Wieck, whom he afterwards married. He founded a paper, the *New Journal of Music,* in which he had these imaginary persons hold long conversations about music; he wrote the "Davidsbundlertanze" ("Dances of

the David-club") in which he pretended that each piece was written by either Florestan or Eusebius, or the two together.

All the music of his early years shows his dislike of the commonplace, his passion for the novel and the unexpected. The melodies are most original, full of odd leaps and strongly marked rhythms; the harmony is often harsh; effects of "color," produced by the pedal, by crossing the hands, by striking a chord and letting up the keys one after another, and so on, are frequent; and the form is highly individual, the themes being little developed, but following each other like the scattered thoughts of an active but untrained mind. Curious names abound: "Butterflies," "Carnival," "Fantastic Pieces," "Flower Piece," "Arabesque." Mottoes and poetic quotations are used, and names are spelled out in letters in the tones of a theme, as, for instance, in the Northern Dance which begins with the name of Gade, a Danish composer — G-A-D-E.

Naturally such queer music was only gradually understood, and most of Schumann's fellow musicians either considered him a little "cracked" or did not notice him at all. In spite of the devotion of his wife, Clara (Wieck) Schumann, a famous pianist who gave her life to making his works known, they made slow headway, and there is a story of a gentleman, after one of her concerts, saying pleasantly to her husband: "And are you musical, too, Mr. Schumann?" This was not so ridiculous as it seems to us, because Schumann was so intensely quiet, so reserved and thoughtful. He lived almost entirely in the world of his own imagination, would sit absolutely silent in company, gazing at the floor, and communicated with the world only in his music. But this very quality is one of the things most original in his works; their deep thoughtfulness, their earnest but suppressed feeling, their mystery and suggestion of day-dream and reverie. The most familiar example is the beautiful piano piece "Träumerei" ("Dreaming").

It would be hard to think of a greater contrast to the character and the music of Schumann than we find in those of Franz Liszt, who was born in Hungary, in 1811, and died in 1886. The famous Hungarian was as thoroughly at home in the world of fashionable society as the German was ill at ease in it; and all his piano compositions show a sense for effects that will "tell," and a skill in producing them,

which we never find in Schumann's sincere music, written to express his own inner feelings. "How extraordinary his playing is," he wrote to Clara Wieck, "so bold and daring, and then again so tender and delicate! But there is a good deal of tinsel about it, too."

The "tinsel" in Liszt, both as a pianist and as a composer, was partly due to the fashions of the day, the public caring much more for trivial melodies from the operas, embroidered by all kinds of glittering scales and running passages, than for real music. Liszt followed the fashion to a certain extent (much more than Schumann or even Chopin), but he used his great influence both to make show playing less merely stiff and brilliant, more free and elastic, and also to introduce more serious melody and more interesting harmony. He arranged for piano — "transcribed," as we say — many songs by Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, as well as preludes and fugues by Bach, and even orchestral pieces of Beethoven, Wagner, Weber, and others. His most famous transcriptions are those of the national melodies of his own country, the fifteen "Hungarian Rhapsodies," so often used as show pieces at the end of recitals. In these he surrounds the simple but delightful tunes with a bewildering network of trills, scales, runs of all kinds, and ranges from tinkling effects in the treble, like those of a music box, to thunderous *fortissimos*.

There is a good deal of difference of opinion as to the artistic value of his use of the piano for these orchestral effects of tone. No one can deny the skill with which he makes the piano roar and cry and throb as if it were possessed, but isn't it better after all for the piano to remain a piano, as it always does in Chopin's hands, to keep its own character, its delicate shades of color and lovely mingling of tones through the pedal, rather than to try to match the orchestra, which after all it can't do? There is more real music, to some of us, in a simple prelude by Chopin or a romance of Schumann, or even a "Song Without Words" by Mendelssohn, than in all the "sound and fury" of a Hungarian Rhapsodie.

Of Liszt's original compositions the best known are the studies "Forest Rustlings" and "Dance of Gnomes," the "Legends," "Sonnets of Petrarch," and "Religious Harmonies," the set of piano pieces called "Annees de Pelerinage" ("Years of Pilgrimage"), and the single sonata. In all these the style is now dazzlingly brilliant, now appealing,

emotional; but if you listen carefully you will feel that Liszt's emotion is not so genuine as Schumann's, that there is a good deal of pose in it, that his sentiment is often only sentimentality.

In spite of the theatrical tendency in Liszt, however, he is a man of such great force, so much of that strange quality we call "personal magnetism," that his work is original and important. In the purely mechanical side of piano playing, in matters of free motion of the wrists and arms, effects of touch and of the pedals, he brought about great changes. And by what he composed himself, and by the generous help he gave to other composers, especially Wagner, he made a deep impression on the history of music.

CHAPTER 13
The Orchestra

The piano, as we have already seen, is an instrument by which a player can start vibrations in the air, so regulated as to speed, force, and duration that they give our ears the sensation of music. The orchestra is really nothing but a much greater and more complicated instrument, by which a hundred men, trained and led by a conductor, can produce similar vibrations in the air. It is, of course, able to do much more than the piano in many ways. In the first place, it can play louder; a hundred men can shake the air more violently than one, even if he be a Rubinstein. In the second place, it can play more separate tones at the same time; a pianist has but ten fingers, and even with the pedal his powers are limited; moreover, to play half a dozen melodies at once, crossing and intertwining, is impossible for him, easy for an orchestra. Thirdly, and most important of all, the pianist is like a painter with only one color on his palette, though it may be used in many shades; but the orchestral palette is almost unlimited in its varieties of color or tone-quality.

In order to understand this, you must know that while nearly all musical tones are made up of several different partial tones, as we have seen in the case of the piano, the number and strength of these partial tones may differ greatly according to the way they are produced, and this difference always results in a difference of what we call tone-quality. The rule is that the fewer and weaker the partial tones the more "pure," "clear" or "quiet" is the quality; the more and stronger the partials, the richer, keener, more brilliant the quality. This may be seen even in the piano. When I strike a string hard it vibrates not only more, but in more separate and distinct ways (giving more partial tones) than when I strike softly; the result is that the tone is not only louder, but more "brilliant." And as we saw in Chapter 9, the same tone or chord, struck with the same force, is richer

when the pedal is held, because then the strings that correspond with the partial tones vibrate in sympathy and so add to the force of these partial tones.

In the orchestra we have many different instruments, acting in different ways, producing less or more partial tones, and therefore varying in quality much more than piano strings possibly can. The violin, for example, owes its clear, penetrating, bright tone to the presence of many partial tones. The flute, in the lower part of its register,[9] produces only one or two partials. and has therefore a mild, pure tone. The oboe owes its sharp quality to comparatively loud high partial tones. Clarinet tone, so peculiar that one can hardly confuse it with any other, is the result of the fact that only the unevenly numbered partial tones, the first, third, fifth, etc., are present in it. The clanging sound of bells comes from their giving out different sets of partial tones at the same time.

All these differences, so important for us to hear if we would enjoy the varieties of color in music, and so interesting to study, depend upon the peculiar ways in which the instruments start the air a-throbbing. According to these peculiar ways the instruments may be arranged in several groups, as follows: 1. Strings made to vibrate by a bow; the violin, the viola, the violoncello, the double-bass. 2. Strings struck by hammers; the piano, the dulcimer, etc. These are little used in the orchestra. 3. Strings plucked by the fingers; the harp, the banjo, the guitar. Only the first is used in orchestral music. 4. Columns of air made to vibrate by blowing across them; the flute, the piccolo, the organ. 5. Columns of air started into vibration by a strip of metal or wood called a reed; the oboe, the clarinet, the bassoon, and others. 6. Columns of air moved by the lips of the player, themselves acting as reeds; the horn, the trumpet, the cornet, the trombone, the tuba. 7. Stretched skins, or pieces of metal, wood, or other material, struck by hammers; the drums of all sorts, the cymbals, the triangle, the tambourine, and the like.

Of these groups numbers 1, 2, and 3 belong to a larger group

[9] Register: the range of tones from low to high which an instrument can sound; its compass; also used to mean a special part of this compass, as "low register," "high register."

called String Instruments, or simply "The Strings"; numbers 4 and 5, because usually made of wood, are classed together as Woodwind Instruments, or simply "The Woodwind"; group 6, usually made of brass, are called "The Brass"; and group 7, all played by striking or *percussion*, are called The Percussion Instruments, or sometimes "The Battery," from the Latin *battuo*, to beat. These four bodies of instruments are found in every large orchestra, and are important in the order named.

You can easily learn to recognize most of the instruments by sight as you sit at a concert, and will find your pleasure much increased by doing so. Stretching to the left and to the right of the conductor or leader, along the front of the stage, are the first and second violins, usually about sixteen of each. These are all alike, and are divided into firsts and seconds merely because they have different parts of the music to play. Directly behind the second violins (and to the right of the conductor) are the violas, about twelve in number. The viola is simply a larger violin, which you will find it hard to tell apart from it unless you are sitting well up. Behind the first violins are the twelve violoncellos, much larger — indeed so large that they have to be played between the knees of the players, resting upon the floor. At the back of the orchestra, to your left, are the eight or ten double-basses, great instruments to which the players have to stand. They are put far back so that their deep, heavy tones will not drown out other sounds. This completes the strings.

Next comes the woodwind, usually grouped well down the stage, and directly in front of the conductor, and a little harder to tell apart. With the flute you will have little difficulty: it is the only one which the player holds sideways and blows across instead of into the end except the piccolo, merely a smaller flute. There are two or three flutes. But the oboe and the clarinet look puzzlingly alike, being almost the same shape, except that the oboe is a little smaller and the "bell" at its end flares out less. If you look while they are playing your ear will help your eye, for the tone of the oboe is thinner and sharper, that of the clarinet more smooth, mellow, liquid. There are usually three clarinet players, one using sometimes the bass clarinet, a similar but larger instrument. Of the three oboe players, one uses sometimes the slightly larger English horn (not really a horn at all, but an oboe

of deeper tone). The three bassoons are long wooden tubes, blown into through a curved mouthpiece of metal; they so much resemble bundles of fagots that the Italians call them "fagotti." The contra-bassoon, or double-bassoon, is still larger, but somewhat similar in appearance.

Back of the woodwind instruments you will see the yellow gleam of the four horns, with their flaring mouths and their long tubes curved into a circle, and near them the four trumpets, looking like large cornets. To the left, across the stage from the double-basses, and like them well in the rear, sit the four men making up what is called the "trombone choir." Three of them play trombones, brass instruments made with a section that pulls in and out; the fourth struggles with a perfect monster of brass, a sort of instrumental elephant or rhinoceros — the tuba.

Finally, at the very back and center of the stage are the percussion instruments: the kettle-drums, great copper bowls covered with parchment, two or three of them in charge of one player; the bass drum, such as you can see any day at a Salvation Army meeting; the cymbals, brass plates or disks which the player clashes together; and a few others.

In your study of just what is going on in the orchestra you can have one other guide almost as helpful as a knowledge of where the various players sit: that is, a copy of the printed music from which the conductor leads, called the "score." Orchestral scores are now published in small size, in volumes that will go in one's pocket; and there is no greater pleasure for one who can read music, even if only a little, than to follow in them the music as it is being played. It is true that one cannot hear the music as a whole so well when one's attention is fixed on the details, but one way of listening helps the other. The study of a score is like the study of a map; we cannot enjoy to the full a journey through a new part of the country if our eyes are glued to a map of it, yet we enjoy it far more the second time if we have followed it first on the map. So the best way to hear a symphony is to hear it twice: first following the details on a score, and second giving our whole minds to the general effect.

The four groups of the orchestra — strings, woodwind, brass, and percussion — are arranged in the following way in the score. The five

lines or staves at the bottom of the page are given to the strings, the most important of all the groups, and in a sense the foundation of the orchestra, in this order: First Violins, Second Violins, Violas, Violoncellos, Double-basses. As the first violins have more to do than any other instruments, their staff, the fifth from the bottom, is the one to which you will give the closest attention. At the top of the page come the woodwinds, in this order: Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons. Each of these have usually one, but sometimes two staves. At the middle of the page, just below the staves of the woodwind, are those of the brass: Horns (usually two staves, two horn-parts on each). Trumpets, Trombones, and Tuba. If any percussion instruments are used, their parts come in between those of the brass and those of the strings.

This is all you need to know about the arrangement of a score to get a great deal of pleasure and profit from it, by using it as a rough map or chart, so to speak, of the "lay of the land." You cannot, to be sure, read it quite accurately without more special knowledge. There are many "transposing instruments," as they are called, in the orchestra, which play their notes lower or higher than they are written, and there are others which use other clefs than the familiar G and F clefs ("treble" and "bass" clefs) of piano music. If you are interested in these matters you can read about them in any book on the orchestra,[10] but just now all we want is a general idea of what is going on as we listen to a symphony or a symphonic poem.

As you get used to following the orchestra in the score you will notice that in spite of the limitless number of combinations of instruments that may be used, and in spite of the bewildering variety of the effects that may thus be produced, there are certain particular things that each group can do better than any other, and that it is therefore apt to be doing a good deal of the time. With the exception of the "battery," each group can make complete harmony by itself, like a choir of voices — soprano, alto, tenor, and bass — and so may be employed alone. The strings, however, are the group most often employed thus independently of everything else, for several reasons.

First, they are more agile — they can play more quickly. The

[10] See, for instance, the present writer's "The Orchestral Instruments and What They Do."

violin can render with ease and accuracy twists, turns, and rapid runs that would be difficult for a flute or a clarinet, ridiculous for an oboe or a trumpet, and impossible for a trombone. Secondly, they can play louder and softer: you cannot possibly get the brilliancy out of the woodwind that you can from the strings, and while the latter can give forth the merest breath of tone the clarinets' and bassoons' softest pianissimo is loud in comparison. Thirdly, they can play on for hours without getting tired, but the wind players, both wood and brass, must have frequent pauses to rest their lips and get their breath. Fourthly, pleasant as woodwind and brass tone is as a contrast, we quickly tire of too much of it; string tone is best for a steady diet. For all these reasons the strings do two thirds of all the orchestral work.

As for the woodwind group, each member of it has so much individuality, is so different from all the others, that although they can be used together as a "choir," they are more often heard separately in "solo" (alone) playing melodies accompanied by other groups. Or two or more of them may combine on such a melody — a flute and a clarinet, an oboe and a bassoon, etc. The possibilities here are countless, as you will soon find in the scores.

The brass instruments, especially the horn, may also be used in "solo," but owing to their full, round tone, with its great solidity and carrying power, they are suited above all to hold chords in long notes while other instruments are giving the melody. As the orchestra has no pedal to mix its tones and keep them sounding, like the piano, it has to hold the music together, so to speak, in some other way, and the best way is to give long notes to the horns, or to the trombone choir. In such passages the strings, oboes, clarinets, and so on, draw the musical pattern, and the brass fill in the color that makes all solid and prevents the effect of a thin tracery without substance.

The drums and the rest of the percussion group have still another mission. Unable either to sing a melody or to hold a harmony, they are invaluable for giving life to the rhythm by marking the accents. Thus we see a little how many-sided a thing is an orchestra; each group, each instrument, has its own appointed part in the work of making the music clear, varied, solid, and rhythmically alive.

No branch of study connected with music is more fascinating (or more endless) than that of orchestration, of the ways different com-

posers have of making this mighty instrument play what they have heard with the ears of their imaginations. There are so many possibilities that even the simplest chord may be written in a hundred different ways, each having its own peculiar sound. I read not long ago that some curious student had collected examples from the scores of many composers of the chord of F-major, F-A-C-F, and had found that no two wrote it quite alike. And, indeed, we need only listen to their works to hear that each musician has his own peculiar mode of writing, his own special quality of tone color. Mendelssohn is clear and pure as spring water; Dvorak is rich, full, mellow; Wagner is full, solid, sonorous; Tschaikovsky is now dark, gloomy, now sparklingly brilliant; Berlioz is thin, but with a sheen as of silver or gold; Brahms is dark and gray, of a noble plainness.

Nevertheless there are certain qualities common to all good orchestral writing. The mass of tone must be solid, not ragged and full of chinks and crannies like a threadbare tapestry. It must be well balanced, so that the melodies stand forth prominently and the less important parts stay in the background where they belong. To secure this perfect balance of tone requires great skill and long practice, and even composers like Schubert occasionally fail in it, as in the place near the end of the first movement of his C-major Symphony, where he covers up his theme, given to the woodwind, by too heavy a mass of strings and brass. Finally, there is the important matter of contrast, by neglect of which a composer sacrifices one of the greatest beauties of orchestral music. The different choirs should be set off against each other, so that each sounds more charming by contrast with the others. Schumann often failed in this matter. He is said to have at first given the trio of the scherzo in his Symphony in C to strings, in spite of the scherzo itself having been almost entirely for strings; it was at Mendelssohn's suggestion that he rewrote it for the woodwind instruments, to which it is perfectly suited.

Even when several groups are playing at once, they can be so managed that their differing tone-qualities are relieved against each other, or on the other hand they can be so "doubled," or made to play the same melodies, that the color is monotonous and dull. Suppose for instance, that our music has three distinct melodies or voices. Here are two ways in which we may score it:

First Way

Melody 1. — 1st violins, flutes, oboes, trumpets.
Melody 2. — 2d violins, violas, clarinets, horns.
Melody 3. — Violoncellos, bassoons, trombones.

Second Way

Melody 1. — 1st violins, 2d violins, violas, violoncellos.
Melody 2. — Flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons.
Melody 3. — Horns and trumpets, or trombones.

Scored in the first way, the mass of tone will be full and thick, but all of one mixed color, and therefore lacking in clearness and relief. Scored in the second way, each part will stand out, because the first is all string tone, the second all woodwind, and the third all brass: the effect of the whole will be much more brilliant.

I have here suggested only a few of the many interesting things you will find to study in music for the orchestra. The more you study, the more you will find to hear, to admire, and to enjoy.

CHAPTER 14
At a Symphony Concert— The Symphonies of Beethoven

Beethoven's nine symphonies, taken together, must on the whole be ranked as the greatest contribution ever made to music by a single man. They are in music something like what Shakespeare's plays, or Thackeray's novels, are in English literature. They are, indeed, a complete literature in themselves. They will bear the study of a lifetime. One who knows them thoroughly knows the best that is in music; no one who does not love them can be considered a true music-lover.

Like all the greatest things in art, these masterpieces were the final result of a slow progress, the perfect blossoms of seeds planted by others. Of those composers who prepared the way for Beethoven, the two most famous were Haydn and Mozart.

Joseph Haydn, born in 1732, in a Hungarian village not far from the city of Vienna (which afterwards became his home, as well as Mozart's and Beethoven's, so that the three are often called the Viennese composers), occupied for the greater part of his life the position of "Chapel-master," or director of the orchestra, to the family of the Ester-hazy princes. It was here a part of his regular duties to compose many symphonies, string quartets, and other such works. In 1791, and again in 1794, he traveled to London, writing, for a concert manager named Salomon, his twelve so-called Salomon Symphonies, by far the best of the one hundred and twenty-five symphonies that he wrote altogether. He was a simple, sensible, cheerful man, a devout Catholic, a hard worker, and a faithful friend; and when he died in 1809 he was honored and mourned by all.

His symphonies, as you may guess by their number, were neither so long nor so carefully made as more modem ones, but they were the

pioneer-works which set up a standard for later composers, and justly entitle him to the name of Father of the Symphony. By his friends he was more familiarly and affectionately called simply "Papa Haydn." As regards form, he fixed the scheme of the symphony as follows: there were three or four separate movements, of which at least one, usually the first, was in the sonata form, with exposition of two or three themes, development, and restatement, also sometimes slow introduction and coda. The last movement might be either in sonata form, or a rondo, consisting of a main theme many times repeated, with other contrasting themes in between. Of the two middle movements one was a slow movement, emotional and songlike; the other was a sprightly, and sometimes humorous, minuet with "trio." A peculiarity was that in the first movement he often used only one theme, in the contrasting keys, instead of two distinct melodies. The spaces between the themes, too, were apt to be filled up with more or less unimportant matter, scales and runs, instead of developing out of the themes; and the development portion was short and not always particularly interesting.

In style the music was "homophonic": that is, the musical ideas were single melodies, or series of chords, rather than the network of intertwining "voices" of the polyphonic style of Bach. This simple style adopted by Haydn was well suited to instruments, and to the kind of form which depends chiefly on contrasts of melodies and of keys, as well as to the straightforward expression we find in Haydn, recalling that of the popular airs among which he grew up. The emotion reflected in his music, indeed, is hardly ever deep, earnest, religious, like Bach's, but rather cheerful and gay. He also adopted an arrangement of the orchestra which has since been only extended, never really changed. He used four groups, strings, woodwind, brass, and percussion: the first practically as we have it to-day; the second consisting of two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, and two bassoons; the third containing only pairs of horns and trumpets; and the "battery" represented by kettledrums alone. This too was a great advance, for before his day it had been customary to use many more woodwind instruments, which injured the balance of the tone.

It must be admitted that Haydn's symphonies now sound rather thin and old-fashioned, and only three or four of them are often
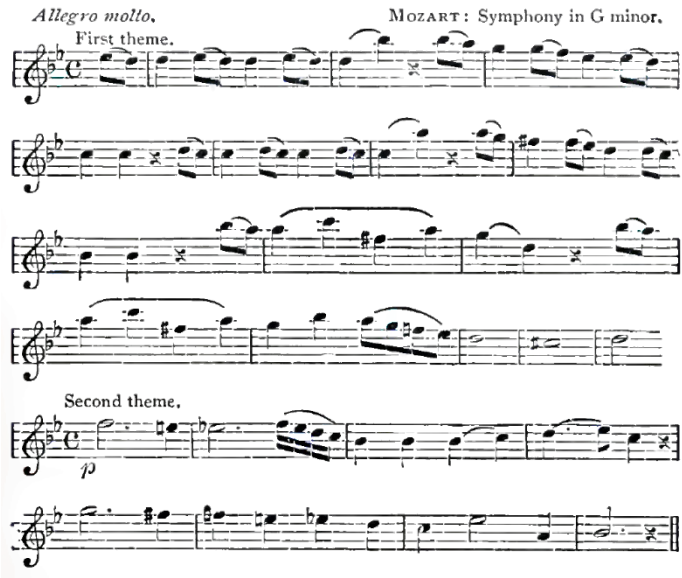
heard. Several of these show his love of a joke. The "Farewell" was written to persuade Prince Esterhazy to let his orchestra, who were staying at his country place, go home to their wives and children. One player after another comes to the end of his part, takes up his music, and goes out, until only one is left playing. The prince saw the point, and remarked: "If all go, we may as well go, too." The "Toy Symphony" is orchestrated for two violins and a double-bass, together with all manner of toy instruments — drums, penny trumpets, whistles, and rattles. The "Surprise" is so named for a loud chord suddenly introduced in the quiet slow movement to wake up the English audiences, who were too fond of their after-dinner nap. One of the finest of the symphonies is the "Oxford," played when Haydn was given the degree of Doctor of Music by Oxford University.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, born in 1756, and dying when he was only thirty-five, wrote in his short life forty-nine symphonies, of which the three greatest, the C-major, known as the "Jupiter," the E-flat major, and the G-minor, were all composed in the summer of 1788. His symphonies, while following Haydn's closely in general plan, are much more perfect works of art. Their themes, to begin with, have that exquisite grace, that variety of outline, that tender and yet noble expressiveness, which we find in all Mozart's melodies. They are less square-cut, less matter of fact, than Haydn's, not so closely modeled on the song's of the people, as two examples, the main themes of the G-minor symphony (Figure XVIII) are enough to show. What freshness, what life, are here! How naturally the phrases rise and fall, as flowing as water, as free as flame!

The same examples will show you how skillfully Mozart contrasts his ideas. The first is careless, almost "happy-go-lucky"; the second slower, more serious and earnest. Hardly eyer does he use the same tune for both themes. He is fond, too, of making his melodies not only out of the ordinary scale of eight tones, but from the scale containing the tones in between them, which we mark by sharps and flats, the scale called "chromatic"; and this, as you see in the second half of the second theme, produces an effect of more intense feeling, such as we often find in Wagner and other modern composers.

Again, Mozart, who had a much better musical education than the self-taught Haydn, thoroughly understood the old polyphonic

FIGURE XVIII.



way of writing, and could weave the voices together with the skill of Bach, yet with a clearness and brilliancy all his own. Consequently his developments are more interesting than Haydn's, the themes being heard in the bass and in the middle parts almost as often as on top, as you may see in this very symphony; and sometimes he writes a whole movement in this style, as for example the finale of his "Jupiter," which is a splendid fugue with three distinct "subjects."

Altogether, Mozart stands for all that is finest, noblest, purest, in classical music. Just what we mean by this word classical is hard to describe, it has been used in so many ways. In the first place it means belonging to the highest class or rank, most finished or perfect. In this sense Greek sculpture is classical, and indeed any work of art in which the proportions are harmonious, the form is complete and satisfying. Later, when artists came to care more about expressing their feelings than about pure beauty of form, the word romantic was used to describe their work, and in contrast with it classical came to mean reserved, unexpressive, and in an extreme use even dry, cold, forbidding. In comparison with Beethoven, Mozart is classic in this sense, as he is less energetic, more serene. But it is in the first sense that he is most justly called classical. His music is so pure and untroubled in

expression, so balanced in form, so clear in style, that it deserves to be called perfect if any work of man can deserve it. It seems almost more than human; its calm beauty seems touched with the divine.
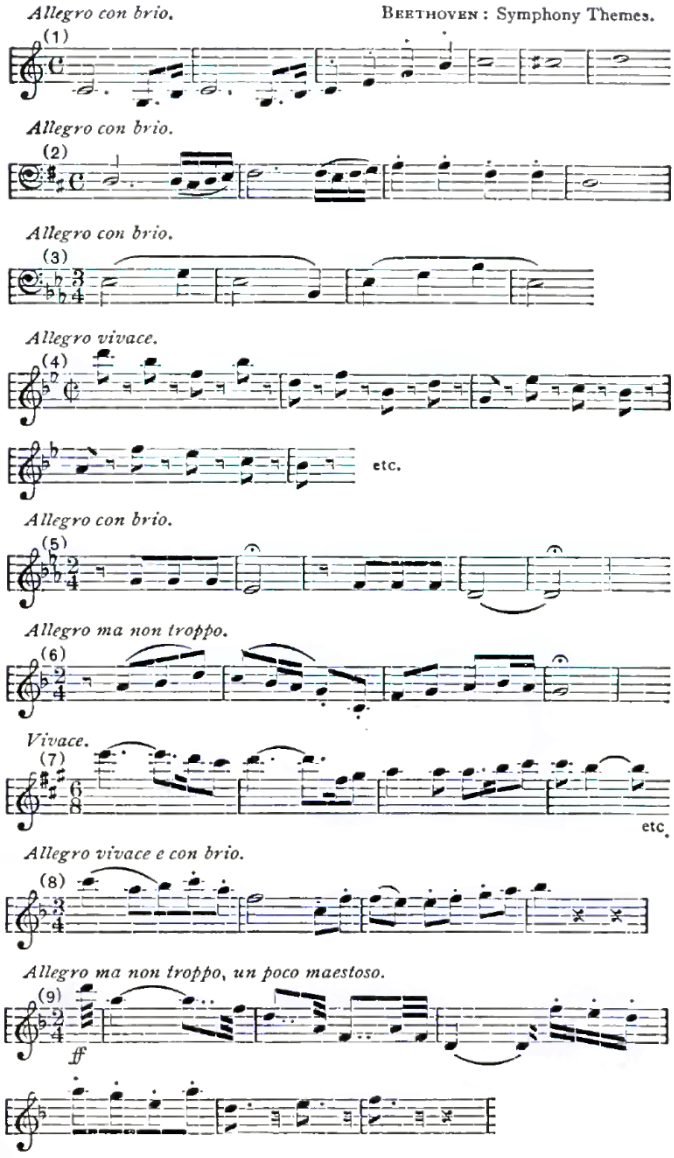
To hear a Beethoven symphony, say the Fifth, after one by Mozart, is like passing from a Greek temple like the Parthenon, with its regular columns, its quiet vertical and horizontal lines of white marble, its tranquil sculptured gods and goddesses, eternally smiling, into the dim, vast spaces of a Gothic cathedral. Here all is grand, rugged, mysterious. The great arches lead our eyes up and up, until we hardly know whether we see or dream. The sculptures are not always beautiful, often grotesque or pathetic — grinning faces, the writhing bodies of tortured saints. The air is heavy with incense, and shot through with many-colored lights. We are no longer calmed and satisfied; we are inspired and at the same time perplexed.

Beethoven, in a word, is a romanticist, and the effect of his art is to suggest more than it clearly says, to lead our imaginations to adventures of their own. He aims not to charm us, but to move and stir us. His ideas are not so complete, so rounded and definite, as Mozart's, but partly for this very reason they are more exciting. And there is in all his music a willfulness, a wild, almost savage energy, that is certainly less divine, but somehow also more human, than the untroubled peace of classicism.

Look, for example, at the main themes of the first movements of his nine symphonies, in Figure XIX. Don't you feel the resistless force of them? Don't they stir in you a sympathetic energy? Short, all of them, wonderfully to the point, not a needless note in any, and each of a rhythmic pattern that once heard can never be forgotten. These are not the measured sentences, courteous and flowing, of a polished orator; they are the sharp, explosive words rapped out by a man eager to say something he feels deeply, a man intensely in earnest. They are the words of the rough, the bearish Beethoven, proud, willful, obstinate, the man who hated shams as much as he loved truth, whose heart, cut off from others by the terrible affliction of deafness and by their inability to understand his ideals, yet beat in sympathy with all that was noble and sincere in human nature.

Impatient as Beethoven was of the rules which musicians of less courage considered unbreakable, however, much as he disliked

FIGURE XIX.



tamely to follow the leader, he was great enough to know that true freedom comes only to him who can obey: as the old poet Quarles expresses it, "The laws of nature break the rules of art." It "was petty rules that Beethoven despised; for laws, for the great general facts of the ways our minds work, and of what appears to us beautiful, he had

the deepest respect. He studied ceaselessly, as his sketch-books show, with their many versions of single themes and their patient experiments in putting them together, to make his music not only strongly expressive but solid and yet various in form. The result was a wonderful harmony between the feelings expressed in his works and their musical beauty, a "perfect balance," as one writer puts it, "of expression and design."

In the two qualities which our minds require in all artistic designs, unity and variety, Beethoven is equally successful. Unity, in music, depends chiefly on the power to make a whole piece or movement grow out of a single musical idea (motive) or out of several such ideas — that is, it depends on thematic development: and Beethoven is in this matter one of the most masterly of all composers, as we have seen.[11] You will be amazed if you will go carefully through the first movement of the Fifth Symphony, noticing how much he makes out of that motive of three short notes and one long, how little there is that is not somehow connected with it. We have all met people who in talking can never stick to the point, who begin speaking of the weather, and in two minutes are telling about their plans for next Christmas. And we have met other people who can control their thoughts, talking connectedly or "logically" as we say, and therefore "getting somewhere." Well, Beethoven, even in his most whimsical moments, when he seems to be making fun of everything, is always logical: he sticks to the point, and says something worth hearing.

But he is not monotonous; he has too much variety for that. Thought number two follows thought number one, but not in the stupid way which any fool could prophesy beforehand. It follows it *naturally*, yet *unexpectedly*, just as in a witty saying. You have to keep your ears open, and your mind alert, to follow Beethoven. Just when you think you know perfectly what is coming next, he gives a little twist of melody, or harmony, or rhythm, or a sudden change of some kind, that at once surprises and satisfies you. He made endless experiments in this kind of pleasant variety. Because people had got used to expecting the second theme in a symphony in a certain key, he often used for it other keys. He loved to introduce a single tone

[11] Chapter 9.

that seemed not to belong to the key at all, and then show that it did. He loved to change the key suddenly without warning, as he does, for example, twice in the coda of the first movement of the "Eroica" Symphony. He loved to get a certain rhythm going, and then mischievously make it twice as fast. In countless ways he is a witty composer, as Stevenson is a witty writer when he tells us that in an argument a woman will always say at the end exactly what she said at the beginning, "unless she has forgotten it."

As for variety in expression, Beethoven's Symphonies are as remarkable in this respect as Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavichord." Each has not only its own themes and style, but its own unique mood. The First and Second, though written when he was much under the influence of Haydn and Mozart, and therefore in some ways less strikingly original than the others, are still distinct: the First full of energy, yet a little quaint and old-fashioned, especially in the slow movement; the Second, with its long introduction at the beginning and its lovely "Larghetto," more charged with deep feeling.

The Third, called "Eroica" ("Heroic"), Beethoven wrote as a tribute to Napoleon, the defender of the rights of the common people against the tyranny of kings, but angrily tore his name from the title-page when he learned that he, too, desired the title of "Emperor." All his passionate love of freedom, his deep sense of the value of the human soul for itself alone, aside from the accidents of fame, wealth, and worldly power, are sounded in the eager, rushing "Allegro," and in the nobly sad Funeral March.

The Fourth bubbles with gayety and high spirits. Its motto might be "On with the dance; let joy be unrestrained." Only in the Adagio do we feel a profounder emotion. It is one of the marvels of art that this work, so full of the boyish, holiday spirit, was written at a time when Beethoven was in black despair over his increasing deafness.

Of all the nine, the Fifth is the most widely loved, perhaps because it is in a sense the most human. Its story is the tragic story of a young man's fight against an unkind fate; Beethoven himself suggested that the motive at the beginning is "Fate knocking at the door." Yet all is not sadness even here; whatever struggles there may be in the first movement, the lovely Andante suggests the "peace which passeth understanding," the peace that comes of acceptance

of God's will; and in the Finale there is the splendid strength of a spirit which has conquered itself.

In the Sixth or "Pastoral" symphony, Beethoven tries something new; turning his back on human nature, which has occupied him in the preceding three works, he goes out into the woods and fields. This symphony is a poem of country life. The method, as well as the subject, is new. Here for the first time in the series we find a definite "programme," a story told in detail, with even the songs of birds and the roar of thunder represented. The movements bear the following titles: "I. The cheerful impressions excited on arriving in the country; II. By the brook; III. Peasants' merry-making; IV. Storm, and the shepherds' hymn, gratitude and thanksgiving after the storm." It is worth noticing, however, that in spite of all this "scene-painting" there is also a true musical expression of emotions; the music not only tells a story, it expresses the inner feelings that this story arouses. Indeed, no music is fuller of the good cheer, the quietude, the health, of the green fields.

In the next two symphonies Beethoven gives free sweep to the love of humor, the whim and mischief, which were such an important part of him. The Seventh has been called, by Wagner, "the apotheosis [glorification] of the dance," a name which excellently fits such a carnival of lively rhythms. Throughout the body of the first movement, after the slow introduction, we are carried along by the persistent rhythm as of a galloping horse. The Eighth abounds in those sudden changes, those surprises of all sorts, which its composer so loved. He seems to have thrown over his sense of dignity and to be indulging to his heart's content in the wildest antics. In the second movement he has a pleasant joke on his friend Maelzel, the inventor of the metronome, that clocklike instrument which ticks the time at which a piece is to be played. The woodwind instruments tick in this way almost all through, while the violins play the graceful melody.

Toward the end of Beethoven's life he was saddened by the wickedness of a nephew he loved dearly, by his deafness, and by being so poor that he had to write pieces he didn't care for in order to make money. He turned to his religion for comfort, and the wonderful Ninth Symphony, in which a chorus of voices is added to the orchestra, is the expression of his religious faith and hope. It is full of a

lofty trust, a resignation to the ills of this world, and a divine peace. There is much that is mysterious and hard to understand; but the more you hear it the more you will feel that it is truly the crown of this noble series of symphonies.
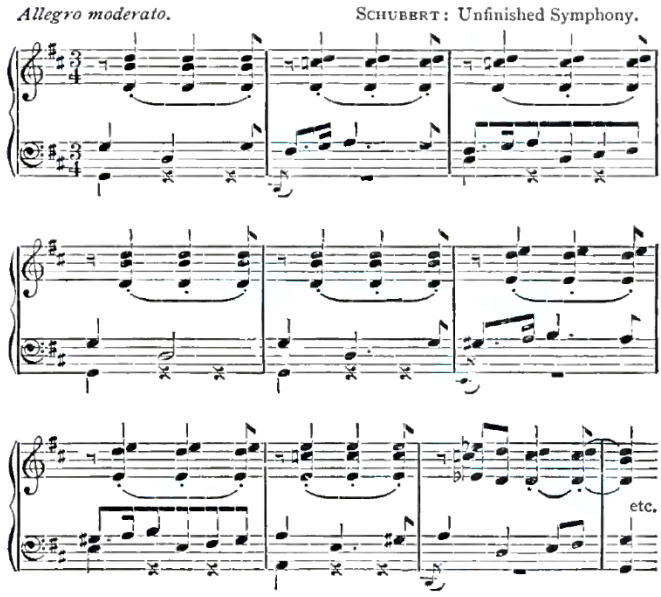
CHAPTER 15
At a Symphony Concert—Modern Symphonies

Herr Felix Weixgartner, in his little book on "The Symphony Since Beethoven," compares the nine symphonies of that composer to the peaks of a great mountain range, standing high above everything else in the land of music. We may also find in this land, he says, "many a pleasant range of hills, and many a romantic cliff, that can fascinate and charm us." But in order to enjoy these lesser beauties, such as we find in many modern symphonies, "we must turn completely away from Beethoven." So true is this that composers themselves have realized it, and have perhaps hardly tried to rival the majestic forms of the master-builder. They have been content to imitate from afar his method of building, and to trust to the novelty or charm of their themes, or to the brilliancy of their harmonic and orchestral coloring, for their appeal.

Of such composers, of whom there have been many, we may select six as being on the whole the most important. Three of these, Schubert, Schumann, and Mendelssohn, lived in the first half of the nineteenth century, just after Beethoven. The other three, Brahms, Tschaikowsky, and Dvorák (pronounced Dvorzhahk) belong to the later half of the same century, and died not many years ago.

Franz Peter Schubert, born in 1797 in Vienna, died there after a short life spent entirely in composing, and in great poverty, in 1828. He is famous chiefly for his songs, loved wherever music is known; but he composed also many piano pieces and other instrumental works, and ten symphonies, of which only two, one in C-major and one in B-minor, known as the "Unfinished," are now heard. These both abound in graceful, appealing melodies, of which a good example is the second theme of the first movement of the "Unfinished," played by the violoncellos, shown in Figure XX. You will notice that it has more of the tenderness of a song than of the largeness

FIGURE XX.
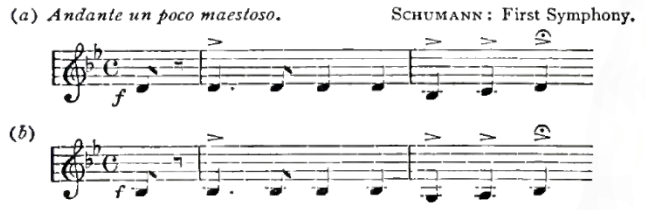


and grandeur we expect in a symphony.

This songlike or "lyrical" grace is what we always find in Schubert, so that he is often called a "lyrical symphonist." We do not find the strength and the balance of form, the architectural quality, of Beethoven; and this is partly due to the very good qualities we do find — Schubert, as we say, "has the defects of his qualities." For it is in the nature of a song to be complete in itself: its phrases balance each other, one leads into the next, and the last brings entire satisfaction. The song is therefore not so well suited to be the germ or seed of a large work like a symphony as the short, striking motive, like those in Figure XIX, which is in itself only a fragment, and so absolutely requires to be developed or made to grow into a larger whole. Schubert cannot work out his themes with the effect of gradual unfolding so magnificent in Beethoven, because they are really finished things at the start; what he does do is to repeat them, often with slight changes, but not with enough of novelty to keep us constantly on the alert. What saves him is the magical charm of the tunes themselves, and the glow and shimmer of the colors he weaves about them. These are so delightful that most of us will agree with Schumann, who said

of his C-major symphony, which lasts over an hour, that it was "of heavenly length."

Schumann himself, though he was first of all a composer for the piano, wrote four symphonies and several fine overtures,[12] in which the music is so full of life and so throbs with healthy, manly feeling that we willingly forget certain weaknesses of form like those of Schubert. A more serious drawback is Schumann's lack of skill in orchestration. It is strange that he, who had such a keen ear for all kinds of "color" effects on the piano, should have written heavily and monotonously for the orchestra. It was partly because he did not feel sure of the individual instruments. Here is an odd example. The first symphony opens with the call for the horns shown at Figure XXI (a).

FIGURE XXI.



This was originally written as at (b), but could not be satisfactorily played by the horns then in use, because the G and the A were dull and muffled, so that the effect of the passage, which should be stirring, was almost laughably halting. It was at Mendelssohn's suggestion that the notes were changed. Being so uncertain of what particular instruments could or couldn't do, Schumann "doubled" the different instruments (that is, put two or more on the same melody) until often all variety was lost. Using all the different kinds too constantly, he saved nothing for contrast.

There used to be a story, years ago, in Boston, of a theater manager who summoned to his office a new cornetist he had engaged a day or two before, and said to him: "See here, young man, I noticed at the performance last night that about half the time you were not playing. What do you mean by being so lazy?" The player replying

[12] The overture is a single movement for orchestra, usually in sonata form, but sometimes, when written as an introduction to an opera, made up without any definite plan from the chief melodies of the opera itself.

that at those moments he "had a rest," the angry manager went on: "Oh, you had a rest, did you? Well, I didn't engage you to have a rest, I engaged you to work; and if you don't work I shall discharge you." Little did that manager know that in a well-written orchestral score the rests are as important as the notes.

It is worth while for you to try to notice the heaviness, the lack of contrast, in Schumann's orchestra as compared with the brilliancy of Dvorak's or Tschaikowsky's, because only by noticing such differences do we cultivate our taste and learn to know the best from the less than best. To help you to see such differences, which may seem little enough at first, is one of the chief purposes of this book. But do not let such knowledge make you contemptuous; the person who sneers at everything, who says "Schumann is overrated; he didn't even know how to use the orchestra," is almost worse than the person who swallows everything whole; indeed, the reason we try to see the faults clearly is that only when we do can we fully appreciate the virtues. And in this case there are plenty of virtues to admire. Schumann is a great master of noble, living melody, as in the first movement of the First Symphony; of quiet, thoughtful, serious feeling, as in the lovely adagio of the Second Symphony; of grand, mysterious harmony, as in the movement in the Third marked "Feierlich" ("Solemn"), inspired by a visit to Cologne Cathedral; of restless passion and tender longing, as in the "Manfred" Overture. It is far better to have something so well worth while to say, even if one says it haltingly, than to be glib of tongue and empty of mind.

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, an elegant gentleman of wealth and cultivation, clever with pencil and pen, a good dancer and horseman, a charming letter-writer, and the idol of the musical world during his short life, was born in Hamburg, Germany, in 1809, and died at Leipsic in 1847. As we should expect from his personality, his music, of which he wrote a great deal and of many kinds, is more graceful and refined than earnest, deep, or powerful. He was a man of poetic imagination, appreciative of the beauties of nature and of other arts than music, especially literature; and his best works, such as the "Italian" and "Scotch" Symphonies, and the overtures "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Ruy Blas," and "Hebrides," were suggested by places or books, and are descriptive.

Not that he was a "realist" or writer of programme music. He seldom tried to make music tell a definite story, or introduced into it the sounds of the outside world (although he does give us the "hee-haw" of the ass that Bottom was turned into by the fairy in the "Midsummer Night's Dream"). His idea was rather to write in the classical way, making beauty of form and the expression of inner feelings his main aim, but to give both in his titles and in the music itself hints of some special story or scene. He stands half-way between the purely classic composers and the realistic writers of to-day. In the "Pilgrims' March" (second movement) of the "Italian" Symphony, you can see mirrored in the regular rhythm and the tranquil melody, if you care to, a procession of holy pilgrims; or if you prefer you may simply enjoy the grave beauty of the music, orchestrated with Mendelssohn's usual clear and transparent coloring.

One of the most important of modern composers, perhaps the only one who in nobility of style and mastery of musical architecture approaches Beethoven's level, is Johannes Brahms, who was born in Hamburg in 1833, and died at Vienna in 1897. He occupies a position all his own; he was little influenced by the modern tendency to care more for richness of color and for vividness of expression than for solidity and beauty of form; he passed his long and uneventful life in the pursuit of an ideal which like Bach's was too high to be understood by many; and while some critics do not hesitate to place him with Bach and Beethoven (the now famous "Three B's") others call him dry, dull, and old-fashioned.

The explanation is that Brahms, though a man of deep feelings, used his head in his music quite as much as his heart. He loved to think for himself, and to require thought from his listeners. Thus, like Beethoven, he was a master of the art of thematic development, of bringing out of his themes, gradually, all the possibilities they contained. Take the main motive of his Second Symphony, for instance; like that of Beethoven's Fifth, it is a mere fragment of four notes, and oddly enough in the same rhythm, too, of three shorts and a long, though differently accented. Out of this simple motive Brahms slowly weaves the richest, most varied patterns; it is squeezed into a smaller space or stretched out into a larger, it is tossed about from player to player, constantly it appears in a new light. In short, Brahms shows

himself here as elsewhere a master of musical logic.

But on the other hand he is so clever at working out themes that he does not always stop to ask himself whether a theme is worth such elaborate treatment. Sometimes it seems to us that he throws away his skill on dry, empty bits of tune, that no amount of dressing up can make look anything but ugly. And even when his melodies are beautiful — and no melodies in the world are more beautiful than, say, the second theme in the Allegro of the Third Symphony, or the main theme of the Adagio in the Fourth — he may take them through so many twists and turns that we can only follow them by attending very closely; and if we are dull or lazy we are apt to blame the composer.

Another thing that makes Brahms's music fail to appeal to a good many people is that he cares little — perhaps too little — for "effects." He is more interested in his musical thoughts themselves than in the way they are going to impress his hearers; he is like a man so eager to say something that he does not stop to be oratorical, to wheedle or dazzle or frighten his audience. Someone has said that his music "looks better than it sounds," meaning that the musical ideas — the melodies and harmonies — impress a trained reader of the score more than the actual sounds impress a hearer who has not previously studied them. It is true, I think, that the tone color of Brahms's orchestra is far less bright, rich, and varied than that of most other great modern composers. He combines his instruments in such a manner that the sound-mass is often "thick" or "gray," and he does not write for each single instrument so as to "show it off" to the best advantage. But on the other hand his ideas themselves are rather grave and noble than charming or brilliant; and good critics have held that his dark coloring is just the right kind of a body to match the soul of his music.
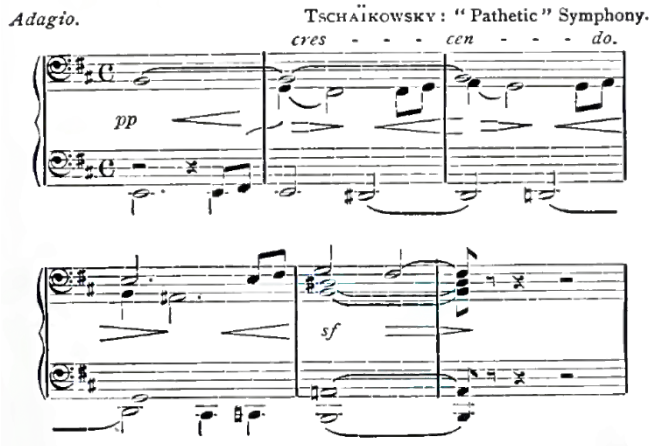
It is when we contrast Brahms with Tschaikowsky or Dvorak that we best appreciate the peculiar qualities of each. The latter composers are easier to get acquainted with; they appeal to us more quickly and at first more strongly; their ideas are simpler, their coloring richer, and they are less interested in the intellectual than in the emotional side of music.

Peter Ilyitch Tschaikowsky, the greatest of Russian composers, was born in 1840, and died in 1893. To a love of graceful melody such as we find in the Italian operas, he joined a fondness for the mono-

tonously repeated rhythms and the minor strains of the melancholy Russian folk-songs, and a passionate intensity of feeling which fills his music, now with the deepest gloom, now with slow climaxes leading to wild outbursts of unrestrained excitement. Many opposing elements enter into his musical nature. There is the love of pure and simple tunefulness which we see in such a melody as the second theme of his "Pathetic" Symphony; there is an almost unhealthy melancholy, a "luxury of grief," which we feel particularly in the same work, in the first and last movements; there is a delight in sheer noise and fury, like the delight of savages in crude colors, which is shown most clearly in the ear-wounding din of the "1812" Overture.

His fondness for deep gloom led Tschaikowsky to use the lower tones of the bass instruments in the orchestra in a highly original way. Such a use of the bassoon, the bass clarinet, the violoncello and double-bass, gives a characteristic somber coloring to many passages in his scores. Take, for instance, the impressive opening of the "Pathetic" Symphony (Figure XXII). Against held tones in the double-

FIGURE XXII.



basses, the first bassoon plays three times a motive of intense sadness (the main motive of the symphony) the phrase being completed by the same motive played once again in the more intense tone of the violas. This eloquent phrase at once establishes the mood of gloom which is never long relieved throughout the work.

Yet as I said Tschaikowsky's despair is always lashing itself into wild fury; and at such times he is as overpoweringly strong and

brilliant as at others he is dark and forbidding. One of his great climaxes, in which a steady advance of trumpets or trombones, often against a persistently held bass-tone like the pedal of an organ, and bursting at last into all the gorgeousness of flashing strings, screaming woodwind, and blaring brass, brings the tears to one's eyes and sends thrills coursing up one's spine. Such mastery of the resources of the orchestra is marvelous; all its colors charm us in turn at the command of this magician. Only after the excitement is over do we wonder if there is not something unwholesome, something almost mad, in this whirlwind of feeling. As we calmly go over the music in memory we miss the tranquil beauty, the perfect balance of form, the gradual, orderly advance of the musical thought, that is so satisfying in the music of Brahms.

Antonin Dvorak, a Bohemian by birth (born 1841, died 1904), though less sensational than Tschaikovsky, is no less a master of the orchestra. Simplicity and grace, a childlike innocence, a sweetness and melting beauty of tone, rich harmony and the elastic rhythms of the dance, we find in his music. Of his many works for orchestra the best known are the Slavonic Dances and the Fifth Symphony, called "From the New World," because it was written in America, and on themes suggested by the melodies of the American negroes. This symphony, a favorite with our audiences, is a splendid example of its composer's art. Its melodies are tuneful, sprightly, easily followed; its harmony is both clear and rich; its rhythms full of "swing" and sparkle. In expression it ranges from the joyous freshness of the first and last movements, and the bubbling gayety of the scherzo, to the appealing sadness of the exquisite Largo, said to voice the homesickness of the composer among foreign scenes and people.

The musicians we have studied in this chapter are so various, both in their ideals and in their methods, that I am afraid you may be bewildered, here at the end of it, to know just what you have really learned, just what is the *moral* of it all. The moral, I think, is this: While we should try, at a symphony concert, to feel these differences, to see how Brahms, say, is more concerned with what we called in Chapter 1 the "aesthetic appeal" of music, and Tschaikovsky with what we called the "sensuous" and the "emotional" appeals, all good symphonies can be listened to, and ought to be, chiefly for the beauty

of the music itself, and not for any story they tell or pictures they call up. We should learn above all to follow attentively the themes, and their development, which are to a symphony what the characters and the plot are to a story. The question is often asked: What does such-and-such a piece of music "mean"? — as if the meaning of it could possibly be put into words! If it could be, there would be no need of the music. Music cannot be translated; the attempt to translate it, as when we say: "This piece is a pair of lovers walking through a forest," only befuddles our minds. Say rather, if you like, that it is a pair of melodies going through a series of tonal adventures, and follow them so closely that you know just what happens to them at every turn. Only thus can you understand them not as vague emotions vaguely expressed, but as a work of musical art, clear, definite, orderly, and beautiful.

CHAPTER 16
At a Symphony Concert—Programme Music

We have already seen, in the chapter on "Music that Tells, Stories," that in addition to arousing certain states of feeling or moods in us by what we called "subjective" expression, music can suggest by "objective" expression the objects of the outside world, horses, waterfalls, thunder, the ocean, and so on, and can even, by showing us these things in order, tell us stories, though much more vaguely than words. We saw what its methods were for doing this: first, definite titles such as "Pastoral" Symphony or "Manfred" Overture, and even little stories printed out complete, called "programmes"; second, suggestions by the music itself of motions and speech, of disagreeable things by dissonances and of agreeable things by consonances, of "light" or "heavy" things by high or low tones, and so on; third, actual imitations of the sounds of the outside world, such as the songs of birds or the whistling of wind; and fourth, by the use of *leit-motive* or "leading motives," themes which we connect with particular persons or ideas, such as are used constantly in Wagner's music-dramas.

We also saw that this descriptive kind of music was called "programme music," and that the composers who have done most to make it popular are Berlioz, Liszt, Richard Strauss, and some others. The names most frequently used for pieces in this style are "overture" and "symphonic poem." The latter is rather inaccurate. The word "poem" is used, I suppose, to suggest that the music is poetic in the sense that it describes or paints, as words do. As for "symphonic," it means strictly "on the plan of a symphony or sonata," and that is just what the symphonic poem is not, being, as we saw, perfectly free in form, and consisting of a single movement instead of three or four. What the word is meant to suggest is merely that the work is written for orchestra, and is based on definite themes first simply presented and later developed; but the order in which they appear is decided
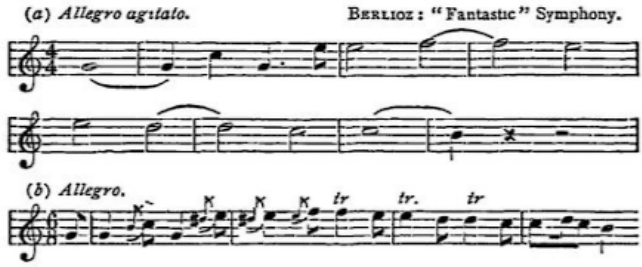
not by any fixed scheme, but by the "programme."

Although Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony and one or two of his other works opened up the path to programme-music, the real pioneer, the first composer who devoted himself almost entirely to this way of working, was Hector Berlioz (1803-69), a Frenchman. Like most of his countrymen, he had a keener sense of the dramatic or story-telling side of art than of general expression and formal beauty. His melodies are odd, distorted, rambling, his harmony is often thin and strained — the chords do not flow naturally one into another; almost the only branch of pure music in which he shows mastery is orchestration, for which he had a delicate and sure instinct. His chief importance lies in his having shown, in such works as his overtures "The Corsair," "King Lear" and" Roman Carnival," his "Harold in Italy" and "Romeo and Juliet" symphonies, and above all in his "Fantastic Symphony," how the dramatic vividness of opera could be introduced into the concert hall.

The object of his "Symphonic Fantastique," which is in five movements, is to tell the adventures of a young musician of unhealthily sensitive nature, who has poisoned himself with opium in love-sick despair — a story, you see, in which the agonies are piled up in a way that makes us smile, but which Berlioz, who was nothing if not in earnest, took seriously enough. In the first movement we see the hero in love, maddened by jealousy, but for a time comforted by religion; in the second he is in a ball-room, indifferent to the whirl of the dancers, dreaming of his ladylove; in the third he goes to the country, and hears the piping of shepherds and the rumble of a summer thunderstorm; in the fourth he dreams that he has killed his beloved and is marching to be beheaded at the stake; and in the fifth and last he fancies himself dead and in the spirit world, surrounded by shrieking witches, among whom he sees his lady once more, horribly changed.

The most interesting point about this curious jumble of the frightful and the ridiculous is the use made of a "leading theme" which stands for the lady, and is heard whenever the thought of her occurs to her lover, which, I hardly need tell you, is very often indeed. The beginning of this theme, called "l'idée fixe," or the "fixed idea," is shown in Figure XXIII, a: not a melody of any great beauty, you

FIGURE XXIII.



notice, but striking enough to be remembered, and to serve as a label. Berlioz develops it very little, merely repeats it whenever it is needed by the story. For instance, when, in the fourth movement, our hero has finished his march to the stake and stands with his head upon the block, we hear four measures of the theme. Alas! it is the last time he will think of her in this world; for down comes the ax (a tremendous crashing chord of the full orchestra) and the death rattle follows on three kettledrums! The only real change in the theme comes when the lady is transformed into a witch; this is shown in Figure XXIII, b.

Franz Liszt, whose piano music we have already considered, used in his orchestral works, most important among which are the "Faust" and "Dante" symphonies and the series of thirteen Symphonic Poems, the method of Berlioz, but applied it with less crudeness and with more musical skill. His "programmes" are less realistic and laughably matter-of-fact than Berlioz's: they deal chiefly with strikingly contrasted characters, ideas, or moods, which music can satisfactorily suggest. In the "Faust Symphony," for example, which is rather a series of three symphonic poems than a single work, each movement bears the name of one of the three characters in Goethe's poem: Faust, Gretchen, Mephistopheles. The first presents in four themes a picture of Faust; his despair and loneliness (Lento), his strivings and hopes (Allegro agitato), his ideals (Andante), and his pride and energy (Grandioso). The second is a musical sketch of the gentle Gretchen. In the third, Mephistopheles, the evil one, appears and makes sport of Faust — an idea suggested by using in a distorted form the theme of Faust's ideals from the first movement.

Liszt thus not only carries further Berlioz's idea of connecting a leading theme with each character of his drama, but by making the

musical treatment of these themes follow the course of the story he secures a "thematic development" which adds much to the interest of the music as music. This we see clearly in such a work as his symphonic poem, "Les Preludes." The programme here is from a poem of Lamartine beginning "What is our life but a series of Preludes to that unknown song of which death strikes the first solemn note?" "Love," the poet goes on, "is the enchanted dawn of every life"; but later, he says, comes some storm, some misfortune, which drives us to seek comfort in the peace of country life. From this we are roused by a call to war, to struggle and strife, and in this fight with the world we regain a feeling of our own power. Following the plan thus suggested, the composer divides his "poem" into six sections, thus: 1. Introduction; 2. Love; 2. Storm; 4. Country life; 5. War; 6. Conclusion.

The most remarkable thing about the music itself is the way in which Liszt makes it all out of two simple themes, transforming them in all manner of ways to get just the expression he needs. In Figure XXIV I have set down the chief forms of these themes, noting the sections in which they occur. Let us run through them, admiring the skill with which they are adapted to all uses.

1. (a). Andante. The first three notes form the main motive of the entire composition. This passage, which opens the work, strikes at once the right mood of solemnity.

(b). The same motive forms the basis of a pompous passage in the low strings and brass.

(c). The 'cellos sing a new motive, the second root-idea of the piece. In the fourth measure you will notice echoes of the first motive in the bass.

2. (d). The second motive, suggesting "Love," richly orchestrated with horns, strings, and harp.

3. (e). Motive I, so changed as to suggest the approaching storm.
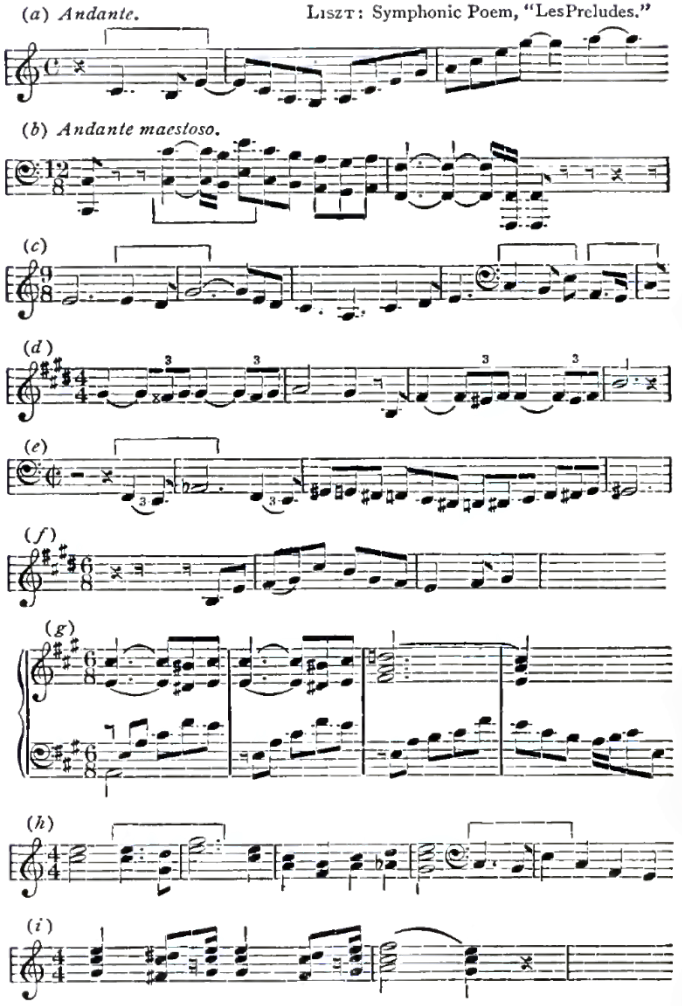
4. (f). A new motive, hinting at the peacefulness and charm of the country. This is later combined with the "love "-theme in (g).

5. (h). Warlike trumpets blare forth another form of the first motive, and later the second is heard, similarly transformed.

6. (i). The work ends noisily with a lengthy treatment of the first theme as at (b).

There is, of course, a good deal of trickery and mere cleverness

FIGURE XXIV.



about these changes of the themes. The transformations, especially (h) and (i), seem more "thought out" than natural, and the original character of the theme is often quite lost. Nevertheless, such a method results in far greater musical interest than Berlioz's mere repetitions, and in the hands of an even greater musician than Liszt — Richard Strauss — it has produced some fine works.

Strauss, who was born at Munich in Germany in 1864, and is thus still a comparatively young man, has already written such a remarkable series of symphonic poems that he has overshadowed all other

composers of programme music, such as Tschaikowsky, Saint-Saens, and Dvorak. He has made the programmistic style so much his own that programme music to-day practically means Richard Strauss's music. His most important programme pieces are "In Italy" (1886), "Don Juan" (1888), "Macbeth" (1886-87), "Death and Transfiguration" (1889), "Till Eulenspiegel" (1894), "Thus Spake Zarathustra" (1894), "Don Quixote" (1897), "A Hero's Life" (1898), and the "Domestic Symphony" (1903).

These works are extraordinary in many ways. They all show, in the first place, a positive genius for hitting off in brief themes, often mere fragments of a few notes, an idea, mood, or character. Such themes are as different as possible from the graceful, balanced melodies of classical music; they abound in odd and even ugly turns, in wide jumps impossible to sing and hard to play, in highly striking, unforgettable rhythms. Secondly, Strauss's harmony is as original as his melody; he is constantly sliding about restlessly from key to key; he is fond of the most frightful discords, and in the later works seems to revel in absolute noise; he closes "Zarathustra" in two keys at once! In the third place, he uses a gigantic orchestra (more than a hundred players), with a perfect regiment of blaring trombones and trumpets, and though he understands all the instruments perfectly he likes to use them in queer ways, making them scream and snarl. Finally, while he does not care to use the classic sonata and other forms, preferring to follow freely the order of events in his programmes, he is a great master of form, so that his works are well balanced and of good proportion, with plenty of contrast, and yet not sacrificing unity.
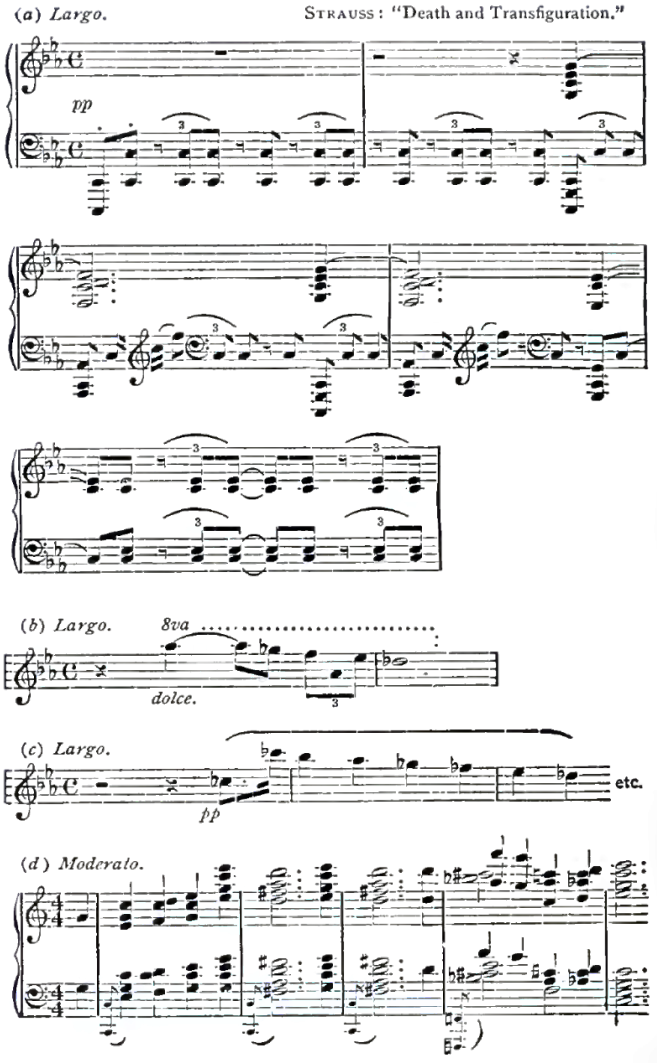
For the purpose of study, for those who are either not familiar with his style or not in sympathy with the extremes of ugliness and noise to which he has forced it in the "Hero's Life" and the "Domestic Symphony," we may choose an early work like "Death and Transfiguration," of which one of his best critics, Mr. Ernest Newman, has said that "as regards the union of pure form with unalloyed purity of material this is perhaps the most perfect thing he has done."

The programme, a poem by the composer's friend, Alexander Ritter, describes a dying man in his small, dimly lighted room. There is no sound but the ticking of the clock. He dreams of his childhood. He awakens to fight once more with death. Exhausted, feverish, he

remembers the days of his fresh youth, and of his later struggle to reach his ideals. But in the midst of these thoughts of the victories over the world that he has never been able to make "clangs the last stroke of Death's iron hammer." Then at last "from the heavenly spaces sounds mightily to greet him what he yearningly sought for here: deliverance from the world, transfiguration of the world."

The music begins with a steady pulsating rhythm, against which soon sounds the Death-motive, heavy, weary, somber (Figure XXV,

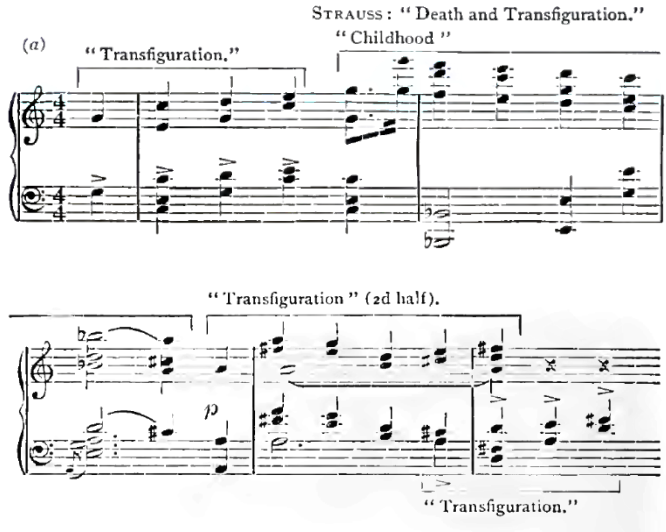
FIGURE XXV.

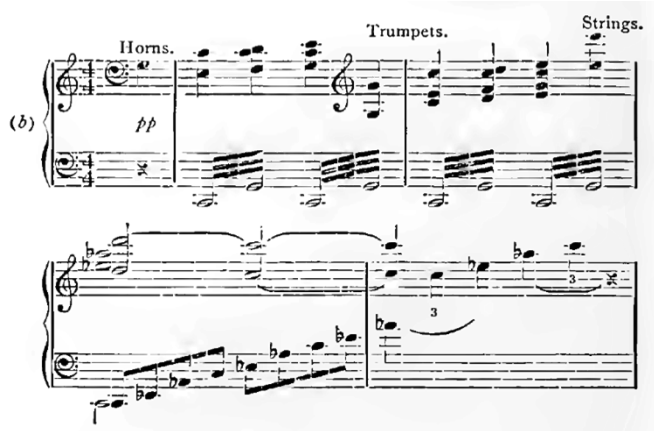


a). To this are added, in the same section, the motive of Memory (b) and of Childhood (c), both wonderfully expressive. Suddenly, however, Death attacks the sick man, and in the second section (Allegro molto agitato) there is a fierce struggle until, exhausted, he sinks back just after the first phrase of the theme of Transfiguration has been heard (Figure XXV, d). In the third section (Meno mosso) he sees visions of his past life (the Childhood and other motives). The struggle comes on again, and this time ends in a wild climax, and the strokes of a gong and the sound of harps suggest the passing of his soul.

So far, mingled with much expressive and beautiful music, there has been a great deal that is noisy and over-realistic. But now, in the fourth and last section, the transfiguring of the man after death, his deliverance from pain and his entrance into peace and divine joy, is depicted in the broad, noble, and solemn music beginning with the Transfiguration theme in C-major (moderato). Brass, wind, and harps, and later strings, work up this theme with splendid power; bits of the Childhood theme are interwoven, with Strauss's wonderful skill (Figure XXVI, a); a magnificent climax is reached; it dies away, and in pianissimo the Transfiguration theme is heard still again in horns, trumpets, and strings (Figure XXVI, b), as if wafted across the

FIGURE XXVI.





heavenly spaces. This entire passage deserves careful study; it is one of the most exalted in feeling, the most stoutly built in form, in all orchestral music.

If Strauss had always chosen "programmes" as suitable to music as this, and had always respected the necessary limits of musical expression as he has for the most part here, we should have been spared much that is petty, ugly, and repulsive. But once a musician has turned away from voicing feelings, and tried to paint the outside world, especially if he is a man as fond of experiment as Strauss, there is no telling where he will end. Thus in "Don Quixote" we have a "wind-machine" introduced into the orchestra, and we have the bleating of the sheep imitated; in "A Hero's Life" we have shrill ugly phrases on the woodwind instruments to represent the chattering of the hero's enemies; and in the "Domestic Symphony" we see the musician using his vast orchestra to produce the squalling of a baby!

Such things, which seem rather the abuse than the use of genius, together with the fact that the melody of Strauss becomes more scrappy and uninspired with each new work, has suggested to many critics the question whether music is to-day really moving forward or backward.

This is too large a question for us to consider here. All we can do is to ask ourselves a few questions, which very likely each one of us will answer differently. What music wears the best: the music of Beethoven, with its classic forms treated with the independence and yet the reverence for great natural laws of the master, and its general

expression of moods; that of the "romanticists," with its less perfect structure and its appeal to our imaginations; or that of the "realists," with its forms determined entirely by programmes and its interest in outside objects rather than inner emotions? Is the great enlargement of the modern orchestra, with the prominence of the brass instruments and their tendency to overpower the more varied woodwind, especially in our large concert halls, an unmixed advantage? Can music deal with a matter-of-fact story without losing some of its ideal beauty, or, on the other hand, can it preserve this beauty without sacrificing vividness and accuracy in illustrating the programme? Is "melody" the "soul of music," or is it merely the toy of artistic babies?

Each of us must answer these questions for himself, as seriously and yet as open-mindedly as possible. We may know beforehand that, however we answer them, somebody will disagree with us. We shall do well, therefore, to realize that in a world where there are many kinds of people there must be many kinds of art; yet this knowledge need not interfere with our clinging with all our love and devotion to the particular kind, whichever it is, that best satisfies our own instinct of what is most deeply expressive and most richly beautiful.

CHAPTER 17
At a Song Recital

In reading the last few chapters you must, I think, have felt it growing more and more clear that even in "pure" or "absolute" music — that is, in music without words — there are two qualities more or less opposed to each other, qualities either of which is apt to thrive at the expense of the other. They may, perhaps, be combined without loss on either side in the greatest masterpieces of the greatest masters; but in lesser works one or the other is apt to suffer. Compositions of the most exquisite musical beauty — beauty of melody and that architecture of different melodies which we call form — are often lacking in vividness of expression: or at least the general expression is what strikes us more than the details of the expression. This is the case in most classical music. On the other hand, pieces which stick closely to their programmes, illustrating each step in detail (Liszt's symphonic poems, for example), are apt to lack unity, balance, and symmetry as a whole. The ideals of "musical beauty" and "dramatic truth," as we may name them, are hard to follow successfully at the same time.

In all music with words, of which the solo song and the opera are the most important branches, this struggle between the two ideals is even more fierce; for here the programme runs along hand in hand with the music, never leaving it free for a moment. Most of the famous quarrels in the history of opera, such as that between Gluck and Piccinni, or that over Italian and German opera, have arisen from this conflict of ideals. Nor has the history of song, which is, so to speak, opera in little, been free from similar differences of opinion, often bitter.

The songs in which the ideal of musical beauty is most singly followed are perhaps the folk-songs, or songs growing up naturally among the common people, and not written by any one composer,

such as are found in great numbers in all countries. The Germans are particularly rich in such songs, as you may see by looking at any good collection such as that of Erk in the Peters Edition, in which are found also many songs by great composers in the style of folk-songs. Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Weber, and others did not scorn to cast their ideas sometimes in this simple mold, any more than the great German poets, Goethe, Schiller, and Heine, scorned to write equally simple songs and ballads.

One of the best-known of these folk-style songs is "Lorelei" ("The Loreley"), the poem by Heinrich Heine, the music by Friedrich Silcher.[13] If you will study this, you will find that, the composer's aim has not been to give the expression of each word or line, but rather to make a charming melody. The form is most simple: eight phrases of equal length, the first two pairs balancing each other, the third giving the contrast, the fourth restating the original idea, with a slight climax to make an effective ending. Exactly the same music is used for each stanza. The accompaniment is not striking in any way — merely a series of harmonies to support the tune.

Now there is no doubt that from one point of view Silcher's setting of the words is unsatisfying. Heine's poem is very dramatic — it is a complete little drama or story. Beginning by telling how he is haunted by an old legend of the Rhine, going on to a description of the calm beauty of the river as he sees it in the waning light, the poet then suddenly imagines himself back in the old days, and recounts how the Loreley, a lovely maiden, sits combing her hair with a golden comb and singing a "wondrous song"; how the boatman, fascinated, does not see the reef toward which he drifts; and how the billows, surrounding him, swallow him up. Yet for all this varied and thrilling tale we have the same graceful melody and quiet accompaniment, over and over again! So it is in thousands of folk-songs, and songs in the folk-style, of all nations. Such songs are seldom "dramatic," in the sense of trying to illustrate their story in detail, like a set of moving pictures. They are "lyrical"; their aim is to arouse in us a single vivid mood; and this they can best do by musical beauty. If either the words or the music have to be sacrificed, then so much the worse for the

[13] Erk's collection, Peters Edition, page 64.

words!

As music constantly advanced in expressive power, however, and as musicians came to be men of more taste and education in matters outside of music, they sought, and found, ways in which they could pay greater attention to the poetic and dramatic part of their work, and thus created another kind of song, the "artistic" song. In the best of such songs musical beauty and dramatic truth are equally striking; in the less successful ones the music suffers.
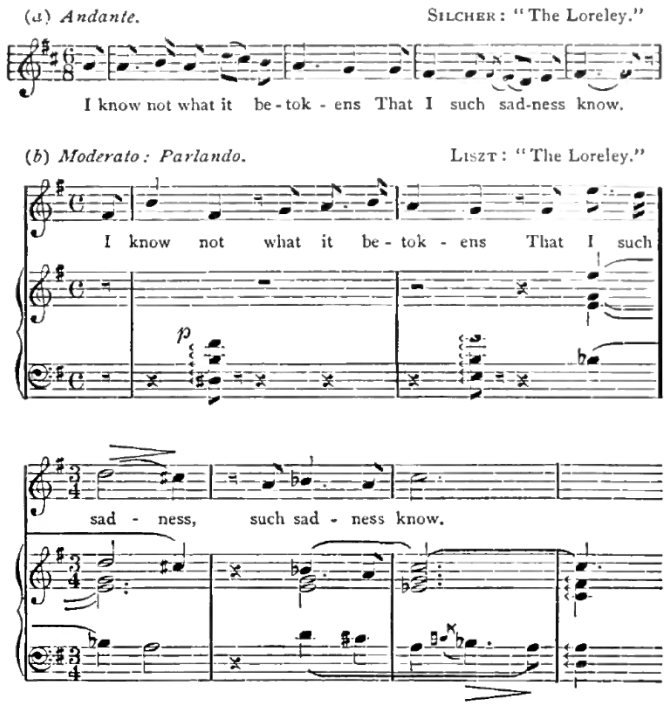
One of the first signs of the change was that composers began to pay more attention to what is called "declamation" — that is, to giving the right accent and amount of time to the important words, and not making unimportant ones stand out. It is remarkable how careless the old composers (as well as some more modern ones) were in this matter; and unless they took particular pains the poetic rhythm and the musical rhythm were almost sure to be at sixes and sevens, because all good poetry has many varieties of rhythm, as we saw in Chapter 4, while musical phrases are apt to have their accents in the same places. Take, for instance, the first two lines of "The Loreley," which may be translated:

> I know not what it betokens
> That I such sadness know.

The words that should he most accented here, to bring out the sense, are "know not" and "sadness"; but in Silcher's tune, the opening phrases of which are shown in Figure XXVII, a, no attention is paid to the fact; the time goes at its own sweet will, emphasizing "know…betokens, I…know," and leaving "sadness," the key word of the whole sentence, quite buried.

Now compare with this the same part of Liszt's setting (Figure XXVII, b), and see how much truer his "declamation" is. Just the right prominence is given to "I know not" and to the "I" that follows, and "sadness" comes out clearly as the chief idea, even being repeated to make it more emphatic. Indeed, the effect is almost as if the lines were spoken instead of sung, and Liszt marks them *"parlando"* — "spoken." The music is not a tune at all; it has not the musical charm of Silcher's; it is a speaking or reciting in musical tones, called "recitative."

FIGURE XXVII.



These brief examples show us a great deal as to the differing effects of the folk-style and the dramatic style. The first is more beautiful, more tuneful; the second is more realistic, it throws the words into the front at the expense of the music. It is a suggestive fact that the composers richest in melody are exactly the ones most apt to ride roughshod over the words. Even Schubert, in many ways the greatest of song composers, frequently does so, as in those lines of "Death and the Maiden," which he turns into nonsense by making them read:

> "Go, *wild* and bloodless *man*!
> I *am* still *young*."

But let us, returning to Liszt's "Loreley," see what more we can learn from it of the "dramatic" way of composing, of which it is a fine example.[14] One thing we notice at once is that the same music is not made to do duty over and over again, but there is different music for

[14] See Mr. Henry T. Finck's collection of "Fifty Mastersongs," in the "Musicians' Library," page 69.

each stanza of the poem. The song is what the Germans call "durchcomponirt" — "composed right through." This is usually the case with "artistic" songs. Furthermore, the accompaniment is much more important than in the Silcher, in many places quite as important as the voice part, or even more so, as where in the stanza about the boat being swallowed up it paints the stormy sea. Harmony is skillfully used to intensify the expression, as at the word "sadness" near the beginning, and later at the words "he sees but the height." Finally, effects of "tone-color" are similarly used, as where the "comb of bright gold" is suggested by the thin, pure color of the high treble.

All these means of making music dramatically expressive came first into systematic use in the settings of Schubert, appropriately called the "Father of the Song." Among his more than four hundred songs are, to be sure, many lovely examples of the simpler lyrical style, such as "Hark, Hark! the Lark," "Who is Sylvia?" and the famous "Serenade"; but it was in his dramatic "Erl-King," "Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel," "The Phantom Double," and others, that he opened up a new path. Who that has ever heard "The Erl-King" can forget the unceasing excitement of the accompaniment, the agonized dissonances at the child's cry, and the thrill of horror in the recitative at the end: "Clasped in his arms the child was dead."

Schubert is at his most appealing, however, in the comparatively few songs in which the dramatic and the melodious are perfectly wedded. The dramatic style has its own dangers. In the Liszt "Loreley" there is but one passage that is thoroughly charming as music — the setting of "the air is cool, day is waning," repeated in the last stanza. This stays in our memory, because it is a tune. So the songs of Schubert which wear best are, I think, either those, like "Hark, Hark! the Lark," which have the magic of perfect melody, or those, like "By the Sea," in which lovely melody is combined with, but not overwhelmed by, dramatic effects like the opening chords that so vividly suggest the solemn rise and fall of the ocean. The best songs of all are neither merely lyric nor merely dramatic, but both.

Robert Schumann, though he wrote one song, "The Two Grenadiers," which stands high in the dramatic class, was first of all a lyric writer, a singer of the simpler feelings of joy and grief, hope and despair. More than a hundred of his best songs were composed in the

year of his marriage, 1840, and were the outpouring of his happiness after the long years of love that had not run smooth. They are more personal and intimate than Schubert's; there runs through them that imaginative, meditative quality so strongly felt in all Schumann's music, and there is in all of them his fine manliness, his perfect sincerity. And what variety! Headlong passion, sweeping all before it, in "Spring Night," and "He, the Best of All"; gentle faith in "When Thy Sweet Eyes" and the too little known "Serenade"; tragic sorrow in "The Poet's Love," with its steadily advancing rhythm and its magnificent solidity of harmony; and the perfect joy of happy love in "Dedication."

To know these is to love them; and to love them is to love the man of whose noble and generous nature they are such a direct expression. Here are a few sentences from the letters he wrote when he was composing them:

"22d February.

"Since yesterday morning I have written about twenty-seven pages of music [the 'Myrthen' songs, opus 25], I can tell you nothing about it, except that I laughed and cried over it with delight. Ah, Clara, what bliss it is writing for the voice!

"13th March.

"Here are...my first published songs. While I was composing them I was quite lost in thoughts of you. If I were not engaged to such a girl, I could not write such music — and I mean that as a special compliment to you.

"15th May.

"I have been composing so much that it really seems uncanny at times. I cannot help it, and should like to sing myself to death, like a nightingale. There are twelve songs of Eichendorff's, but I have nearly forgotten them, and begun something else."

A composer whose songs — though he wrote little else — deserve a place not far below that of Schubert's and Schumann's is Robert Franz (1815-92). His songs, nearly three hundred in number, though less dramatic than Schubert's and less impassioned, perhaps less inspired, than Schumann's, are almost perfect of their kind. Their

peculiar qualities are, first, tender, graceful, lyrical melody, flowing along smoothly without any especially striking "effects" and with almost none of those recitative-like passages we noticed in Liszt's "Loreley"; second, a tendency to the quietly meditative and thoughtful in expression, tinged often with sadness; third, carefully worked out accompaniments, containing many delightful melodies running alongside the main melody of the voice part, something in the "polyphonic" style of Bach, of whom Franz was a loving student.

In order to feel the delicate charm of Franz, you should study carefully such a song as his "For Music."[15] Little attempt is made here at expressing each line or word separately. The three stanzas of the poem are not "through-composed," but set to practically the same music. There are no noisy climaxes — all is subdued, restrained. Yet the earnest, almost religious feeling of the lover's evening thoughts is perfectly caught, and the gentle swell of the music as its melody rises higher and higher in each phrase, and subsides in the last, is finely expressive. A most delightful and characteristic touch is the little counter-melody in the left hand in the third stanza.

Franz's fame has grown very slowly, and he will probably never be popular. This is partly because of the reserve of his style; he does not wear his heart on his sleeve, he never blusters or rants, and only those who love sincerity and the quietness of real feeling understand him. Moreover, he gives singers so little chance to show off with long high notes and other claptrap effects, and his songs depend so much on a perfect balance between singer and accompanist, which calls for skill and genuine artistic feeling, that inferior singers avoid him. This is unfortunate; for there are no songs more perfect in their own way, more sincerely felt, or more classically pure in style, than Franz's.

Since the song was raised to the position of an independent art-form by Schubert and Schumann, many composers have used it for the expression of some of their finest ideas. In general plan they have all followed the leader; but each has also, of course, put his own individuality into his work. Brahms's songs, of which there are over two hundred, are, like everything he wrote, strong, noble, full of deep and manly feeling. The broad curves and long-sustained phrases of

[15] "Fifty Mastersongs," page 91.

his melodies are supported by solid and often wonderfully expressive harmony. He is never stagey or sentimental, always direct, simple, sincere. Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) the composer of the well-known piano pieces and the delightful "Peer Gynt Suite," has written many romantic, delicately graceful songs that ought to be oftener heard than they are. Rubinstein, Tschaikowsky, Dvorak, Jensen, have all made real additions to the rich treasures of song. The French Faure has created a kind of song all his own: delicate, shot through with soft color like a landscape on a hazy day. The songs of two Germans of our own time, Richard Strauss and Hugo Wolf, follow the more dramatic style of Liszt.

It is a pity that all these various beauties are so seldom given to us pure, as the composers made them, unadulterated by the changes or additions of the singers who "interpret" them. No branch of music suffers more from its performers. The reason may be partly that anyone may be a singer, simply by the accident of being born with a good voice, and without the long hard work and earnest thought that is needed to become a good violinist or pianist; and therefore there are many singers who have more voice than taste or good sense. Fortunately it is within the power of all of us to help a little toward making singers realize what are the true ideals they ought to strive toward, by not applauding their high notes and their "expression" of everything but the beauty of the melody, and by encouraging the few true artists who honestly try to humble themselves, in order to exalt the music.

CHAPTER 18
At the Opera

An opera is like a song in combining music with words that give it definite meaning; but in opera the dramatic element is even further emphasized by the actors, costumes, and scenery. We not only hear the story unfolded side by side with the music; we actually see it going on before our eyes, acted by real people, among scenes that seem almost real. Opera is thus a combination of a play, or acted story, with music intended to impress upon us as only music can the states of feeling — the loves, hates, hopes, and fears — of the actors; and it ought, you would think, to have all the vividness of a play, and all the intensity of feeling of pure music. In few operas, however, if in any, has this ideal been realized. What usually happens is that the musical and the dramatic elements struggle against each other just as they do in the song, only more fiercely, and one conquers only by partly disabling the other. What makes the fight even harder for music is that in opera it has against it not only the needs of the dramatic element, but the vanity of singers, each one of whom, flattered by the audience, wishes to be the center of the whole performance. No wonder it has taken the efforts of the greatest geniuses, like Gluck, Mozart, and Wagner, to keep true the balance between all these elements of operatic effect.

Taking its rise in Italy about the year 1600, opera spread rapidly during the seventeenth century through the chief countries of Europe. The general plan early became practically as we have it now. The parts of the chief persons in the story were taken by half a dozen "principals," all skillful singers. There was a chorus to add bustle to the scene and volume to the sound in the climaxes, though at first it was little used. The people expressed their feelings at the moments of excitement, either singly in songs called "arias," or together in duets, trios, quartets, etc., called *ensemble* or "concerted" pieces; the arias

had the balanced phrases of true music, and were often in three-part form. Ordinary talk was either spoken (as in the kind of opera called *opera comique*) or sung in the rambling, unbalanced melody called recitative (as in the *opera seria*). Each nation made prominent what specially appealed to its taste: the Italians made much of the solo singing, enjoying the display of the voice in rapid runs and scales; the Germans cared more for the simple lyrical melody expressive of inner feelings, and for part-songs by several singers together; the French, fond of dancing, developed the *ballet*, an elaborate series of dances made dazzling by many-colored costumes and lights.

During the eighteenth century the scheme of the opera became set in hard-and-fast rules, planned chiefly for show, and paying almost no attention to truth of dramatic effect. The principal singers, especially the soprano and tenor, had become so spoiled by the public, who went wild over their trills and high notes, that they ran everything to suit themselves, having the poor composers and librettists quite under their thumbs. Each opera, no matter what it was about, must have just so many arias for the soprano and so many for the tenor. They must follow in a certain order, and there must be just three acts, and they must end in certain ways, as, for instance, there must be a "grand duet" near the end, no matter what the story. No wonder good poets were disgusted with such an artificial arrangement, and the librettos were written by cheap hack-writers, who worked only for their pay. Operas became little more than concerts sung in costume.

Thus things went on from bad to worse until the first great reformer of the opera, Gluck (1714—87) came upon the scene. In his "Orpheus and Eurydice," produced in 1762, and in later works, he swept the old rules aside, and showed that the aim of opera should be not to show off the singers, but to illustrate the story. He carried out this aim in many ways: by insisting that the libretto should be not merely a string for the musician to run his beads on, but a well-made drama; by making the aria a truly expressive song instead of a series of vocal fireworks; by increasing the number and importance of the *ensemble* pieces and the choruses; by making the orchestra take a part of its own instead of merely supporting the voices.

Gluck's genius was stronger on the dramatic than on the musical

side, however, and his works are somewhat lacking in variety and charm of melody. It was on this side that his work was filled out by that of one of the most timeful of all composers, Mozart, whose operas "The Marriage of Figaro," "Don Giovanni" and "The Magic Flute," are as fresh today as when they first fascinated the world. They are full of the flowing graceful melody of the Italian type, in strong contrast with Gluck's noble but rather severe style; and instead of his ancient Greek and Roman heroes they present to us people with our own virtues and failings. Yet they do this with a truth to life, a vivid sense of the differences in characters and the ways they may be brought out by the music, that shows the wholesome influence of Gluck's reform, and removes them far from the unreality and empty showiness of the early eighteenth-century operas.

Mozart and Gluck were both, however, ahead of their time: one because he was a great musical genius whose instinct led him to effects that did not become the common property of musicians until much later, the other because his sense of what an opera should be as a drama carried him beyond what music was in his time able to do. His ideals were fine and true, but he lacked the tools to carry them out with complete success. The technique of music, its resources of melody, harmony, rhythm, and orchestral color, needed to be developed to a greater perfection before any one but a Mozart could use them in a thoroughly dramatic way.

It was here that the work of the composers of the early nineteenth century, above all of Beethoven, came in as a powerful aid to opera. Beethoven himself, it is true, was not by nature an opera composer. His single opera, "Fidelio," is a noble work because he was a noble musician; but he was first of all a composer for instruments he himself said that his melodies always came to him as if played by instruments rather than sung, and his intense earnestness made the show and artifice of the theater disagreeable to him, while his sense of humor showed him only too clearly the absurdity of making people sing what they would naturally say. His influence was therefore indirect, and depended on the marvelous advance he made, in his symphonies, in directness and force of expression, through both melody and harmony, and in orchestration.

He thus opened up the way for the "romantic" type of opera

which appeared in Germany in the early part of the century, and of which the most important single figure is Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826). In his well-known and still popular operas "Der Freischütz," "Euryanthe," and "Oberon," Weber uses, instead of the well-worn Greek and Latin stories, subjects of a more romantic kind, based on legends of the middle ages, and spiced with mystery and magic. To the charm of gypsies, ghosts, monsters, and fairies he adds the musical beauty of melodies of the folk-song style, more free and full of sentiment than the old arias, of impressive *ensembles* and of his richly varied orchestration, with its mellow horns, its brilliant violins, its pleading clarinets. His overtures, so poetically felt, so richly colored, are like those of Wagner true introductions to the dramas, not mere noisy hotchpotches to open an evening's entertainment.

But notwithstanding all these fine qualities of Weber's work, it made at first but little impression on the growth of opera in general, which was long held back by the trivial taste of the Italians, quite contented as they were with the tinsel and glitter of the old style. The truth is that the audiences, especially in Italy, cared not a whit for truth to real life, for genuine expression of feeling, or for artistic delicacy; all they wanted was their idolized singers and the sentimental commonplace tunes, dressed up with brilliant runs and trills and all kind of musical gimcracks. And to make matters worse, a school of composers arose, with Rossini (1792-1868) at their head, who instead of trying to educate them to better things, fell in with what they wanted, and with a skill worthy of a better cause, fed them with a more sugary diet than ever. "Rossini," says Mr. Edward Dickinson, "had the spirit of a showman, not of a teacher or reformer. His aim was immediate success before an unreflecting public, and he cared little for the lasting value of the means employed. For about twenty years he was entertainer-in-chief for all Western Europe."

Yet even Rossini had his merits. To "give the devil his due," we must admit that he raised the standards in some ways. For one thing, he curbed a little the power of the singers, who had been so long adored by the public that they had grown to think they could have the say about everything. He no longer allowed them to decorate their arias to suit themselves: he insisted that they sing what he wrote, though this was usually just as emptily showy as anything they

could have put in. He removed the sopranos and tenors from their thrones, and gave the altos and basses a chance. He increased the number, importance, and dramatic interest of the concerted numbers. Above all he took more pains with the orchestral part, giving it some individuality. In his two masterpieces, "The Barber of Seville" and "William Tell," which are still played, he made his people more real and his plots more interesting.

Bellini (1802-35) and Donizetti (1798-1848) wrote in the same style as Rossini, but in place of his empty brilliancy and claptrap sensationalism we find in them more sentiment. This sentiment is usually of that shallow kind which is better called "sentimentality," but so far as it goes it shows a tendency to make music for the sake of expressing feeling rather than of merely tickling the ears and dazzling the eyes. But even in Bellini and Donizetti opera was sunk to a pretty low state.

In France matters were somewhat better — not very much. Paris became the chief operatic center of the world through the labors of Gluck, and attracted to it men of so many different nationalities and musical styles, such as the Germans, Meyerbeer and Offenbach, and the Italians, Cherubini, Rossini, and Spontini, that it was like a seething pot into which a little of everything is stirred. No one style takes the lead as in Italy. And although the French have naturally more dramatic sense than the Italians, they will put up with just about as much artificial glitter and surface display, of a slightly different kind. Instead of sentimental melody and vocal flourishes they demanded elaborate scenery, gorgeous ballets, and subjects drawn from history, but treated with a pompous grandeur through which sincere feeling could hardly make itself felt.

Of this pompous style are the operas of Spontini (1774-1851), of which "The Vestal" made a great success in Paris in 1807. Spontini seems to have really tried to improve the taste of the public, both musically and dramatically, but his music was too hollow, too strained and artificial, to enjoy long life. His example was followed by Rossini in his "William Tell," and by others, of whom the most successful was the clever German Jew, Meyerbeer (1791-1864), famous for his operas "Robert the Devil," "The Huguenots," and "The Prophet." While he possessed real instinct for dramatic effect, and particularly for the dramatic use of the orchestra, knowing how to picture the

horrible and grewsome in a way to make the flesh creep, Meyerbeer was too fond of gaudy spectacle, and too willing to come down to his audiences' level of taste instead of drawing them up to a higher one. He lacked refined feeling, and preferred surface glitter to genuine beauty.

The fatal defect of grand or serious opera in France was its pretentiousness and insincerity. Its composers made a display of heroic feeling, but in their hearts they were working not to express themselves, but to gain money. Art would have been in a bad way had not the lighter type of opera comique brought into play all that is best in the French character — its gayety, delicacy, and wit — while discouraging its tendency to pose and swagger. The spoken dialogue which used to be the special mark of the comic opera gave way in time to recitative, and in other ways its outer form approached that of grand opera; but its spirit was distinct, for it treated stories of a romantic or humorous kind rather than "battle, murder, and sudden death," and it cared more for charm than for impressiveness. In the hands of Boieldieu (1775-1834), and later of Auber (1782-1871) and Hérold (1791-1833) it became a formidable rival of grand opera. Still later it was made even more pungent and sparkling, if rather trivial, by Offenbach (1819-80) and others.

Opera thus spread from Italy all over Europe during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It became so enormously popular that not only the geniuses, but all the middling good composers who longed for wealth or fame made it their business to write for the stage. The results, as we have seen, were not entirely good. The need of pleasing the public, a public in which those who merely wished to be entertained far outnumbered the true music-lovers, led the Italians into sacrificing everything to the singers, and the French into caring chiefly for magnificence of outward effect. Yet even the most "popular" composers had done much by the way toward increasing the resources of the musician, especially in the matter of orchestration; and at least one type of opera, the romantic opera of Weber, had opened a path toward more human subjects and a more sincere way of treating them. What was now needed was a great genius who could take all the means that had been gathered together, and use them in the service of a finer ideal. He must have a keen sense of

both dramatic and musical effect. He must be a master of the orchestra. He must be an earnest and understanding student of the new means of musical expression that had grown up outside the opera, through the work chiefly of Beethoven.

Above all, he must be a man sure enough of his aims to stick to them through years of misunderstanding; he must have courage and patience to fight poverty, contempt, envy, and the indifference of the careless crowd. He must combine the skill of a genius with the devotion of a martyr… Such a man now appeared. His name, as you have probably guessed, was Richard Wagner.

CHAPTER 19
At the Opera
(Continued)

Wagner's vast life work is so various and many-sided, it contains in itself such different and often conflicting elements, and his endless theorizing about it in his letters and articles have raised about it such a cloud of problems, that a clear idea of it as a whole is exceedingly hard to get. We cannot attempt here to touch on his theories, frequently vague, of politics, religion, and other phases of life only indirectly connected with music. All we can do is to get some notion of the new ways in which he sought to combine drama and music in his operas, or, as he preferred to call them, music-dramas.

Even here there are many contradictions. Most of these can be traced to the fact that while he himself believed that his aim was to make the drama the main thing, the master, and music the servant, yet his greatest powers were after all musical. From this we may start, and to this we shall return.

In criticising the Italian, French, and German schools of opera that we have been studying, Wagner says in one of his books that in them the musical effect was always the *end*, and the dramatic effect the *means*, whereas the dramatic effect ought to be the end, and the music the means. It was in order to bring about this new balance (similar, you see, to that for which Gluck worked) that he made his sweeping reforms.

First, he wrote his own librettos, in order to have all the materials of his art in his own hands. These he based not on historical events, which he thought contained too many commonplace doings that would not mix well with music, nor on incidents of his own time, which were so near at hand that the audience would take them for themselves merely, and not see their lessons, their poetic suggestiveness, by which Wagner set much store. Instead he took the stories

of life in the middle ages, containing gods and goddesses, fairies and monsters, as well as men and women, which he found in the old German legends. These he valued not only for their dramatic interest as exciting stories, but because they could be taken as *allegories*, representing the deepest facts of men's life in all ages. He was intensely earnest in his belief that the musical drama should be not merely an entertainment, but a lesson, an inspiration to nobler living.

Secondly, feeling that the persons of the drama were important only as bringing out its meaning, he swept away all the customs that had made the singers the main thing. More and more as he went on he replaced the old series of separate musical numbers — arias, duets, choruses — by a continuous flowing musical speech, without stops and without definite "tunes," a kind of declaiming which adapted itself "with absolute freedom to the feeling to be brought out, and which he called "infinite" or "endless melody." He wanted his characters to seem to be talking, rather than singing set pieces as if in a concert. With the same purpose he did away with the repealing of words, and with the many trills and runs of the Italian style.

He never seems to have realized clearly that in thus giving up melody (for "infinite melody" is as impossible as a square circle, since balance of phrases complete in themselves is what gives melody its form) he was sacrificing musical beauty to dramatic appropriateness. But if he did not confess this in his theories, he was too good a musician not to be aware of it, and it was largely in order to restore the musical element that he developed his plan of putting the real melodies in the orchestra.

With him the orchestra becomes in a sense more important than the singers. As we have seen, the powers of orchestral expression had been wonderfully developed by Beethoven and Weber; and Wagner, building on them, was himself one of the greatest of orchestral masters. His plan, then, was to make the orchestral part no longer an accompaniment, but a marvelously rich tapestry of interweaving themes or "leading motives," each of which had moreover a dramatic as well as a musical reason for being, in that it was associated with some particular person or idea in the story (for example, the motive of the ring). Leading motives in themselves were nothing new, having been used by Weber in "Der Freischütz," by Berlioz in his programme

music, and even by Mozart. What was new was the importance Wagner gave to them as the musical threads binding together what without them would have been vague and formless, and the wondrous skill with which he makes them grow, just as Beethoven does in his symphonies. He himself said that his music was the Beethovenian music "developed, expanded, and applied to dramatic purposes."

Finally, Wagner tried to make the scenery and all that appealed to the eye in the stage spectacle, serve the story as obediently as the music. The display of Meyerbeer for its own sake gave place to equally or even more elaborate effects intended to strengthen through the eye the impressions made upon the ear by the music, and on the mind by the poetry. We may not go so far as Wagner in thinking that his "composite art," of which music, poetry, painting, sculpture, and so on are only minor parts, is more perfect than any one of these arts alone, but at least we must admit that with this composite art he has accomplished wonders. How skillfully does he enhance the effect of scenery by music in such a passage as the famous fire scene!

One of the most wonderful things about Wagner is the patient experimenting by which, beginning in the manner of the Spontini and Meyerbeer French opera in his "Rienzi," in 1838, he gradually felt his way, not without many false steps, to his own mode of writing, which was not thoroughly developed until sixteen years later, in "Rhinegold," He had no models to go by; he had to be, as someone has vividly expressed it, "his own ancestor." Thus in "Rienzi" there is much of the hollow glitter, the pompous pretentiousness of the French grand opera; in "The Flying Dutchman," which came next (1841-43), the use of leading motives is foreshadowed, but they are merely repeated rather than developed; in "Tannhäuser" (1843-45) there are still musical numbers, such as Elizabeth's prayer, the pilgrims' choruses, and so on, that are complete in themselves; and in "Lohengrin" (1846-48) for the first time the music is an almost unbroken stream, and the leading motives are used with complete mastery.

During all this early time, too (he was born in 1813, and was thus thirty-four when he finished "Lohengrin") Wagner had to face not only these artistic problems, but the indifference of the public and

the contempt, later growing into jealousy, of other musicians. His ideas were so new, and he followed them so doggedly, using little tact with those who did not sympathize with him, that he made bitter enemies. His vast creations were so expensive to put on the stage that even friendly managers were frightened off. In Paris, in 1839, where he had gone to try to get "Rienzi" performed, he was reduced to such poverty that he had to make arrangements of popular operettas for publishers and write articles for the musical papers in order to keep himself and his wife from starving. And after "Rienzi" had been successfully given in Dresden, and he had been given the post of operatic conductor there, matters were not much better; for his duties kept him so busy that he could find little time for his own work, and when he did produce "Tannhauser" it was not understood. In 1849, moreover, he got into political difficulties, and was exiled from Germany.

At this time he was in despair at the failure of the public to understand his aims. "I was thoroughly disheartened," he says, "from undertaking any new artistic scheme. I had had proofs of the impossibility of making my art intelligible to the public… I thought everything was at an end with my artistic creativeness." Changing his tactics, he devoted much of his time during his exile to explaining his aims in a series of books and articles. But nothing could long keep him from his music, and becoming fascinated by the old legends of the Nibelung dwarfs, the Rhine maidens, and the gods and goddesses of Valhalla, he now began work on what finally became his great "Ring" tetralogy, or group of four dramas — "Rhinegold," "Siegfried," "The Valkyries," and "The Dusk of the Gods."

The composition of these was interrupted in 1857 by work on "Tristan and Isolde," considered by many his masterpiece. It was written in response to a tempting invitation from the Emperor of Brazil to compose an opera for the theater of Rio de Janeiro. As usual, the immediate result was bitter disappointment, the work proving so difficult that it was refused for performance, and remained many years in his desk. For a while there seemed a chance of getting "Tannhauser" produced in Paris, but this, too, ended in failure. Poor and discouraged as he was, Wagner now wrote the most joyous and delightful of all his music-dramas, the immortal "Mastersingers" — a

wonderful instance of the way genius rises above its worldly surroundings.

Nevertheless at this time Wagner was desperate. He had made up his mind to give up the long struggle, to abandon composing and retire to Switzerland, when at last his luck turned, and he was invited by the young King of Bavaria to go to Munich, and continue his great work in peace. Though his troubles were not quite ended, this was the beginning of better times which he had amply earned. A splendid theater was especially built for him in Bayreuth, and in 1874 the "Ring" cycle of dramas, which he had finished two years before, was given with great splendor at the first of those Festivals of Bayreuth which have since become such an important part of the musical life of all Europe. The master, now admired as much as formerly he had been ridiculed, completed his work with the deeply religious "Parsifal" in 1882, and died a year later.

A noble life it was, and as stupendous a work as was ever done by one man. Of course, like all human work, it is not flawless. In spite of Wagner's high ideal of truth to life in the drama, he was fond of stagy theatrical effects that jar on the best modern taste. His dragons, and swans, and other elaborate machinery often verge, to our eyes, on the ridiculous. He seems to have been curiously unimaginative, and to have had to have every element of his drama actually visible on the stage. On this side, as Mr. Newman points out, "the modern world is undoubtedly moving away from him." The morals or lessons of his dramas, too, the truths of human life that they are meant to suggest, are often forced and false — in a word, sentimental. His talk about "regeneration through love," "redemption," the "turning of the Willed-not into the Non-existing," and "man in the myth," is more and more felt to be what the same keen critic calls "moonshine."

A still more serious difficulty is that with all his genius Wagner could not quite solve that old problem of the perfect union of music with the drama — probably because it is insoluble. His *aria parlante*, or spoken song, for the voices, was a makeshift, a compromise between the dramatic untruthfulness of making people sing tunes by way of conversing together and the musical ugliness of letting them talk. It was a far better plan than anyone else had thought of, especially when musically strengthened by the leading motives in the

orchestra, but that it was after all a makeshift is shown by the fact that in the very finest passages of Wagner such as Isolde's great love-scene over Tristan's body, the voice part is not essential to the music, it is, so to speak, stuck on afterwards. The orchestra is the main thing, precisely because the orchestra has those phrases of definite balanced melody that Wagner sought to abolish.

The contradiction at the root of Wagner's work is indeed just this: that its supreme strength and beauty is due to exactly those musical elements that he thought ought to be not the end but the means. As a thinker, a philosopher, his importance is steadily waning; as a dramatist he has serious shortcomings; it is as a musician that he lives and will live. He is one of the greatest melodists of the world; think of the variety of expression, the beauty of line, in his great melodies; in the Pilgrim's Chorus, in the love duet of "Tristan," in the massive "Meistersinger" Overture, in the lovely spring song in "The Valkyries."

As a master of harmony he is almost more remarkable, and his influence is to be found in all modern music. When he wishes he can be as strong and as simple as Beethoven, using the common chords of our ordinary scale with overwhelming effect in the wedding march of "Lohengrin," and on page after page of the "Mastersingers." On the other hand, he did more than any other single musician to show the expressive power of those groping harmonies moving along the "chromatic" scale of half-tones and passing freely and yet firmly from key to key, which give "Tristan and Isolde" an atmosphere all its own.

In the mingling of several melodies at once in a complex web, with a skill equal to that of Bach and yet with a splendor of effect thoroughly modern, as in the famous passage in the "Meistersinger" Overture, he is unique. His rhythms are so various that each of his hundreds of leading motives has its own distinct "profile." His treatment of these motives, the way they are made to grow and change, introduce into opera the living, breathing music of the Beethoven symphony. He handled the orchestra with absolute mastery, and so enlarged it that it became rather a group of orchestras, of contrasting tone colors, than a single one. In short, Wagner has passed all the elements of music through the crucible of his marvelous mind, and they have come forth possessed of strange powers and new possibilities

which are not yet exhausted. With Bach and Beethoven he must always stand as one of the supreme musical creators.

The only serious rival of Wagner is that most remarkable of Italians, Verdi, who was born in the same year, 1813, and died in 1901, producing one of his finest works, "Falstaff," when he was eighty years old. Beginning with works in the shallow and flowery style of Rossini, though of greater dramatic force, such as "Ernani," (1844), "Rigoletto" (1851), "Il Trovatore" (1853) and "La Traviata" (1853), Verdi constantly deepened and refined his way of writing, until in his "Aïda" (1871), "Otello" (1887), and "Falstaff" (1893), he produced music-dramas as closely wrought as Wagner's, though in no sense imitations of them.

In recent years operas have been produced in great abundance and in a bewildering variety of styles by German, French, and Italian composers, comparatively few of them uninfluenced by Wagner in one way or another. The most popular of all these are undoubtedly Gounod's "Faust," which with its sugary melody went straight to the public heart and has been heard one thousand times in France alone, and the musically much finer "Carmen" of the unfortunate Frenchman, Bizet, who died unappreciated the very year it appeared (1875). The highly skilled Saint-Saëns and Massenet have also made successes with "Samson and Delilah," and "Manon Lescaut," respectively, as well as with many others. Charpentier has sprung into fame with his "Louise," a picture of life in Paris to-day, highly realistic, and Debussy with his "Pelleas et Melisande," an opera as far removed from the real as possible.

The Germans have naturally imitated Wagner more closely, especially Humperdinck in his delightful "Hänsel und Gretel," based on the fairy tale of Grimm and making free use of German folk-songs. Richard Strauss has increased Wagner's already gigantic orchestra, and has chosen, in his much-talked-of "Salome" and "Elektra," subjects full of horror and crime. People have such a strange fondness for being shocked that they have rushed to see them, but in spite of the great musical and dramatic skill they show it seems doubtful whether they will live.

The younger Italians, too, have profited by the fondness for the horrible, the exciting, and even the coarse. Mascagni's most popular

"Cavalleria Rusticana" makes up in "thrills" for what it lacks in musical beauty; it moves swiftly, it shows the fierce loves and hates of uncontrolled natures, and it ends with a murder. Leoncavallo's "Il Pagliacci," though more worth while musically, belongs to the same so-called "realistic" school, as do also Puccini's "La Bohême" and "Madame Butterfly." The popularity of such crude and sensational methods suggests that opera is in danger of relapsing into the low state from which Wagner temporarily rescued it. Will some new genius come to raise it again? We cannot tell; but at least we may prepare ourselves to give him, if he does appear, our intelligent support.

CHAPTER 20
Conclusion

In the early chapters of this book we took a view of the most general qualities of all music, with the object of seeing what were its most characteristic effects, found in all its branches, and marking it off from the other arts. Next, by fancying ourselves at concerts of various kinds, we got a nearer view of some of the more important special departments of music — piano and orchestral music, the song, the opera. In all this study our aim was to sharpen our attention by finding out differences, and to cultivate our taste by distinguishing the better effects from the poorer. It now remains to gather up the threads, to sum up very briefly what we have learned, perhaps adding a touch here and there where our mode of study has left gaps.

I think it has come out pretty clearly as we have progressed that the division of musical effects we made in the first chapter was a sound one. Music, we said — all music — appeals to us in three ways: it appeals to our ears by the sensuous beauty of its sounds, to our minds by the beauty of its shape, both in single melodies and in the forms into which they are built, and to our feelings by its power to arouse moods, and also to some extent to suggest the actual surroundings of our everyday lives. Anything more which it may seem to do we shall usually find on examination to be due not to itself, but to some other art with which it is coupled.

In opera, for example, music is coupled with poetry and with drama, and in Wagner's music-dramas even with painting, sculpture, dancing, and other arts. In the oratorio a similar use is made of poetic and dramatic help in the illustration of religious stories. In song, poetry alone is the companion of music. We should try to see clearly in all these cases what part of the effect is due to the music itself, and what part to other elements.

We may also go a step further now, and state a truth that I hope

has been becoming gradually clearer — that those forms of music are the finest in which the purely musical elements count most, and other elements least; and that moreover among these purely musical elements some are more important than others, the one we can least afford to spare being that beauty of form which appeals to the mind. And this at once explains the need of educating our taste, since precisely this most musical of qualities is the one hardest to appreciate, while everybody is more or less sensitive to pleasant sounds and to the appeal to the feelings, and even absolutely unmusical people find much to enjoy in opera, oratorio, and song. What we as music lovers wish is to grow ever more sensitive to the rarest, most spiritual part of music, to enter each day more completely into the companionship of the finest thoughts of the greatest minds.

How necessary study is to such progress we can see on every hand. What is the most "popular" branch of music? Undoubtedly it is the opera. And what are the most popular operas? Either those of the flowery Italian school that by their vocal ornament tickle our ears, that is to say, make the sensuous appeal more than any other, or those that through exciting stories, as in "Cavalleria Rusticana," or gorgeous spectacles, as in much of Meyerbeer, appeal to instincts in us which are not musical at all. Indeed, my point is amply proved by the fact that the ordinary man or woman, on coming out of the opera, talks not of the drama, still less of the music, but of the singers! As if after reading a great poem we should talk only of the paper and the type.

In songs the usual taste is no better. The singer is still in the foreground, and the favorite songs of, say, Schubert, are not those of perfect musical beauty like "Hark, Hark! the Lark," but those which, like the "Erl-King," tell an exciting story. All this is of course perfectly natural. We all, as human beings, like a story, while comparatively few appreciate a perfect melody or a well-rounded form.

In orchestral music, even of the "programme" kind, outside elements take a less important part, and the music is the main thing. Yet even here we find some of the same conditions. In the first place, there is a strong tendency to read into even a symphony a story of some kind, or at least a series of pictures, which really have nothing to do with it. This would do no great harm if it did not distract our

attention from the music itself, and lead us to forget that music is a language, so to speak, that cannot be translated. A melody by a great composer *means* just that melody, just those tones, and nothing else. Let us not spoil it by cloaking its immortal beauty under our rag-tags of "interpretations." In the second place, the marvelous richness and variety of tone in the orchestra is in itself a danger. The composer without ideas seeks to cover his poverty by a gorgeous robe of sound, and the thoughtless hearer is too willing to let him. Good taste, on the contrary, insists that there must be beauty of melody and harmony, and that even when an orchestral work is robbed of its color by being arranged for piano, as when a painting is photographed, something must remain. A composer said to me recently: "I am writing piano pieces now. It is good practice, for it can't be done without ideas."

Yet even piano music has its own dangers. Though the piano has less variety of color than the orchestra, it is capable of many effects, such as pearly runs, dazzling feats of rapidity, and the magic of the pedal, which delight the ear more than the mind. It was the fondness for these that led the pianist-composers of about 1830 to write all those shallow "fantasias" on operatic airs, enveloped in sparkling scale-passages, that have now happily gone out of fashion. Even the masterly Liszt was not superior to such tricks.

The prominence of a single person is also a danger of piano music. Just as the average concert-goer thinks only of the singers, the average recital-goer is apt to think too much of the personality of the pianist, of his hair, his necktie, or his wrist action. Some famous virtuosos have unfortunately not thought it beneath them to encourage and profit by this curiosity about their persons, degrading as it is to their art. Such men choose for their programmes only pieces that will show off their dexterity or their "temperament," with the result that many of the purest gems of piano literature, such as Brahms's noble intermezzos, capriccios, and rhapsodies, are hardly ever heard in recitals at all. But there is a pleasanter side to this as to all pictures. A few really great pianists lose themselves entirely in their work, and play with quiet sincerity what they know to be worth while. And if the public does not understand them at first, it comes round to them in time, and adds admiration to respect.

If we look for the type of music in which all these lower elements of appeal to the ear alone, or to the interest of a story, heard or imagined, or to curiosity about the personalities of performers, are reduced to their minimum, we shall find it, I think, in chamber music, or music for small combinations of instruments of which the string quartet of two violins, a viola, and a violoncello is the standard group. While there is plenty of variety of tone color here, the overwhelming effects of the orchestra, which drown thought in sound, are impossible; pieces with "programmes," though occasionally met with, as in the Bohemian Smetana's beautiful quartet "Aus meinem Leben" — "From My Life" — are rare; and the players, instead of standing out as individuals, are merged in their common work.

All the great masters of pure music have contributed to this purest of its forms, the string quartet, of which Haydn is called the father. What wealth of unalloyed musical delight is to be found in the ever-springing melody, the intricate yet clear tissue of interweaving voices, the deep yet quiet feeling, of the quartets of Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Dvorak, Tschaikowsky, Brahms! And if one wants a little more variety of tone color there are the quintets in which the piano is added to the strings, of which Schumann's is a famous example, and there are, for smaller groups, trios for piano, violin, and violoncello, and sonatas for violin or violoncello with piano. The older one gets, the more familiar with it one grows, the more delightful does chamber music become. It is almost the only form of music that never grows wearisome.

Another high type of music, now unfortunately little cultivated, is that found in the noble organ works of Bach and Handel, and in later times of Mendelssohn, Rheinberger, Cesar Franck, and the French organists of to-day like Widor. Although the organ is played by a single man, it has the voices of a multitude; and owing to the nature of its mechanism it is less minutely expressive than the piano, less responsive to the player's touch, and for that very reason more grand and superhuman. If we were to try to get as near as we could to our idea of "the music of the spheres," we should probably have to choose one of Bach's great organ fugues. But at present our average taste, at least in America, is not fine enough for such a severe style; we prefer sentimental anthems, and even arrangements of operatic

and orchestral pieces, with plenty of "tremolo" and solos for fancy stops.

We should not, however, speak contemptuously of any musical taste which is sincere and open-minded. It is far better to have a real love for Sousa's marches and the waltzes in the latest light operas, yes, even for "ragtime," than to rave over Debussy because he is the fashion. The best qualities we can have in our relation to music are honesty and open-mindedness: honesty that keeps our taste true and wholesome, however crude; open-mindedness that is willing to learn better standards when they are pointed out. Wherever we start, we shall advance, I think, provided we have these qualities, in the direction of preferring pure music to that which is alloyed, and of loving best not what most deliciously or most richly feeds our ears, or what most violently stirs our feelings, but what gently thrills us with its divine beauty.

The Lure of Music

Picturing the Human Side of Great Composers, with Stories of Their Inspired Creations

By Olin Downes

Foreword

A friend of mine had a graphophone which he occasionally enjoyed. He used to say that he "wasn't musical" but he "knew what he liked." His repertory was small, but pleasing to him, since, thanks to the records, he had become acquainted with some half-dozen pieces of fairly good music, and could even whistle scraps of them from memory.

He never knew how musical he was until he chanced one day on a paragraph in a book his daughter was reading, about one of the compositions that he liked. He suddenly realized that this composition told the story of an episode in the life of another man, a human being who lived, struggled, rejoiced, and narrated his experiences in the language of tones.

Having read the story, he played the record over again, and discovered that it meant far more to him than it ever had before. He wondered whether there were stories about his other records, and after much searching obtained a little information on the subject that now absorbed his leisure moments. He then invited a number of friends to his home and read them the stories of the records which he played. His friends were delighted and surprised to discover all that the music, thus explained, meant to them. When my friend told me this, he convinced me that a great need of to-day is a book which shall bring to every home the treasures of the musical world.

It is to him and to his friends, and to all those who love music and wish to know its meaning, that this book is dedicated, in the belief that they will find in the messages of the masters the enjoyment, solace, and inspiration intended for every human heart.

The Author.

CHAPTER 1
George Frederick Handel

George Frederick Handel was a full-blooded, adventurous, practical man, who swung through life magnificently and compelled everybody to acknowledge his genius. As student, traveler, duelist, opera manager, favorite of courts and friend of kings, he was tremendous! He went about clad in knee breeches, powdered wig, and the rest of eighteenth-century fashion. He quarreled and enterprised and speculated. He composed with furious rapidity in every form known to his time, and was one of the few great masters who did not have to die to become famous. Because of his oratorio, "The Messiah," Handel is commonly thought of as a religious composer. Religious he was, but not in the sectarian sense. He wrote more operas than he wrote oratorios. He knew life and loved it. His religious music is the exultant song of the Warrior of the Faith, who takes blows and gives them, chanting the while his assurance of the ultimate victory. Handel's father, a barber-surgeon, wished his son to become a lawyer. That was an estimable profession, whereas the ordinary musician of the day was a mountebank, a scalawag, or worse. When George Frederick showed an unmistakable fondness for musical toys they were taken away from him. He was forbidden even to listen to singing or playing. According to the story, an aunt smuggled a spinet up into the garret, and George Frederick would steal away to the loft and play to himself by the hour.

A day came when his father decided to visit the local duke, who was known to be a patron of music. Handel was forbidden to go, but he ran after his father's coach for miles, through town, through country, until at last, when it was too late to send him home, he was taken in. Handel gained an audience with the duke, improvised for him, and the duke became the ally of his ambitions. It was an occurrence typical of the energy and the stubbornness which Handel showed all his life where his purposes were concerned. An impetuous, powerful

character, who could not fail!

Handel became a pupil of Zachau, organist of the cathedral at Halle, Handel's home town. At the end of three years Zachau announced that his pupil knew more than he did. Thus Handel, when he went out into the world in 1703 as a youth of eighteen, was already well equipped as a composer. He entered the orchestra of the opera house at Hamburg, amusing himself and at first deceiving the players by affecting to know nothing. He made a warm friend of George Mattheson, a composer, critic, and a singer of brilliant gifts. It was Mattheson's habit, when his own opera, "Anthony and Cleopatra," was being performed, to go on the stage as Anthony, then, after the death of that hero, return to his seat at the harpsichord and conduct the orchestra through the rest of the performance. Handel, seated one night in Mattheson's place, refused to give up his position. There were hot words, Mattheson slapped Handel's face, and the quarrel was finished in front of the theater before a crowd of cheering spectators. It is said that a button on Handel's coat saved him from the sword-thrust of Mattheson. The two made it up later; Mattheson assisted enthusiastically in the production of Handel's first opera, "Almira," produced with signal success in 1705. But Handel found himself the butt of jealousies and intrigues, and decided to go to Italy.

Nothing could have been more providential. In his travels Handel consorted with artists and great men of every sort. Italian society was then particularly brilliant and stimulating to the creative mind, and in Italy Handel learned to combine with the science already his the warm beauty of Italian song.

He made a sensation as a virtuoso as well as a composer. It was Scarlatti, himself a celebrated player of the harpsichord, who said, when Handel sat down to play at a masked ball, "That is either the devil or the Saxon" — as Handel was called in Italy.

"The Saxon" came to London, to the country which he was soon to adopt as his own, in 1710. The following year he made a sensation with his opera, "Rinaldo." We talk to-day about the extravagance of operatic production. In this production hundreds of living birds made their appearance in the scene of the gardens of the enchantress Armida, and Addison complained of it in the Spectator, "Instead of perching on the trees and performing their parts, these young actors

either get into the galleries or put out the candles!" Every lover of Handel is familiar with the noble antique melody of the maiden, Almirenda, as she laments the power of Armida over her lover, Rinaldo.

In many pages of his early work Handel stands revealed as one of the world's greatest melodists. That his operas have not held the stage is due probably to conventional libretti which he tried in vain to vitalize with his music.

Handel had come to London on leave from the Elector of Hanover. He was late returning. His absence made trouble for him, and in the meantime this same elector became George I of England. Handel conciliated the king by composing twenty-five pieces for a water fete given by that monarch, and conducting their performance in a barge which followed the king's boat pieces known ever after as the "Water Music."

At first, settled in London, Handel was very fortunate. He became music teacher of the daughters of the Prince of Wales, and it was for his pupil, Princess Anne, that he wrote the harpsichord piece, "The Harmonious Blacksmith." He was for years chapel master of the Duke of Chandos. He might easily have continued in sinecure after sinecure, but that was not Handel. He was made of different stuff. In 1720 he entered on a phase of his career which exposed him as never before to the buffets of fortune.

Handel became director of an opera company, the "Royal Academy of Music," of which the king as well as the greater number of the aristocracy were patrons. In the company was also a rival composer, Bononcini. Promptly there developed a Handel-Bononcini feud, and the journalists of the day were merry. Thus John Byrom of Lancashire:

> "Some say, compar'd to Bononcini
> That Mynheer Handel's but a ninny;
> Others aver that to him Handel
> Is scarcely fit to hold a candle:
> Strange, all this difference there should be
> 'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee!"

There were more sensational events in store. Handel invested in

opera stars as recklessly and pretentiously as any Grau or Hammerstein. He brought from Italy the coloratura soprano Cuzzoni. She was capricious and vain as a parrot, fearing neither God nor man, compelling managers — until she met Handel — and public alike to bow to her follies. Handel hauled her like a sack of meal to an open window. He pointed downward.

He said, in German-English of his own, "Matam, I know dat you are a she deffil, but I vill haf you know dat I ana Beelzebub, te chief of all te deffils!" and threatened to throw her down if she did not sing his music as he commanded. Cuzzoni obeyed.

She reigned in London about seven years. Then Handel brought over her rival, Faustina, and there never were such scenes. The polite world, even royalty itself, took sides in the ridiculous quarrels of these two women, until at last, when Bononcini's opera, "Astyanax," was produced, there was such commotion that not a note of Cuzzoni's first solo could be heard. When it came Faustina's turn there was a riot in the theater. Oaths, challenges, fisticuffs were exchanged on the spot. Lords and ladies forgot themselves, and finally Faustina flung herself at Cuzzoni, and they had it out, tooth and nail.

For the moment the box office triumphed, but in the end, in spite of all he could do, Handel's company failed. He spent his fortune in backing a fresh organization, which also went to the wall. He composed his "Xerxes," an opera, or semi-opera, in 1737, as payment of a debt to Heiddiger, whose partner he had been and to whom he now found himself under obligation. This is the opera which contains Handel's most famous melody, "Ombra mai fu," universally known and loved as the "Largo."

Imagine a man paying a debt of a few pounds with a score containing such music! Because of its stateliness and dignity many have believed the "Largo" to be a religious air. If religion is gratitude to God for nature, they are right, but Handel's intention was secular. He was writing for the stage. Xerxes enters his garden in the heat of the day. He sinks down under a plane tree and sings a song of gratitude for its beneficent shade. When the meaning of this air is realized it becomes the more eloquent — the peace of the hour, the blessed comfort of the shade! As for the title, "Largo," it is simply a direction in the score, indicating a slow movement.

Handel was now in the depths of misfortune. He lay in his bed, partially paralyzed. Former friends of a moment, seeing him vanquished, were prompt to heap all manner of abuse upon him. It was only the interest of the Princess of Wales, friendly, like her father, to Handel, that saved him from being cast into prison for debt. But he was never so great as when faced by apparently insurmountable odds. He went to Aix-la-Chapelle, took the baths, and returned to London, ready for the fray. It was at this time, and reluctantly, that he turned definitely to the form of the oratorio. He had produced "Esther," an oratorio, while chapel master for Chandos, also the masque, "Acis and Galatea," which had characteristics of oratorio, but these works were incidental to the composition of operas and other music. Only bitter disaster led Handel, at the age of fifty-three, to undertake that style of composition in which, above all others, he was to become immortal.

It should be said here that the oratorio and the opera originated at about the same time — toward the end of the sixteenth century. The purpose of the one form was religious, of the other dramatic. The principal distinctions between the two forms are that opera is music drama, performed by singers and instrumentalists, with costumes and scenery, in the theater; while oratorio is the musical setting of a sacred poem, often of a dramatic character, performed by singers and orchestra, without action, costumes, or scenery, in the church or concert hall.

Handel composed his oratorio, "Saul," in 1738. The "Dead March" from this work is one of the most impressive lamentations in music. It is played as the death of Saul and Jonathan is announced to David. The sorrow of the music is the sorrow of strong men. The march has this harmonic peculiarity, that, unlike most music expressive of sadness, it is in a major, not a minor key.

The simple, strong, expressive character of this march are characteristic of much of Handel's music. It is not subtle or introspective, but rather the manly, direct, unpretentious expression of deep feeling. Handel's music, furthermore, never loses the sense of sunshine and open air. In the finest sense of the word, it remains always music for the people.

The success of "Saul," however, did not suffice to save Handel,

who had offended many by his outspokenness and independence, from the plots and cabals which sprang up against him on every hand. Men were paid to pull down the placards in the streets which announced his concerts. He was almost ready to confess himself defeated and seek fortune elsewhere than in England when he announced a farewell concert for April 8, 1741.

He did not know that his disasters were at an end. William Cavendish, fourth Duke of Devon and Lieutenant Director of Ireland, invited Handel to come to Dublin and give performances of his works. Handel, in order, as he said, "to offer this generous and polished nation something new," composed "The Messiah," which he completed in twenty-three days, to a text by Charles Jennens. The first performance was in Dublin, on the 13th of April, 1742. The fashionable audience received a request that the ladies would discard their hoopskirts, and the gentlemen their swords, in order to make more room for the public. The work had an overwhelming success. It remains to-day the best known of all oratorios. It is the supreme manifestation of the human and dramatic quality of Handel's genius. For "The Messiah" is not a sermon, but an immortal song; not a treatise on religious doctrine, but a poem of human redemption, a vast, inspired setting of the greatest story ever told. The text is taken literally from the Bible. The work is divided in three parts. The first tells of the longing of the world for the Messiah, and of His coming. The second tells of the suffering, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus. The third is a declaration of the deepest principles of the Christian faith.

Handel wrote the Pastoral Symphony, which follows the chorus, "Unto us a child is born," after an air which he heard the shepherds of the Abruzzi play on their pipes one Christmas night on the hills outside Rome. The simple little piece is unique in the literature of oratorio. No text is required to tell us what it means, for the very spirit of the moment is upon us the birth in the manger, and the shepherds who watched their flocks by night.

The climax of the oratorio comes with the "Hallelujah" chorus, of which Handel himself said, "I did think I saw all heaven before me, and the great God Himself." All of Handel's inspiration, all his skill, are embodied in this triumphal outpouring. When this chorus was

sung in Covent Garden, London, in 1743, the effect was so sublime that the king, followed as a matter of course by the audience, rose to his feet, an act which has become a custom whenever this music is performed in English-speaking countries.

Through "The Messiah" and the oratorios which followed it Handel's position became firm and incontestable in England. He composed in all fifty-one operas, twenty-three oratorios, and over seventy other compositions. His inspiration fairly ran away with him. Copies of his scores are extant which show that he could scarcely write rapidly enough to keep up with his ideas. He adopted a kind of musical shorthand as a matter of necessity. It is true that he more than once utilized the idea of other composers, a matter in which there was a good deal of license in his time. Some one called him "the grand old thief." But when Handel took another man's idea he made more of it than its originator had dreamed of. He gave the gem its rightful setting. A great many creative artists, among them one William Shakespeare, have done the same thing.

Before Handel died he was stricken blind. He was composing the chorus, "O Lord, how dark are thy ways" for his oratorio, "Jephthah," when an eye failed him and he had to stop work for a time. Ten days later he resumed his labors, and composed some of his noblest music to these prophetic lines, "Grief follows joy as night the day." When he finished the oratorio, in 1751, his sight was gone. Conducting a performance of "Samson" the following year, Handel was seen by a deeply moved audience to tremble and grow pale as the lament of Samson, "Total Eclipse," in which he has so wonderfully sounded the complaint of the sightless hero, was sung. On April 6, 1759, he took the organ, blind as he was, to play during a performance of "The Messiah." His strength failed him in the middle of the movement, but, recovering, he improvised with his accustomed and incomparable grandeur. When he arrived home he took to bed, saying, "I want to die on Good Friday, in the hope of rejoining the good God, my sweet Lord and Saviour, on the day of His resurrection." He passed away, in fact, at eight o'clock in the morning of Holy Saturday, April 14th. The glory of the grand old warrior grew ever greater. In accordance with his wish he was buried in Westminster Abbey. There, to-day, the sun gleaming down through one of the long win-

dows falls athwart his statue, and a page of music, on which is inscribed the first line of the song, "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth."

CHAPTER 2
Johann Sebastian Bach

At the window of a little cottage in Thuringia, by the faint light of the moon, the boy Bach copied music. There was no other way to get the scores which he coveted. His elder brother had forbidden him to touch them. Night after night, for six months, he toiled. Gradually he accumulated a library, to him beyond price. Then his brother discovered Bach at work, took from him the precious manuscripts, and it was years before the lad saw the music again.

This was an episode in the boyhood of John (Johann) Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) "Old Bach" — as he is called to-day by musicians who revere his name — and was perhaps the cause of the blindness which came upon him in his last years. But Bach persisted in his studies. It was impossible to divert him from the pursuit of his purpose. He became the greatest of a family of generations of musicians — perhaps the greatest musician who ever lived. To him, in the words of Robert Schumann, "music owes as great a debt as religion to its Founder."

Bach was the father of twenty children and of compositions without number. His life was a quiet gray. His career is a succession of positions as organist and choir-master in different corners of Germany in the environment of the hard times that followed the Thirty Years War. He composed indefatigably, spinning music as a spider spins his web. His neighbors thought him a little queer, but respected his attainments, and they got along very well. That his music was not estimated at its true worth while he lived concerned the master very little. Careless of the opinions of his contemporaries, he labored on. A few musicians held him in awe, and one day Frederick the Great invited Bach to play the flute with him, but it was a hundred years after Bach's death before the scope and sublimity of his genius were realized.

No doubt Bach's hardships had much to do with his profoundly religious spirit. That he was forced to thrift will be realized from a citation of the yearly salary which he received as organist at Mühlhausen: eighty-five gulden, or about fifty-two dollars in money; twelve bushels of corn; three pounds of fish; two cords of wood; six trusses of brushwood in place of some tilled land owned by the former organist. In addition, as a special favor, the council of the church agreed to loan him a cart to bring his belongings from Arnstad.

Bach, nevertheless, contrived to work his way, a pious, upright, though two-fisted citizen, and to owe no man a penny. He married twice and had wonderful help-mates in his wives. Both of them were excellent musicians who did copying for him and sang and played his music in intervals of bringing up the families. A substantial lot! And Bach created beautiful and substantial music, music as different from the stuff turned out by the average composer of to-day as the firm-woven cloths of Bach's period were different from the shoddy now sold at bargain counters.

One of Bach's simplest and most beautiful melodies is the famous "Air for the G String," which has among Bach's compositions about the place that the celebrated "Largo" holds among the compositions of Handel. It was originally written as a movement for orchestra, but gained its name from the fact that the virtuoso Wilhelm, arranged it as a solo piece to be played on the G string of the violin. It is a melody which grows always more eloquent as one listens, not only because of its noble beauty, but also because of the wisdom, the tenderness, the profound knowledge of life which speak from every measure.

The writer remembers an old Dutch picture which comes up in his mind whenever he listens to this melody of Bach. It is a picture of an old woman at the window of her simple home. Outside, the glory of a sunset tinges the sky. Within, an open Bible on her knees, sits the grandmother, the struggles of life behind her, the day's work done, in her heart the thankfulness and peace that pass human understanding. Of course Bach had no idea of this picture when, as chapelmaster of the Duke of Cothen, he turned out his wonderful composition as a mere detail of the day's work. But the picture surely expresses the meaning of Bach's music…

A noted musician said to the writer: "I am told that Shakespeare

had as universal a mind as Bach, as much imagination, as much understanding of life and human nature. But I can't believe it!"

Bach wrote his preludes and fugues and suites and oratorios, his pieces for clavichord the instrument which preceded the modern piano and his vast, thunderous organ compositions, as readily, when it came to the technic of it, as you or I would write a letter. Yet his technic became only the vehicle of his vision, and in his works can be found most of the ultramodern harmonies discoverable in the music of to-day. He peered forward, with the gaze of a seer, into coming ages. He summed up in his incredible accomplishment all that hundreds of lesser men had toiled and struggled through the centuries to prepare for the coming of such a prophet. Generations of musicians have since chipped off little pieces from his towering cathedrals of tone — enough to give them thought and material to use for the duration of their lives.

Bach was born in the same year as Handel. Like Handel, he was afflicted with blindness in the closing years of his life. Curiously enough, they never met, although a meeting was once arranged, and it appears to have been Handel who was responsible for its not taking place. No greater contrast could be imagined than the careers of these two men. While Handel was marching across the world, making the heavens ring with his hosannas, Bach was humbly, obscurely, greatly laying the foundation stones of the music of the next three centuries.

CHAPTER 3
Gioachino Antonio Rossini

One evening Napoleon III sat in his box at the opera. Across the hall, in a loge which faced his, he observed a stout man in a brown wig whose attention was divided between the performance, a box of bonbons, and the telling of a joke. The Emperor watched this man for a moment, then turned to an attendant, saying, "Bring him to me." The stout one apologized, as he entered the imperial box, for not being in evening dress. "My friend," said Napoleon, "ceremony is unnecessary between emperors." His visitor was Gioachino Rossini, Emperor of Music, as Napoleon was Emperor of France.

Gioachino Antonio Rossini was born at Pesaro, on the Gulf of Venice, February 29, 1792. His parents were very poor. His father was town trumpeter and inspector of slaughter-houses. He played the trumpet very badly, but was a man of parts, and his keen wits were inherited by his son.

The child Rossini had little education. He was apprenticed to a pork butcher, and later to one Prinetti, who sold wine and gave harpsichord lessons. Prinetti was a curious person. It is recorded that he played the scale with only two fingers and was accustomed to go to sleep standing up! He proved too tempting a butt to the natural-born mimic, Rossini, with the result that the apprenticeship came to a sudden end.

What Rossini had absorbed he turned to good account. In the summer his family made part of a troupe of actors who toured the villages and towns about the Venetian Gulf. The father played in the orchestra. The mother sang. Gioachino learned to accompany the singers, play the horn, sing a part, and even try his hand at conducting. Every one liked him for the fun he made — unless perchance he happened to be making fun of them.

In this school of life the boy learned much of human nature and

the whims and tastes of the great public. People are not very different at heart. The song or "turn" that was successful with the peasants of the gulf districts would just as surely, in slightly different dress, win applause from audiences in great cities. The appeal of music and laughter is universal, and Rossini was a lover of both.

Rossini's lessons were not too many. His achievements were due to the originality of his own mind rather than to the precepts of his teachers. Like most of the great masters, he composed first and learned how afterward! He read the scores of master composers, which told him more than books on counterpoint. His father remonstrated with him one day for his erratic mode of life, and urged him to practise the trumpet. Rossini answered that he intended to compose operas.

"In that case," said his father, "you will starve."

"Father," answered Rossini, "you are as good a prophet as you are a trumpeter!"

He quickly became so popular as a composer that in 1813, when he wished to leave the San Mose Theater in Venice for the larger Fenice of the same city, the manager of the San Mose was incensed. By his contract Rossini had to compose one more opera for this theater. The manager treated him very uncivilly and gave him a libretto so poor that the writing of serious music to it would have been impossible. Rossini turned the trick against the manager by writing the most ridiculous passages in which the basses sang tenor parts, the sopranos alto, the worst singer had the most difficult aria, and the violinists rapped on the tin candlesticks in front of them. Immediately after the performance Rossini left for Milan!

In Milan he met an old friend, Prince Belgiocoso, who invited him to his home for a week's hunting-party. It was a gay company. Every day the prince and his guests hunted in the forests, only returning for dinner. Before dinner and between courses Rossini completed his new opera, "Tancredi." Having covered music sheets with almost unintelligible scribbling, he would take his dessert with him and install himself at the piano, saying, "Come, everybody, let us see what this sounds like." Each person would sing a part, Rossini himself joining in, and when it came time for a chorus all would shout at the top of their lungs to give the effect of a great crowd. No one thought of

bed till the small hours of the morning, and at six the rising-horn sounded. One could not compose a successful opera in that way to-day; but at the end of the visit "Tancredi" was finished.

At the performance in Venice Rossini did not at first dare to show himself. The Venetian public was still smarting from the effect of the tin candlestick opera produced only a little time before. The composer hid himself under the stage where he could see and not be seen. Soon, however, the hostility of the public changed to applause, and at the beginning of the quick movement of the overture the repeated bravos so heartened Rossini that he came pompously forth, took his seat at the piano in the orchestra, and conducted the remainder of the opera himself. The overture kept its popularity long after the opera left the stage. The dreamy song of the horn in the opening measures is characteristic of the genius for melody which led the world to the feet of Rossini. The quick movement which follows has the true Rossinian wit and animation, and the spontaneous quality which always distinguished this man's art.

In the following years Rossini introduced many important and admirable changes in Italian opera. He shortened the recitatives (passages of musical declamation), which had become pompous and tiresome. He developed the orchestra. In addition to this, he was the first man to write "arias" (airs) as he expected them to be sung. Before his time the composers wrote only the bare outlines of their melodies, leaving it to the singers to fill in with endless trills and flourishes to suit themselves. With Rossini's changes the opera became more dramatic and lifelike than it had been in the hands of his predecessors, and less a mere exhibition of vocal gymnastics.

In 1816 Rossini produced that opera by which he is best known to-day, the incomparable "Barber of Seville." He completed this work in from thirteen to fifteen days — there is a dispute as to which number is correct. We think it would have been a pity if he had taken more time to write it. It was not for him to plod and philosophize in his music. His genius flashed and flamed. The Promethean fire descended on the music page, and in a trice a masterpiece was born.

The libretto of "The Barber" is based on the comedy of Beaumarchais. Doctor Bartolo is determined to marry his charming young ward, Rosina, but the Count Almaviva, on a visit to his estates near

Seville, has seen the girl and is stealthily paying court to her, disguised as a poor student named Lindoro. With the help of Figaro, the quick-witted barber of Seville, the intentions of Bartolo are defeated and the count wins his bride. The air "Ecco Ridente" is sung by the count as a serenade in the early morning under the window of Rosina. It is a tenor solo in the florid and melodious style of Rossini's day, in which, to quote the scintillating Theophile Gautier, "the Signor Rossini has embroidered marvelous melodies upon the meaningless words of the Italian song."

The count, longing for a sight of Rosina on the balcony, dismisses his followers and ponders how he may win his way to her side. Enter Figaro, the village barber, with his guitar. Lo, the factotum! The town busybody, who knows everything and does everything, handles the razor, the lancet, the combs, connives at love intrigues, marries the girls and widows, and pockets the snug perquisites of the business. They all need him.

"Figaro!"

"I'm here!"

"Figaro!"

"I'm coming!"

Figaro here, there, and everywhere! What a life! This introduces the rollicking solo, "Largo al factotum." Only in Italian could a singer patter it out as it is pattered by Figaro to the gay lilt of Rossini's orchestra. "Passing from mouth to mouth," said Gautier, "it has traveled as far as Polynesia, and the natives of the Southern seas hum it as they cook then breakfast of shell-fish!"

The count and Figaro plot together. Meanwhile Rosina, alone in the house, sings the cavatina, "Una voce poco fa." The song commences coquettishly. In Rosina's hand is a letter. She has harkened to the voice of her lover, and has already resolved to become his. A little later, taking up a laughing melody first announced by the orchestra, she sings, "I'm as gentle as a dove ("lo son docile") — provided — that I have my own way!" ("faro giocar, faro giocar!"), a sentiment repeated with emphasis as the aria comes to an end.

A little later in the opera Don Basilio, the greasy music-teacher of Rosina, appears. He is Bartolo's spy and paid agent, as well as the young lady's instructor in song. Bartolo tells Basilio that Rosina has

been dropping notes over the balcony to a serenader, also that he hears the Count Almaviva, reputed unusually successful with ladies, is in town. He rightly suspects the count of attentions to his ward. How prevent this? He looks at Basilio. That astute gentleman, suiting action and song to the word, sings the "Calumny" aria. They will give the count, he says, such a reputation that he will have to fly the town. It shall be done by means of scandal! Calumny! Does Bartolo realize the power of this weapon? Calumny (La Cahmnia) starts as a running stream, a whispering zephyr, but before you know it, it is resounding like the roar of a cannon ("Come un colpo di canno-o-ne, come canno-o-ne"). The laughing accompaniment of the instruments, the unction with which the solemn-faced Basilio delivers his text, the melody that fairly bubbles from the pen of the composer, make a composition of irresistible humor.

The conversation of these two worthies, however, has been overheard by Figaro. As they disappear the barber steps from his hiding-place with a message for the young mistress. Bartolo and Basilio are drawing up a marriage contract, while the poor student, Lindoro, is dying of love for a certain maiden named Rosina. This brings the duet, "Dunque io son."

"Can I believe it?" cries Rosina. "But then," beginning to sing up the scale like a lark, "I had already suspected it." The song becomes more brilliant and joyous as she realizes her happiness. "Yes," says Figaro, "it's true. He loves you to distraction" — imitating humorously the passages Rosina has just been singing. "And when," asks Rosina, "can I see him?" "Hark!" ("Zitto, zitto!") answers the messenger. "He is near. He waits only one small word from you. Here! Write, saying you expect him!" "Write him!" cries Rosina. "Impossible!" Figaro presses her. "Oh, come, a note ("di biglietto") of but two lines, and it is done." Rosina slyly takes from her pocket the letter already written. "Well, here it is" ("eccolo qua"). Even Figaro, adept in intrigue, is astonished. So this is Miss Innocence, with her hesitations and refusals! Figaro hurries off with the missive for Lindoro.

In the second act occurs the lesson scene, in which the count enters, disguised as the musical assistant of Basilio, and makes love to Rosina behind the piano. The trio composed for this scene was lost, as was also the original overture of the opera. For this overture

the overture to Rossini's "Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra," which was in turn transplanted from an earlier opera, "Aureliano in Palmyra," is customarily substituted, while in place of the lost trio Rosina sings to her admiring guardian whatever show-piece the officiating prima donna desires. Grisi and Alboni sang Rode's "Air and Variations." Patti selected "Il Bacio." Mme. Barrientos sings the brilliant waltz song, "Voce di primavera."

The plot is nearly spoiled by the untimely arrival of Basilio, the real music-teacher, but Figaro's wit is finally victorious, and Bartolo, recognizing at last the futility of his precautions, confers his blessing.

Rossini, who under his careless exterior was a very brilliant, observant, and reflective man, knew that much of his music would not live, but he predicted that one act of his "William Tell" and the whole of his "Barber of Seville" would last for a century. History has proved the sound judgment displayed in this prophecy. Nevertheless, the first performance of "The Barber of Seville" was one of the worst failures in the history of opera. Rossini, by venturing to set this subject to music, had offended the elderly composer, Paisiello, who had also written an opera, very popular at that time; on the same theme. Paisiello's followers gathered in the theater to see that the new work should not be a success, and the cursedness of all animate and inanimate things seemed conspiring to aid them. Rossini, entering the orchestra pit in a showy suit of vicuna with golden buttons, a gift of the manager, Barbaja, was received with a shout of laughter. In the first act Almaviva was to sing a Spanish serenade to Rosina beneath her window and accompany himself on the guitar. He had forgotten to tune his instrument and, in attempting to do this before the tittering onlookers, a string broke. The audience was hilarious. After much preparation Almaviva began again. The people listened only long enough to catch the air, which they then commenced to hum, sing, and whistle in a mocking manner until not a note of the original melody could be heard. It was for this unfortunate air that Rossini substituted at the second performance the "Ecco Ridente." Later on Basilio, entering, stumbled over a trap-door, which increased the confusion. The excitement grew. At the beginning of the magnificent finale of the first act calamity reached its climax. A black cat appeared on the stage. Figaro drove it one way, Bartolo another, and in

avoiding Basilio it tangled itself in Rosina's skirts. Nothing could still the uproar, in the midst of which the curtain was lowered.

Later in the evening, when a group of the leading singers met to condole with Rossini, whom they imagined as pacing the floor in despair and mortification, they found him in bed fast asleep or pretending to be. He was at heart a supersensitive man, but he would have died before admitting his chagrin to the world. He feigned illness the next night, in order to avoid conducting. But the tide turned, and the opera triumphed, as it has triumphed ever since.

During the next eight years Rossini visited many cities — Naples, Milan, Verona, Vienna — composing some twenty operas besides many smaller works. In 1823 he was back in the scene of so many of his operatic ventures, Venice, where he had contracts for two new works, in each of which the black-eyed Madame Colbran, Rossini's wife, was to sing the leading role.

"Semiramide" was first performed at the Fenice Theater, February 3, 1823. The text, by Rossi, is a characteristically Italian operatic version of Voltaire's tragedy, "Semiramis." Rossini spent unusual care and thought on this work, and was disappointed when it proved too serious for the public of his day. The overture, however, with its portentous introduction, won immediate favor.

An admirable example of the decorative and melodious style of the period, in which Rossini excelled, is the aria sung by the queen, Semiramis, as she sings of her love for Arsaces, the young and victorious commander of the Babylonian armies.

Leaving Italy, Rossini went to London, where he had sensational success, then proceeded to Paris, in or near which he passed the remaining years of his life. There, on the 3d of August, 1829, he produced his serious masterpiece, "William Tell," a grand opera, originally in five acts, after the heroic and semi-historical drama of Schiller. The subject offered high incentive to a dramatic composer, although the libretto, pieced together by several different people, was far from perfect for thoughtful purposes, nor was it over faithful to the drama of Schiller. The opera has three magnificent stage pictures: 1. "The Lake of the Four Cantons" — Lake Lucerne — with a Swiss village in the distance. 2. The gathering of the Swiss patriots in a clearing high up on the side of a snow-capped peak. 3. The scene of

the trial in which Tell, forced to obey the tyrant Gessler, shoots with his arrow an apple from the head of his little son. The action of the opera is summarized in the superb overture, which Hector Berlioz described as a great symphony in four parts. The lofty and contemplative introduction expresses the peace and solitude of nature, undisturbed by human passions. The second part depicts the rising of the storm on the lake, after which Gessler meets his end, and a first blow is struck for Swiss liberty. This is one of the most thrilling passages of storm music in the literature of the art.

The third part of this "symphony" is pastoral in character. A flute, solo, plays an air said to be of Swiss origin. "The triangle," said Berlioz, "struck at intervals, is the bell of the flock while shepherds sing their songs." The finale is, battle music, stirring to-day as it was ninety years ago — the gathering of the cantons, the deliverance of the people. It is difficult to praise sufficiently the grand outlines, the musical inspiration, the dramatic force of this work.

Strange to say, "William Tell" was the last opera Rossini composed. With it he brought to a close his career as dramatic composer at the age of thirty-seven. Why, no one knows. Various reasons have been advanced — Rossini's proverbial laziness; his fear of the success of Meyerbeer, his rival, then winning the favor of Paris; his annoyance and resentment when, following the July Revolution of 1830, he saw "William Tell" give place to inferior works on the stage of the Academy. But these reasons are hardly adequate. A great composer must create, whether he wishes it or no. Rossini stopped, inexplicably, in mid-career.

The only important composition which appeared between the performance of "William Tell" in 1829 and Rossini's death at Paris, November 13, 1868, was the performance of his "Stabat Mater." This work was composed in 1832, although not performed in its entirety until ten years later. Rossini wrote the first six movements for Señor Varela, a Spaniard whom Rossini met while traveling in Spain. The remaining four numbers were finished by Tadolini, Rossini being ill and pressed for time. Conditions were that Don Varela should never part with his score, that it should be given every year during Lent at his church, that it never should be performed in public for profit. After Don Varela's death, his heirs sold the manuscript to a Parisian

publisher. There were various complications; a lawsuit followed involving several people. It was finally won by Rossini, who replaced Tadolini's numbers for the "Stabat Mater" and had the work thus performed on the 7th of January, 1842.

The "Stabat Mater" is a Latin church song sung in Catholic churches at the festival of the Seven Sorrows of Mary, and generally during Lenten service. It is the setting of a medieval poem probably written by a Franciscan monk of the thirteenth century. There is the thought of the Mother of Christ at the foot of the cross and the wish of humanity to share her sorrow with her. The text has been given innumerable different musical settings, of which that by Rossini is one of the most famous.

The following numbers are among the most impressive features of the work. "Cujus Animam" is a tenor solo which narrates the suffering of Christ on the cross. The rhythm of the accompaniment is almost martial. The musical style is that of the stage rather than the church. It is hardly necessary to add that the composer has written a splendid melody for the tenor voice.

The final number of the work, a brilliant climax, is the "Inflammatus," for solo voice, chorus, and orchestra. Rossini employs his solo voice to the greatest advantage by making it soar to a high C over the massed harmonies of the chorus.

The "Stabat Mater" has been called, with some justice, theatrical music. It should be remembered that the Italian is emotional and dramatic rather than austere and contemplative in his religion. Rossini always composed in the operatic manner.

This work, with the exception of some short choral compositions of little value, was Rossini's last word in music. Accused of laziness, he answered that with him it was a creed. Nevertheless, he had produced in nineteen years over thirty works for the stage. If he was indolent of body his mental activity was prodigious. The story of his having preferred to write another piece of music to recovering sheets he had dropped under his bed is probably true. But the man who can write one composition in little more time than it would take him to pick up another has, perhaps, a right to his own methods of work.

Rossini was one of the most gifted melodists in the history of his art, a man born for success, knowing his public and how to reach it,

yet a bold innovator and reformer. An epoch of Italian opera is represented in his music. Even when he deliberately composed display pieces for singers his genius turned what he touched to gold, and so fascinated the people that it was long before opera in Italy could recover from the endeavors of other composers to imitate an inimitable master.

CHAPTER 4
Gaetano Donizetti

A scotchman left his bluebells and heather to seek fortune in the wars. His name was Izett, son of a weaver of Perthshire. He was soon captured by a French general, who made him his secretary and took him first to France and later to Italy. In Italy Izett became Izetti. Izetti settled and married. As a compliment, some say, to the lady, he prefixed the syllable "Don" to his name. But Fortune did not deal very kindly with this Donizetti. He ended his life in a basement in Bergamo, a little town in the north of Italy. In this place his grandson, Gaetano, a composer of genius, was born November 29, 1797. Writing of his birthplace to his teacher, Mayer, in a later year, he said, "I was born underground — Borge Cavale; you had to go down by the cellar stairs, where no light ever penetrated."

Donizetti's father, a minor official at the Monte di Pieta, was paid by that civil institution a salary of about one hundred and ten dollars a year. The mother, in the intervals of her family duties, wove linen. Neither parent had any musical inclination, but one of Gaetano's brothers became leader of the city band and ultimately concert-master for the seraglio of the Sultan in Constantinople. The other brother was a tailor whom Gaetano more than once helped in his shop. In this shop there worked also the celebrated tenor, Rubini, who was later to sing in operas composed by his fellow-workman, and who died a millionaire.

Donizetti, whose bent was toward the arts, finally succeeded in inducing his parents to send him to a school of music which had recently been opened in Bergamo by Simon Mayer. Mayer was an uncommonly practical and serious teacher, and Donizetti made such rapid progress under him, especially in singing and violin-playing, that a public subscription was taken to send him to Bologna, where he became a pupil of Padre Mattei, the teacher of Rossini.

It is said that a dispute arose between Donizetti and his father as to the former's vocation, and that, as a result of this dispute, Donizetti voluntarily enlisted in the army. An officer in a regiment quartered at Naples, he soon became very popular because of his agreeable personality and his great musical talent. At last he met a manager who gave him the opportunity which he had been impatiently awaiting, a commission to write an opera. This opera, performed in Venice in the autumn of 1819, was enough of a success to give the composer a start with the public. His first real triumph, however, came three years later with his "Zoraide di Granata" in 1822. The work made so strong an impression that Donizetti was released from military service and henceforth was free to devote himself to a composer's career.

He proceeded to compose with extraordinary rapidity. He was poor, which made it necessary for him to work in haste, but he had a fertile invention, an incredible facility, and a technic which was both substantial and brilliant for his time and his school. He was very accurate in putting down his ideas, and had seldom to make corrections. He did keep a little ivory eraser at his side, but it was less a tool than a talisman. His father had given him this keepsake, with the gruff remark that if Gaetano was determined to be a musician he had better write as little rubbish as possible!

In 1832 the manager of the theater in Milan found that the composer engaged to provide the opera for the opening night of the season would be unable to fulfil his contract. In despair he went to Donizetti. In a fortnight Donizetti produced an opera which, performed on the 12th of May, proved the greatest success of the season.

This opera was the melodious and charming comedy "L'Elisir d'Amore" ("The Elixir of Love"). The story is similar to that used by Gilbert and Sullivan in "The Sorcerer." Adina (Act I) is loved by two men, Nemorino, a young farmer, and Belcore, the dashing sergeant. She seems to favor Belcore, though in reality she prefers the handsome farmer. But Nemorino is shy. Donizetti was fortunate in finding a melody expressive of his plaint, as, distracted with passion, Nemorino mourns the fact that to her who has beauty, charm, and wealth he can offer only an honest love.

Adina pointedly reads a story of a certain "elixir of love" and its wonderful effect on a lady who had appeared indifferent to her suitor.

Nemorino wishes that he might discover this magic potion. Dulcamara, a traveling mendicant, appears. From this fraud Nemorino with his last penny purchases what he believes to be "the elixir of love." Actually it is a bottle of strong wine. But it serves. There comes the news, which spreads quickly, of the death of a rich uncle of Nemorino, of whose fortune the nephew, though as yet ignorant of the fact, is the sole heir! The village girls make up to Nemorino, who believes this to be the working of the love potion. Adina, piqued, bursts into tears. Nemorino is deeply affected, and sings the beautiful romanza, "Una furtiva lagrima," one of the most graceful and tender of Donizetti's inspirations.

Although this simple air has a range of but nine tones, it is a proof of what a great composer can do with the most unpretentious material. The song had been haunting Donizetti for days. Romani was not willing at first to write the text for the music, saying that this would interfere with the development of the last act. Donizetti insisted, and at last the verses were written. The composer appears in this case to have been in the right. It is the appropriate moment in the opera for the romanza which reconciles the lovers and brings a happy conclusion.

"L'Elisir d'Amore" ran for thirty-nine nights, with constantly increasing enthusiasm of the public. It was dedicated "to the fair sex of Milan." They had indeed been most cordial to the composer. He was already at the flood-tide of a remarkable personal popularity, which he never lost. A well-favored youth, a brilliant conversationalist, fond of pleasure, and, they say, not a little successful in affairs of the heart, he was everywhere feted and acclaimed.

Scotland, the land of Donizetti's ancestry, inspired more than one of his operas. Cammarano wrote the libretto of the opera founded on the story of Walter Scott's "Bride of Lammermoor." This opera, "Lucia di Lammermoor," commonly accounted the greatest of Donizetti's productions, was first performed at Naples, September 26, 1835.

The air, "Regnava nel silenzio," from the first act, is sung by Lucy as she awaits her lover, Edgar, in a grove where, legend says, a Ravenswood once killed a maiden who had deceived him. This song is notable for its suavity, refinement, and delicacy of style. The harp

accompaniment has a charm of its own, as Lucy narrates the old legend.

Edgar appears. He must depart on a mission of state. Vows are plighted, in a duet which is one of the loveliest melodies in the opera.

Lucy's brother, Henry, is heavily pressed for debts, and can save himself only if his sister marries the rich Sir Arthur Bucklaw. He calls Lucy to him, tells her that Edgar is faithless, shows her a forged letter, and finally secures her consent to marry Arthur. A wedding is hastily arranged. The ring is no sooner on Lucy's finger than Edgar, returning from a mission to France, bursts into the room, accompanied by a few followers, and stands appalled by what he sees. Lucy, always a well-bred young lady, faints on the spot, Ashton and Bucklaw finger their swords, and it is at this critical moment that Donizetti thrills us with his heavenly sextette. It has been said with entire justice that this music is too beautiful to be appropriate to the dramatic situation. That is true. It should also be said that this glorious composition, defying criticism, analysis, or the passing of time, begins where words end.

Soon after the sextette comes the familiar "Mad Scene," when Lucy, staring before her, a knife in her hand, confronts the astonished guests. She rehearses incoherently the events of the wedding. She has gone insane and killed her bridegroom. Her ravings result in all sorts of melodious pyrotechnics, which exhibit to the full the voice and the skill of the singer. In the cadenzas, a flute is used as though in competition with the vocalist, the one attempting, apparently, to outdo the other in grace and agility of execution. The greatest coloratura singers in the world have awakened frenzies of enthusiasm with this scene.

To-day "Lucia di Lammermoor" is known principally for this "Mad Scene," a "vehicle" for a prima donna, and the great sextette. Yet Donizetti wrote the opera with thought of the heroic tenor, Duprez, a singer of extraordinary presence and dramatic power; and the most impressive music was considered by the public of the thirties and forties to occur in the last act, as Edgar, taking leave of the world and all he holds dear, throws himself on his sword.

From 1822 to 1836 Donizetti produced three or four operas a year, with more rapidity than substance and workmanship. Then a

new composer rose up, a younger man by a few years than Donizetti, one Vincenzo Bellini. Donizetti bestirred himself. "Lucia di Lammermoor" was in a sense his answer to Bellini's opera, "I Puritani," which had had a notably successful *première* only nine months before. The triumph of "Lucia" gained its composer the position of teacher of counterpoint at the Naples Conservatory. But when the Naples censor forbade the production of Donizetti's "Polyeucte" he left Italy for France.

In 1840 came an order from Paris, which henceforth welcomed Donizetti as its own, for a new opera. Donizetti composed "La Favorita," the text adapted by Royer and Waez from a drama, "Le Comte de Comminges," of Baculard-Darnaud. The finale of the fourth act, accounted by many the most dramatic passage that Donizetti composed, was finished by him in three hours' time. He was having dinner with his friends. The company rose to go to a ball. Donizetti begged to be excused, saying that he wished to enjoy his coffee, of which he was inordinately fond. As soon as his friends had gone he sent out for music-paper. Inspiration was upon him, and when the others returned at a late hour the finale of "Favorita" was completed.

The plot is not a tranquil one. Ferdinand, a young monk, sees an unknown and beautiful woman. He cannot dismiss her from his thoughts. He tells his superior, Balthazar, of his vision, and announces that he is going to leave the monastery forever. "Una vergine" is one of the melodies most characteristic of Donizetti's talent.

Ferdinand finds his divinity. She is Leonora, the favorite of King Alfonso of Castile. Ferdinand, knowing nothing of her past, lays his heart at her feet. Leonora is moved, first to compassion, then to love. In the mean time the Church has commanded Alfonso to give up his favorite. It is Balthazar, Ferdinand's old superior, who brings the message, and it is Balthazar who tells Ferdinand that the woman he loves is the creature of the king. In the last act the monks welcome Ferdinand back to the cloister. Heartbroken at his knowledge of Leonora's past, alone within the gray walls, the embittered man looks back to the world which he has left forever and sings the touching air, "Spirito gentil."

Coming from the chapel, Ferdinand is confronted with the sight

of a novice struggling to her knees. Horrified, he recognizes Leonora, and, his love returning, is willing again to break his vows. But Leonora reminds him of his oath to God, and dies in his arms. This opera, like "Lucia," was composed for Duprez. It was first produced on the 2d of December, 1840, at the Academic.

In the course of his lifetime Donizetti composed nearly seventy works for the stage. "Don Pasquale" was written in eight days and produced at the Theatre des Italiens, Paris, January 4, 1843. From the quality of its workmanship, one would not believe that it had been created in such haste. While "Lucia di Lammermoor" remains Donizetti's masterpiece in the eyes of the public, there are those who think it surpassed by "Don Pasquale" and by other of his works in the humorous vein, such as "The Daughter of the Regiment" and "L'Elisir d'Amore." In these light operas, if he is not greater — and it would have been hard for him to be greater than he was in the "Lucia" sextette — he is at least more consistently great, and much more human. The characters in "Don Pasquale" are not figures of strutting operatic tragedy, but human beings, alive to the core, who act naturally and show genuine emotion on the stage. How shrewdly they are drawn, in the music as well as by the action of the drama! How vivid and sparkling is the music! How captivating its play of melody and humor!

Donizetti wrote the music, Cammarano the text of "Don Pasquale," which he adapted from an older opera.

Donizetti's operas, in his later years, were performed all over Europe and even in Constantinople and Calcutta. But he was over-taxing mind and body, and was one day found on his bedroom floor unconscious from over-work and over-play. From that time dated an increasing paralysis of muscle and brain. Nothing is more pathetic than the delusion harbored by him that he was dead. "But don't you know," he would exclaim to callers — "don't you know that poor Donizetti is dead?" He died in his brother's arms on the 8th of April, 1848.

Donizetti's facility, his nervous temperament, and the constant demand for his music as fast as he could produce it, militated against the slow and reflective processes by which enduring masterpieces are brought to birth. Notwithstanding this he was a musician of great gifts

and a man of more than ordinary mentality. His grand operas have the conventional defects of their school and period, but they have also the beautiful melodic line, the lyrical emotion, and, in their highest estate, the divine grace and transparency of true Italian art. In operatic comedy he showed an understanding of human nature, a gift of observation, a love of life which carried him far. Certain of his melodies will live as long as the school of which he was so brilliant a representative endures.

CHAPTER 5
Vincenzo Bellini

Catania fronts on the shimmering waters of the Mediterranean, and Ætna, the volcano, towers in the distance. Ships from all ports of the world crowd the harbors. The place seems to have grown rather than to have been built from the soil. The principal street is laid on the lava which in centuries past flowed from the volcano. A portion of the city, founded about eight centuries before Christ, is new, but the Catania in which Bellini was born is the Catania of stone and stucco houses which nestle together, their brilliant blues, pinks, and yellows softened and made wonderful by time. Narrow streets run into vine-covered arcades or up flights of worn stone steps. Here, in a niche, is a madonna. There, peasants in costumes of a former day sell olives and goats' milk. To feel the peace and tranquillity of the scene, to bathe in the sunshine which floods the land of Italy, is to understand the melodies of Bellini. His art was a flower which blossomed quickly from a hot and fertile soil. Its life was soon spent. It left behind an emotion, a perfume, slow to fade.

Of distinguished appearance, with light, wavy hair, delicate features, a high forehead, and elegantly clad, Bellini was the picture of his music. He was born on the 3d of November, 1801, and was not six years old when he began to compose. His father and grandfather were musicians. He was musical by instinct. His technical accomplishments as a composer were never important, but he interested himself in piano-playing, could sing well, and during a happy and uneventful boyhood composed music of an aria, psalms, and several masses. On his face was already the reflection of that melancholy which colored much of his music and seemed to forecast his early end.

Bellini's father had not the funds to educate his son musically. He, therefore, petitioned the municipality to send the boy to Naples,

and the necessary allowance was granted in May, 1819. In that year Bellini entered on a course of four years' study at the Naples Conservatory. He had good introductions, and the sorrow of parting from his family — he was almost morbidly attached to those whom he loved — was tempered by social and musical successes in the city of his sojourn. When his festival cantata, "Ismene," was performed in San Carlo for a birthday in the royal family, the king himself led the applause. At a stroke Bellini had secured the entry not only into the best houses in Naples, but the greatest theaters in Italy.

In Naples Bellini met Maddalena Fumaroli, the one woman he ever loved. She was a fair-haired Neapolitan. One of her poems was set to music by Bellini. But when Bellini asked Maddalena's father for her hand, he was peremptorily refused. This was a blow from which he never recovered. Another man would have overcome the parent's opposition, or time would have healed the wound. But Bellini had neither a robust nor a combative temperament. He could only suffer. He saw Maddalena for the last time, then threw himself into his work. He worked furiously, fatally, for one of his frail constitution. Opera after opera came from his pen and he rose to fame with a rapidity that was the result of his feverish energy.

"Il Pirata" (Milan, 1827) established Bellini's reputation. In Milan he had the advantage of constant intercourse with a brilliant and artistic circle. He made here the acquaintance of the librettist Romani, who was to write the text of two of Bellini's most famous operas — "Norma" and "Sonnambula" — and he became intimate with celebrated singers who had an important influence on his style. "La Sonnambula," a pretty, pastoral opera, was inspired by certain stretches of water and woodland, peasant cottages, and a waterfall in the vicinity of Lake Como, where Bellini used often to wander. The work was composed with special thought of the singers La Pasta, Rubini, and Mariani. For them he wrote his airs and remodeled a number of his melodies to make them not only expressive, but particularly suitable to the voice and the talent of each of his leading interpreters.

"La Sonnambula" ("The Sleep-walker") was first performed at the Teatro Carcano, Milan, March 6, 1831. The plot hinges on the love of Elvino, a wealthy young peasant, for Amina, and her sleep-walking

tendencies. As it happens, on the eve of their wedding, Rodolfo, a young lord, returns from his travels to the village. Amina, walking in her sleep, enters Rodolfo's bedroom. All is explained when Amina, sleeping, steps from a window of the mill, and, amid the breathless suspense of the onlookers, crosses a rotten plank high over the whirling wheel. She descends safely, and Elvino, realizing the cause of his suspicions, gathers her in his arms.

It cannot be said that the plot of "Sonnambula" is either substantial or highly dramatic. A text of little meaning is Bellini's excuse for some delightful florid melodies. The day had come and gone, and was not to return until the period of the later Verdi, when Italian composers would give careful thought to their libretti and the relation of text and music.

"Norma," Bellini's greatest work, was produced nine months after the *première* of "Sonnambula" on the 26th of December, 1831, at Milan. The composer astonished his warmest admirers by the breadth and nobility of his melodic style. This opera is seldom heard to-day, principally because of the fact that there are all too few singers capable at once of the technical brilliancy and the dramatic feeling of the music. Bellini rewrote the great air "Casta Diva" nine times before he could satisfy La Pasta, who was to sing it. She protested that no human voice was capable of executing such difficulties in an acceptable and artistic manner. Bellini finally suggested that Pasta take the aria home and practise it each day for a week. If at the end of that time she still wished him to change the music, he would do so. La Pasta returned, radiant. She was delighted with the aria and would on no account consent to the change of a single note. She made one of her greatest successes in a scene which, even to-day, is a supreme test of a singer's art.

Norma, high priestess of the Druids of Gaul, counsels them that it is not yet time to rise against the invading Romans. When this time arrives, she will give the signal from the altar. It is night in the sacred groves, and the moon shines clear in the heavens. The prophetess, whose heart is torn between secret love of the Roman proconsul, Pollione, and consuming devotion to her native land, asks the pale goddess to send peace as pure and serene as her own silver rays. Few airs from any opera made a more profound impression on audiences

of Bellini's period than this one, an air which, sung in the grand manner, still moves the hearer by the beauty of the melody and the pathos and depth of its feeling.

[The second great air of Norma] follows almost immediately in the opera. Alone with her thoughts, the high priestess, overcome by a foreboding which she cannot explain, expresses her apprehension for the future, and her doubts of Pollione's love.

Her fears are too well grounded. Pollione is faithless. The young priestess Adalgisa throws herself at Norma's feet, begging to be released from her vows. Norma asks the name of her lover. "Behold him," cries Adalgisa, as Pollione appears.

At last, enraged past endurance at the treachery of the Roman, Norma strikes the sacred shield, and summons the Druids to war. "But first," is the cry, "a sacrifice!" Pollione is led up by the guards. He has been seized in the very temple of Esus, where he had pursued Adalgisa. Norma, raising the dagger, advances to strike, but love is stronger than vengeance. She falters, tears the sacred wreath from her brow, declares herself the guilty one, and offers her life as the propitiatory sacrifice. Overcome by her nobility, and filled with remorse, Pollione follows Norma to the funeral pyre, where, amid the ascending flames, the two expiate their sin.

Returning to Catania soon after the *première* of his masterpiece, Bellini was received with indescribable enthusiasm. A procession headed by dignitaries of the city met him before the gates and escorted him in triumph through the streets. Shopkeepers refused payment for their wares. There was hot rivalry between the Milanese and the Catanians for the favor of their idolized composer. Yet it is recorded that Bellini was profoundly melancholy when it came time to leave his birthplace and once more face the world, and his depression was increased by a superstitious belief in the portents of nature. Ætna was in eruption. "Thou, too, O Ætna," he cried, "art bidding me a last farewell." He was in Paris when he composed his swan-song, "I Puritani."

"I Puritani" ("The Puritans"), the book by Count Pepoli, was first performed at the Theatre des Italiens, Paris, January 25, 1835. The scene is England and the period the wars of the Puritans led by Cromwell against Charles II and his Parliament.

Elvira, daughter of Lord Walter Walton, a leader of the Puritans, loves Lord Arthur Talbot, a Cavalier, and, therefore, a supporter of her father's foes. Admitted to the Puritan fortress through the leniency of Elvira's father, Arthur, in one of the sweetest melodies Bellini ever composed, claims her hand.

Arthur recognizes in a hostage the wife of King Charles, and, his loyalty to his sovereign triumphing for the moment over his love, resolves to save the queen. When Arthur's deed is discovered he is sentenced to death if captured. Elvira, like many operatic heroines of Bellini's day, goes mad at the suspicion of Arthur's infidelity. Compare this song for the operatic heroine who temporarily loses her wits to sing an aria, with Donizetti's music for the mad Lucia of Lammermoor, and note the difference between Lucia's virtuoso piece and the pathetic lament of Elvira. Bellini's music is simpler and more emotional in its appeal than is Donizetti's. This simplicity, this touching pathos and genuineness of feeling, is a distinguishing characteristic of the art of the Catanian.

Sir George, Elvira's uncle, and Sir Richard, her unsuccessful suitor, listen, deeply moved, to the maiden's complaint. Elvira fancies that Arthur is near. He must make haste and no longer delay their happiness. The guests are assembled. Does he hear the music for the dance? The wedding feast is prepared.

The two men then agree that if Arthur returns unarmed and unoffending in any active manner against the cause, his life shall be saved.

It is at this juncture that the two Puritans sing the warlike bass duet, "Suoni la Tromba," a battle-song so robust and sonorous in its character that Rossini laughingly wrote a friend in Milan that he must have heard the sound of the Paris performance!

Arthur is arrested, but news comes of the defeat of Charles and Arthur's life is saved. Elvira's reason is automatically restored to her, and all ends happily.

If Bellini had had Romani instead of Pepoli as his librettist at the time he composed "I Puritani" he would probably have produced a work surpassing every previous effort. One is led to this belief because of the fact that while the libretto of "Puritani" is one of the weakest and silliest which the composer used, the music lifts the work far

above the commonplace level of the text.

Soon after the *premiere* of "Puritani" Alexandre Dumas, traveling in Italy, saw before him an old man driving a light carriage, and was informed that this was the father of Bellini. The author hastened to make himself known. The old man was overjoyed. "Do you really know my son," he cried, "and is he really so celebrated a man? To think that when he was a boy I scolded him for idleness and neglect of his tasks, and because he sat for hours teaching his sister to sing instead of working himself! Every time he has success he sends me a memento. This watch came from 'Norma,' my horse and caleche from 'Puritani.' He is a devoted and affectionate boy!" Dumas himself remarks, "I made myself known to the old man and told him my name, but it brought no recollections to his mind—even in his son he saw not the artist, but his affectionate child."

In September, 1834, Bellini was taken ill and did not again leave his bed. He was delirious, and fancied in his last hours that he was surrounded by the great singers who had often collaborated with him. He was buried in the cemetery of Pere-la-Chaise, by the side of Chopin and Cherubini, an immense concourse following his body in the driving rain to its last resting-place. In 1876 an Italian warship, thundering its salute, bore the remains back to Catania.

CHAPTER 6
Giuseppe Verdi

War had descended on the little village of Le Roncole. Some of the villagers sought refuge in the church, but the barricaded doors soon gave way and those within were at the mercy of a drunken and infuriated soldiery. One woman, hugging a year-old child to her breast, remembered a hidden stairway which led to the belfry. There she crouched, speechless with terror, until evening fell and only a few huddled bodies told of the outrage which had been committed. Then she crept down, her child asleep in her arms. That child was Italy's greatest composer, Giuseppe Verdi.

This incident, according to Arthur Pougin, one of the most authoritative biographers of the composer, occurred in 1814. On the 10th of October, 1813, Verdi was born, the son of an innkeeper, in the little village of Le Roncole. A ragged beggar, Bagasset by name, used to tell Verdi's father that his *bambino* would make a musician. This man Verdi never forgot. When, in after years, the composer bought himself an estate at Sant' Agata, near his birthplace, he often met old Bagasset, still playing, snuffling, and begging for pennies. It was Verdi's habit to give the old fellow money and good things to eat, and Bagasset would weep and laugh, and stammer: "Ah, maestro! I knew you when you were very little; but now —"

Verdi's father saved enough to buy the boy a spinet, a reckless extravagance for one in the humble position and circumstances of the innkeeper. The old spinet is preserved to-day, and within it one may read the following inscription:

> By me, Stefano Cavaletti, were made anew and releathered the jacks of this instrument, to which I have adapted a pedal. I made these jacks gratuitously in consideration of the good disposition which the young Giuseppe Verdi shows in learning to play on the said instrument, which quite suffices to satisfy

me—Anno Domini 1821.

Verdi was soon playing the organ at the church of Le Roncole, on Sundays and holy days, for weddings, baptisms, funerals, and receiving for it all a little less than twenty dollars a year and each harvest-time a popular contribution of corn and other grain. According to the standards of his neighborhood, he was a well-to-do and coming young man. He went to school at Busseto while pursuing his profession at Le Roncole. Tramping the three miles from Le Roncole to Busseto, and back again, sometimes under the sun, sometimes under the shining stars, he developed a health of body and mind that never left him.

A wine merchant of Busseto, Barezzi by name, became interested in Verdi. He took him into his home, secured him a teacher of composition, and later helped him to go to Milan for further study. Applying for entrance to the famous Conservatory of that city, Verdi was refused as not having sufficient talent!

But he had his revenge. He became a private pupil of Lavigna, one of the Conservatory teachers. One evening at Lavigna's house, Basily, the man who had refused Verdi's application, complained of the backwardness of twenty-eight of the Conservatory pupils who had proved unable to construct a fugue on a "subject" (a short musical phrase on which the whole fugue, one of the most complicated of musical structures, is built) which he had given out.

"Can you write down your subject?" asked Lavigna.

Basily complied.

"Sit down at that table," said Lavigna to Verdi, "and work this out."

When Verdi had finished, Basily was amazed.

"You have written not only a fugue," said he, "but a 'double cannon' on my subject. Why?"

Verdi had voluntarily doubled the difficulty of the task set him. And the young genius, looking the old pedant squarely in the eye, answered, with the unmerciful candor of youth, "Because I found your subject rather poor and I wished to embellish it."

Verdi's talent soon made a stir in Milan. Returning to Busseto, he married the daughter of his benefactor, Barezzi. The union was happy, and all promised well, when Verdi's first opera, "Oberto,

Conte di San Bonifacio," was produced at La Scala on the 17th of November, 1839, with a success that went far toward securing him the entree to the opera-houses of Italy. But tragedy was stalking the composer. Verdi had scarcely begun the composition of a comic opera when a disease which the physician could not name carried off first his wife and then his two children. The blow affected profoundly the man and his music. All the succeeding operas of Verdi, until he reached his eightieth year, were of a serious and tragical character. For the moment the heart of the master failed him. But he had his life to live, his work to do, and his genius drove him on. Love of country, if not of life, was strong in him. Italy was groaning under Austrian misrule. It was for Verdi with his music, as for Garibaldi with his armies, to set that spirit free.

The performance of Verdi's next opera, "I Lombardi," on the 11th of February, 1843, was the signal for his first brush with the Austrian censor. The libretto did not treat directly of Italy's wrongs, but it had verses susceptible of patriotic interpretation, and even the presence of the police could not silence the tumultuous demonstration of the audience when the chorus began the broad and stately hymn to liberty opening with the words, "O God of all nations." The record of this passage shows us in what a simple and eloquent way Verdi was able, even so early in his career, to stir the emotions of his countrymen.

Verdi chose for the subject of his next opera the "Hernani" of Victor Hugo. The opera was first performed at the Fenice Theater, Venice, March 9, 1844. A king, Don Carlos of Spain, and the bandit, Ernani, a deposed nobleman, are rivals for the love of Elvira, who, against her wishes, is betrothed to the aged Don Gomez de Silva. Don Gomez and Ernani, for political reasons, plot against the king, with the understanding that if Gomez aids Ernani in the conspiracy, Ernani shall give up his life when demanded by a trumpet blast, the signal of Gomez. The king defeats the conspiracy, forgives the plotters, and, repenting his evil designs on Elvira, himself unites her to Ernani, whom she loves. But the trumpet of the revengeful Gomez sounds from afar, and Ernani, in accordance with Castilian honor, throws himself on his sword. An air from this opera, which has long held favor and figured in many a romance, is the song of Elvira,

"Ernani, fly with me." The heroine, longing for her lover, implores him to come and save her from the union with Don Gomez.

It is high-flown if you like — so was the drama — but it has the warmth and the romantic feeling in which Verdi already surpassed his contemporaries.

Verdi lived his characters when he composed — witness the reproach of Don Gomez, when he finds both king and bandit confronting him in the presence of Elvira. The crude force, the broad, virile outline of the melody contrast powerfully with the delicious musical frills of the Italian operas of the Rossini period.

"O de' verd' anni miei" is the soliloquy of the king as he reflects on the folly of those whose machinations he is about to defeat. This song, too, has more than a hint of the dramatic power as well as the melodic beauty of the Verdi of later days.

It is a striking fact that out of some thirty operas written by Verdi only six remain secure in the repertory of to-day. These are "Rigoletto," "Il Trovatore," "La Traviata," "Aïda," "Otello," and "Falstaff." Occasionally certain others are revived. All of these contain strokes of genius and bear testimony to the labor and failure which even the greatest composer must go through to attain his end.

"Rigoletto," like "Ernani," was inspired by a drama of Victor Hugo, "Le Roi s'amuse." This astonishing opera, produced in Venice, March 11, 1851, is far ahead of its period. Even to-day there are pages which surprise one by their modern feeling and atmosphere. Mark the opening solo of the Duke of Mantua. Surrounded by his brilliant court, this tyrant and libertine sings of his conquests. The song indicates his gay and cynical nature.

Rigoletto, the hunchbacked buffoon of the court, insults Monterone, a nobleman whom the duke has wronged, and Monterone, terrible in his wrath, curses the jester. This curse is soon a-working.

Rigoletto loves but one being in the world, his daughter, Gilda. The duke secretly woos her, in the disguise of a student. Alone in her garden, Gilda sings one of the most famous of Verdi's melodies. "Dearest name," she murmurs, thinking of her lover, "name of one whom I adore." The melody is in the old-fashioned style of Rossini — a simple air, with elaborate musical ornaments. It is worthy of note, however, that it not only displays the skill of the singer, but also

reveals the character of Gilda, an innocent young girl, singing coquettishly of her love. The end of the song is well known in soprano literature because of the high E.

The courtiers conspire to blindfold Rigoletto and make him an unconscious party to the abduction of his own daughter, whom they hand over to the duke.

One of the greatest passages of the opera comes in the third act when Rigoletto enters the ducal anteroom, trying vainly to conceal his dismay under a laughing and careless exterior, while his eyes search everywhere for a sign of the whereabouts of his lost child. At last, unable longer to dissemble, he implores the courtiers who jeer at his misery to have mercy, to speak. They whisper among themselves, but give no reply. Desperate, at his wits' end, forgetful, at last, of caution and the flattery due his masters, the misshapen jester, with a cry of rage, denounces the rabble who have broken his heart.

The courtiers, taken aback by the jester suddenly transformed into a desperate man at bay, leave the room as Gilda emerges from the ducal chamber and throws herself into her father's arms. "Dishonor, my father! Dishonor! Each morning when I went to church a youth wooed me with his eyes. Yesterday as evening shadows fell…I was seized. Ah, horror!" Rigoletto, appalled, cries out, "How I prayed, every day, that you should be shielded and untouched by my infamy… Ah, weep ("piangi, piangi, fanciulla"), my daughter. Weep here on my heart."

There is a dramatic interruption: the sudden appearance of the aged Monterone, whose curse is bringing such evil to the jester, and who, not perceiving the presence of Rigoletto and his daughter, pauses before a portrait of the duke, to thunder his denunciation. For an instant Rigoletto, terrified by this impersonation of doom, cowers in a corner; then, as Monterone goes on, he springs to his feet, and in turn addresses the portrait. "Yes, vengeance" ("Si, vendetta"), he cries. "A father's vengeance upon you." While he strides up and down the apartment, invoking all the powers of evil on the head of the tyrant, Gilda, who can find in her heart only love for her betrayer, tries to console her parent, and prays that Heaven may avert the consequences of his wrath — all this to the furious music of Giuseppe Verdi.

The last act of the opera, which contains the immortal quartet, takes place in a lonely spot on the shores of the river Mincio. On one side is seen the hut of the assassin, Sparafucile. With this man Rigoletto has struck a terrible bargain. Through the sister of Sparafucile, the wanton Maddalena, the duke is to be lured to the hut and there murdered. His body is to be delivered to Rigoletto, who will wait outside at midnight. Gilda, loving her betrayer, implores her father to reconsider his projected crime. For answer he bids her approach the hut, where Gilda sees the duke, fickle, and amorous as ever, dallying with the unscrupulous Maddalena. Such is the situation when the duke sings his aria, beloved of all tenors, "La donna è mobile."

This aria was not shown to the tenor Mirate until a few hours before the *premiere*. Verdi then gave him the music, bidding him not to sing, whistle, or think the melody outside the theater. The composer exacted similar promises of the orchestra, the chorus, and every one present at the rehearsal. The reception of the air proved his wisdom in taking these precautions. The house burst into applause before the tenor had finished the first verse, and when the audience had filed from the theater "La donna è mobile" could be heard whistled and sung throughout Venice.

There are few ensemble passages in all opera which equal in beauty and dramatic power the quartet. Here are four people each animated by a different emotion, each part strongly individual, and all the voices combining to make a piece of heavenly harmony. Gilda is desperate with the discovery of the duke's infidelity. The duke is casting languishing eyes on Maddalena. Maddalena is laughing in his arms, and Rigoletto, crouching outside the door of the hut, is plotting vengeance.

A storm rages. The hour of midnight strikes. A body inclosed in a sack is thrown through the door. Rigoletto is exulting in his vengeance when he hears what seems to him a ghostly echo, the careless song of the duke, "La donna è mobile." He opens the sack and beholds the face of his own daughter. Gilda has offered her life to save the man who betrayed her. "The curse!" he shrieks, and the curtain falls.

The two operas which followed "Rigoletto," "Il Trovatore," and "La Traviata," were performed in the same year, 1853. "II Trovatore"

is a wild tale taken from a Spanish drama. The Count di Luna suspected an old gipsy of gazing with the evil eye on his two children. She was burned at the stake. One of the children of the count disappeared and the next morning bones were found in the midst of a pile of ashes. It was believed that Azucena, daughter of the tortured gipsy, had burned the child in revenge. She committed, however, a horrible mistake, for she cast her own child into the fire and bore off the son of the count. Azucena's life was, on the one hand, a consuming desire for revenge on the family of Di Luna, and, on the other, a passionate love, which she could not quell, for the child she had stolen. This child, whose real name is Garcia di Luna, grows up knowing only that he is called Manrico of Urgel. The gipsy is to him as a mother. She is one of the greatest portraits in Verdi's gallery of operatic heroines. Some think her to have been inspired by Walter Scott's; Meg Merrilies."

It develops in the first act of the opera that the present Count di Luna, whose younger brother has vanished, is madly jealous of an unknown troubadour who serenades the fair Leonora at midnight. That heroine, on a terrace, sentimentally narrates to her confidante, Inez, the circumstances of her first meeting with the mysterious hero whose song has so thrilled her. This is the occasion for her solo, "Tacea la notte," in which she describes the calm beauty of the moonlit night on which she first heard the voice of her adorer.

Scarcely has Leonora told her romantic tale, and Inez very sensibly remarked that she believes no good will come of it, when the voice of the troubadour falls on their ears, a serenade not so famous as the solo of the tower scene, but a beautiful number which merits more attention than it commonly receives.

The familiar operatic formula is then worked first the solo of the lover, then the agitated observations of the fair, then the assembling of three of the principal personages of the drama, in order that a trio may bring the act to an effective musical conclusion.

A third individual has been an interested listener to this melancholy song — the Count di Luna, who, as the serenader advances from one side, himself approaches on the other. The two men fight. The count is wounded, but his life is spared by the troubadour, who is discovered to be Manrico. Leonora flees to a convent. The second

act opens with the gipsy chorus, one of the most popular choruses ever composed.

Azucena, as one in a trance, sings of the death of her mother. A messenger arrives with the intelligence that Di Luna is attacking the convent in which Leonora has taken refuge, that Manrico must assemble his men and confront the foe. In agitation Azucena clings to Manrico and begs him, for her sake, to guard his life.

Before the convent walls Di Luna sings of the tempest in his heart. Few composers save Verdi could have written a melody of such breadth and beauty of line. The man did not lack nobility, and his superb air is in the grand manner.

Manrico rescues Leonora, and they hasten to the fortress of Castellor, pursued by the army of the count. On the eve of their wedding comes the news that the count's followers have captured Azucena. This is the moment for Manrico's furious cry of battle, "Di quella pira." He grasps his sword and, to the warlike rhythm of Verdi's orchestra, rushes forth to the fray. This desperately heroic song was the one melody which the Italian statesman Cavour could remember, as "Il Trovatore" was the one opera to which he would willingly listen. One day Cavour was waiting for news which would powerfully affect the destinies of Italy. At last the telegram, arrived. The face of the solemn and bespectacled statesman lit up at the message. He said nothing, but rushed to the window, threw it open, and shouted at the top of his lungs, "Di quella pira!"

The fourth act of "Trovatore" is one of the most dramatic Verdi ever composed. Manrico and Azucena have been captured and are to be executed in the morning. Outside the castle Aliaferia, Ruiz, the faithful follower of Manrico, shows Leonora the tower in which her lover is confined. "Ah, love," she laments, "carry your message to the cell of the lonely prisoner, keep and console him, and do not let him know the despair in my heart."

Here follows the tower scene, a scene of deathless eloquence and beauty, a scene in which Verdi once and for all demonstrates the dramatic potency of simple Italian melody. From above comes the voice of the doomed troubadour, while Leonora cries out in anguish. A musical background, black as the surrounding night, is the requiem chanted by the nuns, the bell tolling for the last hours of the con-

demned. Underlying all is the shuddering accompaniment of the orchestra.

Manrico is to be beheaded at dawn. Azucena, as her mother before her, will be burned at the stake. Leonora offers herself as the price of her lover's safety. She asks but one condition — that she may bear the news to the dungeon. As she goes, she raises to her lips a poisoned ring. In the cell of the condemned, Azucena lies on the straw, between exhaustion and death. Manrico begs her to sleep, to disperse the dreadful visions which haunt her. Fain would they return to their mountains. Verdi has here written music of the most simple and touching pathos.

Leonora enters, urging Manrico to escape before it is too late, but he, suspicious, asks her at what price she gained his freedom. For answer, Leonora expires before him, with words of love on her lips. The count stands on the threshold. He orders the guards to lead the troubadour to the scaffold. Useless the pleadings of Azucena, and her terrified warnings that the count will rue the deed. The ax falls. "He is punished," cries the count. The gipsy turns on him. "Manrico was thy brother. Oh, mother, thou art avenged!"

"II Trovatore" was first performed in Rome, January 19, 1853. Its plot is lurid and complicated, but the music seethes with the hot blood of Verdi's race. Operatic standards of the period in Italy were crude. A plank and a tune sufficed. But what tunes they were! What melody! What emotional power! In spite of its tortuous narrative, in spite of the old-fashioned conventions which inhere in "Il Trovatore," the music has a pulse, a thrill, that neither time nor custom nor hand-organs can stale.

The libretto of "La Traviata" by Piave, is based on the play of the younger Dumas, *The Lady of the Camellias.* Marguerite Gautier of Dumas's novel is Violetta of the opera. Violetta, a Parisian beauty, is loved by Alfredo. Sincerely devoted to him, she abandons her corrupt life in Paris and retires with him to the country. Alfredo's father, discovering the affair, pleads with Violetta to set free his son. Violetta, knowing that it will be impossible to send Alfredo away by any ordinary means, leaves him to infer that she has been faithless to him, and returns again to Paris. Alfredo, heartbroken by this apparent desertion, follows, and, in the presence of many guests, insults her.

Challenged by one of the company, Alfredo is wounded in a duel. Violetta is dying of consumption when Alfredo, recovering from his injuries, finds out, too late, the cruel injustice he has done.

Verdi in this opera surprised his warmest admirers by the simplicity and refinement of his style. With the utmost economy of means he frequently achieves surpassingly emotional effects. The orchestral prelude to the first act forecasts in a considerable degree the emotions of the drama.

In a company of revelers (Act I) Violetta and Alfredo salute each other with a toast. Life is short and fleeting. It is well for youth to gather its joy while it may.

Alfredo takes his leave. Violetta, for his sake, would fain renounce the follies that surround her. Sadly, wistfully, she begins her air, "Ah! fors' è lui" ("Ah! were it he"). But alas, she reflects, what could she offer Alfredo that would be worthy of his affection? It is best to live in the moment, to be free. With forced gaiety she sings the aria, "Sempre libera" ("Forever free").

Alfredo's ardor overcomes Violetta's hesitation. But her happiness is short-lived. Renouncing all, she leaves him. Alfredo is confronted by his father, who reminds the heartbroken lover of all that waits at home forgiveness, the love of parents and sister, and the fair land of Provence, where the past may be forgotten and healed. "Di Provenza il mar" is the melody Verdi has given the father whose heart goes out to his son.

Not unnaturally Alfredo misunderstands the action of Violetta and puts the grossest construction upon it. He pursues her to the home of her friend, Flora Belvoix. There a ball is in progress, and Violetta is dissembling her grief as best she may. Alfredo, ignoring the unfortunate woman, plays at cards, wins heavily, and challenges his supposed rival, Baron Duphol, to a duel. Violetta is in consternation at his wild talk when they find themselves alone together. Alfredo accuses her of inconstancy, summons the guests about them, and in the presence of the entire company throws his purse at Violetta's feet. For this act of a puppy he is censured not only by his friends but by his father, who has followed him and who now appears on the scene. To a chorus of disapprobation Alfredo departs. Violetta, of course, swoons.

Between this scene and the opening of the last act Alfredo has been wounded in his duel, and has learned too late of the selflessness of Violetta. She is seen, a wasted consumptive, on her death-bed. She reads a letter from Alfredo's father, who is also late in repenting of his interference, well meant as it was, in his son's love affair. "I have told my son," he writes Violetta, "of your sacrifice. He will return to you for pardon. Live for the happiness which you deserve."

The music Verdi wrote for these situations is not only remarkable for deep feeling, but extreme simplicity. With a very few instruments, a very few notes, he prepares the hearer, in his prelude to this final act, for the emotions to come.

Alfredo arrives. He clasps the dying Violetta in his arms, and the two sing of the happiness, far from the prying crowd, which they fondly anticipate, and which will never be theirs. Violetta breathes her last in her lover's arms.

The simple eloquence of the music of the final scene is only another proof of the limitless possibilities of Verdi's genius.

Produced at Venice, March 6, 1853, "Traviata" was coldly received. "Is it my fault or that of the singers?" wrote Verdi to a friend. Time has vindicated the composer. Who was to blame for the failure of the last act? The soprano weighed something over two hundred pounds, and it is not surprising that a gale of laughter swept the house when she announced she was dying of consumption!

It is significant that while up to the time of the composition of "Aïda" Verdi had composed opera after opera, the average time of composition being four months for each work, "Aïda" was followed by only two works, "Otello" and "Falstaff," in a period of twenty-two years! In other words, Verdi was reaching the period when profound reflection and knowledge of life were to contribute to the careful, deliberate achievement of master-works.

"Aïda," produced at Cairo on the 24th of December, 1871, was composed at the invitation of the Khedive of Egypt, a munificent patron of the arts, who desired that Verdi should compose a work on an Egyptian theme for the new Italian Theater which had thrown open its doors the preceding season. To Mariette Bey, the eminent Egyptologist, was intrusted the task of finding a subject which would be appropriate to the occasion and likely to interest Verdi. The

libretto was written in French prose, under the eye of the composer, by Camille du Locle.

Aïda, a captive in the Egyptian court, is handmaid to the Princess Amneris. The two women discover themselves to be rivals for the love of the hero, Radames. He is appointed commander of the Egyptians who are sent against the hordes led by Amonasro, the African chieftain and Aïda's father. Picture the tumult in the heart of this unhappy woman — devoted to her father, fearful for her lover, and the slave of her rival, in whose power she lives. Radames returns from the campaign victorious and with Amonasro in chains. The Egyptian king confers on Radames the hand of his daughter, an honor which may not be refused. On the eve of the wedding Aïda, at the command of her father, wrings from her unsuspecting lover information as to the military plans of the Egyptians' forthcoming campaign against the Ethiopians. Scarcely has the secret been betrayed than the guards of Amneris appear. Radames is condemned to be buried alive for his apparent treachery. Amneris, who knows the truth, offers to save him if he will renounce Aïda, but Radames prefers death to a living lie. In the tomb he finds Aïda, come to share his fate. While the priests chant and the priestesses perform the sacred dance in the temple above them, the lovers sing of union in death, and Amneris, conscience-stricken, implores pardon of her gods.

One of the most beautiful of Verdi's arias is the well-known "Celeste Aïda," in which Radames (Act I) pays glowing tribute to the beauty of Aïda and prays the gods to give him victory and the reward of her love.

Compare the artistic simplicity and romantic feeling of this air with the love music of Verdi's earlier operas. Here are neither pompous heroics nor elaborate vocal display, but straightforward, noble, manly sentiment, and a melody that every one can comprehend and cherish.

Radames, in the presence of the king, the High-priest Ramphis, and other dignitaries, priests, and attendants, is informed of his appointment as leader of the Egyptian armies. Aïda is left alone. "May laurels crown thy brow," she cries out to the departing Radames; "but, alas! how can I wish Radames victory over my father, who wages war

that I may be restored to my country and my crown?" The noble line of the melody, the passionate outbursts of feeling, the broken exclamations which alternate with sustained and beautiful song, make this air one of the world's great masterpieces of dramatic music. Very wonderful, too, is the part played by the orchestra. At the same time, it remains subordinate to the voice, which always retains its ascendancy, its matchless expressive power. "No more," continues Aïda, "do I dare even to recall the names of those for whom my prayers would ascend to heaven. Look down on me, merciful gods, and pity these tears."

The scene changes to the interior of the temple of Vulcan at Memphis. In a mysterious light which shines down from above are seen towering columns, statues of ancient Egyptian deities, tripods whence rise the golden fumes of incense, and looming over all the image of the god Phtha. The aid of Phtha is besought by an invisible priestess, and there are low responses from the assembled priests. Verdi has set before us in an unforgetable manner a scene of ancient ceremonial and worship.

Radames is at the battle-front. Amneris, apprehensive for his safety, longing for his return, broods savagely on the possibility that he loves Aïda. And what if his love is returned? With an imperious gesture she summons the African before her. "Radames has perished!" And the outcry of Aïda shows Amneris how truly she has read her heart.

Comes Radames, triumphant at the head of his hosts, with captives, among them Amonasro, in his train. Probably no composer has written a more stupendous operatic ensemble than the second scene of the second act of "Aïda." The first half of this scene — the acclamations of the people, the ceremonies of triumph, the discovery of the identity of Amonasro, and his superbly barbaric defiance of his conquerors — would have absorbed the creative power of a great and gifted composer.

But this is only the prelude to the gigantic climax, when Radames, against the protests of the priests, obtains as a boon the life of Amonasro, and the hand of Amneris is conferred on the hero. It is musical and dramatic architecture of the grandest type.

Nor could one easily conceive a finer contrast than that of this

scene and the opening of the third act, the river Nile, which shimmers in the moonlight, while from an adjoining temple come the songs of priests and priestesses who await Amneris. Ramphis leads her to the temple in which, on the eve of her wedding, she intends to spend the night in prayer.

Aïda steals in for her meeting with Radames. "Oh, native land," she sings. "Oh, skies of azure, no more shall I behold you." The passion for his native land, for his own soil, which often animated Verdi as a composer, has come powerfully to his assistance in this passage. A tender pastoral melody precedes Aida's solo, and in the orchestra is the whisper of gentle winds. Again Verdi achieves an effect of extraordinary poignancy with the simple melody that comes from the heart of the sorrowing woman.

Of the fourth act Amneris is the heroine, and a royal creature she is. Aïda has escaped. Amonasro was killed. Radames awaits sentence as a traitor, though Amneris knows well that a traitor he is not. Nevertheless, he had planned flight with Aida, and in the eyes of the proud and passionate princess this is a crime more fearful than any of which the hero stands accused.

Weeping, she addresses Radames as guards lead him past to judgment. "If you wish to save yourself, look on Amneris! Is not life with her a lovelier thing than the shameful death of the condemned?" Radames is fearless. A proud woman and a strong man face each other, and the spirit of them both is in Verdi's music.

One searches the literature of music drama for a nobler, more touching passage than this. It is Italian in its fervor and eloquence, it is almost Greek in the nobility and the inherent repose of its art. As the drama proceeds the sympathy of the hearer grows for Amneris. Aïda is a captive maiden in a romantic situation. Amneris is a figure of destiny, half a goddess, and doomed at last, in her repentance, to a fate far more tragic than that of the beings in her power. She must now watch the workings of the revenge she has invoked, helpless to avert its culmination. The unrelenting priests pass Amneris on their way to the hall of judgment. The distracted woman, too late, implores the gods to intervene. Nowhere has Verdi delved deeper in the human heart, in no page of any master-work has he produced a character who excites our emotions and sympathies so much as the

tragic figure of the Egyptian princess imploring, supplicating, and answered only by the dark and inexorable pronouncements of the tribunal.

The double stage of the last act of "Aida" was the idea of Verdi. The upper half of the stage shows the interior of the temple of Vulcan as it was in the first act. Again the tripods are giving forth the fumes of burning incense, again the priestesses are performing the sacred dances, again is heard the music of the invocation to Phtha. Underneath is the vault in which Radames is entombed. Two priests are in the act of nailing down the stone which imprisons him forever.

Radames discovers Aïda, who has preceded him. Nothing is more touching than the final song that Verdi has given his lovers, the sensuous song of love for which the world and life itself are well lost. The two voices, issuing from the darkness of the crypt, mingle with the ancient chant of the priestesses invoking Phtha. It is the music of the lighted temple and the triumphant enemies of Aïda and Radames which appears dark in mood and color, while from underneath, where all is shadow, there rise harmonies radiant and ecstatic.

After the death of Rossini in 1868 Verdi suggested that thirteen Italian composers write as many different numbers of a requiem mass in his memory. Verdi composed only the last number the "Libera me." As might be supposed, the various numbers were so dissimilar in style and value that there was no harmonious relation or proportion between them. The musician and critic, Alberto Mazzucato, was so struck with Verdi's music that he wrote him begging him to compose the complete mass. Soon after this Alessandro Manzoni died. Verdi composed in his memory the requiem for chorus, soloists, and orchestra which concluded with the number originally written in honor of Rossini. A single excerpt from this work, the impressive "Confutatis maledictus," will imply the grandeur, the color, the dramatic feeling of a stupendous composition, which solemnly chants the repose and salvation of death, the terrors of the Judgment Day. "Confutatis maledictus" is from the "Dies irse" ("Day of wrath") of the mass. "From the fate of the accursed," sings the bass, "O God, deliver me."

For the operas "Otello" and "Falstaff" Arrigo Boito, the poet and musician, of whom we say more in another chapter, was the librettist,

and never had composer a stronger and finer text than he gave Verdi. For fifteen years Boito had dreamed of writing a libretto on the basis of "Otello," and himself composing the music, but his reverence for Verdi was so great that he effaced himself with an affection and devotion of which a lesser man would have been incapable.

"Otello" was produced at La Scala, Milan, February 5, 1887. The *premiere* was the occasion for demonstrations of enthusiasm, intense even for an Italian audience. For weeks before the performance cab-drivers and loungers in cafés read the libretto, as they did when "Falstaff" was performed six years later, and discussed it passionately. When the event came off Boito feared for Verdi at the hands of the wildly joyous mob.

Boito begins with the second act of Shakespeare's play, and the storm with which the opera opens is not only the grandest imaginable evocation of the elements, but is also the fitting symbol of the destructive passions which rage in Otello's breast. Characters of the drama and their motives are set forth with masterly skill and condensation. The virility of the music, its concentration and intensity of feeling, are matched by the consummate dramatic technic of the composer. Uncanny is the atmosphere established by Verdi at the beginning of the last act, when the gentle Desdemona, filled with premonitions she cannot explain, sings the "Willow song" and breathes her prayer.

Otello, filled with remorse when he knows the horrible injustice of his crime, cries out, as he stabs himself:

> "I kissed thee ere I killed thee: no way but this;
> Killing myself, to die upon a kiss."

Though often, in his later years, depressed and melancholy, Verdi gave the world as his last creation not a tragedy, but a comedy, a miracle of laughter and song. Boito wove the libretto of "Falstaff" (produced at La Scala, February 9, 1893) from several of Shakespeare's dramas, drawing principally on "The Merry Wives of Windsor." Shakespeare is said to have written this drama in fourteen days for Elizabeth of England, when the Virgin Queen expressed a wish "to see Falstaff in love." The opera is all too seldom performed, partly because of the difficulty of securing in one cast the number of great

singers the score demands. It was composed when Verdi was eighty years old. "Genius," according to Mr. Edgar Lee Masters, "is wisdom and youth." The music which Verdi created in his eightieth year was surpassingly young.

Verdi was a strong, simple man, like his music. He spent the later years of his life on his farm at Sant' Agata, where there was not even a good piano, where he rose at five, inspected the work being done about the estate, raised horses, and gave extensively and anonymously to those in need. Disliking ceremony, a democrat to the backbone, a lover of people who were simple and unassuming like himself, he preferred the Italian peasants and the nature about him to great cities and applauding throngs.

In the course of his career, Verdi summarized practically the entire development of Italian opera. This form first came into definite shape at about the beginning of the seventeenth century. The ideals of the early Italian pioneers of the music-drama were those which obtain to-day with the greatest opera composers: that the music must be throughout dependent upon and expressive of the dramatic situation. But the invention of music-drama led in turn to the appearance of a type of melody so beautiful in itself that the Italians forgot to compose with dramatic truth and consistency, and contented themselves with writing brilliant, melodious showpieces for favorite singers. The ideals of the first opera composers were forgotten, and the singer reigned.

Before Verdi, the bright star of Italian opera was Rossini. His genius triumphed over the conventions of his day. He had a number of brilliant satellites, among whom we now recognize two as being pre-eminent, Bellini and Donizetti. Their best music still charms by its grace and beauty, but it is music of a time that is past. Verdi, starting where the gifted Rossini and his colleagues had stopped, was the strong man, the prophet of the new era. He was a master who summed up in his works the labors and dreams of a thousand lesser men, a patriot who grew like a great tree from the ever-fruitful soil of his native land. His last three operas contain the essence of all dramatic music which has since come from Italy. Yet they are inimitable and of unapproachable perfection in themselves. Verdi was a man of passionate convictions, enduring attachments, unswerving

ideals in life and art. The homage of the world was his when, on the 27th of January, 1901, he passed away.

There are impressive pages in operas of Verdi not specified in the preceding chapter. Records of selections from these works will afford much good music and a more detailed survey of his development as a composer. Why have these operas, with the occasional exception of "The Masked Ball" ("Ballo in Maschera") and "The Power of Destiny" ("Forza del Destino") failed to hold the stage? The answer lies, no doubt, largely in the flimsy and melodramatic character of the libretti. No composer could have built masterpieces of such materials. It appears as if the melodic genius and the dramatic passion of Verdi had sometimes defeated themselves by the impulsiveness and impatience of the man to spill blood and notes in the theater. His genius, like that of Handel, seems to have been prodigal, almost wasteful, like nature; to have produced with a kindred fecundity and carelessness of the result. Consider the dates on which these different works appeared: "Luisa Miller," an orgy of jealousy, poison, and murder, is produced in Naples in 1849. It is on the whole a poorer work than "Ernani," mounted five years before. Only two years after "Luisa Miller" comes "Rigoletto," in 1851, the first of Verdi's operas to hold a place in the repertory of to-day, a work much more modern in certain passages, and better knit than "Il Trovatore," which appeared in 1853. It was after "Rigoletto," "Trovatore," and "Traviata" — six years after, in 1859 — that the first public performance of "The Masked Ball," an arrant hodgepodge of the great and the ridiculous, was given. And so with other works. Genius is not an orderly, pedestrian thing. It is a thing of ebb and flood, calm and storm, like the sea.

"Simon Boccanegea" (Venice, 1857)

Although both prologue and final act of this opera are reputed to have much distinction, the work as a whole has not kept the stage probably because of a weak and confused libretto. In Cologne in 1875 Verdi saw a performance of Schiller's drama, from which the plot was drawn, and cried out, "Ah, what a fine poem Piave might have made for me!" "Il lacerato spirito" is the lament of Simon Boccanegra, who, returning to the city from which he has been absent for twenty-five

years, encounters a funeral cortege, headed by the body of a girl he had loved and betrayed. In the opera, the solo voice is answered by a chorus of grief.

"Ballo in Maschera" ("The Masked Ball") (Rome, 1859)

Many tributes have been paid that city facetiously known as "the hub of the universe," but few have been so astonishing as the placing of the scene of Verdi's opera, "Ballo in Maschera," in Boston, Massachusetts. The original title of the opera, the libretto by Somma, was "Gustavus III." An episode was the assassination of the Swedish monarch. While the rehearsals were in progress occurred the attempted assassination of Napoleon III by Orsini. It was dangerous to excite the Italian public of that day by dwelling too heavily on the killing of monarchs. The Austrian censor ordered Verdi to change his plot. This the composer refused to do. The manager of the theater sued Verdi for not delivering his opera on time. Crowds assembled under Verdi's window and cheered him. The war for Italian independence had begun. Verdi's name had patriotic significance. Thus V. E. R. D. I. came to mean "Viva Vittorio Emanuele, Re D'Italia" ("Long live Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy"). Finally the name of "Richard, governor of Boston," was substituted for Gustavus, and in costumes of our Puritan forefathers the opera was performed. When Mario, the tenor, sang in the opera, he refused to wear the sober garb of the Puritans and was allowed to appear in the costume of a Spanish grandee! In late productions the scenes of the opera have been changed to "A northern country."

Riccardo loves Amelia, wife of his secretary, Renato. He consults a negro sorceress to decipher the future and overhears Amelia, who has come to the same place for a love-cure, declare that she loves him. Amelia, veiled, meets Riccardo in a lonely spot. The devoted Renato hurries thither, to save his chief from approaching conspirators. He discovers his wife's identity and later stabs Riccardo at a masked ball. Riccardo, falling, swears that Amelia is innocent.

A very tuneful aria is that of the faithful Renato, in the first act, when he warns Riccardo that his life is not safe in the palace. There are enemies whose hatred is swifter than the love of Riccardo's subjects, who wait the opportunity to strike.

"Eri tu" is Renato' s denunciation of Amelia, when he believes her to have betrayed his honor. The introductory trumpet blast, the dramatic fervor of the music, make a very effective baritone aria in the old style.

"La Forza Del Destino" ("The Power of Destiny") (Petrograd, 1862)

The libretto is by Piave, after a drama by the Duke of Rivas. Alvaro is about to elope with Leonora when her father, the Marquis de Calatrava, enters the room. Alvaro's pistol accidentally goes off, killing the marquis. Alvaro and Leonora flee to escape the consequences of this deed. Leonora knocks at the door of a monastery, asking leave to take refuge in an abandoned hermitage near by. The monks promise to keep her secret. Leonora's brother, Don Carlos, swears to avenge his father's death and kill his sister's lover. But he and Alvaro become brother officers and firm friends in the army, neither knowing the identity of the other. When this is disclosed they fight, and Carlos is wounded. Alvaro retires to a monastery — the same near which Leonora lives. Carlos follows him. They fight again and Carlos is again wounded. Leonora rushes from her hut, and stumbles over the body of her brother, who recognizes and stabs her before he dies. The book of the opera was revised when it was produced in Milan in 1869. Thus there is more than one ending. The prevailing one is that in which, Don Carlos and his sister dying, Alvaro goes insane and leaps from a precipice. Verdi composed this work in grim earnest, and there are scenes of gripping intensity and musical power. One of the most celebrated passages of the opera is the overture, which contains many of the musical motives that appear later in the work, and which, with that tumultuous eloquence that the orchestra, greatest of all musical instruments, possesses, foretells the tragedy that is to come.

The scene in which Leonora implores the aid of Heaven and blesses the monks of Hornacuelos for the protection they give her is extremely impressive. It takes place before the monastery, and the voices of the chanting monks are heard as a musical background of the desperate appeal of Leonora.

It is while Carlos and Alvaro are as brothers, fighting side by side, and before their insane enmity has developed, that they sing the great

duet, vowing eternal trust and friendship.

"Don Carlos" (Paris, 1867)

In "Don Carlos" Verdi anticipated the grand proportions, the elevated style, of "Aïda." The libretto, based on Schiller's drama, is the work of Mery and Camille du Locle, and is far superior in matter and in style to those of the operas immediately preceding. Don Carlos, son of Philip II of Spain, is betrothed to Elizabeth of Valois, daughter of Henry IV of France. The French king, for reasons of state, sets aside the engagement and gives Elizabeth to King Philip. The youthful lovers, though torn apart, cannot restrain their affection. Their secret is discovered by the jealous Princess Eboli, who informs the king. Don Carlos, on the advice of the Grand Inquisitor, is imprisoned. He is visited in his cell by his friend, Roderigo. The suspicions of the Grand Inquisitor being aroused, Roderigo, popular with the people, as well as a former favorite of the king, is shot. Because of a revolt of the populace, afterward quelled, Carlos is released. At night, under the shadow of deserted cloisters, he meets the queen to say farewell. The two are discovered by the king and Carlos is delivered into the hands of the Inquisitor.

"Ella giammai m'amo'" is the dramatic soliloquy of the king, sung at the beginning of the fourth act. He knows now that Elizabeth can never love him, that kings can command, but there is a realm where their mandates are helpless. In the use of the orchestra, in the expressively written accompaniment and the force of declaration, this air is a significant predecessor of the music of "Aïda."

CHAPTER 7
Ludwig Van Beethoven

History plays strange tricks. There is something very near the spirit of America in the career of Ludwig van Beethoven. He appears in music as the supreme prophet of democracy. He was born (1770-1827) in the period of the American War for Independence and a quarter of a century before the French Revolution, waged in the names of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." The forces which were reshaping society fashioned his soul.

Of common stock, Beethoven rose to the heights through sheer greatness and force of will. He was contemptuous of rank or precedent, and had that in him which compelled respect, even homage, from the highborn. His life, though not without honors and successes, was tragic. The affliction of deafness added indescribably to his burdens. Yet he could toil and fight on. He could roar with laughter, he could adore liberty, he could preserve to the end an utter absorption in his art and a passionate adherence to the noblest ideals. Other music than his haunts us because of its sheer loveliness, or eloquence, or color, or poetry — what you will. But the music of Beethoven is nearer and farther than that. It is first of all the music of a strong man, a brother, passionately human. It has a deeply emotional quality which no other music had in like degree before Beethoven appeared. It is clean and heroic, a proclamation for all time of the great destiny of humanity, the loving-kindness of God, and the godhood of man.

Beethoven's mother was a cook, his father a court singer and a drunkard. A portion of the father's salary was soon paid direct to Ludwig, who shouldered in a considerable degree the responsibilities of the family. There were three brothers, one of whom died in infancy. The other two, Carl and Johann, petty souls, helped to make Beethoven's life wretched by secret traffic and profiting in his compositions. (It was one of these individuals, purse-proud at some paltry

gain, who sent Ludwig his card, with the additional title, "land-owner," and who received in exchange the signature, "Ludwig van Beethoven, Brain-owner.") The father's family came from Louvain in Belgium. Hence the "van" in Beethoven's name, which was probably of social assistance to him, but which was not a certificate of nobility like the "von" in Germany.

Beethoven, despite his surroundings, was fortunate in the training of his talent and the friends he made in high places. He was rather cruelty subjected to the education of the child prodigy. He had his first lessons at four, and played in concert at eight. He composed a set of variations at ten, and was pianist and conductor at the theater when he was thirteen. In the following year he made his first pay as organist. In 1787 he contrived to visit Vienna, where he played to Mozart, who tiptoed from the room and whispered, "That young man will make a noise in the world." Of equal or greater importance in Beethoven's early development is the broadening of his mental horizon, through his acquaintance with aristocracy and people of the great world, his reading, considerably more extensive than that of the average musician of the day, and his acquaintance with several languages. Haydn, too, encouraged him in his studies — they had not yet become the enemies they became in later years — and in 1792 Beethoven went to Vienna, where he passed the remainder of his life.

Almost from the beginning he annoyed his teachers by what they could only construe as a scoffing disrespect for things known and done. Beethoven one day remarked that it was "good occasionally to learn what was according to rule, in order that one may later arrive at what is contrary to rule." But he never made a new rule until he had mastered the old one. The self-restraint he exercised when his youthful genius was urging him to smash conventions to smithereens and go on his way is as remarkable, and as characteristic of his mind, as the audacious originality discovered in his later scores. He was learning, and biding his time. When that time came, knowing his power, certain of his destiny, Beethoven struck out music to ring through the centuries. He freed his art forever from the shackles of formalism and conventionality. He gave music an energy and a revolutionary impulse it has never lost. He seemed to his contemporaries, even to other composers, an anarchist of tones. Actually he was the

prophet of the new era.

Compare any well-known masterpiece of Beethoven with the comparatively polite and polished music of his predecessors, not excepting the two immortals, Haydn and Mozart, of the eighteenth century. Take the best of the Haydn symphonies, or even the C major or G minor symphonies of Mozart, and put them by Beethoven's Fifth. In the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart there is music of heavenly grace and transparency. In the music of Beethoven there is a depth of meaning, a grandeur of utterance, and a fiery spirit which sweeps everything before it.

On the manuscript of his Fifth Symphony, according to Schindler, Beethoven wrote, "Thus fate knocks at the door." At once, without classic preamble, like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, sounds the fate motive. Four tones only. Four hammer strokes of destiny!

The last tone is prolonged and vibrated with the whole strength of the orchestra, as if the irresistible force had met the immovable body, and the two were to strive together for eternity. The motive is driven home by immediate repetition, after which it begins to whisper and mutter and thunder through, the registers of the orchestra. It is nearly always present, in one form or another, throughout the movement, and it is a wonderful example, in addition to its dramatic meaning, of the way in which Beethoven could take an acorn of a musical idea and make from it a vast forest of sound. Even when the second theme, a short, pleading melody, appears, the fate motive is heard softly, as an accompaniment, in the bass. It soon overwhelms the gentle song, swallowed in the orchestral fury. Theme shatters against theme. There are moments of exhaustion, sighs of weariness and dejection, but the music quickly gathers fresh energy and rage, and in this mood the movement comes to an end.

No wonder that such rugged and virile art annoyed the conservatives of Beethoven's day. But could anyone have failed to respond to the slow movement which follows? It opens with an instrumental song which might well have inspired the verse of Henley:

> "It matters not how straight the gate,
> How charged with punishment the scroll,
> I am the captain of my fate:
> I am the master of my soul."

With his sure instinct for the right expression, Beethoven is no longer complex or dramatic. He weaves a series of masterly variations about the main melody, first given to the violoncellos of the orchestra. This melody has two long principal phrases. The first phrase is peaceful and contemplative in spirit, the second partakes more of the character of heroic resolve. The ending is the expression of a man who has found fresh strength to face the battle of life.

The Fifth Symphony is in four movements. Most unprecedented of them all, in some respects, is the third movement, the "Scherzo," which Beethoven substituted for the "Minuet" established as part of the symphony by his forerunners. There is music of restless foreboding, then a sudden outburst of Beethovenish laughter. Mysterious pluckings and whisperings of the strings are interrupted by the trumpet, which, full-voiced, raps out a new version of the Fate theme. Later on the orchestra subsides, sustaining softly a certain chord. Little is heard for many measures save a drum which marks the rhythm, like the heartbeat of one in a trance. At last the drumbeat quickens and swells, and with one mighty crescendo the instruments launch into a finale made of fanfares and shouts of victory — paens, salutations, to the dauntless human soul.

That is the kind of music that Beethoven liked to write. Not that he failed to take pleasure in many lighter moods and smaller forms. See, for example, the Minuet of his piano sonata, Opus 31, No. 3, with the flowing, Mozartean melody of its first part, and the sly humor of the middle section, in which Beethoven jests and digs us in the ribs (Minuet of sonata, Opus 31, No. 3, arranged for orchestra: Columbia Record A 5952). But it was in the romantic, prophetic vein that he stood highest above all others. It is from this height that his spirit broods to-day over the world.

And what of Beethoven, the man? He was under average height, but of powerful and stocky build. He was ugly, yet fascinated everyone he met, if he did not first make him a mortal enemy! The forehead was high and broad, the eyes dark, the lips somewhat protruding, with an effect of fierceness. Everything about the man betokened force, impetuousness, and an iron will. His hands were broad and strong, covered with coarse black hair — bear's paws. Beethoven was a hairy man. He had to shave to the eyes!

At first, newly come to Vienna, and astonishingly well received by the aristocracy, he dressed pretentiously and sparked it with the best of them. "It is good to be with the aristocracy," he said, "but one must impress them." Nothing is more striking than the position he immediately took in this society, where a musician was ranked a little lower than a butler. But as his deafness increased Beethoven drew the more into himself and became continually less attentive to conventions. He would be seen walking in the country, of which he was a passionate lover, gesticulating, shouting like a maniac, singing at the top of his voice the melodies which were pressing for utterance.

In striking contrast to his disregard of exterior detail are his system and industry as a composer. No idea was too trivial for Beethoven to put down immediately in his notebook. Then the idea commenced to grow. It would be altered, polished, revised any number of times until it had the strength, beauty, and significance the composer demanded of his musical material before he transformed it into a sonata, a string quartet, or a symphony. His music was produced with pain and travail, but he was indefatigable in his labors, and the longer he worked at a composition, the more spontaneous it appeared to be.

Much of Beethoven's irritableness and suspicion of even his best friends has been laid to his deafness. Undoubtedly this did embitter his disposition, but he would in any event have been a terrible fellow. His rage when he found or suspected he had been imposed upon was often comical, and always beyond restraint. A waiter who displeased him in a restaurant was grasped firmly by the collar and the stew poured over his head. He pelted a cook with bad eggs which had been served him. He would fling dishes, books, articles of furniture at servants, even when they were servants of noble friends who entertained him. And milord would suffer no condescension! Lichnowsky, as Beethoven's host, gave orders that Beethoven's bell should be answered before his. Beethoven, hearing of this, at once engaged a servant to wait only on himself. He detested sycophancy, and once changed his lodgings because the landlord, a baron, insisted on taking off his hat every time they met. He was a most objectionable tenant, and for reasons which can easily be imagined was always changing his lodgings. He loved to pour water over his hands and would not notice that the basin had overflowed and the floor was flooded. On a fine

morning he stood before a window in his nightshirt, forgetful of that fact and in genuine wonderment as to "what those d—d boys were hooting at." In a temper he was quick to insolence and sarcasm. He was always fond of horseplay and practical jokes, but only when they were on the other fellow. No man was safe from his ire, commoner or aristocrat though he might be. At a rehearsal Prince Lobkowitz made an entirely logical and friendly remark. Beethoven promptly took offense, and could hardly wait for the rehearsal to come to an end to follow Lobkowitz to the gateway of his palace, where the composer stood for some time, telling the world, in no uncertain terms, that Lobkowitz was an ass. The sober truth is that Beethoven in certain moods was boorish, offensive, and overbearing. It is to the infinite credit, not only of himself, but his fine friends, that in spite of everything they esteemed him for what he was, and in most cases remained loyal to the end.

Beethoven was always in love, and this in the most high-minded manner. He adored quixotically the beauty of women, which he exalted to the skies. The letters to Theresa von Breuning, and those to the "unknown beloved," are but a few of many in the same tenor. Among innumerable Beethoven legends are those which tell of his being unable to marry certain noble dames because of differences in rank. One doubts very much whether this was the reason for his loneliness. The true causes lay in all probability in his capricious temper, in the deafness which grew upon him, and in his unsettled circumstances. Nothing in his letters, not even the communication addressed to his brothers and known as the "Will," seems more pathetic than his outcry, "O God, let me at last find her who is destined to be mine and who shall strengthen me in virtue!" Beethoven, worshiping the genius of Mozart, nevertheless regretted that Mozart's greatest operas, "Don Giovanni" and "The Marriage of Figaro," were based on licentious plots, and Beethoven's one opera, "Fidelio" (produced at the Theater an der Wien, November 20, 1806), is among the few music-dramas which glorify conjugal love.

This great opera, for reasons which need not detain us, has never had a widespread success, but if the theater has thereby suffered a loss, the concert room is incalculably the gainer. Beethoven has compressed in one of the most brilliant and dramatic of all overtures

the very essence of his situations. Listening to the music, one should understand the motives of the drama. Florestan has been cast into prison by his enemy, Pizarro. Florestan's loving wife, Leonore, disguises herself as a jailer's assistant. She secures entrance to the dungeon. When Pizarro descends to murder his victim she flings herself in front of the assassin's pistol, at the moment that the trumpet call of their deliverers sounds from the ramparts above.

This is the moment anticipated in the Third "Leonore" Overture, usually played as a prelude to the last act of the opera in which the climactic situation occurs. Four overtures were composed for this opera, of which the original title was "Leonore." A dreamy introduction leads to the main body of the overture. Strings intone a joyous melody of deliverance. Group after group of instruments catch fire with this motive until it is hymned tumultuously by the full orchestra. Later, following two chords of the horns, comes the second theme, "made of sobs and sighs." These motives develop with agitation, until the orchestra, with an imperious flourish, leads up to the trumpet call which is the dramatic climax of the opera. It is answered softly by the song of thanksgiving which Leonore sings in the third act. Again the trumpet sounds, this time nearer; again the song of thankfulness; and the overture ends with frantic rejoicing. Thus Beethoven imagined the love that never became his.

Beethoven's creative life has been roughly divided, for purposes of classification, into three "periods." The first is his formative period, up to about 1800, a period partly of imitation and partly of original and romantic expression, as exemplified in the so-called "Moonlight Sonata," the poetic piano concerto in G major, the First and Second symphonies, and the famous Kreutzer sonata for piano and violin, which inspired the singular tale of Tolstoi. To the second period, the beginning of which coincides with the time of Beethoven's realization that his deafness was incurable, belong the "Waldstein" and "Appasionata" sonatas, the "Rasoumowsky" string quartets, the opera "Fidelio," the violin concerto, and the last piano concerto, called the "Emperor." This period, it will be observed, is also coincident with the rapid growth of democratic ideals in Europe, following the French Revolution. It is the time of equi-balance, in Beethoven's art, between the early imitative compositions and the late mystical works in

which he communes alone with his God. To the final period belong the last great quartets and piano sonatas, the Eighth and Ninth symphonies. This period in Beethoven's life was accompanied by complete deafness and by the infinite vexations and miseries brought upon him by his rascally nephew, whom Carl, dying in 1815, had bequeathed him as a final tribulation of his life.

In spite of the dark clouds that had gathered about him, in spite of the endless complications and worries occasioned by his nephew's peccadillos, Beethoven never expressed more purely and nobly his love of his fellowman, his worship of God, than in the Ninth symphony. As if he had exhausted the expressive capacities of instruments, he employs here a chorus and solo voices to intone the words of Schiller's "Ode to Joy": "Let millions of beings embrace. May this kiss reach the entire world! Brethren, beyond the stars there must dwell a dear Father. Millions, do ye prostrate yourselves? World, dost thou recognize the Creator? Seek Him above the canopy of the stars! There is His dwelling-place."

When this work was produced Beethoven stood in the orchestra. He could not hear a sound. Deep in thought, he remained motionless, his head sunk on his breast, unaware when the last note had been played. One of the singers took his arm and gently turned him about. There stood the multitude, risen to its feet, cheering, waving hats and canes, while many burst into tears at the pitifulness of the figure before them.

This was May 7, 1824. In 1827, racked by bodily ills and by mental suffering more terrible, Beethoven awaited his end. Dropsy developed. "Better water from my body," he said, grimly, "than from my pen." Nature elected that he should die with fitting ceremony. He lay in a coma as an electric storm burst overhead. There was a lightning flash, a clap of thunder, and the unconscious man raised his fist and shook it at the heavens. So the spirit passed, in the storm.

CHAPTER 8
Franz Peter Schubert

Franz Peter Schubert, a shy, fat-backed, bespectacled little man, came into a restaurant one morning in July, 1826. He had been walking through villages and fields all sun and dew. He joined a friend at breakfast, and there on the table lay open a copy of Shakespeare's "Cymbeline." Schubert's eye fell on the lines which begin:

> "Hark! hark! the lark at heav'n's gate sings,
> And Phoebus 'gins arise . . ."

"Ah!" he cried, "such a lovely melody has come into my head, had I but some music paper."

His friend quickly ruled some staves on the back of a menu, and in a trice the lovely immortal song was composed. This song has made its way over the whole world and has been variously arranged for different instruments. The transcription made by Liszt for the piano preserves remarkably the morning mood and the suggestion of the lark rising in the skies.

That was the way in which Schubert created his music. He could not write it down fast enough. What was no less wonderful was the perfect form in which most of his melodies came to him. He seldom revised them, and the song we have just mentioned is only one of many composed in similar fashion. For music was Schubert's natural speech. He was in the habit of expressing himself in the tones of gods and angels, as if that were the most ordinary thing to do.

Schumann said that Schubert could have written music to an advertisement.

The appearance of such a figure is at once tragic and tormenting to those foolish enough to ponder over the unsolvable. How is such genius made? Why should it appear in such a body? Why should its possessor suffer? Schubert asked very little of the world. A few boon

companions who understood him, a jaunt in the country, a romp with a not too formal crowd, when he would make his fat little fingers fly over the keyboard in waltzes of his own improvising, or play his favorite version of the "Erl-King" on a comb, and poems to turn into wonderful songs, and enough music paper to compose — these were his simple needs. He had a right to live and be happy. He lived in poverty, and died overworked, penniless, at an early age. His possessions, including literally bushels of masterpieces, were valued by the appraiser at a little more than ten dollars. Beethoven had passed away, a few months before, with great men about him, with funeral ceremonies in many cities. Schubert lived all his life in or near that same Vienna in which Beethoven made himself a power, and few in the city knew or cared when he disappeared.

Schubert never heard many of his masterpieces, and nothing seems more strangely symbolic of his career than the fate of his "Unfinished" symphony. He began this symphony in 1822 as the only return he could make for the overwhelming honor of having been elected a member of a local music society. Two movements are extant, and there are nine measures of a third. Whether Schubert tucked the music away in a drawer and then forgot about it, as he often did with his compositions, or became busy with another project, no one knows. The fragments of the "Unfinished" symphony which came to light thirty-two years after Schubert had died are precious beyond price, and so acknowledged by audiences the world over.

Anselm Huttenbrenner, a friend of Schubert's youth, prided himself on being also something of a composer. In 1860 the conductor Herbeck was informed that Anselm possessed some Schubert manuscripts, including a symphony. It was hinted that if Herbeck would perform a work of Anselm's he might also have the symphony of Schubert for his program. Perhaps Herbeck thought the price too high, even for a Schubert composition, but after an interval of five years he visited old Anselm, awaiting his end in a tumble-down cottage at Graz, and said to him, "I think of presenting to the public three contemporaries, Huttenbrenner, Schubert, and Lachner. What have you that I can play?"

Anselm brightened up; they selected one of his overtures, then rummaged around among the manuscripts of Schubert. Herbeck's

eye fell on the score of the "Unfinished" symphony. Concealing his excitement, he said, carelessly: "This will do. May I take it along and have it copied at my expense?" "Go ahead," said Anselm; "there's no hurry." And thus it befell that the "Unfinished" symphony of Schubert was first heard between a composition by one Huttenbrenner and a composition by one Lachner, in Vienna, December 17, 1865.

This symphony is Schubert, "the most poetical musician that ever was," at the height of his powers. The first movement expresses passionate melancholy, but Schubert has taken us to a realm where the most bitter sorrows are transmuted into exquisite sounds. The symphony begins with a somber motive deep down in the double basses. The oboe intones its lament over an agitated accompaniment of the violins, which has suggested to some commentators the restlessness of the sea. After the sustained tone of a horn, the violoncellos take up one of the loveliest melodies in orchestral music. All this material is treated with a mastery and economy of means which brings Schubert as a symphonist very near to Beethoven.

What can be said of the movement which follows? It is music such as only Schubert and no other human being could conceive. He speaks to us from another realm in which he habitually lived, a realm unknown to the great number, or vaguely perceived by other composers, who recall what they have heard as clearly as they may and put it down as best they can. Schubert speaks to us, in the words of Sir George Grove, with a magic, a romance, a sweet naturalness which no one has yet approached. Edmonstoune Duncan speaks of the "strange blending of peace and passion." There is vista after vista of beauty. A hymnlike progression for horns and bassoons is accompanied by a descending "pizzicato" passage for the strings. Later the clarinet enters with a melody of haunting pathos. A transformation of this motive, in tragic vein, is given the brass under whirling figures for the strings. The conclusion is rapturous, wistful, but remote from earthly struggle or striving.

There was little of the dramatic in the life of Schubert. There was much that speaks of the piteous meagerness of his existence and the typical care-free Viennese temperament which carried him through his youth with little thought for the morrow, and much happiness, despite his circumstances, in his art and his friends. He was born in

1797, the son of a poor schoolmaster of the Lichtenthal district, near Vienna, and one of a family of fourteen. Long before he knew the formulas of harmony he began to compose. Soon he was playing the violin at quartet performances with his father and two brothers. Having a fine soprano voice, he was sent in his eleventh year to the school where singers for the Imperial Choir were trained. There he was miserable. He almost starved. He could not afford even music paper to compose on. Nevertheless, he acquired there a knowledge of piano, organ, and thorough-bass, and a generous friend, learning of the shortness of music paper, came to his aid.

Leaving this institution, Schubert himself taught school in order to avoid the military conscription, composing indefatigably in intervals of his drudgery. A generous and lively young man, Schober, came to Vienna to study, and invited Schubert to share lodgings with him. From that time on it was farewell to the schoolroom and every other form of official labor. It is difficult to tell how Schubert supported himself, but henceforth he lived only for music. He gathered about him a circle of Bohemians, among them the tenor Vogl, the inspired interpreter of his songs. Schubert composed in one year 1815 two symphonies, eight light operas, sacred music, numerous compositions for piano and string quartet, and a total of one hundred forty-six songs! Among these was the "Erl-King," which he composed in a fit of inspiration in less than an hour after reading Goethe's ballad.

The days flew by swiftly, the manuscripts increased hourly in their numbers, and still Schubert was unknown, unhonored, unsung, by all but a few associates. He lived in music, poetry, and dreams. In 1818 he secured an engagement as music master for the household of Count Esterhazy. For the first and only time in his life he was secure, comfortable, and well paid. He secretly tired of it all and longed to be back in Vienna.

Tradition says that he loved Caroline, the count's seventeen-year-old daughter. Tradition is to be suspected. Schubert wrote home the most enthusiastic praise of the charms of the ladies' maid, adding that the butler was his rival, and showing rather plainly that he was happier in the servants' quarter than in the presence of his noble patrons, who were not too serious in their love of music. "So I am left alone with my beloved" (meaning his music, not the ladies' maid)

"and have to hide her in my room, or in my piano, or in my bosom."

He was happier when he got back to town and went into lodgings with the poet Mayrhofer, a grand and gloomy fellow, who kept alive by means of a government job. It was a damp, dismal old house, with a drooping ceiling, with old ragged furniture, poor light, and general poverty. Mayrhofer got out early in the morning. Schubert slept in his spectacles, so that he could get to work immediately on arising from bed. He worked some seven hours, till two in the afternoon. Then he dined for a *Zwanziger* (seventeen cents) if he had it, and spent the evening with his friends. He was never safe from inspiration, however, and sometimes the dinner hour would fly by while he was composing.

He was happier still when he left Mayrhofer at home and wandered with Vogl and one or two other companions in the mountains of upper Austria. It was Vogl's home place, and whenever they went they were welcomed, honored, and entertained. On the occasion of a second trip, in 1825, Schubert composed his "Ave Maria," one of seven settings for lines from Scott's "Lady of the Lake." Vogl sang the song to various gatherings as they went along the road, and always it had a great effect. Schubert himself recounts his experience: "All were much impressed, especially by the 'Ave Maria.' … My new songs from Walter Scott's 'Lady of the Lake' have been very successful. People were greatly astonished at the devotion which I have thrown into the hymn to the Blessed Virgin, and it seems to have seized and impressed everybody. I think that the reason of this is that I never force myself into devotions, or compose hymns or prayers unless I am really overpowered by the feelings; that alone is real, true devotion." The "Ave Maria" is played to-day as often as it is sung. The melody hardly needs words to express its feeling.

A thing often remarked about Schubert was his carelessness in the choice of poems for musical setting. It is as if he were compelled to seize whatever lay nearest him as a vehicle for the melodies which he had to pour out as long as he lived. By the side of songs to poems by Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Mayrhofer he puts twelve or twenty songs inspired by such obscurities as Holtz and Rosegarten. And it was the same with his operas. He always yearned to write for the stage. He usually chose for this purpose impossible libretti. Sometimes, in spite

of the book, the music survived, and this is the case with the music of "Rosamunde." "Rosamunde, Princess of Cyprus" was the title of an extravagant plot by Madame von Chezy. Schubert completed the music to this play in five days and it was performed December 23, 1823. The drama quickly killed itself and was forgotten. The music was lost, and only discovered in Vienna in 1867 by two English travelers. One of the themes from the "Rosamunde" music Schubert turned later into the piano "Impromptu" in B flat with the variations. Other excerpts from this score, which is bewitchingly beautiful, survive in arrangements for orchestra and for various instruments. Among these are parts of the music for the ballet.

Schubert was much discouraged by the failure of "Rosamunde." These and other circumstances affected his health. But a second visit to the home of the Esterhazys, and the second tour he took in the Austrian mountains with Vogl, restored his spirits. He was enchanted by the fact that he received one hundred dollars for the seven songs from "The Lady of the Lake."

Harder days, however, were upon him, and he was too generous to keep a penny. Then came the death of Beethoven, which greatly saddened the younger man. Schubert had adored Beethoven for many years before they met. He often sat at another table in Beethoven's favorite restaurant and worshipped him from afar. At last a meeting was arranged. Schubert stood, confused, helpless, in the presence of the master. He was handed the carpenter's pencil and paper, on which everyone who wished to communicate with the deaf Beethoven had to write. Beethoven examined some variations which Schubert had written and dedicated fulsomely to him. His eye fell on a chord which surprised him. He pointed it out and turned an inquiring eye on the young composer. Schubert, frightened out of his wits, ran out of the room. Beethoven, reading Schubert's songs on his deathbed, was deeply concerned that he had remained so long in ignorance of their contents. There was a last meeting, when Beethoven could not talk, and Schubert, choking with grief, again fled from the room. Outside he drank two healths, the first to the soul departing, the second to that one of Schubert's circle who should be the first to follow. That one was Schubert, who had less than a year to live. His last year was one of feverish production. Fourteen of the last songs

Schubert composed were issued after his death under the title of "Swan Songs." Among these was the beloved "Serenade," one of the purest and most poetic expressions of a lover's devotion.

Schubert had burned himself out, not in dissipation, but in hard work, in irregular hours, in festivities innocent enough, but not calculated to add to his strength and endurance. He wanted to go again into the mountains, which might well have prolonged his days. But there was no money. A friend sold six of Schubert's finest songs for twenty cents apiece, and hurried to the composer with the proceeds.

Schubert lay on his bed, his mind affected, with the name of Beethoven on his lips. Most of his friends had forgotten him. Only his brother Ferdinand cared for him devoutly, and the great world passed by, indifferent to the end of "the sweetest of all singers, the simplest of all souls" — we again quote from Sir George Grove.

What Schubert might have done had he lived one can only conjecture. He was the originator of the modern romantic song, the founder of a whole school of great German song writers. He it was who made the accompaniment as expressive a part of the song as the voice, and who found for the words of the great romantic poets of his day the melodies which cleaved to them like a twin soul. He wrote six hundred and three songs in all. To classify them is not the purpose of this chapter. To enumerate the greatest of them would be to lose one's way among masterpieces.

Where Schubert had most room to grow was in the matter of musical structure. In his symphonic compositions — the "Unfinished" symphony being the exception — he is prone to repetitions, to pour his ideas too hastily and thoughtlessly into the classic molds which lie ready for them. As an instrumentalist he expressed himself with especial felicity in those charming and romantic pieces for piano which he called "Impromptus" and "Musical Moments." The "Moment Musical" in F minor is one of those elusive, fanciful visions which came so wonderfully to the homely, awkward little fellow who was the most lovable of comrades, the most unassuming of artists, and who would deserve immortality if only for the fact that he did not consider himself the greatest musician who ever lived.

Schubert asked little of life, and gave all. He was no match for the world. He cared nothing for it. He had no sense of injury, because

he never imagined his own greatness. It is given to some to gain honors and riches, to others to find their souls. "My music," said Schubert, "is the product of my genius and my misery, and that which I have written in my greatest distress is that which seems best to the world."

CHAPTER 9
Felix Mendelssohn

Felix Mendelssohn (Jacob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn-Bertholdy) was the one great composer who enjoyed riches and affluence from the cradle to the grave. He had every advantage of education. His career was successful from beginning to end. He has been spoken of with condescension as a gentleman composer. The wonder is that in spite of it all Mendelssohn produced so much good music.

He was descended of a remarkable Jewish family. His grandfather was Moses Mendelssohn, a philosopher, widely known as "the modern Plato." The father, Abraham Mendelssohn, a banker and a man of brilliant culture, laid the foundations of his fortune in Paris. There he met and married the beautiful Leah Salomon. They moved to Berlin, where the Mendelssohn home became the headquarters of the leading musicians, painters, writers, and philosophers of the day. As the genius of Felix became known Abraham was wont laughingly to say that "whereas he formerly was known as the son of his father, he was now known as the father of his son."

It would be hard to imagine a boyhood happier than Mendelssohn's. In 1825, when he was in his sixteenth year, the family moved from the center of Berlin to what was then known as No. 3, Leipsic Street, an estate of some acres with a large mansion, fine old trees, gardens, and a pavilion where there was music every Sunday afternoon. Of the four children, Fanny, the eldest, was herself a gifted pianist and composer. Felix was the second child. Felix and a friend edited a journal known in summer as *The Garden Times* and in winter as *The Snow and Tea Times*. Writing materials lay always at hand in the summerhouses, and often distinguished visitors contributed to the journal.

In this place in his seventeenth year Mendelssohn produced the greatest work of his lifetime, the Overture to Shakespeare's "A

Midsummer Night's Dream." Through the summer of 1826 he read Shakespeare in translation with Fanny, and it could not have been hard, as the sinking sun shone through the branches of the old trees and every hour tinged the scene with fresh beauty, to enter the poet's realm. In every measure the music breathes its witchery and spell. Four chords, at the beginning of the Overture, transport us to the forest of Oberon and Titania. We hear the scamper of Puck, the accents of young lovers astray with midsummer madness, and the comical antics of Bottom and his fellow-clowns. The musical ideas are developed with the most delightful fancy, and the same four chords which open the Overture bring its ending, as if the curtain had risen and fallen on Shakespeare's fantasy.

Years later, at the command of King Friedrich IV of Prussia, Mendelssohn added to his Overture other pieces to be played while Shakespeare's drama was performed. In writing these new pieces he was fortunate in recapturing the mood of his early Overture. Several excerpts from the music incidental to the drama have been arranged for concert use. The first of these is the Scherzo played in the theater after the first act. It is the sprightly music of the elves, the flight of Puck "through brake and brier."

Another passage of exquisite beauty is the Nocturne played after the third act, music inspired by the sleep of Titania. The third composition of a group which has long been a feature of orchestral programs is the celebrated Wedding March, which rivals Wagner's wedding music from "Lohengrin" in its popularity at marriage ceremonies. This march preserves in its brilliant and festal measures much of the glamour and atmosphere of Shakespeare's poetry. It remains, in a sense, music of another world; a march for a royal pair, with fairies in their train.

By the time Mendelssohn had produced his Overture to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" he was fairly launched on his career. He had made his first public appearance at ten, composed his first music of account at twelve, and astonished and delighted the poet Goethe by his playing at the age of thirteen. This was the beginning of a warm friendship which existed between Goethe and Mendelssohn until the death of the aged poet in 1832.

In 1829 Mendelssohn set off on his travels, like other young men

of means and social station of the day. He visited, in three years, France, Britain, and Italy, and the multitude of new impressions had an important effect on his music. In London he was well received in society, eventually establishing friendly relations with Queen Victoria. He traveled by foot and diligence in Scotland. There he saw a procession of bagpipers pass before the castle where Mary Queen of Scots had mourned for Rizzio slain. He visited the Hebrides and heard the lament of many waters. These things went into the pages of his "Scotch" symphony, finest of all his works in that form, and the "Hebrides" overture, second only in originality and inspiration to the music from "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

He remained always the genial Mendelssohn. His music reflected with passing somberness of color certain impressive scenes, but he was no man for tragedy, and he was not a revolutionist in his art. There are people who will travel all the world, and see many strange things, but not change very much because of their experiences. Mendelssohn took with him everywhere the handsome, intelligent, vivacious — Mendelssohn. His "Songs Without Words" are like pages from a rather naive diary. They seem to be saying "a nice letter from sister Fanny this morning," or, "a delightful ride in a gondola as we came through Venice," or, "I wonder what Miss This-that-or-the-other is thinking of me now" — for he philandered pleasantly and harmlessly with many young ladies. The first of the "Songs Without Words" appeared in 1828 or 1829. As they came from the presses they were eagerly taken up, particularly by the English people, with whom Mendelssohn was as popular as Handel had been a century before. These compositions have become household music in England and America. The names by which they are known have usually been bestowed by publishers, as, for example, the name of one of the shortest and most pleasing of them all, "Consolation." On the other hand, it is impossible not to hear in the "Spinning Song" the whir of the spinning-wheel, an effect which in the hands of a virtuoso pianist is always successful.

Mendelssohn's philandering came to an end in due course when he fell in love in 1836 with Cecile Jeanrenaud, daughter of the pastor of the French Reformed Church at Frankfort. Falling in love with her, he did a thing quite natural to him. He went away for a month

to the seaside to test his feelings. Satisfied that he had not been mistaken, he returned, proposed, and was accepted. The bride was a beautiful girl and the marriage was very happy, but Mendelssohn had become so famous and so much immersed in his work, that even his honeymoon was cut short by musical engagements. He appears, however, to have composed at this time one of his most delightful piano pieces, the "Rondo Capriccioso." In his piano music he has seldom equaled the beauty of the twilight introduction, or the mercurial humor of the flashing, elusive passages which follow, when he is again, in fancy, the companion of forest sprites.

A work which in spite of Mendelssohn himself became a favorite of concert audiences is the Overture to "Ruy Blas." Mendelssohn composed it between a Tuesday evening and a Friday morning, for the fiftieth anniversary concert of the Theatrical Pension Fund at Leipsic in 1839. He detested Hugo's play. He had little esteem for his own music. When he was conducting a rehearsal of the London Philharmonic Society in 1844 he tried the Overture through, and liked it no better than before. George Andersen, a violinist of the orchestra and director of the Royal Private Band, complimented Mendelssohn on his work. Mendelssohn replied angrily that he intended to burn it. Andersen begged him to reconsider, and asked if he might not play it to their Majesties. This he did. Their Majesties, Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales, were delighted. Thereafter Mendelssohn played to the Queen and the Queen sang for Mendelssohn (who was more a Victorian than he?), and whatever the merits of opposing opinions, the Overture, published after Mendelssohn's death, found a highly appreciative public.

MacFarren, the Irish composer, finds in the "slow, imperious chords" of the introduction, which more than once recur in the course of the work, "the thought of the iron-minded minister who, offended at the neglect of his royal mistress, avenges this by the advancement of his minion to the highest state offices, in order that the romantic menial may win the Queen's affection, and she be disgraced by the exposure of her lowly passion. The wild ardor with which the allegro begins must figure the extravagant passion of the servitor hero. The passionate cantabile, with its gorgeously rich orchestration" (referring to the melodious second theme of the Overture)

"suggests the idea of the guileless lady who is the victim of her minister's machinations. And the sequel tells of the rapture of Ruy Blas, when, in his strange exaltation, the object which he scarcely durst desire is within his reach — nay, in his very possession — the reciprocation of his love."

Mendelssohn had been thinking for some time of a violin concerto. As far back as 1838 he had written the violinist David: "I should like to write a violin concerto for you next winter. One in E minor is running through my head, and the beginning does not leave me in peace." Seven years later David played this work, on the 13th of March, 1845. Mendelssohn had seldom taken so long with a composition, even allowing for interruptions and delays caused by other engagements.

He wished it not only to sound well, but to "lie well" for the violinist. He was rewarded by the success of the concerto, which has stood ever since as a model of its kind. The song of the violin in the slow movement is one of the most poetic melodies he ever penned. It is also very typical of Mendelssohn's talent. Compared with the almost religious mood of the slow movement of Beethoven's violin concerto, it is somewhat light, but it has "atmosphere." It is as if, when evening fell, we traversed with friend Felix the grounds of his beautiful estate. Shadows fall athwart the lawns and gardens; there is the scent that certain flowers distil in the night; the wind soughs in the trees. As the violin and orchestra converse, one feels a gentle and not disagreeable melancholy.

To play the finale a violinist must have fleetness. Mendelssohn wrote David, "You demand that it should be brilliant, and how is such a one as I to do this?" He need not have depreciated himself. As a composer and a conductor he was the man for a lively pace. He wrote for David a virtuoso finale, which always "brings down the house."

Friedrich Wilhelm IV had had his eye on Mendelssohn for a long time. He wanted him to fill several official positions, which Mendelssohn, wise in his generation, had no wish to occupy. To be general musical director of a new Cathedral choir, or director of music in the new Academy of Arts, meant staying in Berlin, and he no longer liked Berlin. There was jealousy among the musicians of that city, interminable red tape in all things connected with music for royalty.

The spirit of Leipsic, where Mendelssohn spent much of the later part of his life and where he successfully founded the famous Leipsic Conservatory, was far more artistic. Mendelssohn did succeed in evading or resigning from several of the royal appointments, but Friedrich's heart was set on music for a number of dramas, not only "A Midsummer Night's Dream," but dramas by Sophocles and Racine. Mendelssohn set to, despite other exhausting labor. How much he needed and welcomed a respite is shown by a letter of July, 1844, describing a few days' vacation with his family, "Eating and sleeping *without* dress coat, *without* piano, *without* visiting cards, *without* carriage and horses; but *with* donkeys, *with* wild flowers, *with* music paper and sketch books, *with* Cecile and the children." He nevertheless succeeded this year in composing the Overture and the War March of the Priests for "Athalie."

The story of Athalia is told in II Kings and II Chronicles. The march is that of the fanatical priests who go to defeat the ungodly queen, and place again on the throne the rightful ruler of Judea. This march has a sonority and pomp which fit it well for the theater.

The remainder of Mendelssohn's life was only different from the occasions we have described in the new compositions which he brought forth and in his constant efforts in behalf of other composers and the cause of music. His industry was extraordinary, and, what was more, every pen stroke told, whether it was in composing or in tending personally to an ever increasing correspondence. He was the most industrious, systematic, and methodical of men. He wrote music with such mastery of his ideas that instead of preliminary sketches he could frequently put down the notes at the first attempt in their final form. The idea seldom became unruly, as great ideas often do. This very fact is an important indication of the quality of Mendelssohn's talent. It was a talent of the second rather than the first rank. As we have inferred at the beginning of this chapter, Mendelssohn's career was too secure and happy for him to have produced the greatest music. If poverty or tragedy had fertilized his genius, who knows what he would have done? As it was, he produced his greatest work at seventeen, from which time his talent began to lose instead of gain in originality. His technic constantly improved while his ideas became less striking.

He died practically of overwork, and much saddened by the death of his sister Fanny, in his thirty-ninth year. This was not the tragedy of Schubert, cut off at the fullness of his powers. Mendelssohn had completely expressed himself in his Scotch and Italian symphonies; his overtures to "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "The Hebrides," "The Fair Melusina," and lesser works of the same kind; his choral works, including the choral setting of the "First Walpurgis Night" from Goethe's "Faust," the oratorios "St. Paul" and "Elijah," and the "Hymn of Praise"; in compositions of piano and chamber music which have lived virtually one hundred years and given pleasure and solace to millions of people. If in these works Mendelssohn was not an innovator, he was something else of almost equal value. His sanity, good taste, and consummate workmanship redounded to the everlasting good fortune of the musical art. He became a balance-wheel for the generally radical musical tendencies of his period, and in music as well as in politics it is necessary for the radical to be balanced by the conservative.

Mendelssohn's genius was the flower of generations of culture and refinement. Cut off from the common soil of life, the flower withered, the plant died. He was an example for all time of what education can and cannot do. He was, nevertheless, a wonderfully gifted musician who labored with infinite zeal and a high conscience for his ideals. He had a deep sense of his obligation to his own talent and his duty to develop it to the utmost. Not the least of his laurels is the part he played in helping other musicians, and notably in reviving the music of Bach. A majority of men produce in order to live. This man, who had no material cares, lived to produce. He made the most of his gifts, and this should merit him the gratitude and respect of succeeding generations.

CHAPTER 10
Frederic François Chopin

One of the most mysterious and poetic appearances in the history of music is that of Frederic François Chopin, born on the 22d of February, 1810, in the village of Zelazowa-Wola, Poland. How explain the haunting perfume, the astonishing perfection of his art? It seems like an improvisation, until you examine it and find under the surface a structure, delicate but logical, and durable as tempered steel. It is difficult to believe it was made by the hand of man. Other composers show you how they worked. You hear them laboring mightily at the forge. You observe where edges, rough-hewn, were joined together. Chopin, apparently without an effort, achieves a masterpiece. He seems to stand a little aloof from his brethren, as might a favored being from another world.

The father of Chopin was French professor at the University of Warsaw. His mother was a Pole. Frederic grew up a delicate child, whose morbid sensitiveness to impressions was tempered by the society of charming sisters, the frequent presence at his home of many of the most interesting people of his district, and by the nature about him. His talent was manifested very early and he had to beware of the hallucinations which music frequently caused him — visions, sometimes beautiful, at others terrible and painfully distinct. He often frightened the servants at night-time by jumping up in his room at the top of the house, going to the piano, and noting down ideas which he was afraid of forgetting if he waited till the morrow. He began to compose before he knew enough of the art to write out the ideas that came to him, and his teacher, Zwyny, an excellent pedagogue who gave Chopin his first lessons when he was about seven years old, had to take down his improvisations for him. Chopin commenced the study of composition with Ellsner, who called himself, in a letter written his pupil in 1834, "your teacher of harmony and counterpoint, of

little merit but fortunate." Liszt put it happily when he said that Chopin's teachers taught him those things which are most difficult and valuable to learn — "to be exacting with one's self and to feel the advantages that are only obtained by dint of patience and labor."

It is interesting to consider the manner in which Chopin displayed his remarkable originality in his music. Other composers explored unknown paths. He kept almost entirely to forms already fixed, particularly dance forms, such as the polonaise and the mazurka, and within their limits did entirely new things. It was as if a jeweler should put a different jewel in an old setting. The waltzes are not dances for the ballroom, but the emotions of the waltz the waltz spiritualized. The one in E flat, with its brilliant opening, its gaiety and caprice, its sentimental dialogues, is surely a ballroom scene. The conclusion is very poetic, when the initial melody is heard once more, as in a dream.

Each of the waltzes has a distinct individuality. No two are alike. The variety of style and expression is astonishing. Chopin only composed when he had something to say, and was never satisfied until he had found the one inevitable form for his idea. In this he was as scrupulous as Beethoven.

Greatest of all the waltzes is the one in A flat major, Op. 42. Again in the glitter and whirl of the opening is the thought of a brilliant throng. It is a very piquant passage. Later the waltz becomes more melancholy in mood and more personal in sentiment. Measures of strong feeling alternate with those which convey the swing of the dance. Now occurs a simple but very strange effect. The waltz suddenly stops, there is a phrase, laconic, unemotional, but arresting because of its very lack of expression — a passage of six notes, played "in octave" without harmony to support the theme, which appears for a moment like a ghost in the midst of the festivity. Indeed, this curious moment, no sooner come than it is gone, has always reminded the writer of the fantastical tale of Edgar Allan Poe, "The Mask of the Red Death," in which, at midnight, the Red Death suddenly confronts a motley gathering of revelers, who flee from his presence in dismay; and so, in this waltz, the effect just referred to is followed by a wild conclusion in which the music crashes recklessly to its end.

The poetic style of Chopin is most gracefully displayed in these

waltzes, and in the nocturnes, which express the dreamy side of his genius. The nocturne in E flat is in the manner of a serenade, a simple melody, ornamented profusely with varieties of delicate arabesques which are woven about the principal theme. Nothing is more indicative of the manner in which Chopin turned everything that he touched to gold than a consideration of these musical ornamentations which have a refinement, an originality, a poetry, that no other composer achieved in the same way. Furthermore, this melodic style of Chopin's, this manner of singing on the piano as though some brilliant coloratura soprano with the soul of a poet were improvising, as no human throat ever could improvise, was undoubtedly derived from the music of the old Italian school. No wonder that Chopin so loved the music of Bellini.

A Chopin nocturne which is peculiarly well adapted for performance on the violin — indeed, one of the very few compositions of Chopin which sound well on any instrument other than the piano — is the nocturne in E minor, published after his death, and one of the most poetic of all his works in this form.

Chopin, more particularly when he played the nocturnes, was what some robust souls would call a "delicate" performer. He persuaded rather than commanded the instrument. He drew from it secrets which no one else had realized it possessed. His system of fingering was so original that, like the majority of his innovations, it greatly annoyed his contemporaries. Without this fingering the performance of a piece such as the exquisite "Berceuse" (cradle-song) would be an impossibility. The "Berceuse" is the treatment by an inspired master of a very simple melody of a few notes, accompanied by a bass which is practically unchanging throughout the entire piece. Over the gentle rocking motion of this bass is woven a series of variations of extraordinary originality and charm, until the theme is buried, as it were, under beautiful tonal ornamentation. Slower and slower rocks the cradle, and the child sleeps.

Let no one think, however, because Chopin lacked physical strength, and explored confidently the realms that lie on the borderland of the human consciousness, that he was incapable of dramatic intensity and epic greatness of utterance. The body was weak, but the spirit was strong, and the composer dipped his pen in his heart's

blood. So it was when Chopin, who in 1831 settled in Paris, received the news of Poland's downfall at the hands of treacherous foes. The stricken man vacillated miserably between the impulse to take a musket and the consciousness of his physical inability for warfare. The time for action soon passed. Poland was ruined; her poet and prophet was saved. In the polonaises, the great B minor sonata, and kindred compositions, he chanted her fame.

The A major, or "Military Polonaise," is a picture of the pomp and panoply, the gallantry and heroism of a chivalrous people going forth to war.

On a grander scale is the polonaise in A flat major. This is in itself a complete drama of war. It opens with crashing chords and defiant challenges, after which the polonaise proper enters with a lordly swing. The middle portion is a moment in which Chopin draws himself up to his full height as a patriot, where, inspired, he smites the lyre like a bard of old chanting the glories of his native land. Six mighty chords, the invocation of the heroic past, and the tale begins. The left hand, playing octaves, suggests the tread of armed legions springing from the earth at Poland's call. This effect is repeated and is followed by a passage in which some have found a mood of indecision, hesitation. If this is so, it quickly passes. Little by little, the rhythm of the polonaise gathers force and fury, and the work comes to an end in a mood of passionate defiance. It is said that Chopin, composing this heroic music, was terrified by the vision of a procession of knights and warriors advancing upon him.

It is from the testimony of his friends and commentators rather than from the composer that we know what he intended to say when he wrote the B flat minor sonata, which contains the great "Funeral March." This sonata is really an elegy on Poland's downfall at the hands of her enemies. The "Funeral March" needs no description. It has been heard at a thousand ceremonies for the dead, on a thousand occasions when the fate not only of men, but of nations, hung in the balance.

In 1836 Chopin was introduced to the novelist George Sand — some say, by Liszt. She was a theorist before her time, an extravagant and romantic writer who rode horseback astride, at times wore trousers, and even smoked cigars, which used to disgust Chopin to the

bottom of his soul. She was not accounted an exceptionally beautiful woman, but she had an arresting personality and almost masculine assertiveness. At her house were such men as the poet De Musset, one of her many admirers, the artist Delacroix, the poet Heine, Balzac, Gautier, the Goncourt brothers, the great Liszt, and other lesser figures of a feverish artistic epoch. George Sand, the indefatigable, often wrote her affairs into her novels. Chopin was fascinated. There were times when he turned away in despair; but back he came. In the summer of 1838 he was ill, and George Sand, who was going with her family to the island of Majorca, suggested that Chopin accompany them. He knew a few moments of happiness on an island that was full of flowers, under a blue sky, with a thermometer at 74. Unfortunately, the thermometer changed. When the skies grew gray, and the temperature was 36, and the wind howled at night in a dismal and terrifying manner, and the plaster gave way in the walls, it was Chopin who shivered and complained, and George Sand and her son who built the fires, which smoked.

Chopin's cough troubled him and he again saw strange visions. In this place he wrote some of his most dramatic and imaginative compositions. Among them were the greater number of the short pieces which he called "preludes." George Sand said that in these pieces Chopin compressed into a page more feeling than many a composer succeeded in putting into an act of an opera. One can imagine what one likes as the preludes are being played. The one in A flat is idyllic, a dream-picture of a far-off, wondrous land. It might be a memory of Majorca with its glowing skies and gorgeous flowers. At the last a deep bass tone reverberates through upper harmonies that seem suspended in mid-air. Perhaps Chopin, contemplating a peaceful scene, heard the ringing of the bell of a nearby convent.

The scherzi are among the most powerful and fantastic of Chopin's compositions. The scherzo in B flat minor is one of the most frequently — one might say too frequently — played of the four pieces in this form, yet it seems strangely misunderstood by audiences and even by many concert pianists; for it is anything but a gay and brilliant concert piece, as many performers seem to think. The music is possessed of a restless, driving energy, an inner demon of discontent, which will not allow it to rest. The scherzo in B minor alternates

pages of lashing fury with a trio of twilight beauty. The scherzo in C sharp minor contrasts driving, whirling octaves with a choral of sonorous grandeur, which, at last, becomes the war chant of a nation. The scherzo in E major is as a troubled memory of the homeland.

Much more could be said of them and also of the extraordinary mazurkas. In these mazurkas, all based, as the polonaises are based, on national dance rhythms, the individual and transforming genius of Chopin rises like a flower from its native soil. And he became constantly greater, to the day of his untimely taking off.

The concluding years of his life were not happy. They were marked by increasing artistic mastery and increasing bitterness with life. The visit to Majorca with Madame Sand was not, as we have seen, over-successful. Chopin was not the man to exalt love in a cottage. If he had one supreme weakness, it was not his desire, but his actual need of luxury. In discomfort he could not exist, much less compose. Both he and George Sand were happier when they found themselves back in Paris. Relations became strained between the two; in 1844 there were bitter quarrels; in 1847 they parted. George Sand promptly "wrote up" Chopin as the Prince Karol in her novel, *Lucrezia Floriani*. She dissected him as she had previously dissected the disillusioned De Musset. Chopin never spoke to Madame Sand again, though they had mutually sworn that he should die only in her arms. "Dying! He was dying all his life!" said the impetuous Hector Berlioz, who could not tolerate the melancholy Chopin.

In 1848 and 1849 he visited England and Scotland, attended devotedly by an English girl who had come to love him. A characteristic picture of him is drawn by an eye-witness, who watched the little man (this undersize was his most sensitive point) as he moved about from group to group of charming, chattering women, consulting occasionally a tiny jeweled watch as exquisitely fashioned as himself.

He had wavy hair of a chestnut color, delicately penciled eyebrows, a nose with a distinguished crook, a sensitive mouth. He was always attired with scrupulous respect to the prevailing mode. His hands and feet were small and perfectly formed. He was the incarnation of that which was poetical and distinguished. This was Frederic François Chopin.

The following year he died of lung disease. He died surrounded by friends, pupils, and one or two women who loved him, among whom was not George Sand. Of her he complained to the last hour, and so passed the supreme poet of the piano.

Chopin left behind him a few compositions which he did not consider good enough to publish. As a rule he was an excellent judge of his own work. Nevertheless, his "Fantasie-Impromptu," a posthumous composition, has become a favorite piece with the musical public. It is a striking example of the poetry of Chopin's piano style, in which the instrument becomes a veritable aeolian harp of glittering tones and delicate interweaving sonorities. A topical song writer has recently lined his pockets by putting the melody of the middle part into "ragtime" ryhthm.

A hard fate for Chopin, for the man who came into the world like a fairy prince — that is what he was, a fairy prince of a composer — from another sphere, and found life a troubled, yea, a tragic dream, and left imperishable records of his dreams and his sufferings in his poignant, supremely beautiful music.

CHAPTER 11
Franz Liszt

Once in a long while, and not invariably in royal families, a king is born. Franz Liszt was such a king among men. His career was like the passage of some great flaming meteor across the heavens. Everything was thrown at his feet. Not one of the good fairies was absent at his cradle. The story of his life reads more like an extravagant romance than actual fact. Yet the man did exist. Some, now living, remember him, and they look about them, dazed, still bewildered by the passage of the comet.

Liszt, happening to possess a prodigious capacity for music, became one of the most important of modern composers, and beyond doubt the greatest pianist in the history of his art. But he would have been astonishing in any sphere. When some one asked him what he would have been were he not a musician, he replied, "The greatest diplomat in Europe." As it was, he created a new epoch in the history of the piano. Few dreamed before he appeared that the cold-looking instrument of keys and wires could pour forth such floods of color and beauty, such thunder and lightning, such dramatic proclamation or seductive song. Liszt had no rivals. Others were pianists. He was a magician — a god who had given the machine capacities it had not previously possessed, a Piper of Hamelin who drew the whole wondering world after his footsteps!

Because the man and his music were one, it was difficult to separate them. Liszt played as he looked, and looked as he played. He bore himself with the pride and the grace of a monarch. His face changed at the piano — sometimes noble and tender, sometimes stormy and defiant, sometimes sardonic, Mephistophelian, and always, underlying everything, an expression of infinite knowledge and power. All adored him. It is a fact that men followed him in the streets and treasured his cigar stubs, and as for the gentler sex — the

composer Grieg, after visiting Liszt at Weimar, remarked that ladies eyed him as if they would like to eat the last shred of his abbé's robe. For Liszt in later life became an abbé. It has often been said that he took orders just in time to balk the pursuit of the proud but amorous Princess of Sayn-Wittgenstein. He had no objection to her adulation. He was far from insensible to feminine charm, but after one unhappy love-affair of his youth he ceased to care for the bonds of marriage, and was fully enough of a courtier to find more than one way of saying "no."

Liszt was born at Raiding, Hungary, October 22, 1811. From the beginning he showed phenomenal gifts for the piano. His teachers seemed to be merely reminding him of what he already knew. Naturally he was impatient of pedagogic formulas, sometimes rebellious, but quick to own his fault and listen to reason. So that for once a Heaven-sent genius was thoroughly schooled! The good Czerny, of the "Finger-Dexterity" known to all perspiring piano pupils, took him in hand, and made him play yards of studies. At twelve he was already famous in a number of European capitals. At this age also he received a consecration to his art which he never forgot. For the great Beethoven, sitting in an audience, came to him after the concert and kissed his brow. Liszt worked the harder. He was now a petted youth in Paris. Favored by the aristocracy, he was supporting his poor father and mother with his already considerable earnings as virtuoso and teacher when he had his first sorrow. He fell in love with a nobly born pupil, and she with him. As society was constituted in those days, such an affair could have at best but an unhappy ending. The girl's parents intervened. The young Liszt, like many another lover of those days, became more and more engrossed in religion. It was a romantic period more so than any other that modern society has known. Romantic attachments, monastic seclusions, lingering deaths through disappointed passion, defiance of rulers, dabblings in theology all this was in the air. How seriously Liszt took his repulse in love we shall never know. He was a typical young man of the thirties, a little theatrical, as all the youth of that period, but deeply in earnest as well. But we do know that from that time on Liszt seldom, if ever, considered matrimony seriously, and that, with all his generosity and idealism, he was disposed during the remainder of his life to be a trifle

cynical about human relationships.

In 1835 Liszt was the most formidable virtuoso in the world. He had successfully put all of his rivals, among them the really admirable artist of the old school, Thalberg, behind him. But now came on the stage one of the most picturesque and romantic personalities of the early nineteenth century, the violinist, Paganini. He had already done for the violin what Liszt was about to do for the piano: invented a new and special technic for the instrument which revealed all kinds of unheard-of possibilities of its mechanism. Paganini, tall, gaunt, pale, satanic, if a man ever was, in his appearance, took all Europe by storm. Liszt, fired by this new art, which in many respects reflected his own temperament, resolved to emulate it. He locked himself in his studio and emerged the Paganini of his instrument!

As if to beard Paganini himself in his den, Liszt took some of the master-violinist's own compositions and bedeviled them in ways bewildering and well-nigh insurmountable to other pianists of the day. Such a composition is the study based on Paganini's "Campanella," a work in which Paganini had intended to suggest the ringing of bells. Liszt carried out the effect much farther in one of his most celebrated pieces for the piano.

Liszt's technic was the result, not only of his fingers, but his imagination. Color and fantasy characterized everything that he did. He made arrangements of the music of other composers, and as a rule glorified instead of cheapening it in the process. A work which displays very characteristically Liszt's originality and brilliancy in this field is the fantasy on airs from Verdi's "Rigoletto."

Other pianists developed a style associated with their "school" or peculiar only to themselves. Liszt was a master of all styles. The story is told of an evening at George Sand's, when Chopin sat at the piano, and the lights were turned out. Chopin, as every one believed, kept on playing, but when lights were brought it was seen that Liszt had taken his place. Liszt bowed. "Liszt," he said, "can imitate Chopin, but can Chopin imitate Liszt?"

Liszt has more than once been accused of a certain theatricalism. Doubtless there was a trace of this in his character. It shows here and there in his art as well as his life; yet at heart he was noble, sincere, and supremely gifted man.

It was in 1833 that Liszt met the Countess d'Agoult. She was a woman of uncommon intellect and personality, one to understand such a man as Liszt, one to rebel against conventions when her affections were involved, and set the world at naught in her rebellion. There was a long and devoted intimacy between the two. They traveled over much of Europe together. The man, who was never known to unburden himself of his own sorrow, while always helping and consoling those who laid their troubles on his broad shoulders; the man who rescued Richard Wagner and scores of others from absolute penury, and nobly gave of his best in the cause of their immortal creations, as did Liszt this man found a companion in whom he could, in whom he did, confide.

Was it in memory of the D'Agoult or some other episode that Liszt wrote the sentimental piano pieces, the "Liebestraume," of which the one in A flat is the most famous? She was but one of the hundred eager women who pursued that amiable and fascinating man over hill and dale. Liszt supplied pianists with a very popular composition which begins dreamily, mounts to a passionate climax, and after a brilliant display passage subsides with peaceful echoes of the initial song.

To understand fully the complex character of this man and his art we must remember that he was a Hungarian with the passionate and electrical temperament of his countrymen. Liszt grew up with the sound of the music of the Hungarian gipsies in his ears. The excitement of the national dances was in his veins, also the languor, the rhythmic capriciousness, the pulsing fire of his race. It is generally agreed that in his compositions for the piano he seldom surpassed the originality and fascination of the Hungarian rhapsodies. Of these there are in all fourteen.

The second Hungarian Rhapsody is perhaps the most famous of the entire group, a gorgeous piece, with a proud, somber introduction, then flourishes and cadenzas such as a wandering gipsy might make with his bow, then a gradual quickening of the pace, sudden, capricious alternations of tenderness and frenzy, and an ending which is one mad whirl of tone.

Another of the rhapsodies which seems never to pall is the Twelfth. It has a leading motive of great, crashing chords. They are

part of the customary slow introduction which is found in so many of these compositions, and has its analogy in the Hungarian folk-dances themselves. Then come typical dance tunes, faster and faster, now and again interrupted by a return of the reverberating chords of the opening.

A work of the same description as the foregoing piece, but even more effective because it combines the resources of the orchestra with those of the piano, is the Hungarian Fantasy for piano solo and orchestra. One of the very few records successfully made of this style of composition displays not only the breath-taking virtuosity of the pianist, but also the wonderful way in which Liszt could combine his instruments. A very old, ancestral Hungarian melody, a noble, melancholy call, resounds from the brass instruments. The piano ornaments this strain with all kinds of florid passage-work. Effects of strange pulsatile instruments are suggested in the quicker dance rhythms that follow. The main motive returns — the old Hungarian song — while the pianist sweeps wildly the entire range of the keyboard. Thereafter it is give and take between soloist and orchestra, that vie with each other in speed, in power, and quickly changing rhythms. The rhapsodies were only one of the offenses the great Liszt committed against the musical pedants of his and of later days. These amazing pieces still disturb the purists, still seem to them "exaggerated" in their color and pomp, in the dreamy, caressing quality of the melodies and the frenzy of the finales. But the great public has rightly taken them to heart.

Great though Liszt was as a pianist, he was far from content with the career of a public performer, however alluring its rewards. He was the composer of music which looked far toward the future, and anticipated some of the most modern compositions of to-day. His home at Weimar became the Mecca of all the musicians of the world. He knew them all, understood them all, and helped them all. Grieg, Berlioz, Saint-Saëns, Smetana, Cesar Franck — the list is endless in the number and importance of the men whom he inspired. He died at Bayreuth, July 31, 1886. It was a wonderful thing to have been such a musician. It was not less wonderful to have been so loved as a man.

CHAPTER 12
Hector Berlioz

Certain names shine out in an age, but they are seldom the names that were greeted most enthusiastically by contemporary judgment. The man who dares to think too far in advance of his period pays dearly for it, and comparatively seldom lives to reap his reward. This was the fate of the founder of French instrumental composition, Hector Berlioz. He was one of the most original composers who ever lived. No creative artist owed less to teachers, precepts, or traditions. His compositions grow greater with every year that passes. An understanding of the music of to-day is impossible without him. What do not the young Russians, many of the modern Frenchmen, indeed all great composers of to-day owe to this daring pioneer of modern music?

Berlioz was one of the most splendid and heroic figures of the romantic period following the Napoleonic wars in France, when Paris was a hotbed of genius, when many of the glorious artists of the day died young, burned out, as it were, by the intensity of their own flame. Tall, of a spare but powerful frame, red-haired, eagle-eyed, defiant of circumstances, contemptuous of the commonplace, he was born for conflict. Being as fearless in the expression of his opinions as he was individual in his ideas, he made enemies by the score and created a new epoch in French music.

Berlioz's father, a physician of Côte-Saint-Andr, a small town located about halfway between Lyons and Grenoble, wished his son also to study medicine. Hector, born December 11, 1803, grew up with little or no knowledge of musical composition, although he learned to sing anything at sight and to play the flageolet and guitar.

He wandered the hills of Côte-Saint-Andre, succeeded poorly in his routine studies, and devoured certain poems and books of travel which appealed to his adventurous spirit. His father complained that

his son knew every island in the South Sea, but could not tell how many departments there were in France. In place of lessons in harmony, Hector read Virgil, and burst into tears at the sublime pathos of a passage of the "Æneid." Instead of writing counterpoint he fell instantly and miserably in love, at the age of twelve years, with Estelle Fournier, an exquisitely beautiful girl of eighteen, whose eyes and pink slippers were ever in his dreams, and who, through all his tempestuous career, his mad love-affairs, his triumphs and disasters, remained the serene and glorious star of his soul. Even Beatrice was doubtless far more commonplace than Dante imagined her. Estelle, as she showed later, had less sensibility and quixotic great-heartedness than her adorer. But she ennobled him. Glorifying her, he glorified himself and wrote great music. Singularly enough, it was Estelle who inspired the most beautiful melody in that astounding symphony, the "Symphonie Fantastique," which Berlioz wrote to gain the attention and the favor of another woman!

Berlioz, sincerely desirous of obeying his father's wishes, went to Paris in 1822, when he was eighteen years old, and undertook a medical course. After a certain experience in the dissecting-rooms, he jumped through the window and wrote his father that he intended to become a musician. He devoured the musical scores of the free library of the Conservatoire, contrived to get himself a harmony-teacher, and put some early and puerile compositions before the public. He had boundless energy and a will that was indomitable. He tried three times to gain the Prix de Rome. A fourth effort, "Sardanapale," composed while the guns of the July Revolution were reverberating through the streets of Paris, won him the coveted reward. Characteristically, he did not like Rome very much when he got there — at least, he did not like the rather academic atmosphere of the Institute. But who could resist Italy! Above all, how could so romantic and impressionable a youth as Berlioz withstand her charm?

Italy was the cause of one of the gayest and most brilliant of all orchestral overtures, the "Carnaval Romain" ("Roman Carnival"). This is a musical picture of Rome in carnival time. Only Berlioz could have written of this scene with such mad vigor, such electrical *esprit*. Like all other great composers, his contemporaries frequently accused him of having no melody. But listen to the song of the slow intro-

duction, played by the English horn just after the first shout of joyous abandon with which the overture opens. Is not that dreamy song the very voice of the sunniest and most beautiful of all lands? After it has been sung, first by the English horn, and then by stringed instruments, the orchestra rushes into the Salterello, a mad dance. At the end, through the wild tumult of the orchestra, there sounds again the beautiful melody of the introduction. In this piece all is life and gaiety. A hundred strokes of genius have flashed by before the last chord sounds. Such was Berlioz, glorious artist, in his youth!

Berlioz saw Miss Smithson, an Irish actress, in Shakespearean drama. It was his first acquaintance with Shakespeare, whose fascination, combined with that of Miss Smithson, was too much for him. After the most fantastic courtship, and following the performance of the "Symphonic Fantastique" in her honor (it was said that Berlioz sat in the orchestra playing the kettle-drums, and that every time he caught the eye of Miss Smithson he gave a furious roll on the instruments), Berlioz married the actress and they were thoroughly unhappy. Accusations, denials, reconciliations at last the wife an invalid, and the poor composer forced to make money by any and all means to care for her. A son, Louis, born of this union, lived to be the affection and the despair of his father's old age. Occasionally a miracle occurred which kept the family from starving, as when the violinist Paganini, hearing Berlioz's "Childe Harold" symphony, appeared after the performance, dumb with a cold, making frantic signs of approval and the next day sent Berlioz a check for twenty thousand francs. The gift was not due to the generosity of Paganini, a notorious miser, but was from another man, who wished to remain unknown.

In 1845 the composer left his wife in tears and in bitterness to undertake an orchestral tour in Hungary which would give him funds to keep the invalid from privation. It was at this time, under the most distracting conditions, that he composed his "Faust," a dramatic cantata for chorus, orchestra, and solo voices. In trains, in steamboats, on the backs of bills in restaurants, in a shop lighted by a single candle, on a night in Budapest, in a hundred other like situations, he wrote this music.

At Budapest it was proposed that Berlioz write a march on a

Hungarian tune. He chose one from an old album of national airs. He was apprehensive, and so were his friends, about the performance, because this was an air very dear to the Hungarians, and if the composer's treatment of it did not suit them the audience would be quite capable of making trouble. The day of the performance came on and Berlioz had all he could do to conceal his nervousness as he ascended the conductor's stand. The march commenced with utter silence in the audience. The Hungarians were probably surprised, for their custom was to begin a march with a bang and a blare, whereas Berlioz's version commenced softly and gradually swelled to a cataclysm of fury. There was no sign of approval until that dramatic passage in which the orchestra, suddenly hushed, begins a long "crescendo," while under the tremolo of the violins the beating of the bass drums is heard, like the booming of distant cannon. The audience went mad. "A strange, restless movement was perceptible among them," says Berlioz in his memoirs, and when the orchestra let loose its fury "they could contain themselves no longer. Their over-charged souls burst with a tremendous explosion of feeling that raised my hair with terror." This is indeed one of the most stirring of marches, with its irresistible rhythms, its constantly accumulating excitement, its thrill and fury of battle.

Berlioz did not originally think of this march as a part of "Faust." It was an independent effort, a piece inspired by an occasion. But he found the march so good that he transported his "Faust" to a plain in Hungary, in order that a Hungarian regiment be supposed to march by in the distance, playing the "Rakoczy March"! A German critic found fault with this high-handed proceeding, to which Berlioz replied that he would have transported "Faust" to any other part of the world if it would have given him the opportunity to introduce so good a march. So would we.

By the time "Faust" was completed Berlioz's fame had been well established. In addition to other methods of making a living, he had become a music critic and had contributed some of the most witty and penetrating musical criticisms ever written to the columns of the *Journal des Debats* and other papers. He flayed mercilessly the money-changers in the temple of art. He knew whereof he spoke, and his wit felled like a mace. Thus his remark at a concert, when he rose from

his seat and, making a gesture as of one who bids at auction, cried, "Twenty francs, forty francs, one hundred francs, for an idea!"

Fascinating beyond description are his *feuilletons* and his "memoirs," now translated and published, with many of his letters, in Everyman's Library. But his most important literary creation, musically speaking, is the great *Treatise of Instrumentation*, which is not merely a treatise, but a poem about the orchestra, at once so imaginative, so prophetic, so scientific in its outlining of modern orchestral principles, that it remains to-day the backbone of orchestral theory.

Berlioz's first wife died in 1854. A second marriage, with a Mme. Marie Recio, with whom he was no happier, and who was far less worthy of him than Henriette, took place some months later. She lived but a short time. Berlioz was working at his last opera, "The Trojans." He was in ill health, a daily sufferer, and embittered by continual misfortune. Then he again met Estelle. Most pathetic of all the incidents of his late days, it often seems, was the letter he wrote her after their meeting. Never, O hero and madman, were you nobler, more credulous, more divinely a child, than in that letter, which might have been the impassioned avowal — indeed, it was the impassioned avowal — of the boy of twelve instead of the disillusioned man of sixty-one. Berlioz, alone, heart-hungry, implored Estelle to let him visit her often and try to gain that love which was his first and his last passion. She sent him a kind and sensible reply, which must have wounded him more, in its relentless logic and lack of response, than sharp repulse. "The Trojans," produced in 1863, failed, and soon after came the news of the death of his son, Louis, a sea-captain, in a foreign port. Berlioz struggled on, the ghost of himself. But he laid about him lustily, as in the old days. He had a brave smile, if his heart was dead. Only occasionally did a cry of anguish escape him, as when he wrote a friend, "I am past hope, past visions, past high thoughts — I am alone; my scorn for the dishonesty and imbecility of men, my hatred of their insane malignity, are at their height; and every day I say unto death: 'When thou wilt! Why does he tarry?'"

A banquet was held at Grenoble, in 1869, at which Berlioz was the honored guest. Like a tall pine riven by the tempest, he came, erect, but shaking, into the hall. A terrific storm broke outside, the

wind playing havoc with the window-curtains and the candles on the tables, many of which were extinguished. The thunder roared and the lightning flashed, as though Nature had determined to greet the old hero with her grandest music. It was the last that all save his most intimate friends were to see of Hector Berlioz. He died a few days later, on the 8th of March. On his coffin were flowers from a few who still loved him; some wreaths from Russia, where he was adored; from the townspeople at Grenoble; from the youths of Hungary, who had not forgotten the battle music of the "Rakoczy March."

"Life: War" is an inscription on an Egyptian tombstone. This inscription might well have served as the epitaph of Hector Berlioz.

CHAPTER 13
Richard Wagner

The beauty Richard Wagner could not find in his life he created for himself in his art. There was never a man or an artist like him. Erratic, imaginative, idealistic, of an extremely energetic and impressionable temperament, he dreamed impossible dreams, and made these dreams come true. He became from a starving conductor of an insignificant opera company the most powerful figure in the music of the later nineteenth century. As a man he was very great and very small. In other words, very human. He was adored, despised, and hated. Who shall judge? Nature gave Wagner the force and the egotism necessary to impose on the world ideas a century ahead of his time. From the struggles, the miseries, the visions of his rash and headlong career came the wondrous "music-dramas."

Wagner was born in 1813, the year of the battle of Leipsic. Napoleon, hatless, fled by the house of his birth. In the same year the man mentioned on the register as Wagner's father died. He was a police-sergeant. According to certain investigators, Richard's father was Ludwig Geyer, an actor, portrait-painter, and lover of letters, who married the policeman's widow soon after his death. What we know is that Geyer exerted a considerable influence on Richard's early development, if only by bringing him into close contact with the theatre. One of Wagner's earliest recollections was of Geyer as a villain of melodrama, and in due course Richard himself knew the ineffable thrill of being sewed up in canvas wings and suspended as an angel in mid-air. He took other child parts. With only one exception his brothers and sisters attached themselves to the stage. Thus Wagner grew up in the play-house, which had a very important influence on his art.

Wagner as a boy was a puzzle to himself and the community. His mental activity was without a parallel. At a time in life when the

youth of our land play baseball he was already dipping into Goethe, Shakespeare, and Greek tragedy. But he seemed to lack definite objective, and the last thing of which he was suspected was talent for music. He was an impossible piano pupil. He whacked out a few cheap waltzes and one or two overtures in a way all his own, but showed no signs of the composer to come until, as a boy of fourteen, he began to write a drama.

This was a bloody affair. All the characters were killed before the last act, and it was necessary for them to reappear as ghosts to finish the play. There were passages of unconscious humor, as when one personage informs another that if he advances a step his nose will be ground to powder. Absorbed in this creative effort, Wagner neglected to attend school. He was maddeningly calm and uncommunicative when questioned by his elders. The explanation of this came years later in his autobiography, and it is significant of what was happening to him as an artist. "I was still conscious," he says, "of a wonderful secret solace in the midst of the calamity that had befallen me. I knew, what no one else could know *that my work could only be judged when set to music which I had resolved to write for it, and which I intended to start composing immediately*"

He could have made no more momentous discovery. Then and there, with that early preposterous attempt at dramatic writing, he took the initial step which led to the "music of the future" — music indissolubly wedded to drama, to express in new forms of power and beauty the deepest emotions and the loftiest ideals of the race.

Wagner arrived at years of indiscretion. The July revolution of 1830 greatly stirred the imagination of German youth. He mingled uproariously with students whose main occupations were drinking and dueling. Anxious to emulate his companions, our composer challenged five of the boldest cocks of the walk to fight him. Wagner himself knew little of swordsmanship or the punctilio of combat, but was preparing light-heartedly for his doom, when that Providence which protects lunatics stepped in and saved him. Opponent number one was effectually disabled in a duel with another man; opponents numbers two and three fled from the city to escape their creditors; opponent number four was killed in a duel previously scheduled, and opponent number five was detected in misdemeanors and rusticated.

Wagner became a confirmed gambler. One night, at a low ebb of his fortunes and his morals, he threw his mother's pension, of which he was a trustee, on the table. And won!

He crept home in the gray dawn, regarding himself as miraculously saved. He turned to his work in a fury of remorse. In dreams the ghosts of Weber and Beethoven appeared, urging him on.

He succeeded in getting some early compositions performed, in mastering odd musical jobs and trying his hand at conducting, an art which he was soon to revolutionize. Finally he was offered an opening as conductor of a little opera company in Magdeburg. There fate lay in wait for him. He was about to decline the position, when his eye fell on Miss Minna Planer, a comely young actress of the organization, and he was done for. He signed his contract almost on the spot. He labored gigantically in the face of every discouragement, and wooed Minna. After months of poverty and love and jealousy and misgivings they married — to become acquainted later.

Wagner fell deeper and deeper into debt. A proposed benefit concert was a financial failure, resulting only in a long double file of creditors outside his door. In 1837, when his life could hardly have been more sordid and miserable, he read a translation of Bulwer Lytton's "Rienzi," decided to write an opera on the subject and forget his unhappy lot in the contemplation of the heroic figure of the Last of the Tribunes.

He was the one person not struck dumb with amazement when this opera was accepted for performance at the Royal Saxon Court Theatre of Dresden. And what is more, it was a howling success! This, despite the fact that the performance, which started at six, lasted until after twelve. "Rienzi" remains the longest opera Wagner ever wrote. Watching the performance the composer, who had previously refused to consent to a single cut, became alarmed and confused. That he was called out enthusiastically after each curtain meant nothing in his frightened frame of mind. They were being polite, or else mocking him! Long before the end he fled. Early the next morning, before any of the management should be afoot, he made his way to the theatre, overhauled and virtually cut in half his score, left directions for the copyists to follow, and sneaked home again. But he could not keep away from the second performance. He then found

that his cuts had been absolutely forbidden by the management, while the tenor, urged to make excisions in his part, answered hotly that he would not give up a note. "It is too heavenly," he cried. Wagner, unable to believe his ears, hid himself in a corner of a box, whence he was dragged and acclaimed a rising composer of Germany.

The "Rienzi" Overture is an extremely brilliant piece of music, enlisting a very large orchestra and anticipating dramatically the exciting developments of the plot. It opens with a long-sustained "A" of a trumpet. This is the signal, in the opera, for the outbreak of the people against the nobles. In response there rises from the strings Rienzi's prayer from the fifth act. The trumpet again sounds the "A," beginning softly, then swelling the tone like an imperious summons from afar, after which agitated passages lead to the principal part, in quicker movement, of the overture. It is woven of different passages from the scenes which follow. The brass choir takes up the battle hymn, "Santo spirito cavaliere," heard in the third act. A quick version of Rienzi's prayer is given the strings. The music rushes tumultuously and with growing force and brilliancy to its end. In it, in spite of a musical style far from that of the later Wagner, is much of the flaming temperament, the instinct for gorgeous orchestral color, the revolutionary fever that ran quick and hot in Wagner's veins, and later sent him forth, an exile, from his native land.

The truth of the matter, which Wagner later realized, was that Rienzi was brilliant, melodious, and conventional enough not to be over the heads of the local public. It was not, however, sufficiently successful to rescue the composer from his debts. Gradually everything he owned, including his traveling passports, was impounded. Another man would have been discouraged by these disasters, perhaps for life. Wagner became more combative and defiant than ever, He decided to get to Paris, somehow, and try his fortunes in the artistic capital of the world.

This involved flight over the Prussian border. Richard and Minna raised the last possible cent and started by stage-coach for freedom. With their beloved dog, "Robber," they hid in a smuggler's den, then crept between lines of sentries at the risk of their lives, and boarded ship to cross the Baltic to London. The journey proved hazardous in the extreme. They encountered first high winds, then a long calm,

then a terrific storm. The ship was driven far from its course. The sailors, superstitious, believed that the mysterious passengers they had taken on board were accursed. Minna implored her husband to tie her to him with a rope, that they might be united in death. At last the vessel took refuge in a Norwegian fjord as the sailors called to those on shore with a curious rhythmic fragment of song which imbedded itself in Wagner's memory and became a leading motive of his opera, "The Flying Dutchman," which he was to write as a result of this terrifying experience on the sea.

In this opera Wagner took a further step in the development of his original theories of the music drama. Whereas in "Rienzi" he had followed the current style of grand opera as established by Meyerbeer, in "The Flying Dutchman" we discover the germs of his entire future development as a composer. The story, derived in part from the poem of Heine, is of the mariner who, having cursed God, is condemned to wander the seas forever, unless he can be redeemed by the love of a faithful maiden, willing to give her life that his soul may be saved. Wagner employs in his musical score various representative themes, or "leading motives," associated with the personages or principals of the drama, as, for example, the typical motive of the Dutchman, already alluded to, the motive of the faithful Senta, and the motive of redemption, hymned by the orchestra as the faithful maiden, to redeem her lover, casts herself into the sea. "The Flying Dutchman" ("Der Flieglinde Hollander"), which Wagner could not get anyone to perform while he was in Paris, was finally produced under his own direction on the 20th of October, 1842, in Dresden.

In Paris Wagner starved, shivered, and wrote "pot boilers" for music publishers while Minna managed the household and pawned even their wedding presents to keep the wolf from the door. The chronicle of these days is a sad one, and it is noteworthy that one of Wagner's most grievous complaints occurs when he describes the loss of his dog. The unfortunate composer was on his way, a metronome under his arm, to beg of a cheese-monger the extension of one of the notes which were perpetually falling due, when "Robber," whom he had not seen for some time, confronted him in a narrow street. Unfortunately Wagner was so eager to recover the animal that he frightened it by the vehemence of his gestures, and so, in a scene

worthy of the Dostoievsky of "Poor Folk," we see the wretched musician, his coat tails flying in the air, the metronome under his arm, pursuing with incoherent cries his "Robber." "Robber" vanished around a corner, and was never seen again. Incidentally it may be said here that Wagner's love of animals was one of his most characteristic traits. "Robber" was replaced by other pets, and they were fed, even when the larder was very bare. There was, for example, the parrot which soon learned to whistle themes from "Rienzi," from Beethoven's Eighth Symphony and other important works, and we have it on Wagner's own authority that more than once in hours of depression he was greatly cheered by these animals.

It was in Paris, nevertheless, that Wagner, turning from the drudgery and disappointment of his daily life, discovered and explored with passionate enthusiasm the inexhaustible treasures of Germanic myth. There he laid the foundations of his "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin," the works of his artistic maturity, and even looked farther, to the old sagas from which he eventually created the "Ring of the Nibelungen." All the time that he was laboring and fighting these great works kept growing, perfecting themselves within him. As he proceeded, each step took him farther ahead of and away from the operatic fashions of the day. Hence, each opera became more difficult to produce. It was a battle royal between tradition and Richard Wagner. For him there was no way out but achievement.

"Tannhäuser," conceived in Paris, was completed in Dresden. The day came when, having sucked money, as he could do with marvelous art, from friends and relatives, Wagner found he could return to Germany. There was an anguished parting with a few faithful friends and the composer, with profound emotion, set out for his native land. As if Nature herself were conspiring to aid him, Wagner saw the very hillside on which, he was certain, Tannhäuser knelt in repentance for the delirious days in the underground realm of Venus. And as he thought this, there fell on his ears the sound of a shepherd's pipe. Shepherd and hill were reproduced in his opera, the scene which he perceived as he re-entered Germany remaining so graven in his memory that he was able to describe it in the smallest detail to the artist who, years later, in 1860, painted the scenery for the production of "Tannhäuser" in Paris.

We need not trace here the various Tannhäuser legends which Wagner sifted, altered, and re-assembled in writing his libretto. He went through this same process in the writing of all his poems for his operas, and the history of his studies and the development of his poetic conceptions would provide a volume in itself. Suffice it here to say that the basic thought of "Tannhäuser" is that of the erring knight who, having forsaken the paths of righteousness and become a willing slave of Venus, is only saved from perdition by the sacrificial love of the maiden Elizabeth. Her prayers for the man she loves at last cause leaves to bud from the staff of the Pope at Rome, the sign of heavenly pardon and forgiveness of the sinner. It will be noted that the predominating motive in this opera, as in "The Flying Dutchman," and also in the much later "Ring of the Nibelungen," is the redeeming power of woman's love. All of Wagner's overtures or preludes to his operas are intimately connected with the dramatic developments that follow. Thus the "Tannhäuser" overture opens with the prayerful chant of the Pilgrims as they wend their way over hill and dale to Rome — the procession joined in the first act by the repentant Tannhäuser. This is interrupted by the sensuous, exciting music of Venus and her train. A solo clarinet intones the song of the goddess. There is music of emotional struggle, conflict, aspiration, until the Pilgrims' hymn is heard again, approaching from the distance, dispersing the music of the Venusberg, gathering grandeur and sonority as it comes nearer, bringing to a solemn and triumphant conclusion this epitome of a man's spiritual redemption.

Almost as well known as the overture is Wolfram's romance from the third act, "O Thou Sublime. Sweet Evening Star." Evening has fallen and Elizabeth prays for the salvation of her knight. Wolfram, the faithful friend of Tannhäuser and the unrewarded lover of Elizabeth, sings of the sadness of destiny and the greatness of nature.

"Tannhäuser" was first performed under the composer's direction in Dresden, October 19, 1845. Thereafter Wagner occupied himself entirely with "Lohengrin." He was now in very poor physical condition. His physician had ordered him to take certain baths and remain immersed in the waters for an hour every day. In the mornings Wagner wandered in the woods, reading the old poetry of Wolfram von Eschenbach the minstrel of medieval times, whom he had

presented as a dramatic figure in "Tannhäuser." "Pitching my tent by the brook," he says in his memoirs, "I lost myself in Wolfram's strange, yet irresistibly fascinating poem." This mental absorption induced a state of ever-increasing excitement, much to the doctor's consternation. Nor could Wagner be dissuaded from his reading and creating. The climax came when one day, while soaking in his bath, the complete plan of "Lohengrin" came into his head. He leaped from the water and rushed to his manuscript. The baths were discontinued; Wagner could not sleep; the physician retired in disgust; the composition of "Lohengrin" proceeded with feverish rapidity.

The "Lohengrin" prelude is not concerned, as are the overtures of "Tannhäuser" and "The Flying Dutchman," with musical story-telling, but is intended to give the hearer the vision of the descent of the Grail from on high and the return of the sacred vessel to its home in the heavens. The opening is famous for its mysterious beauty and was a revolutionary idea in orchestration when Wagner composed it. It consists of high ethereal "harmonics" for the violins, which then intone, very tenderly, the theme of the Grail. Wagner's treatment of this theme is one of the wonders of modern music. The short motive serves as the musical substance of the whole composition, and exemplifies very wonderfully the composer's theory of "endless melody" *i.e.*, melody which does not come to a definite end after a few measured phrases, but which continues, a steady stream of music, without a stop, from one end of an act or an instrumental movement to the other. Observe, then, how the theme draws itself out like a telescope; how, in turn, the various instruments of the orchestra take it up, weaving it in and out in one continuous musical fabric. Gradually the Grail descends. The music gathers to its climax. A mighty chord of the brass, and it is as though the shining vessel were before our eyes. Thereafter the music grows softer and still softer, until finally one hears only the high, mystical tones — the violin harmonics — of the opening, as though the vision had disappeared in the skies.

Robert Schumann, when Wagner read him the libretto of "Lohengrin," thought at first that such a poem could not be successfully set to music. It has proved the most popular of all Wagner's operas this notwithstanding the fact that in a sense it is the least human of them all. It is poetic legend. In the music is the atmosphere

of that which is mysterious and remotely beautiful. Lohengrin is a figure of mystical romance. Elsa, his uncomprehending bride, has little character of any kind. The most real personages are the plotters, Ortrud and Telramund, but they are protrayed in Wagner's score rather as "dark forces" than as human beings. Over all is the glamour of a more ethereal loveliness than had yet been known in music.

Elsa of Brabant has been falsely accused by Telramund and his wife, Ortrud, of the murder of her young brother, Gottfried, who has disappeared. According to the custom of the time, a trial is announced, when it shall be seen if a champion will arise who will prove by trial of arms the innocence of the young princess. Trumpets sound the summons, but no champion appears. Elsa is questioned. Her answers are vague and incomprehensible. She speaks, as one in a trance, of a knight, seen in her dreams, who is coming to protect her.

When the trumpets call for the last time a skiff is seen floating down the river, drawn by a swan. It carries a knight clad in shining mail. Lohengrin, the deliverer, asks permission to champion Elsa. He defeats Telramund, and Elsa is saved. He is not able, however, to overcome the influence that Ortrud exerts on Elsa's mind. Affecting remorse for her evil deeds, she awakens in Elsa a growing distrust of him who has rescued her.

Lohengrin and Elsa are wedded. The festive orchestral introduction to the third act, in which this event takes place, and the Bridal Chorus, are among the most popular pages Wagner ever wrote.

A mysterious condition had been made by Lohengrin when he interceded for Elsa that she should never ask him his name or antecedents. Now, her happiness otherwise complete, Elsa cannot refrain from putting the question. Lohengrin answers, sorrowfully enough, in his beautiful "Narrative" of his home at Montsalvat, of the services the knights of the Grail are bound to perform, anonymously, reverently, as guardians of the sacred vessel of the blood of Christ. Now, alas! he must part forever from his newly won bride. Telramund is slain as he attempts, at this moment, to kill Lohengrin. In the last scene the identity of the swan is revealed when Ortrud confesses that she has enchanted the bird, and confidently claims that Lohengrin is unable to deliver it from her spell. Lohengrin kneels in prayer, a dove descends from heaven, and in place of the swan stands the long-lost

Gottfried. The dove, replacing the swan, guides the skiff of Lohengrin up the river. The Knight of the Grail sorrowfully farewells the weeping Elsa.

Mr. Runciman believes that Elsa is Minna, that this was Wagner's way of having the last word with his wife. "Lohengrin" was first performed under the direction of Liszt, Wagner's friend, in Weimar in 1850. But Wagner was not to hear his own opera until eleven years later. Other adventures awaited him. In 1849, the year of the Saxony Rebellion, he became intimate with the Russian, Bakunin, a true precursor of Lenin and Trotzky, and not popular with the authorities. Wagner also made a rash speech before a political club, which made a tremendous sensation. He was further guilty of giving free tickets to revolutionists who applauded frantically his appearances at the opera. Then the revolution came to a head; Prussianism triumphed; three of Wagner's friends, including Bakunin, were sentenced to death; he, aroused with difficulty to his position, was persuaded in the nick of time to make his way over the border. Thus was Wagner again flung, homeless and friendless, on the world.

Nature has her own plans for her great men. The only kind of a catastrophe which would have sufficed to pry the composer loose forever from a deadening security had occurred. Lacking that crisis, who knows what Wagner might have sunk to at the hands of convention and routine. He was entering on the freest, most intensively creative period of his career, and circumstances pushed him forward. This point also marked the beginning of the end of his relations with his first wife.

It is not hard to understand the fearful shock that Wagner's part in the events of 1849 was to Minna. Her lot, as the partner of one of the most incorrigible egotists in all history, could never have been over-comfortable. Of course she did not understand her husband. Of course she had the mind and the standards of women of her place in life. But she did her best, and she endured an unspeakable deal. Both of them did. They were mismated. They suffered intensely from it. Wagner, too, endured and forgave, but he was not the only one who deserved sympathy.

Then, too, while Wagner remained at his post in Dresden, there was more than an even chance that some day would find them out of

debt. True, he was in certain things extravagant, determined to have at any cost what he needed, or thought he needed, to compose. He paid heavy sums to have his scores published, and forgotten creditors of the Magdeburg and Riga days kept turning up, until the composer exclaimed wildly that he expected to get a bill from the nurse who had suckled him. They were gaining, nevertheless. Minna was the happy and respectable wife of a musician with various official titles, and they had achieved an unprecedented measure of security and comfort when a madman's folly blew the whole thing up in smoke.

There were more stormy years, until, tempest-tossed, Wagner and the well-meaning woman who was now his wife in name only, found a refuge. They found it at the hands of the Wesendoncks, in Zurich, Switzerland. Mathilde Wesendonck was a woman of education and intellectuality. Her husband was a silk merchant with extensive interests in America. Mathilde persuaded her husband to build for Wagner an idyllic retreat, overlooking lake and valleys of the Alps, where he could compose in happiness and peace. All would have been well had it not been for the attraction which developed between Wagner and Frau Wesendonck. The day came when he read her the poem of "Tristan and Isolde," and that day, like Paolo and Francesca, they read no more. Minna, who could be jealous if she could no longer love, discovered a letter. It was one of renunciation, but this did not help matters. For Wagner there was nothing but to leave his asylum forever. He went to Venice. There, in a frenzy of inspiration, he completed what is perhaps his greatest work. Strange man! he carried on for some time a correspondence with Mathilde Wesendonck, and in this correspondence he shows himself more and more forgetful of their tragedy and more and more exultant over the opera to which, according to sentimentalists, their love had given birth. We say "according to sentimentalists," because Wagner had thought of "Tristan and Isolde" before he fell in love with Mathilde Wesendonck. He called "Tristan and Isolde" "the child of sorrow." Perhaps, in the impersonal eye of destiny, Mathilde Wesendonck had herself to congratulate for having fulfilled her mission in aiding Wagner to complete his masterpiece. But Mathilde did not attend the first performance of "Tristan and Isolde" ("Tristan und Isolde"), which took place in Munich, June 10, 1867.

Tristan and Isolde are fated to love. They are united not only by the passion which came unbidden to them, but by the love potion prepared by Brangaene, Isolde's serving-maid, in place of the death draught which the desperate Isolde had ordered, that she and Tristan might together meet destruction. This thought of inescapable destiny is emphasized by Wagner in a manner akin to that of the old masters of Greek tragedy. From the moment of the drinking of the potion, which takes place while Tristan is escorting Isolde to Cornwall as the prospective bride of old King Mark, the end is determined. Only in death will the lovers find surcease from sorrow. Tristan and Isolde meet at night in the garden of Mark's castle. There they sing passionately of their love, unheeding of Brangaene's warning from the watch-tower, until they are surprised by Mark and his courtiers, and Tristan is mortally wounded by his treacherous friend, Melot. At last Tristan lies dying, praying that Isolde may heed the message he has sent her, and come to him. Isolde's ship arrives too late. Tristan expires in her arms. Will she follow him to that kingdom where day gives place to night, where life gives place to eternity? Isolde, surrounded by Mark and his followers — Mark who, understanding at last, has come not to slay, but to forgive and unite — sings her incomparable death song, that rises, shaking out its wings, for the spirit's flight. "Do you not see," she cries, looking on the body of Tristan, "how he smiles? Do you not hear the music that sweeps through the skies?" As she falls on Tristan's body the orchestra echoes, like a parting sigh, the motive of insatiable longing which united the lovers in life, which unites them in death, even as the laurel and the vine, which, according to ancient legend, entwine over their graves.

Wagner was pardoned and returned to Germany in 1861. Despite the fact that his operas were beginning to win recognition, his fortunes were at a lower point than ever, and, while the public was favorable, the critics were extraordinarily hostile and abusive. The artist has his own methods of revenge. It was in this year that Wagner finished his immortal comedy, "The Mastersingers of Nuremberg" ("Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg"). The hero of this opera is young Walther von Stolzing, a knight and a poet, who craves entrance to the guild of tradesmen and musicians known as the Mastersingers. The requirements for entrance to this guild are very strict. The

applicant must compose and sing a prize song which must conform to an incredible number of stiff, pedantic, meaningless rules. It is not hard to discern in the person of Walther, Wagner himself, the singer of a new art, and in the pedantic Meistersingers Wagner's crabbed and uncomprehending critics. One of the Meistersingers [by the name of] Beckmesser, opposes Walther's entrance to the guild, and also becomes his rival for the prize of the approaching contest of song the hand of the fair Eva, daughter of Hans Sachs, one of the noblest, as he is one of the most human, of Wagner's characters. Beckmesser, who can criticize plentifully, but who cannot create, steals the song composed by Walther, intending to forestall him at the tournament. But he is not equal to his project. He makes a fool of himself before a concourse of the people. Wagner evidently means to say here that pedantry cannot ape genius. Walther rises to sing and the populace are spellbound by his song of youth, genius, and love, a song as fresh as the morning dew.

In the midst of the gloom occasioned by his material difficulties, Wagner completed the glorious, laughing music of this, his one operatic comedy. But thereafter inspiration seemed to depart. The fight was knocked out of him. Disheartened by artistic and financial disappointments, he was on his way to Lucerne when a most dramatic incident saved the day. Young Ludwig II of Bavaria came to the throne. Wagner's poem of "The Ring of the Nibelungen" had fallen into the king's hands. He had heard "Lohengrin" in his eighteenth year. Ludwig's secretary was dispatched posthaste after the fleeing composer, whom he caught up with at Stuttgart, and to whom he gave a purse, the assurance of a royal pension, and the king's message, which read, "Come here and finish your work."

The battle was won; the wolf driven forever from the door. The king, who was undoubtedly half a madman, and one of many whom the composer dominated in the name of his art, financed Wagner's projects with a generosity which added to his unpopularity in certain circles. In due course the Bayreuth project came to flower. This consisted in the erection of a theatre especially designed for the production of Wagner's operas at Bayreuth. Here the four operas which comprise the cycle, "The Ring of the Nibelungen" ("Der Ring des Nibelungen"), were performed in their colossal entirety at the first

Bayreuth festival of 1876.

In this vast work, of which "the lines," in the language of Debussy, "stretch out into infinity," Wagner took the rough ore of the ancient Nibelungen sagas and made it into gold. Singular to relate, there is the complete prophecy, in this work, of the downfall of the monarchistic civilization being reared at that time by western Europe and by no nation more assiduously, with more definitely selfish and materialistic purpose, than by the Germany which rose up after 1870.

From the moment when the misshapen dwarf, Alberich, turns from Love, as personified for him by the nymphs of the Rhine, to desire of Gold and Power, there commences the destruction of the established order. The high gods themselves, caught in the toils of greed and fear, lie, thieve, and compromise with evil in order to gain their ends. Wotan is seen, aware of the disaster he himself has provoked, trying by every means to avert the catastrophe which he well knows will arrive. His own children, Siegfried and Brünnhilde, are sacrificed to the evil which has been wrought, but at last their love redeems the world. Siegfried is murdered. Brünnhilde, mourning him, mounts the funeral pyre. The waters of the great river rise, to cleanse away the shame of the world. Walhalla, home of the futile old gods who ruled from strongholds of power and privilege, goes up in flames.

It is impossible in the limits of a short chapter to tell in detail the picturesque and legendary incidents of "The Rhinegold" ("Das Rheingold"), "The Valkyrie" ("Die Walkure"), "Seigfried," and "The Twilight of the Gods" ("Götterdämmerung"). Each of these works takes an evening to perform. In each of them are passages of Wagner at his very greatest. If there is the occasional place where the action sags a little, where the philosopher gets the better of the dramatist and the musician, the proportions of the task the composer set himself is the explanation. Two passages of nature-music, in which Wagner was always great, often sublime, are the "Ride of the Valkyries" and the "Magic Fire" music from the second of these operas. The "Ride of the Valkyries" ("Walkürenritt") is heard at the opening to the second act. Storm clouds form a background as the Valkyries, riding their war steeds through the air, assemble with wild cries and narrate the death of Siegmund in battle.

The wonderful music of Brünnhilde's sleep makes the final scene.

She, the Valkyrie, having disobeyed the commands of Wotan, is condemned by her father to an age-long slumber, and surrounded by flames to guard her safely until Siegfried, the hero who does not know fear, shall waken her and make her his mate. Here Wagner's capacity for scene-painting in tones is superbly displayed as Wotan strides majestically forward and, striking the rocks with his spear, summons Loki, god of fire, to do his bidding. The flames hiss and roar and flicker as Wotan bids his daughter a noble and melancholy farewell. In the orchestral arrangement of this music the song of Wotan is heard, played by the brass underneath the scintillating effects of strings, wood, and harp. Combined with these figures is the lullaby, the music of Briinnhilde's sleep.

Wagner's name, by the time Bayreuth had been established, and the "Ring of the Nibelungen" mounted on the stage, was one to conjure with. He was a born propagandist, a vigorous, if involved and controversial writer. Wagner societies were established everywhere to collect funds for Bayreuth. Wagner was accused of lining his pockets, until it was announced that Bayreuth faced deficits.

Minna, who had previously parted from her husband, had died, in 1866. In 1870 Wagner married Cosima von Billow. She was the daughter of Liszt and the wife of the composer's previous friend, disciple, and supporter, Hans von Billow. Wagner took the woman to himself ruthlessly, as he had helped himself ruthlessly to everything he wanted all his life. The union was a happy one. A far more beautiful composition than anything in Wagner's last opera, "Parsifal," is the orchestral piece, the "Siegfried Idyll," in which are incorporated a number of the themes from the opera "Siegfried." It was composed when Wagner's son, named after the hero of the "Ring," was born. To-day Cosima and Seigfried reign over what the war has left of Bayreuth.

A word concerning "Parsifal." Before Wagner composed this work he had in mind two other subjects for operas. One was a Christian and the other an Oriental theme. Christianity and Buddhism mingle curiously in "Parsifal." The story is that of Parsifal, the Guileless Fool, descendant of Sir Galahad, whose innocence and purity save the accursed Kundry from the power of Klingsor, the magician, and restore the Grail to its rightful home on Monsalvat. In place of

the sweeping passion of "Tristan," of the open-air feeling and the pulse of the good common folk in "The Mastersingers," or the grandeur of the dramas of the Ring, in which men and gods contend together, we have here a doctrine of philosophic renunciation. In "Parsifal" some see the most mystical and inspired of all Wagner's creations. Contemporaneous critics, in a majority, find the music less convincing than that of earlier works, and it is pointed out that two of the most beautiful passages, the "Good Friday" music and the music for the Flower Maidens who tempt Parsifal in Klingsor's gardens, were composed earlier than other parts of the opera.

"Parsifal" or no "Parsifal," Wagner had done his work. He had created a music as new as anything under the sun could be, of a nervous power, intensity, and splendor before undreamed of. This music, at first unpopular and incomprehensible, is to-day accepted everywhere, and we are moved past words by its beauty and poignancy. Wagner had many theories of opera. His principal ideas were these: the combination, not only of music and drama, but of all the arts which naturally assemble in the theater; the choice of mythical and legendary subjects as the best material for the poet-musician; the abolition of set operatic forms, such as the solo, duet, or *ensemble* number, in favor of the free flight of the music and the logical, unimpeded development of the drama; the use of "leading-motives," already described, developed in a symphonic manner by the orchestra, accentuating the situations on the stage. Wagner also wanted his actors to assume attitudes suggestive of sculpture. As has been observed, such actions on the part of an actor would create the strong impression that he was sick or in pain! After all, what are an artist's theories? More often than not they are pegs on which he can hang his art. Wagner music is the overwhelming thing that lives after him.

He died in 1883, full of honors. We have spoken plainly of his life, as well as of his art. An artist's life is like a cathedral. At first there is grubbing in the soil, apparent aimlessness, disorder, confusion. Years may pass before clear outlines appear, years more before these outlines assume relation to one another. The day comes when the structure is complete. Scaffolding and rubbish are taken away. We suddenly catch our breath. Lo! in place of the dirt, the turmoil, the confusion, there stands a towering monument to God.

CHAPTER 14
Ambroise Thomas

Lesueur, the teacher of Ambroise Thomas at the Paris Conservatoire, called his talented pupil his "note sensible" (the "sensitive" or "leading" tone of the scale), because of Thomas's musical sensitiveness and because he was the seventh of Lesueur's pupils to win the Grand Prix de Rome.

The son of a musician, Ambroise Thomas, born at Metz, August 5, 1811, learned notes with his alphabet and soon played the piano and violin. A man of exceptional quickness and sensibility, as the phrase of Lesueur implied, he was impatient of pretense or platitude, and did not miscalculate the value of academic honors. He knew that it was one thing to please his teachers and another to gain the ear of the world. He returned to Paris as soon as he had spent the three years of the Grand Prix scholarship in travel and at Rome, and began producing operettas. His early works gained considerable temporary success.

Thomas, like most French composers, had the inborn talent for the stage, a knack of driving home a situation, a captivating gaiety and lightness of touch, agreeable then as now. There ensued a short period, however, when the public seemed to tire of his works. Then descended upon Paris the distracting political events of the Revolution of 1848. In that year art was relegated to the background. Thomas, in the uniform of the National Guard, passed under a friend's window brandishing a gun: "This is the instrument upon which I must compose to-day, and the music it produces requires no words."

In 1849 he recovered and strengthened his position with the public with his opera bouffe, "Le Caïd," produced at the Opera Comique, January 3d of that year.

"Le Caïd" ("The Cadi") is a satire, as witty and diverting a piece

as Thomas ever produced, on musical conditions of his day. He is heard here in his most Gallic vein. In this comedy his jests scintillate, and delightful melodies drop from his sleeve. The scene is Algiers. The "hero," if so he can be called, is the fat and cowardly Cadi. There are foolish men, scheming women, and various Oriental characters. Michel, the drum major, addicted to the bottle, compares its charms to those of the Mohammedan paradise in a lively, funny air.

The two greatest works of Thomas were "Mignon," produced at the Opera Comique, November 17, 1866, and "Hamlet," first performed at the Opera, March 9, 1868. The success of "Mignon," an opera full of melody and beautiful orchestration, was immediate and overwhelming. Within six months it had one hundred performances, and the composer was presented with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor. Thomas lived to attend the one-thousandth performance of the work. The libretto, by Jules Barbier and Michel Carre, presents incidents from the plot of Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" arranged in conformance with the prevailing French operatic style. A great poem or story may be treated in different ways by a composer of opera. The composer will have to change the literary form to make it fit the requirements of music and spectacle, but in doing this he may retain the fundamental meanings and scope of his subject-matter. Or the composer may select from an over-richness of material some single episode that has emotional and pictorial interest, and make of it a stage spectacle.

Mignon, the daughter of noble parents, was stolen from her home in Italy by gipsies. Her mother died of grief. Her father, half-crazed with sorrow, wandered from land to land, seeking his child. In the courtyard of an inn (Act I) Mignon is ordered by the gipsy chief to dance for the entertainment of a troupe of actors on their way to the castle of a nobleman, where they are to take part in a festival. Because of fatigue, Mignon refuses to do this, and the chief is about to beat her when an aged harper, the half-demented Lothario, protects the girl, and the student, Wilhelm, also advances to her relief. Questioning Mignon about herself, Wilhelm receives as his answer the wistful, dreamy song of the first act, "Know'st thou the land?" in which the girl seems as one in a dream to behold the distant home of her childhood. "Do you know the land," she sings, "where the orange-

blossom grows, where spring reigns eternal, where the skies are ever blue? It is there I would fain return; it is there I would live and die." This represents one of Thomas's highest flights as a composer.

Wilhelm purchases Mignon's freedom of the gipsies. The actors proceed to the castle. Filina, beautiful and selfish, looks with a favoring eye on the student, who is invited to accompany the troupe. Mignon, full of gratitude, asks to go with Wilhelm disguised as his servant.

At the castle Wilhelm is deep in the toils of Filina. Meanwhile Mignon has come to love her rescuer. Wilhelm is oblivious of her charms. He quarrels with Frederic, Filina's admirer, and Filina is cruelly amused at the simple tactics of Mignon. It was at the beginning of this scene (Act II) that Thomas inserted for the benefit of Madame Trebelli, who took the part of Frederic in the London production, the piquant Rondo Gavotte, one of the show pieces of the opera. It is sung by Frederic as he waits in Filina's boudoir.

The troupe gives a performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and Filina is radiant in the costume of Titania. Flushed by her triumph and by the homage paid her beauty, she sings her polonaise, a brilliant and effective air appropriate to Filina's character.

Filina sends Mignon to the castle. Suddenly the edifice is in flames. Lothario has applied the torch, believing this to be Mignon's wish. Wilhelm emerges from the building with the unconscious Mignon in his arms.

In the last act Mignon is recovering from a long illness, while Wilhelm and Lothario watch over her. Lothario has brought the girl to the home of his youth, where long-forgotten scenes help to restore his mind. Wilhelm knows at last that he loves Mignon, and while she sleeps sings of his devotion.

Mignon, waking, repeats the words of a prayer taught her in infancy by her mother. By this means, and by the discovery of a girdle worn by her in childhood, the Count Lothario recognizes his daughter and all ends well.

There were several versions of this opera. In one Mignon married Wilhelm; in the other she died. The public preferred the wedding, and M. Thomas had no objections.

It was Messrs. Barbier and Carre who again obliged Thomas when

they gave him a libretto ostensibly based on Shakespeare's "Hamlet." Some scenes of the play and part of the text of Shakespeare, notably the soliloquy of Hamlet, "To be or not to be," are reproduced, but we recognize the characters more often than we recognize the sequences of Shakespeare's drama. The form is that of the conventional French grand opera. There are five acts. In the second act Hamlet engages the players, and discovers beyond doubt the guilt of his stepfather. This is the scene in which, with forced gaiety, Hamlet sings the well-known drinking-song.

The finale of this opera was doubtless conceived as a Gallic antidote for Shakespearean gloom. Hamlet mourns over Ophelia's grave and determines to kill himself. The king approaches, at the head of a cortege. The ghost rises again and looks reproachfully at Hamlet, who, at last, turns about and stabs the king. The populace, easily convinced that the man was a murderer, will not hear of Hamlet's suicide, and acclaim him as their ruler.

After all, opera is opera, and musicians are the last to be troubled by any trifling little changes of plot or story. There are still Italian provinces that know "Othello" only through the opera of Rossini, which has a happy ending. As for "Hamlet," witness the remark of a not uncelebrated conductor who had the birthplace of Shakespeare at Stratford-on-Avon pointed out to him:

"Shakespeare? Who was he?"

"Why, you know! He wrote 'Romeo and Juliet,' 'Othello,' and 'Hamlet.'"

"All, yes! Of course! Of course! The librettist!"

Thomas was a man of broad culture, a brilliant conversationalist, and a favorite at the court of Napoleon III. He was successively chevalier (1845), officer (1858), and commander (1868) of the Legion of Honor and a member of the Institute (1851). His tastes, however, were simple. Feted everywhere, enjoying most of the honors that his country could shower upon him, he loved nature, and when not engaged in Paris was most often found on a quiet island in Brittany, where he escaped from the turmoil of the city.

His music has a distinction, refinement, and polish of its own. He was deeply versed in the traditions of the French stage. He wrote admirably for the voice. He understood the art of instrumentation,

and his later scores abound in delicate, pleasing effects. His talent did not run as deep as that of Gounod, but he had style and charm. His aims were serious, perhaps too serious for the quality of his art, yet he was a modest man. He often remarked that the most gratifying experience of his career was the free performance of "Mignon" given on the day following the gala celebration in May, 1894. "It gave an imprint," said he, "of a national character to my work." He was an ardent patriot. In 1870 he saw his birthplace in the hands of the enemy, an event which saddened his later years. He died in Paris, February 12, 1896.

CHAPTER 15
Charles François Gounod

Emotional, impressionable, devout, Charles François Gounod vacillated all his life between the theater and the cloister. This is reflected in his art. His dramatic music seldom lacks the religious element. His religious music is music of amorous emotion as well as worship. Listening to it, it is as though one heard, beyond the prayer, the rustle of silken skirts in the gallery.

Gounod was born in Paris, June 17, 1818. His grandmother knew music and poetry and was an accomplished actress. His father was a painter, and it was thought for some time that Charles would follow in his footsteps. His mother, who had the charm, the thrift, the culture of a Frenchwoman of good birth, taught drawing and music, and by this means supported her family after the death of her husband in 1823.

When Gounod was six he was taken to the opera, nearly perishing with excitement. He could neither eat nor drink. The mother said:

"You know if you do not eat you do not go to the theater."

"Before such a threat," wrote Gounod, "I would have heroically swallowed anything they could put before me. I dined, therefore, with exemplary obedience, and…there we were, mother and I, starting out for the promised land. It seemed as if I was about to enter a sanctuary… I was filled with a sort of sacred terror, as at the approach of some mystery, imposing and redoubtable. I experienced emotions as profound as they were unknown; the desire and fear of that which was to pass before me."

The boy was obviously so stirred by this experience that his mother, who did not wish him to study music, was uneasy. She went to Gounod's school and asked the professor "for Heaven's sake" to "get that musical idea out of his head."

"Aha! little Charles," said the professor next day, "so you wish to

become a musician?"

"Yes."

"Ah! but you do not think what that means! To be a musician amounts to nothing in the world."

"Nothing!" said the child, astonished. "Is it nothing to be a Mozart, Weber, Meyerbeer, Rossini?"

"*Peste! mon garçon!* But at your age Mozart had done some great things. What have you done? What can you do? Here! show me what you can do," as he scribbled on a piece of paper the words of the romance of Joseph from Mehul's opera, then famous, of that name. "Put music to that," said the professor. "See if you can do as well as Mehul. As for Mozart there's still time."

The song was written during the recreation period. Gounod took it to the principal.

"What is it, my child?"

"My song is finished."

"What, already?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let us see. Sing it to me."

"I sang," says Gounod in his memoirs, "and when I had finished I turned timidly about to face my judge. His eyes were full of tears. He drew me to his heart and said, 'It is beautiful, beautiful, my boy… Be a musician, then, since the devil pushes you to it. It's no use to fight against that!'"

Gounod entered the Paris Conservatoire, where he studied with a number of the best teachers of the day, and where Cherubim directed his attention to sacred composition and the music of Palestrina. Gounod's mother was fearful when the time came for the drawing of lots for the military conscription. Gounod comforted her. "Never fear, I will secure exemption by winning the Prix de Rome."

He won the second prize in 1837. His cantata, "Fernand," brought him the Grand Prize two years later.

In Rome Gounod encountered two women who were to be potent influences in his life. One was the great singer, Pauline Viardot-Garcia, an artist whose nature and intellectual gifts drew about her the greatest minds of the day. She was so taken with Gounod's talent and personality that she promised to remember and help him

whenever she could. It was, in fact, Madame Garcia who at a later day introduced Gounod as an opera-composer to the world. The other woman was Mrs. Henselt, who had been, before she married, Fanny Mendelssohn, sister of the composer, and the unnamed creator of a number of the "Songs Without Words." A warm friendship grew up between the two which developed on Gounod's side, at least, into a sentiment more intense. The parting for him was bitter.

It was at this time that he turned to religion. The arrival of an ecclesiast who had also been a personal friend of Gounod's in Paris strengthened him in his determination to enter the Church. He talked of little else. He studied in monasteries and missions. His letter-heads were those of the Missions des Strangers, engraved with two bleeding hearts surmounted by a crown of thorns. It was not until Madame Garcia was approached by a manager of a Parisian theater who desired her to appear a number of times in opera that Gounod came from his retirement. This new opera, known as "Sapho," was not over-successful, either in 1851 or when it was revised thirty years later, but it launched Gounod on his career. It was followed by two unsuccessful grand operas, and then by an opera comique, "Le Medecin Malgre Lui" (1858), which is full of charming music and too little known to-day. Then came "Faust," the libretto by Barbier and Carre, first performed at the Theatre Lyrique, March 19, 1859. The opera presents but one episode of Goethe's masterpiece — the episode of the love of Faust and Marguerite, which is the most human and least philosophic aspect of the work.

The scenes of this opera are so familiar that they need not be described in detail. Those with a passion for statistics — there are such even in music — have reckoned that the musical score contains more melody to the square inch than that of any other opera.

In the air sung by Valentine (Act II), departing for war, he commends his sister, Marguerite, to the care of the boy Siebel, who adores her. This air was not in the original score, but was composed by Gounod for the barytone, Charles Santley, when "Faust" was first performed in London, June 11, 1863.

Mephistopheles, who appears as Faust's traveling-companion in the market-place, sings the sardonic couplets, "The Calf of Gold" that calf, he says, before which all men, the great and the lowly, bow

in abject servility.

[Then] the music of one of the most dramatic scenes in the opera — that in which Marguerite, kneeling in the cathedral imploring pardon from on high, is taunted by the terrible voice of the invisible fiend, threatening her with eternal torment.

In an ardent song Faust (Act III, Scene 1), led by Mephistopheles into the garden of Marguerite, salutes reverently the chaste dwelling of her whom he adores. This is one of Gounod's most celebrated arias.

The Soldiers' Chorus (Act IV, Scene 1) is heard when Valentine returns at the head of his troops from the wars. This chorus was not composed as a part of the score of "Faust," but was taken from an earlier and uncompleted opera of Gounod's, "Ivan, the Terrible."

The ballet-music, considered in Gounod's time one of the finest pages of the opera, displays effectively Gounod's melodious style and his effective use of the orchestra. This ballet occurs between the fourth and fifth acts. The scene is the Vale of Tempe (the only reference to the second part of Goethe's poem made in the opera). Faust, Mephistopheles, Helen of Troy, and many figures of Greek myth are seen. Faust is startled by a vision of Marguerite.

Mephistopheles insolently tunes his guitar before the dwelling of Marguerite and mockingly hints at her ruin. His satanic laughter is one of the notable effects of this song.

The manner in which "Faust" has kept the stage for over half a century is testimony to the solid value as well as the melodic beauty of the opera. Not only in France, but in every land, with every public, educated and uneducated, rich and poor, it has held its own. Gounod, French to the pith, nevertheless studied carefully many operas of different periods and schools. "Faust" was created when he had grown to his full height as a composer and learned, through many failures, how to write in a finished and effective manner for the stage. The workmanship and inspiration shown in certain scenes are really past praise — for example, the garden scene, with its sweeping climax, as Marguerite cries out her love to the stars, then throws herself into Faust's arms! The writing for the voices, the richness and refinement of the instrumentation, are still models to be studied with the utmost care. Yet there was distrust of this work in rehearsal and on the part of publishers, and when Gounod lay dying there was a long-

haired melomaniac who, being refused admittance, beat frantically on the door, anxious to assure the man whose life was ebbing that "Faust" was a poor thing which would not outlive its day!

"Mireille" (1864), originally a tragedy in five acts, later reduced to three acts, with a happy ending, was based on a poem of Frederic Mistral, written in the Provençal dialect. The joyous waltz song was not in the original version of the opera, but was interpolated in the later edition. It is found in the first act. Its rather silly text is set to a charming melody.

Gounod's most popular opera, after "Faust," was undoubtedly "Romeo and Juliet," the libretto by Barbier and Carre from Shakespeare's tragedy. This work was produced at the Theatre Lyrique, Paris, April 27, 1867. The music has less depth and originality than that of "Faust," but certain airs have a pleasing gaiety or lyrical fervor typical of Gounod's talent.

Thus the brilliant song of Juliet, as she enters the ballroom of the Capulets. The lights, the company, the festivities of the occasion, excite her. She has not yet seen Romeo. She knows only that she is young and beautiful, that life is full of wonder, that every to-morrow has a promise more thrilling than the wonder of to-day. That is the theme of Gounod's gay music.

In his later years Gounod turned almost entirely to the composition of religious music. His most famous production in this vein, indeed one of the most popular melodies he composed, is his "Ave Maria." An interesting peculiarity of this work is that only the melody is original with Gounod. The accompaniment is note for note the first prelude of J. S. Bach's (1685-1750) "Well-tempered Clavichord." Hence the saying that Bach, more than a hundred years before Gounod, wrote the accompaniment for the latter's "Ave Maria"!

When the Franco-Prussian War broke out Gounod, far beyond military age, went to London. It was there that he composed his very popular piece, "Funeral March of a Marionette." It is said that the piece was suggested to him by the eccentric gait of the English critic Chorley, a frequent visitor at Gounod's house; that Gounod's pupils, delighted with the burlesque, besought the composer to put it on paper. This fanciful program has been attached to the composition:

A marionette has been killed in a duel. The funeral procession

sets forth. The troupe converse about the vicissitudes of life and reflect sadly that it required but one fairly hard knock on the nose to end the career of so talented an artist. It is midsummer. Some of the troupe begin to find the way long and wearisome. They stop to slake their thirst at a roadside tavern. The refreshment-takers enter into various details touching the qualities of the defunct. They forget that the funeral procession has nearly reached the gates of the cemetery. They resolve to rejoin it, avoiding, however, all appearance of undignified haste. They fall into their places and enter the cemetery to the same phrase as the one at the beginning of the march.

Other compositions of Gounod which have found wide popularity are his charming song to words of Victor Hugo bearing the English title, "Sing, smile, slumber," and various compositions of sacred music.

Among his sacred compositions in larger forms are the cantata, "Gallia," a biblical elegy for the country defeated in 1870, performed at the International Exhibition held in England in 1871, when composers of England, Italy, and Germany were also represented; "The Redemption," sacred trilogy composed for the Birmingham Festival of 1882, and dedicated to Queen Victoria; and a second sacred trilogy, "Mors et Vita," composed for the Birmingham Festival of 1885. Both these latter works were sold to Novello for twenty thousand dollars each. Thus Gounod was successful in a worldly as well as an artistic sense.

Gounod was very popular in London. It was there that he formed the historic friendship for Mrs. Weldon, a fashionable woman who inhabited a house in Tavistock Square. Some said she was beautiful, others that she was the worst-dressed woman in town. After a long and intimate acquaintance the two suddenly parted and Gounod returned to Paris. Mrs. Weldon separated from her husband, lost her money, and became a music-teacher. No doubt she boasted that she knew the traditions of Gounod's music. In want, she presented a board bill for the three years during which she had entertained Gounod as the lion of her receptions, and in 1884 an English jury awarded her the amount of fifty thousand dollars for her services "as secretary, business agent, and landlady"!

May Byron paid Gounod a visit in his apartments at Paris. He

lived in a corner of the Boulevard Malesherbes in a three-story building inhabited by himself, his married daughter, his sister-in-law, and his son Jean with his family. Gounod wore a black-velvet jacket and skullcap, talked delightfully, was obviously and unaffectedly fond of praise, and very sensitive to "adverse criticism." His workroom, study, library, reception-room they were all in one was paneled and vaulted in oak, lighted by stained-glass windows, and fitted with Persian rugs, "small antique tables, divans and sofas in abundance." The composer was hospitality itself. There was felt "an indefinable atmosphere of warmth, tenderness, and trust." The old man was devoted to his grandchildren. Gounod warmly espoused the works of some contemporaries, while for men like Berlioz and Wagner he had little praise. He said of Berlioz that he was "a musical nature that lost its balance"; of Bizet, "a charming musician"; of Wagner, "a wonderful prodigy, an aberration of genius; a visionary, haunted by all that is colossal."

Gounod could not have been sincere and have said anything else. He was not a revolutionist in the radical sense of the word. He was rather one to invest with fresh interest the forms ready to his hand. He was far from content, however, with recognized and established traditions, and there were not lacking those who saw dangerous things in his music. "Faust," one of the best constructed operas in existence, impresses us, above all, by its personal quality. It is not a composer on dress parade before an audience who is talking, but Gounod, and none other. Faust, Valentine, Marguerite they all sing with the same voice; they all express the sentimental soul of the celebrated Frenchman. "Faust" is the most enduring expression of a talent which stands out significantly in the history of French music.

Gounod lived to see the five-hundredth performance of his master-work, and to be decorated with the Cross of the Legion of Honor. He died October 18, 1893.

CHAPTER 16
Jacques Offenbach

Few of us, as we watch the diverting scenes and listen to the sparkling melodies of "The Tales of Hoffman," realize that this work is the expression of a life's tragedy.

Jacques Offenbach, the son of a Jewish cantor, came to Paris in 1833, aged seventeen, lugging under his arm a violoncello as big as himself, and determined to make his fortune in the glittering capital. When he had sat in the cello class of Professor Vaslin, at the Conservatoire, for one year, he decided to move on; for he was impatient of restraint, of the gradual acquirement of knowledge, and felt in his heart that he had in him the material of success.

Offenbach, darting about, found a position as cellist in the orchestra of the Opera Comique. There he learned more about opera and composing for the theater than his teachers could ever have taught him. They were intent on making a respectable musician of him. But respectability was not a part of Offenbach's make-up. It was, in fact, the butt of all those indescribable jokes with which he sprinkled the pages of the dozens of operettas he was to compose. The years flew by, and he mounted and was thrown forward on a wave of popularity which constantly grew in its proportions and the momentum with which it advanced. Offenbach acquired a theater for himself, a cozy little theater of charming and somewhat indiscreet decorations in the Champs-Elysees, which he named the Bouffes Parisiens. And there he did his worst! To that little theater came all the world, to laugh with unbuttoned laughter at things which no one should have laughed at, to hear the latest of those wonderful melodies that Offenbach had but to shake from his sleeve. These tunes had this quality in common with our "popular music" of to-day — that they immediately "caught on." They were on every tongue, and even little children lisped airs and words of which, in the majority of cases —

and fortunately — they seldom realized the full meaning. But unlike our popular music, there was in most of these airs a real art quality, a grace, a spirit the French word *esprit* is a more truly descriptive adjective — which caused them to live as well as to sing.

So it went on! A veritable madness, says the present dean of French composers, Camille Saint-Saëns, seemed to have come over the human race. Monarchs on their way to Paris wired ahead for a box at the Bouffes Parisiens. The society of the day was lax and its ideals low. The populace asked only to be amused. The jaded boulevardiers of the period, the politicians in the intervals of their plotting, sat at the feet of Offenbach, who, alas! too often debased his God-given talent for the sake of the moment and its gold.

In the space of thirty years he produced some ninety operettas. Many of them, still popular in Europe, won favor in part deserved by their real beauties, their touches of humor, tenderness, or dramatic characterization, and most emphatically undeserved by their superficialities and the mad haste of the opportunist by whom they were composed.

Both these characteristics are present in the melodious and lively overture to "Orpheus in Hades" (1858).

There were singers in those days, and Offenbach had the devil's own nose for finding the man or woman who would set an audience on fire. But at the bottom a tender-hearted and idealistic man, with a desire for the better as well as the more showy things of life, he knew that he was not fulfilling his destiny. He was amusing a frivolous people for whose approval he cared little or nothing. He owed it to himself to be great. As the years sped by and the gold rolled in, one ambition grew up in his heart. He longed to be taken seriously. He longed to produce one work which would assure him a lasting position in the Hall of Fame.

That work was "The Tales of Hoffmann" ("Contes d'Hoffmann"). The sketches of the new opera were complete, in the musical shorthand that Offenbach employed when his ideas came faster than he could write them down, and he was coaching the singers, with some of whom he had difficulty because they suspected him of having the evil eye, when he was forced to take to his bed. He had with him his dog, whom he had named, after a song in "The Tales of Hoffmann,"

Kleinzach. "Alas, poor Kleinzach," he said, "I'd give all I have if you and I could be at the first performance." On his death-bed Offenbach gave the last directions about the orchestration of his masterwork to his friend, Ernst Guiraud, and thus enjoining him passed away.

The story of this opera is one of the most curious and original in the literature of music-drama, and most strangely symbolic of Offenbach's career. For Hoffmann, too, is a man who chases delusions and whose footsteps, throughout his life, are dogged by a mysterious and unkind fate. Pursuing the ideal woman — the opera is a recital of his loves — he fancies he sees her in different forms, only to draw back after each of his experiences, crushed by the disillusionment of reality. At last the Muse of art speaks to Hoffmann, of the one love that will bring him happiness — love of that which his genius was given him to serve.

The librettists pieced their story together out of the fantastical tales of E. T. A. Hoffmann. The opera, unusually constructed, is in a prologue, three acts, and an epilogue. Hoffmann is first seen sitting among fellow-students. Distrait, melancholy, he answers their raillery by offering to tell the story of the women whom he has loved. "The name of the first," he says, "was Olympia."

Olympia was a dancing-doll whom Hoffmann, an inexperienced and credulous youth, believed to be a real woman. The doll says, "Yes," "No," dances and sings. Her arms move rigidly up and down. There is intentional stiffness in her sparkling, melodious, mechanical song — the doll, warbling her pretty but meaningless lay, with its fixed rhythm, its angular intervals; a most ingenious and effective bit of musical characterization.

Hoffmann only comes to his senses when Coppelius, the evil-eyed inventor of the doll that has played such havoc with his heart, smashes the automaton in a rage. His dream of youth and love has also been shattered.

In the second act Hoffmann, with the passions of an older man, woos the superb Giulietta, courtesan of Venice. This situation inspired the celebrated barcarolle, a melody of the simplest kind, made of the soft Venetian night, the magic of the moonlight on the lagoons, the poetry and romance of the hour. The barcarolle is sung as a duet by Giulietta and Hoffmann's servant, Nicklausse (the part taken by a

woman in man's costume), as the scene — a terrace, with Hoffmann at the feet of Giulietta — is disclosed.

This is not the only appearance of the barcarolle. At the beginning of the act it provides what is called in artistic phraseology "atmosphere." At the end it is heard again, but with a terrible and tragic significance. Behind Giulietta, in her shadow, as it were, stands a silent and ominous figure in a black costume, felt as a presence, rather than perceived, at first, as a man. This is Dapertutto, the magician, who is spoken of as "a soldier of fortune." Giulietta is his slave. She is to secure for him the soul of Hoffman by imprisoning his image in a magic mirror. Dapertutto voices his malevolent thoughts in the following air:

At Giulietta's instigation, Hoffman fights and kills her lover, Schlemil. Victorious, he seeks Giulietta, only to see her reclining in the arms of another. To the ironical lilt of the barcarolle, and the laughter of the faithless woman, the curtain falls.

Most pathetic and disheartening of all these strange incidents of Hoffman's career is his third and last love-affair. Antonia, the beautiful daughter of Crespel, is under a sinister fate. Her mother, a singer, died of consumption. Antonia's lungs are impaired, and Crespel, her father, knows that if she sings she, too, will die. Crespel is hostile to the love of Hoffman for his daughter. He has fled with her from city to city. He has been pursued, not only by Hoffman, but also by the fiendish Doctor Miracle. A singular being! His face is like a death's head. His attire, in Offenbach's original conception — sometimes altered on the stage to-day — is that of a greasy quack doctor. If you met him on the street, you would dismiss him as a crafty and dishonest patent-medicine man. But look a little closer, and you will recoil from the evil that leaps from those eyes! Miracle professes concern for Antonia. In a terrifying scene he grasps a fiddle, saws on it wildly, and commands the girl to sing. As she obeys, she dies. In the epilogue the students who surround Hoffman remark on the strangeness of his adventures, and depart to drink elsewhere. Hoffman, who is awaiting Stella, a singer in a neighboring theater, falls a prey to curious fancies. Is it not strange that the inventor Coppelius, the magician Dapertutto, and Doctor Miracle seem in retrospect to have had very much the same type of features? Was it one or was it

many who pursued him to his ruin? Were any of these people real men? Did the women actually live? Did he love them, or was it all but a troubled dream? And what is life itself? Is it a dream? A truce to thought, and another drink! Stella, entering, finds Hoffman in a stupor with his head on the table. Hoffman's rival, the crafty Lindorf, has been watching like a spider in his corner. Singular to relate, his face seems to bear a resemblance to the faces of Coppelius, Dapertutto, and Miracle! With a sigh and a backward glance, the frail Stella departs on the arm of Lindorf, and with this final betrayal of the unfortunate dreamer, who is nevertheless, in his slumber, possessed of a fairer vision than any mortal woman could embody, the curtain falls.

Such was the opera in which Offenbach, consciously or otherwise, epitomized his own career.

CHAPTER 17
Leo Delibes

A great composer dawns on the world. His art is attacked by many, supported by a few. Lesser lights gather about his standard or flock to the opposition. Critics quarrel. The gutters run with ink. The public looks on with wonder and delight, and goes its way. By and by the dust of the battle settles and from the cloud certain figures emerge to remain with us and smile through the years. Among these are frequently composers not of the first, but of the second rank; men of true talent, but not deceived about themselves, not hitching their wagons to too high a star; anxious to give the best that is in them to their art; humble in its presence; happy in its service. A composer of this kind and rank is that master of delicious ballet music, Leo Delibes.

To Delibes the ballet was not a series of hackneyed evolutions, but a poem, a dream of the most delicate beauty. He was a musical descendant of a long line of ballet-composers whose art in France had antedated the opera itself. He could trace his inheritance far back to Lulli of the sixteenth century, with his powder and his pomp, his stately, formal music which amused an idle king. Delibes learned much in turn from his master in composition, Adolph Adam, composer of such exquisite scores as that of the ballet, "Ghiselle," and from other men of Adam's period — Herold, Auber, Boieldieu — all masters in miniature, men who held, rightly or wrongly, that the mission of music was not to instruct or edify, but to delight.

Delibes, born at St. Germain-du-Val, February 21, 1836, came to Paris in his tenth year. He was successively choir-boy at the Madeleine, a pupil of many honors at the Conservatoire, accompanist at the Theatre Lyrique, and second chorus-master at the Opera. Perrin, the stage-director, convinced of his talent, commissioned him to compose music for a ballet, "La Source," in collaboration with a Polish

composer, Minkous. The second and third tableaux of this ballet were composed by Delibes. It was performed at the Opera, November 12, 1866. Later it was given in Vienna under the title of "Naila, die Quellen Fee" ("Naila, the Water Nymph"). In this early music the delicate beauty and the fanciful charm of Delibes's composing are already shown.

The audience preferred the music of Delibes to that of Minkous, with whom he had been associated as a favor, and Delibes was finally intrusted with the setting of an entire ballet, "Coppelia," which proved one of his greatest works. The scenario of this ballet was distantly derived from the story of old Coppelius, the toymaker, the magician, who figures in the tales of the romantic writer, E. T. A. Hoffmann, and also in the first act of Offenbach's celebrated opera. The ballet has two acts. The story is a tiny thread which serves to introduce many graceful and diverting dances.

"Sylvia," or "The Nymph of Diana," was performed on the same stage on the 14th of June, 1876. The scenario of the old pastoral kind, which had years ago delighted the gay courts of French kings, was based on Tasso's poem, "Aminta," a poem of Arcadia, an impossible land where nymphs, shepherdesses, fauns, satyrs, and goddesses run about in engaging attire.

Characteristic of the grace and charming instrumentation of Delibes are the piquant "Les Chasseuresses" ("The Huntresses") and the festive "Cortege de Bacchus" ("Procession of Bacchus").

It was truly remarked by contemporaneous critics that Delibes had been almost the first to write ballet music which, while it fitted the stage situation exactly and gave the dancers the most agreeable opportunities, also stood by itself on the concert platform. So with the music of "Sylvia," which has long held an honorable place on orchestral programs.

Delibes produced many operettas, songs, choral works, and two operas comiques, "Jean de Nivelle" and "Lakmé," produced at the Opera Comique, April 14, 1883. The book of "Lakmé," by Goudinet and Gille, was founded on the story, "Le Mariage de Loti" ("The Marriage of Loti"). The scene is India under English rule. Gerald and Frederick, young officers, are wandering about with friends, when Gerald, stopping to sketch a scene in front of a Brahmin temple, sees

Lakme, the beautiful daughter of Nilakantha. Love at first sight! Nilakantha, enraged, stabs the Englishman. In the forest Lakme nurses Gerald, who is badly wounded. Gerald is inclined to think the world well lost for love, and Lakme has departed in search of a drug which, according to Indian legend, makes love eternal, when Frederick appears on the scene, reminds Gerald of his duty to his queen and of the fact that he is engaged to a lady in England. Gerald departs, and Lakme, in despair, poisons herself with an herb that grows in the forest.

The music of this work is not "deep," but it has a charming and unique color. There is in it something of the exotic beauty and fantasy of the designs one might see on an Oriental fan or object of art, a work not to be taken too seriously, but to be enjoyed.

The "Bell Song" derives its name because of the composer's use of bells to characterize the appearance of Lakme, in the attire of a dancing girl. Only Delibes could have written this graceful and semi-Oriental melody, in which the flavor of the East qualifies in a charming manner a brilliant and popular display piece for the soprano voice. "Lakme" was written with special thought of the voice of Marie van Zandt, an American soprano from Texas, whose art Delibes greatly admired. When she slightly changed the notes of a certain passage he first objected, then said: "Very well, sing it your own way. I really think your version is better than mine."

The barytone air, "Lakme, ton doux regard," is in a broader and more dramatic style than most of the music of the opera. It is sung in the same scene as that in which Lakme sings the "Bell Song." Edouard de Reszke used to sing it with such emotion and art that he made noble the character of Nilakantha.

Delibes wrote "Lakmé" perched up in the highest story of one of the crowded houses of the Rue de Rivoli. "His study," wrote a correspondent, "is not much longer than what in America is called a hall bedroom. It contains a small upright piano, two or three tables loaded with books and music, besides a wide, unpainted board supported by crossed legs." "Lakmé" was composed in that room and on that table.

In 1881, on the death of Henri Reber, Delibes became professor of composition at the Conservatoire, and in 1884 a member of the Academic. He was never a rich man. He lived a simple and

industrious life and worked harder for his pupils than he ever did for himself. He was a gay fellow who never grew old; six feet tall, with thick hair and blond beard and a laugh that shook the rafters. Offenbach found one day, in rehearsal of one of his own works, that in some strange manner a solo for the big bass drum had been written into the orchestral parts. No one could tell how it came there. There was one answer — Delibes. He was a born wag. It is recalled that Delibes and his friend, Philippe Gille, used to follow Meyerbeer about the streets of Paris with audible compliments and exaggerated homage. Meyerbeer would turn and salute the pair with extreme politeness, taking them for a couple of newspaper-men, for whom the composer of "Les Huguenots" entertained a respect not unmixed with fear!

One evening at Gille's house Delibes was playing fragments of his new opera, "Kassya," and tumbling about with Gille's son, Victor, who was Delibes's godchild, when he seemed exhausted and lay down on a couch. He did not rise through the evening. "You know I am all here. It may look to you that I am sleeping, but I am listening to everything that is going on." The next morning, when on his way to his classes at the Conservatoire, he was taken suddenly ill on the street, and died.

By his exquisite ballets Delibes will be long remembered. In them he revivified the past in a modern manner and also anticipated the succeeding period in which, thanks largely to him, the French ballet came to its full glory. "The scores of 'Sylvia' and 'Coppelia,'" wrote Alfred Bruneau, the French critic and composer, "beautiful, distinctive, spiritual, singing, luminous, lively, full of all sorts of ingenuities of rhythm, melody, harmony, and orchestration, are the ravishing jewels which, in the museum of our treasure-house, occupy a niche of their own."

CHAPTER 18
Georges Bizet

The composer of "Carmen," to-day one of the most popular and brilliant of all operas, died young and broken-hearted at the apparent failure of his masterpiece. Madame Galli-Marié, who took the title role, was shuffling the cards in the scene in which Carmen foresees her death only a few hours from the time he passed away.

Bizet inherited his prodigious talent. His mother was an admirable pianist, sister-in-law of Delsarte, of physical-culture fame. His father commenced life as an artisan, but so loved music that he became a professional musician at the age of twenty-five. He often repented the early years spent in an uncongenial trade; he dreamed of what he might have been if he had had an earlier start. But there was his child, born with genius, knowing in his boyhood what the father had given years and the very blood of his heart to learn!

"Alexandre Cesar Leopold" he was named at his christening, but he quickly became "Georges" for short. He was born in Paris, October 25, 1838. At ten he entered the Conservatoire, took prize after prize, and made every one love him. He was gay, impetuous, hot-hearted. He had a shock of yellow hair, firm features, a strong body, a ringing laugh. The sweetness of his mouth balanced the mischievous sparkle of his eyes. He was near-sighted, even then, and a tremendous worker.

Bizet won the Prix de Rome in 1857 with his cantata, "Clovis et Clothilde." In Rome he spent his happiest years. In Rome he dreamed the dreams that never came true. He wrote his mother that he intended to make one hundred thousand francs as soon as he returned to Paris. It was simple! Two successes at the Opera Comique, and neither of his parents would have to teach. With one hand he fought circumstances; with the other he held aloft the banner of the ideal. Bizet was accused on certain occasions of writing down to the popular

taste. The wonder is that with all his trials he produced so much great art. And there is such a thing, as he proved in his "Carmen," as writing, not "down," but "up" to the finest sensibilities of the public.

When Bizet returned to Paris his mother was on her death-bed. He had no money. He found music, in his own words, "a splendid art, but a sad trade." He did hack work of all kinds. He gave piano lessons, composed for dances, and wrote music for hire.

Count Waleswki had bestowed on the Theatre Lyrique a subsidy of one hundred thousand francs, on condition that a new work by a winner of the Prix de Rome be mounted each season. Bizet was the first to benefit by this agreement. His opera was "Les Pecheurs de Perles" ("The Pearl Fishers"). It was produced on the 29th of September, 1863.

The libretto is the work of Carre and Cormon. The Ceylonese pearl-fishers choose a virgin priestess who is to call down the blessings of Brahma on their perilous undertakings. When Leila, the priestess, appears, she is recognized by Nadir and Zurga as the beautiful and unknown maiden whom they once beheld before a temple in the forest. The duet in which this incident is recalled is one of the finest passages in the opera. It was sung with sacred text at Bizet's funeral. It displays advantageously his gift as a melodist and a writer for the voice. But it is rather in the exotic coloring of certain passages that one encounters the later Bizet.

The comrades had vowed never to allow a woman to come between them and had hurried from the spot. But neither has forgotten. Recalling the past, Nadir sings of the day that he first saw Leila, as in a dream.

Nadir is unable to restrain his passion for the priestess. They flee. It is the generous Zurga, at the price of his own life, who makes their escape possible.

The public found this opera disturbing in its novelty, and only eighteen performances were given. A letter that Gounod wrote Bizet at this time would be sound advice for any man, whether composing or driving rivets in ships: "Do not hurry under pretense that you are pressed. Bring your work to maturity as if you had twice the time, only work without interruption; that was the system of the tortoise and it defeated the hare."

Bizet's second opera was "La Jolie Fille de Perth" ("The Fair Maid of Perth"), which, produced at the Theatre Lyrique, December 26, 1867, had a short run. "Djamileh," an Oriental one-act piece, in which, to quote Mr. Philip Hale, "the three comedians should be seen as in an opium dream," was given without success at the Opera Comique, May 22, 1872; but the two works in which Bizet, artistically speaking, came into his own were "L'Arlesienne," in which he wrote the incidental music for the drama by Daudet, and the opera "Carmen." Carvalho, manager of the Vaudeville, wished to revive the form of the melodrama — the drama with musical accompaniment and commentary. He asked Daudet and Bizet to collaborate, as a result of which two very wonderful talents, essentially typical of the best in the French art of their period, thought and felt as one.

The heroine of "L'Arlesienne" ("The Woman of Aries"), after whom the drama is named, never appears on the stage. This was a subtlety which disappointed audiences of the day, eager to see the woman who wrought the destruction of the youth, Frederi. Discovering her infamy, he tried in vain to forget her. His mother wished him to marry the faithful Vivette, who loved him well. This affection Frederi could not return. On the very night of their betrothal, while the peasants danced the farandole in the courtyard, he destroyed himself. Marvelous is the reflection, in Bizet's score, of those calm and pastoral scenes in southern France which form the background for the play of the terrible passions of the human race.

In the prelude to "L'Arlesienne" Bizet uses with superb effect the ancient Noel, or Christmas song, of Provence, "The March of the Three Kings." This is an air of great antiquity, and one of the finest folk-tunes in existence. In its original form it narrates the journey of the kings who go to lay their treasures at the feet of the Infant Jesus. At first it is played "in unison" by the instruments of the orchestra without chords to accompany the melody. The inspired adagietto, a passage of simple and sublime tenderness, accompanies in the drama the meeting, after many years, of the shepherd Balthazar and Mother Renaud. These two figures are introduced with the utmost skill and poetry by the dramatist as a foil to the agony of Frederi. Balthazar loved Mother Renaud, when both were young, as fiercely, perhaps, as Frederi the woman of Aries, but Renaud belonged to another, and

she and her shepherd through long, empty years kept faith.

The Farandole of disputed origin is a very old Provençal dance, coming probably from ancient Greece. It is vigorous and joyous in character. Bizet has treated this form with extraordinary skill and in a truly primitive spirit. The orchestra's announcement of the dance is preceded by a crashing version of "The March of the Three Kings," already heard in the prelude. In the last measures, while the Farandole tune whirls in the upper registers of the orchestra, the brass, underneath, shout out the theme of the march.

"L'Arlesienne" was given its first performance at the Vaudeville, Paris, October 1, 1872. In 1873 Bizet married Genevieve Halevy, daughter of Ludovic Halevy, Bizet's old teacher at the Conservatoire. Whether through Halevy's influence or the undirected choice of Leuven and Du Locle, then directors of the Opera Comique, Bizet was commissioned to write a work for that institution. He experimented with various subjects and at last chose that of "Carmen," after the novel of Prosper Merimee. The libretto was prepared by Halevy and Meilhac. It did not follow the original tale too closely. The figure of Micaela, Jose's fiancée, for instance, does not appear at all in Merimee's story. She is introduced in the opera to afford a dramatic contrast to the figure of Carmen; for the managers of the Opera Comique were by this time sufficiently alarmed by the subject of Bizet's choice. Said Leuven:

"Carmen? Merimee's Carmen? Isn't she assassinated by her lover? And this crowd of thieves, gipsies, cigar girls! At the Opera Comique! A family theater! A theater for the promotion of marriages! We rent five or six boxes every night for these meetings of young couples. You are going to put our audience to flight. No, it's impossible."

Leuven retired from the direction of the Opera Comique before "Carmen" was given. Du Locle was the manager when the opera was performed, March 3, 1875.

José (Act I), a young lieutenant of the guards on duty in Seville, is seen by Carmen, the cigarette girl, the gipsy, the wanton. Piqued by his indifference, she pursues him. She sings a love-song, dances before him, and at last throws a rose which hits him "like a bullet" in the heart.

This song is not the melody Bizet originally composed for the

entrance of Carmen on the stage. Madame Galli-Marie wanted something different from his first effort, something in which she could display all her charms. Bizet tried twelve times to suit her. Only at the thirteenth effort did he succeed, with an old Spanish tune which had already been used by the composer Yradier. The "Habanera" from "Carmen" is not, then, the original invention of Bizet, nor yet of Yradier, but of a singer unknown, whose melody fascinated more than one composer.

José, engaged to the fair-haired Micaela, cannot forget the smiles and the disturbing glances of the gipsy. She is arrested, and he is commanded to take her to jail. But the gipsy, full of wiles, sings of her love for the young soldier whom she would fain meet at the inn of Lillas Pastia in the mountains, and Jose, as wax in the hands of the woman, forgets faith, honor, everything for her. She escapes, and for disobeying orders he is cast into prison.

At the inn of Lillas Pastia (Act II), a resort of thieves, cutthroats, and toss-pots of the countryside, Carmen is besieged by her admirers. Among them is Zuniga, Jose's superior officer. Soon comes Escamillo, the swaggering toreador, to shouts of welcome and acclamation. Carmen is much interested, and Escamillo is not unmindful of his good fortune. At first for the company, but later for her — at her — he sings of the bull-ring, of the shouts of the excited crowd, and the prowess of the toreador.

Carmen coquets with him. Escamillo and the company depart. Carmen is asked to join a smuggling expedition. She refuses. "The reason? I'm in love." She expects José, who even now comes singing up the valley.

Carmen welcomes him. Carmen caresses him. Carmen dances for him as only she can dance. Then sounds the note of the trumpet, clear and penetrating, between the click of the castanets, summoning José to duty. The gipsy, in a royal rage, tells him to choose — the garrison or the love of Carmen. José takes from his breast the rose for which he bartered a soldier's honor, the flower which has been his one consolation since the time of his disgrace, and implores her to have mercy.

Carmen is touched by this, but will not relent. José sadly gathers up his arms and is about to go when, as the devil will have it, there is

a knock on the door, and his superior, Zuniga, is before him. José is ordered arrogantly to return at once to the barracks, but military rule and the rivalry of two men for a woman are different things. Swords are drawn. The men are fighting when Carmen calls in her comrades. Zuniga is disarmed, and José, outlawed, casts his lot with Carmen and her people.

But Carmen (Act III) soon commences to tire of her soldier. He is over-scrupulous, serious, melancholy, and possessive. The gipsy will always be free. The great moment of the third act is the card scene, managed with equal dexterity by composer and librettists. On one side of the camp-fire sits Carmen with cards, on the other two prattling girls, Frasquita and Mercedes. The light-hearted gaiety of their song contrasts powerfully with the somber music heard as Carmen picks up the deck and throws a spade. Death! She throws again. Once more a spade. And a last time. Again the black omen. For a moment, gazing into the future, the gipsy is face to face with destiny. Then she turns petulantly to join the tribe in a new adventure.

José is left to guard the pass. Micaela steals in, frightened at these surroundings, with a sad message. She puts her trust in God to protect her in this perilous place, where she has come to find the faithless one. This is the occasion for her melodious song, "Je dis que rien" ("I say that no fear shall deter me").

A shot! José and the toreador descend the pass from opposite sides, the toreador with a hole in his hat. Discovering that they are rivals, they fight. Again the gipsies intervene, this time to protect Escamillo. Carmen shows plainly her new infatuation. There is a violent scene, and José consents to leave only when Micaela tells him that his mother is dying. The curtain falls.

We have waited until now to describe the music of the prelude to "Carmen." This music is heard at the beginning of the opera and again with easily recognizable alterations as the introduction to the last act. It is prophetic of the development of the drama. The opening strain is founded on the rhythm of the march of the cuadrillas. Later comes the song of the toreador. The dance returns. Suddenly it breaks off; there is a moment of silence, more expressive than the playing of a dozen orchestras, after which the cellos intone one of the most dramatic motives in all music — a motive of five notes, savage,

foreboding, an outcry of passion, which, repeated, warns the hearer of Carmen's tragic end. Here, in two measures, is the epitome of the tragedy. The prelude is followed in the record hereafter to be noted by another no less brief and remarkable example of Bizet's genius — the intermezzo which precedes the fourth act. It is difficult to overestimate the originality of this little piece. One hears successively the banging of instruments of percussion, the plucking of strings, and the strange song of a clarinet ghostly, sinister, a melody which is as a disembodied voice of the desert. There is a passionate reply from other instruments of the orchestra, after which the unearthly melody is heard again. "This music," said Nietzsche, who, turning from Wagner, exulted in the genius of "Carmen," "is wicked, subtle, and fatalistic. It remains popular at the same time. Its gaiety is African; destiny hangs over it; its happiness is short, sudden, and without forgiveness."

The end of the drama comes quickly. The day of the bull-fight! Spanish women, flaunting their finery, like birds-of-paradise, in the square of Seville! Cavaliers no less gaily attired! The cries of the venders! The laughter of street urchins, and a sun which inflames the blood — all these things are in the pounding music of Bizet. A shout of welcome, and the glittering pageant files into the ring; the solemn, black-robed alguazil, representative of the law; a cuadrilla of Toreros; chulos; banderilleros; picadors; and lastly, with Carmen on his arm, the toreador. A moment, the last the gipsy will ever know of love and languor, and he leaves her to enter the bull-ring. Carmen is warned by her companions. José is lurking about, more a mad animal than a man, with death in his eyes. He approaches and desperately implores Carmen to return to him. She draws his ring from her finger and flings it in his face. José, seeing red, strikes her to the ground. And he cries, as she falls: "I have killed you. Oh, my Carmen, my Carmen, whom I adored!"

CHAPTER 19
Giacomo Puccini

A great success is often the result of many failures. Giacomo Puccini, composer of "La Bohême," "Tosca," "Madam Butterfly," and other of the most popular operas of the present day, is a case in point. In his youth Puccini, born at Lucca, June 22, 1858, was a disappointment to every one. He failed in school. He failed when an uncle tried to make a singer of him. Even "Madam Butterfly," perhaps the most popular of all his operas, failed at its initial performance.

But Puccini had two things powerfully in his favor: a bulldog tenacity of purpose and inability to know when he was beaten, and a mother who believed in him from the bottom of her soul. She pinched and saved that he might have the necessary training in his art. Her faith was unwavering. Puccini's ancestors had been musicians for generations. There was music in him. He loved it, and some day it would come out. He was her son.

Puccini passed through the hands of several teachers, who could do nothing with him. Finally he found a congenial guide in Angeloni, an old musician, a former colleague of his father, who seemed to have some understanding of the boy. Angeloni secured Puccini a position as organist in a little church of Lucca, the town of his birth, and Puccini promptly got into trouble with the church authorities. This came about because he was fond of weaving into the solemn musical service favorite airs from the popular operas of the day. What was worse, the congregation seemed to enjoy it, until respectability claimed its own and the church authorities put a stop to the mischief. It is to be feared that Puccini was not regarded as a model citizen.

He drifted along until he heard a performance of Verdi's "Aïda," which awakened him to a realization of his purpose in life. He then decided to go to Milan and learn how to compose operas.

There were no funds available, but his mother contrived to gain

audience of Queen Margherita of Italy, and the queen, who became the lifelong friend of the composer, agreed to supply the means for two years' study in Milan.

Arrived at Milan, Puccini, true to form, failed in his entrance examinations for the Conservatory. The next year he passed every other applicant and entered the famous institution with flying colors. Astonishing to relate, he soon succeeded in getting a capriccio for orchestra approved by his teachers and performed by the Conservatory band. Astonishing, in the first place, because he succeeded in something at a first attempt, and, secondly, because it is unknown to this day how he found any one with the patience to read his manuscript. The Puccini manuscripts were then, and are now, miracles of illegibility.

Puccini's teacher in composition was Amilcare Ponchielli, the composer of "La Gioconda," the teacher and mentor of many of the young Italian musicians of the day, who encouraged his pupil to write a first opera, "Le Villi" (Milan, 1884). This opera turned out to be of little value, but if luck had been against Puccini in the early stages of his career it was with him now. "Le Villi" attracted the attention of Giulio Ricordi, head of the Ricordi firm of music-publishers in Italy, which is one of the most powerful music corporations of modern times. Ricordi believed he saw in "Le Villi" the makings of a great composer whom he decided to secure at once. He paid Puccini two hundred dollars for "Le Villi," and four hundred dollars for a second opera, "Edgar" (Milan, 1889), which was not much better than the first. With this money Puccini paid a restaurant bill and other debts of long standing, took the cheapest lodgings in the student quarter of Milan, and laid the real foundations of his career. It was in these circumstances that he composed his third opera, "Manon Lescaut" (produced at Turin, February 1, 1893), after the romance of the Abbé Prévost, an opera which wholly vindicated the judgment of Ricordi and placed Puccini in the front rank of the young Italian composers of the day.

But Puccini had yet to write his most beautiful and inspired work, "La Bohême" (Turin, February 1, 1896), the libretto by Illica and G. Giacosa, after the celebrated novel, *La Vie de Bohême* of Henri Murger. He now lived in one room in the Bohemian quarter of Milan

— he and his brother and a friend. For this room the trio paid six dollars a month. There they cooked their meals over a lamp, and the story goes that Puccini had to play the piano loudly to drown the sound of eggs sizzling in the pan — a proceeding forbidden by the landlord. This landlord reappears, large as life, in the opera. He often examined the students' daily mail before he gave it to them, in order to deduct, when possible, the sum of his monthly rental. The boys smuggled in their fuel in a lawyer's black bag, which the most dignified of the three gravely carried through the streets, pretending that he was on some professional mission. A daily diary preserves entries of the daily expenses, which were mainly for coffee, tobacco, milk, and, in one place, a herring! Reminded of this in a later year, Puccini laughed and said: "Ah, yes, I remember. That was a supper for four!"

Glorious days, when all worked mightily, lived on next to nothing, and fell in love with the pretty girls of the quarter! All this became warp and woof of "La Bohême."

The form of "La Bohême" is somewhat similar to that of "Manon Lescaut." Only two of the scenes hinge closely together. A joyous racket in the orchestra, the curtain flies up, and there are the immortal Bohemians — two of them at least — Rodolphe, the poet, and Marcel, the painter, enemies of propriety, dressed as the choicer spirits still dress on the fourteenth day of July in the Latin Quarter of Paris, and, of course, starving. Rodolphe's epic is burned to keep the fire going. But Schaunard, the musician, comes in armed with food and money. High festival by the Bohemians! The landlord demands his rent, is first flattered, then bullied, then thrust from the room. The comrades of Rodolphe go out. Then comes the moment in the whispering orchestra — oh, might it tarry with us! — when Mimi, the little seamstress over the way, opens the door. The girl is pretty, not too proud, and the moon is shining through the dusty windowpane a dangerous situation, indeed, for a young poet with an article to finish for his paper. Not accidentally, perhaps, Mimi's candle blows out and she drops her door-key. Searching for it, the two touch hands, and are soon lost to the world.

It is here that Rodolphe sings his romantic solo, beginning "Che gelida manina" ("Your tiny hand"), and, continuing, "Sono un poeta" ("I am a poet"), a glorious melody of youth and love, a true lineal

descendant, in its long, rapturous phrases, of the melodies of Italian composers of an early period.

Mimi answers, in music of charming simplicity and feeling, that she embroiders flowers in her little attic, and they make her happy by telling her secrets of love and the springtime such as only poets know.

And so on — the conversation of idiots, as all such conversations should be. The text, certainly, is better than the texts which rhymed "amore" with "dolore" and completely satisfied Puccini's operatic forebears. But a composer could write music in this place, with no words at all!

The conclusion of this act is a moment of exquisite poetry. Rodolphe persuades the pretty girl to join him and his comrades at supper, shadows take possession of the dirty old studio, and the voices of the two lovers float back over the orchestra as they descend the rickety stairs. Puccini has been accused, in other operas, of having written with one eye on the gallery and the other on the box-office. Here, at least, he lives again the Arcadian days of his youth; he looks into Mimi's eyes, he presses her hand, and writes that which, as long as his music endures, will set youth and age a-dreaming.

Youth, dreams, these are the wonder of "La Bohême." There are other Puccini operas. There are "Tosca" and "Madam Butterfly," very famous. There is the immature but vigorously dramatic "Manon Lescaut." There are later works, already aging. The world will listen longest to the music of dreams that do not come again.

"The Bohemians," says Mürger, "always went about together, played together, dined together, often without paying the bill, yet always with a beautiful harmony worthy of the Conservatoire orchestra." In the second act they dine at the Café Momus, Mimi and Rodolphe seeing little of the bustle and gaiety of the scene before them, Marcel dejected and distrait. His Musette has deserted him for a banker whose voice, though cracked, is golden. And here she comes, full sail in silks and furbelows, leaning on the arm of her elderly adorer and regarding her old friends through a lorgnette as one would contemplate the inferior beings of some distant planet. She eyes Marcel and sings a song that would work mischief in the breast of Saint Anthony.

Youth triumphs over age and wealth. Like two magnets, amid the

noisy crowd, Marcel and Musette draw nearer each other. Musette makes a fuss over her shoe, which, she says, hurts her; her banker hurries off to find relief, and when he comes back his bird has flown. Musette, half-shod, has rejoined the Bohemians.

The course of love, however, did not run smooth. Marcel (Act III) and Musette undertook to manage an inn at a gate of Paris. All went well until she began to flirt with the customers and drove him nearly mad with her caprices. Rodolphe quarreled with Mimi. There were tears, reconciliations, avowals, which only preceded fresh disagreements. Mimi developed an alarming cough.

This is the substance of the first three acts. In all his lifetime Puccini did nothing to surpass the simple eloquence and pathos of the final scenes. Winter in very truth has descended on the Bohemians cold, hungry, back in their garret, and jesting miserably in order to hide misgivings. The faithless Mimi and Musette have disappeared. Marcel and Rodolphe sing a doleful but melodious duet.

Suddenly arrives Musette, with the news that Mimi is on the landing below, out of breath, and unable to climb the stairs. They bring her in, they lay her on Rodolphe's hard, ragged bed, to die. There is need of food, medicine, money. Musette takes off her jewels, presents of her latest admirer; Colline removes his old coat, companion of how many trials, consoler of how many sad hours. To the pawnbroker! Farewell to the brave garment! It never bowed to rich or great. It sheltered in its pockets poets and philosophers.

This scene is the true climax of the opera, the summit of the composer's art. How he could have wept and wailed! But Puccini dares to be supremely artistic, dispensing completely with what is merely theatrical. A very few instruments, a fragment of a melody, touchingly reminiscent of happier days, make poignant the idyl and tragedy of youth and days gone by.

Puccini's next opera was the grim and realistic "Tosca." His music emphasizes the force and terror of the drama. Critics have marveled at the effectiveness of his music for the theater. One reason for Puccini's proficiency in this field is his eminently practical method of composition. Puccini uses a miniature cardboard stage, on which are reproductions of the scenes as they are to be set and acted. He moves figures on and off, studies each situation, each position of his

characters, and times his climaxes as carefully as a general, in advance of an offensive, would time the movements of his men.

The libretto of "Tosca," based on the drama which Sardou wrote for Sarah Bernhardt, is by Luigi Illica and G. Giacosa. The period is 1800, when Rome cowered under the lash of autocratic tyranny. The Baron Scarpia, chief of police, rapacious, hypocritical, cruel, has cast his eyes on the beautiful actress, La Tosca. Her lover, Cavaradossi, an artist, shelters the escaped political prisoner, Angelotti. Scarpia, pursuing Angelotti, tortures Cavaradossi when he refuses to betray his friend, the while demanding of Tosca that she shall yield herself if she wishes to save the life of her lover. Tosca, maddened past endurance by the groans of Cavaradossi, which issue from the torture-chamber, gives her promise. But first, she insists, a passport for her and Cavaradossi to enable them to leave Rome. When Scarpia has written the passport Tosca kills him with a knife. Escaping from the room without detection, she hurries to tell her lover, imprisoned and awaiting execution in the adjoining tower, that he is saved. Scarpia, on the promise of Tosca's favor, had assured her that Cavaradossi's execution should be a mock one — blank cartridges. Instead, the execution is real. Cavaradossi falls dead. There sound from below the cries of the soldiers who have discovered the murder of Scarpia. Hurrying to avenge their chief, they are just in time to behold Tosca, shrieking her defiance, hurl herself from the tower to destruction on the stones far below.

As in "La Bohême," there is no orchestral prelude to this opera save three loud, violent chords, heard as the curtain rises, and associated with the thought of Scarpia. The curtain reveals the interior of the church of Sant' Andrea del Valle. Cavaradossi is painting a Madonna, to whom he has given "the dusky glow" of his black-eyed Tosca, and the blue eyes and golden hair of another. Mystery of art, he exclaims, which blends the beauty of his glorious Tosca and all others of her sex in one ideal conception. This is the occasion for Cavaradossi's first solo in Puccini's characteristic melodic vein.

The Baron Scarpia dines (Act II) at the Farnese Palace. He summons Cavaradossi, then Tosca, and before the eyes of the woman her lover is led into the torture-chamber. With a malevolence equal to his outward courtesy Scarpia questions Tosca, who, maddened,

springs to her feet — "Assassin! How much?" Scarpia laughs. "My enemies have called me venal, greedy of gold." The price? Nothing less than Tosca herself, who must surrender to the tyrant, if Cavaradossi is to live. Scarpia's passion is only inflamed by the disgust and abhorrence with which his victim receives his proposal. This increases her fascination for him and his pleasure in merciless brutality. Outside sound the drums which will lead Cavaradossi to his execution.

Tosca kneels to make her prayer. It is the most popular melody in the opera. "My life I've lived for love and art. I have not harmed a human being. Father in heaven, do not forsake me now."

Cavaradossi (Act III), condemned to be executed at dawn in the tower, is writing a last farewell to Tosca. To a sobbing Italian melody he remembers the shining stars and the faint perfume of flowers on another night when he clasped her in his arms.

"Tosca" was first performed in Rome, January 14, 1900.

How much is a composer to be identified with his music? Puccini did not compose "Tosca" with a dagger in one hand and a bottle of Caesar Borgia poison in the other. Quite the contrary! There is a page of the manuscript score of "Tosca" in which the musician, apparently at a stop in his inspiration or momentarily tired of his task, sketched a skull, cross-bones, and a rooster. When the opera was in process of composition Sardou urged Puccini to play him the music. Puccini did not wish to show his score until it was completed. But something was due the author of Tosca, and the composer's wits relieved the situation. He sat down at the piano, and improvised such balderdash as came into his head at the moment. Sardou was enchanted!

Puccini's fourth important opera was "Madam Butterfly." The origin of the story by John Luther Long and of the play in which he collaborated with David Belasco was the tale of Pierre Loti, "Madame Chrysantheme." She was a real person who loved Loti when he was in Japan, though not too seriously. Saying farewell, she dropped into the water a yellow chrysanthemum. But Madam Butterfly, or Cio-Cio-San, as she was called by her own people, was more in earnest when she married Lieutenant Pinkerton, of the United States Navy, forsook her gods for him, and fancied that he had taken her for good and all. When Pinkerton left her she waited patiently for him to re-

turn, as he had promised, and see his child. Only when Pinkerton touched for a day at the harbor of Nagasaki, with an American wife on his arm, did Butterfly realize the truth. Preferring "to die with honor when one cannot live without dishonor," she ended her life with the dagger which, at command of the Mikado, her father had used to end his.

Composing this opera, Puccini not only made use of some characteristically Japanese melodies, but also quoted from "The Star-spangled Banner" during the conversation of Pinkerton and Sharpless, the American consul, in the first act. Pinkerton tells Sharpless of the charm of his new plaything, Cio-Cio-San, to whom he is to be wedded, with Japanese ceremonies, this afternoon. Butterfly and her guests approach in the distance, Butterfly leading them and singing as she comes nearer. For this moment Puccini evolved a peculiarly beautiful and exotic passage of harmony. If chords could be said to have fragrance, it would be true of this music.

The wedding ceremony is scarcely over when Butterfly's uncle, the priest of the temple, denounces her for faithlessness to her gods. Pinkerton dismisses him. Evening falls. The little cottage glows with light, and down toward the harbor a thousand twinkling lanterns seem to mirror the stars in the sky, while Butterfly and Pinkerton sing passionately of their love.

Their duet is the longest flight of melody in the opera, for the score, with a few exceptional passages, is a mosaic of short motives which off-set action and rapid conversation on the stage. Puccini, past master of the modern Italian realistic school, can set any situation to music.

In the second act Butterfly is waiting for Pinkerton. "One fine day," she sings, a line of smoke will be seen in the sky, a cannon will boom in the harbor, and the ship cast anchor. Butterfly will hide, as Pinkerton approaches, to tease him a little and that her heart may not break for joy. In the first act Butterfly is a girl. Her song of the second act comes from the heart of a woman.

A gun sounds over the water, and through the glasses Pinkerton's ship is seen. Butterfly attires herself in her wedding garments and, with her child by her side, watches through the night for Pinkerton. Exhausted by her vigil, thus far fruitless, she is not present when

Pinkerton, with Sharpless, arrives. When she learns the truth the stoicism of her race comes to her aid. She faces stonily the American wife of Pinkerton, and even agrees to give up her child that he may live in the country across the seas. Having dismissed her servant, Suzuki, she takes the dagger from its sheath, kisses the blade, and, as Pinkerton and Sharpless burst in, joins the gods of her fathers.

"Madam Butterfly" was first performed in 1904 at La Scala, Milan. Puccini came to New York in 1907 to superintend the Metropolitan production, which took place, after previous American productions by Henry Savage, on February 11th of that year. One evening he attended a performance of Belasco's "Girl of the Golden West" a play of ranches, "Injuns," "forty-niners"; a girl bartender for a heroine; a renegade cowboy for a hero, a sheriff with a silk hat, boiled shirt, and cigar as the villain of the show. At the climax of this drama, Minnie, the bartender, plays poker for the life of her man, who is wounded and helpless in the loft above, and wins. Puccini said he intended to set the play to music. In 1910 he came again to New York, to supervise the first performance in any theater of "The Girl." Puccini was eminently successful in this score in setting to music everything that happened on the stage, such as the galloping of horses, the noise of a storm, etc. He used a melody of the Zuñi Indians, a motive in ragtime supposed to portray the baser side of the character of Johnston, the hero, and other themes meant to provide local and historical color. As a *tour de force* the music surpassed everything Puccini had done before. As an artistic achievement, however, there was a division of opinion, despite the wonders of the orchestration — the score is scarcely surpassed in this respect by any modern work — and the advanced character of the harmony.

What are the things which have made Puccini successful and prosperous to a degree seldom attained by a composer? First of all, he has evolved a type of melody, sensuous, long-lined, richly harmonized, which has fascinated opera-goers the world over. Secondly, he has a genius for the theater, and is one of the most skilful and progressive musicians of to-day.

Puccini works and plays at Torre del Lago, a beautiful estate on the shores of a large lake in the mountainous regions of northern Italy. This has been his home since his early successes. Here he

finished "La Bohême" and "Madam Butterfly." Here he repairs, whether to create an opera or to fish and hunt over the countryside. For Puccini is neither a recluse nor a dreamer. Men and women, the realities of modern life, interest him more than books and theories. The reasons for his popularity are not far to seek. The man who is in touch with the world about him will seldom fail to gain its approbation.

CHAPTER 20
Pietro Mascagni

Things grow quickly in the hot Italian soil, and this is as true of opera as it is of vegetation. To the Italian composer the intellectual toil and travail of the musician of a more northern clime is not only unnatural but often impossible. The Italian either has or has not the inspiration for a lasting work of art. If he has, he does the thing at once, or he is unlikely to do it at all.

This is true not only of such composers as Rossini and Bellini, but of younger Italians of the present day. They are gentlemen of "temperament." Exceptions may be noted. But consider the fortunes of Mascagni, composer of "Cavalleria Rusticana" ("Rustic Chivalry"), born at Leghorn, December 7, 1863.

Pietro Mascagni is the son of an Italian baker, born with genius, who determined, against the wishes of his father, to follow a musical career. He resolved to take lessons secretly. His father discovered this, and Pietro was saved from a mortal beating by a kind-hearted uncle who took him into his house and let him compose. The uncle was not thanked for this by his brother, but probably felt recompensed by his pride in hatching a composer.

Pietro then attracted the attention of the Count Florestano de Larderel, a wealthy amateur, who paid for his tuition at the Milan Conservatory. At the Conservatory Pietro was a failure. He had more music in him than concentration or self-control. He would not work with regularity. Being the kind of man who acts first and thinks afterward, he bade his instructors an insolent farewell, left the Conservatory, joined a traveling Italian opera company, married, barnstormed, starved. Defying the butcher, in direst want, he competed for a prize offered by the music-publishing house of Sonzogno, finished in eight days the score of "Cavalleria Rusticana," and awoke world-famous.

Italian opera audiences are not phlegmatic. They are pleased or ardently displeased. In the latter instance, hisses, catcalls, carrots, riots. In the former, demonstrations of joy and delirium, tears and cheers, the composer carried out of the theater on the shoulders of the audience, taken home in a carriage drawn by the enthusiastic populace instead of beasts of burden, serenades, flowers, pandemonium. But in all the annals of Italian opera there are few occasions which equaled, in the display of popular enthusiasm, the opening performance of "Cavalleria Rusticana" at the Costanzi Theater, at Rome, May 18, 1890. The opera went far beyond Italy. All over the world it was received with open arms. An older man than Mascagni, then in his twenty-seventh year, would have been pardoned for the increase of self-appreciation which has since been his.

The drama from which the libretto of "Cavalleria" is made is a story of Sicilian peasant life, by Verga. It was a story of stories to inspire a musician of Mascagni's disposition and tendencies — no philosophy, but the tremendous realities of passion. Two peasant women of Italy fight over a man, and the result is a killing. The music did not flow from Mascagni's pen; it exploded like the eruption of a volcano.

The story is very simple, like most of the primal things of life. Turiddu, a youth of the village, went to the wars. He was then the lover of Lola. When he returned Lola had become the wife of Alfio, the carter. Turiddu consoled himself with the trusting Santuzza, but in his heart was more than ever smitten with the coquettish and intriguing Lola, as fickle-tempered as himself. In Mascagni's overture the instruments sigh and moan and exult as they play the prelude in which is expressed the contrasting emotions of the drama, and the curtain rises on the square of a Sicilian village.

It is before dawn on Easter Sunday. Turiddu is returning from the wars. His voice is heard coming nearer and singing passionately of the beauty of Lola.

Villagers gather in the square. Lucia, mother of Turiddu, questions Santuzza as to his whereabouts. "Hush!" is Santuzza's hurried warning as Alfio appears. She knows the truth too well. Those on the stage kneel to sing the Easter hymn. It is a dramatic passage — the swelling chorus of peasants, the responses of the choir in the church,

the "asides" of the conscience-stricken Santuzza, imploring pardon for her sin.

Lucia and Santuzza are alone, and the kindness of Lucia, who resumes her questions about her son, finally wrings from Santuzza the truth.

Abandoned and betrayed, she bares her soul. To-day, twenty-two years after its first performance, and wherever or however it is interpreted, the music Mascagni found for the Sicilian peasant woman wrings the heart.

Lucia, overwhelmed by this revelation, goes to pray. Turiddu, coming to meet Lola at the service, is confronted by Santuzza. She reproaches him bitterty. He is unyielding. A gay fragment of song heralds the approach of Lola, who exchanges barbed civilities with Santuzza, throws a rose and a languishing glance at her lover, and goes into the church. With an elemental intensity, a coarseness of the soil, an abruptness and fury of which only the genius of a Mascagni would be capable, this scene is reflected in the music. Turiddu repulses the woman who clings to him and implores his compassion.

The insulted Santuzza cries as he disappears, "Your Easter shall be bitter; that I swear." Turning, she faces Alfio. She tells him everything, and Alfio vows revenge on the soldier. On this turmoil of passion the curtain falls, and the incomparable intermezzo comes like a cooling breath from the orchestra. What must have been the emotions of the audience which heard this music for the first time!

The villagers come from the church, Turiddu and Lola careless of what fate may bring. Turiddu invites the company to drink, as Alfio appears. The men confront each other. Alfio challenges Turiddu. Turiddu, facing his doom, calls to his mother and sobs in her arms like a child. Some have thought the music of Mascagni in this place sentimental. But the Italian peasant is always a child, and it is probable that Mascagni is nowhere truer to nature than the musical accents in which Turiddu cries, "Mamma! mamma!" begs the blessing of Lucia, and wildly confronts his fate.

The end comes swiftly, and, for an exception in realistic opera, off-stage. Distant cries are heard. Excited villagers appear. Alfio has killed Turiddu. To crashing chords of the orchestra the curtain falls.

CHAPTER 21
Ruggiero Leoncavallo

Ruggiero Leoncavallo, the composer of "Pagliacci," is not only a musician, but a man of considerable literary knowledge, and advanced in his attitude toward his art. He dreamed of composing a trilogy of operas on the subject of the Italian Renaissance, when Italy was the leader of the world in art, in thought, and in budding republican ideals. He struggled with this dream for years, during which he went through the most trying and extraordinary adventures. His funds gave out and he had to make a living as a concert pianist. In this capacity he traveled in Germany, Belgium, Holland, Egypt, Turkey, Greece — making money here, losing it there, and sketching out the music of the first of the three operas.

He was playing in a café in Cairo when his uncle, Leoncavallo Bey, as he was called there, secured Ruggiero an invitation to play at the court of the Khedive. He was received with favor and was appointed musician-in-ordinary to the brother of the Egyptian Viceroy. Later, Arabi Pasha promised the composer the position of director of the Egyptian military bands. All would have been well had it not been for the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, in consequence of which the person of the director of the military bands was no longer safe. It was then, with the quick-wittedness born of despair, that Leoncavallo disguised himself as an Arab and fled to Ismailia, on the back of a camel. Has the reader ever ridden a camel? He should try it, if only to learn all that Leoncavallo, a stout man, underwent on that eventful night of his career!

Leoncavallo was born in Naples, March 8, 1858. His father was Judge-President, and his mother the daughter of a well-known Neapolitan painter. Ruggiero studied at the Naples Conservatory and undertook his first concert tour at the age of sixteen.

Having finished the libretto and the music of the first opera of his

trilogy, "I Medici," he took the work to the Ricordi publishing-house for sale. Ricordi was pleased with the idea and the poem. A year later the music was completed. Ricordi did not like it and refused to perform the opera. Probably he was right. In any case, his indifference sent Leoncavallo over to the rival publishing-house of Sonzogno and to the triumph of his career.

The success of "Cavalleria Rusticana" had convinced Leoncavallo that for the time, at least, short and realistic operas, rather than vast philosophical music-dramas, would command the attention of the public. He turned from history and philosophy to life itself when he wrote text and music of "Pagliacci" ("Clowns"), which won a sweeping triumph when produced at the Teatro dal Verme, Milan, May 21, 1892.

There is shown on the stage a play within a play, the principal characters being members of a wandering troupe of Italian comedians. At first the play is a comedy, but it quickly develops that the passions of the actors are real, not feigned, and the lines spoken on the stage within a stage become the expression of genuine emotions which lead to the final tragedy.

How truly Leoncavallo had drawn from life was shown when he was accused by Catulle Mendès of having stolen his plot from Mendès' drama, "La femme de tabarin," a work first performed in 1887. Mendès threatened suit against the composer for infringement of copyright. The astonishing fact then developed that Leoncavallo's opera was based on an incident which actually occurred in Calabria in 1865, years before Mendès' drama saw the light. In that year an Italian player killed his wife, during a performance, for actual infidelity too closely resembling the actions, in the drama, of a character she impersonated; and, as fate would have it, the case was brought to trial before the very court over which Leoncavallo's father was presiding magistrate! Sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, the murderer cried out in the court-room: "I do not repent. I would do it again." Leoncavallo added, in his reply to Mendès, that if the dramatist desired he, Leoncavallo, could produce his witness, in the person of the slayer, who had recently completed his term, and was on hand to testify in the composer's defense.

The most famous passage in the opera is the prologue, sung by

the clown, Tonio, who puts his head through the curtain before it rises and, in song, addresses the audience. To a remarkable accompaniment, now grotesque and humorous, now somber and tragic, the clown informs the audience that, although actors may seem to be born only to amuse others with their motley garb and antics, they, too, suffer. "We are men and women," he says, "like yourselves one God, one heaven above us, one great, lonely world before us. Listen, then, to the story, as it unfolds itself. Come on" — he turns about — "come on. Ring up the curtain."

The clown disappears. The curtain rises. To the shouts of the villagers the actors enter in a donkey-cart, Canio, the leader of the troupe, beating a drum; Tonio, the misshapen clown, diving about distributing handbills with grotesque buffoonery; Nedda sitting in the cart. The villagers greet them. One suggests to Canio that Tonio looks too kindly on his wife. Canio, honest, impulsive, ardently devoted to her, scouts the idea, though he cannot put it entirely from his mind. There have been several little incidents on the route — he laughs, first merrily, and then a trifle bitterly. It would be dangerous, he says, for anyone to try that game, for the stage and life are different things. In the evening they will see a comedy between Harlequin, the lover, Columbine, the wife, Punchinello, the husband. In the plot it will pass, but if, in real life, Harlequin should act so freely, there would be a different ending. The villagers depart to a swinging chorus.

Nedda is left alone. Tonio makes brutal love to her. She puts a whip across his shoulders. Tonio retreats, vowing vengeance. He has been watching Nedda, and knows she has an admirer hanging about. This admirer now appears — Silvio. There is a love-scene as he implores Nedda to flee with him.

The revengeful Tonio brings Canio to the spot. Canio pursues Silvio, who escapes. Nedda refuses to tell the name of her lover. Canio vows that he will find him, and only the intervention of Beppe, a minor member of the troupe, saves Nedda from his revenge. Beppe, making peace, reminds them that it is time to dress for the play. Canio is as one bereft of reason. He has now to act — to laugh, to leap, to be a fool for the people. This is the essence of the tenor aria,

"Vesti la giubba" and "Ridi, Pagliacco." "Laugh," shouts the desperate Canio. "Laugh, O player, though sorrow be eating your heart."

The tragedy comes swiftly. At nightfall the villagers gather to see the play. A little stage is set in one corner of the great scene. Nedda is the Columbine; Canio is the supposedly stupid husband, Punchinello; Tonio is the sly lover, Harlequin. Columbine and Harlequin are together, holding high festival, while Punchinello is away. Punchinello is heard approaching. Harlequin disappears. Punchinello demands the name of his wife's admirer, which she refuses to tell. Canio, in his disguise, is now talking of his own tragedy, and with such intensity that the audience of peasants is excited to the top pitch of enthusiasm. What acting!

Nedda, terror clutching her, sees murder in the eyes of her husband. Suddenly Punchinello seizes a knife on the table and stabs Columbine to the heart. Appalled, the villagers realize that this is no comedy, but a fearful crime. The first to rush forward is Silvio, Nedda's lover, who has been one of the audience. Canio turns like a flash, and Silvio also falls. Canio stares before him; the knife drops from his hand. "The comedy," he says, in an awed voice — "the comedy is ended."

Like Mascagni, Leoncavallo remains to the great public a man of one opera. Many works have come from his pen since "Pagliacci," but none have commanded long-sustained or world-wide attention. Reviewers have spoken highly of Leoncavallo's "La Bohême," a subject which the composer has accused Puccini of stealing from him. Music from the opera, "Roland of Berlin," a work Leoncavallo composed at the order of Kaiser Wilhelm, was performed when the musician toured in the United States during the season of 1906-1907. It showed that the Kaiser had again overrated his judgment. Of the celebrated trio — Puccini, Mascagni, and Leoncavallo — Puccini seems the only one to have passed the point of his first successes. He is, perhaps, the last and greatest of the Italian realistic school of composers. Younger men whose works show a more poetic and idealistic trend are now taking the stage in Italy.

CHAPTER 22
Jules Frederic Massenet

The late Jules Frederic Massenet was a man of his time and the world about him. He was not one of those artists who come into existence half a century or more ahead of their period, work for the future, and die misunderstood or not wanted by the majority. He was an excellent musician, of great and indisputable gifts, an industrious worker who understood the tastes of the public of his day and was capable of artistic response to them.

Massenet came of thrifty middle-class parents. He was born at Monteaux, May 12, 1842. Some Tyrolese peasants, singing to his mother before the birth of her son, prophesied that the child would be a musician.

His father was an ironmaster, in his youth an officer under the First Empire, who, after the restoration of the Bourbons, sent in his resignation, established iron-works, and invented a huge hammer of extraordinary power. "So, to the sound of heavy hammers of brass, as the ancient poet says, I was born." The quotation is from Massenet's autobiography.

A Vulcan of music, however, he was not destined to be. His music was tender, melodious, sentimental, lending itself well to the purpose of the composer in the many operas in which he sang of woman and love. Thaïs, Mary Magdalene, Salome, Manon, Griselidis, these and other of the noble dames of history and legend were the heroines and the musical inspiration of Jules Massenet.

Massenet's parents were not in easy circumstances. When, as a boy of eleven, he was taken to the Paris Conservatoire, it was necessary to be industrious and thrifty. Jules worked hard at that institution and was broken-hearted when his parents told him, after two years' study, that he would have to return with them to St. Etienne.

Twice he ran away from home and was brought back in a destitute

condition. His flights were always in the direction of Paris and the musical institute. His determination impressed his parents so much that they permitted him to live with his aunt at the French capital and return to the Conservatoire.

Massenet got a chance to play first the triangle and then the kettle-drums in a theater three evenings in the week, at a fee of fifty cents an evening. He also played on Fridays in orchestral concerts at the Café Charles. All this was invaluable experience for him. He was growing up in the atmosphere of the playhouse, where he was soon to come into his own. He obtained the Grand Prix in 1863 and left for Rome in the same year. Jules Valles remembered him at this time as "a youth with long blond hair and deep eyes. Though a mere boy, he inspired respect in us by his unremitting hard work. He was as regular as a pendulum, sitting down before the piano each day at the same hour."

Greatly influenced by the beauty of the Italian country, Massenet ceased to be merely a musician, a specialist in tones. He felt the emotion of art. He came to believe in using the eye as well as the ear in composing. He once cautioned a Swedish student who came to him for lessons to observe his own mountains, fjords, and peasantry. "Out of these you must make music."

Saint-Saëns thus epitomized the genius of Massenet, "Massenet's Muse is a virtuous personage who does nothing against her conscience, but she loves to please and she puts flowers in her hair."

Massenet did not undergo a long evolution as a composer, and some of his happiest inspirations were the products of early years. The "Elegie" is a song taken from the incidental music to Leconte de Lisle's antique drama, "Les Erinnyes" ("The Furies"), composed in 1873. This song, it may be admitted, is not Greek — the drama was based on the "Orestia" of Æschylus — but wholly French in its spirit. Its melancholy has an unexplained charm. It might be a reminiscence of the happy days described in a classic French romance, or painted elegantly on a fan of Watteau, or preserved in the perfume of an old love-letter.

Massenet produced his first opera, "La Grand Tante," in 1867, but his first lyrical drama to go outside of France was his "Herodiade," an opera of "biblical names, Oriental scenery, and French romance,"

treating of the wife of Herod, and of Salome of biblical lore. Salome (Act I) searches for her mother, Herodias, from whom she has long been separated and whom she does not know by name. She has a pure devotion for John the Baptist, who saved her from a beast in the desert. She sings to Phanuel of the goodness of the prophet.

Herod pursues Salome. Herodias demands the head of the prophet, who, she says, insulted her. Salome tells John of her adoration for him, and John exhorts her to love but one — God. The thought of Salome (Act II) haunts the mind of Herod. Surrounded by slaves, he tosses restlessly on his couch. He can think only of her, and this is the occasion for the amorous air, beloved of barytones, "Vision Fugitive" — the vision that leaves Herod no peace.

Before the very Holy of Holies, Herod offers his love to Salome who repulses him with horror. Herod orders the death of both John and Salome. John is executed. Salome, appalled by the discovery that Herodias is her mother, takes her own life.

"Herodiade" was produced December 19, 1881, at the Theatre de la Monnaie, Brussels. Three years and a month elapsed between the appearance of this work and what will probably rank as Massenet's finest achievement, his opera, "Manon," book by Meilhac and Gille (Opera Comique, January 19, 1884). His inspiration was the famous tale of the Abbé Prévost. The Abbé Prévost was a strange man. As a youth his father, after a misdemeanor, threatened to shoot him if he did not enter the priesthood. The son took orders. He wrote ponderous and learned tomes on theological and philosophic subjects. They molder on the shelves, but one little romance, which sprang straight from the heart of the man, a romance which it is fair to consider in a large degree autobiographical, has taken its place among the celebrated masterpieces of literature. This romance is *Manon Lescaut*, to which Massenet, Auber, Puccini, and others have written music. Of them all, Massenet has come nearest to the eighteenth-century atmosphere of the tale. The elegance, the artistic superficiality of the age, the gaiety, tinged with melancholy, which is observed in much of the art and literature of this period, are often present in his music. It was Meilhac, the librettist, who suggested the theme. Taking up the book of *Manon Lescaut* from the table, he said to Massenet, "There's a charming subject for an opera and a charm-

ing name."

"Call it simply 'Manon,'" said Massenet; "that's better!"

The matter was settled. Massenet went at once, incognito, to The Hague, and composed the opera in the same scenes as those in which the Abbé Prévost had written the story.

Des Grieux and Manon (Act I) meet in the courtyard of the inn at Amiens. Manon is a beautiful and unsophisticated country girl, but she is ripe for adventure. The two go to Paris. Des Grieux writes his father, asking permission to marry Manon. Meanwhile Lescaut, the rascally cousin of Manon, assists De Bretigny, a wealthy nobleman who has cast his eyes on the girl, to lure her from the side of Des Grieux. Manon is warned that Des Grieux's father will never consent to their union, and that it will be to her interest to join his rival. Des Grieux comes back from posting the letter to his father. "Listen, Manon! On my way I dreamed the sweetest dream." To a murmuring accompaniment of the orchestra he narrates his vision. This is one of the loveliest of Massenet's inspirations, of happiness with his adored. This happiness, alas, is never to be. The father of Des Grieux is determined to save his son from consequences of folly; temptation has successfully assailed Manon. Alas! the moment, so tragic for both the lovers, is near. Des Grieux is kidnapped, and Manon, in tears, goes to join De Bretigny.

Manon meets Des Grieux's father (Act III) at the fête of the Cours de la Heine, and learns that her unhappy lover is taking orders. Curiosity, a perverse love of conquest, an impulse of genuine affection — who knows what — is stirred in the capricious girl. She hastens to the church of St. Sulpice. Des Grieux is seen clad in his clerical garb, fighting with himself against the passion which still possesses him.

Suddenly Manon is before him. Des Grieux tries in vain to resist her. She was never lovelier, more impassioned, more triumphant in her beauty. "Am I not Manon?" she cries. He forgets all, and she throws herself into his arms.

Manon and Des Grieux live by their wits, and Des Grieux (Act IV) is accused by De Bretigny of cheating at cards. At his instigation, both the lovers are arrested as swindlers. Des Grieux's father saves him, but will not intercede for Manon. Manon, condemned to be

transported to America, meets her lover for the last time (Act V) on the road to Havre. In his arms she recalls their flight to Paris, the trip along the road, the little home they loved so well, the black priest's robe of St. Sulpice, and the music makes vivid these memories. And so she dies Manon, the unfortunate, the incomprehensible, the hapless daughter of joy.

In 1885 George Hartman drew Massenet's attention to Goethe's "Werther" as material for an opera, and the composer was fascinated with the subject. The plot was taken from Goethe's famous novel: the love of Werther for Charlotte, already another's; Charlotte's fidelity to her vows, despite her growing love for Werther; Werther's suicide and Charlotte's grief.

This was the material of Goethe's romance, which fascinated all Europe. Napoleon took the novel with him to Egypt. In some cities it was hawked about in the streets. In China, Charlotte and Werther were modeled in porcelain. Werther "gave birth to a race of sentimentalists who have raged and wailed in every part of the world."

At the first rehearsal of the opera Massenet was so excited that he sat at the piano "and began," in his own words, "to cry like a woman."

George Kestner, a grandson of the Charlotte who inspired Goethe's tale, committed suicide the night when "Werther" was first performed in the Imperial Opera House, Vienna, February 16, 1892.

In the year 1902 there was produced on the 18th of February, at Monte Carlo, "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame" ("The Juggler of Notre Dame"). In this opera there were originally no women characters. Only male singers took part. Massenet welcomed the subject since, always sensitive to criticism, he had been annoyed at reproaches leveled at him because of his prevailing choice of women rather than men for his heroes, and his predilection for sentimental subjects.

Anatole France wrote an ironical tale of Thaïs and the monk, Paphnuce, who dreamed of redeeming her. Paphnuce went to Alexandria. He exhorted the woman, and took her, repentant, to a convent in the desert. Thaïs died in the arms of God. But, alas! her image had wrought havoc in the soul of the monk. Across mountain and valley he sped, and, crouching by the bedside of the dying woman, implored her to be his. "A sinner," to cite the excellent Henry T.

Finck, "became a saint, and a saint became a sinner."

The first scene of the opera shows the monk Athanael (the operatic equivalent of Paphnuce of the original tale) on the banks of the Nile, seeing in a vision Thaïs, before an eager throng, miming the rites of Aphrodite. Athanael swears that he will save her soul. In his monk's robes he comes to the house of Nicias in Alexandria, a gay and generous-hearted voluptuary, a friend of Athanael's youth, and a patron of Thaïs. Alone on the terrace of Nicias' mansion, looking over the beautiful and wicked city, Athanael prays God to keep his soul pure and aid him in his holy mission.

There follows the diverting scene in which the maids of Thaïs, Crobyle and Myrtale, divest Athanael of his monk's robes and clothe him in a manner befitting a guest in the festival at which Thaïs is soon to show herself. Thaïs, confronted by the monk, is impressed, but does not understand his tale of love eternal. She awaits him (Act II, Scene 1) in her chamber, invokes the spirit of Venus, and when Athanael appears bids him welcome in the name of the goddess she serves. Suddenly the monk, grand and terrible in his holy wrath, throws from his shoulders the gorgeous cloak which covers his religious habit, and, with the fury of the fanatic, warns Thaïs of the evil to descend on her if she does not alter her life and seek God.

Athanael leaves the chamber saying that he will wait through the night on the door-step of Thaïs' palace for the moment of her repentance and expiation. It is when the curtain falls on this scene that the orchestra plays the popular "Meditation" melodious, sensuous music of love rather than of religion, which is supposed to tell of the change taking place in the soul of the woman.

Emerging from her dwelling in the morning, Thaïs (Act II, Scene 2), in the garb of a penitent, asks the monk if she may preserve a small antique image of Eros, an exquisite piece given her by Nicias, "for love is a virtue rare."

This is the first moment in which the monk betrays the love and jealousy which, unknown to himself, are in his breast. He snatches the statue from her. "Nicias!" he cries "Nicias! Curse the source whence comes this gift! Destruction upon it!" He dashes the statue in pieces on the ground.

The two encounter a group of revelers who seek to attack

Athanael and take Thaïs from his side, but the generous Nicias aids them to escape from the throng and make their way across the desert to a convent, where Thaïs is received as a chastened penitent. The two scenes of the last act are separated by an orchestral intermezzo. The first shows Athanael again in the camp of his brethren on the Nile, tossing feverishly on his couch, and suddenly agitated by a vision of Thaïs at death's door. The intermezzo is supposed to describe his anguished flight to her side. The final scene is the death of Thaïs, radiant with the vision of approaching salvation, while the miserable Athanael grovels at her feet.

The death of Massenet, on the 13th of August, 1912, was the passing away of a composer whose music is indispensable to the operatic repertory of the present day. Some have called him the French Puccini, but it is hardly a just comparison. Puccini has been less versatile and far less prolific than Massenet, but more progressive in the development of his style. Massenet wrote too quickly to produce an unbroken series of masterpieces, although there is hardly an opera of his — "Thaïs" is musically one of the thinnest of them all — which does not contain at least an air or a scene which shows true creative talent. He often said that melody was the basis of music, "as the good earth is beneath everything."

Massenet produced over thirty works for the stage, a few of which were not published. He was an industrious and systematic workman. He never undertook the writing out of a passage until it was perfectly clear in his mind.

It may be said that he wrote his life, his thoughts, his very habits into his music. His scores contain many written entries, such as "cloudy weather," "Charpentier has won the Prix de Rome," etc. He used to wear a red bathrobe when composing, which he called "homarder," "homard" being the French word for lobster.

Massenet was one of the best known and loved men in Paris — not only in the studio and theater, but in the street. Cab-drivers, chauffeurs, flower-sellers, paper-boys, and street children hummed and whistled airs from his works as he passed them. This greatly pleased him, for he was a kindly man who never rebuked without following with a compliment or word of praise. With women, as his music might indicate, he was courteous and gallant to a fault. He

would assure a charming pupil that she suggested a melody, immediately improvising the theme on the piano.

In short, Massenet's art was himself, as the work of every serious artist must be, whether he intends it or not; what was good in him and what was poor; what was strong and what was weak; what was cheap and what was gold.

CHAPTER 23
Camille Saint-Saëns

The career of Camille Saint-Saëns is a singular problem. He is beyond doubt one of the greatest French composers of to-day. He is also an inveterate traveler; a curious student of astronomy, archeology, mathematics; a critic, essayist, and play-wright; a frequenter of distinguished society, every inch a Parisian and man of the world. His versatility is matched by the apparently incurable restlessness of his mind. A series of literary essays embraces subjects ranging all the way from spiritualism to the resonance of bells. He has composed with brilliant success in practically all of the forms and styles open to the composer of to-day. Yet there is a strange lack of the personal element in his art. Who, what, it may still be asked, is the essential, inner Saint-Saëns? That question he has never answered. He has been content to achieve a prodigious mastery of his medium, to produce music distinguished equally by the logic and finish of its workmanship, to charm, to entertain, to be a great artist without becoming a heavy one.

Saint-Saëns will have his little joke. Of irreproachable demeanor in public, this fine gentleman was never so irresistible as when he impersonated Marguerite, surprised by the jewels, in Gounod's "Faust," or La Belle Helene in Offenbach's operetta of that name, when Bizet, composer of "Carmen," took the tenor role of Calchas! In the "Carnaval des Animaux" ("The Animals' Carnival") Saint-Saëns imitated with grotesque effect the gruntings, squealings, howlings of various creatures of the animal kingdom!

It was in the same composition, however, that he waxed poetic, in the case of his exquisite little piece, "The Swan." How suggest in music a swan? A young modern composer would have written a symphonic poem on the subject. It will be seen that Saint-Saëns has communicated simply, but with admirable art, the mood that might

be inspired by the sight of the beautiful, stately bird, floating serenely on the surface of the water, in the dusk of the evening. This was the only one of the pieces in the "Carnaval des Animaux" which Saint-Saëns allowed to be published.

Saint-Saëns, born in Paris, October 9, 1835, commenced to play the piano almost as soon as he learned to walk. He could tell as a small child the notes struck by all the clock chimes in the house, and remarked one day that a person in the next room was "walking in troches" — that is, in a certain rhythm which he recognized. Later on Saint-Saëns became at the Conservatoire a pupil of Halévy and Reber in composition, and was for a time a private pupil of Gounod. At seventeen he had already a reputation as a pianist. Von Bülow was thunder-struck at his talent, and Liszt selected Saint-Saëns to play with him his "Mephisto Waltz" at the Zurich Festival in Switzerland in 1882.

It was in emulation of Liszt, the originator of the form, that Saint-Saëns wrote his four symphonic poems, "Danse Macabre" ("Dance of Death"), "Le Rouet d'Omphale" ("Omphale's Spinning-wheel"), "Phaeton," after the story of the rash charioteer of the heavens, and "La Jeunesse d'Hercule" ("The Youth of Hercules").

The "Danse Macabre" was inspired by a poem of Henri Cazalis. In his poem, Death, his bony heel tapping the measure, fiddles for the ghosts who dance at midnight in the graveyard. The winds howl and the specters leap about in their winding-sheets. The dance grows wilder until the cock crows, the specters disperse, and the place is again safe for honest men. In the music, Death is heard tuning his fiddle. There are strange orchestral effects. A bell tolls (flutes and harp). A horn echoes the crow of the cock. There is a brief reminder of the music of the goblins as they disappear.

This music is witty, in the Gallic manner, rather than terrible. The composer's seriousness is none too certain. Perhaps Saint-Saëns, as the bones rattle, is laughing at us. But the symphonic poem "Omphale" is perfectly charming. The thought is of Omphale's spinning wheel as it whirls under her fingers, and, in the middle part of the piece, the protests of mighty Hercules, seated at the lady's feet, her humble and devoted slave. There is the suggestion of the movement of the wheel, and a coquettish mood throughout.

Saint-Saëns's one opera to gain an important position in the operatic repertory is "Samson and Delilah." This opera was performed under the patronage of Liszt in Weimar, December 2, 1877. It has an important distinguishing quality as contrasted with almost all the other music of Saint-Saëns. It is often emotional; there are passages of elemental feeling. Delilah stands out, a gorgeous, commanding figure. Samson is any heroic tenor, with one or two expressive airs. The other characters in the opera are of minor importance, but the music of Delilah reflects her beauty and her appeal to Samson.

This opera, which is now like modern music-drama and now like oratorio (it is performed with almost equal frequency on the concert stage and in the theater), opens with an agitated orchestral introduction, in which the music mounts to a climax and then subsides, while, as the curtain rises, the Hebrews sing the lament, "God, Israel's God." Samson steps forward, exhorting his people to have courage, to remember the passage of the Red Sea and other marks of the favor of Jehovah, to hold firm together and strike for freedom.

Abimelech, satrap of Gaza, advances to quell the disturbance. Samson kills him and escapes with his followers. The High Priest of Dagon emerges from the temple. Learning that Samson is inciting the Hebrews to rebellion, he curses the strong man, his people, and his God. The body of Abimelech is removed. The Hebrews return, Samson at their head. Then Samson is confronted with a more insidious foe than satrap or high priest. Delilah comes upon him, followed by a train of maidens, who, in one of the most beautiful passages of the opera, sing of youth and of springtime and love. Delilah takes up the theme, and Samson, warned in vain by an elder, is aflame with her beauty.

A storm (echoed in the orchestra) is gathering as the curtain rises for the second act. Delilah, waiting for Samson, who has more than once escaped her, shows that she is actuated by a desire for revenge rather than by love. "O love, aid my weakness," is her cry, and this cry forebodes disaster for Samson.

The High Priest enters to offer Delilah what price she cares to ask for delivering Samson into his hands. The woman of Sorek, counting her vengeance dearer far than any gold or power, is contemptuous of the learning of the Priest, which has not enabled him to read her

heart. Samson arrives. There follows the love-scene and the irresistible song of Delilah, one of the most expressive and popular of modern airs for contralto.

Samson, undone by Delilah's fascination, is overpowered by the Philistines. The most salient features of the last act are the despondent lament of Samson, as, full of remorse for his weakness, he labors at the treadmill of the Philistines, and the grand "Bacchanale" in the Temple of Dagon, which precedes the destruction of the revelers. In the composition of this wild Oriental dance Saint-Saëns's acquaintance with the East served him well. The wailing cry of an oboe with which the dance opens, the thudding of drums and tinkling of various pulsatile instruments, the strange rhythms heard singly and in combination, make a superb piece of ballet music.

"Local color," such as that shown in the "Bacchanale" from "Samson," is a subject on which Saint-Saëns has made many musical observations. Traveling in southern Europe, for example, he wrote "Nuit a Lisbonne," "Jota Aragonesa," "Rhapsodic d'Auvergne." In the second movement of his fifth piano concerto he employed songs of the boatmen of the Nile. In his "Suite Algerienne" he records impressions of northern Africa, though it may be admitted that the following "Marche Militaire," if Saint-Saëns heard it played by natives, was performed by those who had learned their lessons of European bandmasters.

Saint-Saëns's versatility, faithfully reflected in his music, has sometimes been held against him. Said Edmond Schuré:

"One could say of Mr. Saint-Saëns: 'He never changes his style. He practises all with equal ease.' It would be impossible to define the individuality that is observed in the whole body of his works.... Try to grasp him, lo! he is changed into a siren. Are you under the spell? He turns himself into a mocking-bird. Do you think you hold him at last? He mounts to the clouds as a hippogriff!"

It is true that Saint-Saëns has studied and assimilated the characteristics of many schools of music, old and new; that he has cast his genius in a multitude of molds; that he prefers to be impersonal in his art. But these are not his only characteristics. First of all, there is his love of a clear and ordered beauty; his understanding of this principle in the works of great masters who have lived before him; his modesty

and good taste in desiring to speak only of fine things in his music, and this with as little fuss and feathers as possible. Also, there is his genuine independence of mind. Saint-Saëns may have entertained himself with this or that experiment. He may have pondered thoughtfully and appreciatively the artistic discoveries of this or that school, and applied them in his works. As a young man he was censured because of his enthusiastic adherence to the standards of Liszt and other composers, then considered dangerous. But, after all, he has remained aware of his own convictions, his own mission as an artist. To-day, the younger men, the wilder spirits, call Saint-Saëns a hopeless conservative. He can afford to smile. What has he not done for music in France? After Berlioz, who called him, in 1867, "One of the greatest musicians of our era," Saint-Saëns is the first to have promoted the cause of instrumental and symphonic composition in his own country, to have drawn composers in France out of dangerous ruts of provincialism. Before him the French musician dreamed of one kind of success the success, too often superficial, of the theater and opera house. Saint-Saëns has solidified the whole musical development of modern France. He can rest secure on his laurels. Few, indeed, have undertaken so much, succeeded so well, given pleasure to so many. His work is lasting testimony to his achievement as artist and man.

CHAPTER 24
Modern French Composers

Modernity is a matter of the spirit far more than of the letter. There are modern qualities, despite its traditions of a day that is past, in Bizet's "Carmen," produced in 1875. Massenet's "Thaïs" (1894) is an older work. Camille Saint-Saëns, alive at time of writing and active in the service of his art, must be ranked as a conservative by the side of Claude Achille Debussy, who died in 1918, or Cesar Franck, who died in 1890.

A modern of moderns, though he died still later, was Emmanuel Chabrier. We never heard his Homeric laughter. We never encountered the extravagant gestures, the gallant bearing, the outlandish hats, and the gorgeous waistcoats in which he delighted. We were not the passer-by who, one evening when Chabrier was entertaining Saint-Saëns, Massenet, and others chosen by the gods, shouted from the pavement, "If I were your landlord I should be too happy to ask you for rent." Those days are past. But we have Chabrier's music.

The whole man is reflected in his art. His irresistible gaiety, his nervous vigor, his passionate temperament, animate everything that he writes. He is a man of extremes, discontented with the comfortable or orthodox, delighting in the strangest instrumental combinations, the most audacious effects. His orchestra flashes with a thousand colors, some as bizarre as those that Chabrier liked to wear, others glowing with the soft and exquisite beauty of the rainbow. His music is restless. It is never in repose. Its rhythms and its power sweep everything before it. For electric energy and dramatic spirit there is no music like it.

Visiting Spain, Chabrier wrote his orchestral rhapsody, "España," a work of extraordinary *esprit*. The composer saw the dancers, the dark eyes, the flashing smiles, the tiny heels that tapped the rhythm. "The music whirls along in rapid time. Spangles glitter; the sharp

click of ivory and ebony castanets beats out the cadence of strange, throbbing, deafening notes assonances, unknown to music, but curiously characteristic, effective, intoxicating. Amid the rustle of silks smiles gleam over white teeth, dark eyes sparkle and droop, and flash up again in flame. 'Olé! Olé!' Faces beam and eyes burn. 'Olé! Olé!'"

All this may be found in the gay, scintillating music of Chabrier.

Chabrier, born at Ambert, January 18, 1841, studied law. But music fascinated him. He had inborn talent for the piano, and a marvelous left hand. Alfred Bruneau, critic and composer, said that "the spectacle of Chabrier stepping forward, in a parlor thick with elegant women, toward the feeble instrument, and performing 'España' in the midst of fireworks of broken strings, hammers in pieces and pulverized keys, was a thing of unutterable drollery, which reached epic proportions."

The gaiety and humor of Chabrier, extravagant, audacious, keen-edged, are further shown in his Scherzo-Valse arranged for the violin. It was well said of this composer that he knew how to be "vulgar in good taste"! His musical humor savors at times of the farce and impudence of the Parisian guttersnipe, but, like that guttersnipe whom Hugo immortalized in "Les Misèrables," it has wit and distinction.

But Chabrier was an unlucky man. Neither his "Gwendoline" nor his later opera comique, "Le Roi Malgre Lui" ("The King in Spite of Himself"), was successful in his lifetime. And at the last a cruel paralysis smote both mind and body. As a result he had to leave unfinished beautiful fragments of what promised to be his greatest work, the opera "Briseis." Chabrier died September 13, 1894. He had advanced well toward his thirties before composing to any extent. He began to create music too late, and was forced, apparently by an unkind destiny, to cease too soon.

In a short time and in a few works he compressed the essence of an incomparable talent.

Gustave Charpentier is a lover of life — not life at a distance or as viewed by artists who wear kid gloves but life as it is, and especially that of the common people.

Living in the Montmartre district of Paris, the quarter of working-girls, students, laborers, criminals, he wrote: "I love the life which

surrounds me, this life of the street and of the humble. I feel it profoundly lyric. At certain moments of great emotion I behold it traversed by lightning, by a mighty current of marvelous, fairylike beauty. I have tried to transfer my emotion to my art."

The parents of Charpentier, who was born at Dieuze, Alsace-Lorraine, June 25, 1860, moved to Turcoing after the Franco-Prussian War. Gustave had lessons in "solfege" and the violin, and to support himself worked in a factory. There he organized an orchestra of work-men. The proprietor, much interested in his talent, sent Charpentier to the Conservatoire at Lille. He advanced so rapidly that the municipality of Turcoing voted him a pension to study in Paris. Charpentier entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1881, was taken out for a period of military service, became on his return a pupil of Massenet, and gained the Prix de Rome in 1887 with his cantata, "Didon."

It was during his sojourn at the Villa Medici in Rome that Charpentier, inspired by the beauty and sunshine about him, produced the first work which justly characterized his genius and made him a figure to be reckoned with in the musical world. This was the suite of short, melodious pieces for orchestra entitled "Impressions d'Italie" ("Impressions of Italy"). In this suite he translated into music the warmth and joyousness of the Italian atmosphere.

The suite is in five movements. The first is the "Serenade," the third is "On Muleback." For these pieces the composer wrote his own explanation, which we cannot do better than quote.

SERENADE: "It is nearly midnight. Coming out from the osterie, the young fellows of the neighborhood sing low, burning songs, at times sad, often with a savage accent, under their betrothed's windows. These lovesick phrases are answered by mandolins and guitars. Then the song of the young men sounds again, and dies away, little by little."

In this movement the love-song is first played by the violoncelli, without any accompaniment. Then harps, strings, flutes, and violins give the effect of the plunking of mandolins and guitars.

ON MULEBACK: "Toward evening, along the road that winds through the Sabine Mountains, the mules trot at an even gait, to the bright rhythm of their bells. The melody of the violoncello is the

canzone, sung with full voice by the *mulattiere*; and those sweet thirds of the flutes that follow are the loving song, murmured by the fair girls with deep eyes, seated, or rather kneeling, in the big carts that go up toward the village."

"Louise," produced at the Opera Comique, Paris, February 2, 1900, is the romance of a working-girl of Montmartre and her lover, Julien. He is a painter, a Bohemian, his head full of all the new-fangled ideas of socialism and the rights of youth which were the stock in trade of the young fellows of Charpentier's early days. Louise succumbs to the spell of Paris. Against the commands of her father and mother, she leaves her home and lives with Julien. Later she implores forgiveness of her parents, and returns to them, but the life of the simple household, after her experience of love and the great city, revives her discontent. The city calls her back to its arms. Julien implores her to return to him. There is an angry scene with the parents, a scene of protest and revolt, and while the orchestra hymns the songs of Paris, Louise rushes from the house. The father shakes his clenched fist in the air, "Oh, Paris!" The only answer is the far-off echo of one of the melodies of the city.

In the score Charpentier included with very graphic effect a number of the street cries of Paris the song of the old-clothes man, of the vegetable seller, and other itinerants.

The beautiful air from "Louise," "Depuis le Jour," is heard at the beginning of the third act, as, emerging in the morning from the doorway of the humble but happy dwelling which she occupies with Julien, Louise looks over the city of dreams and recalls with rapturous emotion the first kiss of her lover.

Charpentier's "Julien," produced at the Opera Comique, Paris, on the 4th of June, 1913, is a sequel to "Louise." It narrates the further adventures of the painter and the girl. This work, however, did not meet with the success which attended the production of the former opera.

Claude Achille Debussy left the world music of unique and baffling originality. It is not easy to explain or locate the original sources of his art. True, it partakes occasionally of the characteristics of a known school and period, but where was he born? That is, where, aside from the incident of physical birth, did this spirit first become

conscious of its destiny?

It is true that the music of Debussy owns in several important respects to its French descent. But there is in it something more, something mysterious, pagan, antique, which is the possession of no one people. Debussy has seen nature and beauty in a way peculiarly his own, and has found new forms of expression. It was said of him that if the grass could be heard growing, he would have set it to music! He writes of the moonshine on a ruined temple, the falling of autumn leaves, the play of wind and water. What is most astonishing is the fact that underneath all this free poetic impressionism one discovers workmanship of unerring logic and precision. Yet there are analysts who deny the presence of "form" in the music of Debussy. These would not sympathize with the reflection of Plotinus:

"It is on this account that fire surpasses all other bodies in beauty, because, compared with the other elements, it obtains the order of form; for it is more eminent than the rest, and is the most subtle of all, bordering as it were on an incorporeal nature."

Debussy was born at Saint-Germain (Seine and Oise), France, August 22, 1862. A relative saw that he received piano lessons and entered the Conservatoire in 1873. He won the Grand Prix in 1884 with his cantata, "L'Enfant Prodigue." In the same year he produced his delightful and melodious "Petite Suite" ("Little Suite") for piano, which has since been arranged for orchestra. From this suite comes "En Bateau," a barcarolle of a deliciously songful character which betrays Debussy's early love of Massenet.

It is said that when Debussy was doing his military service he listened attentively to the overtones which clashed in the air as the trumpet blew "taps" and the bells rang in a neighboring church tower; that he learned much while accompanist for a Russian lady, from the singing of the Russian gipsies; that he gained inspiration from the score of Moussorgsky's "Boris Godounow." Debussy made an exquisite setting of Rossetti's poem, "The Blessed Damozel" (1888). He composed his epoch-making reverie for orchestra, "Prelude a l'Apres-midi d'un Faune," in 1892. "Pelleas et Melisande," a music-drama of a strange and shadowy beauty, based on the play of Maurice Maeterlinck, and one of the most significant operas of recent times, was performed at the Opera Comique, Paris, April 30, 1902. Important

songs, piano and orchestral works followed. The later Debussy was inclined to mannerisms and repetitions of the musical effects which had won him fame in previous years. In the set of piano pieces written for his daughter, "The Children's Corner," there are to be found charming musical thoughts, as for example "The Golliwogs' Cake-Walk," an amusing take-off of American "ragtime," showing Debussy's ingenuity in imitating this style and also the extent to which he, among other European composers, has found it interesting.

Debussy died in 1913, and with him departed the most original and poetic musical genius that modern France has thus far produced. He of course left many imitators, and the musical idioms of which he was the foremost exemplar have become part of the music of to-day.

One of the most poetic talents of the present day in France is that of Gabriel Faure, born at Pamiers, Ariege, May 13, 1845. He came to Paris in his tenth year. Saint-Saëns was his master in composition. Faure's success as a piano teacher at Rennes was somewhat dimmed by his being so attractive a young man that mothers hesitated to intrust their daughters to him for instruction! After serving in the Franco-Prussian War, Faure became organist of the Madeleine and successively teacher of composition and director (1905) of the Paris Conservatoire, a position he holds at the time of writing. He has distinguished himself in many fields, but in none more than in his original and poetic songs. His type of melody is peculiarly and exquisitely his own. One of the first compositions to carry Faure's name overseas was his Berceuse for violin. It is in the manner of a quaint old French folk-song, dreamy and tender, and well suited to the instrument to which it is given.

To-day the composers of France surpass those of all other countries in the originality and the varied character of their productions. We have mentioned but a few of an astonishing generation of creative artists. These men have in the past quarter-century or more restored to French music the conviction and the national spirit which it had lost, to a certain extent, prior to 1870. Disastrous as was that year to the French nation, it awoke in the hearts of the people a heroic determination to vindicate themselves, and to throw off, in art as well as in politics, the musical influence of Germany. Out of tribulation came achievement and self-realization.

CHAPTER 25
Antonin Dvorák

Great men are simple. The heart of Antonin Dvorák, the Bohemian genius of music, was that of a little child.

He grew up in a hard school. His parents expected him to be a butcher, but his inclination toward music was stronger than any accident of birth or circumstance. No composer encountered more abject poverty in his early years. A piano was for a long time out of the question. Music paper to write on was a luxury. The peasants of Bohemia, poor enough in any case, were taxed to the breaking-point by the Austro-Hungarian government. With this government Dvorák and his community were anything but friendly. "To be a good Czech," said a journalist of the day, "is to be a good hater of the Germans. Dvorák is a good Czech."

It was fortunate in more ways than one that Dvorák was in the bad graces of those who ruled him, since otherwise he would probably have been given a berth in some German city, and ended his life a respected *Capellmeister* with all the originality taken from him a fate which has overtaken more than one composer good and true. As it was, the genius of Dvorák fed on the life and nature about him. He wandered on the highways and through the forests of his land, listened to the songs of the peasants, and fiddled for fairs and weddings.

A peculiar wistfulness is in his music, a simple, confiding appeal which seems to have come not only from the man but also from his race. The peasant suffers humbly and in silence. No one cares enough about him to listen to his woes. He may not read or write. But he can sing. In his song he tells Mother Nature all that he feels. Dvorák knew neither universities nor, for years, languages other than those spoken about him, yet the word was given him which reached the ear and heart of the world. Once heard, his melodies are not easily forgotten.

Witness the dreamy tenderness and melancholy of the air known as the "Indian Lament."

Bands of strolling musicians used to perform in the inn owned by Dvorák's father. It was with almost unbearable excitement that the boy listened to these performances. He induced the village schoolmaster to teach him how to sing and to play the violin, and eventually obtained his father's permission to study music at Prague. The meager fund donated by his parent gave out, and Dvorák gained a living for several years by playing the viola in orchestras of cafés and theaters.

He was deeply stirred at this time by the improvisations and songs of the gipsies. One of a series of "Gipsy Melodies" is called "Songs my mother taught me" — songs which commemorate the sorrows of a wandering race. "And when I sing these melodies for my own children," continues the verse, "the tears rain down my brown cheeks also." No composer could have written for such a text a melody simpler and more touching than Dvorák's. Few composers in the history of music have been at the same time so unsophisticated and so original in richness and color of harmony, melody of heart-searching eloquence, and variety and piquancy of rhythms. For a parallel to the poignancy and feeling of a song like this one must go to the music of the American negro, which, as we shall see, Dvorák loved and admired.

Dvorák married on the financial basis of earnings far from sufficient for one, still less for two. He undertook every possible kind of musical work — teaching, playing the organ, conducting when the opportunity befell. In later years a friend asked him how he managed to compose and get his dinner under such circumstances; to which the composer replied, with perfect simplicity, that frequently he did not get his dinner.

At first Dvorák created with reckless haste, for his pen could not keep pace with the ideas which thronged his brain. Nothing seemed impossible for his genius. He struck off compositions, white-hot, in a variety of forms. It mattered comparatively little what the form was. The mold that lay nearest at hand was filled. Choral and orchestral works, songs, instrumental pieces, appeared in profusion. Later, experience of life and of art commenced to tell. He thought twice before putting pen to paper. He learned to use fewer ideas, and make more

of them. He began to perfect forms of his own.

Dvorák's fame spread throughout Europe and preceded him to America. He was invited to visit this country in 1892 as director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York. There he composed his greatest orchestral work: the "New World" Symphony.

He believed that our finest and most original music came from the negro slaves, and he incorporated in the first movement of the "New World" Symphony a fragment of the well-known "spiritual," "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot."

The slow movement of this symphony, one of the noblest and most poetic that Dvorák conceived, opens with majestic chords of the brass choir, and these are followed by a haunting melody which seems to have been created for the instrument to which it is given the English horn. Over the whole movement broods the spirit of forest depths and virgin solitudes.

Although Dvorák had created a masterpiece in this work, and employed in it at least one American melody, it was contended, with justice, that it was not an American symphony. It was the symphony, as some one wittily put it, of a homesick Bohemian who based his music on melodies that he heard about him, and continued doing so when he came to America. Dvorák proved, however, that American melodies could become valuable elements of symphonic composition, thus affording a stimulating example to young American composers.

Dvorák stayed in America until 1895, after which he returned to Prague to become in 1901 director of the Prague Conservatory, a post which he held until his death. He was unutterably happy to be at home again. It is probable that in many lonely hours he would have sacrificed his American salary of fifteen thousand dollars a year to get back to his own people. Not for him were the dirt and the noise and the money of great cities. "Pan Antonin," as a compatriot described him, "of the sturdy little figure, the jovial smile, the kindly heart, and the school-girl modesty," was ever and incorrigibly himself, whatever he did, wherever he went. His friends were always laughing at his simplicity and guilelessness. One of them met Dvorák with a book in his hand. What was he doing? "Improving my mind," answered Dvorák. He was reading a book, set in large type, in words of one and two syllables, for young children. It was said of him that he had three

passions — composing, living in the country, and caring for his pigeons! While in America he was invited to spend the summer at the home of a priest, the clinching argument being the offer of a donkey, to be placed wholly at the musician's disposal. Dvorák was delighted. "What a pleasure this will be," he cried, "for my children and myself!"

His children! One suspects that for them he wrote many more of his melodies than the public can ever guess. Listen to the "Humoreske" — one of a series of compositions so entitled, written originally for the piano, and in this instance transcribed for the violin. It is a fireside story, a story told by the composer as he smiles through his tears.

And so he continued to the end, happy with his scores, his family, and chosen friends who did not terrify him with conventions and ceremonies, well content to live simply, work at the only craft he knew, and win hearts. He remained from first to last a peasant, born of his fields and forests, and holding close communion with them. When he tried to compose in a grand and pretentious manner, as in certain of the later quartets, he failed as completely as he failed when he had to don formal garb and mingle with the great. He enriched music significantly by the sincerity and individuality of his contribution to the art, and this art was the reflection of the beauty and tenderness of his own nature. Dvorák was born September 8, 1841, and died on the 1st of May, 1904.

CHAPTER 26
Edvard Grieg

Norway is a somber, wildly beautiful land. Great mountains, scarred and cragged, rise straight from the sea. Deep fjords have been graven in them by the action of the waters, and in the winter these fjords look like icy fingers stretched out by the ocean, eager to grasp their prey. The winter is a long and fearsome night when God knows what is abroad, and the peasants, huddling together about their fires, drink, fiddle, and sing, to forget the evil things that scream in the wind. "This is the land of which the outer limits confront the realm where the old Norse gods still dwell, and where, in the words of Jonas Lie, 'elves and mermaids are still regarded as tame domestic animals.'"

There are really but two seasons — winter and summer. The summer, a short, sunlit day, has scarcely smiled before it is gone, and because of its fleeting beauty it leaves sadness in the hearts of those who know too well the darkness, the cold, the solitudes of the long night. These things are told in the music of Edvard Grieg.

Grieg came of Scotch ancestry. His great-grandfather's name was Greig, or Greigh. He was a native of Aberdeen, who about 1746, in the troublous period of the wars of Charles Edward Stewart, the Pretender, left the land of his birth and settled permanently at Bergen, Norway. There he changed the position of the vowels in his name to conform to the principles of Norwegian pronunciation. His son, John Grieg, a merchant, became also British consul, and the office was passed down to Alexander, father of the composer. The mother of Edvard Grieg was a woman of culture and considerable musical knowledge.

Grieg was born on the 15th of June, 1843. He soon showed his disposition for music — not only music, but modern music, to which he was to bring a new, strange, fascinating beauty. The story of his

first attempt, as a small child, to play the piano is significant as being typical of his artistic originality and the modern quality of his ear. "What shall prevent me," says Grieg himself in a delightful reminiscence of his youthful days, "from calling back that wonderful and mysterious content at discovering, when I stretched my arms up to the piano, not a melody — that was too much — no, but a harmony! First, two notes; then a chord of three notes; then a full chord of four; at last, with both hands — oh, joy! — a combination of five notes, the chord of the ninth." It should be explained that this chord is one of the most important characteristics of modern music, and one of the most valuable assets of composers of to-day. "When I found that," said Grieg, "my happiness knew no bounds. ... I was about five years old."

It was soon time for him to go to school, which he did not like, for he preferred to lie on his back and dream as he watched the summer clouds float lazily in the sky. A brilliant idea came to him in the arithmetic class. "In order to finish as soon as possible I left out all the ciphers, since, as I understood it, they signified nothing. But I profited through experience. Since then I have learned to reckon with ciphers!"

One day he brought to school, instead of an essay, a composition, his first attempt — variations on a familiar melody. A buzz went through the classroom. The teacher made inquiries. "Grieg has a composition." The professor went to a door and called to a colleague: "Come here. Here's something to look at. This little chap is a composer!" But the happiness of the child was short-lived. When the second professor had departed the first changed his tactics "and took me," said Grieg, "by the hair, until everything was black before my eyes, saying, harshly, 'Another time bring your German dictionary with you as you ought to do and leave this foolish stuff at home." Grieg found solace in the person of a young lieutenant who lived opposite the school and who was devoted to music. For him Grieg had to copy all his compositions. "Fortunately, I afterward succeeded in getting back all I had given him and throwing them into the waste-paper basket, where they most certainly belonged. I have often thought with gratitude of my friend the lieutenant, who has since become a general, and of the compliments which he paid to my first

attempt at art."

The day came when Ole Bull, the celebrated Norwegian violinist, rode clattering into the yard and, hearing Grieg's music through the open window, insisted that he become a musician and that his parents send him at once to Leipsic to study. "I felt," said Grieg, "like a packet stuffed full of dreams."

At Leipsic Grieg was mortally homesick. He was then a lump of a lad of fifteen, probably like most Norwegian boys, of whom he himself said: "We Norwegians develop slowly. Before the age of eighteen, one seldom knows what is in him." The husband of his landlady comforted him. "Now see here, my dear Mr. Grieg, we have here the same sun, the same moon, and the same God that you have at home." But it was a long time before these things, and the lessons at the Conservatory, could reconcile Grieg to the loss of Norway.

Grieg in his innocence had expected that by some miracle he could become, in, say, three years, a "wizard master" of music, but surprise and disappointment were in store for him. The truth gradually dawned on him that progress meant long and patient drudgery. This would have been endurable if he had had more sympathetic and intelligent teachers, but German provincialism ruled so strongly at the Leipsic Conservatory that it was impossible for Grieg's masters to realize what he was trying to do, or give him anything but the most academic counsel. When he tried to write the original harmonies that filled his ears he was reproved. The teachers did not realize that Grieg must discover new laws of composition before he could put himself into his music. He worked hard, scarcely leaving time to eat or sleep. The result was that in two years he suffered a collapse and a severe lung trouble, which left him with only one lung for the rest of his life. With the loss of physical strength, however, there seemed to come an increase of nervous energy. He recovered sufficiently to resume his labors and graduate with honors from the Leipsic Conservatory in 1822. After a happy summer in his Norwegian home, he went to Copenhagen, and there met the friend whom he needed just then more than any one else in the world. This was the gifted young Norwegian composer, Richard Nordraak, who, if he had not died at the age of twenty-four, might have been as great as Grieg in his art. At last Grieg had met a companion who understood his dreams and was

with him heart and soul in his desire to found a school of genuine Norwegian music.

It was about this time that Grieg became intimate with Ole Bull. The two made trips far into the mountains, listening to the songs and dances of the peasants which Grieg would then incorporate in his music. No one realized better than he that music draws its existence not from professors and conservatories, but from the common people and the common experiences which make all humanity akin. Thus it is with the "Bridal Procession," taken from a set of "Two Lyrical Pieces" for piano, music in which one hears the sawing of fiddles, the approach of the festive company along the road, and scraps of peasant songs which are gradually lost in the distance.

The lamented death of Nordraak, in whose honor Grieg wrote one of his most impressive pieces of music, cut short the promised crusade for the musical expression of Norway. But in 1867, the same year in which he married, Grieg founded a musical union in Christiania which he conducted until 1880. He toured Europe as a pianist conductor, tours in which he was accompanied by his wife, an admirable singer of her husband's songs.

The year 1874 was a banner one. Grieg was given a small pension by the Norwegian government, which enabled him to give up teaching and devote his time to composition. In the same year he received a letter from Henrik Ibsen, the great Norwegian author, asking him to write music for the drama "Peer Gynt." Grieg, supremely honored by this invitation, had not only a superb drama to inspire him, but a subject ideally in accordance with his genius. It was for him to establish the appropriate background for Ibsen's profound interpretation of an old Norwegian legend.

Composed for the theater, this music was later made into two orchestral suites. Early in the drama Peer visits the trolls, who live underground. The troll king wishes Peer to marry his daughter. When Peer refuses the great cave is in a tumult. The trolls gather and leap on his back until it seems that Peer can no longer throw them off. It is only the prayers of Peer's mother and Solveg, whose constant love at last brings redemption, which save him. The orchestra accompanies the scene of the trolls with uncanny music which constantly grows in excitement. A shriek of the instruments brings the piece to

an end.

The scene of Ase's death is one of greatest pathos, and Grieg equals its poignancy in writing for it very simple music. This music seems to suggest not only sorrow, but the gathering of the winter night. Peer is jesting to hide his despair as his mother dies. He kisses the dead face passionately and sets out again to wander for many years, until the faithful love of Solveg shall restore him his soul.

"Morning," or "Morning Mood," was played before the fourth act, which opens on the coast of Algeria, when "Peer Gynt" was produced with Grieg's music at the Christiania Theater, February 24, 1876. This piece was originally composed for an earlier scene. Says Dorothea Casselmann-Schumacher, "There is a faint sound in the air as of distant bells, mingled with an echo of a mountain yodel; it is Sunday morning on the sunlit fjord."

Wandering in a desert, Peer is worshiped as a prophet by a wild tribe. He decides not to dispel their illusion, since he obtains from them much praise, comfort, and the love of the slave girl Anitra. She dances and sings before him, after which he woos her passionately, only to be deceived and told to remember his graying hairs. The dance is an original and charming composition in the Oriental manner.

In the last act of "Peer Gynt" our hero, wearied, disillusioned, repentant, comes back to his mountain home, where he had left Solveg, his true love, years before. Only she has remained faithful. A tableau shows her in her hut on the mountain-side, where she had told Peer years before that she would await him. There Solveg sings her song, simple and true and sad, like the North, a song of love and faithfulness unto death.

Grieg was one who knew and loved Nature in all her moods. The beautiful composition, "Letzter Frühling," also called "Der Frühling" ("The Spring"), is the second of "Two Elegiac Melodies" for stringed orchestra. None of Grieg's compositions afford better example of the sincere, deeply moving quality of his inspirations than this modest but exquisite piece of music.

Although Grieg sometimes filled a large canvas, he preferred small forms, producing a long series of songs of exceptional beauty and many piquant and poetic pieces for piano. The originality of his

northern harmonies, and the novel rhythms he frequently employs are matched by the poetic feeling and the fineness of artistic instinct with which he develops his musical ideas, as, for example, in the following well-known composition.

The last years of Grieg's life were passed at "Troldhaugen" ("Trolls' Land"), a villa which he built for himself on a promontory which extended far into the sea. The road from Bergen came to an end in front of the grounds. At the entrance was a sign, "Mr. Grieg does not wish to receive callers earlier than four in the afternoon." Previous to that hour he composed. His studio stood at the water's edge and bore a second notice, "If any one chooses to enter this house to steal, please leave the scores, as they are only for my use." He had in his hut a remarkable library of musical scores. After working-hours he was cordiality itself, a brilliant talker, fond of company, the kindliest of hosts, though somewhat tactless and inclined on occasion to be headstrong. His forehead and eyes had the poetry felt in his music. "In his eyes," said a visitor, "one catches a glimpse of Norway." Grieg occasionally took a short journey, but was always happy to get home. He was afraid of the sea, and for that reason never came to America. He died in 1907. The urn containing his ashes was placed in a grotto at the foot of a steep cliff visible from "Troldhaugen" and accessible only from the sea. The grotto was then sealed. An epitaph on a marble slab marks what was once the entrance. There the remains of Norway's greatest composer keep watch over the land that he loved.

Norway, with the possible exception of Finland in recent years, has been the most individual of Northern countries in her music. A countryman of Grieg who gave early promise of surpassing him in the significance of his message was Christian Sinding, born at Kongsberg in 1856. In a somber and powerful symphony and a crashing Rondo Perpetuo for orchestra Sinding showed the Norse spirit of his ancestors, but his individuality was submerged in his admiration of Richard Wagner, so that he is known to-day principally by some interesting songs and piano compositions. A gentler talent was that of Johan Svendsen (1840-1911), the son of a bandmaster of Christiania, a conductor himself at the age of fifteen and a violinist of such talent that, having accepted a position in the orchestra of the Odeon Theatre at Paris, his solo-playing on a certain evening drew the attention of the

audience from the acting of Mme. Sarah Bernhardt. An accident to Svendsen's hand interfered with his career as a virtuoso, but turned his attention the more to composition. Svendsen's "Romance," a beautiful and imaginative composition for the violin, has in it the true ring of the North — the dark color, the expressive melody, and the legendary sadness often and justly associated with Scandinavian music.

Johan Halvorsen, born in 1864 at Drammen, Norway, was also a violinist of unusual gifts who toured Scandinavia and certain cities of Europe, and became, in 1899, conductor of the National Theater at Christiania. He was not only a virtuoso, but knew the orchestra. Witness his march in the Eastern manner, known as the "Triumphal Entry of the Boyars." The boyars were hereditary owners of the soil in feudal times in Russia. They grouped themselves, with their followers, about a chosen prince, and held a rank corresponding roughly to that of the Highland chieftains. Halvorsen's march opens with a curious, barbaric motive played by the clarinets of the orchestra over a drone-bass of a primitive character. A songful contrasting section throws into bolder relief the pomp and color which are picturesque elements of the composition.

The folk-songs of Sweden, of which there is mention in a later chapter, offer a literature more varied and eloquent, perhaps, than the output of her better known composers. A charming and poetic talent which is near the spirit of the people is that of Tor Aulin (1866-1914). His "Humoreske" is a simple and pleasing composition.

Since about 1835 Finland has been making rapid strides in the development of a typical national art. In literature and painting, as well as in music, a number of important and significant figures have risen. Finland is a country of silver lakes and wild moorland. The beauty and melancholy of Northern nature and the stern lot of the Finnish people have contributed to the depth and sincerity of their art. Sibelius' (1865—) "Finlandia" was written in a spirit of patriotic protest when Finland was ruled by the old Russian government. That government was obliged to forbid the public performance of the work because of its exciting effect on the populace. Mark the opening — the chords that growl revolt, the suggestion of a people in prayer, the rolling of drums, the growing excitement of the music, the wildly

defiant conclusion.

The "Praeludium" of Jarnefelt, a composer (1869—) whose great gifts have been overshadowed by those of Sibelius, is a delightful piece in the old style, built over a quaint, persistent motive in the bass.

Because of the novelty and eloquence of their folk-music, and the originality and seriousness of the younger Northern composers, much is expected of them in the immediate future.

CHAPTER 27
Anton Rubinstein

Rubinstein, a colossal nature, a pianist of fabulous powers, was one of the great melodists. He could think melody almost faster than he could write it. A hundred ideas descended on him when he set pen to music paper. Some of these divine guests came with due state and ceremony. The musical thought would arrive in its complete and perfect form, requiring only to be transcribed precisely as it occurred to the musician. But when Rubinstein undertook a great symphony, an opera on a big scale, a sonata on the classic model, it was a different matter. He was a man of impetuous and emotional rather than reflective temperament. It was not his genius to build slowly and with infinite care, to sift out great ideas from small, and rear, block by block, column on column, his cathedral of tone. Whatever was in him at the moment went on paper. Hence it is that Rubinstein is survived to-day principally by his music in the smaller forms, by those simple, inspired melodies which he appears to have jotted down, again and again, as easily and spontaneously as he would have written a letter to a friend.

An example is the "Melody in F," a very simple piece originally composed for the piano. It retains to-day the freshness and charm that it had when first it fell on the ears of the public.

The days of Rubinstein's youth were hard and it was bitter experience which taught him to hug music to his heart. A Jew, born at Wechwotinez, November 28, 1829, he was early subjected to the persecutions which raged with a special violence in Russia during the reign of Nicholas I. Finally, the entire family were baptized as Christians and, leaving behind them the scene of their tribulations, fled over the steppes in a covered wagon to Moscow.

Rubinstein's mother had noticed how attentively the child of five listened to her piano-playing. She decided to teach him, but found

that he soon outstripped her own knowledge of the instrument.

In Moscow, Rubinstein became a pupil of Villoing, who, recognizing the boy's talent, agreed to give him lessons without payment until the time when he would be able to make a return for his education. These lessons were not always pleasant experiences. Villoing was a severe teacher. Blows as well as advice were part of his instruction, but Rubinstein had the vitality, the ambition, the indomitable will for which the great men of his race are famous. He throve under this harsh treatment, and at the age of ten astonished the public of Moscow by his performance at a charity concert in Petrovsky Park.

Villoing said that it was time to undertake a concert tour, to make some money, and become known in the world. In Paris, Anton played for Liszt, Chopin, and other of the famous musicians of the day. He was welcomed everywhere and patronized by aristocrats. Presents were showered upon him, which he promptly pawned. His family was in need and he had no illusions about the friendship of the great. They were to be made use of. They were to become stepping-stones of a career. While a guest at the castle of the Russian Grand Duchess Helen, on Kamennoi Island in the Neva River, Rubinstein completed one of his most admired compositions. He wrote a series of twenty-four "musical portraits," each suggested by the personality of a guest at the castle, and later published under the collective title of "Kamennoi Ostrow" ("Kamennoi Island"). The twenty-second of these "portraits" has been named variously by different publishers, as "Reve Angelique" ("Angelic Vision"), and other different titles, but it is best known to the public by the title of the set of pieces from which it is drawn. Some biographers of Rubinstein find in it a reminiscence of the romantic attachment which existed between the young musician and the woman who loved him, though circumstances of birth kept them apart. They were wont to promenade of an evening on the shores of the river, while a neighboring convent bell was ringing and sunset flooded the world. Youth talked as youth will of its ambitions, dreams, ideals. The sun still sets on the waters that surround Kamennoi Island, but the guests have gone. In the music of Rubinstein is the picture of a magic hour, and, perhaps, the face of a woman as noble by nature as she was by birth.

Rubinstein toured America for the first time in 1872 with the

violinist Wieniawski, and his success was indescribable. His leonine power, his prophetic fire, his evocation of moods of the most poetic beauty, have been often enough described. There is a profile of Rubinstein, leaning forward over the keyboard, wilted collar, drops of sweat falling through the air, and face illumined by the vision of the Lord. He often played with a careless disregard of detail. No one cared. He would have struck fire from his hearers if he had been playing a bass drum. A favorite concert war-horse is the "Valse Caprice," a piano composition in the good old style, full of excitement and melody. Josef Hofmann, himself a great pupil of Rubinstein, acquired at first hand the conception of the master.

Dance rhythms are especially strong in Rubinstein's music, as may be observed by this waltz and by an excerpt from his "Bal Costume." "Toreador and Andalusian" is supposed to be the dance of an Andalusian girl and her gallant bull-fighter. The click of castanets, the bold, challenging gestures of the man, the coquettish movements of the woman, the eyes that flash behind the fan, the applause of the watching throng these are the inspiration of Rubinstein's music.

Had Rubinstein saved what he earned he would have been a millionaire, but his charity, his good deeds, were endless. He was very sensitive to feminine charm and chivalrous toward women, and the amounts which he donated in the form of marriage dowries to penniless maidens became a standing joke with his friends. He was impatient of ceremony and fuss in the routine affairs of life. When he needed a new suit he sent for a tailor and handed him an old garment, telling him to make another precisely similar. He had a laughable habit of fixing dates for changes of clothing. The 1st of May was the day for putting on his summer coat, whether it was shining or snowing. Likewise he wore his Russian furs up to a certain time in the spring. The violets might bloom and the birds might sing, but the furs were retained.

He did not like doctors. In the second week of November, 1894, he complained of pains in the arms and chest. When a physician called on the 19th, and asked if he might examine the heart, Rubinstein hesitated, and when the moment came moved only the left flap of his coat, saying:

"Very well; now listen."

"But I can't hear your heart through your shirt and vest," protested the physician.

Rubinstein hesitated a moment, and then said: "All right. We might as well play whist."

"What about your heart?" persisted the doctor.

"You may hear it some other time," Rubinstein replied. As was his custom, he took that evening a glass of wine before going to bed. At two o'clock of the following morning he was dead.

One reads of the enormous fertility of composers of previous periods, and marvels at what seem, by comparison, the small number of works produced by composers of to-day. Rubinstein composed eighteen operas and sacred dramas; six symphonies; three "character pieces" for orchestra — "Faust," "Ivan IV," "Don Quixote"; three overtures; more than one hundred songs; chamber music and smaller compositions without number for the piano and other solo instruments. These works were lauded to the skies in their day, and played everywhere, but it was not the symphonies — not even the grand "Ocean" symphony — nor the great "sacred dramas," nor the pretentious "character pieces" for orchestra that lived after him. It was the simple, heartfelt melodies that escaped him when he was perhaps least aware of the value of what he was writing which keep green his memory.

CHAPTER 28
Peter Iljitch Tschaikowsky

In Russia it has been a custom to bomb those unhappy potentates whom the people do not love. Peter Iljitch Tschaikowsky employed subtler methods. He concealed his ammunition in his music.

Like a bombshell, indeed, was the explosion of this music, thrown over the fence from the land of the Czar into the concert-halls and opera-houses of Europe and America. Its melancholy beauty, its gorgeous colors, its volcanic passion, shocked the conservative and fascinated the public. No need to explain this music. Useless to condemn it. It was too human, too original, too utterly sincere for that. It winged its way from heart to heart.

Tschaikowsky's was a temperament essentially typical of his country and his times. The unrest, the fatalism, the vague aspirations toward a brighter and freer day, which possessed Russia, were echoed in his art. He was born on the 7th of May, 1840. One day, when he was having a geography lesson with his brothers and sisters, he shocked his governess by kissing the map of Russia and spitting on the rest of the world. Only one other country was excepted, a country always dear to Tschaikowsky's heart. When reproved for his action he answered: "But didn't you see? All the time I kept my hand over France."

Tschaikowsky's first musical impulse was given him when his father brought home from Petrograd a mechanical player, an orchestrion which played airs by Mozart and by Italian composers — Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini — whom Peter thus came to know and love. The music of these men profoundly influenced his own style as a composer in later days.

Peter loved his mother with passionate intensity, and when she died of cholera in 1854 retired into himself, morose, cynical, and somewhat self-centered. It was some time before he recovered. He

followed the example of other men of his own rank in life by fitting himself for an official sinecure in Petrograd, where the pay was good and the service light. By day he was a rather absent-minded and unsatisfactory official, and by night the darling of Petrograd drawing-rooms, for he was a good-looking young man who had a charming talent for the improvisation of waltzes at the piano. This was Tschaikowsky in his twentieth year.

There came a change. Disgust with his idle life grew on the future composer. He decided that his only talent was for music; that, therefore, it was his duty to develop it at whatever cost, if his life were to mean anything and he escape the fate of the fop and the idler. "Do not imagine that I dream of being a great artist," he wrote his father; "I only feel I must do the work for which I have a vocation, whether I become a celebrated composer or only a struggling teacher — 'tis all the same. In any case, my conscience will be clear and I shall no longer have the right to grumble at my lot."

Gone was the dandy of former days. Gone also was the comfortable salary which had been his. Tschaikowsky became a pupil of Anton Rubinstein at the Conservatory. Anton's equally gifted brother, Nicholas Rubinstein, not only took a deep interest in the young man's talent, but helped him through those poverty-stricken days by securing him pupils, giving him shelter, and even clothes on occasion. Tschaikowsky writes home to his father that he is working hard and is happy in his art only it is a little uncomfortable in the evenings, since the scratching of his pen disturbs Rubinstein when he tries to sleep!

Through Rubinstein's interest Tschaikowsky became professor of harmony at the newly opened Moscow Conservatory, and soon commenced to produce significant music. One of the best-known pieces of these early days is the "Chant sans Paroles" ("Song without Words"), from the collection entitled "Souvenirs [Memories] de Hapsal." This piece commemorates one of the happiest experiences of Tschaikowsky's youthful years. After a hard winter's labor at the Conservatory he found himself in possession of the — to him — unparalleled sum of one hundred rubles, or about fifty dollars. He must have thought he had Fortunatus' purse at his disposal, for he immediately embarked with his brother Modest on a holiday trip to

Finland. Arrived in that country, the two idled about at Viborg and admired the Imatra Falls until they suddenly found that there was barely car fare enough to get home, and nothing to live on when they arrived. So they begged sanctuary of Tschaikowsky's stepmother, who lived in the charming district of Hapsal. Through the long summer days the brothers wandered about the forest and watched the glowing sunsets, communing happily with each other and with nature. All too quickly the summer was gone, but Tschaikowsky preserved the memory of those charmed hours in the following melody.

Tschaikowsky's fame commenced to spread, but his pocket-book was still very thin. In order to replenish it he decided to give a concert. For this occasion he composed a new work, in which the whole world recognized the heart-beat of Russia. One day while Tschaikowsky was composing, he heard a plasterer singing beneath the window a sad and beautiful song which the musician could not dismiss from his thoughts. This song, mournful and tender, an old song loved by the Russian peasants, became the substance of the slow movement, or "Andante Cantabile," of his quartet.

As usual, the composer, a painfully shy and sensitive man, passed his hour of torment before the performance of this work took place, wondering whether he had created a work of art or made a plain fool of himself. His doubts were relieved in a manner that he never forgot. Count Leo Tolstoi, the author of *Anna Karenina*, *The Resurrection*, and other famous works, paid him a visit and sat by him while his quartet was being played. Listening to the slow movement, Tolstoi was so profoundly moved that he wept. "I have heard," he said, "the soul of my patient and suffering people."

And now love, which either builds or destroys, came into Tschaikowsky's life. He had just completed an overture called "Destiny" when an Italian opera company visited Moscow. In that company the leading artist was Desirée Artot, "a woman of thirty, not good-looking, but with a passionate and expressive face." Tschaikowsky met her at a supper one evening after the opera. She asked him to call. He avoided her. The company departed from Moscow, but returned there the next fall. Artot asked him why she had not seen him and later the well-meaning Nicholas Rubinstein insisted that Tschaikowsky attend a party at her home. The two became engaged.

But Tschaikowsky was far from happy. He loved Desiree with all his heart, but she would not leave the stage, and he had no appetite for becoming the husband and cloak-carrier of a popular prima donna. The days dragged on, till the Gordian knot was suddenly clipped by Miss Desiree herself, who, without a word of explanation, married a barytone of the Warsaw Opera. Tschaikowsky was prostrated by the blow. Worse still, the company revisited Moscow. The unfortunate composer sat in the auditorium, his opera-glasses glued to his eyes, but seeing nothing because of the tears that streamed down his face.

Just after this bitter experience, and while he was still so much under the spell of the woman that he could not hear her name without emotion, Tschaikowsky was asked to write an overture to Shakespeare's great love drama, "Romeo and Juliet." Could he have found the inspiration for this music had it not been for his own tragedy? The overture opens with a choral motive — the thought of Friar Laurence — and harmonies as beautiful as they are laden with the fateful atmosphere of the drama. Music of strife depicts the brawls of the Montagues and Capulets. Then rises from the depths of the orchestra that melody one of the greatest Tschaikowsky ever penned which chants the love of the immortal pair. It was to this same melody that the composer, intending in later years to complete an opera on the subject, set the words of Juliet: "Oh tarry, night of ecstasy; Oh night of love, stretch thy dark veil over us!" In the overture it is heard again and again, passing from instrument to instrument, and sung with all the splendor and power of the orchestra. At the last it is echoed tragically by different instruments, as chords of the most poignant tenderness and beauty bring the overture to an end.

This was the fruit of Tschaikowsky's first serious love-affair — perhaps his last, if the traditional interpretation of the word "love" is to be applied to the singular relations with women of his later life.

With the "Romeo and Juliet" overture Tschaikowsky sprang at a bound into prominence, not only in Russia but in Europe. His circumstances began to mend, and in return for what she had snatched away Fate sent him one of the most beautiful friendships in the history of art. This was his singular relationship with Nadeshda von Meek, to whom he never spoke in his life, although they corresponded almost daily, and he confided in her as to a companion soul.

Madame von Meek, the widow of a rich engineer, loved music, and had been profoundly affected by the compositions of Tschaikowsky. She asked Tschaikowsky to allow her to pension him for the remainder of his days, saying that it would make her infinitely happy to know him secure and able to compose as his inspiration directed. After some hesitation he accepted this offer. It was Madame von Meek who stipulated, with the rarest tact and generosity, that they should never meet. They never did meet, save once, by accident, when the composer encountered her in the woods. This happened one day near Madame von Meek's estate at Brailov. Tschaikowsky, not knowing of her proximity, suddenly found himself before her. They gazed at each other for a moment without a word. Then Tschaikowsky, with a frightened exclamation, raised his hat and fled through the trees. They continued to correspond until — bitterest of all the composer's trials — there arose between them a misunderstanding which remained unexplained to the day of his death. Surely, beside the eternities of true friendship, the accidents of this life weigh small! Surely, on the other side of the grave, the needful word was spoken!

Madame von Meek was even the confidante of the beginning and end of perhaps the most fantastic and unfortunate experience of marriage a composer ever underwent. It was only an episode, over almost before it began, but it nearly cost the musician his life, to say nothing of his reason.

A woman whom Tschaikowsky hardly knew wrote him a letter telling him that she loved him. Her expressions were so sincere and so touching that the composer answered the letter. Still more foolishly, he consented to visit her. She so aroused his sympathy and his chivalry that at last, though he did not love her, he asked her to be his wife. With an impulse so child-like that it makes one smile, and so tragic in its revelation of helplessness and despair that it makes one weep, he seized letter-paper and confided the whole thing to Madame von Meek! She, sensible woman, neither criticized nor condemned. The marriage, of course, was an utter failure. Tschaikowsky was as one distracted. Later he told a friend, Kashkin, that one night he stood up to his armpits in a near-by river, hoping he would catch a death-chill. The marriage had to be dissolved. Tschaikowsky was a broken man. But he never blamed his wife for the catastrophe, and

always spoke of her as a noble woman.

In 1887 Russia was at war. Tschaikowsky, responsive to the temper of the times, composed the barbaric "Marche Slave." The march opens with the angry pounding of a drum — a call, a menace, a summons to battle. Then, over this single note, is heard the wailing minor chant of a primitive people. "Ancestral voices prophesying war." This is a Serbian folk-tune selected by Tschaikowsky for his purpose.

A new and defiant song is heard, accompanied by commotion of the wind instruments. After stormy preparation the chant is again intoned with all possible orchestral sonority. Gradually, as though vanishing in the distance, this dies away, and low, growling chords bring the first part of the record to a close. The second half of the march opens with a joyous dance motive music of exultation, of anticipated triumph. For a stirring climax the composer gives us two new strains in combination, the first a joyous dance rhythm, through which is heard sounding the Russian national anthem.

The old Russian anthem served Tschaikowsky well. Another great composition inspired by national feeling is the Overture 1812. This was written for the consecration of the Cathedral of Christ in Moscow, built to commemorate the burning of that city in the year 1812. The overture was to be performed in the great square before the church by an enormous orchestra. At the climax church bells were to ring, and the place of the big drums was to be taken by cannon. How successfully Tschaikowsky imagined this scene the assembled multitude in many-colored costumes, the peasants and the nobles, the priests with their icons, the soldiers, the guards of the Czar, and the towering temple of worship for a background and with what technical mastery he filled the great spaces of his canvas is shown by the music.

The overture opens with the Russian hymn, "God preserve Thy people," sounded with antiphonal majesty by the brass instruments. This gives way to music of agitation and suspense, while the oboe plays a mournful melody over an awakening orchestra. Gradually a tempest of tone is let loose. The drums roll. A challenging fanfare is sounded by the cornets. When this is repeated it is heard in combination with a new and singing theme. This makes the first half of the record. The second half, on the reverse side, begins with music woven

of the French "Marseillaise" and a Cossack folk-tune. Fragments of the "Marseillaise" are lost in whirling masses of tone. The Russian airs and the "Marseillaise" alternate. As bells ring from church towers the French anthem is flung out by the brass. The orchestra prepares for some great event, some mighty rejoicing. Again is heard the hymn of the opening, "God preserve Thy people," again the brilliant fanfare of the cornets, and finally, with rolling of drums and joyful reverberation of cathedral bells, the national anthem.

Tschaikowsky composed operas, symphonies, and suites in rapid succession. Among these were the operas "Eugen Onegin," "Pique Dame," "Joan of Arc"; the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies; three string quartets and other pieces of chamber music; many extremely beautiful songs and a ballet, "The Sleeping Beauty."

He waited years before giving the world one of his gayest and most delightful compositions, the "Casse-Noisette" ("Nut-cracker") Suite. The music was to accompany a fairy ballet. In the first scene happy children are gathered about a Christmas tree. Candles are lighted, and every one receives presents. To little Marie is given a common nut-cracker, but she likes this best of all. The boys snatch it from her, and it is broken. Marie bursts into tears, talks to it, caresses it, and before going to bed herself rocks it to sleep under the Christmas tree… It is midnight. Marie awakes, remembers her broken nut-cracker and steals down to the darkened room. Strange sight! Swarms of mice are coming in from all sides. Then a wonderful thing happens. The Christmas cakes, the toys, and, best of all, her beloved nut-cracker, come to life. There is great commotion; war is declared between the mice and the toys. The nut-cracker takes command and fights with the mouse king. When the nut-cracker is almost vanquished Marie bravely throws her shoe at the mouse king. He dies and the mice are defeated. The nut-cracker changes to a handsome prince, thanks Marie, and takes her with him to his magic kingdom. The second scene of the ballet shows the jam mountain in the fairy-land of sweets and toys. Here the sugar-plum fairy is queen. She and her retinue joyfully welcome Marie and the nut-cracker. For the entertainment of the guests of the real world is held the dance of the sweets and the toys. The "Danse Chinoise" ("Chinese Dance") is the dance of the tea one of the gayest and most popular of these little

pieces. The "Danse des Mirlitons" is the droll dance of little red musical toys, which when played sound like that friend of our childhood, the piece of paper and the comb. Belonging to the same suite is the charming "Valse des Fleurs" ("Waltz of the Flowers").

This composition belongs to the period in which Tschaikowsky visited America and conducted performances of his compositions during April and May, 1891.

At the last of his life Tschaikowsky completed his most eloquent and tragic composition, the "Symphonic Pathetique" ("Pathetic Symphony"). What were the circumstances which inspired this work? And had the composer a premonition of his approaching end? Certainly its composition was attended by sorrowful events.

Tschaikowsky's health was poor; he was melancholy and despondent. It seemed to him that his friends were dropping away. Anton Rubinstein had passed in the street without speaking to him. Worst of all, the hardest trial of his life to bear, Madame von Meek had abruptly stopped corresponding with him. We now know that her mind had been affected and that this had changed her relations with every one, but to Tschaikowsky the estrangement was a crushing blow to the fairest ideal of his life. Many believed, in view of his conduct at this time, that he contemplated suicide. He proceeded to put his affairs in order, gave the finishing touches to a number of scores which had not yet been published, and worked with feverish energy on the last symphony. He admitted that this work had a program, a story, but what it was he would never tell. Had he not burned his diary we might know, but now the secret is sealed forever. The tragedy of that music, said one writer, "stained the white radiance of eternity." The "Symphonic Pathetique" stands to-day the monument of Tschaikowsky's art, the epitome of his career.

The following record is of the sad and beautiful theme of the first movement, a theme which might easily be a remembrance of the composer's happy childhood, and of the mother whom he loved so well, whose death embittered the life of her son. In the symphony this music is preceded by a fragment from the Russian requiem.

Constantine von Sternberg, a personal friend of Tschaikowsky, told the writer this story of his end: Tschaikowsky, at a banquet, insisted, despite the warning of his friends, on drinking from a pitcher

of unboiled water. Cholera was rife in Petrograd. Soon after he was seized with pain. A doctor was summoned, every restorative applied, and it seemed that the composer was recovering. He was put to bed, after which the doctor recommended the usual treatment — a hot bath. Singularly enough, Tschaikowsky had had all his life a superstition that he would die in his bath, and was very averse to following the physician's advice. He was, nevertheless, immersed, and all promised well when, on the morning of October 25, 1893, the doctor turned from a consultation with his assistant, and found that life was gone.

This was the end of a noble and unfortunate man, the composer who had done more than any other to make Russia known musically to the outside world. Latin, Slav, Anglo-Saxon — all have been stirred by his voice, by the human documents which he wrote with his heart's blood in little black characters on music paper.

CHAPTER 29
Modern Russian Composers

Rubinstein and Tschaikowsky were the pioneers of one of the most remarkable developments of modern art — the music of the young Russian school. This music astonished the world by its dazzling color, its barbaric extravagance, its gorgeous pictures of the East.

To understand how such an art came into existence it is necessary to go back for a moment to its origins. The true music of Russia came primarily from the people. Illiterate, oppressed, they suffered endlessly, without help, without complaint, other than the songs which rose to God. For centuries their simple and wonderful melodies were ignored, as they themselves were ignored, by the aristocrats and by professional musicians imported from Europe. Finally, however, in the same epoch which was ushered in by the freeing of the serfs, there came to Russian musicians a realization of all that the folklore of their own country might mean to the development of a representative national art.

The first great Russian composer to feel the beauty of the peasant songs and respond to their influence in his music was Michael Ivanovich Glinka, born on the 1st of June, 1804, whose opera, "A Life for the Czar" (Petrograd, 1836), created a new precedent in Russian music and expressed in a thrilling manner the spirit of the Russian people.

Among Glinka's finest compositions is his setting of one of the best-beloved melodies of the Russian people, "The Kamarinskaja," an air danced and sung at peasant weddings, and popular throughout Russia. The freshness and beauty of the melody, as in the case of many folk-songs, seem strangely mated to a text which is amusing and often coarse. Inelegant, this text has the vigor and humor of the common people, the savor of the soil. Such is the origin of the dance which Glinka has glorified by his genius.

Glinka was followed by Dargomizsky, author of an opera, "The Stone Guest" (Petrograd, 1872), and other compositions of a highly original and realistic character. After him, contemporaneously with Rubinstein and Tschaikowsky, came those young men, fanatically conscious of the genius of their nation and determined to express it in music, who called themselves, in gay defiance of conservative opposition, "The Invincible Band." What wonders they wrought! With what ardor did they labor in a day when hope was awaking in the Russian heart, when the people had not as yet been misled by false prophets!

The "Invincibles," or "The Cabinet" — they were known and made fun of by several names — were five in number, and all young men of the upper classes of society. The leader was Mili Balakireff (1837-1910). He was the only one who had at the beginning any serious and extensive knowledge of his art. It devolved on him to counsel and inspire the others.

Alexander Borodin (1834-1887), a natural son of a Prince of Imeretia, was a chemist by profession, and a composer in the intervals of a laborious and fruitful career. For his opera, "Prince Igor," founded on the Russian epic of that name, which dealt with heroic exploits of the twelfth century in Russia, Borodin delved deep in Asiatic lore, both musical and legendary. One of the results of this study was the "Polovskian Dances," supposed to be danced by a primitive people before Prince Igor, who is taken captive by his enemies. These dances are of elemental power and emotional appeal. It was well said of Borodin that he had in his veins the blood of the East and the West, that his art blended the refinement and finish of European culture with the savagery and extravagance of the Eastern barbarian. What is not less remarkable is the clearness and originality of his expression. He was too busy a man, too much occupied with many interests, to produce a great deal of music, but nearly everything he has left is distinguished by clarity of style combined with oriental imagination.

One thinks of Borodin, as his biographers tell of him, going from lecture-room to lecture-room at the Petrograd Medical Institute, shouting in the corridors the strange melodies and intervals which thronged in his head, and one marvels the more at his accomplishment. Between recitations, in odd hours of day and night, he

composed. At home he had little solitude or opportunity for concentration, for his hospitality was that of the true Russian, and his house the resort of any and all the friends and relatives who cared to descend on the good-natured man. Guests, and cats! These animals, of which the Borodins were inordinately fond, were not only underfoot continually, but even sat at the table at mealtime!

The career of Modest Moussorgsky (1839-1881), whose genius was so audacious and original that of all "The Five" he was the longest in being recognized at his true value, was that of an uncompromising idealist. Moussorgsky embodied the social and intellectual movement then sweeping through Russia, of which the refrain was "Back to the People." This was his creed. These people Moussorgsky loved and understood — all of them, good and bad, wise and foolish — and he put them just as they were into his music. The stuttering of the village fool whom he beheld one day making incoherent love to the village belle was to this composer more significant than any classic sonata or symphony, and he made a queer, pathetic song out of it. He celebrated in music of singular weirdness and pathos the fate of the drunken peasant, discouraged by poverty and hardship, who, staggering home, sinks to his last sleep in the whirling snows. An example of the distinctive character of Moussorgsky's music is his "Song of the Flea." This is the song which Mephistopheles sings for the students in Auerbach's wine-cellar. Disguised as a fine gentleman, the fiend offers to entertain the company with a song. Ostensibly an amusing ditty, his song is in reality a scornful, contemptuous parody on the weakness and vanity of men. The king at court, goes the verse, came to think most highly of the wit and talent of a certain pretentious flea. This flea worked himself so thoroughly into the good graces of the monarch that the royal tailor was ordered to make it breeches. All the court bowed down to its superb highness, and even when the courtiers had secretly to scratch — cowards and sycophants that they were — they, nevertheless, cursing under their breath, paid homage to the flea. Into the music Moussorgsky has put the impudence and sarcasm with which Mephistopheles, his tongue in his cheek, bawls out his couplets to the bewildered townsfolk. Satanic laughter is heard after each verse.

Another Columbia record of Moussorgsky's music is that of the

polonaise from his opera, "Boris Godounow" first produced in its entirety at Petrograd, January 24, 1874. The text of this opera is in part taken from Pushkin's poem of the same name, and is in part the work of Moussorgsky. Boris, acting regent during the childhood of the young Dmitri, the young heir of Ivan the Terrible, murders the boy and usurps the throne. Some years later the monk Gregory, who is about the same age as the murdered heir would have been if he had lived, escapes from his cell, claims that he is Dmitri, and leads a revolt against Boris. The revolt gains headway. Boris dies, tortured by remorse, in terror of Dmitri's spirit, which haunts him. An idiot, unconsciously prophetic, weeps for the future of Russia. The polonaise is taken from the first scene of the third act, a scene in which the false Dmitri, who loves Marina, visits a Polish castle where the plotting is going forward. The guests come from the castle in the moonlight and dance the polonaise.

In opera, in a series of songs which are a veritable *comédie humaine* of music, Moussorgsky wrought an artistic revolution. Modern composers bow the knee to his supreme originality of ideas and technic. Moussorgsky paid heavily for his achievement. Borodine in his letters contrasts the change in the dashing young officer, who joined "The Invincibles" in 1857 when he was eighteen years old, and the man whom Borodine met again, after a lapse of years, when Moussorgsky had given up his position in the army and sacrificed everything for his art. Lines of care and ill health had shown themselves. The figure was no longer trim and erect as of yore. The man had known sorrow and thought. There was in the face the loftiness of purpose which sustained Moussorgsky to the end. Alone of all Russians this composer approaches in his music the depth, the power, the subtlety which characterize the writings of the greatest of Russian authors, Feodor Dostoievsky.

Nicholas Rimsky-Korsakoff (1844-1908) commenced life as a naval officer. In that capacity he is believed to have touched the shores of the United States in 1862. As we shall find, his acquaintance with the deep meant much to him as a composer. He loved nature and the Russian legends that nature inspired. He was continually telling fairy-tales in his music. Thus his art was in most respects the precise opposite of that of Moussorgsky. Moussorgsky

faced the realities of life, its tumult of purposes and desires, its noble dreams, its petty absurdities. All these things, which he contemplated with a passionate and unflinching gaze, went on his canvas. Rimsky-Korsakoff preferred the realm of the legendary and the poetic. He is the best known of "The Five" to the outside world. No one of the Russian composers was such a master in handling the orchestra. Tschaikowsky wrote of the gorgeous "Spanish Caprice" that it was the most brilliant feat of orchestration which had come to his attention. This "Caprice" is a fantasia on Spanish airs treated with exceptional spirit by the composer.

The "Spanish Caprice" preceded the wonders of that remarkable piece of music, "Scheherazade," inspired by the *Arabian Nights*, and called by the composer a "symphonic suite." This suite is in four movements. The imaginative and pictorial quality of Rimsky-Korsakoff's genius is fully exhibited in the opening movement, inspired by the stories of Sindbad the sailor. It is a picture of the sea; of the vessel, with bellying sail, which mounts the billows; and the strange song of the wind in her rigging. This depiction of tossing waters is preceded by a curious passage for the trombones, as if a magician, weaving his spells, were calling to his aid the genii of Arabian legends. One also hears a solo violin — the voice of the wheedling Scheherazade assuring her lord that if he will allow her to live another night, she will tell a new tale more incomparably astounding than any he has yet heard. Thereafter is heard the music of the deep.

The sea of Rimsky-Korsakoff is that sea into which bored sultans throw their favorites when they have tired of them, in neat little bags, well sealed. It is the sea frequented by fantastical monsters, the sea in which, according to the caption over the last movement of the suite, the ship of Prince Ajib, hurtling against a statue of a bronze warrior, loses all its nails, which are magnetically extracted from its sides, and sinks in fragments to the bottom. A man of imagination, Rimsky-Korsakoff, in a note in his manuscript score, says that while he had certain tales in mind when he wrote the music inspired by a reading of the *Thousand and One Nights*, the hearer may substitute for himself any one of those immortal stories which the music suggests to him. That part of the last movement headed in the score, "Festival at Bagdad," is certainly Orientalism run riot — the beating of drums

and calls of wind instruments, the dances that heat the blood, the intoxication of those who whirl to the maddening rhythms. At the end of this fantasy…is heard quietly, as at the beginning, the violin motive of fair, fawning Scheherazade!

Rimsky-Korsakoff, in addition to innumerable compositions for the voice and solo instruments, composed thirteen operas. And what were their subjects? He told of Sadko, the minstrel, who dared invade the realm of the sea king, and by the magic of his harp win a bride and escape from threatening monsters of the marine kingdom; of the Snow Maiden, who came down to earth that she might know mortal love, and melted in the arms of her lover at the kiss of the fiery sun. The music of his fantastical fairy-dramas was as much in the character of Russian folk-melody as the stories were typical of the imagination of the people.

The scene of the festival of the spring, in "Snegourotchka" ("The Snow Maiden," Petrograd, 1882), is one of the most beautiful in all opera. In the forest melting snow still lingers. Denizens of the woodland disport themselves fearlessly in the presence of young lovers. Rimsky-Korsakoff went to the country in May of 1882, and completed this work in six months' time. The sap of the spring was in his veins. The laughing music which accompanies the dances of the wood creatures is made of a dozen scraps of odd Russian folk-melody, one motive treading hot on the heels of the other, or several being combined by the composer. Straight from the lap of Russia comes this exulting music of the spring.

The legend of Sadko, the minstrel of Novgorod, haunted the mind of Rimsky-Korsakoff for many years. His Opus 5, "Sadko," a "musical picture" for orchestra, has been mentioned as the first symphonic poem composed by a Russian. This work made its appearance in 1867. Years later, in 1895-1896, Rimsky-Korsakoff completed his opera, "Sadko," which he called a "lyric legend in seven pictures," and in which he incorporated the principal musical themes of the youthful symphonic poem.

The song of the Indian merchant is one of three sung in the fourth tableau, when Sadko, about to set out on a voyage, asks several of the merchants to tell him of their native lands. The merchant of the North tells of gray seas and the might of Odin. The Indian merchant

follows with his strange song. A barcarolle is sung by a merchant from Venice. In each of the three songs the composer has attained a mood and a coloring characteristic of his theme. But he is most irresistible, his expression is most haunting and exotic, when he discourses of the diamonds in the rocky caves and the pearls in the southern seas of distant India's realm.

Rimsky-Korsakoff, an honest, fearless, fiery-tempered man, an advocate, even at personal risk, of democracy, had a strong influence in social as well as artistic movements in Russia. He was not loved by the old government. He died in 1908.

We have said little of Cesar Cui (1835-1918), the least important member of the glorious "Five." He was more conspicuous for literary propaganda in then behalf than for the support given them by his music.

He was at his best in small pieces and in certain songs, some of which had an agreeably Eastern flavor. His "Orientale" for violin and piano is a case in point. The muted violin propounds a monotonous Eastern rhythm. Over it the piano has a tinkling, odd-intervaled song which might accompany some mysterious ceremony.

One of Rimsky-Korsakoff's pupils is Ippolitoff-Ivanoff. He has lived much in Asiatic Russia, and has written a series of Caucasian sketches which have deservedly found favor because of their geniune Orientalism. One of these, "In the Village," represents the music of a semi-civilized Caucasian community the solitary voice of a lamenting viola, followed by Asiatic dance music.

A piece of gorgeously descriptive music is the "March of the Sirdar" ("Cortège du Serdare"). It is an extravagant barbaric Eastern march. A swinging song is sometimes contrasted and sometimes combined with rapid and eccentric musical figures of another land and another clime.

It is not uncharacteristic of the times in Russia that while there are as many gifted Russian composers to-day as ever before, there is no strong, definite musical movement in any one direction. Outstanding composers of the beginning of the twentieth century are Alexander Scriabine (1872-1915), an experimenter, a mystic, a lover of sensations who had something genuine and original to say, and Igor Strawinsky (1882—), composer of "The Fire Bird" ("Oiseau de

Feu"), "Petrouchka," and other works which have been presented by the Russian Ballet. The evolution of his style has been so bewilderingly rapid as to puzzle even his many admirers.

A third figure is in a measure a foil to the extreme modernity of the two composers just mentioned. He is Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873), in his early years a pupil of Arensky, who first became famous outside of his own country through his Prelude in C sharp minor, a youthful composition which he sold to a publisher for twenty dollars.

Some find in this music the despair of Russian convicts marching to their doom. Rachmaninoff has unkindly dispelled illusion by stating definitely that he had no story in mind when he composed his Prelude. The piece is not a story so much as it is a tragical mood. The composer has left each of us to tell his own story, and it was Balzac who said that the wonder of music was its power to reflect that which each of the listeners found in himself.

CHAPTER 30
American Composers

In this chapter only the most general mention can be made of the remarkable musical developments now going forward in America. We confine ourselves to main currents of our musical life, past and present, and particularly to men who have struck an individual and racial note in their compositions. The first of these appears to have been that brilliant and poetic personality, the pianist, Louis Moreau Gottschalk. He was born in New Orleans, May 8, 1829. He came, by way of several generations on his mother's side, from the minor French aristocracy. His father was English. Gottschalk was a child prodigy at three, and at twelve was sent to Paris to study the piano and composition at the Conservatoire. Zimmerman, head of the piano department, refused even to examine him, saying, "America is only a country of steam-engines." It is Gottschalk's lasting distinction that he was the first American to successfully challenge this fast-disappearing provincial European attitude. He studied with Stamaty, and two years later made a brilliant début at the Salle Pleyel. Chopin, who was present, said, "I predict that you will be the king of pianists."

Gottschalk, returning to this country from his early concert successes in Europe, composed his piano piece, "Bamboula," inspired by the barbaric dances of the negroes of New Orleans. The tune is a famous one, and has been used in orchestral compositions by Coleridge-Taylor, Henry F. Gilbert, and probably by others. The novelty of Gottschalk's compositions charmed Europeans and Americans alike, and struck a new note in our musical art. At that time folk-melody — melody of the people, the folk — was seldom given the attention of educated musicians. Gottschalk, like Chopin who greatly influenced his piano style, had the originality and daring to incorporate such melody in his compositions, develop it, and thereby blaze a path which later American composers were to follow.

It is not easy in these days to appreciate the emotion which Gottschalk's music evoked in his hearers, especially when played by himself. There is in his most representative work a tenderness and languor, a sentimentality typical not only of his temperament, but of his period and community. Two of his compositions which held the public for generations are "The Dying Poet" and "The Last Hope," pieces of elegance, sadness, and melodic grace which exerted an irresistible appeal.

Gottschalk lived a singularly romantic and picturesque career. He toured much of Europe, the United States, the West Indies, and South America, where he passed some years. He was equally at home whether partaking of tortillas in the hut of a vaquero or chumming with the Emperor of Brazil. His memoirs make fascinating reading. The story of his death is of a piece with the life he led. According to this story, he rose from a sick bed to play for an expectant audience, and, while interpreting his own composition, "Morte" ("Death"), fell lifeless from his chair. This was in Rio de Janeiro, December 18, 1889.

A musician whose talent was less aristocratic and ornate and of a deeper meaning than Gottschalk's was Stephen Collins Foster, creator of songs America will always hold dear. These and certain other songs by American composers are discussed in the following chapter for what they really are, American folk-songs. It was not until after the Civil War that there appeared in America a number of young men determined to study seriously the technic of composition and lay a solid foundation for achievement in their art.

Edward MacDowell, born in New York, December 18, 1861, studied music in France, where he was a classmate of Debussy at the Paris Conservatoire, and in Germany, where he came strongly under the influence of the romantic school. Celtic by descent, MacDowell lived in a world of dreams. A spirit of faery, as the Irish poets would say, pervades his music. He thought of Arthurian legends, and composed heroic dream-pictures of things forgotten by the world of men. Returning from Europe to America in 1888, he soon fled from the din of cities and found refuge in his log cabin in the woods of Peterboro, New Hampshire. There, in communion with the forest that he loved, he composed much of his best music. He would not cut down a tree — he was certain that the spirit within the bark suffered from the ax.

His nature expressed itself characteristically in short but exquisite melodies, of which the following is a famous example.

In 1896, as it now appears unwisely, MacDowell accepted the chair of music at Columbia University. He died in 1908, and the loss to American music cannot readily be computed. MacDowell was no man to found a school of composition or build foundations for the labors of others to come. This work was done very notably by John Knowles Paine (1839-1906) and his colleagues and disciples. Paine, after studying in Europe, became teacher of composition at Harvard University, and in 1875 occupied the chair of music (the first to be established in America) at that institution. Among his pupils were Arthur Foote (1853—) and Frederick S. Converse (1871—). George W. Chadwick, the most versatile and productive of living American composers, studied first at the New England Conservatory of Music, of which he is now director, and later in Germany with Reinecke and Jadahasson. Among Chadwick's pupils were Horatio Parker, whose choral work, "Hora Novissima," gained him international renown, and Henry Hadley (1871—), brilliantly successful both as composer and as conductor. Mrs. H. H. Beach (1867) is one of the few women composers to write in large as well as small forms, as witness her "Gaelic" symphony and compositions of chamber music.

Two men, chronologically belonging to this group, and yet not of it, are the very antitheses of each other in their artistic tendencies. These are John Alden Carpenter and Henry F. Gilbert. Carpenter, a composer of very sensitive feeling for harmonic and orchestral color, a remarkable technician, and a man of the greatest breadth in his artistic appreciations, was born in Illinois in 1876. He studied under Paine at Harvard and for a time under Edward Elgar in England. His "Adventures in a Perambulator" (1914), a piece for enormous orchestra, describing with humor and astonishing ingenuity the adventures of a baby in its perambulator, made a sensation in concert halls of America. His concertino for piano and orchestra (1915) confirmed him in the position he had won as a composer. This was followed by a symphony (1916), and in 1919 the Chicago Opera Association performed his ballet, after the tale of Wilde, "The Birthday of the Infanta," strikingly effective music for a stage spectacle. In his song cycle, "Gitanjali," Carpenter shows most poetic and refined feeling.

Despite his accomplishments in music he remains active in business, and since 1909 has been vice-president of the mill, railway, and vessel supply firm of George P. Carpenter & Co., of Chicago. Few composers, amateur or professional, in this country or abroad, match him in his mastery of his art. Furthermore, Carpenter is a man who grows, who never stands still in his development.

Henry Franklin Belknap Gilbert was born in Massachusetts in 1868. He was the first American pupil of Edward MacDowell when that composer returned to America after his European studies in 1888. With MacDowell, Gilbert studied composition and orchestration for several years, then, driven by circumstances, wandered over the country making a living at a dozen different trades, consorting with the people, and listening to their music. One of Gilbert's early compositions, quick to make its way, was his "Pirate Song," after the verses of which Stevenson made such effective use in *Treasure Island*. The song is rakish, devil-may-care — the picture of a drunken old tar reeling up the street, singing his ungodly song of treasure, death, and rum.

Gilbert waited many years for recognition of his talent by the influential musical public. Meanwhile he worked with unfaltering faith and zeal to perfect a musical style which should not be of European traditions and formulae, but a manner of musical speech in which the American people could hear an echo, at least, of their own land.

His ideals were memorably vindicated when his "Comedy Overture on Negro Themes" was performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1911, and recognized by influential critics as the work of a new man, with something of first importance to say. Gilbert's pantomime ballet, the "Dance on Place Congo," was produced by the Metropolitan Opera Company in 1918, at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. By turns brutal, tender, and nobly tragic, the music ranks as one of the most important and individual of his achievements.

Nothing is more encouraging as a sign of American musical development than the manner in which composers have multiplied and diversified their productions in late years. Throughout the country have risen men and women whose compositions, written for the

greater part in modest forms, have had an enthusiastic reception by the public, and in sum and substance exerted a highly important influence in making the nation musical.

Dudley Buck (1839-1909), born at Hartford, Connecticut, was one of the earliest Americans to write music respected by musicians and at the same time appealing to the mass of the people. His music is of a generation past, but it will be long before it is willingly relinquished by organists, singers, music-lovers, to whom its religious sentiment and its smooth and melodious quality are appealing.

James Carroll Bartlett was born in Harmony, Maine, in 1850. In 1869 he came to Boston, where he studied with excellent teachers. Later he became a pupil in singing of William Shakespeare in London. He was very successful as teacher, composer, and tenor singer, touring in 1875-1876 with Camilla Urso's concert company, and later with the Sauret-Carreno and the Barnabee concert companies. As a biographer put it happily, "Mr. Bartlett has sung his way into thousands of American hearts." This same should be said of his song, "A Dream," which, because of its simplicity, its sincere and straightforward melodic line, and its suitableness to the text of Charles B. Cory, has established itself in the affections of innumerable music-lovers.

Homer M. Bartlett, the late gifted organist and composer who was in a former edition of this book mentioned as the author of this song, died in New York in 1919. James Carroll Bartlett, composer of "A Dream," now lives, teaches, composes, and enjoys the high esteem of musicians and laymen alike, in Medfield and Boston, Massachusetts.

A talent which endeared itself to the public by its lyric grace and beauty was that of Ethelbert Nevin (1862-1901), born in Edgeworth, Pennsylvania. He came honestly by his gifts — not that his parents were musicians by birth or training, although his father composed the campaign song, "Our Nominee," which elected Polk President — but there was in the home the atmosphere of happiness and beauty likely to stimulate a sensitive nature to artistic production of some kind. Nevin originally intended to be a concert pianist, but he developed such marked ability in composition that he gave the greater part of his time to this pursuit. He had an inborn facility and an unfailing stock of melodic ideas of a very pleasing character. The piano piece,

"Narcissus," which has traveled over the wide world, been played by street musicians of half a dozen different nationalities, and been performed at the command of kings, was conceived and completed within a few hours on a day's ramble in the countryside in 1891. The idea came to Nevin so quickly and in such complete form that he sent the work to the publisher without taking the precaution to correct it at the piano. The famous "Rosary" was composed in 1897, when Nevin was in New York. One evening he opened a letter from an old friend inclosing Robert Cameron Rogers's poem. The first line had the words, "The hours I spent with thee, dear heart." These words aroused the imagination of the composer; the melodic thought came to him. The next day he handed the manuscript, with a note, to his wife. The note read: "Just a little souvenir to let you know how I thank le bon Dieu for giving me you. The entire love and devotion of Ethelbert Nevin." The emotional fervor of this song, the rich, modern quality of the harmonies that support the voice, and the dramatic manner in which the text is set, have won it a lasting place in the repertory and in the affections of the public.

In a cottage across the fields from the house of his childhood, called "Queen Anne's Lodge," Nevin wrote one of his simplest and most engaging songs, "Mighty Lak' a Rose." In it are the humor and tenderness of the old colored mammy who rocked him as a child.

"Ethelbert Nevin," it was said, "wrote like a man who had a chrysanthemum in his buttonhole and the fear of God in his heart."

Frederick Field Bullard (1864-1904) was the author of one of the finest of American part songs, the "Stein Song," which, following the vogue attending its initial appearance, has gradually become a part of the musical literature of the American people, and will probably belong eventually to that class of compositions known as "composed" folk-songs. Bullard, talented and self-critical, did not overrate his ability. He studied seriously, but created sparingly, composing only when he had something to say. When the time came, however, he took care to say it well, as shown by the virile swing, the clean-cut phrases, the manly good-fellowship of his excellent song.

Two Kipling songs by American composers are Walter Damrosch's setting of "Danny Deever" and Oley Speaks' swinging rhythms for the "Road to Mandalay." Mr. Damrosch wisely did not

attempt to make music out of the dramatic recital of Danny Deever's end, but has simply provided a background of constantly increasing rhythmic excitement which drives home the verses with what the newspaper editors call "a punch."

Mr. Speaks has felt the pulse and the romance of Kipling's lines. It is singular that comparatively few composers have attempted settings of these verses, and that none who have attempted them have provided nearly as effective an opportunity for the singer as he.

Songs of American Indians have inevitably influenced composers in the West. Whether these composers have reproduced the actual Indian melodies, or merely derived from Indian motives or legends suggestions for songs of their own, need not be discussed here. We have, in the songs of composers like Lieurance and Cadman, charming melodies, for which the Indian is in greater or lesser degree responsible.

Thurlow Lieurance, of Lincoln, Nebraska, has made an extensive study at first hand of Indian customs and folk-lore. Here is his own description of his well-known "Waters of Minnetonka": "Many persons know the legend of Minnetonka — how the two lovers fled to escape torture, and let themselves sink together into the waters of the lonely northern lake. The silver ripples, it is told, mourn above them, and the winds bear the cry afar. But in the song they will arise from the depths of the lake for you; you will hear the steady and regular beat of their paddles, and see the diamond spray drip off in the moonlight as they pass, once again, in their ghost canoe. A violin, typifying the wind, if you choose, echoes the soft harmonies of the accompaniment, which rock to and fro on harp-chords, between the major key and its relative minor, in and out of that singular domain musicians know as the 'added sixth' chord and its derivatives."

From Cadman, a born song-writer, have come "a number of Indian songs of romantic feeling. He was born in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in 1881. He gained his musical education entirely in Pittsburgh He has also been active as pianist, critic, lecturer. Of late years he has lived in California. His interest in Indian folk-lore dates from about 1906, when he became acquainted with the ethnological studies of Alice Fletcher and La Flesche. He produced in 1908 "Four Indian Songs," one of which, "The Land of the Sky-blue Water," was sung

with the greatest success by Madame Nordica, and has been ever since a favorite with the public. "At Dawning" is similar to this song in its style and its melodious idiom. It is an Indian love-song.

Cadman has written three operas on Indian legends. One of these, "Shane wis," was produced with marked success at the Metropolitan Opera House, March 23, 1918. He is a composer who constantly grows in his mastery of his medium.

There must be added to songs such as these another class of music which is gradually gaining recognition as an important factor in our musical growth — the music of the theaters, the bands, the dance-halls.

The marches of John Philip Sousa (1856—) have energetic rhythms and buoyancy, felt to-day as when these marches were first heard. Mention need only be made of several of the most representative of his works to remind the reader of what they contain, such as "The Stars and Stripes Forever"; "The Washington Post"; "The Thunderer," "El Capitan".

The names of composers of light opera are legion. Their gems are scattered through many scores, and a volume prepared by long and discriminating study would have to be written to do justice to their successes and failures. Two names are pre-eminently associated with this medium — those of Victor Herbert (1859—) and Reginald de Koven (1859-1920). The "Brown October Ale," from the earliest and the finest of his operettas, "Robin Hood", and "Oh, Promise Me," from the same work, represent De Koven at his best.

From Herbert's grand opera, "Natoma," based on the romance of an Indian girl, comes the "Spring Song." One of his most famous and effective works is the "American Fantasie" on national airs, a lively and exciting composition of the holiday and fireworks brand.

What has the negro done in music since the days of his emancipation from slavery? While wholly untrained in the art, he was the creator of the inspired "spirituals," several of which are quoted in the following chapter, and of dance music of primitive fascination and appeal. Later he attended conservatories in America and Europe. Being very assimilative, he quickly learned to imitate the music of the whites a result of comparatively little benefit to his original genius. Still more recently the reflective composers of the colored race have

come to realize that they can scarcely expect to produce significant art unless they seek inspiration in incidents or impressions which form part of their lives and compose in a way not the white man's, but their own. The American negro composer, Will Marion Cook (1869—), was educated musically in this country and in Germany. His song, "Exhortation," is certainly a nearer approach to negro psychology than anything else we have heard. Its composition was inspired by an actual occurrence. Some twenty years ago a little troupe of negro singers and players were traveling through the South, performing as they went. One day they discovered that their manager had been cheating them and stealing their money. The musicians, in an evil temper, assembled in the back room of a little saloon. They played cards, "crap" games, and drank much bad liquor. The manager, entering the room, realized that he was in danger of his life. With a stroke of inspiration amounting to genius the rascal sank to his knees and cried, "Bredren, let us pray!" His first word in default of anything definite he could think of at the moment was a low, miserable, wabbling, "Amen." He repeated this "Amen" two or three times, found his wits, and continued. Terror added fervor to his prayer. His voice shook, his limbs trembled, and the tears rolled down his cheeks. Forgetful of everything, he prayed on until he was in such a mood that he would have gone to his death with a smile. This mood reacted on his audience. The men before him shifted uneasily, but no one could find his voice or move forward. The reprobate held them in the hollow of his hand. He escaped. He left the room alive. There is no word for it but contemporaneous slang. He "got away with it!" Mr. Cook was inspired by this incident in composing his song. He was singularly fortunate in catching the inflection and the emotional zigzagging of that opening "Amen." Another of Mr. Cook's compositions is the "Rain Song," also racial in character.

A chapter on American music is necessarily a chapter which records a hundred different tendencies and efforts in various directions, efforts of uneven value, but all attesting, in sum, to the present rapid artistic growth of the nation, and the mingling and understanding of each other by the multitude of races which make the warp and woof of our national life. There are those who see in this amalgamation of peoples and spiritual forces the promise of a musical

achievement of broad and exceptional significance to the future of the art.

CHAPTER 31
Folk-Songs

All the great composers have gained inspiration from the music of their people, their "folk," whence this music derives its name; from melodies created by musicians, most of them anonymous, whose names do not figure impressively in histories and dictionaries, but whose simple and beautiful songs have outlived the passing of generations, brought comfort, healed sorrow, and made for better understanding and brotherhood among men.

The oldest folk-melodies are of unknown authorship. They were extemporized from a full heart, passed from mouth to mouth, and so came down through the generations. We accept these melodies in the spirit in which they were given, as we accept the air, the sunshine, the good earth beneath us. Though we may not realize how great and beautiful they are, they become part of our lives and thoughts.

It can be seen, by considering the history of a folk-song, how inevitably it became an expression of a people rather than of an individual. The true folk-song, passing from father to son, travels far before it takes final shape. It may disappear, and crop out unaccountably in some far-distant locality. Owing to the fact that it is not printed, to faulty memorizing, to varying vocal ability of the performers, it is subject to many alterations and to the formative influence of many minds. What is most beautiful and durable in the song, however, remains, while notes not essential to the meaning and beauty of the melody disappear. At last the song emerges from the crucible of time, a wonderful symbol of the spirit of the people rather than of the individual who gave it birth.

Folk-songs reflect the environment as well as the heredity of various peoples. The songs of the North are more rugged and heroic than those of the South. The songs of southern climes have a grace and languor not associated with the North. If one were able to

ascertain accurately the time and place of the appearance of a given number of folk-songs he would have testimony, invaluable to the historian, of the wanderings and evolutions of the races that make mankind.

Folk-songs may be divided roughly into two classes: the true folk-song, which is of unknown authorship, and songs of identified composers, so simple and true that the people have adopted them as their own.

United States of America

All kinds of fascinating melodies are afloat in the atmosphere of America. They form a genuine democracy, a "melting-pot" of music. Folk-melodies from Europe, strains from the countries to the north and south of us, mingle with the old slave songs, with cowboy ditties, Indian chants, and jingles of the dance-hall and vaudeville show. All of these must be taken into account by anyone who studies the gradual shaping of our popular musical idioms. Even from the latter sources come melodies, now and again, of arresting individuality. For it is not the origin of a tune which determines its quality. As Debussy once remarked, there is only one music, whether it be found in a waltz or in a symphony. Many an aria sung by a high-priced operatic tenor is inferior in art quality to a jig played for a barn dance. More than one "rag-time" composition of wit, ginger, and originality has come from the depths of "Tin Pan Alley!"

Here is an old minstrel tune, of disputed authorship, "Zip Coon," or "Turkey in the Straw." It was heard as early as 1820. Dixon, Nichols, Farrell, circus clowns and minstrels, have each been mentioned as its composer. It is a wonderfully brisk, humorous, frolicsome air… First let us hear what Mr. Guion himself has to say of the tune and his arrangement: "'Turkey in the Straw' every American, of course, knows, but not as I do, for I have danced to it thousands of times out here at the cowboy dances until I was almost ready to drop. I do not know why, where, when, or by whom it was written, but the cowboys and old fiddlers rather look on it as their 'national hymn.' In this concert transcription I have tried to write it just as I have often heard it whistled and played by our funny old fiddlers, the cow-punchers and cowboys. It is not easy — it was not meant to be, but I

certainly could have made it harder to play!"

Wouldn't you know that the man who talked like that would be the man to make just such a funny and exciting arrangement of "Turkey in the Straw?"

Another fiddler's tune of unknown origin, but which will not soon disappear, is "The Arkansas Traveler." The tune and the tale which accompanies it are true bits of American folk-lore. The tune began to be very popular among fiddlers about 1850. According to the story, a happy-go-lucky, improvident Arkansas farmer sits in front of his cabin playing the first strain of the air. Up rides a stranger in search of a night's lodging, who endeavors to engage him in conversation, saying, "Why don't you put a roof on your house?" The squatter, who keeps on fiddling, answers, "When it's dry I don't want a roof; when it's wet I can't," and so on — much more of the same sort. The stranger finally asks the fiddler why he doesn't play the second half of the tune. The squatter replies: "I've knowed that tune ten years, and it 'ain't got no second part." "Give me the fiddle," says the stranger, who, after fiddling through the familiar first strain of the tune, turns off into the second part with the heel-tingling skill of the true jig-player. Instantly the whole scene changes. The farmer jumps to his feet, swinging arms and dancing, the children tumble about, and the delighted host sings out: "Walk in, stranger. Tie up your horse side of ol' Bill. Give him ten ears of corn. Pull out the demijohn and drink it all," with many other expressions of homely and enthusiastic welcome.

And now let us listen to a composition, descended directly from the minstrel tunes of the type we have just considered, only more lively, more nervous and racy, if anything, than those which have gone before — that famous American tune, the "Dixie" of Dan Emmett. Dan Emmett's father was a blacksmith. Dan helped in the smithy as a boy, and was "Jack of all trades" in the neighborhood. He attended school for a little while, played the fiddle indifferently well, and in his thirteenth year became a typesetter for a newspaper. He wrote another good tune, "Old Dan Tucker" ("Old Dan Tucker," sung by Harry C. Browne, Columbia Record A 1999), when he was sixteen years old. The next year he was a fifer and drummer in the United States army. After serving his time he traveled with circus

bands. In 1842 or 1843 he organized a quartet which, armed with a violin, tambourine, banjo, and "bones," in costumes consisting of a striped calico shirt and blue calico coats with immence swallow tails, gave performances in New York and other cities of the United States. Alas that those days are gone! Alas for the good old minstrel shows which many of us still remember as incidents of childhood, when the fun was so simple and good and clean, and the end man cracked the old "chestnuts" so merrily!

Emmett joined Bryant's Minstrels in 1857. He composed "Dixie" as a walk-around for a performance which took place at 472 Broadway, New York, on Monday evening, September 19, 1859. Charley White, a member of this troupe, tells in his memoirs of the composition of the song. "One Saturday night in 1859, when Dan Emmett was a member of Bryant's Minstrels at Mechanic's Hall, New York, Dan [Bryant] said to Emmett: 'Can't you get us up a walk-around dance? I want something new and lively for next Monday night!' Emmett, of course, went to work, and, as he had done so much in that line of composition, he was not long in finding something suitable. At last he hit upon the first two bars, and any composer can tell you how good a start that is in the manufacture of a melody. The next day, Sunday, he had the words commencing, 'I wish I was in Dixie.' This colloquial expression is not, as most people suppose, a Southern phrase, but first appeared among the circus men in the North. In early fall, when nipping frost would overtake the tented wanderers, the boys would think of the genial warmth of the section they were heading for and the common expression would be, 'Well, I wish I was in Dixie.' This gave the title, or catch-line; the rest of the song was original. On Monday morning the song was rehearsed and highly recommended, and at night, as usual, the house was crowded and many of the auditors went home singing 'Dixie.'"

Emmett received five hundred dollars for the copyright of "Dixie." His receipts from all his other songs amounted to only one hundred dollars. He followed the stage until he was too old to perform and changes of fashion had made his entertainment out of date. In his eightieth year Emmett was persuaded to tour with the minstrel show of Al Fields. "When the orchestra struck up "Dixie" at the first performance "he rose and, with old-time gestures and in a voice

tremulous with age, sang the song." He was warmly welcomed in the South, but one such trip was enough for him. He retired to his shanty at Mount Vernon, Ohio, where he worked in his garden, chopped wood, raised chickens, and thanked God for his humble but not unhappy lot. Before his death he made the request that he be buried in the dress suit he had worn on tour with Al Fields' minstrels, and the band played "Dixie" as his body was lowered into the grave.

Folk-songs which are wholly and inseparably a product of the life of the American nation are the supremely beautiful and pathetic melodies originated by the African slaves. These have been happily entitled by H. E. Krehbiel "Afro-American Folk-Songs." They were born of the sorrows and dreams of the black man, whose susceptible and emotional nature, coupled with the influence of the art of the white, gave rise to a music of unique and incomparable appeal. No white American, save possibly Stephen Foster in his best songs, has equaled the profound feeling and the mystical inspiration of these outpourings of the soul of a race.

It was not until after the Civil War that these songs were given the attention they deserved. A small company of exceptionally gifted negro musicians was then formed, which, under the name of the "Jubilee Singers," toured America and also Europe, introducing their folk-songs with sensational success wherever they appeared.

It was instinctive for the uneducated negro to express feeling in a way that would reach all hearts, while nevertheless avoiding the commonplace with a distinction and originality meriting the admiration of the most cultured musician. "Deep River" is one of the best known of the negro spirituals, as it is one of the most touching. Coleridge-Taylor, the English negro composer, has harmonized it. The arrangement used by Mr. Seagle is that of Henry T. Burleigh, also colored, born in Erie, Pennsylvania, who shows fine musicianship and taste in these harmonizations.

"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" is the familiar melody which the Bohemian composer, Dvorák (see earlier chapter), used in the first movement of his "New World" Symphony, which he composed when he came to America. It is very tender and mystical. Observe how remarkably the cadences suggest the swinging descent of a chariot. The subject, of course, is a naive version of the chariot of fire which

came from heaven to the prophet Elijah, but the thought of the negro is here of mercy and final consolation when the chariot shall descend at last, "Comin' for to carry me home."

One is again indebted to Mr. Burleigh for his arrangements of two of the finest of all spirituals, "Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray" and "Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen." The songs have an indescribable pathos. If America had produced no other music, she would have made a significant contribution to the art of the world.

The songs, however, which most nearly fulfill the mission of folk-music in America, being loved and treasured throughout the land, are those of Stephen Collins Foster. Foster, of Southern descent, expressed in a deeply moving and poetic manner certain phases of American life which have gone, never to return. His art, simple and true, was the reflex of his emotions and impressions of the world about him. He was never a learned composer, though he became a proficient pianist, and in very early years taught himself to play the flute and flageolet. He was great because of his inborn genius for melody, his sensitive perceptions, his innate tenderness and nobility of character. Foster's environment was unusually inspiring to song. He was born at Lawrenceville, in the Allegheny hills, Pennsylvania, July 4, 1826. The tension of modern conditions had not as yet affected his community. There was time to dream as well as to do. In early days Foster listened much to the singing of the negroes, which strongly influenced his own music in later years. He was well educated, well informed on many topics, at ease and on equal terms with men of genius in other fields than his own. His life was a bitter romance. An unhappy marriage and other misfortunes drove him to dissipation and after the death of his mother, whom he loved with all the intensity of his nature, he became more and more the victim of drink. Many of his songs, composed in the morning, were sold in the evening for an hour's forgetfulness. His death was the result of an accident in a New York hotel, when he rose from his bed, weak with fever, and gashed his face and neck on a piece of broken glass. He died January 13, 1864. If he had erred, as Mr. Louis Elson has admirably remarked, "'The light that led astray was light from heaven.'":

Foster composed his first song, "Open Thy Lattice, Love," when he was sixteen. "Uncle Ned," composed for a club of young men who

were in the custom of meeting at Foster's house to sing together, is said to be one of the first songs which showed sympathy and understanding of the lot of the black man. Its sale in later years netted a publisher, who understood its value better than Foster, ten thousand dollars, and this sum was one of the initial profits of a great music-publishing business. When Foster composed "Open Thy Lattice, Love" he wrote only the music. For "Uncle Ned," and over one hundred and fifty other songs, he wrote text as well as melody, since, in his own words, he found that "the difficulty of harmonizing sounds with words" made this necessary. His text was not always the most distinctive in point of style, but, as in the case of "Uncle Ned," it was direct, idiomatic, and genuine in its feeling.

In a similar vein, and in words and music which brought home the scenes he described, were the songs, "Old Black Joe" and "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground."

These songs had and have their place in the life of the American people, but the two songs in which Foster is greatest are undoubtedly "My Old Kentucky Home," said to have been inspired by a visit to the estate of an uncle in Kentucky, and "Old Folks at Home" songs in which Foster touches a note so deep and so true that they would be welcomed and understood almost anywhere in the world, whatever the locality, whatever the tongue of the people. It has been remarked by authorities on the subject that no country has produced "composed folk-songs" which surpass in simple eloquence and beauty those of Foster.

Stephen Foster's brother, Morrison, in his *Biography, Songs and Musical Compositions of Stephen C. Foster,* tells of the composition of "Old Folks at Home": "One day in 1851, Stephen came into my office, on the bank of the Monongahela, Pittsburgh, and said to me, 'What is a good name of two syllables for a Southern river? I want to use it in this new song of 'Old Folks at Home.' I asked him how Yazoo would do. 'Oh,' said he, 'that has been used before.' I then suggested Pedee. 'Oh, pshaw!' he replied, 'I won't have that.' I then took down an atlas from the top of my desk and opened the map of the United States. We both looked over it and my finger stopped at the 'Swanee,' a little river in Florida emptying into the Gulf of Mexico. 'That's it, that's it exactly,' exclaimed he, delighted, as he wrote the name

down; and the song was finished, commencing, "Way down upon de Swanee Ribber.' He left the office, as was his custom, abruptly…and I resumed my work. Just at that time he received a letter from E. P. Christy [a noted "negro minstrel" of the day — Ed.], of New York… asking him if he would write a song for Christy, which the latter might sing before it was published. Stephen showed me the letter and asked what he should do. I said to him, 'Don't let him do it unless he pays you.' At his request I drew up a form of agreement for Christy to sign, stipulating to pay Stephen five hundred dollars for the privilege he asked. This was forwarded to Christy, and return mail brought it back duly signed by the latter. The song happened to be 'Old Folks at Home.'" Such was the history of what is probably Foster's greatest song.

The authorship of the melody of "Home, Sweet Home," a song which Americans have taken to their hearts, has for a long time been in doubt. The words are by John Howard Paine, who, born in New York in 1792, lived some years in England, wandered over the face of the earth, and died in Tunis in 1852 while serving there as United States Consul. The music is of European origin. "Clari, the Maid of Milan," a play with verses by Paine, and music partly composed, partly arranged by Henry R. Bishop, was performed in London May 8, 1823. The climax of the drama hinged on the return of the heroine, forsaken and betrayed, to her homestead, and it was this situation which introduced the famous song. Though it went far and wide, Bishop, who lived for thirty-three years after its first performance, never took pains to assert its authorship. But an examination of his score, in which the air appears more than once in variation, seems to prove that the song is of a piece with the work in which it appears. "Home, Sweet Home" was first sung in America by Mrs. Holman, when "Clari, the Maid of Milan" was performed, on the 12th of November, 1823, in New York.

Mexico

A folk-music near to America in location and hence to a certain degree in racial consciousness is that which comes originally from Spain, *via* Mexico. The melody, "La Paloma" ("The Dove"), bears the name of Sebastian Yradier, the Spanish composer who furnished

Bizet with the original musical idea of the Habanera from "Carmen." It is a "composed folk-song." It is based on the rhythm of the Habanera, a dance believed to have originated in Havana, though in all probability it also came from Spain. It is tropical in its tenderness and ardor, in the capriciously rhythmed melody which Yradier has set over his swinging bass. The words of the song are very slight, like those of many melodies heard in Mexico and Spanish America. It is a love-song, naive, outspoken, Latin in a certain childlike frankness and fervor. It is hard to believe, and it has yet to be proven, that Yradier did not pick up this melody from some highway or byway of Spain or her possessions. For it has not only the folk feeling, but the irregular form of melody that one finds in music of more or less primitive origin. So much for the racial and geographic origins. The historical connection is dramatic. The unfortunate Maximilian, deserted by the scheming Napoleon III, condemned for his adventure into Mexico by the government of the United States, asked that this melody be played as he was led out to execution.

A song of less intensity, but captivating in its exotic grace and fire, is the "Manzanilla." Manzanilla is the name of a town near Seville, in Spain. It is also the name of a light, dry wine popular in Spain and Spanish colonies. There are two strains in this dance melody, one languorous and caressing, the other vigorously rhythmical, the two together typical of many Spanish dances in which rhythm and action alternate between these moods.

It can be seen from the foregoing how clearly folk-songs reflect the heredity and environment of the people from which they spring. It is true that these melodies sometimes travel very far, but in order to survive, the song must have something in common with the temperament of the new community in which it finds itself. The folk-songs of foreign peoples which have entered most intimately into the lives of Americans are those of the British Isles, of Italy, and in a lesser degree those of Spain, Russia, and Scandinavia. French folk-songs have a greater vogue in Canada than here, which is a pity, for there are many very lovely ones. Melodies of Oriental peoples are farther afield from our consciousness, although such is the variety of races settled on this soil that there are few types of folk-songs in the world which could not be discovered in some corner of the country.

England

Songs of the British Isles breathe the sweetness of the countryside, the freshness of the morning, the gaiety of the peasant folk. They have a healthy jollity and sturdiness bespeaking the vigor and sanity of the English people.

An example of the gentler type of English song, distinguished by tender sentiment and an exquisite refinement of melody, is afforded by the beautiful air to which Ben Johson set the words, "Drink to me only with thine eyes." Seldom has a folk-air been more happily mated to a poetic text. The melody appears to be at least as old as that of "Down Among the Dead Men," and its authorship, also, is unknown.

The simple, naive harmony, the apple-cheeked gaiety of English folk-dances are admirably illustrated by the melodies which have been collected and harmonized, with sensitive feeling and musicianship, by Cecil J. Sharpe. The country dance, in days gone by, was the social recreation of the peasantry over the whole countryside. Thanks largely to the efforts of Mr. Sharpe, it is being revived in England, and practised as a means of healthful recreation in the United States.

"Sellenger's Round" is a melody of great antiquity. It was arranged for Queen Elizabeth by her music-teacher, Doctor Byrd. Its original name appears to have been "Saint Leger's Round" or "The beginning of the world." It was very popular in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and its beauty and vigor are felt when it is played to-day.

Ireland

Ireland has produced some of the most beautiful, varied, and imaginative folk-music in the world.

The song "Robin Adair" was long believed to be of Scottish origin, but later researches indicate that it came from Ireland. According to tradition it was composed by the Irish harper, Carrol O'Daly, in the latter part of the fourteenth century, and was inspired by a romantic incident of his own life. O'Daly loved Eileen O'Cavanagh of the county of Connacht. Her family, however, looked unfavorably on his suit. When O'Daly returned from an enforced absence he found that Eileen had been prevailed on by her relatives

to promise her hand to another. Filled with despair he sought a solitary spot and from a full heart composed the song "Eileen Aroon" — the melody of "Robin Adair." Next day, disguised as a harper, O'Daly appeared at the wedding festivities, and at the request of the bride herself played his newly composed air. Needless to say, the song had the desired effect. Recognizing, under the disguise of a traveling musician, the identity of the harper, Eileen, with a swift return of affection for her former lover, eloped with him that night.

Although this melody was printed as an Irish air, at least as early as 1729, it subsequently appeared in several eighteenth-century collections of Scotch melodies. It was the custom in olden time for Irish harpers and wandering minstrels to make trips through Scotland, with very much the same purposes which animate the artist who tours a foreign country to-day. Now Dennis O'Hempsey (or Hempsen), a celebrated Irish harper, born in 1695, made a tour of Scotland in his youth, and played as one of his most popular airs the melody of "Eileen Aroon." This was caught up and widely circulated by the native Highland minstrels and was published and printed as a Scotch air, to which were eventually fitted the words of "Robin Adair."

"My Love's an Arbutus," one of the loveliest of folk-songs, was noted down by the musical antiquary, George Petrie, from the singing of an old gentleman who had learned it in his childhood. The original words began, "I rise ev'ry morning with a heart full of woe." The author of the present words is Alfred Percival Graves, and the musical harmonization is that of Charles Villiers Stanford.

One of the most popular dance tunes of Ireland is known as "Miss McLeod's Reel." It is a folk-melody of great antiquity. Beranger, a French traveler through Ireland in the eighteenth century, says that it was one of the favorite tunes which the Galway pipers played to him in 1779. At the Munster festival of 1906 it was the only reel played for the prize competition in Irish dancing. It is an excellent example of Irish dance music, and well reflects the lighter yet poetic spirit of the people. A whole volume, indeed, might be written on the wonderful variety of style and feeling discovered in Irish jig tunes. These tunes are often used as march tunes and are great favorites with the fife-and-drum corps. One of the most noted of them, "Garryowen," was called by Theodore Roosevelt "the finest marching tune

in the world."

The original text of "Believe me if all those endearing young charms," which dates from before 1700, began "My lodging is on the cold, cold ground," and there are districts in which the song is still sung to these words. Some authorities claim that the song is English, while about an equal number assert that it is of Irish origin. The tender and beautiful melody is of a type which tends to support the latter assumption, though it was first printed as part of the music of an English ballad-opera in 1737, and is not to be found in any collection of Irish music before 1787.

"The Minstrel Boy," a heroic and sturdy air, is one of the finest of Irish melodies. It caused Tom Moore to compose for it the poem to which it has ever been sung. The air, formerly called "The Moreen," was printed by Bunting in a noted collection of Irish airs in 1809.

"The Last Rose of Summer" gains its title from the verses Tom Moore set to a melody, the original name of which was "The Groves of Blarney." The beauty of this melody attracted the notice of Beethoven, who set it as a song for voice with piano accompaniment. Flotow introduced it in its entirety as one of the numbers in his opera, "Martha." This caused Hector Berlioz, who evidently did not think highly of Flotow's work, to remark that the beautiful folk-song "disinfected" the entire opera. And indeed there are few songs which more fittingly embody the happy description of folk melodies given by the late Mr. Elson, who described them as the wild flowers of music.

The scenery is most romantic where the waters of the Avon and the Avoca meet. This inspired the words of the song which Moore wrote to the traditional Irish air, "The Old Head of Dennis." The air is composed in a scale of but six tones, the seventh, or leading tone of our prevailing major and minor scales being absent. It was taken down from the singing of an old peasant woman of Sligo by George Petrie.

Scotland

What Thomas Moore did for Irish folk-music Robert Burns had done for Scotch folk-music some time previously. He wrote truly poetical verses of a folklike character for many of the traditional Scottish airs. With both poets this was a labor of love, a task which

engaged their deepest feelings; and in the case of Burns, as well as that of Moore, it is by the first lines of their poems that many of the traditional Scotch and Irish airs are now known. Here the similarity ceases, however, for while Burns frequently took the old words and the idea they contained, recasting both in a truly poetic and much more beautiful form, Moore usually wrote an entirely original poem in what he conceived to be the spirit of the melody which he had in mind.

The text of "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton" is by Burns. The song was presented as a gift to Mrs. Stewart of Afton Lodge, on the banks of Afton River. Burns set the text to a melody of unknown origin. J. E. Spilman detached Burns's words from the old air, and composed a melody for them so good that the first tune has been entirely supplanted by the second.

"Loch Lomond" is one of the most noble and beautiful of Scotch airs. According to Lady Jane Scott, both air and words are traditional and were taken down by her from a street singer in Edinburgh. According to other authorities, it is a modern composed Scotch air. If so, the composer has achieved a height of eloquence and simplicity seldom equaled by other composers who tried to emulate "the folk."

G. Farquhar Graham says that "Comin' Through the Rye" is "probably a dance-tune of the early times of the eighteenth century." It is a fine example of folk-song evolution, since there are several old Scotch airs of which it may easily be a development. The words are by Robert Burns. The melody offers an excellent illustration of "the Scotch snap," as seen, for example, in the rhythmical arrangement of the two syllables of "bod-y"and "corn-in'," etc.

The touching melody of "John Anderson," long preserved by oral tradition, was at length written down in the year 1578 in Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book, which is still preserved. John Anderson was a real personage, and, according to tradition, the town piper of Kelso and a good deal of a joker. The old verses about him are all of a humorous character. But Burns, in composing his verses for this melody, has idealized and poetized the traditional character of John Anderson, and in so doing has produced a poem which is beautifully fitted to the simple and dignified character of the old melody.

The melody of "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon" is said to

have been partly "faked" on the black keys of the piano by a Mr. James Miller, an Edinburgh author who was greatly desirous of composing a Scotch tune. His beginning was completed by Stephen Clark, arranger of music for "Johnson's Museum." Curiously enough, the tune appears to have been based, consciously or unconsciously, on an old English air, "Lost Is My Quiet Forever." The words are by Burns.

The song, "Annie Laurie," was composed by Lady John Scott. The original words were written by a Mr. Douglas of Fingland to Annie, a daughter of Sir Robert Laurie, first baronet of Maxwelton, Carcal, 1685. "It is painful to record that, notwithstanding the ardent and chivalrous affection displayed by Mr. Douglas in his poem, he did not obtain the heroine for a wife. She married a Mr. Ferguson of Craigdarroch." The original words have been a trifle modernized, but only slightly, the first verse being unchanged.

Wales

The folk-music of Wales probably contains musical fragments of greater antiquity than are to be found elsewhere in the British Isles, for "Wild Wales," as one of the ancient bards calls it, was the last stronghold of the original inhabitants of Britain. A small but very mountainous country, its folk-music is of an equally wild character with that of the Irish, but on the whole more rugged and sturdy. It does not have the element of humor, as has that of the Irish, but is of a serious and frequently even of a martial character. Many of the Welsh folk-songs are vocal marches of a stirring quality which were evidently used as battle-songs in days gone by. That the Welsh are not entirely given to the expression of rugged and heroic emotions in their music is evidenced by such a tender and poetic song as "All Through the Night." This is a fine traditional Welsh melody of great age: simple, dignified, and expressive. It is the most popular Welsh air in England. Mrs. Opie wrote a poem for it, beginning, "Here beneath a willow weepeth poor Mary Ann."

But the best Welsh tune of all, to our mind, is the sturdy old "March of the Men of Harlech," which has been sung for nearly five centuries. It was first published in Jones's Relics of the Welsh Bards, in 1794, but was composed about 1468, when the Yorks captured

Merionethshire, the ancient capital of Wales, from the Lancastrians. Doctor Crotch, referring to the war-songs of this place and period, says that "the military music of the Welsh is superior to that of any other nation." On the other side of the record is another splendid old Welsh air, of fully as ancient origin, in all probability, as the better known "March of the Men of Harlech." The instrumentation and performance of this music by a Welsh band is eminently in keeping with its virile and wild character.

Italy

This is the land which inspired Mignon's song, the land of sunshine, beauty, and noble art traditions. Its folk-songs reflect and express this graceful and beauty-loving spirit, and are characterized by a most seductive charm. Many of the flowing curves of Italian melody seem almost plastic, like the tender and noble lines of the antique statues. Italian folk-songs are filled with a care-free spirit, and are a perfect expression of the sensuous joy of living. It is not easy to divide Italian song into different types and classes, for the reason that Italians all love music, and make it their own, whether it is a street song or an aria from a grand opera.

The Neapolitan song, "Santa Lucia," was sung in the streets of Naples as early as 1853. It is a folk-song of the composed variety, and is one of the most popular folk-melodies. The composer is T. Cottrau. The song is a great favorite with the Naples fishermen.

A song of a similar type, which is the incarnation of joyous spirits and musical grace, is the Neapolitan song of Di Capua, "O sole mio" ("O sun I love").

Another Italian song, so widely popular that, although the work of a well-known musician in recent years, it is to all intents and purposes a folk-song, is Denza's "Funiculi, Funicula." This song was composed in 1880, and it commemorates in Neapolitan dialect the then recent completion of the Funicular Railway to the summit of Vesuvius.