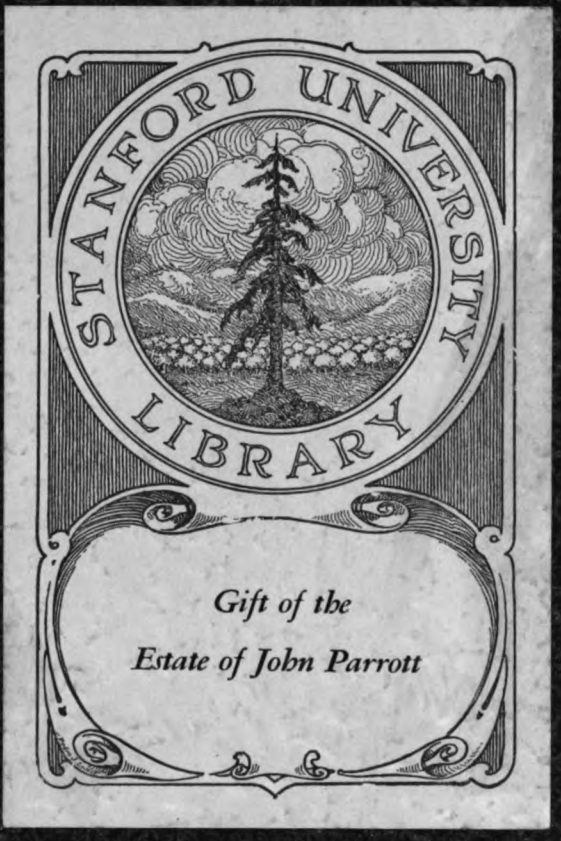
Famous composers and their works

John Knowles Paine, Theodore Thomas, Karl Klauser



Famous Composers and their Works

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Illustrated

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MISCELLANEOUS.

ORLANDO LASSO

Reproduction of an engraving by C. Deblois, after an old German print in the "Cabinet des estampes" in Paris. It bears the inscription, "Orlandus Lassus, musicus excellens."

ORLANDO DI LASSO

ROLAND DELATTRE is generally known by the Italian form of his name, Orlando di Lasso. He was the last great light of the famous school of Netherlands masters who were the real founders of modern musical art. The history of Lasso's career is tolerably well known to us, owing to the existence of Vinchant's "Annals of Hainault" and a sketch by Van Quickelberg published in 1565 in a biographical dictionary called "Heroum Prosopographia." Although the former author was born in 1580, and Lasso died in 1594 or 1595, he places the date of the composer's birth ten years earlier than Van Quickelberg. Fétis gives plausible reasons for accepting Vinchant's date, yet it is probable that Van Quickleberg got his data directly from the composer, of whom he was an intimate friend.

At any rate, he was born in Mons in 1520 or 1530 and at the age of seven began his education. Like all musically gifted persons, he displayed his inclination toward the tone art at an early age, and in his ninth year he began the study of music. At that period music meant counterpoint and church singing. Hence Lasso, being endowed with a fine voice, began his career as a boy chorister in the church of St. Nicolas in his native town. There he became celebrated for the beauty of his voice and was twice stolen but recovered by his parents. The third time the little song-bird was carried off, he consented to remain with Ferdinand Gonzague, viceroy of Sicily and at that time commander of the army of Charles V. When the war was over the lad went with Ferdinand to Sicily and afterward to Milan. Van Quickelberg says that after six years his voice broke and at the age of eighteen he was sent by his patron under charge of Constantin Castriotto to Naples with letters of recommendation to the Marquis of Terza. He became a member of that nobleman's household and remained with him three years. At the end of that time he went to Rome, where he stayed six months as the guest of the archbishop of Florence. He was then appointed chapel-master of the famous church of St. John Lateran. While serving there he was informed of the sickness of his parents, and, probably being somewhat conscience stricken, set out for Mons, where he arrived after his father and mother were dead.

He returned to Rome and soon afterward paid a visit to France and England in company with a noble amateur of music called Julius Caeser Brancaccio. From France he went to Antwerp, where he stayed until he went to Munich in 1557 to enter the service of Albert of Bavaria. The doubt as to the date of his birth makes the length of his residence in Rome uncertain. He was there either two years or twelve, according as he was born in 1520 or 1530. The invitation to Munich seems to show that Lasso had acquired a European reputation as a composer. Such a reputation would naturally have been acquired during a long period of service in the Lateran church. If, however, Lasso did remain in Rome twelve years and produce works which gave him European celebrity, they are lost. Nevertheless even Van Quickelberg's testimony goes to show that Lasso's fame as a composer and as a man had preceded him to Munich. The Duke Albert directed him to engage a number of singers for the ducal choir and take them with him to Munich. Albert V. was a lover of art, and he is credited with being highly pleased at the engagement of Lasso. Quickelberg says that report in the Bavarian capital "was busy as to the character and disposition of the man. He was credited with being a great artist and a high-minded gentleman, and the Munich folk were not to be disappointed. The brilliant wit of the master, his amiability of temper, the cheerfulness of his disposition, and the universality of his knowledge, combined to make him a favorite with all. With

the duke and the duchess he was especially intimate, and owing to their favor was admitted to the highest social gatherings. His introduction to the court

ALBRECHT V.
Reproduced from an ancient prayer book.

nobility resulted in his marriage in 1558 with Regina Welkinger, a maid of honor attendant on the duchess." [Naumann, History of Music, p. 376.]

It may be as well to add here that Lasso and his wife had six children, four sons and two daughters. Ferdinand and Rudolph, the eldest sons, became composers of some note. It was in 1562 that Lasso was made chapel-master to the Duke of Bavaria, thus attaining what was then esteemed as the highest prize in the musical world. He now had under his direction a fine body of singers and instrumentalists, for which a modern composer would have written not only masses, but cantatas and oratorios. We must bear in mind, however, that in Lasso's day church composers preferred the *a capella* style, and the art of orchestral accompaniment, as we understand it now, was unknown. When instruments were used in conjunction with voices they simply doubled the voice parts. Hence Lasso's great compositions are all written for an unaccompanied choir. It appears that Lasso served for five years as chamber musician before being made chapel-master, because Ludwig Daser was not quite old enough to be retired from the higher post and because the Duke wished Lasso to learn the language before assuming the responsibility of the mastership. In 1562, as stated, Daser was retired, and, as Van Quickelberg tells us, "the Duke, seeing that Master Orlando had by this time learnt the language and gained the good will of all by the propriety and gentleness of his behavior, and that his compositions (in number infinite) were universally liked, without loss of time elected him master of the chapel, to the evident pleasure of all."

From this time forward for several years Lasso was engaged in composing his most noted church works, among them being the famous "Penitential Psalms," which are still held in the highest esteem among lovers of pure old church music. He wrote also some of his finest Magnificats, as well as many pieces of secular music. His fame spread through Europe, and though Palestrina was his contemporary, it was Lasso who was spoken of as the "Prince of Musicians." He was also much praised as a conductor, and contemporary writers bear testimony to the fine precision and spirit with which the ducal choir sang under his direction. In 1570 the Emperor Maximilian honored the composer by making him a knight. The following year Pope Gregory XIII. conferred upon him the order of the Golden Spurs. The ceremony was performed with much pomp in the papal chapel at Munich by the chevaliers Cajetan and Mezzacosta. In the same year the composer made a visit to Paris, where he was received with every mark of distinction by Charles IX. This visit and the favor of the monarch have given rise to one of those pretty stories with which the history of music is dotted, but which unfortunately will not bear scrutiny. The story is that Charles IX., tormented by remorse for the massacre of St. Bartholomew, asked Lasso to write his Penitential Psalms as an expression of the kingly repentance. But dates, which are stubborn things, refuse to be reconciled with this story. These psalms were undoubtedly written at the request of Duke Albert. The first volume of them in manuscript is preserved in the Royal State Library at Munich, and it bears the date 1565. The massacre of St. Bartholomew took place in 1572. The value which

Duke Albert set upon these compositions is shown by the manner in which he treated them. They were bound in the most costly manner, in morocco, with silver ornaments which alone cost seven hundred and sixty-four florins. The court painter, Hans Mielich, painted for them portraits of the Duke, Orlando, and of the persons who made the books. J. Sterndale Bennett, in his excellent article on Lasso in Grove's "Dictionary of Music," makes the suggestion that the production of these noble psalms so early in the composer's life at Munich points to the probability that his Roman sojourn was twelve years instead of two, and that he was, therefore, born in 1520 instead of 1530. The inference is hardly avoidable.

To return to the Paris visit, it may be deemed probable that one result of it was the erection of a new Academy of Music, authorized by the king in 1570. The only composition known to have been produced by Lasso in Paris was sent to Duke Albert as "some proof of my gratitude." In 1574 Lasso set out for Paris once more, but when he had gone as far as Frankfort he learned that King Charles IX. was dead; so he returned to Munich, where he resumed the work of composition with undiminished activity. Lasso never left Munich again and a detailed record of his life subsequent to 1575 would consist chiefly of a chronological catalogue of the works which he published. It may be said that he did not produce any large compositions in the years 1578–80. The Duke, who had confirmed him for life in his appointment on his return from Munich, had become ill, and in October, 1579, this generous and high-minded patron of the arts breathed his last.

This was a sad blow to Lasso, whose affection for his princely friend was surely sincere. It was fortunate for the composer's material welfare that Duke Albert's successor was a hearty admirer of his works. The substantial nature of his regard was shown in 1587, when, Lasso having begun to show signs of failing health, the new potentate gave him a country house at Geising on the Ammer. There the composer sought seclusion for a time from the bustle of court life. On April 15, he dedicated twenty-three new madrigals to Dr. Mermann, the court physician, and J. Sterndale Bennett sees in this an evidence of restored health and renewed activity. Near the end of the year, however, he asked to be relieved of some of his numerous duties. The Duke gave him permission to retire from his post and pass a part of each year at Geising with his family, but his salary was to be reduced to two hundred florins per annum. His son Ferdinand, however, was to be appointed a member of the choir at two hundred florins, and Rudolph was to be made organist at the same salary. For some reason Lasso was not satisfied with this arrangement, and so he resumed his labors.

It would be gratifying to be able to picture this great master approaching his end along the green pathway of a serene old age. Unfortunately this cannot be done. His declining years were marked by gloom and morbidity. He talked constantly of death, and became so peevish as to write to Duke William complaining that he had not done all for the composer that Duke Albert had promised.

STATUE OF LASSO IN MUNICH
Erected by Ludwig II.

The devoted wife, Regina, united her efforts with those of Princess Maximiliana to remove the evil effects of this letter. The composer sank gradually and died at Munich on June 14, 1594. He was buried in the cemetery of the Franciscans, and his

widow erected a fine monument to his memory in their church. According to Fétis this stone was two feet four inches high and four feet eight inches long. It had ornamental bas-reliefs representing the holy sepulchre, Lassus and his family at prayer, and the coat-of-arms conferred upon them by the Emperor Maximilian. The inscription on the base was as follows:

"Hic ille est Lassus, lassum qui recreat orbem,
Discordemque sua copulat harmonia."

Here lies he weary who a weary world refreshed,
And discord with his harmony enmeshed.

The reader will note the play on the word *lassus*, weary. The monument was removed when the Franciscan churchyard was dismantled in 1800, and in 1830 the stone disappeared from view. The world of art has to thank the "mad king" Ludwig, of Bavaria (to whom it owes debts of gratitude in connection with Wagner's career), for the erection of a life-size statue in bronze of Orlando Lasso. It stood originally next to the statue of Gluck near the Theatiner Church, but was afterward removed to the public promenade. There is another statue of Lasso at Mons, where he was born.

Lasso was one of the most prolific composers that ever lived. He is said to have written no less than two thousand five hundred original works. A great number of these have been preserved, but the reader who is not able to decipher antique scores will undoubtedly be most interested in those which have been republished in modern form. These are as follows: his famous seven Penitential Psalms, edited by S. W. Dehn and published in Berlin in 1835; a "Regina coeli," "Salve Regina," "Angelus ad pastores," and "Miserere," Rochlitz's "Sammlung vorzüglicher Gesangstücke," Vol. I., published by Schott in 1838; a setting of the twenty-third Psalm as a motet for five voices, a "Quo properas" for ten voices, and a Magnificat for five, published at Berlin by Schlesinger; "Confirma hoc deus" for six voices, Berlin, Guttentag; six German chansons (four voices) and one dialogue (eight voices) in Dehn's "Sammlung alter Musik," Berlin, Crantz; twelve motets (four to eight voices) in Commer's collection published by Schott of Mainz; twenty motets in Proske's "Musica Divina"; the mass "Qual donna attende" (five voices) in Proske's selection of masses published at Ratisbon, 1856; the mass "Or sus à coup" (four voices), edited by Ferrenberg and published by Heberle at Cologne in 1847. Many more of his works have been edited and are ready for publication, but remain in MS. The above list is taken from Scribner's "Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians," and appears to be correct, as far as it goes. Naumann's "History of Music" contains a very beautiful "Adoramus te Christe," a chorale for four male voices. Lest the reader should fall into the error of supposing that the great bulk of Lasso's works were ecclesiastical, it should be mentioned that he wrote many German songs, fifty-nine canzonets, three hundred and seventy-one French songs, thirty-four Latin songs, and two hundred and thirty-three madrigals. Of these last, at least one — "Matrona, mia cara" — holds its own among the glees of to-day; and its quaint refrain of "Dong, dong, dong, derry, derry, dong, dong," haunts every ear that once has heard it.

From portrait in the "Penitential Psalms," set by Lasso, in the Royal State Library at Munich.

To rightly appreciate the value of Lasso's music one must bear in mind the history of the great Netherlands school as a whole. Lasso was the perfect blossom of a plant of long growth. His earliest predecessors had been occupied in manufacturing musical materials, systematizing the old chaotic practice of the mere improvisers and establishing

fundamental forms on which the superstructure of modern music was to be reared. In their efforts at perfecting these forms they had fallen into extravagances, often losing sight of the nature and purpose of music, of which at the best they had a very imperfect comprehension. Occasionally, at least once in each period of the existence of the school, a composer arose who urged forward the march of development. A host of imitators would follow, and in imitating the new forms and touches of a creative mind these men could fall back into mere formal ingenuity again, and stay there till another original thinker arose. The progress of musical art, therefore, might be likened to the rising of the ocean tide on the beach, moving forward in a series of waves, each followed by receding water.

ORLANDO DI LASSO.

From a very early period in the rise of the Netherlands school a movement toward beauty and simplicity of form and expression can be traced. This movement came to its destination in Lasso. He did not, it is true, abandon the contrapuntal forms of his predecessors; but he wholly subordinated them to his purpose, and his purpose was plainly the expression of those feelings which belong to man's religious nature. He succeeded in keeping this purpose uppermost, no matter in what style he chose to write. Sometimes he composed simple chorales in which the voices moved simultaneously, and again he wrote hymns in four parts, adding a popular melody as a discant. He moved from either of these styles to the most complicated polyphonic manner of the Des Prés period without sacrifice of dignity, musical beauty or religious fervor. He wrote works for two and three choirs, and he wrote others for only two voices. In the Penitential Psalms he clearly demonstrated that a

mass of voices and parts was not necessary to an attainment of impressive effect, for he showed that he could be most powerfully expressive and influential while employing the simplest of means. Some of his writing is extremely old-fashioned even for his time. It might have been handed down from the days of Ockeghem. Again he plunges boldly into the labyrinth of chromatics and makes one think he hears the voice of Cyprian de Rore. In short, we must concede that Lasso displayed in his constructive skill the versatility of a complete master, while through all his work there runs the never-failing current of personal influence that flows only from the masterful individuality of a real genius.

Interesting comparisons have been drawn between the style of Lasso and that of Palestrina. The fact is that in formal arrangement Palestrina's masses bear a close assemblance to the most modern of Lasso's works. It is only when the Flemish master is writing in the style of his predecessors that his construction ceases to bear resemblance to that of the Italian. Both excelled in one style — that in which the profundity of contrapuntal skill results in an appearance of simplicity and in a real conveyance of emotion. The difference between the men lies in the character of their musical thought, and that difference has been most excellently expressed by Ambros, who says: "The one (Palestrina) brings the angelic host to earth; the other raises man to eternal regions, both meeting in the realm of the ideal." Fétis, in his prize essay of 1828, says: "Too many writers in their eulogies of Lasso have called him the Prince of musicians of his age. Whatever be the respect which I have for that great man, I declare that I am not able to acquiesce in this exaggerated admiration. It is sufficient for the glory of Lasso that he equalled the reputation of a musician like Palestrina; it would be unjust to accord him the superiority. In examining the works of these two celebrated artists, one remarks the different qualities which they possess and which gives to them an individual physiognomy. The music of the former is graceful and elegant (for the time in which it was composed); but that of Palestrina has more force and seriousness. That of Lasso is more singable and shows greater imagination, but that of his rival is much more learned. In the motets and madrigals of Palestrina are effects of mass which are admirable; but the French songs of Lasso are full of most interesting details. In fine they deserve to be compared with one another; that is a eulogy of both."

Fétis's assertion that the music of Palestrina is the more learned is a trifle vague. The fact is that the learning of Palestrina's music is greater than that of Lasso's only because the former more successfully conceals itself. Nothing could be more lovely in its simplicity than Lasso's "Adoramus te" given by Naumann, but its simplicity is that of the chorale style. The "Regina Coeli" given by Rochlitz is a fine specimen of double counterpoint. The "Salve Regina," given by the same author, is in free chorale style and is written for solo quartet and chorus. The "Angelus ad pastores," while not strict in its counterpoint, is full of learned work, yet withal is not involved in style. The "Principal Parts of the 51st Psalm," also printed in Rochlitz's work, looks very much like a modern anthem, especially the "Gloria patri." The madrigals of Lasso are charming in their native humor and in the piquancy of their part writing.

The influence of Lasso upon later composers cannot well be separated from the general influence of his time, for the contrapuntal church style was the prevailing manner of composition throughout Europe. The Belgian, Italian, and German music of the time is all built on the model established by the Netherlands masters. But Lasso must be credited with having done almost as much as Palestrina toward showing how ecclesiastical music could be written in an artistic but wholly intelligible manner. The German writers who imitated him (Ludwig Senfl, Paul Gerhardt and others) in their Protestant chorals and motets led the way directly to the motets, cantatas and passion music of the Bach period, and Lasso through his influence on them contributed toward the development of the genius of the immortal Sebastian.

W. J. Henderson

THE NETHERLAND MASTERS

THE NETHERLAND MASTERS

THE improvisatore nursed the infancy of both poetry and music. The latter did not grow to the stature of an art until the rude improvisations of its early guardians gave way to the systematic compositions of the Netherland masters. Systematic composition, however, presupposes the existence of three fundamental elements, none of which had assumed tangible form in the earliest days recorded in musical history. These elements are harmony, notation and measure. Huckbald, a Benedictine Monk of St. Armand in Flanders, is credited with being the first to formulate rules for harmony about 895 A. D. His ideas were crude and their results disagreeable to the modern ear. He used chiefly parallel fourths and fifths, but he employed another freer style in which a melody moved flexibly above a fixed bass — the earliest form of pedal point. Harmony was not invented by Huckbald, but he must be honored as the writer of the first treatise on the subject. The field once opened up was industriously cultivated, and by the time the era of the Netherland school began, had been productive of a rich harvest. Notation was also a plant of slow growth, but the employment of four lines in a staff, together with the spaces, was introduced by Guido of Arezzo, who died in 1050. The formulation of rules for measure was the work of Franco of Cologne, who flourished 1200 A. D. He adopted four characters to represent sounds of different lengths. These notes were the *longa*, ▬; the *brevis*, ▬; the *duplex longa*, ▬; and the *semi brevis*, ◆. He also distinguished common from triple time, calling the latter "perfect." Fétis quotes from the introduction to Franco's "Ars Cantus Mensurabilis" the following words: "We propose, therefore, to set forth in this volume this same measured music. We shall not refuse to make known the good ideas of others, nor to expose their mistakes; and if we have invented anything good, we shall support it with good arguments." Fétis, however, makes this significant remark: "Néanmoins le profond savoir qu'on remarque dans l'ouvrage de Francon, et l'obscurité dans laquelle sont ensevelis et les noms et les œuvres de ceux, auxquels il attribue la première invention de la musique mesurée, le feront à jamais regarder comme le premier auteure de cette importante découverte." [Fétis, Mémoire sur cette Question: "Quels ont été les mérites des Neerlandais dans la musique," etc. — Question mise au concours pour l'année 1828 par la quatrieme classe de l'Institut des Sciences, de Litterature et des Beaux Arts du Royaume des Pays-Bas.]

With harmony and measure governed by rules and the written page at hand as a conserving power, systematic composition became a possibility. The study of this art was the work of monks, who were the repositories of polite learning in the middle ages, and they naturally sought for their thematic material in the plain chant of the church. Their treatment of this chant was a natural outgrowth of the impromptu production of music which had preceded systematic composition and which clung to existence with great pertinacity. Guido of Arezzo had taught choristers the art of singing with such success that they began the long-honored custom of adding ornaments to their melodies. They carried this practice to such an extent that it became necessary for one singer to intone the melody while another sang the ornamental part. This adding of ornamental parts was called the art of discant; and when the monks took up scientific composition they simply added discants to the liturgical chants of the church. This was the beginning of counterpoint, the art of writing two or more melodies which shall proceed simultaneously without breaking the rules of harmony. The name "counterpoint" was early applied to it by Johannes de Muris, doctor of theology at the University of Paris

in the beginning of the fourteenth century. This indicates that by his time the scientific setting of note against note had fully superseded discant, the fanciful elaboration of the singers.

It was in the hands of the great masters of the Netherland school that this counterpoint, the first species of scientific composition, was developed to its highest perfection. In the main the differences between their counterpoint and ours are due to the cramped harmony of their time, which was fettered by the employment of the Gregorian scales. The superiority of Bach's counterpoint over theirs from a technical point of view is the result of his mastery of chromatics and his perfection of the system of equal temperament. With the aesthetic superiority of his work we need not concern ourselves, for we must bear in mind the fact that most of the Netherland masters were absorbed in developing the technical construction of music, and had little to do with the exploration of its emotional possibility.

Systems are not completed in a day. Those writers on musical history who pass immediately from the labors of Franco to the Netherland masters ignore the long series of tentative works of the French composers who flourished between 1100 and 1370 A. D., and of the English composers who flourished between the same years. It is a well established fact that in England there were many writers who showed skill in the early contrapuntal forms. Johannes Tinctoris, a Netherlander, writing in 1460 A. D., went so far as to say that the source of counterpoint was among the English, of whom Dunstable was in his opinion the greatest light. Walter Odington, an Englishman, wrote a learned treatise on counterpoint in 1217, and some authorities accept him as the composer of the notable canonic composition, "Sumer is icumen in." It is pretty clearly established, however, that Odington was a disciple of the French school, while Dunstable, being a contemporary of Binchois, was of later birth than the early French composers. The writer of this paper is of the opinion that the line of contrapuntal development appears to join Flanders with France rather than with England, and he, therefore, prefers to consider chiefly the French school.

The Frenchman, Jean Perotin, then, about 1130 A. D., employed imitation, and one of his immediate successors, Jean de Garlande, says in his treatise on music that double counterpoint was known before his time. He says it is the repetition of the same phrase by different voices at different times. It is impracticable in this article to review in detail the achievements of the French school, but a summary of its work is necessary to a comprehension of the Netherland school. The Frenchmen possessed three kinds of harmonic combinations: the Déchant (discant) or double, the triple and the quadruple, or in other words, contrapuntal compositions in two, three and four parts. Discants were of two kinds. In the first the cantus firmus, or fixed chant of the liturgy, was sung by one voice (called tenor—Latin, *teneo*, I hold—because it held the tune) while the other added a discant above it. In the second the discant was freely composed, and a lower part, or bass added.

Three-part compositions were of four kinds: fauxbourdon, motet, rondeau and conduit, the last three being written also in four parts. Fauxbourdon was simply a three-voiced chant, the parts having similar motion, the upper and lower being parallel sixths and the middle in fourths with the discant. In the motet each voice had a text of its own. The rondo was secular and was developed from the folk-music of the day. The conduit was uncertain in form, secular in character, and, like the rondo, was written for either voices or instruments. The early French masters made extensive use of the parallel movement of voices, yet had plainly no conception of harmony founded on chords. They show a much clearer purpose in their contrapuntal writings wherein the imitations are plainly devised according to rules. But the entire musical product of France between 1100 and 1250 was the cold, mathematical work of academicians, who nevertheless served the cause of the tone art by laying down indispensable laws. The last great master of this school, William of Machaut, who wrote the celebrated Coronation Mass for the crowning of Charles V., flourished between 1284 and 1369. Naturally enough the teachings of the French spread into the provinces of Belgium, and there grew up a school from which the Netherland masters rose. The most prominent early Belgian composer was Dufay (1350–1432). This writer introduced secular melodies into his masses, forbade the use of consecutive fifths, and freely used interrupted canonic part writing, in which the imitation appears only at occasional effective places. His works show evidences of a vague groping after euphonic beauty. Antoine de Busnois, who died in 1482, was the last of these

early masters. His works abound in clever use of the devices of imitation and inversion. His canonic writing is more finished and his harmony bolder than Dufay's. The character of the music produced at this time has been well described by Mr. Rockstro. He says: "At this period, representing the infancy of art, the subject, or canto fermo, was almost invariably placed in the tenor and sung in long sustained notes, while two or more supplementary voices accompanied it with an elaborate counterpoint, written like the canto fermo itself in one or other of the ancient ecclesiastical modes, and consisting of fugal passages, points of imitation, or even canons, all suggested by the primary idea, and all working together for a common end."

Dufay was the connecting link between the French School and the great Netherland masters. At this time the Dutch led the world in painting, in the liberal arts and in commercial enterprise. Their skill in mechanics was unequalled, and we naturally expect to see their musicians further the development of musical technique. We must bear in mind facts to which the writer has had to refer elsewhere ("Story of Music," p. 21). "The general tendency of European thought at this time also had its bearing on the tone art. Scholasticism was in full sway, and such philosophers as Albertus Magnus, John Duns Scotus and William of Ockham were engaged in wondrous metaphysical hair-splitting, endeavoring to reduce Aristotelianism to a Christian basis by the application of the most vigorous logic. This spirit of scholasticism entered music, and contrapuntal science by too much learning was made mad." Yet the essential nature of music could not be wholly suppressed, and as the writers of the time acquired that marvellous mastery of musical material which came from their practice of counterpoint, they began to use their science as a means and not an end; and finally the masters of the Netherland school attained the loftiest heights of church composition. Various divisions of the periods of development of this school have been made. That adopted by the writer is Emil Naumann's with some alterations. It does not appear to be necessary to set the Dutch members of the school apart from the Belgians; and the writer, in his estimate of the comparative importance of the masters, agrees with Kiesewetter and Fétis rather than with Naumann. The division of the school into four periods, as follows, seems to be a fair one:

NETHERLANDS SCHOOL (1425–1625 A.D.).
First Period, 1425–1512.
Chief masters: Ockeghem, Hobrecht, Brumel.
Second Period, 1455–1526.
Chief masters: Josquin des Près, Jean Mouton.
Third Period, 1495–1572.
Chief masters: Gombert, Willaert, Goudimel, De Rore, Jannequin, Arkadelt.
Fourth Period, 1520–1625.
Chief masters: Orlando Lasso, Swelinck, De Monte.

Johannes Ockeghem, the most accomplished writer of the first period, was born between 1415 and 1430, probably at Termonde in East Flanders. It is likely that he studied music under Binchois, a contemporary of Dufay. At any rate an Ockeghem was one of the college of singers at the Antwerp cathedral in 1443, when Binchois was choir master. About 1444 the youth entered the service of Charles VII. of France, as a singer. He stood high in the favor of Louis XI., who made him treasurer of the church of St. Martin's at Tours. There Ockeghem passed the remainder of his life, retiring from active service about 1490. He died about 1513.

Octavio dei Petrucci, of Fossombrone, invented movable types for printing music in 1502, and obtained a patent for the exclusive use of the process for fifteen years in 1513. By that time the advance in the mastery of counterpoint had left Ockeghem somewhat out of fashion; and it is, therefore, not remarkable that Petrucci's earliest collections contain nothing by this master. Not till years after his death was any mass or motet of his given to the world. Then only one was printed entire. This was his "Missa cujusvis toni," which was plainly selected because of its science. Extracts from his "Missa Prolationum" were used in theoretical treatises; and, indeed, Ockeghem's music seems generally to have been cherished wholly on account of the technical instruction which might be derived from it. The list of his extant compositions, as given in Scribner's "Cyclopedia of Music," is as follows:

"Missa cujusvis toni," in Liber XV., missarum (Petreius, Louvain, 1538); six motets and a sequence (Petrucci, Venice, 1503); an enigmatic canon in S. Heyden's "Ars Canendi" and in Glarean's "Dodekachordon"; fragments of "Missa prolationum" in Heyden's book and in Bellermann's "Kontrapunkt"; mass "De plus en plus," MS. in Pontifical Chapel, Rome; two masses,

"Pour quelque peine" and "Ecce ancilla Domini," in the Brussels Library; motets in MS. in Rome, Florence and Dijon; six masses, an Ave and some motets in Van der Straeten; Kyrie and Christe, from "Missa cujusvis toni" in Rochlitz.

This list is probably correct except the six motets and a sequence set down as published by Petrucci in 1503. Ambros, who is always trustworthy and who mentions all these works and also three songs (D'ung aultre mer," "Aultre Venus" and "Rondo Royal") and a motet ("Alma redemptoris") in MS. at Florence, did not discover any publications by Petrucci. The enigmatical canon was solved by Kiesewetter, Burney, Hawkins and other historians; but the solution believed to be most nearly correct is that of the profound contrapuntist and excellent historian, Fétis. Glareanus (Dodekachordon, p. 454) speaks also of a motet for thirty-six voices. This was, no doubt, originally written for six or nine voices, the other parts being derived from them by canons. It is not certain, however, that Ockeghem ever wrote such a work. The "Missa cujusvis toni" ("A mass in any tone," or scale, as we should say now) may have been written as an exercise for the master's pupils, as some historians conjecture, but it seems more probable that it was a natural outgrowth of the puzzle-building spirit of the time and of Ockeghem's especial fondness for displays of musical ingenuity. The peculiarity of the mass is that it employs in a remarkable manner all the church modes or scales. It was sung in Munich many years after Ockeghem's death and a corrected copy of it is still preserved in the chapel.

Fétis says: "As a professor, Ockeghem was also very remarkable, for all the most celebrated musicians at the close of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century were his pupils." In the "Complaint" written after his death by William Grespel, appear the following lines:

> "Argicola, Verbonnet, Prioris,
> Josquin des Près, Gaspard, Brumel, Compère,
> Ne parlez plus de Joyeul chants, ne ris,
> Mais composez un ne recorderis,
> Pour lamentir nostre maistre et bon père."

Antoine Brumel achieved the greatest distinction among these pupils. He was born about 1460 and died about 1520. His personal history is lost. The present age possesses, however, a fuller record of his work than it has of his master's. In one volume printed by Petrucci in 1503 and to be found in the Royal Library at Berlin, there are five of his masses. Another mass by this composer is in a volume of works by various writers, printed also by Petrucci. A copy of this composition is in the British Museum. A number of masses and motets of his are scattered through other collections of Petrucci's. Others exist in MS. in Munich. Brumel's motet, "O Domine Jesu Christe, pastor bone," quoted by Naumann, is written in a clear and dignified style, abounds in full chords, and contains only such passages of imitation as would readily suggest themselves. A better example of the style of the period is his canonic, "Laudate Dominum," given by Foskel and Kiesewetter.

Jacob Hobrecht, the principal Dutch master of the first Netherland period, was born about 1430, at Utrecht, where he subsequently became chapel-master. It does not appear on record anywhere that he was a pupil of Ockeghem, but he was unquestionably a disciple of that composer. He achieved celebrity in his life time and was honored with many distinctions. He wrote a mass for the choir of the Bruges Cathedral, and the whole body journeyed to Antwerp to pay him homage. It is stated that he also received a visit from Bishop Borbone of Cortona, leader of the papal choir. Hobrecht became chapel-master at Utrecht, about 1465, and had there a choir of seventy voices. A part of his life was spent in Florence at the court of Lorenzo the Magnificent, where he met Josquin des Près.

The indefatigable Ambros goes into a careful discussion of eight masses of Hobrecht's, published in the Petrucci collections. Of these the best, known as the "Fortuna desperata," was published in modern notation at Amsterdam in 1870. Examples of Hobrecht's writing are also to be found in the works of Burney, Forkel, Kiesewetter, and Naumann. One of Hobrecht's musical feats was the composition of a mass in a single night. His works contain all the canonic inventions employed by Ockeghem, and are a mine of contrapuntal learning. Doubtless when sung by the trained cathedral choirs of their period, they were impressive to ears not attuned to modern tonality.

So much for the personal history of the most brilliant lights of the time. More instructive will be a review of the musical character of their work.

It is the prevailing influence of one or two masters in each period that marks its extent. Its char-

acter was formed by that influence, and salient features of the style of each period may be fairly distinguished. The first period was marked by the extreme development of the canon. Perhaps for the benefit of the reader who may not have studied counterpoint it would be well to give here one or two elementary definitions. Imitation, in the words of Sir Frederick A. Gore-Ouseley, is "a repetition, more or less exact, by one voice of a phrase or passage previously enunciated by another. If the imitation is absolutely exact as to intervals it becomes a canon." Canon is the most rigorous species of imitation. Naturally then, as imitation is the foundation of fugal writing, the first occupation of musicians was its perfection. Thus we see that the composers of the first period of the Netherland school were almost wholly engaged in exploring the resources of canonic composition, and the most celebrated of their number, Ockeghem, was he who displayed the greatest ingenuity in this style. To describe the various forms of canonic jugglery invented by Ockeghem and his contemporaries would weary the reader; but a few may be mentioned as examples of the craft exercised at that time.

First, there was the "cancriza," or backward movement of the cantus firmus, in which the melody was repeated interval by interval, beginning at the last note and moving toward the first. Second, there was the inverted canon, in which the inversion consisted of beginning at the original first note and proceeding with each interval reversed, so that a melody which had ascended would, in the inversion, descend. In the canon by augmentation the subject reappears in one of the subsidiary parts in notes twice as long as those in which it was originally announced. Conversely in the canon by diminution the subject is repeated in notes of smaller duration than those first used. These four forms are still extant and have been employed by most great composers of modern music from Bach to the present time. The canon by augmentation is often used in choral music, especially in the bass, with superb effect. Indeed all the varieties described are to be found in the music of Handel and Bach, the latter being a complete master of their use in instrumental as well as choral composition.

But the composers of the first Netherland period employed kinds of canonic writing which are now looked upon as mere curiosities. Among these were the repetition of the cantus firmus beginning with the second note and ending with the first; the repetition with the omission of all the rests; the perfect repetition of the whole melody; a repetition half forward and half backward; and another with the omission of all the shortest notes. Naumann is of the opinion that these forms "arose from an earnest desire to consolidate a system of part-writing which could only exist after a complete mastery had been obtained over all kinds of musical contrivances." Kiesewetter, also generous in his views, says that these writers excel their predecessors in possessing "a greater facility in counterpoint and fertility in invention; their compositions, moreover, being no longer mere premeditated submissions to the contrapuntal operation, but for the most part being indicative of thought and sketched out with manifest design, being also full of ingenious contrivances of an obligato counterpoint, at that time just discovered, such as augmentation, diminution, inversion, imitation; together with canons and fugues of the most manifold description."

Of Ockeghem in particular, Rochlitz ("Sammlung vorzüglicher Gesangstücke," Vol. I., p. 22) says: "His style was distinguished from that of his predecessors, especially Dufay, principally in two ways: it was more artistic and was not founded on well-known melodies, but in part on freely made melodic movements contrapuntally developed, which rendered the style richer and more varied."

This statement is undoubtedly true, and may be taken for all it is worth. But the prima facie evidence of the works of these masters is that the writers were bent on exhausting the resources of canonic ingenuity, that their private study was all devoted to the exploration of academic counterpoint, that they worked in slavish obedience to the contrapuntal formulas which they themselves had contrived, and that their most ambitious compositions were nothing more or less than brilliant specimens of technical skill. To this estimate of their work excellent support is given by the significant criticism of Martin Luther on the writing of Josquin des Près, chief master of the second period. The great reformer said: "Josquin is a master of the notes; they have to do as he wills, other composers must do as the notes will." Furthermore the Latin formulas used in noting canons in Ockeghem's day go far toward proving that it was the mechanical ingenuity of the form which appealed to the masters of that time. They were in the habit of putting

forth a canonic subject with the general indication "Ex una plures," signifying that several parts were to be evolved from one, and a special direction, such as "Ad medium referas, pausas relinque priores," darkly hinting at the manner of the working out. These riddle canons date back to Dufay's time, but they were the special delight of Ockeghem and his contemporaries. The results of such practice could only be musical mathematics, yet the masters of this period performed a lasting service to art; for they laid down rules for this kind of composition and in their own works indicated the path by which artistic results might be reached by their successors. The highest praise that can be awarded to their works is that they are profound in their scholarship, not without evidences of taste in the selection of the formulas to be employed, and certainly imbued with a good deal of the dignity which would inevitably result from a skilful contrapuntal treatment of the church chant. Ambros finds evidences of design in one of Ockeghem's motets, from which he quotes, but the design is certainly not of the kind which would call for praise if discovered in contemporaneous music. Naumann, who is quite carried away by the improvement of the first Netherlands compositions over those of the French contrapuntists, is warm in his praise of these early canonists. He says:

"Almost at the beginning of the Netherland school, mechanical invention was made subservient to idea. It was no longer contrapuntal writing for counterpoint's sake. Excesses were toned down, and the desire unquestionable was that the contrapuntist's art should occupy its proper position as a means to an end. Euphony and beauty of expression were the objects of the composer. In part writing each voice was made to relate to the other in a manner totally unknown to the Paris masters. Such were the first beginnings of the 'canonic' form, and fugato system of writing, the herald of that scholarly class of compositions known as fugues, the end and aim of which it is to connect in the closest possible manner the various component parts. It was this complete mastery over counterpoint in all its varying details that gave to the tone-masters such unbounded artistic liberty. No longer was it necessary that they should, like the organists, cantors, and magisters of Paris and Tournay, exhibit their power over newly-acquired contrivances, but, as inheritors of a system of inventive skill, the devices and contrivances fell into their proper and natural channel, and were regarded as merely subordinate to a purer tonal expression of feelings than had hitherto been attempted. Henceforth counterpoint was but a means to an end, and art-music began to assume for the first time the characteristics of folk-music, i. e., the free, pure and natural outflow of heart and mind, with the invaluable addition, however, of intellectual manipulation."

Naumann's comments are the result of his overvaluation of the purely tentative labors of the early French school and his manifest eagerness to find grounds for laudation of the writers of the first Netherland period. It is a plain fact, to which all evidence points, that the man looked up to as the chief master of the period was a profound academician and that he was greater as a teacher than as a composer. That his successors did achieve something in the way of euphonic beauty and freedom of style is certainly true, as can be demonstrated by an examination of the works of Josquin des Près. Even the Dutchmen Hobrecht and Brumel sometimes struggled toward a simpler and purer musical expression than was to be attained through Ockeghem's canonic labyrinths, but the famous teacher's influence prevailed over the spirit of his time, and the musicians were, for the most part, like the Mastersingers, slaves of the contemporaneous *leges tabulaturae*. The unbounded delight which they took in the solution of riddle canons is a proof of the view they took of their art. Dr. Langhans, who is too calm a critic to be led into special pleading, says:

"The origin of the methods of notation which were in favor with the Netherlandic composers is to be sought in the fact that the newly acquired art of counterpoint was regarded preëminently as a means of exercising the sagacity of the composer as well as of the performer." The author continues pointing out that "at last there existed so many signs, not strictly belonging to notation, that a composition for many voices, even when these entered together, could be written down with but one series of notes, it being left to the sagacity of the performers to divine the composer's intention by means of the annexed signs."

Thus we see that the first period of the Netherland school was characterized by a search after ingenious forms, and this search was carried to such an extent that the composer, having found a new

form, gave a hint at it and then invited the executant to do a little searching on his own account. The writer believes that his assertion that this was an era of pure mechanics in music is sound and is supported by sufficient evidence.

But it was an era of short duration. Although Ockeghem and his closest imitators carried the mechanical period up to 1512, it overlapped the beginning of the second period, in which euphony sought and found recognition in music. The chief master of the period, Josquin des Près (his name appears in different places as Jodocus a Prato and a Pratis), was the first real genius in the history of modern music.

JOSQUIN DES PRÈS.
From Van der Straeten's "Musique aux pay bas," loaned by the Newberry Library, Chicago.

Like Fétis, "I should never finish if I undertook to cite all the authorities who show the high esteem which Josquin des Près enjoyed in his day and after his death." Nothing more admirable has been written in regard to this master than that portion of Fétis's prize essay of 1828 which treats of him, and it would be a pleasure to give a full translation of it; but that is impracticable. On the authority of Duverdier, Ronsard, the poet, and others, Fétis shows that Josquin was born about 1450 in the province of Hainault, probably at Condé. His correct name, as shown by his epitaph, was Josse. Josquin comes from the Latinized form of Jossekin, a diminutive of his name. His early instruction in music he obtained as a choir boy in St. Quentin, where in his young manhood he became chapel master. St. Quentin is not far from Tours, and at the latter place lived Ockeghem. Thither went Josquin to study under the most famous master of the day. It is impossible to be sure at this time whether Josquin became chapel-master immediately after finishing his studies or first went to Italy. It is probable that his term of study under Ockeghem was a long one, for he became a perfect master of all his teacher's wonderful contrapuntal knowledge. Adam de Bolensa, author of a work dealing with the history of the choir of the papal chapel, says that Josquin was a singer there during the pontificate of Sixtus IV., which lasted from 1471 till 1484. While there he wrote several of his finest masses, of which the MSS. are still carefully preserved in the library of the Sistine chapel. Josquin had already achieved great distinction and was rapidly rising to the position of first composer of his day.

On the death of Sixtus IV. he betook himself to the court of Hercules d'Est, duke of Ferrara. Under the patronage of this nobleman he wrote his mass "Hercules dux Ferrariae" and his Miserere. In spite of the magnificence of the court of Ferrara and the opportunity of a permanent settlement, Josquin remained only a short time, and departed into France, where he at once obtained the favor of Louis XII. and became his *premier chanteur*. This, however, was not a post of such importance as the master deserved and he again sought a new patron. This time he entered the service of Maximilian I., the emperor of the Netherlands. This potentate made him provost

in the cathedral of Condé, where he passed the remainder of his life, dying, as the epitaph in the choir of the cathedral shows, on August 27, 1521.

The most noted of Josquin's disciples was Jean Mouton, who died in 1522. He was so faithful a scholar that a motet of his was for a long time supposed to be the work of Josquin. He also wrote several psalms, but his masses and motets are his best works.

Josquin des Près attained greater celebrity in his lifetime than any other composer in the early centuries of modern music except Orlando di Lasso. Baini, the biographer of Palestrina, says there was "only Josquin in Italy, only Josquin in France, only Josquin in Germany; in Flanders, in Bohemia, in Hungaria, in Spain, only Josquin." Fétis says, "His superiority over his rivals, his fecundity and the great number of ingenious inventions which he spread through his works placed him far beyond comparison with other composers, who could do no better than become his imitators." A large number of Josquin's works exists yet and bears evidence to the justice of the esteem in which he was held by his contemporaries. His printed compositions are nineteen masses, fifty secular pieces, and over one hundred and fifty motets. His finest masses are the "La sol fa re mi," "Ad fugam," "De Beata Virgine" aud "Da Pacem." The Incarnatus of the last, in Naumann's judgment, has never been surpassed by any master of modern times.

Josquin, as already intimated, was the first composer who strove to make contrapuntal ingenuity a means and not an end, and he is, therefore, to be credited with the introduction of a new era in music. It must not be supposed that he was always wise, for he twice set to music the genealogy of Christ, a subject in which no romantic composer would seek for inspiration. Again he continued the practice of writing masses on the melodies of popular songs such as "L'Homme Armé," mingling the text of the song with the solemn words of the liturgy in a way which showed a lack of perfect artistic taste. Fétis's estimate of Josquin's genius is worthy of reproduction here. He says:

"If one examines the works of this composer, he is struck with the appearance of freedom which prevails in them in spite of the dry combinations which he was obliged to make in obedience to the taste of the time. He is credited with being the inventor of most of the scientific refinements which were at once adopted by the composers of all nations, and perfected by Palestrina and other Italian musicians. Canonic art is especially indebted to him, if not for its invention, at least for considerable development and perfection. He is the first who wrote regularly in more than two parts. Finally he introduced into music an air of elegance unknown before his time and which his successors did not always happily imitate. Moreover, he became the model which each one set for himself in the first half of the sixteenth century as the *ne plus ultra* of composition."

Ambros says: "In Josquin we have the first musician who creates a genial impression," and he calls attention to his employment of the dissonance to express emotion.

To summarize the whole matter, it appears, in spite of the hints of Fétis that Josquin was possibly the inventor of canonic art, that this composer was the first gifted musician who found the formal material of his art sufficiently developed to admit of his approaching self-expression through music. The earlier masters had given their time and study to the foundation of contrapuntal science. Josquin, having learned all that Ockeghem could teach him, was ready to begin in the vigor of his young manhood to use his science as a means and not an end. This accounts for the air of freedom, which, as Fétis notes, is a conspicuous merit of his work. Luther's comment, previously quoted, shows that this freedom must have been noticeable even to his contemporaries, though they could not perceive its reason nor estimate its value. Josquin, like all other great geniuses, was in advance of the ordinary minds of his time, and most of his contemporaries continued to work out the old contrapuntal puzzles in the old spirit. But the influence of Josquin made itself felt among the more gifted musicians of the day, and paved the way for the third period of the Netherland school, which, while boasting of no such genius as Josquin, was richer in results than the second.

The third period, extending from 1495 to 1572, was particularly rich in masters who advanced the development of musical art and whose names deserve to be remembered. Nicolas Gombert was born at Bruges and was in some capacity, not definitely known, in the service of Charles V. Herman Finck tells us ("Novi sunt inventores, in quibus est Nicolaus Gombert, Jusquini piae memoriae discipulus") that he was a pupil of Josquin, and he set to

music a poem by Avidius on the death of Josquin. Burney deciphered this music and found that it was a servile imitation of the composer's master. Gombert was educated for the church, and he was a priest till the end of his life, though he acted as chapel-master. The records of his career are very scanty and it is probable that his life was uneventful. The latter part of his existence was passed in the enjoyment of a sinecure office under the king of the Netherlands.

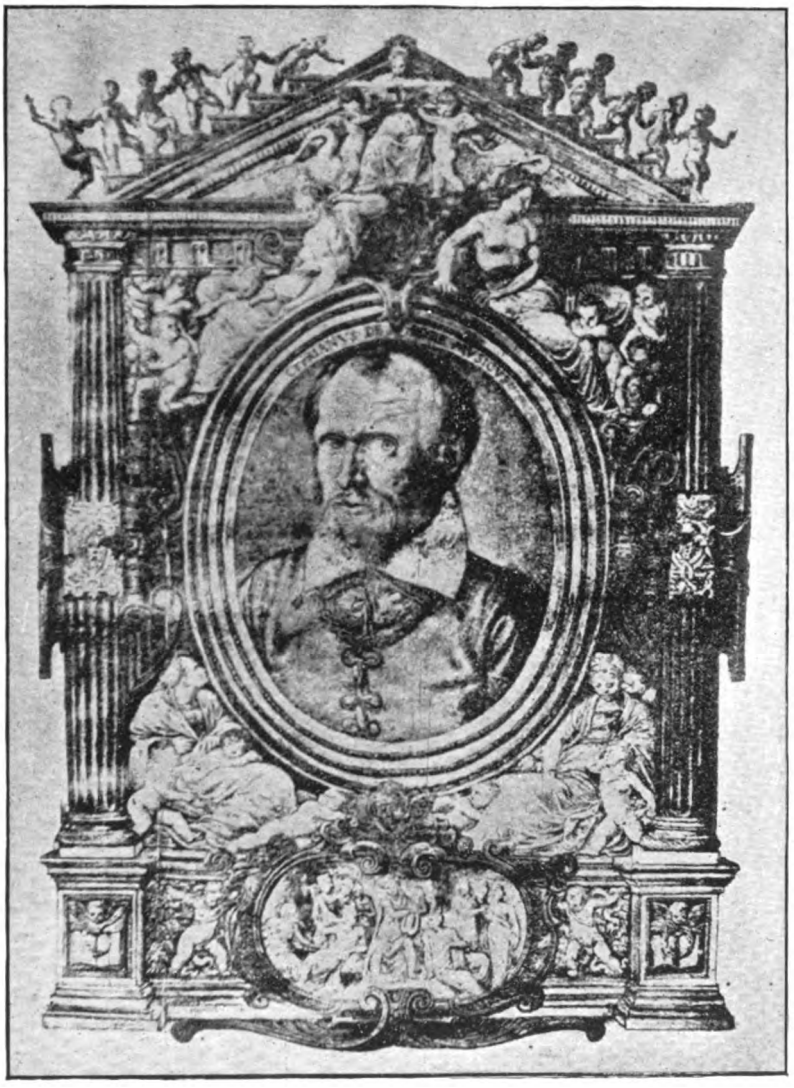
Adrian Willaert, the most brilliant light of the third period, was born in Bruges in 1480. He was sent to Paris to study law, but his gift for music soon turned his mind to the study of counterpoint. It is uncertain whether he was a pupil of Josquin or of Mouton. On the completion of his studies he returned to Flanders, but soon departed to Rome. There he heard one of his own motets, "Verbum dulce et suave," performed as the work of Josquin. He promptly claimed it as his work, whereupon the papal choir refused to sing it again. Disgusted with such treatment, he shook the dust of the holy city from his feet, and went to Ferrara. He did not remain there long, however, and we soon afterward find him serving as cantor to King Lewis, of Bohemia and Hungary. In 1526 he went to Venice, and on Dec. 12, 1527, the doge Andrea Gritti appointed him chapel-master of St. Mark's. In Venice he remained till his death, Dec. 7, 1562. He became the head of a great vocal school, was the teacher of some of the most famous organists of his time, and wrote compositions which materially changed the character of all subsequent music, both religious and secular.

ADRIAN WILLAERT.

From Van der Straeten's "Musique aux pay bas," loaned by the Newberry Library, Chicago.

Claude Goudimel was born at Vaison, near Avignon, in 1510. His teacher is unknown. Between 1535 and 1540 he went to Rome, where he founded a music school, subsequently the most celebrated conservatory in Italy. He had many gifted pupils, among them one who still ranks among the Titans of music — Palestrina. In 1555 Goudimel was settled in Paris as partner of the publisher Nicolaus du Chemin. The firm published Goudimel's setting of the odes of Horace, treated according to

their metre, under the title "Horatii Flacci, poetae lyricae, odae omnes, quotquot carminum generibus differunt, ad rythmos musicos redactae." Goudimel's scholarly treatment of these odes shows that he was a man of classical education. In 1558 he wrote his last mass, and afterward became a Protestant. He became a marked man, and it is almost certain, despite Ambros's contention to the contrary, that he was one of the victims of the Huguenot massacre on the eve of St. Bartholomew, Aug. 24, 1572.



CYPRIAN DE RORE.

From Van der Straeten's "Musique aux pays bas," loaned by the Newberry Library, Chicago.

Cyprian de Rore was born at Malines, Brabant, in 1516. At an early age he went to Venice to study under Willaert, and became a chorister at St. Mark's. He soon rose to notice, and Willaert recommended him to the Duke of Ferrara, who took him into his service. In 1563 he succeeded Willaert as chapel-master of St. Mark's, but he remained in that post only a short time. In 1564 he was prefect of the choir of Ottaviano Farnese at Parma. He died in 1565.

Clement Jannequin was a native of Flanders, and probably a pupil — certainly a disciple — of Josquin. Of his life almost nothing is known, but fortunately many of his works are extant. Jacob Arcadelt was another distinguished master of this period. He was singing master of the boys at St. Peter's in 1539, and became one of the papal singers in 1540. In 1555 he entered the service of Cardinal Charles of Lorraine. With him he went to Paris where he probably remained till the end of his life.

The compositions of the masters of this period have been preserved in large numbers. So many of them are extant that it is hardly necessary to give a list of them. The most important are Gombert's "Pater Noster," his motet "Vita Dulcedo" and "Miserere," his "Bird Cantata" and "Le Berger et la Bergère"; Willaert's "Magnificat" for three choirs and his madrigals; Jannequin's "Cris de Paris" and "La Bataille"; Goudimel's masses — "Audi filia," "Le bien que j'ai" and "Sous le pont d'Avignon"; Cyprian de Rore's "Chromatic Madrigals," Arcadelt's "Pater Noster" for eight voices, his "Missa de Beata Virgine," and his madrigals.

The special features of this period were the development of secular music and the entrance of ecclesiastical music upon a transition from the dry canonic style of Ockeghem to the true emotional

religious style of Palestrina. The change in church music should first engage our attention. In the Church of St. Mark there were, and still are, two organs facing each other. It is probable that this suggested to Willaert the advisability of dividing his choir into two parts. Having done this, it was natural that he should hit upon the plan of writing antiphonal music. Choruses in eight parts had been written before, but he was the first to construct them as two separate choruses of four parts each. Secondly, he began the practice of seeking for broad and grand effects of harmony instead of working out his voice parts according to strict canonic law. His chorals open with canonic progressions, but these are speedily interrupted by the entrance of common chords. The result is that in Willaert's compositions we find the foundations of modern polyphonic style. He had a fine feeling for harmonies and employed rich chords to excellent advantage. The earlier writers treated their voice parts independently; Willaert made special efforts to constitute harmony the foundation of his counterpoint. The development of each part was shaped so that it became one of the elements of the general harmonic effect. In order to accomplish this Willaert was obliged to adopt the modern chord forms and the fundamental chord relations of modern music — the tonic, dominant and subdominant. Claude Goudimel's church compositions show the influence of Willaert in an unmistakable manner, and through them the line of development to Palestrina is clearly marked. Palestrina was a great genius, an original thinker; but the clay which was ready for his moulding was a contrapuntal style in which chord harmonies were a vital part. This style was prepared for him by his master Goudimel under the influence of Willaert. The possibilities of modern style were revealed in another direction by De Rore's study of chromatics. His "Chromatic Madrigals," published in 1544 (eleven years before Palestrina's first masses), were very influential in drawing the attention of composers to the flexibility of style to be attained by throwing off the shackles of the old Gregorian scales.

It can hardly be doubted that two intellectual and spiritual movements influenced the development of religious music in the period of Willaert and his contemporaries. The first of these was the reawakening of interest in classical antiquity brought about by the influx of scholars from Constantinople after the fall of Rome's eastern empire in 1453. This reawakening is commonly known as the Renaissance, and its effects were felt in music much later than in other branches of art. "The reason of this," as Dr. Langhans with fine discernment points out, "is to be found proximately in the lack of a musical antique. While the poet, as also the painter, the sculptor and the architect, met at every step the masterpieces of their predecessors in antiquity, and found in them the stimulus and the pattern for their own creations, to the musician the direct connection with the past was denied." Nevertheless the proclamation by the eastern scholars of the chaste and simple beauty of antique art was bound to have an influence upon music, especially when the search for a new and purer style was urged by motives of ecclesiastical expediency. This impetus came from the second movement, the spiritual, namely, the Lutheran reformation.

Through the influence of Luther the rule of the church that the singing should be exclusively in the hands of a choir was abolished, and the practice of congregational singing arose. The elaborate contrapuntal music of the day was obviously impracticable for this kind of singing. Luther, therefore, "selected from the ancient Latin church songs such melodies as were rythmically like the folk-song and hence especially likely to be caught up by the popular ear." Here we find the origin of the glorious German chorale, of our contemporaneous hymn. The first Lutheran hymn-book was published in 1524, and it is impossible to escape the conviction that the advent of this new and influential form of church music powerfully affected the style of all subsequent composers.

The development of secular music at this time is even more interesting and instructive than that of religious music, but it would require a chapter for its proper treatment; and as it was not long in abandoning the basis of counterpoint and entering upon the free arioso style of the opera (in 1600), it may be dismissed briefly. The reader must understand that popular music in the form of folk-songs has existed from time immemorial. The Netherlands masters frequently employed the melodies of these songs (and the words, too) in their masses, which gave rise to abuses removed by the Council of Trent in 1565. In the third period of the Netherlands school, however, the masters of scientific music began to compose music for the

general public, and the result was the madrigal form, which has survived till to-day. This was a natural result of Josquin's aiming at beauty in music. The

JAN PIETERS SWELINCK.

next step after euphony was naturally toward expression, and the first attempts at expression were, of course, imitative. In other words the secular composers turned to nature and tried to imitate her sounds in music. These men were the first who practised what we may call tone-photography in contradistinction to tone-coloring, which goes deeper. When Beethoven introduced the cuckoo in the pastoral symphony he practised tone-photography. The works of Gombert and Jannequin abound in skilful writing of this kind. Gombert's "Bird Cantata" is a clever and humorous composition. Jannequin's "Cris de Paris" is a musical imitation of the street cries of a great city, and his "Le Battaille" is a picture of a battle. When we remember that these works were written for voices in four parts, we are astounded at the technical accomplishments of these old masters. This ambition to tell some kind of a story in music affected even the religious compositions of the day, and one of Willaert's motets tells the history of Susannah. This work was plainly the precursor of the oratorio form, which first took recognizable shape in Cavaliere's "L'Anima è Corpo," produced in 1600.

The fourth and last period of the Netherlands school was distinguished by two features: the production of a master whose genius eclipsed the brilliancy of all his predecessors and whose music was a logical outcome of their labors, and secondly, the completion of the mediæval development of counterpoint. The mission of the Netherland masters was ended, and new art-forms came to supersede the ecclesiastical canon. This now descended from its leadership of the musical army and took that place in the ranks which it maintained till the supremacy of Haydn and the sonata form.

As Orlando di Lasso, the mightiest of all the Netherland masters, is to be treated separately in this work, no outline of his life need be given here and his music will be discussed only in its general relation to the progress of his time. Jan Pieters Swelinck (born at Deventer in 1540, died at Amsterdam, 1621) was a pupil of Cyprian de Rore. Swelinck had already displayed ability as an organist when he set out for Venice to engage in advanced studies. He became one of the most famous organists of his day, but his vocal compositions show that he stood directly in the line of development of the school to which he belonged by birth. His settings of the psalms in four, five, six, seven and eight parts are written in strict *a capella* style. Swelinck is particularly interesting as being one of the founders of the polyphonic instrumental style, which succeeded the choral counterpoint, and a forerunner of Bach.

Philip de Monte was born either at Mons or at Mechlin about 1521. He was treasurer and canon of the cathedral at Cambrai, and in 1594 he was prefect of the choir in the Court Chapel at Prague. He passed the remainder of his life there, and was held in high esteem. He was a prolific writer and besides masses and motets, nineteen books of his madrigals for five voices and eight books of French songs for six voices are extant. His works show the usual Netherlandic skill in counterpoint, some of them being extremely intricate.

We have seen how influences had begun work which was to destroy the empire of *a capella* counterpoint, but its reign was to go out in a blaze of glory lit by the torches of genius in the hands of Lasso and Palestrina. The despotism of ecclesias-

tical counterpoint over all art-music was indeed at the close of its career, yet the writer must not be understood as asserting that the development of counterpoint ended, for in the German fugue it found its highest and most perfect form. But it ceased to be the controlling power in music, giving way to modern melody built on scale and arpeggio passages and to the song- and dance-forms of the people. It may as well be said here that the technical possibilities of counterpoint were exhausted by the Netherland masters, and not even Johann Sebastian Bach, the most profound and original musical thinker the world has ever known, could invent a form of canonic writing which they had not practised. What he was chiefly instrumental in accomplishing (in a technical way) was the extension of canon into the perfect fugue, and the application of the polyphony of the Netherland masters to the organ, the clavichord and the orchestra, thus laying the foundations upon which rest the whole structure of the modern symphony and string quartet.

The music of the other composers of the fourth period is but a reflection of that of Lasso, who was fully as great a genius as Palestrina. He had a perfect mastery of the whole science of counterpoint as it had been developed by the masters of the first two periods. He was equally a master of the simpler style which had gradually been asserting itself. He used these styles and their combinations according to the character of the text to which he was writing music. Some of his masses are Gothic in their wonderful tracery of intertwining parts. His famous "Penitential Psalms" surprise, move and conquer us by their beautiful, pathetic simplicity. The notable fact about all his music, and about that of his contemporaries, is the plain manifestation through it all of an absolute mastery of contrapuntal science and a settled employment of it for their own purposes of expression. And here arises the question, what kind of expression?

PHILIP DE MONTE.

From Van der Straeten's "Musique aux pay bas," loaned by the Newberry Library, Chicago.

The music of Lasso, and some of that written by other composers of this period, shows that musi-

cians had at last begun to lay hold of the real purpose of their art. Their music shows that they aimed at expression of themselves. They began to praise God personally, and musical science became in truth what it had been only in appearance so far as the composers were concerned — a real, earnest *Gloria Tibi*. It is this which vitalizes Lasso's music and makes it acceptable to-day.

We have now reached the time after which the brilliancy of the Netherlands school speedily disappeared. The march of musical progress was transferred to Italy, where the seed sown by Willaert and De Rore in Venice was producing splendid fruit. Indeed the mission of the Netherlands school was at an end. It had given its life blood to the perfection of musical science and had completed its labors and achieved its loftiest glory by indicating the emotional power of music. We have seen that each of the four periods was marked by a step in the advancement of art, thus:

First period: Perfection of Contrapuntal Technics.
Second period: Attempts at Euphony.
Third period: Development of Tone-painting.
Fourth period: Counterpoint made subservient to emotional expression.

In those four steps you have the history of music up to the close of the sixteenth century. Away back in the twelfth century we saw as through a glass darkly a horde of students thronging the streets of Paris and swallowing, in wild eagerness, all kinds of learning in scraps and lumps, with little order and less system. The Cathedral of Notre Dame and the University of Paris, the former glorified throughout Europe as the rose of Christendom, the latter celebrated even by Pope Alexander I., as "a tree of life in an earthly paradise," were their cloister and their shrine. Out of this motley multitude there breaks upon our vision one sober, industrious musician, Jean Perotin, striving to find the secret of law and order for tones. Evidently a man of method, an orderly, peaceable, mechanical, plodding sort of person was this Perotin, and he left us "imitation." This his successors took up and in a few short years developed double counterpoint. Five more centuries rolled away and counterpoint had passed the period of mechanical development and reached the loftiest heights of ecclesiastical expression. Orlando Lasso and Palestrina built great Gothic temples of music that will stand longer than Westminster Abbey. But still counterpoint meant canon and fugue. Then came the birth of opera. The labors of the Netherlanders ended, and music saw that her mission was to sing not alone man's love of God, but his love of woman, his fear, his joy, his despair — in short the unspeakable emotions of his boundless soul.

So the old mathematical canon grew into a new kind of counterpoint, undreamed of by Ockeghem and Josquin, a free untrammeled counterpoint, which breaks upon us to-day in all varieties of works from the humblest to the greatest. Listen to Delibes' "Naila" waltz. There never was a truer piece of counterpoint written in the days of Josquin than that violoncello melody that glides in beneath the principal theme of the first strings, like a new dancer come upon the ball room floor. Turn to the wonderful prelude to "Die Meistersinger." Hear the melody that voices the love of Walter and Eva surging through the strings against the stiff and stately proclamation of the Masters' dignity by the bass. The two melodies proceed together. It is not canon, it is not fugue; but it is counterpoint — even Dr. Johannes de Muris, of the Paris University, would have passed it as *contrapunctus a penna*. But it is modern counterpoint, not for itself, but for an ulterior purpose, the one glorious purpose of modern music, to reveal the soul of man. The music of to-day could not sustain its existence through twenty consecutive measures had it not been for the labors of those cloistered scholiasts of the middle ages, building note against note, like ants heaping up sand. Like the artist that rounded St. Peter's dome, they builded better than they knew, and left an inheritance which grew to fabulous wealth in the hands of their giant heirs Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. The very body of Wagner's music is counterpoint, free counterpoint, not canon and fugue. And it is counterpoint with a soul in it, for every time two or more themes sound simultaneously the orchestra becomes so eloquent with rich meanings that its utterance throbs through the air like the magnetism of love. It was a happy time for the tone art when in the Autumn days of the fifteenth century the folk-song wooed and won the fugue.

W. J. Henderson.

IOANNES PETRALOYSIUS PRAENESTINUS

Imago secundum prototypum in Archivo musico
Basilicae Vaticanae conservatum.

Principis musicae sacrae saec. XVI. autographum

Giovanni pierluigi

Reproduction of a vigorous etching by F. Böttcher from portrait preserved in the Vatican library. Authentic portraits of Palestrina are extremely rare. This is doubtless the best.

GIOVANNI PIERLUIGI DA PALESTRINA

GIOVANNI PIERLUIGI DA PALESTRINA received his last name from the town of Palestrina, the ancient Praeneste, where he was born in the early part of the sixteenth century, the precise year being a matter of conjecture. 1514, 1524, 1528, and 1529, are the years variously ascribed to his birth by various biographers, but the most recently discovered evidence seems to point to 1524 as the most probable date. He was of humble parentage, which partially accounts for the lack of definite information about his earliest years, and as the public registers of the city of Palestrina were destroyed by the soldiery of the Duke of Alva, it is not likely that any reliable information regarding his ancestry or birth will ever be obtained. In accordance with the habit of the time, as the composer grew famous his name was latinized and became Johannes Petrus Aloysius Praenestinus. The lack of early biographical material regarding the man who became at once the culmination of the Flemish and the founder of the pure Italian school has led to the invention of many a doubtful tale regarding his beginnings in the art of music. He came to Rome (but four hours' travel from his native city) in 1540, and we are told that the accidental circumstance of his singing in the street led a musician to take him in his care and train him vocally; but this tale is not probable since Palestrina had a poor voice and his appointment as papal singer was by no means on account of his vocal attainments. Be this as it may, Palestrina soon became a pupil of Claudio Goudimel (who was afterwards killed in the massacre of St. Bartholomew), the teacher also of his friend Nanini. It is probable that he returned to the city of his birth in 1544 and, at least temporarily, became organist and director in the cathedral there, and at this time (June 12th, 1547), married Lucrezia de Goris. Of this lady very little is known; she is said to have been in fairly good circumstances, and to have been a devoted wife to the master; she bore him four sons, three of whom died after having given some proof that they had inherited Palestrina's musical genius; she herself died in 1580. Some of the recent historians maintain that Palestrina had but three sons, of whom two died. In 1551 we find Palestrina in Rome as *Maestro de' Putti* (teacher of the boy singers) in the Capella Giulia in the Vatican, and in considerable repute, for he was allowed the title of "Maestro della Capella della Basilica Vaticana." While employed at this post he composed a set of four and five-voiced masses which were published in 1544 and dedicated to Pope Julius III. The work marks an epoch, for it was the first important one by any Italian composer, the Church having up to this time relied almost wholly upon the Flemish composers for her musical works. The Pope proved himself immediately grateful by appointing the composer one of the singers of the papal choir; this appointment was in violation of the rules of the church, for the singers were supposed to be celibates, and not only was Palestrina married, but his voice was not such as would have been chosen for the finest ecclesiastic choir of the world. To the credit of the composer, who was one of the most devout of Catholics, it must be said that he hesitated long before accepting a position to which he knew that he had no right, but finally, believing that the Pope knew better than he, Palestrina entered on his new duties, which brought with them a welcome increase of income. But Julius III. died six months after, and his successor, Marcellus II., died twenty-three days after becoming Pope. Marcellus was very well disposed towards Palestrina, and his death was a great blow to the composer. Paul IV. became sovereign pontiff in 1555. John Peter Caraffa (Paul IV.) was of different mould from his predecessors; haughty and imperious, he was active in promoting the power of the church over all nations

and thrones, but equally so in reforming it within; he would permit no married singers in his choir, and in less than a year after his appointment, Palestrina found himself dismissed from what promised to be a life position. The dismissal was tempered by the allowance of a pension of six scudi per month, but Palestrina, with a family dependent on his work, thought that it meant irretrievable ruin, and, almost broken-hearted, took to his bed with a severe attack of nervous fever. The sensitive character and innate modesty of the man were never better proven, for his reputation was even then far too great for the loss of any situation to ruin him. Already in October of the same year (1555) Palestrina was appointed director of the music of the Lateran Church, a position which, although less remunerative than that from which he had been dismissed, allowed him to retain the small annuity granted by the Pope. He remained here five and a half years (from October 1st, 1555, until February 1st, 1561) and during this epoch produced many important sacred works, among which were his volume of *Improperia* and a wonderful eight-voiced "Crux Fidelis" which he produced on Good Fridays with his choir. His set of four-voiced "Lamentations" also aided in spreading his fame as the leader of a new school, the pure school of Italian church-music. On March 1st, 1561, he entered upon the position of director of the music of the Church of St. Maria Maggiore, a post which he retained for ten years. It was while he was director here that the event occurred that spread his fame through all the Catholic nations of the earth. Church music had for a long time lapsed from the dignity which should have been its chief characteristic. The Flemish composers were in a large degree responsible for this; they had placed their ingenuity above religious earnestness, and in order to show their contrapuntal skill would frequently choose some well-known secular song as the *cantus firmus* of their masses, and weave their counterpoint around this as a core. Dozens of masses were written on the old Provençal song of "L'Homme Armé," Palestrina himself furnishing one, and it seemed to be a point of honor among the composers to see who could wreath the most brilliant counterpoint around this popular tune. Many of the melodies chosen were not even so dignified as this, and at times the Flemish composer would choose as his *cantus firmus* some drinking song of his native land. In those days the melody was generally committed to the tenor part (the word comes from "teneo" and means "the holding part," that is the part that held the tune) and in order the better to show on what foundation they had built, the Flemings retained the original words in this part, whence it came to be no uncommon thing to hear the tenors roar out a bacchanalian song while the rest of the choir were intoning a "Kyrie," a "Gloria," a "Credo," or an "Agnus Dei." It is almost incredible that the custom lasted as long as it did, but at last, in 1562, the Cardinals were summoned together for the purification of all ecclesiastical matters, and the famous Council of Trent began to cut at the root of the evil. As is generally the case in all reactions, the reform seemed likely to go too far, for while all were united upon the abolition of secular words in the Mass, some maintained that the evil lay deeper yet, and attacked counterpoint itself as worldly and unfit for true religious music. These advocated nothing less than a return to the plain song or chant, a turning back of the hands of musical progress that might have been very serious in its results. Fortunately, however, the ablegates, and the envoys of the Emperor Ferdinand I., protested vigorously, and the whole matter was finally referred to a committee of eight cardinals, who very wisely chose eight of the papal singers to assist them in their deliberations. The sittings of this committee were held chiefly in 1563, and fortunately two of the number, Cardinals Vitellozo Vitellozzi and Carlo Borromeo (afterwards canonized) were men of especial musical culture. The works of Palestrina had been frequently cited during the debates, and now it was determined to commission him to write a mass which should prove to the world that the employment of counterpoint was consistent with the expression of the most earnest religious thought. Right nobly did Palestrina respond to the call. Too diffident of his own powers to trust the issue to a single work, he sent the cardinals three, of which the first two were dignified and effective, while the third was the celebrated "Mass of Pope Marcellus." He sent the works on their completion, in 1565, to Cardinal Borromeo, and the *Missa Papae Marcelli* was soon after performed at the house of Cardinal Vitellozzi. It made its effect immediately, and soon after the Pope ordered an especial performance of it by the choir at the Apostolical chapel. It is odd to read of the honors which followed in its track; they took every shape but the one which Palestrina

most needed — a pecuniary result. The copyist of the papal chapel wrote out the parts in larger notes than were employed in other works, the Pope (Pius IV.) exclaimed on hearing the mass for the first time, that such must be the music that the angels chanted in the new Jerusalem, and when, a few years after (in 1567), Palestrina published this mass with some others and dedicated the volume to Philip II. of Spain, that eminent bigot sent the composer — his thanks!

It was probably on account of this mass, however, that Palestrina came back to the papal choir. He did not come as a singer this time, but a new office was created for him, that of "Composer to the Pontifical Choir." It may be mentioned here that none of the different positions which Palestrina occupied took him out of the reach of pecuniary cares, and he never received an adequate recompense for his labors; yet one may doubt whether he ever suffered absolute poverty; his wife is said by some historians, to have been well-to-do, and the friendship of different cardinals could not have been without some pecuniary results. Palestrina was blessed with many true and steadfast admirers who must have atoned in some degree for the jealousies of his brother-musicians. His wife was devoted to him, the cardinal D'Este was a friend, in addition to the two cardinals already mentioned; but the great solace of his career was the close companionship of the most musical and devout of priests, Filippo Neri, who has since been made saint by the church. As this priest was the founder of the oratorio it is not too much to imagine that Palestrina may have helped him with advice and music and thus have assisted at the birth of the loftiest religious form of later times. Yet in the midst of all his work, and in the enjoyment of all his companionships, the life of Palestrina is in startling contrast with the brilliant and well-rewarded career of his contemporary, Orlando di Lasso. If ever the Catholic church desires to canonize a musical composer, it will find devoutness, humility, and many other saintly characteristics in Palestrina. The great pang of his life was the loss of his promising boys just as they began to prove to him that his musical instruction had planted seeds in fertile soil. The one son who outlived him seems to have been a sordid and heartless wretch in vivid contrast to the character of his father, whose compositions he recklessly scattered from mercenary motives. Yet the life of Palestrina must have had its moments of sunshine. Probably the most striking of these occurred in 1575, the jubilee year, when, as a compliment to their distinguished townsman, 1500 singers from the city of Palestrina entered Rome, divided into three companies, singing the works of the composer, while he, marching at the head of the vocal army, directed the musical proceedings. In 1571, after the death of Animuccia (also a pupil of Claudio Goudimel), Palestrina became leader of the choir of St. Peter's and soon after he became a teacher in the music school which his friend Giovanni Maria Nanini opened in Rome, a school which gave rise to many composers, and which established the early Italian composition on a firmer basis than ever before. In 1593 Palestrina became musical director to Cardinal Aldobrandini, but he was now an old man and his death ensued soon after; but his activity continued unabated almost up to his decease; even to his very last days he produced works which remain monuments of his energy. In January, 1594, he published thirty "Spiritual Madrigals" for five voices, in praise of the Holy Virgin, and this was his last work, for he died less than a month later. He had already begun another work, a volume of masses to be dedicated to Clement VIII., when he was attacked by pleurisy; the disease hastened to a fatal ending, for he was ill but a week, receiving extreme unction January 29th and dying February 2d, 1594, in the arms of his friend Philip Neri; his most famous contemporary,

PALESTRINA.
From a portrait in Naumann's History of Music.

Orlando di Lasso, died just four months later, so that the end of the Flemish school, and the brilliant beginning of the Italian church school come very close together.

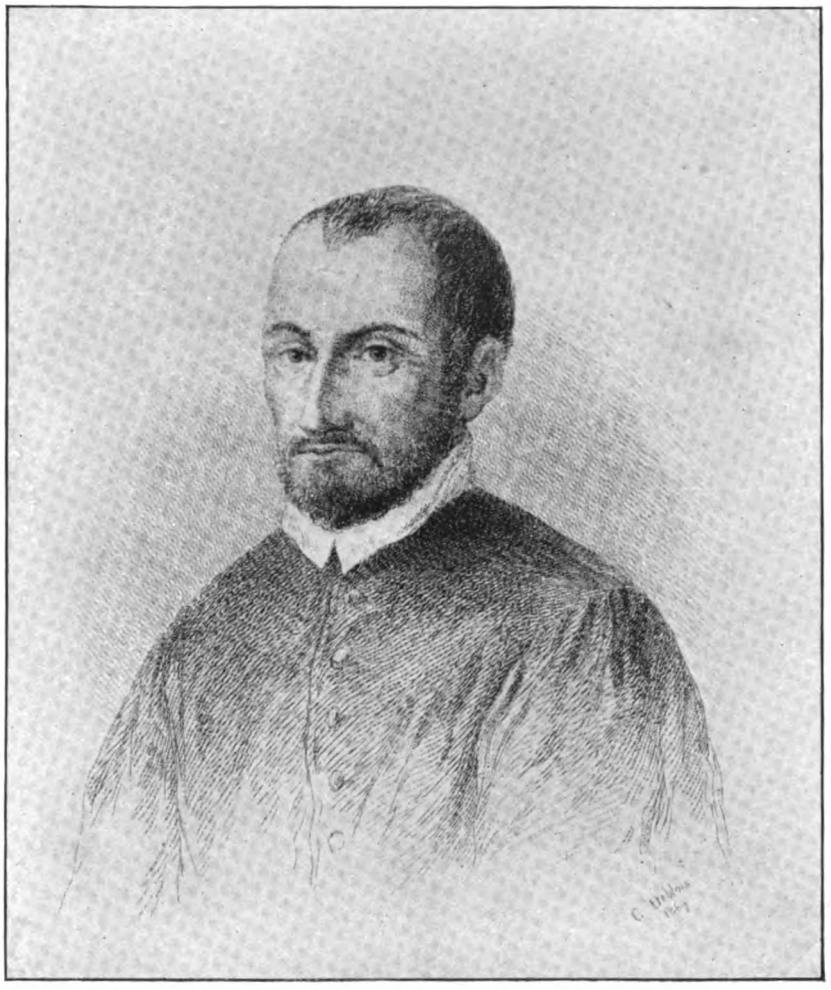
Of the character of Palestrina's music we shall speak below, but it may be stated here that there has never existed a composer at once so prolific and so sustainedly powerful. The mere list of his compositions would take considerable space, for he composed 93 masses for from four to eight voices, 179 motettes, 45 sets of hymns for the entire year, 3 books of "Lamentations," 3 books of Litanies, 2 books of Magnificats, 4 books of Madrigals, a wonderful Stabat Mater, and very much more that is unclassified. A list that is absolutely stupendous when the character of the works is remembered. Through the enterprise of Messrs. Breitkopf & Härtel all of these works will soon have appeared in print.

Palestrina is buried in St Peter's in the chapel of Sts. Simon and Judas. The simple inscription on his tomb runs:

Johannes Petrus Aloysius Praenestinus,
Musicæ Princeps.

It is but natural to find the old Italian writers showering down laudatory adjectives on Palestrina. Undoubtedly Palestrina and Di Lasso, whose careers are almost exactly contemporaneous, were the two chief composers of the 16th century, and it is equally undoubted that of these two Palestrina was much the more earnest and serious; but one may receive with some degree of caution such phrases as "the light and glory of music," "the Prince of Music," and "the Father of Music," all of which may be found in the early commentaries on his works. It must be borne in mind that Palestrina lived at a time when music was still largely a mathematical science, when the art (so far as it was an art) tended almost wholly towards the intellectual, and when the emotional side, which is so important an element with the moderns, was scarcely recognized. It is an odd coincidence that the very year in which the two great composers of intellectual polyphony died (1594) saw the birth of the emotional school in the shape of the first opera, "Dafne." We must not search for great emotional display in the modern sense, even in the "Lamentations" or the "Stabat Mater" of Palestrina, but if we judge his works from the standard of dignity and a pure leading of the voices even in the most intricate passages, we shall find them to be most perfect models, and it was through the complex progressions of the old counterpoint that our modern style was evolved; Palestrina and Di Lasso were the ploughmen who made the harvest of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Bach and Wagner, possible. The lack of definite rhythm (for the ancient counterpoint was the least rhythmic expression of music) is sometimes a stumbling-block in the way of modern appreciation of some of Palestrina's work, but the devout student of Bach will soon find himself an admirer of the pure and lofty vein of the older master. Krause, the historian, says: "I am convinced that this school possesses a permanent value for all time. The greatest art connoisseurs of the new school pay the greatest homage to the Palestrina style." Thibaut describes Palestrina as deeper than Di Lasso, and as such a master of the old church modes and of the pure school (in which the triad was the foundation of everything and the seventh chords were not admitted) that calmness and repose are to be found in a greater degree in his works than in the compositions of any other composer. Palestrina has been called the "Homer of Music," and there is something in his stately style that makes the phrase a fitting one.

Baini, who in the early part of this century was the successor in office of the great composer, being musical director of the papal choir at Rome, was probably the ablest and most enthusiastic student of the works of Palestrina that ever existed, and his great work, "*Memorie storicho-critiche della vita e delle opere di Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina*" (Rome, 1828. Two volumes), spite of a degree of partisanship and consequent lack of appreciation of the the work of some of the Flemish composers, will probably always remain the bucket through which the waters of the well of Palestrina are best attainable. No man ever had as good opportunities of access to the master's works, and no one



PALESTRINA.

From a portrait by Schnorr, engraved by Amsler and re engraved by Deblois. This portrait has evidently been suggested by the Vatican portrait. (See frontispiece.) Authentic portraits of Palestrina are extremely rare.

could have employed those opportunities better. He, with extreme exactness, classifies the works of the master into ten groups or styles. It would be both unnecessary and prolix to follow him through all of these; more practical for the general musician is the summing up of Hauptmann (whose essay is founded on Baini), who says, "Baini's ten styles may become bewildering to many, but three styles of composition may be readily recognized on close acquaintance with his works. In the first style he approaches the school of his predecessors the Netherlanders (the Flemish school), and this is shown to our ears by a lack of harmony; the melodies go on their course beside each other, without blending into harmonious unity; harmonically judged they are dry, heavy, and inflexible, and they are continuously canonic or fugated. The second style is, on the contrary, in simultaneous progressions, like our chorales. Here the voices are, as a matter of course, always singable, but the conditions of the melody are, as the harmonies of the preceding, rather negative, and the composer is not turned aside by any ill-sounding effects. The third style is the uniting of the foregoing two in the best and most beautiful manner that can be achieved in this sphere, and it is this school that has placed Palestrina in so high a rank for all time; in this style is the Mass of Pope Marcellus composed. There are however, beautiful specimens of the second style in existence, as, for example, the *Improperia*, which always refreshes me by its simplicity."

In the use of chorale-like simplicity, Palestrina causes the commentator involuntarily to draw a comparison between him and John Sebastian Bach. The parallel could be drawn more closely than many of the ancient ones of Plutarch, for not only were both composers polyphonic in their musical vein, but both were actuated by the sincerest religious feeling in their largest compositions. Palestrina may stand as the typical Catholic, as Bach represents the earnest Protestant, in music.

Unquestionably the earliest vein of Palestrina's composition was influenced by his Flemish training, and he returned to this florid and ingenious style in later time when he set the old melody of "*L'Homme Armé*" as a Mass. This was a very natural proceeding. We have alluded above to the custom of setting masses around a secular core, using some popular melody as *cantus firmus*, as practiced by the Netherlanders. When Palestrina chose the above-named melody, he entered deliberately into the lists with them; so many of his predecessors had used the self-same *cantus* that "*L'Homme Armé*" became in some degree a challenge and a specimen of competitive composition; skill and complexity were to rule in such a mass, and it is sufficient to say that Palestrina overtopped his competitors in these, and therefore the object of this work was attained. It may stand as the best example of the first school.

The *Improperia* are a series of antiphons and responses which, on the morning of Good Friday, take the place of the daily Mass of the Catholic church. They represent the remonstrances of the suffering Savior with the people for their ingratitude for his benefits, whence the title "*Improperia*," i. e. "the Reproaches." We have stated that the old pure school did not portray emotion in the modern style; one may not find in these "Reproaches" of Palestrina the entirely human style of a Luzzi's "Ave Maria" or the operatic manner of a Rossini' s "Stabat Mater," but the simple combination of dignity with sorrow is nevertheless far more effective and suitable to the religious service; it is therefore not surprising to find these *Improperia* (the first revelation of the genius of Palestrina) still retained in annual use in the Papal Chapel, and we may class them as Hauptmann did, as the best example of Palestrina's second manner. Mendelssohn held them to be Palestrina's most beautiful work, and the poet Goethe was also greatly moved by them.

The Mass of Pope Marcellus has been cited as the best example of the master's third style, and at the same time the culmination of his powers. This Mass is in the so-called Hypo-Ionian mode (although the "Crucifixus" and "Benedictus" are Mixo-Lydian), and is probably the noblest example of the employment of the church modes in the pure style. Although the work is most intricate, Palestrina has here achieved that most difficult feat, the art of concealing art. It presents all the old fugal artifices, and the "Agnus Dei" is a close and ingenious canon. It is written for six voices, soprano, alto, two tenors, and two basses. This in itself was an unusual combination of voices and gave opportunities for great antiphonal effect, between the lower voices, and these opportunities are so well used that the effect of a double choir is frequently attained.

Baini calls the "Kyrie" devout; the "Gloria"

animated; the "Credo" majestic; the "Sanctus" angelic; and the "Agnus Dei" prayerful; but it is doubtful if the modern auditor will perceive all these distinctions in listening to the work. Of its dignity and loftiness, however, there can be no question. One can observe readily how close to the composer's heart was the injunction that the words should be clearly understood; in the most important phrases we find counterpoint of the first order (note against note), while in passages where the same words are often repeated Palestrina employed the most beautiful contrapuntal imitations. The voices are so interwoven that wonderful chords greet us in almost every phrase, yet so free from unnecessary dissonance are these, and so clearly founded on the progressions of the triads, that the effect of simplicity is attained even in the midst of the displays of greatest musical skill. It is true that one can find effective chords in the works of the Flemish school, but on examining these closely it will be seen that they have been "filled in," and do not arise spontaneously from the contrapuntal progressions, while with Palestrina the leading of the voices is never disturbed in the slightest degree for the sake of the chord-formation, but all the harmonic effects grow out of the melodic construction of the various parts, or of the musical imitations introduced between the voices. It remains to be stated that the great musical historian Ambros has thrown doubt upon the origin of the Mass just described, and asseverates that not only was it not written as a model at the request of the committee of cardinals, but that there was really no occasion for any especial reform in the matter of church music at the time that it was produced. The weight of authority and the consensus of opinion, however, are here entirely against the eminent German scholar, and the facts as above stated are now almost universally conceded.

In all of Palestrina's church music one cannot fail to notice that he discards the chromatic progressions which his predecessors and contemporaries used so freely; he did this from a devout desire to keep the church modes intact, and if at times, because of this self-denial, he lost some effects of emotional display, on the whole his works gain much in purity and dignity in consequence.

If in Palestrina's Masses we find the beginning of chord-effect, the true principles of harmonic beauty, in his motettes and madrigals one can discern the first masterly touches of the employment of rhythm. Rhythm could only reach its true culmination in the homophony which came at a later epoch, but one can trace a distinct effort in this direction in the shorter and lighter works of the master, who thus may be regarded as a connecting link between the old and the new schools.

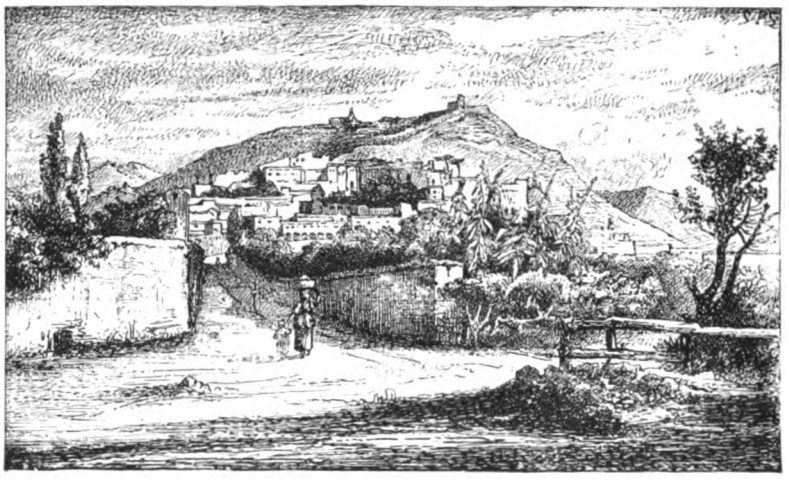
In the matter of the old triad-construction of his chords, however, he was inflexible; Des Pres and Di Lasso might use dissonances to express passion, but he held this kind of passion as too human to enter into his pure church-music. Monteverde soon after brought in the free use of the seventh-chords, yet the careful student will find these slyly introduced in many a work of the 16th century; he will however, find few such attempts in Palestrina.

How earnestly this composer regarded his art, and how deeply he felt its responsibilities may be gathered from his own words:—

"Music exerts a great influence upon the minds of mankind, and is intended not only to cheer these, but also to guide and to control them, a statement which has not only been made by the ancients, but which is found equally true to-day. The sharper blame, therefore, do those deserve who misemploy so great and splendid a gift of God in light or unworthy things, and thereby excite men, who of themselves are inclined to all evil, to sin and misdoing. As regards myself, I have from youth been affrighted at such misuse, and anxiously have I avoided giving forth anything which could lead anyone to become more wicked or godless. All the more should I, now that I have attained to riper years, and am not far removed from old age, place my entire thoughts on lofty, earnest things such as are worthy of a Christian."

With these words does Palestrina dedicate his first book of Motettes to Cardinal d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, and no historian or reviewer could give a truer summing up of Palestrina's character and its influence on his music than he has here done for himself.

Louis C. Elson



VIEW OF THE TOWN OF PALESTRINA — THE ANCIENT PRAENESTE.

Birthplace of Palestrina, who received his surname from this place.

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDE

IN Claudio Monteverde we have to do with one of those composers who mark an epoch in art. Starting apparently in full touch with the ideas of the generation into which they happen to be born, such masters acquire originality as they proceed, and, guided entirely by the depth and reliability of their own intuitions, almost imperceptibly digress from the methods in vogue, and at the end leave the world a rich heritage of thoroughly original and enjoyable works. Such a genius adorned the beginning of the sixteenth century in Josquin des Près, another was the richly gifted Orlando Lasso, and in later times many such have appeared; the epoch of modern romantic music being peculiarly rich in them.

Claudio Monteverde was born at Cremona, in Lombardy, in the year 1568. He was the son of poor parents. From earliest childhood he manifested a love of music, and very soon became proficient upon the viola, which even then had become perfected, through the work of Andrea Amati and Gaspar da Salo.

While still a boy, Monteverde was engaged as viola player in the private orchestra of the Duke of Mantua, and there his talent became so evident that the ducal music director, Messer Marc Antonio Ingeneri, taught him counterpoint and the art of composition as it was then practised. Under this stimulation, Monteverde published his first composition at the age of sixteen, in the year 1584. They were called "Canzonettas for three voices," and were printed at Venice. Quite naturally, considering the youth of the composer, these compositions do not show the originality which later rendered his works famous. Their more noticeable peculiarity, judging them from the standpoint of their own day, was a degree of laxity, at times approaching carelessness, in counterpoint. It is evident even thus early that Monteverde's ear for melody enabled him to tolerate harmonic faults between the voices which, without this appreciation of melodious flow, would have been highly disagreeable.

His position in the service of the prince was by no means a sinecure. A letter of his brother, Giulio Cæsar Monteverde, declares that he was incessantly occupied, not alone with the music of the church, but also with that for chamber concerts, ballets, and all sorts of divertissements, making constant demands upon the fertility of the overflowing invention of the young musician. He seems to have been in a somewhat personal relation to the Duke, and all through life he evinced his attachment to members of the Gonzaga family.

His first book of madrigals was published in 1587, when the young composer had reached the age of eighteen. Five other books followed them, dated 1593, 1594, 1597, 1599, and finally 1614. All these were printed at Venice, which was then the chief book-making city of Europe. In a later portion of this discourse the innovations characterizing the third book of madrigals will be more fully considered. Meanwhile Monteverde appears to have steadily advanced in his art, and in the favor of the prince. The brother's letter, already mentioned, is authority for the statement that in 1599 he spent some months at the baths of Spa, and brought back from thence certain traits of the French style.

Very soon after the publication of the third book of madrigals, Monteverde found a critic. A certain Canon Artusi, of St. Saviour, in Bologna, published a brochure upon "The Imperfection of Modern Music," taking for his text one of the madrigals in Monteverde's third book.

This led to further communications from Monteverde himself, prefixed to one of his later volumes, in which he declares that "harmony is the lady

of the words" (*signora della orazione*), meaning thereby that the composer must first consider the dramatic needs of his text, and only thereafter permit himself to be governed by those of music as such.

Upon the death of the ducal music director, Ingeneri, Monteverde succeeded to the place. This appears to have been in 1603, according to the preface to the sixth set of his madrigals (in 1614), in which he speaks of having been in the service of the Duke of Mantua ten years.

The famous "representative style," in other words, dramatic music, had already been discovered, as recounted at greater length in the essay upon Italy. It is sufficient for our present purpose to compare the dates. It was about 1595 that Vincenzo Gallilei intoned at Count Bardi's his epoch-making monologue upon "Ugolino," and in 1597 the first opera, "Dafne," was privately performed at the house of Count Corsi. In 1600 the first opera, "Eurydice," the poem by Rinuccini and music by Jacopo Peri, was publicly performed upon the occasion of the marriage of Henry IV., of France, to Catherine de Medici. This work has the double honor of having been the first opera ever publicly performed and the first opera ever printed. A copy of the original edition of A. D. 1600 is now in the Newberry Library of Chicago. The fundamental problem of the new style was that of furnishing appropriate musical cadences for the impressive utterance of the words of the text. Hence the musical handling of "Eurydice" is very meagre. There is only one short instrumental ritornello, and only one short aria, of sixteen measures. Almost the entire remainder of the work is in a rather stiff and formal recitative. No attempt is made at instrumental coloring. The accompaniment is simply intended to support the voices and assure the singers of their pitch, quite after the ideas advanced by Artistoxenos, and applied universally in Greek tragedy. The tonality in "Eurydice" is almost wholly minor.

Whether Monteverde had opportunity of seeing any of these performances we have no means of knowing. At all events he may well have possessed a copy of the published "Eurydice." And so it was no doubt with pleasure that in 1607, upon the occasion of the marriage of Francesco Gonzeaga with Margherita, Infanta of Savoy, he received a commission to prepare a "dramma per musica" for the festivities. The subject chosen was "Arianna" (Ariadne), the text prepared by Rinuccini. In this work for the first time Monteverde had opportunity to give free rein to his powers. No doubt he realized that he had to present his work before hearers who had attended upon the performances of "Eurydice," and were full of its novel effects. One of his own singers, Rasi, had been engaged in the Florentine performances. The effect of "Arianna" was extraordinary, even prodigious. The aria of the deserted Ariadne, *Lasciatemi morir*, melted the hearers to tears. Monteverde's rival, Marco da Gagliano, who had also been commissioned to prepare a new setting of "Dafne" for the same occasion, was astonished like all the rest. G. B. Doni, in his treatise upon "Scenic Music," holds Monteverde's aria for a master-work indeed. Such was the entrance of the master into the new style. "Arianna" had a long life. As late as 1640 it was played in the theatre of S. Mose, in Venice. The success of this work naturally led to others in the new style. Hence, one year later, another opera, "Orfeo," the text by a writer not now known, and a "Ballo del Ingrate," in which, Ambros says, the music, "in spite of the ancient gods, who figure in the text, stands for the first time in the magic glow of the romantic."

Monteverde was now in the fullness of his powers. He had reached the age of forty-six. He was at once the most original of all Italian musicians of the time, and the most distinguished. Hence upon the death, in 1614, of Giulo Cæsare Martinengo, the musical director of St. Mark's, in Venice, Monteverde was called to the place, which both by reason of its celebrity as already the appurtenance of great composers for two centuries, and on account of its relation to the official life of Venice, was perhaps the most desirable one in the whole world. The salary paid the deceased conductor had been two hundred ducats yearly; that of Monteverde was made three hundred at the start, and in addition a sum of fifty ducats for expenses of removing from Mantua. In 1616 the salary was raised again to four hundred ducats, and later he was awarded the free use of a house in the canon's close. Valuable gratuities were voted him upon several occasions, as one hundred ducats, Dec. 14, 1642, one hundred and fifty in 1629, etc. Honors came fast upon him. When he

was invited to Bologna, in order to direct the music for some festivity, a delegation of distinguished citizens met him a long way out upon the route, and orations and formal recognitions of the honor done the city by his accepting the invitation had full place, according to the imposing forms of the time.

In spite of the distinction which Monteverde had gained in the musical dramas already mentioned, it was not for several years after entering upon his duties at St. Mark's that he found opportunity to pursue his ideal. Between 1614 and 1624 he appeared only as church composer, excepting now and then when he produced music for a state *fête*, for as yet there was no public opera house in the world. In the year 1637 the first one was erected at Venice, in the parish of S. Cassiano. But previously, in 1624, the senator Girolamo Moncenigo invited Monteverde to compose a new work in the representative style, which accordingly he did, and it was privately performed in the Moncenigo palace. It was called "Il Combatimento di Tancredi e Clorinda," an intermezzo. The story was taken from Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," and represented Clorinda going in search of her lover, Tancred, in disguise of a young knight. Through some misunderstanding a duel between them was unavoidable, and at the moment when the swords flash and the strokes make grim accents in the pretty love story, Monteverde had the happy thought of introducing the pizzicato effect with the strings; and later when Clorinda falls, mortally wounded, the suspense is indicated by the still usual orchestral means, the tremolo. These striking effects, however, were by no means Monteverde's chief claim to memory for this work, for throughout, if we may believe the hearers (the music having disapeared), the music accurately reproduced and interpreted the feeling of the story, and the hearers were intensely absorbed, and at the critical moment moved to tears.

Another celebrated work of Monteverde was a solemn requiem which he composed in 1621, for the funeral services in honor of Cosmos II., in the church S. Giovanni e S. Paulo. Concerning this, the opera librettist, Giuol Strozzi, writes complimentarily if not clearly, that the music "depicted grief in the Mixolydian tone, the happy discovery of Sappho; and the *Dies Iræ* and the well intoned *De Profundis*, by their novelty and mastery, awakened in the hearers the greatest wonder."

From this time onward, Monteverde composed often in the new style. In 1627 he composed for the court of Parma five intermezzi; in 1629, for the birthday of Vito Morisini, a cantata, "Il Rosajo fiorito"; and in 1630, for the marriage of the daughter of his patron, the senator Moncenigo, to Lorenzo Giustiniani, he wrote to a poem by Strozzi, "Proserpina Rapita." Here again the enthusiasm of the hearers was unbounded. The magic combination of drama and song in choruses, dances, and orchestration was magical. Unfortunately almost all the operatic and church compositions of Monteverde have been lost. But his continual progress in the art of orchestration is shown now and then in the chance allusions of his contemporaries. Thus we are told that in 1631, upon the day when the votive church S. Maria della Salute was opened by the Doge (in memory of the stay of the plague), a solemn service was also held in St. Mark's, when a great effect was made in the *Gloria* and *Credo* by the resounding trombones.

As soon as a public opera house was opened in Venice, the demands upon Monteverde's talent as opera composer became more frequent. Thus followed one important work after another, until almost the end of his long and honored life. In 1642, at the age of seventy-four, he produced his last opera, "L'Incoronazione di Poppea," which had the customary effect of novelty and nobility.

Monteverde had been happily married while still living in Mantua. He had two sons, one of whom became a priest, the other a physician. Upon the death of his wife he entered the church, and took holy orders, so that from the age of sixty-five to the close of his life he was priest as well as composer and musical director. In person he seems to have been tall, rather meagre in figure, and the few existing portraits represent him as serious, perhaps even ascetic, in face. After a short illness, Monteverde died, in 1643. His funeral was held in St. Mark's, under the musical direction of his pupil, Giovanni Rovetta. But a second and more formal service was held on the 15th of December, 1643, in the Frari church, under the direction of another of his pupils, Giambattista Marinoni, musical director at the cathedral of Padua. The great master was buried in the Frari church, in a chapel at the left of the choir. No stone bears his name to mark the spot.

Monteverde's position in the world of art might almost be designated as that of "father of the

opera." For, while it is true that he did not himself directly discover this great form of applied music, he certainly was the first to produce dramatic works characterized by the same general ideas as those which prevail at the present day. The connection of Jacopo Peri with opera was altogether fleeting and temporary, having been limited to the two works already mentioned. Monteverde, who was already a vigorous and fully established musician and composer at the time of Peri's first attempt, took hold of the new art form with such vigor and readiness, and with such truth of insight, that he must always stand in the place of honor. Peri's conception of the musical part of opera was rather small and limited. What he sought was a truthful declamation of the text in the matter of cadence and emphasis. To this Monteverde added a deeper insight into the feeling pervading the dramatic situation. This gave the key-note to his music, whether that of the voices, or of voices and instruments together.

This honor belongs still more incontestably to Monteverde when it is remembered what innovations he made in the general points of musical structure and instrumentation, both of which place his fame in the strongest possible light as that of a master. In his earliest canzonettas the defects are those of a half-taught composer, rather than of one deliberately marking out a new path. But in the third book of madrigals there are innovations which have been pointed out by all critical writers upon the history of harmony, especially by Choron and Fétis. In the madrigal "Stracciami pur il côre" (the music of which is given entire in Burney's "History of Music," Vol. III.), the rhythm has more movement, the metrical form is better, there are natural cadences, and prolonged dissonances of a materially different character to anything preceding them. Fétis mentions, at the words *non puo morir d'amore*, double dissonances, arising by suspension of 9–4, 9–7–4, 6–5–4, the latter having an extremely disagreeable effect. Modern tonality is anticipated by the use of the leading tone. In his fifth book of madrigals he gives free rein to his ideas, and introduces dissonances without preparation, especially the seventh and ninth on the dominant. There is also a diminished seventh. He thus possessed the means of a rational harmonic accentuation and dramatic characterization.

In the department of orchestration, Monteverde may properly be considered the originator of the art, and here again we come upon one of those accidental connections, or harmonies, between the man and his environment which impart to art-history so much the character of a chapter in development. It was Monteverde who first placed the violin in its place of honor in the orchestra. Peri's orchestra contained two tenor-viols, but no violin. While still retaining the chittarone, or large guitars, cembali, or harpsichord, Monteverde had two bass-viols, ten tenor-viols (his own instrument, with whose possibilities he was acquainted), two violi da gamba (a tenor-viol with frets), one double harp, two small French violins, four trombones, a regal or small reed organ (for sustaining tones), one small octave flute, one clarion, and three trumpets with mutes. From the complete loss of anything like orchestral scores or individual parts, it has been surmised that these players exercised their own judgment as to what and when to play. This, however, appears impossible. Otherwise the peculiar effects graphically employed for dramatic coloration would not have been produced. Such effects as the pizzicati and tremolo of violins in "Tancred," and the trombone effects in the mass, mentioned above, do not come by the happy chance of players putting in notes at their unregulated wills. The characteristic difference between the orchestra of Monteverde and Peri was in the possession of means of prolonging tones, and thereby rendering the music impressive and pathetic. Without the stringed instruments this would forever have remained impossible.

W. S. B. Mathews.

A. SCARLATTI

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ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI

THERE has never been in the musical history of the world such another blossoming into song as took place in Italy after the invention of the representative style. The great master, Monteverde, lived to see the opening of the first public opera houses, and by the end of the century there were theatres devoted to the musical drama in almost every city of Italy. Monteverde was succeeded by several composers, in part contemporaries of each other, among whom the most eminent names were those of Cesti, Lotti, and Legrenzi. All the tuneful instincts of the Italian nation came to expression in the new form of art, and the theatres vied with each other in obtaining the composition of new works by the best masters available. In these there were two national instincts operative: that for the drama, and that for tune. Hence we begin to find, very early in the development, the merely declamatory consideration which ruled Peri, and the additional element of musical characterization which led Monteverde into many new paths, giving place to the merely tuneful, and delaying the drama until an aria had time to fully complete itself.

In its earliest forms the aria gained in symmetry and tunefulness, without seriously hampering the dramatic movement. Soon, however, the voice began to attract attention to itself, and in the illustration of its previously forgotten talents the action of the drama was still further delayed.

Many illustrations of these generalized statements might be cited, but those following later are perhaps sufficient for showing the point which had been reached in the development when the great genius Alessandro Scarlatti appeared.

Born in Trajano, Sicily, and gifted with the music-loving organization of the Sicilians, Alessandro Scarlatti seems to have made his way to Rome at an early age. It is uncertain where he obtained his musical education. Some writers credit him to Pavian masters, others to Carissimi at Rome. It is quite likely that he may have received instruction at both places, while the greater part of his equipment as composer he may have acquired by his own exertions. Nothing at all is known of his first thirty years. But from the assertion of the Marquis of Villerosa (in his work upon the Neapolitan composers) that Scarlatti was a fine singer, a virtuoso upon the harp, and an excellent composer when he first came to Naples, we are at liberty to suppose that he gained a musical livelihood by exercising the first two of these talents. He must have made very thorough studies as composer, for there are several of his works (hereafter cited) which show that he was proficient in all the learning of the ecclesiastical schools.

At length, in 1680, he emerges from the obscurity through the performance of his first opera, "L'Onesta del' Amore," at the palace of the ex-queen of Sweden, Christina, in Rome. The work pleased, and the young composer seems to have been taken into the service of the queen, where he remained until her death, which took place in 1688. Nothing is known of this opera beyond the fact of its performance. Even the influence it may have had on the fortunes of the young composer is inferential, for there is no evidence that he may not have been in her employ previously. The next reliable glimpse we have of him is in the performance of his opera "Pompeo" in January, 1684.

Then for nine years we lose sight of him again until January, 1693, when an oratorio of his, "I Dolore di Maria, sempre Virgine," was written for the congregation of the "seven griefs," at San Luigi di Palazzo. In the same year, also, his opera of "Teodora" was played at Rome. Other indications combine to show that Scarlatti must have

rapidly gained in popular estimation during these years, whose record for the present, at least, seems so hopelessly lost.

One year later, namely, on Jan. 6, 1694, Scarlatti was appointed musical director of the royal chapel at Naples, where his first work seems to have been the production of Legrenzi's "Odoacre," with certain adaptations and additions of his own. In a prefatory note to the published edition, Scarlatti says: "The airs rewritten by the editor are distinguished by an asterisk, to the end that their faults should not prejudice the reputation of Legrenzi, whose immortal glory is an object of the editor's unlimited respect." Nevertheless, it may be remarked in passing, this respect did not prevent him from making important changes in the work,—changes which he must have believed improvements, and likely to render the performances more successful. Apparently the modesty of the young composer was technical and verbal rather than anything deeper.

ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI.

From an engraving of a portrait by Solimène, published in Naples, 1819.

There is every indication that Scarlatti found the Neapolitan position very much to his taste. As yet we are without a carefully prepared biography, and little is known of this part of his career beyond the names and times of performance of the operas, which followed each other rapidly, at the rate of at least three a year during his entire productive career. Among those of the first ten years at Naples, the following are to be mentioned: "Pirro e Demetri," 1697; "Il Prigionero Fortunato," 1698; and "Laodicea e Berenice," 1701. During this period he was director of the conservatory of San Onofrio.

Here, moreover, he at least inspired the teaching of the voice, for it was at this school, under Scarlatti's direction, that many of the most eminent singers of the first quarter of the eighteenth century were educated. Among the names mentioned in this connection are those of Farinelli, Senesimo, and Mme. Faustina Hasse. It is probable that Scarlatti himself taught singing, in support of which reasons will be mentioned later.

At this time Naples was in considerable disturbance of a political kind, and in 1703 the situation became insupportable to Scarlatti, who thereupon turned his steps once more towards Rome, where he was appointed assistant musical director of Santa Maria Maggiore, in 1703. Four years later, upon the death of the musical director, Antoine Foggia, he was made full director. He was also made the musical director at the palace of the distinguished and magnificent Cardinal Ottoboni.

He had now come to the full measure of his powers and popularity. One of his celebrated works, "Il Caduta de Decemviri," was played in 1706; another, "Il Trionfo della Liberta," was played at Venice in 1707. He composed with the greatest spontaneity. Burney, the musical historian, mentions seeing the manuscripts of thirty-five cantatas by Scarlatti, which he composed at Tivoli, in the month of October, 1704, while on a visit to his friend, André Adami, chaplain singer in the pontifical chapel. These works were dated, and the dates show that they were written at the rate of one a day. Quanz, the celebrated flute player, visited Naples in 1725, when Scarlatti was a very old man, and met him several times. He mentions a certain wealthy amateur who had collected four hundred manuscript compositions of Scarlatti.

It was during the Roman residence that the young Handel formed the acquaintance of the two Scarlattis, for the son Domenico was by this time the very first clavier virtuoso in Italy. Handel was so much interested that he accompanied the Scarlattis upon their return to Naples, where the master resumed his position as court musical director, in 1709. Handel remained in Naples, studying the cantata style of Scarlatti, until the spring of the following year.

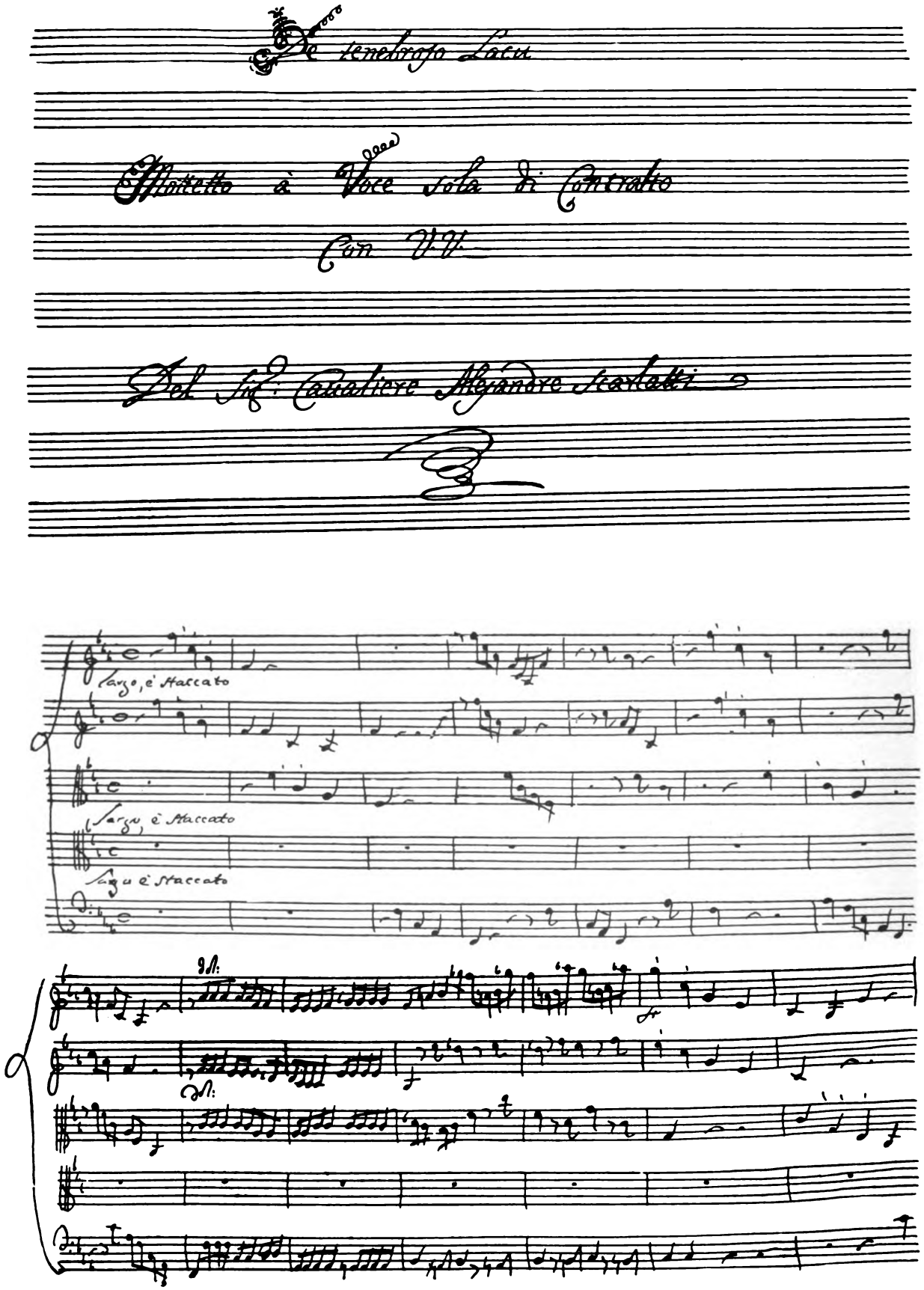
In his later residence at Naples his activity continued, but the very names of many of his works are now lost. Among the most important of these may be mentioned the opera of "Tigrane," which was played in 1715. Another, "Griselda," was produced in 1721. In addition to the direction of the conservatory of San Onofrio, he appears to have taught musical composition at the two other conservatories, of Dei Poveri and Di Loreto. His activity as composer continued almost to the end of his long and honored life. He died Oct. 24, 1825.

The total number of Scarlatti's secular operas was more than one hundred and fifteen. He composed many oratorios, among which may be mentioned "I Dolore di Maria," "Il Sacrafizio d'Abramo," "Il Martirio di S. Teodosia," "La Concezzione della Beata Virgine," "La Sposa di Sacra Cantici," "S. Fillipo Neri," "La Virgine Addolorata," etc. There were about two hundred masses, and more than four hundred secular cantatas. The latter are semi-dramatic settings of short texts for a single voice, with accompaniments for clavier, or combinations of instruments for chamber use. The vast number of pieces of the latter class, together with many other compositions nearly allied to them (chamber duets for voice and light accompaniment, etc.), can only be regarded as having been occasioned by special circumstances in the way of facilities for performance. For it must be remembered that nearly all of these works demand of the singer a degree of virtuosity which was then extremely rare, and to be found perhaps scarcely at all outside the pupils of Scarlatti himself. The solution is to be found in the fact already mentioned that the master himself was a fine singer. Furthermore he had a daughter, La Flaminia, who seems to have been a singularly gifted creature. Bernardo de Domenice, in Vol. IV. of his "Vite d'Pittori, Scultori, ed Archetetti napolitain" (Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects of Naples), is quoted by Florimo, in his "La Scuola Musicale di Napoli" (Marano, 1880), as saying of Francesco Solimene, that he was a lover of music, and in the habit of spending much time at the house of Scarlatti, whose daughter La Flaminia was a wonderful singer, full of dramatic fervor and gifted with a magnificent voice. It would seem, therefore, that these works may have been composed primarily for his own satisfaction and for the pleasure of his own family circle.

In respect to the facility with which he composed, as well as in the agreeable manner of writing for the voice, Scarlatti was the true founder of later Italian opera, his principles of composition having been almost universally followed until past the middle of the present century. But unlike some of the modern Italians, Scarlatti's ease of production rested upon most thorough attainments in counterpoint and the technical mastery of material. His great masses are monuments of learning, and by good judges are counted worthy of being placed beside those most honored in the annals of ecclesiastical music. Among the most celebrated of these works are a four-voice requiem, an "Ave Regina Cælorum" for two voices and organ, a great four-voice canon, a five-voice mass with orchestra, a great pastoral mass for two choirs, eleven voices, with orchestra and organ, and a famous motette, "Tu es Petrus," for two choirs. This was sung at the coronation of Napoleon I. by a choir of thirty papal singers, specially imported for the purpose.

The greater part of the works of Scarlatti are lost, or lie concealed in the archives of the religious houses for which many of them were composed. The archives of the Royal College of Music at Naples contain fifty works of his, among which there are seven of his operas.

It is by no means easy at the present day to discriminate between the musical reforms which Scarlatti actually invented himself, and those which tradition has somewhat generously attributed to him, but which were in fact the fortunate discoveries of earlier composers soon forgotten. Speaking in general terms, between Scarlatti and Monteverde a full century intervened, a century of such feverish musical activity as the world has scarcely ever seen equalled. Many gifted men took up the representative style where Monteverde left it, and small reforms were continually introduced. Scarlatti is credited with having made the aria more symmetrical by introducing the *da capo* after the



Fac-simile autograph manuscript written by Scarlatti. Original is in the British Museum.

middle part. He is also held by some to have invented, or greatly perfected, the Italian art of singing, and to have introduced running divisions for the display of the technique of the singers. In this point he is the forerunner of the later Italian composers. It is not at all easy to define the precise limitations between Scarlatti's work and that of the other composers, famous in their times, but now almost forgotten. Few of their works are now accessible, and the extracts in such collections as Gevaert's "Les Gloires de l'Italie" may have been edited with the additions required for modern ideas. But so far as I feel justified in drawing conclusions from the evidence accessible, the following are among the more important facts in the case: —

In Peri's "Eurydice" the aria occupies the smallest possible place. Giulio Caccini, his amateur co-worker, has an aria published in 1600 from "Nymphes des Ondes," called *Fere selvagge che per monti errato*, which is in the key of G, moderato, two periods, eight and six measures. The air by Peri, already mentioned, was sixteen measures, in sustained tones, symmetrical, and fulfilling the proper place of aria, which is that of emphasizing and idealizing an important moment in the drama. Gavaert's collection contains one by Marco Gagliano, a duet for two voices, *Alma mea dove ten vai*, which is in the key of D minor, and runs in thirds in the regulation Italian style. It is evident that here we have not to do with the representative style, but with a folks song more or less idealized. A cantata for solo voice, by Luigi Rossi, 1640, printed in Gevaert's collection, had the theme resumed after the middle part, in a manner quite equivalent to the *da capo*. This song also is notable for the amount of vocal running work which it contains (an interesting circumstance, considering the comparatively early period of its production after the discovery of the representative style); in this there are from eight to sixteen notes to a syllable, sixteenths in common time. Even the recitative in the dramatic part of this cantata has the pyrotechnic divisions. Cavalli, an aria from whose "Giasone" appears in Gevaert's collection (1649), seems to have held rather a meagre idea of the possibility of the aria. One of the more interesting of these early specimens is the aria or canzone, *Farci pazzo da caterna*, which is practically a duet with its own accompaniment, the voice answering the leading motive in the bass. It is somewhat defective in symmetry, but its general effect is admirable.

Scarlatti was far more richly endowed than these composers, both by nature and by art. In the Newberry Library, Chicago, there is one opera of Scarlatti's complete, "La Rosaura" (Edition of the German Society for Musical Research), which was probably produced between 1689 and 1692. As compared with the operas by Monteverde, the melody of this work is much more free. There is a *largo* prelude and aria of Climene in the second scene, with a string introduction, beautifully done. The violin part is very noble and effective. The second part of the aria is in A minor and other keys, ending in C minor, after which there is a *da capo*, bringing back the main aria. I know not whether this *da capo* was written by Scarlatti, or was an addition by the later editor; but inasmuch as the date of this opera so closely coincides with that of "Teodora" (1693), generally regarded as the first example of the *da capo*, this may well enough be an earlier case, unknown to the former writers. In the fifth scene there are some running divisions which are extended to considerable length, the word "spasso," for instance, having seven beats of common time, sixteenths. Throughout this work minor tonality preponderates very much, all the airs being in minor, and only one or two of the *ritournelli* being in major. Rosaura has a good air in the second act, and there is a remarkably fine piece of work for violin solo, lute, and 'cello, the cembale being silent.

M. Fétis says that in "Il Cadute de' Decemviri," played in 1705, "All the airs have a sentiment corresponding with the words, and a taking originality. Many have a solo violin with two other violin parts. In the second act an air of touching expression is accompanied by violin solo, with obbligati 'celli, and bass alone. The piece is full of strange harmonies and bold modulations, and is of exquisite beauty."

It was Scarlatti's good fortune to be active as a composer at the very time when the violin had received its finishing touches at the hands of the later Amati and Antonio Stradivarius. The first great violin virtuoso, Archangelo Corelli, had published his epoch-marking works during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Scarlatti appears to have entered into the new musical

world thus opened with ever fresh enjoyment and a rare intelligence. Fétis says that in "Laodicea e Berenice" (1701) he wrote an air with obbligato for violin and 'cello, the former having been intended for Corelli; but upon its proving impossible to secure Corelli, the air had to be given up because there was no violinist sufficiently skilled to play it.

In "Tigrane" (1715) the orchestra consisted of violins, violas, 'celli, basses, two horns, two oboes, which was an unprecedented number at that time. In "La Caduta de Decemviri" (1706) the air *Ma, il ben mio che fa* was accompanied by violins in four parts, with admirable effect. Obbligato solos are also frequent.

Scarlatti also made a mark as teacher of singing. By many he is regarded as the founder of the Italian art of singing. This may well enough have been the case. A great singer himself, a fine musician in every respect, and fully imbued with the concept of *cantabile* melody, as shown in the violin effects already mentioned as frequent in his operas, nothing could be more natural than that he should put the two ideas together, and seek to discover a method of training through which the human voice would be capable of similarly noble effects, with the added element of inherent vitality. According to tradition, he accomplished his task. At all events it was his pupil, Nicolo Porpora, who brought the art of sustained song to its highest perfection. Besides Porpora, who was perhaps his greatest pupil (and his eminent son, Domenico Scarlatti, who was great composer as well as virtuoso upon the clavier), the most celebrated of Scarlatti's pupils were Logroscino, Durante, and Hasse.

Considering the importance of the period when Scarlatti flourished, and his own prominence both in the eyes of his contemporaries and in the history of art, it is surprising that his biography has never been exhaustively written. Such a work, carried out in the spirit of Spitta's "Bach," would amount to a history of the creation and growth of Italian opera, and would be of vast interest.

W. S. B. Mathews.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA PERGOLESE

THE measure of a life is not its length, but its productiveness, and the best of a life's work is in its quality, not its quantity. The history of the fine arts is rich in the names of those who ended a great career before they had rounded out two score years, and many of the world's triumphs in the open conflicts of battle on land or sea and of labor in the struggles of peaceful times were won by men who had not long left their boyhood behind them.

Eminent among these young men, whose work and fame are to be permanently preserved and esteemed, is Giovanni Battista Pergolese, the span of whose life hardly exceeded a quarter of a century, and the number of whose compositions appears small in proportion to the influence he exerted and the new impulse he imparted to the musical world a hundred and fifty years ago.

Yet during his lifetime he was unappreciated and unsuccessful, and was a person of so little consequence that many details of his history are difficult to discover, while others which might now be interesting and instructive, are absolutely unknown. The very year and place of his birth are disputed. Some authorities claim that he was born in 1704 at Casoria, in the immediate vicinity of Naples; but the best are agreed upon the date of January 3, 1710, and name Jesi, a small town near Ancona, as the place. On the other hand, Fétis, after much examination, comes to the conclusion that he was born at Pergola, a town near Urbino,— whence his surname of Pergolese, his family name being Jesi — and sets down that the year was 1707. On this point he is evidently wrong, as he would thus make the composer older by three years at the time of his death than he is generally stated to have been.

Of his boyhood nothing is known, but he must have shown in an unusual degree the musical talent so common in Italy, because he is found at about ten years of age as a charity student in Naples, and under the protection of the Duke of Maddaloni and Prince of Stigliano, the latter being first equerry to to the King of Naples. Here again accounts differ. On the one hand it is claimed that the boy was received into the Conservatory Dei Poveri di Gesú Cristo, while on the other it is argued with much probability that he was taught at San Onofrio. If the latter be accepted as the truth, the contradiction can be explained by the fact that his teacher, Gaetano Greco, was originally at the former institution, but spent his later years in connection with the latter.

As the lad showed small aptitude for vocal music, he was first set to learn the violin of Domenico Mattei, who soon discovering the nature of his talent, sent him to Greco. This eminent master, himself a distinguished pupil of the great Alessandro Scarlatti, found Pergolese to be well worth cultivating and devoted himself to him with loving care. But in about two years Greco died, and Pergolese then received instruction from Durante, the famous master of counterpoint, whose methods are still followed in the royal conservatory at Naples, and from Feo. During this period his attention was concentrated upon the science of music and composition, and it is recorded that by the time he was fourteen years old, he had written some things of considerable consequence.

The effect of his training in the reserved, scholastic and almost conventional Neapolitan methods and of the influence about him was naturally such as to render his style severe, classic and almost formal; but no such limitation could be set to the expansion of his spirit, and no sooner was he free from academic constraint and ready to choose his own way in the world, than he began to express himself more vividly and to turn toward the theatre as his true field. His first composition was, so to speak,

a compromise between the lessoning of the past and his ambitions for the future, for it was a drama with a flavor of oratorio. It was called "San Guglielmo d' Aquitania," and was produced at the Fiorentini, which stood in the second rank of Neapolitan theatres, and was not then, as subsequently, confined to the representation of comedy. The opera had only a qualified success with the public, being judged to have too much science and too little melody; but it sufficed to make his talent evident to his noble patrons, who then exerted their influence to get him hearings at other theatres. Thus encouraged, he wrote "Sallustia," an opera-buffa; "Amor fa l' Uomo Cieco," an *intermezzo*, at the suggestion of the Prince of Stigliano; and "Ricimero," a grand opera. These were performed at San Bartolomeo and other secondary theatres, and were all failures.

PERGOLESE.

Reproduction of a rare print from the British Museum.

Disappointed and almost disheartened, Pergolese decided to give up the stage, and for two years he devoted himself to instrumental music, composing about thirty trios for strings, chiefly for the Prince of Stigliano and other friends. But his disposition was not to be longer controlled, and in 1731 he produced "La Serva Padrona," a light opera which made an instant success and has attained a justly high reputation all the world over. Being in the vein again, he followed this with "Il Maestro di Musica," "Il Geloso Schernito," "Lo Frate Innamorato," "Livietta e Tracolo," "Il Prigioniero Superbo" and "La Contadina Astuta." These were mostly composed upon Neapolitan texts, were full of gaiety and brightness, and had temporary success in the San Bartolomeo, the Nuovo and other theatres; but their local dialect and the fact that they belonged to the less important classes of opera, prevented their obtaining any wide currency.

In May, 1734, Pergolese was called to Rome to become the chapel-master of the church of Santa Maria di Loreto. Regarding this nomination as a promotion in his art as well as a recognition of his ability, he set himself seriously to work upon something which should at once confirm any good opinion of his powers and demonstrate his gratitude. Putting aside the trivial Neapolitan *libretti*, he turned to Metastasio and drew from his poetry the text for his "Olimpiade," a grand opera which was brought out in 1735 at the Tordinona. At this time the composer Duni — of whom little more than the name now remains — was a composer much in favor, and was about to bring out a new work of his own, "Nero." He had no small fear of what Pergolese might do and withheld his score until he could make acquaintance with that of the new comer. His opinion, written directly to Pergolese, with many expressions of admiration, included these words: "There are here too many details beyond the reach of the average public; they will pass unperceived, and you will not succeed. My opera will not have the value of yours; but, being more simple, it will be more fortunate." Duni was right; the "Olimpiade" was a failure; some parts of it were hissed, — although it was admitted that two airs and one duet were "deeply expressive," — and one chronicler records that some irate auditor went so far as to throw an orange at the head of the composer as he sat at the harpsichord in the orchestra. The generous spirited Duni afterwards said that he was "in a fury" against the Roman public for its behavior toward his contemporary.

This defeat was a decisive one, and Pergolese turned back to his duties as a composer and director of religious music. The ensuing period was signalized by his writing, among other things, of a mass, a *Dixit* and a *Laudate*, all upon a commission from the Duke of Maddaloni, who desired them for the annual festival at the church of San Lorenzo in Lucina, at Rome, where they were sung with great eclat.

The end of Pergolese's career was now approaching. For about four years he had had frequent hemorrhages and had shown other signs of pulmonary consumption. Beside having within it the germs of this fatal disease, his constitution had been sapped and weakened by dissipation, and what one of his biographers calls squarely his "*passion effrénée pour les femmes.*" To save what strength and life he still had, it was necessary that he should leave Rome for a less trying climate, and he determined to return to the softer and more salubrious air of Naples. One writer says that he betook himself to a property belonging to the Duke of Maddaloni, at Torre del Greco, just at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, where the sunny exposure and the protection of the volcano from the winds of the north are thought to be extremely propitious to such invalids as he. But this stay can have been only temporary, because his final residence is known to have been in a villa at Pozzuoli, which is quite on the other side of Naples and is to be accounted a no less salubrious place of sojourn, having been sought for sanitary reasons by the old Romans.

Reproduction of a fine medal by T. Mercandetti, struck in 1806 (after the death of Pergolese), in commemoration of his "Stabat Mater."

Pergolese was hardly fit to do any work in these days, but he had accepted a commission from the confraternity of San Luigi di Palazzo, in Rome, and was determined to execute it. The subject was a "Salve Regina," and he was to receive for it the munificent sum of ten ducats — equivalent, perhaps, to about eight dollars of the present currency. Like Mozart, laboring over this "Requiem," Pergolese gave his last thought and his last strength to this anthem, and had hardly completed it when, on the 16th of March, 1736, he died. There were rumors at the time, which even had some currency years later, that he had been poisoned, the isolation of his retreat and the peculiarity of some of his symptoms suggesting the possibility of this. But, apart from the fact that his physical condition and his known habits explained his maladies and their inevitable termination, Pergolese was not a figure of sufficient importance to excite jealousy or animosity. His life had not been a public one in the full sense of the word, and in the lyric drama, where he desired most to shine, he had made but one real success — that of "La Serva Padrona."

Hardly had the young composer's body been buried — in the little cathedral at Pozzuoli — when a sudden and extreme admiration for his music broke out in Italy, and soon spread to other countries. Naples, in her tardy enthusiasm, justified the reproach of Dr. Burney, who wrote, "Had she known her own happiness, Naples might have boasted of possessing one of the greatest geniuses she or the world had ever produced. The first opera of Giovanni Battista Pergolese was performed at her second theatre! The young composer found not among his countrymen minds sensible of his extraordinary talents or that acknowledged the natural maxim of Horace, '*Bonus sis felixque tuis.*' His native land was the last to discover, or to confess, his superior powers."

Two years after its author's death the "Olimpiade" was reproduced in splendid fashion at Rome and received with honor. The "Serva Padrona" was translated into other languages and heard in many European cities. It reached Paris about 1750, and although performed by inferior singers, it created so deep an impression, —subsequently increased by "Il Maestro di Musica," —that some French authorities have not hesitated to say that this music almost revolutionized theatrical art and led to the establishment of comic opera as it has been since understood in France. His sacred music was also introduced in the Concerts Spirituels and greatly applauded as among the chief sensations of the time. Pergolese is judged to have had his first adequate hearing in England in 1724. The poet Gray had brought home from Italy fine reports of the new music, and in that year the "Olimpiade" was put upon the stage of the King's

Theatre, then directed by the Duke of Middlesex. It had not a distinguished success, but one air, "*Tremende oscure atroci*," became an established favorite in concerts with the principal Italian tenors for ten years after.

For a good many years after Pergolese's death his music, both dramatic and sacred, was in the highest esteem throughout Italy, and received the tribute of much imitation. His "Stabat Mater," which may be regarded as the best of his ecclesiastical compositions — unless some should prefer the "Salve Regina" — even held its own, and not in Italy alone, by any means, until it was superseded by the larger and more popularly written work of Rossini.

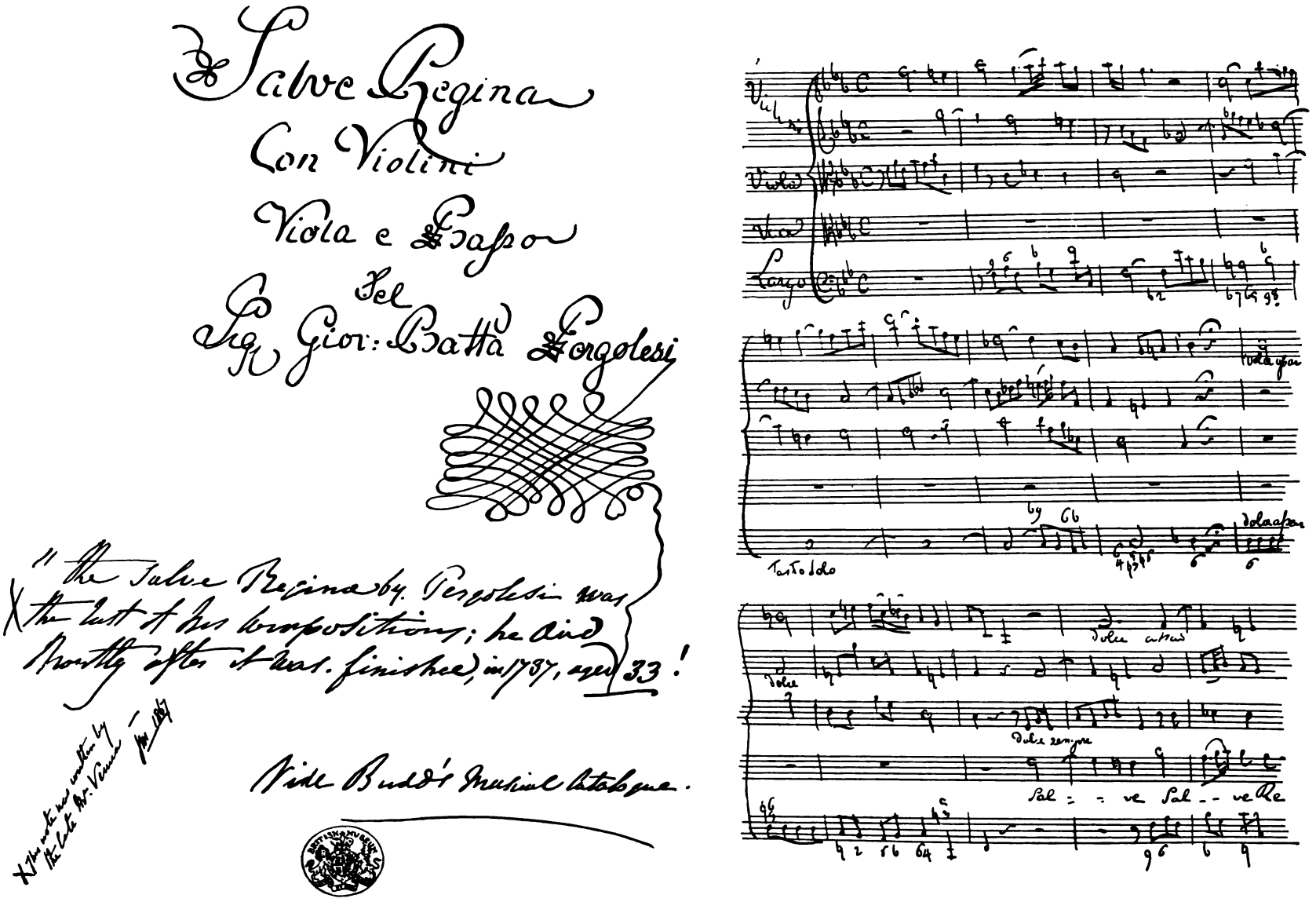
The rush of modern music and the modifications in taste have pushed the scores of Pergolese from the theatre and the concert room, and no later performances of his operas are to be noted as of consequence since the double revival of "La Serva Padrona" in Paris, in 1863, when the original version was given at the Italiens and the French translation at the Opéra Comique, Mesdames Galli-Marié and Penco carrying off the honors. The instrumental trios are never heard nowadays, and although Catholic choirs throughout the world still keep his church music in use, it is only upon rare occasions that the "Stabat Mater" is produced for Protestant auditors by some serious-minded choral society.

Pergolese was a quite industrious writer, if allowance be made for the diversions caused by his personal indulgences, and for the discouragement which was naturally produced upon a temperament like his by the lack of appreciation, sympathy and material support, individual patronage having undoubtedly contributed at least as much to his material and spiritual comfort and development as public applause and sustenance. He was not a rapid writer, however, and the record of his compositions, so far as they are known, includes besides the operas which have been already named, a large cantata entitled "Orfeo;" five minor cantatas; an oratorio having for its subject the Nativity; the thirty trios already alluded to; five masses, and a dozen or so of religious pieces. A considerable number of the vocal scores were published and twenty-four of the trios were printed in London or Amsterdam, but the minor religious works and some of the operas remained in manuscript and are practically inaccessible except to studious inquirers in Italian libraries.

It is not difficult to establish now a just estimate of the genius of Pergolese, which was undervalued during his lifetime, then suddenly exalted above its worth and then again depreciated below its true plane. It was seldom that the external form of his compositions gave an adequate idea of the spiritual qualities which dwelt within them. Wise and careful observers often remarked that they heard with surprise and delight much which they had not anticipated from an examination of the scores. Educated strictly in the severe and learned Neapolitan school, he was of course a master of counterpoint and of all the devices and figures of musical effect, which, as has been said, constituted the staple of his first pieces. But he had an intuitive sense of the dramatic element in man and in music, and he made this felt, alike in the humorous sprightliness of "La Serva Padrona," the emotional piety of the "Salve Regina," and the pathetic strophes of the "Stabat Mater."

Except in his grand operas and his ecclesiastical pieces, he asked for no large forces of singers or players. In his masses he wrote as usual for four voices, although he seems to have preferred five, and he not infrequently required in them two choirs, each in five parts. The "Stabat Mater" is for two voices only, and its accompaniment is so simple and so thin that Paisiello subsequently wrote additional instrumentation for it. The "Serva Padrona" has only two characters and the accompaniment requires only the string quartet; yet so ingenious, so bright, so gay and so apposite is all the music, that the hearer never finds it monotonous or tedious.

That Pergolese should have began his musical life as a violinist and yet should have written for the voice with perfect expressiveness and exact adaptation, has sometimes been thought strange. But his is by no means an isolated case, for many

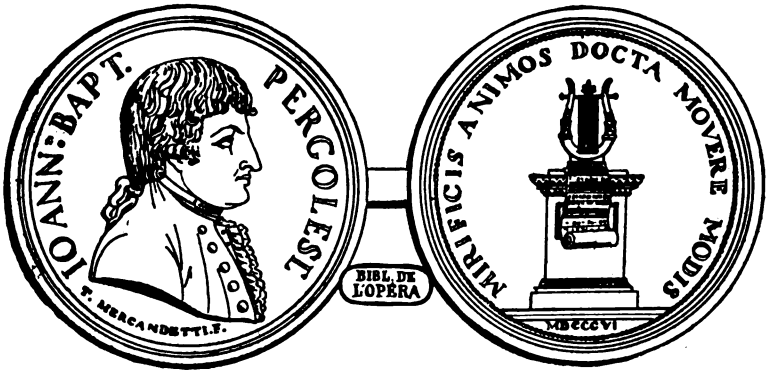


Reproduction of original title-page and a portion of musical manuscript of the celebrated "Salve Regina," by Pergolesi, now in the possession of the British Museum. The added note on title-page made by Mr. Venna is probably incorrect, for the best authorities agree that he died in 1736, aged 26.

of the best writers of vocal music have begun their studies as instrumentalists and have even excelled as performers; besides which, he put aside the violin as soon as the larger scope of his gifts was discovered and further improved his feeling for the voice by association with Vinci and Hasse when he was once free of the Conservatory.

Pergolese's limitations sprang from the same source whence flowed his power — his understanding of the natural adaptation of the means of expression to the ideas and emotions to be conveyed. He could not or would not pass into the theatrical, the meretricious and the exaggerated, and hence it is that his music sometimes fell short of the effect which he had hoped for it or lacked the variety of color and manner without which a large and extended work must weary the ear, or at least fail to keep it alert and interested.

He excelled in grace, simplicity and purity of style, although his music, written for singers who had been trained to depend upon themselves and not to lean upon accompaniments, may appear abstruse and difficult to present readers. He brought to his time the vitality, movement, spring and sincerity of life which it had not, and he used his means with tact and directness in appealing to sentiment, mirth, pathos and piety according as he wished to evoke them. If he cannot be accorded the honor of having created a new manner of musical composition, he must be awarded that of having beautified and enlivened the art as he found it, and of having done the world a lasting benefit, greater perhaps in the impulse given to contemporary and subsequent thought, than in the impression directly made by him upon his time and his people.



Outline sketch of commemorative medal. See page 45.

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI

Reproduction of a lithograph made by A. Lemoine, after a photograph from life taken by Erwin of Paris, in 1861.

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI

Reproduction of a lithograph made by A. Lemoine, after a photograph from life taken by Erwin of Paris, in 1861.

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI

ROSSINI is one of the last and most glorious representatives of that admirable Italian school which for three centuries cast such a brilliant radiance over the art of its country, and which seems unhappily, to have come to a close with the illustrious Verdi. A genius, fertile and luminous, gifted with an inspiration warm and generous, an imagination ardent and active, he astonished the world for twenty years by his creative power, and after having enchanted his native land by a long series of works which were distinguished, now by the grace, now by the grandeur, now by the novelty of their forms, he prematurely terminated his dramatic career at the age of thirty-seven, by a marvellous masterpiece written expressly for the French stage. This was the *William Tell* which radiated from France over the entire world, and which to-day, after an existence of sixty years, is still young, fresh and powerful, like a colossus which nothing can harm. The history of this immortal artist, whose name should be inscribed in letters of gold in the annals of the art, is certainly one of the most interesting which the history of music can furnish us.

Gioacchino Rossini was born at Pesaro, a little town of the Romagne, Feb. 29, 1792. His father, who was a musician and played very well on the horn, was employed in this little town in the double capacity of *tubatore* (town-trumpeter) and inspector of the slaughter houses. His mother, whose name was Anna Guidarini, was very beautiful and gifted with an exceptionally fine voice. At the time of the passage through Pesaro in 1796 of the victorious French army, Rossini's father, it is said, in a burst of enthusiasm for republican ideas, let fall some imprudent remarks which the reaction soon afterwards judged worthy of punishment. They began by dismissing him from the post of *tubatore*, after which it was not long before he was thrown into prison. Left alone with her child, his wife joined a travelling opera troupe, and when the prisoner was set at liberty he followed her in her peregrinations, playing the horn in the orchestra of the theatres at which she performed.

During this time the child learned from his father the first elements of music, and even reached the dignity of playing second horn in the orchestra. But the lad gave such unusual promise that his parents soon determined to give him a regular musical education. He was sent to Bologna and placed under the instruction of a professor named Angelo Tesei, with whom he studied singing and the piano, and as he had a very sweet soprano voice he was able to earn something by singing in the churches. Notwithstanding his tender age he rapidly became an excellent reader and clever accompanist, so that his father thought it best to take the boy with him on his tours and to obtain for him the post of *maestro al cembalo* at the theatres. This was only for a short time, however, and early in 1807 the young Rossini returned to Bologna and entered the famous musical lyceum of that city, where he studied counterpoint with P. Stanislas Mattei, and the violoncello with Cavedagni. The following year he was charged with the composition of the annual cantata, which it was the custom to confide to the best pupil of the institution. This cantata, which was entitled *Pianto d'armonia per la Morte d'Orfeo*, was performed on Aug. 8, 1808. Rossini was sixteen years old, and already six of his compositions had been performed, one of which was an opera, *Demetrio e Polibio*.

But he was impatient of the yoke of his master Mattei, who dismayed him with numberless rules of counterpoint for which he could give no reason, and who, when questioned on these points by his pupil would simply respond that such was the tradition. Dissatisfied with such insufficient

explanation, Rossini thought out a more practical and certainly excellent means of familiarizing himself with the forms of harmony and modulation; he applied himself to the study of the quartets and symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, and also to the task of scoring them. Thus, by an attentive analysis, he learned more in a few months than he had learned in several years through the empirical teaching of Mattei. Then when he felt pretty sure of himself, he left the school, determined to start out on the career of composer. He had just passed his eighteenth year.

He returned to Pesaro, his native town, and there found friends and advocates who facilitated his entrance upon that career by obtaining for him an engagement with the San Mosê theatre of Venice, to write an opera entitled *la Cambiale di matrimonio*, which was performed at that theatre in the autumn of 1810. This little work was a happy beginning for him. The following year he gave to the Corso theatre of Bologna, *l'Equivoco stravagante*, and in 1812 he brought out no less than six operas: *l'Inganno felice* (San Mosê theatre, Venice), *Ciro in Babilonia* (Communal theatre, Ferrare), *la Scala di seta* (San Mosê theatre, Venice), *Demetrio e Polibio* (Valle theatre, Rome), *la Pietra del paragone* (Scala theatre, Milan), and *l'Occasione fa il ladro, o il Cambio della valigia* San Mosê theatre, Venice. These works were not all equally successful, but most of them were very well received as was proved by the eagerness with which the different theatres already strove for the works of so young a composer. Moreover, one could point out in these different scores many remarkable fragments which gave some idea of the precocious genius of the artist, and of the freshness, grace and originality of his inspiration; in *l'Inganno felice*, a very beautiful trio; in *la Pietra del paragone*, a charming cavatina and the finale of the first act; in *Ciro in Babilonia*, two airs and a fine chorus, the principal motive of which became later the theme of the adorable cavatina of the *Barber of Seville* (Ecco ridente il cielo); finally, in *Demetrio e Polibio*, an exquisite quartet which was afterwards interpolated by the singers into several of the master's works.

In 1813, after a *farsa* entitled *il Signor Bruschino o il Figlio per azzardo*, Rossini again wrote two very important works, one in the serious *genre*, *Tancredi*, the other in the *genre bouffe*, *l'Italiana in Algeri*. These two works, the first of which was performed at the Fenice theatre, Venice, and the second at the San Benedetto, of the same city, was a double triumph for the author, and placed Rossini once for all in the first rank of the composers of his time. Moreover, they proved that the young master was as much at home in the dramatic *genre*, where he worked with a remarkable grandeur and power, as in light opera, in which he displayed an unequalled verve, gaiety, warmth and originality.

Rossini's artistic successes led to another kind of success, no less important. Italy was then under French rule, and Napoleon, emperor of the French people, had taken the title of king of Italy. But Napoleon, whose very life it was to fight, was a terrible devourer of men and his constant cry was for more soldiers. Rossini had reached the age when he must draw lots for the conscription. Was it possible to enroll a young artist whose genius announced itself in so brilliant a fashion, and could they force this artist, who promised to win distinction for his country, to take the chances of combat? All Italy was as one voice which demanded that Rossini be exempt from military service. Prince Eugène, who bore the title and fulfilled the functions of viceroy, took it upon himself to pronounce this exemption, and the future author of *William Tell* was able to pursue in peace the career in which he was to find honor and glory. In 1814 Rossini gave in quick succession to the Scala theatre of Milan two great works, one of them serious, *Aureliano in Palmira*, which was not very successful, the other light, *il Turco in Italia*, which was more fortunate; then in the following year he brought out at Venice *Sigismondo*. It was from this time forth that he found a place worthy of him.

There was at that time at the San Carlo theatre of Naples a man who had made himself famous throughout all Italy, a remarkable impresario, whose cleverness and fortune were matters of surprise even to those best acquainted with the mysteries of the green-room, and the difficulties attending all enterprises of this kind. A Milanese by birth, this man, whose name was Domenico Barbaja, was born of very poor parents, who had given him no education whatever. But he was naturally intelligent, astute, audacious, consumed with ambition, and to all this he joined a very

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI.

Reproduction of an excellent lithograph portrait of Rossini in middle life.

sagacious mind and a remarkable artistic instinct, coupled with an indefatigable activity. Ascended from the lowest round in the social ladder, apt at everything he undertook, having been in turn commissioner, horse-jockey, waiter at the café, petty usurer and contractor for the public gaming tables, he had ended by becoming quite at home in public affairs, which he managed with a consummate cleverness. He had installed himself at Naples in 1808, and it was there that he had obtained the license for keeping a gambling house. The following year he took the direction of the two royal theatres, San Carlo and Fondo, to which he soon added the other two theatres, the Fiorentini and the Nuovo. Then, as if this did not suffice to satisfy his ardor, he undertook in a short time, without abandoning any of his other projects, the management of the two great stages of the Scala and the Canobbiana at Milan, and the Italian opera at Vienna. And under his inspired direction all these enterprises prospered so well that the Italians surnamed Barbaja *il Napoleone degl' impresari*. It is certain that for twenty years he succeeded in uniting at the theatres which he directed, all the most celebrated composers, poets, singers and dancers, and that his liberality, good taste and artistic sense contributed very considerably to the surprising development of dramatic art in Italy during this period.

ROSSINI.

Reproduction of a lithograph portrait of Rossini in his thirty-sixth year, drawn by H. Grévédon, Paris

Like the rest of the world Barbaja was acquainted with Rossini's precocious success, and with his remarkable perception he quickly understood that the composer might become an important source of his prosperity. He resolved to ally himself to him, and as he was at once equitable and generous, he desired to pay a fair compensation for the services which he expected. Rossini had just given in Venice his last opera, *Sigismondo*, and had returned to Bologna. It was there that Barbaja went to find him and to offer him an engagement. Hitherto Rossini's experience with impresari had been confined almost solely to the poor unfortunate specimens who were in a chronic state of collapse. Imagine then his surprise when Barbaja, whose reputation was well known to him, came to propose an engagement of several years, assuring him, besides a fixed sum of about 11,000 francs, an annual interest of about 4,000 francs in his gambling business. It is true that in return Rossini was to agree to write two new works each year, and to arrange and adapt all the ancient works which it might please Barbaja to mount at the San Carlo and Fondo theatres. It was, in fact, besides the composition of his operas the whole musical direction of these two theatres, which Rossini was thus assuming, a charge which was simply enormous and which had dismayed all others. But what was that for an artist such as he, in exchange for the fortune which Barbaja held before his eyes, and the influence upon his future of the brilliant situation offered him on one of the first lyric stages of Italy?

So the contract was quickly signed, and Rossini went immediately to Naples to assume his new functions. No sooner did he arrive at that city, in the beginning of the year 1815, than Barbaja gave him the libretto of *Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra*, to set to music. It was with this work that he was to make his debut at the San Carlo, having for principal interpreter an artist of Spanish origin, Isabella Colbran, then in the zenith of her talent and her beauty, and who was one of the most esteemed cantatrices of that period in all Italy.

(Isabella Colbran, then the mistress of Barbaja, soon became that of Rossini, who afterwards married her, only to be separated at the end of a few years). The composer and the cantatrice obtained a wonderful success and the *Elisabetta* won a veritable triumph at Naples.

Rossini profited by this success to leave Naples for a time. His engagement with Barbaja was not exclusive, and a certain liberty of action was reserved to him. He took himself to Rome, whither he was called to write two operas for two different theatres; one, *Torvaldo e Dorliska*, for the Valle theatre, the other, *il Barbiere di Siviglia* for the Argentina.

ISABELLA ANGELA COLBRAN.

Rossini's first wife. From an original contemporary drawing in chalks and pencil.

We know that Paisiello had already treated the subject of the Barber of Seville, and that the opera conceived by him on Beaumarchais's comedy had been performed in 1789 at St. Petersburg, where he was imperial capellmeister; from there the work of the Neapolitan master had spread over all Europe, and had met, particularly in Italy, with a very flattering reception. Therefore it happened that Rossini was charged with presumption for daring to put *il Barbiere* to music, and that he was accused of trying to eclipse the glory of Paisiello, who was the first to use this idea. The reproach was all the more singular since such things were of very frequent occurrence in Italy, where, for nearly a century, composers had been setting to music, one after another, all the lyric poems of Apostolo, Zeno and Metastasio, such as *Nerone*, *Alessandro nell' Indie*, *Artaserse*, *l' Olimpiade*, etc., etc. Why then should Rossini, who in this case had only done what so many others had done before him, become thus an object of criticism and anger? It is difficult to say. Possibly it was Paisiello himself, whose jealousy and faults of character are sufficiently well known, who from Naples, where he had retired, started the hostile sentiments against his rival, and secretly planned the fall of the new work. At least, so it has been said, and the idea does not seem wholly unlikely.

Rossini, however, out of respect for the old master, had courteously written to him on the subject, declaring that it was not his intention to enter into competition with him, but simply to treat a subject which pleased him. Furthermore, and in order to avoid even the appearance of a desire for competition on his part, he had taken the precaution to have a new libretto made on the subject, and even to change the title of the work to *Almaviva, ossia l'inutile precauzione* (it was not until later that the title of *il Barbiere di Siviglia* was definitely adopted). Finally, in order that the wishes and intentions of the poet and composer might not be misunderstood, and that the public might not be mistaken in the matter, the following preface was placed at the head of the libretto.

"Notice to the public. The comedy by Beaumarchais entitled *le Barbier de Séville* or *la Précaution inutile*, is presented to Rome under the form of a comic drama, with the title of *Almaviva, ossia l'inutile precauzione*, with the object of fully convincing the public of the sentiments of respect and veneration which the author of the music of the present drama entertains toward the celebrated Paisiello, who has already treated this subject under its original title.

"Impelled to undertake this same difficult task the master, Gioacchino Rossini, that he might not incur the reproach of a daring vanity with the immortal author who has preceded him, has ex-

pressly required that the *Barber of Seville* be entirely versified anew, and that there shall be added several new situations, demanded, moreover,

Caricature of Rossini by Carjat reproduced from a print at the Paris Opera.

by the modern theatrical taste which has changed so much since the renowned Paisiello wrote his music.

"Some other differences between the contexture of the present drama and that of the French comedy above mentioned, have been required by the necessity of introducing choruses, partly to conform to modern customs, partly because they are indispensable in a theatre of such vast proportions. The courteous public is informed of this fact in order that it may excuse the author of the present drama, who, except for the concurrence of circumstances so imperative, would not have dared to introduce the slightest change in the French work consecrated by the applause of all Europe."

All these precautions and the artistic uprightness which Rossini exhibited in this delicate matter, could not avail to still the storm which hurled itself about him. No matter what he might have done to appease them, the Romans were exasperated in advance against his work and against himself, and the first performance of *il Barbiere*, outrageously hissed, was the most complete scandal of which the annals of the theatre can offer example. An account of it has been given by one of the Italian biographers of the master, Zanolini, from whom I borrow the following details: "The Romans went to the theatre, persuaded that they were going to hear detestable music, and disposed to punish an ignorant upstart. The overture was executed in the midst of a confused hub-bub, the precursor of the tempest. Garcia attempted to accompany with his guitar the first air of the count Almaviva; all the strings broke at once, and then commenced the laughs, jeers and hisses. A little while after, Don Basilio, an old singer of the Sistine chapel, stumbled, on entering the stage, and fell and bumped his nose. This was enough; laughs and hisses burst from all sides, and people would not and could not listen any longer. One person applauded, one only, and that was the composer; and the more he clapped, the louder grew the hisses, until, when the fury of the crowd had reached its climax, he mounted upon his chair, so that he might be seen by all, and with head, hands and voice testified to the actors his approbation. He remained intrepid until the orchestra had all left, waiting to receive the very last insult. He was to be present at the second performance, but he found some pretext for being excused, and the directors were delighted, because they feared him at the same time that they had confidence in his music. During the second evening, Rossini was conversing at his home with some friends, when cries were heard in the street in front of the house and the lights of many torches were seen through the window. When they distinguished among the cries the name of Rossini, his guests were alarmed but afterwards, the voices of friends having been recognized, the doors were all opened wide to the messengers sent by the spectators assembled at the Argentina, and who, carried away by their enthusiasm were clamoring for the maestro to show himself. Rossini was carried thither in triumph, and was covered with applause." So we see that this happy *Barbiere* which for eighty years has been the delight of the whole world, was badly enough received on its entrance into that world.

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI.

Reproduction of a lithograph by A. de Bayalos, made from a portrait by Dupré. Rossini in middle life. Portraits in spandrel are,

Grisi.
Rubini.
Tamburini.

Pasta.
Curioni.

Garcia Viardot
Mario.
Lablache.

Meanwhile, when the bad humor of the Romans was fairly over, and the *Barber* established in public favor, Rossini prepared to go to Naples in response to a call from Barbaja. Immediately on his return he set to work, giving first to the Fiorentini theatre a little work entitled *la Gazzetta*, then writing for the San Carlo his *Otello*, which achieved a considerable success and was played by the great artists Nozzari, David, Garcia, Benedetti and Colbran. He afterwards returned to Rome where he gave that gem of comic verve, *la Cenerentola*, then went to Milan where he wrote for the Scala, *la Gazza ladra*, a work little remembered to-day. He then went back to Naples to give *Armida*, and again returned to Rome where he brought out *Adelaide di Borgogna*, which met with very meagre success. But he soon made up for this failure by giving at Naples *Moses in Egypt*, one of his best works, which was followed by *Ricciardo e Zoraide* and *Hermione*, the libretto of which was taken from Racine's *Andromaque*. At the same time he sent to Lisbon the score of a little comic work which was requested of him by the royal theatre of that city; *Adina, o il Califfo di Bagdad*, on the subject of a French comic opera by Boieldieu, bearing the same title. After having given at Venice *Edoardo e Cristina* he again won great success at Naples with *la Donna del Lago*, a work full of poetry and originality.

It was at this point that Rossini had reached the fulness of his glory. Scarcely twenty-seven years of age, he had already written twenty-nine operas, several of which had achieved a brilliant success, and his name, popular throughout Italy, was famous in all Europe, which applauded his works with frenzy. And yet, the success of *la Donna del Lago* could not sustain a mediocre work like *Bianca e Falerio*, which was coldly received at the Scala, Milan. But the master regained public favor with his *Maometto II.* which was received with enthusiasm at Naples. He went to Rome shortly after to give *Matilde di Shabran*, one of the feeblest of his works, and then rose to the top again with *Zelmira*, which was very successful, not only at Naples, but at Vienna where Rossini was invited to direct the performance of the opera, accompanied by Colbran, then his wife, who sung the leading part. Finally, he wrote and brought out at Venice, *Semiramide*, one of the most remarkable of his works, in spite of its faults. Rossini counted much, and with reason, on this score which the Venetians received with a cold reserve. Neither the richness of the inspiration, nor the variety of the forms, nor the grandeur of the style which distinguished this noble and superb work, could overcome the indifference of the public. After a reception so unjust, a result so contrary to his legitimate hopes, Rossini, who at that moment was solicited on all sides, did not hesitate to leave Italy. An engagement was offered him in England; he accepted it immediately and went to London, passing through Paris where he formed relations which were soon to bring him back to that city.

Rossini was to write for the Italian theatre at London an opera entitled *la Figlia dell'aria*; he had composed the first act, when the direction of the theatre failed, and the project was abandoned. However, his trip to England was far from being unfruitful of results. Sought after by the highest society, encouraged in every way, received at court, Rossini, during his five months stay at London where he excited the liveliest enthusiasm, was able to realize from the concerts and lessons which he gave with his wife, about 200,000 francs, which was the basis of his future fortune. At the same time, through the intervention of the French ambassador in England, he signed an engagement with the minister of the royal house, by which he accepted the direction of the Théâtre-Italien of Paris at a salary of 20,000 francs per year, without prejudice to the author's rights in the works which he might wish to write for that theatre or for the Opéra.

Rossini found in France the same enthusiastic welcome which had been given him in England. He composed first a little Italian opera called *il Viaggio a Reims*, which was performed on the occasion of the fêtes given in that city for the coronation of King Charles X. He next occupied himself with transforming for the French stage two of his best Italian works, *Maometto II.* which became at the Opéra *le Siège de Corinthe*, and *Mosè in Egitto*, which was performed at that theatre under the title of *Moïse*. In passing from one tongue to the other, these two works were subject to much remodelling from the hand of the composer. He changed parts of them, added to them, strove to render the declamation more clear and precise, finally forced himself to adapt his inspiration to the necessities of the French stage

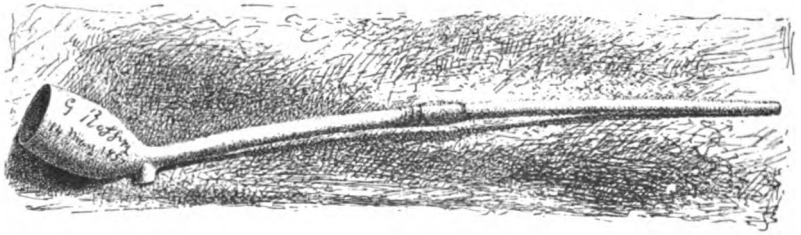
ROSSINI ON HIS DEATH BED.

Reproduction of Gustave Doré's celebrated picture, from photograph at the Paris Opera

and of the musical genius of that country. Success crowned his efforts, and in the face of that success, Rossini dreamed of writing a great new work expressly for the Opéra. But first he brought out at that theatre a pretty little opera in two acts, *le Comte Ory*, which was received with great applause, and in which he had embodied some fragments of the *Viaggio a Reims*.

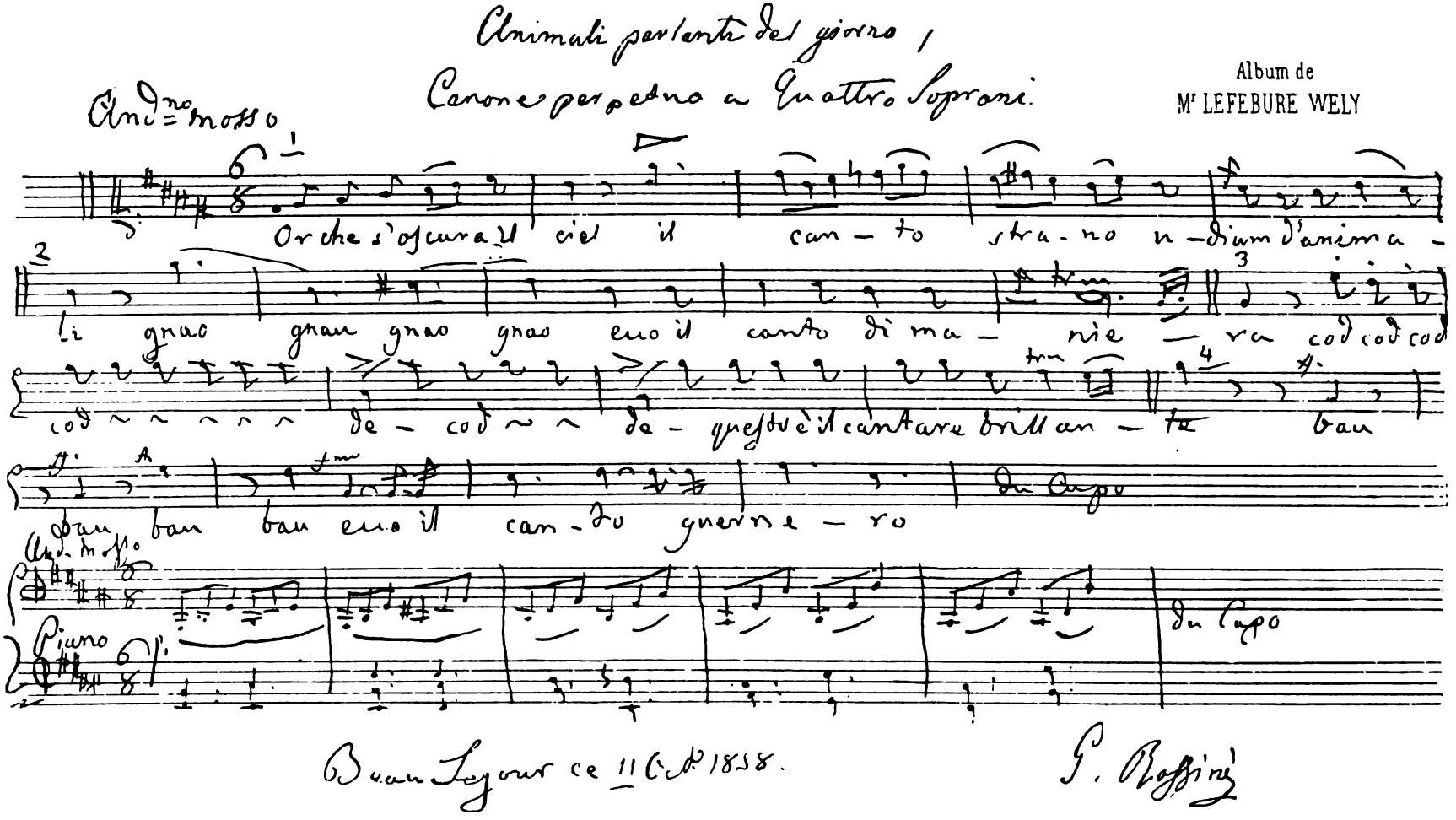
At last came the great work which the public were awaiting with impatience, *William Tell*, which was performed Aug. 3, 1829, with Nourrit, Dabadie, Levasseur, Prévost, Mmes. Cinti-Damoreau, Mori and Dabadie for the principal interpreters. In writing the score of *William Tell*, Rossini had applied his genius to the exigencies of the French stage, as Gluck had done fifty years before. He had given to his declamation a breadth hitherto unknown, to his instrumentation a superb color and *éclat*, while the dramatic action had acquired with him a marvellous power, and the wealth and freshness of his inspiration surpassed all that could be desired. It cannot be denied that the appearance of *William Tell* is a luminous date in the history of music in France, that the success of this masterpiece has never diminished, and that after more than sixty years it is still as touching, as pathetic, as grand, as much respected as in the first days of its existence.

How comes it then that after so complete, so brilliant, so incontestable a triumph, Rossini should have renounced the theatre forever, that he should never have wished to repeat so happy an attempt? That is a mystery which as yet it has been impossible to solve, and it is certainly a great misfortune for the art, which has thereby been deprived of untold masterpieces. But the fact remains that from the 3rd of August, 1829, date of the first performance of *William Tell* until the 13th of November, 1868, date of the master's death, Rossini wrote nothing more for the stage. This does not mean that he stopped composing; far from it. His compositions on the contrary are numerous, and some of them very important, but none are for the theatre. First should be mentioned his religious music: a *Stabat Mater*, a *Petite Messe solennelle*, and a *Tantum ergo;* then three choruses for female voices, *la Foi*, *l'Espérance*, *la Charité; le Chant des Titans* for four bass voices; *Soirées musicales*, comprising eight ariettes and four duets; and finally a great number of songs and piano pieces. Earlier, and in the course of his Italian career, Rossini had written, for different occasions, a number of cantatas and lyric scenes, the titles of which are: *il Pianto d' Armonia per la morte d' Orfeo; Didone abbandonata; Egle ed Irene; Teti e Peleo; Igea; Ad onore di S. M. il re de Napoli; Ad onore di S. M. l'emperatore d'Austria; la Riconoscenza; il Vero Omaggio; i Pastori;* etc.



ROSSINI'S CLAY PIPE BEARING HIS AUTOGRAPH.

Now in the library of the Paris Conservatory. Sketched by special permission.



Fac-simile autograph musical manuscript written by Rossini.

Rossini, whom Weber did not understand, and whom Beethoven did not wish to know, belongs nevertheless to the race of those grand creators, and in his veins coursed the blood of a man of genius. At the period of his birth three great musicians represented principally that beautiful Italian school so justly celebrated in the last century in spite of its characteristic defects. These three great musicians were Guglielmi, Cimarosa and Paisiello; Guglielmi, forgotten to-day even in his own country, and whom artists themselves no longer know; Cimarosa, the verve and gaiety of whose genius seemed to reserve him to a less tragic end; finally Paisiello, whom Rossini was called to down with his own weapons, in successfully making after him another *il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and whose glory was to be somewhat obscured by the glory of his brilliant rival. As for the others, Niccolini, Sarti, Portogallo, Gazzaniga, Nasolini, etc., they were undoubtedly artists of real talent, but devoid of originality and who confined themselves to following in the path which these great leaders traced out for them.

Some years later, and after a sort of interregnum, three more great artists were coming to fill the vacant place, and to govern in their turn the Italian musical world. Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti — three geniuses quite distinct from each other, not only from the standpoint of the nature of their personal inspiration, but also as regards the form with which they clothe their ideas, were coming to throw a new lustre, unhappily the last, over that Italian school so glorious for two centuries, and of which the author of *Rigoletto* and *Aida* remains to-day the venerable and last representative. Rossini, a brilliant and luminous genius, Bellini, of a pensive, poetic and tender nature, Donizetti, nervous and expansive in temperament, all were called to take place in the first rank, with this distinction, that the first always preserved an evident advantage, and that he alone brought into the art a new and characteristic note.

And yet for years past Rossini has been spoken of slightingly, his genius has not been understood, his worth has been denied and these wrongs are carried on at the present hour. Certain adepts of a new school, who affect to disparage all that was done before them, are ready to drag him to the gibbet without even giving him credit for what they owe him,— directly or indirectly. They do not seem to have the least idea that it is Rossini who has emancipated musical art as applied to the theatre; that it is Rossini who has given freedom to melodic form; that it is Rossini who has substituted for the majestic and uniform solemnity of the ancient lyric declamation, a rational diction, with an expression more vivacious, more intense and more vigorous; that it is Rossini who, by the movement and variety communicated to the rhythm, has given to the musical phrase the natural sentiment and warmth of action which it too often lacked; that it is Rossini to whom we owe the richness and the splendors of the modern dramatic orchestra. Who knows if that admirable orchestra of Wagner, to which unhappily everything is sacrificed, would exist to-day had it not been for Rossini? Whatever may be his faults — and assuredly he has them — we can afford to pardon them all in consideration of the incomparable qualities of this great man.

During nearly half a century Rossini has reigned supreme on all the stages of the world. Wherever there existed an Italian theatre, there were played and sung the works of Rossini: *Otello*, *Semiramide*, *Mosé*, *il Barbiere*, *la Gazza ladra*, *Cenerentola*, *l'Italiana in Algeri*, *la Donna del Lago*, *Maometto*. If all his serious works are not complete and perfect, at least all of them contain superb parts. Witness *Mosé*, what grandeur, what power and what majesty! Witness *Otello*, what spirit, what vigor and what boldness! Witness *Semiramide*, what color, what brilliancy and what splendor! However, there are grave faults to be found with Rossini's serious operas; in the first place a lack of unity, and also certain weaknesses which by their proximity, militate against some really admirable pages; then the abuse of vocalization and of the ornate style, absolutely incompatible with the purely dramatic element; finally, the occasional lack of real emotion and the frequent absence of pathos, an absence so complete that it may justly be said of Rossini that he never knew how to sing of love. And yet, by the side of these grave faults are qualities so grand, an inspiration so rich, a style so noble, a phrase so elegant, an orchestra so vigorous and always so full of interest, that the works though imperfect in their *ensemble*, have been able through certain sublime portions to win very great success.

But the place where Rossini is complete and inimitable is in opera bouffe. *Il Barbiere* is cer-

tainly a masterpiece, and *Cenerentola* comes very near being one. A wonderful imagination, gaiety carried sometimes to the point of folly, an ardor and quickness of inspiration that was simply prodigious, together with an instrumentation always new, always piquant, always of an extreme elegance; such are the qualities which characterized Rossini's light music, and which make it still as young and fresh as when it first appeared, eighty years ago.

In regard to his dramatic music, I must not forget, after having pointed out its shortcomings, to make an important statement, giving him credit for the progress which is unquestionably due him. I refer to the transformation which he has brought about in the recitative, beginning with his *Elisabetta*. Until then he had not risen above *Tancredi*, a charming score, but one in which his methods scarcely differed from those employed by the musicians of his time, Mayr, Generali, Paër and others. Undoubtedly his harmony was fuller, his instrumentation richer, more varied and more brilliant than that of these artists, but the progress stopped there. With *Elisabetta*, his first work given at Naples, Rossini started an important reform. Up to that time the Italian composers had employed almost exclusively the *recitativo secco*, that is to say, a recitative accompanied solely by the clavichord, with a continuous bass by the violoncello in the orchestra. Now these thin and meagre recitatives, often much developed, weakened the scenic effect, killed all musical interest, and formed too violent a contrast with the general style of the work. It was only in exceptional cases that the composers allowed themselves some measures of *recitativo strumentato*, to serve as an introduction to an important piece.

ROSSINI

Caricature bust by Dantan in the Carnavalet Museum, Paris.

Rossini, in his *Elisabetta*, was the first to treat all the recitative part as a grand lyric declamation, and to sustain that precise, vigorous, very rhythmic declamation with a melodic accompaniment, arranged for the full orchestra. Thanks to this means the scenic action was considerably developed, the musical interest was sustained from beginning to end, without break or sign of weakness, the work gained a homogeneity and a general color hitherto unknown; finally, the composer experienced the advantage of being able to bind together, as strongly as need be, incidents, situations, episodes which otherwise would have been chilled by the untimely presence of those *recitativi secchi*, the crying evil of the serious operas. Certainly this is a trait of genius, which classes Rossini in the rank of the happiest of innovators.

When, fifteen years after having given his *Elisabetta* at Naples, he wrote *William Tell* for the Paris Opéra, people were able to judge of the incomparable grandeur of his dramatic genius. Here were no concessions to a perverted taste, no ill-timed vocal effects, no weakness of style, no negligence in the form; but a grand inspiration, a bold and noble accent, heroic outbursts, a color marvellously appropriate to the subject, and above all the sincerity of an artist of genius desiring to create a masterpiece.

A study of Rossini would be incomplete, which did not consider the influence which that great man exercised over the artists of his time. It is with some reflections on this subject that I am going to close the present work.

An abundance of melody, precision of rhythm, richness of instrumentation, untiring verve, movement, color and life, such are the distinctive signs

ROSSINI.

Caricature from Paris "Pantheon Charivarique" designed to express popular disapproval at his retirement from the Opera to live upon his means.

of Rossini's musical personality. Moreover, this personality was so powerful, so exuberant, so magnetic, that it not only effaced that of his contemporaries, who were unable to struggle against this colossus, but it soon absorbed that of all the young composers who were coming after him, and who, gifted by nature with less generosity, were appropriating his methods, as far as possible, and making themselves his servile imitators. With the exception of Bellini and Donizetti, whose natural temperament and personal gifts were safeguards against this rage of imitation, one may say that for half a century all the Italian composers applied themselves to writing music *a la Rossini*, and seemed preoccupied solely with reproducing effects and combinations originated by the young master. Pacini, for example, wrote eighty operas in the Rossinian style, not one of which was worthy to pass down to posterity; and the Ricci brothers, though more gifted than Pacini as regards a freshness of inspiration, also imitated Rossini too closely, and allowed some little of their own personality to appear only in the pleasant, merry score of *Crispino e la Comare*, their one work which has gained recognition outside of Italy. Furthermore, these Italian imitators of Rossini, not knowing how to separate the tares from the wheat, followed exactly in his footsteps, and reproduced his faults as conscientiously as his virtues, mistaking noise for sonority, sadly abusing the flowery style, even in the most pathetic moments, to the great detriment of dramatic truth (Mercadante himself has not escaped this fault), and unhappily not having, like their model, that wonderful gift of melody for which certain of his faults could be pardoned, and which constituted a good part of his power.

The flagrant imitation of Rossinian forms by the fellow-artists of the master clearly indicated their inferiority, at the same time that it demonstrated his absorbing influence. In France also where the Théâtre-Italien, brilliant with its splendid array of illustrious singers, had early made known the most important of Rossini's works, this influence made itself felt to a considerable extent, but less completely, and with more discernment, our musicians merely drawing profit from the progress made by the author of *il Barbiere* and *Semiramide*, without permitting themselves to abandon in his favor their own personality. It was easy to recognize the trace of this influence in certain of Boieldieu's scores, in Auber's manner, nay, even in that of Herold, an artist of strong and eclectic temperament, whose own originality never failed him for an instant, while accepting up to a certain point a reflection from Weber on the one hand, on the other Rossini, whom he had been able to study for a long time in his own country. But the French musicians had as a safeguard against servility to the latter artist, that innate sentiment of dramatic truth which formed part of the genius of their country and which did not permit them to sacrifice anything to the exact expression of that truth. Besides, the great artists of whom I speak here had a personal worth which put them quite beyond the thought of slavery or of too great submission to any artist whatever. Nevertheless, I repeat that Rossini's influence over the French artists was very considerable, and I add that it was happy and beneficial because it was limited to making them profit by methods and discoveries, the use of which,

MARBLE MEDALLION OF ROSSINI, BY H. CHEVALIER.

Made by order of the Minister of Fine Arts for the Foyer of the Paris Opera House. Exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1865.

joined to their natural gifts and qualifications, could only enrich the latter and increase the domain of art.

In closing I would say briefly that for half a century Rossini's genius has shed its radiance over entire Europe, and that that radiance seemed to eclipse everything around him. After having reigned master of the art in his own country for fifteen years, he increased his influence still more by his contact with France, and it was in France, whose temperament, full of taste, eclecticism and reason, he knew so marvellously, that he wrote his most magnificent masterpiece, *William Tell*, before which all his former works pale, with the exception of *The Barber of Seville*. If The *Barber* is the imperishable and prodigious model of opera bouffe, *William Tell* is the most touching, the most striking dramatic poem which ever flowed from his pen. Either would suffice for his glory, and both assign to him a unique and quite exceptional place in the history of musical art in the nineteenth century.

FRESCO FROM VIENNA OPERA HOUSE

Representing scene from the "Barber of Seville."

VINCENZO BELLINI

Reproduction of a portrait in the possession of Francesco Florimo, a fellow-student with Bellini in Naples. Engraved by C. Deblois.

VINCENZO BELLINI

TOWARD the end of the last century there came to the pleasant and prosperous city of Catania, in Sicily, a musician named Vincenzo Bellini. He had a large family, and his eldest son, Rosario, followed the family profession as a teacher and church organist. Rosario married young, and on the 1st of November, 1801, his first child was born and was named Vincenzo, for his grandfather. The usual stories of precocious talent are attributed to this boy, but the fact remains that he showed from his childhood a strongly musical disposition, and that his talent was so well cultivated by his father and grandfather that he could play the piano passably when five years old, and at six wrote some small religious settings. As he grew the artistic temperament manifested itself strongly, both in efforts to follow professional lines, and in the fitful moodiness characteristic of such natures.

It was soon evident that the boy had obtained all that Catania could give him. His father had not the means to provide properly for him, and consequently he petitioned the municipality to send Vincenzo to Naples. The royal intendant received the petition favorably, and an annual allowance was granted in May, 1819.

On leaving Sicily, Bellini took excellent letters of recommendation to persons of consequence in Naples, and particularly to Nicolo Zingarelli, who was the director of the Conservatory. For two years he was taught by Giacomo di Tritto, then an old man, but still famous not only for his own able compositions, but also for his training of his students. Then he passed on to Zingarelli, under whom his progress was so notable that he was promoted to the honorable position of first assistant master. Yet, as his after life proved, this progress was due more to the natural expansion of his powers than to any steady and systematic use of them.

During this period, Bellini wrote a good many things, of which nothing is now heard, because they were done perfunctorily, and belonged to such classes of composition as did not suit his genius.

Nevertheless, his individuality and its peculiar bent could not be altogether hidden, and he more than once provoked the angry censure of Zingarelli, who could not abide innovations, and who went so far as to say that if this rebelliously independent pupil persisted in writing the opera which he purposed, he must do it unaided. The youth kept on, and soon finished his music for "Adelson e Salvini," the text being an old libretto of Fioravanti. This opera, performed by fellow-pupils on the Conservatory stage, gave some hints of original talent, but as a whole it left such an impression that its author indorsed it, "A poor mess." This was in 1825, and the failure was balanced by the success of a cantata entitled "Ismene," which Bellini wrote for a royal festival in San Carlo.

From that night dates his course of almost unbroken success. The famous Barbaja was managing San Carlo, and, moved by his own faith and the urgency of patrons, he gave Bellini a commission. Desirous to complete this in another atmosphere, and to fly from scenes which were painfully associated with his affection for a girl who had been refused to him by her parents, Bellini went to Catania, and returning, brought "Bianca e Gernando," which was performed in May, 1826, by a splendid cast. The writing was unequal, and some of the critical thought they felt the hand of Zingarelli in its best pages. It had a fair success, nevertheless, and Bellini received the handsome amount of three hundred ducats, besides the bright assurance of a prosperous future.

Barbaja was the *impresario* of La Scala, at Milan, also, and with his accustomed shrewdness he promptly engaged Bellini to write an opera for that stage. To Milan accordingly the young com-

poser went. Here he associated himself with Felice Romani, the most famous Italian librettist, who, whatever may be said of his style, understood dramatic and lyrical effects, and was now at the height of his ability and reputation.

The first result of this union was "Il Pirata," produced at La Scala, Oct. 27, 1827, with a cast including Rubini, Tamburini, and Mme. Méric-Lalande. Bellini bore his new honors modestly, and with more of hope than triumph. Soon Vienna had indorsed the verdict of Milan, and the composer's fame was now not Italian, but European.

Competition for Bellini's services soon began. The Carlo Felice, at Genoa, was about to open, and its manager asked for Bellini's next opera. This —"La Straniera"—was already bespoken, and the Genoese therefore offered eight thousand francs to reproduce "Bianca e Gernando," provided the author would revise it. The sum was tempting, and in April, 1828, the public applauded this reformed edition.

"La Straniera" cost its authors much trouble, for there were situations which poet and musician could not see and feel alike; but at last their spirits harmonized, and on Feb. 14, 1829, this opera met a magnificent reception at La Scala. A richer, more varied, and deeper talent was there shown than in any preceding work, and the proud Catanians caused an honorary medal to be struck in commemoration of it.

Now Parma offered Bellini a remunerative commission, which he accepted, and went thither to prepare his work. He began badly, for he declined the collaboration of a favorite local writer, in order not to separate himself from Romani. The latter's libretto, "Zaira," was poor, and Bellini was not in good vein. All things worked together for ill; so the opera, produced in 1829, was a failure, and only a couple of extracts from it remain.

The other operas were doing so well as to console him for this mortification, and he went from city to city to prepare them for presentation. Venice begged something new for La Fenice; and Bellini, reverting to an early admiration for the story of "Romeo and Juliet," accepted from Romani, "I Capuletti ed i Montecchi," which was given in March, 1830, Grisi making one of the cast, and such parts of "Zaira" as were worth saving being wrought into the score. Success attained the height of a popular ovation, and Francis I., of Naples, sent Bellini the medal of Civil Merit, while he, in turn, dedicated his work in grateful terms to his fellow-citizens of Catania.

But Milan, jealous of the attentions heaped by other cities upon her favorite composer, insisted on his return. Scarcely had he arrived when he was seized with an intestinal disorder which brought him to death's door. But youth, care, and skill saved him, and he began at once his new score, destined for the Carcano, which had a fine company and repertory, and was fairly rivalling La Scala. This score was "La Sonnambula," the libretto of which Romani had founded on a comedietta by Scribe. Bellini was anxious to excel himself, for the leading singers were none other than Pasta and Rubini. The conditions were favorable, for the fascinating and profitable society of these artists and especially of la Pasta, influenced and stimulated his genius. On March 6, 1831, "La Sonnambula" was produced and began that triumphant success which shows small sign of waning.

The management of La Scala at once made Bellini an offer for his next work, among the tempting conditions being the payment of three thousand ducats, and for his interpreters, Pasta, Grisi, Donzelli, and Negrini. The libretto was just after Bellini's own heart, the writing was rapidly accomplished, and on Dec. 26, 1831, only some nine months after the production of "La Sonnambula," "Norma" was sung for the first time on the stage of La Scala. Strangely as it seems now, the opera was almost a failure. The theme was larger and nobler than any which Bellini had treated, and he had risen to its height, leaving behind his light, familiar style, and assuming a breadth and strength of diction in which his admirers did not recognize him. Bellini was astonished and disappointed, but after a few performances a great and deep enthusiasm succeeded the indifference and half-hostility of the early nights.

A brief leisure now intervened, which was employed in visits to Naples, and to Catania, where still were the family whom he had not seen for several years. He received ovations everywhere; his operas were sung, in part or entire, in the principal theatres along his route, he was made a member of the Bourbon Academy in Naples, and at Catania the royal intendant conducted him in a state carriage, drawn by four horses, to his home. At Naples also Barbaja was waiting for him with

MONUMENT TO BELLINI IN CATANIA.

offers for three new works to be written for San Carlo; but Bellini could not gratify him.

His stay in Sicily was short. In about a month he returned, and after pausing in several cities to direct productions of his works, he came again to Venice, in August, 1832, preparing an opera for the Fenice. Various trivial causes had raised up jealousies against him, and his libretto was unsatisfactory, because Romani had neglected work for pleasure. So when the new opera, which was "Beatrice di Tenda," was produced, on March 16, 1833, it fell flat and never afterward recovered any prominence, although it contained some excellent scenes.

But the ill success of this opera was as nothing to the triumphs of its predecessors, and it began to be apparent that Bellini must follow his music to Paris and London, where his scores were established favorites. Contracts from both had been tendered him early in 1833, and he went directly to London to produce "La Sonnambula" and "Norma." His stay there was a social as well as an artistic success, but he could not protract it, because his engagements with the Italian Opera in Paris called him thither early in 1834. His reception was most flattering, and his friends hoped that good influences would induce him to study the important department of orchestration, which he had always neglected. But Parisian fascinations and pleasures had more power over him, and he could not forget them even in the quiet residence which he had found at Puteaux, on the Seine. He set himself to work resolutely, however, and toward the end of the year it was evident that "I Puritani" would be ready early in 1835. In fact, on Jan. 25 it was given, the whole house having been bespoken long in advance. The audience was distinguished, and the triumph unqualified. A distinct advance — due perhaps more to observation than to toil — was apparent all through the work, and the French critics and connoisseurs promptly gave him credit for it.

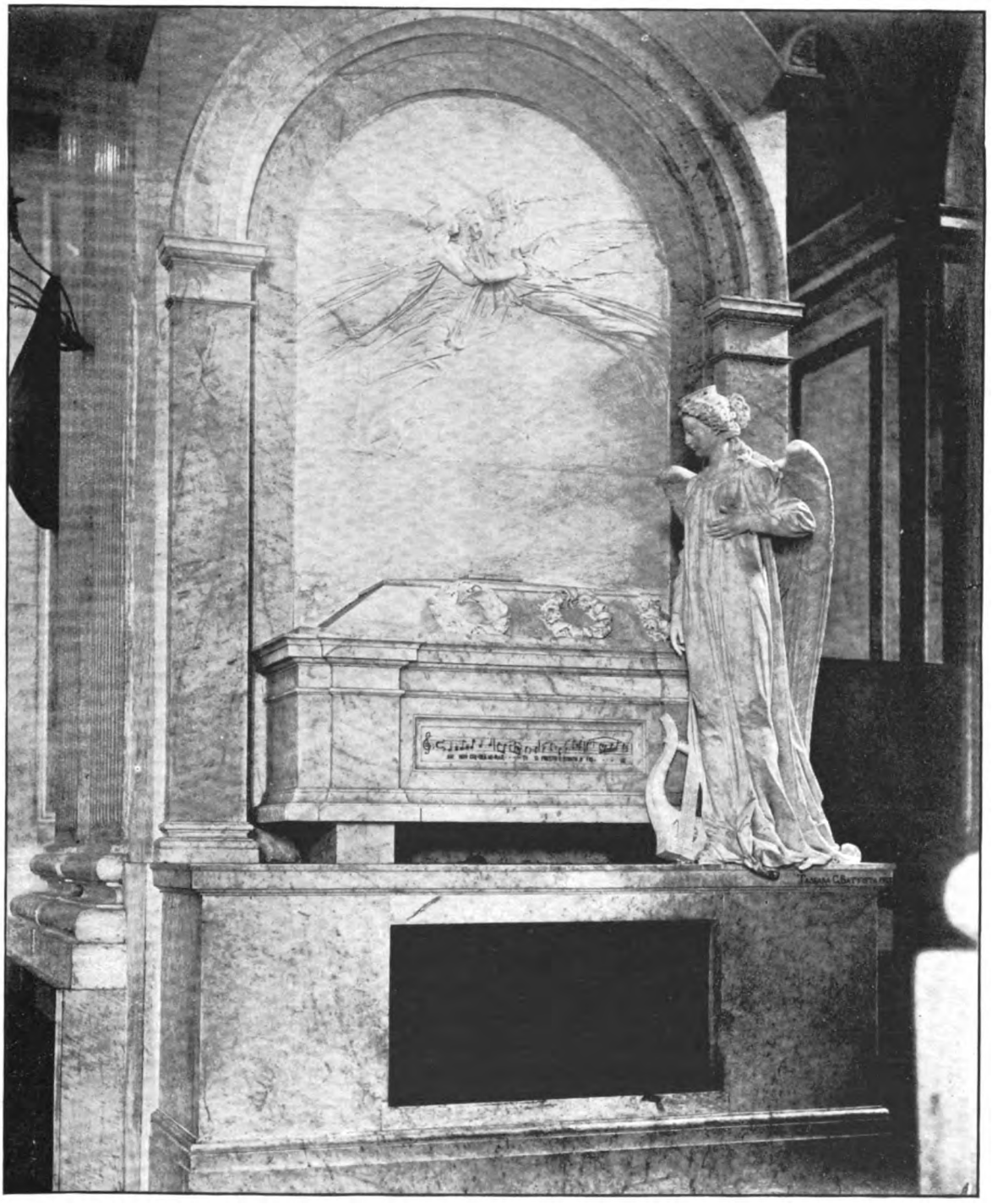
BUST OF BELLINI BY DANTAN.

From the Carnavalet Museum, Paris.

Honors poured in upon Bellini. He was made a chevalier of the Legion of Honor, the king of Naples decorated him, and offers from managers were numerous, including one from San Carlo, naming the sum (almost preposterous for Italy) of nine thousand ducats for two operas, which was more than rich Milan would promise.

But the composer's career was to be as brief as it had been splendid. He had burned his candle at both ends. He had been unremitting in labor and unrestrained in pleasure. His constitution, not too strong, had also been shaken by the illness previously mentioned, symptoms of which reappeared early in September. No effort which care, prudence, and ability could make was spared; but on the 23d of that month, in the year 1835, he died, being a little less than thirty-four years old.

Every tribute was paid to his name and memory. A commission, including some of the greatest composers and vocalists, was appointed to arrange his obsequies, which took place in the Chapel of the Invalides, Oct. 4. The music was superb, and in spite of a furious rain, an immense crowd attended the interment at Père-la-Chaise, where memorial addresses were spoken by eminent men. Subscription raised a noble monument for him, and regret and condolence were general in the musical world. Thirty years later, the Catanians asked leave to remove his body, but it was not until September, 1876, that they were ready. Then an Italian war vessel received it, and on its arrival



TOMB OF BELLINI IN THE CATHEDRAL AT CATANIA.

at Catania it was placed in the very carriage which had borne Bellini on his triumphal return. The commemoration lasted three days, and the coffin was finally deposited in the Cathedral.

Bellini was of an attractive, though not handsome, person, his face lacking strength. He belonged to the blond Italian type, and his portraits suggest almost any other European nationality as much as his own; his figure was slender and elastic; his general effect was rather that of an idealist than a practical man. His temper was generally even, his love of humor and word-play easily stirred, and his movements easy and elegant. He had his moods of despondency, and his friends remembered after his death how some sombre incidents had apparently impressed him gloomily in the last year of his life. His characteristics made him especially welcome in female society, but it may be doubted whether any woman ever really loved him well, or whether he was ever much attracted by any after his unsuccessful affair at Naples. In his profession he made friends always, and almost no enemies, for he neither felt nor provoked comparisons or jealousies. The regard he inspired was well founded, and the mourning his death caused was sincere.

The genius of Bellini was original and decided. Although he was impressionable, he was independent, and this was the source of his weakness as well as of his strength. For while not blind to the faults and deficiencies of his compositions, he was so firm in his knowledge of their peculiar merits that the criticisms he accepted as just could not move him to alter his methods, so that, as has already been said, his growth in art was rather a natural progression than the result of cultivation.

He entered the Conservatory at a fortunate moment, and he fell into good hands. From Tritto, Bellini got the conventional part of his education, while from Zingarelli, who was both enthusiastic and classical, a noble composer and a strong scientist, he received, on the one hand, sharp, wholesome criticism, and on the other, an ardent impulse. Most of his fellow-pupils were mediocrities, and none have been eminent except the brothers Ricci, best known by their "Crispino e la Comare," and Carlo Conti, whose many operas have had great currency in Italy.

The disposition of Bellini was primarily toward what could be musically expressed by the human voice, and all who heard his compositions were convinced that the world had received a rich new gift. Rossini was now great in fame and influence, and the brilliant vocalists of the time were revelling in his florid airs. Bellini, realizing that even the theatre demanded melody more than anything else, and feeling sure that a source of it was waking up within him, was either astute or ingenious enough not to attempt to follow the example of Rossini. He gave his melodies no less extension, but he first simplified them, and then broadened and fortified them in some situations, while in others he softened and sweetened them. He could not command pathos, profound grief, terror, menace, or tragic grandeur. Sentiment, not emotion, was his chief characteristic; but in "Norma" he rose to dignity and maintained calmness, while in "I Puritani" he became noble and strenuous. In "Il Pirata" and in "I Capuletti ed i Montecchi" there were not infrequently boldness and vigor, as the excerpts which are still heard occasionally show. In "Beatrice di Tenda" his weakest airs are found, and in "La Sonnambula" his suavity, tenderness, and appealing purity are most felt.

He had a sufficient perception of character to distinguish his personages in song, and he appreciated the capacity of each voice for which he wrote, so that his music is singable by vocalists of moderate ability, and yet is advantageous for consummate artists. The best of executants will find scope in "La Sonnambula," while the dramatically strong can have full range in "Norma" and "I Puritani." Yet his melodies sometimes are almost mawkishly sweet, and his recitatives are generally fragmentary and inexpressive, while it is only in the last two or three operas, and in "I Puritani" especially, that the vocal harmony has much variety or ingenuity. Oddly enough, while studied for human voices, many of his best melodies flow as easily and effectively from instruments, especially those of wood or brass, and the effect of the best of them depends mostly upon the enthusiasm, the emphasis, or the *bel canto* of the singers.

Venezia 20: Dcl 1830:

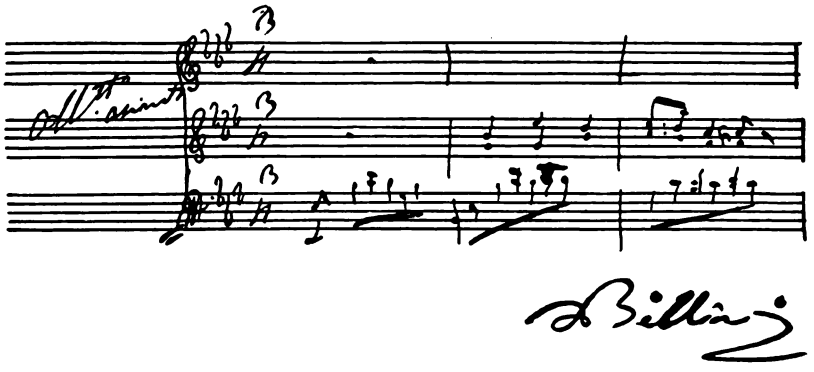
Mio caro Florimo

T'avviso che di già sono obbligato di scrivere l'opera per questo carnevale, e questa mattina confirmeremo la scrittura con l'impresa, la quale m'accorda un mese e mezzo di tempo per scriverla e porla in scena: Vedi che strapazzamento e ben tu penserai, dicendomi che ho fatto male; ma le disposizioni del Governatore e di questa tutta Venezia mi spinsero a questo pericoloso impegno; frattanto tutta Venezia gioisce di questa combinazione, ed io spero di non far tanto male. Se non ti scriverò spesso in questi giorni avvenire, o pure spesso e poco, non ti lagnare perchè sai in che stretto tempo mi trovo. Qui i tempi vanno sempre male: il Pirata andò in piacere. Il libro, Romani che già je n'è qui giunto, mi scriverà da nuovo Giulietta e Romeo, ma lo ritoccherà diversamente, e con diverse situazioni. Addio mio caro Florimo. La mia salute non va male, solamente sono raffreddato, e se questi tempi non cessano non mi potrò guarire. Vogliami bene e ricevi i miei abbr.ci Il tuo Bellini

Fac-simile autograph letter written by Bellini.

The instrumental portions of his operas betray in every page his ignorance, his weakness, and his indifference. His overtures are generally such only in name, a superficial arrangement of two or three principal themes, and his accompaniments rarely are more than bald and formal supports to the voice. The same general manner pervades them; the upper strings play broken arpeggios while the lower ones give a sustained harmony, to which the wind instruments contribute some color of tone, but which they seldom diversify with figure or comment of their own. It is to be observed that the score of "I Puritani," written under the influence of music in Paris, is richer and more expressive than any which preceded it, and gave the promise which was never to be fulfilled.

Bellini had the advantage of early acceptance in theatres difficult of access, of the friendship of great contemporary musicians, handsome pecuniary emolument, and the co-operation of some of the greatest vocalists the world has known.



GAETANO DONIZETTI

Reproduction of a lithograph portrait by V. Roscioni of Vincenzo.

GAETANO DONIZETTI

GENIUS is no less remarkable for the manner of its appearance in the world than for the subsequent manifestations of the power. At times it seems to be the natural result of a cumulation of influences, and yet again it can be traced to no source or cause. Bellini descended from at least two generations of musicians; but his contemporary, Gaetano Donizetti, the subject of this sketch, had no family prototype and left no heritage in art to any child.

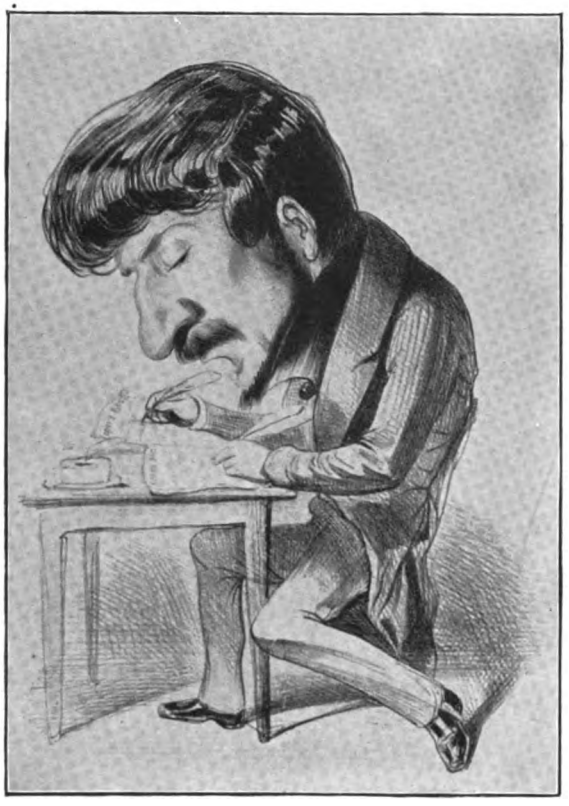
His father, Andrea Donizetti, is not known to have been born in Bergamo, but in that small city of North Italy he was occupied at first as a weaver. Desirous of bettering himself sufficiently to marry Domenica Nava, he obtained a modest position in the local *Monte di Pietà*, settled down to his routine employment and became the father of four sons. One of these, Gaetano, — born November 29, 1797, — was so bright, so alert and so evidently talented that the father began to hope and plan that he might be able to educate him for a lawyer, so that his professional position might give the family a higher social standing and perhaps add something to its narrow income. But so soon as the child was far enough advanced beyond elementary studies to have intelligent preferences, he began to show a predilection for the arts, which was so far indulged as to allow him to study drawing, architecture and literature. This did not satisfy the boy's cravings, however, and he plucked up courage to ask his father to have him taught music. He was so earnest and so confident that, in spite of the disappointment which this strong disposition caused, his father consented and cast about him to see how he could best provide the instruction.

The conditions could not have been more propitious. There had come to Bergamo in 1788 a young Bavarian named Johann Simon Mayer, for the purpose of studying music under the eminent guidance of Lenzi and Bertoni. When his own studies were completed he opened a school for twelve pupils, eight of whom were to be trained as sopranos and contraltos, to replace in the churches the men who had sung those parts hitherto, while the other four were to be taught the violin and the violoncello. All were obliged to study harmony and the art of accompanying, other capable teachers — among them Capuzzi, who had learned the violin under the famous Tartini — adding their instruction to Mayer's.

Into this little conservatory Donizetti entered in 1806. He was so fortunate as to enlist at once the interest of Mayer, who was already beginning to get a European fame because of his wisdom, solidity and learning. The lad's talent seemed so remarkable, his elasticity of disposition and his earnest determination so unusual for his years, that the master took special pains in developing him. Even at this early age, Donizetti showed marked imitative and dramatic ability, and such clearness of insight and exposition as made him at once an example and an aid to his slower or duller companions. By the time he was ten years old he had advanced so much in the right direction as to have made his mark in solo contralto music and to be appointed *repetitore* — or preparatory teacher — in the classes both of singing and of the violin, as well as to be taken by Mayer as his special pupil in harmony.

Naturally enough, the boy tried his hand at composition, but his master wisely made no account of these efforts until they had brought forth something really commendable for its ideas and their treatment. All the while new branches of study were suggested, in all of which Donizetti made commendable progress, learning to appreciate the classic masters of Italy and Germany, to play passing well upon the pianoforte, the organ, the flute and the double-bass, beside making constant progress as a singer, although it is said that his exactitude

and grace were more noticeable than any fulness or strength of tone. Besides those professional studies, he was taught history, mythology, Latin and



CARICATURE OF DONIZETTI.

From the Paris "Pantheon Charivarique."

rhetoric, so that when in time he devoted himself to theatrical composition, he was well equipped. His special bent was shown, not only in his arranging a little stage for juvenile performances in which his part was always well done, but also in his attempting a tenor part in a real theatre; but failing in this, he gave up any hopes of becoming a professional vocalist and decided to devote himself to composition.

By 1815 Mayer concluded that Donizetti ought to have other training than Bergamo could give and therefore sent him to Bologna, a city still prominent for its understanding and love of the arts, in order that he might study fugue and counterpoint under Mattei, who had recently brought out Rossini and other worthy pupils and could strengthen this youth where he was weak. Thither Donizetti went, furnished with letters and introductions, one of the most profitable of which was to Giovanni Ricordi of Milan, founder of the famous music-publishing house of that name.

It appears that Donizetti remained as a member of the Philharmonic Lyceum of Bologna until sometime in 1818, and that he made such good use of his opportunities as to obtain extra lessons from Mattei and to write things which the library of the school still preserves with respect. They are mostly for full orchestra and solo voices and several of them had public presentment.

His formal studies ended, Donizetti returned to Bergamo, where he kept at work training his memory and his quickness of mind and hand, and writing string quartets after the style of such masters as Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. A variety of compositions for the voice, mostly ecclesiastical, and for the piano were published by him, but no request was yet made to him for any theatrical music, at which he was much disappointed. It was indeed a difficult period for a new writer; the stage was not yet weary of the operas of Cimarosa, Paisiello, Zingarelli, Paer and Mayer, while the few opportunities of which a new comer might hope to avail himself were scarcely more than sufficed for the genius of Rossini and of Bellini. Any attempt to rival in his own field either of these would necessarily have been fatal, and Donizetti was prudent enough to create an independent style for himself while maintaining, like them, that the melody of human voices was of the first value in the lyric drama.

At last his moment came and he began his course with "Enrico di Borgogna," described as a "semi-serious" opera and successfully produced at Venice in the autumn of 1818. Being asked to supply something for the next season, he provided for the winter of 1819-20 a comic opera called "Il Falegname di Livonia," which was also well received. After getting this well under way he went to Mantua with "Le Nozze in Villa," which he had finished about the same time but which made a failure.

Long and serious schooling had wrought their proper effect on Donizetti, and he set himself to analyze the causes of his success and unsuccess, and allowed two years to pass before he was ready to try again. He indeed went to Rome in the autumn of 1821, but it was not until winter that he produced "Zoraide di Granata," which was immediately and greatly successful, demonstrating that his life and talent ought to be consecrated to operatic composition.

One danger threatened him, however. Bergamo was under the Austrian domination and he was liable to do military duty. Unless the fear of this could be conjured away, he could not write with a free spirit, nor could he marry the woman he loved, Virginia Vasselli, because her father would not consent so long as his future was in doubt. Strong protestations were addressed to the Austrian ambassador in Rome, Mayer used his best efforts, an additional pretext was found in some slight physical defect, and Donizetti was relieved from the anxious peril. He could now pursue his art untrammeled, could form his domestic life as he desired and could unite himself with sympathetic friends. This

GAETANO DONIZETTI.

Reproduction of a portrait in Clément's "Les Musiciens Célèbres."

independence, added to his natural activity, soon showed its effects in the further production of three operas in that same year, of which two were given in Naples — "La Zingara," a comic opera at the Nuovo, and "La Lettera Anonima," really a musical farce, at the Fondo — and "Chiara e Serafina" or "I Pirati," at the Scala, in Milan.

No sooner was it understood that Donizetti was free and ready to write, than commissions were sent him from all the chief theatres of Italy. Rossini, Bellini, Pacini and Mercadante were all in a certain sense his rivals, and their names were often bulletined with his in the prospectuses of one or another season. But his genius preserved its individuality, and the charm of his music was so great that from this time forward the years were few in which only one or two operas were written by him, while during many twelvemonths he completed four

and even five operas. Some of these were short, it is true, limited even to a single act, while others again are chronicled as mere farces in the records of the time; so, too, several seasons passed before he rose beyond the humorous disposition which had showed itself in mimicry and simple buffoonery during his school years and attempted a strictly serious or even a romantic subject.

Therefore, although he was constantly writing for such important houses as the San Carlo, the Nuovo and the Fondo, in Naples; the Valle, in Rome; the Carlo Felice, in Genoa; and later for the Scala and the Carcano, in Milan; the catalogue of these works presents an array of names unfamiliar to any but systematic students of musical literature. There are indications, here and there, that his reading of books was wider than that of some of his contemporaries and that there was springing up in him a preference for historical subjects, as well as that interest in the novels of Walter Scott which ultimately became almost a passion with him. "La Regina de Golconda," "Jeanne di Calais," "Il Castello di Kenilworth," "Francesca di Foix," "Imelda dei Lambertazzi" and "Anna Bolena" are titles which appear between 1828 and 1831, while it is recorded that he composed in 1830 an oratorio about the deluge.

Returning for a moment, it is to be noted that in 1822 he was in Naples, making studies in the Conservatory whose librarian, Sigismondi, objected intensely to the new style which had come in with Rossini, and it was only by some ingenious device that Donizetti obtained the scores he was so anxious to peruse. Wherever he went he was handsomely received and greatly applauded. In 1826 he had special honor from the Queen of Naples, and the celebrated manager Barbaja ordered a number of operas for his various theatres and made him director of the Nuovo for two years. During this period he wrote various isolated airs, eminent among which is a setting of Dante's "Count Ugolino's Lament," written for the basso Lablache. Like other composers of the time, Donizetti may be said to have had no fixed residence. If he had a commission from any city, he established himself there temporarily, to be in close and intelligent relationship with the manager, the artists and the public whom he was to please. It was near the close of 1830 that the first work of his which holds a present place, "Anna Bolena," was sung at the Carcano, having been put in rehearsal within four weeks after its beginning. This was adjudged so great a work that Mayer wrote concerning it that "at last the French had to confess that Italy had another composer beside Rossini." Close upon this serious opera came "L' Elisire d' Amore," which still stands beside Rossini's "Cenerentola," a splendidly gay illustration of the best Italian *buffo* writing.

In 1833 "Parisina" introduced him to the Pergola, in Florence, and in the autumn of that year Rome received with great satisfaction "Torquato Tasso," which the author dedicated to Bergamo, Sorrento and Rome.

In spite of its fecundity, the genius of Donizetti strengthened with its exercise, and after comparatively brief intervals, occupied with less important works, there appeared those great compositions which will always remain magnificent examplars of Italian opera in the nineteenth century. In 1834, the Scala, despairing because Mercadante, smitten with opthalmia, could not fulfil his engagement, turned to Donizetti, who taking the libretto which Romani had prepared for his friend, completed upon it in twenty-five days, "Lucrezia Borgia," a lyric tragedy which the musicians of all the world know. In 1834 came "Maria Stuarda;" in 1835, "Gemma di Vergy," "Marino Faliero," and the perennially interesting "Lucia di Lammermoor;" in 1836, "Belisario," "Betly" and "L' Assedio di Calais."

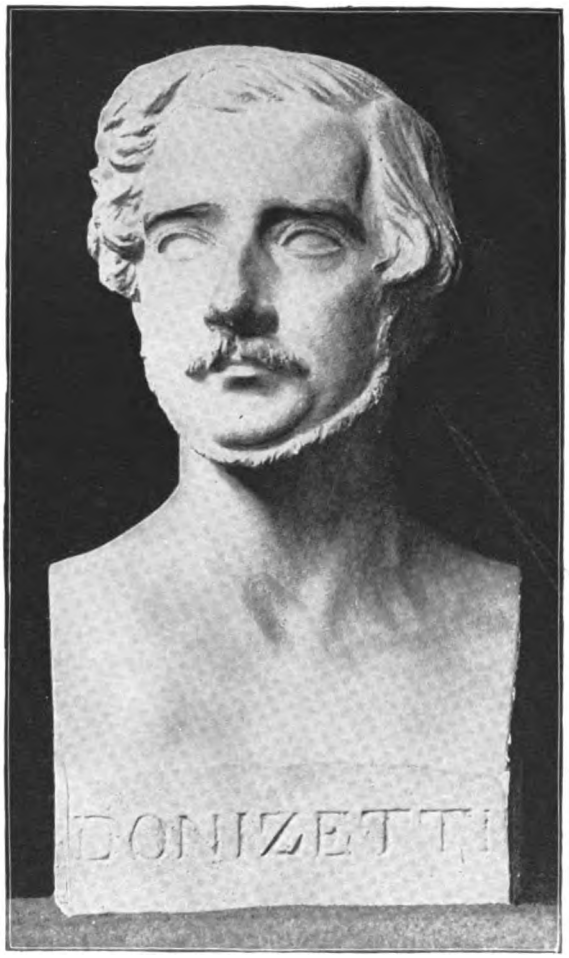
In the meantime Donizetti had been going up and down the peninsula, visiting particularly Naples because he had hopes of becoming Zingarelli's successor as professor of counterpoint, for which post his education, severer, and his taste, simpler than Rossini's, seemed to fit him. He had visited Paris in 1833, where "Marino Faliero" had a splendid reception. It was in May, 1837, that the anticipated death of the venerable Zingarelli took place, and Donizetti was named director *pro tem.* of the Conservatory. In July of this same year his wife died suddenly after fourteen years of happy wedlock. This was a heavy blow for him, and his sorrowing heart found some relief in that pathetic and sombre melody, "*Ella è Morta*," which he dedicated to her memory. But his engagements left him no time for pure grief and he continued to write, though less frequently, for a couple of years.

But Paris was constantly reclaiming him, and in 1840 "La Fille du Régiment"—"created" to a

MONUMENT TO DONIZETTI IN THE CATHEDRAL AT BERGAMO.

Executed by the sculptor Vincenzo Vela. Erected in 1855 by his brothers Giuseppe and Francesco.

French text—made its brilliant entrance at the Opéra Comique, and public, press and court bestowed upon its author all their honors. Already resident in Paris for some two years, Donizetti saw that it was best for him to remain there, not only because there was more money to be made, but also because there was more to learn and to be inspired by. He began to modify his native fun according to the lighter humor of France, and during the next three years he composed "La Favorite," "Linda di Chamounix" and "Don Pasquale," besides such graver things as "Les Martyrs," (known in Italian as "Il Poliuto"), "Maria di Rohan," "Dom Sebastien," "Maria Padilla" and "Adelia," even the few which were written to Italian texts for Milan, Rome and Vienna, being sent out from Paris.

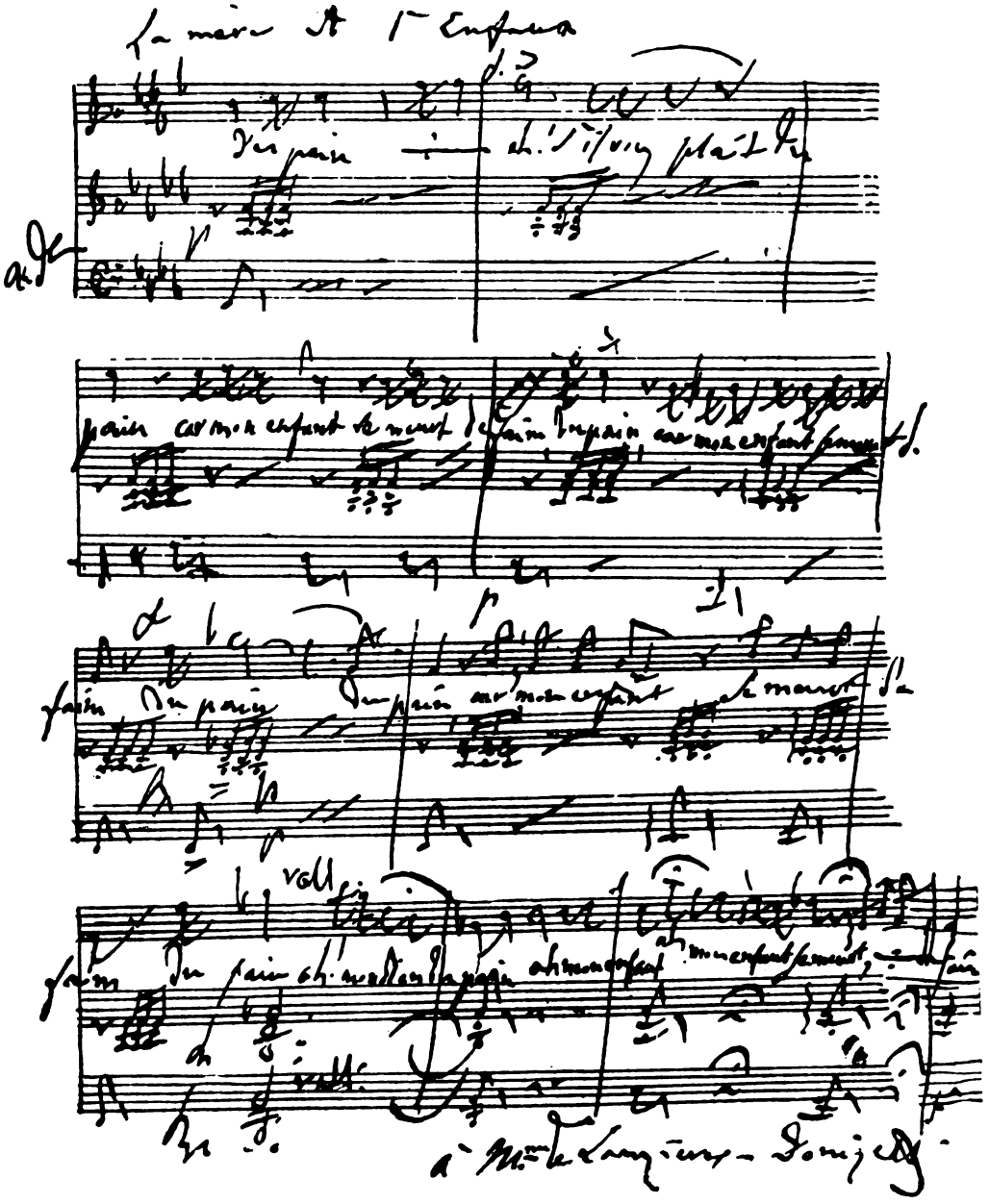


DONIZETTI.
Bust by Dantan in the Carnavalet Museum, Paris.

In 1840 he visited Switzerland for his health and crossed the frontier to Milan and Bergamo, where his townsfolk drew his carriage home after a festival performance at the theatre. But if he had hoped to be called on to Naples for the position which had been virtually promised him, he was disappointed, for Mercadante about this time received the appointment, and Donizetti soon returned to Paris and his work. Other brief visits to Italy and to Germany were made during this epoch, and among many honorary tributes came some from the Sultan of Turkey and Pope Gregory XVI. In Vienna, whither he went early in 1842 to direct his "Linda," he had also great honor, and was named royal *Kapellmeister* and director of the opera, with an *honorarium* of four thousand florins and without the obligation of permanent residence.

The next few years were divided between Paris and Vienna, and his operas passed out of Europe across the Atlantic and even reached Constantinople and Calcutta. Men distinguished in art, science and letters became his friends, and his income was constantly augmenting. But early in 1845 he was found one morning senseless upon his bedroom floor in Paris, and from that hour dated the dreadful decay of mind and body which ended at last in death on April 8, 1848, after several years passed in private lunatic asylums. His sensitive and susceptible nature, excited and worn by his eager and exhausting industry, and perhaps by some irregularities of life, had given warnings in intense headaches, and bewildering depressions, against which he had nerved himself with a destructive strain. The dreary imbecility of these later years made death welcome, when at last it came to him in Bergamo, whither he had been removed in the care of a nephew and his physician in the autumn of 1847. Bergamo gave him a noble funeral and assigned him a tomb in the cathedral beside that of his master, Mayer, who had died three years before, and in 1855 his brothers Giuseppe and Francesco erected a stately monument made by Vincenzo Vela.

Donizetti's life fell all within the most brilliant and inspiring period of Italian opera, touching the earlier great at its beginning, running parallel with other distinguished men and overlapping the rise of Verdi, Ricci and the elder writers of the present time. All things considered, it does not seem as if his talent could have been turned to better account, although his astonishing facility made him often take the quickest rather than the best way to reach his ends. But he had been so well grounded in the departments which Bellini avoided, and had pursued so much serious study, that although he was sometimes superficial he was never trivial, and the outlines of his scoring were correct even when they were badly filled. His own skill with instruments and his knowledge of vocalism were of immense advantage; because, being above all things a melodist, he could adapt his airs perfectly to their singers or to the instruments which were to carry them in accompaniment. His reading and his taste led



Fac-simile musical manuscript written by Donizetti.

him to select strong, sympathetic subjects, preferably historical or romantic, and his dramatic disposition enabled him to make his scenes expressive and captivating. He was fortunate and unusual in his ability to treat appropriately both humorous and serious subjects, and his melodies are eminent for their true sentiment no less than for their variety and the purely musical quality which makes them interesting and beautiful whether they be sung or played. His accompaniments are often thin and conventional arrays of simple chords, but when he is at his best they are full, rich in harmony and tone-color and enlightened by significant figures. Yet he understood so well the purpose of the lyric drama that his scores are never heavy with ostentatious counterpoint or intricate polyphony. That he was capable of dignity and forcefulness, his graver and less familiar works illustrate, and the praise bestowed upon his string quartets when they were played in Paris, in 1856, proved that he was equal to composition upon classic lines had it been demanded of him.

Besides his sixty-six operas, most of which have been named above, he wrote many overtures, some large church pieces, many albums of songs in various languages, of which none are unworthy of preservation, beside a multitude of ephemeral things of which none remain but few and scattered traces.

All the greatest vocalists of the first half of the century sang for him, and the rosters of the opera-houses for which he wrote, repeat the names of Catalani, Cecconi, Méric-Lalande, Tosi, Pasta, Grisi, Ungher, Borghesi, Dorus-Gras and Stolz among the women, and of Fioravanti, Donzelli, Busti, Rubini, Tamburini, Lablache, Verger, Winter, Donzelli, Negrini, Salvi, Duprez, Derivis, Levasseur, Wartel, Coletti, Baroilhet, Ronconi and Rovere among the men. His life, therefore, was active, honorable, prosperous and happy; and in reviewing it one finds little to regret except that it was not ended by a sudden, instead of a gradual, death.

GASPARO LUIGI PACIFICO SPONTINI

Reproduction of a lithograph portrait by Maurin.

GASPARO LUIGI PACIFICO SPONTINI

ALTHOUGH Italian by birth, the author of "La Vestale" was, in his life work, almost a Frenchman, and, like other celebrated composers, reflected a share of his glory upon his adopted country.

Gasparo Luigi Pacifico Spontini was born at Majolati, Nov. 14, 1774; he was intended by his parents for the priesthood, and was accordingly placed under the care of a paternal uncle, dean of the Church of Santa Maria del Piano at Jesi. He had much trouble in overcoming the opposition of his family, and particularly of his uncle, to his musical education, but the dean was obliged to yield at last, and consented to the little Gasparo studying music in his spare moments, first with the singer Ciaffolati and the organist Menghini, then with Bartoli, director of music at Jesi, and Bonnami, director of music at Masaccio. In 1791, Spontini was ready to enter the conservatory *la Pieta dei Turchini* at Naples, where he made such rapid progress under the direction of Sala and Tritta, that he soon received the title of *maestrino*, or tutor. One fine day (he was then twenty-two years old) he fled from the conservatory and hastened to Rome, where he brought out a very pleasing little opera, "Le Puntigli delle donne." Between that time and 1802 he brought out at Rome, Naples, and Venice fifteen operas, which established his early fame. The best known of those early operas is "Gli amanti in cimento," sung at Rome in 1801. But the young musician dreamed of greater triumphs, and in 1803 he left Italy for France, where his genius was destined to be developed in a very marked fashion.

Spontini began his Paris career by giving singing lessons, and in order to bring himself before the public he produced at the *Italien* (Feb. 11, 1804) his opera "La Finta Filosofa." This performance, which was honored by the presence of the First Consul and Josephine, was a great success for the young composer, whom the newspapers announced as a pupil of Cimarosa. Afterwards he succeeded in forcing the doors of the *Opéra Comique* with "La Petite maison," which was very badly received by reason of the poem, and was played only three times. It must be said that the new-comer had against him not only the French musicians, professors and pupils of the Conservatoire, opposed to the invasion of Italian music, but also the Italian composers who had succeeded in making a place for themselves in France, like Della Maria and Nicolo, and who had no intention of giving up the place to this unexpected rival. The failure of "La Petite maison" did not prevent Spontini from being chosen by Jouy to set to music a poem entitled "La Vestale," and about the same time he received from the hands of Dieulafoi a new libretto in one act, "Milton." This work was played at the *Opéra Comique*, Nov. 27, 1804, and brought Spontini into notice, for the breadth of certain motives, the touching simplicity of some of the melodies, fixed upon him the serious attention of the public, and gave a foretaste of the transformation which was to take place in the young composer.

He afterwards experienced another failure at the *Opéra Comique* with "Le Pot de fleurs" (March 12, 1805), but this failure did not make much impression, for people remembered only "Milton."

Moreover, Spontini was engaged upon the work which was to gain for him immortality. He had found in Jouy's poem the opportunity for developing all his qualities of breadth, boldness, and dramatic sentiment, which he had vainly sought to bring out in his Italian operas, or in his little French operettas. But it was not enough to have written a masterpiece like "La Vestale," it must also be performed. Spontini, favored with the protection of Josephine, had composed a cantata in honor of the conqueror of Austerlitz, "l'Eccelsa Gara," sung at the Imperial Theatre on Feb. 8, 1806. The Emperor

in return had signed the order for the preparation and *mise en scène* of "La Vestale," and the rehearsals were begun. But the new opera was withdrawn in favor of a certain ballet, "Ulysses," by Milon and Persuis; then the decorations which had been painted for "La Vestale" were destroyed by a storm. Finally Napoleon, who never encouraged Spontini, although he was credited with remarks complimentary to the latter, decided to bring out first the "Triomphe de Trajan," a grand opera written in his honor by Esménard, with music by Lesueur, Persuis, and Kreutzer, and though this opera had proved a great success, thanks to its rich *mise en scène*, and had left a free field to Spontini, there was talk of again postponing "La Vestale" in favor of Lesueur's opera, "La Mort d'Adam." Jouy and Spontini probably would have expostulated in vain, but that Lesueur's music, happily for them, was not ready at the necessary moment. Then they were obliged to make all haste with the rehearsals and bring out "La Vestale," Dec. 15, 1807. The composer was only thirty-seven years old, when at this auspicious moment he stepped into the position left vacant by the death of Gluck and the departure of his successor Salieri.

G. SPONTINI.

Reproduction of a portrait by Vincent.

This work gave to the ancient lyric tragedy an unexpected life, warmth, and elevation, and made Spontini absolute master of the theatre. One of the decennial prizes instituted by Napoleon was awarded to him, notwithstanding the redoubtable competition of Lesueur's "Bardes," the opera preferred by the Emperor. Méhul, Gossec, and Grétry, the three members of the Académie des Beaux Arts who rendered this verdict, gave evidence of a commendable independence. Spontini, having dedicated his score to the Empress Josephine, immediately set about composing a new work on a poem which Jouy had just sent him, "Ferdinand Cortez," and this was performed at the *Opéra*, Nov. 28, 1809. This work was fairly successful, thanks to the music, and in spite of the weakness of the poem, which was so badly put together that subsequently Jouy was obliged to reverse the order of the acts, in order to improve them dramatically. Yet the general feeling was that this score, notwithstanding its striking beauties, had not the inspiration, the unity of effect, which had been appreciated so much in "La Vestale," and it always remained a work of secondary importance in the opinion of the musical public. These two successes singularly developed the natural importance and vanity of Spontini, who never doubted his own genius, and who even at the opening of his career showed an extraordinary confidence and spirit; but a less favorable period was in store for him. He married the daughter of the celebrated piano manufacturer, Jean Baptiste Erard, and in 1810 the privilege of the direction of the *Théâtre Italien* was given to him, but in consequence of administrative dissensions he was soon supplanted, after having made known to the Parisians, in 1811,

Mozart's "Don Giovanni." Three years later he wanted his privilege returned to him by the royal government, but it was refused, being granted to Mme. Catalani associated with Paër.

The ancient *protégé* of the Empress was a little neglected under the Restoration. Nevertheless he composed an "occasional" opera, "Pélage ou le Roi et la Paix" (April 23, 1814); June 21, he brought out a mediocre opera ballet, "Les Dieux Rivaux," on the occasion of the marriage of the Duc de Berry (Persuis, Berton, and Kreutzer had also collaborated for one); he brought about in 1817 a brilliant revival of "Ferdinand Cortez," remodelled throughout; finally he gave, on the 20th of December, 1819, his opera of "Olympia," which showed here and there the hand of the great composer, but which was in every respect inferior to "La Vestale" and "Cortez." It was a complete failure in Paris, but in 1821 the work, having been rewritten to a great extent, was given in Berlin with great *eclat.*

SPONTINI.

Reproduced from a portrait engraved after a painting by Jean Guérin, made shortly after the first representation of "La Vestale."

This was a double triumph for Spontini, it being his revenge on Paris and his crowning success in the German states. For a long time, indeed, the king of Prussia, Frederick William III., had cherished the most sincere admiration for him. In 1814 he demanded of him several pieces for the music of his guard, and after hearing, in 1818, the remodelled "Ferdinand Cortez," he desired to attach this great musician to his court. Spontini was not satisfied with the title of royal capellmeister, and notwithstanding the opposition of the Count of Brühl, intendant of the royal theatre, he obtained, by contract signed in August, 1819, the position of general director of music, at a salary of 10,000 Prussian thalers (about $7,000). He went to Berlin, therefore, and occupied this important post from 1820 to 1840, exercising a considerable influence on all that pertained to musical art in Prussia, elevating the standard of education for the artists, and composing numerous cantatas or works for

special occasions which his court duties required him to write. He also brought out two new works at the Berlin Opera House: in 1821, the opera ballet "Nurmahal," taken from Moore's poem "Lalla Rookh"; in 1825, "Alcidor"; and in 1827 he wrote the grand romantic opera "Agnes von Hohenstaufen," the first act of which had been played ten years before at a royal *fête*. All these productions added nothing to his glory, and have fallen into oblivion.

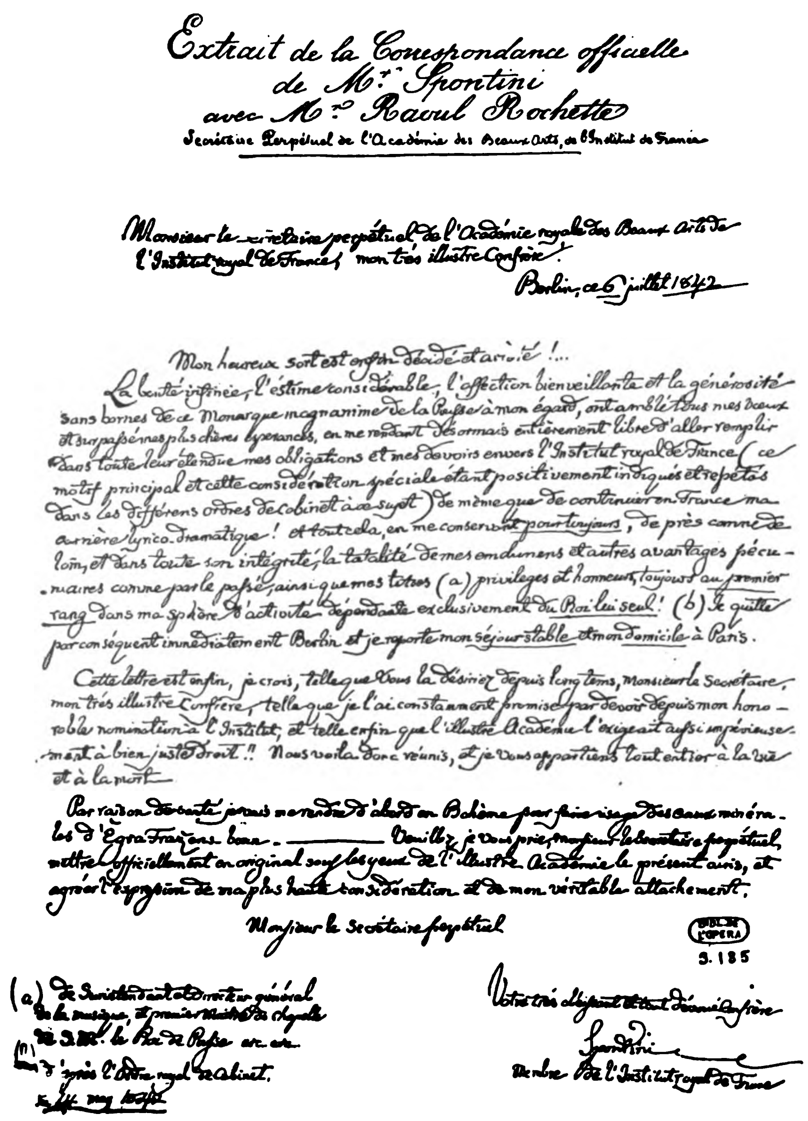
The performance of "Agnes" called forth a very violent criticism from Rellstab, the representative of all Spontini's enemies in Germany, and who had just been made editor of the "Vossische Zeitung." Indeed, when Spontini arrived in Berlin to assume his duties, he soon saw in league against him all the German musicians and composers, over whose heads he had stepped.

Though generous and obliging, his pride was deeply hurt by these hostilities, and he could not conceal deep irritation at the cavillings of his enemies, to which he gave a sharp retort. He had caused to be suppressed a pamphlet in which Rellstab had accused him of withholding from the stage, or else playing with an evident intention of ruining them, the works of composers whom he had reason to fear; he had brought about Rellstab's arrest and detention for several months for a spiteful article in which the critic expressed doubt that the composer of "Nurmahal," "Alcidor," and "Agnes" was the same as the composer of "La Vestale" and "Cortez." But Rellstab responded with violent satires published at Mayence, in which Spontini, without being named, was easily recognizable by his personal peculiarities of manner and speech, which were cleverly depicted. Finally, as the natural result of Rellstab's imprisonment, the entire party of which he was the mouthpiece redoubled its spiteful attacks against Spontini.

Thenceforth the latter, feeling himself more and more an object of attack, began to cherish the project of returning to France. His absence had calmed all the jealousies which his colossal self-love had excited against him, and in one of the long vacations which he spent in Italy or France during his twenty years' service in Prussia, there had been talk of his writing for the Paris *Opéra* a grand work, "Les Athéniennes," in place of the opera "Louis IX.," which Louis XVIII. had previously wished him to compose, and the first ideas of which he had put on paper. At length, in 1838, the Académie des Beaux Arts nominated him, unhesitatingly, in Paër's place, provided he would return and settle in Paris. His protector, King Frederick William III., died in August, 1840; but even if this event had not taken place, Spontini would not have accepted a third engagement of ten years with the royal house of Prussia. The new king would have preferred to retain him, but the disgust which Spontini felt at the open hostility of the intendant of the royal theatre, and also the promise which he had made to his colleagues of the Institute of France, decided him to refuse these overtures. He left Berlin in July, 1842, under conditions very painful to his self-love, but advantageous to his purse, since the king provided that he should retain all his honorary titles and receive an annual pension of about $3,200.

On his return to Paris, after a certain time passed in Italy, he sought to have his old operas revived, but he, who had dubbed as barbarous all the music which had taken root at the *Opéra* in his absence, encountered only animosity, and was unable to carry out his plans. On the other hand, his "Vestale" had achieved great success in Denmark; some fragments of it were sung and much applauded at Cologne in 1847; and Spontini, ennobled by the king of Denmark, made Conte de San Andrea by the Pope, was gloriously received by the king of Prussia when he returned as a visitor to the capital. Such were the last gratifications of self-love which this great composer experienced; and although France had not much more to offer him, he always returned to that country, and chose Paris above all other places for his home.

At last, when his memory and hearing began to fail, he felt that the beautiful climate of his native country might restore his health, and he left Paris in 1850 to return to the Roman States. He was received at Jesi with honors which are by custom reserved for sovereigns. Then he wished to visit once more his native town, Majolati. He had been there several months, when one day, while suffering from a very bad cold, he insisted on going to mass, in spite of the earnest remonstrances of his wife. There he took more cold, fever set in, and the illustrious composer died on the 24th of January, 1851, at the age of seventy-seven.



Extrait de la Correspondance officielle de Mr. Spontini avec Mr. Raoul Rochette

Secrétaire Perpétuel de l'Académie des Beaux Arts, de l'Institut de France

Monsieur le Secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie royale des Beaux Arts de l'Institut royal de France, mon très illustre Confrère !

Berlin, ce 6 juillet 1842

Mon heureux sort est enfin décidé et arrêté !...

La bonté infinie, l'estime considérable, l'affection bienveillante et la générosité sans bornes de ce Monarque magnanime de la Prusse à mon égard, ont comblé tous mes vœux et surpassé mes plus chères espérances, en me rendant désormais entièrement libre d'aller remplir dans toute leur étendue mes obligations et mes devoirs envers l'Institut royal de France (ce motif principal et cette considération spéciale étant positivement indiqués et répétés dans les différens ordres de cabinet à ce sujet) de même que de continuer en France ma carrière lyrico-dramatique ! et tout cela, en me conservant pour toujours, de près comme de loin, et dans toute son intégrité, la totalité de mes émolumens et autres avantages pécuniaires comme par le passé, ainsi que mes titres (a) privileges et honneurs, toujours au premier rang dans ma sphère d'activité dépendante exclusivement du Roi lui seul ! (b) Je quitte par conséquent immédiatement Berlin et je reporte mon séjour stable et mon domicile à Paris.

Cette lettre est enfin, je crois, telle que Vous la désiriez depuis long tems, Monsieur le Secrétaire, mon très illustre Confrère, telle que je l'ai constamment promise par devoir depuis mon honorable nomination à l'Institut, et telle enfin que l'illustre Académie l'exigeait aussi impérieusement à bien juste droit !! Nous voilà donc réunis, et je vous appartiens tout entier à la vie et à la mort.

Par raison de santé je vais me rendre d'abord en Bohême pour faire usage des eaux minérales d'Egra Franzens brunn. ——— Veuillez, je vous prie, Monsieur le Secrétaire perpétuel, mettre officiellement en original sous les yeux de l'illustre Académie le présent avis, et agréez l'expression de ma plus haute considération et de mon véritable attachement.

Monsieur le Secrétaire perpétuel

Votre très obéissant et tout dévoué Confrère

Spontini

Membre de l'Institut royal de France

(a) de Surintendant et Directeur général de la musique, et premier Maître de chapelle de S. M. le Roi de Prusse etc. etc.

(b) d'après l'Ordre royal de cabinet.

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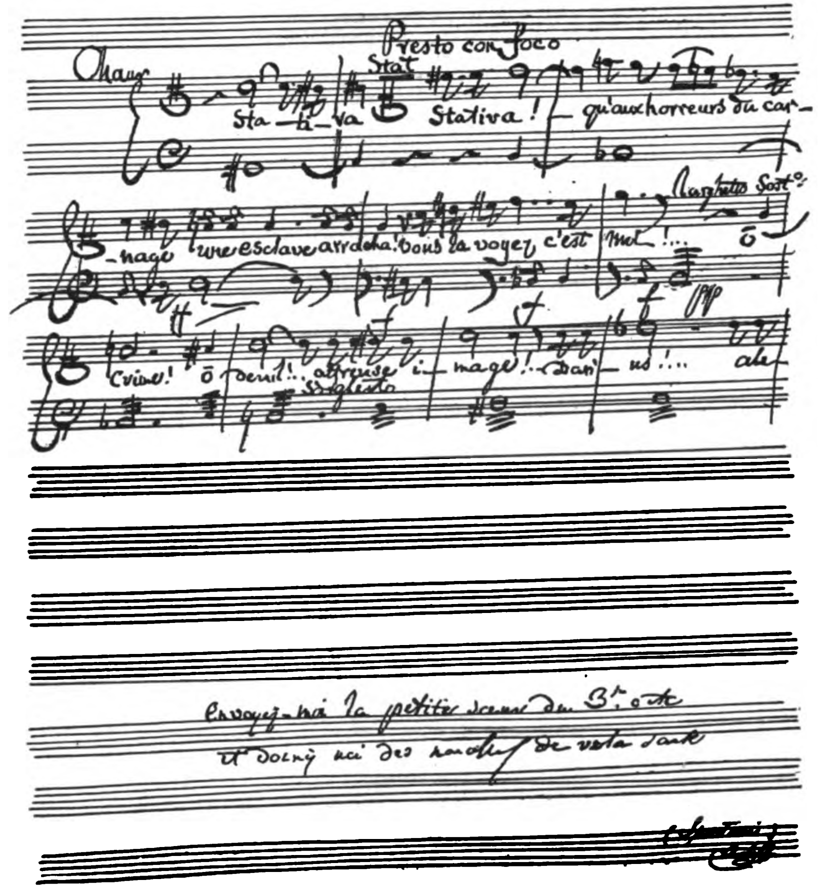


Fac-simile autograph letter and musical manuscript written by Spontini.

Spontini's operas no longer hold an important rank, and yet his name always commands respect, thanks to the beautiful bits which are still admired in "Ferdinand Cortez" and in "La Vestale." Assuredly, Spontini was no innovator such as was Gluck. He was content, without revolutionizing lyric tragedy, to give it more dramatic animation, and masters as bold and as little mindful of conventionalities as were Berlioz and Wagner have professed a real admiration for Spontini.

This artist, in spite of the changes which music underwent during his lifetime, was so thoroughly convinced of the superiority of his conceptions of the noble art, that one could not but feel a respect for him and for his best qualities. The march and the prayer in "Olympia," the scene of the revolt in "Ferdinand Cortez," best of all, the grand *finale* of "La Vestale," rest upon motives so expressive, and appeal so strongly to the emotions, that one cannot do otherwise than admire them. It was Spontini's misfortune never to find another poem which suited his genius so well as "La Vestale." "Olympia" bears evidence of a singular indecision and of repeated modifications, in the midst of which the composer's idea and intention vaguely float. In fact, Spontini constantly made changes in his scores, pasting alteration over alteration until almost every page resembled a patchwork or mosaic. "Ferdinand Cortez" contains some rare beauties as regards melody, expression, and dramatic effect, but these beauties are exceptional; "La Vestale" alone was a true masterpiece.

BUST OF SPONTINI BY DANTAN.

From the Carnavalet Museum, Paris.

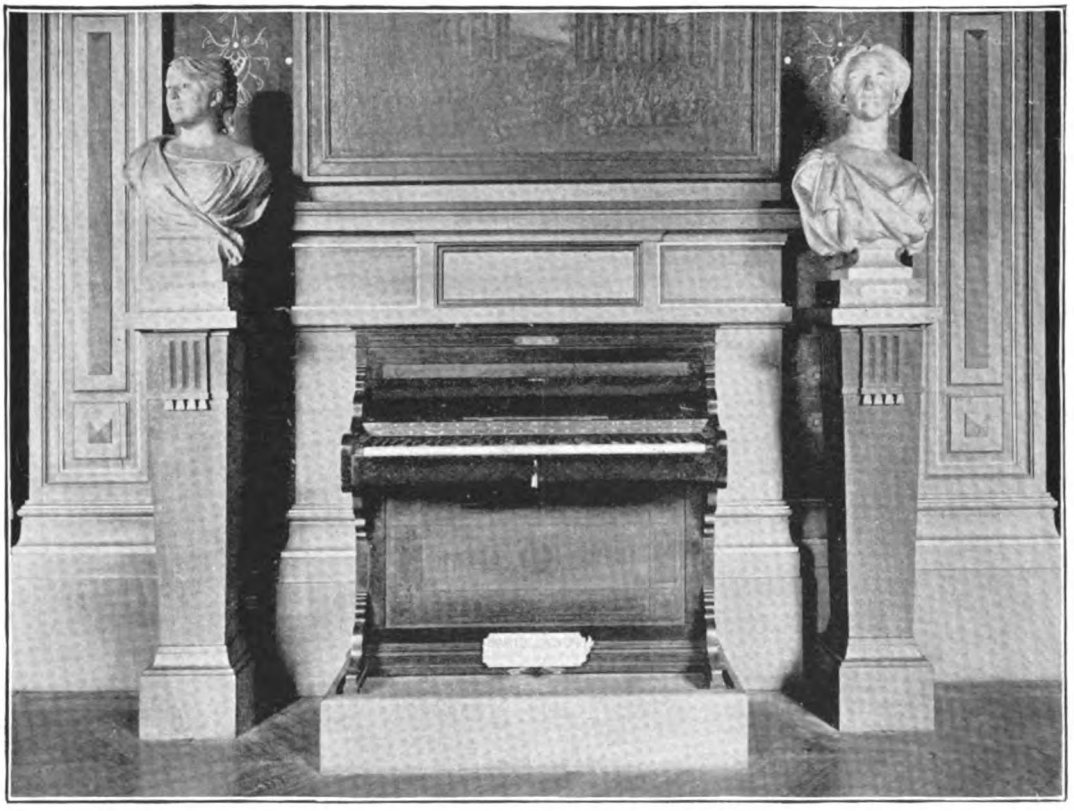
In this opera we must consider especially the high inspiration which breathes through it, the powerful emotions which it reveals, and not pause at Spontini's somewhat embarrassed formulas and mediocre methods. What tenderness in the first duo of Licinius and Cinna, *Unis par l'amitié;* what anguish in the supplication of Julia, *Oh! des infortunés déesse tutélaire;* what passion in the air *Impitoyable dieux,* and what sweet resignation in the cavatina, *Les Dieux prendront pitié . . !* The last song, *Adieu mes tendres sœurs,* is as sadly expressive as the hymn *Fille du ciel* is full of religious sentiment, and this series of magnificent pages is crowned by that imposing *finale* of the second act, which was at that time a work of genius. And yet, when "La Vestale" was revived at the *Opéra* in 1854, three years after Spontini's death, it was played only eight times, making a total of 213 performances in Paris. When "Ferdinand Cortez" was played again in 1840, it lived through only six performances, making a total of 248 in Paris. After all, Spontini, with his great melodic qualities and rare dramatic instinct, only continued in the path which Gluck had laid out, and was in no sense an innovator. Thus he exercised no influence on musicians who followed him, while he stood by and saw powerful rivals revolutionize musical art and reform the public taste.

He raged and stormed when people talked to him of the "fashion"; but here he was helpless, for musical taste had totally changed in twenty years. While he was still in Prussia, he pro-

posed to the administration of the *Opéra* to go to Paris and direct a revival of "Ferdinand Cortez," with the denouement as he had arranged it for Berlin, and, after a suit gained at first, then lost, against the director of the *Opéra*, Duponchel, to prevent him from playing that opera again in its original form, he was obliged to submit to the pitiful and fatal revival of 1840. But if he had gained his point, he would have found himself confronted with entirely new preferences on the part of the public, for since his departure there had been a complete revolution at the *Opéra*, under the influence of Rossini and Meyerbeer. "William Tell," "Robert le Diable," and "The Huguenots," not to mention "La Muette de Portici," coming one year before "William Tell," had struck a fatal blow at ancient lyric tragedy. The public, weary of antique heroes, of Greeks and of Romans, desired something a little less formal, more animated and real. They wanted dramas concerning times more nearly approaching their own, and therefore more interesting to them. The music also had completely changed in character; it allowed of a much richer instrumentation, a search after picturesque or historic color, a variety in the melody and dramatic expression which had never occurred to Spontini.

And yet, after this revolution was an accepted fact, Spontini, quite blinded by his phenomenal self-love, delivered himself of the following sentiments to Richard Wagner, when the two composers met at Dresden in 1844: "After Gluck, it is I who have made a grand revolution with 'La Vestale'; I have introduced the augmentation of the sixth in harmony, and the big drum in the orchestra. With 'Cortez' I have taken a step forward; I have taken three steps with 'Olympia,' and a hundred with 'Agnes von Hohenstaufen.' After that I might have composed 'The Athenians,' an excellent poem, but I have renounced it, despairing of excelling myself. Now how do you imagine that it is possible for anybody to invent anything new when I, Spontini, realize that I am unable to surpass my greater works? And furthermore it is very evident that since 'La Vestale,' not a note of music has been written that has not been stolen from me." Was it possible to show a greater blindness in the face of such works as "William Tell" and "The Huguenots," or to give a more erroneous estimate of himself, ranging his works in the exact inverse order of their worth? Poor Spontini, who was so unfortunate as to outlive his glory, and see "unworthy rivals" all about him, bearing off the laurels!

H. Jullien



SPONTINI'S PIANO IN THE MUSEUM OF THE PARIS OPERA HOUSE.

From a photograph made specially for this work.

LUIGI CHERUBINI

Reproduction of an excellent lithograph portrait.

CHERUBINI

LUIGI CHERUBINI

THE full name of this illustrious master is Luigi Carlo Zanobi Salvatore Maria Cherubini. He was born in Florence, on the 14th of September, 1760. From his earliest youth it was intended that he should follow the musical profession, and the first instruction he received was imparted to him by his father, Bartolomeo, who filled the position of musical accompanist at the Teatra della Pergola. Under his direction, the boy soon became proficient in playing from figured bass, and with the help of Bartolomeo Felici, the best teacher of counterpoint in all Tuscany at that time, he acquired a knowledge of the principles of composition. He received lessons in singing and in organ and piano playing; in short, all his musical gifts were developed with such surprising rapidity that at the age of thirteen he composed his first mass, which was performed in church and very favorably received. Cantatas, short dramatic compositions, two more masses, and an oratorio followed in swift succession. It now became Cherubini's ardent wish to visit the important musical centres in Italy, and to enjoy the instruction of the most famous masters. His father's very limited resources being insufficient for the gratification of this desire, a stipend was granted him for the purpose by the Grand Duke Leopold. In 1778, Cherubini betook himself to Giuseppi Sarti, in Bologna, and, on the master's removal to Milan, a year afterward, followed him to that city. Sarti's methods of teaching were those of the old school; that is to say, he regarded the contrapuntal style of composition of the sixteenth century as the foundation of all true art, and exacted complete mastery of its principles from all his pupils. Yet it argued no inconsistency on Sarti's part that he also devoted himself zealously to dramatic composition, a field in which his success was not less marked than in that of church music. To these two forms of art the Italians confined themselves in Sarti's time; for their instrumental music, which served as a model for all Europe until the first half of the eighteenth century, was in a state of almost complete decay. It was chiefly owing to the teaching of Sarti, that Cherubini became the greatest contrapuntist of his time, and excelled even Mozart in purity and severity of style. His famous *Credo* for eight voices, *a cappella*, one of the most marvellous artistic achievements of any age, was worked out in part under Sarti's eye. In connection with this style of composition, Cherubini continued to labor diligently in the line of operatic music. Sarti adopted the commendable practice of inserting in his own operas certain airs composed by his most talented pupils, thus affording his young disciples an opportunity of becoming practically acquainted with operatic effects, yet shielding them from the discouraging severity of public criticism. After completing his preparatory studies in this way, Cherubini ventured for the first time to step forward with an entire opera of his own composition. It was called "Quinto Fabio," and was brought out in Alexandria, through Sarti's influence. "Armida" and "Messenzio," performed in Florence, also "Adriano in Siria," produced at Livorno, followed in 1782, but these works seem to have made no permanent impression upon the public. Nevertheless Cherubini's earnest, profound, and eminently artistic nature was revealed in them to an extent that astonished his countrymen, who were accustomed to music of a lighter and more pleasing character, such as the operatic compositions of the Neapolitan and Venetian school. A certain degree of admiration was accorded him, and he was occasionally honored with flattering appellations, as for example "Il Cherubino" (the cherub); but none the less the fact remains that neither

the earlier nor the later works of the musician found true appreciation in his native land.

Sarti, meantime, strove without ceasing to secure the advancement of his pupil, and procured for him in 1784 the position of composer at the Haymarket Theatre in London. After Handel's death, Italian music had quickly regained its old place in the popular esteem in England. During the three years of Cherubini's residence in London, he wrote the operas "La Finta Principessa" and "Giulio Sabino," the first of which was received with much applause, while the latter proved a complete failure. Wounded by this want of success, Cherubini repaired to Paris in 1786, and, after one more visit to London in 1787, he took up his permanent residence in the French metropolis. He had found there a true friend in Viotti, the famous violin virtuoso, and with his assistance gained admission to the upper circles of society, even receiving the honor of an introduction to Queen Marie Antoinette. An event of great importance in deciding the direction of his artistic faculties was his attendance at the so-called *Concert de la Loge Olympique*, where he heard for the first time a symphony of Haydn's, probably one of a series of six, composed in 1786, by especial command of the society. A new world was suddenly opened to Cherubini by this magnificently rendered work. From this hour he began to feel the influence of German instrumental music, and Haydn, in particular, remained to the end of his life the object of his highest veneration.

While on the way from Italy to England the musician promised, when he had discharged his obligations in London, to compose an opera for the Royal Theatre in Turin. In 1788 he fulfilled his promise by the production of "Iphigenia in Aulis." This opera was given during the carnival season in Turin, where it was enthusiastically received, and was also performed in other Italian theatres. It was the last work which he wrote for the stage of his fatherland. The impressions produced upon him by the French opera, the works of Gluck, and Haydn's orchestral music had filled his mind with new ideals. Before his visit to Turin, he had already begun to compose the music of "Démophon," an operatic poem by Marmontel, and he now proceeded with the work. This, his first French opera, was performed in the *Academie royale de musique* on the 2d of September, 1788, but proved only a partial success, — a fact which was due partly to the character of the piece, partly to unfavorable external influences. Before Cherubini was commissioned to undertake the composition for the poem, it had been intrusted to Johann Christoph Vogel of Nuremberg, an imitator of Gluck, but he advanced so slowly with his task that Marmontel became impatient. Vogel had resided in Paris since 1776 and had won many friends for himself through his opera "La Toison d'Or," which appeared in the year 1786. On the 26th of June, 1788, he died, while still in the prime of life, and, as the completed score of "Démophon" was found among his papers, the wish was expressed by many that his composition should be performed before Cherubini's. This, however, did not happen, and a feeling of dissatisfaction existed in consequence. The overture, which was played in February, 1789, at a concert of the *Loge Olympique*, was received with unusual favor, and gave rise to disparaging comments upon Cherubini's work. But Vogel's opera, taken as a whole, could lay as little claim to permanent success as that of his rival, though it was more frequently put upon the stage.

In this same year of 1789, Cherubini first found definite employment in Paris. Here Léonard, the *coiffeur* of the queen, had obtained permission, through the good offices of her Majesty, to organize an Italian opera. Viotti collected in Italy a number of superior singers, who at first gave their performances in the Tuileries and afterwards in a newly erected theatre in the Rue Feydeau. Cherubini was invited to become musical director of the enterprise, and entered upon the work with youthful ardor. His extraordinary talents, his exactness and inexorable firmness, accomplished the desired result, that of securing performances uniformly of the highest order. The works presented to a delighted public were those of the most famous Italian composers of the day, Guglielmi, Gazzaniga, Paisiello, Cimarosa, and others. Cherubini himself composed a considerable number of detached arias, which were inserted in the operas of the before-mentioned masters, and served to heighten their charm. For the concerts of the *Loge Olym-*

pique, in which the queen showed the liveliest interest, he wrote in the course of the first year the cantatas "Amphion" and "Circe." He also began an opera, "Marguerite d'Anjou," which was to be brought out at the Tuileries theatre, but its completion was hindered by the progress of the French Revolution, the terrors of which, in 1792, entirely put an end to Italian opera in Paris. Viotti fled to England, and his singers were dispersed. Cherubini sought to escape the incalculable dangers to which every one who had been connected with the royal court was then exposed, by living in the greatest seclusion, and associating only with a very small circle of intimate friends. In addition to his musical studies, he began to occupy himself with the natural sciences, botany in particular possessing great attractions for him. Yet he could not wholly avoid coming in contact with the forces at work in the Revolution, and was obliged to enter the National Guard, in whose service he guarded the prisons and escorted the condemned to the scaffold. On one occasion his own life stood in danger. A troop of *sansculottes* marched roaring through the streets, looking for musicians to accompany their songs, and among others, they pounced upon Cherubini, who refused to assist them. The crowd assumed a threatening attitude, whereupon a friend pressed a violin into his hand and took position with him at the head of the procession. In his youth Cherubini had learned a little violin playing for his own pleasure, and this slight knowledge now proved his salvation. He was obliged to wander about all day with the rioters, and when they halted in a desolate spot, the musicians took their places upon some barrels and played down to their vile audience. It was amid all the terrors and excitement of this wild period that Cherubini composed his opera "Lodoiska," the work which decided his position in the artistic world. Within a short time a company of French singers had been performing in alternation with an Italian troupe at the *Théâtre Feydeau*, and here the opera was produced for the first time. Its success was so pronounced that during the following year no less than two hundred repetitions of the work were demanded in Paris, and its fame soon spread in every direction. In this composition the new ideal which Cherubini had cherished for so many years was happily realized.

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Reproduction of a portrait by Quenedey, Paris, 1809.

A second opera, "Koukourgi," had been nearly completed in the year 1793. But the overthrow of the monarchy on the 10th of August, 1792, and the confused condition of public affairs at this juncture, took away all prospect of its immediate production. In the mean time the composer had left Paris and was residing in Normandy with a family of his acquaintance. When he returned, in 1794, he brought with him the completed score of the opera "Elisa." It was brought out on the 13th of December, 1794, in the *Théâtre Feydeau*, but was less successful than "Lodoiska." During the next few years there was a considerable falling off in Cherubini's activity as a composer, owing to his appointment as teacher of counterpoint in the *Conservatoire de Musique*, just established, in which he became also one of the inspectors of the institution. Exact and conscientious by nature even to the point of pedantry, the musician devoted himself with unflagging energy to the duties of his

office, yet occasionally returned with fresh ardor to operatic composition. In 1737 appeared "Medée," his most powerful dramatic work; in 1800, "Les Deux Journées" (Water-Carrier), the most admired and effective of all. Between the two stand the lesser operas, "L'Hôtellerie Portugaise" (1798) and "La Punition" (1799). A number of short vocal compositions belonging to this same period show that Cherubini was obliged to contribute his quota to the French Revolution. Among them are "Hymne à la Fraternité" (22d September, 1793), "Hymne du Panthéon," "Chant pour le dix Août," the ode on the 18th Fructidor and others. The most important and almost the last work of this kind was the beautiful music composed in memoriam of the noble Gen. Hoche, which was performed in public on the 1st of October, 1797.

There was an element of harshness and defiance in Cherubini's character, which rendered it impossible for him to bend to the will of others, and he never modified his severe criticisms of art and artists in conversing with the loftiest personages. In the presence of Napoleon, whether as First Consul or as the all-powerful Emperor of France, it was impossible for him to dissimulate, and he excited the displeasure of the potentate by speaking disparagingly of Zingarelli, one of his favorite composers. Paisiello, on the other hand, who was equally a favorite of Napoleon, Cherubini was willing to tolerate. Yet on one occasion, when the Emperor, who had no comprehension of the earnestness and refinement of Cherubini's style, was, as usual, extolling the two much-admired artists, and characterized our musician's orchestral accompaniments as overladen with ornament, he is said to have received the reply, "You love the music which does not prevent you from thinking of the affairs of state." This remark was probably never forgiven; certain it is that during Napoleon's reign, Cherubini never attained the eminence which he so richly deserved, but for twenty years was obliged to content himself with his position at the Conservatory which afforded him barely sufficient means for his own support and that of his family. Paisiello, meantime, obtained a remunerative appointment as director of a musical organization established by Napoleon, in 1802. When the jealousy of the Paris musicians caused him to forsake his post in disgust, the Emperor wished that Zingarelli should be his successor. The latter declining, the choice now fell upon Méhul, who, out of regard for Cherubini, also refused to accept. The place, however, was eventually given to Lesueur. This proved a trying experience to Cherubini, and had an injurious effect upon his mental and physical condition. The failure of his musically charming but dramatically uninteresting opera "Anacréon" could only increase the bitterness of his disappointment. It was therefore with pleasure that he accepted an invitation to Vienna, for the sake of producing there some of his earlier operas, and of composing a new one exclusively for the Austrian capital. He reached the city in July, and the warmth of his reception, the love and admiration shown him by Haydn and Beethoven, both of whom he held in the highest veneration, made up to him for much that he had previously suffered. Before the production of his new opera, "Faniska," on the 25th of February, 1806, he listened to a performance of "Fidelio." Cherubini admired the greatness of Beethoven, but was less powerfully attracted by him than by Haydn, a fact for which the former's peculiar personality might very well account. With respect to the opera he criticised in it, as was very natural for an Italian, the lack of vocal style, and also found fault with the great C major overture on account of its abrupt modulations. Beethoven, on his part, had great respect for Cherubini as an artist, as is not only attested by many of his utterances, but distinctly seen in his compositions. If "Fidelio" shows a resemblance to any other operas whatever, it is to those of Cherubini, and this master's influence is also perceptible here and there in Beethoven's Fourth Symphony in B flat major, written in 1806.

Meantime, during the composer's absence from Paris, the war between France and Austria had broken out, but was speedily terminated by Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz on the 2d of December, 1805. After this event, the conqueror took up his residence at Schönbrunn, near Vienna, and, learning that Cherubini was at that time living in the capital, commanded him to direct his musical *soirées*, twelve in number, paid him a considerable sum of money for his services, and manifested unusual friendliness in every way. On

one occasion, however, the conversation unfortunately fell upon "Faniska," which Napoleon had not yet heard. "It would not please you, sire," said Cherubini, remembering his former discussions with the Emperor. "Why not?" the latter inquired. "The orchestral accompaniment is too overladen," was Cherubini's curt reply. It will be seen that if Napoleon forgot nothing, Cherubini was not behind him in this respect. But the power was in the hands of the Emperor, and this the master was made to realize afresh after his return to Paris on the first of April. A recurrence of his old feelings of discontent, and an affection of the nervous system which often excited the gravest apprehensions of his family and friends, now ensued. The number of compositions belonging to the next few years is very small. In 1806 he finished the *Credo* for eight voices which he began in Bologna, while under Sarti's instruction. An unproductive season followed, continuing till the autumn of 1808, during which nothing of importance came from his pen. Other stars rose in the firmament, and he lost the place he had occupied for fifteen years as the greatest living operatic composer. In Spontini, whose "Vestale" appeared in 1807, was seen a composer who understood better than Cherubini the art of reflecting the splendors of imperialism in musical strains. The latter now seemed ready to abandon composition altogether, and devoted himself more zealously than ever to his botanical studies or beguiled the time with the singular occupation of making all sorts of strange drawings by combining in various way the figures found upon playing cards. Ferdinand Hiller, who saw these drawings, describes them as fantastic groups or scenes, — dancers with red jerkins, wrestlers in scarlet caps, buildings, and miniature landscapes with all sorts of wonderful foliage. The cards were laid lengthwise or sidewise, used separately or united, and larger or smaller portions of the spots were erased, the whole thing being a remarkable mixture of invention and calculation. These pictures the artist had framed and hung upon the walls of his room.

In Paris, at this period, there lived a Monsieur de Caraman, Prince of Chimay, a great lover of music and very friendly to Cherubini, whom he invited to spend the summer of 1808 on his estate in Belgium, hoping that the quiet of rural life might restore the musician's failing strength. Cherubini accepted the invitation, and Auber, at that time his pupil, accompanied him to Chimay. The inhabitants of the place, having heard of the celebrated composer's arrival at the castle, sent a deputation to entreat him to compose them an ode to be sung on St. Cecilia's day. Cherubini, with harsh abruptness, refused to comply with the request. But soon afterwards the occupants of the castle saw him going about in a meditative mood, and then to set himself quietly and industriously to work. After another brief interval he called Auber to the piano, and showed him a recently completed *Kyrie*. When this had been sung through in the presence of his astonished and delighted friends, Cherubini wrote the *Gloria*, and presented both compositions to the highly elated townspeople, who gave them as satisfactory a public performance as possible, considering the very limited amount of talent at their command. This was the beginning of the celebrated F major mass for three-part chorus and orchestra. On his return to Paris, Cherubini completed the work, and in March, 1809, it was performed for the first time in the Prince's *salon* by a select chorus and orchestra, before an audience of invited guests. In thus returning, a mature artist, to the field of his youthful endeavors, the composer was destined to exhibit his genius in its finest and most permanent qualities. The F major mass inaugurated a new order of church music, just as a new operatic style was created by "Lodoiska"; and if other opera composers came after him who followed different ideals and obscured his fame, it is an undeniable fact that the Catholic Church music of the nineteenth century can show us nothing worthy to stand by the side of Cherubini's works. He has here remained the unequalled master.

In running over the list of his compositions it is easy to see that from this time on he produced less and less of the dramatic order. In the year 1809 appeared the charming one-act Italian opera, "Pimmalione," which was performed at the Tuileries in the presence of Napoleon and the art-loving Empress Josephine. The name of the composer had not been communicated to the Emperor, who was profoundly stirred by the music; but when he learned that it was written by Cherubini, he manifested more aston-

ishment than pleasure. Notwithstanding this, he sent the musician a handsome sum of money, and commissioned him to compose a festal ode on the occasion of his marriage to the Archduchess Marie Louise of Austria. Another one-act opera, with a French text, "Le Crescendo," was brought out in the Feydeau Theatre on the 1st of September, 1810. In 1813 there followed a work for the Grand Opera, where Cherubini had first presented his "Démophon" and "Anacréon" twenty-five years before. The new opera, however, was not well received, and a period of twenty years now elapsed before the production of another. In 1833 a remodelling of the old "Koukourgi," under the title of "Ali Baba," was given to the public. It deserves our admiration as the work of a septuagenarian, but is wholly ineffective from an artistic point of view.

The last period in the long life of the master is that of his great sacred compositions, and begins in the year 1808. No less than eight masses, two requiems, and a very large number of minor pieces make up the rich array. The great D minor mass appeared in 1811, the C major in 1816, the coronation masses in G major and A major in 1819 and 1825. The celebrated C minor requiem was composed in 1816, and rendered for the first time in the Church of St. Denis on the anniversary of the death of Louis XVI. The second requiem attracts special attention for the following reasons: It is written in D minor, for male voices only. Cherubini wrote it in 1836, being then seventy-six years old. On the occasion of the funeral of Boieldieu in 1834, the C minor requiem had been sung; but as female voices were here called into requisition, the Archbishop of Paris requested that the work should not be used again for a similar purpose, the singing of women being prohibited by the church. It was Cherubini's wish that no controversy on this point should arise at the time of his own decease, and he therefore wrote a work in which alto and soprano voices were entirely omitted. In this connection another composition should be mentioned, which does not strictly belong to the sacred music, but is more nearly related to the eleven secular cantatas in Italian style produced by Cherubini. It was, however, employed for a funeral service, and is the well-known "Chant pour la mort de Joseph Haydn," written for three solo voices and orchestra. This work is full of deep feeling and of wonderful beauties of tone. One of its leading ideas accords with a melody from the "Creation," and the whole work is certainly to be regarded as a heartfelt tribute of admiration offered by Cherubini to the great German master. The work was performed at the Paris *Conservatoire* in the winter of 1810, the death of Haydn having occurred in the preceding year. Cherubini, however, inscribed it in the list of his works under the date 1805, and it is not yet known whether it was composed in consequence of a false report of Haydn's death or was originally a song of praise dedicated to the Viennese composer in the year when the two musicians first met, and subsequently converted into a lament.

While Cherubini had shown in his youth a certain interest in the composition of church music, and in mature years had turned his attention for a long time in other directions, he had not thus far occupied himself with German chamber music and the symphony. But in his last creative period he entered upon this domain. In 1814 he composed his first, and, for a considerable interval, only string quartet. In the following year he wrote for the Philharmonic Society in London a concert overture in G major and a symphony in D major, the latter being the sole work of its class he ever gave to the world. In 1829 he finished a second string quartet in C major, for which he made a rearrangement of his symphony, including a new *adagio*. The third quartet in D minor, a very spirited production, was completed on the 31st of July, 1834, and three more works of the same kind followed it before the autumn of 1837, as also another string quintet.

The musician's financial affairs now began to take a more favorable turn. After the restoration of the Bourbons the *Conservatoire* was temporarily closed but reopened somewhat later, under the title "École royale de chant et de déclamation," when Cherubini resumed his old place as teacher of counterpoint. Moreover, in 1816 the king made him director of the royal band, an office which he magnanimously shared with Lesueur. It was for this organization, to which were attached the most distinguished singers and instrumentalists, whose performances were extolled as unsurpassed, that Cherubini wrote the most of his greater and lesser sacred composi-

MONUMENT TO CHERUBINI.

From a photograph of monument by Fantacchiotti in San Croce Church, Florence, Italy.

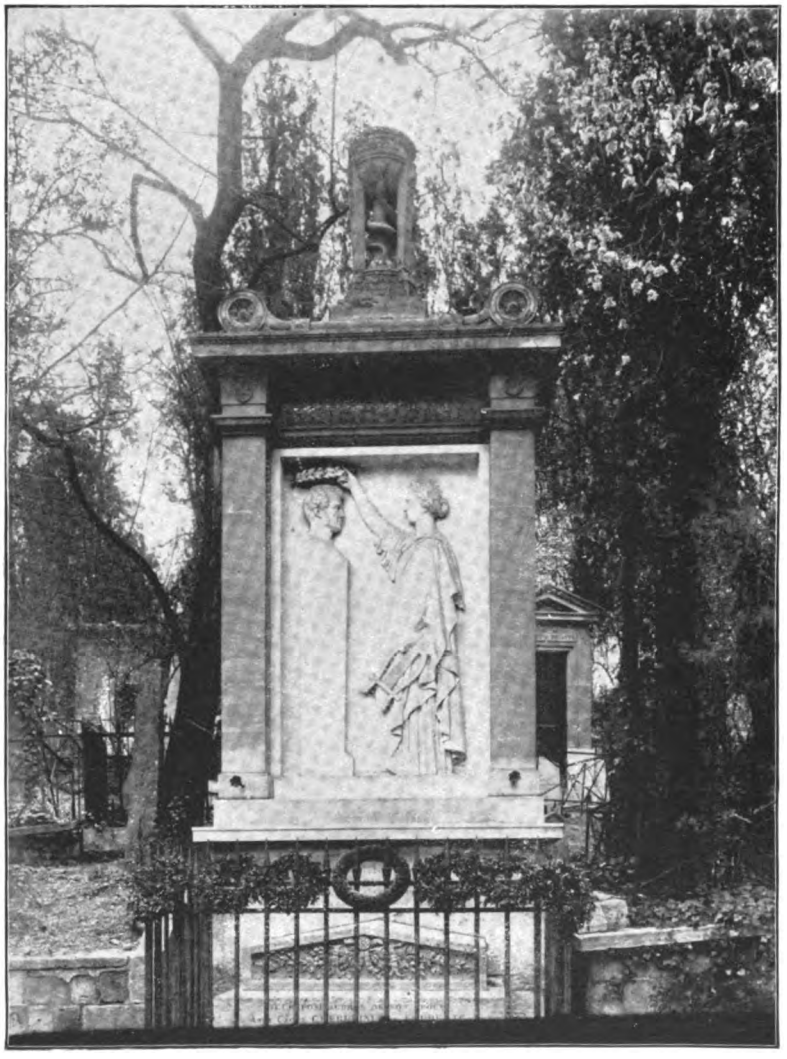
tions. The brevity of the service at which the chapel choir was required to assist is seen in the character of the compositions themselves. The music, like the service, being necessarily short, masses such as those in F major and D minor were not available. Cherubini was obliged to condense his ideas as much as possible, but the external pressure at this time, far from injuring his style, served only to increase its effectiveness. It was often the case, moreover, that only a single portion of the mass was celebrated in musical form, which accounts for the great number of *Kyrie* and other fragmentary compositions found among his works.

A position of more importance than any he had yet occupied awaited our artist in the year 1822. The management of the *École Royale* (after 1830 it was again called the *Conservatoire*) had been intrusted in 1816 to the highly esteemed writer upon musical history, François Louis Perne, who did not prove equal to the undertaking, and Cherubini was now called upon to fill his place. So great was his success as director of the institution that it not only rose at once to its former level, but became a model of completeness. Nor is it too much to say that the prestige still attached to the name of the Paris *Conservatoire* owes its origin to Cherubini, who united in himself all the qualities necessary for the proper fulfilment of the responsibilities which rested upon him. The influence and authority which a world-wide reputation bestows belonged to him by right. As a composer, the bent of his mind was serious and earnest, and had always led him to profit by the accumulated experience of centuries in laying the foundation for his own life-work. In addition, he possessed that talent for organization and direction which is so rare with artists. Extreme punctuality and love of order, untiring industry and severity towards himself and others, were among his most prominent characteristics, which perhaps were developed to an unnecessary extent, causing him to demand complete submission to his will on the part of others, and discouraging the expression of any individuality or independence, often denying even that degree of personal freedom to which all mankind are entitled. Both by teachers and pupils he was more feared than beloved. His taciturnity, the harsh and frequently sarcastic enunciation of his decisions, his obstinacy and pedantry, increased with years and rendered co-operation with him no easy task. Talent of an extravagant order found no favor in his eyes, and the dislike which Berlioz felt for him during his student days was reciprocated by the most open depreciation on Cherubini's part. But with all that may be said, it is impossible to detract from the inestimable service rendered by him as director of the *Conservatoire*, both to the institution itself and to the French music in general. The publication of his celebrated instruction book, "Cours de Contrepoint et de Fugue," which was introduced into the classes of the Conservatory, took place in the later years of his life. The text of this book was not written by Cherubini himself, but by one of his pupils; Fétis thinks by Halévy. In the matter of oral explanations, the master was exceedingly chary. He pointed out in the clearest manner what must be done, but no reasons were given as to why it should be thus, and not otherwise; he never liked to talk much about his art. Taking his method as a whole, too much cannot be said in its praise. In the matter of counterpoint he did not confine himself to the rules laid down in the sixteenth century, but embraced with his comprehensive glance the whole domain of modern music.

Although the greater part of Cherubini's life was passed in straitened circumstances, and his worth as an artist received at most only a partial recognition, yet in his old age the world delighted to do him honor, and his authority was undisputed. In the year 1795 the musician married Cécile Tourette, the daughter of a member of the old royal chapel, who bore him a son and two daughters. To this earnest, industrious man the highest pleasures that life could offer were those of his happy home, where, in his later years free from care, he gladly dispensed an unpretentious hospitality such as had been impossible when he was obliged to struggle for the necessities of existence. Ferdinand Hiller, who resided in Paris between the years of 1828 and 1835, paid frequent visits to Cherubini, and was once conducted by the artist's oldest daughter to the dwelling occupied by the family in 1800. A single apartment then served both as the musician's study and the children's sitting-room. Here he sat at a little table by the window and composed the opera "Les Deux Journées," while the children played in the back-

ground. A line of demarcation was drawn through the middle of the room; beyond this the children could amuse themselves as noisily as they pleased, but they were forbidden to cross the line. So long as this regulation was obeyed, and no one came too near him, he did not feel disturbed, and here we see revealed the mental constitution of the man.

Cherubini died at Paris on the 15th of March, 1842, in the eighty-second year of his life. As Commander of the Legion of Honor, a distinction from the king never before conferred upon any musician, he was buried with military honors. Over three thousand persons were in the funeral procession, which conducted the remains of the composer to the cemetery of Père Lachaise, where they still repose. Within a short time after his death, several memoirs of Cherubini were issued. A fellow-countryman, Luigi Picchianti, published a work called "Notizie sulla vita e sulle opere di Luigi Cherubini," which even to-day is of substantial value, so far as the principal facts of his life are concerned. Miel, a Frenchman, wrote "Notices sur la vie et les ouvrages de Cherubini" (1842), while Fétis in the "Biographie Universelle des Musiciens," and Ferdinand Hiller in "Musikalisches und Persönliches," made important contributions drawn from their personal knowledge of the artist. A careful compilation, entitled "Cherubini; Memorials illustrative of his Life" (London, 1874), was made by Edward Bellasis. The fullest revelations concerning his life history were, however, made by the musician himself in the catalogue of his works, illustrated with autobiographical notes and published with the consent of the writer's relatives by Bottée de Toulman, librarian of the *Conservatoire*. The precious collection of manuscript compositions left behind by Cherubini remained for a long time in the hands of the family, who, though willing to dispose of them, could find neither in Italy nor France a state institution, a society, or a private individual ready to purchase this inestimable treasure and preserve it to posterity. At length, however, the writer of these lines had the honor of being permitted to assist the Prussian government in securing the manuscripts, which are now in the possession of the Royal Library in Berlin.



CHERUBINI'S TOMB IN PÈRE LACHAISE, PARIS.

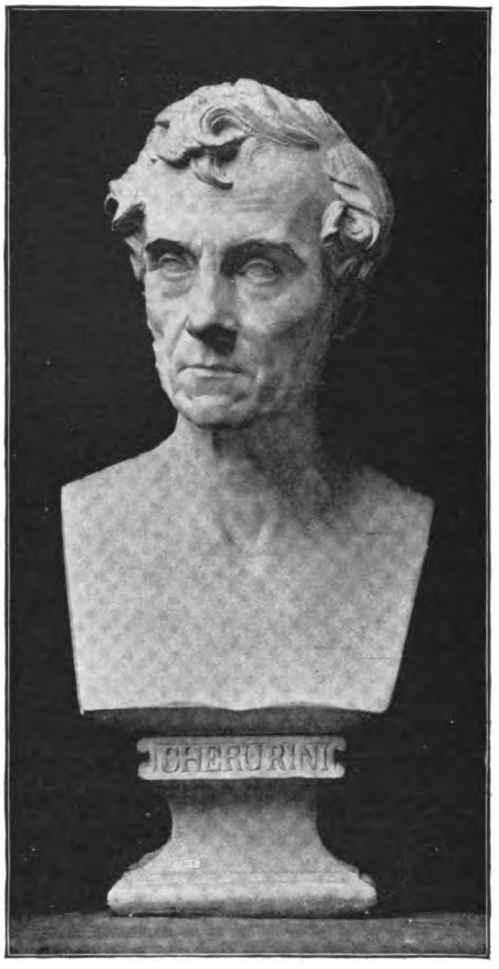
From a photograph made specially for this work.

Many circumstances have thus far combined to prevent the forming of a decisive judgment in the public mind as to the position which should be assigned to Cherubini in the musical world. The path which leads to the proper understanding of an artist's personality, through a study of the character of the nation to which he belongs, seems in this instance to be effectually blocked, for in the subject of our essay we behold the phenomenon especially rare among the Italians — an international musician. Though Cherubini was trained in the forms of old Italian church music under the severe and thorough tuition of Sarti, pupil of Padre Martini, the learned Bolognese contrapuntist, and though familiar from childhood with the light and artistic opera-melodies of his fatherland, yet this native of Florence was destined to achieve his life work in a foreign land. Cherubini composed the greater number and most important of his works for the *Conservatoire* in Paris, the city which became his second home. And, finally, it was through the study of a world-renowned German master, belonging to his own time, that the whole nature of the man was first stirred to its foundation. From all this it follows readily enough that while Cherubini reveals alike to the Italians, the French, and the Germans certain traits which are characteristic of each nationality, he awakens for the most part in one and all a certain feeling of strangeness. The different elements which make up his musical personality are not welded together externally, nor was anything further from the master's thought than to offer something to every nation in a vain struggle to win for himself the applause of the world. Let it rather be regarded as the strongest impulse of his earnest, reflective nature to appropriate for his development everything that could be acquired from the collective artistic culture of the race. These acquisitions he was able to fuse together into a musical language of peculiar significance, incapable of comparison with any other; but in so doing he was obliged to renounce the sort of sympathy which, resting upon a national foundation, draws souls together as by an irresistible force.

Unlike the greater number of Italian composers, whose highest aim was a cheerful, agreeably stimulating artistic enjoyment, there is in Cherubini an element of severity, an aristocratic elegance of expression, which often border on coldness. Strains such as enchant the multitude are of infrequent occurrence in his music. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that the multitude kept itself aloof from him. Only one of all his operas, "Les Deux Journées," now known in Germany under the name of "Der Wasserträger" (The Water Carrier), was able to attain a lasting popularity. For a variety of reasons, also, his sacred compositions have failed to become widely known. The masses and requiems are, first of all, too grand and earnest, too difficult and full of meaning, to adapt themselves to the vapid style of Catholic Church music, and, when performed in the concert room, they do not often produce their full effect. Nor is the three-part writing, which Cherubini has repeatedly employed with reference to the needs of the French church choirs, at all suited to the requirements of our choral societies. It is, unfortunately, too often the case that trifling obstacles of a similar character interfere with a proper appreciation of the finest productions of genius. The fact that the name of Cherubini does not stand inscribed in the temple of fame with those of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven must be attributed in some degree to unfamiliarity with his works on the part of the public, but is still further owing to the peculiarity of the artist's musical nature, and to the remarkable place which he has created for himself in and beyond the musical life of the nations. To estimate him at his full value should be the distinctive office of the German people; and it is indeed true that, while he is everywhere spoken of with respect, there exists to-day, in the select circle of German musicians and musical critics, as little doubt as existed five-and-twenty years ago that a place should be accorded to Cherubini among the greatest composers whom the world has known. He mastered musical forms and resources to an extent that has been rarely equalled. In the severe contrapuntal style of composition, which has gone more and more out of fashion since Beethoven, he surpassed all his contemporaries, whatever might be their relations to him in other respects. With the single exception of Sebastian Bach, no composer has ever employed the contrapuntal forms so freely, intelligently, and profoundly as Cherubini; while as regards harmony and transparent clearness, he stands even before Bach in the most complicated of his works. A thorough mastery of counterpoint is of

more especial importance in vocal church music, although dramatic composition also affords it sufficient opportunity, and it can nowhere be entirely dispensed with. In addition to his skill in this direction, Cherubini had complete control over the technique and the forms of modern instrumental music, a domain from which his French and Italian contemporaries were excluded, he having followed in Haydn's footsteps; and in artistic elaboration of motives, and in masterly handling of orchestra and string quartet, he scarcely yields the palm to his German master. But it is, first of all, in works formed by an agreeable combination of vocal and instrumental music that his diversified talents found their centre of activity. In respect to the association of vocal music in one or more parts with the play of the instruments, Cherubini's operas, cantatas, and church compositions are masterpieces of the highest order, and entirely worthy to stand by the side of similar works by Haydn and Mozart.

A highly developed sense of form and unusual mastery of artistic methods would certainly not suffice of themselves to place Cherubini in the front rank of composers, if he had not been able at the same time to impress the stamp of individual genius upon his manifold productions. He has sometimes been called an eclectic, and always, of course, with the implication that he was less original, and less fertile in invention, than the great German masters of his time. This estimate of him would seem, however, to confound the strength of the musician's creative power with its quality. No artist can do more than develop to a higher degree what he finds already existent. For this purpose, he fills his mind with a greater or lesser number of artistic thoughts, and transforms them into the elements of his own creations. The fulness and variety of these formative elements will generally be in proportion to the power of the composer. It can truly be said of Sebastian Bach that not a single species of art was known in his time which he did not make use of for his own purposes. Whatever Handel and Mozart could draw from Italian music for the realization of their artistic ideals they unhesitatingly appropriated, employing it partly as the foundation of their productions, partly as supplementary material. In all such instances, the point to be considered is whether the strength of the artist is sufficient to vivify and renew the foreign elements. That this was the case with Cherubini, I have already remarked. His style of musical expression is a thoroughly characteristic one, entirely different from that of other com-



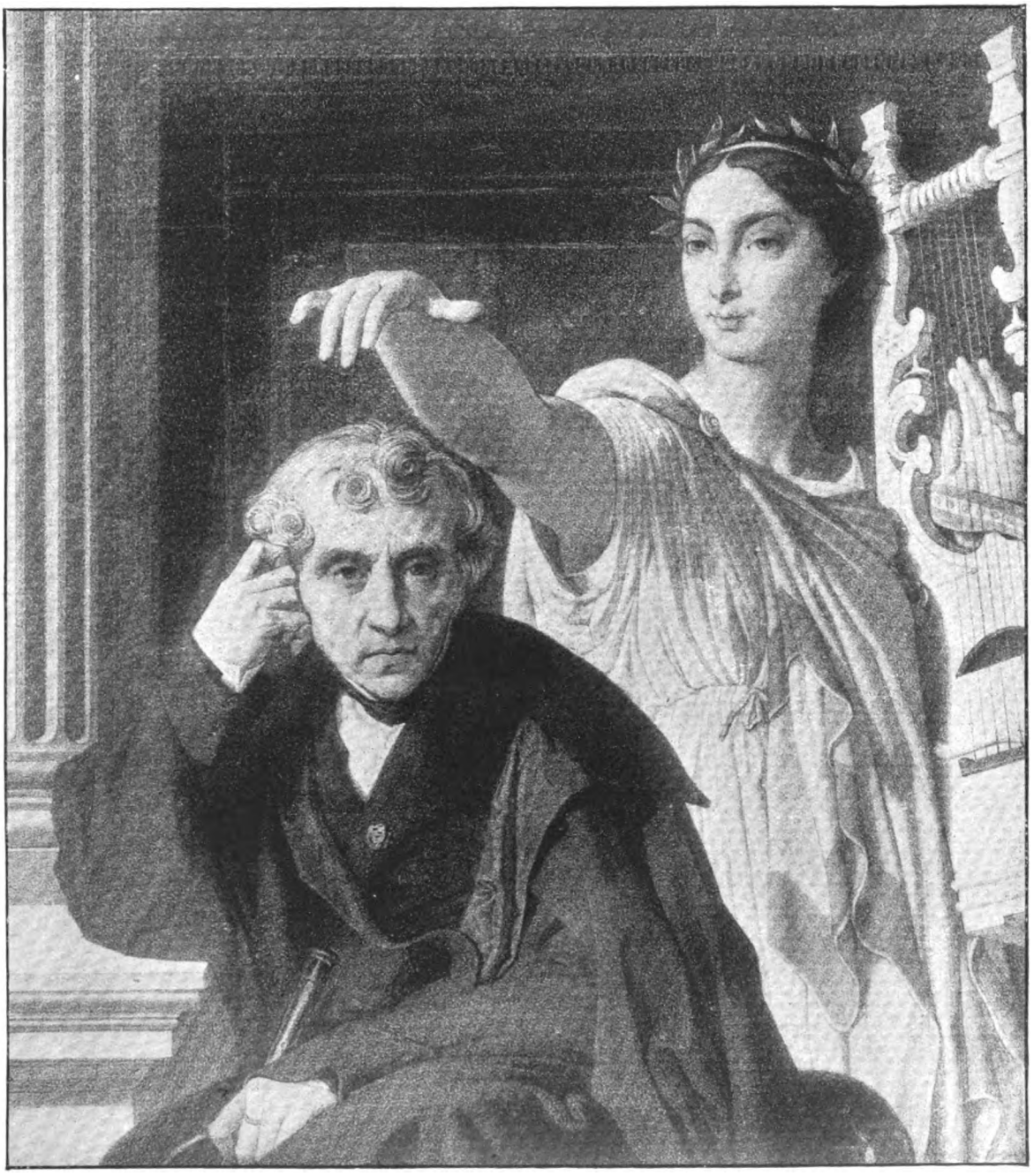
CHERUBINI.

From a bust by Dantan in the Carnavalet Museum, Paris.

posers; its cold and reserved elegance not being due to the eclectic character of his cultivation, but to the idiosyncrasy of his artistic nature. Granted that the mission of art is to animate and cheer, and that this is not accomplished through the medium of reflection, but by the direct, artless outpouring of the artist's thoughts, it must none the less be permitted to the artist to sacrifice the immediately transporting effect of his music in favor of profoundness, and the unusual order of charm intended to be conveyed. Those compositions of Cherubini which fail to electrify at the first hearing attract us

when we have studied them, through their grandeur of outline, the deep earnestness which pervades them, their artistic finish, and the exceptional brilliancy of particular passages. Of course there are included among his works, as is the case with all artists, some unimportant productions in which certain peculiarities of his nature are too plainly revealed. Such are especially to be found among the compositions of his latest years, and the last three of his string quartets can afford unmixed pleasure to no one. But whoever wishes to form a just judgment of Cherubini should turn to the rich array of great works belonging to his most productive period, in which one cannot fail to perceive a harmonious blending of the universally intelligible with a pure and characteristically peculiar beauty which appeals to every appreciative listener.

Cherubini is not included among the composers whose originality is clearly shown in their earliest productions, and who are much more commonly found among the Germans than the Italians, since the latter write with great rapidity and spontaneity, making free use of resources already proved to be effective. The works belonging to his Italian period are after the manner of that day, and many things in his operas remind one especially of Piccini. With Cherubini, however, the execution is always more careful, the melody more noble and earnest, so that the careful observer finds in his compositions sufficient indication of an independent mind to understand why it was that from the beginning the Italian public was more startled than pleased with his music. The transition to a new style was not gradual, but sudden and surprising; in this respect he reminds one very strikingly of his younger compatriot, Spontini, in whose opera, "La Vestale," is seen an equally violent change of manner. The year 1786 marks the turning-point in the case of Cherubini, and the transitional work was a cantata called "Amphion." It was in this year that the musician made his first acquaintance with Haydn's symphonies, and the effect they produced upon him must have been positively electrifying. The orchestral treatment in "Amphion," the solo accompaniments, the interweaving of the instrumental playing with the chorus singing, everything in the whole work wears an aspect so entirely new that one may say, here the real Cherubini steps forward a finished artist. This will become evident to all from the fact that the *allegro* of the overture to "Anacréon," that enchanting and truly incomparable production of Cherubini's pen, is essentially composed of the orchestral introduction to "Amphion." The cantata was intended for the *Loge Olympique*, but was never performed either there or elsewhere. The composer therefore thought he must employ some portions of it for the opera referred to, which appeared seventeen years later. "Iphigenia in Aulis," belonging to the year 1788, shows us the new style transferred to the domain of the *opera seria*. This work, which has no equal among all Italian operas, had the good fortune to meet the approval of Cherubini's countrymen, who were able to take no pleasure in the music of Mozart. While in the form of the different pieces, the nature of the cadenzas, and certain other firmly established mediums of expression, the opera proclaims its relationship to the Italian school, yet in the series of beautiful melodies it contains it rises as far above Italian opera as Mozart's "Idomeneo." But how different is Cherubini's manner here from that of Mozart, of whose operas at this period he most certainly had no knowledge, having been borne wholly on the wings of his own genius in attaining the lofty height occupied by "Iphigenia." In "Démophon," his first French opera, it seems as if the composer had overtasked his strength, although the magnificent ensemble movements of the work are far superior in form to anything in the same line attempted by Gluck, with whom, in this instance, Cherubini had entered into competition. The opera is full of pathos and rich in original invention, but is not cast in the great tragic mould, and lacks the simplicity which is necessary for the production of a striking effect. "Lodoiska" is characterized by greater restraint, and is generally considered to be the musician's first dramatic masterpiece. My own preference would be for the "Iphigenia," if the libretto of that work were not so inferior. In writing "Lodoiska," Cherubini entered upon the domain of the French *opéra comique*, which, through its simplicity of action and its direct appeal to human emotions, affords great opportunities for dramatic effect in the hands of a skilful artist. The composer's activity in the operatic line was henceforth almost wholly confined to works of this class, among which three of the most prominent are "Elisa," "Les Deux Journées," and "Faniska." Even "Medée," that powerful musi-



LUIGI CHERUBINI.

Reproduction of lithograph by Léveille made from a painting by Ingres, 1842, now in possession of the Louvre in Paris.

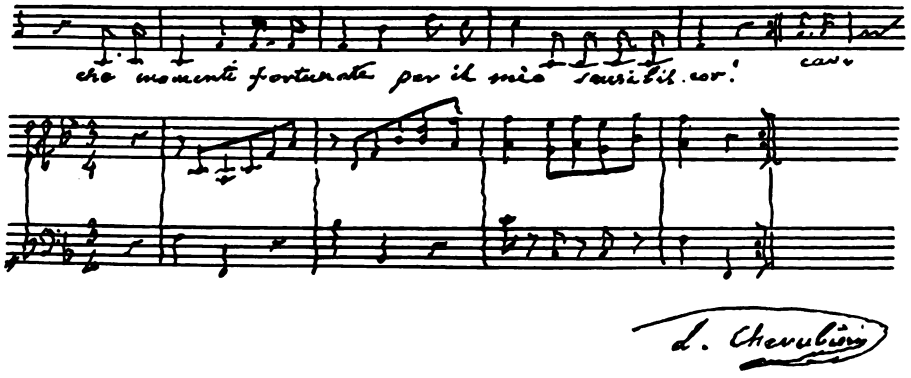
cal tragedy was obliged, through pressure of circumstances, to adapt itself to the same form.

In all these works the style of the master is unchanged; but inasmuch as it would exceed the limits of this article to enter upon the interesting task of analyzing the operas in detail, there is but little more to be said. That all are theatrically effective is a matter of course, since they are the work of an Italian, but they possess less of the dramatic quality in a narrower sense than the operas of Spontini, and many other less gifted composers. As a dramatic composer Cherubini was too fond of music for its own sake, and indulges too freely in elaborations of his musical themes, such as enchant his hearers in the masses in F major and D minor, but which interfere with the action in a work intended for the stage. He does not excel in portraying the more violent emotions, but surpasses all his predecessors in the representation of an intense, trembling excitement, while no more recent composer has gone beyond him in the power of awakening dramatic suspense.

If the importance of an artist's personality is to be estimated by the influence he has exercised upon his contemporaries and upon posterity, then Cherubini towers immeasurably above all the musicians of his day. The French opera of the nineteenth century would not be worthy of mention without him, and he has given to the country of his adoption in every way far more than he ever received from it. His position with respect to Germany is an analogous one, and Italy alone has remained almost entirely unaffected by his music. If he received instruction from Haydn, Beethoven in his turn was a pupil of Cherubini. "Fidelio" could not have existed without the "Water Carrier," or the first movement of the B flat major Symphony without Cherubini's overtures. In many portions of Beethoven's masses, also, he followed the lead of Cherubini, whose C minor requiem he greatly admired.

The influence of our composer upon the exponents of the romantic opera in Germany was also very powerful. Spohr himself confessed that there were times when he ranked Cherubini above all others, Mozart not excepted. Weber found the form of his overture already prepared for him in "Anacréon"; the wonderful volume of sound in Cherubini's orchestral music, and the manner in which the color of the instruments is made to contribute to the dramatic effect, have been studied by no one in a more docile spirit than by Weber. With the lapse of time, indeed, it has almost gone so far that the Germans look upon the Italian as one of their own race. But the honor which is his due will never be fully paid to Cherubini till the whole musical world bows down in admiration before his artistic greatness.

Philipp Spitta



ARRIGO BOITO

Reproduction of a photograph from life by Fratelli Vianelli, Venice.

ARRIGO BOITO

ARRIGO BOITO presents the peculiar example of a musician high in distinction in his own country, with a fair measure of fame in other lands, who, though past the age of fifty years has thus far produced but a single work, his *Mephistopheles*. This work, having at first met with a sad repulse in Italy, recovered itself in a brilliant fashion some years afterwards, and has since run successfully on almost all the large stages of Europe. He is perhaps the only known example of a composer who owes his reputation to a single work, and the uniqueness of the case makes it worthy of mention. It is true that Arrigo Boito is poet as well as musician, that he is more productive as poet than as musician, and that his fame in his own country addresses itself perhaps even more to the writer than to the composer. Another peculiarity of Boito's is that, like Wagner, he claims that a musician cannot write a good score unless he has also conceived and executed the poem of his opera, and he puts this theory in practice by writing the words and the music of his *Mephistopheles*. But he has belied himself by outlining the librettos of half a score of operas, of which he has confided to other artists the task of composing the music; so that, between his principles and his conduct there is an evident contradiction.

Boito was born at Padua on the 24th of February, 1842. His father, who was a Venetian, was a distinguished painter. His mother, Polish by birth and education, was a woman of remarkable intellect, high birth and great culture. The eminently artistic conditions which surrounded his early childhood, and that of his elder brother Camillo, seemed to push them irresistibly towards the cultivation of the fine arts. Indeed, Camillo became an architect and distinguished art critic, whereas Arrigo devoted himself to letters and to music.

Arrigo was only eleven years of age when he was admitted, in 1853, to the Milan Conservatory, where he formed a very strong and fraternal attachment for one of his fellow-students, poor Franco Faccio, an artist of great promise, who became conductor of the orchestra at the Scala theatre, Milan, and who died insane, cut off in the full vigor of youth and the full maturity of his talent in less than a year after. Both had for their masters at the Conservatory, Ronchetti and Mazzucato, and both finished their studies in the same year, 1861. Boito had written the words of a "mystery" in one act, entitled *le Sorelle d'Italia*, for which he and his friend Faccio wrote the music, and this little work was performed according to custom, by the pupils of the Conservatory in one of the exercises at the close of the year. It was so well received by the special audience gathered to hear it that the minister of public instruction granted to each of the young composers a premium of 2,000 francs to enable them to study abroad for one year.

I believe that Boito then made a trip to France. At all events, he had returned to Italy in 1862, and was already proving his poetic talent by writing the verse of the *Inno delle Nazioni*, of which Verdi wrote the music, and which was performed at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, on the occasion of the opening of the Universal Exposition in that city. Soon afterward he again became poet collaborator, furnishing his friend Franco Faccio with the libretto of an opera entitled *Amleto*, which was given with some success at the Carlo Felice theatre, Genoa, in 1865, but which, given some years later,

in 1871, at the Scala of Milan, suffered a signal and memorable defeat. In 1866, when Italy was at war with Austria, Boito, who is an ardent patriot, enlisted as a volunteer and served the campaign in the ranks of Garibaldi's army.

The 5th of March, 1868, was the important date in Arrigo Boito's artistic career; it was the date of the first performance, at the Scala theatre, Milan, of his *Mephistopheles*, an opera in five acts with prologue, the complete failure of which formed an epoch in the history of the theatre in Italy. He had already spent several years of labor on this important work, for which, as the title implies, he had been inspired by Goethe's *Faust*, and which he had counted on giving this title, when the unexpected appearance at the Scala of Gounod's *Faust*, and the success which it obtained there, came to cause him considerable disquietude, and obliged him, that he might not be accused of servile imitation, to modify the plan of his work, and to change even its title. He called it *Mephistopheles*, and proceeded with as much persistence as ever to have it performed at the theatre which had just seen Gounod's masterpiece applauded.

The fiasco of *Mephistopheles* was tremendous and rarely had a storm burst with such fury under the roof of the Scala. The author had given such free scope to his fancy both in the music and the poem, that the Milanese public was quite upset by his ultra romantic methods and indignant at a work which diverged so widely from the beaten track. Yet, although they cried out at the sacrilege and hissed furiously, those of the spectators whose minds were not warped by prejudice, recognized in this work, in spite of its faults, the breath of an intelligent, earnest and inspired artist. Here is what an Italian biographer of Boito says on the subject:

"Boito staged Goethe's poem with true spirit, making the Evil One his protagonist and giving to the drama an absolutely new form, even attempting to bring back the use of the Latin metres in his verses, an attempt which he was the first to make. The first performance of *Mephistopheles* at the Scala was a veritable battle, in which the work was sustained by passionate admirers and combatted by bitter adversaries. The composer, with rare intrepidity, directed the orchestra as if he were wholly oblivious of the uproar which surged about him. In short *Mephistopheles* fell, but in so doing left a lasting impression on the minds of the public. Perhaps its failure was chiefly due to the excessive length of certain episodes, and the little or no dramatic element in some places, as for instance the symphonic interlude between the fourth and fifth acts. But Boito was not discouraged, and he was right. Apart from a certain eccentricity which even the intelligent, unprejudiced public did not relish and which it wished to see disappear from the prologue of the libretto, his opera contained many real beauties. Boito had the rare virtue of submitting partially to the wishes of this public, and the patience to wait till his time should arrive: and it did arrive. In 1875, *Mephistopheles* was performed at Bologna and applauded there. In 1881, it reappeared at the Scala, reduced to four acts and considerably modified, and this time it was received with enthusiasm. The author was fêted by numerous artists, critics and men of letters assembled at Milan on the occasion of the national Exposition, and from there his work began to make the tour of the theatres of the two worlds, being everywhere received with equal favor."

More productive as poet, I have already said, than as musician, it was in this capacity that Boito appeared before the public during the interval that elapsed between the first and second editions of his *Mephistopheles*. He first published a little humorous poem, *Re Orso*, which had great success. Then he soon set to work to write opera librettos for various composers. He wrote, by order of Mazzucato, director of the Milan Conservatory, the poem of a little opera in one act, *un Tramonto*, the music of which was written by a pupil of the establishment, Gaetano Coronaro, become since then second conductor at the Scala. This opera was written for representation on the little stage of the Conservatory at the closing exercises of the academic year. It was to this work, which was afterwards played at several Italian theatres, that Coronaro owed his diploma on leaving the Conservatory. A little later Boito wrote the libretto of *la Falce* for Alfredo Catalini, an opera which also appeared first at the Conservatory; then he gave to Amilcare Ponchielli the libretto of *Gioconda*, which was very successful in Italy and abroad. The subject of *Gioconda* he had borrowed from one of the most beautiful of Victor Hugo's dramas, *Angelo tyran de Padone*, but he had reduced it for the lyric stage with great skill, preserving the principal situations, and those best calculated to

excite the inspiration of the composer. Boito signed these various works with the pseudonym *Tobia Gorrio*, which forms an anagram of his name, Arrigo Boito.

It was about this time that Boito wrote the words and the music of an opera entitled *Ero e Leandro*. The verses are exquisite, it is said, and worthy of a true poet, but the music did not satisfy him and he declined to make it known. He then confided the poem of *Ero e Leandro* to the celebrated double-bass player, Bottesini, who was also a distinguished composer, and the opera with the latter's music was performed in 1879 at the royal theatre of Turin. Boito had not entirely condemned his own score, however, and he embodied several fragments of it in his new edition of *Mephistopheles*, among others, the duet *Lontano, lontano*. He wrote librettos for other composers, particularly *Alessandro Farnese* and *le Maschere*, and he published a volume of poems, *il Libro dei versi* (Turin, Casanova, 1877,) which was very well received by the public, and parts of which deserve the honor of being included by Paolo Heyse in his *Antologia dei poeti italiani*.

Boito, whose ideas and principles are very advanced in music, as in literature, put himself at the head of the Wagnerian party in Italy. He was one of the most ardent in sustaining and spreading in his country the doctrines of the German master, being aided at Milan by the musical critic of the *Perseveranza*, Filippo Filippi, who died some years ago, and at Rome by Sgambati, a remarkable pianist and composer, and one of the most distinguished artists of his country. In order to accelerate as much as possible the movement which was manifesting itself in Italy in favor of Wagner, Boito did not hesitate to make a translation of his works. To him is due the Italian adaptation of *Rienzi*, performed at Turin in 1882, and that of *Tristan and Isolde*.

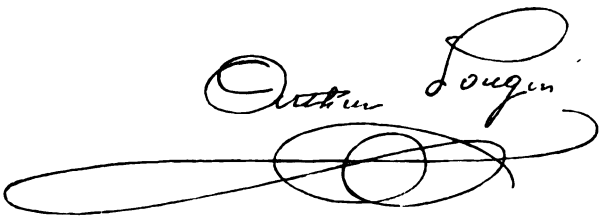
He had not given up, however, appearing again himself as a composer, and he had written the libretto of a lyric drama entitled *Nerone*, for which he also wished to compose the score. But at least ten years have slipped by since this work was first spoken of, the newspapers announcing each year that it is about ready for representation, and nothing has been seen of it yet. So the Italian critics make much sport of Boito and his long promised work. However, while waiting for *Nerone* to be finished, Boito has written for Verdi, who has a very deep affection for him, the librettos of two great works, one of them dramatic, the other comic, the subjects of which he has borrowed from Shakespeare. The first is *Otello*, which has been so successful for a number of years, and which Verdi did not hesitate to attempt after Rossini; the second is *Falstaff*, of which the master has finished the score, and which is to be performed in the near future at the Scala, Milan.

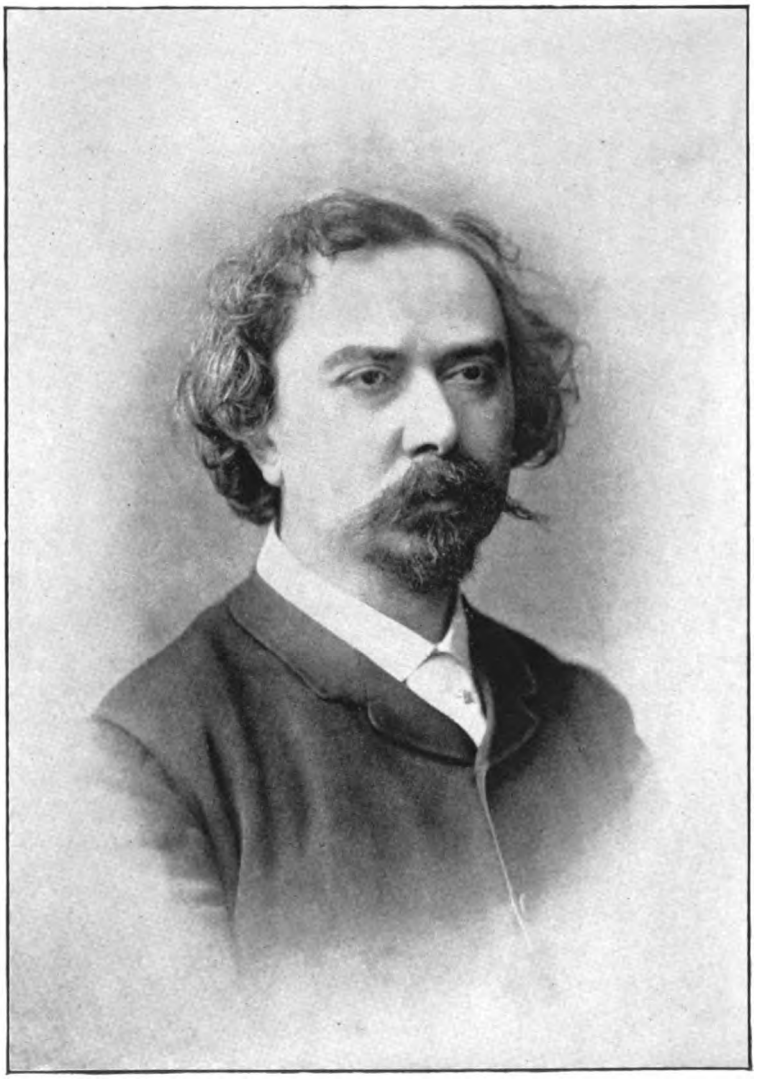
And this is where we find Boito to-day. But we would hardly know how to pass over one incident of his life which is greatly to his honor, and which suffices to show the deep and true brotherly affection which united him to his unhappy friend Franco Faccio. In 1890, when the death of Bottesini made it necessary to select a successor to this great artist as Director of the Conservatory at Parma, Verdi was extremely anxious that Boito should accept the office, which he persisted in declining. Then Franco Faccio was proposed and accepted. But Faccio, whose health had begun to fail, was, before he could go and take possession of his post, seized with a mental aberration at Graetz, where he had gone for rest. At the first news of the event, Boito left for Graetz, lavished upon his friend the most devoted care, and with some members of his family, took him back to Milan, then to Monza, where the unfortunate man died at the end of about eighteen months. Until the last they were hoping against hope for a recovery; but meantime the Parma Conservatory was without a director, a thing prejudicial to the labors and the studies of the pupils. At this juncture Boito generously volunteered to go to Parma as a substitute for his friend at the Conservatory until his health should permit him to fulfill its functions. He was named "honorary" director, as is stated in the following despatch addressed from Rome at that time by Dr. Giovanni Mariotti, syndic of Parma, to the Vice-director of the Conservatory of that city:—"Arrigo Boito, to whom, before all others, and on several occasions, Verdi has vainly offered the directorship of our Conservatory, consents to-day, through a very noble sentiment, to become our director in place of his afflicted friend. Yesterday was signed the royal decree which names Boito honorary director of our Conservatory, confiding to him the supreme authority during the absence of the real director. He is a precious

acquisition, of which Parma will, no doubt, be proud." Boito, indeed, went to Parma and assumed temporary charge of the Conservatory. Then, when poor Faccio died, he resigned the duties which he had accepted only as a service to his friend, and resumed the simple course of his private occupation and labors. Is it not very true that this fact does honor to Boito's character?

Boito is certainly a distinguished artist, but one who carries boldness almost to the point of temerity, and the desire to be original to the point of eccentricity; and this applies to the poet as well as to the musician. Thus his own countrymen find fault with certain daring peculiarities in his *Mephistopheles*, for instance, from a scenic point of view, his prologue with the chorus of angels, which has nothing to do with the subject; and from a poetic point of view, the use of odd and affected metres, as well as the use he makes from time to time of verse written in Milanese dialect, which has nothing to do with the true Italian language. As a musician also, he is criticised for having broken so radically with the ancient Italian melodic forms, without daring, however, to accept frankly the Wagnerian theories, but permitting whimsicalities and eccentricities which seem useless and appear only calculated to offend sensitive ears. Notwithstanding all that, he is very talented and remarkably clever. In a letter which Rossini wrote to Tito Ricordi, the famous music publisher of Milan, on the 21st of April, 1868, that is to say some weeks after the appearance and fall of *Mephistopheles* at the Scala theatre, I find these interesting lines: "I desire to be remembered to Boito, whose great talent I appreciate infinitely; he has sent me his libretto of *Mephistopheles*, by which I see that he is too precocious in desiring to be an innovator. Do not fancy that I would make war on innovators! I simply prefer that people should not claim to do in a day that which can only be accomplished in several years. Let the dear Giulio (Tito Ricordi's son, an excellent musician and composer) read *benignly* my first work, *Demetrio e Polibio*, and *William Tell;* he will see that I was not a crab! * * * * * * " Rossini meant by this to indicate the artistic progress which he had made between his first and his last opera; he had gone steadily forward. Boito had wished to go too quickly, and had broken too openly with all the traditions. Hence the sad reception which the public gave to his *Mephistopheles* in its first form. Profiting by this warning of the public, Boito took his work in hand, modified it without destroying its character, by smoothing the rough places, made the desirable concessions and saw himself recompensed for his pains by a success as complete as had been its previous failure.

It is very difficult, however, to judge an artist and estimate fairly his talent on the strength of a single work. The score of *Mephistopheles* can only give an idea of the author's tendencies, only serve to indicate his temperament and his artistic nature. It is insufficient to permit of classifying him, and of fixing his place among contemporary composers. If Boito continues to preserve the obstinate silence which he has preserved now for quarter of a century, his fugitive dramatic passage can only be regarded as an accident in the musical history of this century. If he decides at length to shake off his idle inclination and break that silence by offering to the public that *Nerone* which has been so long talked about, and at which he works so slowly, perhaps it will be possible to form a rational opinion of his worth and of his personality. Until then, criticism will be very difficult and will run a great risk of going astray.





GIOVANNI SGAMBATI

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GIOVANNI SGAMBATI

FOR what he has done as composer, pianist, and conductor, and because of the strong and wholesome influence that he has exerted upon the musical life of his countrymen, the name of Giovanni Sgambati will be an honored one in the history of Italy for the last half of this century. His influence has been not less potent from the fact that his writings and concert performances have been unconnected with the stage. Italy is no longer what it was, essentially the greatest land of opera; its glory has largely departed, the mighty music-dramas of Richard Wagner and, in a lesser degree, the works of Meyerbeer, Gounod, Bizet, Massenet, Tschaïkowsky, Goldmark and others, having over-shadowed all of the Italian operas excepting one or two by Bellini and Rossini, the later and greater works of Verdi, and the "Mefistofele" of Boito, and it is to-day much more natural than formerly for an Italian who is called to high musical work to turn to that kind of composition in which the fame of the greatest masters has been made. While a strong liking, and even preference, for opera will always characterize the Italians, it is certain that a taste for symphonic and chamber-music is gradually being acquired, as the knowledge of these forms becomes more common. As forwarding this work, the names of Bazzini and Martucci should also be mentioned.

Sgambati has been obliged in a fashion to make his public, but it is at any rate a very different one from that of years gone by, to which the Herz variations and the Thalberg and early Liszt operatic fantasias represented the highest form of pianoforte music, and for which the Mercadante, Bellini, Donizetti and the first Verdi operas were composed. In his success in accomplishing this educational result is to be found a lesson for all artists who, from lack of conviction or of courage, are tempted to let mediocrity have its way, and not to strive for the higher cultivation of music, wherever their lot may place them.

Giovanni Sgambati was born in Rome, May 28th, 1843, his mother being English, the daughter of Joseph Gott, a sculptor who had for many years lived in Rome, and his father an advocate. It was intended that he should pursue his father's profession, but his strong and evident talent for music determined it otherwise. He studied, as a boy, pianoforte playing and harmony with Natalucci, a pupil of Zingarelli, and from an early age we find him singing in church, playing in public, conducting small orchestras and composing to a certain extent. In 1860 he settled in Rome, quickly becoming known for his pianoforte playing, and especially for the solid and classical character of his programmes; for Italian taste and music had not at that time begun to show their later divergence from the old ideals. Rossini was still living and productive; Bellini and Donizetti had so far shown no signs of becoming old-fashioned.

Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann and, best of all, Bach and Handel were Sgambati's favorite authors, by means of whom he sought to purify and educate the taste of his audiences. Shortly afterwards, just when he was on the point of going to Germany to continue his studies, Liszt came to Rome. His plans were changed, for from this time Liszt was his teacher, and he was able to work long and well under that wise, authoritative and suggestive guidance, to which, doubtless, is owing much of the consummate mastery in piano-forte playing for which he is famous, although his style of composition seems to have been little affected by Liszt's influence. Sgambati is well-known to be one of the greatest exponents of the Liszt school, and from all accounts, in his playing there is also present that same feeling for formal and sensuous beauty which is to be found in his compositions; a most interesting account of him as a pianist and teacher is to be found in Bettina Walker's

"My musical experiences"; the story is told in such a charming and personal way as to give a capital idea, both of the man and the musician.

Besides his other concerts, we find him also at this time giving orchestral ones, at which some of the great symphonies were heard for the first time in Rome. In 1869 he and Liszt made a visit to Germany together, Sgambati making his first acquaintance with Wagner's music at Munich: it was some years later, in 1877, that through Wagner's recommendation his pianoforte quintets were published by Schott of Mayence. It is interesting to read, in this connection, a part of a letter which Wagner wrote in November, 1876, to Dr. Strecker, the head of the firm of Schott. It has been published, with Sgambati's permission, in Miss Walker's book, and is here taken from it.

"But, to say the truth, my letter of to-day has another end in view, namely, to commend to you most earnestly for publication two quintets (pianoforte and stringed instruments) composed by Signor Sgambati, of Rome. Liszt had already, and in a most especial and emphatic manner, called my attention to this distinguished composer and pianist. I recently had the genuine and extreme pleasure of, for once, coming into contact with the possessor of a truly great and original talent — a talent which, as he is in Rome [?!], and therefore possibly a little out of place, I would gladly be the means of introducing to the wider musical circle of the world at large."

In 1886 he was made one of the five corresponding members of the French Institute to fill the place vacated by the death of Liszt.

As a pianoforte teacher, he has been from the first one of the leading men, being a professor at the Academy of St. Cecilia at Rome, and has had a multitude of pupils, among them not a few Americans. To show the high standard that is maintained at the Academy, the requirements for a diploma are here quoted. The pupil must be prepared with the twenty-four preludes and fugues of the first book of the "Well-tempered Clavichord," with twenty-four studies from Clementi's "Gradus ad Parnassum," and must play some large modern piece by heart, read a manuscript composition at sight, and answer *viva voce* questions in harmony and composition.

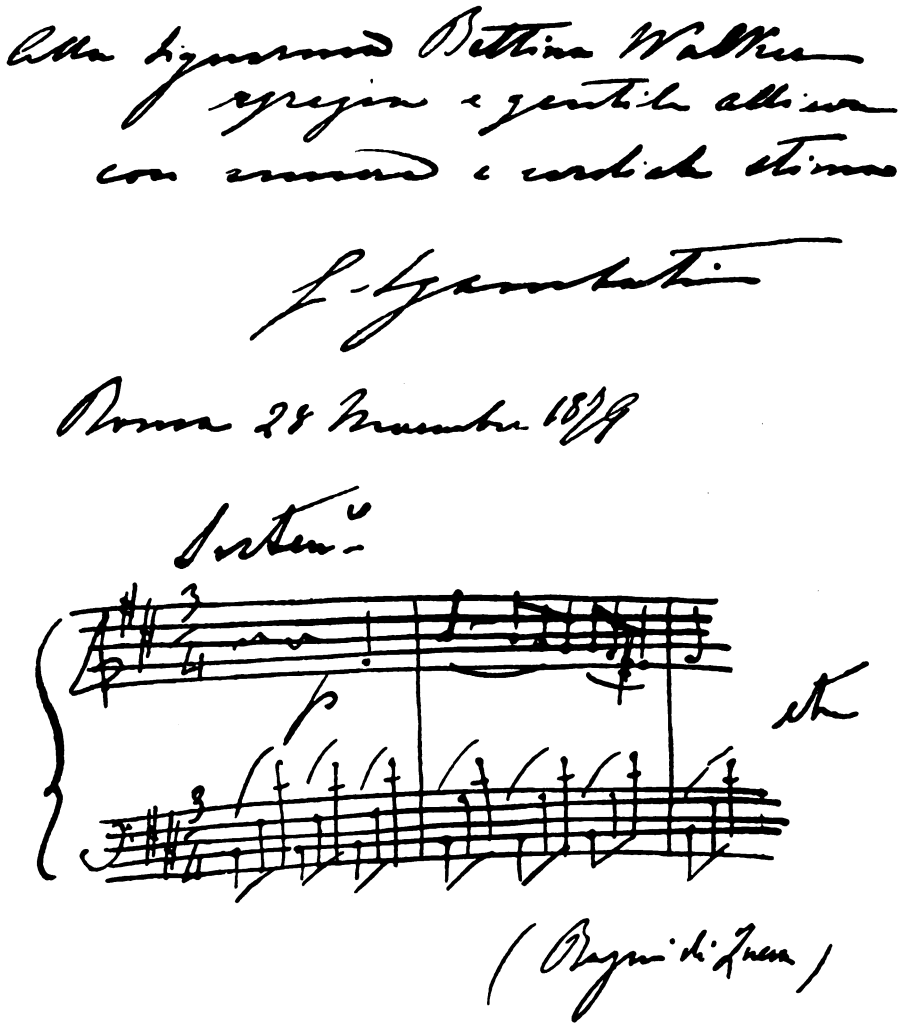
In his pianoforte compositions two features are salient: a remarkable feeling for melodic and harmonic refinement, with a clear and beautiful formal structure, and as a complement to these, an abhorrence of everything trite and common; this last trait, however, does not degenerate into affectation and ugliness.

Sgambati has published but little, probably partly on account of the severe self-criticism that is evident in his work, the result of which is seen in the qualities above mentioned. But this is not by any means to imply that his music is lacking in freshness or force; on the contrary, his best work has, which is not too common, a distinction of its own, and there is great vigor and strength in the pianoforte concerto and the symphony, his two works written in the largest form. As every musician, however, in thinking of Dvořák, Brahms, Tschaïkowsky, St. Saëns, etc., has always unconsciously in his mind certain characteristics that he associates with their music, without which it would not be theirs, so in Sgambati are we attracted by his great polish and refinement, as well as by a certain personal charm of manner that is always present (perhaps that is the Italian side of him).

Of vocal music, there have been published three sets of songs (Op. 1, 2, 19) and a cantata for one voice with orchestral accompaniment; of chamber music, there are two quintets for piano and strings (Op. 4 and 5) and a quartet for strings in the unusual key of D-flat major. Of these last, the first quintet, in F minor, is generally considered the most striking, but although it and its companion and the string quartet have made their way, it is by his pianoforte works that he is best known. They are: a Notturno (Op. 3); a strong and characteristic Prelude and Fugue (Op. 6); two Etudes (Op. 10); the "Fogli volanti" (Op. 12), several of which are peculiarly charming; the well-known and truly original Gavotte (Op. 14); four pieces; "Preludio," "Vecchio Minuetto," "Nenia," "Toccata" (Op. 18); "Three Nocturnes" (Op.

20) ; Suite (Op. 21) ; " Pièces Lyriques " (Op. 23), and the Concerto in G minor (Op. 15).

These pianoforte pieces do not cover a great number of pages, but in them we often feel something that is none too common, and that it is to be highly prized: we find a personality. It is easy now-a-days to be personal by being vulgar and obtrusive, but it is not so usual to find that quality combined with the reticence and knowledge that mark the finest work, and it is perhaps Sgambati's best trait that we do find that in his music. Most of the pieces are under the disadvantage of being



Fac-simile autograph and musical manuscript written by Sgambati.

less easy to play than they sound, and the opposite feature is so much liked by players that it is surprising that they have obtained popularity. The Gavotte is not run in the common mould, which has been so much employed for the turning out of numberless pieces of the old dance forms, but is piquant and interesting, and with its appropriate drone-like Musette, is as well-known as any; the " Fogli Volanti " has made many admirers for its author, while the " Vecchio Minuetto " and the " Toccata " from Op. 18, and the first of the Nocturnes (Op. 20) in especial are much played. The first study

of Op. 10, in F-sharp minor, has especial interest to pianists in that a clever application is made in it of the system of pedal notation proposed by Hans Schmitt; in this desire to set down exactly what he wishes to express at the pianoforte, Sgambati exhibits a certain likeness to Sterndale Bennett, and indeed the two are somewhat akin in their musical way of thought.

The pianoforte concerto is written in a large style, especially the first movement, and has several portions that are striking and unusual; it is grateful for the player, and sure of success. The fact that three trombones are in the score would lead one to fear a certain over-doing of effect, but the brass is so judiciously used as to justify its presence; and in the symphony also the orchestration is skilful and well contrasted, good effects being often obtained by the use of but few instruments. The symphony has had varying fortunes, being received with great warmth in Italy and in London, but having the opposite fate when performed in New York; it was produced at a concert in the Quirinal, March 28, 1881, the King and Queen of Italy being in the audience, and the King conferred upon the composer the order of the Crown of Italy upon that occasion.

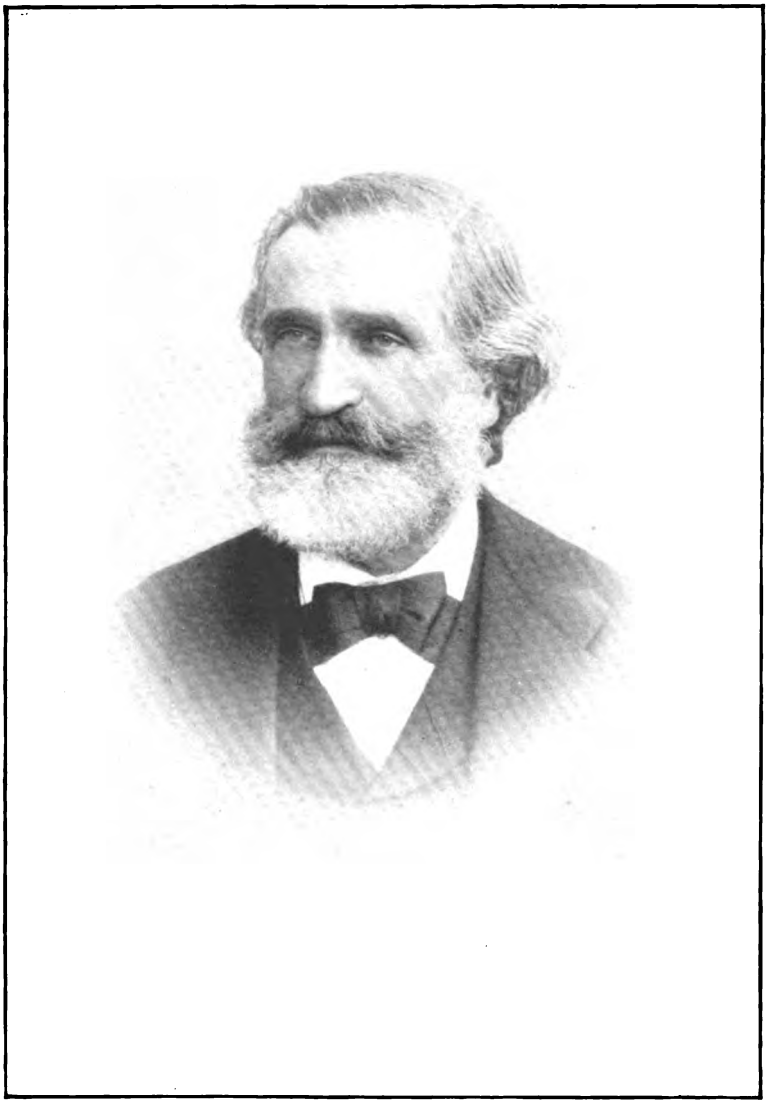
To sum up the characteristics of Sgambati's work: in him is found all the old respect for form and style that was once supreme, but that now is not so universally accepted; he is not fond of making dabs of contrasting colors and calling the result a picture, but everything with him must be well-drawn, and the values must be right. His melodies are clearly cut, their harmonization interesting, and with all his adherence to the classic models, there is so much individuality that his music is his own. It is interesting to find a leading composer of Italy so distinguished for sobriety and reticence, while for extravagance of expression we look to the new men of Germany, France and Russia. And, as Sgambati is still in the prime of life, with ripened powers, even more is to be hoped and expected from him than in the past.

Here follows a list of his published compositions:

Op. 1. Album of songs.
Op. 2. Album of songs.
Op. 3. Notturno for piano.
Op. 4. Quintet for piano and strings in F minor.
Op. 5. Quintet for piano and strings in G minor.
Op. 6. Prelude and Fugue for piano in E flat minor.
Op. 10. Two Etudes for piano.
Op. 12. "Fogli Volanti" (pieces for piano).
Op. 14. Gavotte for piano in A flat minor.
Op. 15. Concerto for piano and orchestra in G minor.
Op. 16. Symphony for orchestra in D major.
Op. 17. String quartet in D flat major.
Op. 18. Four pieces for piano: Preludio; Vecchio Minuetto; Nenia; Toccata.
Op. 19. Songs.
Op. 20. Three Nocturnes for piano.
Op. 21. Suite for piano.
Op. 23. Pièces Lyriques.

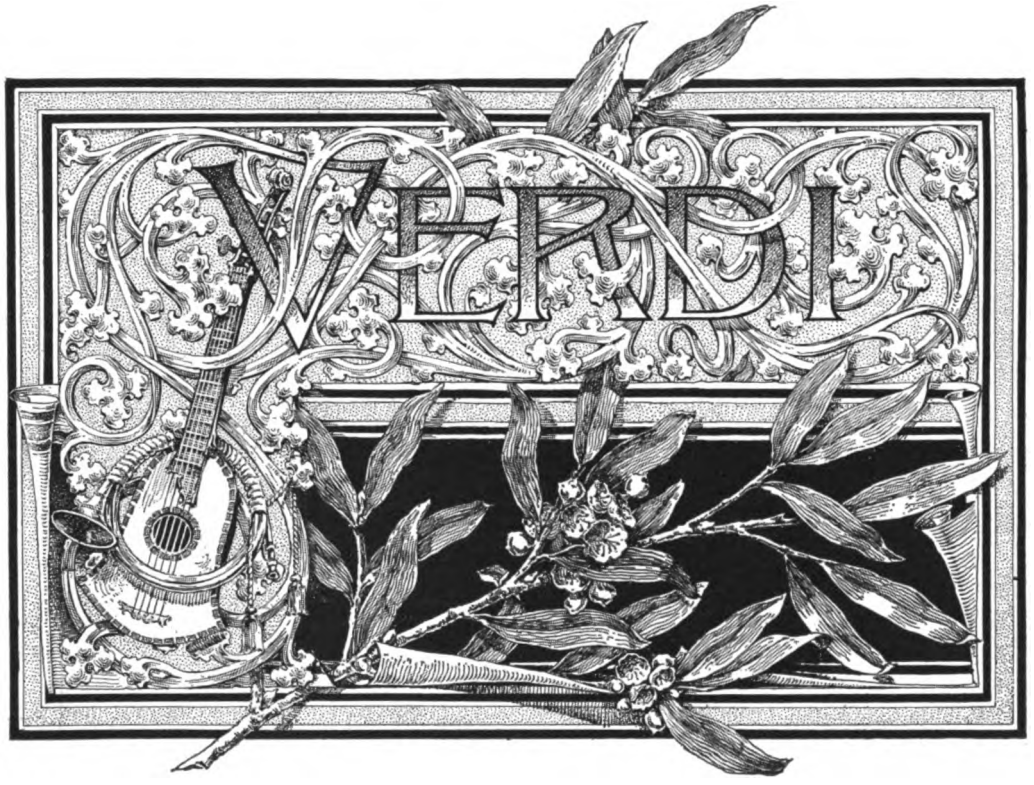
A second symphony is written, but not yet published.

Arthur Foote



GIUSEPPE VERDI

Reproduction of a photograph from life, by Bengue & Co, Paris.



GIUSEPPE VERDI

GIUSEPPE VERDI, the last representative of the long line of Italian opera composers of the old school, was born Oct. 10, 1813, at Roncole, a little group of dwellings about three miles distant from Busseto, and occupied by some two hundred impoverished and ignorant laborers. His origin was very humble, his parents being poor and the keepers of an insignificant inn and also of a small shop where were dispensed sugar, coffee, pipes, tobacco and liquor. Of Verdi's earliest infancy little is known. His surroundings were miserable enough, and the atmosphere in which he lived was not of a nature to foster art aspirations. As a child he was sad and taciturn, and showed no inclination to indulge in those amusements that are so eagerly enjoyed by youngsters generally. He manifested at a tender age that fondness for music which has been so often chronicled in this work of the youth of those who afterwards became famous as composers. His only enthusiasm was when an organ-grinder passed through the village, for then he could not be kept at home, but would follow the ambulant music-maker from place to place. This is almost all that is current regarding his earliest musical taste, and it is by no means an evidence of any abnormal partiality for music, since it is not rare in children to be attracted by street music even when the player is not a pied piper of Hamelin to draw them after him by a magic spell. However, the child Verdi must have borne other testimony to his instinctive love of music, for when we next hear of him it is as the owner of a spinet, which, by the way, is still in the composer's possession. He was then seven years old. That a poor innkeeper should have squeezed from his scanty earnings sufficient to buy his son such an instrument must be received, in absence of other proof, as evidence that his musical gifts were of a precocious order that caused them to be considered worthy encouragement. An old friend of Verdi's father has placed on record the earnestness with which the lad practised on this spinet. We are told that he was at first content with his ability to play the first five notes of the scale, and then busied himself in trying to combine the notes in chords, falling into a rapture of delight when he by chance sounded the major third and the fifth of C. We read, furthermore, that when he could not find the same chord again the next day he lost his temper, and seizing a hammer began to break the spinet to pieces, for which foreshadowing of a certain school of pianoforte playing that has since then come into vogue, he received an exemplary blow on the ear from his angry father. The next we hear of him is as a pupil of one Baistrocchi, the organist of the little church of Roncole, who had been engaged by Verdi's father to give the boy music lessons. At the end of a year the old story so often told of the youth of great artists was repeated. Baistrocchi confessed that the pupil had learned all that the teacher had to impart, and therefore young Verdi's connection with him ceased. As the boy was then only eight years old, the question is rather one regarding the extent of the pedagogue's knowledge than of the pupil's capacity. Be this as it may, two years later Verdi, at the age of ten, replaced Baistrocchi as organist of the church. His salary the first year was about $7.20 of our money. The second year it was increased by eighty cents and consequently amounted to $8.00, or a trifle over two cents a day! — certainly far from munificent. In the mean while Verdi had received no schooling, and his father thought it time to look after the lad's education. A cobbler who lived at Busseto and by name Pugnatta, agreed to give young Verdi board and lodging and to send him to the principal school in the town, in return for six cents a day to be paid by the elder Verdi. Extortionate charges were not

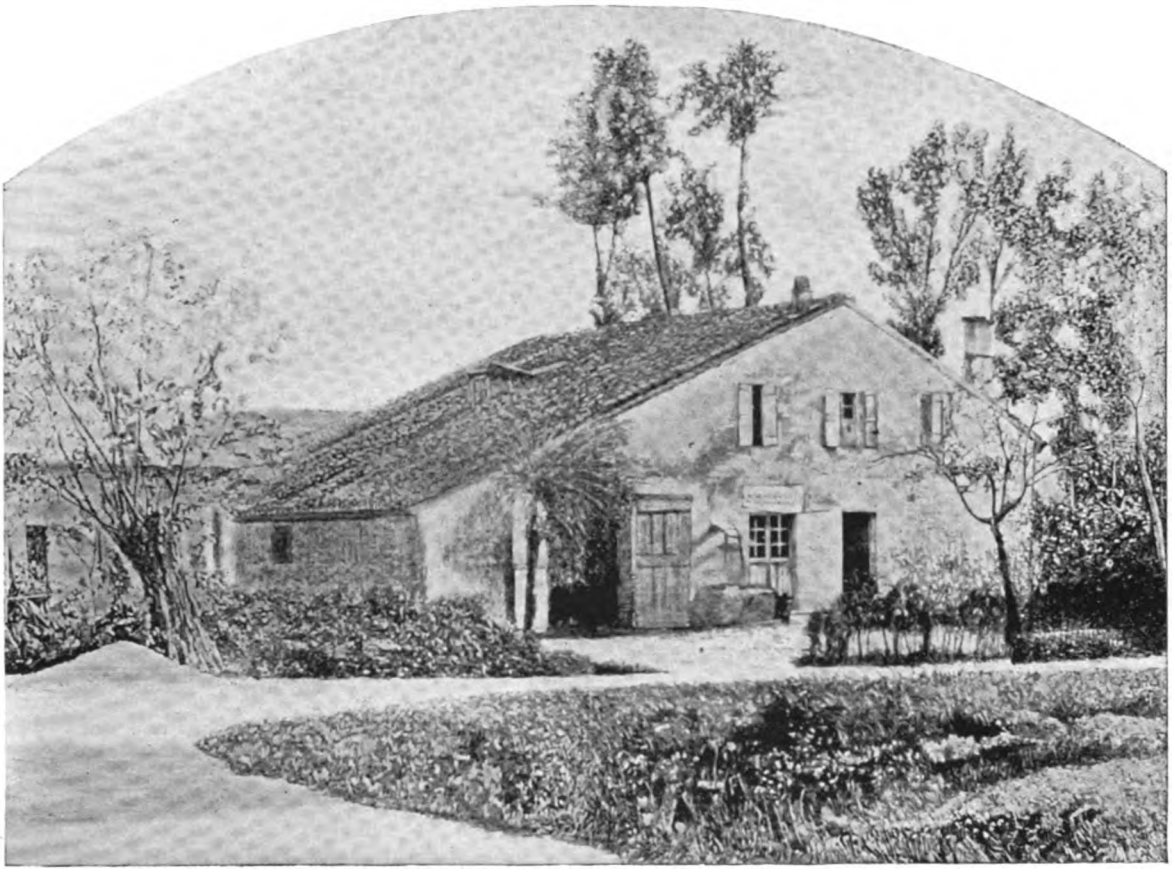
the rule in and about the birthplace of the future composer of "Aïda," the "Manzoni Requiem" and "Falstaff." At school the boy studied industriously, and walked the three miles between Busseto and Roncole twice every Sunday and feast-day to play the organ at his church in the latter place. His wretched income was increased annually by some ten or twelve dollars, received from christenings, weddings and funerals; and at the annual harvest festival, when it was customary for the organist of the place to go about from door to door with a sack over his shoulder to make a collection for himself, he added a trifle to his finances. Such experiences were severe for a sensitive boy.

In two years at Busseto, while under the protection of the cobbler, whose lodger and ward he was, Verdi learned to read, write and cipher. About this time he made the acquaintance of a Signor Barezzi, who took a deep interest in him, gave him employment, and aided him in enlarging his musical knowledge. In the house of Barezzi the rehearsals and concerts of the Philharmonic Society of Busseto took place. Here, for the first time, Verdi had an opportunity to study music seriously. He attended all the rehearsals, and seemed so absorbed in his love for the art that Signor Ferdinando Provesi, who was the conductor of the concerts as well as chapel master and organist of the cathedral, took a fancy to him, and under his excellent guidance Verdi was led into a more serious course of study. Under Provesi, who was a good contrapuntist, a composer of numerous operas of which he was the author of both words and music, and who was, in addition, a man of wide reading, Verdi studied until he was sixteen years old. In the mean while he had improved rapidly, and he frequently replaced his master as organist at the cathedral and as conductor of the Philharmonic concerts. He likewise wrote numerous works, which he copied, taught and conducted himself. Nevertheless, as a composer he manifested no very brilliant precocity and no special genius. His talent for music was clearly indicated, but nothing has appeared to show that his early artistic development was akin to that of a Mozart, a Schubert, or a Mendelssohn.

At the age of sixteen it was thought advisable that he should go to Milan in order to study in the conservatory there. His own means did not encourage any hope of realizing this step forward. However, Signor Barezzi came to the front again and induced the Monte di Pietà, an institution with a fund to assist promising young men without means in the study of art or science, to award Verdi six hundred francs a year for two years. To this Barezzi added the funds for music lessons, and for board and lodging in Milan. Under these encouraging conditions Verdi went on his way to Milan, where he arrived in due season, full of hope and enthusiasm; and with this incident ended the least interesting and the most painful period of the young composer's life: not that he did not suffer afterward, for his first experience in Milan was a very discouraging one; but he was never again to know the extreme misery of poverty and obscurity that had colored his life up to that time.

When the young artist presented himself at the Milan conservatory to pass the examination which was to test his fitness for entrance to that institution, he was refused admission because, as was claimed, he gave so little evidence of musical talent. This was a severe blow, and for a moment caused the applicant to doubt his capacity for the art he had adopted through the promptings of his instinct: but he soon recovered from the shock, and on the advice of Signor Alessandro Rolla, conductor of La Scala, offered himself as a pupil to the then celebrated composer Lavigna, who, after due consideration, consented to give him lessons in composition and orchestration; and it was from Lavigna that Verdi received his first valuable and practical instruction in music. Verdi was now eighteen, and for two years he devoted himself to the earnest study of harmony, counterpoint, fugue and composition. In 1833, Provesi, his earlier teacher in Busseto, died, and Verdi fulfilling a promise he had made before leaving for Milan returned to Busseto to take the place of Provesi. He went unwillingly, for he had higher aspirations than to become an organist in a small town; but such were the conditions that were made when his friends there subscribed money for his musical education, and Verdi felt that it would be dishonorable to break his word. It happened, however, that there was another candidate for the place, a certain Giovanni Ferrari, an indifferent organist and a still more indifferent musician, who, having influential friends in the church was warmly supported by them. The result was that Verdi was defeated and his rival elected. Verdi plodded along as best he

could, and soon fell in love with the oldest daughter of his patron, Barezzi. The young composer was poor; the father of his beloved was rich: but Barezzi made no opposition to the betrothal of the young people, and in 1836 the lovers were made man and wife. Two years later Verdi again turned his back on Busseto, where he was little appreciated and where an art career was impossible. He went again to Milan with his wife and two children, carrying with him the score of his first opera, "Oberto, Conte di San Bonifacio," in the hope of having it performed. On reaching Milan he found that his former teacher and devoted friend, Lavigna, was dead. He experienced the usual difficulties in placing his earliest opera on the stage. At one moment he was full of hope, and then he was cast down by despair. He was bandied to and fro with his score under his arm, until at last his opera was accepted for La Scala and was put into rehearsal. Then, one of the principal artists was taken suddenly



VERDI'S BIRTHPLACE IN RONCOLE.

ill, and all chance of a performance vanished. The anxieties, the alternations of feeling he had experienced, caused the young composer to lose heart completely, until one morning he was summoned to the theatre by the *impresario*, who, informing him that having heard Ronconi speak very favorably of "Oberto," he was willing to produce it under certain conditions. These were agreed to eagerly, and on the evening of Nov. 17, 1839, "Oberto" was performed for the first time. The work, which is little else than a reflection of Bellini, was well received and was performed several times. Among the changes he had been called on to make in the score before it was finally accepted by the *impresario*, Signor Bartolomeo Merelli, was the introduction of a quartet which was one of the most successful pieces in the opera. Later, the composer achieved other and still greater successes with opera quartets.

The favor with which "Oberto" had been re-

ceived induced Merelli to engage Verdi to write three operas, to be played either in Milan or Vienna. Eight months' time was given in which to compose each opera, and the price that Verdi was to receive for each was 4,000 livres ($670.00), the profits of the copyright to be divided between composer and manager. Verdi agreed to everything, and Merelli commissioned the poet Rossi to write a libretto for the composer, "Il Proscritto" being the result. Verdi did not like the book, and had scarcely reconciled himself to set it to music when Merelli suddenly demanded a comic opera from him, whereupon Verdi began to compose "Un Giorno di Regno." Then disaster after disaster crowded on him. His two children died suddenly within a few days of each other, and his wife also died after of inflammation of the brain. Three coffins passed out of his house in three months, and he was left without a family. In the midst of this appalling affliction he was obliged to finish his comic opera. It was completed and was a dead failure, only one performance having been accorded it. What could be expected from a comic opera written under such terribly tragic conditions? Naturally, Verdi lost heart, and for the moment discouraged by the failure of his opera, resolved to compose no more. Merelli remonstrated with him, but Verdi was inexorable; and, therefore, the manager cancelled their contract. Later, Verdi and Merelli met again by chance, and the latter, after vainly urging the composer to resume his art, thrust a libretto on him and hastened away. It was the book of "Nabucco." On reaching home Verdi angrily threw the libretto on his writing-table, determined to have nothing to do with it; but his eye, falling on the open page, was attracted by a certain line which he read, and then he was impelled to read page after page and was much impressed by the poem. The result was, that after many struggles with himself the score was completed, and taken to the now triumphant Merelli. The parts were copied out, and at the end of February, 1842, the first rehearsal took place; and on March 9, twelve days later, the first performance was given. The work was an overwhelming success. With this opera, and when he was twenty-nine years old, Verdi's career as a composer began in earnest.

About one year later, or, to be more exact, on the evening of Feb. 11, 1843, "I Lombardi" was produced, and again success crowned the composer's efforts. It was a great advance on its predecessor in point of style and individuality, and is still performed. Commissions now began to pour in on Verdi, and his name was becoming known beyond the borders of his native land. Managers sought eagerly for scores from him, and the *impresario* of the Fenice Theatre in Venice obtained his next work, which was "Ernani." It was first performed March 9, 1844, and excited immense enthusiasm; and within the nine months after it appeared it was performed in no less than fifteen opera houses, making later a tour of the world, and remaining for many years one of the most popular of modern operas. In November of the same year "I Due Foscari" was brought out at the Argentina Theatre in Rome, and though it had a fair success, it did not increase Verdi's reputation. He was now writing with great rapidity, and in three months "Giovanna d'Arco" was played at La Scala. It did not become popular and has fallen into oblivion, its overture alone surviving. Six months after "Alzira" was produced at La Scala, and again the composer failed to repeat the triumph he had won in "Ernani." His next opera, "Attila," was written for the Fenice, and on the evening of March 17, 1846, it excited a furore equal to that which attended his "Ernani" at the same house. Then came "Macbeth" one year later, which was a failure owing to the absence of a part for a tenor singer.

"Ernani" and "Attila" had given Verdi a European fame, and it was not long before he received offers from managers from abroad. The first came from Lumley, then lessee of Her Majesty's Theatre; and Verdi at once accepted a proposition to compose an opera for England. "King Lear" was suggested as a subject, but was rejected because its plot did not turn on love. Schiller's "The Robbers" was at last decided on, and it was performed under the title, "I Masnadieri," in London, July 22, 1847, with Jenny Lind, Lablache and Gardoni in the cast. It was not a success there, and met with no more favorable reception elsewhere. As Costa, after the production of this opera, left Her Majesty's Theatre to join Covent Garden, Lumley made Verdi a proposition to become his conductor for three years at a very handsome salary. The offer was favorably entertained by the composer, but there stood in the way a contract with the publisher, Lucca, of

Milan, by which Verdi had agreed to write two operas for him. Efforts were made to buy Lucca off, but he held to his bargain, and the result was that Verdi did not remain in London. He went to Passy, and there composed "Il Corsaro" and "La Battaglia di Legnano" for Lucca. The former was brought out at Trieste, Oct. 25, 1848, and was a complete failure. The other opera was produced in Rome, Jan. 27, 1849, with no more gratifying results. The composer, however, was not dismayed by these disasters, but set to work at once on "Luisa Miller" for the San Carlo of Naples, where, on Dec. 8, 1849, it was given for the first time with a success that was as merited as it was overwhelming. His next work, "Stifellio," first performed at Trieste, Nov. 16, 1850, culminated in failure, and even when rewritten and revived as "Aroldo" seven years later, achieved no very encouraging popularity. Verdi had now written sixteen operas, all of which have fallen into oblivion except "Ernani," "I Lombardi" and, perhaps, "Luisa Miller." Despite the failure of most of them, their composer had become a great favorite with the public, owing to the appeal that much in the texts of his operas made to the patriotism of his fellow-countrymen, then fretting under Austrian rule. For example, the chorus in "I Lombardi," beginning *O Signore dal tetto natio*, excited great enthusiasm because of the application the public fastened on the words. It was the same with the chorus, *Si videsti I Leon di Castiglia*, in "Ernani." The censorship was very severe in that day, and so easily excited were the people by anything that bore even the most remote reference to the spirit of revolution prevailing, that the authorities would not allow a conspiracy to be acted on the stage; and hence "Ernani" had to be changed before the police would give consent to its performance. In "Attila," the aria, *Cara Patria già madre e Regina*, afforded the people an opportunity to testify violently to their animosity toward the Austrian government. The house was in an uproar; the audience shouted and screamed; hats, canes, umbrellas, fans, bonnets and flowers were hurled to and fro; the roaring of the public drowned the tones of the singers and the orchestra, and the police found the greatest difficulty in reducing the noise-makers to order. This all reflected favorably on Verdi as far as the public was concerned, and he became a popular idol of the time. With "Luisa Miller" ended what may be considered the first period of his musical development.

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

From a portrait engraved by Deblois.

In 1851 he began that series of operas which established his fame as the greatest of living Italian opera composers. A libretto founded on Victor Hugo's "Le Roi s'amuse" was prepared for Verdi, with the title "La Maledizione." The censorship objected to a king being presented in the light in which Francis I. is made to appear in the original story, especially when cursed by a court fool.

After much anger and much debating, the monarch was turned into a duke of Mantua and the title into "Rigoletto." Verdi retired to Busseto and labored vigorously at his score. It was completed in forty days, and was performed at La Fenice, March 11, 1851. Its success was enormous. The work was soon given in every opera house in Europe with the same results that attended it in Venice. The composer rested on his laurels for two years. Then "Il Trovatore" appeared at the Teatro Apollo, Rome, Jan. 19, 1853. Its triumph was immediate and brilliant, and this opera also made an instant tour of the civilized world. It was only some five weeks later when "La Traviata" was produced at the Fenice. This opera, however, fell flat and was an utter failure. The composer, who rated the work very highly, was in de-

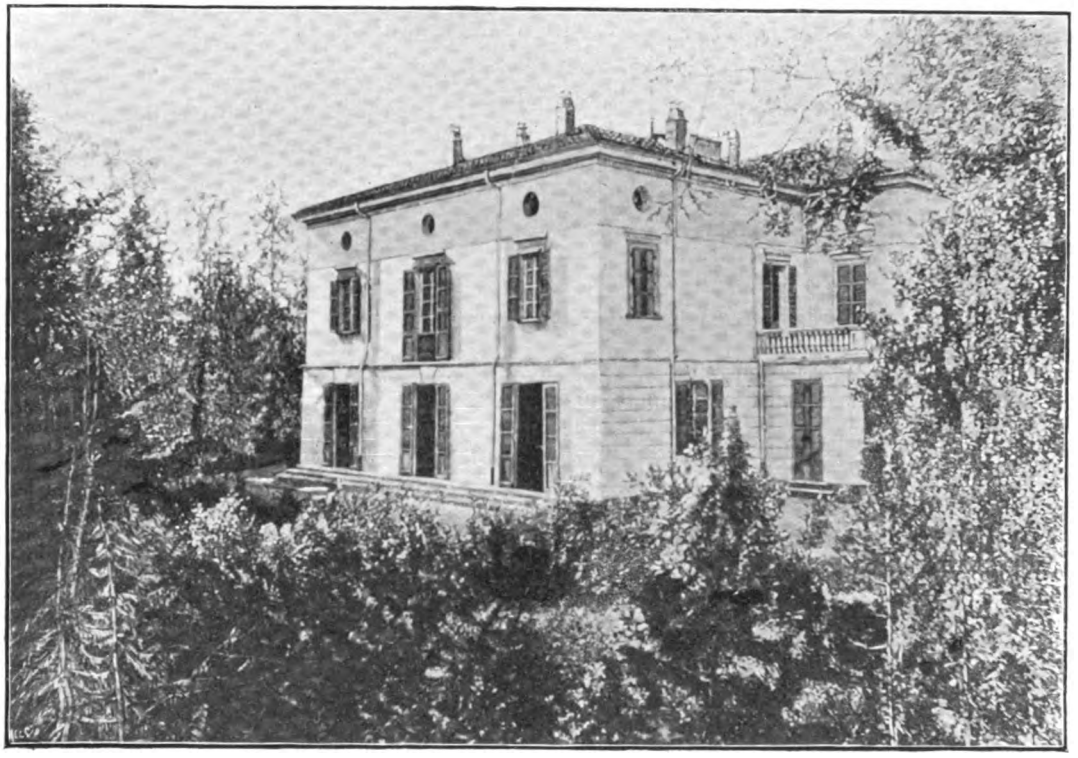
spair. The fault was not with his score but with the singers, especially with Signora Donatelli who sang and acted Violetta. She was an exceedingly fleshy woman, and when the doctor, in the third act, announced that the heroine was emaciated by consumption and had only a few hours to live, the audience burst into roars of laughter. The opera was damned for Venice. Nevertheless, elsewhere it experienced a better fate and met with an enthusiastic reception. These three operas may be pronounced the best as well as the last of the Italian opera school as developed through Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti.

Verdi's next work was "Les Vêpres Sicilliennes," written for the Paris Grand Opéra, and given for the first time there June 13, 1855. It is a brilliant work, but made no advance on its immediate predecessors from the same source. Then came "Simon Boccanegra," for La Fenice, produced March 12, 1857. It was an irretrievable failure, despite its fine and intensely dramatic last act. This was followed by "Un Ballo in Maschera," brought out at the Teatro Apollo, Rome, Feb. 17, 1859. There was again trouble with the police, who objected to the original title, "Gustavo III.," a monarch who was assassinated. The text was also deemed objectionable, and the composer was commanded to choose other words for his music. Verdi indignantly refused, and the manager of the San Carlo at Naples, for whom the work was written, brought an action against Verdi for damages to the extent of two hundred thousand francs. This affair almost excited a revolution in Naples. The populace assembled outside Verdi's house and cheered him and followed him through the streets, shouting "Viva Verdi!" his name, read acrostically, signifying "*V*ittorio *E*mmanuele *R*e *D*i *I*talia"; the cry, though apparently honoring the composer, carrying with it a revolutionary significance. However, the title was changed; a governor of Boston replaced Gustavo III., and the opera was one of Verdi's most decided popular successes. His next opera was composed for St. Petersburg, and was "La Forza del Destino." It was brought out with mild success Nov. 10, 1862. Then succeeded "Don Carlos," for the Grand Opéra in Paris, produced March 11, 1867, and enthusiastically received; but it added nothing to Verdi's fame. He was now fifty-four years old, and had written twenty-six operas. His fame was world-wide, and he was the greatest living Italian opera composer. Wealth and honors had followed glory, and the son of the poor innkeeper of Roncole was now one of whom his native land was proud.

In the mean while Verdi was elected a foreign member of the Académie des Beaux Arts in Paris, to take the place vacated by the death of Meyerbeer. More than this; for, when the duchy of Parma resolved to annex itself to the new kingdom of Italy and formed its first legislative assembly, Verdi was elected deputy to this body by the district of Busseto. He became a member of the Italian parliament upon the urgent solicitation of Count Cavour, but at the end of two or three years sent in his resignation. This, however, did not prevent King Victor Emmanuel making him a senator in 1875; but he had no taste for politics, and after having taken the oath, he never again sat in that body. The honors that were showered on him did not turn his head, and he was never more pleased than when his friends, forgetting his titles, addressed him simply as Signor Verdi. In 1862 he composed a cantata expressly for the inauguration of the World's Fair in London. Four great musicians had been called on to represent their country musically at this exposition. They were Auber for France, Meyerbeer for Germany, Verdi for Italy, and Sterndale Bennett for England. Verdi is the only one of these masters still living. His work was an "Inno delle Nazioni," which was performed at Her Majesty's Theatre, May 24, 1862. The hymn comprised an introduction, a chorus, and a soprano solo sung by Mme. Tietjens. The *finale*, which is on a vast scale, skilfully combined the English, French and Italian national airs.

After "Don Carlos," Verdi did not produce a new opera for four years, and then appeared "Aïda," written for the opening of the Italian Theatre in Cairo, in December, 1871, the most brilliant and most original work he had composed up to that time, and, on the whole, the most impressive evidence of his musical genius. His next achievement was his splendid Requiem, written to commemorate the anniversary of the death of Manzoni and produced at Milan, May 24, 1874, in the church of San Marco. Its success in the church was immense, and elsewhere it was no less enthusiastically received and admired. In April, 1881, a revised version of "Simon Boccanegra" was given at Milan. The work was more successful than it was

in its original form, but it did not become popular. His other works up to this time were a string quartet, written at Naples and performed in the composer's own house, in April, 1873; a "Pater Noster" for two sopranos, contralto, tenor and bass; and an "Ave Maria" for soprano and strings. Both these last-named works were given for the first time at La Scala, April 18, 1880. Verdi was now sixty years of age, and could well afford to rest on his laurels. He had worked industriously and had reached a time of life when the inventive faculties begin to show signs of exhaustion. His growth in his art had been constant, and his latest works were his masterpieces. His fecundity, however, was not yet exhausted; for, after a silence of sixteen years, he produced "Otello," another magnificent opera, at La Scala, Feb. 6, 1887; and still later, when eighty years of age, he brought out "Falstaff," a work full of youth, inspiration and beauty, and marvellous as the invention of a composer who had reached fourscore years, though the opera calls for no excuse for shortcomings on account of its writer's advanced age. It is his latest effort, up to date, though there are reports that this



VILLA SANT' AGATA.

The residence of Verdi near Busseto.

wonderful old man is busy in the composition of an opera founded on Shakespeare's "King Lear."

In addition to the immense mass of music already mentioned, Verdi has published for the voice six *romanzas*, two bass songs, a nocturne for soprano, tenor, and bass, with flute obligato; an album of six *romanzas*, and other lighter compositions. His youthful works that remain unpublished include marches, symphonies, concertos and variations for the pianoforte, duets, trios, church compositions, including a "Stabat Mater," and cantatas. He also wrote choruses to Manzoni's tragedies, and set music to many of the same author's poems. In 1862 he was one of the thirteen Italian composers who combined to write a requiem as a tribute to the memory of Rossini. For this Verdi composed a "Libera me," which so impressed Signor Mazzucato that he urged Verdi to compose the whole work. Manzoni dying soon after, Verdi offered to write a requiem in the poet's honor, and the last movement is the same "Libera me" that was written for the Rossini memorial.

After mourning deeply the loss of the wife and children that had been taken from him with such

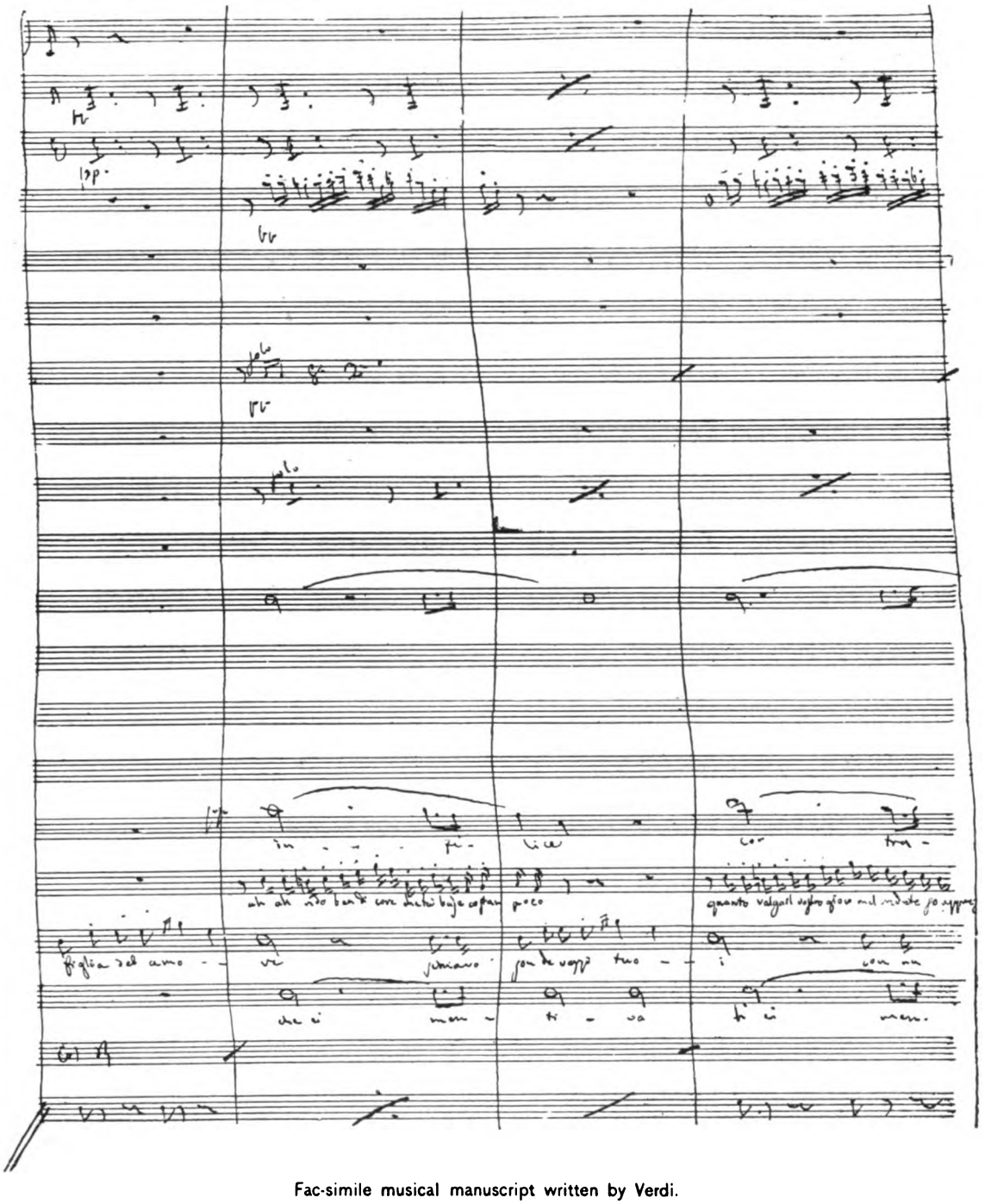
agonizing rapidity, Verdi married Signora Strapponi, by whom, however, he has had no children. He resides on his handsome estate near Busseto, except during the winter months which he passes in Genoa. He has a beautiful garden and a large farm, to whose cultivation he devotes himself with enthusiasm. He is very fond of his animals, especially his horses. To young musicians he is especially kind. His modesty is excessive, and he objects strongly to talk of himself and his art triumphs. He lives quietly the life of a well-to-do country gentleman, and is delighted to see his friends, if they are not over-prone to discuss music. His disposition is charitable, and he gives freely but unostentatiously to the needy. Some of the splendors of his garden, which appear to be the mere caprice of a rich man with a taste for the luxuries of life, were conceived and carried out for the purpose of giving to poor working people out of employ, the means of earning a livelihood. He gave ten thousand francs toward building a theatre at Busseto, because the inhabitants desired one. It is a small but handsome and elegant building, on the front of which is inscribed, in letters of gold, the name of the great master, who years before, when a poor boy, played the organ in the church of the neighboring village of Roncole for the yearly pay of $7.20.

Verdi is described as "tall, agile, vigorous, endowed with an iron constitution and an energy of character that promise lifelong virility." His friend and *collaborateur*, Signor Ghislanzoni, says of him: "I have known artists who, after having been recklessly prodigal of good humor and affability in their youth, have become gloomy and almost irritable under the burden of glory and honors. Verdi, on the contrary, seems to have left behind him at each upward step in his career a part of that hard, rough exterior that belonged to his earlier years." At eighty he is still young, still vivacious.

That Verdi is one of the most popular opera composers of his time must be freely conceded. That he is a great musician in any exacting sense of the word cannot be so readily granted. He has been in no sense an innovator, and as far as his influence on opera is concerned, he leaves it where he found it, except inasmuch as he has followed the changes that the musical development of his time has made in every branch of the art. He has not been an epoch-maker in opera, as was Rossini, and in nothing that he has written has he made such an impression on his contemporaries in opera as was made by the "La Sonnambula" and the "Norma" of Bellini, and the "Lucia di Lammermoor" and the "La Favorita" of Donizetti. As it seems to us, he was the logical outgrowth of the latter, as Donizetti was of Bellini, as Bellini was of Rossini, and as Rossini was of the *finales* of "Il Nozze di Figaro." Gifted with an inexhaustive fund of melody, and a strong feeling for dramatic effect, he trusted to these gifts without paying especial heed to any philosophical principle on which operas should be composed, and appealed to the nerves and the ephemeral emotions of his public, rather than to its heart or its intelligence, for its plaudits. The immense vogue he has won, not only in his own country but in every land where a taste for opera is cultivated, shows that this form of appeal was not made in vain. Nevertheless, the twenty-seven operas which form the great bulk of his musical life-work, in spite of their wealth and variety of melody, the extraordinary resources of invention they exemplify in their composer, and the fluent skill exhibited by him in saying the same thing in an infinite number of ways, do not present anything of the highest order, even in their kind. Not one of these operas is great in the sense that Rossini's "Il Barbiere di Seviglia" is great, or in the sense that the first act and the meeting of the cantons in the same master's "William Tell" are great. There are beauties innumerable in them, but they do not lie deeper than the surface. They are affluent in inspiration of a certain order, but it is the inspiration of a prolific tune-maker, with an instinct for opera writing, and without any very high musicianship or any very sincere artistic feeling. More spontaneous, perhaps, than Meyerbeer, in the invention of melody, he has never risen to the height of the magnificent duet between Raoul and Valentine, in the fourth act of "Les Huguenots," and the fine trio in the last act of "Robert le Diable."

We have said that Verdi was the logical out-

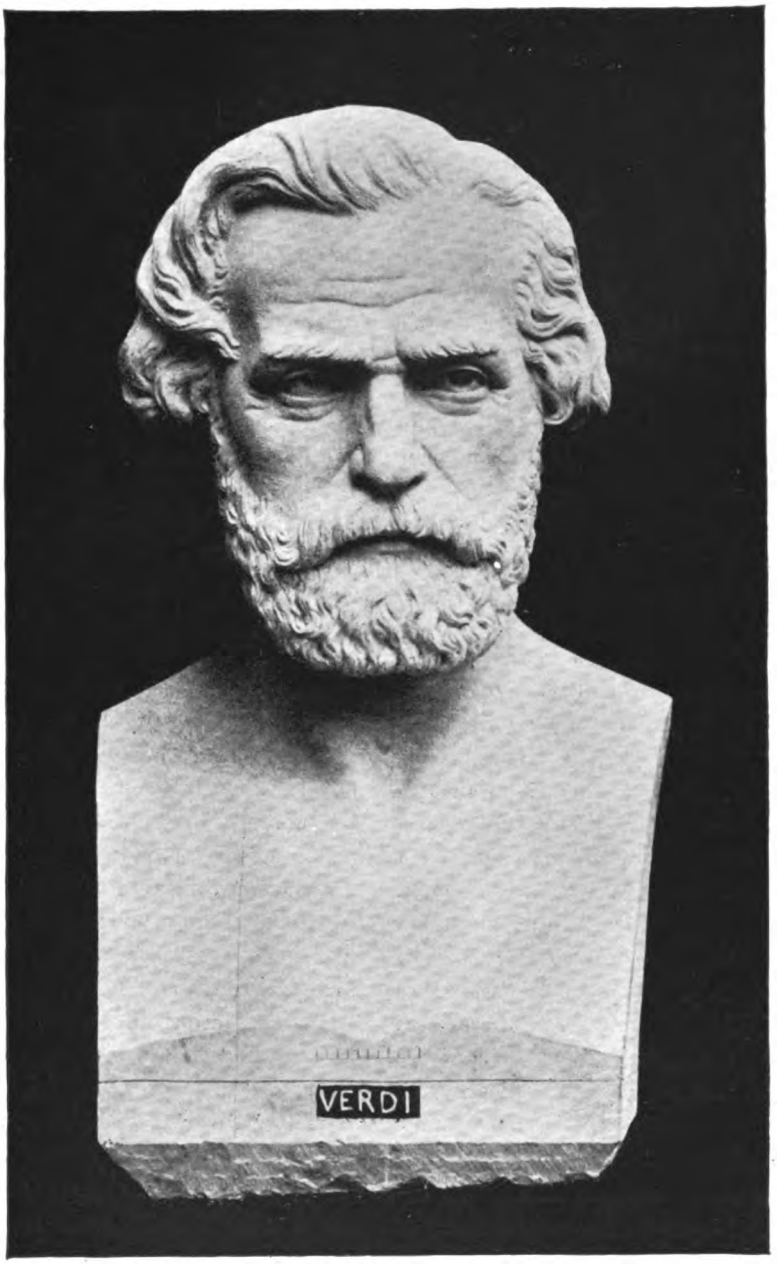
Rigoletto-(1851)-Quartetto Atto III



Fac-simile musical manuscript written by Verdi.

growth of Donizetti. It would be more exact to say that, up to the time that "Aïda" appeared, he continued to follow in the same path as that trodden by the composer of "Lucia." The latter, after all, had a certain originality, inasmuch as his operas were, in many distinctive ways, different from those of any of his predecessors; though it may, with some show of justice, be claimed that the "I Puritani" of Bellini provided him with his model. The difference between Bellini and Donizetti, however, is far greater than is that between Donizetti and Verdi, though there is a marked family resemblance between all three, as far as conventional forms are concerned. Until quite recently, however, these forms were the monotonous characteristics of Italian opera. In saying this we do not mean that the operas of this school are not in harmony with the views that have of late prevailed regarding the absurdity of this form or the propriety of that form of opera: in other words, that Italian opera, with its *cabballettas*, duets, quartets, and its *scenas*, consisting of a recitative, an andante, and a brilliant allegro, its adherence to flowing melody and to tunefulness generally is wrong in principle, as opposed to that form of opera or music-drama advocated by Wagner and his followers, which, it is claimed, is more natural and more logical. When the characters in a drama, instead of speaking, resort to singing in order to express themselves, whether they do it according to the methods of Wagner or the methods of Verdi, the absurdity is equally great. Ortrud giving vent to her hate in song is no less untrue to nature than is Azucena. There is no more truth, no more logic, in the "endless melodies" of Wagner than there is in the regularly formed and terminable melodies of Verdi. The opera music of Wagner, when performed by an orchestra without the assistance of voices, says no more than does the music of Verdi given under the same conditions, except that the latter is more intelligible as music pure and simple. We do not intend to draw any comparison between the respective qualities of the music of these composers, but we insist that no one who hears the music of either master for the first time, as mere instrumental music, can tell what it is intended to express on the stage. Hence it is folly to urge that the opera music of any school expresses more than that of another. It is folly to speak of nature in connection with the emotions of love, hate, hope, despair, joy and woe, when sung by actors to the accompaniment of an orchestra. The only logic that can enter into so illogical a process is that which, having conceded that song may take the place of speech, concedes all the rest. The opera composer should not be judged by any other canon of art than that which he has followed in writing his work; and when Wagner's Tristan sings his love according to the composer's idea of musical and dramatic propriety, he is no less ridiculous, *per se*, than is Verdi's Ernani in the like situation. The composer who creates the precise impression that he strives to create by the music he places in the mouths of his characters is the composer who has made all that can be made of his art, whether he be Wagner or Verdi. It is not the way in which it is done, but it is the result achieved, that is to be considered. That the two masters will express the same sentiment by methods directly contrary is nothing to the point. The effect is all that is of importance, and it is in the power of nobody to prove that the one method is right and the other wrong, or to impress greater propriety on the one than on the other, except arbitrarily and irresponsibly.

Verdi's reputation began to spread after "Nabucco"; it increased with "I Lombardi" and was established firmly by "Ernani." In all these works, affluence of melody and rhythmical variety are conspicuous. In none of them is there any profound musicianship. They suggest brilliant improvisation rather than deep thought. In certain portions of the scores of "I Lombardi" and "Ernani" there is vigorous dramatic color, but it is of the perfunctory type made familiar by Donizetti. The orchestration is conventional, and orchestral color is rarely sought except by violent contrasts. The overture to "Nabucco" is one of the few works in this kind that the composer has attempted. It is made up of melodies from the opera, put together with no special skill, and, though effective after a noisy fashion, is of no musical value. It is the best of his overtures, but in common with the others, is wholly barren of thematic development. In this purely instrumental branch of his art he has written nothing as good as Donizetti's overture to "La Fille du Regiment," in respect to form, instrumentation, and musicianship generally. His overtures to "Giovanna d'Arco," "Les Vêpres Sicilliennes," "Aroldo" and "La Forza del Destino," though



BUST OF VERDI.

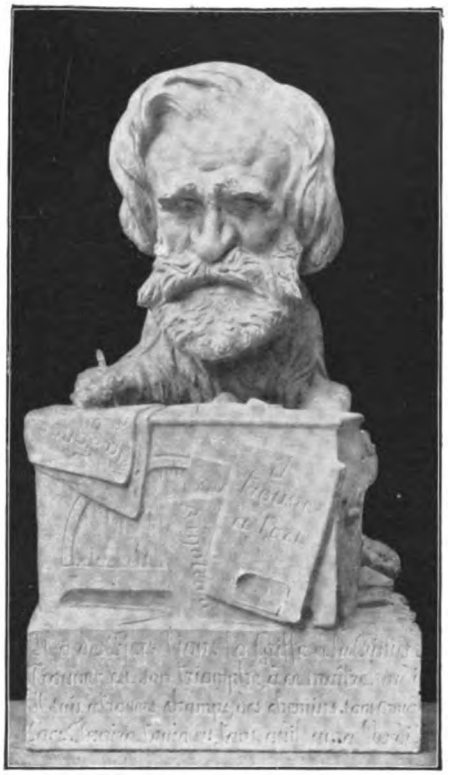
From a photograph at the Paris Opera Library.

tuneful and effective in their way, are without any merit on which we need dwell.

Verdi did not attain to fame without meeting with opposition. It was claimed that he was overnoisy, a charge not wholly without foundation, notably in his "I Due Foscari" which succeeded "Ernani," and in which the predominance of the brass wind instruments, a novelty then, was almost overpowering. Then, too, it was charged that his music, if it should be sung much, would ruin the voices of the singers, so addicted was he to write for them in their highest register. It was not until "Rigoletto" appeared that his instrumentation showed any marked care, or that he seemed to be impressed by the variety of effects that could be produced by a judicious use of the wood wind. In Gilda's air, *Caro nomo*, the scoring is delightful in its grace, delicacy and charmingly contrasted coloring. In the last act of this opera, too, is the famous quartet, in which are so felicitously mingled impassioned love, mirth, suspense and vengefulness, — the best thing in its kind that had appeared since the sextet in "Lucia" and the trio in "Lucrezia Borgia," and which was soon to be followed by the more popular but less artistic *Miserere* in "Il Trovatore." It is true that he had written the stirring and effective *Carlo Magno* finale to one of the acts of his "Ernani," and that it attained to immense popular favor; but the "Rigoletto" quartet is the most brilliant and most musicianly of all his efforts in its kind. "Rigoletto," which was composed in forty days, has outlived the sixteen operas that preceded it, and its wealth of melody and its powerful dramatic effects, cause it to be listened to still with much of the pleasure and interest that attended its first production forty-two years ago. It is one of the works in which the composer will live.

In "Il Trovatore" Verdi made another stride in advance. During the two years that passed between the production of "Rigoletto" and that of "Il Trovatore," a great change had taken place in his style. There is observable in the score of the later opera a larger variety in his harmonies, and the basses move more independently and more fluently. The accompaniments are less perfunctory, and are given a more artistic taste than that of merely emphasizing the rhythms in a conventional way. The instrumentation is richer, the parts often move more freely, and the general effect is more serious and impressive; while the varieties of tone-color are more affluent than in any of the composer's earlier scores. In other respects, notwithstanding the popularity of the opera, we do not think it is superior to "Rigoletto." On the contrary, it seems to us to lack something of the artistic dignity that pertains to its immediate predecessor. It is overfull of mere tune-making that does not fairly echo the dramatic sentiment of the situations on which it is expended. In "Rigoletto," Verdi seems to have escaped wholly from the influence of Donizetti. In "Il Trovatore" the methods of Donizetti are constantly recalled, and the opera seems cast in the same mould as "Lucrezia Borgia." The music given to Azucena, graceful and ear-pleasing as it is, for the most part appears trivial and frivolous when it is considered in relation to the passion it is intended to emphasize. Still, forty years after its birth it remains one of the most popular operas on the stage, even in Germany. "La Traviata" overflows with exquisite melodies, but here the composer has been more successful in wedding sound to sense. His theme was sentimental rather than dramatic, and the sensuous tunes harmonized well with the spirit of the text. Elegance, refinement and warmth of style characterize the score throughout, and the proprieties are not violated except in the vulgar air, *Di provenza*, the music of which, to say nothing of its reiteration of the same rhythmical phrase bar after bar, is ridiculously inappropriate to the sentiment of the situation. "Les Vêpres Sicilliennes" showed no further change in the composer's methods, and the same may be said of "Un ballo in Maschera," "La Forza del Destino" and "Don Carlos." There are fine dramatic and instrumental moments in all these works, but in none of them is there any advance beyond "Rigoletto." Moreover, there are many lapses back to the composer's "Ernani" period. He was not yet able or willing to break wholly with the past. It is true that he continued to give more and more care to those portions of his score that dealt with the action of the drama, instead of bestowing attention on the composition of catching melodies and *ensembles*, to the neglect of the intermediate parts. In his "Simon Boccanegra," however, which succeeded "Les Vêpres Sicilliennes," he gave the first impressive indication of his sympathy with the more modern school of opera that existed outside of Italy; and in

this work he essayed a more declamatory recitative, a deeper regard for tone-color, and a more serious devotion to the dramatic sentiment of the scene and action, and less to the mere formal aria. In other words, Verdi became, to some extent, a revolutionist in his art, and was the first Italian master to recognize what was going on in the world of opera beyond the confines of his own country. The work in which this cry of progress was sounded met with complete failure, and for a time he returned to the old order of things, or else approached the new with faint-heartedness. When, after four years' silence, he was heard again, he was boldly and unequivocally an advocate of the new movement, as "Aïda" amply testifies. Here he abandons, for good and all, the conventional forms to which he had so long adhered. He has considered his libretto as a whole, and not as so many opportunities for tune-making; he has attempted to maintain a proper and uniform local color — has tried to create the impression of an unbroken and self-consistent dramatic entirety; he has essayed to impart as much interest to the recitatives, and to the more declamatory aspects of his score, as to the more purely melodious. The melody flows on with the familiar fluency, but it is tempered by dignity. The orchestra looms into primary importance as part of a logical whole, instead of remaining the mere accompaniment, more or less artistic, that it is in the composer's other scores. It is Verdi still, but a Verdi matured in style and fully ripened in artistic judgment, — a Verdi thoroughly awake, for the first time, to the fact that the horizon of art is bounded only by the height from which it is viewed.



CARICATURE OF VERDI BY DANTAN.

From the Carnavalet Museum, Paris.

In "Aïda" there is little that can be detached from its stage surroundings without loss of effect. That Verdi was satisfied with the results achieved by him in this opera is evidenced by his revision and rewriting of "Simon Boccanegra," in which the earlier melodies are retained, but in which the dramatic portions of the score are deepened and intensified, and made even more impressive than were the like features in the score of "Aïda." His "Othello," if not a still further step in advance, maintains to the full the position now assumed by the master. It is interesting to compare his treatment of the tragedy with that of his predecessor, Rossini. In all that pertains to dignity, sympathy with the spirit of the poem, seriousness of style and sincerity of art, the advantage lies wholly with the modern composer. Rossini's "Othello," however, emphasized an epoch in serious opera, for it is the first opera written throughout in *recitativo strumento* to the exclusion of the customary *recitativo secco*.

"Othello" exemplified that Verdi's conversion to the methods of modern musical thought was complete. The spectacle of a composer whose fame is established, whose labors have met with a substantial return that has placed him beyond the need of further toil, who has reached an age at which most artistic careers have closed, beginning as it were, *de novo*, is a rare one. That he said anything in his more recent operas that he had not already said is doubtful; his methods of thought remained unchanged, but the language in which he uttered them was more refined and more dignified. He was, however, to make a still greater departure from his past; and it was accomplished in his "Falstaff," in which at fourscore he was to show himself a modern of moderns. The progress was astonishing: but after all, it only emphasized one of the composer's familiar sayings, "If you want the new in art, you must return to the old"; for he has gone back to the fundamental principles of opera as enunciated by Gluck. There is here a wholesale

abandoning of the formal divisions in opera. Complexity has given way to simplicity. The music harmonizes with the characteristic spirit of the text; the melodies are brief; recitative is sparingly used, and musical declamation makes up the greater portion of the score. The orchestra no longer follows, but has risen to equal importance with the voice, and lends its own appropriate color and accent to the illustration and enforcement of the sentiment of the text. Graceful and exquisite tunefulness is maintained, but it falls into its proper place and continues no longer than it justly expresses the sentiment of the situation. There is a beautiful balance between the voices and the orchestra, and though the instrumentation is strikingly modern, it is free from the restless and wearying Wagnerian polyphony and excess of tone-color. Part-writing, an essential to which little attention has been paid by Italian composers of opera, comes into unusual though not brilliant prominence, and always with delightful effect. The scoring is never overloaded; the right touch always comes in the right place; and every change of color has its special meaning as a strengthening of the emotion of the moment, as indicated by the stage action. In brief, the latest work of the composer is his most masterly, musically considered; and what is most astonishing is, that it suggests nothing of its creator's age, except the experience, the mellowness, and the enlarged art feeling that have come with it. And yet it is more important as a manifestation of the composer's capacity to receive and to adopt new impressions in his extreme old age, than it is as a work of art. In other words, its value is of a personal rather than of a general nature, and Verdi remains to the end a great opera composer of world-wide popularity, who has exercised no influence and made no impression on the art of which he is so brilliant a representative.

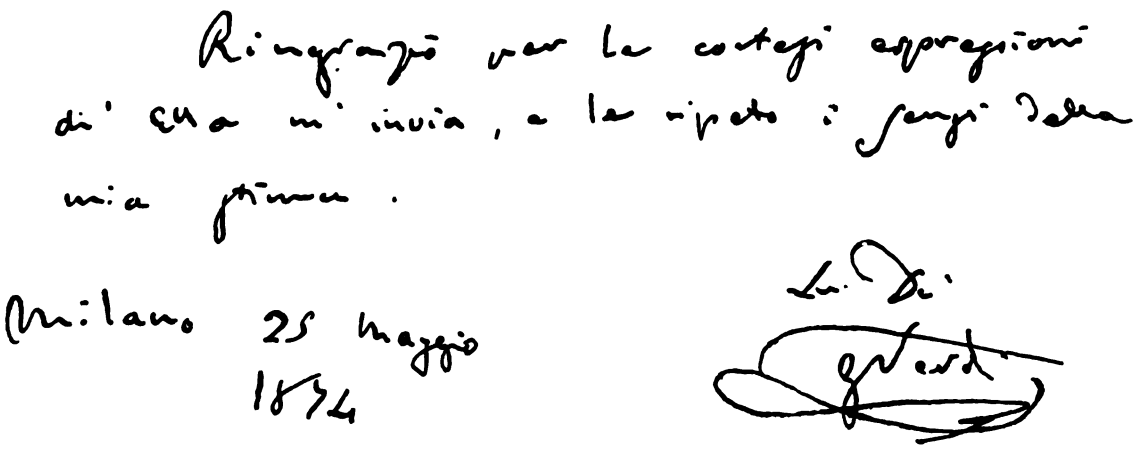
In closing this estimate of Verdi as a composer of opera, we may add that even in his most absolute departure from the traditions of Italian opera; as he found them, he has remained essentially Italian. It has been argued that in his later works he falls under the sway of Wagner; but this, we think, would be difficult to demonstrate. He may not have remained uninfluenced by the German master's theories regarding the character of opera librettos, but musically, he is always a true son of his native land. His younger Italian contemporaries have far outrun him as reformers. From present indications it would appear that Verdi is destined to be the last of the long line of Italian opera composers whose theories were those of the old school, more or less modified in respect to style or fashion, as time passed. He has had no imitators and he will leave no disciples. In this he will also be singular, for from the dawn of opera to the present time every great composer of Italian opera has left behind him a survivor who has followed in his footsteps — at least until he has found out an individual path for himself. From the era when Nicolo Logroscino invented the concerted *finale* for comic opera, and it was first extended to serious opera by Pasiello, Italian serious opera began to break away from its earlier rigid form and to congeal into that which prevailed down to the period when the reform, with which we have just dealt, gave to it a death blow. From Pasiello and Piccinni, composer after composer appeared, each succeeding one overlapping his immediate predecessor and carrying the development of the school a step farther. Cimarosa followed Piccinni in this way, and was in turn followed by Rossini, who was succeeded by Mercadante, Pacini, Bellini, Donizetti and Verdi. Here, as we have already observed, the line abruptly ends, and not with the greatest of the brilliant group. Which, if any, of Verdi's operas will survive it is difficult to predict, but we think that "Rigoletto" has the best chance; but none of them is destined to the immortality of "La Serva Padrona," "Il Matrimonio Segreto," "La Sonnambula" and "Il Barbiere di Siviglia."

It only remains for us to consider Verdi's Requiem, a work that has been praised with as much enthusiasm as it has been condemned with acrimony. Dr. Hans von Bülow, speaking for one school of criticism, and with no very great discretion, asserted this composition to be a "monstrosity" that would do no credit to an ordinary pupil of any music school in Germany. It is possible that Dr. von Bülow viewed the work from a purely pedagogic standpoint and with special reference to transgressions of musical grammar. In matters of this kind much depends on the esteem in which the composer holds arbitrary rules, and on his right to heed or to disobey them as he may see fit. Much, too, depends on the standpoint, prejudiced or otherwise, from which the critic considers

the work. An ordinary pupil of any music school in Germany may or may not be able to write more correctly than Verdi has written in numerous places in this Requiem, but there is more in music than a strict observance of the rules of musical grammar; and it is in no need of demonstration that it is beyond the power of any ordinary pupil in any music school to write music of so high an order. In fact, be the work what it may, it has not been equalled in its kind by any contemporary graduates of one of the schools to which Dr. von Bülow refers. Another fault that has been found with this work is that it is not sacred in character. Reduced to its simplest terms this charge means that Verdi's Requiem is not conceived in the same spirit that Bach conceived his "Matthew-Passion" and Handel his "Messiah." This, in turn, indicates a belief that it is compulsory on a warm-blooded and highly emotional Italian to appeal to God in the mood that is favored of the more stolid and less impulsive German. The mere matter of difference in temperament makes it impossible to institute a comparison between the sacred music of Verdi and that of Bach and Handel. Then, too, there is overmuch of cant in perfunctory discussion of what is and what is not sacred in music; and after all, the words to which the music is composed would seem to have more to do with the matter than does the music itself. Considered in the abstract, it is no more reasonable to argue that Bach's music is essentially religious than it would be to argue that Verdi's is not. The argument must be decided, in either case, on arbitrary principles and according to the prejudices of those who participate in it. It would not be easy to define exactly in what the religious element of so-called sacred music is apparent, whether such music be of German or of Italian origin. It is beyond all contradiction that Handel utilized many of his Italian opera airs for his oratorios, and that what began by being profane ended by becoming serious. These airs were none the more profane for their operatic origin, and none the more sacred for their transferences to oratorio. The English and German speaking races have accepted Bach and Handel as the noblest exponents of what is understood by them as the religious sentiment in music; but that acceptance does not make a law for the Latin races, — for the Italians, the Spaniards and the French. Of the unequalled genius of Bach and of Handel, and of the large nobility of their music, there cannot be two opinions; but they wrote after the fashion of their day, and the musical style they adopted was not chosen because it was abstractly religious in character, but because it was the only style they knew, and it was the style common to the stage and the church, save that when adapted to the latter it was more contrapuntal in treatment. That choral fugues, single or double, strict or free, are radically or essentially religious in feeling, still remains to be proved. No man and no body of men are entitled to decide dogmatically that this or that style is the only one appropriate for sacred music. If Handel can be permitted to take airs written for purely dramatic works, and in what was then considered a purely dramatic spirit, by the most dramatic composer of his time, and use them for sacred works, why shall Verdi be condemned for composing his Requiem in a dramatic spirit, at first hand? It may be argued that Palestrina, among Italians, set the pattern for a dignified and undramatic style of church music; but it can also be urged, and with justice, that the music which Palestrina set to solemn words differed in no wise from the madrigals he composed to words of far other import. In judging Verdi's Requiem, as in judging other works of art ably and conscientiously made, we should try to look at it from the composer's point of view. In the abstract, there is nothing more suggestively sacred in the music of *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, than there is in that of *Home, Sweet Home*. The text makes the only difference. The foundation of the art and science of music is wholly arbitrary, but the laws of the school stop at the point at which the individuality and the imagination of the master composer begin to manifest themselves.

Verdi's Requiem is conceived in a spirit wholly antipodal to that in which Bach and Handel conceived their works. His, however, is the spirit of his time and nation, as was also theirs. Those who have accepted the "Matthew-Passion" as the culmination of what music can achieve in religion, condemn this Requiem as theatrical, maintaining that its melodies are constantly suggestive of opera and its more vigorously dramatic moments of stage effect; but the composer does not view it in the same way. He has written as an Italian Roman Catholic of to-day felt inspired

to write, and has made no pretence of attempting to write as a German Lutheran wrote over one hundred and fifty years ago. That the work is one of great power in its way, and often reaches a high point of impressiveness, has never been denied. Whether it is religious music or not cannot be determined except according to the prejudices of those who believe, on the one hand, that it is, and of those who believe, on the other, that it is not. Verdi and the majority of his countrymen are of the former opinion, and there is no universally received principle of musical art that can be brought forward to prove that they are in error. It is an argument that must be settled on either side by race partialities. Moreover, at what point a composer shall be checked in interpreting his text as he best understands it, cannot be easily decided. The Requiem was written to do honor to the memory of Verdi's friend, Manzoni, and that the composer acquitted himself of his task in a spirit of sincerity, both devotional and artistic, admits of no doubt. It is an Italian Requiem, and was so intended to be; and, therefore, it is useless, and something more, to find fault with it because it is not German. Its ultimate fate will not be decided by the critics, but will rest on the success or the failure of the appeal it makes to posterity. Verdi, though he has left no permanent mark on his art, has been the most popular opera composer of his time, and his extraordinary musical growth toward the close of his career indicates that there was in him a capacity for far higher work than he achieved. It is to be regretted that he did not sooner fall into line with the musical spirit of the age; nevertheless, he has made an honorable and dignified name in his art, and one that must always be mentioned with veneration.



MUSIC IN ITALY

TOWARD the end of the Middle Ages, the morning of a new and powerful intellectual life began to dawn. Renewed industry and commerce created wealth. In large and flourishing cities, the sense of liberty and of independence from the pressure of feudal rule united citizens in powerful corporations.

With wealth and liberty, literature, art and science found a favorable field in which to fructify.

From Italy the new light spread over the other European countries. The Italians, everywhere surrounded by the sublime remains of Greek and Roman art, recovered first from the lethargy and confusion, caused by the great immigration of Northern nations. In Bologna, Pisa, Padua, Parma, Naples and other cities, universities and high schools were founded, where it is said, thousands of students from all countries flocked to listen to the teaching of great masters; and in this rich, inspiring and varied spectacle, Dante was the noble central figure.

The development of music, in Italy, kept pace with that of literature, and its first emanations were based on the music of ancient Greece, so far as its few surviving musical hymns could be deciphered.

Greece disappeared as a nation after the Roman conquest, and its music vanished at the same time. The musical revival was an entirely new departure which dated from the appearance of the early Christian converts at Rome, during the time of the Apostles. These neophytes tried to introduce the old tunes which they had heard in the holy city. But such strange melodies could not, of course, find ready adoption, and they were suppressed during the general persecutions. They were, it is true, used in the worship which was secretly carried on in the catacombs. Here they survived, transmitted from generation to generation by oral communication only, during the three centuries that preceded the formal recognition of Christianity by the state.

As text and music were greatly corrupted through such transmission, Saint Ambrose, bishop of Milan, made, about the year 384, a collection of the sacred tunes then in use, trying to restore them to their original form; and he appended to the collection a code of technical laws, in order to prevent future corruptions of the music. Saint Gregory the Great made many additions (590 A. D.) to the work of Saint Ambrose, and at the same time tried to establish more comprehensive musical laws. He was the first to revive, in their completeness, the eight modes used by the Greeks, and which supplanted the four used in the time of Saint Ambrose. The collection of Gregory included, also, many new tunes and hymns, together with music to the antiphones for the entire ecclesiastical year. All this he gave in an improved mode of musical notation (Semiography), and he called this new collection "Antiphonar."

The next stage in musical development was the important work of Guido of Arezzo (1030), a Benedictine monk of Pomposa, who wrote voluminously on musical theory and on the condition of the music of his time. It has been the rule with historians of music to attribute to Guido many discoveries which were doubtless made by other monks. Thus, he is credited with the invention of counterpoint, solmisation, the staff, the hexachord, the harmonic or Guidonian hand (see page 137), and the monochord. It is doubtful if research will ever be able to establish with accuracy exactly what we owe to Guido, but it is certain that he invented solmisation, by applying to the diatonic scale certain syllables of a hymn dedicated to John the Baptist, and they introduced new light and greater facility into the study of music. The modification of Guido's solmisation by the substitution of the more vocal syllable "do" for "ut," has been generally adopted; but the French, whose u is, by nature, sufficiently vocal, have not felt the need of this change.

In the early middle ages the entire study and teaching of science and art, so far as it is known, was in the hands of the monks. They did their utmost to maintain a clear distinction between learned and popular music. Thus it happened that the folksong, the utterance of the people, had its own line of development. The earliest attempts in writing learned music date from the time of Hucbald, a Benedictine monk of Flanders (840–930 A. D.) and of the staunchest of his followers, Jean Perotin; but Hucbald was not the inventor of counterpoint. The principle of imitation and the foundations of canon and fugue, were laid in Northern Europe; the first great school of composition was established in the Netherlands. Elsewhere in this work will be found a systematic and full treatment of this period. We need therefore only direct attention to that essay on the subject, which establishes the chronological connection of the Netherland masters with the great era of ecclesiastical music at Rome.

The first Roman school owes its salient characteristics to the marked preference accorded Flemish singers in the choir of the Sistine Chapel, at Rome. The founder of the school was the Belgian, Constanzo Festa, who obtained a place in the choir, in 1516. His compositions and those of his pupils show distinct traces of the influence of the successors of Josquin des Près, but they possess sufficient individuality to prove the existence of innate genius of a very high order. Festa is believed to have been the first Italian composer who became a thorough master in counterpoint. But his Netherland tendencies did not prevent his foreshadowing that tenderness, purity and simplicity which distinguished the works of the great Italian masters who followed him.

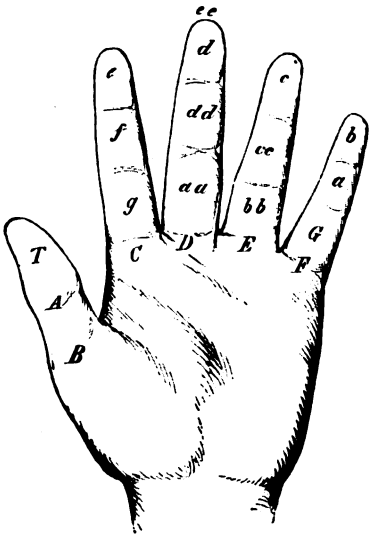
The golden age of ecclesiastical music begins to dawn with the second Roman school and the appearance of Giovanni Pierluigi Sante Palestrina, one of the greatest and most original geniuses the world of art ever produced.

Numerous changes had taken place in musical style up to the time of Palestrina's appearance. When the rude forms of discant and organum, practiced by Hucbald and Guido of Arezzo, had been abandoned in consequence of the invention of counterpoint, the composers of the time, following the course of development already indicated, struck out in an entirely new art-form, called fugue. There were two kinds of fugue, — the free or unlimited, and the strict or limited. Both kinds still exist, but not under the same names. The former is now called real fugue, to distinguish it from modern deviations from the classical model. The latter kind we now call canon.

In earlier times the polyphonic styles, as well as the secular and ecclesiastic, had each enjoyed a separate existence and undergone a separate development; but the work of the Flemish masters did much to counteract these natural tendencies, and to bring, as it were, all musical grist to one mill. These writers not only made use of secular tunes, in order, as they thought, to give more variety to their music, but they often gave these tunes undue prominence, and thus rendered impossible a really artistic performance. We meet with innumerable masses based on secular themes, such as the first line of a well-known romance. "L'homme armé," for instance, a very popular song of the period, was thus used. It would be wrong, however to attribute any irreverence to these composers. They were merely following the promptings of laudable and genuine artistic feelings, in employing that which should readily appeal to the musical sense of their listeners. Nor are we without examples of similar practices in other arts. In the works of the old Flemish painters, for instance, not only do we see anachronisms in their "Nativities," their "Marriages at Cana" or their "Festivals of Simon of Bethany," but the scene is laid in some well known inn; we find in the background a faithful copy of kitchen utensils of every description; and through an open door we descry the familiar face of a tradesman, or the portrait of the stout and coarse-looking inn-keeper. It was a sign of the times, and no one dreamed of censuring the artist who thus worked. Those great painters threw on their canvas what they saw in every day life, never thinking that it should be otherwise; and the composers did likewise in their art. They used in an elaborate way the melodies most frequently heard; but in the course of time this manner of writing had disgraceful consequences. Musical degeneracy became so great and so general that it could only be termed musical debauchery. It was against absurdities such as these that the Council of Trent protested.

Pope Pius IV., having made thorough investigation, came to the conclusion that the style of

music generally cultivated was open to serious objections. It was in 1564 that he convened a commission of cardinals to consider the evil and to prescribe a remedy. This commission was inclined to banish from the church all music except unisons and unaccompanied plain chant; but it was decided, before issuing such a far-reaching decree, to canvass the possibilities of introducing "modern" music which should be free from frivolity. After much deliberation, they commissioned Palestrina to write a mass in the purest attainable church style. The result of their bidding was the composition of the Missa Papæ Marcelli. The success of this remarkable work far exceeded the high expectations that it had aroused. The Pope himself was present at the first performance in the Sistine Chapel, June 19, 1565. So moved was he by the work that, on leaving the church, he exclaimed: "This certainly must have been the harmony of the New Song which the apostle John heard sung in the heavenly Jerusalem, and of which this other John (Palestrina) has given us a foretaste in the Jerusalem on earth." And so it was formally determined that this mass should stand as a model for all church music thereafter to be composed.



GUIDONIAN HAND.

This composition by Palestrina, as well as very many others, not only displays a complete mastery of counterpoint and vocal style, but also deep religious feeling and a rare ability in writing for the human voice. The sterling value of his works cannot be overestimated. Their influence upon later periods has been immeasurable. Indeed, we may say without exaggeration, that never in art has such a mighty change taken place as that caused by the immortal Palestrina's reformatory efforts.

The earlier contrapuntists collected, stone by stone, the materials which served their successors as foundations for further work. Ockeghem was the first to use these fragments in a symmetrical way and to bequeath a systematic style of music-writing to his followers. Among these was Josquin des Près, who attempted to vivify and to infuse blood into the hitherto lifeless counterpoint. But although his success was considerable, it was reserved for Palestrina to free his art from fetters, and to bestow upon it, as far as was possible, individuality. The most noteworthy of Palestrina's Roman contemporaries were Vittoria, Giovanni Maria and Bernar Nannini, Felice and Francesco Anerio, and the famous composer of madrigals Luca Marenzio. But other cities of Italy had also their schools, all, however, more or less under the influence of Palestrina. The most prominent was the Venetian school, founded by Adrian Willaert.

Adrian Willaert, born at Bruges in Flanders, in the year 1490, is said to have been a pupil of Jean Mouton, possibly also of Josquin des Près himself. He first studied law at the university of Paris, which, however, he soon abandoned for music. As a young man of twenty-six he had already made a name in his own country with his compositions. It seems, however, that he was not successful in obtaining a position in Rome; he went, therefore, to try his fortune in Venice. He succeeded so well there that in 1527 he had already obtained the position of chapel-master in the church of St. Mark. Under Willaert's direction the music at St. Mark's became famous, and the office of chapel-master at that church reached a high point of eminence; and thence until the eighteenth century the place was occupied only by masters of the first rank. Willaert's influence as a composer and as a teacher of musical art and science was great and beneficial. He was the founder of the Venetian school of music from which sprang so many distinguished composers, theorists and singers. He was the first to introduce the double chorus in the antiphonal form. Up to his death (1562) he kept his position at St. Mark's. He was a pioneer in the broadest sense, for though his style was founded on that of Josquin and his disciples, he began almost where they left off. Willaert's introduction of double choruses in combination, at church service, led afterward to a style of music which his followers developed to its utmost limits, and which resulted in such monstrosities as masses for forty-eight voices. They, of course, were no more than cold, mathematical calculations, barren of intrinsic musical value.

Willaert, with his countrymen Arcadelt and Verdelot, was also the founder or promoter of the madrigal, as a highly refined style of music. Hitherto it had been a kind of wild-flower, a simple pastoral. But now it assumed more importance. The so-called "sacred madrigal" was an offshoot of this new style, and does not differ essentially from contemporary motets. At a later period the comic madrigal came into vogue, through Vecchi and others; and finally, the madrigal was introduced on the dramatic stage in the earliest beginnings of opera, and gave rise to the modern opera chorus. The most celebrated of Willaert's pupils were Cyprian de Rore, also Flemish by birth, Zarlino, the great theorist, Costanzo Porta, Nicolo Vincento (or Vincentino) and Della Viola.

Cyprian de Rore was born at Mecheln. He was Willaert's successor at St. Mark's in 1563, and died at Parma two years later. His originality was manifested in his madrigals, which became so popular that the Italians called him "Il divino." De Rore did not hesitate to use chromatic intervals, and boldly entered upon the new path which his teacher had merely pointed out. Considerable opposition was made to this innovation at first; but soon other bold masters, such as Orlando Lasso and Luca Marenzio, adopted chromatic intervals in their writings. These masters deserve the honor of having prepared the way for the modern system of major and minor keys and the chromatic scale. They did more toward the attainment of a newer and higher type of music than all the speculations of learned theorists and scholars had been able to accomplish.

De Rore's successor at St. Mark's was Giuseppe Zarlino, the greatest musical theorist of the sixteenth century. Zarlino's specialty was the theory of music rather than composition; hence, it is rather difficult to form any idea of his talent as a composer, from the few compositions that are at hand. His great work on the principles of music entitled "Istituzioni harmoniche" holds a very high place in musical literature. Before his day, musicians avoided the third in the last chord of the final cadence of a composition; all pieces ending either with the simple octave, or the octave with the fifth. Orlando Lasso was the first to adopt this innovation in practical music, but he did not extend it to the minor third, which was not used at the close of a piece until far into the eighteenth century.

Zarlino justified the use of major and minor thirds and sixths as concords, by his so-called diatonic system of "tempered intervals," which was an improvement on the pure-fifth system of Pythagoras. This new system recognized large and small whole tones in the series of intervals comprising the diatonic scale.

The foundation of modern organ-playing was laid at Venice. The most celebrated organ-players of the sixteenth century were offshoots of the Venetian school. With regard to organ music of the Venetian masters, it consisted of short pieces, the form resembling that of the modern prelude. Free running passages and broken chords, with now and then some hints of stricter counterpoint, were the characteristics of this music. The titles indicated greater variety than the contents. Some of them were named: Ricercari, Symphonia, Praeambula, Toccata, Capriccio, Intermezzo, Canzone, and so on.

Von Winterfeld, a celebrated German author, gives, in his masterly work, "Giovanni Gabrieli and his Age," the following complete list of the organists of St. Mark's: De Berghem, Parrabosco, Claudio Merulo and Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli. These two last, Andrea and his nephew Giovanni, were the two greatest masters of the Venetian school.

Andrea Gabrieli was born in 1510, at Venice. He was appointed organist of the second organ at St. Mark's and held this position till his death (1586). He was a productive composer, and enriched church music by the accompaniments of various instruments. He was a remarkable organist, and was the teacher of Merulo, who was very famous as a composer and player on the organ.

Giovanni Gabrieli was born in 1540 and was appointed, in 1584, first organist at St. Mark's in place of Merulo. His genius was manifested in all branches of musical composition. His church music is as solemn and as elevated as that of Palestrina. Although he employed the church modes, he seemed to mould their rigid forms into a more modern expression than had hitherto been imparted to them. Ambros, another great musical historian says: "He prays and we pray with him." If we compare the same text with Palestrina, whose style is not less glorious, nor less elevating to the soul, we feel an immense difference; for Palestrina is the last purest sound of the older direction in music, while Gabrieli announces, in a wonderful manner, the

coming musical emancipation of the individual. In unaccompanied vocal music he has never been equalled in the production of rich effects of musical coloring; in separating and massing together "choral harmonies." His compositions for two, three and four choruses are wonderful exhibitions of skill and judgment.

Giovanni della Croce was the last representative of the Venetian school, which died with him in 1609.

Florence, Naples, Bologna and Milan had also distinct polyphonic schools, all of which exercised a decided influence upon foreign schools, not only in their beginning but in their later development. Thus, the Venetian school had a great influence upon the schools of Nuremberg and Munich, the former founded by Hans Leo Hassler, a German, and the latter by the famous Netherlander, Orlando di Lasso (Roland de Lattre.) The influence extended even to Spain.

But these great workers were not destined long to enjoy that public favor which they so richly merited. New forms of composition and new means of expression were being carefully considered.

The rise in popularity of the monodic, the "one melody" style, involved a sudden decline of interest in the polyphonic school. It is impossible to give with exactness the date of the total disappearance of this later style of writing in Italy. With the gradual introduction of madrigals and through the influence of dramatic music, the hitherto accepted rules of musical construction were subjected to a great change. In the compositions in the old church modes we note, as distinctive traits, an unrelaxing adherence to diatonic scale progressions and a strict preservation of half-tone interval (mi-fa) in all the modes. By this usage each key required, of course, its own special harmonic treatment, and each of the cadences, or endings, differed in character from all the others. The distinctions between the various mediæval keys were, indeed, far more strongly marked than are those which exist between the modern major and minor scales. These great differences led the older church composers to attribute to each of the modes distinct powers of expression; but just as no modern theorist has been able satisfactorily to explain the nature and character of the major and minor keys, so the mediæval composers had widely diverging ideas concerning the modes, and employed them variously, according to their personal preferences.

Toward the end of the sixteenth century less strict laws came to be applied to the use of the old church modes, and gradually their peculiar diatonic was wholly lost. Through the efforts of the madrigalists, and especially through the agency of the masters of the Venetian school, the chromatic element became established in music, and the severity and harshness of the church modes greatly lessened.

The most common forms of secular music in Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were the Frottola, the Villotta or Villanella, and the Madrial or Madrigal. They were all part songs, more or less elaborate, according to the sentiment of the poetry. The Frottole were four-part songs, of a gay and trivial nature, generally popular street songs; but some of them were more earnest and sentimental, being set to good poetry (arcadica).

The Villotte or Villanelle were originally peasants' songs, as the name implies. They resembled the frottole, but were more extended and musicianly. The Villotte alla Napoletana were the most artistic songs of this class, but were often sung to frivolous words. The Madrigal was known as early as the fourteenth century, but it did not rise into universal prominence as the representative form of secular music before Willaert's day.

The word madrigal is derived from mandra, a flock, and denoted, originally, a shepherd's song (Pastorale). As formerly stated, early composers often selected for their masses Gregorian chants, or secular melodies. In the madrigal, however, the composition rested upon original invention, thus allowing more variety in form and contrapuntal treatment. In the madrigal, the composer's endeavor was to express through adequate music, the meaning of the poem: he followed closely, with appropriate motives, the sentiment of the different verses. Strict and elaborate canons and fugues were therefore out of place in the madrigal, in which, though seemingly simple in its construction, the composer found ample opportunity to display his mastery in contrapuntal writing. Great variety in rhythm, poetical expression, characteristic melodies, new and striking harmonies, were considered the necessary qualities of the madrigal. It was generally written in three, four, five, six and even more parts, though writing in five parts seems to have been most in favor and use.

The words of a madrigal generally consisted of twelve or fifteen lines, which had no fixed metre, so

that the poem appeared more like a free, than a versified recitation. The closing lines often expressed some witty or happy thought like an epigram. The music was governed more strictly by the meaning of the words than it was in the mass, and the counterpoint was more simple and expressive. In some madrigals the voices were treated with exquisite refinement, in a delicate web of counterpoint. Others were composed in simple harmony, note against note. This latter style possessed a diatonic character, out of which the chromatic element of modern music could gradually be developed. The first hints of this new method we owe to Willaert.

Adrian Willaert is considered, if not as the inventor of the madrigal, at least as the composer by whom it was given its first artistic form. It may be regarded as the highest form of chamber-music of those days, written and composed for the refined and appreciative amateurs of the best social circles, principally in Venice and Rome. All composers of repute produced works in this favorite form; among others (beside the two most prominent, Willaert and Cyprian de Rore) Constanzo Porta, Constanzo Festa, Verdelot, Arcadelt, Orlandus Lassus, Orazio Vechi and Luca Marenzio, the last named being the best madrigalist of his time.

There were other favorite vocal forms of a more general character, which were composed according to a chosen metre, to which the poem was afterward set. The name given to this species of composition was *modus* (still to be found in the Portuguese term for folk-song, *modinha*) or *aer*, and from this source was derived the modern name, air or aria, which signifies the manner of singing (as we say a person has a certain air or manner), and does not refer, as many suppose it does, to the medium of song; that is, the sound of vibrating air.

These forms of secular song were inspired, undoubtedly, by the beautiful poetry which enriched Italian literature at that period, — the age of Dante, Petrarch, Torquato Tasso and Bocaccio.

Petrucci published (1504–1508) as many as eight books of Frottole, some nine hundred numbers in all. These are characteristic, though primitive examples of Italian music, and mark the essential difference between that and Flemish music. The latter, like the Gothic architecture of the North, was developed organically from germs or motives, while the former corresponds to simpler forms, the grand curves and arches of Roman churches, within whose walls the pure and elevated harmonies of Palestrina have resounded through the centuries. The innovations which resulted from these new ideas rapidly became popular, and in the course of time, old church modes fell permanently into disuse.

The last noteworthy representatives of the polyphonic school of the sixteenth century were Orlando di Lasso (Munich), Giovanni della Croce (Venice) and, chiefly, Gregorio Allegri.

Allegri, a beneficed priest attached to the cathedral at Fermo, and a member of the same family which produced the painter Coreggio, was a composer of much distinction. He was born at Rome about 1580, and died in 1652. He was instructed in music by G. M. Nannini. During his residence at Fermo he acted as chorister and composer for the cathedral. Certain motetti and concerti, published at this time, attracted the notice of Pope Urban VIII., and Allegri received from him, in 1629, the appointment to a vacancy among the cantori of the Apostolic Chapel. Allegri's name is chiefly associated with a Miserere in nine parts for two choirs, which has been sung annually in the Pontifical Chapel, during Holy Week. This is held to be one of the most beautiful compositions ever dedicated to the service of the Roman church. There was a time when it was so much treasured that to copy it was a crime punished by excommunication. But in various ways it came to be known outside the Sistine Chapel. Dr. Burney (1726–1814), the famous English historian of music, obtained a copy of it. Mozart, when a boy of fifteen, took down the notes while the choir sang it. Choron, the well known French musician, managed to insert it in his collection of pieces used in Rome during the Holy Week.

In the Sistine Chapel this Miserere has always excited the enthusiasm of musicians owing to a certain indescribable intensity of sadness that characterizes it, and to its perfect rhythmical adaptation to the words to which it is wedded.

We have now to deal with an epoch in the history of music which saw the culminations of a great reform. New artistic ideas manifested themselves, and thrust into the background the achievements of polyphonic science. The movement had its beginnings in Florence. There, at the palace of the Count Bardi, was formed a society of art connoisseurs, composed principally of men of noble birth. The fundamental purpose of this coterie was to

reëstablish the Greek drama on a basis at once artistic and modern; but the final result of their experiments and discussions was the invention of the opera and the oratorio. Curiously enough, through the fact that only few musicians belonged to the Bardi circle, their ideas were able to make greater progress than they would otherwise have done; for professional musicians in that age were not willing to grant, even for purposes of dramatic expression, the smallest freedom in harmonic or contrapuntal treatment. Here, for the first time in the history of music, we may justly pay high tribute to dilettantism, since it was owing to the efforts of these ardent Florentine amateurs that two of the noblest and most popular branches of musical art were originated.

We find among the friends of Count Bardi the foremost men of the time. The count himself was a gifted poet and composer. Corsi, who afterward became president of the society, was a man of great learning. Ottavio Rinuccini, a highly accomplished poet, supplied the libretti for the first two operas ever performed. Pietro Strozzi was also a poet and composer with advanced ideas. Emilio del Cavalieri, the creator and inventor of the oratorio, was "ducal superintendent of fine arts." Prominent in the society was also Vincenzo Galilei, father of the immortal astronomer, and himself a distinguished composer and clever mathematician. He and Battista Doni were the society's chief representatives in the literary war carried on with the celebrated Zarlino, who furiously condemned the new ideas, and prophesied the ruin of musical art if such innovations should be permanently adopted.

The credit of having introduced a new, fresh and enlivening element into the artistic attempts of the Bardi society is to be attributed chiefly to Giulio Caccini and Vincenzo Galilei. The former was a composer, a singer, and a writer on musical matters.

GREGORIO ALLEGRI.
From an engraving by C. Deblois, 1867

He was generally considered to be the staunchest defender of the new art. In his much discussed work "Nuove Musiche," he places himself in the front rank of the battle and urgently demands the recognition of solo song, so heartily despised by the professional musicians of the time. Caccini, whose own singing gave his hearers intense delight, felt that this department of the art could never reach individual development while the Palestrina style of composition prevailed. He had little theoretical knowledge of music; but, following the example of Galilei, who was the first to use recitative in his musical productions, Caccini enlarged and improved this form, and sung his compositions to the Bardi society. His only accompaniment was the theorbo, a species of lute, but his efforts gained enthusiastic approval. From the small beginnings thus made he passed, in company with Galilei, to the composition of long dramatic scenes, the text being furnished by Count Bardi. This gave to the effort in the direction of reform a new and unexpected significance. Galilei's chief endeavor in his artistic experiments was to introduce the popular element into composition; for, as he insisted, music was not simply the scientific occupation of a few learned men, but belonged to the whole world. Hence, almost all his music is homophonous. No doubt unison vocal music, with little or no accompaniment, had been heard in the canzonetta, villanella, and other forms of popular melody, ages before the birth of Galilei. That the recognition of what we call now the "leading-note" as an essential element of melody was no new thing, may be gathered from the words of Zarlino, who, writing in 1558, says: "Even Nature herself has provided for these things; for not only those skilled in music, but also the contadini (peasants), who sing without any art at all, proceed by the interval of the semitone in forming their closes." The

germs of this new element, destined to work one of the most sweeping revolutions known in the history of art, are evidently in all the early attempts of the monodists. In exchange for the contrapuntal glories of the sixteenth century, the composers of the seventeenth offered the graces of symmetrical form, hitherto unknown. The idea was not thrown away on their successors. It was not long before symmetrical form was cultivated in association with a new system, not of counterpoint, as it is sometimes erroneously called, but of part-writings based on the principles of modern harmony, and eminently adapted to the requirements of instrumental music. Thus, in such slight indications of regular phrasing, reiterated figures and prearranged plan as are shown in Caccini's unpretending little arias, we may recognize the origin of much that delights us in the grandest creations of modern musical genius.

The Bardi society wholly failed to attain that for which it struggled, — a revival of the Hellenic drama; but, in the same way that their contemporaries, the alchemists, failed to find a formula for making gold and yet discovered a new science, so these connoisseurs, while failing to impart Greek character to their productions, gave new individuality to music, and introduced into it many important things.

The first embodiment, in large form, of the new ideas was accomplished by Jacopo Peri in his opera, "Daphne," privately performed at the Palazzo Corsi, in 1597. Later works were the "Conte Ugolino" of Galilei, and three operas by Emilio del Cavalieri, entitled "Il Satiro," "La Disperazione di Fileno," and "Il Giuoco della Cieca." The musical style of these compositions was called "lo stile representativo" or "musica parlante." The first publicly performed outcome of this little society's activity was Peri's opera, "Euridice." The text was by Ottavio Rinuccini, the renowned poet of the Bardi coterie. Both Caccini and Peri wrote music to it; but the work of the latter was preferred, and it was given for the first time on the occasion of the marriage of Henry IV. of France and Maria di Medici, in December, 1600.

It was, however, as a result of Monteverde's great genius that the opera, as such, was definitely established. The name "opera" was first used in 1650. Before that time a musical drama of this kind had been known as "melodramma" or "dramma per musica." Monteverde determined certain laws and rules which have ever since served to determine the outlines of the opera form. This great artist was born in 1586 in Cremona, and pursued his first musical studies under the Cremonese theoretician, Ingegneri. It was, perhaps, the too strict discipline of this master that caused Monteverde to throw off the fetters which scholastic pedagogy was accustomed to impose on rising genius. His first published compositions were two madrigals, which gave evidence of revolutionary tendencies. In the works of similar form which followed, however, he wholly cast aside the many cherished traditions of the Palestrina style, and drew on himself the condemnation of all the orthodox musicians of his time. The great theorist, Artusi, author of "Delle Imperfezione della Musica Moderna" (Venice, 1600) was, at first, a spirited advocate of the ideas of Galilei and the Florentine school. Later, on the publication of Monteverde's six volumes of madrigals, he declared himself as decidedly opposed to the plan of renewing the Greek drama, and wrote biting articles against Monteverde in particular. He condemned this composer's violations of the laws of harmony and counterpoint, and, indeed, went so far as to deny him all musical talent. Monteverde was unmoved and uninfluenced by this adverse criticism. He felt himself irresistibly drawn to the composition of homophonic and dramatic music, and felt that artistic ideals could be realized only by a total disregard of the existing canons of musical art.

Another ducal marriage, that of Francesco Gonzaga, son of the Duke of Mantua, brought to Rinuccini the command to write a new libretto. The poet, full of inspiration, produced two texts, one of which, "Arianna," was composed by Monteverde and achieved great success. The Duke of Mantua then proved to be the general protector of the new art, for we note that he commanded Monteverde to write operas for different occasions. "Orfeo" (1608), "Combattimento di Tancredi" (1613), "Le nozze d' Enea," "Il Ritorno d' Ulisse" are all occasional works of the great reformer. Monteverde died in 1643, and was buried in the Chiesa dei Frari.

The great success of Monteverde's works turned the tide of composition towards the creation of operas, and the popularity of these productions soon suggested the desirability of erecting theatres which should be chiefly devoted to the presentation

of opera. The first opera house was built in Venice in 1637, and was called the Teatro di San Cassiano. The owners of it were Benedetto Ferrari and Francesco Mannelli, who wrote respectively the libretti and the music to the first two operas represented there. Francesco Cavalli, Monteverde's favorite pupil, also composed operas for this theatre. Two other opera houses were built at Venice within a short space of time. For these theatres operatic novelties were supplied in rapid succession. The names of the composers were Carlo Pallavicini, D. Giovanni Legrenzi, Antonio Sartorio, and Marc Antonio Cesti. Cavalli was a very prolific writer, having composed between 1639 and 1665 not less than thirty-four operas. The best among them were "Il Giasone" (1649) and "L' Erismera" (1665), of which the manuscripts are preserved in the library of St. Mark at Venice. Legrenzi wrote seventeen operas, the most successful being "Achille in Scyro" (1664) and "I due Cesari" (1683). Opera became more and more fashionable; and, as Venice was one of the greatest musical centres as well as one of the most popular pleasure resorts, the city of the laguna possessed, before the end of the seventeenth century, no less than eleven opera houses, all of which were filled to overflowing whenever performances were given. In Rome, the first opera house, known as the "Torre di Nona," was opened in 1671 with Cavalli's "Giasone"; the second, "La scala dei Signori Capranica," was inaugurated in 1679. A third theatre was that of the Palazzo Alberti (1696.)

From these musical centres, the love for opera soon spread to Naples, to Bologna, to Padua, and other places. The courts at Vienna, Dresden and Paris sought to cultivate a taste for Italian opera, and huge theatres were built for this purpose. Ottavio Rinuccini, the poet, went to France in the suite of Maria di Medici, and made an unsuccessful attempt to introduce Italian opera. It was not until the time of Jean Baptiste Lully, an Italian by birth, that the new art-form attained a firm foothold in France.

Meanwhile, the oratorio, which, as has already been said, came into existence almost as early as the opera, was also becoming very popular. This species of sacred composition was the direct descendant of the mysteries and miracle-plays of the middle ages. These mysteries were primarily intended for the instruction of the masses in biblical history. The dramatic facts and occurrences of the Scriptures were treated, it is true, in a rather coarse manner, but the rugged poetry which many of these works contain has not been justly appreciated by either moralists or historians. A remnant of these ancient works is still to be found in the periodical representations at Oberammergau, and some prominent composers of the present epoch have tried to revive this old form of art. We transcribe from the preface of the miracle-play, "Maria Magdalena," produced with great success at Berlin and several important English centres, the following sentences: Mysteries, or miracle-plays, were representations of dramatic scenes borrowed from the Bible, and were performed in the Middle Ages, chiefly by roving Franciscans. This brotherhood, wandering from hamlet to hamlet, from place to place, saw in these shows, performed often with great pomp in churches or public squares, the most effectual means of spreading abroad the principles of the Christian religion. At first, the dramas rested upon a purely declamatory basis, but at the end of the fifteenth century choral songs with incidental solos, accompanied by the organ and other instruments, became incorporated in the representations. We find the embryos of musical mysteries in 1289 at Friuli and at 1343 at Padua. In France, too, these performances were called mysteries, and in Spain "autos sacramentales." Lope de Vega wrote a great number of these holy dramas. It was the universal custom at that epoch for the spectators, previous to the beginning of the drama, to recite some antiphons having connection with the action of the play.

We may regard it as a very striking coincidence, that in the same year which witnessed the production of Peri's "Euridice" at Florence, the first oratorio was performed at Rome, in the church of S. Maria in Valicella, then recently built by St. Philip Neri, the founder of the congregation of the Oratorians. St. Philip, a friend of Palestrina, was a firm believer in the power of sacred music, and its utility as a means of exciting healthy devotional feeling. For the purpose of encouraging a general love for it, he warmly supported the guild or brotherhood called the Laudisti. On certain solemn occasions this order paraded the streets singing hymns of a melodious character, called "laudi spirituali," one of which — "Alla trinità beata" — is still to be heard as a popular hymn-

tune. It was probably in the oratory attached to the new church, that the first oratorio was performed, in the month of February, 1600; and it is certain that it was from the name of the edifice that this form of composition derived its name.

The title of the first oratorio was "La Rappresentazione dell' Anima e del Corpo" (The representation of the Soul and the Body). The words were by Laura Guidiccioni and the music by Emilio del Cavalieri. The subject was allegorical, and the style of the music was that of the monodic school, a style wholly declamatory and recognizing no distinction whatever between recitative and air. The inventor and the early masters of the oratorio treated this "sacred drama" more in the manner of the miracle-plays than in that of classical tragedy.

The broad distinction between the mediæval miracle play — which, for a long time, had been popular in Italy, France, Spain, England and Germany — and the oratorio, was that while in the former the dialogue was spoken, in the latter it was recited to musical notes. The oratorio, in fact, as invented by Emilio del Cavalieri was neither more nor less than an opera, based on a sacred subject; and in Italy it never assumed any other form. Other attempts of the same epoch were made by Kapsberger, a German living in Rome: also by Loreto Michelangiolo Capellina, "Il lamento di S. Maria Vergine" (1627); by Stefano Landi, "S. Alessio" (1634); and by Michelangiolo Rossi "Erminio sul Giordano" (1637). The most successful, however, was Domenico Mazzocchi's "Repentimento di S. Maria Maddalena."

Another important composer in this epoch, and connected chiefly with the early evolution of oratorio style, was Ludovico Viadana (Mantua) who wrote concerti da chiesa (church-concertos), pieces for one or more voices with an organ-bass, and thus introduced into chamber music the newly invented monody of Caccini. He is also the first prominent writer who used the basso continuo, so called because it continues with the upper chief melody and gives it a steadfast, harmonic basis. The long-cherished belief that Viadana was the inventor of this device is erroneous.

The early efforts of Monteverde and Cavalli prepared the way for a later generation of composers, whose works are even now regarded as masterpieces of a style of composition none the less beautiful because no longer cultivated. The most prominent composers of the brilliant period which followed the inauguration of the monodic school were Carissimi, Colonna, Alessandro Stradella, Francesco and Luigi de Rossi, and, greatest of all, Alessandro Scarlatti, of whom a special biographical account is included in the present work. Giacomo Carissimi (born in 1604 at Monino, died in 1674 at Rome) devoted himself chiefly to the composition of sacred music. His works are characterized by sweetness and grace, combined with a richness of instrumental accompaniment very much in advance of the age. His chief compositions are the oratorios "Jefte" and "Iona." Giovanni Paolo Colonna (born in 1640 at Brescia, died in 1695 at Bologna) wrote sacred music of a massive, dignified character, and in every way worthy the school to which it belongs. The manuscript of an "offertorium defunctorum," by Colonna, for eight voices, is in the library of the Royal College of Music in London. This master trained a large number of talented pupils (the Bolognese school), among others, Clari, the composer of many fine works and especially of a collection of charming vocal duets and trios; Giovanni Bononcini, a rival of Handel, in London; and Perti, Aldovrandini, Passarini, Pasquale, and the celebrated composer and historian, Padre Martini.

Alessandro Stradella, whose name has been so frequently mentioned in connection with a fatal love-adventure, wrote many operas and oratorios. The aria "Pietà, signore," attributed to him, is not of his composition. For a long time it was thought to have been written by Alessandro Scarlatti; but it is evidently in the style of Francesco di Rossi, a canon of Bari, who died in 1688.

Rossi wrote the operas "Il Sejano," "Clorilda," "Mitrane." The beautiful aria "Ah! rendimi," well known to all singers, is from his opera "Mitrane." Luigi Rossi, of whose presence in Rome we hear as early as the year 1620, was also a very talented composer. His only known opera is "Il palazzo incantato." But none of these composers rivalled, either in talent or reputation, their great contemporary, Alessandro Scarlatti, who was born in 1659 at Trapani in Sicily and died in 1725 at Naples. He was a pupil of Carissimi. The secret of his great power lay in his recognition of the true value of counterpoint. He was wise enough to see that the art for which Peri and Monteverde had expressed their undisguised contempt, formed

the technical basis of all true greatness in music. Scarlatti was considered the most learned musician, as well as the greatest genius of the age. His power of production was almost incredible. His first opera, "L'Onesta nell Amore" (1680), was followed by no less than a hundred and fourteen other operas. He is known to have written two hundred masses, and far more than that number of cantatas. Very few of these were printed, and the majority have been consequently lost. Signs of rapid progress are everywhere apparent in these operas, — most of all in the recitative and the form of the aria. Scarlatti is supposed to be the inventor of the recitative obligato (with accompaniment) and the da capo (repetition of a musical movement). His son, Domenico Scarlatti, of whom we shall have later to speak, became one of the greatest harpsicord players on record. Alessandro's greatest contemporaries in Germany were the older members of the Bach family, who steadily made advances in musical art, more especially in the higher branches of sacred music, culminating in the great Sebastian Bach.

BENEDETTO MARCELLO.
Reproduction of a lithograph portrait.

The followers of Scarlatti during the earlier years of the eighteenth century, claim our admiration, not so much on account of their inventive power, as on the ground that they made progress in matters of technical perfection. Nevertheless, the century gave birth to some composers whose genius was not merely great in comparison with the talent displayed by contemporary writers, but so truly great in itself that it seems impossible they should ever be forgotten.

Among the Italian followers of Scarlatti was the favorite pupil of Legrenzi, Antonio Lotti (1667–1740). He invested the form left by Scarlatti with a melodious grace so modern in character that some of his arias, e. g. "Pur dicesti," are still regarded as standard compositions. He wrote more than twenty operas. In 1756 he was elected maestro di capella at St. Mark's, and in the same year he was commissioned by the Venetian Republic to compose, in honor of the Doge's wedding the Adriatic, the famous "Madrigale per il Bucintoro," entitled "Spirito di Dio."

Antonio Caldara (1678–1736) was also a pupil of Legrenzi, at the time when Lotti studied with him. In 1714 he went to Mantua as maestro di capella, and later in the same capacity to Vienna. He wrote ninety-six operas, of which the most successful was "Temistocle." His finest composition is a Crucifixus for sixteen voices, still very often sung in prominent churches. Among Lotti's pupils was Baldassare Galuppi (1706–1786), who wrote fifty-four operas, and a great deal of delightful chamber-music.

Another pupil of Caldara, and a prominent figure in musical history, was Benedetto Marcello (1686–1739). He was a Venetian nobleman and musical amateur who, though possessing the musical ability of neither Lotti or Caldara, nevertheless succeeded, by hard work, by keen artistic zeal and by literary mastery, in winning fame for himself even outside his native country. His masterpiece, the paraphrases of fifty psalms set to music, at once brought him to the attention of all the prominent musicians of his time, and established his reputation. The library of St. Mark in Venice has a manuscript "Teoria musicale" by him; the court library has many autographs and other works of Marcello, including the cantatas "Addio di Ettone," "Clorie Daliso" and "La Stravaganza." Marcello's satirical pamphlet, "Il teatro alla moda," is a valuable source of information concerning society life in Venice toward the middle of the eighteenth century. Rossini borrowed

one of the principal themes of his overture to the "Siege of Corinth" from Marcello's twenty-first psalm.

While the Palestrina epoch was called the "Golden age of ecclesiastical music," the Neapolitan dramatic school, founded by Alessandro Scarlatti, covers a period in the eighteenth century which is called the "Second golden age of Italian music." Almost all of these prominent composers were pupils of Alessandro Scarlatti. Francesco Durante (1684–1755) was a highly accomplished musician, and one of the best writers of the age. His sacred compositions, which are numberless, are as graceful as they are tempered with true dignity of style.

Emanuele d' Astorga (1688–1736) was celebrated as a singer and as a composer, and also for his romantic and rather melancholy life. His "Stabat mater," is a composition full of religious fervor and sweet pathos, as well as original in form and melodic invention. Leonardo Leo (1694–1741), who was superior to Astorga, wrote about fifty operas (one for the debut of the soprano Caffarelli), many masses, and a famous Miserere for eight voices. Francesco Feo (1699–1750) was a noble and learned master, who wrote the operas "Ipermestra" and "Andromache."

PADRE J. B. MARTINI.
Reproduction of a lithograph portrait.

Lionardo da Vinci (1690–1732), who is sometimes confounded with the great painter of the same name, wrote the operas "Silla" and "Siface." A love quarrel caused his untimely death by assassination.

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710–1737) was a pupil of Greco, Durante, and Feo. As an opera composer his only success was "La Serva Padrona," an intermezzo which was performed in nearly every theatre in Europe. Among Pergolesi's productions as a church composer, the "Stabat Mater," for two female voices with a string-quartet accompaniment, enjoyed for a while extraordinary popularity.

Nicolo Jomelli's (1714–1774) tender and pathetic style rendered him exceedingly popular, both in Italy and in Germany. He wrote sacred and dramatic music. Mozart said of Jomelli: "He is so brilliant in his own particular way that none of us will be able to put him aside: but he should not have attempted to compose church-music in the old style." Nothwithstanding this judgment by Mozart, it is an undeniable fact that Jomelli was the only composer of his time who treated the ecclesiastical style in an almost perfect manner.

Giovanni Paisiello (1741–1815) showed his true greatness most clearly on the stage, and attained a reputation so enduring that his best opera, "Il barbiere di Siviglia," produced at St. Petersburg in 1777, was only after great opposition displaced to make room for Rossini's masterpiece of the same name.

Nicolo Porpora (1686–1766) was very celebrated as a teacher of singing, but also enjoyed, for some time, great popularity as an opera composer.

One of the most important scientific musicians of the eighteenth century was Padre Martini, who was born at Bologna in 1706. He was first taught music by his father, Antonio Maria. He learned singing and violin playing in his youth, and had lessons in counterpoint from Antonio Riccieri, a castrato of Vincenzo and a composer of merit. In 1725, after having been ordained, he became maestro di capella of the church of San Francesco in Bologna. He thus gradually acquired an extraordinary and comprehensive mass of knowledge, with an amount of literary information far in advance of his musical contemporaries. His library was unusually complete for the time. He possessed, for

instance, ten copies of Guido of Arezzo's very rare Micrologos. Scientific men of all countries took pleasure in sending him books.

It was chiefly in the development of means and details of expression that music was advancing during this period. The art of singing, too, was receiving much attention. The head of the Neapolitan school, Aless. Scarlatti, in addition to his mastery of counterpoint and fugue, was also a great vocal artist, and all his successors tried to cultivate the art of *bel canto*. This art of purified and unsophisticated singing was the foundation-stone in the career of all dramatic composers, and hence their great ability to write in a wholly singable style.

The climax of *bel canto* was reached when the celebrated vocal artist, Pistocchi, founded at Bologna his training school for vocalists. Many of his earlier pupils were the celebrities and stars of the London Italian opera, during the brilliant epoch in which Handel wrote for that stage. Among them were the male soprano Senesino, and Sgra. Cuzzoni and Faustina Hasse, wife of the opera composer. But the medal had also its reverse. Haughtiness and boundless conceit were prominent characteristics of these artists. Everybody knows how Handel, not always sweet of temper, treated Cuzzoni, who whimsically refused to take a part in a new opera unless the composer would rewrite it for her. As if endowed with superhuman strength, he seized her, held her out of a window, and threatened to drop her if she did not consent to sing the part as written. But those who had not at their command such violent means to subdue singers, had repeatedly to suffer from their tyrannies.

GIOVANNI PAISIELLO.

From an engraving in Clément's "Musiciens Célèbres."

Indeed, as vocal art came to be more and more the central point of interest in the opera, consideration for the composer grew less and less; and, finally, he became simply the slave of the almost musically-ignorant vocalists. He was obliged to modify his compositions to their satisfaction, whether the changes were in accord with good taste or not. In the operas of the eighteenth century the musical work was esteemed valuable only in proportion as it offered opportunities for vocal display. The composer, in many cases, gave no more than a skeleton of the aria, and the singers were left free to add any embellishments that would display their vocal abilities to the best advantage. Nevertheless names like those of Cuzzoni, Faustina, Durastanti, Frasi, Strada, La Francesina, Nicolini, Senesino, Bernacchi and Carestini lent brilliancy to the epoch. They were all favorite singers in Handel's day. They were great singers when he engaged them, and he no doubt made them greater. In like manner, Porpora, notwithstanding the weakness of his operas, created the school which produced Caffarelli and Farinelli. The Italians may, with just pride, dwell on the fact that the great majority of the prominent singers of the nineteenth century were pupils of Italian masters, such singers, for instance, as Mesdames Mara, Catalani, Pasta, Malibran, Sontag, Grisi and Persiani; the great tenors Manuel Garcia, Rubini and Mario, and the incomparable bassi Lablache and Tamburini, all of whom owed their faultless method to the purely vocal style of the music in which it was their ambition to excel.

But, in spite of its grace and its richly melodious flow, there were serious faults in the older opera of Italy. There was, in the first place, insincerity in dramatic expression.

As eminent representatives of the closing days of this brilliant period of Italian opera, we may mention Nicola Piccinni, Domenico Cimarosa, and Nicolo Zingarelli. Piccinni (1728–1810) gained

greater fame than any of his precursors. It was at Rome in 1760 that he produced "Cecchina la buona figluola," perhaps the most popular buffo opera that was ever written, and which for years had an extraordinary vogue. Among many improvements Piccinni introduced in his operas, were the extension of the duet, hitherto treated in a conventional undramatic way, and the variety and importance given to the finale in many movements, the invention of which, however, is due to Logroscino. His fame was equalled by his industry. In the year 1761, alone, he wrote six operas, three serious and three comic. Through the appearance of a rival and former pupil of his, Anfossi, who also won great success with comic operas, he fell seriously ill, and after his recovery he was induced by his friends to leave Italy and go to Paris, which he did in 1776. After this, a surprising change of style took place when he wrote the French operas, "Roland" and "Atys," both of which were successful. Then followed the famous contests between Gluckists and Piccinnists, an episode which has been treated in detail in the special article on Gluck.

DOMENICO CIMAROSA.
From an engraving by C. Deblois, 1867.

Logroscino, another celebrated opera-composer, built his finale upon only one subject or theme; Piccinni, on the contrary, chose several contrasting movements in different keys, and thus gave more dramatic motion and effect to his finales.

Domenico Cimarosa, born at Naples about the year 1749, is said to have been educated under Sacchini, Piccinni and Fenaroli, an eminent Italian theorist at the conservatorio di S. Maria di Loreto. The influence of his genius upon modern Italian opera was so great and so long-continued, that he must be considered as one of the foremost of Italian operatic composers. Up to 1780 he had written about fourteen operas. He then became the acknowledged rival of Paisiello, although their merits were of a different order. Cimarosa's flow of melody was already more genial and infinitely less restrained than Paisiello's, and the concerted movements of the latter bear no comparison with those of his younger rival. By invitation of the Empress Catherine II., Cimarosa went to St. Petersburg in 1787. He remained until 1791, and he produced about six operas in the Russian metropolis. His greatest triumph, however, was achieved in Vienna, where he became court conductor, with the "Matrimonio segreto," one of the finest masterpieces of Italian opera. Subsequently he returned to Naples, and was accorded every possible honor by king Fernando. But he was imprudent enough to join the French terrorists at the outbreak of the revolution, and accordingly he fell into disgrace and was condemned to death. Escaping, he fled to Venice, where he died in 1801. Cimarosa was a prominent genius in the opera buffa, so excellent a master, indeed, that it is scarcely possible to class his works with any others than the masterpieces of Mozart and Rossini's "Barbiere." Beside his operas, seventy-six in all, Cimarosa composed several oratorios, cantatas and masses, which were much admired in their day. His real talent lay in comedy, in his sparkling wit and unfailing good humor. His invention was inexhaustible in the representation of that over-flowing and yet naïve liveliness, that merry, teasing loquacity, which is the distinguishing feature of the genuine Italian buffo style. His chief musical excellence lay in the vocal parts, but the orchestra is delicately and effectually handled, and some of his ensembles are real masterpieces.

Nicolo Zingarelli (1752–1837), whose "Romeo e

Giulietta" was so much admired, was unsurpassed in purity of style and refinement of detail. Zingarelli was director of the Conservatory at Naples, and later held a similar position in Milan. Among his numerous pupils the most celebrated was the "swan of Catania," Vincenzo Bellini. All these masters contributed something towards the perfection of outward form, which Italian opera was gradually assuming.

Vincenzo Bellini (1802–1835) was undoubtedly one of the most gifted as well as one of the most popular Italian composers of this century. He studied with Zingarelli at Naples, Mercadante being his class-mate. After some more or less fortunate attempts in opera-writing, he scored a full success with the "Montecchi e Capuletti" in 1830, Pasta appearing. His two greatest successes, however, were "La Sonnambula" (1831, Milan) and "Norma" (1832), with Pasta as heroine. Each of these creations found its way in an incredibly short space of time to every opera house in Europe. Bellini later went to Paris, where he produced "I Puritani" in 1835, with Mme. Grisi and MM. Rubini, Tamburini and Lablache. This was no less a success than the popular works which had preceded it. The excitement attendant upon the production of the latter work was more than Bellini's delicate constitution could endure, and eight months after its performance he died, at Puteaux, near Paris.

Gaetano Donizetti (1798–1848), one of the most prolific writers of the school of the first half of this century, also studied at Naples with Zingarelli. In 1830 he scored his first triumph with "Anna Bolena" (Pasta, Lablache). Rubini sang in it, and a large number of comic and serious operas followed; among them being "L' elisir d' amore" (1832), "Lucrezia Borgia" (1824), "Lucia di Lammermoor" (1835), the last written expressly for the celebrated Madame Persiani and the French tenor Duprez. These are his best operas, and none of his later works were able to win the great popularity attained by them. His last work, "Catarina Cornaro," was produced at Naples in 1844. Soon after, his health broke down completely, and in 1848 he died of paralysis at Bergamo, his native place.

But the glory of the two last mentioned composers was far surpassed by that of their great rival Gioacchino Rossini (born at Pesaro, 1792, died at Passy, near Paris, 1868.) Son of roaming musicians, he became early acquainted with stage-life, and after some incomplete studies, he ventured to write an opera, "La Cambiale di Matrimonio" (1810, Venice). Two others followed, and with the fourth, "La Pietra di Paragone," he scored a great success at Milan. In 1813 "Tancredi" was given and created a furore, making for him a world-wide reputation. "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," the greatest master-piece of opera buffa, was a fiasco at Rome (1816). "La Cenerentola" (1817), "La Gazza ladra" (1817) and "Moise in Egitto" (1818) were his greatest successful operas. He went afterwards to Vienna, where he was received with enthusiasm, and succeeded in making the Viennese quite forget that they had Beethoven living among them. In 1825 he settled in Paris and produced "Guillaume Tell." After this he wrote no more for the stage, but in 1842 he completed his exquisite "Stabat Mater," and in 1864 "La Messe Solennelle." To the end of his life he possessed the art not only of attaining popularity, but of gaining the affections of all with whom he came in contact.

It may not be without interest to quote some sentences of the celebrated French writer Eugene de Mirecourt (in "Les Contemporains") to show in what quite different ways French people of the time gave their opinion about Rossini. Mirecourt says: "In spite of his immense musical genius we do not accord him the *feu sacré*. He never cared for any dignity in his talent, nor had he any pride in his art. God gave him melody, and he might have sung like the nightingale, which warbles among the branches of the tree, but Gioacchino did not care for that sort of thing. He aspired only to become a millionaire as quickly as possible. At the top of every sixteenth note he saw a gold coin, and hence he wrote as many semiquavers as he was able." Another characteristic incident may be mentioned, which will show Rossini in another light. Nourrit, the celebrated French tenor, who created the part of "Arnold" in William Tell, suggested that Rossini should make an addition to the score, writing a new duet between Matilda and Arnold, and trying to emulate in it the celebrated duo from "The Huguenots." Rossini, as he had finished the full score of the opera, did not see his way clear to comply with Nourrit's wish, and his letter to the great tenor is significant. He writes: "I have finished completely my 'William Tell.' And it was a very hard work, I may say, not because

of the many notes with which I filled the staves, but for the emotion, for the continuous keeping up of a high-pitched excitement during the composition. There are many who firmly believe in my *fa presto* way, in my careless writing, because they have seen me, over and over again, laughing, joking, perhaps also attending to the cooking of a dish of savory maccaroni with tomato sauce; and they think I could write serious music, while talking and gossiping with my friends; but they are all sadly mistaken. When the heart's fibre is touched, I am moved, I suffer agony, I weep." And I think whoever listens with unbiassed feeling, to the strains of Arnold's aria, or to the many other musical inspirations, must be capable of distinguishing the composer of the "Barbiere" from that other one who wrote "Guglielmo Tell."

DOMENICO SCARLATTI.
Reproduction of a lithograph portrait.

Although we of the nineteenth century think of Italy chiefly as an opera-producing country, we must not forget that she was, in earlier days, identified with important phases in the development of instrumental music. Not only were the piano and violin invented in Italy, but the latter instrument was brought in that country to the highest possible degree of perfection; and the achievements of Italian organists are of primary importance in the history of music. The art of harpsichord, or pianoforte, playing could claim, at the end of the seventeenth century, worthy and ingenious performers and composers. The greatest among all was Domenico Scarlatti, born in 1683. He was a pupil of his father and of Gasparrini, at Naples. He was the first composer who studied the peculiar characteristics of the free style of harpsichord music. His bold innovations were by no means appreciated in Italy, for Dr. Burney remarks in his "State of Music in France and Italy," that the harpsichord was so little cultivated that it had not affected the organ, which was still played in the grand old traditional style. After having composed many operas for Naples, Scarlatti went to Venice, where he made the acquaintance of Handel. Later, in Rome, Cardinal Ottoboni held a kind of competition between the two masters which was undecided in respect to the harpsichord; but when it came to the organ, Scarlatti was the first to acknowledge his rival's superiority, and to declare that he had no idea that such playing as Handel's existed. The two became fast friends from that day. They remained together till Handel left Italy, and met again in London in 1720. Though the technique of pianoforte playing owes so much to Domenico Scarlatti, he did little toward the development of the sonata. Other distinguished performers and composers at the same time, were Durante, Paradies, Porpora, Gasparrini and Alberti.

Gerolamo Frescobaldi was the greatest and most important of all Italian organists. He was born, 1587, at Ferrara, and studied under Alessandro Milleville, also a native of Ferrara. Quadrio tells us that he possessed a singularly beautiful voice, and it is certain that while still a youth, he enjoyed a great reputation both as singer and organist. In 1516 he went to Rome, and before long was appointed regular organist at St. Peter's. His first performance there, according to Baini, attracted an audience of thirty thousand persons. Frohberger, the great German organist and composer, was Frescobaldi's pupil from 1637 to 1641, and thus the noble style of Italian organ playing was handed on to other schools. His compositions are important and give us a high idea of his powers. He

was the first to play fugues on the organ. His works consist chiefly of organ-compositions, which even to-day are considered worthy the attention of students of that instrument. Other great Italian masters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, distinguished and gifted composers for the organ, were Girolamo, Parabosco, Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli, and Merulo.

The early history of the stringed instruments in Italy is one of the most important episodes in the general history of the art. The famous Italian makers have earned a well deserved immortality, and never were their instruments as highly prized as now. The parent of the violin was the rebec, specimens of which may still be seen in numerous museums. We find indications of the use of the rebec in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In manuscripts of that period it is represented as not unlike the mandolin in form, with trefoil sound-holes, and a carved head in the place of the modern scroll. It was fitted with three strings and was played with a bow of somewhat rounded form.

GIROLAMO FRESCOBALDI.
Reproduction of a lithograph portrait.

The leading-spirit of the Amati family was Andrea Amati (1520–1577), whose improvements upon the stringed instruments made at Brescia by Maggini and Gasparo da Salo, the most celebrated artists of the still older Brescian school, prepared the way for that perfection that was so soon to be attained. Andrea's brother, the elder Nicolo, confined his attention chiefly to the bass viol. Antonio (1565–1670) and Geronimo, Andrea's two sons, carried out their father's ideas with intelligence and zeal; but the greatest genius of all was Geronimo's son, the second Nicolo (1596–1648), whose best works are simply priceless. Under his son, another Geronimo, the celebrity of the house declined, never to rise again.

Another famous family of Cremonese artists was that of the Guarneri. The founder of the house, Andreas Guarnerius, whose instruments bear dates from 1650 to 1695, was a pupil of Nicolo Amati. The greatest of the family was Joseph, surnamed del Gesù (1683–1745), a nephew of the venerable Andreas, and so excellent a maker that one of his violins can scarcely be bought at the present day for less than twenty-five hundred dollars. We may add, as a matter of interest, that Joachim, when in London, received the present of a Guarnerius valued at more than six thousand dollars; that Sarasate uses an instrument, granted him for life, but belonging to the Spanish crown, worth fifteen thousand dollars; and that a similar price was paid by Mr. Crawford Leith, of Scotland, for the celebrated "Messiah Stradivarius." This violin is the product of another famous Cremonese maker, the last and greatest artist of the school, Antonio Stradivarius (1649–1737), whose instruments have equal value with those of his fellow townsmen Nicolo Amati and Joseph Guarnerius.

The first famous Italian violin virtuoso was Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713). He settled permanently in Rome in 1683, and found there a happy home in the palace of Cardinal Ottoboni, whose concerts he conducted up to the time of his death. His violin playing was characterized by a refinement of taste which no other performer of the day was able to equal, and the same quality embodied in his compositions render them still delightful, although the technique demanded for their per-

formance would now be regarded as infantile. Among his numerous pupils the most eminent were Geminiani, Locatelli, Somis, Baptiste and Castrucci.

Of equal significance was Giuseppe Tartini (1692–1745). His fame rests on various grounds. He was one of the greatest violinists of all times, an eminent composer, and a scientific writer on musical physics. His contemporaries agree in crediting him with all the qualities that make a great player, a fine tone, unlimited command of fingerboard and bow, perfect intonation in double stops, a brilliant trill and double-trill, which he executed equally well with all the fingers. He was also a remarkably good teacher, as is evidenced by the large number of excellent pupils he sent forth and of which the most eminent are, Nardini, Bini, Manfredi, Ferrari, Graun and Lahoussaye. Some of these have borne enthusiastic testimony to Tartini's rare merits and powers as a teacher, to his unremitting zeal and personal devotion to his scholars, many of whom were linked to him by bonds of intimate friendship to the close of his life.

ARCANGELO CORELLI.
From Naumann's History of Music.

The importance of the influence of Italy on the earlier forms of composition was not less important than that which she wielded in other branches. The sonata, as its name indicates, is of Italian origin. For a long time the composition of sonatas was cultivated almost exclusively by the violinists. Corelli and Tartini are its principal inventors and representatives. Although they looked upon it mainly as an opportunity to display their technical accomplishments, nevertheless, the musical ability of these two violinists was so great that they constantly sought a noble classical form for their thoughts, and gave to the composition a harmonic construction which corresponds to the most advanced ideas of the time.

As has already been said, the chief remarkable phenomenon in the development of the sonata among the masters of the violin, was the rapidity with which a firm structure in respect to harmony and the relation of keys was produced. The delicate instinct of Corelli and of some of those who followed him, divined and grasped the effect and importance of the effects of certain keys in connection with others distantly or closely related, and the extended and consistent working out of this principle produced those very works which have made their composers renowned far and wide.

The Italian violinist cultivated principally the "intermediate type" which joins the earlier and later sonata style, and in which the first or principal theme appears at the beginning of the first half and reappears near the end, quite in accordance with the custom of our own day. As a noteworthy example of this style, the tempo di gavotta of the eighth sonata, in Corelli's opera seconda, may be named. Among other good examples are the last movement in Tartini's fourth sonata (Op. 1) and the last movement of that in D minor; also the last movement of Geminiani's sonata in C minor, some parts of Vivaldi's sonata in A major, and some sections also of Nardini's sonatas.

Pietro Locatelli (born in 1693 at Bergamo, died in 1764 at Amsterdam) became, at the most tender age, a pupil of Corelli, at Rome. He travelled and settled finally in Amsterdam. He was a very original virtuoso, and the first who introduced extremely difficult violin passages into his compositions. He is therefore generally called the forerunner of Paganini.

Francesco Geminiani (born in 1680 at Lucca, died in 1761 at Dublin), a pupil of Corelli at Rome, also studied composition there with no less a master than Scarlatti. He possessed an extraordinarily lively temperament, which, according to the testimony of contemporary writers, showed itself strongly in his performances. In 1714 he went to England, where he became very popular, and was received into the house of Lord Essex, who became his pupil.

One of the great names among Italian violinists and composers of sonatas is that of Antonio Vivaldi. He forms, so to speak, the connecting link between the perfection of Italian sonata and the beginning of the cultivation of the same form in Germany.

A brilliant comet appeared in the musical heavens, however, that most celebrated and most eccentric of all Italian violinists, Nicolo Paganini (1784–1839). The extraordinary power of this artist's playing could have had its source only in genius of the first order. If genius, as Michael Angelo justly said, is the power of taking infinite pains, Paganini certainly possessed it in a very high degree; for his power of concentration and perseverance were unexampled. Mere perfection of technique, however, would never have thrown the whole of musical Europe into such ecstasies. With the first notes his audience was spell-bound. There was in him — though certainly not the evil spirit suspected by the superstitious — a demoniac element, which irresistibly took hold of those that came under the sway of his tone. Moscheles, the great pianist, remarks: "His constant and daring flights, his newly discovered flageolet-tones, his gift of fusing and beautifying subjects of wholly opposite natures — all these phases of genius so completely bewildered my musical perceptions that for days afterwards my head was on fire and my brain reeled." He was no mere virtuoso. There was something in his playing that defied description or imitation; and he certainly had, in a high degree, originality and character, the two qualities which distinguish the man of genius from the man of talent.

GIUSEPPE TARTINI.
From Naumann's History of Music.

A star of second magnitude as a violinist, but nevertheless noteworthy, was J. B. Viotti (1735–1824), who wrote many classical concertos for his instrument, but afterward gave up playing altogether. Giardini, Pugnani, Campagnoli and many others, living in various musical countries, made names for themselves as performers and composers.

As has already been remarked, Scarlatti was the principal representative in the development of the form of the clavier sonata. Scarlatti, but a few years older than J. Sebastian Bach, has the same distinguishing marks as his great contemporary. He holds himself firmly to a clearly determined form, conditioned by musical laws. The principal difference between the two composers is that Scarlatti was inclined to make the brilliant technique which he possessed as virtuoso the real object of the composition, while in the case of Bach, even in things of lesser dimensions, introspection and artistic intensity manifested themselves. Nevertheless, the flowing and dazzling manner of writing which Scarlatti possessed and which was the result of his Italian temperament, must have often served Sebastian Bach as a model. Scarlatti's form inclines more toward that of the etude than of the true sonata. It was through Baldassare Galuppi (1706–1785), a pupil of Lotti and a very talented composer, that the piano sonata received characteristic expression. In his works after the manner of Corelli and Tartini, the display and passage work appeared only as a subordinate element. In comparing Galuppi's celebrated sonata in D major with similar works of Scarlatti, we perceive the great difference between the two masters.

The sonata's greatest companion-piece, the symphony, also came into existence through the efforts of Italian musicians. The word sinfonia first appears with a very uncertain meaning. In general, it was used to mark the distinction between vocal and instrumental movements in cantatas, in sacred music, and, later, in opera. At the beginning of the seventeenth century we find the word used for the first time in large vocal works, and applied to interludes, ritornelle and preludes. This became the general custom when opera was introduced, and the short instrumental prelude was always entitled symphony. This last species of composition is, indeed, to be considered as the origin of our classical symphonic form. Not all the early operas had instrumental introductions, although Jacopo Peri himself made use of them. In his "Eurydice" there is a symphony for three

flutes! Monteverde considerably enlarged the form, but seemed to find in it no characteristic expression of his ideas. At that time the form consisted of three parts, a slow movement, a quicker movement, and again a slow movement. This form of the symphony had really no artistic connection with the opera which followed, but was only a musical piece to inform the hearers that the performance was about to begin. Later, however, came works with more marked and pertinent character, which bore the names, overture and toccata. Finally, through the introduction of ballet-melodies, the symphony became of a livelier nature. At the same time, the word symphony gained more significance, and, as its inner construction kept pace with the modest beginning of the sonata form, it became visibly more artistic, more musical and of a more clearly-defined form. We early come in contact, however, with a different kind of sinfonia, invented by an Italian who had become identified with the French school. This form corresponds more nearly to the overture of the present day. Jean Baptiste Lully first used this form. It consisted of a slow, dignified movement, followed by one of light, French style, and closing with a slow movement, which, however, was of less serious character than the first.

The next manifestation of the overture form resembled still more closely our symphony of to-day, in that it began and ended with quick movements. The middle movement was an andante. It is difficult to decide which of the Italian composers first used this form. The details of the development of the separate movements were, in comparison with earlier works of similar character, more careful and more strict. Evidences of the purely musical interest in the perfection of form thus manifested themselves, and the artistic arrangement of ideas made the work much more comprehensible to the public. From its earliest day, this species of composition has borne a clearly defined resemblance to our modern orchestral works, and, under the formative influence of the multitude of composers who used it, the sinfonia italiana made rapid progress towards perfection. By the beginning of the eighteenth century there was that unanimity of ideas among composers which indicates that a musical form exists as an independent thing. We find perhaps the best specimens of these "symphonies" in the overtures to "Catone in Utica" by Lionardo da Vinci and to "Il Mondo alla Riversa" by Galuppi, the latter of which was given one year before Joseph Haydn wrote his first symphony. Another excellent specimen is the overture to the "Bidone" of Piccinni; and, indeed, we find the form in use by Mozart in his first attempt at opera, "La Finta Semplice."

Contemporaneously with the sinfonia there were cultivated, especially in Germany by Bach and Handel, two other art forms of orchestral character: the suite and the concerto grosso. The former was a succession of loosely connected dance movements, such as allemande, courante, gavotte, bourree, passacaglia, passepied, sarabande, etc. The concerto grosso was a species of enlarged sonata for orchestra, which, by means of incidental solos for separate instruments, afforded the various players opportunity to give evidence of their abilities as soloists. Handel wrote many such concertos. These two forms, combined with the technical and musical development of the sinfonia italiana, congealed finally into the form of our classic symphony. The honor of having first given the stamp to this form falls to Sammartini, a Milanese conductor. His symphonies had three separate movements: allegro, andante, allegro. Haydn took Sammartini as a model in everything. He perfected the symphony by bringing the instrumental development to really artistic significance, and by adding another movement, the minuet. Contemporaries of Haydn, Stamitz, Wagenseil, Emanuel Bach, had also attempted the composition of symphonies after the model of Sammartini; but none of them reached the degree of excellence attained by Haydn, although their works, in certain technical respects, were not without influence on Haydn's style.

With the exception of Boccherini and Cherubini, scarcely a single prominent Italian composer gave any attention to the composition of symphonies. This might naturally be expected in view of the enormous popularity of operatic and vocal music. It was not until the later decades of the nineteenth century that certain more or less successful attempts were made by Italians in this field of composition. The two composers who have gained greatest honor in this connection have been the Roman Sgambati, a pupil of Liszt, and the excellent Neapolitan musican, Martucci, at present director of the conservatory in Bologna. Both these artists have composed symphonic works of a high order of

merit. It is hardly to be expected, however, that the Italians will ever make lasting contributions to a species of composition so wholly foreign to the natural tendencies of their national character.

But let us resume the record of things operatic in Italy. It will be remembered that we traced the growth of the opera from its beginning under the hand of Peri, through its development by Scarlatti, Legrenzi, Logroscino, Jomelli, Pergolesi, Salieri and Piccinni, its ennoblement by Gluck, on to its perfection as a purely Italian production, through the genius of Cimarosa. The last-named composer invested his works with a charm which has never been surpassed, and glorified its outward form with a symmetrical grace which raises his compositions more nearly than those of any other composer to the height of Mozart.

We have now to mention another great Italian master of the age, who, though belonging chronologically to a group which we will discuss later, may properly be mentioned here, as he forms the last link of the chain of composers of the Neapolitan school. We refer to Luigi Carlo Z. S. Cherubini. As he, however, passed so many of his active years in France, it is impossible to think of him apart from the country of his adoption. A special article concerning this great master by Dr. Philipp Spitta, will be found on page ninety-three of this work.

Among the other Italian composers of the same period who devoted themselves to the cultivation of French grand opera, and opera comique, are the following: A. M. G. Sacchini (1734–1786) settled in Paris about 1784. Under the patronage of Queen Marie Antoinette, he brought out two of his Italian operas, "Rinaldi" and "Il gran Cid."

Ferdinando Paër (1771–1839) lived in Italy, Dresden, Vienna and Paris. In the last-named city he succeeded Spontini as the director of the Opera Italien. His most popular work was "Agnese."

Michele Caraffa (1785–1864) studied at Paris under Cherubini. His best operas are "Masaniello," not to be confounded with Auber's popular opera of the same name, and "La prison d'Edimbourg."

Gasparo Luigi Pacifico Spontini (1774–1851), after having written some unimportant operas in Italy, settled at Paris in 1803. In 1807 his masterpiece, "La Vestale," with which he won the great state-prize of 10,000 francs, was produced at the Academie Nationale with brilliant and well-merited success. His next opera, "Fernando Cortez" (1809), was received with still greater enthusiasm. Bitterly disappointed by the failure of his third opera, "Olympia" (1819), he accepted a permanent engagement offered by King Frederic William III. of Prussia. At Berlin his operas in a revised form were given at the Royal Opera with great success, and "Olympia" thus had its artistic rehabilitation. Some weeks later — the 18th of June, 1821 — the first performance of Weber's "Freischütz" took place at the same theatre, and its unheard-of success was gall and bitterness to Spontini, whose jealous temper could brook the presence of no possible rival. Accordingly he tried, by every means that lay within his power, to crush the gifted composer, whom he chose to regard as his personal enemy; but of course the "Freischütz" and its author were unassailable. Spontini afterwards wrote "Nurmahal," "Alcidor," and, in 1827, "Agnes von Hohenstaufen." The performance of the latter began a long series of personal attacks in which Spontini defended himself ably, but which made his life in Berlin unpleasant. His second term of ten years ended about the time of the king's death, in 1840, and two years later he returned to Paris. He died in 1851, at his birthplace, Majolati, in Italy, to whose poor, with that of Jesi, he left his money.

Several lesser lights of the same epoch are worthy of mention. Valentino Fioravanti (1770–1837), who wrote "Le cantatrice villane," a delightful opera buffa. This work was held for a long time in high esteem. Giovanni Piccinni (1796–1867) wrote a large number of operas, among which the best known are "Tasso" and "Nicolo de' Lapi." Saverio Mercadante (1797–1870) was one of the best and most learned composers of the Italian school, whom at the beginning of his musical career they used to call "Il Beethoven italiano." His first work, a cantata for the Teatro del Fondo (1818), was followed by another, "L'Apoteosi d'Ercole," produced at San Carlo (1819) with extraordinary success. In the same year he produced his first opera buffa, "Violenza e costanza," and after this came several serious operas, of which "Elisa e Claudio" (Milan, 1822) was the most successful. From this period Mercadante steadily maintained his reputation as an operatic writer, and the verdict of Italy in his favor was endorsed by Vienna in 1824. He passed the years 1827 and 1828 in Madrid, 1829 in Cadiz, and in 1831 returned to Naples. In 1833 he became Generali's successor

as chapel-master at the cathedral of Novara. In 1836 he composed and superintended the production of "I Briganti" in Paris. But the two operas with which he made a decided hit were: "Il Giuramento" (Milan, 1837) and "Il Bravo" (Naples, 1838); both had long and successful runs in the most important theatres. In the opera buffa, "I due illustri rivali," he changed his style, working the accents strongly with the brass instruments. In this respect he set an example which unfortunately has been widely followed, for the continued and injudicious use of the brass instruments in the orchestra led a great many of Italian operatic composers to ruin. In 1840 he became director of the conservatory at Naples, a position which he held up to his death (1870). Though he lost an eye when at Novara, he continued to compose by dictation; but he became totally blind in 1862. His influence with regard to sensible musical development, especially in the dramatic scenes and recitatives of opera, has been undoubtedly a great one, and we owe it to him alone, if since his appearance Italian composers no longer adhere to poor accompaniments and insignificant musical phrasing.

Of Luigi Ricci (1805–1859) and his brother Federigo (1809–1877) it is scarcely necessary to speak, although their opera "Crispino e la Comare" has been given in all the principal theatres of Europe and America.

The brilliant period of Bellini, Donizetti and Rossini is linked with the present by the life-work of one who was their contemporary, and is also still with us, Verdi, the Nestor of all living Italian musicians. Born in 1814, the author of "Ernani," "Il Trovatore," "La Traviata," "Rigoletto," "Un ballo in maschera," "Aïda," "Otello" and "Falstaff" may be regarded as the most successful and most talented of Italian composers of the present time. The variety of styles in which he has written operas shows the breadth of his genius, and his Requiem Mass, written in memory of the great Italian poet, Alessandro Manzoni, is a sacred work of great dramatic power. Full details concerning his life and work will be found in the special article devoted to him.

Quite a number of second rate composers, whose names, however, have to be mentioned for the sake of completeness, appear now on the horizon. Some of these were able to please their contemporaries for a considerable length of time. First of all, and to be thought of in intimate connection with Mercadante, is Lauro Rossi. He was director of the conservatory at Milan, and afterwards at Naples, and retired finally to his native place Macerata. He wrote many opere buffe, among which, "Il Domino Nero" and "La Figlia di Figaro" were very popular. His last work, of more ambitious character, was "La Contessa di Mons" (libretto after Sardou), which met with an uncertain success.

Besides him, Enrico Petrella and Antonio Cagnoni are to be placed. The former, a genuine Neapolitan in the truest sense of the word, a musical "lazzarone" without much refinement, but full of the "frase italiana," wrote a large number of operas, some of them winning the greatest popularity. Cagnoni is on a higher level as a composer, but cannot be numbered among the stars of first magnitude. He wrote most of his operas for a great and popular Italian artist, the famous basso-cantante, Alessandro Bottero. This singer's ability was quite unique, and it is very probable that now when he is no more, Cagnoni's operas also will soon be forgotten. Chief among his works are "Papa Martin," "Michele Perrin," "Don Bucefalo," all of which enjoyed immense popularity. He also composed "Claudia," "Francesco da Rimini." Some of his operas are in the true buffo style, while the others are in the semi-serio.

Of the younger school of Italian operatic composers, we have to mention three names particularly: Arrigo Boito, Amilcare Ponchielli and Carlos Gomez. The last named is a Brazilian by birth, but he studied at the conservatory at Milan, and his operas have been brought out at Italian theatres. We may therefore include his name among Italian composers. As there is a special article in this work dealing with Arrigo Boito, we need only mention the great influence his appearance has had upon the development of modern Italian opera. He has produced only one work, "Mefistofele." His methods in dramatic music are striking and convincing. In spite of his earnestness of purpose, his work does not lack in popularity and power, and one is scarcely surprised at the fact of its immense success wherever it has been performed.

Quite a clique of "avveniristi" (futurists, or followers of Wagner), chiefly composed of the very

best national talent, suddenly sprang up and sought to introduce the new art and the ideas of the German prophet. The nation at large did not sympathize with these proceedings. Many thought that such a movement threatened detriment to Italian art. Hence, they longed for a great national operatic composer and hailed with delight and enthusiasm the appearance of Amilcare Ponchielli, who brought with him everything which was demanded by the conservative party. The peculiar story of this composer should be briefly told. Born at Cremona, he became a pupil at the conservatory at Milan, together with Cagnoni and Boito. He distinguished himself greatly by writing a beautiful cantata for the graduation exercises, and everybody regarded him as the pride of the institution. Of course, his chief aim was to write an opera; and, lacking money to pay for a text by a well known author, he found an obscure poet who willingly arranged a libretto out of Manzoni's celebrated novel: "I promessi sposi" (The Betrothed). The opera when produced was a complete failure, and poor Ponchielli was only too glad to accept the position of bandmaster in a wretched village near Cremona, where he had leisure to meditate on the fortunes of operatic composition. Nothing was heard of him for many years. He was supposed to be writing marches and transcriptions of operas for his own band. Suddenly, after twenty years, an unknown benefactor offered him the means to give the same opera again, but thoroughly revised and elaborated, at the Teatro dal Verme in Milan. The success, of which the writer happened to be a witness, was immense, and at the same time was not without spontaneity. The Italianissimi found in this opera all they desired: a rich vein of melody, strong dramatic accents, and the whole machinery of the Italian stage action of former times. Ponchielli was at once placed beside Verdi. Up to his untimely death in 1882, he produced several other operas, which, however, with a single exception, did not meet with genuine success. The titles were: "I Lituani," "Il figliuol prodigo," "Gioconda" and "Marion Delorme." He also wrote some graceful and sparkling music to a ballet, "Le due Gemelle" (The Twins).

Carlos A. Gomez is quite opposite in type and style. The late emperor of Brazil took a special interest in the promising boy, and sent him in 1865 to Italy, that he might pursue his musical studies. He was a pupil of Lauro Rossi and Mazzuccato, both directors of the conservatory at Milan. This native of Brazil was full of ideas of exotic flavor, and he selected for his opera a plot which gave him ample opportunity to display his racy, national talent. His first opera, "Guarany," deals with a Peruvian story, and the most happy numbers in it are those where Aimorè, king of the Aztecs, and his followers appear on the stage. Gomez in these fragments simply outdoes Meyerbeer in his "Africana," which hitherto has been considered the acme of savage music. Although delightfully successful in this respect the composer was not able to make the rest of his opera of equal merit. The work had only a comparatively short run. Gomez's succeeding operas, far better in musical workmanship, "Fosca" and "Maria Tudor," were failures, but a third, lighter in character, "Salvator Rosa," was a great success, and contains many sparkling and bright numbers, among them the celebrated song, "Mia Piccerella." His last opera, "Condor," given a short time ago at La Scala, did not fulfil the expectations that were formed regarding it. Gomez went several times to Brazil, where all his operas were given. He was a pensionnaire of the late emperor Dom Pedro, who gave him annually, up to the time of his dethronement, 10,000 francs out of his private purse.

Filippo Marchetti, another modern composer, was very fortunate with his "Ruy Blas" (after Victor Hugo). This opera had one of the longest runs on record, and by royalty from it alone Marchetti soon became a very wealthy man. His other works, "Giulietta e Romeo," "Gustave Wasa" and "Don Juan d'Austria," were dismal failures and of no special physiognomy whatever. Marchetti, a favorite of the queen of Italy, is now president of the Accademia di S. Cecilia in Rome.

Bottesini, the celebrated double bass virtuoso, belongs also to this group of composers. His first opera, "Ali Baba," was very successful when given, but did not maintain itself in public favor. "Ero e Leandro," a second opera of his, did not prove a great success.

Of the younger generation we have to mention Coronaro, who wrote "La creola," and who is now professor of composition at the conservatory in Milan. His younger brother, living in Vicenza, was the winner in a late competition for the Sonzogno prizes, which, as everybody knows, brought Mascagni from obscurity to celebrity.

Alfredo Catalani is one of the most gifted and remarkable Italian composers of this period. His musical and general culture is refined in the highest degree. He was a pupil, first, of Bazin in Paris, and afterward, strange coincidence of names, of Bazzini, in Milan. He gave his operas chiefly at Milan (La Scala) or Turin (Teatro Regio). The best among them are "Dejanice" and "Wally," which, however, were not very popular with the public. But Catalani is by far the best musican among all the living Italian opera composers.

Alfredo Smareglia, a Dalmatian by birth, and a pupil of the conservatory at Milan, excited great expectations by the production at this institution of a symphonic poem, "Leonora," founded upon Burger's ballad. He subsequently wrote the operas "Preciosa" and "Il vassalo di Szigeth," the latter of which was given successfully at the opera house at Vienna, and afterwards at the Metropolitan in New York. Smareglia, who is as industrious as he is highly talented, is now writing a new opera to be given at Vienna.

Alberto Franchetti, a grandson of the rich Jewish banker Rothschild, is a composer of unusual talent and with daring, striking ideas, which are not always successfully realized. His *curriculum vitæ* reminds one very much of that of Meyerbeer. Educated in music at the conservatory at Dresden, under the celebrated Dræseke, he soon distinguished himself by the production of a symphony in E, which has been performed in many prominent orchestral concerts. After this he wrote the opera "Asrael," a curious mixture, an empirical Italian salad, composed of all that has been and is. He shows, however, in this work a decided talent for the stage, though the symphonic element is rather too prominent. This opera, also, has been given at the Metropolitan opera house in New York. Chiefly influenced by the mannerisms of Wagner, without fully catching his spirit, and never forgetting his severe German musical education, Franchetti is an original figure in the modern history of Italian music. He received the honorable commission of the municipality of Genoa to compose the music to the opera "Christopher Columbus," which was performed at the Teatro Carlo Felice in connection with the Columbian centennial festivities and won a great success.

The Wagnerian enthusiasm in Italy is, however, more of an outward manifestation than an inner power in the life and feelings of the inhabitants of the Apennine peninsula. Even if the fascinating and intoxicating orchestral coloring of the great Bayreuth master is not without effect on the sensuous Italian, his music cannot be fully understood until a regular and thorough study of the classic composers, including Schumann, shall have become a second nature with the Italians. Meanwhile the realists, having invaded literary and artistic France, found their way over the Alps, and many ardent emulators of their methods are to be found among Italian artists. Cremona and Domenico Morelli among the painters, and the two daring Sicilian authors, Giovanni Verga and Luigi Capuana, have been the chief representatives of the movement. About 1878, Verga published a volume of Sicilian peasant sketches, powerful and attractive, imbued with the warm and realistic coloring of his native soil. Curiously enough, these clever little sketches, which bear in themselves the germ of effective libretti, had never been made to serve for operatic plots, probably on account of their small dimensions and too realistic contents, until a strange contingency led many young composers to make use of them. The music publisher, Sonzogno of Milan, a man of great wealth and enterprise, having for a considerable time been aware of the fruitless attempts of young national composers to produce their operas, instituted a competition for short operas in one act. About ten of the competitors went to Verga's rich novel-collection for the plot of their musical compositions. As everybody knows, Pietro Mascagni was the fortunate winner with his now world-famous "Cavalleria rusticana." The subject is a happy one for a one-act opera. Within a very short space of time a powerful dramatic action, with all the glowing and varied Southern coloring, takes place. It is the old, old story, already a thousand times told, of love's conquest and faithlessness, and the natural tragic consequences. The scene is laid in a country of daggers and stiletti. There is no practical use in applying the critical dissecting knife to prove that the enormous success with which the "Cavalleria" met was disproportionate to the real value of the work. We think that never since the beginning of opera has a work by a youthful composer had such a large and international popularity, bringing at the same time nearly an independent fortune to the composer. Before Mascagni competed

for the Sonzogno prize his little family was actually starving, and he had not money enough to hire the piano so necessary to the exercise of his profession.

The particular and very uncertain success of Mascagni's second opera, "Amico Fritz," was a great disappointment to those who had looked upon the young author as a coming king in the realm of opera. But the great triumph of his third work, "I Rantzau," produced at Florence in November, 1892, has revived the hope that Mascagni is not merely a lucky child of fortune, but that he possesses an out-spoken musical and dramatic individuality. That he is only an opera composer is beyond a doubt. The sudden changes in stage situation, the sharp contrasts, and, above all, the musical scene-painting which he does with coarse but sure brush, these are factors whose fitness to the genius of Mascagni stamps him as wholly in the trend of his theatrical talent. The chief significance of the new opera, "I Rantzau," lies, in our opinion, in the fact that Mascagni has at last composed something which seems to be the product of a personal and characteristic style.

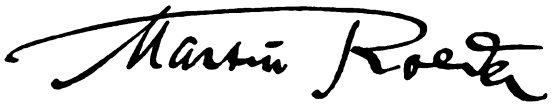
PIETRO MASCAGNI.
Reproduction of a lithograph portrait.

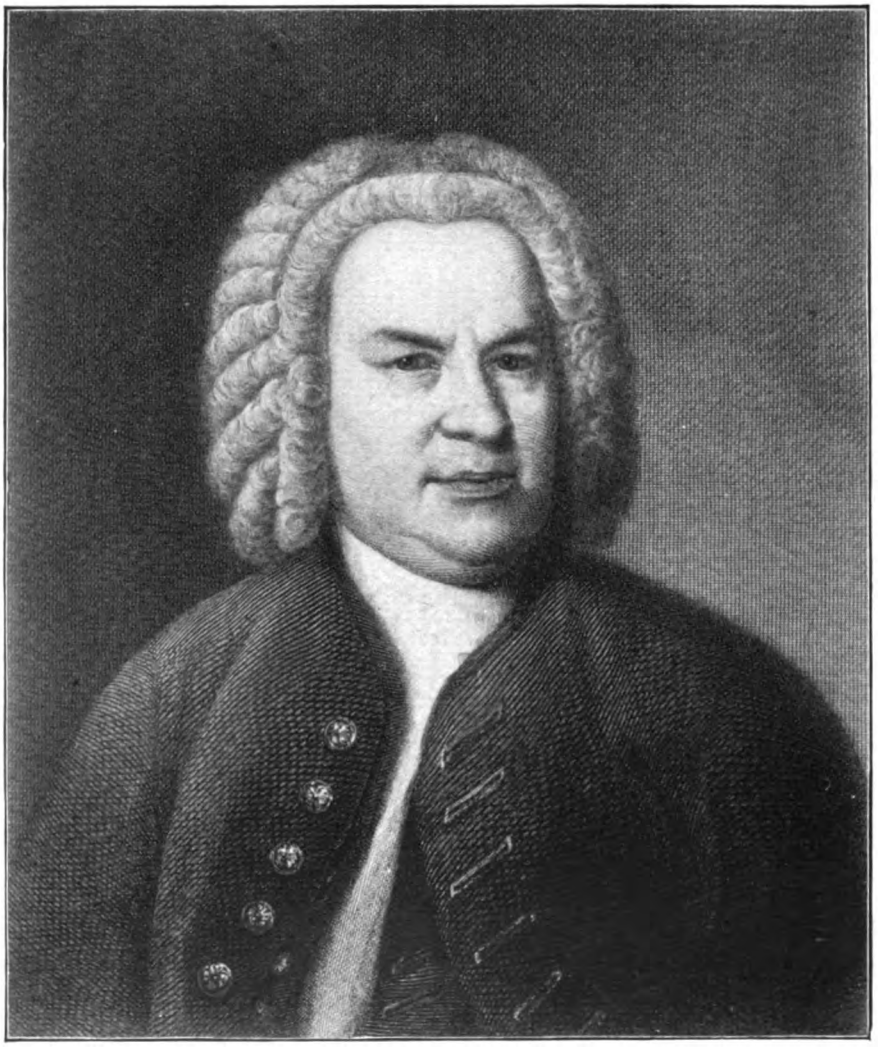
There are two other composers whose reputations are still young, one of whom, Giordano, has been brought to public attention through the Sonzogno competion. The other, Leoncavallo, a man of literary as well as musical gifts, was able to choose the most practical way of introducing himself as an operatic composer, by paying the expenses of the performance of his opera, "I Pagliacci," at the Teatro del Verme in Milan. The work had an almost unparalleled success. We may well believe that this opera will, in the course of time, enjoy even greater popularity than attended its fortunate twin sister, "Cavalleria Rusticana." Leoncavallo himself wrote the text of his opera. Giordano treated another sketch of the Verga collection. In this work, "Malavita," he displays all the qualities required by an operatic composer — rapid musical development, broadly melodious phrasing, great variety of coloring, and vivid, sparkling rhythm, both in vocal and instrumental writing. There is every hope that Giordano, if his further artistic and musical development should fully realize its brilliant promise, may one day rank among the most prominent of Italian stage composers. But neither Mascagni nor Giordano can reach the surprising and striking originality found in Leoncavallo's "Pagliacci." W. von Sachs, a well-known New York critic, attended in Vienna a performance of "Pagliacci," and we have from him the opinion that Ruggero Leoncavallo may be called the head of the new Milanese school of composers. The plot, founded partly on the "Drama Nuevo" of Estibanez, and in its essential details not unlike the French play "Tabarin," presents the oft tried experiment of a play within a play. The hero is a mountebank who, deceived by his faithless wife, enacts in earnest the mimic scenes of jealousy. The principal characters, five in number, as in the "Cavalleria," belong, with one exception, to a company of strolling players, who, in the typical rôles of the old Italian *comedia dell' arte*, tell in pantomime the familiar tale of deception, jealousy and revenge. There is to be noted in the condensed, picturesque action of this opera, an evident attempt to reproduce the more striking characteristics of Mascagni's work. Many of the latter's distinguishing musical methods are used, though without sacrifice of originality of musical idea. Like Mascagni, Leoncavallo has more than a super-

ficial acquaintance with Wagner's works, and the great master's example can surely be traced to the fact that he, too, is the author of his own libretto. In each of these most modern operas of "Cavalleria," "Tilda," "Malavita" and "Pagliacci," a keen striving after the new realistic is to be observed. Each work has met with unqualified success, and this success has been certified by the approbation of such a critical body of judges as gathered at Vienna on the occasion of the Theatrical Exhibition.

The secret of such phenomenal successes lies partly in the rapid advance toward the denouement, in a frank and rich melodious flow of catching phrases, but mainly in the fact that all these young composers belong to the class of musical realists. Their works, then, are powerful because they conform to the spirit of the age. Lastly, their authors have an instinctive knowledge of stage effect, which enables them to use to the best advantage the materials at their disposal.

We recognize in these products of the present time the possibilities of a great musical advance for Italy. The younger composers, unlike their predecessors, have zealously studied the technique of composition with truly international breadth of interest. It is also to be noted that this same generation has completely freed itself from the idolatrous worship of Wagner. Those phases of Wagner's genius which should not be imitated have been shunned, and the Italians have turned to the passionately melodious song-phrase, which is truly characteristic of their nature. They have returned, in a word, to their own feelings and their own inspirations, as well as to their own belief in the power of rapid stage action. Although elaborate musical workmanship has never been a prominent feature of Italian composers, much has nevertheless been done in later years to improve matters in this respect. There is therefore reason to hope, that, if once the system of musical education can be founded on a solid basis, the most gratifying results may follow in Italian music of the future. The inhabitants of the Apennine peninsula, with their sensuous nature, their musical language, and their overflowing love for singing and music in general, must perforce continue to cultivate an art without which their life as a nation would be incomplete.





JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Reproduction of a steel engraving by Sichling, after an oil portrait by Haussmann, in 1746.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

THE question of physical and mental heredity is one which at the present day not only challenges the investigation of the learned, but is actively discussed in the wider circles of cultivated society. No better example can be cited in support of the affirmative side of this question, than the family of Johann Sebastian Bach, in which, for the space of not less than two hundred and fifty years, musical talent of a high order was transmitted from one generation to another. Displaying itself for the first time in the sixteenth century, the gift grew more and more marked until it reached its culminating point in the subject of this memoir, but began to dwindle in his posterity and disappeared entirely in the last descendant of the race, who died in Berlin in 1845.

For a long time the erroneous idea was almost universally accepted, that the Bachs originated in Hungary and had emigrated to Thuringia in the second half of the sixteenth century. In reality, however, the family was of pure German extraction and had established itself before the time of the Reformation on the northeastern slope of the Thuringian forest. Wechmar, a village in the neighborhood of Gotha, was the residence of the immediate progenitors of Sebastian Bach, and the first of these concerning whose musical proclivities we have any information were Veit and Caspar Bach. The former had learned the trade of a baker and miller, and, while absent on his travels, he took occasion to visit Hungary, but soon returned to his native village. Here, when the labors of the day were ended, he devoted himself to playing on the zither for amusement. Hans Bach, his son, born about 1580, adopted music as a profession, after having received instruction from the town musician of Gotha, Caspar Bach, presumably his uncle, and, by way of subsidiary occupation, he plied the trade of a carpet-weaver. With his cherished violin for a companion, it was his habit to roam far and wide throughout Thuringia, making the strains of his instrument resound wherever a joyous company was found assembled. A jovial fellow, full of merry jests, he soon became universally popular in the region, and the musical importance of the Bach family was perceptibly increased through the inherited ability of his three sons, Johann, Christoph and Heinrich. Several musicians of note are also to be counted among the descendants of a brother of Hans, of whom Johann Ludwig Bach, who died in 1741 while occupying the position of Capellmeister in Meiningen, deserves special mention.

But the gift for music which had impressed its stamp upon the race was exhibited in a still greater degree by the three brothers already referred to, Johann, Christoph and Heinrich Bach. Christoph, born in 1613, became *Stadt-Musikant* in Erfurt, and later was transferred to Arnstadt, where Heinrich, born in 1615, was established as organist. Johann, born in 1604, discharged the double office of town-musician and organist in Erfurt. All three, it will be seen, united in turning their attention to instrumental music in general and to church music in particular, cultivating more especially the science of organ-playing, and it may here be remarked that no one of their descendants up to the time of Sebastian Bach departed from this sphere of activity. It was in this great man that true German art first sought expression, and therefore the family in its totality must forever be regarded as an embodiment of the artistic aspiration of the nation. Singularly enough, neither the three brothers, nor their sons and grandchildren, were ever moved by the desire to visit Italy, although so many of their comrades in art were constantly repairing thither. The splendors of the royal courts of Germany were equally powerless to attract; they perseveringly employed their talents in the service of their fellow citizens, faithful alike in their ecclesiastical and civil rela-

tions, and bearing with patience the privations to which they were often subjected. During the lifetime of the trio of brothers, three principal gathering-places for the continually increasing branches of the family were appointed, at Erfurt, Arnstadt and Eisenach respectively, and between these three towns there was a constant interchange of visits. If a piece of good-fortune came to any one in either place, he called upon the others to follow him, or, falling into distress, he hastened away in order to try his fate anew under the sheltering care of his kinsmen. In this way the bond of family union was closely cemented between them. In Erfurt, the brothers and their children were able to hold in exclusive possession for a century all musical positions in the gift of the government, and even fifty years later, the town musicians in the place continued to be called "the Bachs," although there was no longer any one among them who bore the name. One branch of the family was permanently established in Arnstadt until 1739, another in Eisenach till 1777, where some of its descendants still remained only twenty years ago, though no longer following the profession of their ancestors. In summing up the qualities of this race of musicians, it is not too much to say that they exhibited the most salient features of the Thuringian type of character, and, with the exception of one of the descendants of Christoph Bach, who settled on Frankish soil, no disposition was ever shown to depart from the region which gave them birth. Indeed, so strongly possessed were they by the necessity of occasionally seeing one another face to face, that for a long time it was their custom to appoint a day in every year, on which the masculine members of the family should assemble in one of the chosen centers. The many happy hours which they passed together on these occasions were devoted to the narration of their respective experiences, interspersed with music as a means of recreation. They generally began with the singing of a choral, which was followed by livelier airs, often set to words free and unconstrained. They were especially fond of "quodlibets," a kind of musical medley, more or less skillfully composed of every sort of merry popular melody, or, as frequently happened, the singers depended upon their own powers of improvisation. Taken as a whole, the Bachs were characterized by a strong love of pleasure, which, however, was by no means incompatible with their sincere and fervent piety.

If one takes into account the low order of cultivation prevailing in Germany at that early period, the artistic excellence attained by this family becomes all the more remarkable. Its musical promise was first revealed in the time of the Thirty Years' War, and it was during the second half of the seventeenth century, when the moral, intellectual and material strength of the nation was at its lowest ebb, that the promise was gloriously fulfilled. Simultaneously with the earliest manifestations of activity in other provinces of intellectual life, German music attained in Sebastian Bach a height so lofty that it has never been surpassed, and from this fact two deductions may be drawn: first, in spite of the sufferings consequent upon the Thirty Years' War, there had remained implanted in the inmost hearts of the people a vital germ of great productive power; and, second, the best of which the German nation was capable in the first century after the war, found expression through this family of artists. It is also noteworthy in respect to the German people, that the first creative impulse by which they were stirred was in the direction of music, and that, in the unsounded depths of feeling from which this impulse springs, they found compensation for the loss of those earthly possessions upon which unmerciful fate had laid its destroying hand. Something like a law of nature is moreover to be discovered in the fact that German musical art at that time, whether ecclesiastical or secular in character, developed itself chiefly in the instrumental line. The essential foundation of both these styles is represented by the *Volkslied*, which must be regarded as the most direct and unperverted utterance of the popular imagination. The *Tanzlied*, at first sung by the people, but later always played, forms the fundamental element of the instrumental music of that day. The ecclesiastical music of the seventeenth century, however, that which alone has a right to the name in the strictest sense, was developed in and through the science of organ composition. Organ music, on the other hand, derived its greatest inspiration from the religious form of the *Volkslied*, that is, from the choral melodies of the Protestant church. If the ecclesiastial music of the time reached a higher point of perfection than secular instrumental music, it is because religion offers a broader field for art than any other manifestation of civilized life. For it has everywhere aroused in the heart that profound enthusiasm from

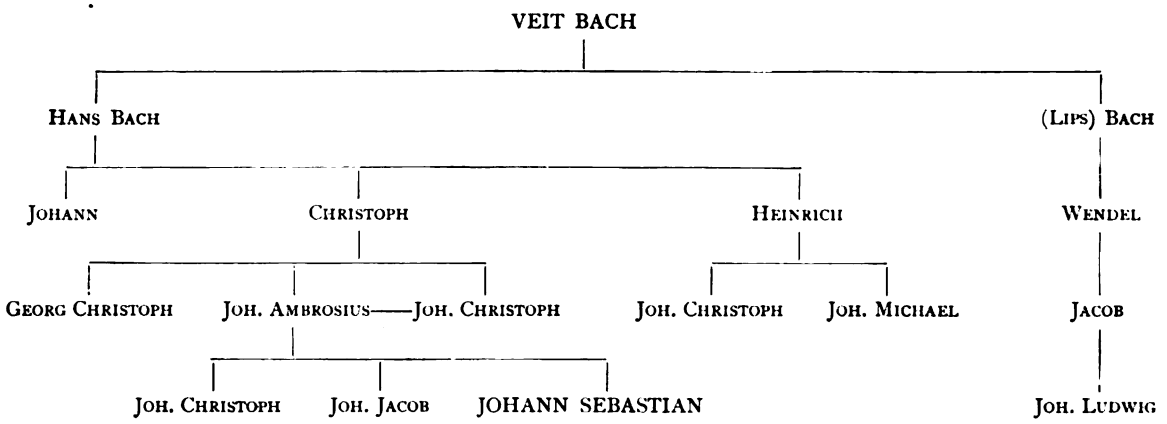
which the creative artistic impulse springs. Everywhere the great productions of ecclesiastical art are animated by a freshness and spontaneity, which may be counterbalanced by works of another class, but cannot be effaced by them. The end of the Thirty Years' War was the beginning of a period in which, to such of the German people as had retained in any degree the love of higher things and the consciousness of a connection with the sheltering and protecting power of God, religion must necessarily have appeared to be the only secure possession in life. It was no joyous burst of gratitude which stirred their souls, but from the depths of their misery they looked upward, imploring help. The character of the church music which originated at that time was at first tender and supplicating like the prayer of an invalid, while later, under Sebastian Bach, it gained depth and fervor, but retained its severity and earnestness, the outpouring of a spirit strengthened by misfortune.

If the Bach family is to be regarded as a standard-bearer of culture in the midst of a period of universal desolation, then it is not in the least surprising that its members were greatly superior to their environment, from a moral point of view. This may be explained in part by the fact that many of them were in the service of the church; yet even those who followed another calling revealed a wholesome soundness of nature which stands out in sharp relief against the ruder manners and moral laxity of their contemporaries. Repeated instances of their unselfish devotion and conscientious discharge of duty under the most trying circumstances have been handed down to us, and when we consider the peculiar relation subsisting between members of their profession and the passions of mankind, our admiration of virtues so rare and so austere must necessarily increase. The musicians of that day followed the fashion of all the industrial corporations by forming themselves into a guild, and it was precisely as a guild that they became an object of contempt on account of their extreme demoralization. The better sort, of course, were aware of this, and in the year 1653 a society of musicians was formed in Upper and Lower Saxony, for the purpose of protecting their common interests and of promoting a higher order of morality. The Bachs, however, did not find it necessary to join a union of this sort. With them, the family traditions, so religiously respected, were more binding than the most formal edict issued under the sanction of the Emperor himself. It is surely not to be reckoned among the least of their merits that they preserved their strong independence and integrity of purpose in an age which had no conception of artistic dignity; furthermore, they were citizens of petty states, at whose courts musicians were ranked with lackeys, and for the most part treated as such when attached to the service of the princely chapels.

Johann Bach had several sons, all of whom were musicians in Erfurt. One of his grandchildren, Johann Bernhard Bach, became organist in Eisenach and won a reputation as composer of organ and orchestral music, but no other member of this branch of the family attained celebrity. The descendants of Heinrich Bach, who himself was a fine organist and excelled in composition, were however more prominent in the musical world. His two sons, Johann Christoph and Johann Michael, took higher rank as composers than any of the other ancestors of Sebastian Bach. The former especially must certainly be pronounced the greatest motet composer living at the close of the seventeenth century. Unfortunately only eight of his motets are extant, but in these he shows himself worthy to stand by the side of his predecessor, Heinrich Schütz, and his great successor, Sebastian Bach. Johann Michael (born 1648, died 1694), while inferior to his brother both as regards invention and execution, has still much of the latter's fervency of feeling, and is distinguished by a certain profundity of imagination. He confined himself to instrumental composition more exclusively than Johann Christoph, and devoted himself in addition to the manufacture of clavichords and violins. But few of his instrumental compositions are now extant, and the twelve motets which have been preserved give perhaps no just idea of his artistic personality, taken as a whole.

In Christoph, the second of the three sons of Hans Bach, we behold the grandfather of Sebastian. He also was the father of three sons, the eldest of whom has been alluded to as having taken up his residence in Franconia. The other two, Johann Ambrosius and Johann Christoph, were twin brothers and resembled each other, both in appearance and in character, to a degree which excited universal astonishment. Their thoughts and modes of expression were identical; they played the same instrument and in the same style. The sympathy

between them is said to have been so close that they shared each other's illnesses, and the elder survived the death of the younger but a short time. Ambrosius Bach was born in Erfurt in 1645, and there passed a portion of his youth, becoming later a member of the public orchestra. In 1671 he removed to Eisenach, where he acted as town-musician, his cousin, Johann Christoph Bach, the before-mentioned important composer, being already established there as organist. Here he died in January, 1694; and the youngest of his eight children, consisting of six sons and two daughters, was to become the man whose genius these lines commemorate. In order to afford a comprehensive view of the connection between the different generations, a genealogical tree of the Bach family is here inserted.



Johann Sebastian Bach was born about one month later than Handel, in the year 1685. Reckoning from the day of his baptism, originally asserted to have been the 23d of March, we may assume his birthday to have fallen on the 21st of March, O. S., a date corresponding to the 31st of that month according to our present calendar. At the early age of ten, both parents had been taken away by death, and it is probable that only two of his brothers still survived. These were Johann Jakob, who was then serving his musical apprenticeship, with a view to succeeding his father, and Johann Christoph. The latter was already able to earn his own living in the capacity of organist at Ohrdruf, a town in the vicinity of Gotha, and took the little Sebastian under his personal charge, thus separating him for years from the beautiful surroundings of his early home. The necessary stimulus for developing the boy's talent was readily supplied by the musical traditions of the family. His father, though best known as a violinist, is reputed to have been a thoroughly educated musician, and it is also certain that the influence exercised upon him by his great-uncle, the Eisenach organist, was very strong. As was the case in all places belonging to the protestant confession, where there was no royal court, and no Italian singers were at hand, the principal opportunity for the study of vocal music in Ohrdruf was afforded by the *Schülerchor*, or pupil-choir. The youthful Bach possessed a very beautiful soprano voice, and he assuredly belonged to this choir, then composed of forty members, who, following an ancient custom, were in the habit of marching through the town on certain appointed days, singing and collecting money on the way.

Johann Christoph, the elder brother, was Sebastian's senior by fourteen years. In 1686, he had been sent by his father to Erfurt, in order to enjoy the instruction of Johann Pachelbel, one of the most eminent organ composers of his time. Three years later he betook himself to Arnstadt, where he discharged a portion of the duties belonging to the position of his venerable great-uncle, Heinrich Bach. After the year 1690, he resided in Ohrdruf, in which village he died in 1721. It was soon evident that a higher order of ability than he could boast was required for the proper unfolding of the youthful Sebastian's genius. The jealousy of Johann Christoph was moreover excited by the fact that he saw himself in danger of being cast in the shade by his younger brother, and notwithstanding the burning desire of the boy to obtain them, he withheld from him a collection of organ compositions by the most famous masters, copied by himself. Sebastian there-

upon managed to get possession of the manuscripts, which he copied by moonlight—at least, so it is related. In addition to the instruction received at home, he attended the gymnasium in Ohrdruf. At Easter (1700) he left his brother's house and made his way to Lüneburg, accompanied by a friend, Georg Erdmann by name, with whom he continued to hold relations in after years. Both were entered as matins scholars at St. Michael's School in Lüneburg. This institution was especially devoted to the cultivation of music and attracted to itself the youthful talent of Thuringia. Bach was at first enrolled among the discantists, but soon manifested a capacity for so many branches of the musical art that the remuneration received for his services enabled him to remain in the school even after the loss of his soprano voice. Before leaving Lüneburg, in the spring of 1703, he is said to have passed successfully through every class, and to have improved to the utmost every opportunity afforded him, even acquiring some proficiency in the French language, a branch of instruction not yet generally introduced into the German schools. All the more credit is due him for this, because the musical duties of the

BACH S BIRTHPLACE AT EISENACH IN THURINGIA.
From a photograph by G. Jagemann.

pupils were manifold and often rendered it impossible for them to pursue, with regularity, any literary or scientific course of study. But Bach was not merely endowed with unusual intellectual gifts; he devoted himself with unflagging perseverance to the accomplishment of his ends.

In the seventeenth century, Lüneburg occupied a prominent position in North Germany as a center of cultivation for church music, and in this connection St. Michael's Cloister, with its school, deserves no small degree of praise. It was here the custom to celebrate the eighteen festival days of the church in each year by rendering, with full orchestral accompaniment, the music adapted to the several occasions. If we count with these performances the others which were often given by especial command, they would reach at least an annual aggregate of from thirty-four to forty. On all intervening Sundays a motet was sung, if nothing more. The abundant resources of the cloister had provided a choice collection of musical works, both printed and in manuscript, among which were to be found compositions by Heinrich and the great Johann Christoph Bach, so that the fame of his family had preceded the young Sebastian. A native of Eisenach, Johann Jakob Löw, a pupil of Heinrich Schütz, was, moreover, acting as organist in the Church of St. Nicholas, at Lüneburg. Bach probably made the acquaintance of this countryman of his, who, however, was a man advanced in years, and perhaps

no longer able to interest himself in the newer methods of the youthful genius. But there was another Thuringian at work in Lüneburg, upon whom nature had bestowed an original creative mind, and who was then in the prime of life. This was Georg Böhm, at that time organist of St. John's Church, and previously a resident of Hamburg, where he became interested in the Northern school of organ music. The names of the many superior artists belonging to this school have only recently been rescued from oblivion. Their chief claim to distinction does not rest upon what they were able to accomplish in the line of compositions for the organ, or their skill as performers; it is mainly based upon their influence in the development of the *suite*, which may be defined as a secular instrumental form. Some of the most eminent of these artists were Johann Adam Reinken and Vincentius Lübeck in Hamburg, Dietrich Buxtehude in Lübeck, and Nikolaus Bruhns in Husum. Böhm had studied with great interest the peculiarities of this school and showed himself able to combine with them such knowledge of musical forms as he had managed to acquire in his Thuringian home. At the same time, he did not remain insensible to the piquant charm of the French school of pianoforte music, which rose into prominence at the end of the seventeenth century. He had himself made successful attempts at clavier music, and something of the French manner had crept into his organ compositions. It was easy to account for this, since he lived in the neighborhood of the town of Celle, where clavier music was actively cultivated. At this time Duke Georg Wilhelm of Lüneburg-Celle, the last descendant of the royal line of Guelph princes, was a resident of the place and had provided for the exclusive adoption of French music in all the services conducted in the royal chapel. From these elements the highly gifted Böhm formed his extremely characteristic style, and produced such an impression upon Bach that he wrote a number of still-existing organ compositions, which might easily be mistaken for the work of the older master. And not only this; he went directly to the sources from which Böhm had drawn, making repeated pedestrian journeys to Hamburg and Celle, where he acquired fresh artistic impressions, which he turned over and over in his mind with unceasing energy.

After the brief course in the elements of music which had been given him by his brother, Bach had, properly speaking, no second instructor, nor did he require one. Herein is plainly seen the inestimable boon conferred upon him by his ancestors, who had so definitely pre-determined the sphere of his activity that any departure therefrom would have been scarcely possible. But there must also be taken into account his own great executive power, and the untiring industry with which he not only developed his technical skill as clavier, organ and violin player, but also continued to perfect himself in the art of composition. We learn from his son that he often worked through the whole night in order to satisfy his ardent desire for knowledge.

At Easter, 1703, Bach left St. Michael's in order to devote himself entirely to the profession of music. Had his means permitted, he would probably have been glad to enter a university, as was then customary with rising musicians, and as many of his cousins had done before him. But he was poor and obliged to earn his bread. Returning to Thuringia, he obtained a situation as organist at the ducal Saxon Court of Weimar, where, however, he only remained a few months. An organ had recently been added to the New Church at Arnstadt, and just at this time the instrument was completed. Notwithstanding his youth, Bach must have already acquired great fame as an organ player, for he was summoned to try the instrument and to play upon it on the occasion of its first employment in a church service. This happened in July, 1703. His performance seems to have made a profound impression on the citizens of the place and advantageous offers were made with a view to securing his services as organist for the New Church. He decided to accept them, severed his connection with Weimar, and entered upon his new duties on the 14th of August. It was thus that the boy of eighteen now became an inhabitant of the little town so especially endeared to him through long family tradition. In order to convey an idea of the style of living in which artists like himself were able to indulge at that time, let it be here recorded that his yearly salary amounted to about fifty-seven dollars. This sum was so much more than sufficient for his needs, that after a few years he not only had money enough to spare for a journey of some length, but was also able to render aid to an indigent cousin. The outside obligations imposed by his position were very few. He played the organ three times a week and gave instruction in singing to a small pupil-choir,

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Drawing by Sidney L. Smith, after the monument in Eisenach, by A. Donndorf.

but here his labors as a teacher ended. The New Church did not rank as the first in Arnstadt, that position being maintained by the Franciscan Church, where the principal choir of singers rendered the music for which Bach's pupils were in process of preparation. The town was then the residence of Count Anton Günther, of Schwarzburg, a man who interested himself in music in many ways, and supported a small chapel, to which he gave as leader an important musician, Adam Drese. For the court performances it was customary to demand the aid of every inhabitant of the region who possessed any skill as instrumentalist or singer, and it is quite possible that Bach's services also may have been called into requisition. Here, in any case, he found ample leisure for continuing his studies. The only artists in the place were men of mediocre ability who could teach him nothing; but he had brought with him from Lüneburg a rich experience, together with a full supply of musical works, forming a treasure-house from which he was able to draw for two whole years. A portion of his own compositions for the clavier and organ, belonging to this period, are of the highest importance. In the year 1704, he completed a work for the clavier, which possesses a biographical interest from its connection with his brother, Johann Jakob. The latter had enlisted as oboist for the body-guard of his Swedish majesty, Charles XII., made the Russian campaign in the king's service, and, after the battle of Pultawa, accompanied him to Bender. From this point he afterwards went, by way of Constantinople, to Stockholm, where he died in 1722, probably in consequence of his superhuman exertions during the campaign. On his departure from home, Sebastian composed a "*Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo*," which is also known under its somewhat more familiar German title: "Capriccio auf die Abreise eines Freundes." It is divided into five parts, with explanatory programme, as follows: I., "Persuasion of the friends, endeavoring to deter him (the brother) from undertaking the journey"; II., "Various casualties which might befall him in foreign lands"; III., "A general lamentation by his friends"; IV., "The friends, because they see it cannot be otherwise, come to take leave"; V., "The Postillion's Aria." At the end is a long fugue, the theme of which is the call of the post-horn. The whole work shows decided skill in composition and marked originality.

In the autumn of 1705, Bach determined to give the finishing touch to his musical culture by studying for a short time with Dietrich Buxtehude in Lübeck. Buxtehude was a Dane, born in 1638 at Helsingförs, on the island of Seeland, and consequently an old man at that time. Towards the middle of the seventeenth century, he came to Lübeck and became organist of Saint Mary's Church. The position was one of the finest in Germany, not only on account of the very considerable income it afforded, but also because of its magnificent organ and the favorable musical conditions prevailing in the place. Buxtehude is to be regarded as the founder of the "*Abendmusiken*," musical performances on a grand scale, which took place in the church, between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, on the five Sundays preceding Christmas. On these occasions he distinguished himself as an organ virtuoso and often presented his own vocal compositions. Bach had formed his travelling plans with direct reference to spending the period of the Abendmusiken in Lübeck. Towards the end of October, he asked for a few weeks' leave of absence, and undertook, with the help of the money saved from his salary, to make the long journey of fifty German miles on foot. Arrived in Lübeck, there is no doubt that he at once entered into close personal relations with Buxtehude. So completely, indeed, did he fall under the spell of the artist, that he forgot all the duties of his office and trebled his leave of absence, returning to Arnstadt on the 21st of February. Perhaps it lay only with himself to decide upon settling permanently in Lübeck. It was often the case with regard to the positions of organist, cantor and the like, that the sons-in-law of the incumbents, in wooing their wives, had at the same time sued for the office of the father. Buxtehude had himself pursued this course, and, as his children were all daughters, he wished to see the husband of the oldest in the person of his successor. In the year 1703, Handel, who had then just come to Hamburg, paid a visit to Buxtehude. He had probably wished to ascertain whether the place was a desirable one for himself, since it was evident that the venerable artist had not long to live. But the marriage which was made a condition of the contract presented too few allurements. Bach may have held the same opinion, or else, as is more likely, he was already bound to his native province by ties of strong affection.

The church Consistory in charge of Bach's position were justly indignant at his unduly protracted absence and called him to account. After his extremely promising beginning, people had grown more and more dissatisfied with the manner in which he discharged his duties as organist. He was reproached with making his accompaniment for the congregational singing so intricate and irregular that the singers often completely lost the melody. Moreover, he at first made his preludes immoderately long, and, when given a hint of this by the officiating clergyman, he immediately fell into the opposite extreme, and cut them much too short. It was also said that he had neglected the training of his pupil-choir and was unable to exercise proper control over the same. These complaints were certainly not unfounded; they accord with Bach's artistic development and with his character. When he sat before the organ, inspired by musical thoughts in rich profusion, he could not have been the genius that he was, if he did not sometimes forget that he must adapt himself to the comprehension of the congregation and the arrangement of the service. That, after the exhortation to restraint, he at once offered preludes of the most striking brevity, is an instance of that defiant spirit which was one of his strongly marked characteristics. The pupil-choir, after a time, began to seem insignificant in his eyes, and the exercises with them monotonous. Considering his youth and the irritability of his temperament, it is not surprising that he failed to retain the respect of this band of untrained youths. Notwithstanding their reproaches, the members of the Consistory showed themselves, on the whole, sufficiently lenient, and allowed nearly a year to pass before making further remonstrances, though he continued, in the interval, to act as he pleased. Bach was no longer contented in Arnstadt, where, after all, though perfectly capable of standing in the first rank, he filled a position of secondary importance. It is credibly related, that favorable offers were made him at this time, from many different places, and on the 29th of June, 1707, he resigned his office in Arnstadt to accept an appointment as organist at Mühlhausen, in Thuringia.

The Bachs, as a family, were accustomed to marry early in life. Among the criticisms upon Sebastian's conduct made by the clergy of Arnstadt, there was one to the effect that he had accompanied upon his organ, the singing of a "strange maiden." This, however, could not well have happened during the service, as female singers in that day were still excluded from church music. The "maiden" was probably his cousin, Maria Barbara Bach, daughter of Michael Bach, who might have been betrothed to him at that time, since he married her on the 17th of October, 1707. Four of the seven children of this marriage, three sons and a daughter, reached maturity, and two of these sons, Wilhelm Friedemann, and Carl Philipp Emanuel, born in 1710 and 1714 respectively, are well known to have attained great musical renown.

In Mühlhausen there were two principal churches, the Blasius and the Church of St Mary. The former, to which Bach was attached, took the highest rank, its organist constituting the chief musical dignitary of the city, and a certain additional lustre was shed upon the position, through the fact that it had been filled by a number of brilliant musicians. Among these were Joachim Moller, styled von Burck (1541–1610), Johann Rudolf Ahle (1625–1673) and Johann Georg Ahle (1673–1706). The prominent composer, Johann Eccard, a contemporary and friend of Moller, was also a native of Mühlhausen. Bach recognized the honor conferred upon him by the call, and it spurred him on to more important achievements. In addition to his unwearied efforts to advance himself in the line of his special branch of art, he zealously strove to elevate the standard of vocal music in the churches of Mühlhausen, and procured at his own expense a fine collection of the best church music, which was produced by him from time to time. He caused the organ of the Blasiuskirche to be repaired after a plan of his own, which bore witness to his great practical knowledge, and also attached to it a *Glockenspiel*, or peal of bells. He moreover composed several great pieces of church music for chorus, solo voices, organ and other instruments. One of these was performed on the 4th of February, 1708, at the time of the so-called Changing of the Council, an annual ceremony which consisted in transferring the administration of one of the three branches of the municipal government to another. A second beautiful work of the same order was founded on the words of the 130th psalm. But from various causes Bach soon found his activity held in check. His grand and lofty compositions, which surprised by their novelty, presented a striking contrast to the light and pleasing style of the later

Mühlhausen masters. The inhabitants of the free and ancient imperial city were possessed of a strongly developed local pride, extending far beyond its proper limits. Affecting superiority, they were disposed to hold themselves aloof from strangers, and that a youth of twenty-two, treading in the footsteps of their once highly respected fellow-citizens, should manifest such independence and love of innovation, aroused their antagonism. These difficulties, however, were not insuperable; Bach, on his side, was not wanting in friends, and the Council gave abundant proof of its good-will. But other and more radical differences existed, which could not be so easily put aside. Philipp Jakob Spener had recently started a movement in the Lutheran Church, which, after the publication of his book, entitled "Pia Desideria," received the name of pietism, and this movement had spread to Mühlhausen. The first clergyman of the town and leading preacher at the Blasiuskirche, J. A. Frohne, was an ardent advocate of the principles and measures of Spener, which owed their origin to the unsatisfactory status of the Lutheran clergy. This body adhered obstinately to the forms which

MORNING PRAYERS IN BACH FAMILY.
From a painting of an ideal scene.

Luther had given it, while departing all too widely from the spirit of the Protestant reformer. The pietism of Spener, in the first decades of its existence, had brought abundant blessing into the domain of spiritual and intellectual life, while his opponents, who were styled orthodox, presented a sad picture of moral torpor and arrogant narrow-mindedness. Unfortunately, the pietists became by degrees very strongly tinctured with asceticism, which had the effect of lessening their influence upon the popular heart, and rendering impossible the genuine success of their cause. As a class, they conceived of the earthly life only in the light of a contrast to the heavenly one, which they dreamed of leading in a state of blessed communion with God. Everything which did not directly promote this rapt, contemplative condition they felt bound to reject, and in this way soon became hostile to the arts, which the orthodox highly valued and encouraged, after the example of Luther. Music seemed to the pietists seductive, unless made to serve an edificatory purpose, and even then it could be employed only for the accentuation of simple religious songs. These, at any rate, were the views which Frohne now sought to establish; it was only natural that Bach, whose genius was just beginning to spread its mighty wings, whose highest aim was to introduce a lofty type of ecclesiastical music, embracing everything the age had produced in the shape of artistic forms and devices, should lift up his voice in protest at such a time. If ever in his life he had been characterized by a yielding and pliant disposition, it was not to be expected that he should manifest it now, when his life-work

was in question. We must therefore regard it as the voice of destiny which, after the lapse of a single year, called him to fill the post of organist at the ducal court of Weimar, one of the places he had formerly visited in making a concert tour. He did not hesitate to obey the call, though realizing to the full the extent of his obligation to the friendly and appreciative Council of the city of Mühlhausen. These men were well aware of the magnitude of their loss and consented most unwillingly to his release, after imposing the condition that he should continue to superintend from Weimar the organ repairs which he had commenced.

Among the most remarkable of the false impressions which have prevailed concerning Bach's personality, must be accounted the idea that he was himself a pietist. Attempts have been made to prove this on the one hand from the nature of the poems composed by him, on the other, from the character of his music. And indeed, it is not difficult to discover in many of the poetical texts which he wrote for his own church music, the pietistic forms of expression. But since these forms, notwithstanding a certain bombastic quality, a rapturous, exaggerated sentiment and an exuberant tenderness, still strike a note of genuine poetry, they were habitually employed by all writers of that day.

Not a single pietist, however, was included in the number of the poets who wrote for Bach. One of these, Erdmann Neumeister, was, on the contrary, a zealous champion of orthodoxy. And concerning the sympathy between Bach's music and pietism, it must also be said here that nothing beyond a certain analogy exists. A strong intensity of feeling is common to both, and the profound intelligence exhibited by the musician in following the most hidden meanings of his text, resembles the fervid devotion with which the pietists were wont to read the Bible. Moreover, the lofty idealism which inspired his artistic creations, causing him to regard everything *sub specie aeterni*, as it were, corresponds in a certain way to the unworldly spirit of the apostles of Spener, who, lost in ecstasy, directed their gaze towards the pictured glories of the heavenly sphere. But, while these pious souls gave themselves up unreservedly to this sort of subjective fanaticism, with Bach the personal feeling is always controlled by the utmost conceivable severity of the musical form. The pietists renounced the world and the forces at work in it; Bach founded his activity upon what had been created before him in his art, and rejoiced, after the manner of his ancestors, in a hearty enjoyment of the world and its beauty. It is not merely because pietism interfered with the free exercise of his art that Bach refused it his support, but rather because this particular religious bent was distasteful to him in every way. The old Lutheran form of Protestantism was an inheritance of his race, and his education had been carried on in places where orthodoxy flourished. In Arnstadt it had victoriously trampled under foot, before his coming, some feeble germs of pietism, which of itself is almost sufficient reason for the attitude of quiet hostility towards Spener, assumed by him from the beginning. The second clergyman of the town, Georg Christian Eilmar, was an orthodox of the strictest kind, and soon after his installation had fallen into a violent controversy with Frohne, which lasted for years and was still in progress when Bach came to Mühlhausen. The musician espoused Eilmar's cause with ardor and did not hesitate to express his opinions publicly, thus affording another manifestation of the spirit of obstinate defiance which formed one of his fundamental traits. For it was impossible that he should be attracted by a prosaic, arrogant, and thoroughly unpleasing personality like that of Eilmar, neither was he in any wise a fanatical partisan of orthodoxy. He held firmly to the belief of his fathers, but to inquire into the principles of their faith was an idea that never occurred to him. Whatever needs his religion may have failed to satisfy were more than filled by his art and the conscientious manner in which he exercised it.

For the next nine years of his life Bach was established in Weimar as court organist and chamber musician; after 1714 he also officiated as concert-master of the ducal chapel and performed some of the duties of capellmeister. Everything that had been lacking in Mühlhausen, he found here at the court of Duke Wilhelm Ernst, a man whose strongly marked personal character was reflected upon his surroundings, imparting to them something of the genial Thuringian spirit. Differing from most of his compeers in possessing a lively sense of his obligations as a ruler, he failed to cherish the delusion that his subjects only existed for the convenience of the reigning class. He was of an earnest nature, this great-grand-uncle of Goethe's friend Karl August,

and lived without ostentation, almost as simply indeed as an ordinary citizen, in his castle of Wilhelmsburg. Without children and separated from his wife after a brief, unhappy union, all his interests were centred in the welfare of the little province; above all, he occupied himself with church and school affairs. Even as a child, he had displayed the strong theological bias which always distinguished him, and had afterwards studied for three years at the University of Jena. His favorite associates were members of the clerical profession, and in order to provide for the spiritual needs of the town of Weimar, which numbered at that time about 5,000 inhabitants, he increased the number of preachers, in whose conferences and theological discussions he took an active part. Orthodox in belief, he hated and prohibited all sectarian controversy, and without diminishing his zeal for the elevation of ecclesiastical standards and the broadening of church organization, he extended a protecting care over the arts and sciences. Weimar owes to him not only its gymnasium, but also the foundation of its library, at present so justly renowned. He took pains to support an excellent music chapel and even tolerated an opera at his court. Chamber music was by no means neglected, but the strongest interest manifested by the duke was in ecclesiastical matters, and during his long reign of forty-five years (1683–1728), his persevering efforts to awaken in the court and the citizens of the town an interest in the works of a great composer of sacred music were crowned with deserved success.

No musicians of eminence were to be found in the Weimar of that day. The aged capellmeister, Johann Samuel Drese, was in feeble health, making it necessary for Bach to relieve him of a portion of his work. Johann Gottfried Walther of Erfurt, who was related to Bach on his mother's side, filled the place of organist in the town-church and soon formed an intimate friendship with his kinsman. Walther's name has continued to be held in esteem up to the present time through his musical lexicon, which was published in Leipsic in 1732 and is a valuable reference book for students of scientific music. But only the spare moments of its industrious author were devoted to the preparation of this work. In addition to his duties as organist, he was active as a composer and also gave instruction in music, his services as teacher being greatly in demand. His strength lies chiefly in the domain of organ music, where he has successfully followed in the footsteps of Johann Pachelbel. In this connection should be mentioned an artist from a neighboring state, who, however, was often seen in Weimar, and who found a degree of pleasure in Bach's society which the latter fully reciprocated. Georg Philipp Telemann, one of the most skilful musicians of his age, enjoyed at that time a greater celebrity than Bach, and steadily maintained to the end of his life the reputation of a high musical authority. His style is wanting in depth and earnestness, but he was one of the most prolific writers the world has seen, showing an incredible activity in every species of composition, so that in the end he was himself unable to say precisely what or how much had proceeded from his pen.

Bach did not restrict his acquaintance to the narrow limits of his immediate surroundings, but was in the habit of undertaking frequent journeys with the view of spreading his fame as organ virtuoso and composer. On one occasion before the end of the year 1714, he went to Cassel for the purpose of testing an organ which had been newly restored. Prince Frederick, son of the reigning duke and afterwards King of Sweden, summoned him to play in his presence and was enchanted by the unheard-of virtuosity of his pedal-playing. In the autumn of 1713, he passed some time in Halle, on his return from a professional tour, and very possibly attracted by a fine new organ, erected by Christoph Cuncius in the Church of the Holy Virgin. The post of organist at this church having been vacant for a year, it seems to have been suggested that Bach should make application for the place. The proposal must at first have been a tempting one, since the organ furnished him in Weimar was very inferior, containing in all only two manuals and twenty-four stops, while that in Halle had sixty-three sounding stops. He soon expressed his willingness to accept the appointment, and prolonged his stay sufficiently to enable him to compose the cantata required of all candidates and to conduct the performance of the same. The church elders were now very anxious to secure his services, but Bach left the place without awaiting their decision. There were many drawbacks connected with the position, and the thought of his friend and patron the duke caused him to waver. When, therefore, the formal "call" was sent to him before Christmas, in the shape of a regularly attested document, just as

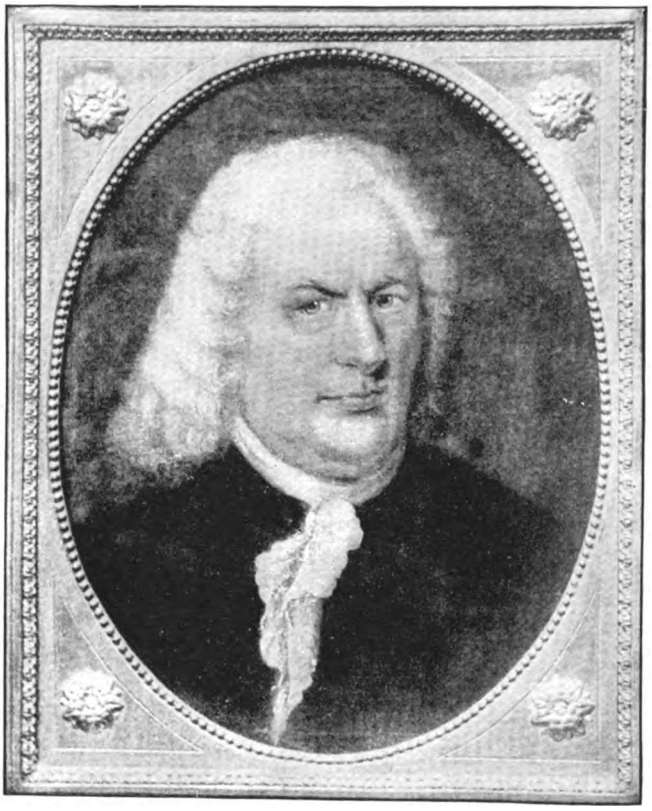
though the matter had already been settled between them, Bach expressed his wish to discuss the matter further before deciding. The authorities took offence at this, and, quite without reason, practically accused him of only pretending to treat with them, in order to obtain an increase of salary from the duke. The sole attraction for Bach in Halle was undoubtedly its beautiful organ. Up to this time he had been using instruments of small or medium size, and indeed, throughout his long career, an organ adequate to the genius of this greatest master in the world was never placed at his command. Meantime the bold and arrogant manner in which he was accused of evading his promise could not fail to be resented with indignation by a man like Bach. He returned a very sharp letter of protest, which plainly showed the church authorities that they had made a mistake. Realizing later their want of tact, they sought to make amends by inviting him to attend the trial performance on the new organ, and Bach accepted the invitation.

In the course of a third journey known to have been made by Bach in the autumn of 1714, he paid his first visit to Leipsic, the city in which he was to spend the last twenty-seven years of his life. On the first Sunday after Advent, he furnished all the organ music for the service (conducted, probably, in the Thomas Church), and also produced a cantata of his own composition. We are familiar with this cantata; it is one of the most beautiful belonging to Bach's earlier period, and begins with a chorus, based upon the old Ambrosian hymn, "Come, Saviour of the people" ("*Veni, redemptor gentium*"). Not long afterwards, Bach probably repaired to the ducal court at Meiningen, to which his cousin, Johann Ludwig Bach, was attached as capellmeister. We have no knowledge of any previous communication between the two branches of the family descended from Veit Bach, and there is good ground for assuming that it was Sebastian who made the advances in this instance. Johann Ludwig had an especial gift for the composition of church music. Twenty-two of his cantatas were copied out by Sebastian's own hand, and of still greater importance than these are the motets by the same master, who, if he does not equal Johann Christoph Bach of Eisenach, has yet introduced into German music, with great success, the Italian method so brilliantly exemplified by Leonardo Leo.

Another autumnal journey made by Sebastian Bach had for its goal the Saxon electoral court at Dresden, where occurred one of the most famous and memorable events of his life. He had always maintained the most friendly relations with the German musicians attached to the electoral chapel, who just now felt themselves unjustly thrust into the background, owing to the preference of the court for the French and Italian school of tonal art. It happened that precisely at this time Jean Louis Marchand, an organist from Paris, was visiting in Dresden and delighting the elector and his court by the elegance of his technique. Bach had found as yet no opportunity of appearing before the court, but so greatly distinguished himself in other musical circles as to create an ardent interest in the question whether he or Marchand was the greater artist. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries competitive musical performances were in high favor. Bach, who was thoroughly acquainted with the style of Marchand's playing and the character of his music, consented to challenge the Frenchman to a trial of skill upon the clavier. Marchand accepted and the tournament was arranged to take place, in the presence of a select body of judges, at the house of a personage of high rank; probably the minister, Graf von Flemming. When the appointed hour arrived Bach was on the spot, but Marchand did not appear; in the sure premonition of failure, he had abandoned the field without resistance. Bach now played alone and enchanted his audience. The report of this occurrence was rapidly spread abroad and served to add new lustre to the fame of the master, who now stood forth a victorious champion of German national art, as opposed to the theories and methods of the French.

These various professional journeys and the visit between the years 1715 and 1717 of Georg Erdmann, the friend of his youth, who, after completing his study of the law, had entered the Russian service in 1715, are the most important external events of Bach's stay in Weimar. If we glance at his creative activity during that period, we see that the principal emphasis falls upon his work as organ virtuoso and composer. Duke Wilhelm took great pleasure in his playing, and this incited him to use his utmost efforts in the art of handling his instrument. It was in Weimar that he wrote the larger number of his very numerous organ compositions, and he also made much progress here in the art of vocal composition, besides becoming thoroughly ac-

quainted for the first time with Italian chamber music. The duke's nephew, Prince Johann Ernst, was of a decidedly musical turn, and, with the aid of Walther, had even made attempts at composition. In gratification of his tastes, frequent concerts of chamber music were given at the castle, Bach acting as leader. The violin concerto, which had just been revived in Italy through the efforts of Torelli and Vivaldi, and the violin sonata in the form established by Corelli, were favorite varieties of this sort of music, in which Bach soon developed a strong interest, as is shown by the fact that he arranged for the clavier and the organ about twenty of Vivaldi's concertos. These works are not arrangements in the ordinary sense, but are rather expansions of the original motives. By means of an animated bass, a richly melodious baritone and artistic contrapuntal imitations, Bach converted his material into something at once novel and charming. He also took themes from the violin sonatas of Corelli and Albinoni, while he richly elaborated and fashioned into an organ fugue, the leading motive of a composition by the Venetian Legrenzi. That he entered very heartily into the spirit of the Italian music of the day is evident from his causing a copy to be made for himself of an important production of Frescobaldi, the greatest Italian organ master. This work, entitled "*Fiori Musicali*" appeared in 1635.



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH.

From an oil portrait owned by the Bach family until 1828. Now in possession of A. Grenser, of Vienna.

But the period of Bach's activity in the line of chamber music properly began after he left Weimar in response to an invitation to become capellmeister at the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. It was probably on account of his not having been appointed to the same office in Weimar, after the death of the venerable Samuel Drese, a preferment which he had every reason to expect, that he gave up his post as organist in the town. The love and protection always bestowed by the duke upon old and trusty servants prevailed in this instance over his interest in art, for he allowed Drese's very incompetent son to succeed his father. The Prince of Cöthen was allied to the ducal family of Weimar through the marriage of his sister to the heir apparent of the reigning house, and on the occasion of his visit at the time of the wedding festivities, it is very likely that Bach may have attracted his attention. He was just the man to appreciate the importance of so great a musician. Clear-sighted and enthusiastic, unmarried and still in the springtime of life, he was endowed with an unbiased judgment and the ability to rule, as well as with an unusual talent for music. He played several instruments, was an excellent bass singer, and Bach said of him in after years that he not only loved music but understood it. And it was precisely chamber music that was almost exclusively cultivated in Cöthen. The province professed the Calvinistic faith and music therefore played an entirely subordinate rôle in ecclesiastical and social life. Bach had no official connection with the church organs in the place. The court never possessed an opera and seems to have been only sparingly provided with singers. Bach's labors were therefore limited to the concerts held at the castle, in which

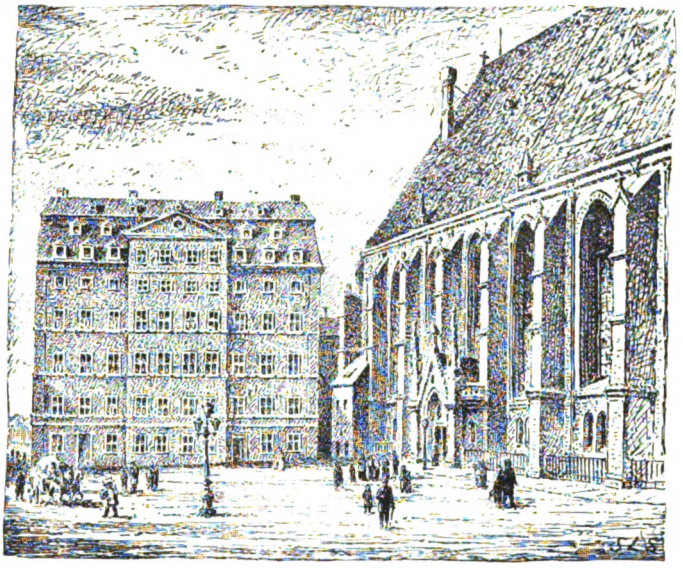
the prince himself took part, and which were especially signalized by the musician's own appearance as performer and composer. There was in Cöthen no opportunity for stepping before the public, and it testifies to the genuineness of Bach's nature and his devotion to instrumental art that he could spend with enjoyment six of the best years of his life in this position, so devoid of all external attraction. During this time he wrote the greater part of his chamber works, including the first part of the "Wohltemperirte Clavier," the "Inventionen und Sinfonien," the sonatas and suites for violin and violoncello without accompaniment, and also with the clavier; finally, the six great concertos dedicated to Margrave Christian of Brandenburg. The prince manifested the warmest attachment for Bach, treated him as a friend in every way, and at last could so little dispense with his society that the two undertook frequent journeys together, in the course of which they twice made a prolonged stay at Carlsbad. Bach meantime did not relinquish his independent professional tours and was often summoned in different directions for the inspection of organs. In December, 1717, he tested the newly-constructed instrument in the Pauliner-Kirche at Leipsic; in 1719 he was once more in Halle and here very narrowly missed meeting Handel, who had travelled thither from London in search of singers for his newly-organized operatic academy and was spending a short time with his relatives before returning. Bach had been informed of this and went to call upon Handel, who, however, had already started on his return journey. Ten years later, he again came to Germany, but Bach was prevented by illness from paying his respects in person and therefore despatched his oldest son with an invitation for Handel to visit him. Although this was declined with an expression of regret, there is little, if any, ground for the assumption that Handel purposely avoided an acquaintanceship with Bach. Yet it may be said in favor of the latter that he always showed a lively interest in Handel's compositions, which was by no means fully reciprocated, and that it was not his fault if the two greatest musicians of their age never saw each other face to face.

In November, 1720, Bach paid a visit to Hamburg, which city, so far as we know, he had not seen since leaving Lüneburg, unless he stopped there on his way from Lübeck in 1706. The celebrated Johann Adam Reinken, almost a centenarian at this time, was still attached to St. Catharine's Church in Hamburg, and Bach very naturally felt a desire to again meet the master with whom he had studied as a boy. An appointment was made for him to play before the assembled magistrates of the city and many other illustrious personages, including Reinken. The venerable artist was greatly moved at Bach's performance (which lasted nearly half an hour) of the choral "By the waters of Babylon," which Reinken himself had long ago arranged for the organ after the manner of the Northern composers. At the close, he went up to Bach and said: "I thought this art was dead, but see that it still lives in you." It is possible that Bach also produced in Hamburg a church cantata of his own composition: "Whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted." A longing for his favorite instrument, of which he had been deprived in Cöthen, was certainly awakened in him by the great number of fine organs here at hand. It chanced that the post of organist at St. Jacob's Church was just then vacant, and a prize competition for the same was to take place on the 28th of November, but Bach was called home by his prince and could not delay so long. He departed on the 23d of November, leaving behind him the assurance that he would gladly accept the place, if offered him. The strongest desire to secure his services was shown by many influential persons, but the church authorities decided in favor of a native of Hamburg, a certain Joachim Heitmann, who, to be sure, was a very insignificant performer, but who had promised to pay into the church treasury a premium of 4000 Hamburg marks, in case of his election. The leading clergyman of the church, Erdmann Neumeister, was so enraged over this affair, that he soon after referred to it in his Christmas sermon, and summed up the expression of his sentiments with the pithy remark that if one of the angels of Bethlehem, divinely gifted as a musician, should desire to become organist at St. Jacob's, but possessed no money, he would be allowed to fly away again.

Not only was Bach awaited in Cöthen by his prince, but family affairs of urgent importance demanded his attention. A heavy loss had befallen him in the summer of this year — his wife had unexpectedly died while he was absent in Carlsbad with the prince. No news of the event had reached him and her remains had long since been committed to the earth when he returned and learned what had

happened. In the next year another calamity followed hard upon the first: his oldest brother died at Ohrdruf, and two years later still the second brother, Johann Jakob, ended his eventful career. Sebastian Bach, meantime, was approaching the period of his second marriage, an event which took place in 1721. At the court in Cöthen, there lived a singer named Anna Magdalena Wilke, twenty-one years of age, the daughter of the court trumpeter at Weissenfels. Upon her Bach now fixed his choice, founded a new household with her help, and in their twenty-eight years of wedded life thirteen children were born to them. The unusual talent for music possessed by Anna Magdalena was developed under her husband's direction to such a degree that she was able to participate in his labors, and is known to have written out the different parts of many of his church cantatas. Two books of music still exist which Bach prepared for her, filled with songs and clavier compositions, mostly of his own writing. Judging from these books, he would seem to have composed his so-called "French Suites" especially for her; she must therefore have distinguished herself highly as a performer on the clavier. Notwithstanding the happy turn now given to Bach's life, his position in Cöthen was becoming uncomfortable for him. A week after his wedding the prince was also married. His bride had no taste for music, and therefore the prince's own interest in it was temporarily diminished. Bach could but clearly perceive that ultimately he would not be able to endure existence in Cöthen — the field of his usefulness was here too limited. Through the death of Johann Kuhnau, the position of cantor at St. Thomas' school in Leipsic had recently become vacant. Bach sought and obtained it, entering upon his duties on the 1st of June, 1723. He continued, however, in the service of the prince as capellmeister "von Haus aus," a title given to the incumbent of an office when not required to reside in the town. Bach was only called upon to appear at court occasionally in the capacity of musical conductor and to furnish compositions for extra occasions. Of this character was the festival cantata produced by him on the 2d of July, 1725, in celebration of the prince's second marriage. But his appreciative friend and patron was not destined to enjoy a long life; he died on the 14th of November, 1728. Bach composed for him a magnificent requiem, the performance of which he conducted in person.

Regarded from an external point of view, the change now made by Bach was a step downward, and he himself once wrote to Erdmann that he did not relish the descent at first. But the office of cantor at the Leipsic Thomas-Schule was by no means of the common order. It seldom happens that a position is filled so uninterruptedly by men of the highest importance, who, in many cases, were as eminent in science as in music, thus imparting to their office a twofold distinction. In this instance, the long list of especially famous names begins with Sethus Calvisius. He was followed in 1615 by Johann Hermann Schein, and the latter in 1630 by Tobias Michael. Sebastian Knüpfer succeeded to the office in 1657, Johann Schelle in 1676, Johann Kuhnau in 1701. Kuhnau died in 1722, having come into personal contact with Bach in the years 1714, 1716 and 1717.



ST. THOMAS' SCHOOL IN LEIPSIC.

The occupations of a cantor were not exclusively musical in character. From time immemorial he had been required to give scientific instruction, the third class in the school being allotted to him, while the conrector assumed the charge of the second class and the rector of the first. The city council of Leipsic, however, was fain to acknowledge that

this arrangement was a difficult one to maintain. Capable musicians, as a rule, even if possessed of the requisite knowledge, took no pleasure in scientific teaching, and this was very decidedly the case with Bach. He soon confined himself wholly to the musical duties of his position and the supervision of the alumni, a care which was exercised alternately by the teachers. These alumni, fifty-five in number, who were supported and educated, free of expense, from the surplus funds of the institution, formed the vocal choir of the town. Bach attended to the daily training of these singers and generally officiated as leader at their public concerts. In the two principal churches of the city, the St. Thomas and the St. Nicholas, sacred music with instrumental accompaniment was given every other Sunday and, on great festival days, in both churches together. Exceptions to this custom were made during Lent and at the Advent season, when motets were sung, without accompaniment, and the leadership of these could be entrusted to an especially gifted member of the highest class in school, which was called the "praefectus chori." As the cantor had nothing further to do with the church services beyond conducting the music in the University Church on certain festal occasions and when wedding or funeral music was commanded, it cannot be said that Bach was overburdened with official duties. On the contrary, he was able to devote a considerable amount of time to composition, and made frequent journeys in the interest of his profession.

It would, however, be going too far to say that Bach's position at St. Thomas's was in every way a congenial one. On the contrary many of its duties were irksome to him, and he did not always find it agreeable to be brought into close contact with pupils who, in part at least, were wild and undisciplined. During the first part of his stay, under the lenient rule of the rector, Johann Heinrich Ernesti, the situation was very trying. We must remember that Bach was an artist, and, as such, of an irritable and capricious disposition, hence little adapted to the training of unruly youths. For the rest, although there was indeed no lack of musical interest in Leipsic, the performers engaged by the town authorities bore no comparison with those in the service of the princes' courts, and the proximity of Dresden, where the most eminent singers and instrumentalists were in active co-operation, was unfavorable, on account of easily-instituted comparisons. The town council of Leipsic could not and would not imitate the lavish generosity of the Saxon court in musical matters, and there is no doubt that it often failed to supply what was strictly necessary. A decided want of tact was also shown in dealing with a great artist, revered by the whole musical world, in precisely the same manner as with any other government official. That Bach was often oppressed with discontent is not to be wondered at, and the feeling seems to have reached its culminating point in the year 1730. After discharging the duties of his office for seven years and composing works of such magnitude as the St. John and St. Matthew Passions, numerous church and jubilee cantatas, including three of the latter order in celebration of the second centenary anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 1730, it was nevertheless said in a council meeting held on the 2d of August, that the cantor was lazy, did not give proper attention to the singing lessons, and, had taken all sorts of unwarrantable liberties, in punishment for which a diminution of his fees had been resolved upon. The "liberties" consisted in his having once sent a member of the choir into the country without previously informing the Burgomaster and having himself made a journey without asking leave. So far as the singing-lessons were concerned, it had for a hundred years been customary for the cantor to give up the charge of them to the prefect of the choir, except on unusually important occasions. By way of response to this incredible proceeding on the part of the council, Bach drew up a memorial with the following title: "A brief but necessary Statement of what constitutes well appointed church music, with a few unprejudiced observations on its present state of decay." In this document he makes a statement of the amount of money he would require in order to organize church music according to his wishes, and contrasts with this the very insufficient sum actually at his command. Since the council did not afford him what he considered necessary, he began to entertain the idea of leaving Leipsic, and on the 28th of October, 1730, he wrote to Erdmann in Dantsic upon the subject. But no action was taken in the matter; Bach remained in Leipsic, and although vexations and annoyances were not wanting in after years, there seems to have been no recurrence of such a crisis. He always lived in friendly relations with the aged rector of the school, Johann

Heinrich Ernesti, and found a warm friend and admirer in his successor, the distinguished philologist, Johann Matthias Gesner (1730–1734), whom he had known ever since the Weimar days. With the third incumbent of the office, however, Johann August Ernesti, he fell into a violent controversy, on account of the removal of a chorus prefect. This was fought out with much obstinacy by Bach because he knew he was right in the principal point at issue. He seems, moreover, to have come off victorious after a two years' struggle, but the consequence was an enduring bitterness between cantor and rector, which tended neither to the advantage of the school, nor of its music.

But if the drawbacks connected with Bach's stay in Leipsic are undeniable and deserving of the conspicuous mention which they have heretofore received, the question on the other hand might well be raised in what locality of the Germany of that day he could have found a position commensurate with his genius. He was not adapted by nature for a brilliant princely court like that of Dresden; there the opera and Italian singing were all in all; appreciation was lacking both for his organ music and his church cantatas — at the very most he was recognized as a virtuoso. And this would have been equally the case if his compositions had been less profound and earnest. He belonged in a place where he would come into constant communication with the Protestant church, and where, in case of need, he had means at hand for giving expression to his grand ideas. So far as such a place was to be found at all, Leipsic offered him perhaps a better field than any other of the larger German towns, and a wider sphere of action had become imperatively necessary for him, after the limitations imposed upon him at Weimar and Cöthen. The liturgy in the Leipsic churches, which even at the present day is comparatively rich, was then characterized by a fulness and variety scarcely inferior to that of the Catholics, and music was called into requisition in corresponding measure. Here was sufficient encouragement for the development of a many-sided activity. Bach's compositions, to be sure, were far above the comprehension of the Leipsic public. But a traditional respect for church music and their strong love for the Thomas choir furnished him at least with willing ears. As cantor of the institution, too, Bach was incontestably the first musical authority of the town, and the proud consciousness of this fact experienced by the artist, could not be even disturbed by the influence of the opera, then already established in Leipsic.[1]

The position occupied by Leipsic as a centre of traffic, especially at the time of the "Messen," or great fairs, heightened the importance of his office, and the strangers who poured into the town at such seasons bore away with them the fame of Bach. Few musicians came hither without seeking the acquaintance of the master, playing before him and begging the privilege of hearing him perform. If one reckons, in addition to these advantages, the material benefits derived from the position, which were sufficient to relieve a man of his simple habits from all wearing anxieties, a very comfortable picture is presented, the darker side of which is to be attributed rather to the deficiencies of the age than to the condition of affairs in Leipsic.

The twenty-seven years passed by Bach in the famous university town cover a period of prodigious activity in the composition of sacred vocal music. Works for the organ became more rare, since his calling brought him into no direct communication with that instrument. On the other hand, a series of magnificent works in the department of chamber music was written in Leipsic. For this his own home and the family life presented the strongest inducements, but about the year 1736, he also conducted a musical union composed of the university students, who assembled twice a week for practice. Journeys were at this time of frequent occurrence, especially to Dresden, where Bach had long possessed a wealth of friends and continually added to the number. In 1736 he received from the court in that city the title "Hof-Compositeur," and in 1733 his eldest son, Wilhelm Friedmann, secured his first position as organist at the Church of St. Sophia, in that city. During his travels in 1727, Bach was twice in Hamburg; his native province of Thuringia was not forgotten, and his relations with Weimar were renewed through the efforts of the successor of Duke Wilhelm Ernst. It is also certain that he paid at least one visit to Erfurt, one of the old gathering-places of the family. Between the years 1723 and 1726, he was frequently heard

[1] It was not until the last decade of his life that there was formed in the circles of the well-to-do merchant class a musical union which survives to-day as the "Institution of the Gewandhaus Concerts." Bach was probably not a member of the society, at any rate, not an influential one.

at the Saxon ducal court of Weissenfels and received from this court the title of Capellmeister, which he bore until his death. The last journey of which we have knowledge was undertaken in May, 1747, and directed to the court of King Frederick II. of Prussia, where, since the year 1740, his son Carl Philipp Emanuel had been established as chamber musician. The king resided in Potsdam and held here his regular "Musikabende," at which he himself played the flute in the circle of his musical friends. Hither Bach repaired on the 7th of May, accompanied by his son Wilhelm Friedemann, and here, through his playing, he aroused the admiration of the king, who himself gave a theme to work out on the clavier. The next day he performed before a crowded audience in the Church of the Holy Ghost, and on the same evening appeared again before the king at his palace, where, at Frederick's request, he improvised a six-part fugue. From Potsdam he went to Berlin and, among other objects of interest, visited the opera-house, built in 1743. After his return to Leipsic he employed the theme given him by the king as the basis of a series of artistic compositions of varying length, which he caused to be engraved and dedicated to Frederick, under the title: "*Musikalisches Opfer.*"

During the last years of his life, Bach was several times drawn into literary controversies. One of his adversaries was Johann Adolf Scheibe, who, born in Leipsic in 1708, resided there as music-teacher till 1735 and then went to Hamburg, where he published a periodical to which he gave the title of "Critische Musikus." In this he attacked Bach on account of his confused and turgid style, which he characterized as both painful and ineffective, because it was opposed to common sense. Scheibe cherished a personal resentment against Bach, believing that he had judged him unjustly on the occasion of his candidacy for the position of organist at St. Thomas's Church in 1727. The attack caused great excitement and called forth a polemical discussion between Scheibe and Bach's friend, the university teacher, Johann Abraham Birnbaum, in which the former was finally worsted. After the lapse of some years, he seems to have realized that he had gone too far, and endeavored in his later works to efface the unfavorable impression produced by his immature criticism of the great artist. In 1749 the school rector, Biedermann, of Freiburg in Saxony, published a Latin treatise containing a warning to youth against an excessive devotion to music, as "easily leading to a dissipated life." In illustration of his theory, he cites a number of profligate characters, belonging to antiquity, and also dwells upon the small esteem in which the musicians of those days were held. The effect of this tirade was to excite the animosity of the whole musical profession, and Bach, whose pupil, Johann Friedrich Doles, was cantor of the Freiburg school, felt himself called upon to retaliate. He induced the organist Schröter to write a reply, which, however, did not appear in print until it had undergone a number of unwarrantable alterations, falsely attributed by the author to Bach himself. As a result of this, the latter was subjected to all sorts of annoyances, and though he did not defend himself with his pen, he was driven to do so through the medium of music. A Latin cantata, "Phöbus und Pan," which evidently referred to Scheibe's hostility, was composed by him in 1731 and performed by a society of musical students. At the time of the Birnbaum controversy, he again brought it to light, inserted a few appropriate allusions in the text, and produced it anew. He was not the man to suffer insult or see his cherished art defamed.

Bach had been nearsighted from his childhood and was afflicted in later years with a weakness of the eyes, which was doubtless occasioned by the strain of his night labors as a youth. An English oculist named Taylor, the same who afterwards treated Handel in London, came to Leipsic in the winter of 1749, and, yielding to the advice of his friends, Bach submitted to an operation, which proved unsuccessful and he became totally blind. Nor was this the only sad result, for the medical treatment prescribed at the same time completely undermined his hitherto unfailing strength. On the eighteenth of July he suddenly found his sight restored, but was, however, stricken with apoplexy immediately afterward, and on the evening of the 28th of July, he died. His work was continued until within a few days before the event, and a choral "Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit" ("Before Thy throne herewith I come"), which he dictated to his son-in-law, was his last composition. His funeral took place on the morning of the 31st of July in St. John's Church. Of the children left behind, two of the sons were taken in charge by their brothers and sisters, the others were already established in independent positions outside of

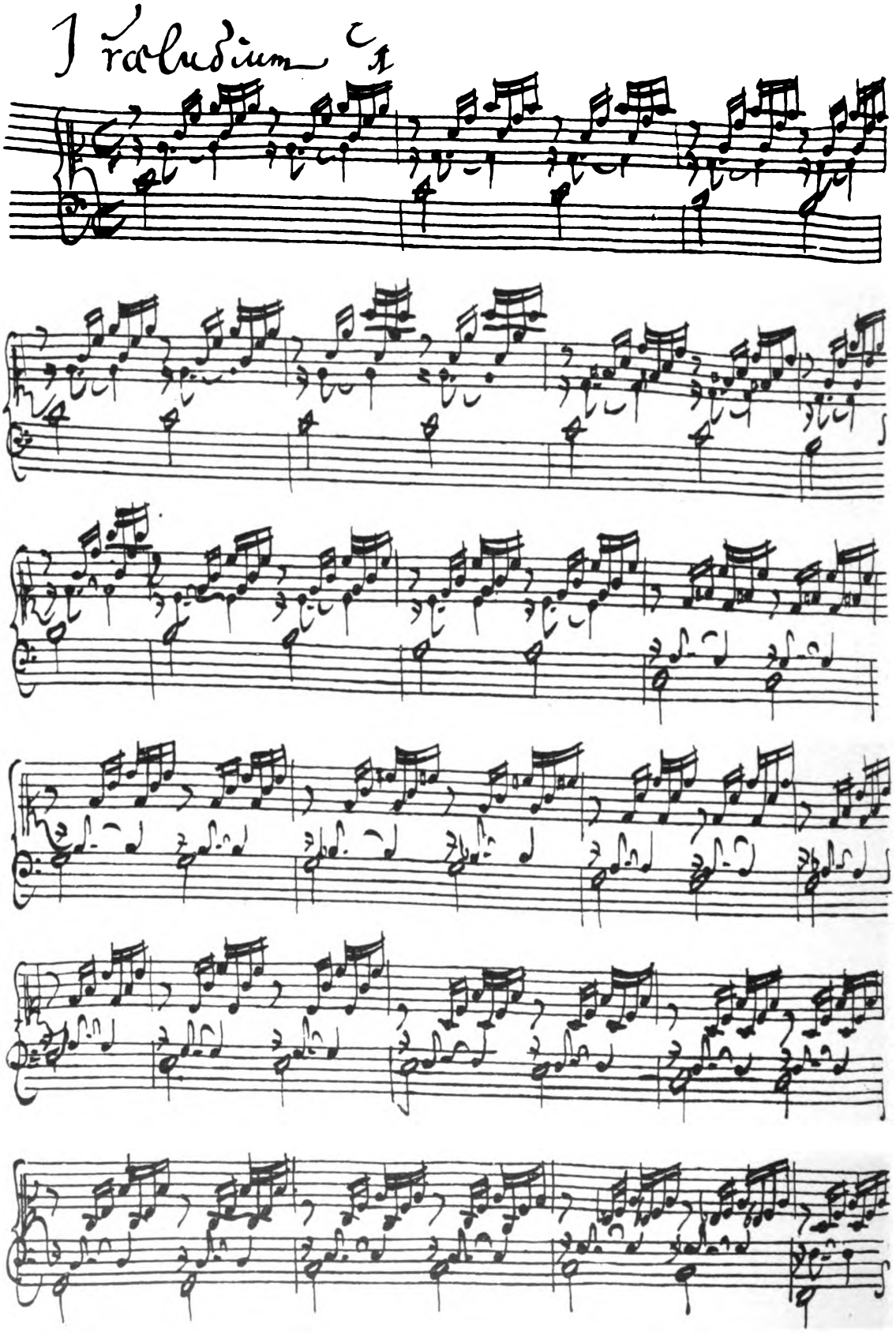
Leipsic. The widow, who had three daughters to support, fell into poverty and lived finally upon public benevolence. It is an indelible stain upon the honor of the town of Leipsic that this was permitted.

Together with his wonderful gifts as an artist, Bach united great clearness and acuteness of intellect, strength of will, a persistency which often amounted to obstinacy, the love for order and a high sense of duty. Like all artists, he possessed an irritable temperament, and was liable to passionate outbreaks, but in the main his demeanor was grave and dignified. Though conscious of his worth, he was free from arrogance. He provided generously for his family and his home life was a happy one, nothing affording him more pleasure than the little concerts which he conducted with his wife and children, assisted occasionally by talented pupils. If he sometimes manifested violent excitement when giving instruction to large school classes, he exercised great patience with individual pupils and showed a happy faculty for teaching them. Instead of oppressing them by the excess of his genius, he drew them up to himself with words of friendly encouragement, and it is certain that he could hold up to them no better example than his own unwearied industry. Among the large number of distinguished artists trained by him are Johann

BACH BEFORE FREDERICK THE GREAT.
From a painting of an ideal scene.

Ludwig Krebs, Gottfried August Homilius, Johann Friedrich Agricola, Johann Philipp Kirnberger, Johann Theophilus Goldberg, Johann Gottfried Müthel; also his own sons, Wilhelm Friedemann, Carl Philipp Emanuel, and Johann Christoph Friedrich. The education of the last he was unable to complete. His latest pupil was Johann Christian Kittel, afterwards organist in Erfurt, who, through his great gifts as a teacher, kept alive in Thuringia for several generations the art of Sebastian Bach. He died in 1809.

The old inherited love of race was strongly characteristic of Johann Sebastian. We owe to him a manuscript genealogy of the Bach family, which is now preserved in the royal library at Berlin. The first number is from the hand of Sebastian himself, while the remainder of the work was performed by his son, Philipp Emanuel. The philanthropic and self-sacrificing spirit manifested by Bach towards his pupils was still more fully exemplified in the circle of his family. In the year 1707 he bestowed upon a cousin in needy circumstances a part of his slender salary. While in Weimar, he took into his house a son of his eldest brother, thus requiting the kindness which he had received from the latter as a boy. In Cöthen he devoted himself energetically and with true filial affection to the fulfilment of an honored relative's testamentary bequests, against his own interests and in opposition to the grasping demands of her next of kin. All that we know of Bach's life presents him to us in the light of a strong and noble nature and confirms us in the belief that the truly great artist must as a man always be profoundly worthy of our veneration.



Fac-simile of the manuscript of the first page of the first Prelude from Bach's "Well-tempered Clavichord."

That in Bach we behold the highest degree of development attained by a race of musicians who flourished through many generations, is due to his wonderful and manifold musical gifts, rather than to his having followed directly in the footsteps of any of the more important composers among his ancestors. He was endowed with a talent for composition of the very first order, has not been excelled as a performer upon the organ and the clavier up to the present day, and was a violin player of the profoundest intelligence, exhibiting complete mastery over the technique of his instrument. At the same time he had a thorough knowledge of organ-building and also distinguished himself by the invention of a new stringed instrument, called the "viola pomposa," and a keyed instrument which was an ingenious combination of the lute and the cembalo. He devised the first perfectly satisfactory method of tuning a clavier according to the tempered system, and introduced the style of fingering, which, with a few modifications, is now in use. But the particular musical form in which his uncle Johann Christoph Bach, of Eisenach, became so great a master — the motet — while cultivated to some extent by Sebastian Bach, was developed differently by him, and his immediate predecessors in the art which made him especially great were not found among the men of his own race.

Bach is first of all a composer of organ music as employed in the domain of the church, and his work must be viewed from this standpoint, if we are to judge him aright. The original foundation of organ music in Germany had been the ecclesiastical Volkslied, or Protestant choral. This does not mean that the melody of a choral was played from beginning to end upon the organ, but that it was made the central point of an independently constructed work, an arrangement possible to be effected in three different ways. Firstly: the choral was played in direct combination with the organ accompaniment, in a way to introduce the congregational singing as the principal feature; in this case a few lines only were worked out in free, contrapuntal style, so as to acquire the character of an improvisation. We see here the choral prelude in its most restricted form. In the second place, the choral was treated as an independent piece of music and resolved into its elementary parts, each one of which was worked out for itself, the composer being influenced in a general way by the poetic sentiment of the text and allowing the musical form to be determined by the relation which the separate lines of the melody bore to each other. Thirdly: the choral, as it left the composer's hands, seemed to him the expression of the poetical thoughts and sensations embodied by the text, and, if played merely by one person, he regarded it as the form in which the assembled congregation gave utterance to its feelings; the choral melody then became the middle point of an independent composition, one part of which moved majestically and solemnly onward, while to the others was entrusted the office of expressing the delicate and personal emotions awakened in the breast of the composer.

By the side of these choral compositions, which, as we have seen, are founded upon a given melody, stand other important forms of music in the seventeenth century: the toccata, the praeludium, the fugue and the passacaglio, or ciacone. While the two last-mentioned proceed from the free invention of the composer, yet here also the Volkslied has exerted its influence, as can easily be seen from the nature of the fugal themes, which are much more expressive and definite than those employed by the Catholics, because with the latter the strong attraction for the Volkslied was wanting. The two greatest organ masters directly preceding Bach were Dietrich Buxtehude and Johann Pachelbel. The latter was born in Nuremberg in 1653 and died there in 1706, while holding the position of organist.

He had been actively at work in Eisenach and Erfurt for thirteen years, gave instruction to Bach's oldest brother and exercised a great influence upon organ music in Thuringia and upon Bach himself in his earlier years. That poetic treatment of the organ choral already described owes its origin to Pachelbel, whose strength lay chiefly in this form of art. Buxtehude's forte, on the other hand, is pre-eminently a free style of composition for the organ and a brilliant artistic handling of the instrument, in contrast to which the thorough, but unpretending technique of Pachelbel falls into the background. All the creative power possessed by these two masters, Bach combined in his own person.

Over one hundred organ chorals by Bach are still extant and a large proportion of them are in his own handwriting. A fine collection of forty-five shorter pieces is presented by his "Orgelbüchlein" (Little Organ Book). The compilation of this was made in Cöthen, but the greater part of its contents

belongs to the Weimar period. The pieces are almost wholly in Pachelbel's manner, but are more characteristic, richer and of greater depth. The melody always moves on uninterruptedly and, with few exceptions, in the simple style adapted to congregational singing. The other parts are artistically interwoven and reflect the particular sensations which the significance of the choral melody in the church liturgy and the import of the poem to which it belongs awaken in the mind. The musical thought from which the accompanying parts are developed is usually brief; it takes its character from the poem, into the meaning of which Bach penetrates very deeply. The effect is especially beautiful when he reproduces in his music the idea of certain visions, which have been called up by the poem. An example of this is furnished by the choral: "Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schaar" ("From Heaven came the Angel Host"), in which two of the accompanying parts with their ascending and descending strains seem to personify the Christmas angels coming down to the shepherds and again soaring upward. A favorite plan of Bach for increasing in an artistic manner the importance of the choral melody, is that of managing it after the fashion of a canon; that is to say, it is heard not merely in a single part, but recurs in another, after a certain interval, an arrangement from which surprisingly expressive harmonies result.

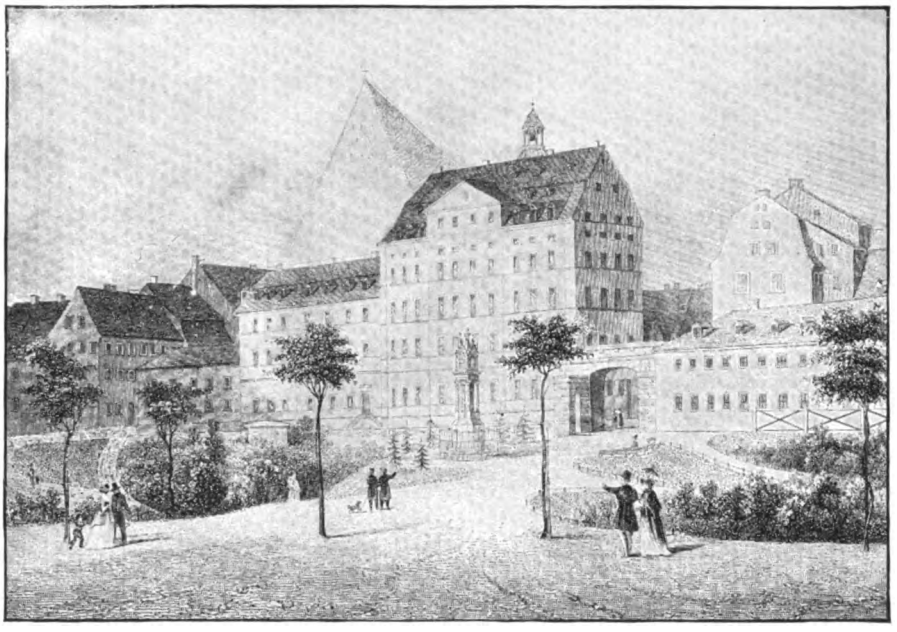
Besides the "Little Organ Book," we possess a second autograph collection by Bach, containing sixteen organ chorals, interspersed with several pieces of the same order written by his pupil Altnikol. In this volume are included the most noteworthy of the more extented organ chorals composed during the Weimar period; these however were not published until they had undergone the careful revision of the artist and received many changes from his hand. Here we find model compositions in all the larger forms, which either came down to Bach from his predecessors, or were acquired by his own continually increasing culture. His constant and energetic efforts to attain the greatest possible organic unity in his compositions naturally obliged him to place the strongest emphasis upon the development of the polyphonic web of the melodic accompaniment from a single musical thought. If this thought became expanded into a longer and more expressive theme, worked out according to the rules of art, the accompaniment was then likely to acquire an independence and importance which interfered with the predominance of the choral melody. The sole means therefore of strengthening this melody was to introduce a vocal part, and that is precisely what was done by Bach. While he added to the composition thus changed, other instruments besides the organ and also other vocal parts, he transferred the organ chorus to the domain of vocal music, in order that he might give it the grandest conceivable form. Bach's choral choruses, which excite the astonished admiration of all who know them, are the direct outgrowth of his organ chorals. The piece from the "Little Organ Book" consisting of twenty-seven measures, composed upon the melody, "O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig" ("O, Innocent Lamb of God"), and the gigantic opening chorus of the St. Matthew Passion, in which the same melody is accompanied and crowned by two vocal choruses, two orchestras and two organs, rest upon exactly the same principle of construction.

Buxtehude had paid no attention to the third method of developing the choral, as previously described, but bestowed much thought and artistic skill upon the second, and had succeeded in imparting to it an especial charm, through tasteful ornamentation of the melody and the combination of several different kinds of organ registers. His works in this line, however, are not distinguished by any especial unity or by reserve of form. Bach felt himself attracted by this free and more fantastic style of composition, because it stimulated him to evolve from it something which should satisfy his own lofty ideal. A number of highly remarkable organ chorals, of the most dissimilar character, originated in this way; among them are the elaborations of "Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele" ("Adorn thyself, beloved Soul"), "An Wasserflüssen Babylon," two re-arrangements of "Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr" ("Glory alone to God on High"), and one of "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland."

In the Leipsic period, few organ chorals were composed by Bach, but each one of these is a master work of the musician. The forms are those of the Weimar chorals, but are on a comparatively colossal scale and the art of the composer has increased in corresponding measure. They were published in the year 1739, together with several choral fugues in the third part of his so-called "Clavier-Uebung"; in 1746 were issued five variations in canonic

form upon the Christmas song: "Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her" ("From Heaven on high come I hither"). Bach's strong attachment for this artistic form, over which he had gained entire mastery in his youth, continued to the end. His last work, composed immediately before his death and dictated to Altnikol, was an organ choral.

In Bach's organ music of a freer style, it is easier than in the chorals to perceive the gradual approach to perfection. Here it is very evident that Pachelbel was not his master; even the few preludes and fugues which he wrote in his first years at Arnstadt betray a study of Buxtehude. After the journey to Lübeck, what had before been imitation became free creation after the manner of his model. In Weimar, where he rose to eminence as an organ virtuoso, the striving after external brilliancy and the desire of developing his skill as a performer in all directions, bear evidence for a considerable period of his continued adherence to the style of the Danish master. Although the compositions of this time are in no wise superficial, they yet stand far below his later works in solidity. By degrees, and evidently in consequence of close and persever-



MONUMENT TO BACH IN PARK AT LEIPSIC.
Reproduced from an old steel engraving.

ing labor with the choral, Bach's melodies become much richer and more expressive. The study of Italian music, to which he devoted himself in Weimar, had the effect of imparting to his work greater clearness and finish, and his beautiful "*canzone*" for the organ is the direct result of that study. The name itself bears witness to the fact, since the Italians of the seventeenth century were accustomed to designate by this word the musical form which afterwards was called the fugue. In a group of organ compositions, which manifestly belong to the later Weimar period, Bach shows himself to have reached that eminence as a composer of fugues which only he was able to attain. The greatest skill in execution is everywhere presupposed, but nothing is sacrificed to this; the fugal themes are forms of a strongly accentuated type; in the management of the parts great restraint and system are displayed; the preludes also lose their extemporaneous character, are given a real theme and subjected to the rules of the contrapuntal style. The only organ passacaglio by Bach was composed at about this time. Well knowing that Buxtehude had excelled in this form he resolved to make an attempt in that direction, summoned all his powers and created one of the most lofty works of German tonal art.

At the time when Bach's playing excited the general admiration of the Hamburg public in 1720, he

probably performed there his great G-minor fugue with prelude, one of his best known and most celebrated works. A musician of the eighteenth century pronounced this to be "the very best pedal piece of Herr Johann Sebastian Bach," and it is certainly safe to assert that he never wrote one which surpassed it. Play of imagination, inexhaustible invention, transparent clearness, unaffected simplicity, lofty earnestness and deep inward joy are here combined to form a whole of such unapproachable grandeur as to exclude every thought of a comparison with other composers. Among the works of the Leipsic period should be mentioned first of all the six sonatas for two manuals and pedal. These were completed between the years 1727 and 1733 and, according to tradition, were intended for the education of the musician's eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann. The form of these pieces, as is well known, is borrowed from the Italian chamber music. Properly speaking, they are not intended for the organ, but for a pedal-clavier with two manuals, yet they do not lose in effect, when played upon the former instrument. They present the most difficult of tasks to the organ-performer, not only because the most perfect independence of movement is demanded of both hands, as well as the feet, but also on account of the crystalline transparency of the three-part movement which renders the smallest defect in execution extremely painful to the ear. The six so-called "great preludes and fugues" (Edition of the Bach Society, Vol. xv., p. 189—260) are also considered as belonging to the Leipsic time, although no positive external evidence in favor of the assumption can be produced. If we add to these the preludes and fugues in G major, the toccata and fugue in F major, the "Doric" toccata and fugue in D minor and the great prelude with fugue in E♭ major, we shall have nearly exhausted the list of works composed by Bach during the latest period of his life. Should this seem to any one a small amount for so great an artist to accomplish in twenty-seven years, he must remember that the principal object of Bach's activity throughout this period was the vocal church music, which, as cantor of St. Thomas's, it was his duty to provide each Sunday. The value of works of art, moreover, is not to be estimated by their number or extent. Haydn wrote over one hundred symphonies, Beethoven only nine, yet the composer of "Fidelio" certainly does not rank below Haydn in importance. These later organ pieces of Bach's are creations of a universal type. Into each one of them the artist infused the whole of his giant intellect, animating by the breath of his genius the masses of sound poured forth from the organ in prodigious volume, yet governed in the smallest details by the most rigorous rules of art. They are true and actual prototypes of the divinely ordered processes of nature, and in listening to them one calls to mind the profound saying of Goethe: "Bach's music produces in me the feeling that the eternal harmonies are holding converse together as they may have done in the bosom of God before the creation."

The term chamber music was borrowed by the Germans from the Italians, with whom "*musica da camera*" was directly opposed to "*musica da chiesa*." In German it might be more appropriate to say "society music." We are accustomed in our day to think only of instrumental music in this connection, but it was the original intention to include vocal compositions as well. Works of both kinds were produced by Bach, but however interesting his vocal chamber music may be, it is of only secondary importance, relatively speaking. He must himself have been of this opinion, for he frequently made re-arrangements of these compositions (which were mostly written for particular occasions), and thus converted them into church music. His instrumental works, on the other hand, are of the highest importance, not only for their intrinsic merit, but as a means of determining the permanent artistic standing of the composer. In considering them, it is necessary to distinguish between such as are especially derived from organ music, those which grew out of Italian violin music, and the remaining portion, which found their origin in the exclusive domain of the clavier. In a general way at least, the style of organ music exercised great influence upon all three of the varieties mentioned; Bach made it his point of departure and it formed through his whole life the basis of his work.

To the first class of instrumental compositions belong the toccatos, preludes, fugues and all works for the clavier written in fugal style. It should here be observed that the modern clavier, or pianoforte, had just been invented in Bach's time and was still in its crudest form. Bach did not intend his clavier compositions for this instrument, but for the clavichord and clavicembalo, which are of a different quality of tone and much inferior in volume to the hammer

clavier at present in use. When this fact is taken into account, no false impressions need prevail concerning the effect of those earlier clavier pieces, which were so much in the style of organ music. We find among them many works of marked originality and beauty, such as the three magnificent toccatas in E minor, C minor and F major, written probably in the Weimar period and offering, even in our own day, the most grateful task which can be undertaken by an earnest and painstaking pianist. Bach's chamber music compositions, however, reached their highest point of perfection in Cöthen, as has been already stated. Here he created in 1723 that collection of artistic and soulful melodies, in the form of two and three-part clavier pieces, which received the name of "Inventionen und Sinfonien"; here also in 1722 he finished the first part of the "Wohltemperirte Clavier." This world-renowned work contains twenty-four preludes and fugues in all the major and minor keys of the twelve chromatic scales. Its title is due to the fact that the method of tuning an instrument in such a way as to secure purity of tone in nearly every key was first discovered in Bach's time. Until then, in the case of the clavier, the clavichord, etc., such keys as had either very few sharps or flats in the signature or none at all, had been tuned as correctly as possible and the remainder with proportionate inexactness. To distribute these unavoidable inaccuracies among the twelve keys of the instrument in such a way that, while no one of them attained perfect purity of interval, the deviations therefrom were too slight to offend the ear, was the task of the so-called "equal temperament." Bach's fame as an unsurpassed composer of fugues is founded especially upon the "Wohltemperirte Clavier," the contents of which were not composed at one time, but by degrees, many pieces dating from an early period of the artist's activity. The second part of the "Wohltemperirte Clavier" was completed in 1742. In this collection, the three-part fugue predominates and throughout the whole work there breathes that freedom and repose which are characteristic of the highest order of genius only. The first part is still more artistic, and Bach's command over the technicalities of the fugal style appears in it more plainly. Both parts have this in common, that they contain nothing but musical character-pieces of the first rank. The "Chromatische Fantasie und Fugue" may also have been written in Cöthen; it was certainly completed before 1738. The well-known C-minor fantasia was probably composed in 1738; of the fugue which was to follow it, nothing but a fragment remains. In 1747 appeared the "Musikalische Opfer" and in 1749 "Die Kunst der Fugue," these two works forming the conclusion of the whole series of compositions. The former is a collection of various fugues and canons, together with a four-movement sonata for violin, flute and clavier. Ingenious and important as the single pieces are, they cannot be said to form a symmetrical whole, while with regard to "The Art of Fugue" the contrary is true. In the original engraved edition of this work, which Bach was able to revise only in part, much extraneous matter had crept in. After this was excluded, there remained fifteen fugues and four canons, all composed upon the same theme. The fugues belong together and seem to be arranged in four groups in order to facilitate the hearer's comprehension of them; strictly speaking, however, they form all together a single gigantic fugue in fifteen divisions. Because Bach wished to show in this work the utmost that could be accomplished with a single theme, it should not be assumed that in writing it, his sole purpose was to instruct. The same may also be said of the "Orgelbüchlein," the "Inventionen und Sinfonien" and the "Wohltemperirte Clavier," which had also been composed by him for the benefit of rising artists. Yet the practical purpose had the effect of giving wings to his imagination; he strove to produce not only the most artistic work of which he was capable, but also the most beautiful, and in this he was successful. In fact the "Art of Fugue" is one of the most sublime instrumental works of the composer. But its deep and solemn earnestness, only rising to passionate emotion in the central fugues, in order to sink back into itself again, as well as the difficulty of understanding so great a number of complicated pieces, all bearing a certain relation to each other, has thus far interfered with the proper appreciation of this last great monument erected to himself by the master. In a still later fugue, Bach wished to make use of his own name, having perceived that its four letters, regarded as notes, formed a characteristic melody. The intention was not carried out, but several fugues upon the family name are still extant, one of which at least is well known, has been frequently printed, and may very easily have proceeded from the hand of Sebastian Bach.

The musician's numerous compositions for violin, gamba and flute, with and without accompaniment, belong in the domain of Italian chamber music, and take either the concerto or the sonata form, as established by the Italians in 1700 — forms everywhere available, although different in many respects from those at present employed for the same class of works. Bach's own violin playing must have been exceptionally artistic, even though he may not have conquered the greatest difficulties of his compositions as triumphantly as Joseph Joachim is able to do in our day. The German violinists of the seventeenth century had a fondness for double and more-stopping violin-playing, and surpassed the Italians in this respect. Bach's three sonatas for violin without accompaniment probably mark the utmost limit of development attainable by this kind of technique. It cannot be proved with certainty that any one before him ever attempted the composition of sonatas without accompaniment and in these works a certain admixture of clavier music is perceptible, especially in the fugue movements. The sonatas were arranged, either in parts or as a whole, for the clavier or the organ, and appear to almost better advantage in this way than in their original form. The preference for clavier-music is a trait by which Bach, as a German, is distinguished from the Italians. The latter contented themselves even in violin sonatas with a simple form of thorough-bass, that is, in connection with the violin part only one bass was written down for the clavier player, who improvised with the right hand supplementary chords. Bach composed very few works of this class and seldom left the accompaniment to be extemporized, but preferred to write out in full an independent part for the right hand. Of this description are the famous six sonatas for violin and clavier, the three sonatas for gamba and for flute with clavier. Among the latter the F-minor sonata takes rank as the most beautiful piece of chamber music ever composed for the flute. Three of Bach's violin concertos have been preserved, written in A minor, E major and D minor respectively. In the latter, two violins are concerted with the orchestra. It was not uncommon at that time to employ more than one instrument in a concerto, and to such a composition the name *concerto grosso* was given. In 1721 Bach dedicated to the margrave Christian of Brandenburg, six concertos for a full body of instruments; of these numbers 2, 4 and 5 are concerti grossi. In the combining of solo instruments Bach is much bolder than his contemporaries and sometimes ventures upon the extraordinary. Thus in the second of this group of concertos he opposes to the orchestra a trumpet, a flute, an oboe and a violin, in the fifth a flute, a violin and a clavier. On the other hand, there are concertos by him in which the external contrast between solo and tutti has entirely vanished and nothing remains but the pure musical form arising from this contrast. Of this nature is the Italian concerto in F major, which Bach composed for the piano alone. Eight concertos for clavier and orchestra (the latter consisting here, as was usual in that day, of string instruments and cembalo) are still extant. The one in D minor is considered the finest of all. Of still greater value are the concertos for two and three pianos, in which the form of the *concerto grosso* is employed in a new manner. There even exists a concerto for four claviers and orchestra; this, however, is only an elaboration of a violin concerto by Vivaldi. It should be remarked in this connection that Bach regarded the organ as an instrument for church use exclusively and wrote no organ concertos, whereas Handel produced many works of that class.

The clavier variations and suites composed by Bach are most characteristic and individual in style. We possess, to be sure, only two sets of variations by him, but the aria with thirty variations is a work which has marked out new paths for the variation form and exerted an influence extending through and beyond Beethoven to Schumann and Brahms. In the suite consisting of dance-forms, or the partita, the French had distinguished themselves as also the German clavier masters, Johann Jacob Froberger, Johann Krieger and Johann Kuhnau, from all of whom Bach made zealous attempts to learn. His three principal works of this sort are the so-styled French Suites, English Suites and the Partitas. Each collection contains six suites, but in Bach's lifetime only the Partitas were published in the engraved form. These compositions are pervaded by the wholesome freshness and cheerfulness characteristic of the German people, while they exhibit at the same time unusual firmness and delicacy of structure; Bach indeed imparted to the clavier suite the highest conceivable degree of finish. In the six violoncello suites without accompaniment, the form is presented to us in a different

tone-material. This style of music was abandoned after the master's death and was succeeded by the clavier sonata, to which Bach had never paid any considerable attention. Another form in existence at this time was the orchestra suite, which differed from the clavier suite in respect to the arrangement of the dances and showed much greater freedom as to the choice and number of the same; it was often the case, moreover, that an overture served as introduction to the work. Bach left behind four such orchestral suites or partitas; he also employed the same form in three suites for violin without accompaniment, which were published in one volume, together with the three unaccompanied violin sonatas, in one of which occurs the famous D-minor violin chaconne. And, finally, this form was transferred by Bach to the clavier, as in the case of the B-minor partita, which he published in 1735 in the second part of his clavier-Uebung.

As a composer of church music, Bach occupies a position in the evangelical ranks analogous to that of Palestrina among the Catholics. The difference in time, nationality and artistic gifts naturally presupposes an equal degree of difference in musical forms and resources, but aside from this, emphasis must be placed upon the infinitely greater versatility of Bach, who was at home in every domain of art, with the exception of the opera and the oratorio, and in each one created works that have never been surpassed, while Palestrina confined himself almost wholly within fixed ecclesiastical limits. The different varieties of evangelical church music possible to be considered by Bach were the hymn, the motet, the church cantata, the evangelical histories, the mass and the magnificat. The hymn, or Protestant choral, received no increment from him; he composed very beautiful religious songs, but nothing in the style of the Volkslied. As regards the motet, that old ecclesiastical form of song without accompaniment and composed of many parts, Bach certainly paid some attention to it in his capacity as director of the vocal choir at St. Thomas's. Four works of this class with double chorus and one in five parts (Jesu, meine Freude) are ripe fruits of his genius, but however beautiful and powerful as compositions, they are not properly continuations of the motet in the form given it in the seventeenth century by Schütz, Johann Christoph Bach and others. These composers adhered closely to the severe style of the church motet of the sixteenth century, into which, however, a certain secular element had been introduced, while Bach's motets are rather to be regarded as a subsidiary form of his church cantatas. We find in them the same resemblance to organ music which characterizes his vocal compositions with instrumental accompaniment, and among the latter are many pieces precisely after the manner of the motet. It is now a tolerably well established fact that Bach's motets were never performed without the aid of the organ or other instruments; in fact remarkably well trained choruses would have been necessary in order to dispense with such support. That they must have been intended to serve as an occasional substitute for a cantata, is shown by their unusual length, which would prevent them from filling the regularly appointed place in the church liturgy.

According to excellent authority, Bach wrote five complete "year books" of church cantatas. Reckoned according to the requirements of the Leipsic church year, they would therefore reach a total of about four hundred, but not more than half that number have been preserved. The name here employed was given to the works in the present century; Bach himself called them concertos, and thereby indicates their historical origin. The sacred concerto was first introduced into Germany by Schütz, who imported it from Italy. Originally a piece of one or more solo parts with an instrumental accompaniment pervaded by intense passionate feeling, it soon adopted the chorus as a means of attaining completeness and variety. The choral, elaborated in various ways was then added and afterwards the aria in its different forms, the text of this new style of concerto being expanded to correspond. While in the beginning this text consisted only of biblical passages or prayers, all kinds of devotional poetry were later employed, in connection with the choral stanzas. After the year 1700 the so-called "madrigal" form of poetry found its way into the concerto and was also very commonly made use of in operatic music. In this way the recitative became a part of the concerto, which had gradually been made to include all the vocal forms then in vogue. The church cantata of Bach is the sacred concerto, in its most perfect form. As a means of blending into a harmonious whole the manifold elements which composed it, Bach had recourse to the style of his organ music, as carefully wrought out by him in the bosom of the

church. In this way, while implanting upon the work all the forms which have been enumerated, he imparted to it the truly ecclesiastical character which it had never before possessed. The choral now became the principal musical feature of the concerto (or cantata) and the closest connection was established between the text of the work and the Bible selection which formed the subject of the sermon on the particular Sunday or festival day for which it was composed. The regularly appointed place for the cantata in the church service was just before the sermon, but, on very important occasions, it was sometimes divided into two parts, the second of which came after the sermon. The wealth of creative power revealed by Bach in this musical form, which now unhappily has become unfamiliar to us, transports one with astonishment; above all, his treatment of the choral is simply amazing. Appearing in solo and chorus songs, artistically elaborated or in simple popular form, resounding in a single instrument or in a group of instruments, while the singing voices are occupied with another text, which seems to receive its highest consecration from this interpenetrating melody, it imparts strength and animation to the entire work, and in proportion as Bach advanced in years, he gave greater definiteness to this central feature of the cantata. The texts for such compositions were furnished by Erdmann Neumeister of Hamburg, and after him by Salomo Franck in Weimar, Christian Friedrich Henrici and Mariane von Ziegler in Leipsic. They consisted, in their normal form, of passages from the Bible and stanzas of hymns, which were held together by a free style of versification. But in order that the chorals might acquire still greater influence than was possible under these conditions, Bach sometimes made compositions for each stanza of the poetic text, with an ever-varying employment of his melody, as in Luther's Easter hymn: "Christ lag in Todes Banden" ("Christ lay in bonds of darkness"). Again, since the stanza was not adapted to every kind of music, he occasionally substituted for it the madrigal, but in such a way that the original theme, now approaching nearer and now retreating into the distance, was easily recognized by those among the listeners who were familiar with the hymn. About forty cantatas of this description are still in existence.

Among the evangelical histories should be included, besides Bach's Passion Music, his Christmas and Ascension oratorios. It is probable that this name was given to the works merely for the sake of brevity; the works are not oratorios such as Handel's, but church music, which was performed during the service, the Passions on Good Friday afternoon, before and after the sermon, the others on the respective festal days, before the morning sermon. The term "histories," however, seems appropriate, because in these works the narration of events in the words of the Bible constitutes as it were the thread which joins together the manifold parts. The old church custom of intoning passages from the Bible is the foundation upon which these works have been built up, during successive centuries of development. Since the intoning of long selections, such as the accounts of Christ's sufferings and death, was too fatiguing for a single clergyman, it was usual to distribute them among a number, and in such a way that one delivered the narrative portion, another the words of Christ, a third the utterances of all the other speaking persons introduced. From this custom proceeds the peculiar distribution of the text among the different singers, which is found in the Passion music of Bach. For the rest, their style is precisely the same as that of the church cantatas. Of the five Passions of Bach, only three are preserved. The St. Luke Passion, which has often been considered spurious, but upon insufficient grounds, belongs to his earliest youthful period, and may have been written in Arnstadt, perhaps even in Lüneburg. It can claim nothing more than a historical interest, in comparison with the other two. The St. John Passion was probably produced for the first time on the 17th of April, 1724 — the Matthew Passion certainly on the 15th of April, 1729, both performances taking place in the St. Thomas's Church at Leipsic. They are undoubtedly the most comprehensive of the existing works of Bach. Represented without abridgment, the St. Matthew Passion alone occupies about two hours and a half, so that with the sermon and the remaining portions of the liturgy, the afternoon service must have covered a space of four hours. The dress in which these two works are clothed corresponds to their intrinsic value; both belong to the richest, most powerfully conceived and most affecting compositions of all people and all ages. The St. Matthew Passion is smoother in form, more varied, and appeals more directly to the hearer. For want of the assistance of a competent poet, Bach was compelled to make many still

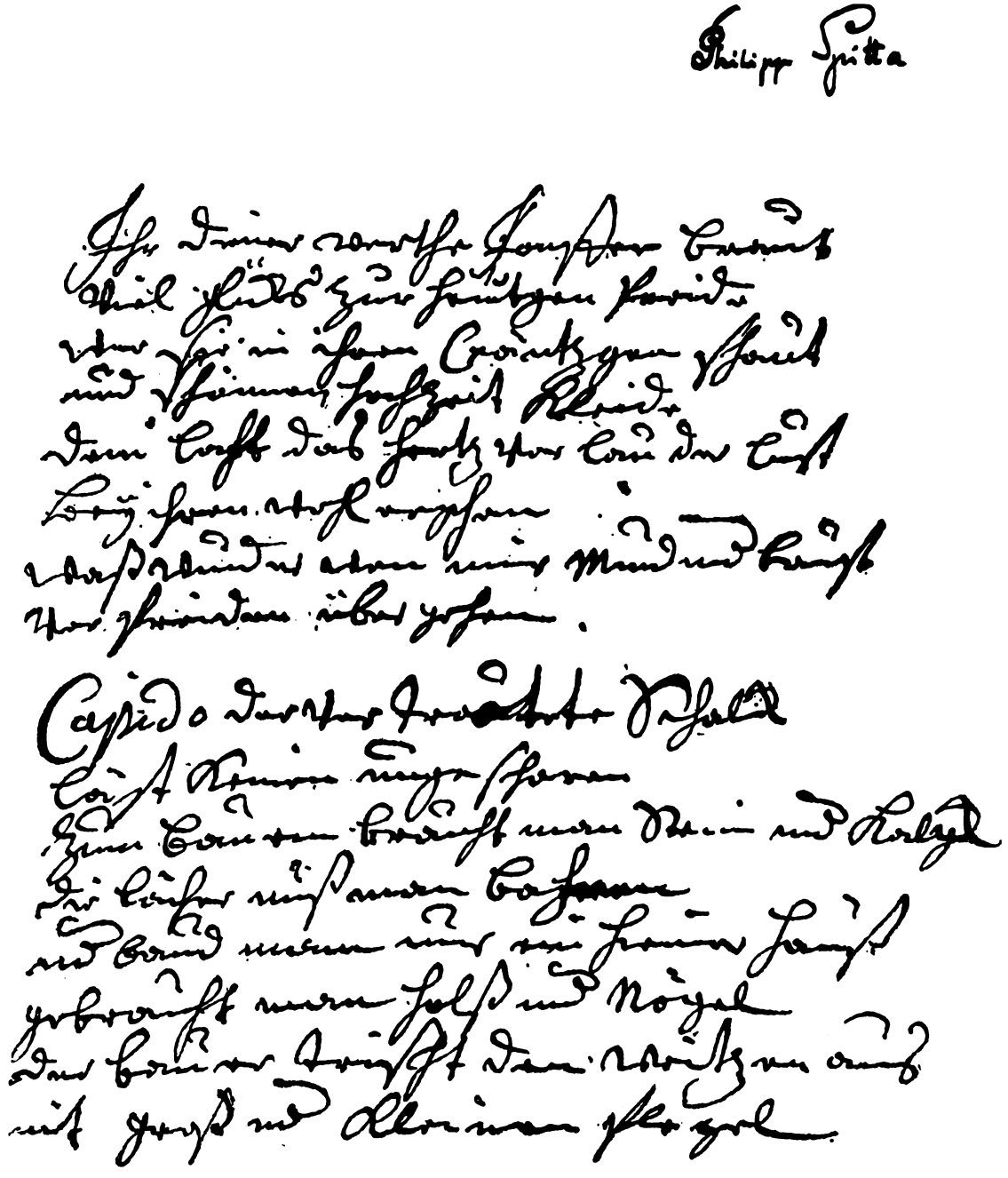
perceptible alterations in the earlier work: it is moreover pervaded by a certain severity and gloom. For this reason it is somewhat less dear to the hearts of the German people than the St. Matthew Passion, which has become with the process of time one of the most popular of vocal compositions. Very nearly the same may be said of the Christmas "history," composed in 1734, a bright, joyous and charming production, offering a complete contrast to the Passion Music. It is divided into six sections, from the fact that the twelve days between the 25th of December and the 6th of January form a continuous festival period, in which six days are especially celebrated, namely: the three days of Christmas, New Year's Day, New Year's Sunday and the Epiphany. One part of the work is devoted to each of these days. The shortest of the histories was composed for Ascension Day and has only the length of the ordinary church cantata. Singularly enough, there is no Easter history by Bach; his little Easter "oratorio," which in this case has more right than usual to the name, since it approaches in style the Italian works thus designated, though far from resembling those written by Handel, is not to be reckoned among his important achievements.

In Bach's day, it was the custom in Leipsic to render in Latin the magnificat performed at the afternoon service on the three great festal days. It is owing to this circumstance that Bach composed his splendid composition, which was probably performed for the first time on Christmas day in the year 1723. Certain portions of the Latin mass were moreover still in general use, especially the "Kyrie" and the "Sanctus," the employment of the "Gloria" being confined to Christmas Day. Since the "Kyrie" was a regular part of the service on the first Sunday in Advent, a certain connection was thus established between it and the "Gloria," and this may be one of the reasons why Bach composed a number of so-called short masses, consisting only of those two parts.* And as the practice of performing the whole of a Latin mass was not yet entirely given up in the Protestant church, more particularly in Leipsic, it is easily explained how Bach could conceive the project of writing a work of the kind in Latin. In the beginning, he only contemplated writing a "Kyrie" and a "Gloria," and these, being completed on the 27th of July, 1733, were presented to the Elector of Saxony in Dresden. One after another, however, the remaining parts were added and the entire work was finished as early as 1738. To produce it as a whole, under the conditions existing in Leipsic at that time, was utterly impossible, and it is probable that Bach never heard a full public performance of his grandest work. So much the more admirable was the courage displayed by him in undertaking a composition, which frees itself from the limitations of the actual and exists only in the realm of the ideal. In this mass all distinction between Protestant and Catholic is done away with and nothing remains but a universal Christian church, the image of which appears in the gigantic work, for whose creation Bach summoned all his powers and which has no equal in the world. Its only rival is the "Messiah" of Handel, and the difference between the two compositions is a consequence of the difference in the men who produced them. Handel, the oratorio composer, treated his subject historically, while Bach remained in the domain of the church, which, however, he extended far beyond the limits of a narrow belief, a matter of no concern to him when his genius took its loftiest flight.

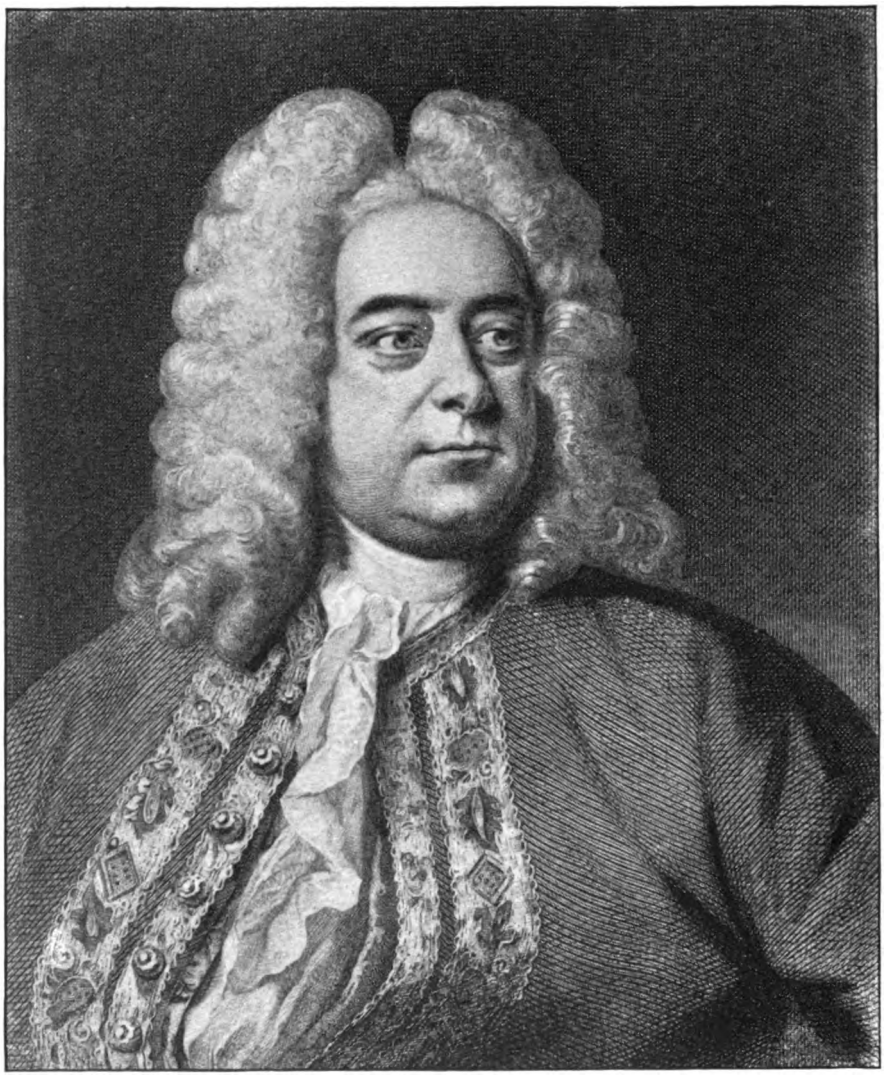
Bach's vocal church compositions, which, on account of their novelty and difficulty, had seldom been employed in his lifetime, were almost entirely forgotten for a considerable period after his death. The first revival of interest in them took place in North Germany, towards the end of the last century, when Bach was beginning to find proper recognition and was even acknowledged to be Handel's equal in greatness. In 1800, several publishers began an edition of his works, so strongly was the tide turning in his favor. During the time of the Napoleonic campaigns and the German war of independence, Handel was in the ascendancy, but when the long period of political inactivity supervened and the people found leisure for reflection and introspection, Bach's time had come. A decisive manifestation of the popular appreciation of his standing as an artist was afforded by the performance of the St. Matthew Passion, under the auspices of Mendelssohn on the 11th of March, 1829. In 1850 the Bach Society was founded in Leipsic, in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of his death. The object of this society is to promote the publication of carefully revised editions of the master's

* Among these works the two in F major and A major are the most beautiful.

works. Thus far, forty-eight folio volumes have been issued, and in a few years the task will be completed. A detailed description of the personality and the works of Bach, considered in their relation to his time and the age which preceded him, has been given to the public by the author of this essay. Meantime the most surprising progress has been made in the direction of a proper understanding of Bach's music. From year to year it has steadily grown more familiar in both hemispheres, and the art of the composer has already become so closely identified with the culture, not only of the German people, but of the entire world, that there is no danger of its ever again being forgotten.



Fac-simile autograph manuscript of a humorous Wedding Carmen written by Bach, the words of which were probably his own and addressed to his wife Anna Magdalena. Date about 1725.



GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL

Reproduction of a steel engraving by Sichling, after an oil portrait by V. Hudson. This is considered as Handel's most satisfactory portrait. It was first engraved by Faber in 1749, ten years before the master's death.

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL was born at Halle on the Saale, on the 23d of February, 1685, the same year that gave to the world his famous contemporary, Sebastian Bach. Halle, formerly a Saxon city, belonged after 1680 to the electorate of Brandenburg. Handel's father was surgeon-barber and officially attached in this capacity to the ducal court of Saxony at Weissenfels. A vigorous and active man, he acquired in time both property and influence, and at the age of sixty-two he took to himself a second wife, the daughter of the pastor at Giebichenstein, near Halle. The second son of this branch of the family was the composer, George Frederick.

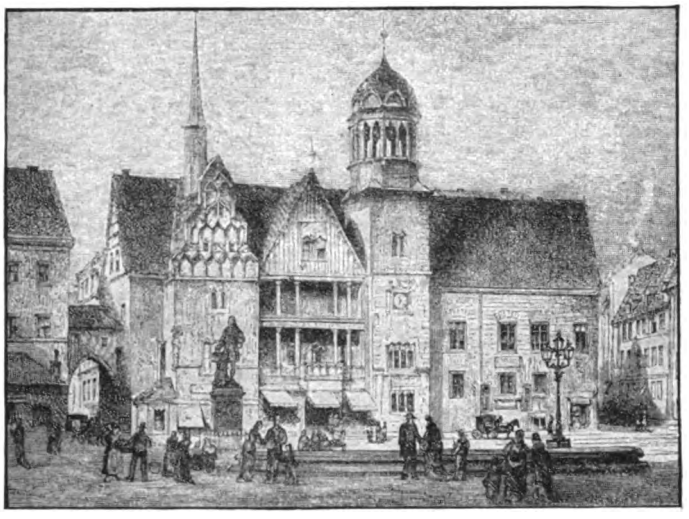
The boy was intended for a jurist, and was sent to the grammar-school. His talent for music showed itself early, but was repressed, rather than encouraged by the father, who, however, had once allowed his son to accompany him to the court at Weissenfels, where, at that time, music was zealously cultivated and represented by able performers. The boy's organ-playing and the universal talent for music which he already manifested, created such astonishment that the duke not only dismissed him with liberal presents but also impressed upon the father that it was his duty not to allow such gifts to perish. In obedience to this injunction, George was placed under the instruction of the organist at the Marienkirche, Friedrick Wilhelm Zachau. This musician had sufficient ability to be able to point out the way to the young genius, who thenceforth pursued it alone. Handel's nature was of the kind which matures early, and he was one of the few precocious musicians who have reached old age and retained their creative power in later years. He was about eleven years old when his lessons began under Zachau, and at this time he composed six sonatas for two oboes and base, which have been preserved, and cannot fail to excite admiration for the skill with which they are written, as well as for their depth of feeling. He assisted his teacher in the care of the organ services and, moreover, already wrote church cantatas, completing one every Sunday for the space of three years. His rapidity in composing, which later caused so much amazement, showed itself from the first. He himself said, when one of his early productions was laid before him: "I used to write like the Devil in those days, but chiefly for the oboe, which was my favorite instrument." While pursuing his studies in composition, he was at the same time diligent in his practice of the clavichord and organ. Handel would have been no true German if he had not possessed a special aptitude for this phase of the art, in which Germany has surpassed all other nations. Among the more renowned musicians, whose works were his models, are mentioned Froberger, Johann Friedrich Alberti, Johann Krüger, that excellent composer for the clavichord, and Delphin Strunck, the Brunswick organist and younger friend of Heinrich Schutz; Kaspar Kerl, though born in Upper Saxony, belongs nevertheless to the South German school of organists, so closely allied to the Italian. Upon Bach no deeply penetrating influence was ever exercised by this school, whereas Handel's strong affinity for it cannot possibly be denied. He has himself referred to Johann Krüger's piano music as furnishing him a superior model, and he held in honor all his life that artist's "Anmuthige Clavier-Uebung," published in 1699. Handel now developed with wonderful rapidity into a performer of surpassing excellence, his favorite instrument being the organ, as adapting itself better than the clavier to his love for the grand and majestic. He was fond of improvising and especially great in that direction, his inspiration being perhaps more direct than that of Bach, who, indeed, was also powerful in extemporization, but whose profound imagination was called into play less easily. It is worthy of note in regard to Handel,

that though he played the organ constantly up to extreme old age, no veritable organ-compositions by him are extant. Those which now pass for such were in part originally intended for the clavier, or, when really for the organ, as in the case of his numerous organ concertos, the instrument thus designated was nothing more than a finer sort of clavier.

The first journey of any consequence undertaken by Handel was directed to the electoral court in Berlin and, as the visit was made in the company of his father, it could not have been later than 1696, the death of Handel senior having occurred on the 11th of February, 1697. At that time, thanks to the refined cultivation of the electress Sophie Charlotte, the Berlin Court was justly regarded as a fostering home of the arts and sciences. In music, the Italians took the lead. Here Handel first met Giovanni Bononcini and Atilio Ariosti, later his rivals in England. The impression produced at Court by the youth's playing, his maturity of mind and the skill he displayed in the execution of difficult tasks, was so strong, that elector Frederick offered to defray the expenses of his musical education in Italy. Fortunately for the boy, his father refused this offer, the acceptance of which would have had the effect of attaching Handel permanently to the imperial court, where, from the beginning of the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm I. (1713) all arts declined. Meantime the idea of a legal education had not been entirely given up, and the son was dutiful enough to respect this cherished project of his father, even after the latter's death, although he could scarcely have felt the slightest inward doubt as to his true vocation in life. After completing his course at the gymnasium, he studied at the university in Halle during the years 1702 and 1703. At the same time he filled the position of organist at the Calvanistic Cathedral in the Moritzburg, and in that capacity received a salary of about fifty dollars a year.

In the spring of 1703 he took the decisive step; he abandoned the law forever, and left Halle, in order to ascertain through his own experience the condition of musical matters in the world at large. Church cantatas and motettes, organ and clavier playing could not continue, in the long run, to be the sole objects of his activity. Bach was satisfied in such a sphere; Handel was attracted by secular music and courted publicity. The opera, established in Italy, had been cultivated in Germany in the seventeenth century only at the royal courts. But since 1678 it had found a home in the free city of Hamburg, where, in the year 1695, it had entered upon its most brilliant period. Reinhard Keiser, born at Teuchern near Weissenfels in 1674, a man of more genius than any German operatic writer of his time, had composed for it and decided the direction it was to follow. When Handel arrived in the city, Keiser had also undertaken to conduct the business portion of the enterprise, for which he was by no means adapted, and the value of his services was gradually diminishing. But for an artist in the dawn of his career, stimulating influences were here at work. What Handel especially wished to acquire — the art of strong, beautiful, universally effective melody—Keiser's opera offered him the best opportunity for acquiring, if he desired to remain in the sphere of German music. He applied for admission to the theatre orchestra, took his place very modestly as second violin, and kept in the background as much as possible. But on one occasion, in the absence of the accompanying pianist, Handel undertook to fill his place and excited great admiration by his masterly performance. Through the friendship of Johann Mattheson, a native Hamburger, some years older than Handel and at that time principal tenor at the opera, he was introduced into the society of the place. But he did not allow himself to be drawn into the gay life of which Keiser was the leading spirit. In the company of Mattheson he once rode over to Lübeck, and made the acquaintance of Buxtehude, before whom he played. This happened only a little in advance of Bach's journey from Arnstadt to Buxtehude. It was probably on the return trip from Lübeck that Bach chose to pass through Hamburg, so that the two greatest musicians of their day traveled thither almost at the same time without any knowledge of each other, nor did they ever become personally acquainted in after years. In 1704, probably for performance in Holy Week, Handel composed his Passion music, having followed the account given in the gospel of John. The poetic text was furnished by Christian Postel, who formerly had written also for the operatic stage. Handel's first attempt at an opera was in the following year. This work, "Almira," was brought out in the carnival period of 1705 and excited the jealousy of Keiser himself, through the extraordinary applause

which it received. After this followed "Nero" and "Florindo and Daphne," the latter an opera intended for two evenings. Meantime the operatic enterprise was on the eve of failure, owing to the irregular business methods of Keiser, who was obliged to resign his office of director and leave Hamburg. At this time also, Handel's stay in the city came to an end. He had learned what there was to learn and had moreover perceived that the German opera in Hamburg was only an imitation of the Italian, and that he must go to the fountain head in order to attain his end—a thorough mastery of the science of vocal composition, *Solo Gesang*. From the profits of his music-teaching in Hamburg he had managed to save the sum of two hundred ducats, and with this, at the end of the year 1706, or the beginning of 1707, he started for Italy. Possibly he made a short visit at Florence on his way to Rome; at any rate he was in the latter city during the opera season of 1707 and remained there certainly until July. Then he turned his face northward again, brought out in Florence his first Italian opera, "Rodrigo," in which the afterwards famous singer, Vittoria Tesi, assumed the leading role. In January, 1708, he went to Venice, which was still one of the principal homes of the opera in Italy, though Naples was already beginning to dispute its supremacy. The opera, "Agrippina," which Handel produced here, and in which Tesi, having followed the composer from Florence to Venice, again appeared in the leading role, spread his fame throughout the land and far beyond its boundaries. From Venice, where he had made the acquaintance of Antonio Lotti, he went back to Rome and found there a very cordial welcome from the "Arcadia," a society formed for the promotion of the arts and sciences, including among its members the most cultivated and talented people of the city, and presided over by the Marchese Ruspoli. Another society, in which music received still more attention than in the "Arcadia," had been founded by the Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni. All the more important works composed by Handel in Rome were performed in this circle and conducted by the great violin virtuoso, Archangelo Corelli. Two oratorios in the Italian style were produced at this time: "*La Risurrezione*" and "*Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno*." The latter work underwent two revisions during Handel's London period, first in 1737, then shortly before his death in 1757. The desire to perfect himself more and more in his art, the enthusiastic recognition which greeted him, his easy entrance into the most intellectual and brilliant society in Italy, all this combined to make these months in Rome the happiest period of his life. The best musicians became his friends. With Domenico Scarlatti, the greatest clavier master of Italy, he engaged in a grand competition, at the close of which it remained undecided which was the greater performer; but when they went to the organ, Scarlatti himself was the first to say that the prize belonged to his rival. Among Handel's cantatas, there is one entitled "Partenza," the substance of which is a lament that he must leave the beautiful banks of the Tiber. If one does not wish to go so far as to read in this an affair of the heart, it still reveals how hard the parting was for him. From Rome he went to Naples, to Alessandro Scarlatti, the father of Domenico and the founder of the Neapolitan School. His reputation had preceded him, and here also he met with the warmest reception in the highest and most cultivated circles, while surrounded by stimulating influences of every sort. How strongly attracted he was by the society and the life of Southern Italy, is shown by the fact that he remained a



PUBLIC SQUARE IN HALLE, CONTAINING HANDEL'S MONUMENT.

whole year in Naples without accomplishing much that was characteristic in his art. The only important work of which we have knowledge is the pastoral: "*Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*," but this was already completed on the 16th of June, 1708. It is related that the society world of Italy became so fond of Handel, that it would gladly have retained him; it is even said that efforts were made to convert him to the Catholic faith. Handel, however, would neither abandon his belief, nor his German spirit; he had come to learn from the Italians, but what they had taught him, it was his intention to use in his own way.

By way of Rome and Florence, he now returned to Venice, where, in the carnival season of 1710, he listened again to the performance of his opera "Agrippina." Artists and illustrious friends of art from England and from the electoral court of Hanover were present, also the Hanoverian chapel-master, Abbé Agostine Steffani. In their company he traveled back to Germany and became Steffani's successor in Hanover. He, however, soon obtained leave of absence that he might go to England, whither he was urgently invited. The journey was made by way of Düsseldorf, where one of his patrons, Johann Wilhelm of the Palatinate, resided, and then through Holland. A personality like Handel's seemed especially suited to aid in elevating the musical standard of the English people. Allied with them in race, and understanding therefore their peculiar characteristics, he had acquired, through his residence in Italy, complete mastery of what the English taste now demanded above all else — Italian art. But there was no thought of simply importing this into England just as it grew on its own soil. England could look back with pride upon her musical past. In the sixteenth century she hardly ranked below the other countries of Europe in respect to eminent composers, and in the seventeenth she could boast of no less an artist than Henry Purcell. Since the death of this famous man in the prime of life, there had, however, been a dearth of creative power in the sphere of music. But there remained the persistent desire to establish once more a national English art by appropriating whatever the Germans, the French, and pre-eminently the Italians had created, and Handel seemed the person best adapted to assist in this undertaking. Since 1705 there had been an Italian opera in London, but it did not flourish. For this Handel wrote in two weeks his opera "Rinaldo." This was the first work with which he stepped before the English public. It was produced for the first time at the Haymarket Theatre and proved so successful that it was repeated fourteen times in the same season. The text had been written in English verse by Aaron Hill, the director of the opera-house. It was then translated into Italian and employed in this form by Handel. His position in England was assured by this opera. He had even been permitted to play before Queen Anne and gained her approval. When he left in order to resume his duties in Hanover, the English were loath to spare him, and constantly expressed the hope that he would soon return.

In former years, under the elector Ernst August, the Hanoverian court had possessed an opera-house, and Steffani had written for it a number of excellent works. The theatre indeed still remained in the princely palace on the Leine, but there were no operatic performances in the reign of elector Georg Ludwig. Handel's activity was restricted to the leadership of the chamber music performed at Court, and that which was ordered on the occasion of special festivities. For his model in composition he took his predecessor, Steffani, whose strength and artistic importance lie in his chamber duets ("*Duetti da Camera*"). The solo parts of the chamber cantata originated by Carissimi are dramatic in character, while the duets of Steffani are lyric. He did not aim to represent well-defined musical characters in his duets, but to express lyric feeling in a general way, in the development of which both voices are made to blend artistically in polyphonic style. In Italy, Handel had occupied himself especially with the solo cantata; in Hanover he devoted himself to the duet, and a considerable number of these exquisite compositions are still preserved. But with a mind full of grand conceptions and a constant craving for publicity, it is easy to understand that he could not long content himself at the Hanoverian court and was strongly attracted to London. Wishing to visit that city in the autumn of 1712, he begged for a new leave of absence and received it, but with the proviso that "he should engage to return within a reasonable time." This condition he did not fulfil, nor did he ever again return to Hanover. After having confirmed himself in the good will of the English public by means of two new operas, and found favor with the queen by writing an ode for her birthday (Feb. 6, 1713), he was commissioned by the latter to

HANDEL'S FATHER.

GEORGE HANDEL, — valet and surgeon to the prince of Saxe-Magdeburg. The subjoined verse praises his skill, benevolence and fidelity.

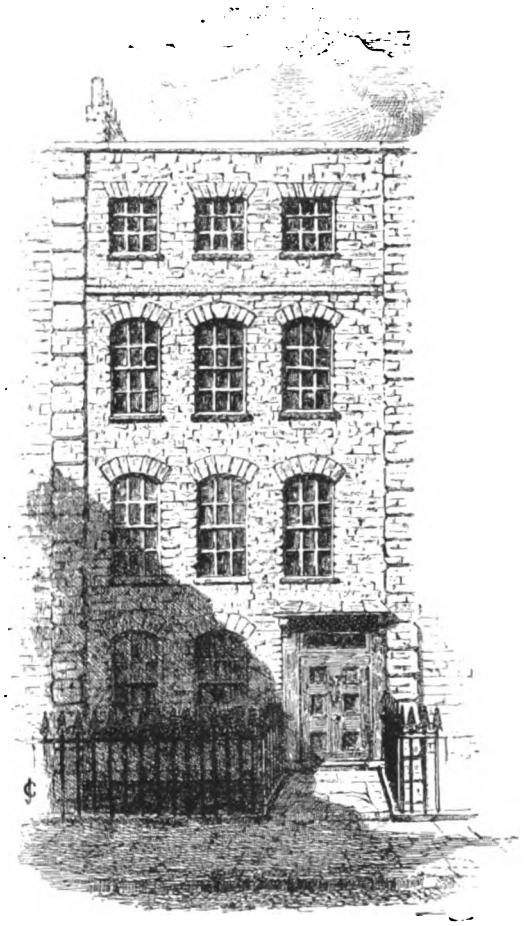
compose the music for the public celebration of the Peace of Utrecht. The queen had won for herself so much credit through the speedy termination of the war of the Spanish Succession that she was inclined for a celebration and desired a brilliant festival. To this Handel contributed in fullest measure, furnishing two works: the so-called "Utrecht Te Deum" and the composition of the 100th Psalm ("Jubilate"). In return, the queen granted him a yearly salary of £200, thus taking him completely into her service. His leave of absence had expired without his being able to resolve upon leaving England. He learned that the elector was angry with him, but thought himself secure under the protection of the English queen. But now ensued the sovereign's sudden death (1714), and her successor upon the throne was the elector of Hanover. From the awkward predicament in which Handel now found himself he contrived to escape through the power of his art. Learning that the king proposed to make an excursion on the Thames, Handel composed for the occasion a piece of music whose lofty beauty won for him the royal pardon. Under the name of "Water Music," it grew popular and familiar.

From this time it was decided that England should become Handel's second home. Only as a visitor did he see his fatherland again, and it was during his first prolonged sojourn in 1716 that he accomplished his last great vocal composition in the German language. After the pattern of the Italian oratorios, a prominent resident of Hamburg, Barthold Heinrich Brockes, had written a rhymed poem on the Passion, which, because it was in sympathy with the Italianizing spirit of the day, was eagerly seized upon by the German composers. Keiser, Telemann, Mattheson and Stölzel set it to music; even Sebastian Bach took some aria texts from it for his "*Johannes Passion.*" Its attraction for Handel lay no doubt in the Italian form of the poem and the possibility of applying for once the skill in composition acquired in Italy to a text in his mother tongue. He was far from intending to come to the rescue of the evangelical church music of Germany, for into this domain this Passion music cannot possibly be drawn, although Brockes, by the introduction of a narrating evangelist and the addition of chorals, had made some concessions in this direction. It is, therefore, unjust to draw any sort of comparison between the "Passion" of Handel and that of Bach. From the fact that he afterwards made use of the most essential portions of his work in his oratorios, Handel has distinctly shown the character of his music.

The opera in London had meantime entered upon a critical period, and Handel, who had last furnished a work for it in 1715, did not for some time turn his attention in that direction. In 1717 he accepted a position as musical director for Duke James of Chandos, at Cannons, near London. In his service, Handel wrote the greater number of his grand compositions upon the Psalms, which were styled "Anthems," a word borrowed from the English liturgy. These were not on the plan of a motette, for all the resources known to the musical art of that time were here called into requisition — chorus and solo singing, with rich instrumental accompaniment, the text being drawn from the Bible. This kind of music was not then to be found in either Italy or Germany, but was peculiar to England. The ecclesiastical spirit in a narrow sense does not however exist in the anthems of Handel; their music is characteristic, and suggests the style of the oratorios. It was in Cannons also that he wrote the first works to which the name of oratorio could properly be given. If, before this time, the Italian oratorio had maintained a sort of external relationship with the church, in so far as it was frequently employed in the service, a sermon being inserted between the two parts, Handel now showed that he would no longer tolerate even this connection. The material of one of the two works is indeed taken from the Bible, but that of the other is drawn from the mythological treasure-house of classical antiquity. Moreover, he gave a new and independent character to his oratorio by adapting it to English words, and in this he persisted to the end of his life; whereas, for the imposing array of operas which he afterwards composed, he employed from first to last the Italian language only. If his three years' stay with the Duke of Chandos was a period of great importance and laid the foundation of his future activity, it is not less true that he also gained much which contributed to his fame as a composer, through looking backward at this time. In the art-loving circles of the English nobility, whose hospitality he enjoyed, particularly at Burlington House, but certainly at the residence of the Duke of Chandos as well, he had given much pleasure by his piano playing. He had also composed many pieces for the piano, which, since he let them escape from his hand, found their way to the public. These

he now collected, added new ones and issued them in his own name on the 11th of November, 1720, under the title of "*Suites de Pièces pour le clavecin.*" They consist of eight series of melodies of the most varied character, and Handel never furnished a more brilliant example of what he could accomplish in the line of piano music than in this instance.

In order to procure for themselves more easily than had hitherto been possible the enjoyment of a good Italian opera, a stock company was now formed by the most illustrious and wealthiest art amateurs of London, who, in 1720, founded an academy of music. For model they had in mind the Paris *Academie de Musique*, and as the king took a box at the opera-house, paying for it a very considerable sum, they were permitted to call themselves the "Royal" Academy of Music. Before arrangements were fully completed, Handel was sent to the continent for the purpose of obtaining suitable Italian singers. The best talent possible to be procured was in request for the Royal Academy. In search of singers therefore he went again to Germany and visited Dresden, where the elector had established an Italian opera under the direction of the great Antonio Lotti; on this occasion he played at Court with great success, and received a present of one hundred ducats. Bach, who, two years before, had engaged in his famous competition with Marchand, had not been noticed by the Court. It happened oddly in this year that Bach, passing through Halle in the course of a journey, wished to seek out Handel, whom he supposed to be visiting his relatives in the place; but he arrived too late — Handel had already gone. In the spring of 1720, the opening of the Academy took place. The composers engaged for this occasion were the Italians, Bononcini and Ariosti, and the German Handel. The latter, who, during the eight years' existence of the academy, wrote fourteen operas for it, finally drove his Italian colleagues wholly out of the field. Two of the most famous prima donnas of their day were secured: Francesca Cuzzoni (1723) and Faustina Bordoni (1726). It is related of Cuzzoni, that, because she refused to sing a certain aria in his opera, "Ottone," Handel seized her and threatened to throw her out of the window. After this she was tractable through fear, and became devoted to the master through her convictions as an artist. Between herself and Bordoni, however, a rivalry existed from the beginning, which, intensified by the adherents of each, finally led to an exchange of blows between the singers on the public stage. In consequence of this and of other annoying scenes, the standing of the institute was injured. From the beginning it had encountered violent opposition from the native musicians, who saw



HANDEL'S HOUSE. 1725.
57, Lower Brook Street, Hanover Square
Here Handel lived for 34 years, from 1725 to his death in 1759.
Here he composed The Messiah and other works
See Callcott's HANDEL ALBUM.
Published by C. Lonsdale, 26 Old Bond Street

themselves thrown in the shade by foreigners, and, the financial basis of the enterprise being insecure, it had to be abandoned in 1728.

In the meantime, King George I. had died on the eleventh of June, 1727, and was succeeded by his son, George II., for whose coronation festival Handel had composed four great anthems. The text of one of these is as follows: "Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet annointed Solomon king. And all the people rejoiced and said: God save the King, long live the King, may the King live forever!

Amen, Alleluja." It soon became very popular and was called, for brevity, the anthem, "God save the King." From this arose the idea that Handel was the composer of the English national hymn, the first strophe of which ends with these words and which, for this reason, was also named from them. The idea is erroneous; the poet and composer of the hymn was the Englishman, Henry Carey, who wrote it in 1743. For the space of a year and a half, from the first of June, 1728, to the second of December, 1729, there was no Italian opera, but the public amused itself with the so-called "Beggar's Opera" of John Gay, a coarse, popular vaudeville, the musical charm of which consists in the interwoven national airs. Here was a reaction against foreign influence which plainly showed the desire of the English to impress upon their music the stamp of nationality, even though this was no longer possible. Within the next twelve years more than a hundred vaudevilles in the style of the Beggar's Opera were produced, a part of which spread over to Germany and contributed in no small degree to the development of the "*Singspiel*," which was to be moulded by Mozart and Weber into the national German opera. During the interval above mentioned Handel was not in England. He first went with Steffani to Italy, where he passed the winter. A new Italian opera enterprise was already planned, which was to be independently conducted by Heidegger and Handel, and its financial soundness to be assured by means of subscriptions. In pursuance of this plan Handel engaged singers in Italy, took up his abode for the summer of 1729 in Halle (where Bach attempted for the second time to make his personal acquaintance), and opened his theatre on the second of December with "Lotario," an opera of his own composition, furnishing in all six similar works during the four years' continuance of the enterprise. The arrogance of the Italian singers and the political opposition of all those who were angry because Handel enjoyed the favor of the royal court, finally rendered the situation unendurable. When the directors were obliged to suspend their performances, the same opposing faction, who were contending against the foreigner in the person of Handel, called into existence a rival Italian opera, for which they tried to collect the most celebrated performers in Europe. Among the singers was Cuzzoni; among the composers the husband of Faustina Bordoni, Johann Adolph Hasse, who had occupied the position of chapel-master in Dresden since 1731. When Hasse was invited to London, he is said to have asked if Handel was dead, so improbable did it seem to him that there was a place for him, great composer though he was, where his powerful compatriot was working. Nor was the latter inclined to abandon the field to his opponents. Driven by them from the Haymarket Theatre, he repaired to Covent Garden and there resumed his operatic representations on the thirtieth of October, 1733. But, though he summoned all his energies and wrote no less than nine new operas, he could not win for himself an enduring success in this sphere of activity. Not only were all his earlier savings now swallowed up, but debts were contracted, and in 1737 he was obliged to close the theatre. The opposite party, however, derived no advantage from his failure; their own undertaking was abandoned only eleven days later. Handel had made superhuman exertions to hold his own during the last few years; his strength now collapsed. A stroke of paralysis lamed one of his hands — indications of insanity appeared. Yielding to the urgent entreaties of his friends, he went to the hot baths at Aix-la-Chapelle, the effect of which was so favorable that he came away after a few months, completely cured. Returning to London, he found that Heidegger had formed from the ruins of the two opera companies a new one, with which he was giving performances at the Haymarket. Handel now wrote, partly for this company, partly at the solicitation of outsiders, six more operas, the last of which "Deidamia," was completed in 1741 and seemed the dying echo of a life-period which had ended for him four years ago.

That the full greatness of a man is only revealed when misfortune overtakes him was to be demonstrated by Handel at this trying time. His latest operas he wrote for the sake of the money. One of them, "*Serse*" (Xerxes), which was completed in the year 1738, marks what was very nearly the saddest time in his life. In order to redeem his word of honor and save himself from a debtor's prison, he worked with immoderate energy and yet with meagre material results. When he now found himself in the most pressing need, his friends advised him to give a benefit concert, a thing which Handel had never wished to engage in; on the contrary, he had often expressed himself with harshness against that sort of begging. All the more bitter

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL.

Reproduced from a proof before letters of Houbraken's portrait of Handel, engraved on copper. After Hudson's portrait this may be regarded as most excellent.

was it for him that he must after all resort to it at last. On the twenty-eighth of March, 1738, in the week before Easter, the concert took place at the Haymarket Theatre. No oratorio was given by Handel on this occasion, but only a number of Italian and English songs, to which he added an organ concerto of his own composition. The interest excited was far beyond all expectation — the house so crowded that places had to be provided on the stage itself for five hundred illustrious auditors, and the receipts from the concert were estimated at eight hundred pounds. But, while Handel was thus struggling with all his might for his own existence, he had always time and strength to spare for his suffering fellow men. The brilliant successes attained by musicians within the last twenty years had allured many persons into the paths of art, who expected to acquire therein honor and riches, yet were not endowed by nature with the necessary gifts. They had therefore soon suffered shipwreck and fallen into poverty. Two English musicians, Festing and Greene, devised the plan of forming an aid society for indigent musical artists. Handel immediately entered into the project and rendered invaluable assistance to the society by performing for its benefit, on the twentieth of March, 1739, his "Alexander's Feast" and a newly composed organ concerto, on the twenty-eighth of March, 1740, "Acis and Galatea," and on the fourteenth of March, 1741, a series of minor compositions. And here let it be said that the inhabitants of London, even if they had shown themselves for a time somewhat indifferent to his music, still continued faithful in their veneration for the man. In 1738, Tyers, the proprietor of Vauxhall Gardens, determined to erect in them a statue of Handel, and the universal applause which this act excited proved that it was an expression of the sentiment of the people.

The life of Handel may be resolved into three parts. The first extends to the year 1720, and is preparatory in character. The second ends in 1737, and belongs especially to the opera. The third and last is devoted almost exclusively to the oratorio. Since the earliest English oratorios which he wrote at Cannons, Handel had been long inactive in this sphere of music. It may be said of the coronation anthems of the year 1727 that they resemble the oratorio in style, but the first really new oratorios were produced in 1733. This species of musical composition was still almost unknown to the greater part of the London public, for the performances given at Cannons did not reach a wide circle of listeners. Bernard Gates, however, the director of the boy chorus belonging to the royal chapel, had taken part in the first rendering of "Esther," and the recollection of the work had never left him. He brought it out before a company of invited guests and thereby incited Handel to produce it publicly himself in May of the succeeding year. A performance of "Acis and Galatea," under his own leadership, followed a month later. It is worthy of note that the different singing societies which occupied themselves at this time with the two oratorios of Handel, attempted to put them on the stage with costumes and action, after the manner of the opera. People evidently did not yet know how to deal with this new departure in the musical line, and in Italy it was not at all unusual to produce certain oratorios in theatrical fashion, as "*agioni sacre.*" Handel, meantime, disapproved of the custom and only allowed the singers to be placed upon a stage, which was suitably decorated. The two oratorios now composed as a result of the new impulse given to his activity, were "Deborah" and "Athaliah," and the former was first performed at the Haymarket on the seventeenth of March. But the subscription tickets of the opera-goers were not good on this day and, as the price of admission was fixed at one guinea, the house remained empty. At this time, too, Handel's opponents tried to draw him into the field of politics and to bring him into discredit through the accusation that he had allied himself with Minister Walpole for the purpose of draining the resources of the people in every possible way. That such ridiculous assertions could gain credence only for the moment, shows very plainly the high estimation in which Handel was then held by the London public. On the twenty-seventh of March, and on two subsequent occasions, "Deborah" was repeated, and now, for the first time received proper recognition as a work of art. The other oratorio, "Athaliah," had also its vicissitudes. The hostility to the house of Hanover which prevailed in many circles of English society had been shared up to this time by the University of Oxford, and the rector of the same, Dr. Holmes, wishing to promote more friendly relations, took advantage of the annual commencement exercises of the institution for this purpose. Handel, the favorite of the royal court, was invited to add lustre to the celebra-

For D.R ARNOLD'S *Edition of* HANDEL'S *Works*

From the Statue in Vauxhall Gardens.

Engraved by Bartolozzi after a drawing by Rebecca.

tion through his art; he was also included in the number of eminent men who were to be invested with the title of Doctor at the same time. This honor would have been declined by the musician on his own personal account, but as an artist he accepted, using the title rarely. The "Athaliah," written wholly in the interest of the occasion, was performed in Oxford on the 10th of July. Singers and instrumental performers were brought from London by Handel, and the festival, in the course of which "Esther" and "Acis and Galatea," as well as the "Utrecht Te Deum" and the "Jubilate" were given, was a brilliant success. The next oratorio was "Alexander's Feast," or the "Power of Music." It was finished in January, 1736, and brought out for the first time on the 19th of February. In writing this work, Handel had in mind the popular custom of celebrating the day of St. Cecilia by means of the art of which she was the patron. It was Purcell who inaugurated musical performances of this festive character on St. Cecilia's day, and among the poets who glorified it, Dryden stands pre-eminent with his two Cecilian odes. It was the greater of these which Handel took for the foundation of his work, employing the arrangement of Newburgh Hamilton. The impression produced by the very first performance was extraordinary, and the work was repeated four times in the same season, meeting with the speediest and most wide-spread success of any of Handel's oratorios, although it falls within the period when his best energies were devoted to operatic works. With the production of "Saul," in 1738, commences the long, uninterrupted series of oratorios in which Handel, who, instead of becoming embittered by the hard experiences of his life, was only roused by them to a more complete expression, poured out the fulness of his genius. Immediately after the "Saul" ensued the creation, in something less than a month, of his gigantic work: "Israel in Egypt." As now known, this consists of only two parts; but as it came from the composer's hands on the first of November, 1738, it was in three divisions. For the lament over the death of Joseph with which it opened, Handel had used the funeral anthem written after the death of the noble Queen Caroline in 1737. He was probably reluctant to allow this beautiful work, which, in its original form, was only available for the occasion which called it forth, to sink into oblivion. At the same time we see that he himself must have considered the style of his anthems as very closely related to that of his oratorios. It was owing to a misunderstanding that, after the death of Handel, the second and third parts of the "Israel" were made to stand for the whole work, while the funeral anthem was printed by itself. But neither on its first performance (April 4, 1739) nor on its repetition in 1756, did "Israel in Egypt" make an impression on the public. The reason for this lies in the fact that the solo portions of the work are entirely subordinate to the chorus, which here maintains its supremacy as in no other of Handel's oratorios and rises to the highest conceivable degree of grandeur.

The contrast with the composer's operas, which are made up almost entirely of solo numbers was too decided, and moreover there was at this time in London a marked and deplorable falling off of musical interest. After years of immoderate indulgence, there followed a period of weariness and indifference. Handel, indeed, set to music in 1739 Dryden's lesser "Ode to St. Cecilia," and in 1740 Milton's beautiful poem "*L' allegro ed il pensieroso*," * thus showing how he identified himself with the intellectual life of the English and the creations of their most eminent men. But his efforts seemed no longer to bear fruit, and he was already considering the project of leaving England forever, when offers made to him from Dublin opened favorable prospects in a new quarter. He was requested to give a performance in that city, for the benefit of some of its benevolent institutions, and in return the best vocal and instrumental talent of the place would be at his disposal for such other concerts as he might give. The work composed by Handel for the desired performance was the "Messiah." The text had been drawn from the Bible by Charles Jennings (not by Handel himself, as has been falsely stated), and the music was completed on the 14th of September, 1741. On the 18th of November Handel arrived in Dublin, and on the 13th of April, 1742, was produced for the first time the work in which the lofty aim of the composer became perfectly clear. The new order of art created by him, the oratorio as he conceived it, was now first comprehended by the world, and began at once to enter into the life of the English people as an exponent of the highest ideal good which had been vouchsafed them in their generation. Many of Handel's other works were brought out in Dublin,

* To the latter Charles Jennings had appended verses forming a third part: "*Il moderato.*"

and he enjoyed there a period of unalloyed happiness, after the trials of the past few years. When he returned to London in 1742, he found that here also the tide had turned in his favor. The seed sown by him through a quarter of a century was finally beginning to germinate. His music had gradually cultivated the taste of the nation and he could henceforth count upon a sure understanding of whatever he might create. From this time Handel's authority in England was uncontested and his popularity boundless. He stood forth before the eyes of the people as the embodied essence of all music. It now became his habit to perform the "Messiah" every year for the benefit of a foundling's home, and he employed the resources of his art most freely and nobly in every direction in aid of all charitable institutions. What he had already once attempted in 1735 in the Lenten season, when no operas could be performed, but had not been able to carry out, became now a regularly organized arrangement. Twelve concerts were given annually, in which he produced his own vocal works and in addition delighted the audiences by his performances upon the organ. In 1743 he began the series of concerts with his "Samson," which was composed immediately after the "Messiah," and won scarcely less favor than the latter. Of his later oratorios, "Judas Maccabæus" alone enjoyed an equally great and lasting success. But the remaining thirteen, which occupied the inexhaustible energies of the man until within two years of his death, were listened to with sympathetic interest. They are: "Semele" (1743), "Joseph" (also 1743), "Belshazzar" (1744), "Heracles" (1744), Occasional Oratorios (1746), "Joshua" (1747), "Alexander Balus" (1747), "Solomon" (1748), "Susannah" (1748), "Theodora" (1749), "The Choice of Hercules" (1750), "Jephthah" (1751), "The Triumph of Time and Truth" (1757). The last-named work is that final arrangement of the Italian oratorio, which has been already mentioned. When Handel brought it out again in 1737, much changed and amplified, he still retained the Italian text, and it was now, for the first time, incorporated with the series of his English oratorios. It is an allegorical drama: Beauty and Pleasure stand upon one side, Time and Counsel on the other. Which of the two pairs shall finally win the day, is to be shown. Deceit places herself near the first, and tries to blind their eyes to the transitoriness of all delights and the earnestness of life. But in the end, following the warnings of Time and Counsel, Beauty and Pleasure turn after all to Truth. The deep significance of Handel's closing his long career with the same work which stands at its entrance, is readily perceived. Well might it seem to him an image of his own life. He too had formed intimate acquaintance with the beauty and pleasure of the world, but he could truly say in the evening of his life that they had not succeeded in averting his gaze from the serious and eternal things which "are not of this world."

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL.

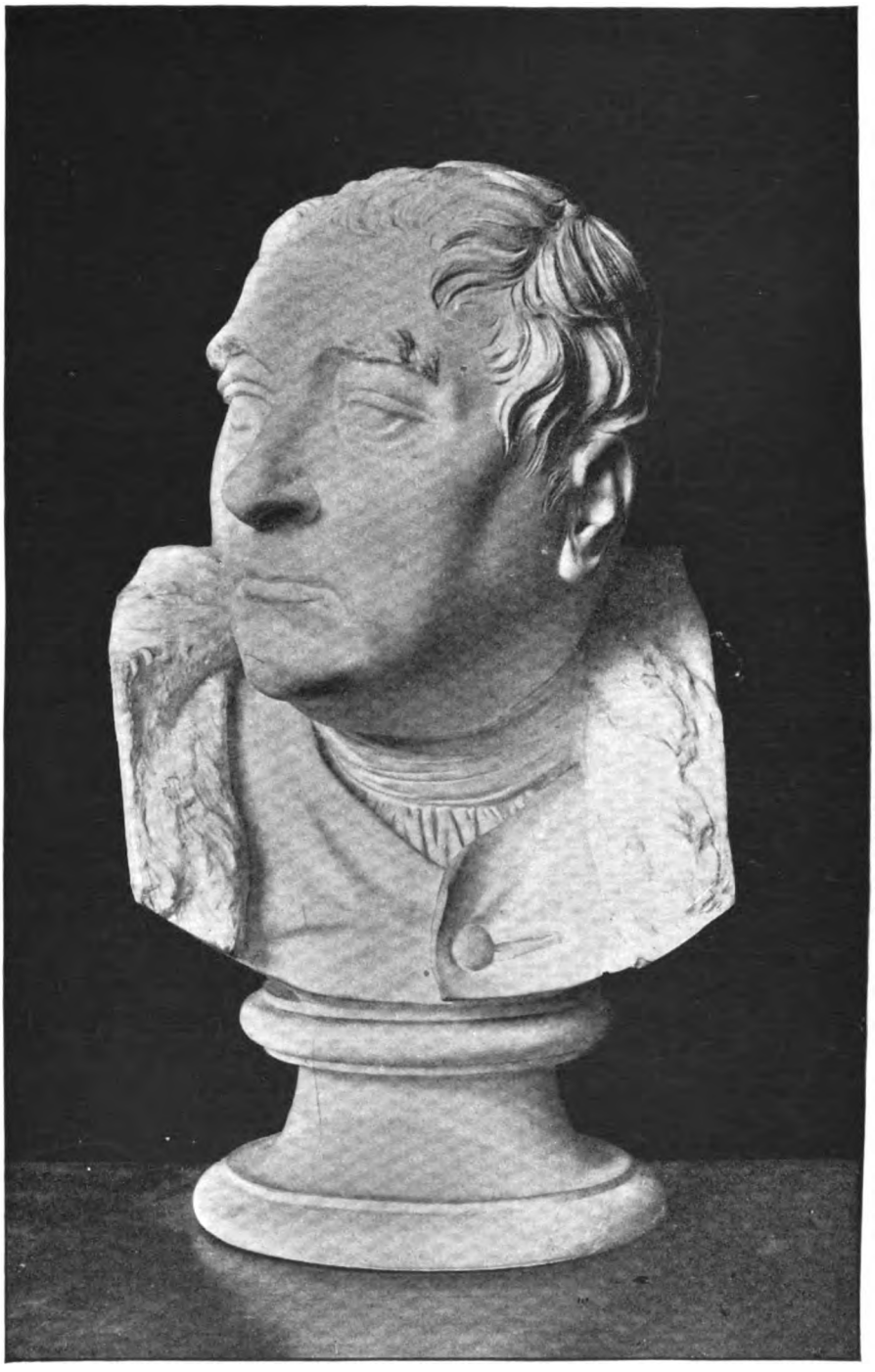
Engraved by Deblois from a portrait by Mad. Ciement, evidently based upon the Hudson portrait.

Between the oratorios just mentioned fall a few other less important works, among which the "Te Deum" for the victory at Dettingen in 1743 deserves

special mention. The last of his oratorios written down wholly in his own hand was "Jephthah," and this he could only accomplish with difficulty. For when he had arrived at the closing chorus of the second part, he was attacked with a disease of the eyes, from which, however, he so far recovered as to be able to complete the work by degrees. But he was engaged upon this oratorio from the 21st of January to the 30th of August, whereas three or four weeks were usually sufficient for a task of this sort. The oculist Taylor, whose want of skill was manifested so clearly in the case of Sebastian Bach, treated Handel also, and performed an operation; but here again the experiment was unsuccessful and total blindness was the result. With Bach this condition lasted only a few months, while Handel was obliged to support the affliction through all the last years of his life. In spite of this, he continued his musical performances under the direction of his pupil, John Christian Smith, and even in his blindness, regularly played an organ solo between the second and third parts of an oratorio. He chose for the purpose one or another of his organ concertos, but when obliged to play without instrumental accompaniment, did not confine himself to the music as written, trusting instead to his great gift for improvisation and joining in with the other performers at a given signal. It was an impressive sight for the audience when the blind old man was conducted to the organ bench and then, after he had enchanted them through his wonderful playing, was led forward to make his bow. During the singing of the oratorio, he was accustomed to sit still near the organ, and on the performance of "Samson," when the blind hero of the piece reached the aria: "Total eclipse! no sun, no moon," tears were often seen to flow from the sightless eyes. Even as late as 1759 he still gave his oratorio concerts. But before the series was ended, on the 6th of April, he fell ill, never to recover. On the 14th of April, at eight o'clock in the morning, he died. It was the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, where stands the monument erected to his memory.

Of his not inconsiderable property, he bequeathed about £20,000 to his relatives in Germany. He went through life unmarried, and posterity has not learned whether the prospect of founding a family of his own ever opened itself before him. In figure he was tall and robust; his movements were clumsy, but his features were animated and dignified. He was easily moved to anger, but a certain element of humor served to break the force of his stormy outbreaks. The broken English in which he spoke had often a comical effect, especially in moments of excitement. Burney relates that he had a natural turn for wit and the gift of treating the most commonplace matters in an interesting manner. His ordinary expression was somewhat stern, (that he seldom laughed in his younger days is also related by Mattheson) but when he smiled it was like a sunbeam piercing a dark cloud. Unyielding determination, strong independence, sincere devoutness, a high sense of honor, fidelity and a noble philanthropy, which was always ready to offer help, were among the most marked traits of this man, whose greatness did not consist in his art alone.

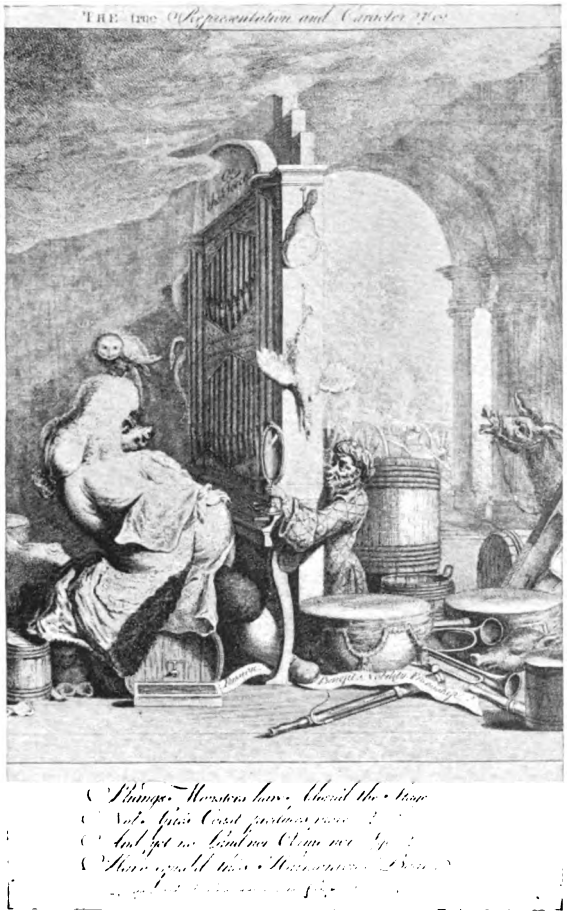
In Handel and Bach the inborn talent for music of the German people finds a fuller expression than at any earlier or later period, nor have other nations furnished an instance so phenomenal. The reason lies partly in the fact that the two men, equally endowed by nature, differed from each other as widely as possible, and accordingly exercised their powers in the most opposite domains of art. Precisely in these two departments of music from which Bach held himself entirely aloof, the opera and the oratorio, Handel labored with untiring and exclusive energy. Organ and piano playing, to be sure, formed for him the starting-point of his development, but while Bach went on through his whole life in the path marked out from the beginning, Handel left it at the early age of eighteen and entered upon a wholly different career. Of Bach it can be said that he was an instrumental composer, and remained such to the end of his life. The medium through which Handel wished to express himself was that of song. Instruments which can be associated with the voice and form a setting for it he considered, and therefore treated as subordinate. And even where he allows them to work independently — in his piano compositions, in his concertos and sonatas of the most-varied arrangement — there is awakened



GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL.

From an accurate cast of the head and shoulders of Roubillac's statue of Handel, in Westminster-Abbey.

in the hearer the feeling that he is being amused by a sweet, beautiful, thought-inspiring play, but still a *play*, in the truest meaning of the word. Handel first becomes entirely serious in his cantatas, operas and oratorios, and for this reason it is difficult to provide a place for him in the history of instrumental music. He stands by himself and not in the ranks.



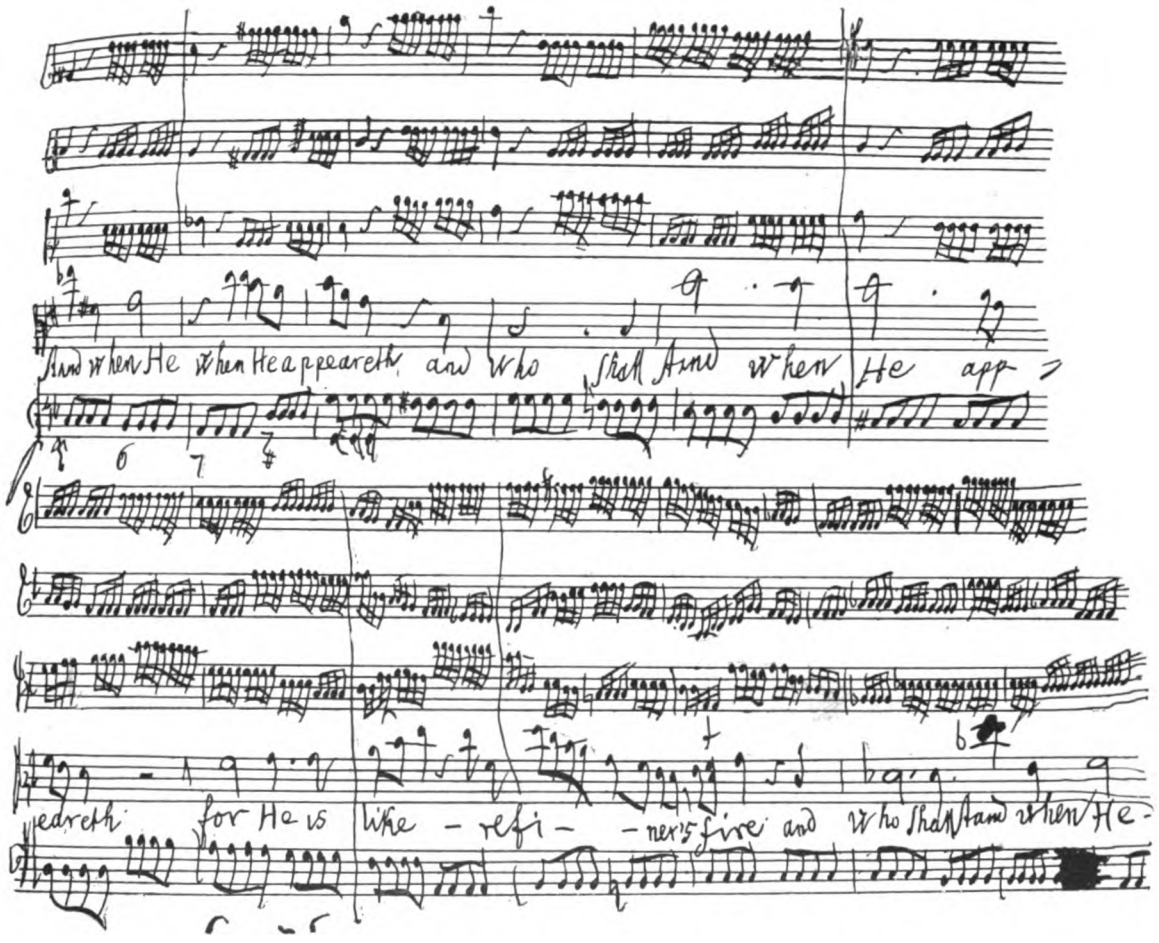
HANDEL AS A MONSTROUS "HARMONIOUS BOAR."
This caricature is said to have been drawn by the scene-painter at the theatre, in spiteful retaliation for some reprimand received from the composer.

The most beautiful of his piano compositions are the eight suites of 1720. "*Suite*" does not signify here a definite form of piano music, as with Bach and his German predecessors. The word indeed can only be translated by *series*, or *succession*. In this collection there is not one actual suite, but a number of different pieces for the piano are arranged in pleasing alternation. There are dances and variations, but also preludes and fugues, and finally pieces more in the manner of the Italian chamber music, which preferred the violin to the piano as a medium of expression. The caprice of the master here held sovereign sway. Even his manner of writing for the piano is different from that of Bach. He had learned more than the latter from Krieger and Kuhnau, and a certain relationship with the South German piano music is also shown; it is very significant that he interested himself in the "*Componimenti Musicali*," by Gottlieb Muffat of Vienna, which appeared in 1735, while, so far as we know, he took no notice of Bach's piano compositions. It is, however, certain that he allowed himself to be strongly influenced by the two Scarlattis; this is plainly shown by the style of his piano technique, but more especially in his manner of writing piano fugues. In regard to this, one should examine, by the side of the first collection, the fourth, published in 1735, which only contains six fugues. The contents of the second and third are less important. Handel at one time gave instruction to the royal princesses, and may have written down for their use much that is included in this collection.

As is readily conceivable, when we consider the school in which his taste was formed, Handel wrote from preference chamber music in the Italian style. He has given us solo sonatas with bass, trios for two violins and bass, *concerti grossi*, and concertos for the organ. But here, also, he shows an inclination to depart from the forms which, after a gradual process of development, had become established in 1700, not for the purpose of making organic improvement in them, but through pure caprice. Like that of his piano compositions, the music has something of an improvisatorial and accidental character. It might be different, without becoming therefore less beautiful and entertaining. The creations which he offers are by no means always original; we repeatedly find portions of his compositions for the voice, which he has simply arranged for instruments. He once went with a clerical friend of his to take a walk in the Vauxhall gardens on the Thames, at the hour of the usual public concert. The orchestra began to play and both men drew near to listen. After a time the old clergyman said: "It is wretched stuff." "You are right," said Handel, "I thought so myself, after I had written it." But just in this improvisatorial style lies one of the especial charms of his instrumental music. It is

necessarily unequal in merit, but when the composer was in the right mood, he accomplished something which delighted everybody and will always delight anew. Among the twelve *concerti grossi* of 1739, the third, in E minor, and the sixth, in G minor, are works of surpassing beauty. The twelve *concerti* are only written for stringed instruments, to which Handel, for the most part confines himself in works of a different class. This is the Italian fashion. Bach employs by preference the most diverse sorts of wind instruments in the six great concertos of 1721. To his complex, contrapuntal style of writing, moreover, the transparent simplicity of Handel, who always says exactly what he has to say without circumlocution, but with the greatest emphasis, offers a sharp contrast. One may say, indeed, that Handel's *concerti grossi* are no *concerti* at all, in Bach's sense of the word. They have the form of Corelli's sonatas, freely adapted to the resources of a fuller body of instruments. The organ concertos of Handel are more in the prescribed form. It has already been observed that the organ is here treated like a piano of richer tone, and not like a church instrument, after the manner of Bach. English performers have had the same idea and have just as often made use of the concertos for piano music.

The Italian cantatas of Handel are likewise to be regarded as a less important branch, or even a component part of his operas, just as the chamber duets, anthems and similar compositions belong in the domain of his oratorios. For a brief survey



Fac-simile autograph manuscript of passage from Handel's "Messiah."

of his works, it is therefore sufficient to confine ourselves to the opera and the oratorio. The opinion has been widespread and prevails even in our day, that so long as Handel occupied himself with the opera, he was obstinately pursuing the wrong path, which he only abandoned after many bitter experiences, in order henceforth to devote himself to the oratorio, for which nature had intended him. For it has always been considered one of the most marked characteristics of genius that it discovers the right way unconsciously, as it were, and impelled by inward necessity. According to this, Handel, with his forty operas, would have mistaken his true bent during the best forty years of his life. The opinion rests, however, upon the theory of an antithesis between the opera and the oratorio, which has never existed. During the hundred years preceding Handel's time, the two forms of art, simultaneous in origin, kept equal pace in their development. Through the changes wrought in the opera in the middle of the seventeenth century at Venice, and from the end of that period at Naples, solo song attained almost complete supremacy in that field, while in the oratorio there was still room for the chorus. The extraordinary pleasure derived from solo-singing is shown by the effort made to express the individual personality in music, and the opportunity of doing this is what attracted Handel to the opera. If we regard the poetic compositions employed by him in the light of their dramatic value, their delineation of character, the systematic management and increasing intensity of the action, they are not, for the most part, calculated to excite a profound interest. They are after the manner of all operatic poems in Italy in 1700, and generally derive their material from ancient history or from mythological lore. But the poets certainly show skill in so arranging their incidents that the personages concerned find opportunity to give utterance to their feelings. The portrayal of character, by means of music, was, then, the object in view. This Handel wished to accomplish in his operas, and, within the limits which he prescribed for himself, he was entirely successful. Not psychological processes, but psychological conditions were what he wished to represent in his arias, and the progress of the action lies always outside of the principal musical themes. That this was intentional with him, and also with the Italians of his time, is proved most clearly by the form of solo-song almost exclusively employed. The aria, as fashioned by Alessandro Scarlatti, is only adapted to a feeling which indeed rises above its original state, but soon returns to it. The recurrence of the first part at the end, after a weakly contrasting middle portion, is the image of a self-centred exclusiveness. The direct opposite of this form is that in which a slow movement is followed by a more rapid one, so that the feeling passes from rest to motion, from contemplation to activity. This is certainly the dramatic form, and therefore Handel's opera music is not dramatic in a narrow sense. But no one will attempt to deny that his style has also its artistic justification and is sure of producing great effects whenever the hearer concentrates his attention upon the characteristic picture presented, rather than upon the suspense resulting from an uninterrupted continuous action. With inexhaustible inventive power, Handel has drawn such pictures in his operas. No reproach is less deserved than that he has acquired a stereotyped manner and turns out his productions as if they were cast in a mould. Whenever the same forms and turns recur in his works, they express exactly what is demanded by the situation and is necessary for the accomplishing of a powerful effect. For the rest, he seizes every problem firmly and repeats himself as little as the circumstances of our lives are exactly repeated, even if they sometimes seem to show a general resemblance. His work, to be sure, lies almost wholly in the province of simple sensations — complicated, romantic, psychological conditions are out of his sphere. So-called *ensemble* movements, in which different persons with strongly-contrasting emotions confront each other, whose utterances it has become one of the most interesting tasks of the latter opera-composers to weave together upon the ground of a certain universal sympathy, are of comparatively rare occurrence in his compositions. Just as little does he concern himself to give expression to a mood which proceeds from a single scene, considered as such. The instrumental accompaniment, which finds herein one of its heaviest tasks, is always extremely simple and restrained. Everything really essential finds utterance through the singer. Singers of the highest order are therefore demanded by his operas, those who have not only command of the most highly perfected technique of their art, but whose creative mind enables them to become

STATUE OF HANDEL IN PARIS OPERA HOUSE.

Reproduced from a photograph made for this work by special permission. One of four life-size statues placed in the vestibule of the Opera House, at the foot of the grand marble staircase.

thoroughly imbued with the spirit of a piece of music. He lived in a time when the art of song on every side was in a condition of the highest cultivation, and it was under such influences that he was able to create those perfect specimens of characteristic and artistic song, found in almost superabundant measure in his operas. Because in our time this art has been lost, the beauty of Handel's opera arias remains for the most part concealed from us, but that another change will one day take place there is no doubt. An immediate revolution, to be sure, is not to be expected. Music has fallen by degrees from that lofty height, and only by degrees can she again attain unto it. What the operas of Handel will then signify to the world cannot to-day be even approximately estimated.

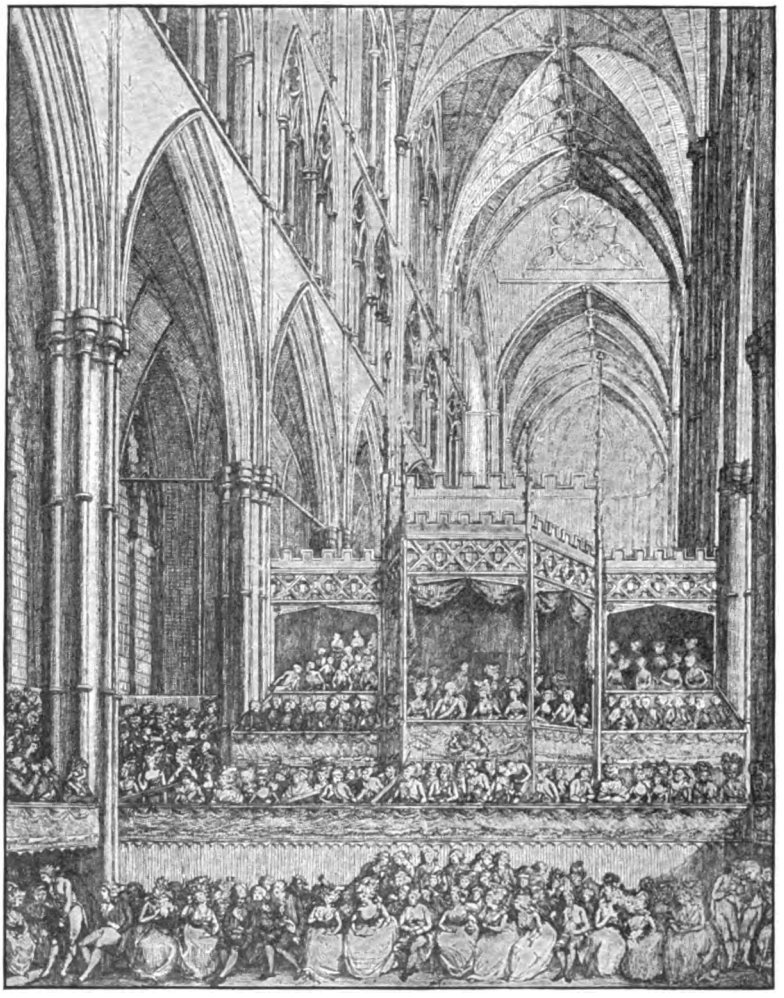
Exactly the same characteristic form of musical representation which is peculiar to Handel's operas constitutes, in a still greater degree, the essence of his oratorios. From an external point of view the oratorios stand higher, because they are produced with so much richer musical resources and because, in order to employ these properly, a much higher order of art is required. The chorus, which was almost wholly excluded from the operas, is here made use of in manifold ways, taking at least equal rank with the solo-song, while it often predominates. But the inner worth of the oratorio is greater, because in this we are no longer concerned with transient emotions, confined to a narrow circle of fictitious personages, who, in their totality, are indifferent to us, but with the feelings aroused by momentous events in the world's history, by the deeds and sorrows of great men and women, by legends full of the deepest symbolism, by lofty, divine decrees, extending even to the life, sufferings and resurrection of Christ, the son of God. The mighty choruses in Handel's oratorios took a powerful hold upon his contemporaries, to whom they appeared in the light of something wholly new. His Italian predecessors were more or less wanting in that sense of the sublime which caused Handel to seize upon such material as demanded the full co-operation of a large body of singers, and in this very direction was displayed most strikingly the immense superiority of his genius and his strength as an artist. The imposing array of figures which he leads before us in his choral pictures is astounding. From the simplest choral melodies, like the songs of victory in "Saul" and in "Judas Maccabaeus," to the gigantically towering, yet easily animated masses of the chorus in "Israel in Egypt," they stand forth, exuberant in strength, overpowering in the impression they produce, but at the same time simple and easily understood, as if they were created by the power of Nature herself. And in the case of these choruses again, the equipment and co-operation of the orchestra are limited, the principal task devolving here also upon the singers. With Bach the effect consists in the complete blending of organ, chorus, and orchestral tone. The hearer must be conscious neither of those who sing nor those who play; the incorporeal essence of melody floats through the spaces of the church. In listening to Handel's choruses, one rejoices in the consciousness that it is human beings who are singing. Their tones are like the voice of a victorious army, of nations blessed by God, of all sympathetic humanity. The greater the number of people united in the expression of an emotion, the less of his individualism does each retain. An oratorio chorus, however marked its character, can still express only feelings of a strong and simple nature. Joy and sorrow! So far as the meaning of a piece of music can be interpreted, these two words paraphrase the utterances of Handel's choruses. Both are to be understood in their fullest significance; joy, from the bright, childish enjoyment of life, to the tumultuous bursts of exultation after victory won, from pious adoration to enthusiastic soaring up to God; sorrow, both as quiet sadness and deep, intensest mourning. But it is always one of these two emotions, which resounds full and clear. Mixtures of the two, such as often occur with Bach, are almost never found in Handel's music.

In the last century, the opinion became fully established that Handel was pre-eminently great in choral music, and, as there was a sudden revolution of taste at this time in the line of solo-song, his arias and glorious recitatives were thrown into the shade. But the only way in which it is possible to be just to the composer, is to acknowledge the latter as well as the former, to be necessary for the completeness of the *ensemble*, and dependent upon each other for their effect. Since the greater number of Handel's oratorios are biblical in subject, and since from the beginning a certain edificatory purpose was associated with this order of work, a strong desire prevailed in Germany to class them as church music. But to do this is to thrust them out of the

free and elevated position which they rightfully hold. In them the distinction between the worldly and the ecclesiastical is done away with, nor could they with propriety be designated as religious in character, for, besides his biblical material, Handel has also employed for his compositions profane history (Alexander Balus), ancient mythology (Heracles, Semele, Acis and Galatea), legendary subjects (Theodora), and pure description (Alexander's Feast; Allegro and Pensieroso). A noble humanity was the ideal of his art, and this he has completely realized in his oratorios. The "Messiah" itself is no exception, but rather crowns them all in this respect.

The characteristic musical style which from this time especially distinguishes the oratorio demands no distinct form of poetry. It is only necessary that events should be presented which are calculated to hold the feelings in a continuous state of excitement. The portrayal of these feelings by means of music can, however, just as well be accomplished with a narrative text, as in "Israel," a descriptive, as in the "Allegro," or with one which only *indicates* events, like the "Messiah," as with a poem in dramatic form. The latter is most frequently employed by Handel and is particularly adapted to solo-song; still he would by no means consent to have his oratorios regarded as real musical dramas, otherwise it would have been easy for him to produce them on the stage with full action. He objected to this, because a theatrical representation seemed to him more likely to diminish than to increase their effect, by diverting the attention from what was to him of still more importance in the oratorio than in the opera — the working of pure music.

It was a long time before Handel's oratorios became naturalized in his native country. The facilities for presenting them were wanting; in the small private musical societies, which existed here at that time, there was not room for works of such gigantic growth. But the centennial anniversary, erroneously



COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Reproduced from an engraving published at the time. Drawn by E. F. Burney and engraved by J. Spilsbury. The plate bears this inscription:

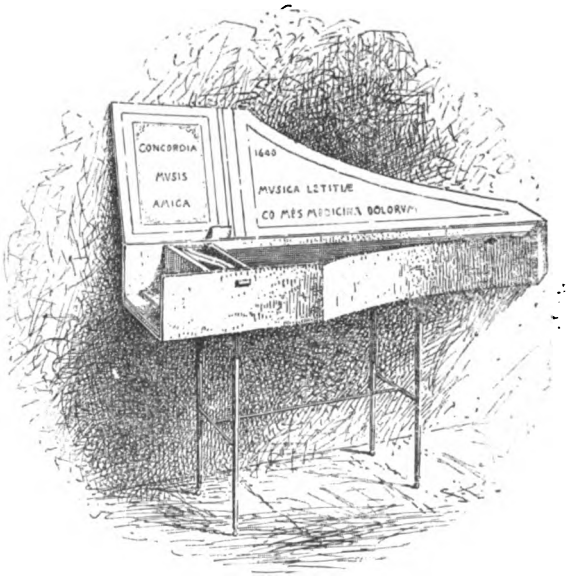
View of the Gallery prepared for the reception of their Majesties, the Royal Family, Directors, and principal Personages in the Kingdom, at the Commemoration of Handel in Westminster Abbey.

celebrated in England in 1784 and repeated in 1785, with its productions of Handel's works on a previously unheard-of scale, aroused in the German people a spirit of emulation. In 1786, 1787 and 1788, Johann Adam Hiller organized in Berlin, Leipsic, and Breslau great performances of the "Messiah," which created a profound impression. The *Singakademie* founded in Berlin in 1791 pro-

ceeded to occupy itself diligently with Handel, and on the model of this there soon arose a number of choral societies, which did the same thing. After the year 1810 great musical festivals began to be held, and it was not long before Handel's oratorios constituted their principal material. At the most important of these, the Rhenish, which was established in 1818, thirty-four oratorios, or other great choral compositions of Handel, were given in the course of forty-four performances. But as yet, it must be said, full justice has only been done to the choruses of these great works; for an adequate rendering of the solo portions, the vocal culture of our time is not yet sufficient.

Several attempts at a complete edition of Handel's works have been already made; two of these were in England, in 1784 and 1840 respectively, but both were failures. On the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the composer's death, in the year 1859, the German Handel Society was founded for the express purpose of finally accomplishing the desired result. The editor of the edition is Friedrich Chrysander, and the work, intended to consist of one hundred volumes, is approaching completion. For the first time, all the operas are here published in connection with the oratorios. The inestimable service rendered by Chrysander is not, however, limited to this task. He is also the author of a biography of Handel (Leipsic, Breitkopf und Härtel), which far surpasses all earlier works upon this subject and may be reckoned among the best productions of our century, in the line of scientific musical literature.

Philipp Spitta



HANDEL'S HARPSICHORD.

CHRISTOPH WILIBALD GLUCK

Reproduction of a photograph from an oil portrait by J. S. Duplessis, Paris, 1776. Gluck in his sixty-second year. *(See page 223.)*

CHRISTOPH WILIBALD GLUCK

POETRY and Music, gracious twin-sisters sent from Heaven to comfort suffering humanity, are seldom intimately united in the history of Art; it may even be affirmed that the story of their evolution presents a picture of ceaseless struggle in which the one is ever striving for mastery over the other. Although these sister-arts (neither of which can claim the right of primogeniture) at the time of the highest development of Greek art displayed in united action an inconceivable power which has never since been attained, they were compelled after a brief period, with the rise of sophistic philosophy, to descend from that lofty position. While language and music were developed as separate arts it was indeed possible for them individually to reach a state of perfection, but the efficiency subsequently attained by united strength and harmonious coalescence was then impossible.

In like manner in the Middle Ages poetry and music strove for supremacy. After the solemn melodies of St. Gregory, linked so closely with the words, had comforted, inspired and sustained the Western World in a time of her deepest abasement, song, which had been hitherto for one voice, developed into polyphony, and with this mighty advance in music the friendly relations between these arts was once more disturbed. In the joy at overcoming difficulties which part-music offered the composers as well as the singers, the former completely lost sight of their duty toward the words, and were so utterly indifferent to the text of vocal work that they did not hesitate to use in the same piece two poems upon quite different subjects, yes, even in different languages, and in so doing argued, and not without reason, that in the intricacy of the vocal parts the words would scarcely be heard.

At the appearance of the modern opera in the year 1600, the struggle of the two sister-arts was especially severe. Even as proposed by its founders, who saw in it a revival of the antique drama, poets and composers, during the first decades, were eager to coöperate. When, however, the passion for the opera was no longer confined to the circle of the aristocracy, when special buildings had been erected to which the public could gain access for a consideration (the "Cassiano" in Venice, in 1637, being the first), the noble simplicity striven for by those lovers of antiquity came to an end. The popular craving for the spectacular and the desire for music which was pleasing to the ear strongly affected the further growth of the opera. In Italy, which country in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries set the fashion for all Europe in operatic and musical matters, the public was especially enthusiastic over strong, well-trained voices. No matter how high the point of perfection reached by the art of singing, the singers, male and female, received but one-sided recognition. Soon these obtained undisputed control of the opera; in order to please the taste of the masses, directors, even poets and composers felt obliged to surrender. For them only was the libretto arranged, and in order to satisfy their vanity did the composer tax his imagination. In vain did truly artistic men — among them the Venetian composer Benedetto Marcello with his satire "Il teatro alla moda" (1720) — raise their voices against "the mighty abuse of music at the cost of the sister-arts," their warning words fell unheeded. It was reserved for a German, after a desperate struggle, to put an end to the nuisance of the singers' sovereignty and to give once more to the opera a truly artistic significance, and this German was Gluck.

Christoph Wilibald Gluck was born on the 2d of July, 1714, at Weidenwang, a village of the Caprische Obersalz. He was the son of a forester, and in childhood had occasion to steel himself bodily and mentally for the warfare which in later years

was waged against the power of fashion and prejudice. When an old man, the master in friendly converse loved to recall those early days when he and his brother followed their father barefoot to the forest. Dreaming in the shadows of the woods, listening to the rustling of the tree-tops and the songs of birds, unconsciously a sense of music was awakened in the boy; there was no indication of any special gift, however, and indeed, had such been shown, under the circumstances it would hardly have been encouraged, for the father was extremely practical and governed the education of his children accordingly. The desire to give them a better education than was possible in the vicinity of Weidenwang may have occasioned his moving to Bohemia in 1722 and entering the service, first of Prince Kindsky and then of Prince Lobwitz. Mention may also be made here of a third office held by him upon the Bohemian possessions of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, in whose service he died in 1747.

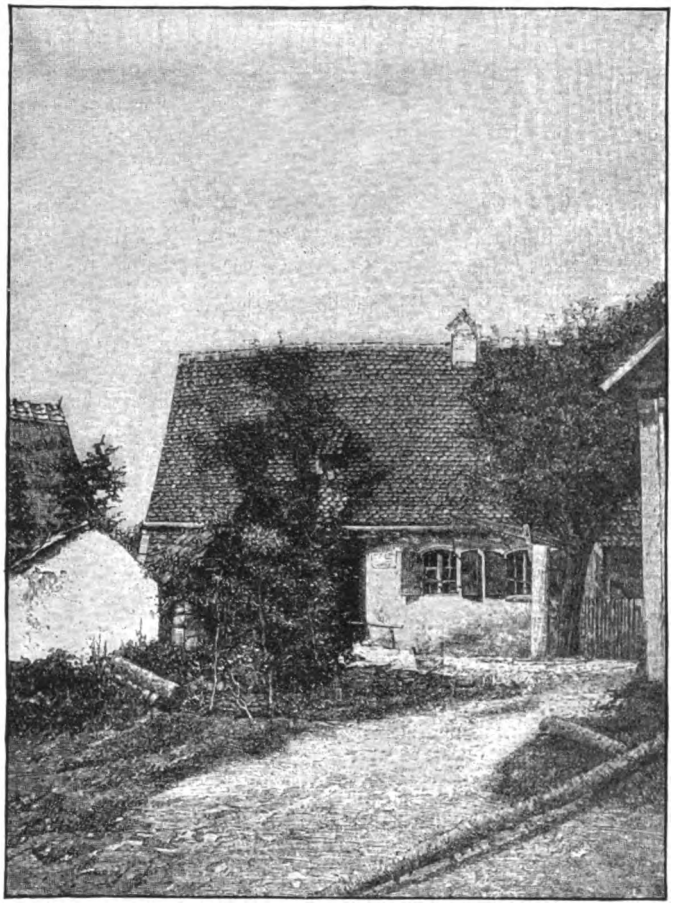
In the schools of the little towns of Kamitz and Eisenberg, which henceforth became the homes of the family of Gluck, the young Christoph found his first inspiration, for in all Catholic countries the scholars were obliged to take part in the musical part of the service and received not only the necessary vocal instruction, but instrumental as well; and it is said the boy played both violin and violoncello with passable skill. Beyond this, the schooling was so superficial that his father placed him, in 1726, at the Jesuit College at Kommatau (Bohemia). That the Jesuits are most thorough in their instruction is well known; but whether the blind obedience and abject slavery exacted of the scholars in the name of "a true Church" is calculated to develop mind and character successfully, seems doubtful. Gluck's strength of character through life shows that the pernicious influence of the Jesuitical teaching had no serious effect upon his nature. Among the advantages derived from his sojourn in Kommatau, the instruction received upon the piano and organ is of the greatest importance.

Yet violin and violoncello were still his favorite instruments; they were his comfort and support during years of study and wandering, for from his slender income the father could but partially pay for his son's maintenance. This did not deter Gluck, in 1732, from bravely taking his staff in hand and turning his steps toward Prague that he might be better informed both in music and science. Whether he then contemplated becoming a musician or composer is uncertain; we simply know that in order to make his living he taught the violoncello and singing, and that in church celebrations, notably in those of the Tein Church, under the leadership of the celebrated composer Czernohorsky, he played in the orchestra. In his leisure hours and upon the numerous festival days of the Catholics he did not hesitate to wander to the neighboring villages and by his dance-music and his singing to earn a piece of money or a meal. Toward the end of his sojourn at Prague, however (1736), he had made such strides in music that he ventured his productions in larger cities and before cultured audiences. By his rendering of violoncello music he succeeded in attracting attention in the circles of the aristocracy, and the princely family of Lobkowitz showed him special favor. Under the protection of the influential and enthusiastic prince, Gluck boldly ventured to express a wish to devote himself exclusively to music, and the same year, encouraged by his patron, that he might better accomplish his end he went to Vienna, then the fountain-head of musicial activity, where J. J. Fux, Conti and Caldara, musicians of European fame, were at work together.

Unfortunately there are no reliable accounts of Gluck's first stay in Vienna and the nature of his study there, but without doubt his part in the musical life corresponded with the peculiar kind of training he had previously received. An important fact remarked by A. L. Marx ("Gluck und die Oper," I., 20) is that up to this time Gluck had held aloof from the piano, "that curious instrument which is unsatisfactory in every tone, and in melody suffers by comparison with every other, which is yet the blessed parent of creative phantasies and lends itself to rich and ever-varying expression . . . which is capable of presenting various melodies simultaneously, grouping independent voices and producing dramatic effect with them; in a word, the only proper polyphonic auxiliary to the dramatic in music." While for all the great masters of the century, for Bach as for Handel, for Mozart as for Beethoven, the piano was the basis of musical education, the lever of their creative power, Gluck confined himself almost exclusively to vocal music and stringed instruments, a significant fact which explains the merits as well as defects in the master's later activity. The freedom and

perfect ease with which the aforesaid musicians overcame the difficulties of counterpoint, we miss in Gluck's music, even at the time of maturity; and if it be urged that his musical plans for reform did not allow a development of the art of counterpoint, it may be remarked how little of it he showed in his church compositions. True, he has given us but one work of this kind, which appeared in Paris and later in Leipsic, a "De profundis" which seems, with its frequent but never quite complete examples of polyphony, a convincing proof that Gluck was not wholly familiar with polyphonic expression.

Under these circumstances it may be inferred that Gluck was ill-content in a city where, as chief Kapellmeister at the Court, the greatest master of counterpoint of his time, J. J. Fux, had absolute control of all musical matters. The attraction toward Italy, in which direction the glance of every ambitious musician was turned, must have been, in his case, peculiarly strong, and he therefore received with joy the invitation of Lombardy's Prince Melzi (who had grown to know and prize him in Lobkowitz House) to follow him to Milan, as chamber-musician. This city, as the residence of Sammartini, one of the most celebrated masters of harmony in Italy, afforded him excellent opportunity to make good the defects in his musical education and to become fully acquainted with the secrets of dramatic composition. Giovanni Battista Sammartini (born about 1700, died about 1770) held the position of organist at several churches; he began his career as opera-composer, but subsequently turned his attention to instrumental music and gained high praise from his contemporaries for chamber and orchestral compositions which might rank as forerunners of the quartets and symphonies of Haydn. Under him Gluck studied fully four years, when he ventured bravely before the public, well equipped with the opera "Artaxerxes" (1741), text by Metastasio. The success of this must have been pronounced, as the master, but twenty-eight years of age, immediately received commissions for opera compositions from Milan as well as from other cities of Italy. We know the "Artaxerxes" mainly by hearsay, as the score, together with scores of the operas written later for Milan — "Demofoonte" (1742), "Siface" (1743) and "Fédre" (1743) — was burned in a theatre fire. In his "Studies for Musicians," J. F. Reichardt tells us that "in 'Artaxerxes' Gluck endeavored to depart as much as possible from the broad, well-trodden road of the Italian composers of his time, and to write music more nearly approaching harmonious expression, to which he later owed his imperishable reputation and which, so to speak, he had himself created." In spite of this and similar opinions it is highly improbable that these first works of Gluck exhibited his individuality, for had they done so it would still be apparent when making comparison with the works of his contemporaneous rivals; it is all the more improbable as, for a number of years, he adapted his style to the prevalent taste, and did not materially depart from the stereotyped form of Italian opera.



GLUCK'S BIRTHPLACE IN WEIDENWANG,
Near the Bohemian frontier.

The position in the musical world secured by Gluck through his first opera, is shown by the fact that he received an order from London for an opera for the Haymarket Theatre. In Paris, where he stopped on the way to England, he may have had a presentiment that here was to be the field of his future activity; in the absence of any detailed account of his stay in the city, we may assume that here he became familiar with the grand opera as created by Lully and perfected by Rameau, which in its nature was infinitely nearer his ideal — distinctly seen later — than the Italian opera. It cannot be said, however, that these first Parisian impressions had an immediate effect on Gluck's artistic methods and mode of expression, inasmuch as his opera "La Caduta dei Giganti," written for London and brought out in the year 1746, was in the prescribed Italian vein. But from the initiated, the "lion's claws" were not hidden. In his "History of Arts," Burney says of an aria: "It is of very peculiar creation but much too monotonous," and of the instrumentation "It is original but drowns the melody;" finally "One wishes the melodies were somewhat more graceful and had more artistic repose." In these criticisms we read between the lines that the composer of "The Overthrow of the Titans" already betrayed his individuality.

Gluck had little reason to be satisfied with his success in London; his opera was given but five times, and though his "Artamene," written for Cremona three years before, was somewhat more popular, this could hardly compensate for the failure of his more recent work. He had no cause to regret his journey to London, however, for here, as in Paris, he gained impressions which materially extended his artistic horizon and were of utmost importance to his development; here, also, he made the acquaintance of Handel and his works. We know that the personal relations of the two masters were friendly, but Handel does not appear to have felt deep sympathy for his younger brother in the art. How could he, who a few years before had broken forever with the opera in order to turn to oratorio, which was better suited to his artistic nature, be other than indifferent to the attempt of this youth to establish the success of the opera? And how could it escape the great master of polyphony that Gluck stood in this art far below him? Handel's terse word that "Gluck understood about as much of counterpoint as his (Handel's) cook," was certainly not intended for publicity, yet it shows so definitely the relations of the masters at this time that it should not be omitted from Gluck's biography. Further than this, we should not consider them opponents in any way. Gluck treated the associate thirty years his senior with utmost deference, and the latter from his experience advised him, in a kindly manner, how to work as opera-composer in order to win the approval of Englishmen.

Thus far, we have made as complete a review as possible of the factors instrumental in Gluck's development, and shall dwell briefly on the following years, in which he was obliged to reconcile the suggestions received in foreign countries before they brought about a proper revolution in his methods. Gluck proved effectually the truth of the word "chi va piano, va sano," for though the oratorios of Handel with their wonderful choruses filled with dramatic fire exerted a powerful influence over him, there was need of a lengthy process of assimilation before his own choruses could shape themselves after these models.

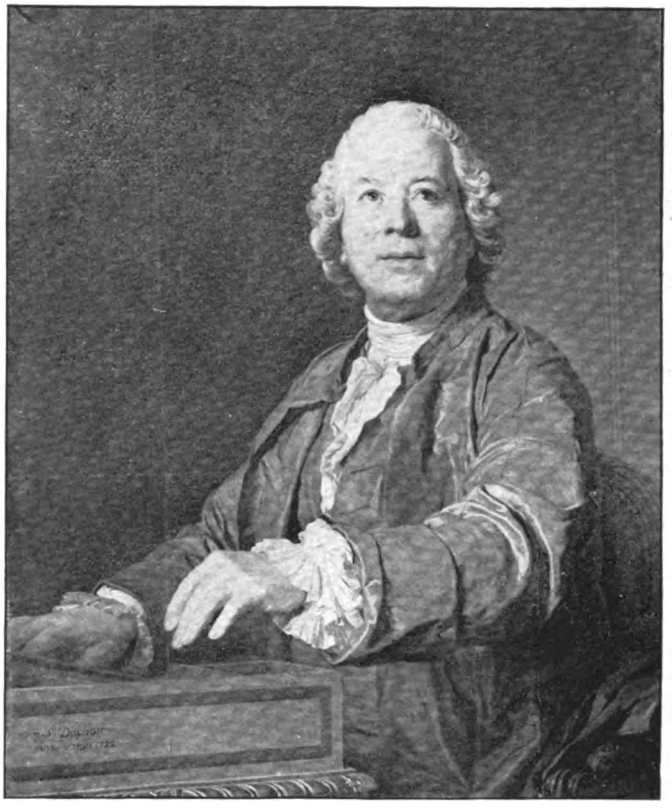
From London Gluck went to Hamburg, where the conductor Mingotti had arrived with an Italian troupe. He does not appear to have contemplated taking an active part,[1] for in the summer of the same year (1747) we find him in Dresden, where Mingotti's troupe had in the meantime arrived, presenting with them his opera "Le Nozze d' Ercole e d' Ebe" (The Wedding of Hercules and Hebe) in celebration of the union of the Princess Anna and the Electoral Prince of Bavaria. The fact that this opera was presented in the palace theatre at Pillnitz, near Dresden, and that court favor was shown the composer, gave rise to the erroneous statement, repeated by different biographers, that Gluck, at this time, was appointed Kapellmeister at the Dresden court. Such an appointment was denied him, if for no other reason than because, at the time, the celebrated Hasse was undisputed leader there, and Gluck was not a man to occupy an inferior position. In this opera he seems to have made no unusual exertion; the composition (which until recently was wholly unknown, having been discovered but a few years ago by Fürstenau in the

[1] According to Fürstenau ("History of Music and the Theatre at the Court of Dresden," II., 249), it is not improbable that Gluck conducted the opera at Hamburg from Nov. 15–27, 1747.

Dresden archives) was quite in the prevalent style of Italian opera, even though certain features were indicative of the coming reform.

From Dresden Gluck turned, for the second time, to the music-loving empire city on the Danube (1748). He had left it a scholar, but returned a master, and as such was recognized and honored in all the circles of Vienna. He found a zealous patron in the Prince of Hildburghausen, the favorite of Maria Theresa, through whose intercession he soon obtained an order for the composition of an opera to be given on the birthday of the Empress. This opera was the "Semiramide riconosciuta," by Metastasio, a Viennese court poet then at the height of his fame. It is needless to say that we look in vain for the least indication of a change in Gluck's style, as it was in Metastasio's librettos that the type of the older opera intended almost exclusively for vocalists was most pronounced, and in setting these to music it was necessary to conform to the prevalent fashion.

Gluck retained this style, also, in his following works, which need be merely mentioned: the perfected serenade "Tetide" (1749), given in the theatre of Castle Charlottesburg at Copenhagen at a birthday fête for the Crown Prince, afterward King Christian VII.; also the operas written for Rome and Naples, "Telemachus" (1749) and "La Clemenza di Tito" (1751) by Metastasio, both noteworthy, in that Gluck, later, availed himself of several of their numbers in the masterpieces of his Parisian epoch. These were followed by a long list of similar works, for Gluck displayed, even then, a restless activity, though in 1750 he married, and with his Marianna, a daughter of the rich Venetian merchant Pergin, experienced all the joy of a happy marriage which remained undisturbed till his death. Two impulses in the next decade of Gluck's activity deserve special mention; one was his eager interest in literature. "Gifted by nature with as great a love for literature as for music," says his biographer Anton Schmidt, "he now worked with incessant energy in this province as well. Though somewhat late, he applied himself to a thorough study of Latin and French and to poetry. He made the acquaintance of the most distinguished men of science, that through intercourse with them and in the companionship of good books he might cultivate the ideas which had so long been ingrafted in his nature concerning the mighty influence of music and its close connection with poetry, of which at this time but few had even dreamed."—"C. W. Ritter von Gluck," p. 79.



CHRISTOPH WILIBALD GLUCK.

From an oil portrait by J. S. Duplessis, Paris, 1776, Gluck being then in his sixty-second year. The painting is now in the Imperial picture gallery, at Vienna.

The second was his acquaintance with the French comic opera, which until the year 1752 had been given only on the improvised stage; a new era began for this when in the same year a troupe of Italian bouffe singers arrived in Paris and was received with enthusiastic interest by the public. For the first time scenes from daily life appropriately staged were enacted upon the operatic stage in place of the customary frigid representation of a mythological character. All this was to the extreme disgust of the conservative, but to the unbounded delight of the progressive who, with the representative of

philosophic enlightenment J. J. Rousseau, anticipated for art and life a healthy return from artificial to natural conditions. In the bitter struggle between these parties, a struggle to which the appearance of the opera-bouffe gave rise, progress was victorious. The most competent poets and composers of France did not hesitate to follow the lead of Italy, and while from the modest "Intermezzo" they developed the "Opera comique," they showed the world that owing to her artistic nature France, above all other nations, was best fitted to represent this new style of art. In view of the influence which France had exerted over the intellectual life of Europe since the time of Louis XIV., it was quite natural that the neighboring nations should wish to share in the new acquisition. From 1755 therefore, the comic opera, which originated in Paris, was invariably performed in Vienna as well. Meanwhile, in most cases the librettos were satisfactory and the composition was confided to local musicians, among whom Gluck took first rank, having been Kapellmeister since 1754. His works of this kind which are preserved to us as "Airs nouveaux" to the respective librettos, consist of songs with simple piano accompaniment in light French style. One of these operettas, Lemonnier's "Cadi dupé," became a great favorite throughout Germany under the title of "Der betrogene Cadi," and when given again but a short while ago in the opera house at Berlin, it maintained, in spite of its hundred years, its original crispness and popularity. Gluck's French operettas may be regarded as occasional works, as incidental to his masterpieces. They are not to be lightly esteemed, however, for they virtually served to bring his ideas of reform to a focus and to prepare him for the war which he subsequently declared against the older Italian opera.

The beginning of this war coincided with the acquaintance made by Gluck, about 1760, of Raniero di Calzabigi, counsellor of the chamber-of-accounts for the Netherlands in Vienna (the Netherlands were then under Austrian government), and the author of many excellent dramatic works. In him Gluck found a friend who shared his convictions that the Italian opera needed depth and improvement, that it could not accomplish its end in the form which Metastasio had given it. Calzabigi declared himself ready to assist the master in working out his plans, and the fruit of their efforts was the opera "Orfeo ed Euridice" (Orpheus and Euridice), which was first given Oct. 5, 1762, in the Imperial Theatre at Vienna. This excited enthusiastic applause, but was received with disfavor and astonishment as well, for many of the hearers accustomed to the former style of the Italian opera, were far more confused than edified by music based chiefly upon dramatic truth. Gluck had given unusual attention to the artists of this opera; as he later told the English composer Burney, it cost him ceaseless effort during the rehearsals, to direct the singers, dancers and orchestra to his satisfaction. "Very probable," as Marx remarks, "for they were obliged to do what had never been before required — deny themselves their special skill and inclination in order to lose themselves wholly and unconditionally in the rôle they had assumed. It had been the custom to adapt the rôles and the entire so-called drama to the habits and the wishes of the singers." ("Gluck und die Oper," I. 300).

Gluck's energetic determination, however, overcame these difficulties. As a director, he could rank with Handel in force, energy and insight. His contemporary, the contrabass Kämppfer, describes him as "a veritable tyrant who becomes enraged at the slightest failure and yields to vehement expressions of anger. Twenty, thirty repetitions do not suffice for the practised musicians of the chapel, among whom are certain virtuosos; they must produce the *ensemble* effect. He is so brusque that they often refuse to obey, and only by the persuasion of the Emperor, 'You know it is his way, he means it not unkindly,' are they induced to play under him. They always require double pay; those who have been accustomed to receive one ducat, when *Gluck* directs receive two. No fortissimo can be strong enough and no pianissimo weak enough for him at certain times. Yet it is quite curious how every emotion, the wild, the gentle and the sad is expressed in look and gesture." It is natural that even the most indolent was unable to resist the inspiring influence of such a leader, and even the bearer of the title-rôle, the male alto singer, Guadagni, willingly submitted to the master, and after each rehearsal was more disposed to agree with his ideas. The final success of the work was therefore established and actually after the fifth representation the last remnant of opposition disappeared and applause was unanimous. After the triumph gained by this first effort in the new direction, retraction for Gluck would

naturally be supposed to be impossible. Yet he allowed five years to elapse which he filled with works of lesser worth, among others an opera by Metastasio, "Ezio," brought out in 1763, before he again appeared upon the battle-ground. This time he was armed with the opera "Alceste," given for the first time Dec. 16, 1767, in Vienna. In writing this work, after years of reserve, the master, in whose character prudence and extreme deliberation were marvellously balanced by courage and self-confidence, followed the French motto, "Reculer pour mieux sauter" ("look before you leap"); with a mighty bound he cleared the chasm between the old opera and that which agreed with his ideal, and that all doubt regarding his intention might be dispelled, his "Alceste" appeared with a preface which may be regarded as Gluck's confession of faith, and as such deserves special mention. This was addressed to the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the most important parts are as follows: — "In setting the opera of 'Alceste' to music I have resolved to avoid all those abuses which have crept into Italian opera through the mistaken vanity of singers and the unwise compliance of composers, and which have rendered it wearisome and ridiculous, instead of being, as it once was, the grandest and most imposing stage of modern times. I have endeavored to reduce music to its proper function, that of seconding poetry by enforcing the expression of sentiment and the interest of the situation, without interrupting the action or weakening it by superfluous ornament (raffreddata con degli inutili ornamenti). My idea is that the relation of music to poetry is much the same as that of harmonious coloring and well-disposed light and shade to an accurate drawing, which animate the figures without altering their outlines. I have therefore been very careful never to interrupt a singer in the heat of a dialogue in order to introduce a tedious ritornelle, nor to stop him in the middle of a piece either for the purpose of displaying the flexibility of his voice on some favorable vowel, or that the orchestra may give him time to take breath before a long-sustained note. Furthermore, I have not thought it right to hurry through the second part of a song if the words happened to be the most important of the whole, in order to repeat the first part regularly four times over; or to finish the air where the sense is complete in order to allow the singer to exhibit his power of varying the passage at pleasure. In fact, my object has been to put an end to abuses against which good taste and good sense have long protested in vain.

"My idea is that the overture should indicate the subject and prepare the spectators for the character of the piece they are about to see; that the instruments ought to be introduced in proportion to the degree of interest and passion in the words; and that it is necessary, above all, to avoid making too great a disparity between the recitative and the air of a dialogue, in order not to break the sense of a period or awkwardly interrupt the movement and animation of a scene. I have also felt that my chief endeavor should be to attain a grand simplicity (una bella simplicità), and consequently I have avoided making a parade of difficulties at the cost of clearness. I have set no value on novelty as such, unless naturally suggested by the situation and suited to the expression; in fact there is no rule which I have not felt bound to sacrifice for the sake of effect."

As may be readily imagined, the freedom of this artistic manifesto created great commotion. How could the majority of music-lovers listen with indifference to the statement that its favorite, the Italian opera, was "absurd and wearisome"? And why should not the professional musicians be horrified that one of their number set forth the "Violation of the Rules of Composition" as allowable, nay, even as desirable? As far as the effect of the opera itself was concerned, "Alceste" met with the same reception as that accorded its predecessor, "Orpheus." Though Gluck and Calzabigi had done their best, the new opera found but little favor. Well might an enthusiastic admirer of Gluck, Sonnenfels, in his "Letters on the Vienna Stage," exclaim: "I find myself in the land of wonders. A serious opera without eunuchs, music without solfeggios, or rather, throat sounds, an Italian poem without cheap wit or bluster. With this threefold wonder the theatre nearest the Hofburg is re-opened." The great majority of music-lovers remained cold, at least at the first representations of "Alceste," and scoffers remarked that "if any tears were shed they were purely from exhaustion." There is no doubt but that this reserved attitude was assumed especially toward the poetry, which suffered from a certain monotony, inasmuch as it presented but one actor, if, indeed, his decision to die may be regarded as an act! The authors of "Alceste" were not ignorant of this weakness of

the libretto, and in a third work they set themselves the task of portraying the conflict of man with man. This they tried to carry out in the opera "Paride ed Helena" (Paris and Helen), which appeared the following year (1769), but this time they deceived themselves in the selection of the text; since there is no real climax — the catastrophe of the destruction of Troy, brought about by the capture of Helen, being merely suggested at the conclusion through Athena, who appears as goddess *ex machina* — the whole poem dwindles into a common-place love-story. The embellishments, conflicts, a sacrificial feast, etc., could not compensate for the lack of a dramatic nucleus, and Gluck was obliged to see this work, with which he had taken infinite pains, disappear from the stage.

The dissatisfaction of the master was still further increased by the scornful attitude assumed by his critics with regard to his efforts for reform. In North Germany especially, the appearance of "Alceste" and of its defiant preface gave the signal to break the staff over the head of the audacious disturber of the peace. One of the most prominent Berlin critics, Frederick Nicolai, did not hesitate to assert that "Alceste" had no merit, though he had only heard several numbers of the opera at a rehearsal. This attitude of competent judges induced Gluck in 1770 to come before the world with a new manifesto, the dedication of "Paris and Helen," to the Duke of Braganza. This was not a whit less forcible than was his first dedication, and was chiefly directed toward his critics. It ran as follows: —

"Whereas I dedicate this work to Your Highness, I am less concerned to find a patron than a judge. Only a mind above the prejudice of custom, a sufficient knowledge of the sublime teaching of art, a taste formed by great ideals as well as by the unvarying principles of the true and beautiful, are what I seek in my Mæcenas and find united in Your Highness. Only in the hope of finding imitators did I resolve to bring out the music of 'Alceste,' and flattered myself that men would follow eagerly the path which I had opened in order to suppress the abuses which had crept into Italian opera and impaired its worth. I am convinced, however, that my hopes were vain. Smatterers, would-be judges of poetry and music, a class of people which is unfortunately very large and is always a thousand times more detrimental to the progress of art than is ignorance, threaten to be the death of their own presumption. Because of imperfectly studied, poorly conducted and still more poorly performed rehearsals it has been unjustly condemned, and the effect which the opera might produce upon the stage has been judged by its effect in a room. Is not this the sagacity of that Greek city which had miscalculated the effect of statues near at hand that were intended for tall pillars? Any one of these eccentric music-lovers whose soul is only in his ear will find many of my arias too rough, many passages too hard or imperfectly prepared, but he does not consider that in accordance with the situation, an aria or passage requires just this lofty expression and that thus the happiest contrasts are obtained. A pedant in harmony will detect carelessness and occasionally a false start, and consider himself justified in condemning both as unpardonable sins against the rules of harmony, whereupon many will agree in pronouncing this music exaggerated, barbarous and wild.

"The other artists fare no better in this respect, sentence is passed with quite as little justice and insight, and Your Highness will readily divine the reason, since the more one strives for perfection and truth the more necessary become the attributes of accuracy and justice. The qualities which distinguished Raphael from all other painters are possessed by few. Slight change of line may not destroy the resemblance in a caricature, but it may entirely disfigure the appearance of a lovely countenance. In music I will cite but one example, the aria from the opera Orpheus, 'Che farò senza Euridice.' Should one make the least change in the movement or manner of expression it would become simply an ordinary air for puppet-shows. In a piece of this kind the effect of the scene may be utterly destroyed by a more or less sustained note, an increase of tone, carelessness in tempo, a trill, a passage, etc., etc. When it is a question of carrying out the theme according to the principles laid down by me, the presence of the composer is as necessary as the sun to the creations of nature. He is the soul and the life, without whom all is in disorder and confusion, but he must be prepared to meet all obstacles even as we would meet men who, because they have eyes and ears, without regard to the structure of these organs, feel called upon to pronounce judgment upon the fine arts, simply because they *have* eyes and ears, for hastily to pass sentence upon

things which he least understands, is a common failing of man. Nay, one of the greatest philosophers of this century recently dared to write a dissertation on music which he published as oracular with the superscription, 'Sogni di Ciechi e Fole di Romanzi' (Dreams of the Blind and Stories of Romance).

"Your Highness must already have read the drama 'Paris' and remarked that it does not offer to the composer those intense passions and tragic situations which in the 'Alceste' stir the souls of the spectators and afford opportunity for strong emotion. In this music you would as little expect the same strength and force as in a picture painted in broad daylight you would demand the same strong effects of light and shade and the same sharp contrasts which the artist can employ only on a subject painted in a subdued light. 'Alceste' treats of a wife who is about to lose her husband, to save whom she courageously conjures up the spirits of the nether world in the blackest shadows of night in a dark wood, and who, even in her last death-struggle trembles for the fate of her children and forces herself to part from an idolized husband. In 'Paris,' on the contrary, the question is of a loving youth who has to contend with the reserve of a truly noble but arrogant wife, a reserve which, by means of the arts of inventive passion, he finally conquers. I have therefore taken pains to think of an interchange of colors which I find in the various characters of the Phrygian and Spartan races, while I have contrasted the rude and stubborn disposition of the one with the tender, gentle disposition of the other. Hence I believe that the song which in my opera wholly takes the place of declamation, must imitate in the Helen the native rudeness of her race; I have thought, also, that because I sought to sustain this character in the music, I should not be blamed if I occasionally descended to the trivial. If one really wishes to follow the truth he must never forget that according to the measure of the subject in question even the supreme beauties of melody and harmony, if employed in the wrong places, may become faults and imperfections. I expect from my 'Paris' no better success than from my 'Alceste' as far as effecting the desired change in style of composition is concerned; yet all the long-foreseen hindrances shall not deter me from making new efforts toward the accomplishment of my good aim. If I but win the approval of Your Highness, with contented mind I may assure myself: Tolle Siparium; sufficit mihi unus Plato pro cuncto populo."

GLUCK.

From a pencil drawing of bust by the sculptor Houdon; probably a study for the statue in the Paris Opera House. See page 237.

With the appearance of this second declaration of war the attacks of criticism against Gluck became more numerous and violent, and it must have been the master's earnest wish to find a place for his activity which should be less under the musical influence of Italy than was Germany. Such a place was Paris, whose artistic conditions were the more favorable for Gluck's plans of reform in that the representatives in philosophy and *belles-lettres* set the standard in musical matters also, and with cultured people their opinion went much farther than that of the exceedingly conservative professional musicians. What attractive conditions for a composer who, at war with tradition, assigned to poetry the first place in the opera, while music should be but its servant!

Gluck did not hesitate to seize the opportunity, in 1772, of becoming more intimate with the Bailli *du Rollet*, a man fond of literature, highly cul-

tivated, and enthusiastic over his music. Gluck had known him in Rome and now met him again as Attaché of the French Embassy in Vienna. A closer acquaintance with du Rollet gave the composer the means of carrying into effect his plan of going to Paris. Without regard to his former coworker, Calzabigi — Gluck's relations with the latter may well have been changed since the failure of "Paris and Helen"— the master bound himself to du Rollet, who agreed to prepare, with his help, Racine's "Iphigénie in Aulis," and to bring about the performance of the work in the great Parisian Opera. The difficulties which arose from the business transactions with the directors of the Grand Opera were entirely overcome by an emphatic word from one of Gluck's former pupils, Marie Antoinette, who had been placed, in the meantime, upon the French throne, and in the autumn of 1773 Gluck was able to leave Vienna for Paris.

In Paris the German master was received with open arms by the court as well as by leaders in the literary circles. The protection of the former was of special consequence to Gluck, as he was to have infinitely greater trouble with the singers and musicians than he had experienced in Vienna. Even at the first rehearsals of his opera he was convinced that the principal actors of the "Académie royale de musique" (Royal Academy of Music), which was the official name of the Grand Opera, left much to be desired in singing, pronunciation, acting and all else. The dancers, who, until within a few years, had always entered with masks, entirely lacked the ability to assist the action by their pantomime as Gluck desired. The chorus was accustomed to march up and down in rank and file, the men on one side and the women on the other, and then to stand immovable. The orchestra finally reached the extreme height of laziness and lawlessness; in cold weather the entire company played in gloves, and the only way the leader could achieve any kind of *ensemble* was to beat the time loudly on his desk. And now Gluck made short work of the belligerents. To the singer who assumed the rôle of Iphigenia and in a rehearsal refused to follow instructions he said: "Voyez-vous, Mademoiselle, je suis ici pour faire exécuter Iphigénie; si vous voulez chanter, rien de mieux; si vous ne le voulez pas, à votre aise. J'irai voir la reine et je lui dirai, il m'est impossible de faire jouer mon opéra. Puis je monterai dans ma voiture et je reprendrai la route de Vienne." ("Mademoiselle, I am here to bring out Iphigenia: if you will sing, nothing can be better; if not, very well, I will go to the Queen and will say: It is impossible to have my opera performed; then I will take my seat in my carriage and return to Vienna.") Certainly the majority of the coöperators would have been glad to get rid of the master in this way, but knowing the court to be on his side, there was nothing to do but submit.

The day of the representation of "Iphigénie" (19 April, 1774) was anticipated with excitement by all Paris. In literary circles — the so-called bureaux d'esprit (offices of wit) — there were arguments for and against Gluck. In the first place here was a composer who had spoken the apparently paradoxical words which were nevertheless true: "When I compose operas I try, first of all, to forget that I am a musician," and in these circles there was violent opposition to the extremely self-confident reformer. Baron Grimm, a subtle critic and known as the patron of young Mozart during his second sojourn in Paris, thus describes, in a most graphic way, the ruling sentiments: "For two weeks Paris has been thinking and dreaming nothing but music. Music is the subject of all our debates, of all conversation; it is the life of all our suppers, and it would be simply ridiculous to show interest in anything else. To a political question the reply is a melody, to a moral reflection, the ritornelle of an aria; if one tries to excite interest in Racine or Voltaire he is reminded of the effect produced by the orchestra in the recitative of Agamemnon. Need I say that it is Gluck's 'Iphigénie' which has excited such a furore? A furore all the more tremendous because of the difference of opinion and the fanaticism of parties. One party swears that no other gods than Lully and Rameau shall be recognized; another believes only in the melodious revelations of Jomelli, Piccini and Sacchini; a third will hear of no other composer than Gluck, who has found the only true dramatic music drawn from the eternal fount of harmony, from the most intimate union of mind and soul; a music that belongs to no land, but which he has genially appropriated to our language."

It goes without saying that opinions differed even upon the evening of the first representation, but upon the second, applause was unanimous, or, as Grimm expresses it, "Iphigénie" was applauded "aux nues" (to the clouds). The series of suc-

cessful representations was interrupted by the death of Louis XV., in consequence of which the theatre was closed for thirty-four days. This interruption was, however, employed in studying the "Orpheus," which meanwhile had been translated into French by Moline. Gluck had to make several important changes in the music, for the Academy of Music had no eunuchs among its members (the French public never having found pleasure in such singers), and the master was obliged to transpose for the tenor the title-rôle written for alto. Although by the substitution of the brilliant tenor for the melancholy alto the part of "Orpheus" lost something of its charm, "Orphée et Euridice" still had a success which far exceeded that of "Iphigénie." It was a special joy to Gluck that J. J. Rousseau, who had been one of his partisans, soon after the appearance of "Iphigénie" became one of his enthusiastic admirers. The philosopher of Geneva affirmed that the music of "Orpheus" had reconciled him to existence, and the reproach cast upon Gluck's music, that it was lacking in melody — a reproach, by the way, which no musical innovator, up to the present day, has been spared — he met with the words: "I believe that melody proceeds from every pore." Besides this, after Gluck had taught him better, Rousseau did not hesitate — and this does him honor — to publicly acknowledge that he had made a serious mistake in stating that the French language was unsuitable to set to music.

NICOLA PICCINI,
Gluck's rival in Paris from 1776 to 1779.
Of the 150 Italian Operas written by this composer not one has survived.

It would lead us too far to enter into the reasons given by Rousseau in his "Lettre sur la musique française" (Essay upon French music) in support of his former opinion. In the main he accused the French language — and justly — of being devoid of all accent (destituée de tout accent) and concluded that Gluck's efforts to bring about a reform in French opera had no chance of success. But he did not know or did not consider that language without accent to a German is quite incomprehensible, that a German composer cannot do otherwise than satisfy his inborn love of accent in the use of a language that is foreign to him. While Gluck thus breathed a vital element into French song, a need felt by the French themselves, but which they did not know how to meet, he won the warmest recognition of all truly musically-gifted Frenchmen and that of the French-Swiss Rousseau among them.

Results of such importance could not be affected by the fact that two of Gluck's earlier works, the operetta "L'arbre enchanté" (The Enchanted Tree) and the opera ballet "La Cythère assiégée" (Cythera Besieged), when performed in Paris the following year (1775), found but a lukewarm welcome. The master had left Paris before the representation of the latter work, not to rest on his laurels, but to begin at once the composition of two new operas, "Roland" and "Armide," both by Quinault, which, with the French adaptation of "Alceste," were intended for representation in Paris the following year. In the midst of his work, however, he was surprised by the news that, at the instigation of his opponents, the directors of the Grand Opera had called to Paris the famous opera-composer Nicola Piccini, and had likewise confided to him the composition of "Roland." In a violent rage Gluck destroyed what music of "Roland" was already completed and wrote an angry letter to his co-laborer du Rollet, who was then tarrying in Paris, in which, without denying his respect for the talent of his rival, he accused his opponents of treachery and

overwhelmed their spokesman, the author Marmontel, with bitter ridicule. This letter, which du Rollet had printed in the periodical "L'année littéraire," gave the signal for a literary war, which in matters of art has never been surpassed in bitterness except, perhaps, at the appearance of Richard Wagner. A vivid picture of this is given in the collection of newspaper reports, brochures, eulogies and satires (which appeared in Naples in 1781 and in German translation in 1823) called forth by Gluck's opera-reforms, and entitled "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la révolution opérée dans la musique par M. le Chevalier Gluck." (Memoirs: a Contribution to the History of the Revolution brought about in Music by M. le Chevalier Gluck.)

When, at the beginning of the year 1776, Gluck returned in order to rehearse "Alceste," he found the cultured people divided into two parties under the names "Gluckists" and "Piccinists," drawn up in line of battle. Again, as in 1752, at the appearance of the Italian bouffe-singers there were formed in the theatre the King's party and the Queen's party; for the king, though not in the least musical, thought it his duty to defend the older opera, while the queen with unwavering fidelity remained true to her countryman and former instructor. At the head of the Gluckists stood the *Abbé Arnaud* and *Suard*, the proprietor of the "Journal de Paris," while for Piccini, who had arrived in Paris before Gluck, stood *Marmontel* and the editor of the noted paper "Mercure de France," *Laharpe*. At the first representation of "Alceste" victory for the Piccinists seemed assured, so utterly did the opera fail, the last act being actually hissed. But, as frequently upon former occasions, the public altered its opinion with each successive performance and bestowed ever richer applause upon the "Alceste" in the thirty-eight consecutive representations. Gluck's fame rose still higher, however, with the presentation of "Armide" (Sept. 23, 1777), in consequence of which his bust was placed near those of Lully, Rameau and Quinault in the foyer of the Grand Opera.

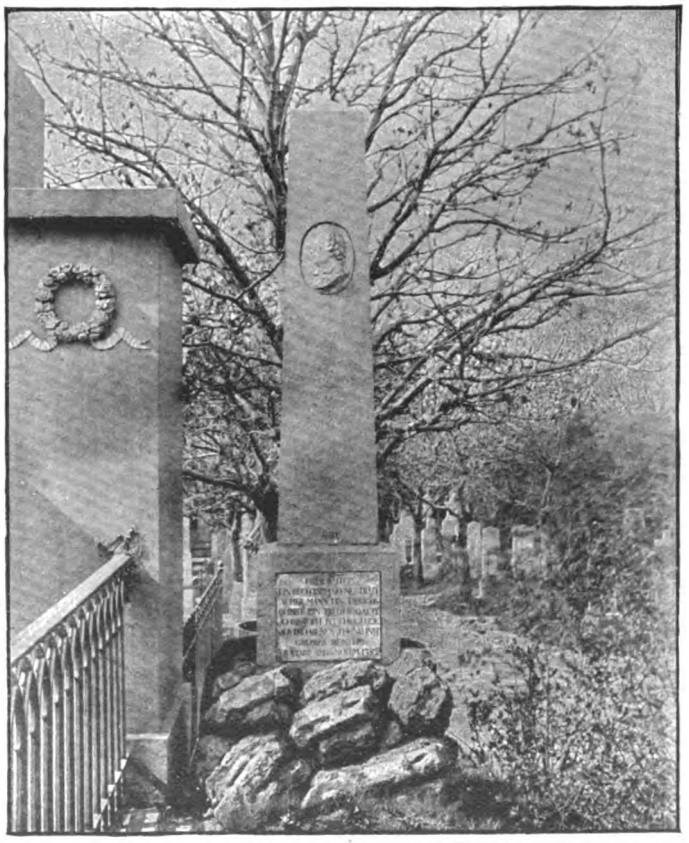
And what were the personal relations of the two masters whose adherents fought so bitterly? Fairly friendly, as among fellow-artists, after they had become acquainted at a banquet which *Berton*, one of the directors of the Grand Opera, had happily given in their honor. Later, they had occasion to put this friendly feeling into action; when Piccini's "Roland" was being studied and at a rehearsal the composer was thrown into the utmost confusion, being unused to conducting and unfamiliar with the French language, Gluck, who happened to be present, rushed impulsively into the orchestra, threw aside wig and coat and led with such tremendous energy that everything ran smoothly; he also joined most cordially in the applause given his rival upon the appearance of "Roland" in January, 1778. Piccini, on the other hand, when he heard of Gluck's death, expressed his regard for the departed by starting a subscription for the establishment of a yearly concert to be given upon the anniversary of Gluck's death at which nothing but his compositions should be given. The friendly relations of the rivals had another severe test. After Gluck had found a new co-laborer in the poet Guillard, and had gone to Vienna with the text of "Iphigénie in Tauris" to set it to music, the directors of the Grand Opera, as in the case of "Roland," were again speculating on the Parisians' love of sensation and induced Piccini also to compose an "Iphigénie in Tauris," which should appear before that of Gluck. This time, however, our master did not propose to relinquish his rights; toward the end of the year 1778 he returned to Paris, and with the aid of the queen so carried his point that the supposed warfare "man to man" ceased and his work gained the precedence. His "Kampf ums Recht" (Fight for the Right) was crowned with brilliant success; not only did those who were co-operating in the production of "Iphigénie" show themselves well-disposed and even enthusiastic in their task, but at the first performance of this work (May 18, 1779) the effect upon its hearers was magical. The ideal of all earnest friends of the opera seemed attained in the "Iphigénie in Tauris," and even the cautious Grimm, overcome by the impressions of this representation, wrote: "I know not if what we have heard be a melody. Perhaps it is something much better; I forget the opera and find myself in a Greek tragedy."

After this memorable evening it could no longer be doubted that the war between the Gluckists and Piccinists was over; that the German master had been victorious. True, the "Iphigénie in Tauris" of Piccini, given about a year later (January, 1781), was also extremely successful, but when the experiment was made, soon after, of producing alternately

the operas of the two masters, after slight hesitation, the public decided by a large majority — as is shown by the receipts — in Gluck's favor.*

Unfortunately Gluck's Parisian activity closed with a failure. The last opera which he produced there, Baron von Tschudi's "Echo and Narcissus" (autumn of 1779) was coldly received, and after a few representations disappeared from the repertoire. From the fact that in this the master lavished his skill on a dull, dramatically ineffective text, we may conclude that he owed more to chance than to his literary ability in finding such an excellent text for "Iphigénie in Tauris." Even his follower, C. M. von Weber, was quite doubtful in regard to the dramatic effect of a text, as is proved in his choice of "Euryanthe." In this same year Gluck left Paris and never returned. In possession of a considerable fortune and loaded with honors he passed the last years of his life in Vienna in comfort and ease. Owing to an iron constitution he recovered from a severe illness the following year and his adherents in Paris did not relinquish the hope of seeing the master again in their midst, but this they were forced to do when, in 1784, Gluck had a stroke of paralysis. It is true he recovered from this, but a second stroke, three years later, put an end to his life. In his death the whole artistic world shared the heavy loss sustained by art. Vienna in particular honored the memory of her celebrated citizen with grand funeral services, when his "De profundis" came to light, as well as other treasures of his mind to which he had devoted his constant and most loving care.

* At the twentieth double representation Gluck's work brought 3115 livres, that of Piccini, but 1483 livres. It goes without saying that the number of people in the audience can never be a criterion for the intrinsic value of a work of art, unless the author has made no concession to the taste of the masses. But as Gluck, since his "Orpheus," had absolutely refused to do this, the applause of the general public has all the more weight.

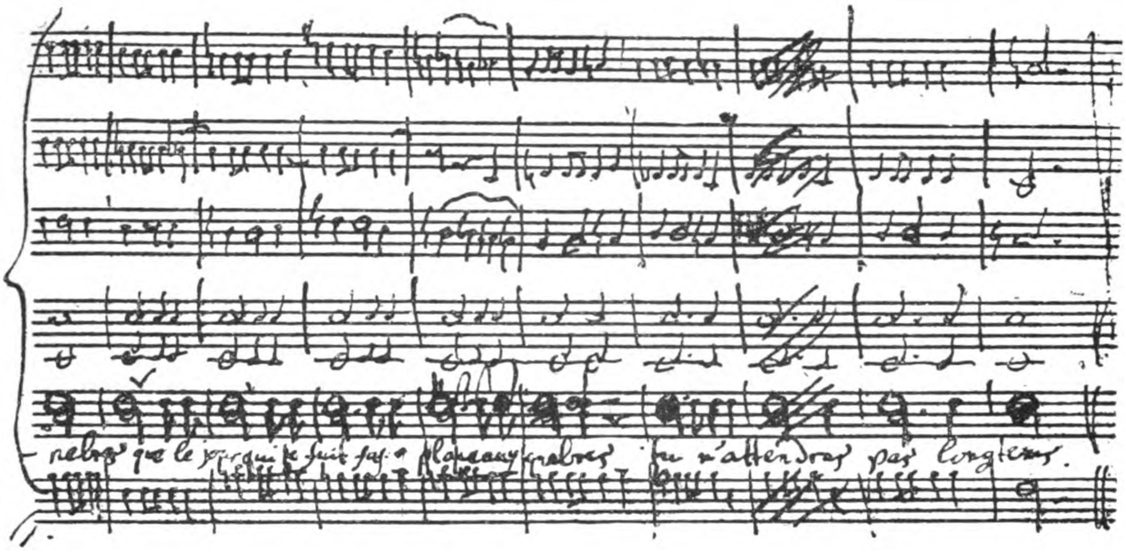


GLUCK'S GRAVE IN VIENNA.
From a photograph.

After what has been said concerning the progress of Gluck's development, stress need hardly be laid upon the fact that, in reviewing his work, poetry no less than music must be considered. In the first place we cannot refuse the poet of "Orpheus," Raniero Calzabigi, the honor of having had a considerable share in the reform effected by our master. In view of the then prevailing indifference of the opera-lovers to the text, we cannot be surprised that the credit of the opera-reform was attributed to Gluck, whose name entirely eclipsed that of his co-laborer. That Gluck himself, however, is not accountable for this mistake, is proved by his letter sent to the "Mercure de France" in Feb., 1773, in which he says: "I should bitterly reproach myself were I to consent to having attributed to me this new kind of Italian opera, the success of which has justified the experiment. To Calzabigi, rather, belongs the special credit, and if my music proves effectual I must thank him who has put me in a position to draw freely from the well-springs of my art." Due allowance should be made for Calzabigi's own statement, as this was published after Gluck had parted from his first co-worker in the inconsiderate way already mentioned, and the latter had every reason to be incensed with him. In a letter addressed to the "Mercure" (June 25, 1784), he says, among other things, that he had convinced Gluck that musical expression should be based upon an expressive rendering of the libretto, that he had begged him to banish from his music all ornate passages, cadenzas and ritornelles, and Gluck had yielded. We may confidently assent to his closing words: "I hope you will concede from this *exposé* that if Gluck is the author of dramatic music he has by no means created it out of nothing. It was I who gave him the material, or, if you will, the chaos; the honor of this creation should, therefore, be shared equally between us." Finally, the following words from Gluck's preface to "Alceste" are sufficient proof that Calzabigi's claims were just. "By a lucky chance I happened upon the very *libretto* in which the celebrated author had developed *a new plan* for the musical drama," a statement which only through an inconceivable blunder could have been given the interpretation "the celebrated author of 'Alceste,' Herr von Calzabigi, *carried out my plan for a lyric drama*" attributed to Gluck by Anton Schmid and his numerous followers.

Let us now consider Gluck's works, beginning with "Orpheus." Even in this first opera we find the libretto as well as music at the extreme limit of his departure from the old forms. The break with the old opera is a complete one; it seems to be the opinion of successive generations by whom the "Orpheus" has been considered Gluck's most sympathetic work, that it would have been impossible to reach a greater climax. The action is of the most extreme simplicity; to the myths transmitted from Virgil and Ovid the operatic poet makes no material addition. In the first act we hear the lamentations of Orpheus and his companions at the loss of the beloved; whereupon Amor (Cupid) appears, to bring the singer the consoling word that Euridice can be restored to him provided he possesses not only courage to descend to Hades, but the moral strength to refrain from looking at his love until they shall have again reached the upper world. The second act is laid in Hades and begins with the dances and songs of the furies. To the entreaty of Orpheus to abate their wrath, they answer with a horribly inexorable "No!" At length, however, they are unable to resist his supplication and open to him the door of Hades. The scene now changes to a charming region of the Elysian Fields, enlivened by the song of the departed spirits and later of Euridice herself. The prayer of Orpheus to the shades that his wife may be restored to him is not unheeded; she is brought to him, he seizes her hand and without looking at her, leads her away. The beginning of the third act represents the tragic conflict of the lovers. Euridice, who knows nothing of Cupid's injunction, is in despair that Orpheus stubbornly refuses to regard her or to make reply to her words of soft entreaty; but finally his power of resistance fails, he turns toward his wife to embrace her, whereupon she sinks back lifeless, now apparently irrevocably lost. Once again, however, the gods have compassion, and at the moment in which Orpheus, in desperation, is about to end his life, Cupid again appears, and satisfied with the fidelity of Orpheus pardons the false step and leads the lovers to the upper world to unite them there forever.

Judging from his own words, the simplicity of the action did not deter the composer from employing extensively all aids to his art. In order to do full justice to his music we must remember his great successor who, much more richly endowed and



der schönen Wissenschaften allhier berichten, und daß der Eintrag von denen Zeitungen, und Calendern solle eine portion des fondi ausmachen, umb die Kosten zu bestreiten, wan ich werde besser von der Sache unterrichtet seyn, werde nicht ermanglen Ihnen alles zu berichten. Indessen haben Sie mich ein wenig lieb, biß ich widerumb so glücklich bin Sie zu sehen, Mein Weib, und Tochter machen Ihnen Ihre Complimenten und freyen sich sehr von Ihnen etwas zu hören, und ich verbleibe dero

Ihr ergebenster
Gluck

Fac simile autograph letter and musical manuscript by Gluck.

filled with a spirit of a new time, far surpassed him as a musician — Mozart, who in this case could confirm the old saying: "Let well enough alone." Still more, if we look backward and contrast the greatest representative of the older Italian opera, Handel, with Gluck, we are astonished at the progress made by opera-music through the former. The old-fashioned ornate music of Handel has disappeared; true expression has gained the supremacy, although it never reigns at the expense of the melody which is almost inexhaustible and in its grace betrays in every measure the country whence it came. The celebrated aria "Che farò senza Euridice" is an example of Gluck's power to harmonize the greatest nobility of sentiment with the insinuating charm of melody. A sharp characterization corresponding to modern emotion is of course excluded here, and one of Gluck's French critics is not incorrect in his assertion that one can sing to the aforesaid air "J'ai trouvé mon Euridice" as well as "J'ai perdu mon Euridice." (I have *found* my Euridice as well as I have *lost* my Euridice.)

In the part of Euridice and in the duet of husband and wife, Gluck's power of musical delineation is even greater, but most impressive are the choruses in which the influence of the Handel oratorios is unmistakable. The chorus of the furies forbidding Orpheus the entrance to Hades is one of the most affecting, most impressive in the entire province of dramatic music, and serves to heighten the restful effect of the graceful ballet of a chorus of blessed spirits led by a flute solo, which immediately follows. Here the effect produced by the orchestra must not be overlooked, neither the modest means of this orchestra, which in the "Dance of the Furies" consists merely of a string quartette, two horns, oboe and flageolet.

As regards the music, the "Alceste" is more admirable than the "Orpheus," in that the uniformity of the libretto has put the skill of the composer to the more severe test. Even J. J. Rousseau averred that he knew of no opera in which the expression of the passions was more uniform than in "Alceste"; that all revolved about the two conditions of the soul, love and fear, and to describe these two sensations over and over again without monotony, required the composer's utmost skill. Rousseau makes also the just criticism that in the last act, where a climax is most needed to hold the listeners to the end, the interest flags. In point of fact the action of the "Alceste" is more feeble than that of "Orpheus." In agreement with Gluck, Calzabigi has preserved in his poetry the entire strength and simplicity of his prototype, the "Alceste" of Euripides; even the element of the unexpected which appears in "Orpheus" is not here employed. Admetus, King of Thessaly, is dangerrously ill; his death is hourly expected. Apollo, who once, when driven from Olympus, found favor with the King, wishes to express his gratitude and causes his oracle to proclaim that if another person will voluntarily die for him, Admetus shall live. While the people, horrified, take flight, Alceste declares herself ready to sacrifice her life for her beloved husband. She dies, but Apollo (not Hercules, as in Euripides) appears at the same instant, rescues her from death and restores her to her family and people.

In his "Alceste" Gluck has exercised all his talent as composer in order to give the most intense musical expression to the evangel of devoted, self-sacrificing love. Naturally, it is to the noble, touching figure of the queen, wife and mother that he devotes the greatest love and care. Courageously she faces death with the words of the famous aria, "Ombre, larve, compagne di morte"; and the tenderest mother speaks in her when in parting from her children she makes her last petition: "Venite sovente alla mia tomba ornatela di fiori."

Further, the choruses in "Alceste" are overpowering in effect, which fact indicates a step in advance of "Orpheus" in so far that here the orchestra conduces infinitely more to the portrayal of the situation. Even in the first mentioned arias of "Alceste" the instruments, especially the trumpets, are employed in the most telling manner. Still more stirring is the orchestral action following the decree of the oracle, in the chorus "Fuggiamo!" Scarcely have the words of the gods died away when the basses are heard, in dull, sustained tones, descriptive of the murmur of the multitude. The murmuring grows louder and individual cries are heard until finally the entire mass of orchestra and chorus unites in the cry: "Let us away!" The full power of the Gluck orchestra, however, is revealed in the chorus of the gods of death which is sung upon one key by the basses, while the melody is sustained by the instruments. As an orchestral piece of the highest, most imperishable worth the

sacrificial march in the first act deserves special mention. In this the melody, sustained simply by stringed instruments and low flutes, is quite different in character from ordinary marches and cannot fail to produce upon the mind of the hearers the mood corresponding to the high religious action.

Of "Paris and Helen" the reader knows already that, in spite of the sanguine hopes of the composer, the work was decidedly rejected by the public. He will remember also that Gluck, in this case, was not disposed to recognize the "vox populi" as the "vox dei," as he gave vent to indignation at his failure in the dedication of the work to the Duke of Braganza. Later, however, he must have acknowledged the justice of the judgment pronounced by the Viennese public, proved, if in no other way, by the fact that he did not consider "Paris" suitable to appear at the Paris Opera with "Orpheus" and "Alceste." Still, this almost unknown opera has its significance in the resumé of the master's development. In his endeavor to draw a sharp contrast between the principal figures — the effeminate Phrygian and the pure, true Spartan maid — Gluck has gained perceptibly in this direction of his art, and in the vocal as well as in the orchestral parts the peculiarity of each distinct nation is expressed. This is apparent even in the overture, which is more nearly related to the drama than in the case of Gluck's former operas, in that certain of its motives are repeated in the course of the action.

The overture to "Paris and Helen" may serve as a bridge from those works to which Gluck had given his whole creative strength and in which he had, so to speak, surpassed himself, to the works of the Parisian period, which is commonly regarded as the master's third period, though incorrectly, for in point of fact, Gluck's activity is divided into but two sections: the time before and the time after his acquaintance with Calzabigi. This is not saying that Gluck, in the presence of a drama as important as "Iphigénie in Aulis," the first real drama which he undertook to set to music, took, as it were, new impetus in order to outdo himself if possible for the sake of the Paris public whose judgment he so thoroughly respected. This is demonstrated in the overture to the aforesaid opera which, corresponding to this sort of ideal prologue, transports us to a higher sphere, in which we are prepared for the drama. "Here, as in the overture to 'Don Juan,'" says Richard Wagner, "it is the struggle or at least the juxtaposition of two adverse elements which determines the movement of the piece. Even in the action of 'Iphigénie' these two elements appear. The army of Greek heroes is assembled for the purpose of a great mutual undertaking; inspired by the thought of this alone, all other human interest disappears before that of the masses. Opposed to this is the interest attaching to the preservation of a human life, the rescue of a tender maiden. With what characteristic perspicuity and truth has Gluck almost personified these contrasts! In what lofty proportion has he measured them and made such contrast that by this juxtaposition alone is the opposition, and in consequence the movement given! By the ponderousness of the principal motive advancing solemnly, the mass of the people united in one interest is recognized, while immediately in the succeeding theme the interest in the suffering, frail creature fills us with compassion. The repetition of this single contrast throughout the composition gives us the great idea of the Greek tragedy, filling us alternately with fear and pity. Thus we attain to the lofty, excited state which prepares us for a drama the highest meaning of which it reveals to us at the outset and so leads us to understand, according to this meaning, the action which immediately follows."

In his treatment of the subject-matter of "Iphigénie in Aulis," Gluck's co-worker, du Rollet, has closely followed Racine's tragedy of the same name, even as the latter followed the drama of Euripides. The army of the Greeks has embarked for Troy in order to avenge the insult to their country by the capture of Helen. In the harbor of Aulis the warriors are detained by a tedious calm because their leader, Agamemnon, has killed a stag sacred to Diana and called down upon himself the vengeance of the goddess. Kalchas, the high priest, inquires of the oracle what may be done to propitiate Diana and receives the terrifying answer that naught but a human sacrifice, even the daughter of the king, Iphigenia, can in any wise appease her wrath. At these words, paternal affection, pride, love of country and military glory wage a fearful battle in the heart of the king, who becomes still more desperate when his wife, Clytemnestra, appears at the camp with her daughter who is to be forthwith united in marriage to the hero Achilles. The

murmurs of the warriors clamoring for the sacrifice and the repeated warning of Kalchas reveal the frightful truth to the unsuspecting one; but Iphigenia declares herself ready to obey the gods. She kneels at the altar and is about to receive her death-blow, when Achilles with his Thessalonian warriors hastens, by force of arms, to save his bride from sacrificial death. Kalchas, however, steps between the combatants and tells them that their zeal has already appeased the anger of the goddess; the altar is destroyed by lightning, a favorable wind arises and amidst gay dancing and songs of great rejoicing the reunion of the lovers is celebrated.

(Only in the conclusion does du Rollet differ from Racine and the latter from Euripides, on whose account Diana herself saves Iphigenia by taking her to Tauris enveloped in a cloud. Racine brings about the dénouement through Eriphile, who loves Achilles, and recognizing the hopelessness of her love, offers herself a willing victim.)

This material offered the musician the richest opportunity to describe various conditions of the soul, as well as to satisfy the desire for pomp and show inherent to grand opera. The rejoicing at the appearance of the queen and the bridal couple, and also after the rescue of Iphigenia; the encounter of the Greek and Thessalonian warriors; the solemnity of the sacrificial rites are all illustrated in most glowing colors by the music. The dances are distinguished by greater brilliancy than those of Gluck's former operas, aided by a richer instrumentation — besides the string quartette two each of the flute, oboe, horn and flageolet. A passecaille in the third scene of the second act is so charming in effect that even Gluck's most bitter enemy, Professor Forkel, was obliged to give it his approval. But the master appears most admirable where the libretto allows him to display his skill as a dramatic author, chiefly in the ensemble pieces in which essentially different characters are united, as in the mighty ruler Agamemnon, the loving Clytemnestra wildly incensed by the loss of her daughter, the suffering Iphigenia ready for any sacrifice, and the youthful hero Achilles impelled by impetuous strength. Later composers surpassing Gluck as regards skill in counterpoint may have excelled him in *fineness* of distinction, but for truth, sincerity and strength of conviction there is nothing greater to be found in the entire realm of operatic literature than the love-duet of Iphigenia and Achilles in the first act, "Ne doutez jamais de ma flamme!" than Clytemnestra's outburst of despair in the words "Etouffez des soupirs trop indignes de vous"; than the scene of Agamemnon in the second act, "O, dieux, que vais-je faire? C'est ta fille," in which the remorse of the unhappy father is vividly portrayed; than the trio, in the same act, of Iphigenia, the mother and Achilles, in which the mild, forgiving spirit of the maiden contrasts effectively with the passionate ebullition of her partners. In relation to this trio we must agree with Marx's assertion that "Gluck had no need of the perfected art of later time, nay, its possession might have confused him and led him far astray. The characters of Gluck's conception needed nothing other than what was already at hand. As well clothe Raphael's chaste madonnas with the splendid garments of Veronese as to adorn Gluck's character with later ornamental art." ("Gluck und die Oper," II. 93.)

When Gluck brought out "Armide" he was sixty-three years old. He was exceedingly daring in this venture, for he had closely followed the libretto of Quinault and therefore ran the risk of being compared to Lully by many who still adhered to him in Paris, and also of seeing the "Armide" of the older master preferred to his. In the flush of his egotism, however, he believed he had no reason to fear this comparison; besides, it was a fascinating thing to lose himself for once in the romance of the Middle Ages, for up to this time he had set to music only subjects from ancient mythology of gods and heroes. At first Gluck seems to have intended to make no unusual exertion; the overture to "Armide" is none other than the one written for "Telemachus" and subsequently used in the festival play "Le feste d'Apollo;" the aria of Hatred, "Plus on connait l'amour," is an imitation of the Jupiter aria in "Philemon and Baucis," and the main features in the conspiracy-scene in the second act (Hidraot and Armide) are likewise taken from "Telemachus." In the course of the work, however, the novelty of the material and the opportunity for musical description allows greater and finally the greatest display of power, and this opera becomes well worthy to rank among his strongest works.

Quinault used as material for this libretto an episode from Tasso's "Jerusalem Redeemed." Armide, the Queen of Damascus, is an enchantress, and with the help of her genius Hidraot, has be-

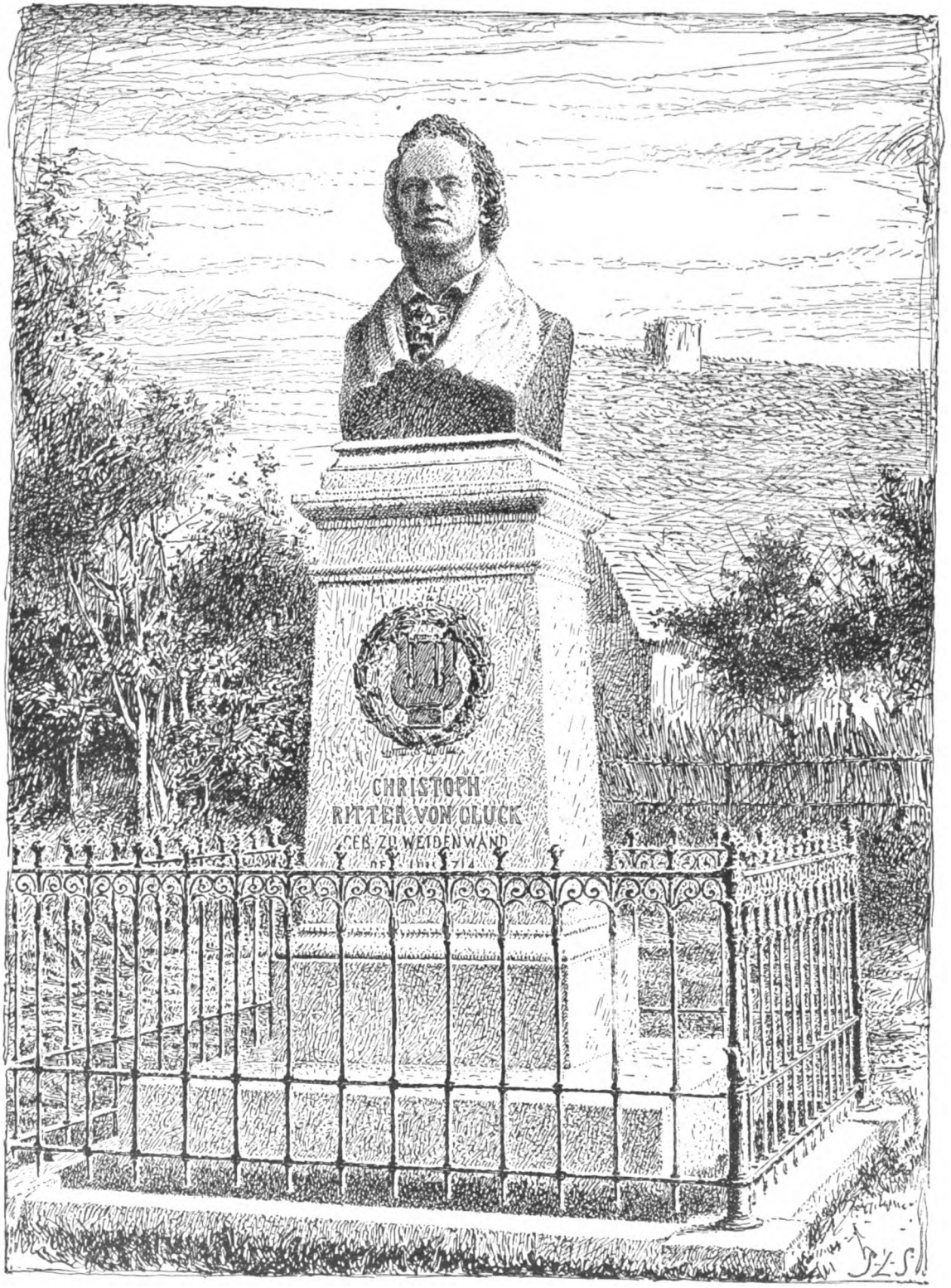
STATUE OF GLUCK IN PARIS OPERA HOUSE.

Executed by the sculptor Houdon. Reproduced from a photograph made for this work by special permission. One of the four life-size statues placed in the vestibule of the Opera House, at the foot of the grand marble staircase.

guiled into her net a number of the crusaders who had started with Gottfried von Bouillon for the Holy Land. The captured knights are to be delivered over to the king of Egypt — when Renaud appears and releases them from the hands of the guards. "Un seul guerrier!" cry Armide and her train filled with astonishment and rage, these words followed by a chorus of irresistible power, "Poursuivons jusqu'au trépas l'ennemi." In the second act Armide and Hidraot proceed to summon the demons in the awful words mysteriously rendered by the orchestra, "Esprits de haine et de rage, demons obéissez-nous!" Here the scene changes to a charming landscape, Renaud appears, and in sharp contrast to the preceding movement a lovely idyl led by the flute is rendered by the orchestra. Ensnared by the charm of the region, the knight sinks into slumber, but Armide approaches to take her revenge. In her magnificent monologue "Enfin il est en ma puissance," she believes herself near the goal, but the beauty of the sleeping hero transforms her hate to love and she becomes inspired with the single wish that she may chain him to her. In the third act she seeks to overcome the passion and again evokes the demons of hate, this time entreating them to free her from her love. "Venez, venez, haine implacable!" Hatred appears also, with his followers (avec sa suite) but is powerless to heal the love-wounds inflicted upon Armide. Her attempt to awaken responsive love in Renaud's breast, after having chosen an enchanted island in the ocean for a dwelling-place for both, forms the subject-matter in the fourth act, the music of which, though dramatically insignificant, is nevertheless fully calculated to disprove the assertion made by Gluck's opponents, that he lacked a sense of the grace and beauty of true melody. In the last act we see Renaud in Armide's arms entranced by her witchery. The dances executed at her command, among them the Chaconne (which at that time was indispensable to the French opera), have bewildered him, robbed him of his senses and his knightly power, when two messengers — Ubalde and the Danish Knight — appear, having been sent by the army of crusaders to his rescue. At the imperious word "Notre général vous rappelle!" he summons all his strength and frees himself from Armide's arms, but she, torn with remorse and anger causes the abode of their brief happiness to disappear in flames.

In his "Armide" Gluck made great concessions to gratify the love of the spectacular and the craving for the sensual of the opera-loving public; in the main, however, this opera owes its chief success to the earnestness with which the master performed his task as a dramatist. As an instance of the way in which he obtained the best dramatic effects in "Armide," at the time of the representations in Paris, Gluck begged the famous singer, Larrivée, to undertake the part of the Danish Knight, though he acknowledged it a slight part for his talent. "But," he added, "it contains one passage which will be sufficient compensation." He did not say too much, for the words "Notre général vous rappelle," rendered with tremendous effect by Larrivée, called forth a storm of applause at every representation.

After this "Ride into the Land of Romance" Gluck returned again to the antique and created his last opera, "Iphigénie in Tauris," which takes first rank among his masterpieces. If in "Armide" he had dealt rather too much with externalities, in "Iphigénie in Tauris" he kept even more strictly than before within the prescribed limits of the drama, scorning that embellishment which had been added to the opera in order to distinguish it from the drama. His co-worker, in this case, was the young poet Guillard, who had framed the text of this his initial work after the tragedy of Guimond de la Touche, adding nothing, but on the contrary, discarding, with dramatic *savoir faire*, all which was not suitable to set to music. The opera does not begin with an overture, but with a short orchestral prelude which describes at first the peaceful, then the stormy sea. When the curtain rises we see the ship sail by, which bears Orestes and Pylades. After the storm — which is a masterly piece of orchestration — has subsided, Iphigenia tells her dream to her companions. In her father's palace she has seen her mother murdered by the hand of her brother Orestes, while by a supernatural power she seems compelled to murder him. Sorely oppressed by the remembrance of this dream she beseeches Diana with the touching words "O, toi, qui prolongeas mes jours" that she who once saved her life may now take back her gift. In the meantime the Scythian inhabitants of Tauris have imprisoned the Greeks cast upon the shore, and Thoas, the ruler of the land, condemns them to be offered upon the altar of Diana, and Iphigenia the priestess of the gods, to perform the sacrifice.



GLUCK'S MONUMENT IN WEIDENWANG.

In the second act we see the two friends as prisoners in the temple. To Orestes' outbursts of despair Pylades replies in the touching aria "Unis dès la plus tendre enfance." In vain! He is powerless to banish the frightful memories of Orestes, who is plunged again into despair at the separation from his friend. His words, "Le calme rentre dans mon cœur," are only a self-delusion, his real state of mind being betrayed by the feverish movement in sixteenths of the bass-viol. Not even in sleep can he find peace, for scarcely has he closed his eyes when the Eumenides appear and terrify the murderer with their cries of revenge, — and here, for the first time, the trombones are introduced. After their frightful song "Vengeons et la nature et les dieux en courroux" and the succeeding words "Il a tué sa mère," given pianissimo by the entire chorus and the orchestra, Iphigenia appears, questions the stranger and learns from him the terrible fate of her parent, and that Orestes himself is no longer among the living. The second act closes with a funeral celebration in honor of her brother's memory, during which the priestess mourns her loss in the aria, "O, malheureuse Iphigénie!"

One of the most beautiful and ennobling scenes of the opera is that of the third act, in which the friends contend as to which shall be sacrificed for the other, for to only one of the prisoners does the cruel Thoas, moved by Iphigenia's prayers, grant life and the permission to return to Greece. As Orestes threatens to take his own life in case he is not made the victim, Pylades yields, only with the intention of effecting his friend's release, however, immediately upon his own deliverance. This aria in praise of friendship, "Divinité des grandes âmes, amitié," is characterized at first by sweet simplicity, but at the words "Je vais sauver Oreste," the music becomes so grand — especially at the sudden introduction of the kettle-drums and trumpets, which have not been used in the entire act — as to produce an irresistible effect upon the audience.

In the fourth act Iphigenia entreats Diana, in the words "Je t'implore et je tremble, Déesse implacable," to spare her the frightful task of sacrificing the young stranger, but her supplications are unheeded. As she seizes the sacrificial knife with which she is to stab Orestes to the heart, the latter half-involuntarily exclaims: "Ainsi tu péris en Aulide, Iphigénie, o, ma sœur!" The ensuing scene of recognition in which all the composer's depth of feeling, all the passion of his heart are embodied, is of most intense theatrical effect. Now follow, one after another, the most thrilling scenes. The brother and sister resolve to escape, but are surprised by Thoas, who insists upon the sacrifice — when Pylades appears with his faithful Greeks, slays the barbarian, and amid songs of rejoicing the curtain falls for the last time.

We have already stated that "Iphigénie in Tauris" was the only one of Gluck's operas which was fully appreciated by the public at its first representation. How is this remarkable fact to be explained? First of all we should say, without hesitation, by the impressive force of the material which is qualified to move and thrill the hearts of men in all ages, and to which has been given a form exactly suited to the operatic stage. Secondly, by the music, in which Gluck has adhered more strictly than in his previous works to his principle of according the first place to the libretto, for its very subordination to the text heightens rather than lessens the effect. Concerning the general character of this music, it is noticeable that the lyric element, which in the course of his reform Gluck sacrificed more and more to the dramatic, appears again in the sad "Iphigénie." In the choruses as well as in the arias, some of which, as we have seen, date from his Italian period, the lyric element is undeniable, while in the recitatives Gluck the dramatist is revealed in all his power. This beautiful symmetry of the forces governing the drama, the well-balanced alternation of the passive mood and the excitement called forth by the action, together give that solemnity to the music of "Iphigénie in Tauris" which fills the soul of the listener, even to the present time, and have given it the precedence of Gluck's creations.

Applause, honors and material reward for his work fell to Gluck's lot in richer measure than to any musician of his time. On the other hand he endured all those affronts seldom spared the pioneer artist who is true to his convictions. It must have grieved him especially to encounter only ill-will and crude misconception from the majority of his countrymen. Nearly all North Germany refused to recognize his works, following the example of Berlin, which, thanks to Frederick the Great, had now achieved a leading position in artistic and scientific matters. Frederick the Great himself saw in the Dresden kapellmeister, Hasse, the fore-

most representative of the opera, and asserted that Gluck knew nothing of singing and understood nothing of great operatic style. His sister, Princess

Portrait of Gluck, made during his stay in Paris by Aug. de St. Aubin. From a delicate engraving on copper.

Amelia, who had made a thorough study of composition under Kirnberger, upon becoming familiar with the "Iphigénie in Aulis" sent the following verdict to her teacher: "Herr Gluck, according to my opinion, will never rank as a skilled composer. In the first place, he has no inventive faculty, secondly his melody is miserable, and thirdly there is no accent, no expression, everything has a tiresome sameness. Finally and in general the whole opera is very poor, but it is the latest craze and has numerous supporters."

Professor Forkel, one of the first musical authorities of North Germany, pronounced an even harsher and more unjust judgment on the master. As late as 1778, when the latter was about to attain the highest point of his activity with the "Iphigénie in Tauris," Forkel published in his "Critical Musical Library" a criticism of 157 pages on the works of Gluck, in which he exerted all his energy and made use of all his musical knowledge in order to prove their worthlessness. The professor took special exception to the passage in the preface to "Alceste" in which Gluck says he was trying to attain to a noble simplicity. "What the Chevalier is pleased to call 'noble simplicity,'" says Forkel, "is, in our opinion, nothing more than a miserable, empty, or, to speak more clearly, an ignoble stupidity arising from a lack of skill and knowledge; it is like the stupid simplicity of common people compared with the noble simplicity in the conduct and conversation of those of culture and refinement. In the one case all is awkward, faulty and defective, in the other graceful, true and perfect. In short, Gluck's kind of noble simplicity resembles the style of our bar-room artists, which has simplicity enough, it is true, but, at the same time, much that is repulsive."

Similar expressions of professional prejudice — not to say stupidity — might be cited by the dozen; but the reader may prefer, in conclusion, to hear the voices of the noblest, most enlightened of his countrymen, which amply indemnify the master for the injustice done him by the "Leckmessern" of his time. *Goethe* expressed his reverence for Gluck in the beautiful verses which accompanied the copy of "Iphigénie in Tauris" which he sent the singer Milder:

"Dies unschuldvolle, fromme Spiel
Das edlen Beifall sich errungen,
Erreichte doch ein höheres Ziel
Von *Gluck* betont, von *dir* gesungen."

(This noble drama, from corruption free
Won the unfeigned applause of thoughtful men,
But reached a still more lofty purpose, when
To music set by Gluck, and sung by thee!)

Just as sincerely did Wieland, the great master of poetry, pay homage to music and its great exponent. "I have moments," he wrote on July 13th, 1776, "in which I long inexpressibly for the ability to produce a lyric work worthy to receive life and immortality through Gluck. And oh! that we might once be fortunate enough to see and hear him in our midst! That I might see the man face to face

and in his presence give some slight expression to the emotions kindled by the little I have heard (and very poorly rendered) of his splendid works!" The year before, Wieland had spoken still more specifically in regard to the Gluck reform; in 1775, he wrote in the "German Mercury": "At last we have lived to see the epoch in which the mighty genius of a Gluck has undertaken the great work of a musical reform. The success of his 'Orpheus' and 'Iphigénie' would lead us to hope everything, if, in those capitals of Europe where the Fine Arts have their chief centre, innumerable obstacles did not oppose his undertaking. To restore their original dignity to those arts which the populace have been accustomed to regard as the tools of sensual enjoyment, and to seat Nature firmly on a throne which has been long usurped by the arbitrary power of fashion, luxury and voluptuousness, is a great and daring venture. Gluck has shown us what might be done by music, if in our day there were an Athens anywhere in Europe, and if, in this Athens should appear a Pericles who should do for the opera what he did for the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides."

Words of this kind were not spoken in vain; their power, together with Gluck's music, could not but succeed in breaking down the opposition of even the strictest adherents to the old régime, and before the beginning of another century all the master's enemies had left the field. From that time to the present day, there has been no serious-minded lover of music who has not cheerfully agreed with the motto to be found upon the bust of Gluck in the Grand Opera in Paris:

"Il préféra les Muses aux Sirènes."
(He preferred the Muses to the Sirens.)

W. Langhans.

FRESCO IN VIENNA OPERA HOUSE REPRESENTING GLUCK'S "ARMIDE."

From a photograph.

DATE DUE			