

careful preparation could make them acceptable to a modern audience. It is for this reason that Handel's Operas are all but unknown, even in the country in which they were composed, while the fame of his Oratorios has penetrated to every country in Europe.

In France, the Opera was first established, upon a firm basis, by Giovanni Battista Lulli; an Italian, who, about the year 1644, came to Paris, in the character of Page to Mademoiselle de Montpensier, but whose splendid musical talent soon won him a high position at the court of King Louis XIV. Lulli did good service in the cause of Art, by elaborating the meagre Instrumental Prelude of the older Italian Composers into the well-defined movement now called the Overture. This he made to consist of an introductory Slow Movement, followed by an Allegro (generally in the shape of a Fugue), with the frequent addition of a Minuet, Gavotte, or other movement of lighter character, by way of Finale—a form of design which soon obtained a recognised position in the artistic world, and which was even accepted by Handel, who used it for most of his grand orchestral introductions. The next great French Composer was the celebrated theorist, Rameau, whose first Opera, *Hippolyte et Aricie*, (produced, in 1733), exercised a great and beneficial influence upon the development of the Lyric Drama. His style differed in many important particulars from that adopted by Lulli, but both obtained an equal amount of public favour; and, until the appearance of Gluck, in the year 1774, the operas of these two gifted writers retained almost undisputed possession of the Parisian Stage.

Though by birth a German, Christoph Willibald Gluck wrote, in his youth, entirely in the then prevalent Italian style, in which he met with tolerable, if not unvarying success. It was only after long experience that he learned to distrust the principles upon which that style was founded; to believe that the most telling situations of the Drama were continually sacrificed, in order that popular taste might be gratified with *Airs*, cast in a Procrustean mould from which no Composer ever ventured to depart; and, to con-

demn the result of this mechanical mode of writing, as an inconsistency which entirely destroyed the scenic interest of the piece. He first gave effect to his new-born desire for the attainment of dramatic truth, in his delightful Operas, *Orfeo*, *Alceste*, and *Paride ed Elena*. The reception of these great works, in Vienna, was far from satisfactory. The principles they represented were not understood. Metastasio—the most popular Librettist that ever lived—had prepared the way for their condemnation, years before, by his memorable dictum, “Gluck has extraordinary fire; but he is mad.” Nevertheless, confident in the truth of his theory, the Composer made a fourth attempt, in *Iphigénie en Aulide*, which was produced, in Paris, under the patronage of Marie Antoinette, on April 19, 1774, with an effect which fully atoned for all previous disappointment. For the moment, Gluck was completely master of the situation. Two years later, his supremacy was disputed by Piccini, an Italian, whose attachment to the traditions of the older School brought him into violent collision with the theories of the German Composer. The appearance of this really talented writer divided the musical world into two hostile parties, afterwards called the Gluckists and the Piccinists, each of which fought desperately in its leader's cause. Gluck won the victory, at last: but his principles were soon forgotten, in France, under Grétry, and Boieldieu, and their successors, Hérold, Halévy, Auber, and Meyerbeer; Méhul, and Cherubini, alone, among modern writers, having made any serious attempt to carry them out, in writing for the French Lyric Theatre. The “Piccinists,” on the other hand, did not retire from the contest entirely profitless. Their chief undoubtedly did much for the Italian School, which flourished, splendidly, under Cimarosa, gave birth, in later times, to the brilliant genius of Rossini, and still continues to enchant its votaries with the delicious melodies of Bellini and Donizetti. So far, therefore, as France and Italy are concerned, Gluck may be said to have fought his fight in vain. But it wrought a lasting effect upon German Art.

In studying the conditions of German Dramatic Music, we must

learn to mark carefully the distinction between the true German Opera, and its Italian prototype transferred to German soil. The former was first placed upon a satisfactory footing, at Hamburg, soon after the beginning of the Eighteenth Century, by the indefatigable Keiser. The latter was successfully cultivated, at Dresden, by Hasse, and his rival, Nicolo Porpora, between the years 1731 and 1763. Both forms of Art were treated, by other Composers, with more or less favourable results: but it was reserved for the genius of Mozart to bring both to absolute perfection. The Italian Operas of that delightful writer, headed by his *Nozze di Figaro*, and *Il Don Giovanni*, are admitted to be unapproachable. Equally unapproachable is his great German masterpiece, *Die Zauberflöte*, first sung, at Vienna, on the 30th of September, 1791, and still regarded as the finest Lyric Comedy existing in the German language. Fourteen years after its production, Beethoven achieved an equal triumph in German Serious Opera; clearly demonstrating, in his *Fidelio*—the only work of the kind he ever attempted—the possibility of carrying out Gluck's dramatic theories, in combination with musical forms no less symmetrical than those the great reformer so ruthlessly discarded. *Fidelio* was first produced on the 20th of November, 1805. On the 13th of June, 1821, Weber gave, in his immortal *Der Freischütz*, the first impulse to that "Romantic School" which he so ably developed in his scarcely less beautiful *Euryanthe*, and *Oberon*. These works are, one and all, imperishable; and, notwithstanding the later productions of Marschner, Spohr, Weigl, Wagner, and Gounod, form the chief attraction of every Operatic *Répertoire* in Europe—a high position from which they are not likely to be soon deposed. Whether they will ever give place to still higher creations remains to be seen.

Dr. Arne, in the year 1762, made a bold attempt to establish an English School of Grand Opera; and would probably have succeeded in raising a noble edifice, on the foundation, laid, some eighty years previously, by the great Henry Purcell, had his endeavours been seconded by men as enthusiastic as himself. But

the cause was afterwards ruined by a mistaken idea of the unfitness of the English language for continuous Recitative. To this absurd fallacy we must attribute the fact that the works of men of real genius—such as Shield, Dibdin, Charles Horn, and Sir Henry Bishop—though full of detached pieces, of exquisite beauty, can lay no claim to be considered as Operas, in the true sense of the term.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### ON THE INVENTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORATORIO.

The first idea of the Oratorio was, in all probability, suggested by the Mysteries and Miracle-Plays of the Middle Ages. It is certain, that, in those rude performances, the Dialogue was frequently relieved by the introduction of Songs, and other incidental pieces of Music; and, when the plays themselves gradually fell into disuse, the custom of illustrating Scenes from Scripture History by Music and Acting was still continued, for the purpose of familiarising the multitude with the more prominent details of the Sacred Narrative. S. Philip Neri, the founder of the "Congregation of Oratorians," whose efforts to introduce a popular style of Hymnody have already been noticed in a former Chapter, expressed great confidence in this method of instruction; and turned it to such excellent account, in the Oratory attached to his Convent, in Rome, that, since the year 1540, grand Performances of Sacred Music have been everywhere distinguished by the name of "Oratorios." His favourite subjects were, the History of Job, and the Parables of the Good Samaritan, and the Prodigal Son. The Music with which these early attempts were illustrated occupied a position as nearly as possible midway between the strict Ecclesiastical Style, and that of the Madrigal. Towards the close of the century, a greater freedom of manner prevailed; the Monodic Style was introduced; and a large proportion of the Music was purely declamatory. By a singular coincidence, the first Oratorio in which these

characteristics are discoverable—Emilio del Cavaliere's *Rappresentazione dell' anima, e del corpo*—was first performed, at Rome, in the Oratory of S. Philip's great Church, *S. Maria in Vallicella*, in the self-same year (1600) in which Peri's *Euridice*, the first *Opera Seria*, was produced at Florence. On the strength of this curious work, Emilio del Cavaliere claims the merit of having invented Recitative: and, undoubtedly, he was one of its originators; for he is believed to have been frequently present at the Count of Vernio's celebrated *réunions*,\* and was certainly on intimate terms with most of the savants who attended those interesting meetings. On this account, we are not surprised to find that his Recitatives are scarcely distinguishable from those of his friend, Peri; a circumstance which will be at once apparent, if the reader will compare the following extract from the first Oratorio with that from the first Opera given on page 38:—

Recitative. EMILIO DEL CAVALIERE.

Il tem-po, . . il tem - po fug - - ge,

la vi - ta si distrug - ge, E già mi par sen -

- ti - re L'ul - ti-ma tromba, e di - re, U -

11 10# # #

\* See pages 35, 38.



The subsequent development of the Oratorio, in Italy, corresponded closely with that of the Opera. By common consent, it was written, almost exclusively, in the Monodic Style, relieved only by Choruses more or less approaching the character of the Madrigal. Yet, it never stooped to frivolity. The really great Composers contrived to infuse into their new method of writing a dignity by no means unworthy of the Sacred Text: and none strove more earnestly to attain a consistent purity of style than Alessandro Stradella, whose Oratorio, *San Giovanni Battista*, is scarcely less celebrated for its romantic history, than for its excellence as a work of Art.

Stradella was born at Naples, in the year 1650: and, in early youth, contracted a clandestine marriage with a lady of noble birth, named Hortensia, with whom he resided, for some time, in Rome. This circumstance gave grievous offence to a Venetian nobleman, who had long been attached to Hortensia, and who, in a fit of jealous fury, hired two assassins to put his hated rival to death. On their arrival in Rome, the brigands followed Stradella to the Church of S. John Lateran—where *San Giovanni Battista* was about to be performed for the first time—determining to stab their victim to the heart, as he returned home. But, to pass away the intervening time, they entered the Church, and listened to the Music, which affected them so powerfully, that, instead of fulfilling their horrible purpose, they threw themselves at the Composer's feet, and entreated his pardon for their intended crime. Stradella then fled, with Hortensia, to Turin; where, under the protection of the Duchess of Savoy, he wrote much excellent Music. He could not, however, escape the vigilance of his relentless enemy,

at whose instigation he was ultimately assassinated, with his unhappy wife, at Genoa, in the year 1679.

The labours of Stradella were nobly supplemented by those of Carissimi, Colonna, Alessandro Scarlatti, Leonardo Leo, Caldara, Durante, and their successors, Jomelli, Zingarelli, and Porpora; and, towards the close of the Eighteenth Century, Cimarosa attained, in his *Sagrificio d'Abramo*, and *Assalone*, a tender pathos which has rarely been exceeded.

But, it was not in Italy that the Oratorio was destined to reach its highest degree of perfection.

It made its first appearance, in Germany, in the form of a Lenten Cantata, descriptive of the Passion of Our Lord. Some interesting works of this description were produced, at Dresden, by Heinrich Schütz, between the years 1628 and 1672. In the last-named year, Johann Sebastiani brought out a very fine one, at Königsberg. But, a still greater Passion Oratorio was composed, in 1704, at Hamburg, by Reinhardt Keiser, whose success tempted Mattheson, Telemann, and even Handel, to follow in his steps. The Melody of the Lutheran Choral plays an important part in all these great compositions, and serves to distinguish their style, very clearly, from that of the old Italian School, which was wholly founded on the venerable Melodies of the Roman Church. This peculiarity was turned to inestimable use by John Sebastian Bach, whose five sets of *Passion-Music*, and *Christmas Oratorio*, elevated the true German School to a level above which no later Composer has ever successfully attempted to rise. Not even the *Tod Jesu* of Graun can for a moment compare with these magnificent works, in which the richest resources of modern Counterpoint are tempered with an amount of expression for which we may search in vain in innumerable productions of far later date.

Nevertheless, the works of Bach himself fail to represent the noblest ideal form which the Oratorio has proved itself capable of realising.

When Handel put himself into competition with Keiser, at Hamburg, he was barely twenty years of age: and, though he

produced a *Cantata on the Passion*, of undeniable beauty, in 1704, and a still finer *Passion Oratorio*,\* in 1717, we can scarcely wonder that these works cannot be fairly reckoned among his masterpieces. It was not until he had proved himself superior to all his contemporaries in Operatic composition, that he seriously turned his attention to the style which has since made his name so universally famous. His first English Oratorio, *Esther*, was written, for the Chapel of the Duke of Chandos, at Cannons, in the year 1720. After that date, we hear no more of it, until 1731, when it was represented, in action, by the Children of His Majesty's Chapel Royal, at the house of Mr. Barnard Gates. On the 2nd of May, 1732, it was publicly performed, for the first time, at the King's Theatre, with appropriate scenery and dresses, but without action: and, on this occasion, the house was so crowded, that money paid for tickets was returned to such purchasers as were unable to obtain seats. The success of *Esther* led to the composition of *Deborah*: a much grander work, with magnificent Double Choruses, in the Master's finest style. *Deborah* was produced, at the King's Theatre, in 1733; but, though it proved its Composer to be the greatest Musician in Europe, it was less warmly received than its predecessor, and the raised prices of the seats reduced its performance to a comparative failure. At this period of his life, Handel was, indeed, surrounded by difficulties, which might well have broken a less energetic spirit: but he struggled against them, nobly; and, during the twenty-four years which followed the first appearance of *Deborah*, he composed no less than seventeen Oratorios, including his inimitable *Saul*, *Israel in Egypt*, *Samson*, *Solomon*, *The Occasional Oratorio*, *Judas Maccabæus*, *Joseph*, *Jephtha*, and *The Messiah*—to say nothing of his delightful secular productions, *Semele*, *Acis and Galatea*, and others of equal importance. To criticise these stupendous works, within the limits of our present essay, would be

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\* Interesting extracts from both these works, as well as from those of Keiser, Mattheson, and Telemann, will be found in Bitter's "*Beitrag zur Geschichte des Oratoriums*." (Berlin, 1872.)



impossible. We can only point to them as marvels of genius--masterpieces, which have held their ground, already, for more than a hundred years, and are even more fully appreciated, now, than they were when first presented to the public; not because the public of the Eighteenth Century was incapable of understanding them, but, because the Composer's enemies were so blinded by jealousy, that they refused to do him justice. For this reason, *The Messiah* so nearly failed, at its first performance in London, in the year 1741,\* that Handel carried it away to Dublin, where it was received with the greatest enthusiasm. It was only after his return to England, in 1743, that it received its due meed of applause; though it is but fair to say, that, since that time, it has been invariably recognised as the finest Oratorio that ever was written.

Handel was not fortunate enough to leave behind him a successor capable of carrying on the work at which he so earnestly laboured. Since his death, but few Composers have succeeded in producing a really fine Oratorio; and, of these few, not one has attempted to imitate the sublimity of style which was his most prominent characteristic. This quality is said to have made a deep impression upon Haydn, during his visit to England, in 1791: yet, in his delightful Oratorio, *The Creation*, composed in 1798, and *The Seasons*, produced in the following year, that most genial of writers wisely followed the promptings of his own natural inclination, and, though he frankly confessed the Composer of the "*Hallelujah Chorus*" to be "the master of us all," manifested no desire to reproduce his majestic periods, but contented himself with the delicious melodies which enchant our ears, to-day, as completely as they did those of their first auditors, at the Schwarzenberg Palace. In like manner, Beethoven, notwith-

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\* This, at least, has long been the generally received tradition; but, Victor Schœlcher, in his well-known "Life of Handel" (pp. 250-256), brings forward weighty evidence to prove that *The Messiah* was performed, for the first time, in Dublin, on the 13th of April, 1742.

standing his deep reverence for Handel, shows no trace, in *The Mount of Olives*, of the massive breadth of conception he so warmly admired.\* It may be said that this work, first performed in the year 1803, is, by common consent, referred to Beethoven's "first manner"—a style which was never free from traces, more or less distinct, of the influence of Haydn, and Mozart. This is true: but, it is doubtful whether he would have emulated the colossal simplicity of Handel, had he composed a second Oratorio.

Since the death of Beethoven, two German Composers have distinguished themselves by the production of Oratorios of peculiar beauty.

Spohr, in *The Last Judgment*, *The Crucifixion*, and *The Fall of Babylon*, has turned to excellent account those chromatic progressions which he never fails to handle with an effect as happy as it is unexpected. For this very reason, he has frequently been accused of "mannerism:" but, his "mannerism"—if it be such—is so strikingly original, that no one has ever yet succeeded in imitating it.

Mendelssohn confessedly founded his style upon that of Sebastian Bach. But he was no slavish imitator, either of Bach, or any other Master. He simply learned from Bach, and wrote as his own rich genius dictated. Hence, his Oratorios, *Saint Paul*, and *Elijah*, are as original, in manner, as they are earnest in conception, and masterly in form. Time seems rather to increase than to diminish their popularity: and, as the last thirty years have produced nothing worthy of being placed in comparison with either of them, we may fairly consider them to represent the Sacred Musical Drama, in the latest, if not the grandest form of development which it has hitherto been its fortune to attain.

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\* Mr. Stumpff, the well-known London Harp Manufacturer, presented Beethoven with a valuable copy of Dr. Arnold's complete edition of Handel's works. Beethoven was delighted with the unexpected gift; and, when lying on his death-bed, pointed to the cherished volumes, with the exclamation, "*Das ist das Wahre!*" ("That is the True Thing!")

## CHAPTER XII.

## ON THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

Monteverde's bold use of unprepared Discords did even more for the advancement of Instrumental Music than for that of Secular Song; for, the Voice submits, easily, to contrapuntal trammels, the severity of which would oppose an insuperable barrier to the progress of instrumental forms.

That the earliest compositions for three or more Instruments, played in concert, were identical, in style, with those written for Voices, is proved by the title-pages of many old collections of "*Ayres, apt for Voices, or Viols.*" But, pieces for Solo Instruments, containing practical difficulties, quite as great as any of those with which we are called upon to contend at the present day, were not uncommon in the Sixteenth Century. An interesting collection of these mediæval *tours de force* is preserved, in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, in a MS volume, commonly known as "*Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book,*" from which we extract some "*Variations to the Accompaniments of the Hexachord,*" by Dr. John Bull (the reputed author of "*God save the King*"), containing passages which few modern *Virtuosi* would care to attack, without a little preliminary study\* :—

Variations on the Hexachord.

DR. JOHN BULL.



\* The Slurs are not in the original copy; but have been introduced, in order to call attention to rhythmic combinations which rival, in complexity, any that we are accustomed to look for, even in the works of Chopin.

[illegible]

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented in two systems. The first system consists of a treble clef staff with a whole note G4 and a whole rest, followed by a bass clef staff with a four-measure melody. The melody starts with a half note G2, followed by a half note A2, and then a quarter note G2. The second system continues the melody in the bass clef staff, starting with a half note F2, followed by a half note E2, and then a quarter note D2. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a key signature change to one sharp (F#).

A musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff is in 9/4 time and the bass staff is in 6/4 time. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The melody is written in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. The score includes a key signature change from one sharp to one flat (Bb) in the second measure of the treble staff.

A musical score for two voices, Soprano and Alto, set to the lyrics "The Rose Tree". The music is written on two staves. The top staff is for the Soprano voice, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff is for the Alto voice, starting with an alto clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). Both parts feature a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and some rests. The lyrics are printed below each staff, aligned with the corresponding notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of both staves.

Almost all the earliest specimens of Instrumental Music with which we are acquainted appear in the form of Dance Tunes. During the later Middle Ages, and the period which immediately followed them, the most popular Airs of this description were the *Allemande*, the *Courante*, the *Minuet*, the *Sarabande*, the *Gavotte*, the *Bourrée*, the *Giga*, the *Loure*, the *Chaconne*, the *Passecaille*, the *Pavane*, the *Branle*, and the *Galliard*.

The *Allemande*, in its latest, and most perfect form, was a Movement in Common Time, consisting of two Strains, each of which usually began with a short "Starting-Note." The first Strain generally ended with a Modulation to the Scale of the Dominant;\* the second, as a matter of course, on the Tonic Harmony: and both were always repeated. It has been said that this particular form of the *Allemande* did not really originate in a Dance Tune; but it is difficult to support the assertion.

The *Courante* was a brisk Movement, in Triple Time, consisting, like the *Allemande*, of two Strains, each of which began with a short "Starting-Note," the first generally ending with the usual Modulation to the Scale of the Dominant.

The *Minuet* was a slower Movement, in  $\frac{3}{4}$  Time, consisting of two Strains, generally—though not always—beginning with an odd Crotchet. The Minuets in *Samson*, and *Don Giovanni*, (each beginning with a full bar), are among the finest in existence.

The *Sarabande* was an Air, of Spanish origin, slower, and more stately than the Minuet, and almost always written in  $\frac{3}{2}$  Time. Handel's delightful air, *Lascia ch'io pianga*, in *Rinaldo*, originally appeared, as an instrumental Sarabande, in his earlier opera, *Almira*.

The *Gavotte* was a more spirited Dance, in *Alla breve* Time— $\frac{2}{2}$ , with two Minim Beats in the Bar. Like the *Allemande*, and Minuet, it consisted of two Strains, the first of which usually terminated in the Scale of the Dominant, while both invariably

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\* For more detailed information concerning this Modulation, see "Practical Harmony; a Manual for Young Students, by W. S. Rockstro." (Cocks & Co.)

began, and ended, at the half-bar. The "*Gavotte and Rondo*," from Bach's Sixth *Violin Sonata*, exhibits the movement in a peculiarly beautiful and highly-developed form.

The *Bourrée* differed from the *Gavotte*, in that it was written in Simple Common Time,  $\text{C}$ , with four Crotchet Beats in the Bar; each of its two parts beginning at the fourth Beat, and ending at the third. The *Bourrée* from Bach's *Violoncello Sonata in E♭*, is a remarkably interesting example of the style.

The *Giga* was a rapid Dance Movement, in  $\frac{1}{8}$  Time, and in two parts, each of which began with an odd Quaver, by way of a Starting-Note. Corelli sometimes wrote his *Gigas* in  $\frac{6}{8}$  Time.

The *Loure* was a slower kind of *Giga*, usually written in  $\frac{6}{4}$  time, though some late examples may be found in  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

The *Chaconne* was a Basque, or Spanish Dance, the Music to which took the form of Variations, on a Ground-Bass, consisting of a single Strain, of four, or eight Bars, in  $\frac{3}{4}$  Time, beginning always upon the first Beat of the Bar. The finest *Chaconnes* extant are by Handel, and Bach. Jomelli has also left us a very beautiful example.

The *Passecaille* differed from the *Chaconne*, only in being a little slower, and in beginning always on the third Beat of the Bar, instead of the first.

The *Pavane* (from the Latin, *Pavo*, a Peacock,) was a very slow and stately Movement, in Common Time, consisting, generally, of three Strains, each of which began, and ended, with a half-bar.

The *Branle* was an old French Dance, in Common Time, written in two Strains, of which the first was sometimes longer than the second, both beginning, always, upon the first Beat of the Bar.

The *Galliard* was a somewhat rollicking Dance, in  $\frac{3}{4}$  Time, beginning on the third Beat of the Bar.

It was a favourite custom, with Composers of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, to string together some five or six of these quaint old Dance Tunes into a continuous piece, called a *Suite*. As a general rule, the *Suite* began with a more or less ornate *Prélude*, in Common Time, and ended with a *Giga*; the

second place being occupied by an *Allemande*, and the third, by a *Courante*. But this law was by no means a strict one. Sometimes a *Gavotte* was substituted for the final *Giga*. Sometimes its place was supplied by an *Air et Doubles*—or, as we should now say, an *Air with Variations*. The finest examples remaining to us are, six *Suites Anglaises*, and as many *Suites Françaises*, by Sebastian Bach; and sixteen grand *Suites* by Handel. These last are divided into two sets; the fifth *Suite* of the first set concluding with the famous *Air et Doubles*, commonly called *The Harmonious Blacksmith*.

Another instrumental form, diligently cultivated in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, was the Fugue—a movement, founded upon a given Subject, repeated, sometimes in one part, sometimes in another, and enriched with all the clever contrapuntal devices the ingenuity of its Composer could suggest. The Fugue was successfully introduced, by Lulli, into nearly all the Overtures to his once celebrated Operas; and employed, with infinitely greater effect, by Handel, and Bach, who used it, freely, in their choral, as well as their instrumental compositions, and brought it to a state of perfection which has never since been equalled. Bach's *Wohltemperirte Klavier* contains Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues of inimitable beauty: while, among Handel's Overtures and Choruses, we find innumerable specimens of the style which have always been regarded as his grandest and most sublime conceptions. Corelli has also left us some fine instrumental examples.

During the course of the Eighteenth Century, a notable change took place in the construction of the *Allemande*, which was frequently developed, to a considerable length, and published, separately, under the title of *Sonata*. Very fine Sonatas, answering more or less closely to this description, have been bequeathed to us by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, Paradies, and especially Domenico Scarlatti, whose well-known Sonata in A—sometimes called *L'Eventail*—would probably become one of the most popular pianoforte pieces of the day, were it not that its almost insuperable difficulty deters even highly accomplished *Virtuosi* from attempting

to play it.\* In Emanuel Bach's Sonatas, the *Allegro* is generally followed by a short *Adagio*, and this, by a *Rondo*. Many other writers have left us Sonatas in two or three distinct movements. But, for the perfect ideal of the so-called "Sonata-Form," we are indebted to the genius of Haydn, the originality of whose invention has justly earned for him the title of "The Father of Modern Instrumental Music."

In its complete form, Haydn's ideal design comprised four distinct movements. The first of these was a well-developed *Allegro*—sometimes prefaced, especially in Orchestral Compositions, by an introductory *Adagio*, or *Largo*. In its main features, this *Allegro* was constructed very much upon the principle of the old *Allemande*; but with one important difference. After modulating to the Key of the Dominant, the first part of the movement, instead of proceeding, at once, to a Perfect Cadence, introduced a Second Subject, in the new key; which Second Subject re-appeared, near the close of the second part, transposed to the key in which the movement originally started.† The *Allegro* was followed by a Slow Movement—either *Andante*, or *Adagio*—the form of which was less rigidly defined. The third movement was a *Minuet*, consisting of two Strains, followed by a *Trio*, consisting of two more, after which the *Minuet* was repeated, in the manner of a *Da Capo*. The *Finale* was a *Rondo*, generally of lighter and more playful character than the *Allegro*, and differing from it, also, in that, after each of its clauses, the original Subject was repeated, in full, in the original key. A work, composed, upon this regular, and now generally received plan, for one or two Solo Instruments, is called *par excellence*, a *Sonata*. When the resources of a full Orchestra are called into play, the composition is entitled a *Symphony*. When a Solo Instrument is accompanied by the full Orchestra, it

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\* Those who have had the good fortune to hear this delightful Sonata interpreted by Clara Schumann will not readily forget the effect it is capable of producing.

† When the Movement was in the Minor Mode, the Second Subject usually made its first appearance in the Relative Major.



is called a *Concerto*. When the first Movement only is employed, it is called an *Overture*; and, in that form, is used as the Instrumental Prelude to an Opera, an Oratorio, or other grand choral work.

Not only do we trace the influence of the "Sonata-Form" in all the great instrumental works produced by Haydn himself, but we find it openly adopted by every one of his successors, and forming the basis of every Overture, Quartett, Sonata, Symphony, or other similar composition that has ever been given to the world, since the beginning of the present century. Not that the really great writers have slavishly followed the lead even of Haydn. They have not, indeed, disdained to learn from him: but each has added to his teaching some good thing of his own. Mozart, in his *Jupiter Symphony* substituted for the *Rondo* a magnificent *Orchestral Fugue*. Beethoven enriched the *Allegro* with a well-developed *Coda*; and quickened the *Tempo* of the *Minuet* to so great an extent, that, its old name being no longer applicable, he thought it necessary to call it a *Scherzo*. But, the main outlines of the design have been followed by all; and will probably continue to be regarded as classical, until some Composer, greater than any who have preceded him, shall succeed in inventing some new form, as yet undreamed of—and, we may safely say, undesired.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### ON THE GREAT MASTERS OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.

It may seem strange to speak of the development of Modern Music as progressive, after having already described the latter half of the Sixteenth Century as the "Golden Age" of Art. But, we must remember that the School inaugurated by the disciples of Giovanni Bardi had nothing in common with that

which owed its perfection to the genius of Palestrina. It was emphatically a new beginning. Rejecting the experience of the Middle Ages as worthless, it sought, in the traditions of antient Greece, a point whence it might start, afresh, in a direction never before essayed; and was content to pass, anew, through the successive stages of Infancy, Childhood, and Adolescence, before it became capable of achieving either real greatness, or enduring fame. This being the case, we need scarcely say that the works it produced, during the earlier half of the Seventeenth Century, were immeasurably inferior to those that glorified the Sixteenth. Yet, it triumphed, at last, over every obstacle that lay in its path; and, aided by the creative talents of Handel, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and a hundred other earnest-minded men of lesser note, enriched the world, between the years 1700 and 1800, with innumerable Compositions of undeniable interest and beauty.

It will be our pleasant task to say a few words concerning some of the Great Masters who flourished during this memorable epoch, beginning with the greatest of them all.

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL was born, at Halle, in Saxony, on the 23rd of February, 1685.\* His father—an eminent surgeon—would have educated him for the Law, had he found it possible to subdue his passion for Music. This, however, proved so ungovernable, that, through the intercession of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, the child was placed, at the early age of seven years, under the care of Zachau, an Organist of some reputation, who began, at once, to give him instruction on the Organ, the Harpsichord, the Violin, and the Hautboy, as well as in the Art of Composition, and, three years afterwards, declared that his pupil knew more than himself.

In 1696, Handel was sent to Berlin, where, under the patronage of the Elector of Brandenburg, he continued his studies with

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\* The date (1684) inscribed upon the monument, at Westminster Abbey, is proved, by the Register, at Halle, to be incorrect.

unexampled success; attracting so much attention, by the precocity of his talent, that Attilio Ariosti, a favoured Court Musician, "would frequently take him upon his knee, and make him play on the Harpsichord, for an hour at a time." Seven years later—his father having, meanwhile, died, leaving him very poor—he removed to Hamburg; and, in order that he might be the better able to support his widowed mother, accepted an engagement at the German Opera-House, for which, in company with Keiser, Mattheson, and Telemann, he wrote several successful Operas, besides some other works of great promise. From Hamburg, he travelled to Italy, where he composed two Operas, *Rodrigo*, and *Agrippina*, two Oratorios, *La Resurrezione*, and *Il Trionfo del Tempo, e del Disinganno*,\* and a Serenata, called *Acis, Galatea, e Polifemo*.† Returning, in 1709, to Germany, he was appointed *Kapellmeister* to the Elector of Hanover, on condition that he should be permitted to finish his travels, before entering upon the duties of his office. In 1710, he visited England; and, in the following year, his Opera, *Rinaldo*, was received, in London, with such unbounded applause, that he was tempted to prolong his residence in this country to an extent which gave great offence to his Hanoverian patron, who, meanwhile, had assumed the title of King George I. Handel now believed himself to be in irretrievable disgrace; and would probably have been made to suffer severely for his desertion, had it not been for the ingenuity of Baron Kilmanseck. By advice of this kind friend, he composed his celebrated *Water Music*, and hired an Orchestra to perform it, upon a boat, which followed the Elector's barge, on the 22nd of August, 1715, when he was rowing up the Thames. The offended Potentate was delighted with the music; and, hearing that it was composed by his truant *Kapellmeister*, not only pardoned his delinquencies, but granted him a pension of £200 a-year.

Handel now made England his permanent home. In 1719, he entered the service of the Duke of Chandos; for whose private

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\* Afterwards enlarged, and called, *The Triumph of Time and Truth*.

† Not the work afterwards known as *Acis and Galatea*.

Chapel, at Cannons, near Edgeware, he wrote much admirable Sacred Music. In 1720, he undertook the management of the Italian Opera Company called "The Royal Academy of Music;" and won, thereby, immortal fame, as a Composer, though his fortunes were ruined, by the cabals of his singers, and the factious opposition of a party of noblemen, who were interested in the prosperity of a rival house, and a rival Composer — Giovanni Battista Buononcini. It was mainly in consequence of this opposition, and the misfortunes it brought upon him, that, in 1732, he began to substitute, for his ill-appreciated Operas, those magnificent Oratorios in which he excelled, not only the greatest Composers of his own day, but all who have since appeared upon the scene. These he continued to produce, in rapid succession, until the year 1759, when, on Good Friday, the 13th of April,\* he died, quite blind, in the hope, (as he touchingly expressed himself), of "meeting the good God, his sweet Lord, and Saviour, on the Day of His Resurrection"—the Easter Sunday following.

The list of Handel's works comprises forty-four complete Operas, twenty-two Oratorios, and four magnificent Odes, besides innumerable Cantatas, Serenatas, Concertos, and other Compositions, Sacred and Sæcular, of the highest excellence. The fertility of his invention was no less remarkable than the grandeur of his conceptions: and, giving due weight to each of these great qualities, we may fairly assign him a place, among modern musicians, analogous to that which Palestrina held among those of the Sixteenth Century. A singular bond of union between these two Great Masters is, indeed, suggested, by the punctilious care with which Handel invariably substituted a simple Chord of the Sixth for the less pure  $\frac{4}{3}$  so frequently found in the works of modern writers.†

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\* This is the date inscribed upon his monument, and generally received as the correct one; but an attempt has lately been made to prove that he lingered until the morning of Saturday, April 14.

† For a description of the peculiarities of this Chord, see "Practical Harmony: a Manual for Young Students, by W. S. Rockstro." (Cocks & Co.)

JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH, (the only modern Composer whose Sacred Music makes the least approach to the sublimity of Handel) was born, at Eisenach, on the 21st of March, 1685. He was taught to play on the Violin, by his father, Johann Ambrosius, a good musician, who inherited his talent through five generations of artistic ancestors, many of whom attained no small degree of celebrity. When not quite ten years old, Sebastian was left an orphan, and committed to the care of his elder brother, Johann Christoph, Organist of Ohrdruff. Johann Christoph taught him the Harpsichord; but appears to have been jealous of his talent: for, he persistently withheld from him a MS volume of pieces, by Froberger, Buxtehude, and other celebrated Composers of the day, which the child so earnestly desired to study that he copied it out, from beginning to end, by moonlight. The task occupied him six months, and injured his eye-sight for life: yet, no sooner had he finished his transcription, than his brother discovered it, and heartlessly took it away from him. He remained with Johann Christoph until the year 1700, when he was admitted as a Chorister, at Lüneberg, where his beautiful Treble Voice attracted great attention. Meanwhile, he continued his studies diligently; and, in 1703, was appointed Court Musician ('*Hofmusikus*') at Weimar. In the following year, he obtained the appointment of Organist, at Arnstadt; removing thence, in 1707, to Mühlhausen, in the Thüringerwald, where, in 1714, he was raised to the dignity of *Hof-Concertmeister*. In 1717, he paid a visit to Dresden; and, on his return, was appointed *Kapellmeister* to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen, in whose service he remained, until 1723, when he was chosen Cantor of the Thomas-Schule, at Leipzig. This appointment he retained, until the day of his death; and here it was that he wrote most of his great choral works, including his Cantatas, Passion-Music, and Mass in B minor. In the year 1747, he was invited to Berlin, by Frederick the Great, who received him with tokens of the highest esteem. His fame had, indeed, by this time, spread throughout the whole of Germany. He was universally recognised as the greatest genius the Bach family had ever

produced; and beloved, as much for his amiable qualities as for his learning, by all who knew him. He was twice married, and blessed with no less than twenty children, (seven, by his first wife, and thirteen by his second), of whom several became celebrated for their musical talent, while one—Carl Philipp Emanuel—attained quite an European reputation. During the last few years of his life, his injured sight failed, rapidly: and he died, quite blind, on the 28th of July, 1750, leaving behind him an immense number of invaluable MSS, including, besides his most celebrated vocal works, compositions of the highest value for the Organ, Harpsichord, Violin, Violoncello, Flute, and several other instruments. His collections of Fugues, for the Organ and Harpsichord, are too well known to need description; and his treatment of the German *Choral*, in his Oratorios and Cantatas, is still regarded as one of the grandest characteristics of the Teutonic School.

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN was born at Rohrau, in Austria, on the night of the 31st of March, 1732; and received his first instruction in Music from a distant relative, named Frankh, to whose care his father committed him, when he was only six years old. Frankh lived at Hainburg, where, two years later, the tiny "Sepperl's"\* clear Treble Voice accidentally attracted the attention of Georg von Reutter, the then *Kapellmeister* of St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna, who at once admitted him into the Cathedral Choir, and retained him there until the year 1748, when, his Voice having lost its youthful freshness, he was left to shift for himself, as best he could. Though thrown, by this misfortune, entirely on his own resources, and compelled to starve, in a miserable garret in the Kohlmarkt, he continued his studies, with unvarying assiduity; and, after receiving the best instruction he could get for nothing, (including some lessons from Porpora,) obtained a few pupils, made some kind friends, and patiently awaited better times. These came at last. In 1759 he was appointed *Musikdirektor* to Count

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\* *Sepperl*, *Sepherl*, and *Pepi*, are Austrian equivalents for "Little Joe."

Morzin; and, in 1761, he obtained a similar, though far more important and influential post, in the establishment of Prinz Paul Anton Esterhazy.

Haydn was now well provided for, and devoted the whole of his time to the production of the delightful works which have made his name so deservedly famous. After the death of his kind patron, he remained in the service of his brother, Prinz Nikolaus, whose celebrated diamond suit obtained for him the title of "the Magnificent," (*der Prücktige*). Prinz Nikolaus was a still more liberal patron of Art than his brother; and to him Haydn owed the pleasantest of lives, with innumerable opportunities for bringing out his talents to the greatest possible advantage. The Prince died in 1790; and, in the following year, Haydn visited London, for the first time, and composed the first six of his *Grand Symphonies* for Salomon's Concerts. On the 8th of July, 1791, the University of Oxford conferred upon him the Degree of Doctor of Music. In 1794, he came a second time to London; and, during that and the following year, he produced six new *Symphonies*, to complete his engagement with Salomon. He returned to Vienna in August, 1795, and again re-constituted the Esterhazy Orchestra for Prinz Anton, the successor of Prinz Nikolaus. He composed his greatest work, *The Creation*, in 1798; and *The Seasons*, in the following year. This was his last great effort. During the latter years of his life, the infirmities of age increased upon him rapidly. On the 26th of May, 1809, he was carried to his Pianoforte, and solemnly sang the "*Emperor's Hymn*" three times, with the best voice he could command; and, at one o'clock on the morning of the 31st, his spirit passed away.

Haydn's life was, on the whole, an exceptionally happy one; though its brightness was marred by the evil tempers of a heartless and unsympathising wife. The improvements he introduced into the form of Instrumental Movements have already been described.\* The fact, that, of *Symphonies* alone, he left behind him no less

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\* See page 56.

than a hundred and twenty-five, will serve to give some idea of the fecundity of his genius.

JOHANN CHRYSOSTOMUS WOLFGANG GOTTLIEB\* MOZART, Haydn's immediate successor, and the most formidable of his rivals, was born, at Salzburg, on the 27th of January, 1756; and learned the rudiments of music from his father, Leopold Mozart, a Violinist of some celebrity. So precocious was his intellect, that, at the age of four years, he could learn and play a Minuet in little more than half an hour; and, at five, he made his first childish attempts at composition. In the autumn of the year 1762 he played, on the Harpsichord, before the Emperor, Francis I, at Munich. In the following year, he was taken, by his father, to Paris, where, as well as at Versailles, he had the honour of playing before the whole Court. In 1764 he came to England, and was received with acclamation, both at Court, and in private circles. An invaluable memorial of his visit to this country is preserved in the Library of the British Museum, in his earliest known vocal composition—a clever little Motet, in four parts, entitled “*God is our refuge*,” written by his own hand, and dated 1765. It seems strange that this little piece should never have been published;† for, apart from the interest attached to it, as the work of a Boy of nine years old, its intrinsic merits entitle it to a place among the best of our modern English Full Anthems, while its shortness and simplicity place it within the reach of almost any average Choir. In the hope of introducing it to the notice of many who may find it useful, we here present it to our readers, exactly as it stands in the original MS—but, with the addition of a separate Organ Accompaniment, and with the substitution of the G for the C clef, throughout. ‡

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\* Generally called Wolfgang Amadeus, (W.A.), the latter name being the Italian (or, rather, Latinised) equivalent of Gottlieb.

† Except in the form of a *facsimile*, in Pohl's “Mozart in London.”

‡ In performance, it will be found most effective if sung, first, by four Solo Voices, and afterwards repeated in Chorus.



## GOD IS OUR REFUGE.

W. A. MOZART.  
(Composed A.D. 1765)

TREBLE.

ALTO.

TENOR.  
Sva.  
lower.

BASS.

ORGAN.

Strength; a ve - ry pre - sent

Re - fuge, our Re - fuge and Strength; a ve - ry

God is our Re - - -

help . . in trou - - - ble,

pre - sent help in trou - - ble,

- fuge, God is our Re - fuge and

God is our Re - fuge and Strength;

a pre - sent help in trou - -

a pre - sent help.

Strength; a pre - sent

a ve - ry pre - sent help, a pre - sent

- ble. God is . . . our Re - fuge, and  
 God is our Re - - -  
 help,  
 help in trou - - -  
 Strength; a ve - ry pre - sent  
 - fuge and Strength; a ve - ry pre - sent  
 a ve - ry pre - sent help  
 - ble, a ve - ry pre - sent help

The musical score is written for a vocal part and a piano accompaniment. The vocal part consists of two systems of three staves each. The piano part consists of two systems of two staves each. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are written below the vocal staves.

help in trou - - - - - ble

help in . . . trou - ble.

in trou - - - - - ble.

in trou - - - - - ble.

Mozart left England in the year 1765; and, passing again through France, won golden opinions in many of the large cities of Europe, returning to Salzburg towards the close of 1766. Two years later he performed before the Emperor, Joseph II, at Vienna; and, in 1769, his father took him to Italy, where, though he was nominally in the service of the Archbishop of Salzburg, he remained some years; bringing out his first serious Opera, *Mitridate*, at Milan, and enjoying, on his arrival at Rome, the high honour of being created, by Pope Clement XIV, a Knight of the Golden Spur.\* In 1777, he endeavoured, by his father's wish, to settle in Paris; but, finding that city uncongenial to his taste, returned to Vienna in 1779. After bringing out his first really famous Opera *Idomeneo*, at Munich, he quitted the service of the Archbishop, and entered that of the Emperor Joseph II, who was sincerely attached to him, and thoroughly appreciated his talent. In 1782 he composed his great comic opera, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*;† and, in 1786, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, followed by *Il Don Giovanni* in

\* Glück was also a Cavaliere of this Order—*Auratus militiæ eques*.

† Known, also, as *Belmonte and Konstanza*; and, in France, as *L'Enlèvement du Serail*.

1787, *Così fan tutte* in 1790, and *Die Zauberflöte* and *La Clemenza di Tito* in 1791—the last year of his short, but eventful life. The circumstances under which he produced his latest work, the celebrated *Requiem*, are too extraordinary to be passed over in silence. A Stranger, one evening, requested him to compose a grand *Messa di Requiem* in memory of a departed friend, allowing him a month in which to complete the work, and paying him a hundred ducats for it in advance. Mozart was ill, and in miserable spirits; and—as he afterwards expressed to his devoted wife—was haunted by the idea that he was composing the *Requiem* for himself. He worked at it night and day, yet could not finish it within the stipulated time; and, when the Stranger called, he asked for another month. The delay was granted, and the Stranger put down fifty ducats more for the additional time. Mozart now felt persuaded that this mysterious Stranger was a supernatural visitant, come to warn him of his approaching end. He continued to work more zealously than ever: but the terrible thought preyed upon his mind, and probably had some considerable share in working out its own fulfilment. When the Stranger called again, the gentle Composer had breathed his last. The *Requiem*—the finest of his Masses—was nearly finished; but is said to have been actually completed, from Mozart's own sketches, by Süßmayer. The Stranger was satisfied; took the Score away with him; and was never seen again. We need not enter into the endless discussions to which this story has given rise. It is sufficient to know that the deep study necessary for the completion of the work unquestionably hastened its author's end: and that in his case, if ever, the sword had too surely worn out the scabbard.

Mozart died on the 5th of December, 1791. The *Requiem* was sung at the funeral of his friend, Haydn, in 1809, as well as at that of Beethoven in 1827. On these two occasions, a prominent part in the performance was taken by the celebrated singer, Lablache. In 1809 he was but sixteen years of age; and, his Voice having not yet broken, he sang the principal Contralto part. In 1827 he sang the principal Bass.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## ON THE GREAT MASTERS OF THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES.

If the closing years of the Eighteenth Century were saddened by the early death of Mozart, they were also cheered by the gradual rise to eminence of one of the greatest Musicians the world has ever known.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN was born, in the year 1770, at Bonn; and, before he had completed his fourth year, began to study Music under the guidance of his father, a Tenor Singer in the chapel of Max Friedrich, Archbishop Elector of Cologne. He was afterwards taught by another Tenor Singer, named Pfeiffer, a member of the Opera Company; next, by Van den Eeden, the Court Organist; finally, by Van den Eeden's more highly accomplished successor, Christian Neefe. In 1781 he published his first composition—*Three Sonatas for the Pianoforte*—at Mannheim. Two years later, he was appointed "Cembalist" at the Court Theatre at Bonn; and, in the following year, Second Organist in the Elector's Chapel. In 1792, he was sent, by the then Elector, Max Franz, (brother of the Emperor Joseph,) to Vienna, where he studied, diligently, under Haydn, and Albrechtsberger, and where he ultimately settled for the remainder of his life. The difficulties against which he was compelled to struggle, while slowly making his way to fame, would have proved insurmountable to any man of ordinary energy; and the vagaries of his own wayward temper increased them a thousand-fold; yet, no man ever succeeded in gaining the affection of firmer, or more devoted friends. The Archduke Rodolph, the Princes Lobkowitz, Lichnowski, and Kinski, Counts Waldstein, Browne, and Fries, the

Baron van Swieten, Schindler, Schuppanzigh, and, above all, his old and tried friends, the Breunings, were unremitting in their attention to his lightest wishes, and ready to bear with his eccentricities to any extent: but the general public were slow to appreciate his talent, and received some of his greatest works with a half-heartedness, which, to us, seems simply incredible. This naturally served to sour, still farther, a temper the reverse of pliable. But he was the last man in the world to sacrifice his own feelings for the sake of popularity. If ever a devotee loved Art for its own dear sake alone, it was he. He worked out his grand designs with the most assiduous care, and always in strictest accordance with his own ideas of right and wrong. Hence, that strange originality, which no one has ever yet succeeded in imitating. It is true, that, in his so-called "First Style"—including the *Symphonies in C, and D*, the earlier *Sonatas*, the *Septett*, the *Mount of Olives*, and the *Mass in C*—he pursued a path which had already been successfully trodden by Haydn and Mozart; but, in the "Second Style"—well represented by the *Symphonies* from No. 3, to No. 8, inclusive, the *Sonata Appassionata*, (among many others), the one Grand Opera, *Fidelio*, and most of his best-known compositions—he was Beethoven, and no one else; while, if the works referred to the "Third Manner"—the *Mass in D*, the *Ninth Symphony*, and some of the later *Sonatas* and *Quartetts*—are less generally appreciated, the fault lies, not in them, but in the weakness of those who are unable to comprehend the workings of his fully matured intellect.

Beethoven's life was as sombre as Haydn's was bright and genial. In spite of his fitful outbursts of uncontrollable gaiety, it is impossible to believe that he was a happy man. The last years of his life were embittered, not only by a gradually increasing deafness, which deprived him of his only solace, but, still more, by the ingratitude of a worthless nephew, upon whom he lavished a wealth of affection which might have melted a heart of stone. He died, during a terrific thunderstorm, on the 26th of March, 1827. Even in Vienna his greatness was acknowledged,

then; and with reason, for it is not to be expected that the present century will "see his like again."

One of Beethoven's most talented contemporaries was FRANZ SCHUBERT (*Nat.* Jan. 31, 1797, *Ob.* Nov. 19, 1828). He, also, like Beethoven, wrote, not for popularity, but in obedience to the dictates of an inward Voice which would not be silenced. Though his Compositions were so little prized, during his life-time, that not one tenth part of them were ever either published or performed, their number is almost incredible. Yet, until within the last thirty-five years, his name was known, even in Germany, only by his matchless Songs. That he is now better understood is due entirely to the generous ardour of Robert Schumann, who was the first\* to rescue his greater works from the oblivion to which they were rapidly drifting. Once brought to light, it is not likely that they will ever again be forgotten.

CARL MARIA VON WEBER, another brilliant ornament of this rich period, was born, at Eutin, in Holstein, on the 16th December, 1786. After studying, diligently, under Henschkel, Michael Haydn, and the Abbé Vogler, he was appointed, in 1804, *Musikdirektor* at Breslau, where he composed an Opera, full of rich promise, entitled *Rübezahl*. In 1809, he produced his *Abu Hassan*, at Darmstadt. Not many years afterwards, he was appointed Director of the Opera, at Prague; and, in 1817, his talent was rewarded with a similar appointment, at Dresden, in which city he continued to reside, with little intermission, until the year of his death. In Dresden, he composed the greatest of his dramatic works, *Der Freischütz*; which, however, was first performed, not there, but at Berlin, on the 18th of July, 1821. On the 18th October, 1823, he produced his *Euryanthe*, at Vienna; and, on the 12th of

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\* The first, but not the only enthusiastic worker in so good a cause. It is to Mr. George Grove—author of the well-known "Dictionary of Music and Musicians"—that we owe the resuscitation of Schubert's delightful *Rosamunda*.



April, 1826, his grand English Opera, *Oberon*, in London, where he died of consumption, on the 5th of July, in the same year. It is on these three last-named works that his fame chiefly rests; though he wrote many other very fine ones, including much admirable Music for the Pianoforte.

While Weber was earnestly laying the foundation of the "Romantic School" in Germany, GIOACCHINO ROSSINI was taking the musical world, in Italy, by storm. He was born at Pesaro, on the 29th of February, 1792. His first great triumph was *Il Tancredi*, produced, at Venice, in 1813, with such extraordinary success, that, even within the Courts of Law, the refrain of *Di tanti palpiti* was hummed, and whistled, until the Judges were tired of calling their auditories to order. This delightful Opera was followed by *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *Il Turco in Italia*, *Elisabetta*, *Torvaldo e Dorliska*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (his masterpiece, composed in 1816), *Otello*, *La Cenerentola*, *La Gazza Ladra*, *Mosè in Egitto*, *La Donna del Lago*, *Semiramide*, and a host of others, too numerous to mention. His last great Opera, *Guillaume Tell*, was produced, in Paris, in 1829. After that year, he wrote but little; though the world has since been enchanted with his delicious (if not Sacred) *Stabat Mater*, and *Messe Solennelle*, as original, in their own peculiar style, as his dramatic works. He died, at Paris, on the 13th November, 1868.

Another highly gifted Italian, MARIA LUIGI CARLO ZENOBIO SALVADOR CHERUBINI, also made Paris his permanent home; but cultivated, there, a style very different from that adopted by Rossini. Cherubini was born, at Florence, on the 8th of September, 1760. His first *Mass* was sung, at Florence, in 1773, and greeted as an indication of extraordinary youthful genius. In 1778, he was sent, by Leopold II, Grand Duke of Tuscany, to Bologna, where he studied, diligently, under Sarti. In 1785, and 1786, he brought out, in London, his Operas, *La Finta Principessa*, and *Giulio Sabino*. On a second visit to this country, in 1787, he was

appointed "Composer to His Majesty's Theatre." In the following year, he brought out his first French Opera, *Démophon*, in Paris. This, however, was less successful than *Lodoiska*, which first appeared, in 1791, and effected a complete revolution in French Dramatic Music. *Lodoiska* was followed, at intervals of some years, by *Elise*, *Faniska*, *Medée*, *Les Abencerrages*, *Ali Baba*, and *Les deux Journées*, (*Der Wasserträger*), all masterpieces of the School he founded, and the greatest of his Operas. But it was not in Operas alone that he excelled. His *Masses*, and especially his two *Requiems*, though not written in the true Church Style, are full of beauties of the highest order: and we are also indebted to him for a masterly *Treatise on Counterpoint*. He died, at Paris, in the year 1842; leaving, unhappily, the greater number of his works unpublished.

From these Great Masters we pass on, to speak of some who reached the zenith of their fame at a still later date.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### ON THE LATER MASTERS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

It is easier to discuss the merits, and narrate the biography, of the great men of a past generation, than to speak of those with whom we have, ourselves, held familiar intercourse. Yet, the writer of these pages would be acting a very unworthy part, were he, for any such cause as this, to pass over, in silence, the Art-life of some whom he once knew, and loved, and to one of whom, especially, he owes more than any poor words of his can ever express. For, it was Mendelssohn who taught him all that he had power to learn: and if, in later times, he has succeeded in adding anything to the store for which he is so largely indebted to the unwearying kindness of his great Preceptor, it is only because that ever-watchful Preceptor's wise and earnest counsels

have helped him to distinguish between that which is true, in Art, and that which is false.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY was born, in Hamburg, on the 3rd of February, 1809; and doubtless inherited some portion, at least, of the refinement of taste which ennobled even his earliest childhood, from an ancestry not unknown to fame; for his father, Abraham Mendelssohn, himself a man of very high attainments, was the son of that Moses Mendelssohn whose scholarship earned, years ago, an European reputation;\* and his mother—from whom he derived his second surname, Bartholdy—was gifted with a quite exceptional intellect. In 1812-13, the family removed to Berlin, where the little Felix was instructed in the Theory of Music by Carl Friedrich Zelter, and in Pianoforte-playing, by Ludwig Berger. The precocity of his talent astonished all who knew him. At eight years old he touched the piano with the hand of a master, and detected consecutive fifths which escaped even Zelter's keen perception. At twelve he was introduced to Goethe, with whom he ever after remained on terms of the most intimate friendship.† At seventeen he composed his overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—a truly marvellous conception, the freshness and originality of which we do not find exceeded in any of his later works. Yet his time was by no means wholly given up to the study of Music. His general education was carefully superintended by his devoted parents; he passed, with honour, through the usual *Curriculum*, at the University of Berlin; and, on his entrance into public life, was at once recognised, not as an Artist only, but as an accomplished Classical Scholar.

Mendelssohn first visited London, in the year 1829; and, on that

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\* In allusion to this circumstance, Abraham Mendelssohn once said to a friend, "In my youth I was called 'the son of the great Mendelssohn'; but, now, I am better known as 'the father of the great Mendelssohn.'"

† When the writer first visited Mendelssohn, at Frankfort, almost the first thing he did was, to take him to see the well-known statue of Goethe, then newly placed in its present position.

occasion, conducted his Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, at the "Philharmonic Concerts," where it produced a profound impression. At the close of the season, he continued his journey northwards, as far as the Hebrides; drawing, from the romantic beauty of the scenery through which he passed, the inspiration which afterwards found expression in the "Concert Overture," known as *The Isles of Fingal*, and the *Scotch Symphony*. In 1830, he paid a memorable visit to Goethe, at Weimar,\* while on his way to Italy, where he spent many happy months, and whence he wrote those delightful "Letters," which those who cannot read German fluently may still turn to good account through the medium of Lady Wallace's translation. In 1832, after conducting his Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in Paris, he made a second visit to London, for the purpose of introducing the Overture to *The Isles of Fingal* at the "Philharmonic," where he also played, for the first time, his beautiful *Concerto in G minor*. In the following year, he again came to this country; and, on the 13th of May, conducted, at the "Philharmonic," his second, or, as it is now more generally called, his *Italian Symphony*. On returning to Germany, he took up his residence in Düsseldorf, remaining there, in the character of *Stadt Musikdirektor*, until the year 1835, when, by urgent request, he accepted the direction of the "Gewandhaus Concerts," in Leipzig. At Düsseldorf he composed the greater part of his Oratorio, *Saint Paul*. It was not without regret that he left the pleasant little town; but, his reception in Leipzig was most encouraging. He arrived there in September; and, on the 4th of October, conducted the first "Gewandhaus Concert," the programme of which included Beethoven's Symphony in B flat, and his own Overture to *Die Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt*. The season was most successful. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm of the most critical public in Germany: and the winter would have been a happy one indeed, had it not been

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\* That this visit gave as much pleasure to the aged Poet as to the youthful Musician, is proved by the motto on the title-page of the present volume.

clouded by the death of his father, to whom he was tenderly attached.

During this eventful season, Mendelssohn completed his first Oratorio, *Saint Paul*, which was produced, at Düsseldorf, on Whitsunday, the 22nd of May, 1836. In the following winter he again conducted the "Gewandhaus Concerts," and continued to do so, with few interruptions, until the close of his bright career. Meanwhile, in the spring of the year 1837, he was married, at Frankfort, to Mademoiselle Cécilia Jeanrenaud, the beloved wife whose history, thenceforth, became one with his own. Later in the year, Madame Mendelssohn accompanied him to England, where he never failed to find a hearty welcome; and, on the 20th of September, *Saint Paul* was given, for the first time in the English language, at the Birmingham Festival.

Mendelssohn's activity was now almost incredible. Work succeeded work with unexampled rapidity; and each new creation exhibited the development of some new and noble thought. Want of space compels us to restrict our observations to a very few, only, of the priceless treasures he produced at this period; and to give little more than the names, and dates, even of these.

The *Lobgesang* was written for the "*Gutenberg Festival*"—a centennial commemoration of the Invention of Printing—and was first performed, at Leipzig, on the 25th of June, 1840. *Antigone*, written by command of the King of Prussia, was first represented at Berlin on the 15th of October, 1841. The *Scotch Symphony* (No. 3, in A minor) was brought out, at the "Gewandhaus," on the 13th of March, 1842, and played, in London, at the "Philharmonic," under the Composer's direction, on the 13th of June, in the same year. On the 2nd of February, 1843, *Die erste Walpurgis Nacht* made its first appearance in Leipzig. On the 12th of the following October, the *Wedding March*, and other Incidental Music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, was given at the new Palace in Potsdam. These great Compositions were followed, at more or less brief intervals, by *Œdipus*, *Athalie*, the *Violin Concerto*, the *Trio in C Minor*, the *Six Organ Sonatas*, the *Fifth and Sixth*

*Books of Lieder ohne Worte*, and an endless list of other works of smaller dimensions, though scarcely inferior interest. Yet, amidst all this productive energy, Mendelssohn found time to establish, in Leipzig, that splendid *Conservatorium der Musik* which is now—as it was, indeed, from the first—the finest Academy in Europe.

The Oratorio, *Elijah*, Mendelssohn's last grand composition, was the result of many years' careful thought and unremitting study. It was produced, at the Birmingham Festival, on the 26th of August, 1846. This magnificent work is so well known in England that all comment upon it would be superfluous. Undoubtedly the excitement of perfecting it, and directing its first performance, hastened in some degree the termination of that life which exercised more influence than any other upon contemporary Art. The writer well remembers how more than usually frail the great Composer looked, notwithstanding the intense happiness that beamed in his excited features, when, little thinking how soon the end was to come, he saw him, for the last time, at Klingemann's house, in Hobart Place. On his return to Leipzig, he was taken seriously ill. He never grew really stronger; though he directed many Concerts, during the Winter, at the "Gewandhaus," and, in the Spring of 1847, paid a short visit to London, for the purpose of bringing out *Elijah* at Exeter Hall. A fearful trouble followed his return home—the sudden death of his sister, Fanny Hensel. The news of the calamity was brought to him at Frankfort, and caused a shock, from the effects of which he never recovered. He did his best to bear it bravely; and worked a little, in Switzerland, at his unfinished Compositions, *Christus* and *Lorelei*: but he himself well knew that the Rest he could not take in this life was very near at hand. He returned to Leipzig early in September. On the 9th of October, his friend, Madame Frege, sang to him his last Composition, *The Song of Night—Vergangen ist der lichte Tag*—and on the 4th of November Cäcilia Mendelssohn was left a widow.

It would be difficult to imagine two methods of Modern Com-

position more strongly opposed than those of Mendelssohn and Spohr: yet these two Great Masters were keenly alive to each other's merits, and warmly interested in each other's progress.

LUDWIG SPOHR was born, in the Duchy of Brunswick, on the 5th of April, 1784, and first became known to the world as an accomplished Violinist; though his Compositions afterwards attained even greater celebrity than his powers as a *Virtuoso*. The originality of his style is very striking. Even in his earliest works, he manifests a command over the intricacies of the Chromatic Genus greater than that exercised by any other Composer, antient or modern: and this he employs incessantly, as a means of producing an infinity of effects, which have been imitated a thousand times by envious plagiarists, but never once with the slightest approach to success. His greatest works are his Operas, *Faust*, *Der Berg-geist*, *Zemire und Azor*, *Der Alchymist*, and *Jessonda*; his Oratorios, *The Last Judgment*, *The Crucifixion*, and *The Fall of Babylon*; his delicious Symphony, *Die Weihe der Töne*, (known, in England, as *The Power of Sound*); and an enormous number of Compositions, of the highest merit, for his own favourite Instrument.

As a Violinist, he stood unrivalled, save by one great Artist, only, whose name is now as much a "Household Word," in England as in Germany. His Quartett playing was especially delightful. We well remember hearing him lead his Double Quartett in E minor, at a private party, in Leipzig, in the month of June, 1846, with a delicacy of expression, and refinement of taste, to which no verbal description could possibly do adequate justice. He was assisted, on that occasion, by Ferdinand David, and Joachim; Mendelssohn, and Gade, playing the two Viola parts. Not very long afterwards, he led the same great work, in London, at the "Beethoven Rooms," in Harley Street, with Joachim as his chief assistant. We shall never again hear it interpreted by two such Artists in conjunction. This was almost the last occasion on which he was heard, in public, in this

country. He died at Cassel—where for thirty-seven years he had held the post of *Kapellmeister*—on the 22nd of October, 1859.

It was at Mendelssohn's house, in Leipzig, that the writer enjoyed the privilege of meeting, for the first time, another great Musician, the depth of whose genius is, even yet, but very imperfectly understood, either in England or on the Continent.

ROBERT SCHUMANN was born at Zwickau, in Saxony, on the 8th of June, 1810; and won his way to fame in the face of many untoward obstacles, not the least serious of which was the opposition of his family to his devotion to an artistic life. It was not until the year 1830 that this opposition was finally overcome. He then fixed his residence, for three years, in the house of the celebrated *maestro*, Friedrich Wieck, from whom he had already received much valuable instruction, and whose daughter, Clara—the most accomplished Pianist of modern times—he eventually married. His prospects as an instrumentalist were marred by the failure of a surgical operation, to which he had submitted, in the hope of increasing the independence of his fingers. In consequence of this misfortune, he turned his attention the more seriously towards Composition, which he studied, diligently, under Kupsch, and Heinrich Dorn. *Les Papillons*, one of his earliest, but by no means least interesting effusions, appeared in 1831. In 1834 he established a periodical work, entitled *Die Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and enriched it with a number of critical essays of the highest value, four volumes of which were collected, in 1854, and published under his own immediate supervision. In 1838 he visited Vienna, where he rescued from oblivion a number of Schubert's most important MSS. His marriage took place in 1840. In 1844 he removed to Dresden. In 1850 he was invited to accept the appointment of *Stadt Musikdirektor* at Düsseldorf—the post which Mendelssohn had resigned in 1835. Here he remained until 1854, when a disease of the brain, with which he had long been threatened, rendered the continuance of



his artistic career impossible. He died at Endenich, near Bonn, on the 29th of July, 1856; leaving behind him an immense collection of works, of which the most important are his Opera, *Genofova*, (first performed, at Leipzig, in 1850,) the Overtures to *Die Braut von Messina* and *Hermann und Dorothea*, the *Rhenish Symphony*, *Paradise and the Peri*, *Manfred*, *Des König's Sohn*, and an incalculable number of Songs and Chamber Compositions, including the famous *Carnival*, the *Phantasiestücke*, the *Etudes Symphoniques*, the *Kinderscenen*, the *Novelettes*, and others too numerous to mention, which have long been regarded as Piano-forte Classics.

Schumann was an enthusiastic admirer of the works of Chopin, the originality of whose genius found a ready response in the breast of one no less original than himself.

FRANÇOIS FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN was born at Zela Zowa Wola, in Poland, on the 1st of March, 1809. He himself used to say that his life was "an episode, without beginning, and with a sorrowful end." Into the history of that miserable episode, and of the well-known novelist who figured as its heroine, we need not enter. All that now concerns us is his wonderful power as Pianist and Composer. In both branches of Art he was irresistible. In both he soared into an atmosphere of Romance, impenetrably closed to minds of coarser mould. Schumann truly characterised him as "the boldest and proudest Poet-Spirit of the age"; and well described the wonderful individuality of his conceptions in the clever little epigram, "Chopin looks at many things; but, always through the same spectacles." His works are very numerous, and full of freshness and beauty. He died, in Paris, on the 17th of October, 1849.

Want of space compels us to pass over the history of many a modern Artist, and Composer, upon whose labours in the good cause we would, only too willingly, have dilated, had our limits

been less circumscribed. For sketches of the history of Dussek, and Czerny, and Hector Berlioz, and Stephen Heller, we have, unhappily, no room. It remains only that we should say a few words concerning one great Composer and Pianist, who has passed from our sight so recently, that, while recalling his kindly smile, and gentle manner, we can scarcely realise the sad truth, that he is no longer here.

WILLIAM STERNDALE BENNETT was born, at Sheffield, on the 13th of April, 1816; and, when only eight years old, was admitted, as a Chorister, at King's College, Cambridge. Two years later, he was sent, in consequence of his great promise, to the Royal Academy of Music, where he studied Composition, under Dr. Crotch, and Mr. Lucas, and Pianoforte-playing, under Mr. W. H. Holmes, and the celebrated Cipriani Potter. His first printed work—the *Concerto in D minor*—was written in 1832, and first produced, at the Academy Concert, in the following year, when it attracted the attention of Mendelssohn, who praised it warmly, and contracted, with the young Composer, a close friendship, which terminated only with his death. The *Overture to Parisina*, and the *Concerto in C minor*, appeared in 1834: the *Overture to the Naiades*, in 1836. Soon after this, Bennett made his first visit to Leipzig, where he won the sincere admiration of Robert Schumann, and many other distinguished artists. His fame was, now, firmly established; and his pure style of Pianoforte-playing, no less than his talent for Composition, gained him a lasting reputation in his own country. In 1849, he founded the Bach Society. In 1856, he was elected Professor of Music in the University of Cambridge, and engaged as permanent Conductor of the Philharmonic Society's Concerts. He produced his Cantata, *The May Queen*—perhaps the most popular work he ever wrote—at the Leeds Musical Festival, in 1858, and his delightful *Overture to Paradise and the Peri*, at the Philharmonic, in 1862. In 1866, he resigned the management of the Philharmonic Concerts, and