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Florian's Song

Benjamin Godard

Adapted and Edited with Instructions as to Interpretation
and Method of Study by

Leopold Godowsky

Biographical Sketch, General Information and Glossary by
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FLORIAN'S SONG (FRANCE)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—BENJAMIN GODARD.

*Born in Paris, France, August 18, 1849.
Died at Cannes, France, January 10, 1895.*

BENJAMIN GODARD was not one of the greatest French composers, but he was undoubtedly a true child of French musical culture, and as such he was admired for the graceful charm of his music. He hardly possessed the depth of feeling and the higher dramatic instinct necessary to epoch-making work; neither was he sufficiently critical to rewrite or discard those compositions, which were of inferior merit. And yet the name of Godard is known throughout the musical world, because his music is a true expression of the French temperament.

Entering the Paris Conservatoire when he was fourteen years of age, he studied the violin with Richard Hammer, and harmony under Reber. Twice he competed for the *Prix de Rome*, with its alluring prospects of study in Italy, but he failed both times. After leaving the institution he played violin in a number of chamber music societies; however, he did not neglect his composing—he was even inclined to be too prolific.

In 1878 he carried off the prize offered by the City of Paris, with his dramatic symphony, *Tasso*. This work, written before he was thirty, was really the climax of his achievement, for he never wrote anything which approached this symphony in artistic worth. Of his eight operas, his last, *La Vivandière*, was the most successful. Unfortunately, it was produced eleven weeks after Godard's death and consequently he never knew that he had finally written a work which was to become a favorite with the public.

POETIC IDEA: Godard composed over 100 songs, of which this is one of the most charming as well as the most popular. The quaint melody might have been written for the flute or oboe, and as the flute is mentioned in the text, it is probable that the composer intended to imitate the shepherd's pipe in the character of the air. When one observes the pastoral organ-point (open fifths) which form the bass of seventeen measures of the song, one is more convinced of the composer's intention. This song may be considered as an innocent pastoral ditty.

LESSON: It should be remarked that the top voice or melody is frequently *staccato* while the harmonies played by the lower side of the right hand are sustained, thus in m. 4, E-G-F sharp and E (melody) are played detached, and the harmonies B-D and G-C sharp are played *legato*. One might imagine the horns of the orchestra sounding the harmonies with the violins (*pizzicato*) plucking out the melody. Notice the *legato* character of the mysterious echo m. 9-10, like a shepherd's tune heard in some distant ravine.

The fifths in the left hand must be played with a slight accent on the quarter-notes, and the *staccato* eighth-notes are to be given lightly in a kind of lilting manner. The climax from measures 17-20 and measures 41-44 (inclusive) must be played with a great deal of fire. The syncopated chords in the above measures add strength to the rhythm.

Ano. 536-2

Notice that measures 33-34 give the echo of the flute notes in the register most favorable to that instrument. The student should also observe that the right-hand harmonies of the second verse are played *staccato* when the melody is *staccato*; in the first verse this is not the case. Compare measures 21-24 and measures 45-48, remarking the different slurring and the different chords arpeggiated when the phrase is repeated. The above measures being by far the most expressive of the entire song, must be greatly retarded and be interpreted with adequate emotion.

NOTE TO THE TEACHER.—The aim of the editors is to have every department of their work as perfect and complete as possible, and they have been governed by this principle in making the annotations to the Educational Adaptations. Although nothing superfluous has been included, the teacher must use discretion as to the amount of text material that the student is capable of assimilating at the time.

GLOSSARY

NAMES

Godard,	pronounced,	Gō-dār.
Carres,	“	Cār.
Conservatoire,	“	Cōn-sēr-vā-twār.

TERMS

allegretto,	pronounced,	āl-lē-grēt-tō, - not so quick as <i>allegro</i> .
poco rall. (rallentando),	“	pō-kō rāl-lēn-tān-dō, - a little retarding of time.
poco più sostenuto,	“	pō-kō pē-oo sōs-tē-noo-tō, - a little more sustained.
dim. (diminuendo),	“	dē-mē-noo-ēn-dō, - diminishing the volume of tone.
a tempo,	“	āh tēm-pō, - in time.
cresc. (crescendo),	“	crē-shēn-dō, - increasing the tone volume.
leggiero,	“	lēd-jē-ā-rō, - lightly, delicately.
staccato,	“	stāk-kā-tō, - short, detached.
pizzicato,	“	pīt-sē-kā-tō, - pinched or plucked.
La Vivandière,	“	lā vēe-vaun-dyēr, - a sutler, one who follows an army, selling food and drink.
Prix de Rome,	“	prēe dē Rōme, - prize of Rome, a prize awarded by a National Conservatory to the composer of the best musical work of the year.

EDUCATIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Song Series

Florian's Song

FRANCE

Adapted and edited by Leopold Godowsky.

BENJAMIN GODARD.

Allegretto. ♩ = 100-108

Ah! tell me if you e - ver

meet

him,

A shep - herd youth of gen - tle

mien,

One whom you love as soon as

seen, One whom you love the more you greet

him:

Ah! he is mine, give him to me!

17 *ff poco più sostenuto* 18 19 *dim.* 20

His love have I, my faith has he.

21 *rall. e dim.* 22 23 24 *a tempo*

If by his voice so sweet and

25 *pp* 26 27 *leggiero* 28

ten - - - der He charms the e - choes far and

29 30 31 32

Florian's Song, 2.

near And if his flute notes high and

33 *pp* 34 35 *p* 36

clear The tears of pen - sive hearts can ren - - - der,

37 *poco cresc.* 38 39 40 *poco rall.*

Then is he mine, give him to me!

41 *ff poco piu sostenuto* 42 43 *dim.* 44

His love have I — my faith has he.

45 *rall. e dim.* 46 47 48 *a tempo* 49 *pp*