The Deeper Sources Of the Beauty and Expression of Music

THE DEEPER SOURCES OF THE BEAUTY AND EXPRESSION OF MUSIC.

BY

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WITH MANY MUSICAL EXAMPLES.

LONDON:

WILLIAM REEVES, 83, CHARING CROSS ROAD, W.C.

PRINTED BY
W. REEVES, PRINTER AND PUBLISHER,
83, CHARING CROSS ROAD, W.C.

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CHAPTER I.

THE SEEMING ANOMALY BETWEEN THE HUMAN ORIGIN OF MUSIC AND ITS ELEVATED BEAUTY.

MUSICAL æsthetics is admitted to be a peculiarly occult branch of philosophy and one in which little progress has been made. Eminent thinkers have wrestled with it without conclusive result. Among scientists and philosophers who have recently attacked it are Herbert Spencer, Helmholtz, Darwin and Weissmann; and although their respective views remain authoritative utterances on the subject, none of them embodies an exhaustive and convincing philosophy of the higher beauty of music, the reason probably being that none of these great men gave more than a fraction of their attention to the problem.

The thinker on music perceives at the outset the distinction that music does not draw its general form from nature, like painting and sculpture do, or from language, like poetry does, but that this general form has been shaped gradually by man. But then he is confronted by these questions: how is it that an arbitrary, humanly devised form can betray a beauty so unique and elevated? how comes it about that man in his own sphere of action —without borrowing any form "cast by nature's heavenly hand"—is able to stir such feeling as that which fine music arouses? The music may be purely instrumental—quite free from any suggestion of nature—yet it may arouse feeling as transcendent as that inspired by any natural influence.

Now a sense of this unaccountability—of that insufficiency between the visible process and the full result which gives rise to the foregoing questions—seems to have possessed some of the thinkers whose names I have mentioned. Thus Herbert Spencer on "The Origin and Function of Music," says:

"In the absence of this (Herbert Spencer's) theory, the expressiveness of music appears to be inexplicable."

Darwin, in "The Descent of Man," says:

"As neither the enjoyment nor the capacity of producing musical notes are faculties of the least use to man in reference to his daily habits of life, they must be ranked amongst the most mysterious with which he is endowed."

And August Weissmann in "Thoughts on the musical sense in man and animals," says:

"The questions treated of, lie on the boundary between science and philosophy, and can hardly be solved from either province alone."

The present investigation is an attempt to make some further advance towards the solution of this difficult problem. The reader will observe that, as I have stated, it has two aspects—the difficulty has two parts. There has to be accounted for, first, music's abstract beauty, secondly, its inordinate power of stirring feeling.

Though music always affects us emotionally it does not always do so in the degree that it unfolds the quality of charm. A strain may be of such a character as to rather delight and elicit admiration than stir profound feeling, whilst, on the other hand, all music that does the latter must have a certain beauty—in short, the two qualities, though largely connected, do not always attend one another in equal proportions. In speaking of the influence of music I refer at once to this duality in its nature. I shall attempt to account for music's abstract charm on one principle, for its moving power on another.

I have referred to the fact that music does not draw its structural material in completeness from nature. Everyone must be aware that *some* lineaments of musical form appear in nature. We will first glance at these with a view to ascertain how far they go to explain music.

Music may be defined broadly and briefly as an effect consisting of musical sounds, with a tendency to symmetry in their arrangement. I say a *tendency* to symmetry, because in music, as in nature generally, symmetry is seldom perfect: in both the great charm is, it is always being de-

parted from but never lost. We meet in nature, though somewhat rarely, with musical sounds produced independently of man, as in some bird-notes; also with unmusical or semi-musical sounds involving a certain symmetry and produced both independently of man as well as by man. Examples produced independently of man occur in the beatings of the waves, the falling of water, the sounds of insects, and the singing of birds. In all such effects as these, however, except perhaps the last, the symmetry is mainly in the form of regularity. The last, the singing of birds, is generally regarded as something approaching music. Yet notwithstanding it has its own charm, this effect is essentially different in character from music. In the first place, the quality of its sounds is only partly musical; other elements of effect enter largely into it—a liquid whistling as well as peculiar kinds of reediness difficult to describe in words. Yet it is largely in virtue of these latter elements—so redolent of the free world of nature—that such sounds possess for us their character and beauty. In the second place, in the singing of birds, musical intervals are rather suggested than defined. The actual interval is generally indeterminate. Though it may approach a musical interval the ear can seldom definitely fit it to one. Often it resembles an inflection or *modulation* of the human voice, and sometimes a chromatic effect in music. But there is generally a want of musical definiteness. On the other hand, the rhythmic effects in bird songs are always clearly defined. On the whole, it seems that it is in a certain combination

of qualities involving a departure from the conditions of musical effect with suggestions of music, where the charm of the singing of birds resides.*

MUSIC IS LARGELY ADUMBRATED BY LANGUAGE, BOTH AS REGARDS PRINCIPLES OF FORM AND EXPRESSION.

Only in human language do we find a tendency to tonal symmetry bearing an appreciable likeness to that which music involves. In spoken language we find design in the following kinds of effect.

1. Inflection or modulation of the voice.
2. The *time* a syllable is dwelt upon.
3. Pause.
4. Accent.
5. Speed of utterance.

Now there is a certain likeness between the above and the following structural elements in music. Thus:

1. Inflection or modulation of the voice in language

* In bird-song nature unfolds a world of music having much akin to that created by man as regards general expression, and containing some suggestions of it as regards form, yet differing from it in that it has its own heaven-born inspiration; that it is complete in itself; perfect, and that its beauties do not fade. A sympathetic listener to the bird-notes in spring-time must feel that the birds are busy in some kind of expression, and that the general effect is much imbued with the character of intonation in language whilst it seems the nearer to music in that it is independent of words. And though like human intonation the forms of this utterance are largely stereotyped yet its freedom and seeming spontaneity combined with the freshness and beauty of the pure sound in which it is enrobed and of the surrounding conditions, give it the character of an exuberant musical expression of the joy and varied feeling of life and youth.

so far as it produces a certain expression, resembles melodic change in music.

2. The time a syllable is dwelt upon in language, may be regarded as a rude likeness of value, or length of note, in music.

3. The pause in language may be regarded as a likeness of the rest as well as the pause in music.

4. Accent in speech is not only the same principle of effect as accent in music, but in the metres of poetry it assumes forms precisely similar to certain forms of time, or regular accentuation, in music.

But there are more points of connection between music and speech than these.

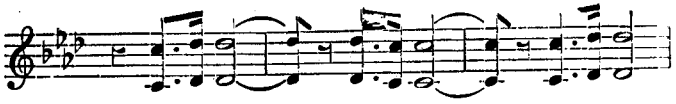
The principle of the key-note may be observed in language. It is present where the tone of the terminating portion of a passage is felt as having a definite and clear relation to the tones in which other parts of the sentence have been spoken.

So much as to lineaments of form.

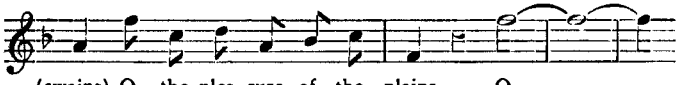
Now as to principles of expression.

In both instrumental and vocal music may be observed the likeness of certain steps in the process of utterance, namely, (1) inspiration; (2) the holding-in of the breath; (3) expiration. A likeness of the tendency in sorrowful utterance to take in full inspirations, to hold them in, and then let them escape suddenly, may be observed in the opening symphony of Gounod's song, "There is a green hill far away," where the long wailing notes of the sub-

ject break off suddenly as if breath failed or a speaker were overcome:



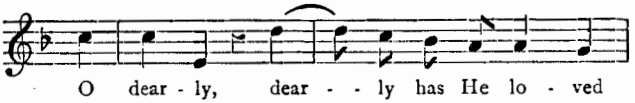
On the other hand, the tendency of all feelings of a joyful nature to stimulate a free and strong action of the muscles concerned in breathing, prompts naturally those unfailingly sustained sounds which occur frequently in songs and choruses of an enthusiastic character. In such circumstances we not only take in deep inspirations, but we hold them in as with a feeling of fulness of life—let them escape slowly—express much in a breath. A good example of this occurs in the first chorus of Handel's "Acis and Galatea," where the ejaculation "O!" sustained by all the voices during the total time occupied by a minim, semibreve, and crotchet stands out from the rest of the text as a parenthetical expression of life and joy:



The effect of the major chord *tutti*, and *fortissimo* held on for three bars first in the first position and then in the third, which opens the *Finale* of the Overture to "Der Freischütz" is also a likeness but in instrumental music of the same tendency.

Again, the fervour which prompts *stress* in speech may give birth to effects in music of peculiar beauty. A fine

example occurs in the song of Gounod to which I have just referred, where the word "dearly," beginning at the end of a bar, is sustained into the next; and though here is the touch of genius, it is genius armed with the *feeling for utterance:*



In the foregoing examples we see certain rudiments of musical expression which occur in language, transfigured into independent musical effects.

Further, such rudiments may in language be extended organically so as to define a certain form, which has a vague resemblance to extension of form in music. This is strikingly evidenced in fine elocution. The elocutionist of genius adds a special if evanescent construction to the language he speaks. It may be said that he *sets* his language to elocutional effect as definitely, if not as deliberately, as a composer sets his text to music. Those who heard Charles Dickens read certain portions of his works must have been struck with the power and beauty of the special vocal effect with which he environed his utterance. They must have felt that this was as much a new creation demanding genius to conceive as any musical setting of language. Elocution is a different thing from music. At the same time it is related to music so far, that in it certain effects resembling the rudiments of musical form are organically connected, and that it is a special influence of which the particular shape assumed, as in the case of original music, is always unanticipated.

An obvious connection between language and music exists when certain forms of plural utterance in life appear in music—as when dialogue and discussion are suggested by themes answering one another, or the shouts and exclamations of a crowd are reflected in choruses.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE RHETORICAL IMPULSE ON MUSIC.

We see then that language and music approach at several points—that there is a broad though very imperfect resemblance between them. But imperfect as this resemblance is—virtually different as two effects may be even at the points that approach: for instance, as an inflection of the voice may be from melodic change—it is scarcely possible to over-rate its importance. Its cause is of course the fact that language and vocal music involve largely the same machinery in us for their production, and fall within one broad region of our sensibility. This statement alone suggests that music must owe much of its influence to language, and the suggestion becomes stronger when we consider that language is a fundamental faculty—that every individual uses it and is more or less moved by it. This is why language influences music more than music influences language. One may be a great and moving speaker without being particularly sensitive to music. But every musician has some experience of the use and powers of language. Thus it is that every composer is to some extent influenced in his work by his feeling for language. As a matter of fact, we find that graphic musical expression often moves in such forms as might be suggested by the feeling of utterance.

Two simple instances of this from Gounod have been given. This feeling of utterance is, in fact, an important element in his genius. Out of numerous other instances which occur in his works I may refer to the tribute to the Cross in the second act of "Faust," the form of which is so suggestive of long-breathed, full souled speech. I have always felt that a distinguishing feature in the genius of Handel is his large dramatic feeling—the aiding expression by rhetorically conceived effects of rhythm and accentuation. There can be little doubt that where a strong rhetorical feeling accompanies the possession of the musical creative faculty the circumstances are particularly favourable for the unfolding of the latter. Perhaps it is not too much to say that such a combination is an essential condition of great musical genius.

CHAPTER II.

ABSTRACT MUSICAL, LIKE NATURAL, BEAUTY IS A CHANCE FITNESS OR COINCIDENCE, OF WHICH THE VISIBLE CONDITIONS ARE THE PLASTICITY IN HUMAN FACULTIES AND THE DIVERSITY IN OUTWARD NATURE.

THE question now arises—Is the solution of the problem which occupies us to be found in the connection between language and music? Many years back in an essay on this subject I pointed out that as the burthen of language becomes elevated the musical rudiments in it, and more particularly those that relate to rhythm, assume a more artistic form. This, I thought, suggested that in music where those rudiments have an independent existence and assume highly developed forms we have a pure language of feeling. And I regarded the unique power and expression of sacred music as both supporting, and explained by, this suggestion, the appro-

priate language and its highest burden of feeling being here met together.

Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his essay on "The Origin and Function of Music," also explains music's influence upon us on the ground that it is a vehicle of feeling. He says:

"As strong emotion produced song, so still stronger "produced the elaboration, the variety and complexity of "musical expression having become developed through "the intensely susceptible temperaments of musical com- "posers. . . This greater versatility of feeling on the part "of composers explains the fact that music not only ex- "cites so strongly our more familiar feelings, but also "imbues us with feeling we never had before. The diffi- "culty, not to say impossibility of otherwise accounting "for either the expressiveness or genesis of music is in- "direct confirmation of the truth of the foregoing theory."

But subsequent reflection led me to feel that neither my theory, as above expressed, nor Herbert Spencer's, was really convincing; they seemed to amount rather to the suggestion of possibility than probability—much less necessity. As we proceed I shall submit some further considerations suggesting that language has everything to do with music's emotional power but pointing more inevitably to that conclusion. Nor did either of the theories above referred to appear to throw light upon music's abstract beauty—that beauty which, as I have said, though emanating from man seems almost as unique as the beauty of nature.

My explanation of this abstract beauty in music will

consist to a great extent of an attempt to bring it into line with natural beauty. Now natural beauty has been regarded by great thinkers as at bottom an ultimate fact. This Darwin seems to imply in the following sentence:

"But if it be further asked why musical tones in a "certain order and rhythm give man and other animals "pleasure we can no more give the reason than for the "pleasantness of certain tastes and smells."

I venture to think that though this beauty of nature may be inexplicable in detail, its existence becomes less unaccountable if we take a broad view of the circumstances. The view to which I allude is this: we, with all our varied capacities, are surrounded by a, to us, infinity of agencies, with a portion of which we are necessarily in harmony. But beyond this necessary adaptation there are certain fitnesses between our nature and the outer world which appear to be simply coincidences arising out of the plasticity of our faculties and the infinite diversity without. I propose to give a few examples of this deep principle.

Tyndall says that the blue of sky is caused by extremely small particles of moisture—so small as to only reflect the blue ray. Now the laws which determine the state of the atmosphere and the action of light exist quite irrespectively of man, whilst his visual sensibility was laid down originally, and descended to him, for comparatively near and practical purposes. Yet this sensibility being borne upon by the action of light in the circumstances

just referred to results in his realizing the unique effect of blue sky.

Here is another instance of this principle of coincidence. In a letter received from my brother who at the time of writing was sketching in Wales the following passage occurs: "One is out of the village in two or three minutes, into dense dark woods, or by the side of murmuring crystal streams in the meadows, or up the steep mountain side surrounded with autumnal tinted bracken or brambles loaded with blackberries—warm tinted rocks jutting up here and there half covered with velvet-like moss of every shade of brown and green."

Now to refer only to this "velvet-like moss of every shade of brown and green": it puts on its various effects quite irrespective of our vision yet as we exercise this sense upon those effects there opens within us the new and wonderful region of æsthetic sensibility.

Some particularly striking illustrations of this principle of coincidence may be given in connection with our voice and auditory susceptibility. The foundations of these faculties were laid in the past. Even those inarticulate inflections which we hear in the vocal expression of animals involve a general form of vocal and aural endowment which lies at the root of the musical sensation. They involve in a rudimentary form the power of producing *timbre*, and a gliding change of pitch; as well as the corresponding auditory organization for being sensitive to these effects. Now we know that these powers exist in man in a certain highly developed form, and it is not difficult to understand that this may have been

brought about by vocal intercommunication on the principle of utility, that is to say by the use of speech. We can even conceive that the highest musical qualities of the speaking voice may have been largely developed in this way—that is, on the principle of utility. But between the finest effect of this kind, that is, speaking effect, with its influence upon us, and the effect and influence of, say, a fine tenor voice in the simplest snatch of melody, there is not simply a jump but a translation in the capacities both of the vocal organ and the auditory sensibility; and we find ourselves in a new world of effect. The last-mentioned fact, a fine voice in melody, may, I think, be regarded as drawn from nature. A fine singing voice is often a purely natural thing, and the exercise of such a voice in a few musical notes must often have taken place, and still take place, quite spontaneously. Here, then, in endowing man with the speaking voice and with all its corresponding susceptibility, nature opened the door to the unique beauty and thrill of song.

But a signal instance of this principle of coincidence is our sensitiveness to the effect of harmony. This would seem to be a, so to speak, unintended result of an aural adaptation that must have been formed in the remote past.

Among the natural results at any time of mobility of the larynx and variability of the cavity of the mouth,* would be sound gliding through different degrees of pitch, as in the inflection of the voice (due to the first)

* Technically, the passage leading through the pharyngeal, the buccal, and to a certain extent the nasal cavities, to the opening of the mouth.

and differences of vowel sound (due to the second.) It is safe to assume that side by side with such a vocal endowment would exist an aural structure adapted for being influenced by both the above kinds of effect. Now the scientific reader need not be told that such an aural structure would be necessarily sensitive to the effect of *timbre*, and be thus in principle similar to that by means of which we are enabled to hear and compare the different sounds in human devised harmony. But for the benefit of other readers I propose in the following chapter to try to make this point quite clear and convincing.

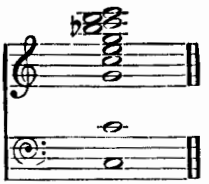
CHAPTER III.

TIMBRE AND VOWEL-SOUND BRIEFLY ANALYZED; THE SENSIBILITY FORMED IN THE ORDINARY COURSE OF NATURAL EVOLUTION TO ANSWER TO THEM, LETS INTO OUR NATURES THE WORLD OF HARMONY.

TIMBRE or quality of sound depends upon the fact that a musical sound of rich character though heard as a single sound is really an assemblage of sounds. To speak with scientific precision it is a compound sound of which the constituent simple sounds are of different pitch and so arranged that, starting with the lowest, the others are of ascending pitch in lessening degrees, so that the whole tabulated would form a column of sounds between which the intervals, comparatively large towards the base, become smaller as they ascend. The lowest of these sounds is called the fundamental sound. It gives us the impression of the pitch of the general effect. The other sounds are called *partial* sounds.

To complete this general description of the physical conditions of timbre I should add the following further particulars.

While from the fundamental sound to the sixth sound of the series, the sounds are in perfect concord, beyond the sixth sound they begin to involve discord. This is shown in the following diagram which gives the first ten sounds of the series:



Those partial sounds which are in harmony with the fundamental sound are called *harmonics.*

The intensity of each partial sound is, as a rule, in the inverse ratio of its pitch.

Though, as I have intimated, the ear does not realize the existence of the partial sounds as separate sounds yet each has its distinct influence upon our sensibility, and the combined result is our feeling of timbre.

The different *kinds* of timbre arise as the general state of things we have described is modified:

(1.) By absence of certain partial sounds.

(2.) By change in the intensity of the partial sounds in relation to one another and to the fundamental note.

The first condition of a tone of rich quality is the presence of the lower partial sounds; the second is the

presence in some force of the upper, as without the latter the sound loses in power and brilliancy.

The effect of a simple sound—that is a sound unattended by partial sounds—is soft and sweet but wanting in strength and energy. The sound of the flute with little wind approaches this kind of effect. In the case of the sound of an instrument played by the bow the intensity of the lower partial sounds in relation to the fundamental sound is less than in the case of the sound of the piano, while that of certain of the higher partial sounds is greater—this state of things tends to produce the incisive, penetrating character of sound peculiar to instruments played by the bow.

Thus much, then, for the effect of timbre as produced by musical instruments. When produced by the human voice a further and peculiar modification of this condition of things occurs, giving rise to an accompanying and unique effect—an effect quite distinct from timbre yet inherently allied to it: the effect namely of vowel sound.

In the case of a vowel sound, a sound set up by the vocal chords is reinforced by the cavity of the mouth but in a way differing from that in which a sound is reinforced in the case of a musical instrument whether such reinforcement be by sounding-board, enclosed chamber (as with the violin) or cavity of a pipe. In all such cases the lowest note of the auxiliary reverberation always corresponds with the fundamental sound of the note given by the instrument. But in the case of a vowel sound the lowest note due to the cavity of the mouth corresponds not with the fundamental sound of the note set up by

the vocal chords but with one of its harmonics which is thus made to stand out in intensity both from the fundamental sound and the other harmonics. Thus the different vowel sounds are produced, the cavity of the mouth so varying in capacity and form as to reinforce sometimes one sometimes another harmonic of the note set up by the vocal chords.*

These particulars show clearly that the perception of timbre and vowel sound depend upon an aural construction calculated to receive simultaneously the different series of tremors involved in an assemblage of sounds. They also show that in the case of timbre of rich quality the lower sounds of the assemblage involve such a combination as given forth by sounds having each an independent source would produce the distinct effect of harmony.† Can we doubt then that the aural construction formed to be sensitive to the effects of timbre and vowel sound is that which renders possible the pervading thrill of harmony?

But if the foregoing inference as to the pedigree of our sensibility to harmonic effect is correct what a striking example of the principle of coincidence! An auditory

*** Some readers may have noticed that a sound closely resembling an inflected vowel-sound is produced when a housemaid strikes a metal or earthenware bowl partly filled with water against something hard, and at the same time happens to tilt it. The reason is that by the shifting of the water the vibratory action of the bowl is so changed that its lowest note reinforces one ot the partial sounds before the influence of the fundamental sound has ceased.**

† See illustration page 18.

apparatus initiated to discriminate the slightest differences in the vocal or other sounds of animal life and probably fully developed at the unknown epoch of the dawn of human speech, is the means by which we realize the thrilling clang of accordant sounds and that massive, gracious, musical experience, the synchronizing variety of concerted effect!

CHAPTER IV.

THE LARGER REASONS WHY MUSIC IS FREE OF THE OBJECTIVE WORLD, AND DISCONTINUOUS.

I HAVE called attention to the fact that the capacity of expression by intonation which is such a general feature in the animal world and which flows in language, leaps suddenly in the primitive outpouring of untutored song, into a transfigured effect, sounding the mysterious deep of melody in man.

I have also pointed out that the capacity, similarly inherited, of our sensitiveness to timbre, being appealed to by certain assemblages of free sounds, that is, sounds having each an independent source as distinguished from the partial sounds, unheard separately, of a single compound sound, the harmonic thrill is as it were, miraculously called forth within us.

Now let it be clearly borne in mind that, as I have en-

deavoured to convey in the previous chapter, these great changes are not developments. Within the respective orders of effect—that is, in intonation and in timbre—there may have been developments. But from intonation to melody is a jump.* Not only in melody has sound become purely musical and the intervals distinctively defined but the effect is unique—having the character of ultimate charm. So from timbre to harmony is a jump. Not only in the latter are the elements of effect independent sounds instead of being, as in timbre, constituents of a single sound, but the effect is totally new, involving a distinct order of experience.

It will be seen then that though the particular nervous organization involved in our sensitiveness to effects of intonation in language, is a necessary *antecedent* to our susceptibility to both melody and harmony, the latter susceptibility is by no means a functional development of tnat organization. Intonation in language still fulfills that practical function of expression in virtue of which it was first developed. But melody and harmony have no practical function whatever; whilst as I have just said, they give rise to quite new orders of sensation. The principle therefore involved in the fact that our inherited sensibility to effects of intonation serves to render us susceptible to the charm of melody and the thrill of harmony, is, as I have also said, not development but coincidence. That man should in the course of his general activity have arrived at the production, vocally or otherwise, of musical sounds involving definite intervals, is

* See slightly qualifying remark beginning line 61, Chapter XII.

not to be wondered at. Nor would it have been surprising that such sounds should have been arranged in melodic and even harmonic forms, to the production of plain, uninspiring effects. But that certain of such forms should have discovered in him the æsthetic susceptibilities which enable him to feel the enchanting beauty of melody and the pervading and exalting thrill of harmony—there is the coincidence!

The reader will remember that I introduced this particular coincidence as an example of the existence of certain fitnesses between ourselves and the outer world. To state this important principle categorically: Above the necessary adaptation between us and our environment, there is in various directions a higher harmony not subserving our material needs, of which harmony the visible conditions are :—

(1.) The wide margin that nature as a rule allows in the powers of our necessary faculties.

(2.) The infinite agencies without us.

The reader will also remember that I regarded this principle of coincidence as being the common first cause of the beauty of nature and the charm of music, and thus as revealing these two kinds of beauty—totally different as they are—as, in relation to their first cause, in line.

This connection between them it is unnecessary to say is of a very general and abstract character. Still it at least serves to define the limit beyond which our understandings cannot go in relation to the ultimate charm of either effect. It is in the very nature of this charm that it should

be inscrutable. But if the mind cannot penetrate this fundamental mystery it can reach the causes of the salient differences between the above two kinds of effect and thus perceive certain peculiarities of both, the reasons of which are probably not generally known.

The differences to which I propose to call attention are the following:—

Natural beauty is inseparably connected with the objective world, is self-revealed, and constant.

Musical beauty is generally free of the objective world; it demands human volition, and is intermittent.

Now in explanation:

Why do we call the sight of things the things themselves, and the sound of things only sounds? Thus in coming within view of the sea, if we said "That is the sea!" we should consider that our words had a direct application. But if we could only hear the sea, and made the above remark, we should consider that we spoke referentially. To speak with direct application in the latter circumstances we should say, "That is the *sound* of the sea." Thus the visual effect would stand for the object itself, whilst the auditory effect would stand only for the sound of the object.

In order to answer the foregoing question I must refer to certain physical and physiological facts relating to light and vision.

From a single central source light proceeds continually, which light the surfaces of objects reflect in ways corresponding to their character.

In seeming adjustment to the fact that light is a permanent influence, our organ of sight is constituted for being unintermittingly active during our waking hours, and is so far sensitive to the differentiation of the light coming from an object as to be capable of receiving a picture standing for that differentiation. Thus light has the property of conveying to us an impression of certain external features of all objects exposed to it or from which it proceeds. But our receiving such an impression depends upon the space between the eye and the object being clear of any opaque body or medium. It is thus by impressions produced by light in the first instance, that ordinarily we acquire a general knowledge of our position in relation to an object.

But soon experiences of the other senses come in, particularising the knowledge so far acquired. For instance, we reach or walk towards the object and so acquire a more definite idea of its distance; or we touch it and learn its consistency, texture and temperature, or perhaps get further knowledge of its form. Subsequently such impressions become fixedly associated with its visual impression—thus the sight of water always suggests the unique consistence and feel of water, the sight of stone or iron, hardness—of leaves, the cool feel of leaves. A sight is thus to us as a rule more than a sight, being an ordered combination of various experiences acquired through the other senses yet that have become merged in the visual experience. Thus it is that an inseparability between the visual impression of an object and the object as a whole has become established in our minds.

Now let us contrast with the rôle of light as thus far unfolded the general rôle of musical sound.

Musical sound is not a permanent influence, and in conformity with this fact the sensibility to which it appeals is only calculated for being active during comparatively short periods of time.

Although musical sound is more or less reflected and absorbed as it moves among objects, the result is to modify its general volume and character,—as when music is performed in an empty or full room,—not to give us impressions of those objects. Only when the object itself emits sound is such object suggested, as in the thundering of the surf, the whistle of the wind, or the song of the lark; and even in these circumstances we separate mentally the object from the sound.

Though sound is strictly speaking an objective effect, we only so realize it in relation to its first source as in the cases just mentioned or when it proceeds from a voice or an instrument. Beyond its first source we regard it as unlocated—pervasive.

Why then the visual impression of the sea stands for the sea itself whilst the sound stands only for the sound, has probably long ere this been obvious to the reader.

The visual effect having, so to speak, drawn to itself in close though unconscious association various impressions derived through other senses, stands for their concrete union, that is, for the object itself; whilst the auditory impression continues to be felt but as an attribute. Thus the visual impression though in itself but

a sight, stands for an object, whilst the auditory impression though as objective as the pure visual impression, stands but for a sound.

We now perceive the rationale of those salient differences between natural and musical beauty specified some space back.

Owing to the paramount position of the sun and to our harmonising endowment of vision, the mind is ever confronting a retinal picture standing for such differentiation of the outer world as light can give us; and in certain of the impressions thus conveyed various experiences derived through the other senses are merged. Thus our objective world is the world of light, which light being continuous, so fills the mind with its infinitely varied effects that in this direction man has no scope for original conception. Thus all visual beauty is confined to objects or objective effect; nature is the appanage of the beauty of form and colour, and hence the canon of the painter: to depart from nature is to sink beneath her. Thus also visual beauty is self-revealed.

On the other hand musical beauty being based upon an unpermanent stimulus, and involving only a single sense —experience,—instead of those assemblages of different sense-experiences which compose our objective world,— is necessarily free of that world and discontinuous.

These considerations then reveal why musical beauty is always intangible—ærial, and discontinuous, whilst visual beauty is always inherently associated with objects

or objective effect, and constant; is really due, speaking in a large sense, to circumstance, and not to intrinsic superiority or inferiority in either kind of beauty.

CHAPTER V.

CONTRAST IN SCENIC EFFECT AND IN MUSIC.

IN the last chapter we traced out the causes of certain differences between visual and auditory effect with the result that some obvious and elementary facts connected with music were brought out in large relief—in a light which in this connection we may perhaps say "cometh from afar" from within and without us. Nevertheless this light, which brings out these more obvious facts, will if followed illumine others—some less obvious, some extremely subtle. We shall therefore continue for a time in our present path of enquiry—the comparison of natural and musical beauty; the point I now propose to bring out being the difference between these two effects in power of contrast.

The ordinary contrasts as observed by the eye between

the various objects of nature are not only unmistakably definite and clear, but they are realised without effort. Take the contrast of lake and meadow. There is no contrast in music so complete and yet so *quiet* as this. By quiet contrast I mean a distinct change of impression (bringing, it may be, change of sentiment) without there being a break in the general mood of feeling. The contrast between day and night or between a stormy and a serene sky involves what I term a change of mood. Music can unfold contrast in which there is the change both of sentiment and mood, as in the case of the melody in the opening of the Overture to "Der Freischütz" and the *tremolo* passage which follows; but it cannot unfold the kind of contrast which we realise in looking at lake and meadow. Take any effective movement in an instrumental work whether for one instrument, a few instruments or for full orchestra. We recognise the different themes and their varying treatment. There is much clearness of impression amid variety. Yet we have to exert a certain amount of attention; and all the while have the feeling of being in a special world—a world in which all variety is produced by changes in a single character of sensation. Now such variety as this is the nearest approach that music can make to the distinctly marked yet quiet and effortlessly felt variety of nature.

It is obvious that the considerations submitted in our last chapter in explanation of the fact that the sight of an object seems the object itself whilst the sound, even when produced by the object, is never merged in it, lie at the root of our present explanation. It is obvious that

the fact that a sight is an ordered combination of various sense-experiences, accounts largely for the marked and quiet contrast of visual beauty. In the case, say, of the water of a river and its sandy or pebbly margin and near shelving grass, or grassy bank—these different features involve as well as retinal variety differences of touch, feel, temperature and muscular resistance, and though the latter four sensations do not belong to visual effect yet through their direct association with it they bring to it new elements of contrast without disturbing the general mood of feeling. Yet obvious as it is that the foregoing considerations lie at the foundation of the cause of the quietly perceived variety of natural scenes they do not constitute its complete explanation. Two important influences which contribute to this quietly perceived variety remain to be stated.

The first of these influences is the contrast of colours. The contrast of colours has the nature of an ultimate fact in our sensation, and though it may perhaps be capable of displaying the highest power of visual contrast (for I speak here with diffidence) it is largely consistent with a single mood. It would seem to be analogous to the contrast produced by differences of timbre in music, one being contrast in the general character of light as the other is in the general character of sound. But timbre never unfolds the marked contrast which is a potentiality of colour; its greatest contrast may be compared to that of different tints of a single colour—as between the vivid green of the early leaf of spring and the darker green of the leaf of summer. Notwithstanding the difference

there is a general prevailing oneness of character. But between different colours there is a decided duality. That our sensibility to different colours should be thus so decided and spontaneous belongs probably, as I have suggested, to something fundamental in the conditions of our development. Further—contrast of timbre is not an indispensable element in musical beauty as contrast of colour is in natural. Long and important musical constructions may unfold beauty from beginning to end without there being any difference of timbre, as in the pianoforte sonata and the quartet for stringed instruments. Of course in all concerted effect there is some contrast of timbre. But its main use is to give variety to different bodies of effect or to succeeding phrases in orchestral music, or organ music.

The second of the two influences is, ocular muscular action. On this depends all definiteness of that colour effect to which we have just been referring, and largely definiteness of form. If we fix our glance, say on the petals of a flower of which the heart is of a different colour, we to a certain extent realize this colour also, but we do not do so distinctly *so long as we keep our glance quite fixed on the petals.* In order to realize vividly the contrast between the two colours it is essential for the glance to move from one to the other. Now this kind of movement would seem to be a normal concomitant of the exercise of vision. Whenever we fix our sight on a definite point of any object the whole effect which but for that point fills up our visual field is more or less phantasmal—unreal—dream-

like notwithstanding we may be conscious of decided and extensive contrasts in that field. For instance, in looking definitely say at a building or an umbrageous tree we may be conscious of a large spread of sky above. Yet it is difficult to say how much in such circumstances this consciousness is not due to the eye's previous wanderings, so exceptional is it for the sight to be fixed, and so much does its being so demand a strenuous act of the will.

Now suppose we fix our glance on the heart of the flower just referred to, then not only will the colour of the petals be phantasmal but after awhile their forms will seem vague. This leads to my next point, namely, that not only is movement of the sight essentially connected with our full and vivid realisation of contrast of colour but with our sense of space* and our perception of form.

Now our perception of visual form is largely due to the muscular action just described taking a definite course. For instance we are cognizant largely of the

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*** Whether the sensation of light itself brings the attending consciousness of space, or this latter is really due to the optical movement that commences simultaneously with the sensation of light it is difficult to say, but it is certain that the sense of space is a necessary consequence of conscious muscular action whether connected with visual effect or not, for where this muscular action takes place there must be the feeling of a space through which that action moves. In conformity with what I have said in connection with our perception of contrast of colours, practically with the sensation of light optical muscular action at once begins—probably in order to bring the region of clear vision opposite various points of the lighted surface.**

shape of a circular object by the association with a certain retinal impression, of that sweep of the eye-balls which is involved in following the outline of a circle; of an angular object by the association with its retinal impression, of sudden changes of direction in the sweep of the eye-balls. And in looking at a scene and surveying solid objects other muscular actions enter—namely, that which regulates the position of the focus to which the crystalline lens brings the light which enters the eye, and that involved in bringing about the various necessary degrees of convergence of the axes of the eye-balls; the former being concerned mainly in our realisation of near distances, the latter in our realization of distances both near and far and in our comprehension of objects of three dimensions.

Further, besides all this action of the delicate muscles connected with the eye, other kinds of muscular activity contribute to our conception of space and form, as when the head and body move in order to extend the sweep of the eye, or when the limbs move in the field of vision. As I have just implied in referring to the convergence of the lines of sight, the close correspondence of the retinal impressions with the details of varied movement is aided by our having two eyes and thus two points of survey. Even when the retinal impression of an object is small enough to be embraced completely by the region of clear vision without muscular movement, our realisation of its form is still associated with the muscular feeling because

our ideas of form begin with experiences of the larger kinds of muscular exercise.*

Now ideas thus formed by aid of the larger muscular experiences become subsequently associated exclusively with the finer—the purely optical—muscular feelings involved in the movements of the eye. The finer muscular feelings are thus, so to speak, educated by the grosser, from which, what I may term, our *standard* of difference of position in space is in the first place derived. It is thus not difficult to understand that our appreciation of difference of form begins with comparatively large differences.

The fact then that two objects give us two distinct impressions involves also this: we perform two respective muscular movements or series of movements, each of which, when the objects are surveyed simultaneously, are again contrasted with another—namely, that involved in glancing from one object to the other. Thus we realise

* The history of this latter process may be as follows. A child moves its arms and hands in the field of vision or produces changes in this field by movements of its head. From the association of the muscular feeling involved in these movements with the different impressions produced on the eye it derives its first definite ideas of difference of position in space. For instance the association of the muscular feeling involved in the movement of the head with the occular impression of the enlarged visual sweep, gives a certain definiteness to the latter impression. So when the child stretches out its arm and grasps or touches something a definite sense of distance is produced by the association of the feeling of movement in the limb with the visual picture containing the object. Further, when it begins to walk the association of a certain muscular effort or series of efforts with visual change still further develops its sense of definite distance.

the two objects as occupying two definitely separated places. These are the reasons why two leaves or two pebbles, whose pure retinal impressions are similar, and whose associated experiences must be the same, create in us two clearly defined impressions.

The reader now perceives the important part played by the optical muscles in visual effect—how as well as rendering vivid the primal differences of colour they aid to render precise our conceptions of distance and form—how they represent the larger muscular experiences and thus in the fine character of their own action are capable of defining acute contrast amid perfect repose.

We are now in a position to understand why we feel a sense of clear contrast amid perfect repose when we survey ordinary natural scenes.

Beyond the fact that sight being our leading sense its exercise is naturally accompanied by a more perfect feeling of repose than that of any other, the reasons of the above would seem to be:—

(1.) The contrast resulting from the different sense-experiences associated directly with the various features of the scene.

(2.) The primal and spontaneous contrast of different colours.

(3.) The constant participation in vision of occular muscular action, to which is due the development, completeness and vividness of the foregoing contrast of colour, and of definiteness and distinctness of detail in our perception of form.

Now to turn to music. In the light of the foregoing particulars it is easy to see why when musical effect does not involve extreme differences of mood (as it does in the example from "Der Freischütz" referred to at the commencement of this chapter) we experience amid all the variety a general oneness of impression and often have to make a certain effort to catch the changes of effect. The reason is the singleness of the musical sensation—the general absence from it of the direct suggestion of other sense-experiences.

The above conclusion is corroborated by a reference to the art of sculpture which in this connection occupies a position largely similar to that of music. Sculpture though it approaches nature so closely is still far inferior to nature in power of contrast, and this inferiority is due to the same cause as the weakness of the power of contrast in music. Take a subject in sculpture embracing a few figures, and say among them a laughing boy and a sleeping child. Now with a little attention,—for as in music we have here to make a certain effort of attention —we not only observe clearly the different members of the group but may realise all that cunning faithfulness to nature which in the case of masterpieces in this art causes the marble to seem almost to breathe and speak. Yet notwithstanding this, the difference between the two faces appears far less than in nature or in a picture. Though life is suggested, and in certain particulars most vividly, we yet feel that between this life and ourselves is the veil of the art medium. We are in a special world where if we are not, as in music,

confined to the exercise of a single sense the play of the various senses is much restricted. The world of colour is withdrawn. Hence lessened contrast in the cases of even such marked differences of expression as laughing and sleeping.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SOURCE OF THOSE DISTINCT SUGGESTIONS OF THE GENERAL WORLD WHICH ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO THE MUSICAL SENSATION—POSITION, DIRECTION, MOVEMENT AND VISUAL FORM.

THE reader is probably prepared for the remark that as our previous studies in visual effect led beyond the solution of the particular problem in hand, so the somewhat minute examination of visual action entered into in our last chapter helps to explain more than the difference between scenic and musical contrast.

First: To the great distinction between the aural and visual senses previously pointed out, namely, that the one is comparatively single, involving a simple impression, while the other is latently combinative, involving the mingled feelings of many senses, we are now enabled to add another, namely, that the ear is the passive recipient of impressions—that in the case of two or more sounds

proceeding from different points it has in itself no power answering to that which the eye possesses in its muscular endowment by means of which various retinal impressions become associated with different portions of a muscular action.

Secondly: We are, so to say, put on the scent of an explanation of that continual suggestion of movement in visual space which is fundamental to musical effect, and to those lineaments of visual form which frequently unfold in the musical atmosphere and help so largely to articulate the expression.

The simplest melody—all melody—exemplifies movement more or less vividly. As to visual form instances of composers suggesting a picture of height by pitch-effect are numerous enough. Thus, in the passage, "The waves stood upright as a heap," in "Israel in Egypt," a series of notes not varying in pitch between themselves stands out from the musical context in virtue of being declaimed at a comparatively high pitch of the voice. Rossini is moved by the same instinct in his "Stabat Mater," at the passage "Dum pendebat filius."

I showed in the last chapter how essentially our sense of space and form depends upon muscular action both general and optical. In the light of this fact we realise the distinction that whereas the eye has a definite muscular endowment the ear has not but is virtually passive. But if this is the case, whence come these definite suggestions in music of movement in visual space and of visual form?

I submit that they proceed from certain muscular actions which though belonging to another organ are as-

sociated closely and in a peculiarly defined way with our aural sensibility. If I should be right then the above seeming contradiction of the law that our ideas of form depend upon muscular feeling would be a peculiar confirmation of it.

The muscular action to which I allude is that connected with the larynx.

In the first chapter of this work I pointed out that music and language involve in common certain lineaments of form and principles of expression; and in chapters two and three I referred to the probability that ear and larynx were largely developed in sympathy. Now it is probably due to the, so to say, interposition of the principle of language, that is, the principle of communication and expression, that this process commenced, as it is to the continual subsequent exercise of speech through unknown ages, that it has led to the remarkable, so to say, attunement in the action of these organs which I am now about to describe.

Sir Michael Foster referring to the influence of auditory sensation upon laryngeal muscular action, says:—

"They (auditory sensations) are in a way essential to the very utterance of the voice; the dumbness which is so conspicuous a concomitant of congenital deafness is in most cases due not to deficiency in the muscular apparatus or even in the nervous mechanism on what we may call its motor side, but to the lack of afferent (incoming) impulses from the auditory nerve. And in popular language we recognise this dependence of the management

of the laryngeal muscles on auditory sensations when we talk of such or such one as 'having no ear.'"

But distinct testimony of this subtle connection exists in the experience of everyone. Before we sing—before we speak—we know to a certainty the sound we are going to produce. This implies to the scientifically initiated that when we are about to sing or speak the mere fore-hearing,* or conception, of a sound is attended by the formation of the precise nervous and muscular preparation for its production. But when we further consider that this minutely perfect co-ordination of auditory sensations and laryngeal action exists for every producible sound we can perhaps form an adequate idea of the extensiveness as well as the complexity and precision of the sympathy between ear and voice which has become established in us.

But now comes the question: how when in the act of singing does laryngeal muscular action become associated with movement in visual space and in defined directions —as up and down—and with visual form? That our larger external, and our optical, muscular actions are thus associated, is, as has been explained, because they have been exercised in close connection with visual effect from

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* What is the manner of occupation of the brain with a resuscitated feeling of resistance, a smell, or a sound? There is only one answer that seems admissible. The renewed feeling occupies the very same parts, and in the same manner as the original feeling, and no other parts, nor in any other assignable manner. . . . . The imagination of visible objects is a process of seeing; the musician's imagination is hearing.—BAIN, *On the Senses and the Intellect.*

infancy. But the movements due to the laryngeal muscles are internal and thus seemingly separated from visual effect.

To the above question I submit the following answer. Take the fact that with difference of pitch passing towards acute we associate a change of position in space upward, and *vice versa*. This association is probably derived from the fact that in singing comparatively low notes the set of the larynx is such as to direct the vibrations downward towards the chest, whilst in singing the higher notes the set of the larynx is such as to direct the vibrations upward towards the head. In the production then of extreme differences of pitch the sounds would be felt by the singer to proceed distinctly from different places in the perpendicular dimension. There are intermediate settings of the larynx which appear to relate to intermediate registers, and while each setting prevails the muscular changes that occur as the notes rise would seem to be mainly those involved in producing the increased tension of the vocal chords. So notwithstanding in singing the scale gradually the reverberation seems actually to proceed from a higher or lower point at each step, it is possible that it really only comes from a relatively higher or lower region in the case of a few different general positions of the larynx, and this may be sufficient to cause us to associate change of pitch generally with high and low so that the smallest change of pitch is felt as a change in altitude.

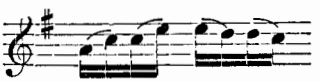
But another effect is connected with these circumstances. Into the sense of difference in position

produced by pitch-change may enter that of *movement.* When a sense of movement proceeds from muscular feeling it demands some attending impressions in order to become defined. Perhaps in its pure organic form in infancy different degrees of resistance of themselves suffice for this purpose. But in our general experience whenever muscular action gives rise to the sense of movement it is almost inevitably associated with visual effect. Even the movement due to the muscular action of the lungs we think of as movement in visual space. Thus it is that when succeeding impressions of altitude produced by pitch-change differentiate the muscular action involved in producing the voice, the sense of movement is aroused. However long a singer keeps on one note he has no sense of movement, but directly he begins to vary the pitch that sense arises. Here again is an extraordinary example of the principle of coincidence. When we speak or sing, the set of the larynx so varying as to direct the vibrations sometimes upward sometimes downward, is the first cause not only of the sense of visual form in music but of that sense of movement which is often such a vivid experience in listening to it!

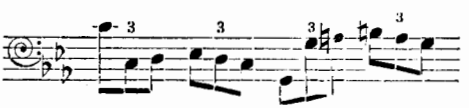
The fact may be here alluded to that in intonation, in speech, and in singing, as in playing, some musical instruments, the force that sets up the vibrations acts largely independently of the mechanism which produces the change of pitch. Thus by sustained action of the lungs during change of pitch results smoothness of movement, as by broken action attending such change results broken

movement. So from variation of the force with which the lungs are exerted results evenness or graduation of loudness in the sound as well as the effect of accent.

In the following figures from Handel's "Waft her angels" we have suggested a fine kind of movement in visual space—a short, smooth motion upward and downward and accented slightly at the beginning—giving us the feeling and vision of "wafting" or the motion of wings.

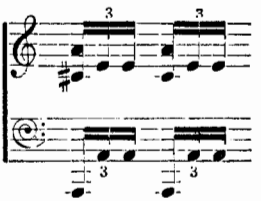


In Handel's chorus "But the waters overwhelmed their enemies" in "Israel in Egypt" we have in the bass of the accompaniment broad rising and falling passages which on the principles I have stated represent both the form and movement of waves, whilst their repetition suggests the waves following one another rhythmically and continuously.



I have said that the sense of movement in music is aroused when a feeling of muscular action is rendered definite by successive visual impressions associated with pitch-change. But the thought may arise in the reader that it is a common practice of composers to suggest motion by reiteration of notes or repetition of passages.

For instance the reiteration of notes in the accompaniment to Schubert's "The Erl King" may be intended to represent the beating of rain or the galloping of the horse. So the repeated triplet figure

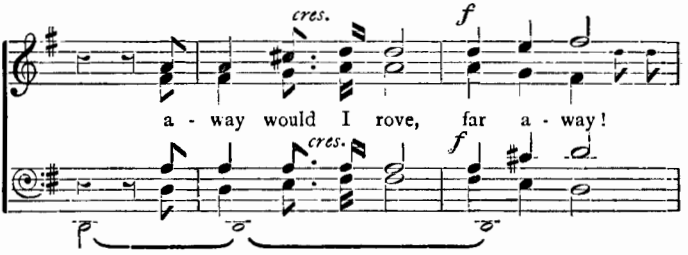


in the accompaniment to the chorus "There came a fiery chariot," in Mendelssohn's "Elijah," may be intended to represent the motion of chariot wheels, or the galloping of the "fiery horses." In any case both these effects of reiteration and repetition respectively suggest rapid motion very vividly. How, then, it may be asked, are these facts reconcileable with my definition thus far of movement in music. I reply thus:—

The qualities I am treating of in this chapter are such as are fundamental to the musical sensation. The *movement* I am treating of is a power, so to speak, belonging to the musical medium itself, whereas the movement I have just glanced at is the result of a special application of that medium. The first is organically connected with change of pitch; the second is due to the interposition of extraneous imagery of which it is one of the associations. The one follows necessarily from the effect that produces it; the other does not. When we think of the circumstances of purely abstract music,—under which the sym-

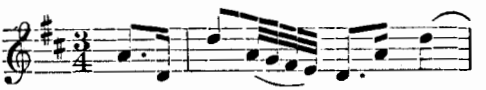
phonies of Beethoven and Tchaïkovsky speak,—in which circumstances there is no interposition of imagery from without—we realise the importance of the qualities I am treating of—those liens between music and the outer world the roots of which lie in the musical medium itself.

The following extract from Mendelssohn's "Hear my Prayer" shows how the power of suggesting visual space and movement, indwelling in the musical material itself, is increased when employed in connection with harmonising circumstances from without—how its influence is extended and how vivid rendered, by a definite action of the imagination. Observe what a limitless new extent of flight is suggested where the soprano part—continuing the ascending passage in the middle bar simply, rises through a major third in the last.



The sense of position and of movement may alternate in a peculiar way in the delineation of visual form in music. Change of pitch always involves the sense of movement though such sense may vary from being almost latent to being very vivid. Thus it is that sometimes in the delineation of visual form in music the sense of position is the more prominent effect and at other

times that of movement. In the air "Golden columns" from Handel's "Solomon" the composer pictures the columns by a figure involving the ascent and descent of an octave, the prominent effect being change of pitch; but "the tendrils of the clasping vine" he depicts by short passages of semiquavers whose graphic importance is only their rhythmic effect.



Thus the broad proportions of the picture are represented by pitch-effect but the more complex detail by rhythmic. The rationale of this procedure would seem to be as follows. The subdivisions of the form that pitch change cannot represent can be suggested by subdivisions of the general movement.

CHAPTER VII.

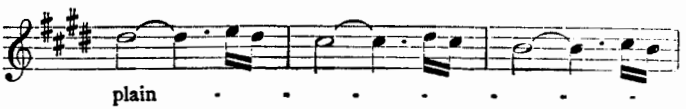
THE SECOND FACTOR IN THE INHERENT CONNECTION BETWEEN MUSIC AND MOTION: THE SENSE OF THE HORIZONTAL LATENT IN THE PRINCIPLE OF TIME.

THE fact that in listening to music we are not visited with sensations of light or colour tends to confirm the hypothesis formulated in our last chapter that it is the muscular action involved in changing the set of the larynx to which that sense of movement in the perpendicular dimension and those consequent ideas of position and form are due which music undoubtedly does at times create in us more or less distinctly. This confirmation rests on the following considerations:

The sense of up and down is probably portion of the organised feeling in us of the natural position of the body, and this feeling in its turn is no doubt closely associated with the exercise of vision on which our preserving the natural position of the body so largely de-

pends. But the *first* association of the laryngeal movement involved in pitch-change would, as this movement is inward, be the sense of up and down in bodily feeling, the visual world being the general idea underlying this feeling. Thus it would seem that in the effect of pitch-change in music there would naturally be no more than the sense of change in the perpendicular dimension whilst the sense of space necessarily adhering to this association would be more or less shadowy and not connected with sensations of positive brightness or colour. Let the reader bear carefully in mind that I am treating of the indwelling suggestiveness of music, not to this as increased by extraneous associations as in vocal and programme music, in which case among other results an atmosphere of brightness and colour might be easily suggested.

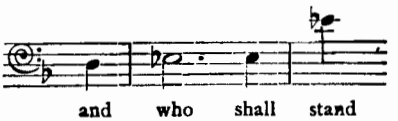
It is possibly on the principle of complementary feeling that notes or passages not varying in pitch, when used in connection with effects so varying, tend to suggest the idea of the horizontal. This principle I may thus explain: As pitch-change produces a sense of up or down, sustained or reiterated notes would tend to suggest a relation of space the furthest removed from up or down, that is to say, some sense of the horizontal plane. The following extract from Handel's "Every Valley" illustrates the effect to which I allude.



But the *general* sense of the horizontal in music rests,

as we are about to see, on a positive influence. As roused by complementary feeling it would necessarily be but temporary and thus, as in the above illustration, only applicable to passing effect.

I have treated of that factor of the feeling of movement inherent in music which is due to pitch-change, namely, the sense of up and down. But the sense of movement distinctly upward or downward occurs only occasionally and then the effect seldom involves more than a single musical interval. In the following example the upward direction is suggested very decidedly.



The question now arises: how can we explain that feeling as of homogeneous movement compounded in degrees infinitely various of the perpendicular and horizontal, which enters so largely into the musical sensation? We have explained how the sense of the perpendicular arises. What remains to be accounted for is, how the sense of the horizontal comes to enter into that of the perpendicular.

I submit that it enters with the rhythm, or some perceptible embodiment of the feeling of time by accent. Now rhythm, which term the reader will understand I use in order to refer to this general kind of effect, is one of the natural forms of human expression—our feeling for it is instinctive, and we manifest it in various ways, but always by muscular action. In the case of the poetry of

modern peoples the elements of rhythm are the more forcible enunciations of accent. But the circumstances that mainly foster it are those in which the *outer* muscles come into play. Even in poetry, as it would seem, the source of the metrical principle of effect was the dance.

Now what varieties of movement has not the dance engendered in its long and varied course! Here I think I cannot do better than introduce a passage from R. G. Moulton's work "The ancient classical drama" concerning Greek dancing in connection with the ancient Ballad-Dance.

"The real dancing of the Greeks is a lost art, of which the modern ballet is a corruption, and the orator's action a faint survival. It was an art which used bodily motion to convey thought: as in speech the tongue articulated words, so in dancing the body swayed and gesticulated into meaning. It was perhaps the supreme art of an age which was the great period of the world for bodily development; and the degree of perfection to which dancing attained in Greece may be described in the enthusiastic words of Charles Kingsley:

'A dance in which every motion was a word, and rest as eloquent as motion; in which every attitude was a fresh motive for a sculptor of the purest school, and the highest physical activity was manifested, not, as in coarse comic pantomimes, in fantastic bounds and unnatural distortions, but in perpetual delicate modulations of a stately and self sustaining grace.'

"It is such dancing as this which united with speech and music to make the Ballad-Dance; wherever the language of primitive peoples raises itself to that conscious eleva-

tion which makes it literature, it appears not alone, but supported by the sister arts of music and dance—a story, or poetical conception, is at one and the same time versified, chanted, and conveyed in gesture. In the case of Miriam's Song of Deliverance the poetical form of her words has come down to us, while the two other elements are supplied by the verse which tells how Miriam 'took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and dances.' It was a sacred Ballad-Dance that David danced with all his might before the Lord. Heathen War Dances, chanting rude defiance with savage gestures, are the same embryonic poetry of races which are to-day passing through the early stage of civilisation traversed by ourselves hundreds, and by the Hebrews thousands, of years ago."

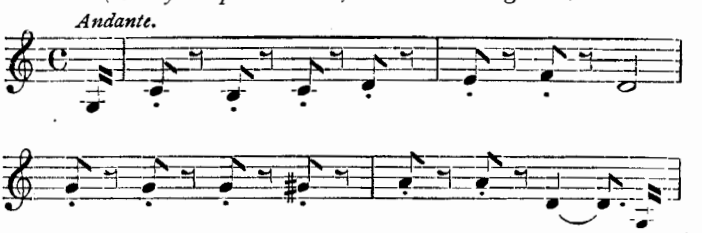
Now my point in referring to the rhythmic principle and to the dance as its principal source, is this: the movement of the dance being movement of human beings must lean largely to the horizontal. It cannot rise far above the earth or leave it long. But the *sense* of it wedded to the movement suggested by pitch-change can leave the earth—it is free; and what is the result? The inspirations in motion of the bodily life of man in the dance, blend in those of his emotional life in that intonation whose first source is his breath. To speak literally, the largely horizontal movements associated with rhythm unite with the upward and downward movements suggested by pitch-change, and we have the infinite variety, pliancy and freedom of that *ideal motion* which is such a transcendent element in the musi-

cal sensation—and though so fugitive is still a positive feeling that can arise in no other circumstances.

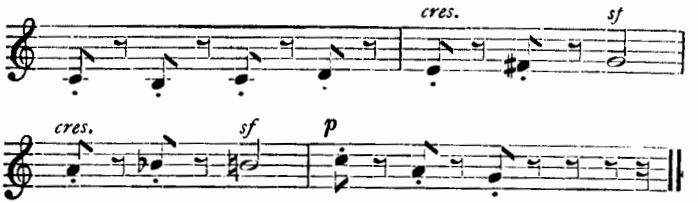
From considering this ideal motion simply as part of the general musical material, or abstractly, I now pass temporarily, in order to glance at it when it enters into the concrete work.

Here it comes under a special constructive influence which draws it into formative action, this influence being the *feeling of the tonic.* In listening to the following example we have* a feeling first of a short movement in space from the tonic *downward*, then of a movement *back* to the tonic, of the continuance of such movement some distance upward and of its *return* portion of the way and of its pausing. Then after some further movements of the same kind we have the sense of a new centre, or key note, which we realise as occupying a different position in the ideal space from that of the original tonic, yet at the same time as having a definite relation to it. Thus under the influence of the principle of the tonic the ideal movement falls into form more or less symmetrical.

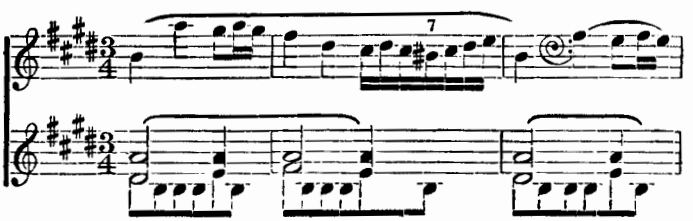
From Andante of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 14, No. 2.
(Only top notes of treble are given).



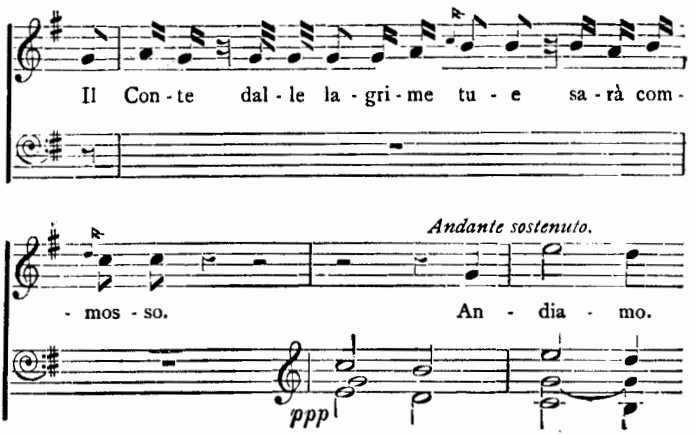
* Referring to the effect from the first quaver.



Now in order to summon up, if possible, in the reader a present experience of the two forms of movement I have referred to, uniting into one ideal motion and drawn into form by the influence of tonality, I cite the following strain from Chopin in which may perhaps be caught the feeling of that bodily movement which invests effects of accentuation and measure, soaring, lifted from the earth by that due to varying pitch.



It is in harmony with the idea thus set forth as to the source of the sense of the horizontal in music, that as this sense never or seldom arises in ordinary utterance, so it is not suggested in musical effect based on utterance, but if the music falls into *measure* it tends to supervene. This may perhaps be felt (as it was intended by the composer to be felt) in the following example from Bellini's "La Sonnambula."



I have referred to the feeling of movement springing from the dance as the basis of the horizontal factor in the ideal motion of music; but, as I have implied, other movement than that associated with the dance may become that factor. The sense of the horizontal may arise in virtue of many rhythmic effects in nature or life associated with motion, such as the tramping of men, the galloping of horses, the rhythm of rowing, the rippling of water, the beating of waves, rocking, or in fact, any measured movement which produces sound. This may aid to explain the undoubted fact that the mere succession of notes at a measured pace as in the case of the movement of the bass in the chorus "But the waters overwhelmed," and as in all arpeggio accompaniment—impresses a sense of the horizontal.

But I would repeat that though such rhythmic effects as those just alluded to may have their influence in inducing

the sense of the horizontal, particularly in its more mechancial phases, the deep source of that sense in music would seem to be the revival by rhythmic effect of some feeling, present or inherited, of the expressional movements of the human body and limbs. In this connection an idea occurs to me which may or may not have value.

The development of speech is one of the dark places of science, but I think it may be almost concluded that speech did not arise simply out of attempts to articulate. The medium of communication and expression in early man must have been compounded of several elements among which were probably inarticulate sounds, semi-articulate sounds, semi-musical sounds, gesture, and bodily movement generally. Possibly then in the life-history of our foregoers there were long periods in which certain musical or semi-musical effects, and certain articulate effects were co-ordinated with expressive movements ranging from savage gestures to the graceful forms suggested by Moulton and Kingsley as belonging to dancing as attained by the ancient Greeks. If this should have been the case it would bring very considerable support to my idea that the sense of the horizontal which coalescing with that of the perpendicular engenders the ideal motion felt in music, proceeds from the rhythmic element of which general form of effect it is a deep-seated association. Thus speech may be the survival and special development of one of the elements of this primal medium,

whilst in the melody of music there may be the resuscitation and special development of the other.

In the light of these considerations it would seem that the old fashion of following broken recitative with some kind of measured effect was right in principle though it may—like all technical procedure in music tends to do—have become perfunctory in form; and particularly it would seem, that the impulse in composers—as the situation deepens in interest and the sentiment rises—to fall into a special rhythm and, so to speak, more eloquent contour of movement, is prompted by a true instinct of expression. As an instance I would cite the death of Valentine in Gounod's "Faust." Here is varied and cumulative expression to which rhythmic contour contributes. First as between voices and accompaniment in the movement in D minor, where certain contours of rhythm rise and fall in sympathy with the sentiment, to a staid measure; and then in the succeeding short movement in D major where to a rising tide of accentuation in the accompaniment, the chorus after some exclamatory phrases of simple but definite rhythmic design fall into an ascending passage in solemn movement, and close, defining two broad, simple rhythmic figures conformed by the emphasis of nature. One almost feels that this august scene demands the lost art of expression by gesture—so appropriate for it does it seem.

The foregoing considerations as to the pedigree of our feeling for rhythm would also seem to suggest that long

spells of halting, timeless effect accompanied by harmonies however subtle, can never ultimately become generally pleasing, but that the feeling of the "modulations" in movement referred to by Kingsley and inherited in our sensibility, will never cease to prompt effect more or less melodic.

CHAPTER VIII.

TONALITY. THE PRINCIPLES OF UNITY AND DELIMITATION.

IN the last chapter I referred to an influence termed "the feeling of the key-note," and in the Beethoven example I called attention to the way in which the key-note seems to draw the ideal motion of music into form. In the present chapter I propose to ask, and to try to answer, the question: What is the feeling of the key note?

Briefly it is the feeling for form in music. What is contained in this reply will appear if I refer to certain fundamental principles of æsthetical form in general. Two of these are, Unity and Delimitation. Unity in a work of art is: each part being vitally essential to the whole, and the whole informing—exercising a full influence upon—each part. This principle is also expressed by the word *organic*, which word leads me to define

Delimitation. This is, the definite separateness of the art-work from the general world of effect to which it belongs —that is, freedom, without total disconnectedness, from that world. Both principles are illustrated in an organism—say an animal or plant. Setting aside the circumstance that these are living things drawing continuous life from their medium, both satisfy perfectly the foregoing definitions. How they do so with regard to unity is obvious from the fact that they *are* organic, and as to delimitation it is perhaps as obvious from the fact that each is, so to speak, an individual complete in itself though dependent upon its medium.

Now in the case of a painter, if his work consisted simply of a plant or an animal he would have the two principles ready to his hand; but if it had to embrace a larger portion of nature, taking in several objects and effects, he would be moved by artistic feeling to obtain them by selection and treatment.

It will probably have occurred to the reader that though I have spoken of these principles separately they are inherently related. Unity involves delimitation—there cannot be unity in an effect that goes on and on—whilst delimitation if it does not necessarily involve unity, conduces to it. The inter-relation of these two principles and their effect in art is perhaps somewhat fully set forth in the following passage from a paper of mine* which aims to show that our tempered system itself is an em-

* "The philosophy of our tempered system" Proceedings of the Musical Association 1091-1902.

bodiment of them—that that system is a natural and spontaneous result of composers being prompted to draw into inherent relation removed scales that are the basis of organic effects.

"There is æsthetic manifestation in our ordinary visual scope. Through the limitation of our sight, the continuity of nature is to it arrested—the prospect is rounded and domed in, and we have the perspective of earth and sky. But there is more than this general transfiguration. Through being thus enclosed, the various visible features acquire a more pronounced individuality as well as a special inter-relation, and all fall into a certain unity of form, character, and expression. If the extent of our sight were unrestricted, or considerably less restricted than it is, then in our visual scope both that local character and that general unity to which we are accustomed would be lost. On the one hand, in the limitless vista of similar effects individuality would disappear; on the other, the embracing of far-removed, crudely-contrasted differences would destroy that unity of expression which present natural scenes so vividly imbue. Such effects as tone of season and clime we should never enjoy.

I shall now endeavour to show that not only does æsthetic effect involve under all circumstances some kind of arrest in the continuity of absolute truth, but that this arrest always brings about a certain changed expression in the delimited area. To draw another illustration from nature: When, looking at some scene in the most ordinary way, we limit our survey, taking in only a portion

of what is spread around—when, in fact, we select a particular view, we do so in order that certain features shall stand out more strongly than otherwise they would do, or certain relations strike the attention which otherwise would be unobserved.

Coming to art, we break the continuity of absolute truth still more definitely, and with the conscious purpose of influencing impression. In these circumstances æsthetic effect stands out more prominently from general truth, as in the following illustration.

One summer evening, I observed an artist with his easel planted near the top of a barren slope, but commanding only the bare, hillocky ground of the slope, so that there was nothing but the ground to paint. Yet in the picture this rising, uneven ground had an effect that it had not when looked at unseparated from its natural continuity. The small protuberances and every unevenness had acquired on the one hand a more marked individuality, on the other, a special relationship; whilst the sky had a far more powerful effect than the sky of the natural scene—impressing something of the largeness of the sky of mountain top—and all involved a certain symmetry, and a unity. The artist had added nothing to what he saw, yet he presented more than nature *unpartitioned* conveyed. He simply *delimited*, yet in doing so, *created*.

In ordinary vision, then, in natural observation, and in the artist's picture, the general condition of æsthetic effect is a limiting of the continuity of nature; and, as a result of this delimitation, there is a remarkable change in the impression produced—the individuality of the various

features seems heightened; they fall into relationship; harmony, or contrast, as the case may be, unfolds, whilst all breathes a certain unity of spirit."

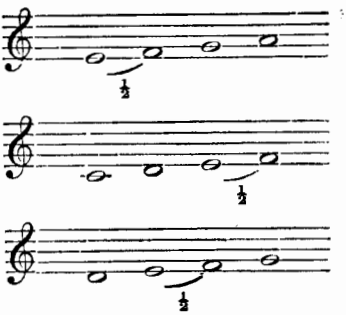
Now when we listen to the simplest strain it arouses in us the musical sensation, we have a sense of unity involving delimitation, corresponding in music to those qualities as above elucidated; and the musical expression for this sense is *the feeling of the key-note.*

This deduction is supported by, and at the same time helps to explain, that peculiar connection between the feeling of the tonic and the use of the step of a semitone as a structural element in music (represented by its presence in the diatonic scale) which has much puzzled thinkers.

That an organic principle is involved in the entering of this step of a semitone into the scale is a fact that the known course of musical development reveals unequivocally. The step of a semitone as a structural element enters into the oldest melodies. It is an interval of the ancient Greek and of the Mediæval scales. Coming to the present we feel it to be obvious that without the diatonic semitones all the simpler and clearly beautiful effect would be totally destroyed while the more complex would lose largely if not altogether articulateness and expression.

Now in the light of our recent generalisation that a work of art involves necessarily unity and delimitation it is obvious that the diatonic semitone helps the ear to perceive this unity and delimitation as a mere auditory sensation. Take the sounds embraced in the three species

of the interval of a fourth on which both the ancient Greek and the Mediæval scales are built, and which differ only in the position of the half tone



it is obvious that in the case of a short melody based upon any one of this series, whichever note should fulfil the function of key-note, the fact that one of the steps involved would be a semitone, would materially aid the listener in defining in sensation the position of that note —would strengthen the feeling of it, and thus tend to delimit the sounds over which its influence extended from the general world of musical sounds.

But with the facilitating our auditory perception the diatonic semitones combine a positive and inscrutable æsthetic influence. It would seem that just as our limitation of vision is an arbitrary though harmonising factor in the æsthetic influence of a natural scene, so our incapa-

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*** From the introduction ("On the formation of the diatonic scales") to "Mélodies Populaires de Grèce et D'Orient. By L. A. Bourgault-Ducoudray.**

city to take account in sensation of a continuous succession of whole tones without the occurrence of the semitone at certain intervals, is an arbitrary yet at the same time harmonising factor in the effect of an articulate strain.

CHAPTER IX.

STATEMENT OF THE FULL CASE FOR THE EXPLICABILITY OF MUSICAL EXPRESSION FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE INFLUENCE OF SPEECH.

IN the present chapter I propose to remark on some of the facts thus far attempted to be established, with a view to present the full case for the accountability of Musical Expression by language.

We have seen in chapters six and seven that part of the way in which music gets into touch with our faculties is by producing in us an idea of movement. We have also seen that this ideal motion rests on, so to speak, concealed muscular feeling, and may suggest lineaments of visual form. It may seem that the latter is an insignificant part of musical effect. It is in reality a most important part of that effect. Not only does it help to articulate expression but it gives a composer *initiative*. If some trivial effects are due to it some of the most

sublime in spirit owe to it both spirit and form. But as regards the feeling of ideal motion that music raises so vividly, its power for illustrative purposes cannot be overrated. I have pointed out the connection between rhythm and bodily movement. It is not difficult to conceive how all the feeling—the passion—that ever impelled gesture and movement may find its way into rhythm, and thus speak in *emphasis* and *pace*. Hence the torrential outbreaks of this element of expression in the Wagnerian musical drama.

I have submitted that the natural tendencies of expression belonging respectively to the two factors in this ideal motion are the following: pure inward feeling, to intonation, and that more demonstrative feeling which demands outward movement, to rhythm, this proposition having been suggested by the facts that intonation results from internal muscular action closely connected with organs which are at the very source of our life, whilst rhythm though in its element of accent attending intonation, draws its fuller development from an inherited feeling of outward expressional movement. At the same time this proposition harmonises with an instinct we betray in speech. In speech it is the inflexion, the modulation, the stress, or the cadence, of the pure vocal tone that seems the expression of feeling in, so to speak, its comparatively static life; whilst accent, pace, emphasis, gesture, movement, are its indications in a state of energy when it tends to demonstrativeness and passion.

The foregoing considerations betray then that the two elements of musical effect of which I have been speaking

are complementary both as regards form and expression; and that assuming the relation between them in music is such as I have suggested, and a similar relation is adumbrated in language, a twofold likeness in spirit between speech and music requires to be added to those pointed out in chapter one.

The reader will remember that in connection with the likenesses above referred to, I remarked that imperfect as the resemblance between speech and music which they constitute, may be, it was scarcely possible to overrate its importance. The considerations to which I shall now lead up will I think give to that remark a greatly added weight. I have hinted at the probability (I should perhaps have said the certainty) that the primal vocal and auditory organs that embodied the type of those we possess, were largely developed in sympathy, and that it was probably due to the interposition of the principle of language,—that is, of the principle of communication and expression,—that that process commenced, as it is certainly due to the subsequent exercise of speech through unknown ages that it has led to the wonderful coördination in the action of our present vocal and auditory organs remarked upon by Sir Michael Foster and described by myself in chapter six—a coördination that would seem only to be accounted for by some such far-back reaching and continuous interaction. It is for the expert in science to suggest how far back this relation in the action of our vocal and auditory organs has extended—whether beyond the period of the beginnings of human speech, and if beyond how far. But that such relation has em-

braced an immense backward stretch in our life history is illustrated in every gradation of tone—every modulation, inflexion or cadence, of the voice, that is effortlessly produced precisely as preconceived, by any of us.

Now as to the considerations that the foregoing references suggest. What a world of impressions connected with the auditory sense must not the action of the vocal organs have left behind throughout this long course of time! And seeing that the musical sensation in melody and harmony is a *marginal* or *by-action* of our ordinary aural sensibility, what an endless chain of associations may not the subtle tremors of melody and harmony set in motion when they strike upon the auditory nerve! Then when we further consider that in their primitive life these tremors came from the same source as speech—as music was first vocal—involving the action of the speech-organs (that lie close to the pulse and the breath of life)—that thus they tend to carry the very beat, nay the slightest flutter or it may be the strong lifing up, of the heart as well as (as recently shown) that more demonstrative feeling which is associated with gesture and movement—when we consider all tnis, we are in possession perhaps of the full argument in favour of the explicability of musical expression from the stand-point of the influence of language.

The probability I have suggested that an almost infinite potentiality of association attaches to our auditory sensibility may certainly suffice to account for the extraordinary pliancy and versatility of the emotional sugges-

tiveness of music. It would seem also amply sufficient to account for the fact that notwithstanding music's important illustrative capacity, its main and central function is enunciatory. Thus in its great manifestations it does not rest upon illustration but inevitably, sooner or later, falls into betraying that spirit of utterance which I have more than once referred to as attaching to graphic musical expression. Even in listening to Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony in which illustrative effect plays a conspicuour part we have long spells in which the music rising to direct utterance, unfolds as elevated a spirit—works an impressiveness as earnest—as that emanating from the most sublime effect of any oratorio.

But whilst the argument from the standpoint of language may account for the general emotional pliancy and versatility, and for the enunciatory attitude, of musical expression the question remains, does it seem sufficient to account for such potently felt impressiveness as that to which I have just alluded—for that exaltation of feeling as of the enlarging of the whole inward nature—feeling elevatedly triumphant rather than passionate—which answers to the gracious glory of sound?

Let us try to get a distinct idea of the problem. Musicians constituting with their instruments a fine orchestra, assemble in a hall—their instruments are man-made and they play a man-devised work—there need be no words, no scenery, or anything "cast by nature's heavenly hand"; yet feeling as impressive—emotions as deep—as any aroused by the most august influences in nature are created in the listener. Now suppose an artist

of the greatest genius with all the resources of colour to his hand attempted to influence a looker-on without introducing any form or effect from nature. He might be subtle in design, and in power of displaying effects of colour, and thus might succeed in arousing admiration for certain beauties of abstract form and colour. But how infinitely weaker any impression he could produce would be than that he would make if he presented the simplest effect of nature! How immeasurably short the emotion imbued in the former circumstances would be of that aroused in the latter! Yet the impression and feeling produced in the latter circumstances would represent the influence of the musical work—that influence would be as profound and decided—it would be felt as august—feeling would be lifted as high; yet, as I have said, there would be nothing but man-devised effect to account for it!

Now abstraction made for the fact that through the circumstances entered into in chapter four, all human devised æsthetic effect in the sphere of vision must be necessarily dwarfed and impoverished by the ever-present, infinite revelation of nature, whilst in the sphere of musical sound man is exploring a new world and thus the beauties discovered and the feelings created would suffer no diminution from any pre-development of such effects; the fact remains that his pure creation in this new world does in its influence upon our æsthetic susceptibility vie with that of any effect of the painter's art or of nature itself; and we come again to the question: is this to be wholly accounted for by the re-stirring by music of inherited past impressions of the auditory sense?

These impressions as we have seen have been received in the course of a vast part of the whole development of man, and would thus be infinite in number and character —thus far we are on the firm ground of induction from facts of physical science of which the present remarkable coördination of our vocal and auditory organs is evidence. What is hypothetical is: are the tremors of music's expression and inscrutable beauty, subtle enough to thrill through this otherwise still labyrinth?—to induce in one of those positive but spiritually fine threads of association that knit the generations, such a vivid kindling from the past! As we ask this question we occupy a position—a point of observation in our search—perhaps as advanced as close reasoning based on facts and modest hypothesis can bring us. But here the path we are in joins another. Another and more daring hypothesis framed to lead to the very heart of the solution of the problem invites us to proceed. This hypothesis I propose to treat of in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

DARWIN'S HYPOTHESIS OF MUSICAL EXPRESSION. THE TENDENCY OF MUSIC TO GROW OLD. THE INFLUENCE OF INHERITED FEELING IN THE EFFECT UPON US OF ART AND NATURE.

THE hypothesis referred to at the close of the last chapter is that of Darwin. In the light of certain considerations previously set forth in that chapter to the effect that through the long and continued interplay between speech and our auditory sensibility an infinite potentiality of association has become attached to the latter, I asked the question: Is inspired music capable of exercising a re-kindling influence upon that potentiality?

Now the hypothesis of Darwin selects a special region in the world of past impressions—he specifies a certain kind of emotion as calculated to be revived by music, and to this particular re-stirring of past feeling attributes

music's peculiarly moving and exalting power. The following is his hypothesis in his own words: —

"Music arouses in us various emotions, but not the more terrible ones of horror, fear, rage, etc. It awakens the gentler feelings of tenderness and love which readily pass into devotion. . . It likewise stirs up in us the sense of triumph and the glorious ardour for war . . . the sensations and ideas thus excited in us by music, or expressed by the cadences of oratory, appear from their vagueness, yet depth, like mental reversions to the emotions and thoughts of a long past age.

"All these facts with respect to music and impassioned speech become intelligible to a certain extent if we may assume that musical tones and rhythm were used by our half-human ancestors during the season of courtship, when animals of all kinds are excited, not only by love, but by the strong passions of jealousy, rivalry and triumph. From the deeply-laid principle of inherited associations, musical tones in this case would be likely to call up, vaguely and indefinitely, the strong emotions of a long past age."

I here just remark parenthetically that in the foregoing it would appear that Darwin does not intend to suggest an explanation of the beauty of music generally, but only of its deeper expression, for he also says: "But if it be further asked why musical tones in a certain order and rhythm give man and other animals pleasure we can no more give the reason than for the pleasantness of certain tastes and smells."

The reader of course observes that, as I intimated in

introducing this hypothesis, the emotions to which Darwin refers would be a particular portion of that world of past feeling which has helped so distinctly to bring about our present auditory susceptibility. In order, however, that the reader may consider the above hypothesis quite independently I will quote some passages in which —before I had worked out fully the remarkable connection between our vocal and auditory organs stated in our last chapter—I endeavoured to point out what I then considered to be its full significance.

"Here it is assumed that these 'tones' and this 'rhythm' with the supreme emotion that incited them produced certain allied modifications of the nervous organisation; that these have descended hereditarily; and that music by restirring those inherited impressions connected immediately with the sense of hearing, recreates partially the emotional state originally associated with them. . . .

"Pondered upon deeply, this hypothesis impresses strongly that here is the door to the mystery of music's power over us. It may seem at first sight that the region of experience out of which, according to it, those past feelings which music revives arise is too circumscribed, and thus the feelings themselves of too special a nature to form the basis of such a manifold influence as music. But when we look into the full argument which was probably in Darwin's mind in advancing this explanation, this region and these feelings are not so limited as they at first sight appear. Darwin was impressed by the fact of the capital importance of the stimulus of sound more

or less musical throughout the vast range of sentient being. Not only are the humblest organisms of various kinds specially formed to be susceptible to this stimulus but its influence must be a peculiarly pervading of not a crowning element in their consciousness. Being present then at such comparatively early stages in the march of life there is scarcely any limit to the backward range of this susceptibility in the ancestral line of any advanced organism. Consequently, however far back the circumstances may have been amid which the feelings were excited which Darwin supposes music revives, there must have been created in the possessors of those primitive feelings when they were under the influence of this stimulus, a similar tremor echoing as far back again, and so on; and throughout all these experiences this susceptibility to sound would relate to moments in life of raised if not highest consciousness."

It will no doubt occur to the reader that the main suggestion set forth in the foregoing quotation—that of the capital importance of the stimulus of sound more or less musical throughout the vast range of sentient being, is implied in our recent argument in favour of the existence of a special revertive susceptibility on the part of the ear under the influence of music. Also the answer to the objection in the following quotation would also apply to the revertive susceptibility just referred to. "I may here attempt to reply to another objection to Darwin's theory of musical expression. It may be said that those vocal expressions of the past which he refers to, having

been, in all probability, wild and semi-savage, far ruder effects than the select effects of musical art would suffice to re-stir their inherited impressions. To which it may be replied, that the above hypothesis does not necessarily involve the assumption of a likeness of effect between some past form of kindling sound and the inspired, artistic strain. Into the latter of course enters largely the influence of accumulated originality and formative development. The retrospective sensibility may be only touched occasionally by some deep, pervasive tremor; yet on such touches may depend the music's kindling power, and to consummate them the systematic stimulation involved in a more or less lengthy musical construction may be necessary."

How to comment from our present standpoint on this hypothesis, assuming that the remarkable connection between the vocal and auditory organs, and all that it implies, set forth in our previous chapter has been duly considered by Darwin, it would seem that he came to the conclusion that only feeling of the master nature of that specified by him would be capable of leaving behind impressions lasting enough to be now revivable by the stimulus of music. However this may be, this particular emotional reversion suggested by Darwin would fall within that potentiality of association, assumed to attach to our auditory sensibility in the proposition set forth in our previous chapter which proposition, as we have seen, is supported by facts.

This idea of the revival of past feeling of whatever

kind being a factor in musical expression has an important bearing upon that characteristic of the musical medium brought out in our fourth chapter, namely, that it is single in its nature and its immediate appeal is to a single sense. I have thought that this characteristic may explain the often somewhat saddening and disappointing fact to music-lovers—that music loses its freshness comparatively quickly. A musical composition tends to begin to fade soon after it is thoroughly realised. In many cases highly original and when first heard most striking effects, after a certain repetition become stale and vapid whilst the influence of the most inspired after they have once become familiar is only preserved by sparing performance. On the other hand visual effect both in nature and art is permanently fresh; its freshness only declines with the daily ebb of our energies—with their renewal it is daily restored.

Now has this contrast anything to do with the fact that the one kind of effect appeals immediately to a single sense whilst the other appeals to several; that the latter in the material of its form embraces various influences relating to our physical life whilst the former in the material of its form consists but of one and that an exceptional one, namely, musical sound—thus in looking at a picture we may enjoy ideally the warmth of the sun, the feeling of the air as it blows upon the skin or as we breathe it, the sensations of exercise and movement—of rest and repose; whilst in listening to music (of course instrumental) unless the effect is purely imitative we feel cut off from such impressions—; is then the ever renewing

freshness that visual effect as exhibited in art and nature, possesses, due to the fact that it embraces those organic feelings that we are constituted not to tire of; and is the sooner fading freshness of music due to the fact that it does not embrace them?

One peculiarity of music has a certain suggestiveness with regard to this question; it is, that some melodies seem to have escaped the seeds of decay. Frequently it is not the so-called classical strain that wears best; nor does a melody necessarily possess the quality of fadelessness in proportion to its originality. Some distinctly original, sharp cut, melodies soon become stale. On the other hand the melody which takes a permanent hold upon us is generally largely pervasive and seems to penetrate to the depths of feeling. Now, referring to the question of musical expression depending upon the revival of past feeling, does not the last mentioned fact suggest that holding power is due to the revertive influence of an effect? If this should be so it would support the idea of a connection between continuing freshness in art and the leaven of organic feeling which it breathes, for the holding effect would depend upon inherited association in a special degree—it would smack of life and thus organic feeling would enter largely into its influence upon us.

Here I propose to make a short digression from the strict path of our enquiry in order to make a few observations on the principle of inheritance regarded more broadly. It may be said that only recently have our eyes

been opened to the light that principle throws upon our nature. But whilst in the physiological direction its guidance and suggestiveness have been appreciated, its application to æsthetics appears to me not to have received due attention. Darwin, however, as we have seen, did not quite overlook its importance in this regard. Now in connection with our line of thought in the present and the previous chapter, the question has risen in my mind whether music is alone in this power of restirring the tremors of past feeling—whether some such action is not aroused in us, though perhaps far more faintly and vaguely, by the visual world? May not day and night, the sun, the starry heavens, forest, mountain, sky and ocean, have some retrospective influence? That in their case such influence should be far fainter than in the case of music (even irrespective of that special susceptibility attaching to the auditory sense upon which I have laid so much stress) would follow from the fact that the world of nature spread around us—so vivid and permanent—with all its present, pressing feeling, would necessarily interfere with it—pale it, or render it perhaps seemingly imperceptible.

This latter hypothesis would seem to be the lifting of a curtain. For it tends to throw light upon the indefinable power of nature and art, by suggesting that our sentient capacity is far deeper and more varied than we should otherwise conceive. For if the varied feelings that throbbed through former lives for countless generations are not passed quite away, but re-arise in fainter tremors and changed complexions, how deep and complex must

be the conditions of feeling within us!—what a vast potentiality of feeling do we inherit!—what a world within us have nature and art to illume! Such hypothesis would seem to suggest some explanation of that feeling when under the spell of nature and art as of an enlarging of our being. Further, variety in the tendency to this reawakening would help to account for the curious differences between individuals as regards sensibility to nature and art. If we are all born with retrospective emotional susceptibilities—that is, subject not only to natural differences in feelings due to the present but also in feelings due to the long past—how much greater the possibility of difference between us! As regards striking difference in sensibility to nature and art, sometimes the attending outward circumstances render such a difference more, rather than less inexplicable. Thus, one born and reared in a totally unpicturesque city, his artistic nature, as one would suppose, starved to death by ugliness and monotonous built-in aspects, finds himself one day in the country. Yet nature does not speak to him in a strange tongue. He understands her language notwithstanding its infinite and ineffable burthen; and a world of harmonious feeling unfolds within him. Another reared amid all the influences of open nature is totally unresponsive. Again, a boy hitherto a stranger to musical effect one day hears by accident the strain of a master; he is filled with feeling; the strain has spoken to him; whilst, it may be, his brother, whose rearing has been the same, and whose

mental development and general nature may seem the same, does not hear it.

These reflections upon the possibility of a wider emotional resuscitation than that to which we have confined our attention in special connection with music, are entered into with diffidence and, as I have said, by the way. The subject, however, suggests one more reflection. The possibility of the reawakening of past feeling in general, by various influences, would strengthen the hypothesis of the principle of " coincidence " expounded in chapter two, by increasing so immensely on the subjective side its field of operation.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LIMITATION INVOLVED IN MUSIC BEING THE WORLD OF A SINGLE SENSE IS A SOURCE OF ITS POWER. STATEMENT OF THE PRINCIPLE OF ARBITRARY ASSOCIATION.

IN the course of my comparison of music and visual effect thus far, the reader has observed that in several respects that comparison is not, to speak in general terms, to the advantage of music, the leading instance being the fact, that music only embraces in the material of its form one of the effects of the general world, namely, musical sound; thus so far as its material is concerned its effect upon us is shorn of the greater part of that influence which attaches to the splendour, beauty, impressiveness and articulateness of nature, and to the sympathetic objects connected with life.

It now has to be pointed out that the very limitation involved in music being the world of a single sense is a source of its power.

Music has been always considered peculiarly fit to attend such ideas as eternity, immortality; allusions to that which no eye has seen—to another world; that is to say, the religious and poetic order of ideas. Now its fitness in this connection has much to do with its freedom from other sense associations. It attends the idea of the infinite with peculiar effect, because it is free from many features of the finite; it suggests the spiritual the more appropriately in that it does not present the tangible; the unseen because it does not present the visible.

The analogy pointed out between music and sculpture in chapter five harmonises with this vein of reflection. Music's appropriateness for expressing abstract conceptions is reflected in sculpture, in which limitation is a source of power. The very unnaturalness of the cold, white medium gives to sculpture a certain spiritualistic import—renders it particularly fitted to articulate ideal conceptions in that it gives to their expression a certain chasteness and permanence; the absence of colour gives a certain chasteness, and the materiality of the marble gives permanence; both are essential qualities of this spiritualistic import yet both involve the absence of certain natural conditions from the form or forms imitated.

Notwithstanding music is, speaking strictly, an objective effect we do not altogether so realise it, particularly in the case of instrumental music the least important associations of which are the instruments from which that music proceeds. I have referred to the fact that a stream of musical sound though it may be more or less absorbed and reflected by objects gives us no impressions of them. The

sound thus remains an abstract effect. Hence we feel music as something external yet immaterial. There is thus some resemblance between our mental attitude to music and that we bear toward the religious and poetic conceptions to which I have just referred. These we regard as referring to something external yet immaterial. As I have said, these advantages, which music has as a medium of expression, spring out of the very limitation involved in its being so largely the world of a single sense.

The sense of hearing being perhaps, of all the senses, that which is least associated with the leading sense, the region of effect into which it leads us has been comparatively little explored. Thus it may be said that music is relatively a new experience; that in his essays in it man is pushing into a new world of effect, and that in listening to it we enter upon a new form of being. This is perhaps why its deeper imaginative effects tend to produce in us a vivid feeling of the novel and strange—to influence us somewhat as if we gazed on an unexplored ocean.

When music is produced by the human voice it ceases to be naked in associations, being then enrobed in the manifold associations of humanity. Thus, philosophy alone points to the possession by music of the human voice as a fact of capital importance. It is this vast change from abstract sound to sound rich in human associations —from tones strange to tones familiar—which we feel as so striking and grateful when human voices break in upon instrumental music. In vocal music the mystic features of musical sound have a human aspect. Thus it is that

high musical emanation in vocal form has something of the character of inspired utterance. Like sacred prophecy it has in it the note of human sympathy, with a boding of the infinite. Thus it would seem to have been a true æsthetic instinct which impelled Carlyle to speak thus of music: "Nothing among the utterances allowed to man is felt to be so divine. It brings us nearer to the infinite, we look for moments across the cloudy elements into the eternal sea of light, when song leads and inspires us. Serious nations, all nations that can listen to the mandate of nature, have prized song and music as the highest, as a vehicle for worship, for prophecy and for whatsoever in them was divine."

In the light of the consideration that instrumental music is so largely isolated from the world of the other senses, it is not surprising that resources of expression depending upon associations attaching to certain instruments and styles should be utilised by composers. I refer to the connection of instruments of primitive character with pastoral scenes; of that of the harp with spiritual conceptions and a certain class of poetic ideas; of that of the organ with religious expression, and of that of brass instruments with the stirring emotions associated with war. All these accidental yet fixed associations open up for the musician scope of effect of great value to him. They enable him, while he works his special spell within, to revive certain familiar ideas and feelings, and thus escape occasionally from *the world of a single sense.* He has, however, and has always had, the means of escaping from this restricted

world at will, the means namely of associating his strains with life and outer nature, as in song.

I now arrive at the statement of a principle which I have long considered to be an important one. Thus far in this work my main object has been the explanation of the beauty and expression which are inherent in music. I shall now try to show the philosophic basis of that more composite and intellectually more articulate effect which is produced when music is allied to the general world as in lyric, dramatic and programme music. The character of this alliance may be pointed out briefly and clearly if we take the case of song. In this alliance the words are one thing, the music is another; there is no essential connection between them. The music might go with other words, or stand alone; the words could go with other music. The two things are associated *arbitrarily*. At the same time they mutually strengthen and enhance one another. The nature of this principle, which I term the principle of *Arbitrary association*, is as follows.

It has probably struck many people that the vividness with which we realise an inward flow of pleasurable and absorbing feeling, whatever may be its source, is apt to be heightened inordinately by the slightest accession of pleasantness in outward sensation. This kind of action is particularly marked when the inward feeling is of a raised temper—a fervent character. Love, for instance, may be greatly intensified by the simplest accession of adventitious charm in its object—the smallest decorative trifle. The poet's finer phrensy may be raised in a like degree

by the simplest natural beauty—by the emergence of a star, by a gleam of sunshine, a flower, or even the humble grass of the roadside. What I wish to bring out clearly is that an inward feeling—however deep and settled—may be increased inordinately by concurrent influences appealing to our outer sensibility.

Now in the field of art this principle is of great importance; here its action, being deliberately and elaborately prepared, is very striking. It may be observed in that tendency which the poet and graphic writer betray, to link widely separate phenomena—to strike simultaneously the deep and inner, and the outer and more superficial notes of feeling, and thus influence us in a peculiarly extended and massive manner. All poetic writers betray a tendency to light up some striking extraneous natural fact, not when outward nature is engaging attention, but when the reader is held by some anteriorly invoked feeling. Shakespeare almost invariably accompanies the development of a serious climax by allusion to certain incidental facts of nature possessing accordant tones. In "Julius Cæsar" the sense of the imminent tragedy is made more vivid by the "unaccustomed terror of the night." Tennyson, in depicting a sombre parting of lovers concludes with this dash of phenomenal accompaniment "and above them roared the pines." The allusions to the "moonlight" and "silvery mist" in the last page of Dickens' "Great Expectations," are also instances of this beautiful feeling. With a view to demonstrate the action of this principle as convincingly as possible I will give another example

from Shakespeare and another from Dickens, going a little more into detail in the case of each.

In the third scene of the second act of "Macbeth" we look upon a court inside Macbeth's castle. It is morning. We have seen some fearful signs of what has been done within during the night; and feelings of dread and horror mingle in us with the influence of profound moral stirrings on the part of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. But Shakespeare is not satisfied with working upon our inner and deeper sensibilities only. While the above emotions are still fresh within us—before they are, as it were, brought to a head by the discovery of the murder—our attention is drawn to natural phenomena having accordant tone. When Macduff has gone in to call the supposed sleeping king, the following dialogue occurs:—

"*Lennox.*—The night has been unruly: where we lay,
Our chimnies were blown down: and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i'the air; strange screams of death;
. . . . The obscure bird
Clamour'd the live-long night: some say, the earth
Was feverous, and did shake.
Macbeth.— 'Twas a rough night.
Lennox.—My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it."

Thus the whole gamut of sensibility is played upon from inner to outer.

In the illustration from "Dombey and Son" the boy, Paul, is dying. His sister, Florence, holds his head upon her arm. We are touched with the master hand that is tender as well as strong—that impresses us with what is purest and loveliest in life, as well as with what is sad and solemn. But Dickens, like Shakespeare, is not satisfied with moving us inwardly: he also works upon our outer sensibility. As the pathetic scene proceeds, amidst the general local colouring and incidental filling up, a particular outward allusion is harped upon as relating to the central motive. Not once or twice but five times Dickens refers to the sunbeams that "quivered on the opposite wall like golden water." That is the first allusion. The following are the others:—

"Thus, the flush of the day, in its heat and light, would gradually decline, and again the golden water would be dancing on the wall."

. . . . . .

"How many times the golden water danced upon the wall; how many nights the dark river rolled toward the sea in spite of him; Paul never counted, never sought to know."

. . . . . .

"Sister and brother wound their arms around each other, and the golden light came streaming in and fell upon them locked together."

The last allusion begins the reflection upon Paul's death:

"The golden ripple on the wall came back again, and nothing else stirred in the room."

Now here, as in Shakespeare, there is something far deeper and more earnest than any feeling for local colour or actuality. Amid the stress of heart-sympathy some subtle combination of poetic idea and moral insight prompts Dickens to conjure up this supreme natural splendour, which to our finite sensibility seems a link between us and the Inscrutable Source of all beauty.

Now the intensity which the special effect of extraneous phenomena adds, in these examples, to the general and deeper emotional state, and the intensity which music gives to literary expression and scenic effect, are produced on the same principle—the principle of blending with deep inward feelings certain harmonising yet independent outward sensations. This "unruly night," these "roaring pines," this "moonlight" and "silvery mist" and "golden water," are the writers' *aiding phenomena;* they fulfil a function which is the same in principle as that which music fulfils when allied with language. There is, it is true, the following difference between the two cases, but it does not affect the unity of principle which underlies them. In vocal music the sensuous influence (the music) points to the mental or emotional subject and to nothing else. That is to say, not being drawn bodily from nature it is, as I have shown free from all associations but those connected with the attending words; thus, it bears undividedly upon those words. On the other hand, in literature, as in the instances given, the aiding phenomena or sensuous influence being drawn from nature in its regular and spontaneous manifestation, has other and often domina-

ting associations. Whilst then in song the aiding phenomena (that is, the music) is something newly created, in literature it is drawn from the natural world. This is why in vocal music the two influences, though really arbitrarily associated, are felt to coalesce so completely.

The foregoing illustrations then suggest that in that general fulness and power of expression which is obtained by the alliance of music with language, scene or situation, we have the action of a principle of expression which extends beyond musical art. In them as in vocal music, while thought and feeling move within, our outer sensibility is appealed to; side by side with the influence which works upon us mentally, morally or emotionally, are presented to us certain striking or beautiful effects appealing directly to our outer sensation. A generally similar instinct thus seems to move the literary and musical artist.

The fact that there need be no essential connection between the two orders of influence employed under this principle—that they have only to be placed *side by side* —both explains and justifies the practice in composition of employing the same phrase in conjunction with different mental or emotional circumstances. However well a certain musical effect may suit a particular idea it can often be effectively allied to another. Music abounds in structural effects which, though they arose probably in the first instance out of originating power, have become common available material. Climacteric effects, the various melodic and harmonic cadences idiomatic melodic

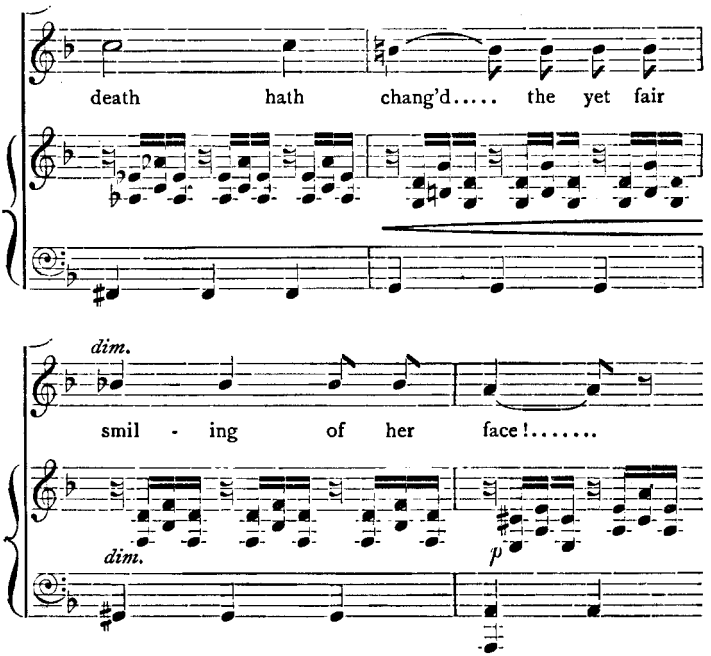
turns and harmonic successions, are examples. Nor are these merely perfunctory effects; on the other hand, many of them are so powerful in expression that a large part of every composer's task is to lead up to them in a new way. That it is in the nature of a single musical effect to be versatile in poetic expression is shown by the fact that in vocal music we are continually meeting the same turn of effect associated with a different idea or sentiment.

I was struck in reading Messrs. B. and B. F. Fletcher's fine work on architecture* by a remark occurring there more than once, to the effect that a striking fact in architecture is the fewness of salient formative designs. This reminded me of the similar state of things as regards the salient structural effects in music to which I have just alluded; and the parallel seems all the more suggestive considered in connection with the fact that architecture is the one art that resembles music in that it is exploring a new world of form—that in the purely æsthetic direction its materials are not drawn from nature or life, from either of which, like music, it takes but hints.

Whilst emphasising the fact that no special connection is necessary between the main subject involving the inner and deeper flow of feeling, and the aiding phenomena, I do not of course intend to convey that certain principles of selection have not to be observed. Though there may be no likeness between the two influences brought side by side, there may be still a likeness of relations. To give

* **History of Architecture; a comparative view of the historical styles.**

some instances, let the reader observe the change of harmony at the word "smiling" in the following passage in Gounod's "Abraham's Request":—



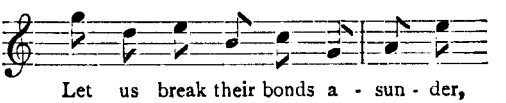
In the action of smiling, facial movements of the most delicate nature occur, yet slight as they are the change made by them in the effect of a smile is most striking; it is the change from shade to sunlight. These relations are reflected in the music of the above extract. At the word "smiling" the pitch change is the slightest that can be made—namely, a semitone, whilst the harmonic change

is peculiarly smooth; yet the effect is a striking and beautiful contrast.

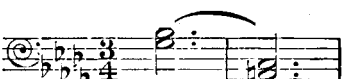
As another instance take Handel's air "The People that walked in darkness." This is in the minor mode which fact in itself tends to render the precise constitution of the intervals less obvious to the ear than the intervals of a melody in the major mode usually are, because the relation of the various degrees of the scale to the tonic is less simple in the minor than in the major mode. But the above intervals are rendered still more difficult to grasp by the introduction of accidentals. Now the necessity of careful admeasurement thus occasioned seems to render the music in question illustrative of the uncertain, tentative movements of people walking in darkness.

The two following examples show that Handel and Wagner indicate the idea of something physically sundered—of disconnected fragments—in much the same way, that is, by the use of intervals comparatively unmelodic—the separateness between the notes of which is particularly marked.

Handel (From "The Messiah").



Wagner (The subject of the broken sword).



These somewhat diagrammatic representations of the

ideas musically treated involve what I term a "likeness of relations." I do not of course cite them with the thought that I am pointing out anything new. And so far from there being anything deep there seems a certain naïveness in the impulse which moves composers to bring about a superficial resemblance between the form of their music and the ideas it attends. But it must be remembered that in many instances this impulse has led to very happy results, and in some to the most sublime effects in music. The composer of fertility and power does not necessarily suspend his deeper feeling for expression when writing illustrative effect.

The particular appropriateness in the selection of the details of effect in the foregoing examples may be regarded as an enhancement of the action of the principle of Arbitrary association, to the free play of which,—with or without imitative effect or *guiding theme*,—the broad and deep expression in music set to language, scene or situation, is due.

Of late years there has been a marked tendency on the part of composers to associate their promptings with the outer, or mentally defined, world. Hence what is termed programme music and illustrative symphonic composition. This tendency is due in my opinion to an extending realisation of the principle which in this chapter I have endeavoured to state—to a fuller recognition of the effect music can unfold when associated with scene and circumstance—of its power to add to them a breathing spirit—to create an atmosphere.

At the same time there exists a feeling that it is only in

a vague sense that music can be said to express anything. The fact that a purely instrumental composition may admit of different poetical interpretations tends to puzzle the mind in its attempt to unravel the principles of musical expression. The present statement then of the principle of Arbitrary association may tend to place music in a clearer light in this connection by showing that as, what I term, *aiding phenomena*, it can occupy a position analogous to that which in literature is fulfilled by those transcendent and august effects of the natural world which are infinite in their powers of poetic suggestion.

CHAPTER XII.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS.

THE philosophy of the higher influence of music as unfolded in this enquiry may be summed up as follows:

The natural effect which adumbrates music in a certain completeness is language, in which we find rudimentary embodiments of the leading principles both of the form and expression of music. The general cause of this is, the fact that language and vocal music (which is music's fountain stream) involve largely the same machinery in us for their production, and fall within one broad region of our sensibility.

As a matter of procedure I have considered the elements of beauty and expression separately. They cannot of course be separated in the concrete effect. Still in that effect we are impressed as with two elements—we feel that in the case of a certain melody it would not be so beauti-

ful without the expression, yet at the same time, that without a certain absolute charm the expression would not be so keen. Whence then comes this element of charm?

Darwin, as we have seen, regards it as unaccountable. Possibly in my attempted explanation I may get no further than Darwin though I may state the fact differently. However this may be, I attempt first to place musical beauty in line with natural. What then is natural beauty? The answer might be, speaking simply, a lucky chance. Certain effects in nature that, as in the case of the hues of velvet-like mosses in a forest, have come about quite irrespective of the faculties of man, nevertheless move in him the æsthetic emotion—that is to say, between those effects and particular sensibilities within us there is as by a *coincidence* a special attunement. Now if we said that this is chance we should in my opinion go rather away from the truth than towards it. To us chance means what may happen as between our infinitely limited existence and such part of the infinite outer-play of circumstances as it may come in contact with. Thus chance as regards our volition is a factor on which as a rule we cannot calculate; so in our constructive work we (except where we have carefully and closely circumscribed its play as in the case of the business of insurance) leave nothing to it. But in the large, free interplay of nature it would seem to be, whencesoever it proceeds, a deep constructive principle. As an example of its operation that is particularly related to our enquiry I have referred to our musical organization itself. I have pointed out that not that we

might enjoy the exalting thrill of harmony was the plan of the special apparatus within us which enables us to receive that pervasive sensation laid down in the remote past, but in order that its possessors might discriminate certain subtle differences in the inarticulate sounds that their vocal organs enabled them to produce.

To state the particulars of the example here referred to: First at some remote stage in the course of development a certain plan of vocal organ and corresponding auditory sensibility was laid down for the then present purposes (to put the matter from the human point of view) of some kind of expression and communication. Then, a certain point in this development having been attained the free play of the vocal organs in man gave rise to a new effect, the melodic strain. It may be that the rudiment of this became unfolded in the use of primitive language at a stage when it consisted largely of inarticulate sounds, and thus the operation of the utilitarian principle may have gradually merged into that of the æsthetic; but ultimately primal melody reached a point of development when the former principle ceased, and new functions, relating to a new effect and a new sensibility, became taken on by the old vocal and auditory structures. Next, in the synchronising of whole themes (Polyphony) the passing rencontres of notes belonging to different *parts* occasionally revealed flashes of harmonic beauty. Thus voice and aural sensibility arrived ultimately at exercising functions and giving rise to feelings totally different from those for which and to produce which they were originally developed. Now the "coincidence" lies

in the fact that for both orders of result the type of vocal organ and auditory sensibility originally unfolded is indispensable. This is illustrated with particular distinctness in the case of the latter sensibility in connection with harmony. What could be more different than the harsh timbre-effect in the intonation of a semi-savage from an effect of modern harmony? Yet the provision in the ear of the barbarian for analysing the composite clang of the former effect—for separating its constituent vibrations of different period—which enabled him to take it in, for whatever purpose, involves the peculiar principle of construction by which in particular the thrill of harmony pervades us, and on which our whole musical sensibility depends!

So with visual beauty—the eye though developed for practical purposes, in its free play discovers certain effects on earth or in the heavens; and there opens within us a new and wonderful region of sensibility.

The reader will observe that in these examples there is revealed what I term a certain *marginal* action—a remarkable latitude of action—on the part of our various faculties, amounting to their putting on new functions and new sensibilities.

As a conclusion from these considerations I define both natural and musical beauty, as coincidences, of which the perceptible conditions are (1) the wide margin that nature as a rule allows in the powers of our necessary faculties; (2) the infinite diversity of the outer world.

The obvious distinctions between musical and natural

beauty, that the former is devised by man, ephemeral, and not inherently related to objects, whereas the latter is self-revealed, constant and inherently connected with objects, is due to the pre-eminent position of light. Its permanence and range combined with the fact that it brings us impressions of objects between which and ourselves there is no opaque body or medium, renders vision our leading sense, causes us to associate all other sense-experiences of objects with the visual experience, and thus renders the objective world, so to speak, the appanage of visual beauty—a beauty endowed with the permanence of that world and, with it, self-revealed.

But if there could be a state of things in which light was an unpermanent influence—in its higher display dependent upon man for its production—and not giving impressions of objects exposed to its influence, we can easily conceive that it could not then occupy the position it now holds as leading sense, and that any beauty it might unfold would resemble musical beauty in that it would not contain the influence of other sense-experiences, would be thus free of the objective world, and ephemeral.

Notwithstanding, then, the differences between visual and aural beauty occasioned by the paramount position of the visual stimulus the two are in line thus far: each unfolds a totally new power in the sensibility to which it appeals; and each has a character of universality—that is to say, involves a special relation between an outer effect, and a sensibility pervading all men.

It would seem that the circumstance of the visual

stimulus being, so to speak, the chosen medium for bringing to us impressions of the objective world, is connected with the unfading character of visual beauty. A natural beauty being inherently connected with part of the objective world its influence upon us consists not only of the sensation and feeling produced by the pure visual impression but also of various sensations and feelings relating to the other senses, as for instance, the feeling produced by touch, that of the air upon the skin or as we breathe it, the feel of water, of leaves, and the feeling of different degrees of muscular resistance. Now all these are feelings relating to our organic life, which we are constituted not to tire of. Further, light itself is a sensation we are constituted not to tire of.

Thus visual beauty whether it be of flower, star, or of light of sky or sea, is beauty set in the objective world and fraught with the ever pristine sensations of organic life. Hence its unfading nature as well as that ineffable sentiment it breathes as a lien between man's finite life and the infinity and glory of the outer world.

The fact that various impressions relating to the other senses are, as we have just seen, so to speak, hiddenly associated with visual impressions may alone render their contrast acute amid perfect repose, as in the case of land and water. But when the visual impression does not embrace such opposite effects as these, acute yet quiet contrast may still be felt in the generally constant differences of colours, or in the fine action of the optical muscles as they, so to speak, register in muscular sensation every

change in retinal impression. To these various causes, singly or in combination, is due that marked yet effortlessly perceived contrast in nature of which there is no likeness in music.

The working out the last of the above causes led us to the analysis of our perception of visual *form* which may be thus succinctly stated. The sense of position in space begins in the feeling of resistance to gravity in connection with the exercise of vision. It begins in infancy, but it is conveniently explained if we take the just mentioned feeling of resistance to gravity as we stand erect. The direction in the field of vision to the point of that resistance, we call *down;* the opposite direction, *up*. The next step is: we execute movements which we conceive as starting from some point in the line between the eye and the point of resistance to gravity—as in reaching and walking. Then from the association of the feelings involved in such movements with the respective visual effects as they arise, we acquire definite ideas of distance, direction and (aided by experiences of touch in the handling of objects) form. Subsequently feelings of the finer and incessant action of the optical muscles (prompted by the necessity of bringing the salient points of objects opposite the spot of clear vision) become *representative* of the experiences acquired as above—that action accentuating, registering and thus becoming the ready test of all our ideas of form.

As one result of this analysis we are struck with the importance of the muscular feeling in our perception of

form, this perception beginning with the sense of the ruder muscular actions and becoming completed by that of the finer; and contrast between eye and ear in respect of muscular action at once suggests itself, the ear having no power answering to that the eye possesses in its muscular endowment by means of which various retinal impressions become associated with different portions of a muscular action.

Seeing, however, that music suggests ideas of visual movement, position and, vaguely, form; and that such ideas in general undoubtedly owe their origin to muscular feeling, the question arises: how do they become conjured up by effects of sound (apart from the intermediation of word or scene or the special association of characteristic effects) the ear being the *passive* recipient of impressions? The answer to this question demands a new section of this summary.

Position and movement in the perpendicular dimension have become associated with change in pitch through the fact that in singing comparatively low notes the set of the larynx is such as to direct the vibrations downwards toward the chest, whilst in singing high notes it is such as to direct the vibrations upwards towards the head. Thus it is that we associate change of pitch generally with upward and downward in space, so that the smallest change of pitch is felt as a change in altitude.

A certain sense of *form* is suggested on the principle of complementary impression, when an effect of change of pitch is used in connection with sustained or reiterated

notes this latter effect in its distinct opposition to the former suggesting the distinct opposition of the horizontal to the perpendicular dimension.

But the sense of free movement in music in all directions is completed by the combination of pitch-change with rhythm—that is, the feeling of time by accent. Now accent though in the present day in its pure use confined to enunciation, as in speech and poetry, is inherently not only a muscular feeling but a feeling tending to connect itself with the *outer* muscles, which originally participated in its action. There is thus more in rhythm than at first thought appears. Whence that electric influence in this effect which induces so potently to varied movement and vivid feeling, from the very lifting up of the feet of soldiers by the vehement pulse of the martial strain or the impelling to the wavy dance in music's "voluptuous swell"; to the emotional excitation—the vague but massive thrill of inward kindling aroused by the ordered emphasis of oratory?

That rhythm (whatever may be the fact as regards music generally) is an ancestral feeling seems almost certain. It probably reverts not only to the dance but to the primal war-dance, and possibly to the gesture and movement that were an essential portion of rudimentary language. That the beauty and perfection of ancient Greek dancing contained elements which descended from remoter periods and other races is extremely probable; that some elements came from Egypt and Arabia may be said to be certain. Parenthetically I may here record my idea that from Greek dancing and some, to us unknown,

cadences of their music were possibly derived the style and expression—unique in their elevation of character—which gave to the early Italian School its almost prophetic note. To resume: it would seem that it is the revived feeling of varied motion with which rhythm was thus associated in the past, united with the unlimited feeling of the perpendicular suggested by pitch-change, which form in us that feeling of utterly free, unfettered movement which constitutes such an important part of the musical sensation—the general continuity of the pure tone-effect linking such passing ideas of position as may be suggested, into one ideal motion which may be homogeneous and suave, or irregular and agitated, as that continuity is more or less perfect.

The sense of the horizontal in music may be to some extent suggested by its rhythm through the association of the latter with such effects as the regular tramp of men, the galloping of horses, the rippling of water, or any measured movement which gives forth sound; and this may aid to explain the fact that the mere succession of notes at a measured pace impresses a sense of the horizontal. At the same time as our feeling of rhythm is very probably an inherited sense of bodily movement it is this inherited feeling of movement which would seem to be the deeper source of our sense of the horizontal in music.

Though in concrete effect the respective feelings of movement suggested by the two factors, rhythm and pitch-change, are inherently mingled, we may observe in that mingling certain peculiarities which point to its dual

nature as thus hypothesized. Thus, that feeling of *unlimited* movement upward or downward to the suggestion of which music so easily lends itself would seem to point to pitch-change as its source. This change being produced by internal muscular action would involve feeling of a *vaguer* character than that attending the exercise of the muscles involved in the definite movements of the limbs and body—some of which movement might account for a limited feeling of up and down in music. Such vaguer feeling would have in its very nature a character of being unlimited. Hence in illustrative effect a small rise in pitch may suggest an infinite ascent in the ethereal musical space, as exemplified in the illustration from Mendelssohn.* In Tchaïkovsky's Symphony in B minor occurs an episode consisting of descending passages played one after another by different instruments (each passage necessarily of limited extent), the effect of which is the suggestion of an unfathomable scope of descent.

Further, a certain dual influence resulting from the principles of effect, pitch-change and rhythm, extends into the region of emotional expression. As intonation, with the accentuation that is an inherent part of it and that is itself produced by the breath, proceeds from organs close to the centre of life—organs which the slightest change in the beating of the heart tends to affect —it is felt as the very voice of inward feeling; whilst as accentuation rises, feeling of a more demonstrative nature seems to supervene; and as accent is fortified by outer

* See page 48.

muscular action, as by the movement of the body or limbs, what is termed strong feeling enters upon the scene. Thus it is that rhythm is so largely the voice of passionate feeling in dramatic music. So with that purer passion that animates the orator or the composer in his peroration, a feeling descending from the time when some form of bodily movement was an essential and prominent element in expression, may prompt the special rhythmic effect—the strenuous pulse—peculiar to both circumstances.

The feeling of the key-note, or tonality, is the feeling of art-form in music. It is prompted by a sense of the necessity of that kind of unity which is embodied in organic nature—in which each part is essential to the whole and the whole informs each part. And as in an organism there is a definite delimitation from general nature, so in an articulate strain there is, so far as the influence of the key-note extends, a definite delimitation from the general repertory of musical sounds.

The factor in the scale of the diatonic semitone aids the listener in distinguishing the key-note. We are incapable of taking account musically of a continuous succession of whole tones. At the same time with the adaptation of the effect of sound to our faculties, involved in the diatonic semitone, the inscrutable æsthetical principle enters, as it does in the perspective of earth and sky, necessitated by our limited sight.

At the commencement of this enquiry we saw that music is adumbrated in language both as regards principles of form and expression. In the course of our subse-

quent investigation certain considerations were entered into tending to explain this relation between music and language. One of these may be thus briefly repeated.

It is more than probable that the primary vocal and auditory organs—embodying the type of those we now possess—were developed in sympathy; and that it was due to the principle of language—of expression and communication—that that sympathetic development began—as it is certainly due to the subsequent exercise of speech through unknown ages, that that wonderful coördination in the action of our present vocal and auditory organs has been attained which is suggested by the fact that in cases of congenital deafness the power of speech fails from simple lack of the essential customary auditory stimulus, and that is evidenced in every gradation of tone—every modulation, inflexion or cadence of the voice—that we so effortlessly produce precisely as preconceived.

Now if the more vivid or frequent impressions due to the exercise of a sense may leave behind heritable traces capable of being revived, on the principle of association, what a world of such traces must not the action of the vocal organs throughout the above inconceivable period have left upon the tablets of the auditory sense! and what varied associations may not the subtle tremors of music set in motion when they strike upon it!

The question now suggests itself; is it from the vast world of association belonging to the auditory sense, above referred to, that musical effect as conformed by

the various principles that have been thus far pointed out in this enquiry, acquires that special strength that lifts it to the level of a natural influence? There is no doubt of the fact that in, say, a Beethoven Symphony, man does in the sphere of his own creation produce an effect which in its influence upon our æsthetic sensibility, vies with any effect of the painter's art, or even nature itself. And there is perhaps as little doubt that the impressions received upon the auditory sense throughout its history would be infinite in number and character. Have then the more vivid of these impressions left heritable traces?; and, if so, are the tremors of music's expression and inscrutable beauty subtle enough to reawaken some of their long past kindling?

We here strike upon Darwin's hypothesis of musical expression. Darwin explains the unique power of music, for an abstract influence, on the above principle of the rekindling of past auditory impressions but he limits them to impressions of a particular kind. They would have been produced by the musical tones and rhythm assumed to have been used by our half-human ancestors when excited not only by love but by the strong passions of jealousy, rivalry and triumph. Thus the point of Darwin's argument is not the vast range and variety of our auditory susceptibility but the peculiar character of a particular part of it. Assuming then that Darwin had considered the special fulness of the auditory repertory of latent impressions due to the close sympathy between the voice and the ear from their beginning, as above pointed out, we must conclude that in his opinion only

those expressions of half-savage passion and joy to which he refers, would leave impressions so charged with life as in after ages to be capable of quickening even by the searching stimulus of music.

The obvious comment on this hypothesis, that these emotions of the past, together with their expressions, having been in all probability wild and semi-savage, far ruder sounds than the select effects of musical art would suffice to restore their inherited impressions; is answered by the consideration that this reawakening by association may only consist of the retrospective sensibility being touched *occasionally* by some deep pervasive tremor, yet to effect even this the systematic stimulation involved in cumulative musical effect may be necessary.

The idea of the revival of past feeling being a factor in musical expression tends to throw light upon the curious inequality that compositions of generally level merit in other respects, not infrequently betray as regards retention of freshness. Preliminarily—there is a fundamental difference as regards this power between music and visual beauty, whether in art or nature. Whilst as a rule even inspired strains, unless sparingly repeated, tend to fade soon after they have become familiar visual beauty in great art is virtually, and in nature absolutely, unfading; the reason as suggested by me being the larger entering into visual beauty of those organic feelings of which we are constituted not to tire. But some melodies, and those not always of the, so called, classical type or

having anything about them of that esoteric character attaching to some extent to high art, seem to have quite escaped the seeds of decay.

Now the melody which takes a permanent hold upon us is generally largely pervasive, and this suggests that it is one whose expression is in a special degree due to its revertive influence. There would thus seem to be a connection between the revertive influence of music and its holding power, and this harmonises with the principle of my explanation of the unfailing nature of visual beauty. For the pervasive—that is the revertive—strain would breathe in a special degree of primal life and thus tend to appeal to *organic* feeling.

Let the reader not give way to the idea (which may easily enough arise) that there is something fanciful in bringing in the remote past as a factor in some of the arguments in this work. Little more than a generation ago few physiologists thought of going back in our ancestry in the investigation of the infinite structures and processes involved in our physical organization. Now none would dream of attempting such an investigation except in the light of the principle of descent. But to ignore this principle in the study of any part of the mysterious world of our varied feelings would surely be as short-sighted.

The comparison thus far between music and visual art has in several respects not been—to speak in a familiar way—to the advantage of music, the principal reason being that music in the material of its form consists

only of one of the effects of the general world, namely musical sound. Thus it is largely shorn of all that suggestiveness which attaches to the very material of poetry and painting in their reproduction of nature and life.

Yet this very limitation is the source of special beauty and expression. To it is due music's subtle power of bodying forth in expression a certain abstract order of ideas, particularly some relating to religion—such as eternity, immortality, reverence, the unseen; its fitness in this connection having much to do with its freedom from other sense associations. This gain in expression by the, so to speak, shutting out of the general world is reflected to a certain extent in the art of sculpture as when abstract ideas are expressed in allegory, in which case the absence of certain natural conditions is the foundation of special spiritualistic import.

The region of effect into which the sense of hearing leads us has in comparison to the world of vision been little explored. Music is relatively a new experience. This is perhaps why its deeper imaginative effects tend to influence us somewhat as if we gazed on an unexplored ocean.

Thus much as to the beauty and expression of pure music. Now as to the effect produced when music is directed to special expression as in song and in dramatic and programme music.

Allied with language and scene another principle of expression enters into musical effect. This I term *Arbitrary association.* Its influence rests upon the fact

that a flow of deep inward feeling is strengthened inordinately by the accession of concurrent harmonising outward sensations. This principle operates in literature, when a certain state of inward feeling is accompanied by allusions to the outer world which allusions may have no inherent connection with such feeling yet are calculated to render it more articulate and far more vivid. It is, the striking certain outer and clearer, simultaneously with the inner and more profound, notes of feeling, to the influencing us in a more massive way. Now what in literature this attendant imagery is to the main subject music is to the definite emotions and ideas connected with the words or the scene with which it is associated. In the case of the literary expression, however, the attendant imagery—as it is drawn from nature and life—has necessarily certain definite associations accruing to it; but in the case of the musical expression, the music has not —it bears undividedly upon the idea with which it is arbitrarily connected, and this is why in vocal music the music and the words coalesce so perfectly.

In the single nature of the musical sensation it may be said are involved the following important qualities both negative and positive which we have seen characterise musical art:

On the one hand, its inferiority to art based on vision for defining contrast; and its soon fading freshness.

On the other hand, its seeming immateriality; its power of aiding the expression of religious feeling and idea (due to absence of suggestions of material life); the im-

pressiveness which its comparative strangeness gives to it; its perfect coalescence (in vocal music) with the influence to which it is allied; and the unique character of its beauty.

These distinctions may perhaps be regarded as certain details in the great difference between light and sound in their relation to man. The first message of light is to our perception. Being our leading sensation in the exploration of the outer world its first associations are our utilitarian experiences. Supreme as it is as an æsthetic influence, to evoke æsthetic feeling is its secondary function—coming

"with years that bring the philosophic mind."

On the other hand musical sound appeals primarily to feeling; its first function is to move or thrill. Hence its unique emotional influence and its generally ephemeral character. Being, so to speak, the vehicle of that which is in its nature temporary, it is itself a temporary effect—as the delicate wild floral blooms of spring, or the periodical vividness in the colouring of certain birds and insects, have the short, intense life of the feeling of which they are the chosen incitation.

To take a broad glance in conclusion: From the point of view attained in this enquiry absolute beauty in music is a coincidence; whilst its deeper expression depends upon its influencing through the sense of hearing the terminals of certain liens of association reaching backward to far past emotions. Genius may be regarded as the instinct for discovering, first, the outward factors of

that coincidence, secondly, the magic note which touches those terminals of past feeling. It is through the unsearchable action of these two principles, namely, coincidence and inherited association, that a strain not differing from the dullest in the general character of its constitution, or superior on any visible structural grounds, may have the surpassing quality of inspiration.

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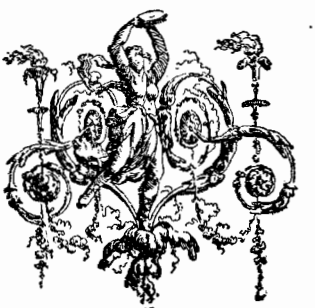

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