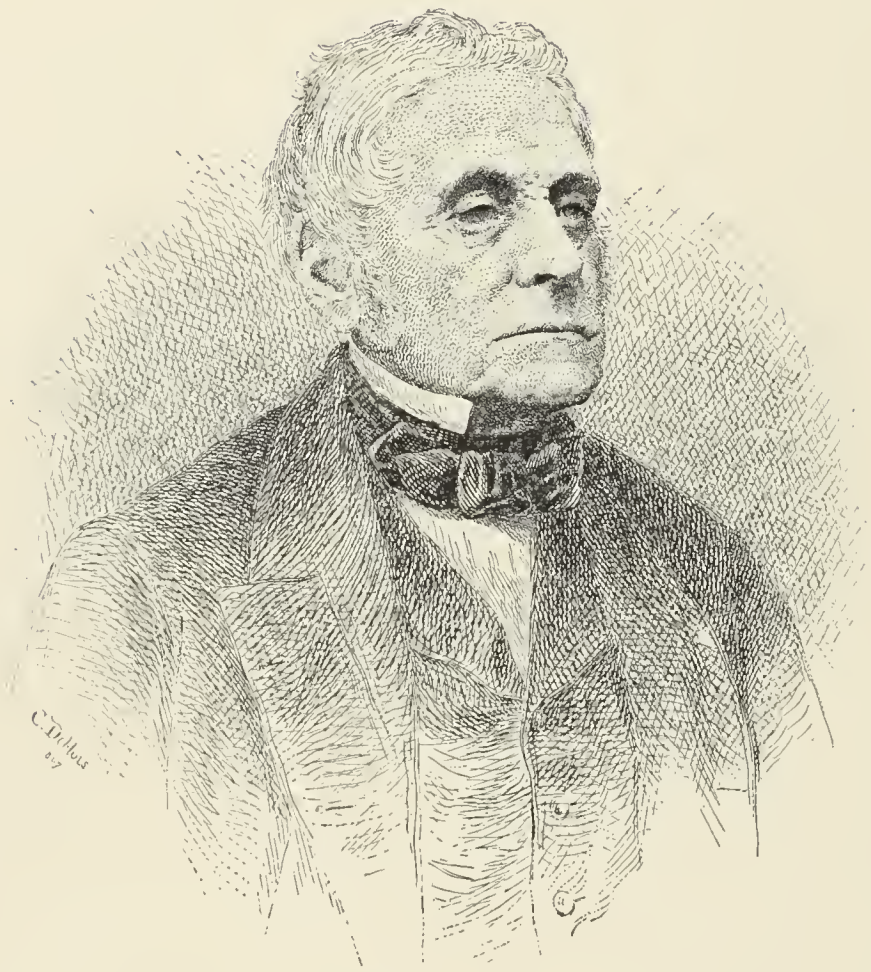
Famous Composers and Their Music



DANIEL FRANÇOIS ESPRIT AUBER

From an engraving by C. Deblois, 1867.

FAMOUS COMPOSERS AND THEIR MUSIC

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FAMOUS COMPOSERS AND THEIR WORKS

VOL. 5

DANIEL FRANÇOIS ESPRIT AUBER

LIFE more peaceful, happy and regular, nay, even monotonous, or one more devoid of incident than Auber's, has never fallen to the lot of any musician. Uniformly harmonious, with but an occasional musical dissonance, the symphony of his life led up to its dramatic climax when the dying composer lay surrounded by the turmoil and carnage of the Paris Commune. Such is the picture we draw of the existence of this French composer, in whose garden of life there grew only roses without thorns; whose long and glorious career as a composer ended only with his life; who felt that he had not lived long enough, and who clung tenaciously to life, energetically refusing to drop this mantle of mortality, postponing the final moment by the mere strength of his powerful determination to live.

Auber, the most Parisian of Parisians, who could never tear himself away from his dear native city, even for a short excursion in the summer, was born, — as it happened — at Caen, towards the end of the month of January, 1782. I say, "as it happened," because the composer's parents were not settled in that town and were only staying there temporarily when the future author of "La Muette de Portici" made his entrance upon the stage of life. His father was a print-seller in Paris. Being a thorough business man he wished his son to become a business man also. To this end, when his child had received a somewhat summary education, and had almost reached man's estate, he sent him to London to begin his career in a house of business.

Even at this early period the young Auber was considered a distinguished amateur musician. He played the piano well, and had made successful attempts at minor composition, such as ballads, small morceaux for the piano, etc. Realizing that he was not fitted for a business life, but for that of a musician, Auber returned to Paris, where he was not long in making for himself a reputation in the fashionable world. He was looked upon as an agreeable pianist and a graceful composer, with sparkling and original ideas. He pleased the ladies by his irreproachable gallantry and the sterner sex by his wit and vivacity. During this early period of his life Auber produced a number of *lieder*, serenade duets, and pieces of drawing-room music, including a trio for the piano, violin and violoncello, which was considered charming by the indulgent and easy-going audience who heard it. Encouraged by this success, he wrote a more important work, a concerto for violins with orchestra, which was executed by the celebrated Mazas at one of the Conservatoire concerts. He also composed, for his friend Lamare, concertos which were applauded by the general public. This Lamare was a violoncellist of great talent and erudition, but so barren of musical creative power that he could not originate the simplest melody nor compose a note for his own instrument. Auber adapted his music so cleverly to the playing of the eminent instrumentalist that Lamare said to him: "Nobody would think, my dear Auber, that I was not the composer of these concertos, so strongly are they impressed with my personality." To which Auber replied: "Since that is so, my dear Lamare, the concertos shall be published in your name." And as a matter of fact they were so published, successively, under the name of the violoncellist. The public thought he was the author of them, but musicians were aware of the truth, which has been an open secret for a considerable time.

It is evident that although Auber made his début as a dramatic composer at a late period, he early practised this art as an amateur, producing his compositions in the Paris drawing-rooms. These drawing-rooms were his academy of music up to the time when, convinced that he had still much to learn in the practice of counterpoint, he sought assistance from the illustrious Cherubini, whom he was

destined one day to succeed as director of the Paris Conservatoire.

The first work that Auber submitted to public judgment was a comic opera in one act, entitled "Le Séjour Militaire," which was produced at the Théâtre Feydeau in 1813. Auber was then thirty-two years old. This piece was not his first attempt in theatrical work, however; for he had previously written a comic opera for the Prince de Chimay, and before this, still another work for a small orchestra, which was represented in an amateur theatre. He had also composed a Mass, with orchestra, in which occurred the admirable chant which he used at a later date in the famous prayer in his masterpiece, "La Muette de Portici." "Le Séjour Militaire" may be regarded merely as marking a date in the biography of the French composer. This piece, of somewhat doubtful buffoonery, passed unnoticed by the general public. Indeed the musician himself was very slightly impressed with it, being but imperfectly inspired when he wrote it. Nevertheless a writer then celebrated, M. Martinville, discovered in this score several pretty *motifs* and a great deal of wit.

From 1813 to 1819 Auber remained silent, and it might have been thought that he had ceased to exist. What became of him during this long period? He still continued to appear in society and, when in the humor, to write as an amateur fugitive pieces of music set to subjects of the same character. He asked dramatic poets to write pieces for him, but they were not very anxious to do so after the failure of "Le Séjour Militaire."

About this time the composer's father died, leaving a widow and two sons without fortune. During this period, when the eminent musician that was to be was still pursuing his studies, he found himself face to face with pecuniary difficulties; but he supported them bravely, never complaining.

Planard, the most fashionable librettist of that day, was accustomed to gather around him in his little house at Passy — which was not then considered one of the districts of Paris — a company of amateurs and artists. There was music, and Auber, one of the most assiduous habitués of the house, accompanied on the piano. In this way it came to pass that Madame Planard took a great interest in Auber and espoused his cause.

"My dear," she said to her husband, "can you not entrust one of your poems to poor Auber, who is so well-bred, so witty, and so good an accompanist? I am convinced that he will earn himself a name among our composers. It is a pity that he should compose operatic airs without words because he has none to work on."

Women always gain the day, whenever they plead in favor of the unknown and the lowly, and Auber was then both unknown and lowly. Madame Planard pleaded so well in this particular instance that her protégé obtained from Planard two pieces instead of one to set to music. The first was a piece in one act, entitled "Le Testament et le Billet Doux," which unfortunately met with a much less favorable reception from the public than "Le Séjour Militaire," and that had been a failure. The next venture was "La Bergère Châtelaine," in three acts, and it made ample amends for all previous mortifications. Its success was unanimous and brilliant. None too soon indeed. Had the author lost this opportunity his future as a composer would have been irretrievably ruined, for no poet would have entrusted him with a libretto.

At the time when Auber produced "La Bergère Châtelaine," the turning-point in his artistic career, he was thirty-eight years of age, just a year younger than Rossini when he closed his with that immortal masterpiece "Guillaume Tell."

Planard, having witnessed the failure of "Le Testament," would have liked to take back the libretto of "La Bergère Châtelaine" which he had handed over to Auber some time before. But now he was very happy to have another of his pieces, in three acts, entitled "Emma," set to music by the composer. This work was represented at the Théâtre Feydeau in 1821, and was an extraordinary success. The high road to fortune was now open, and for more than forty years the composer's career was one long series of triumphs, which continued to the last day of his life. One might have thought, after the complete success of the two last comic operas upon which Auber and Planard collaborated, that they would have continued to work together for a long time; but it was not so. Scribe had just then attained his brilliant position as a writer of vaudevilles. Fate had decided that there should be a partnership between him and Auber, a partnership which of all the combinations that ever existed between word-writer and musician was the happiest and most lasting.

What was the secret of the union of these two

minds, these two talented beings who were so well constituted to understand each other that they seem to have been born the one for the other, to work together for their common glory and to the great delight of the public who applauded them so well? It was in this wise.

A vaudeville by Scribe had just been accepted at the Théâtre de Madame, which he rightly expected would meet with success. For a certain morceau to be sung during the progress of the play he thought that the air of the round in "La Bergère Châtelaine" was wonderfully well adapted. Although he had never yet had an opportunity of seeing Auber, Scribe did not on that account hesitate to write to him. This historic letter and Auber's reply to it have been preserved, and they are too interesting not to be reproduced here, the more so as they are comparatively unknown. They are as follows:

"To Monsieur Auber: —

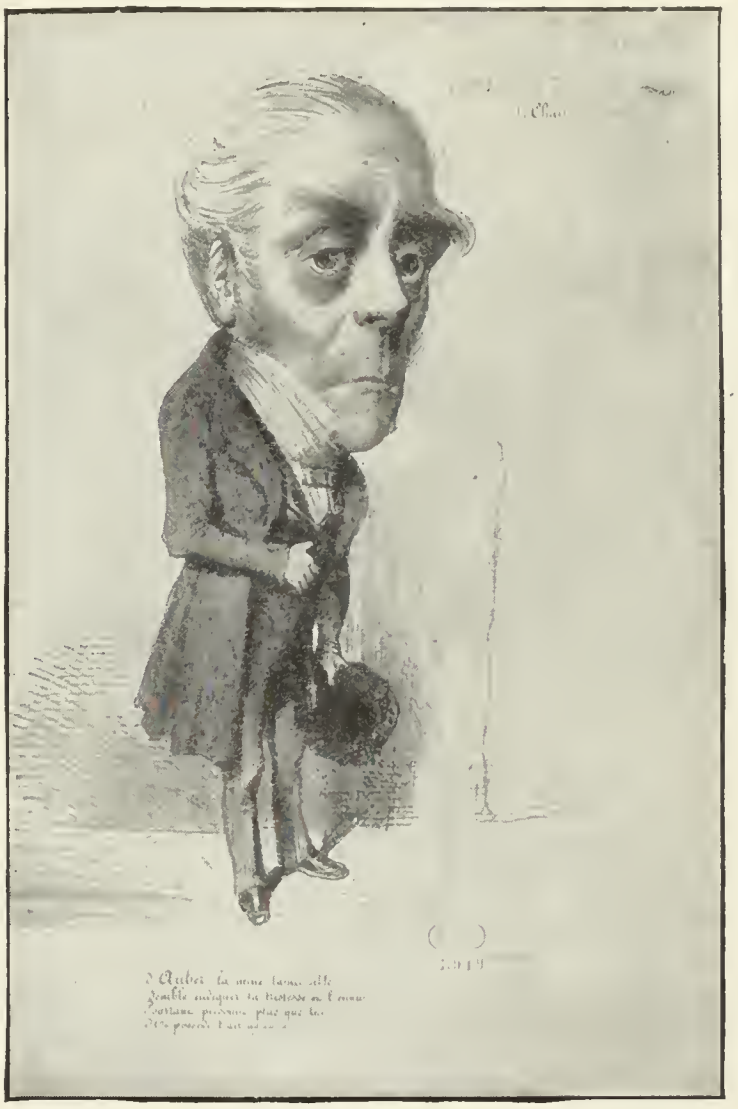
"Will you kindly permit me, Sir, to place in a vaudeville which I am just now writing for the Théâtre de Madame, your round from 'La Bergère Châtelaine' which is so delightful and justly popular? I will not conceal from you, Sir, that I have promised my director to make the piece succeed, and that I have counted upon using your charming music."

This note is quite gallant, but Auber replies to it with just as much gallantry:

"To Monsieur Scribe: —

"My round is but a trifle, Sir, and you are so gifted that you can dispense with my poor assistance. However, if I grant you what you ask, although you do not really need it, and you will allow me to lend you at the same time the fine voice and pretty face of Mme. Boulanger, I think we should both of us do a good stroke of business."

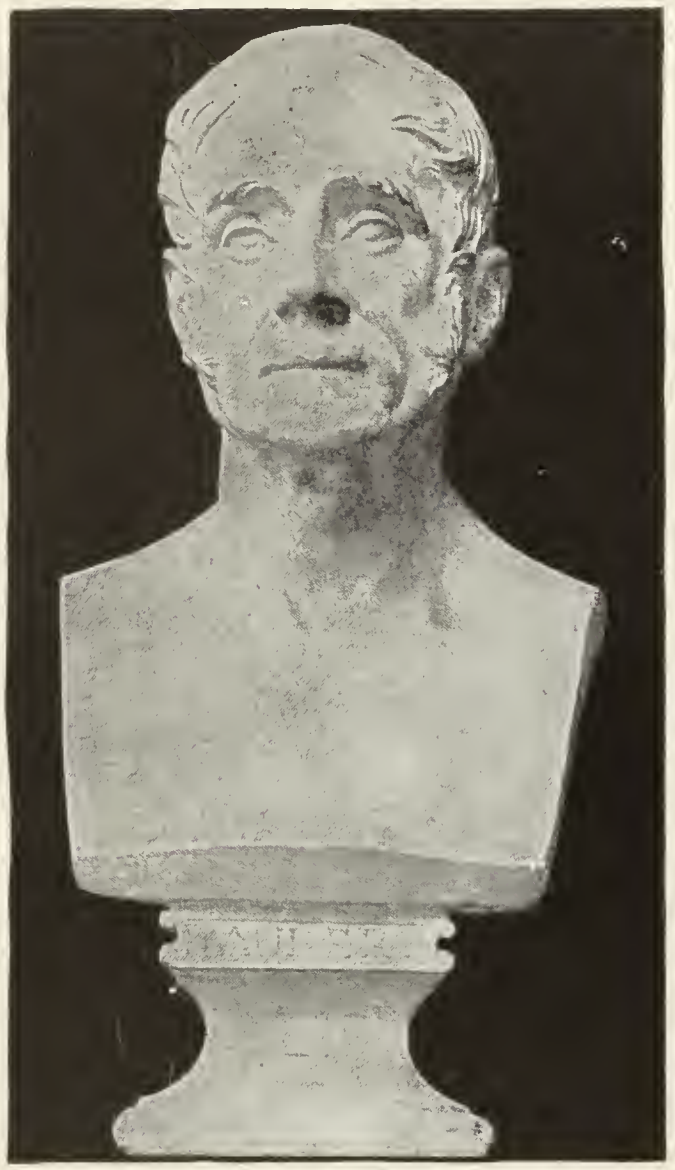
The good stroke of business consisted in the thrice-happy collaboration which resulted from this exchange of letters, a collaboration only broken by the death of Scribe, which took place many years before that of Auber. On one occasion Auber said to me: "I owe my successes to Scribe. Without his assistance I feel that I should never have obtained the place I occupy in the musical world." Without detracting in any degree from the value of Auber's music, it may be said that this statement is true; for the composer needed a librettist of such versatile wit and resource of imagination that I do not see amongst the comic-opera librettists a single poet who could have taken Scribe's place in this work. During the whole of his life Auber was accustomed to compose the principal



CARICATURE OF AUBER.
From the Paris Charivari.

airs of his operas before the libretto was written and almost without regard to the character of the scene in which these airs would be used; and to these melodies Scribe wrote words with extraordinary ease. Auber sang the airs, accompanying himself on the piano, while Scribe, pencil in hand, instantly found the verses naturally suited to the character of the music, cleverly adapting himself to its rhythm, oftentimes very strange. I may mention the "Seguidille" in "Le Domino Noir," which was a singularly difficult test of Scribe's powers. Another instance is the song of Henriette in "L'Ambassadrice," which was also written by Auber without words. It was an astonishing feat on the part of Scribe to find the comic and original verses which he adapted to this melody, the scansion of which is so very singular.

It was on horseback or while riding in his carriage during his daily excursions to the Bois de Boulogne that Auber found his happiest *motifs*. On



BUST OF AUBER,
By Danton; in the Carnavalet Museum, Paris.

returning home he set them to music and inserted them in the opera upon which he was working, and then Scribe supplied the words. In the principal scenes, however, Auber wrote to the verses of his collaborator, and he would begin to work on his return from the theatre, whither he went nearly every evening. In this way he would write on a little table by the side of his piano up to four or five o'clock in the morning. As often as not, he did not go to bed, but slept in his arm-chair. Many of his scores bear traces of the ink which dropped from his pen as he let it fall from his hand when overcome by slumber. The manual of his old square piano bears numerous inkstains on the white keys of the upper octave, which indicate the moment when Auber fell asleep at his work. The musician never needed more than from three to four hours of sleep daily, and throughout his life he took only one meal in twenty-four hours, namely, dinner. On rising, he would drink a cup of camomile, which he swallowed fasting. This was sufficient to sustain him without undue fatigue to the digestive organs up to the time of his only meal at six o'clock. He frequently invited to his table, frugal as it was, young professional lady singers, for he was extremely susceptible to the attractions of the fair sex, and remained a worshipper of beauty even unto death. Venus was his goddess, and he ever adored her most conscientiously.

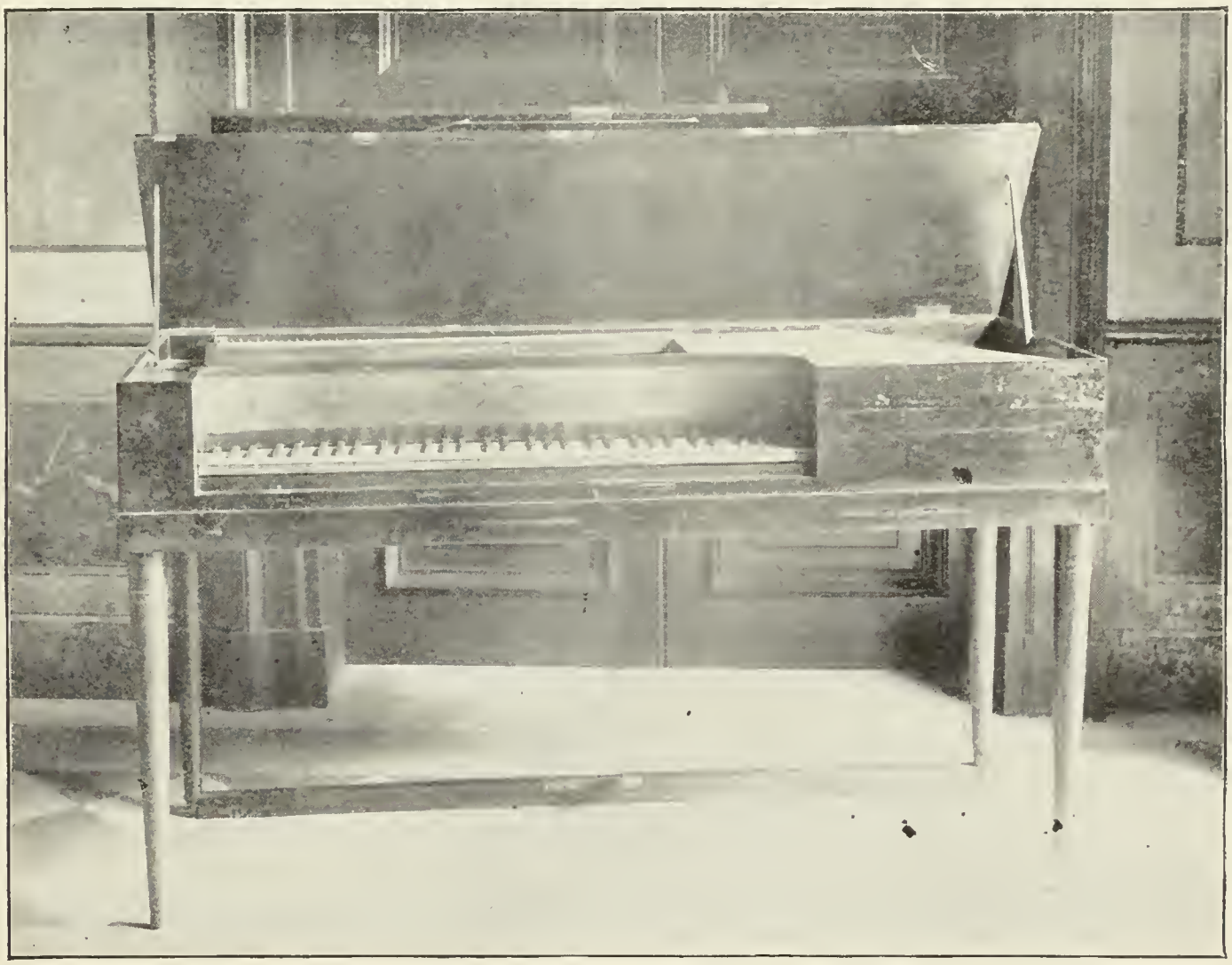
Auber had eight domestics in his service, and never was man worse served than he. One evening he invited to dinner several professional ladies, as also the learned Mr. Weckerlin, librarian of the Conservatoire. The dinner was good and well served. Music and song followed the repast. One of the ladies being thirsty, the master rang for a glass of water. There was no answer. The housekeeper, the old Sophie, whose face had been familiar for half a century to all Auber's friends, had gone to bed; the cook had followed her example; the valet-de-chambre had gone out for a walk with John, the English coachman, who remained more than thirty years in the composer's service: in short, all the servants had disappeared. Auber did not fall into a passion: he never became angry at anything. "As we cannot get anything here," said he to his guests, "let us go and take an ice at Tortoni's."

We have already referred to the numerous inkstains on the old piano, made by the pen which fell from Auber's hand as sleep overpowered him during his long nocturnal labors, and we now propose to give some details of this interesting and historic instrument, which remains an object of curiosity to all the admirers of the master who visit the instrumental museum at the Conservatoire, and of which we have been able to take a photograph by the gracious permission of M. Pillaut, the learned Conservator of the Museum.

This piano, oblong in form, very light and built of mahogany, was bought by Auber on the 17th of February, 1812, in the showrooms of the celebrated Erard. The manufacturer's number is 8414. It is a double-stringed instrument, and its compass is only five and a half octaves. When, in 1842, Auber succeeded Cherubini as director of the Conservatoire, he had this piano brought thither and placed

it in his study. It was upon this instrument, from which the master could never be separated, and which had become his true friend and harmonious confidant, an indefatigable and never-failing source of inspiration, that Auber composed those charming and *spirituel* comedies which, so often performed and always with success, have remained models of French comic opera in common with the works of Monsigny, Dalayrac, Grétry, Boïeldieu, Hérold, and other great masters.

Besides the old piano which stood in his private room at the Conservatoire, Auber had another at home, in his house in the Rue St. Georges. This latter was an upright piano which I have often seen. Like his oblong piano, it was stained with ink on the two upper octaves. Auber never thought, like Ambroise Thomas and Charles Gounod, of having made by the firm of Pleyel what is called a composer's piano, which is both an excellent instrument and a secretary.



AUBER'S PIANO AT THE PARIS CONSERVATOIRE MUSEUM.

Reproduced from a photograph made by special permission.

Auber once related to me that two days before the first performance of "La Muette" (which he completed in three months!) the overture was not yet ready. He composed it with all the fervor which comes of improvisation. The evening before the first production the orchestra rehearsed it for the first time, and the musicians accorded this instrumental preface an enthusiastic reception. On the first night the public were so enchanted with it that it received a double *encore*. I have never seen this fact mentioned in any of the biographies of the illustrious composer, but I learnt it from Auber himself.

It has been a matter of astonishment that this French musician, who did not know Italy, who never left Paris — with the exception of a journey to London when he was a very young man — should have been able to introduce into "La Muette" so much of Italian local color, and assimilate in so wonderful a manner the musical genius of the Neapolitans. We are in imagination as thoroughly in Naples as it is possible to be without

actually being there, the moment we hear that victorious march, so full of freedom, rhythm and melody, and see on the stage the crowd of triumphant lazzaroni now masters of the land. One would gladly learn in what circumstances this beautiful and marvellously characteristic air came into the mind of the Parisian composer. Jouvin will tell us, and he has made no mistake, for this curious information reached him from the lips of the composer himself: "Would you know where the com-

AUBER'S RESIDENCE IN PARIS.

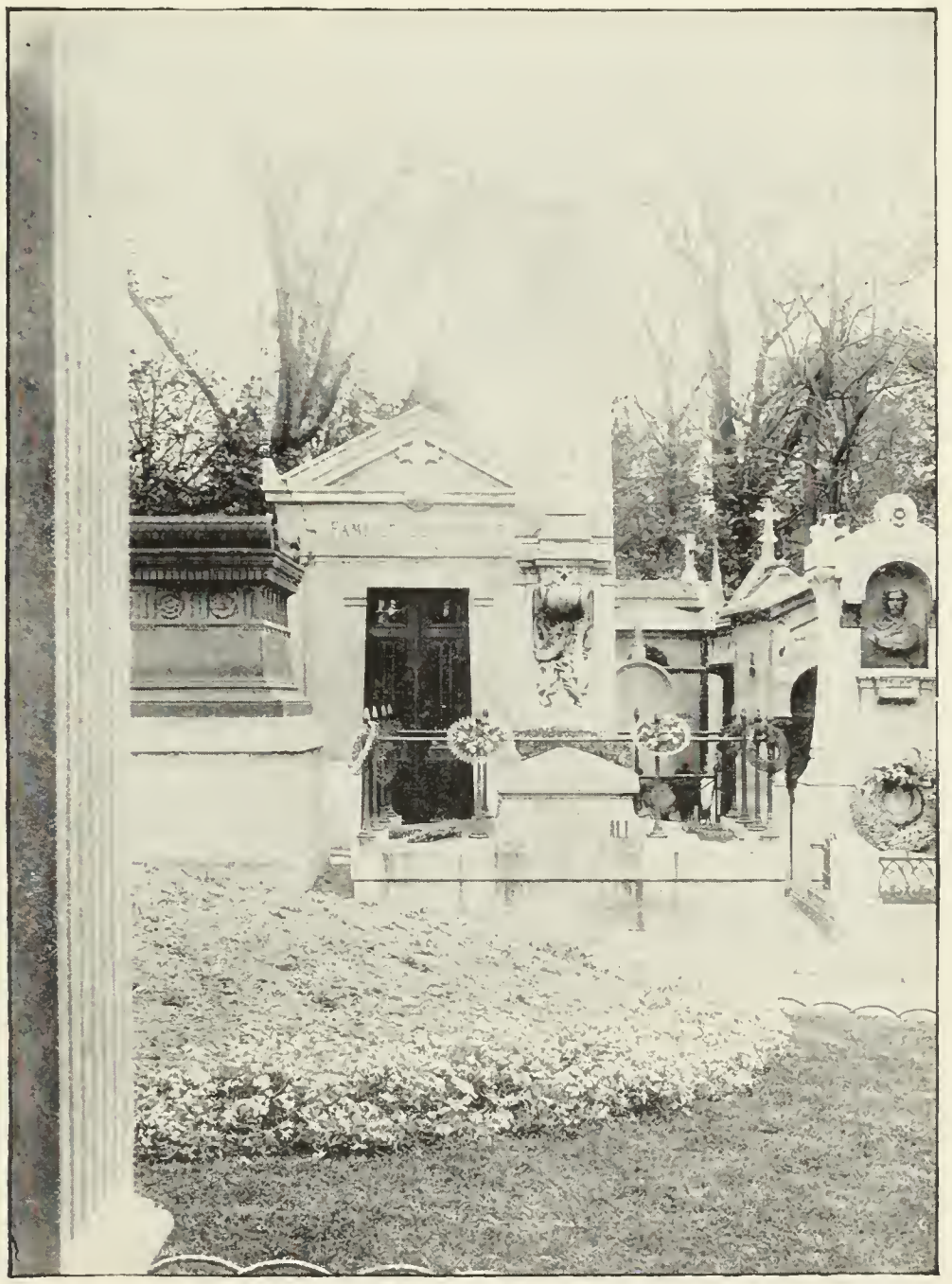
From a photograph.

In this house Auber lived for forty years, and it was here that he died in May, 1871, during the battle with the Paris Commune.

poser found the *motif* of this march, the melody of which is so free and unconventional? He found it in a shaving dish! It was when he was shaving himself, with his face covered with soap, that there came upon him the rhythm and melody of this inspiration; and he seized and secured it before it was lost. Such is the origin of the inspiration which, twice in the overture and at the end of the fourth act, so powerfully appeals to the spectator in the auditorium. O Genius, behold thy handiwork! Have not sixty winners of the grand Prix de Rome passed no inconsiderable time seeking inspiration in

the land of classic song and returned home without a single idea? M. Auber, who could never tear himself away from Paris, discovers the sky of Naples in the lather at the bottom of a basin!"

The extraordinary effort made by Auber in the composition of "La Muette," in less time than would have been needed by a copyist to transcribe this voluminous score, completely deprived him of his mental powers for the moment, and he was obliged to take absolute rest for some time. His ideas were exhausted, and he would have found it impossible even to find a melody for a simple song.



AUBER'S TOMB IN PÈRE LACHAISE, PARIS.

From a photograph.

He thought that the fountain of musical invention was dried up within him, and for all time. But his faculties, thank God, were not extinguished, and there yet remained in the composer's brain living fountains from whence were to gush forth his best, his most characteristic works, and those which are most strongly impressed with the author's style and personality.

In many respects, Auber was not an irreproachable director of the Conservatoire, where he remained, however, a number of years. He was all his life too fashionable a man, too kind, too weak to direct with the necessary firmness a school so difficult to govern as the Ecole Nationale de Musique et de Déclamation of Paris. He attempted no improvements in the arrangement of the studies, and

while all public institutions throughout France were being modified in accordance with progressive ideas, the Conservatoire alone remained stationary and, as it were, fossilized in its ancient condition. Ultimately the Administration des Beaux-Arts became alarmed at this state of things, and on the 2d of April, 1870, the following order was issued: —

"In the name of the Emperor, the Minister of Fine Arts issues the following order:

"Art. 1. A committee is hereby formed the mission of which shall be to revise the present government of the Conservatoire, and to consider and propose such modifications as may be made, especially in regard to the teaching in this institution, so that the studies pursued there may be made as profitable as possible.

"Art. 2. This committee, which shall sit under the presidency of the Minister of Fine Arts, shall be constituted as follows:

"MM. Auber, Emile Augier, Edmond About, Azévédo, Chaix d'Estange, de Charnacé, Oscar Comettant, Félicien David, Camille Doucet, Théophile Gautier, Gevaert, Charles Gounod, Guiroult, Jouvin, Ernest Legouvé, Nogent-Saint-Laurens, Emile Perrin, Prince Poniatowski, H. Prévost, Reber, Ernest Reyer, de Saint-Georges, de Saint-Valry, Albéric Second, Edouard Thierry, Ambroise Thomas, J. Weiss."

The sittings of this committee were of a most interesting character. Auber, then eighty-eight years of age, was never absent from any of them; but he remained silent all the while. It seemed as though he were there in the presence of judges rather than before a committee in which he had full and complete liberty of discussion. Of all the propositions made by the committee only one was ever put into execution, by Ambroise Thomas, who succeeded Auber as director of the Ecole Nationale de Musique et de Déclamation of Paris. This proposition was that Sol-fa classes should be established especially for the pupils of both sexes in the singing classes.

Auber was Maître-de-chapelle to the Emperor Napoleon III. He was a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honor, and he received a number of foreign decorations. He never married.

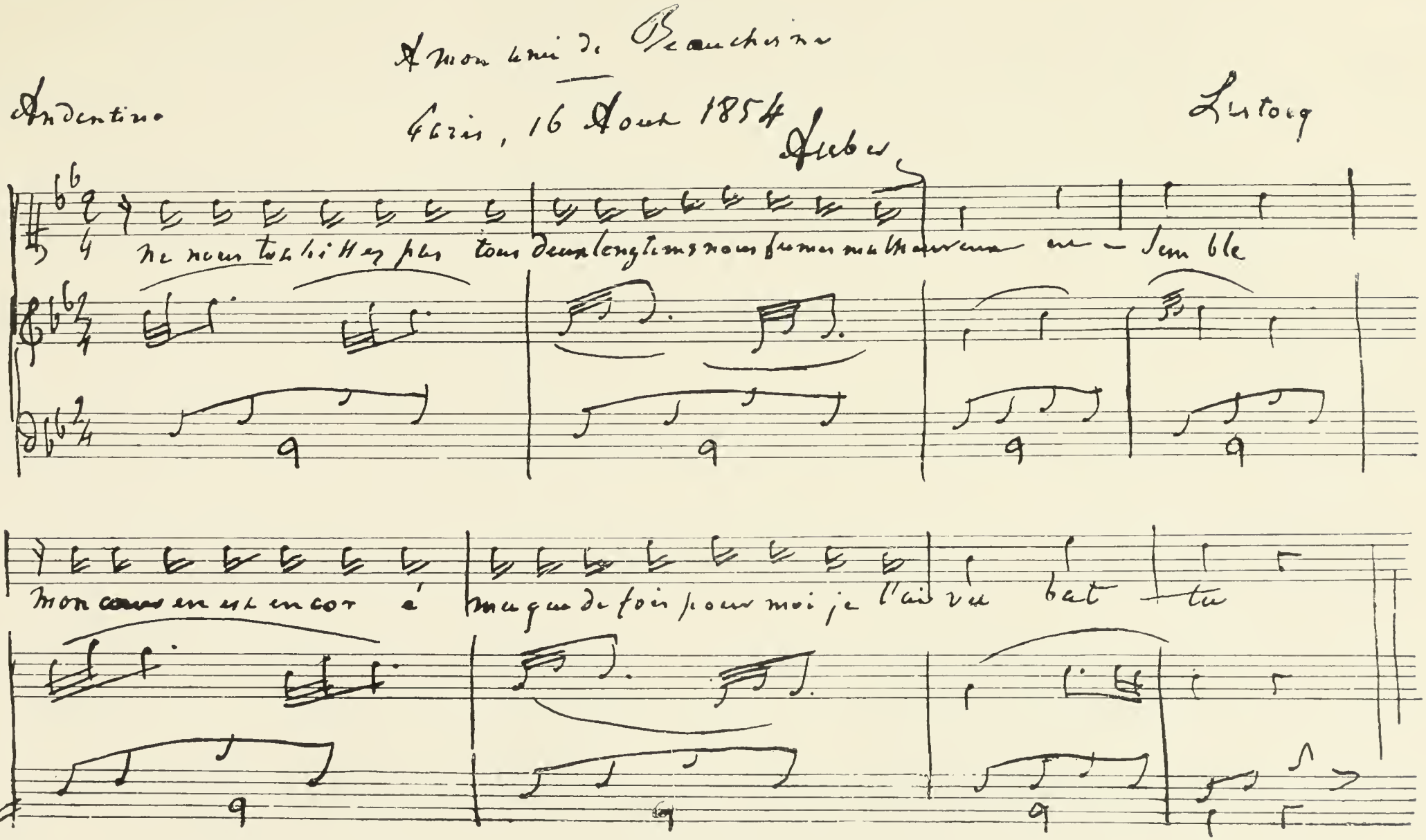
It was Auber's misfortune to see the siege of Paris and the terrible deeds of the Commune. At that time he had two horses to which he was very much attached, named Figaro and Almaviva. When famine began to stalk through the land he was called upon to give up the first-named animal to be used as food. The other met with perhaps a still more cruel fate, for it was taken from the elegant coupé of the composer to draw a cart at St. Denis. In the midst of the successive misfortunes which befell his beloved city of Paris, Auber became deeply downcast. His strength rapidly ebbed away, and after a terrible struggle lasting several days, during which he fought desperately with death — for he still clung tenaciously to life,— he breathed his last, cared for in turn by Ambroise Thomas, Marmontel and Weckerlin, on the 12th of May, 1871. When public order had been re-established, he was accorded a solemn public funeral on the 15th of July following.

Auber's labors were devoted to one long series of sparkling comic operas due to the happy partnership of Scribe and Auber, a partnership in which Mélesville was often associated. The first comic opera produced by the triple partnership was "Leicester," the subject of which was taken by the authors from Sir Walter Scott's romance, "Kenilworth." Although, from the character of the dramatis personæ, "Leicester," was somewhat remarkable compared with the plays usually produced at the Théâtre Feydeau, it was nevertheless well received by the public.

After this came "La Neige," a pretty score which, however, the critics (who in those days were generally literary men not at all competent to judge of musical matters) declared bore some resemblance to the work of Rossini. But at that time what musician was there who could entirely withstand Rossini's style, which had conquered the universe, not even excepting Germany?

"La Neige" was succeeded by "Le Maçon," in which there occur at least two or three morceaux that are marvels of wit and grace.

"Le Maçon" was followed by "Le Timide,"



Fac-simile autograph musical manuscript by Daniel François Auber

Mon cher ami, Madame Batton est tellement malade depuis qu'elle a perdu son fils, que son mari est obligé de rester auprès d'elle, ce qui l'empêche de tenir sa classe aujourd'hui. — Je voudrais bien que les élèves, que nous traitons sévèrement pour l'exactitude, ne vinssent pas pour rien. — Si Batiste pouvait nous rendre le service de tenir cette classe aujourd'hui, il nous tirerait d'embarras. Voyez le. Demandez lui cela de ma part, et entendez vous avec. Ferrière.

tout à vous

Auber

Mercredi (Septembre, 1849.)

Il va sans dire, mon cher ami, que vous devez rester à Fontainebleau tant que votre état de santé l'exigera.

. . . . . .

. . . . . Je n'ai que le temps d'écrire des notes, des dièses, des bémols &c &c, et je ne suis pas encore arrivé à la fin de ma tâche..

Je dois mettre en répétition le 15 de ce mois, et d'ici là, il me faut travailler jour et nuit.

Adieu, mon cher ami; Je retourne à ma partition. (*)

Auber

Lundi (1er Octobre, 1860.)

Fac-simile autograph letters from Auber to Alfred de Beauchesne, Secretary of the Conservatoire.

"Fiorella," "La Muette de Portici," a grand opera in five acts, produced by Scribe and Casimir Delavigne, which was represented at the Académie de Musique on the 19th of February, 1828. It had considerable success the first night and the succeeding representations only strengthened the good opinion formed of it. After more than sixty years and in spite of certain features which are now looked upon as old-fashioned, as well as an orchestration which would better suit present ideas were it more powerful and contrapuntal, at least in certain parts of the score, this admirable work would still be quite presentable anywhere. The impartial public, which does not yield to the influence of schools of music and does not hide its impressions, would still warmly applaud in this rich treasury of sweet melody the chorus, "O Dieu puissant"; the barcarolle, "Amis, la matinée est belle"; the duet by the two men, "Amour Sacré de la Patrie"; the market scene; the beautiful and impressive prayer; the delicious air of "Sleep"; the air sung by the woman in the fourth act, "Arbitre d'une Vie," which has become classical; and that other barcarolle, "Voyez du haut de ce rivage"; the tarantella, etc.

The original and singularly bold idea of making a dumb girl the heroine of a grand opera was received at the outset with censure on the part of the critics; and it must be admitted as a general principle that the critics were perfectly right. Slowly, however, the public became accustomed to this creation, and it has now for a long time been admitted that the rôle of Fenella is a mark of genius. The whole of this part played in dumb show seems to be voiced, as it were, by the orchestra, which renders in a wonderfully happy manner and with extraordinary dexterity the sentiments felt by the sister of the fisher Massaniello.

As to the overture, it has earned public approval in every part of the world where an orchestra can be found capable of executing it. It is brilliant, dramatic, pathetic, and the *motif* of the triumphal march which constitutes the *allegro* is superb and truly irresistible in its power to move the audience.

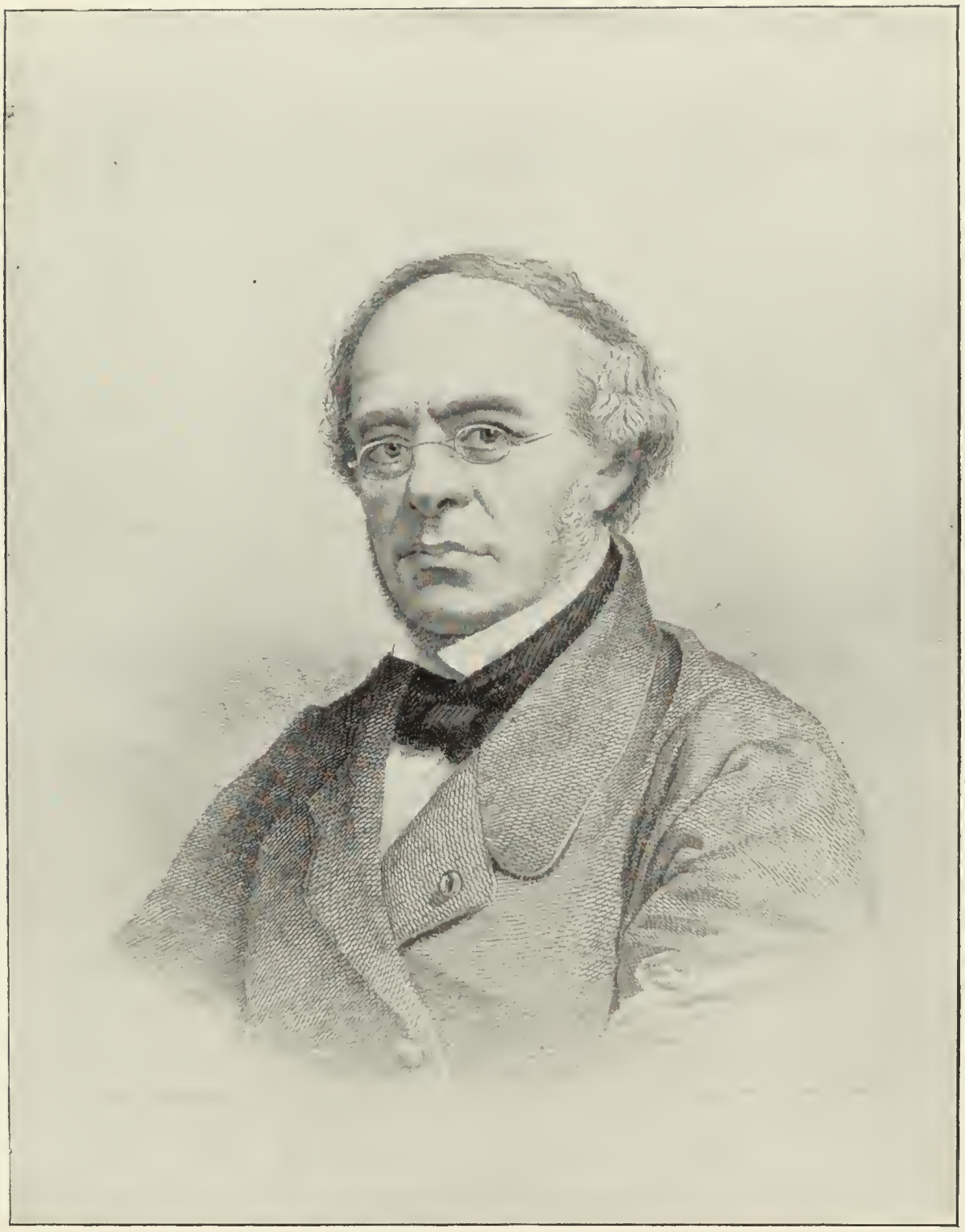
Space would fail us were we to stop, even for a moment, to speak of each one of his works, and we cannot do more than name them. Yet their names alone will sing in the reader's memory those varied songs, so *spirituel*, so well suited to the works which they designate that they have nearly all continued to hold the musical stage of Europe ever since they were first produced. They are as follows: "La Fiancée," "Fra Diavolo," "Le Dieu et la Bayadère," "Gustave III.," "Lestocq," "Le Cheval de Bronze," "Actéon," "Les Chaperons Blancs," "L'Ambassadrice," "Le Domino Noir," "Le Lac des Fées," "Zanetta," "Les Diamants de la Couronne," "Le Duc d'Aloune," "La Part du Diable," "La Sirène," "La Barcarolle," "Haydée," "L'Enfant Prodigue," "Zerline, ou la Corbeille d'Oranges," "Marco Spada," "Jenny Bell," "Manon Lescaut," "La Circassienne," "La Fiancée du Roi de Garbes," "Le Premier Jour de Bonheur," "Rêve d'Amour." This last-named comic opera was the last of the long series of the dramatic works of our author. It was represented on the 20th of December, 1869, and truth compels us to state that it was received with some reserve. Quite the reverse was the fate of "Le Premier Jour de Bonheur," which obtained a full measure of success. In this opera occurs an exquisite melody that speedily became popular, "Les Djinns."

Rossini has described Auber's talent in a remarkably pithy manner. "Auber," said he, "may have produced light music, but he produced it like a great musician." So much meaning could not be condensed into fewer words. Even so, Auber, in spite of the slight appearance of his work, was one of the most learned musicians of his time. But he took as much pains to conceal his knowledge as others do to exhibit theirs. His great desire was, evidently in obedience to the nature of the man, to be always clear, melodious, lovable, *spirituel*, attractive in every way; never wearisome. In this he was perhaps wrong. Possessing as he did the science of counterpoint and a wonderful dexterity in instrumentation, he would have done well to make himself, from time to time at least, more obscure, mystical, symbolical and enigmatical, for in so doing he would have risen in the esteem of the pedants who affect to like only that kind of music which is wearisome and to understand only that which is incomprehensible. Such obscurity on his part would have thrown into still higher relief the inspirations born of his truly creative faculties, I mean his songs and his *motifs*. Whenever he desired to do so, Auber well knew how to rise to the lofty and pathetic, and he could produce what is called grand high class music. Let such as doubt this read the fourth act of "Manon Lescaut," and they

will be convinced that there was in the mind and heart of Auber something more than dance music. We have there grand and beautiful music, and I find it difficult to mention any orchestration richer or more impressive and more beautifully conceived than that which occurs in "La Circassienne." We have only to read the many *solfeggios* that he wrote during the long years when he was director of the Conservatoire for competition among the pupils learning the sol-fa system, and we shall find in these minor masterpieces the sure hand of an eminent and profound harmonist.

Oscar Comettant

MEDALLION OF AUBER
by David.
From Paris Opera Archives.



J. F. E. HALÉVY

Reproduction of a portrait by Weger, engraved after a photograph.

JACQUES FRANÇOIS FROMENTAL ELIAS HALÉVY

JACQUES FRANÇOIS FROMENTAL ELIAS HALÉVY was born in Paris, May 27, 1799, of Jewish parents, whose family name was Lévi. The same considerations of expediency that induced Meyerbeer to change his name from Beer to that which he afterwards made famous, proved similarly potent with Halévy. His father was by birth a Bavarian, his mother was born in Lorraine. The former was greatly honored among French Israelites for his upright character and as a Hebrew scholar profoundly versed in the Talmud. While yet very young, Halévy developed such remarkable musical precocity that he was sent to the Conservatory when only ten years of age. He was at once placed in the class of Berton, then in the full flush of his triumph as the composer of "Montano et Stéphanie," his masterpiece. Berton outlived his fame, and his music is now forgotten. It may be mentioned in passing, that Berton was greatly piqued by the success of Rossini, and published two acrimonious pamphlets attacking the Italian composer. One of these was entitled, "De la Musique Mécanique et de la Musique Philosophique," and the other, "Epître à un célèbre compositeur Français précédée de quelques observations sur la Musique Mécanique et la Musique Philosophique." Of course, "la musique mécanique" was the music of Rossini, and "la musique philosophique" was that of Berton. The "célèbre compositeur" was Boieldieu, who was greatly mortified by a dedication that identified him with sentiments wholly in conflict with those he entertained toward Rossini.

Halévy prosecuted his studies so industriously under the guidance of Berton, who was an admirable musician, and progressed so rapidly, that one year after he entered the Conservatory, he won a prize in solfeggio, and the year following, the second prize in harmony was bestowed on him. From Berton's instruction he passed to that of Cherubini, who subjected him to a rigid course of counterpoint, fugue and composition. Here again, he advanced with such speed that at the end of seven years, and while yet a boy of seventeen, he competed for the Grand Prix de Rome, obtaining the second prize for his cantata, "Les dernières moments de Tasse." The next year the second prize again fell to his lot, and the year following, 1819, he reached the height of his ambition, carrying off the Grand Prix itself for his "Herminie."

This much-coveted distinction is awarded at the annual competitive examinations of the Académie des Beaux Arts. The successful candidates become government pensioners for four years, and as such are sent to Rome, where they reside in the Villa Medici, in the Académie de France. The prize composition was, at first, a cantata for one voice and orchestra, and after, for one male and one female voice and orchestra. The prize was established in 1803, and since then, a winner has been sent, at the cost of the government, to Rome, every year, except in those years when no composition was considered worthy the prize. It is somewhat curious that of the sixty and odd students whose achievements and future promise won for them this honor, so few attained to permanent fame. The only prize-winners whose names have made the tour of the world are Hérold, Halévy, Berlioz, A. Thomas, Gounod, Bizet, and Massenet.

Before his departure for Rome, he composed a Funeral March and a "De Profondis" on the death of the Duc de Berri (1820), for three voices and orchestra. He dedicated it to Cherubini, and it was performed in the synagogue in Rue St. Avoye. In Italy he devoted himself with his accustomed energy to serious and unflagging study; wrote an opera, which was not performed, and some works for the church, which remain unpublished. At the end of his prescribed term abroad, he returned home,

eager to prove to his fellow countrymen that he had not studied in vain. He turned his eyes in the direction of the opera stage, but experienced the usual disappointments, in his early attempts to obtain a hearing, and was almost in despair at the discouraging difficulties that stood in his way. He composed "Les Bohémiennes" and offered it to the Grand Opera, but it was not accepted. He was more successful with "Pygmalion," which was received and placed in rehearsal, but it was suddenly withdrawn and never performed. An opera comique, "Les deux Pavillons," met the same depressing fate. Halévy began to lose hope, when in 1827, and when he was twenty-eight years of age, the Théâtre Feydeau accepted his "L'Artisan," which was produced in the same year without making any very marked impression. It is an unambitious work of no special interest, except for some piquant couplets, and a well-written chorus. The following year he collaborated with Rifaut in the score of "Le Roi et le Batelier," written for the fête of Charles X. In the same year "Clari" was given at the Théâtre Italien. This was a three-act opera, and up to that time, his most important work. Malibran sung the principal part, and for the first time the young composer experienced the intoxication of success. There is, however, nothing in the score to indicate the Halévy of "La Juive" and of "L'Eclair."

In 1829 he was appointed, at the Théâtre Italien, to share with Hérold the duties of chef du chant. In that year was produced, at the Opera Comique, his "Le Dilletante d'Avignon," a parody on Italian opera librettos, which was heartily applauded, and of which the chorus, "Vive, vive l'Italie," was hummed and whistled and attained to the honor of adoption by vaudeville writers. His next work was "La Langue Musicale," which, despite some pretty music, failed, owing to the silliness of the libretto. In the spring of 1830, "Manon Lescaut," a ballet, charming in melody and brilliant in orchestration, was produced with great success, and was published. Then came in 1832 the ballet-opera, "La Tentation," written in collaboration with Casimir Gide, and though it was well received it brought no fame to Halévy. He had worked faithfully and indefatigably, but as yet without winning the recognition for which he so fervently hoped. Opera after opera was composed with remarkable rapidity, to meet with no greater prosperity than a *succés d'estime*. A one-act comic opera, "Les Souvenirs de Lafleur," brought him no better fortune. Hérold dying in 1833, and leaving his opera, "Ludovic," unfinished, Halévy completed it, composing for the first act a fine quartet that was always encored, and writing the whole of the second act. Still, the composer failed to win fame; but the clouds were about to dissipate suddenly and to display his sun at once, in its fullest glory.

In 1835, "La Juive" was given at the Grand Opera, and Halévy was hailed as a master composer. The work was received with a frenzy of delight, and in the wild enthusiasm it aroused, the composer enjoyed all that follows recognized genius and well-earned fame in the capital of France. This work opened to him every opera house in Europe, and a career of brilliant success. In the same year in which this masterpiece saw the light, he produced a work of a character so wholly different as to excite wonder that it could have come from the same composer. It is, however, no less great in its way, and was no less overwhelmingly successful. This was "L'Eclair," a musical comedy for two tenors and two sopranos only, and without choruses. It is exquisitely charming, a model of artistic skill and profound knowledge gracefully employed. These works won for him admission to the Institute, where he succeeded Reiche. Halévy was then thirty-seven years old, and had reached his highest point of greatness, for though he wrote many more operas, he never again equalled "La Juive" and "L'Eclair."

The year after "La Juive" was produced, Meyerbeer's "Les Huguenots" appeared and proved to be an epoch-making opera. Its instant and enormous success had an unfavorable effect on Halévy, for he abandoned his own peculiar individuality of style, and became a follower, if not an imitator of Meyerbeer. Still worse, for in his eagerness to compose, he was not particular in his choice of librettos, and accepted any to which music could be written. The result was a series of opera books, mostly of a gloomy turn, that no music could deprive of their tiresomeness or make interesting. Under this unwise course of action he soon exhausted his musical invention and became nearly as dull as were his librettos. "Les Mousquetaires de la Reine," and "Le Val d'Andorre," two fine operas, must be excepted.

His industry was astonishing, as will be seen by

the following complete list of the works that succeed his two crowning triumphs: "Guido et Ginevra," grand opera, five acts, 1838; "Les Treize," comic opera, three acts, and "Le Shérif," comic opera, three acts, 1839; "Le Drapier," comic opera, three acts, 1840; "Le Guiterrara," comic opera, three acts, and "La Reine de Chypre," grand opera, five acts, 1843; "Le Lazzarone," comic opera, two acts, 1844; "Les Mousquetaires de la Reine," comic opera, three acts, 1846; "Le Val d'Andorre," comic opera, three acts, 1848; incidental music for "Prométhée Enchainé," and "La Fée aux Roses," comic opera, three acts, 1849; "La Tempesta," grand opera, three acts, and "La Dame de Pique," comic opera, three acts, 1850; "Le Juif Errant," grand opera, five acts, 1852; "Le Nabab," comic opera, three acts, 1853; "Jaquarita l'Indienne," comic opera, three acts, 1855; "Valentine d'Aubigny," comic opera, three acts, 1856; "La Magicienne," grand opera, five acts, 1858; "Noé," grand opera, five acts (unfinished); "Les Plages du Nil," cantata with chorus and orchestra, besides numerous vocal pieces and some music for the pianoforte. Of all these operas only "Les Mousquetaires" and "Le Val d'Andorre" survive through occasional performances. The latter, when originally produced, saved the Opera Comique from bankruptcy, and ten years later relieved the Théâtre Lyrique from pecuniary difficulties against which it then struggled.

CARICATURE OF HALÉVY BY DANTAN.
From the Carnavalet Museum, Paris.

In addition to the production of this immense mass of operatic music, Halévy was able to fill the part of one of the principal professors at the Conservatoire. In 1831 he was made professor of counterpoint and fugue, and in 1840 he became professor of composition. He wrote a book of instruction, entitled, "Leçons de lecture musicale," which first appeared in 1857. It remains, in a revised form, the accepted text-book for teaching solfeggio in the primary schools of Paris. Among his more distinguished pupils were Gounod, Victor Massé, Bazin and Bizet, the last named of whom married Halévy's daughter.

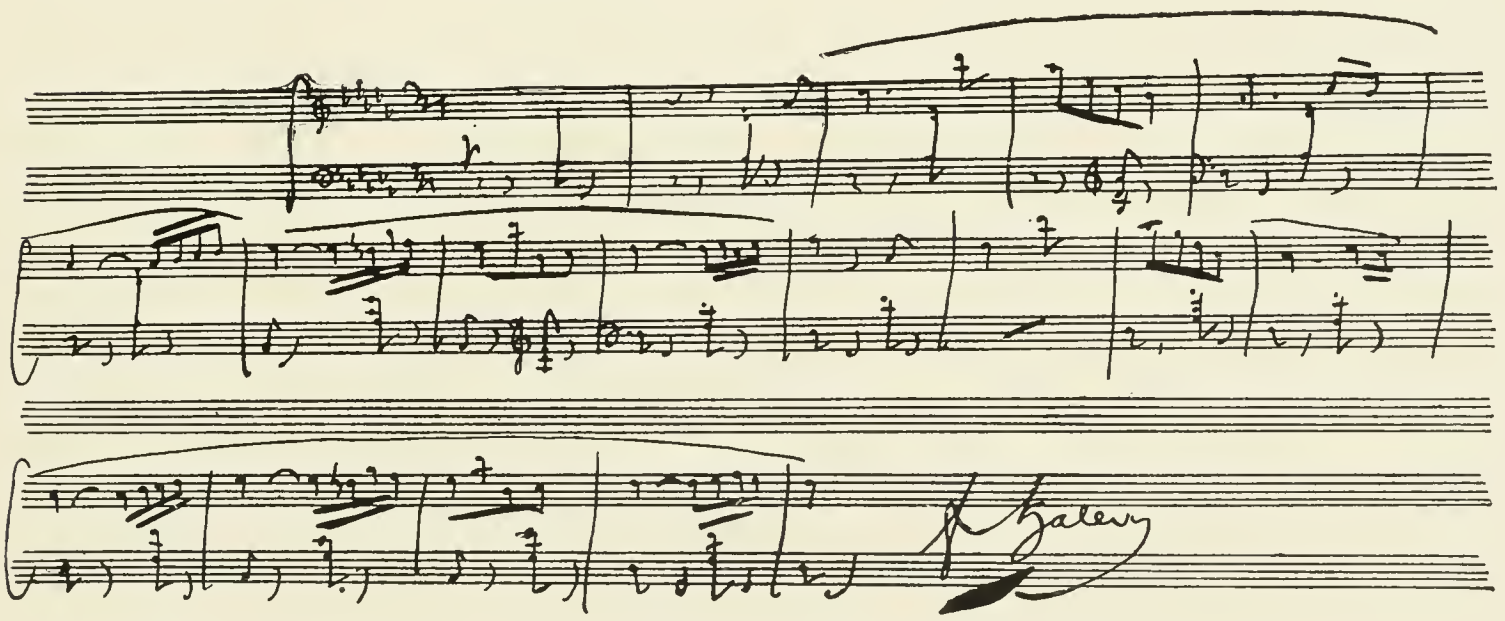
In 1854 he was made permanent secretary of the Académie des Beaux Arts. It was a part of his duties in this office to pronounce eulogiums. These he published, with additions, in 1869, under the title, "Souvenirs et Portraits, études sur les beaux arts." They are gracefully written, and are entertaining and edifying reading. In 1861 the severe work to which he had subjected himself, began to tell on his health. A southern climate was ordered by his physicians. He selected Nice, whither he departed with his family in December, 1861. It was too late, and moreover, in the comparative quiet of his new abode he missed the excitement to which he had been accustomed. His debility rendered work almost impossible, and his depression in consequence was painfully intensified. The end came March 17, 1862. His body was taken to Paris and buried on the 24th of the same month, with great ceremony. "La Juive" was revived at the Grand Opera in honor of his memory, on the 29th of May, and his bust, the work of his widow, was crowned on the stage.

Halévy was a highly gifted man. In addition to his genius for music, he had innate talent for writing and was an excellent poet and a brilliant literateur. He was acquainted with German, Italian,

HALÉVY'S TOMB IN PÉRE LACHAISE, PARIS.

From a photograph made specially for this work.

English and Latin and also with Hebrew and Greek. As a composer, though he was a musician of rare talents, he wrote too much, too rapidly and too carelessly, to do himself full justice. His two masterpieces are almost immeasurably above any of his other operas. In these latter, we meet, now and then, with moments of great beauty, with scenes of thrilling dramatic power, but they are in the midst of much that is oppressively dull owing to the rigid obscurity of style in which they are written. He seems to have had so sensitive a fear of falling into commonplace that he went to the opposite extreme, even avoiding clearly marked rhythms. His mannerisms were a persistent resort to the minor key, a fondness for a soft pianissimo effect on the lower notes, long held, to be regularly and suddenly opposed by a loud crash of the whole orchestra on the upper notes; unexpected and violent contrasts in dynamics that are mere capricious effects without any logical cause; prolixity and over-deliberately following a sombre strain with one of great brilliancy, and vice versa. In all his scores, however, his fine genius is manifested, and it is impossible to study one of them carefully without becoming impressed by the vigor, the affluence and the flexibility of his genius. He was equally at home in the gloom of tragedy and the gaiety of piquant comedy. In scenes of pomp in



Fac-simile autograph manuscript by Halévy in possession of the Paris Opera Library.

which the stage is crowded with characters concerned in some high festivity, he is peculiarly felicitous. He was a master of passion in its every aspect, and when he is at his best here, he never sounds a false note. His characters are always strongly defined, and no composer has left behind him a more masterly collection of vivid stage portraits than has he. He was essentially the bard of melancholy, as his many exquisitely tender and mournful melodies testify. One of the typical characteristics of his music is its refined distinction. His abhorrence of triviality was so keen that it caused him often to go too far out of his way to avoid it, and the result was that he overfrequently fastened on his music a labored aspect that was fatal to the impression of spontaneity in effect. When he was less self-conscious, however, his music flows with delightful ease, lucidity and naturalness. His instrumentation is that of a thorough master. He had a fine sense of tone color, and his scores are rarely overloaded. He was an innovator in the use and treatment of wind instruments, and anticipated many effects that have been claimed for those who came after him.

In "La Juive" the orchestration is, in point of richness, originality and variety of powerful contrasts, much in advance of anything previously known in French opera; and his instrumentation of

" L'Eclair," in its freshness, vivacity and piquancy, was no less innovating, and notable in a lighter direction. In " La Juive " he had a libretto which is among the finest that were ever set to music. Its tragic story is told with immense effect, and the poet's knowledge of the needs of a composer is manifested with masterly ability. Halévy never again obtained such a book. How felicitously it inspired him, is seen in the first act in the impressive reply of the Cardinal to Eleazar's contempt for the Christians; in the romance sung by Leopold to Rachel; in the chorus of the people at the fountain which runs with wine; in the magnificent chorus and march which precede the brilliant entrance of the Emperor, and ending with the stirring Te Deum and the welcome to the Emperor. In the second act, the Passover scene in Eleazar's house is full of interest in its Jewish elements, with which Halévy, himself a Jew, must have been in complete sympathy. In the same act there are the fiery duet between Eudoxia and Leopold, and the other duet, equally spirited and intense in effect, between Rachel and Leopold, both masterpieces in their way, and speedily followed by the no less splendid dramatic aria sung by Rachel to her father, and in which she announces her love for Leopold; the climax of this wonderful act being reached in the thrilling trio, in which Eleazar pronounces the curse. The next act, with its brilliant pageantries, falls short of that which precedes it, but has an immensely dramatic, concerted number which culminates in the anathema by the Cardinal. The fourth act rises to the level of the second, with its noble duet between Eleazar and the Cardinal, the tremendous scene of the Jew in which he savagely defies his Christian foes and welcomes death. The last act is for the most part declamatory, and has no such numbers as those we have named, but the impressive dramatic intensity of the work is maintained to the end.

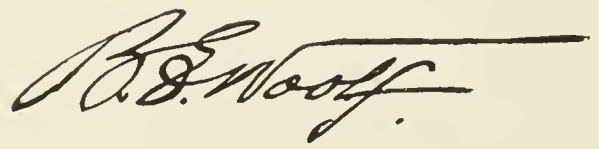
In " Guido et Ginevra," he tries to repeat the success of " La Juive," but despite several fine flights of genius he failed, not only owing to the morbidly sad and dull nature of the play, but to the heaviness of the music. He was more successful with " La Reine de Chypre," an essentially spectacular opera, which, by the way, was analyzed by Wagner in one of his Paris letters (1841). The score is often brilliant and melodious, and it contains some movingly pathetic melodies, but it is uneven in excellence, and has pages on pages of music so obscure in meaning and so dull in effect that its interest is often impaired. Almost the same criticism may be made on his next grand opera, " Charles VI." Moreover, by this time, Meyerbeer's " Les Huguenots " had been produced, and Halévy, carried away by the enthusiasm with which that work filled him, consciously or otherwise, deserted his own marked individuality and became, to all intents and purposes, a follower of Meyerbeer, at least in grand opera. In his " Le Val d'Andorre " he became himself again, for the time being, and produced a lyric drama that fell little short of perfection in the complete sympathy with which the composer identified himself with the poet. There Halévy sounded the very depths of passionate grief, in the music he has given to Rosa after her lover has been drawn as conscript. In " Les Mousquetaires de la Reine " he produced a delightful score, sparkling, chivalrous in spirit and full of beauties. For the rest there is little to be said that would not be in the way of repetition. His " La Tempesta," written for Her Majesty's Theatre, London, was received there with enthusiastic favor, but although there are some genuine beauties in the work, especially in the finely characteristic music given to Caliban, it has nothing in it that entitles it to live. Halévy was greatly piqued that the one melody most praised by the artists, and that was hummed by everybody, was Dr. Arne's " Where the bee sucks," which he had retained for Ariel. With all his fecundity in melody Halévy rarely wrote one that achieved general popularity. The most noted exception is " Quand de la nuit l'épais nuage " from " L'Eclair," a charming air, simple, chaste, and delicious in its tender grace. He seldom, however, vouchsafed so unaffected a tune, the harmonies of which are for the most part confined to the tonic and dominant. The romance " Pendant la fête une inconnue," from " Guido et Genevra," is another morceau, scarcely less naïve and delicate, that long survived the opera in which it appeared, but it did not make the tour of the world as did the other. His comic operas abound in fascinating music which is buried, and must remain so, in the uninteresting librettos that he so thoughtlessly accepted. In that dreary book, " Le Drapier," there is a glorious duet, " Ah! devenez mon père." But there is not an opera of his in which some perfect gem is not to be found. His fecundity in melody is impressively exemplified in

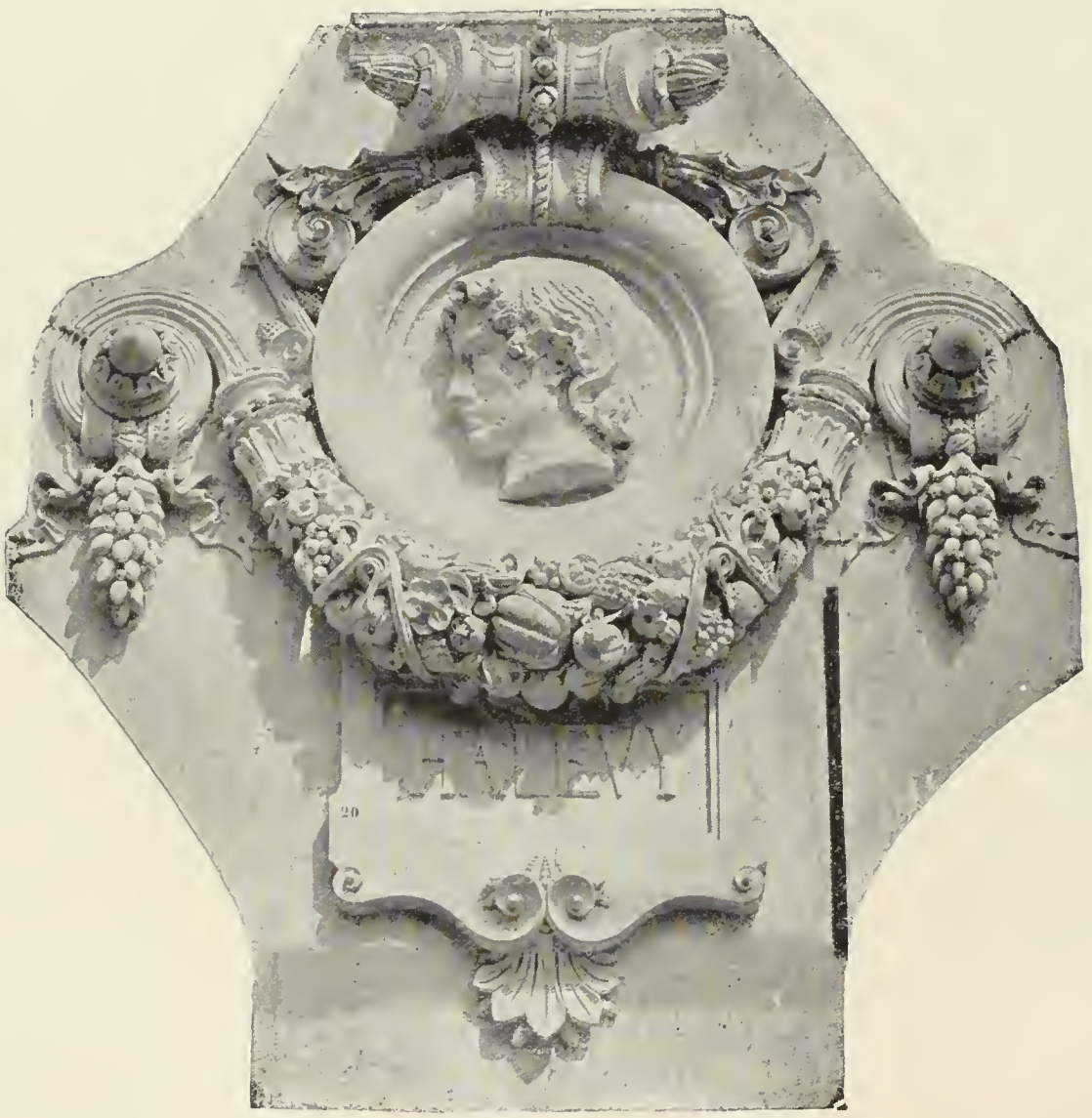
the fairy-opera "La Fée aux Roses," of which the score is affluent in charming music, sensuously oriental in style, beautiful in local color, and of striking originality in orchestral treatment. He made an attempt to revive the enharmonic scale of the Greeks in his "Prométhée Enchainé," the translation of which had been made by his brother. It was a bold adventure, but it failed. It must be confessed that it is monotonous because of lack of variety in the orchestration, owing to the almost continuous use of wind instruments to the neglect of the strings. The recitatives are noble, and the chorus of the Océanides is one of his most classical and beautiful compositions.

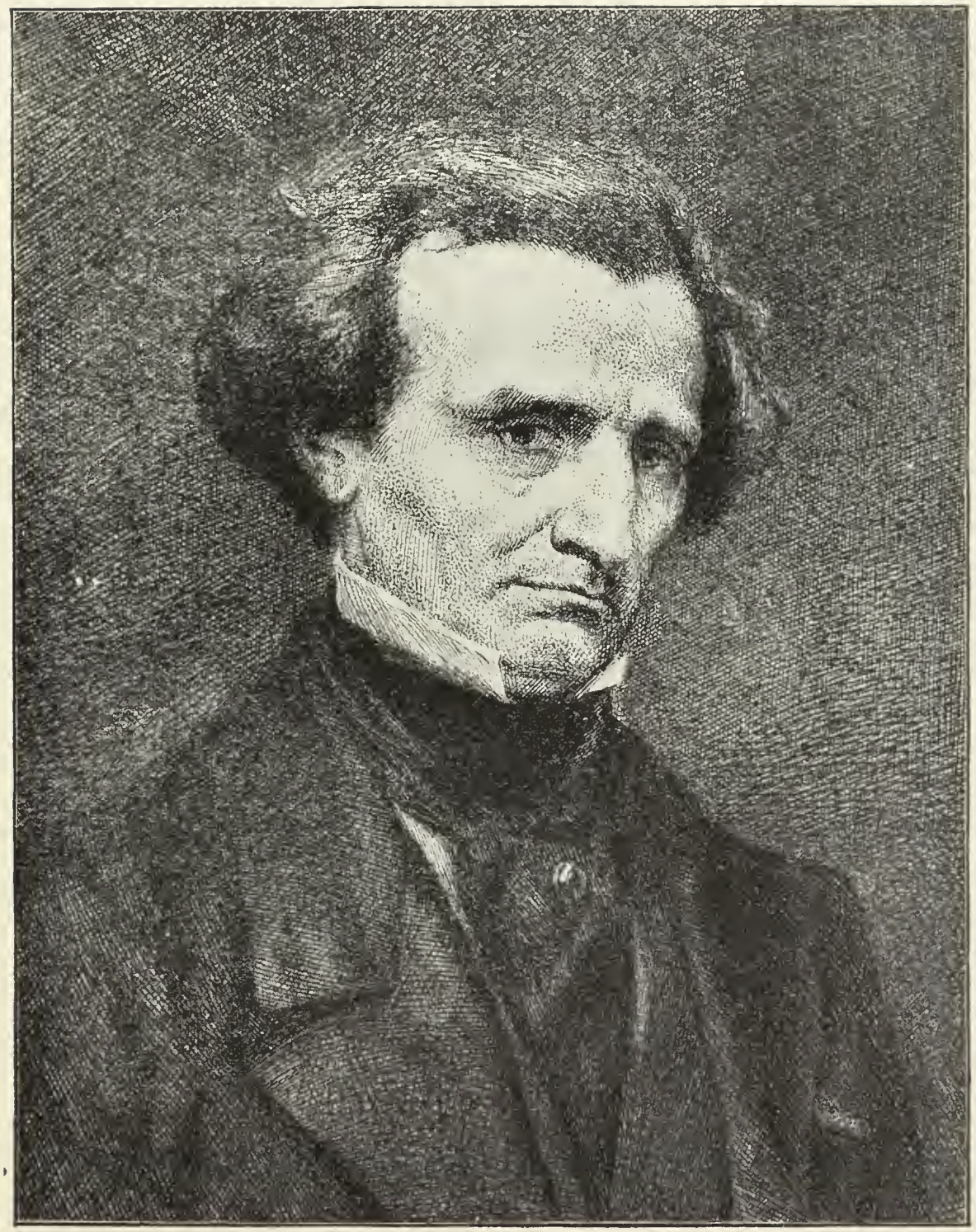
CARICATURE OF HALÉVY BY CARJAT.
From the Paris illustrated paper "Le Gaulois."

Halévy, despite all his industry and the fame he enjoyed through his greatest successes, made no lasting impression on the music of his day. Even "La Juive," notwithstanding its power and its brilliancy, found no imitators, and "L'Eclair" still stands alone, the only example in its *genre*. It is sad that an artist should have labored so long and so well, should have been a thorough master of his art, and yet have fallen almost into obscurity thirty years after his death. A careful examination of some of his more ambitious operas shows that he was, in some respects, slightly in advance of his time, especially in his tendency to avoid purely rhythmical airs in favor of what is now called "Endless Melody," but there is no likelihood that the future will revive his works. It was his misfortune that Meyerbeer's star rose so early after the appearance of "La Juive," and that Halévy was drawn into the vortex that the rage for the composer of "Les Huguenots" made. If he had followed the example of the latter, had written music to none but good librettos, economized his talents instead of wasting them in a reckless ambition to produce music; if he had also adhered firmly to his own individual originality instead of permitting himself to be unreasonably influenced by the success of another, his operas might have had a stronger claim than they have on the favorable consideration of posterity. When Halévy wrote "La Juive," the time was ripe for a great revolution in French grand opera, and he just escaped becoming an epoch-maker at his art. Meyerbeer appeared at that moment, and to him fell the honor that was just within Halévy's grasp. Whether the latter would have seized it if his rival's career had been delayed, it is hard to say, for his lack of discrimination in the choice of opera books was already deep-seated. Saint Beuve says of him: "'La Juive,' 'Guido,' 'La Reine de Chypre,' 'Charles VI,' are true lyric tragedies on which are the seal of beauties that time cannot obliterate. Some works, that appeal more readily to the tastes of the masses, have been dowered with greater popularity, but the decision of those who know is the only one that appeals to a conscientious artist, and of this, Halévy received an ample share. We think we are not mistaken in saying that as musical education becomes more wide-spread, the popularity of Halévy will grow." This, however, is doubtful, and it is more than probable that Halévy himself felt that he had not wholly accomplished his mission, for Saint Beuve, who knew him well, also says, "It is strange that this estimable man, always full of work, should sometimes have nursed a secret sorrow. What it was, not even his most cherished and trusted

friends ever knew. He never complained." Who shall say that this secret sorrow, so silently guarded, was not born of a sense of failure, or at least, of self-disappointment! It is not improbable that toward the close of his busy art-life he saw, with prophetic eye, the fate that was to attend the greater part of what he had composed; that he had written for his own time and not for the future. Already he has become little more than a name to nearly all, except students of musical history. The works on which his fame chiefly rests are seldom performed, and the others, admirable as many of them are, have gone into oblivion, and in all probability, never to see the light again. That he was a master in his art, is unquestionable, but it would seem also that he was lacking in that highest quality of genius that confers immortality on its possessor.







HECTOR BERLIOZ

Reproduction of a portrait engraved by A. Gilbert after a painting by G. Courbet.

BERLIOZ

HECTOR BERLIOZ

MORE than a score of years have passed since Berlioz died, in Paris, that city which was the object of his youthful dreams, the scene of his bitter struggles and his sublime defeats. It was in the midst of those Parisians, who had accorded him little more than mockery and scorn, that he had wished to die, weighed down by sadness and discouragement, supported by a few intimate friends and rare disciples. Moreover, did he not foresee that sad end when writing the following lines which subsequent events proved only too true? "It was about that time of my academic life that I experienced again the attack of a cruel malady (moral, nervous, imaginary, whatever you like) which I will call sickness of isolation, and which will kill me some day . . . This is not spleen, though it leads to that later on; it is the boiling away, the evaporation of the heart, the senses, the brain, the nervous fluid. Spleen is the congelation of all that, it is the block of ice." Therefore death was for him a blessed release. For some years before, there remained of Hector Berlioz nothing but an earthly frame, an inert and suffering body; the moral being was crushed. The fall of *The Trojans* was the rudest possible shock to that nature so well tempered to receive it; hitherto the proud artist had returned blow for blow; never had a defeat, however grave, completely overthrown him. For the first time, in witnessing the downfall of the work of his predilection, the athlete had faltered. He had laid down his arms and thenceforth, weary of life and of the struggle, had contented himself with the hollow diversions which the capital offered him, "preoccupied solely with material interests, inattentive and indifferent to that which impassions poets and artists, having a morbid taste for scandal and mockery, laughing with a dry and mirthless laugh when this strange taste is gratified." A certain heartache, a vague suffering of the soul, vain regrets, preyed upon him at least as much as bodily ills; his shade alone wandered among us, dumb, taciturn, *isolated*, and one beautiful morning in the month of March it vanished.

Berlioz's militant career may be divided into two distinct periods; that in which he struggles for position, and which lasts from his arrival in Paris until after *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Funeral and Triumphal Symphony*, in 1842; that in which, tired of struggling without profit though not without glory, he starts off to establish his reputation outside the frontier, and to return afterwards to Paris, victorious and triumphant; this lasts until his death. So soon as he achieved a success abroad, great or small, "Be sure that Paris knows it!" was the cry to his friends. And Paris, being informed of it, had forgotten it instantly. It was during the intervals between these tours, when he came back to France to see if his foreign successes had given him a better standing in the eyes of his countrymen, that his last principal works were produced: *The Damnation of Faust*, *The Childhood of Christ*, *The Te Deum* and *Beatrice and Benedict*, finally *The Trojans*.

It was towards the end of 1821 that Berlioz came to Paris, ostensibly to study medicine, but with a secret longing to devote himself to music. He was then nearly eighteen years of age, being born at La Côte Saint-André (Isère), Dec. 11, 1803, and had already received some lessons in music from the poor stranded artists at La Côte. We are indebted to Berlioz himself for the names of these artists, which were Imbert and Dorant.

On arriving at Paris, where his father, a simple health officer, but a devotee to the sciences and to medicine, had allowed him to come on the express condition that he should follow exactly the course of the Faculty, he set to work as best he could to carry out this program. But one evening he goes to the Opera to hear Salieri's *Danaïdes*: immediately music regains possession of his soul,

and he spends all his spare time in the library of the *Conservatoire*, studying the scores of Gluck's operas; there he meets a pupil of Lesueur who introduces him to that master, and he attaches himself with much affection to the author of the *Bardes*, who admits him to his class. At length he informs his family of his settled determination to devote himself to music, and he has performed at Saint-Roch a mass which he burns almost immediately after, saving only the *Resurrexit* which obtains grace in his sight, at least for a time. He then took part in the preparatory concours for the prize of Rome, and was not even judged worthy to be a competitor. Immediately summoned home by his parents, who had no faith in his "pretended irresistible vocation," he arrived there so sad, so crushed, so misanthropic, that his father, uneasy about him, permitted him to return to try once more his fortune in Paris. He came back for the winter of 1826, having nothing to live on but a small allowance from his family, on which he was obliged to economize in order to pay back, little by little, a loan which a friend had made him for the execution of his mass. His existence at this time, which was shared by another student, his friend Carbonnel, was a very miserable one, their meals consisting on certain days of vegetables and dried fruits. He gave lessons in solfeggio at a franc a lesson, and even applied for the position of chorus-singer at the *Théâtre des Nouveautés*. But artistic pleasures counterbalanced the material privations, and his heart danced for joy whenever he could go to the *Opéra* or to the *Odéon* and hear some masterpiece by Spontini, Gluck or Weber; his fourth god, Beethoven, was not revealed to him till two years later, when Habeneck founded the *Société des concerts du Conservatoire* for the dissemination of the works of that prodigious genius. He continued however in the classes of Lesueur and Reicha, so that he was able to pass the preliminary examination for the concours of 1828. The subject given out by the board of examiners was a scene from *Orpheus torn to pieces by Bacchantes*, and Berlioz's music was declared by the judges as *impossible to be played*. His only response was to prepare for its performance at the concert to be given at the Conservatoire, the superintendent of the Beaux Arts, M. de Larochefoucauld, to whom he had been recommended, having placed that hall at his disposal, notwithstanding the violent protestations of the director, Cherubini. But chance favored the self-love of the members of the Institute, for Berlioz was obliged to give up his plan, on account of an indisposition of the singer Alexis Dupont.

It would have been strange indeed, if Berlioz, with his ardent imagination and brain always on fire, had allowed the romantic movement to pass by without attaching himself to it with all the fury and passion which he threw into everything. He soon became one of the leaders of the new school, poor enough in musicians, counting only himself and Monpau, whereas it abounded in writers and artists. Like all his comrades in romanticism, even exceeding them all, Berlioz was an enthusiastic and constant visitor at the *Odéon*, where some of Shakespeare's plays were then being given by a company of English tragedians. Here he received a double blow; from Shakespeare who floored him, as he said, and from Miss Smithson who intoxicated him. It was to attract the attention of the beautiful tragedienne that he organized, with his overtures to *Waverley* and *Francs-Juges* and his cantata of *la Mort d'Orphée*, a concert which she never heard anything about. It was also this idea of reaching her through the medium of music which inspired him to write his *Fantastic Symphony*, in which he put himself in the scene with his beloved, and which, in fact, was to end by gaining him Miss Smithson's heart.

As these first attempts of Berlioz are little known, it is well to specify them, if for no other reason than because one may find in these forgotten pieces the plan of certain pages of the *Damnation of Faust* and the *Childhood of Christ*. His overtures to *Waverley* and to the *Francs-Juges* were performed for the first time at the concert which he gave at the Conservatoire, in honor of Miss Smithson, May 26, 1828; on this occasion he also had played the *Resurrexit* from his first mass, in place of *The Death of Orpheus*, which could not be given owing to the illness of Alexis Dupont, a march of the Magi going to visit the manger, and a grand scene on the Greek Revolution. Finally, on the 1st of November, 1829, he had his two overtures repeated, together with his *Resurrexit* under a new title, *The last Judgment*, and a new work entitled *Chorus of Sylphs*, the plan of which is as follows: "Mephistopheles, in order to excite in Faust's soul the love of pleasure, assembles the sprites of the air and bids them sing. After a prelude on their magic instruments, they describe an enchanted country, the inhabitants of which are intoxicated

with perpetual delights. Gradually the charm operates, the voices of the Sylphs die away and Faust, fallen asleep, remains plunged in delicious dreams." Everybody knows to-day what this adorable bit has become.

In the meantime Berlioz obtained the "Prix de Rome" in July, 1830, after having tried for it four times in vain. He set out at once for Rome, first giving, however, a farewell concert at which was played his cantata of *Sardanapalus* and the *Fantastic Symphony*, aimed at Miss Smithson whom Berlioz execrated because of her ignorant indifference, and who, moreover, had not the slightest suspicion of his mad passion and frantic hatred. The young composer departed quite proud of his success and also of the sharp response of Cherubini who said, when asked if he was going to hear the new production of Berlioz, "I do not need to go to find out *how things should not be done*." He stayed in Italy nearly two years, in order to conform to the regulations of the Academy, but it was time wasted for him from an artistic point of view. With his just and profound distaste for Italian music, he was in no condition to be benefited by it. The only comfort he took was in fleeing to the country, where he strolled with his new friend Mendelssohn; but this companionship proved uncongenial and was short-lived. He shortened his sojourn in Italy as much as possible, and as soon as the director Horace Vernet gave him leave, he returned to Paris, taking with him an overture to King Lear and the monodrama of *Lelio or the Return to Life*, a series of old pieces worked over, which completed the *Fantastic Symphony*. This work he could have done just as well in Paris as in Rome; indeed he would probably have accomplished more by remaining in Paris, instead of strolling about the country near Rome playing on his guitar and frittering away his time.

MISS SMITHSON.
Reproduction of a French lithograph portrait by Francis — published in 1827.

On his return to Paris he felt a reawakening of his passion for Miss Smithson, who had been temporarily forgotten and patronizingly dubbed "the Smithson girl," while his heart was interested elsewhere. At the time of his setting out for Rome, he had thoughts for none but the young and attractive pianiste, Marie Moke, whom he had known through his friend Ferdinand Hiller; to her he had shown some attention, finally declaring to her his uncontrollable passion.

This young lady had coolly married Camille Pleyel — a name which she was to make famous as a virtuoso — while her mad lover, her pretended fiancé, was in Italy.

He made haste, as soon as he got back to Paris, to organize a concert for the purpose of performing in honor of Miss Smithson, the *Fantastic Symphony*, and on that day (Dec. 9, 1832) he experienced a double triumph, since this masterpiece, which she believed to be inspired by herself, deeply touched the tragedienne and won her heart for Berlioz. Little did she suspect that this composition had been written with a view to stigmatize her, at the time when Berlioz was madly in love with Mademoiselle Moke, and that before going to Rome he had it played in honor of Mademoiselle Moke, as it was now being given in Miss Smithson's honor. Meanwhile, the families of the two lovers made just opposition to their fine projects for the future; but Berlioz and his fiancée taking the lead, strove their utmost to overcome these obstacles, and to tie the indissoluble bond which was to render them equally miserable.

During all these negotiations the English Theatre of Paris was obliged to close its doors, and Miss

Smithson, who had assumed direction of it, found herself without resources, not having enough to pay the debts of the enterprise. To make matters worse, she broke her leg while getting out of a carriage, in which she was going about to organize a benefit concert. While she was confined to the house by her accident, Berlioz had the customary "respectful summons" to make to her family, and as soon as she was well he married her; "she was mine," he said, "and I bade defiance to every thing!" The young household was not rolling in wealth; the wife had nothing but her debts, and the husband had but three hundred francs which a friend had lent him. No matter, even a sad life is not without its sunshine. Berlioz was obliged to have recourse to his pen, and began to write for the newspapers through sheer necessity, a thing which he had hitherto done through love of controversy and in self-defence.

His first appearance in literature was made in 1829 in the *Correspondent,* with a pretty well developed article on Beethoven, whom the artists and amateurs of Paris were just beginning to know, thanks to Habeneck and his *Société des Concerts* at the Conservatoire. He also furnished some articles to the *Revue Européenne* and the *Courrier de l'Europe;* finally, that influential paper, the *Gazette musicale de Paris,* which in 1881 ended a glorious career of forty-seven years, espoused Berlioz's cause, and worked faithfully for his success. Shortly after, in 1835 he allied himself with the *Journal des Débats* as musical critic, a post which he held for thirty years, finding in its proprietors, MM. Bertin, staunch friends and protectors. Besides giving him a comfortable living, Berlioz's articles served him at first in establishing relations with the press, as much as they injured him later by exciting bitter jealousy and enmity.

It was in the midst of financial difficulties that Berlioz wrote the symphony *Harold in Italy,* inspired no doubt by his own excursions in the vicinity of Rome. In this he introduced a viola part for Paganini, but the part was too much subordinated to the orchestra to suit the great violinist, who desired a veritable concerto with a simple orchestral accompaniment; fortunately Berlioz did not give heed to this demand. The performance of *Harold* (Nov. 23, 1834) made Berlioz known to connoisseurs, and soon after M. de Gasparin, Minister of the Interior, ordered of him a Requiem for the anniversary service of the victims, not of the Revolution of 1830, but of the Fieschi outrage. This *Requiem* did not reach its destination, but was performed at the celebrated service in the church of the *Invalides,* Dec. 5, 1837, for the French soldiers and General Danrémont, killed at the siege of Constantine.

Fortune seemed at last to smile on the persistent efforts of the young composer, when a failure came to overturn his fond hopes. His opera *Benvenuto Cellini,* written on a poem by Léon de Nailly and Auguste Barbier, was performed at the *Opéra* Sept. 10, 1838; it was well sustained by Mmes. Stolz and Dorus-Gras, but badly rendered by Duprez, and disappeared from the bills after three performances, the celebrated tenor not wishing to appear in a work in which he was quite eclipsed by the two prima donnas. Berlioz, in order to recover from the effect of this failure, organized two Conservatoire concerts, thinking that the performance of the *Fantastic Symphony* would recompense him for the loss of his rights at the *Opéra.* The first concert barely covered expenses, but the second had a memorable result. Scarcely was the symphony ended when a man jumped upon the platform, and kissed the hands of the stupefied composer. The next day Berlioz received a letter in which, as a token of admiration, he was asked to accept a sum of twenty thousand francs, and this letter was signed by the enthusiastic listener of the evening before, Nicolo Paganini. This sum — whether it was, as some think, a secret manifestation of Bertin's liberality, or whether it was really given by Paganini for the purpose of defending himself in the eyes of the Parisians against an accusation of avarice — made Berlioz easy in his finances for some little time, and enabled him to work with an unperturbed mind. He profited by the first hours of leisure which he had found since his return, and wrote first his symphony with solos and choruses, *Romeo and Juliet,* which he dedicated to his official benefactor and which was first heard Nov. 24, 1839, and then the grand *Funeral and Triumphal Symphony,* performed at the inauguration of the column of July in in 1840. He also wrote, about this time, a number of songs or choral compositions, and the brilliant overture *Le Carnival Romain.*

The year 1842 was an important date in Berlioz's career. From that time his life was a divided one. Misunderstood in his own country, disheartened by

NICOLO PAGANINI.

From a drawing by Ingres in Rome, 1818. Engraved by Calamatta. Paganini in his thirty-fourth year.

his unsuccessful attempts to win the heart of the great public, inconsolable for the failure of *Benvenuto* which closed to him forever the doors of the Academy of Music, he resolved to undertake an artistic tour through Europe, and began with Belgium in the latter part of the year 1842. He met with rather more success there than in France, though he was still the subject of heated discussion. He took with him a decidedly mediocre singer, Mademoiselle Martin Recio, who had made a failure at the Opéra, and had managed to attach herself to him. He married her later, soon after the death of Miss Smithson, from whom he had been separated; but he was no happier in his second marriage than in his first; his first wife drank, his second made unjustifiable pretensions as a singer, which always exasperated him. After this little excursion to Belgium, Berlioz determined to try his fortune in Germany, where already some of his works had found their way; from this time onward, his life was nothing more than a series of journeys through France and foreign countries. His first grand tour was through northern Germany. At Leipsic he saw Mendelssohn, whom he met on the best of terms, forgetting all about their youthful quarrels; at Dresden he inspired an equal devotion on the part of Richard Wagner, who received him as a brother and treated him as a master; at Berlin he was no less warmly welcomed by Meyerbeer, who recruited the necessary artists for him and enabled him to direct a part of his *Requiem*.

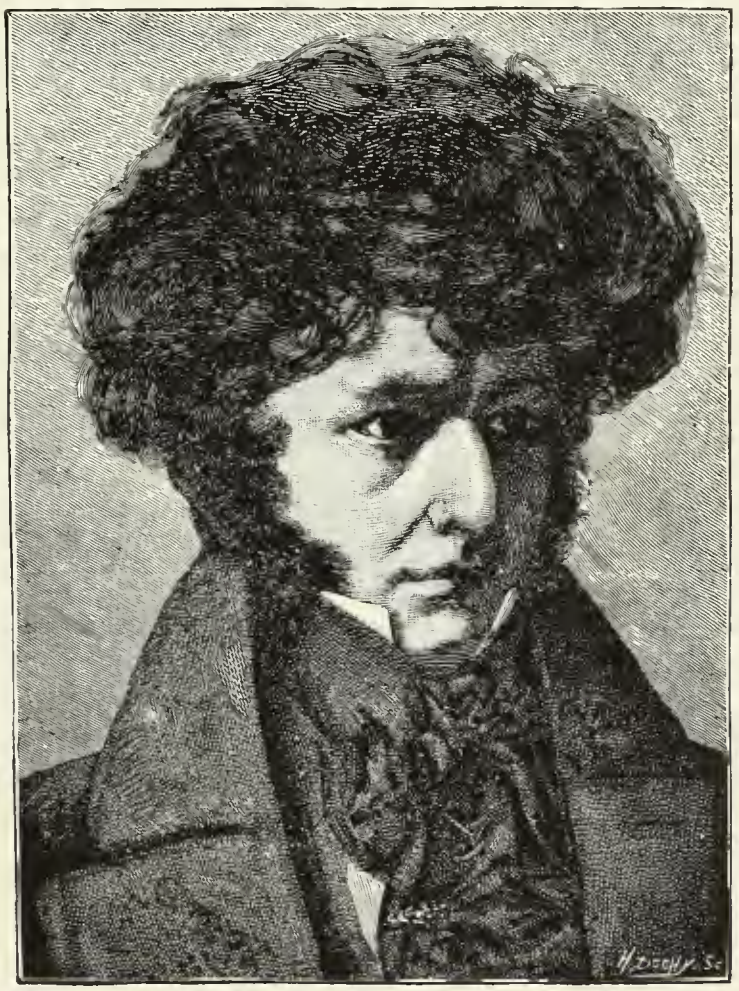
On his return to Paris he organized, first, a monster festival at the Exposition of the Products of Industry, in August, 1844, then four grand concerts at the Circus of the Champs Elysées, early in 1845; but these gigantic concerts which it had always been his aim to direct, brought him no profit. Not discouraged by this, however, he gave grand concerts at Marseilles and at Lyons, the modest success of which was due partly to curiosity, partly to surprise. After that he went to Austria, Bohemia and Hungary; this tour was scarcely finished when he rushed off to Lille to organize a grand festival there on the occasion of the inauguration of the Northern railroad. Finally in the summer of 1846 he returned to Paris, and after having given a magnificent performance of his *Requiem* in the Saint Eustache church, he decided to bring before the public his most important work, *The Damnation of Faust*. The first performance took place on December 6, before a small audience. The solos were sung by Roger, Hermann, Leon, Henri, and Madame Duflôt-Maillard, who had no better comprehension of the music than the public. The second performance was given on Sunday the 20th, before an equally small house, with a tenor who had to omit the *Invocation to Nature*. This convinced Berlioz that he was still far from having conquered his own country. He departed for Russia, deeply wounded by the indifference of his countrymen.

Some of his Paris friends had clubbed together to furnish him the means to go to St. Petersburg, whence he had received some brilliant offers. He achieved the greatest success there, with musicians as well as with the public, and the fact of his having formerly befriended Glinka at Paris had its effect in enlisting sympathies for him in Russia. On his way back he stopped at Berlin, where the *Damnation of Faust* was given with little enough appreciation, but where he received recognition from the sovereign and the princess of Prussia. When he got back again to Paris, crowned with laurels, and with money enough to settle all the debts incurred by the performance of the *Damnation of Faust* at the *Opéra Comique*, he worked hard to get the appointment at the *Opéra* of Duponchel and Roqueplan, who were talking of an immediate revival of *Benvenuto Cellini*, of mounting *la Nonne sanglante*, etc. Berlioz succeeded in getting them nominated directors, through the aid of the Bertins, but they no sooner had the official notice in their pockets than they utterly ignored Berlioz. The latter understood that he was holding a restraint upon them, and since, as he said, he was accustomed to this sort of proceedings, he took himself off to London in order to rid them of his troublesome presence. The affair of the Drury Lane concerts, unwisely entered into with the eccentric conductor Julien, terminated in bankruptcy, and the Revolution which followed in 1848 would have left Berlioz without a sou had not Victor Hugo and Louis Blanc obtained for the sworn disciple of the romantic school the humble post of librarian at the Conservatoire.

In August, 1848, Berlioz experienced one of the keenest sorrows of his life in the loss of his father. He went to Grenoble to attend his father's funeral, and in his Mémoires he gives a most touching account of the sad visit. It was about this time that his little *Chœur de Bergers* was given under the pseudonym of Pierce Ducré, at the concerts of the

Philharmonic Society, Saint Cecilia hall, Chaussée d'Antin. In 1852 his *Benvenuto* was given with great success at Weimar under the fervent direction of Liszt, but the next year the same opera utterly failed in London, where the Italians, said Berlioz, conspired to ruin it. By "Italians" Berlioz meant the orchestral conductor Costa and his party. Berlioz had accepted the preceding year the leadership of the New Philharmonic, and had made by his success, and attacks, a bitter enemy of the leader of the old *Philharmonic Society*.

After the Empire had been restored in France, Berlioz would have liked to see reëstablished in his own favor the high position which his master Lesueur had occupied under the first Empire; but all that he obtained was the privilege of performing a Te Deum, which he was holding in reserve for the coronation of the new sovereign, and it was Auber who was appointed master of music of the Imperial Chapel. In December, 1854, his sacred trilogy of the *Childhood of Christ*, completed and remodelled, was given with great success, and if it was performed but twice, it was only because Berlioz, — he had taken great care to announce it in advance, — was on the point of departing for Gotha, Weimar, and Brussels, where there was great eagerness to hear this new work. He returned to Paris the following March, and on the evening of April 30, 1855, the day preceding the Universal Exposition, he gave in Saint Eustache church the first performance of his grand *Te Deum* for three choruses, orchestra and organ. Afterwards when it became a question of engraving it, Berlioz was able to see how greatly he was admired in foreign lands, for the first subscribers were the kings of Hanover, Saxony, Prussia, the emperor of Russia, the king of Belgium and the queen of England. The following year he published a final and much enlarged edition of his excellent *Treatise on Modern Instrumentation and Orchestration*, originally brought out in 1844; he dedicated this work to the king of Prussia. On the 21st of June, 1856, after four *tours de scrutin*, he was nominated member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, replacing Adolphe Adam, who had refused to vote for him two years before and had helped to form the majority in favor of Clapisson. The following years were spent by Berlioz in organizing concerts at Weimar and in England, and above all in the composition of the great work on which he built his supreme hope of success in France, his tragedy of *Les Troyens*. Since 1856 he had been invited every year to Baden by Bénazet, contractor for the gaming tables, to organize grand concerts for the benefit of the visitors. Thus when the king of Baden, as Bénazet was called, concluded to build a new entertainment hall, it occurred to him at once that it would be a fine idea to get Berlioz to write something for its inauguration, and the latter, from the first mention of the subject, felt a reawakening of the desire which had been haunting him for thirty years, to write a comic opera, at once sentimental and gay, on certain scenes arranged by himself after Shakespeare's comedy *Much Ado About Nothing*. He acquitted himself of this agreeable task by fits and starts; the performance of the work at Baden took place three days sooner than he hoped, and the success was great enough with that cosmopolitan audience, in which the French predominated, to find an immediate echo at Paris. The following year Mesdames Viardot and Vendenheuvel-Duprez sung the delicious nocturne which closes the first act. For an instant Berlioz indulged in the hope that they were going



HECTOR BERLIOZ.
Reproduced from a portrait engraved after a painting by M. Signol — Rome — 1831.

to play his bit of comedy at the Opéra Comique, and in this fond hope he wrote two more things and had them engraved; but he was soon obliged to recognize that it would be impossible with such a director as Emile Perrin, and so thought no more about it. Besides, he was entirely occupied with his dear *Troyens* and the production of this beloved work absorbed his every thought. In 1857 he was all in the heat of the composition; he talked about his antique tragedy to M. Bennett, to Auguste Morel, to Hans von Bülow; in default of the music he read his poem at the salons, sometimes at M. Edouard Bertin's house, sometimes at his own, and everywhere he received the warmest congratulations. At a soirée at the Tuileries, the Empress spoke to him at length in regard to it, and immediately he proposed to read his poems to the sovereigns if the Emperor could find an hour to give him, but not until three acts were completed, so that they might order the immediate study of it at the Opéra. Alas, the Emperor, unlearned in matters of music, did not respond favorably to Berlioz's demands; he took no notice of his poem, and did not give the longed-for order to mount *Les Troyens* at the *Opéra*. But while Berlioz was chafing with impatience at seeing *La Favorite* and *Lucie*, translated by Alphonse Royer, played over and over again, and Halévy's *La Magicienne* and Félicien David's *Herculanum* pass him by, the Emperor, through the solicitations of the princess Metternich, opened the doors of the *Opéra* to Richard Wagner, and decreed that his *Tannhäuser* should be given with great pomp and magnificence.

The blow was a cruel one, and Berlioz, beside himself with rage and disappointment, attacked this unexpected rival and his opera with a fury that knew no bounds. He did not understand, unhappy man, that his cause was closely allied to that of Richard Wagner; the public, influenced by such critics as Scudo, Jouvin, Lasalle, Azevedo and Chadeuil, was equally hard on both of them and classed them together as a couple of dangerous madmen; no distinction was made between the two. The fall of *Tannhäuser*, towards which Berlioz had worked with all his energies, resulted in closing to him the stage of the Opéra, and it also assured in advance the unpopularity of *les Troyens* with the public ready to extol or condemn the two innovators without discrimination. Moreover he saw Gounod, Gevaert and many others gain access to the Opéra in preference to himself. At last quite worn out with disappointment, Berlioz decided to accept the offers of M. Carvalho. This manager had just reopened the *Théâtre Lyrique* and wished to make a great hit in order to obtain from the government a subsidy of a hundred thousand francs.

But it was no longer a question of playing the whole of *les Troyens* at the *Théâtre Lyrique;* they would content themselves now with playing the first three acts, subdivided into five, under the title of *les Troyens à Carthage*. The first part of the work Berlioz had published as *la Prise de Troie*, but he never heard it performed. *Les Troyens à Carthage* was given at the *Théâtre Lyrique* Nov. 4, 1863, and scored a failure, although nothing particularly hostile or unpleasant occurred on the opening night; the poor author even entertained faint hopes of future success. It was the cumulative effect of the scornful articles in nearly all the large newspapers, the ridicule of the smaller press and of the theatrical parodies, above all the absolute indifference of the public, leaving his cherished work to drag itself miserably through a score of performances, that disheartened Berlioz and killed him. His whole life, indeed, had hung upon this last hope of success, and with the conviction of genius, at the close of the general rehearsal he had exclaimed with tears coursing freely down his cheeks, "It is beautiful, it is sublime!" He retired to his house and lived there, taciturn, desolate, seeing only a few chosen friends who tried to console him, and cared for like a child by his mother-in-law; he had buried his second wife (June, 1862) by the side of the first, in Montmartre cemetery.

Thanks to the income from his compositions he was able to give up his post of musical critic of the *Débats*, which had become insupportable to him, and was made an officer of the Legion of Honor. He had been a chevalier for twenty-four years, having been appointed by M. de Gasparin in 1839, six months before the performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. At Paris he found some consolation in listening to selections from the *Childhood of Christ* at the concerts of the *Conservatoire*, and in seeing people give serious attention to his compositions and sometimes applaud them heartily, at the Popular Concerts recently founded by Pasdeloup. Only two or three times did he consent to go out of France; once to direct the *Damnation of Faust* at Vienna, whither he was invited by Herbeck, court

capellmeister; once to conduct the *Harold* Symphony at Cologne by the invitation of Ferdinand Hiller; finally to St. Petersburg at the very urgent solicitations of the grand duchess Helen, an enthusiastic admirer of his works. But on the eve of his departure he learned of the death of his son Louis in a distant country. It was a terrible blow to Berlioz, who was devotedly attached to this son, a frail, dissipated youth, always discontented with his lot, and little more than a source of anxiety to his father. He set out for St. Petersburg with a broken heart, and though overwhelmed with successes and triumphs, entertained and received like a friend by his young admirer, the grand duchess, he felt his health failing and his strength leaving him day by day. On his return he went south, thinking that the Mediterranean might have a beneficial effect upon his health and spirits; but twice while walking on the beach, once at Monaco, afterwards at Nice, he was attacked with vertigo, and fell fainting to the ground. He returned to Paris, and at the end of two months believed himself cured of these fainting spells, but the nervous trouble increased daily. He still had desire and strength enough left to drag himself to Grenoble in August, 1868, to attend a musical solemnity at which he was made honorary president by his colleagues, who were proud of him at last. This was the end; on Monday morning the 8th of March, 1869, Hector Berlioz quietly and painlessly breathed his last.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

Reproduced from a Russian photograph, selected by von Bulow as being the best likeness of Berlioz in his later years.

Just a year later the conversion of the public to Berlioz music was accomplished by means of a grand festival at the *Opéra* in honor of the master, organized by his disciple Ernest Reyer. Even up to this time it was possible to hear Berlioz's music only at the Popular Concerts, and then often in the midst of confusion and protestations. The announcement of this concert gave rise to many pleasantries, and people agreed, with nods and chuckles, that the best way to pay honor to such a man was to play music as unlike his as possible. However, the festival took place on the day appointed, with a program made up entirely of the master's works, and some of the pieces, such as the *Waltz of the Sylphs*, and the *Hungarian March*, caused the liveliest surprise. They had come to laugh and they listened; they even applauded, and better than with the tips of their fingers. This was the signal for a reaction, and from that day the sudden change of opinion was only intensified as the musical public, who had hitherto tolerated only a few selections, familiarized themselves with the superb creations of this master and insisted on hearing successively all his complete works.

His wonderful *La Damnation de Faust* in particular, so little appreciated at first, finally had an amazing success and an irresistible attraction for the crowd, perhaps because the result was assisted by two or three concert performances. But there is nothing half-way about a French audience, it has no lukewarm sentiments, and it praises as immoderately as it condemns. Having once taken the stand, it accepted and applauded everything from Berlioz's pen, and when it had exhausted mere bravos, it easily persuaded itself to erect a monument to his memory. First it was a question of a simple bust to be placed upon his tomb in Montmartre Cemetery, then it was proposed to erect a statue to him in his native city; but Paris did not wish to do less than Côte-Saint-André, and so it happened that Alfred Lénoir's statue of the composer was erected in Vintimille square near the rue de Calais, the quarter where he spent a long period of his life and where he died. An exact duplicate of the statue was erected at Côte-Saint-André in 1890, and surely two statues are not too many to honor the great artist of whom Auber said with a little spice of wickedness, — "Yes, this Berlioz is certainly worth something, but what a pity that his education began so late."

To-day Berlioz is at the topmost height of fame, and this renown he has achieved by one work. To the whole musical world he is the composer of *La Damnation de Faust*, and neither *Romeo et Juliette*, nor *L'Enfance du Christ*, nor the *Requiem*, each a masterpiece in its way, has obtained the wide-spread success of the first-named work. It is singular that a purely orchestral composition, *La Symphony Fantastique*, should be accorded a second rank in the general judgment. Strictly speaking, this symphony and *La Damnation* present, outside the music written by him for the stage, the quintessence of Berlioz's genius. They are the two poles between which his affluent inspiration oscillates. In the former of these scores is to be found all the romantic exuberance of youth; the fury of a latent rebellion against discipline and yet wholly master of itself; a dazzling wealth of instrumentation; a poetic and delightful coloring. In the other, of which the style is more varied, burst forth a passion, an irony, a burning heat, a prodigious intuition of the effects of vast numbers, a fantastic raillery, a power of dramatic expression without equal. It is none the less true that genius radiates from many pages of his other works: the *Pilgrim's March* in *Harold:* the *Offertory* and the *Tuba Mirum* in the *Requiem;* the *Repose of the Holy Family* in *L'Enfance du Christ;* the *Night of the Ball*, and the *Love Scene* from *Roméo et Juliette;* the nocturne-duet from *Béatrice et Bénédict;* the love-duet, the quintet and the septet in *Les Troyens* are all bright inspirations among creations of the highest worth, that met with great favor, although the works of which they are a part had not the power to win the masses as they were won by *La Symphonie Fantastique* and *La Damnation de Faust.* These last gratify the public taste (using the term in its broadest acceptation) because they are not merely concert music, but have a close affinity with the stage, in the dramatic stories they illustrate. I believe that the minute descriptive programme which Berlioz has attached to *La Symphonie Fantastique* has been largely instrumental in assuring the success of this work with a public that mentally follows the imaginary drama, step by step as the orchestra depicts the various episodes; now melodramatic, now rustic, now loving, sanguinary and demoniac. Such is still more the case with *La Damnation de Faust.* Berlioz's work has certainly benefited by the attention drawn to Goethe's poem by M. Gounod's opera; the great mass of the public knew nothing of the original when *La Damnation* was first heard by them in 1846. Nowadays music-lovers everywhere are equally well informed on this point; they understood, from the time that the opera was given, the meaning of what was recited to them by Berlioz's singers, clad in black dress suits and white neckties; they filled in the gaps in his libretto from what the opera of Faust taught them; they compared number with number; in fact, by reason of placing side by side two works so widely unlike each other, they learned to appreciate the warm, passionate and magnificent power of Berlioz's older composition. Thus little by little this product of genius has forced itself on general admiration as the model on which Gounod's Faust was planned.

It is no exaggeration to proclaim *La Damnation de Faust* a work of genius, and it excites all the more admiration when we know that certain numbers, among others, the scene in which Faust is lulled to sleep by elfins, came from the brain of a composer only twenty-five years old, and appeared almost perfect in the *Huit scènes de Faust* which Berlioz published in 1829, not being able to have it performed, and which he dedicated to M. de Larochefoucauld. This fine scene, therefore, dates back to 1828, as does the beautiful song *La Fête de Pâques* and also the joyous rondo sung by the peasants. In fact, not only the grand choruses, but the shorter pieces, the songs of *Le Rat* and of *La Puce;* the ballad, *Le Roi de Thule;* the romance of Marguerite, joined arbitrarily to the soldiers' chorus and *La Sérenade du diable* are all fragments of his youthful work that Berlioz retained in the score of his maturer period and had the skill to combine anew in several scenes of extraordinary poetic beauty and richness of effect. How inspired the pretty rustic scene into which he has inserted, judiciously or otherwise, his admirable *Rakoczy March*, written to gain the good will of the Hungarians; the superb monologue of the doctor, introducing the Easter chorus; the animated scene at the Auerbach tavern with its bizarre songs and the ironical fugue on the word *Amen;* the marvellous scene on the banks of the Elbe with the fine appeal to the demon; the delightful slumber chorus of the spirits and the exquisite ballet of the sylphs; the double chorus of students. Does it not seem that they were all conceived, composed and written down

at a white heat and without a pause between them? How fascinating and impressive appears the really devilish serenade of Mephisto, the charming *Ménuet des Follets* after the ecstatic air of Faust, the archaic ballad of Marguerite, the extremely tender love-duet, and the grand final trio with its chorus of neighbors. The last part is, from beginning to end, absolutely above criticism. It opens with Marguerite's sad lament interrupted by the chorus of students and leads up to the sublime invocation of nature; to the fantastic path of the abyss; to the lovely song of Seraphim after the furious suggestions of hell. What a splendid culmination!

Surely *La Damnation de Faust* is a masterpiece; but *Roméo et Juliette* is another and should have enjoyed as great a success. That it did not is perhaps owing to the fact that in Berlioz's symphony, vocal music has only a small place, the instruments alone translating the sentiments of the characters, the two not being in juxtaposition as they are in many of the familiar operas of *Romeo and Juliet* by Gounod and others which ought to have led to an appreciation of Berlioz's score. The seven movements that form this composition are all of marked worth and are appropriate to the strange plan of the work. In the first place, the prologue, imitated from Shakespeare, and of which M. Gounod, later, adopted Berlioz's idea, presents a résumé of the work at once complete, grand and delightful, and comprises the fine verses that Berlioz, strangely enough, caused to be sung by a Muse in honor of Shakespeare and Poetry. The opening part includes three incomparable numbers: the poetic and piquantly agitated revery of Romeo wandering in the garden during the ball; the love scene between Juliet and Romeo, a masterpiece of orchestration; the Queen Mab movement, a model of fantastic airiness; also three numbers in the second part, the funeral of Juliet, with its penetrating sadness; the death of Romeo, in which Berlioz has given free rein to his passion for descriptive music, and the oath of reconciliation, preceded by a stirring recitative and the noble prayer of the monk. These are so many magnificent fragments, which, placed side by side according to the composer's design, form a creation of a wholly superior order.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.
From an engraving by Auguste Hüssener.

After *Faust* and *Romeo*, comes the *Requiem*,—another triumph; a romantic composition of the first class, written with feverish enthusiasm by a master who rather sought to paint a striking picture to each line of the *Requiem* than to probe to the literal sense of the Latin text. The *Kyrie* is the least eccentric and the most expressive number. The *Tuba Mirum*, in particular, produces a tremendous effect with its four orchestras of brass; an idea that Felicien David and Verdi borrowed from this. Berlioz has given to the *Lacrymosa* a searching pathos. Perhaps the finest movement in the work to which Schumann rendered such ample justice, is the *Offertorium*. The requiem ends with a *Sanctus* for tenor solo, seraphic in sentiment, followed by a beautiful *Agnus* and a lovely, unfugued *Amen*. It is fitting to bring together, for comparison, this composition and the *Te Deum* written about 1850, of which the finest page is the hymn of the seraphim, *Tibi omnes angeli*, that rises to a magnificent crescendo and dies away at the close on a long and distant chord of the organ. The prayer for tenor solo, *Te ergo quæsumus* is equally perfect, and the final chorus is a majestic number to which Berlioz has attached a brilliant and thrilling triumphal march for the "presentation of flags." It recalls by the vastness of its proportions and its orchestral massiveness, his *Symphonie funèbre et triumphale*, so much admired by Richard Wagner, and of which the peroration, entitled *Apothéose*, forced a flattering exclamation of praise from even the savage Habeneck.

The *Symphonie Fantastique*, to return to the most applauded work of Berlioz, after *Faust*, is one of

the most bizarre eccentricities ever hatched in a composer's brain; but it is also one of the most impressive. The first movement, *Rêveries-passions*, at once so sad and tender, is, however, excelled by the *Scène aux champs*, which soothes and charms us with its peacefulness. It is the most inspired movement of the symphony. *Le Bal* and the *Marche au supplice* are aflame with the extraordinary verve of the composer, who, taking motives that are neither very striking nor very original in themselves, develops them with extraordinary power, and with such fullness that each movement attains an almost incredible expressiveness. Though in the *Songe d'une nuit de Sabbat*, the *Dies Iræ* is burlesqued and degraded by the mocking accents of the piccolo, the tinkling of bells, the bellowing of ophicleides, yet this last part produces an irresistible effect and drags the hearer along in the train of the hellish turmoil. In *Harold en Italie* Berlioz pushes this seeking for extremely varied tone-colors, and unexpected contrasts, and curious surprises for the ear so far, that he frequently falls into excess. The fine *Marche des Pèlerins* has eclipsed the other portions of the symphony, but the first movement, *Harold aux montagnes*, is full of poetic melancholy, and the *Serénade d'un montagnard*, breathes a tranquil peace with which the fiery and tumultuous *Orgie de brigands* forms a powerful, nay, almost exaggerated contrast.

In the exquisite religious legend *L'Enfance du Christ*, and the graceful opera comique, *Béatrice et Bénédict* we make the acquaintance of a Berlioz tempered by age and who no longer seeks to "make a noise in the world." The second part of his oratorio-drama *La Fuite en Egypte*, is universally known through its delightful chorus of shepherds and its lovely tenor recitative; there is also much charm in the first duet of Mary and Joseph as they watch over Jesus. The third part includes a powerfully dramatic scene in which the fugitives knock in vain at every door, followed by a patriarchal scene with the beautiful phrase of the father of the family welcoming Jesus, and the trio, with two flutes and harps, of young Ishmaelites. This is music that delights the world. It is the same with the famous duet-nocturne in *Béatrice et Bénédict*, whose beauty dwells in the opening strain of Hero's air, and in the splendid andante, à la Gluck, sung by Beatrice. What gaiety, perhaps a little forced now and then, emanates from the mocking duet between Beatrice and Benedict; from the trio of men and the trio of women. What exquisite sweetness there is in the *Chant d'hyménée* heard from afar; what verve in the piquant rondo sung at the close by the reconciled lovers!

Benvenuto Cellini, a work that has never been revived, is not one of the finer achievements of Berlioz; in it we meet too many concessions to the virtuosity of the conventional opera primadonna, but it is pervaded by a spirit wholly youthful, set off by sparkling instrumentation. The trio of the first act, and the sad air of Teresa; the grand quartet in the Place Colonne with its different themes ingeniously blended and strongly marked; the couplets of Ascanio; the narrative air of Cellini; the scene in which the poltroon Fieramosca simulates a duel; the charming love-duet between Teresa and Cellini,— here, indeed, are page after page of limpid melody that delight their hearers, as did the opening brilliant overture with the following long carnival scene, which reproduces with extraordinary effect the mutterings and rumblings of a crowd. This is, in truth, the climax of the work. To this opera must be joined the overture, *Le Carnaval Romain*, written later by Berlioz, and perhaps the most beautiful of his isolated overtures. In any case, it is that which has had the greatest success, eclipsing the overture, *Les Francs Juges*, even in Germany where it was at first so much applauded, as well as the overtures, *Waverly*, *The Corsair*, and *King Lear*, the last, though so expressive, having never enjoyed equal favor with *Le Carnaval Romain*.

The tragedy *Les Troyens*, imitated from Virgil, marked the return to first principles made by Berlioz when maturity had calmed the effervescence of youth and the ebulition of middle age. It was taken up again in a moment of classic aspiration and shows how much the teachings of Lesueur influenced him. *La Prise de Troie* and *Les Troyens à Carthage*, separate works, but performed together for the first time at Carlsruhe in December, 1870, are of equal worth and of a superior order. In *La Prise de Troie* the despairing appeals of Cassandra, the tender replies of Corèbe; the fiery choruses, the ballet music, of which the local color is so appropriate; the epic grandeur of the benediction of Astyanax by Paris; the excited joy of the Trojan people welcoming the entrance of the wooden horse; the woe-fraught prophecies of Cassandra. In *Les Troyens à Carthage* the peaceful songs of the Trojans; the

sublimely touching melodies of Dido; the caressing responses of Anna; Æneas' call to arms, and the stirring orchestral scene of the royal hunt; the third act, an unmistakable masterpiece, with its pretty dance tunes, its quintet, its incomparable septet, and its fine love-duet; the last two acts, with the sweet plaint of the sailor, Hylas; the pathetic farewell of Æneas and the splendid death scene of Dido, — all prove that both parts of *Les Troyens* must be placed in the same rank as two great works that blend into one perfect whole.

Berlioz, in addition to his large symphonic and vocal works, wrote numerous detached songs with orchestral or pianoforte accompaniment. *La Captive*, which was greatly extended from the original sketch written in Italy; *Le 5 mai*, a magnificent song glorifying the first Napoleon; *Sara la baigneuse*, and *La Mort d'Ophélie*, lovely works for two female voices; a fine *Hymne à la France; Neuf mélodies Irlandaises*, a youthful effort, inspired by the poems of Thomas Moore; *Les nuits d'été*, six settings of poems by Théophile Gautier, are the most notable of this class of compositions. By adding to these the pieces collected to form *Lelio; Rêverie et Caprice*, for violin solo and orchestra; a charming *Meditation religieuse*, after Thomas Moore; and a striking *Marche Funèbre* for the interment of Hamlet; we have enumerated all the works of Berlioz, great and small, that are worth remembering.

The true domain of Berlioz, that in which he is really king, is the orchestra. He gave an extraordinary impetus to the art of instrumentation, — even after Beethoven and Weber, on whom he leaned, — by his marvellous instinct for blending the various timbres of orchestral instruments, by his indefatigable search for new combinations of tone, by his constant effort to add to the power and the expressiveness of the orchestra in order to make it translate the most diverse sentiments, thus giving to his music a stronger relief, a more animated color. The prodigious result was, that he almost recreated the art of orchestration, opened a new horizon to it, and therefore deserves the title of the French Beethoven. Is it not also astonishing that his genius, audaciously innovating in regard to instrumentation, exercised an influence not only on all those musicians who began their career after his success was established, but on others who were his elders by age and reputation, such as Meyerbeer, or somewhat younger, such as Richard Wagner? These two composers, not the least able of their day, having heard the works of Berlioz at a time when very few took him seriously, had an intuition of his worth and from the very first felt instinctively even more than Schumann, that it was necessary to respect this young man gifted with such extraordinary imagination.

CARICATURE OF BERLIOZ.
By Benjamin — Nov. 1, 1838.

Thenceforward Meyerbeer, one of those rare musicians, be it said to his honor, who feel a concern for other creations than their own, took a lively and permanent interest in all that Berlioz produced. Wagner, on his side, admitted to friends that he no sooner reached Paris than he made a profound study of Berlioz's instrumentation; that he had since reread his scores many times, and that he had often

profited by the works of "that devilishly clever man." Moreover, from 1841, he regarded Berlioz as a musician filling a place of his own, mingling with none, while loving, understanding, worshipping Beethoven; dreaming perhaps to be German in the hours when his genius urged him to write in imitation of this great master; but unable to assimilate French love of external effect with Beethoven's profound symphonic style; possessing a wonderful fancy, an imagination of extraordinary energy; torn between his artistic impulses and the tastes of his fellow countrymen, whom he wished to win; incapable of asking or of receiving advice; possessed of that virtue, rare even among Germans, of not wishing to write for money; turning his back on all musical trivialty; eminently fitted by reason of these qualities and of these faults to create great works, popular or national as in the *Symphonie de Juillet*, the best in his eyes, of Berlioz's works, and the only one which, to him, seemed destined to live.

CARICATURE OF BERLIOZ.
By Carjat.

The portrait is pretty, and coming from the pen of Wagner, is flattering enough, save in its conclusion, which appears somewhat absurd today. But this amazing aptitude for obtaining from an orchestra more than any other composer had been able to compass, was exactly the origin of the misunderstanding between Berlioz and the public. Certainly the so-called learned criticisms of the most serious journals and the chaffing of the less dignified press, contributed much to transform Berlioz, in the eye of the masses, into a species of charlatan hungry for fame and banging his drum vigorously to attract the mob; denying him genius except for drawing attention to himself. These slurs, however, would not have taken a firm hold in the minds of their readers if the adverse criticisms had been wholly without an appearance of justice. In brief, with what did they reproach him? of lacking melodic invention and of replacing it by inextricable orchestral tangles; of rejoicing in diabolical noise and of entertaining a positive contempt for all music except his own. Nevertheless, Berlioz was not wanting in melody. His themes, when separated from their complicated accompaniments, have even a family likeness to the romanzas of 1840 in the style of Madame Duchambage or of Blangini; his themes, vocal or instrumental, have generally a dreamy melancholy, which seem to recall his birthplace, with its tender and tremulous songs so loved by the peasants of Dauphiny. These perfectly clear melodies, whenever he was content to give them simple accompaniments, met with instant recognition and success from the public. Among them is *La Captive* in its first version; also the tenor recitative in *La Fuite en Egypte*. It seemed surprising that the composer of these delicate melodies should be the one who wrote such complicated music, and so the ignorant were taught that these melodic treasure-troves were wholly exceptional with this troublesome, demented and blustering composer.

What repelled the public and assisted its misunderstanding on this point, were the intricacies of his deeply-studied and curiously-strange method of orchestration. In carrying out the idea that by the aid of the most varied tone combinations every shade of meaning in a piece of music can be made clear to the listener, Berlioz, imbued as he was with the teachings of Lesueur, had a tendency to overcharge the more novel touches of his musical picture, in order to indicate the secondary details with that distinctness which seemed indispensable to him. From this practice arose confusion in the mind of the inexperienced hearer, and produced cloudiness in the music from which the dominant idea could not be detached without an effort. On the other hand he gave utterance to many noble

and touching thoughts with pathetic declamation, poetic and richly-colored orchestration, and impressive sonority; essential qualities in Berlioz that are really wonderful and on which his enemies, notably Fétis, were careful not to throw light. On the contrary, they did their uttermost to discourage the public from bestowing attention on these works, and they succeeded only too well and too long.

Here then is one of the causes that made amateurs rebel, on principle, against the innovations of this great composer; but another cause, inherent in the soul of Berlioz, repelled timid people. It was his spirit of intolerance and of exclusive self-admiration. Carried along by the impulse of the time and the desire to insure victory for his art theories, Berlioz did not hesitate to attack the reputations of the most cherished idols of the hour; therefore, whether he wrote, or whether he spoke, he indulged his natural disposition to exaggerate everything with virulent indignation, and outbursts of mad enthusiasm in support of the artistic faith that swayed him. The public did not and could not understand him, and irritated by his fierce aggressive tone, held itself instinctively on guard against the creations of this fighting innovator and stood ready to pay him the price of his contempt for it. Between a rancorous public offended by the disdain this iconoclast manifested for its tastes, and an artist who never exhausted the taunts he had in store for it, there was always an antagonism, skilfully intensified by the personal foes of the master and which ceased only at his death.

Antagonism is the true word, for Berlioz in his vocal works at least never departed from the models so dear to the public. In fact, so far as opera is concerned, he remained ever the disciple and admirer of Spontini and of Gluck, without dreaming that he was destined soon to initiate a revolution in this branch of musical art. Even when, at the height of his own romantic fervor, he broke down the barriers of the symphony, there always remained in Berlioz an instinctive respect for consecrated forms; and as soon as he passed from the concert-room to the stage he conformed in the most ingenious manner imaginable to the old methods in all his works written with an eye to the opera house. He was deliberately revolutionary in the symphony only, and that chiefly in respect to instrumentation.

With this creator, endowed with a phenomenal genius in a certain way, the ideas regarding the essential conditions of musical art were so unsettled, and changed so often from one time and from one style to another, that he would have been puzzled to formulate them with any exactness. He emitted fire and flames, he hurled curses and roared bitter denunciations, but when it came to deciding the ideal that an artist should follow or the absolute principles he should adopt, he did nothing.

There exists a radical difference between the two great musicians who have convulsed the musical world in the second half of this century. The later-comer, Richard Wagner, pursued a fully defined ideal, a single problem, on the solving of which he had long concentrated his thoughts and all the force of his genius, viz.: — the fusion of music and the drama. He kept steadily in this one path and brought the music-drama to the highest point it is possible for it to attain. Berlioz, on the contrary, realized at one stroke all the modifications that seemed to him desirable to fasten upon the symphony and the opera. He did not seek an integral reform, but simply wished to enrich each branch of musical art with new descriptive and picturesque elements. But while his flexible brain turned now toward the stage, now toward the church, or the concert-room, he did not deviate much from the traditional forms, though he endowed them with new and wonderful characteristics.

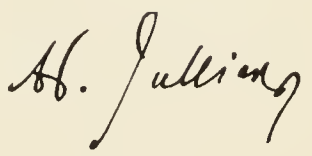
Warmly romantic with Shakespeare, purely classic with Virgil, who were his literary deities, he was eclectic in literature as in music. The splendid lyric accents of Gluck are not in full harmony with the deep poetic and chivalric inspiration of Weber, and the lack of resemblance between Spontini and Beethoven is still more striking, yet Berlioz loved them all. It matters not that Berlioz confounded these masters in his religious admiration of them and made for himself a double personality, repudiating all rule and tradition when he wrote for the orchestra and for the concert stage, and becoming a pious observer of hallowed forms when he turned to the theatre. In his *Les Troyens*, the voice parts are of a wholly classic purity while the orchestra abounds in modern romanticism; in *Béatrice et Bénédict*, delightful inspirations, exquisite in their poetry, are mingled with the conventional forms that Berlioz mercilessly condemned in the works of others: inexplicable vocal flourishes, repetitions of words, outrages on prosody, the clipping of rebellious words; all this by a composer in whose

eyes correct declamation was a fundamental essential of song.

Such was the composer Berlioz, such the critic, and the critic was not unhelpful to the composer. In fact, all that he was in France, all that he was able to win, during his lifetime, he owed to his position as a writer for the press and as the friend of influential journalists. But he made many enemies, less by the aggressiveness of his writings than by his caustic wit. There was in him an imperative necessity to tell the public his hates and his loves, and if he did not always feel free to give bold expression to the disgust with which certain works filled him, he invariably let his contempt be seen through his polished and even laudatory phrases. At least, nobody was ever deceived. The musician in Berlioz is impassioned, now tender, now vigorous. It is the same with the writer. His style is picturesque and incisive, sometimes trivial. Side by side are exclamations of admiration and contempt; quasi religious respect and genuinely holy anger, all equally energetic and sincere — the word and the blow. To appreciate this at its full value, it suffices to select at hazard one of the collection of articles published by himself in book form under the titles, *Les Soirées de l'orchestra*, *Les Grotesques de la musique*, in which the humorist tone prevails and *A travers chants*, which contains his most serious thoughts; the two volumes of letters published after his death, *Correspondance inédite et lettres intimes*; and finally his amusing and fascinating *Mémoires*, in which he travesties himself unreservedly and confuses somewhat the dates and facts. This book is a genuine romance.

Berlioz, bitter and unsympathetic as it here pleases him to appear, was wholly unconventional; he was the athlete constantly stripped for the combat, and armed for the fight. How different from the Berlioz seen in his profession and in society! As much as those, who knowing him but slightly, judged him hard and unsociable, so much did those to whom his affections went out, laud his extreme kindness and his tenderness of feeling. He was not prepossessing in appearance or manner. His esteem and friendship had to be won little by little, in order to open by some means or other, the way to his heart. He no sooner found himself among friends, than his spirits rose and often urged him into countless pleasantries. Nevertheless, even toward these he showed the most variable disposition: he would arrive sullen and morose, and then without warning, would break into wild and infectious gaiety, to fall just as suddenly into icy reserve. A troublesome thought would suffice for this, and it only needed an inopportune word to make him intractable. If he chanced to be in the mood for brilliant paradoxes or merry persiflage, it was necessary to refrain from interrupting or opposing him. In the heat of conversation, no matter how serious, he loved to utter wretched puns, and absurd verbal extravagances. These irrepressible sallies, at which he was generally the only one to laugh, were something very serious in his eyes. "Genius is akin to madness."

"Berlioz, one of the most eminent musicians of all time, perhaps the most extraordinary artist in every way who ever lived." Thus he was characterized by M. Reyer in speaking at the foot of Berlioz's statue. He was, truly, an extraordinary artist in every sense; apostle and sectarian at one and the same time; one who conceived great things and sometimes partly realized them; who was in turn sarcastic and sentimental, emotional and passionate almost to weeping; who nourished an intolerant worship of his art and never knew moderation in his judgments; who was gifted with admirable creative faculties and opened new paths to the art of instrumentation; who was in perpetual strife with the pretenders of true melody, to whom he never yielded; who aimed to be at once as noble and as majestic as Spontini, as imaginative and as impassioned as Weber, as sweet and as tender as Virgil, as sublime and as trivial as Shakespeare, as grand and pathetic as Goethe and Beethoven, yet who knew how to be himself by force of will and loftiness of genius. Berlioz had a rare grasp of mind, and was keenly sensitive to the beauties of certain great literary works, hence the "romantic movement" in France deeply influenced him With enormous will power and bordering on insanity, he aspired in his youthful dreams to be considered, some day, the Victor Hugo, the Delacrox of musical art, and, in some respects, his aspiration was more than realized — after he was dead!



AMBROISE THOMAS

Reproduction of a photograph from life by E. Pirou, Paris.

CHARLES LOUIS AMBROISE THOMAS

AMBROISE THOMAS was born in Metz on the fifth day of August, 1811. He was the son of a musician and received his first instruction in music from his father. In his earliest childhood he developed a talent for music and when only four years of age he began his musical studies. Three years later he had instruction on the violin and piano, for which latter instrument he manifested a special gift, and he was already an excellent performer on it, when, in 1828, at the age of seventeen, he was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire and became the pupil of Zimmermann in piano playing, of Dourien for harmony, and of Lesueur for composition. Kalkbrenner, then in the height of his fame, took a great interest in the boy and aided his study of the piano, while Barbereau gave him lessons in counterpoint. He was a diligent student, and one year after his entrance to the Conservatoire he won the first prize for piano playing. The year following, he carried off the first prize for harmony, and two years later the Grand Prix was awarded him; and when only twenty-one, he went to Italy at the expense of the State, remaining there for the prescribed three years, and studying conscientiously. During this period he wrote a string quintet; a quartet for strings; a trio for pianoforte, violin, and 'cello; a fantasia for pianoforte and orchestra; a fantasia on Scotch melodies, for piano; six capriccios in the form of waltzes, for piano; two nocturnes for piano, a rondo for four hands, for the same instrument; six Italian songs; three motets, with organ, and a requiem, with orchestra. These works were all published, as was also his prize cantata "Hermann and Ketty." They are now forgotten, but they were then evidences of great industry and of a leaning in the direction of what was most worthy in the art into which the young musician had been born, and they attracted earnest critical attention.

He returned to Paris early in 1836, and at once sought for a hearing at the Opéra Comique, the first ambition of a young French composer. He did not have long to wait, for in August, 1837, his one-act opera, "La Double Echelle," was performed, and so favorably received that he obtained a firm foothold at the opera house and produced there "Le Perruquier de la Régence," three acts (1838); "Le Panier Fleuri," one act (1839). In the meanwhile, encouraged by his success, he aspired to the Académie, and in 1839 produced there, in collaboration with Benoist, La "Gipsy," a ballet in two acts. He also composed for the same establishment "Le Comte de Carmagnola" (1841); "Le Guerillero" (1842); and "Betty," a ballet in two acts (1846). None of these was successful. At that time Auber, Halévy, Meyerbeer and Donizetti were composing for the Académie, and it was not easy for a young artist to hold his own against them. Thomas had not neglected the Opéra Comique, for which he wrote "Carline" (1840); "Angélique et Médor" (1843); "Mina" (1843), all of which failed to make any favorable impression on the public. Discouraged by the lack of success that attended his efforts, he ceased to write for the lyric stage, and for five years remained silent. When he was heard again it was in "Le Caïd," a three-act comic opera, which was produced in 1849, and achieved a brilliant success, making a tour of Europe. It was followed in 1850 by "Le Songe d'une nuit d'été," in three acts. This opera was no less fortunate in the reception accorded it, and at once gave Thomas a foremost place among the young French composers of the day. Then came "Raymond," three acts (1851); "La Tonelli" (1853); "La Cour de Célimène" (1855); "Psyché" (1857); "Le Carnaval de Venise" (1857); "Le Roman d'Elvire." Some of these obtained slight temporary success, but not one of them won the popularity that attended "Le

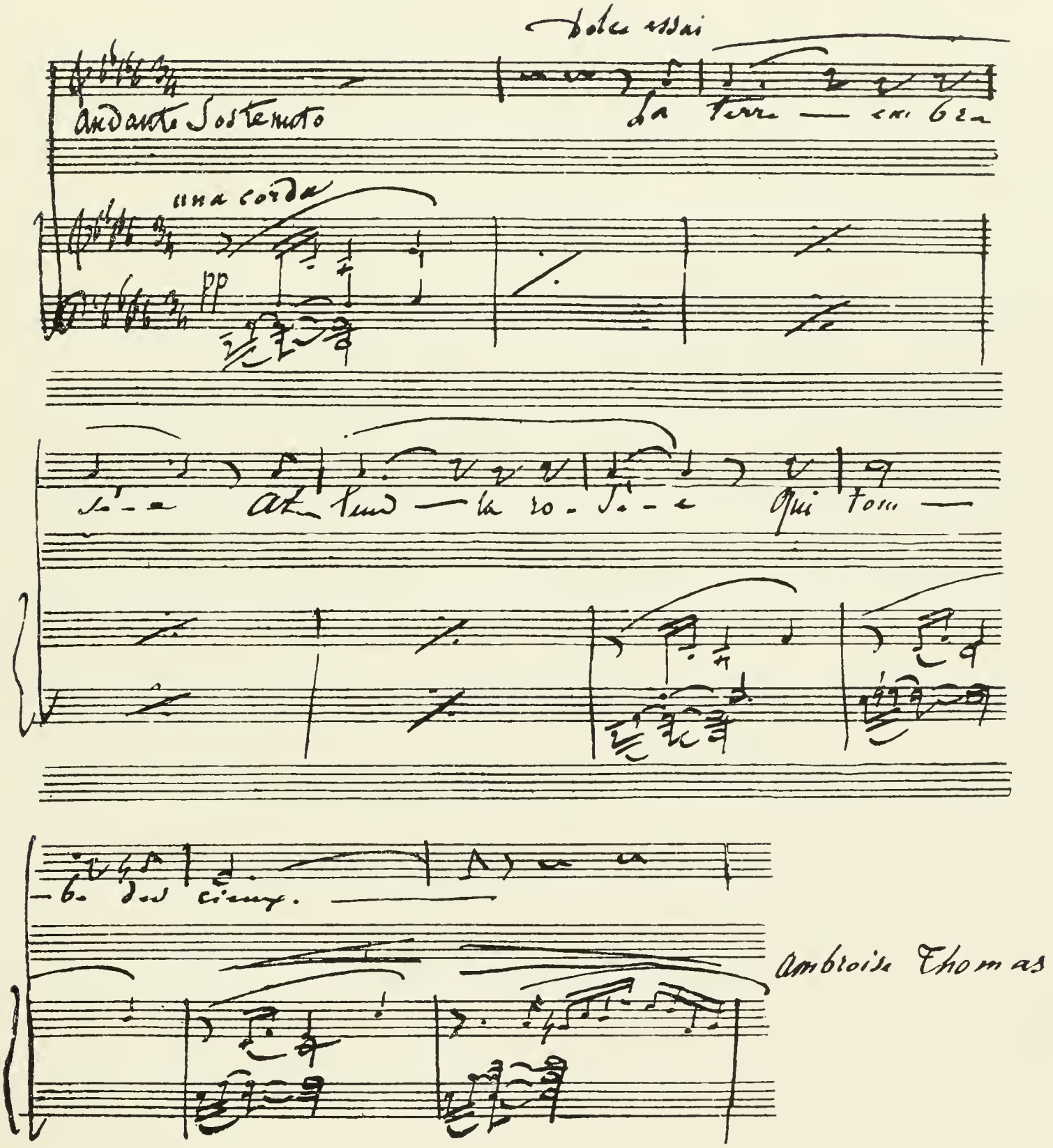
Caïd" and "Le Songe." Again Thomas retired from view, and this time it was six years before he produced another opera.

In 1851 he became a member of the Institute, and in 1852, Professor of Composition in the Conservatoire. Up to this time Thomas had distinguished himself as a fluent and refined melodist, and by his piquant orchestration; he was also noted as a master of musical comedy. Nevertheless he had not yet been able to win for himself a rank equal to that of Auber, and in French comic opera, "Le Maçon," "Fra Diavolo," "Le Domino Noir," and "Les Diamants de la Couronne," which had been composed before Thomas went into his second seclusion, still surpassed all that the latter had produced, and survive to this day, while, with the exception of "Le Caïd," none of Thomas's operas antecedent to 1850 are ever performed.

In 1866 "Mignon" was heard, and Thomas at once leaped to world-wide fame. The work had an overwhelming success, and has been given in every opera house in the world. Two years later this masterpiece was followed by "Hamlet," which was equally successful in France, though it has not, elsewhere, proved as popular as "Mignon." On the strength of these two fine operas he was appointed, in 1871, to fill the position of Director of the Conservatoire, left vacant by the death of Auber. His other compositions, not yet mentioned, are a cantata composed for the inauguration of a statue to Lesueur (1852); a "Messe Solennelle" (1857); a "Marche Réligieuse" (1865); "Hommage à Boïeldieu," composed for the centenary of Boïeldieu (1875), and many part songs, among them "La Vapeur," "Le Chant des Amis," "Le Tyrol," "France," "L'Atlantique," "Le Carnaval de Rome," "Le Traineaux," "Le Temple de la Paix," "La Nuit du Sabbat," some of which are works of the highest merit, in their order. In 1874 was produced "Gille et Gilleton," a one-act comic opera, written, however, in 1861. "Psyché" was revived in 1878 with additions, but though the music is full of graceful beauty, and was warmly praised, it made no marked impression on the general public. After "Hamlet," Thomas did not bring forward another opera for fourteen years, and then he made another brilliant success with "Françoise di Rimini" (1882), in which was some of the finest music he had ever written, especially in the prologue and in the fourth act. He was now seventy-one years of age, and could well rest on the laurels he had won. From that date until the present (1893), he has produced no new lyric work, his only contribution to the stage of the opera being a ballet founded on "The Tempest," by Shakespeare (1889), which, though remarkable as the effort of a man seventy-eight years old, was not destined to be numbered among his successes. In fact, with this work his career as a composer appears to have ended. He received the grand Cross of the Legion of Honor in 1880. At the age of eighty-two, he is still fulfilling his duties at the Conservatoire, in which institution he has worked many important and useful reforms. He has improved the method of instruction, has instituted lectures on the general history of music; has founded an orchestral class and compulsory vocal classes for reading at sight, and has raised the standard of solfeggio teaching. Not only this, but he has been largely instrumental in increasing the salaries of the professors, and has enlarged the prosperity of the institution until it has reached a point that makes it almost self-paying. Thomas has lived a wholly artistic life and has, fortunately, escaped most of the severer trials experienced by the majority of those who have devoted themselves to that branch of his art which has brought him fame and competence. He is given to physical exercise, is fond of country life, has a villa at Argenteuil and an island home at Zillieo, in Brittany. He is not without literary talent and his tastes are refined. He is an enthusiastic collector of bric-a-brac, and rarely fails attendance at any of the more important auctions at the Hotel Druot.

Ambroise Thomas' life as a composer for the Paris opera houses covered fifty-two years. In that time he wrote much charming music, but he never developed any individuality of style, never wrote anything so distinctively his own that it could at once be attributed to him by reason of any charac-

Le Soir



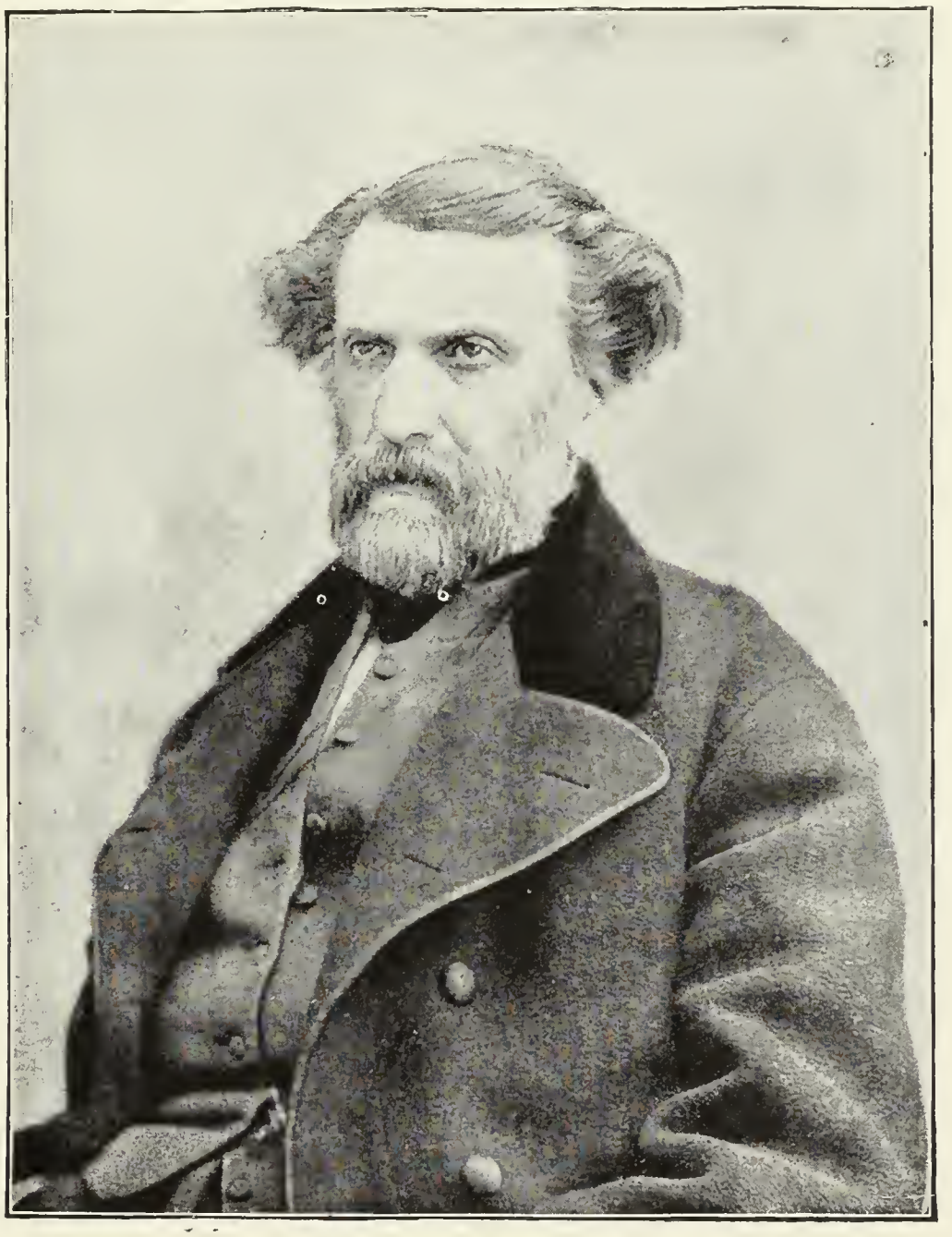
Fac-simile autograph manuscript of an "Album Leaf" written by Ambroise Thomas.

teristics belonging peculiarly and distinguishingly to him. His earlier operas, produced between 1837 and 1848, are marked by refinement of taste, and graceful finish in workmanship. After that and until 1860 his method underwent a change, and he sought brilliancy and piquancy, as instanced in "Le Caïd," and gradually warmed into poetic feeling and deeper sentiment, departing, in the meanwhile, from the conventionalities that Rossini and other Italian composers had fastened on French opera music. His growth in his art has been steady from the very outset, but if he has ceased to write after "Le Roman d'Elvire," which ended this period of his musical development, his fame as a composer would hardly have survived down to the present time. From the opera just named to "Mignon" was an enormous stride, and the brilliant reputation this work made for him was sustained by "Hamlet" and "Françoise di Rimini." But even these, his masterpieces, do not present him in the light of a composer who had something to say that had not been said before. His art evolution had enlarged his method of thought and had enabled him to give a wider scope to his talents, but it had not endowed him with a style that set him apart from other composers. We hear of the style of Auber, and it brings a clear idea of a strongly marked musical individuality to our mind. The same may be said of the style of Meyerbeer and also that of Gounod; but to speak of the style of Thomas would be to convey no such distinct and instant suggestion of a definite and an unmistakable originality, like that which pertains essentially to Bizet.

The music of Thomas is always polished and delicate; his operas show that he has an innate feeling for dramatic effect; his musical comedies are models for the intimate blending of music with the spirit of the words and the stage situations. His harmonies are rich and flowing, and impart to his work a decided air of refined elegance. His instrumentation emphasizes convincingly his thorough mastery over the resources of the modern orchestra and a sensitive appreciation of the characteristic tone-color of the different instruments. His scores are never overloaded, and as the rule the right touch is always put by him in the right place. The voice is never overwhelmed by the orchestra. With all these merits he is rarely if ever emphatic, and strength and intensity of passion are not among his musical gifts. Love, melancholy, gaiety and poetic tenderness are the sentiments in which he excels. Fire, and a vigorous sweep of emotional feeling are not within his power to depict. The changes in the style of his scores are the changes that the varying musical tastes of the times brought about. He never formed these tastes, but he invariably followed them. His earlier operas are in the vein of Auber or of Rossini, sometimes of both in combination. When the fashion of the day called for more dramatic expression he followed in the footsteps of Halévy. Later, when brilliancy, tunefulness and graceful commonplace were the vogue, he had no scruple against modelling himself on Clapisson. It was not until Gounod had risen into fame and "Faust" became the rage, filling the music-loving world with delight, that Thomas found it possible to write "Mignon" and "Hamlet," in both which operas the influence of the younger composer is shown on almost every page. Thomas has not the gift of originality, but he has the gift of receptivity and the faculty of assimilation largely developed. Twice he went into seclusion, and each time when he reappeared it was with a style in harmony with that of the favorite opera composers of the hour. There is nothing culpable in this, for it proves conclusively, that Thomas was always an untiring student. It is undeniable, that on every occasion his style underwent a radical change, it showed an advance in the broader and more impressive essentials of his art, and added to the fame of the composer. The works in which he will live are those which belong to his last period.

Not so with his greater confrère Halévy, whose first grand successes, "La Juive" and "L'Eclair," were his only masterpieces. Thomas has not reached the height to which Halévy soared in either of these operas. "Mignon" and "Hamlet" are, however, works of no common order. The former has won a place in the repertory of every opera house in Europe. There is much of genuine poetic feeling in the music, and the score, as a whole, is distinguished by grace, melodiousness, delicacy of taste, and that effect of spontaneity that is understood as inspiration. Fine discrimination has been shown in giving each character its appropriate musical expression, and the skill with which the people of the story are contrasted cannot be too warmly praised. The "Connais-tu le pays," the "swallow" duet, the prayer of Mignon, the romance of Wilhelm, the polonaise of Felina, have become

justly celebrated. The orchestration is exquisite in its delicate finish and its ingeniously varied but always artistic color. That it has achieved a permanent place on the opera stage is beyond question. "Hamlet" is more ambitious, and though not without a certain nobility of style, is little else than a more elaborate "Mignon." In it the composer says nothing that he has not already said in the last-named work, the only change being a somewhat more earnest method of expression. In this opera it was claimed that Thomas "has indicated to young composers the line at which the new school should stop, under penalty of exceeding the bounds of lyric art"; but Thomas, though undoubtedly

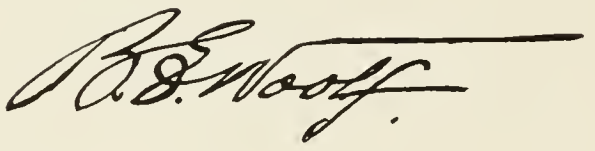


AMBROISE THOMAS.

Reproduction of a lithograph portrait published by Becquet of Paris.

a musician of talent, knowledge and experience, has never shown such originality as to entitle him to be considered a reformer, and as yet there has not been, even in his own country, any propaganda to spread a knowledge of him through the world. "Hamlet" may be considered the extreme point that French grand opera had reached in the direction of the Wagnerian music drama up to the time that it appeared. The Gounod influence is still clearly apparent in it, but the Wagner influence also makes itself felt in the effort to break away from conventional models and to substitute expressive declamation for more rhythmical melody. The mad song of Ophelia is, perhaps, the most

effective number in the opera. "Françoise de Rimini" went a step further than did "Hamlet" toward a predetermined departure from the old school of operatic music to the new. The composer authorized the statement that the prologue to the work would be a profession of musical faith, which he had long contemplated and in which he would mark definitely how closely symphonic music can be allied with the lyric drama; after which the curtain was to rise on music essentially "theatrical," or, if a better word should he demanded, "human." The prologue is certainly as strong and masterly, but it has in it nothing of a symphonic quality, and, as a profession of faith, proved to be of no permanent value save as an evidence of the highest point which the composer's musical development had reached. This portion of the opera and the fourth act are by far the finest achievements of Thomas. The orchestra through the whole opera is treated with consummate power, notably in the beautiful effects obtained by unaccustomed groupings of the different instruments. In the ingenious blendings of tone color that are produced by combining widely varying timbres with a skill as profound as felicitous; the richness, ripeness, and perfection of the scoring generally; as well as the masterly discretion observed in maintaining a judicious balance between the orchestra and the singers, the score may be justly given a place among the most masterly that modern musical art has produced. For the rest, despite some splendid dramatic moments in the work and the faultless finish of its workmanship as a whole, it is to be doubted if it will live. But how few works do live! Many glorious operas have been written since "Don Giovanni" and "Fidelio" saw the light, and yet not one has appeared that has yet been accorded a place by their side. Hundreds of operas that met with a brilliant and deserved success in their day, have fallen gradually into the background; operas by Spontini, who, in "La Vestale," just escaped producing an immortal masterpiece; by Cherubini, whose "Les Deux Journées" came nearer winning the third place than any opera since; by Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, Meyerbeer, whose "Les Huguenots" is his only work that bids fair to survive; by Weber, whose "Der Freischütz" alone promises to last. The supreme operas of the world might be named on the fingers of one hand. Mention of Wagner has been avoided because he is yet to experience the test of time,—that incorruptible and most pitiless of critics. It is the fate of some admirable and justly honored composers to learn their ultimate reputation with posterity during their life-time. Among these, we think, is Ambroise Thomas, and that reputation will include respectful consideration for an eminent and able musician, who constantly grew in his art; while it will accord him a prominent place in the ranks of wholly estimable opera composers of the second order.



GEORGES BIZET

Reproduction of a photograph from life by Carjat & Cie., Paris.

ALEXANDRE CÉSAR LÉOPOLD BIZET.

ALEXANDRE-CÉSAR-LÉOPOLD BIZET was born in Paris, Oct. 25th, 1838. His god-father called him "Georges," and as "Georges," Bizet is known to the world at large.

The father of Bizet was an artisan, who, at the age of twenty-five, studied music, and became a teacher of singing. He outlived his son. The mother was a sister of the wife of Delsarte. She was a pianist of ability, a "first prize" of the Conservatory. From her Bizet learned the alphabet and musical notation. From his father he learned the use of the pianoforte, and the elements of harmony.

The boy did not wish to be a musician; he hankered after the literary life. "When I was a child," Bizet told Gallet, "they hid my books to keep me from abandoning music for literature."

Although he was not of the required age, Bizet passed brilliantly, in his tenth year, the entrance-examination of the Conservatory, where he studied the pianoforte under Marmontel, the organ under Benoist, counterpoint and fugue under Zimmermann; and after the death of the latter, he studied composition under Halévy. He won a prize before he was eleven years old, the first of many prizes: —

First solfeggio prize (1849); second pianoforte prize (1851), and the first pianoforte prize (1852); first "accessit d'orgue" (1853), second prize (1854), first prize (1855); second prize in fugue (1854), first prize (1855); second "grand prix de Rome" of the Institute (1856), and first "grand prix" (1857).

In 1856 Offenbach, manager of the Bouffes-Parisiens, proposed a competition in operetta. The libretto was "Doctor Miracle." Seventy-eight composers appeared; six were found worthy, and the prizes was awarded *ex æquo*, to Bizet and Lecocq. The music of the latter was first heard April 8th, 1857; the music of Bizet was heard April 9th. The public was impartially cold.

Toward the end of 1857 Bizet started on his journey to Rome. He journeyed leisurely, and entered the city Jan. 28, 1858. It was in 1859 that he sent, according to rule, a composition to the "Académie des Beaux-Arts"; it was not a mass however; it was an operetta in Italian: "Don Procopio," in two acts. The reviewer, Ambroise Thomas, praised the ease, the brilliancy, "the fresh and bold style" of the composer, and he deplored the fact that Bizet had not given his attention to a work of religious character. The score of this operetta is lost. In 1859 Bizet traveled in Italy and obtained permission to remain in Rome during the one year, that, according to tradition, should be spent in Germany. He sent to the Académie "Vasco de Gama," a descriptive orchestral composition with choruses; three numbers of an orchestral suite; and, if Pougin is correct, an operetta in one act, "La Guzla de l'Emir"; but Pigot claims that this latter work was not begun until after the return to Paris.

He returned and found his mother on her death-bed. He was without means, without employment; and he was crushed by the death of the one for whom he was eager to work day and night. He once wrote to her from Rome, "100,000 francs, the sum is nothing! Two successes at the Opéra-Comique! I wish to love you always with all my soul, and to be always as to-day the most loving of sons."

He was a "prix de Rome," — too often an honor that brings with it no substantial reward. He was a "prix de Rome," as was the unfortunate described by Legouvé:

> "Listen to the wretched plight
> Of a melancholy man,
> A young man of sixty years,
> Whom they call 'un prix de Rome.'"

Burning with desire to write for the operatic stage,

he gave music lessons. Dreaming of dramatic situations and grand finales, he made pianoforte arrangements of airs from operas written by others.

The Count Walewski granted Carvalho, the manager of the Théâtre-Lyrique, a subsidy of 100,000 francs, on the condition that an important work by a "prix de Rome" should be produced each year. Bizet was the first to profit thereby. He wrote the music for "The Pearl Fishers." The text was by Carré and Cormon, and the opera was produced with gorgeous scenic setting, Sept. 30, 1863. The opera was given eighteen times, and it was not sung again in Paris until 1889, at the Gaité, and in Italian, with Calvé and Talazac, when it was only heard six times.

It is stated in Pigot's "Bizet et son Œuvre" that Blau and Gallet wrote a libretto, "Ivan, the Terrible," which was set to music by Bizet in the style of Verdi. Gallet says that neither he nor Blau wrote a word of such a libretto.

In 1866 Bizet worked at the orchestral composition which three years later was played at a Concert Pasdeloup and was then called "Souvenirs de Rome"; he temporarily abandoned it on the receipt of a libretto by Saint-Georges and Adenis, founded on Sir Walter Scott's "The Fair Maid of Perth." While he composed the music of this opera, he supported himself by giving lessons, correcting proofs, arranging dance music for orchestra, and writing songs. He often worked fifteen or sixteen hours a day. His letters of this year end with one and the same cry: "I must make my living." This pursuit of a living brought early death.

The score of "The Fair Maid of Perth" was finnished in six months, but the opera was not produced at the Théâtre-Lyrique until the 26th of December, 1867. There were twenty-one representations. In 1890 there were eleven representations at the Eden Theatre (Théâtre Lyrique).

It was in 1867 that Bizet wrote the first act of "Malbrough," an opérette bouffe, which was given at the Athénée. In 1868 or 1869 he wrote the music of an opérette-vaudeville, "Sol-si-ré-pif-pan," for the Menus-Plaisirs, and he did not sign the score.

It was also in 1867 that he appeared as a writer on musical subjects. His first and last article was published in the first number of the Revue Nationale, Aug. 3rd. His pseudonym was "Gaston de Betzi."

And then Bizet busied himself in the completion of "Noah," a biblical opera left unfinished by Halévy; in arranging operas for pianoforte solo; in original compositions for the pianoforte, as his "chromatic variations." He wrote music for the text of "The Cup of the King of Thule"; he called it "wretched stuff" and destroyed it. His "Souvenir de Rome, fantaisie symphonique" was played at a Concert Populaire in 1869. In that same year, June 3rd, he was married to Geneviève Halévy, the daughter of the composer. After the invasion of France, Bizet served in the National Guard, and his letters during those bloody days reveal the depth of his patriotism and his disgust at the incompetence and corruption in high places.

In 1872 (May 22) a little work in one act was brought out at the Opéra Comique. It was called "Djamileh"; the text was by Gallet, the music was by Bizet. It was given ten or eleven times; and Saint-Saëns, infuriated at the Parisian public, wrote biting verses:

"The ruminating bourgeois, pot-bellied and ugly, sits in his narrow stall, regretting separation from his kind; he half-opens a glassy eye, munches a bon-bon, then sleeps again, thinking that the orchestra is a-tuning."

Carvalho, manager of the Vaudeville, dreamed of reviving the melodrama. He first caught his playwright, Daudet; he secured Bizet as the musician; the result was "L'Arlésienne," which was first produced Oct. 1, 1872. The music included twenty-four numbers, orchestral and choral. The score was designed for the particular orchestra of the Vaudeville. Bizet rearranged for full orchestra the numbers that make up the Suite No. 1, and the Suite was first played at a Concert Populaire Nov. 10, 1872. He also revised the other numbers, and the revision was used at the revivals at the Odéon in 1885 and 1887. The Suite No. 2 was arranged by Ernest Guiraud.

The overture, "Patrie," was first played at a Concert Populaire in February, 1874. Bizet experimented with texts suggested for an opéra-comique; he finally chose "Carmen," the text of which was drawn by Meilhac and Halévy from a tale by Merimée. The opera was produced at the Opéra-Comique, March 3, 1875, with the following cast: Carmen, Galli-Marié; Micaëla, Marguerite Chapuis; Don Jose, Lhérie; Escamillo, Bouhy. It was about this time that Bizet was decorated with the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor.

"Carmen" was no more successful than its predecessors. Bizet mourned its failure. For some time he had fought bravely against melancholy. At the age of thirty-six, he exclaimed, "It is extraordinary that I should feel so old." Attacks of angina had been periodical for some years. He would jest at his suffering: "Fancy a double-pedal, A flat, E flat, which goes through your head from ear to ear." He had abused his strength by over-work. Suddenly, at midnight, he died in Bougival, where he

BIZET'S TOMB IN PÈRE LACHAISE, PARIS.

From a photograph made specially for this work.

was resting. It was June 3rd, three months after the first performance of "Carmen." The widow was left with a five-year-old son.

Bizet left few manuscripts. He burned many shortly before his death. The fragments of "Don Rodrigue" and "Clarisse Harlowe" were left in a curious notation that is nearly hieroglyphical, not to be deciphered.

When Louis Gallet first met Bizet, he saw a forest of blonde hair, thick and curly, which surrounded

a round and almost child-like face. Bizet's figure was robust. In later years his features were firm, and his expression was energetic, tempered by the trust, the frankness, and the goodness that characterized his nature. He was very short-sighted, and he wore eyeglasses constantly. His mouth lent itself as easily to expression of mocking wit as to kindness. His love for his parents has been already mentioned; his devotion toward his wife was such that she told Gounod there was not one minute of the six years of marriage which she would not gladly live over. He was a welcome companion, fond of jest and paradox, frank and loyal. At the house of Saint-Saëns he played gladly the part of Helen in Offenbach's operetta. He was ever firm, even extravagant in friendship, as when at Baden-Baden in '62 he challenged a man who spoke lightly of Gounod's "Queen of Sheba." When the talk was concerning musicians whom he loved, Bach, Mozart, Rossini, Verdi, Gounod, his voice would lose its peculiar sibilance, and his hot eloquence showed honesty as well as nimble wit and power of expression. In all of the recollections of troops of friends, in his letters to acquaintances and friends there is not a suggestion of mean action, scheming purpose, low or narrow thought.

At the age of fourteen Bizet was a master of the pianoforte; his technique was above reproach; he was particularly skilful in mixing his colors: an exquisitely defined melody had its proper and characteristic background. Halévy and Liszt are of the many witnesses to his extraordinary talent for reading from score at sight. Reyer speaks of his remarkable memory. And yet Bizet never appeared in public as a pianist; although in certain salons of Paris his abilities excited lively admiration.

So too his gifts as a composer for orchestra were more than ordinary; but whenever he had an opportunity to write for the stage, he abandoned any instrumental work that had interested him.

For Bizet obeyed the instincts of the French musician and looked to the stage for enduring fame.

There is no need of close examination of "The Pearl Fishers," and "The Fair Maid of Perth." We know the later works of Bizet, and therefore we find hints of genius in the early operas. With the exception of the duet of Nadir and Zurga and of a few pages saturated with local color, there is little in "The Pearl Fishers" to herald the arrival of a master of the stage. There are delightful examples of instrumentation in "The Fair Maid of Perth": the opera as a whole is conventional, and the solo passages and the ensemble are often reminiscent: there is continual homage to famous men: Gounod, Halévy, Verdi, Thomas, *et al.* Bizet had not yet found the use of his own voice.

Nor would "Djamileh," the satisfaction of the longing of Camille du Locle for ideal musical revery, the sounding of the revolt against the school of Scribe, carry the name of Bizet to after years. Its perfume is subtle and penetrating; its colors delight trained eyes. It is a *tour de force*. It has the affected frankness of a pastel in prose. The hearer must be mastered by the spirit of the Orient to thoroughly enjoy. The three comedians should be seen as in an opium dream.

The fame of Bizet must rest eventually on two works: "L'Arlésienne" and "Carmen."

I believe "L'Arlésienne" is the more artistic, the greater work. In "Carmen" is the greater promise of what Bizet might have done. The music of "L'Arlésienne," is inseparably associated with success or failure of the play itself and the abilities of play-actors. If the concert-suite is played, it pleases; but apart from the representation of the dramatic scenes, the music loses its true significance. The saxophone solo in the Prelude, with its marvellous accompaniment, gratifies the ear in the concert room; but its haunting and melancholy beauty is intensified tenfold when it is associated with the apparition of "The Innocent." It is impossible to over-rate the beauty, the passion, the dramatic fitness of the music that accompanies the various scenes in the simple and terrible drama of Daudet. The dialogue between *Mère Renaud* and *Balthazar* when they meet after fifty years is touching; but the *adagietto*, that softly tells of humble heroism, love preserved without shame, the kiss given at last and without passion, longings and regrets endured in silence, rises to a height of pathos that is beyond

the reach of words or pantomime. In connection with the scene and the dialogue the *adagietto* is irresistible in its effect; in the concert room, it is simply a beautiful piece for muted strings. This play of Daudet is so simple, so devoid of trickery that its popular and universal success is extremely doubtful. The average spectator would fain see the unworthy *Woman of Arles* for whom *Fréderi* burns in agony; the shepherd *Balthazer* seems to him a good, tiresome old man with a beard; *The Innocent*, unless the part is played with rare finesse, becomes almost ludicrous. Not until there is a return to the appreciation of simplicity will this music of Bizet be known as the supreme example of music in the domain of melodrama.

Meilhac and Halévy in the libretto of "Carmen," feel constantly the pulse of the audience.

The opera is not a sustained masterpiece. The want of action in the third act is not atoned for by a display of musical inspiration. With the exception of the trio of card-players, the music of this act is far below that of the other three. But, with the omission of this act, how frank, how intense, how characteristic, is the music that tells of a tragedy of universal and eternal interest.

For *Carmen* lived years before she was known by Merimée. She dies many deaths, and many are her resurrections. When the world was young, they say her name was Lilith, and the serpent for her sake hated Adam. She perished that wild night when the heavens rained fire upon the Cities of the Plain. Samson knew her when she dwelt in the valley of Sorek. The mound builders saw her and fell at her feet. She disquieted the blameless men of Ethiopia. Years after she was the friend of Theodora. In the fifteenth century she was noticed in Sabbatic revels led by the four-horned goat. She was in Paris at the end of the last century, and she wore powder and patches at the dinners given by the Marquis de Sade. In Spain she rolled cigarettes and wrecked the life of *Don José*.

The dramatic genius of Bizet is seen fully in his treatment of this character. She sings no idle words. Each tone stabs. There are here no agreeable or sensuous love passages; as Bellaigue remarks, there is not a touch of voluptuousness in the opera. The soldier is under the spell of a vain, coarse, reckless gipsy of maddening personality. He knows the folly, the madness of his passion; he sees "as from a tower the end of all." These characters are sharply drawn and forcibly painted. There is free use of the palette knife; there is fine and ingenious detail. The singers sing because it is the natural expression of their emotions; they do not sing to amuse the audience or accommodate the stage carpenter. The orchestra with wealth of rhythm and color italicizes the song; prepares the action; accompanies it; or moralizes. Apart from the technical skill shown in the instrumentation, the great ability of Bizet is seen in his combining the French traditions of the past and the German spirit of the present without incongruity. Here is a departure from old models, and yet a confirmation. The quintet is sung because thereby the feeling of the scene is best expressed; five people are not introduced because the quintet is an agreeable combination of voices. The unmeaning vocal ornaments found in the earlier operas of Bizet have disappeared. He uses his own manly, intense speech. He expresses his own thoughts in his own way. He does not care whether his work is opéra-comique or grand opera, or melodrama. His sole object is to tell his story as directly and as forcibly as possible.

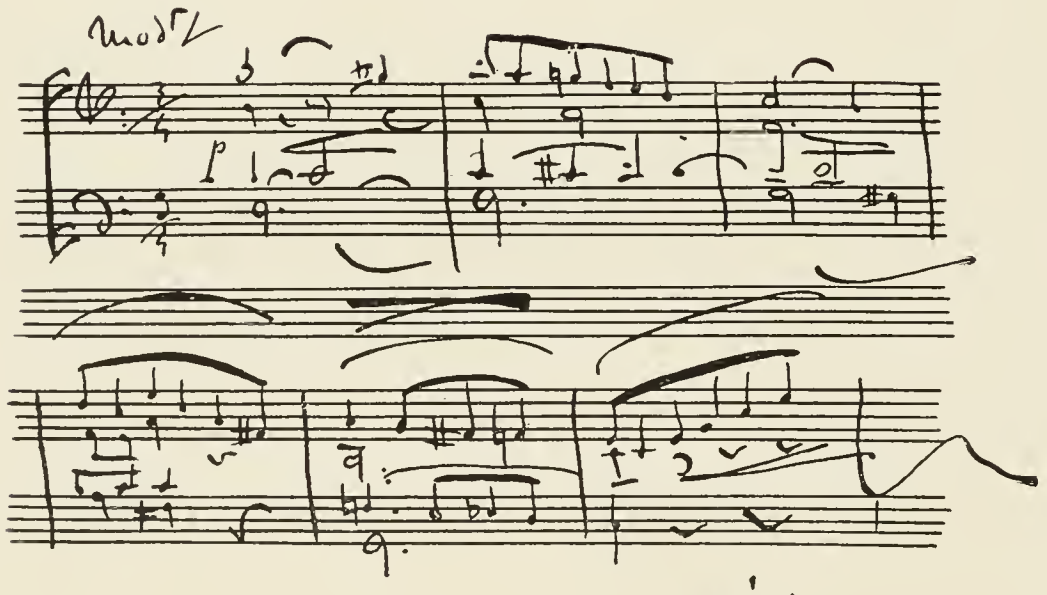
In a world of art that is too often ruled by insincerity, a lusty, well-trained voice aroused the attention. Suddenly the voice was hushed. Only with the silence, came the hearty approval of the great audience. Bizet met with no popular success during his life-time. Now "Carmen" holds the stage; "L'Arlésienne" excites the admiration of all musicians; the earlier operas have been revived and sung in foreign languages. In his own country he was from the start known vulgarly as "one of the most ferocious of the French Wagnerian school": an absurd charge: for in no one of his operas is there recognition of the peculiar theories of Wagner. Bizet followed the traditional formulas: he used the air, the concerted pieces, the formal divisions and subdivisions. The orchestra assists the singer; it does not usurp his place. Without doubt he learned from Wagner in the matter of orchestral expression, as Wagner learned from Weber and Meyerbeer; as one sensible man does from his predecessors. There was nothing new in Bizet's use of the typical motive; it was similarly employed by Grétry, Auber, Halévy.

Melody, expressive harmony, ingenious counterpoint, an unerring sense of the value of a peculiar tone of an instrument or the advantage of a combi-

nation of instruments, — these were used by the Bizet of later years simply to express truth. This was the purpose of his life; this was the motto of his existence. No one could be more refined than he in musical expression; no one could be more seemingly brutal. The glowing words that he wrote concerning Verdi in the Revue Nationale show his one prevailing thought: "Let us then be frank and true; let us not demand of a great artist qualities which he lacks, and let us profit from the qualities which he possesses. When a passionate, violent, even brutal temperament; when a Verdi presents us with a strong and living work full of gold and mud, of gall and blood, let us not go to him and say coldly, 'But, my dear Sir, this is wanting in taste, it is not *distingué*.' *Distingué!* Are Michael-Angelo, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Beethoven, Cervantes, and Rabelais *distingués?*"

It is presumptuous, it is impossible to anticipate the verdict of Time the Avenger. It is not improbable, however, that the future historian of the opera will class Bizet with Wagner and Verdi as the men of mighty influence over the opera of the last years of this century. "Carmen" was, perhaps, a promise, a starting-point, rather than a fulfillment. But if the young and fiery composers of Italy of to-day turn reverently toward Verdi and Wagner, they also read lovingly the score of "Carmen."

Philip Hale



Georges Bizet

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS

Reproduction of a photograph from life, by Eug. Pirout, Paris.

CAMILLE SAINT–SAËNS

THE eminent composer, Camille Saint-Saëns, was born in Paris, October 9, 1835. While yet an infant he manifested an innate gift for music. We are informed by the most reliable of his biographers, his grand-aunt, that, observing the deep attention with which the child listened to music, she gave him his first lessons on the piano when he was scarcely three years old. It would not be easy to find a record of earlier precocity. His mother relates, when her son began to play the first exercise, C, D, E, F, G, she discovered him playing it with only the right hand, using the other hand to press the weak little fingers down, in order to sound each note distinctly. It was ingenious, almost virtuosity! That a child like Saint-Saëns should make rapid progress was inevitable. When his fingers were sufficiently strong to strike the keys of the pianoforte without great effort, his grand-aunt, believing that she had reached the end of her task with him, placed him in charge of a professional teacher of the pianoforte. It was not long before this teacher was replaced in turn, by a master worthy of such a pupil, and wholly capable of guiding his studies. This master was Stamaty, and the choice was admirable. In addition to Stamaty, who was only a teacher of the pianoforte, M. Maledan, an able instructor in harmony and theory and a man of decided talent, was engaged to guide the more serious musical studies of young Saint-Saëns.

The boy was ten years old when his mother resolved that he should make the acquaintance of some of the notabilities of the musical world before making his first appearance in public. To this end she gave a private soirée at her house, the result of which was echoed through the press of Paris. The lad performed, with Stamaty, one of Mozart's Sonatas for four hands with surprising ease and in remarkable sympathy with the composer's style. Then, with a quartet accompaniment, he performed some of the works of the great masters, including fugues by Bach, a concerto by Hummel, and Beethoven's concerto in C minor.

A few months later, he made his début before the public in a concert given in the Pleyel Salon, so much favored of artists, and where Chopin and Rubinstein, not to name other great pianist-composers, also made their first bow before a Parisian audience. Little Camille, as he was then styled, achieved a flattering success. The most eminent critics sang his praises and predicted a great future for him. Never did they prophesy with more true foresight than they did on that occasion. *L'Illustration* published his portrait, and there were some who went so far as to draw a comparison between him and the incomparable Mozart!

This brilliant début in nowise spoiled the young pianist; on the contrary, its effect only increased his zeal for study. He attended the course of lessons in composition under Halévy at the Conservatoire as an *élève auditeur*, literally, a listening pupil, for one year. He then obtained admission to the organ class where he won the first prize. Encouraged by his success he next appeared as a competitor at the Institut (Prix de Rome), but failed. He never again crossed the threshold of the Institut de France until long afterward, when he was received with honor and glory as a member of the "Section Musicale." When he competed for the Prix de Rome, he was only seventeen years of age, but he had already attained celebrity as a pianist and an organist, and had also distinguished himself as the composer of several important scores. One of these was an ode to St. Cecilia, for chorus, solo, and grand orchestra, which was performed by the Société Sainte Cécile, of which Seghers was the leader. The newspapers were as severe upon Saint-Saëns as a composer, as they had been satisfied with his début as a pianist. "In the absence of inspiration of the first

order, or of brilliant genius," writes the critic of the Gazette Musicale, " it could be wished that the composer showed a little more *fougue* and dash, were it only in a few paltry flights which reveal a young artist's desire to create for himself an individual style."

With Saint-Saëns inspiration came later, and it was pure inspiration, without fault, and was not wanting in originality.

The young composer soon avenged himself for these harsh criticisms, by composing his first symphony, in E-flat, which was also executed by the Société Sainte-Cécile. The great artist of the future had not then reached his sixteenth year. The work was well calculated to encourage the highest hopes for the future of the symphonist, and these hopes were abundantly realized by his last and admirable symphony in C minor, a composition which indeed may be considered a genuine masterpiece. The first symphony by the lad of sixteen met with a full measure of applause; it has been published and is still frequently played with success. It appears in the catalogue of his complete works as the musical leaflet No. 2. The second symphony, in F major, was performed for the first time in 1856 by the Philharmonic Society of Bordeaux, and also met with a warm welcome. A third symphony in D does not appear in the catalogue, which also does not mention the second symphony, the only symphonies named being those in E-flat, in A minor (Leaflet 56) and in C minor (Leaflet 78). It would seem, therefore, either that two of the five symphonies written by Saint-Saëns have not been published, or that this *complete* catalogue, printed by his publishers, Durand et Schoenewerk, of Paris, is *incomplete*.

I have purposely omitted to mention four concertos for piano and orchestra, because these productions, which are of a high order, have brought to mind an incident which is worthy a special place in this biography.

These four fine works were brilliantly performed on the same evening in the Salle Pleyel by Mme. Marie Jaëll, the pianist so famous for her extraordinary, not to say marvellous, powers of execution. This was, indeed, a feat on the part of the virtuoso as well as an interesting exhibition of artistic talent, and its success was complete. The performances began at nine o'clock in the evening and ended at half-past eleven. Throughout this long and difficult test there was not the slightest momentary defect, either in the playing of the orchestra or in that of the experienced and skilful pianist. For the success of so difficult a task the most subtle artistic feeling and exceptional muscular force were necessary. Mme. Jaëll possessed these qualities in such measure that the soirée devoted to the four concertos of Saint-Saëns will never fade from the memory of those who were present. Besides these concertos we should mention a concerto-fantaisie for piano and orchestra written in 1891 for Mme. Roger-Niclos, which she played with great success at the Colonne concerts. This work has recently been published.

In his work entitled " Virtuoses Contemporains," our dear master and friend, Marmontel, has felicitously described the style of piano-playing characteristic of Saint Saëns. " Saint-Saëns is as accomplished a pianist as he is an organist. He attacks the piece in hand with great energy, and keeps perfect time. His fiery and brilliant execution is flawless even in the most rapid passages. His powerful but admirably modulated playing is full of majesty and breadth; and the only fault that can be found with his masterly execution is, perhaps, the excess of rhythmical precision. Ever master of himself, Saint-Saëns leaves nothing to chance and does not, perhaps, always yield sufficiently to the pathetic. On the other hand, the virtuoso always acquits himself with irreproachable accuracy."

For many years Saint-Saëns has quitted Paris in the winter, to seek the warm sunshine under the blue skies of those favored countries to which the sun remains ever faithful. In order to travel and pass his time free from all annoyance, the composer has adopted the excellent custom of departing from Paris without any flourish of trumpets, without informing anyone where he intends to sojourn, and often without knowing, himself, exactly where he will pitch his tent. On leaving Paris on the 30th of November, 1889, he charged his worthy friend and colleague, Guiraud, of the Institut, now no more, alas! in case the Académie de Musique should authorize the rehearsals of his " Ascanio," to begin during the composer's absence. It was put in hand, and M. Guiraud, with score before him, followed the rehearsals with the utmost care and assiduity.

The preparations for the opera had made great progress, and everybody expected, at any moment, the composer's return. Not only did he refrain from reappearing in Paris to assist at the last rehearsals and to give his final hints to the singers and the orches-

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS.

Reproduction of a photograph from life by Raschkow, Jr. — Breslau.

tra, but he did not even write to anyone. Nobody knew where he had concealed himself. This extraordinary and unheard-of act of a composer, who goes abroad to amuse himself by chasing butterflies or collecting plants, while at home the theatrical managers are making preparations for the first performance of a work of such importance as a grand five-act opera, excited all Paris. It even disturbed the Government, which caused inquiry to be made for the musician by its diplomatic agents throughout the world. The search was a vain one. It was generally thought that Saint-Saëns had died in some part of Ceylon, where certain French travellers believed they had seen him as he was making his way to Japan. The first performance of "Ascanio" was given at a moment when it was in doubt whether Saint-Saëns was dead or alive. Happily, he was still of this world and in very good health; but careless of his glory, was basking in the sunshine of the Canary Islands, busily engaged in finishing a volume of verse which appeared in Paris last year; for Saint-Saëns is a poet as well as a musician. It was a relief to the public when an announcement was at last made by Louis Gallet, the composer's fellow-worker and friend, that the fugitive, at the very moment when "Ascanio" was under active rehearsal at the Opéra, was peacefully and contentedly breathing the warm and balmy air of Palma. As soon as the newspapers betrayed his sojourn in this verdant and flowery retreat, the authorities of the city and the principal inhabitants proposed to confer honors upon the master. But the composer had not gone all the way to Teneriffe for this purpose, and thanking the authorities for the homage they wished to pay him, immediately disappeared again!

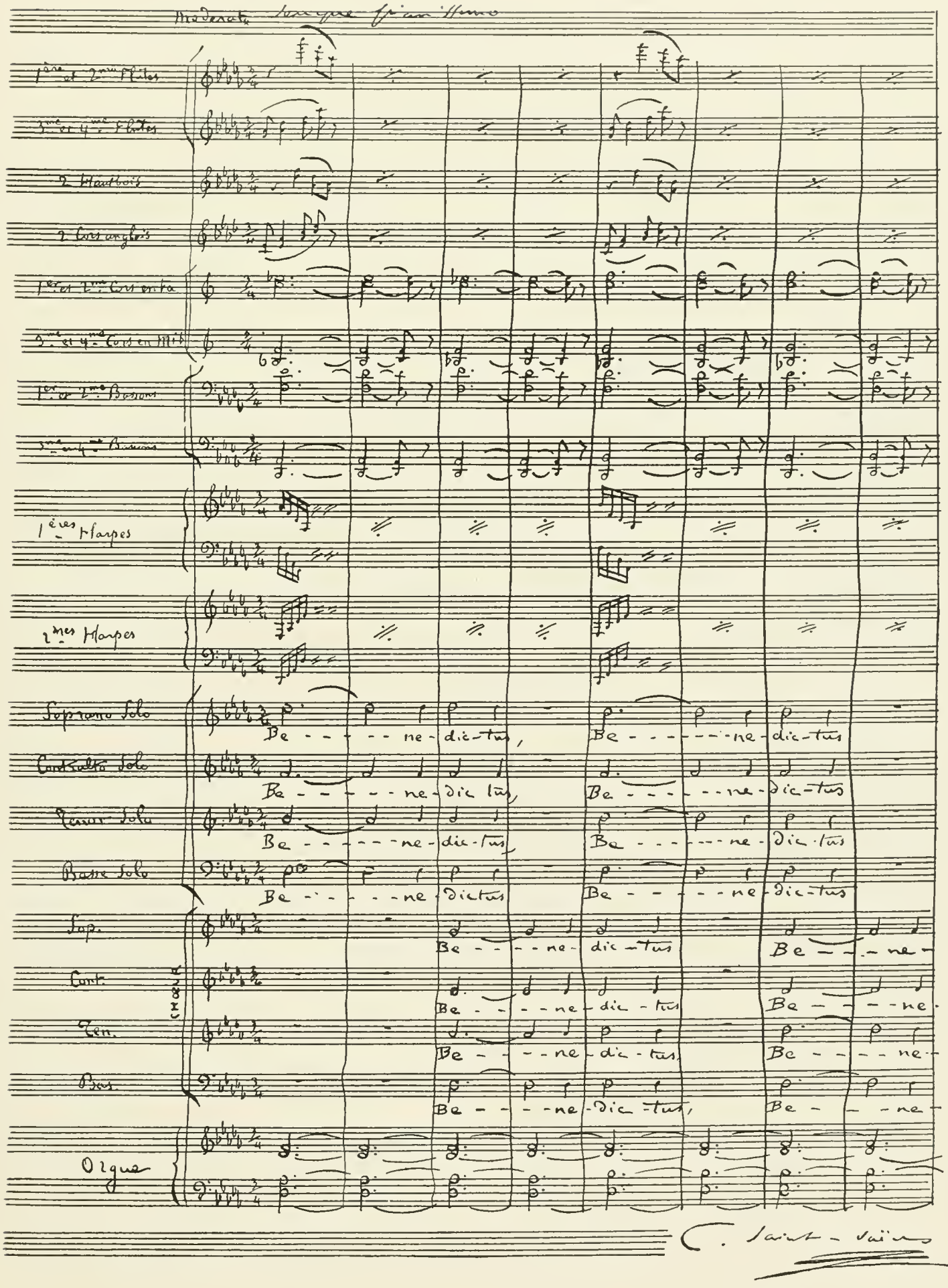
Saint-Saëns is a husband and a father, but his married life has unfortunately not been a very happy one. His two children both died at an early age. One of them fell from the balcony of his father's house, and was killed, while the other suddenly died a short time afterward. Thus it sometimes happens that a man may have, like Saint-Saëns, everything that goes to make up the sum of human happiness — talent, success, honor and fortune, — and yet yearn in vain for that complete felicity which is denied him. Concealed like the statue of Isis, whose veil no mortal has ever been permitted to draw aside, is the condition of unalloyed happiness on this earthly sphere. We know that it exists; we seek it; ofttimes we think it within our grasp, and yet it eludes us!

We cannot more fitly terminate this sketch of the great personality of Saint-Saëns than by adding that he is one of the most masterly readers of piano and organ music who has ever lived, and an improviser of the first rank.

As a child pianist and composer, Camille Saint-Saëns was what is called an infant prodigy. The child has come to man's estate and is, at the present moment, one of the most learned and able artists in every branch of his art, that can be found in the ranks of modern musicians. Since the death of Beethoven, Schumann and Mendelssohn, he wields in Europe the sceptre of symphony; he is renowned as a composer for the church and the theatre, and as an organist; and the mastery he has shown in the concerto, the oratorio and chamber music, of which he has produced a large number of works, is of world-wide fame.

Of his purely instrumental music we may mention, in chronological order: "Tarentelle," for flute and clarinet with orchestra; "Orient et Occident," a military march; Ballade for piano, organ and violin; Introduction and Rondo Capricioso, for violin and piano; "Le Rouet d'Omphale," a symphonic poem; Concerto for violoncello in A minor; Sonato for piano and violoncello; Heroic March for full orchestra; Ballade for horn or violoncello and piano, in F; Ballade for flute or violin and piano; Lullaby for piano and violin, in B-flat; "Phaéton," a symphonic poem; "Danse Macabre," for Orchestra, arranged for piano, for one or two performers, and for one or two pianos; also for piano duet, with violin or violoncello; for military band, etc; Quartet for piano, violin, alto and violoncello; Allegro appassionata, for violoncello and piano; Ballade for violin and piano, in C; Suite for orchestra; prelude, saraband, gavotte, ballade and finale; "La Jeunesse d'Hercule," symphonic poem; Ballade for violoncello and piano in D; Concerto for violin in C major; "Suite Algérienne," for

Benedictus — Extrait du "Requiem" op 54



Fac-simile autograph musical manuscript contributed by the composer for use in this work

orchestra; Concerto for violin, in B minor; Concert piece for violin and piano; "Une Nuit à Lisbonne," barcarolle for orchestra; "La Jota Aragonaise," for orchestra; Septet for trumpet, two violins, alto, violoncello, contra-bass and piano; Hymn to Victor Hugo, for orchestra; Sonata for piano and violin in D minor; "Wedding-Cake," Caprice Valse for piano and stringed instruments; Caprice on Danish and Russian airs, for flute, oboe, clarinet and piano; "Havanaise" for violin and piano; "La Fiancée du Timbalier," for orchestra; etc., etc.

We bear in mind several scores by Saint-Saëns which do not appear in the general catalogue of his works. First of all, there is a very fine composition for a military band, which the illustrious musician was good enough to write at my request, in 1868, for the celebration of Hoche's centenary at Versailles. A short time ago I asked Saint-Saëns why he had not published this beautiful work, written as a tribute to the memory of the great French general, and which is so full of stirring patriotic sentiment. The composer replied that he did not know what had become of this music since the day on which it was solemnly performed before the statue of Hoche at Versailles. The full score and the orchestral parts have remained undiscovered up to the present time. I may also mention, as among the compositions of Saint-Saëns, which are not included in the catalogue of his works, an extremely original, bright and thoroughly artistic work written for several instruments and called "Le Carnaval des Animaux." Only one of the animals in this merry Carnival has been honored by publication, viz.: "The Swan," whose song is interpreted in this zoölogical symphony by the violoncello.

The works by Saint-Saëns for piano solo, duet, and for two pianos are very numerous. All of them are vigorously characteristic of the decided and learned style of the master, and are also marked by a certain individuality peculiar to this famous pianist-composer.

It is well known that the composer is one of the most renowned organists in Europe. As might be expected, he has written specially for this instrument, which, figuratively speaking, is the embodiment of all other instruments. We will only mention the Rhapsodies on the Breton canticles; also the "Bénédiction Nuptiale" and "Elévation et Communion," which are noble works for the King of Instruments.

Saint-Saëns succeeded Lefébvre Wely as organist at the Madeleine. Among his church compositions he has composed a Grand Mass for four voices, soli and orchestra; "Tantum Ergo," a Chorus; a "Christmas Oratorio" for chorus, soli and orchestra; Psalm XVIII.— "Cœli enarrant" for soli, chorus and orchestra; "Le Déluge," biblical poem for soli, chorus and orchestra; and a Requiem which, with the oratorio "Le Déluge," we include among his best works. There is also a collection of twenty separate motets for the Holy Communion, motets to the Virgin, and other miscellaneous motets.

We may further mention among the characteristic compositions which are not in the religious or the dramatic style: — Scene from Corneille's "Les Horaces," for soprano, baritone and orchestra; six Persian melodies, vocal and instrumental (piano); "Les Soldats de Gédéon," double chorus without accompaniment; "Chanson du Grand-papa," chorus for female voices; "Chanson d'un Ancêtre," chorus for male voices with baritone solo; "La Lyre et la Harpe," soli, chorus and orchestra; two choruses with piano accompaniment: "Calme des Nuits" and "Les Fleurs et les Arbres"; two choruses for male voices without accompaniment: "Les Marins de Kermor" and "Les Titans"; "Les Guerriers," chorus for male voices; several other choruses, besides some fifty duets and melodies with piano accompaniment. We abridge the list in order to mention the composer's dramatic works: "Le Timbre d'Argent"; "La Princesse Jaune," comic opera in one act; "Proserpine," lyric drama in four acts; "Etienne Marcel," opera in four acts; "Samson et Dalila," biblical opera in three acts; "Henry VIII.," opera in four acts; and lastly, "Ascanio," opera in five acts.

It has been said with truth that Saint-Saëns is of all composers the one who differs most from himself, in his dramatic works. We mean by this that he has emancipated himself from the hard and fast lines of any particular school; that he has no system and is guided wholly by his own inspiration, tempered and strengthened by great musical learning. He could, if he so desired, write according to the theories or in the manner of this or of that composer, but he prefers to write as his genius follows its own individual vein, agreeing, no doubt, with his famous colleague and friend, Charles Gounod, that if there are many systems of composition, there are, after all, only two kinds of music:

that which is good and that which is bad. His admiration for all the great masters is profound, but he strives to imitate none, this has caused certain critics to subject him to the reproach of eclecticism. He has expressed himself on this point with frank sincerity (for Saint-Saëns is a man as well as a musician) in a highly interesting volume entitled "Harmonie et Mélodie." After declaring that he had never belonged to any religion in music, he adds: "I claim to preserve my liberty, to like what pleases me and to reject the rest; to believe good that which is good, discordant that which is discordant, absurd that which is absurd. This is precisely what the more ardent disciples of Wagner refuse to concede. They grasp you by the throat, and insist that you must admire everything Wagnerian, no heed what it may be. With them there is something beyond love of art: the spirit of sectarianism. I am afraid of sectarians, and so keep myself prudently aloof from them."

It was of these Wagnerian critics, who carry their love for the composer of "music dramas" to the point of fanatic intolerance, even of ferocity, that Saint-Saëns was thinking when he wrote these lines, as well as others that we shall quote presently; and these same critics accused our composer of the crime of refusing to enlist under the banner of the master of Bayreuth. They sought to crush Saint-Saëns in their criticisms of his last great opera, "Ascanio," by saying, not only had he here perpetrated the heresy of adhering to that form of opera that prevailed before Wagner propounded his theories of the "lyric drama," but that he had also forgotten himself so far as to write airs in the Italian style! These amiable censors showed themselves more royalist than the king himself, for as a matter of fact Wagner by no means despised Italian airs; on the contrary, he liked them very much if we may believe what he has said. The following words of the composer of "Lohengrin" are worth remembering: "After listening to an opera by Bellini, that has delighted us, we discover on reflection, that its charm is owing to the clear melody, to the simple, lofty and beautiful song of the Italian composer. To treasure in the memory these delightful melodies is certainly no grave sin. Nor is it a heavier one to pray to heaven, before retiring to rest, that it may inspire German composers with the secret of these melodies and a like manner of using them."

The truth is that in music, as in all other arts, we do what we can rather than what we should most like to do, and he is wisest who is guided by his own genius. The genius of Camille Saint-Saëns is so rich in resources that he can safely trust himself and let the spirit work within him as it wills. There are composers who, forgetting that beauty is inseparable from high art, strive after eminence by seeking originality at any cost, and who do not disdain to make that art, harmonious before and beyond all other arts, the art of torturing our ears with music that is *per se* inharmonious. Is not Saint-Saëns right when, in speaking of these psychological and hysterical composers, he says with peculiar felicity: "It is certain that we cannot work too hard to instil in the public a taste for pleasures of an elevated order; but to offer it what is ingeniously described as 'painful pleasure,' to offer a feast consisting of 'exquisite suffering' and 'poetic perversion,' merely ends in mortification. When we wish to mortify our souls we do not go to the theatre but to a convent."

We may be asked for the opinion of the composer of "Faust," "Roméo et Juliette" and "Mireille," concerning the composer of "Samson et Dalila," "Henry VIII." and "Ascanio." I am in a position to answer the question. Gounod has spoken of Saint-Saëns in connection with his last opera as follows: "That in the lyric drama, music should coalesce with the drama and blend in one harmonious whole is an excellent theory, but only on condition that in this indissoluble union, music shall still be true and beautiful music; otherwise the union is no more than a cruel bondage for one of the arts so joined, and that art is Music. Throughout the works of Saint-Saëns we are in communion with an artist who never for an instant forgets or sacrifices his art; everywhere and always is the great musician present, and everywhere, too, the drama appears before him as a *law*, not as a *yoke*. Passions, characters, situations, are felt by him with the same certainty of discernment, whether in song, declamation, recitative, or in the dramatic part which must be played by his orchestra; and all this in an idiom and a form which are musically irreproachable, insomuch that he has created true and lasting 'morceaux de musique' even where the librettist did not provide the frame-work expected of him."

Were we not limited as to space, it would be

a pleasing task to present here a technical and æsthetic analysis of the operas of the French master concerning whom we write thus briefly; but this would carry us too far. Suffice it, from what we have already written, for the reader to form a satisfactory judgment on the instrumental and vocal works of Saint-Saëns. In the "Timbre d'Argent," which has something in common with the fable of "Faust," we are in the midst of a musical and chorographic fantasy. This score is very attractive and well emphasizes a very pretty performance.

"La Princesse Jaune" transports us into the East, where reality seems as a dream. It is a drawing-room comedy, the scene of which is laid in a Japanese village, where Dutch tulips grow as rank as does the grass in the fields; where the sky is blue, where everything is full of color and appears smiling, joyous and lovable.

In "Etienne Marcel," the illustrious Prévôt des Marchands, we have historical drama, in the civil war waged for the triumph of communal liberties. The rioters force a violent entrance into the Palais de la Cité, and the voices of scoffers are heard alternating with the cries of raving fanatics. It is terrible, and quite characteristic of the Parisian mind in the troublous times when the streets became one great battle-field. Love, of course, finds its place in "Etienne Marcel," a love gentle and searching. Some of the contrasts are most happy, the choruses are superb, the volume of sound is sublime.

"Samson et Dalila," as is sufficiently indicated by the title, is a biblical opera, almost an oratorio, reminding us of the "Joseph" of Méhul. I was overflowing with enthusiasm on coming out from the representation of "Samson et Dalila." This score and the symphony in C minor are, I believe, the two finest jewels in the crown of this musical king. They are works full of the highest inspiration, of a most sublime cast, wonderfully elaborate in style, and masterpieces in the fullest sense of the word.

The gloomy subject of "Henry VIII." opened up new fields to Saint-Saëns, and afforded him a local color that influenced his music. The moment the score opens, we feel that we know exactly where we are and whither we are going. The principal personages in the drama have been each and all instantaneously portrayed and their diverse characters are accurately represented. The king of England, the Pope's nightmare and the terror of his queenly wives and victims, is, from a musical point of view, especially well portrayed in his wild orgies and brutal amours. Anne Boleyn fails to hide the pride that lies behind her love, although its expression is not less charming on that account. Catherine of Arragon, the noble and unfortunate forsaken one, is superb in her insulted majesty, her pathetic and sweet melancholy. The choruses are treated in a masterly manner, and there is one important "morceau d'ensemble" which is a signal triumph of expressive and dramatic counterpoint. The airs in the ballet impress us as being thoroughly English. As to the orchestra, the importance of which cannot be overestimated, it plays in a measured and finished style and produces the effect of a powerful organ. Here we have local color again, cleverly used.

"Ascanio" is the last dramatic work of Saint-Saëns. The fanatical partisans of the Wagnerian theories, as we have already observed, were not sparing of bitter criticism. Saint-Saëns must have found ample consolation for this in the continuous applause showered upon him by the public which always cordially welcomes whatever affords it pleasure. "Ascanio" is indeed equal in all respect to "Henry VIII.," and worthy the composer, which is saying not a little of a man who has given such treasures to all lovers of music.

JULES MASSENET

Reproduction of a photograph from life by Nadar of Paris.

JULES EMILE FRÉDÉRIC MASSENET

JULES EMILE FRÉDÉRIC MASSENET was born on the 12th of May, 1842, at Montaud, in the department of the Loire, and was the eleventh child of his parents. His musical talent developed at an early age. When only eleven years old he was sufficiently acquainted with the theoretical elements of the art to take his place in François Bazin's harmony class in the Conservatoire. It is by no means uncommon for a professor to mistake the capacity of his pupils. Unfortunately Bazin failed to foresee the splendid future reserved for his young pupil Massenet: on the contrary, he believed him to be destitute of all musical talent and requested that he might be dismissed from his class. The poor little musician felt so deeply humiliated by this insult that he was almost inclined to renounce music forever. It was five years before he reappeared at the Conservatoire, but luckily, at the end of that long term, he returned to study under the learned Henri Reber in the harmony class.

One day, shortly after Massenet joined this class, Reber addressed him thus in presence of his fellow-pupils: "Monsieur, I urge you, for your own welfare, to quit my class and go into a higher one, a class where fugue and composition are taught. You understand as much of harmony, so called, as I can teach you, and you will waste your time if you remain with me. Follow my advice, for if I am a true prophet, you will make your mark."

Thus it was that, dismissed from Bazin's harmony class as a dunce, Massenet was advised to leave Reber's class because he learned too rapidly. The youngster followed the advice given by the composer of "Le Père Gaillard" and "La Nuit de Noël," and studied fugue and composition with Ambroise Thomas, the composer of "Mignon" and Hamlet," who had been appointed director of the school after the death of Auber.

In the composition class young Massenet so distinguished himself by his ardor and application to study, that he won, and ever after retained, the friendship of Ambroise Thomas. At each lesson he submitted to his master, in addition to fugues and exercises in counterpoint, instrumental and vocal works of various kinds, each bearing witness to his lively imagination and to his instinct to produce something new. Of course all these efforts of the future composer of "Manon" were not irreproachable, and sometimes his comrades rallied him on what they called his fits of musical intoxication. "Let him sow his wild oats," said Ambroise Thomas, "and you will find that when he has sobered down and become more reflective he will achieve something. He is a genius."

The time was close at hand when Massenet was to fulfil this flattering prophecy. In the very same year, 1863, he obtained the first prize in counterpoint and fugue at the Conservatoire and the Grand Prize for musical composition (Grand Prix de Rome) at the Institut de France. He was then, we believe, already married, although physically he did not look more than fifteen years of age.

As he had an annual allowance accorded him by the State, he set out for the Eternal City and made a tour in Italy, proceeding thence to Germany to seek inspiration from the masters of symphony. The winner of the Grand Prix de Rome is expected during his sojourn abroad, to send at least one work to the Institute as a proof that he has turned his time to good account and has made due progress. Whether or not young Massenet left his lightheartedness behind him when he crossed the French frontier we cannot say; but the composition he sent from Rome was a Requiem. Massenet wrote a large work for solo voices, chorus and orchestra, entitled "Pompéia," which in form as well as in instrumentation showed the influence of Berlioz.

This indicated an inquiring and meditative mind in the young composer, who was thus feeling his way through the boldest and most modern school of music.

Massenet sent a second envoy from Rome, which was his first orchestral suite. With this suite is associated an event of great importance in the musical career of the composer. Massenet tells the story himself.

The composer had just returned to France, after passing in Italy and Germany the regulation period accorded the laureates of the Institute. While walking in the street, he met Pasdeloup, the founder and director of the celebrated "Popular Concerts." Pasdeloup was one of the best men in the world, but he had the habit of treating young composers in a brusque and patronizing manner. He had only seen Massenet once, and that was during the performance of the cantata for which he was awarded the Grand Prize. As has already been stated, Massenet always looked much younger than he really was, and from his twentieth to his twenty-fourth year he had the face and air of a boy of sixteen. Pasdeloup accosted him with a frown, as though he had something disagreeable to tell him, and speaking in an offensively familiar and condescending manner, said: —

"Ah, so you have returned to France. What have you been doing during your absence?"

"I have been writing music, M. Pasdeloup."

"That is all very well; but it is not sufficient to write music; you must write good music. Is your music really good?"

"Sir, it is not for me to pass judgment upon it."

"You have written, I believe, an orchestral suite?"

"Yes sir."

"Well, but everybody writes orchestral suites. Is yours a good one? Are you satisfied with it yourself?"

"Well, Monsieur Pasdeloup, I feel obliged to admit that it pleases me when I play it on the piano, but I have not yet heard it performed by an orchestra."

"Of course it pleases you. But how much music is there that pleases its composer, and yet is not worth a button. Can I see your manuscript?"

"You do me too much honor, Monsieur Pasdeloup. I will send my score to you this very evening."

"Good. I will tell you what I think of it and whether it pleases me as much as it pleases you. Let me say that I think very little of the music of young men who win the Prix de Rome. They only know how to imitate the faults of the masters they study. However, we shall see."

And Pasdeloup quitted Massenet with an air of utter dissatisfaction.

The young composer hastened home and told his family of the interview and of the faint hope he cherished that his suite might possibly be performed at the famous Popular Concerts. He then rolled up his score, took it to Pasdeloup's residence, and left it with the concierge. Ten days later Massenet received, by post, a gift which filled him with equal joy and surprise. It was a ticket admitting him to a rehearsal. He was invited to the Cirque d'Hiver, where the Popular Concerts were given, to hear a rehearsal of his orchestral suite.

Next day, full of excitement, he set out for the rehearsal. On arriving at the door, however, he had not sufficient courage to enter, so overcome was he by his emotions. "Perhaps," thought he, "the orchestral effect may not be what I intended," and he felt that he had not strength to brave the severe criticisms of Pasdeloup and the jeers of the members of the orchestra.

Massenet returned home without having dared to listen to the rehearsal of his work and wholly discontented with himself. He called himself a coward and a pretender, and as he passed along the boulevard, his eye mechanically seeking the announcement of the performances at the theatres and concerts, he was suddenly astounded to see his own name on the programme of the Pasdeloup Concert to be given on the following Sunday. They were really going to play his suite! He ran rather than walked home to announce the glorious news.

"They play — my suite — Sunday — Popular Concert! — Oh! how my heart beats!"

And the great composer, as the memory of the beginning of his musical career came back to him, bowed his head on my breast and burst into tears. I wept with him.

"Ah!" said he, "I was happier then than I am to-day. Anticipation is better than the reality."

The opera "Manon" has a curious history which Massenet related to me one day. Everybody knows in what singular circumstances the author of "Manon Lescaut" (Abbé Prévost) took refuge at

MASSENET IN HIS STUDY.

Reproduced from a photograph from life made by Dornac & Co., Paris, 1891.

The Hague. It was in that city that he wrote his "Mémoires d'un Homme de Qualité" to which "Manon Lescaut" seems to belong as a species of postscript or sequel. In a like manner, and in that Dutch town, Massenet, owing to certain circumstances, chanced to write the score of "Manon" the substance of which is taken from the Abbé Prevost's romance. Wishing to remain apart from the rest of the world, in order to be quite undisturbed, he took lodgings as a boarder under an assumed name at a house in The Hague. To prevent all suspicion as to identity, he did not send for a piano, for, unlike some composers, Massenet does not need a piano to enable him to compose. He thinks out his music, which he hears inwardly, already arranged for the orchestra. Absorbed in his work, the composer labored unceasingly. He never went forth to take necessary exercise until after nightfall, that he might run no risk of being recognized. After his walk, which lasted about an hour, he returned home with coat collar turned up to conceal his face.

He was accustomed to write at a large table littered with music-paper, each sheet bearing thirty staves. When not actually engaged in composing he amused himself by reading the Abbé Prévost's romance, written by the French author in that same foreign town, possibly even in that same house, more than a century before. And Massenet's artistic imagination saw in this fact a happy prognostic. "Why," thought he, "should not my score of 'Manon' be as successful as was Prévost's immortal novel? Grant, O, Sovereign God of Inspiration, that I may cause the sweet and loving Manon to sing, after a lapse of a hundred years, under the same sky, far away from Paris, and in the same happy strain as that in which the most worldly of abbés made her speak!"

The existence of the mysterious foreigner, who was always writing music but who never played any instrument, greatly exercised Massenet's landlord. The inmates of the house were not less mystified than was he. The gossips agreed that this French musician was a choirmaster — and a very original one. At last the composer was recognized, and the next day the newspapers informed the public that Massenet had been for some time at The Hague. People flocked to see him, and his apartments were speedily crowded with friends or with persons who came from mere curiosity. Happily, however, the score of "Manon" was completed.

Massenet is one of the most estimable of men, kind and sympathetic to a fault, and possessed of great delicacy and consideration for others. He would enjoy the friendship of all men, were he less talented and consequently less liable to inspire jealousy. Of medium stature, spare but well made and of striking appearance, he has always looked younger than he really was, a happy privilege among the many others enjoyed by this favored son of genius, who is an honor and glory of the present generation of French composers. He is now a member of the Institute of France, a professor of composition at the National Conservatory of Paris and an Officer of the Legion of Honor.

As we close this biographical sketch, the distinguished composer has just given the first performance of his latest opera, "Werther," at the Grand Theatre of Vienna, where it met with brilliant success. Massenet has been kind enough to bestow on us a page of the work to place in this biography, with a specimen of his hand-writing, and we tender him our warmest thanks. By the time these lines meet the eye of the reader, "Werther" will have been put upon the stage at the Opéra Comique, in Paris.

Massenet's debut in theatrical work dates from the third of April, 1866, when "La Grand' tante," a pretty little piece full of melody and freshness, was represented at the Opéra Comique. It was he who, on the Emperor's fête, August 12 of the following year, wrote the official cantata performed at the Opéra.

After this first attempt in theatrical music, and his cantata, Massenet produced various concert works, among others, "Poèmes et Souvenirs" and "Poèmes d' Avril," the words of which are by Armand Sylvestre; also a *bouffe* scene entitled "L'Improvisateur." His second Suite d'Orchestre,—a Suite Hongroise, was played at the Concerts Populaires. For the Société Classique Armingaud he composed "Introductions et Variations," a quartet for stringed

and wind instruments. In 1872 he produced his second dramatic work, "Don César de Bazan," at the Opéra-Comique; but the public did not give it a very cordial reception. It had been written under unfavorable conditions, improvised, as it were, in three weeks. The managers of the theatre proposed terms to the young composer which he was obliged to accept or decline without amendment. Massenet took his revenge for this treatment, however, in the very same year, with the delightful scenic music for the drama, "Les Errynies," by the Comte de Lisle, which was represented at the Odéon. The next year, 1873, the composer produced one of his most exquisite scores, which shows his warm poetic talent in the most characteristic manner. This was "Marie Madeleine," a sacred drama in three acts, which has had a world-wide success. So successful was it indeed that Massenet was encouraged to write "Eve," a mystery in three acts. This latter, so intimately related in character to "Marie Madeleine," has been given at the concerts of sacred harmony established by Lamoureux. In this, too, the composer's personality is emphasized by exquisitely delicate and poetic touches. The same may be said of "La Vierge," a sacred legend in four parts, written for the Opéra concerts and played for the first time in 1880. The "Sleep of the Virgin" in this legend is one of those inspirations which prove beyond all doubt the measure of a composer's genius.

A year before the production of "La Vierge," Massenet had given the French National Academy of Music his first great opera, "Le Roi de Lahore," in five acts, the success of which was not at first evident. The public considered this beautiful music slightly cold, and instrumental rather than vocal. They said the composer had shown himself wanting in melody, and that he had sacrificed too much to his love for scientific combinations, although wild applause greeted a certain number of happily-conceived songs, among others the aria so splendidly rendered by Lassalle and which has always been honored with an encore.

It is only when great works are reproduced after a certain interval of time that we can determine whether they are really worthy a place in the musical repertory. The reproduction at the Opéra of the "Roi de Lahore" was a great success, and it has always been enthusiastically received in the principal theatres of Europe and America.

The Théâtre de la Monnaie, at Brussels, enjoyed the privilege of giving, in 1881, the first performance of Massenet's second grand opera, "Hérodiade" in three acts and five tableaux. This time success was beyond all doubt, and from the first representation onward, the piece was received with enthusiasm. Whatever M. Massenet may hereafter give to the world, "Hérodiade" will undoubtedly remain one of the finest works that have originated in the fertile brain of this distinguished musician. Throughout the work the divine afflatus is maintained, and melody fills the auditorium. The opera is full of passion and sentiment, at once human and religious, just as in "Marie Madeleine." It might be said that "Hérodiade" is the same sacred drama brought upon the stage, with this difference, that Madeleine becomes Salome, and Christ is transformed into John.

After "Hérodiade," in Brussels, we had, in 1884, "Manon" at the Opéra Comique in Paris. Were I asked to make a definite choice between "Hérodiade" and "Manon" I should hesitate; but I should choose "Manon." From the first to the last note the work is delightful. It is not less beautiful when softly sung at home to the accompaniment of the piano, than in the theatre, where our delight never for an instant moderates.

Following "Manon" in 1885, Massenet's "Le Cid" in four acts, was performed at the Grand Opéra in Paris, and although reproduced several times, this work still maintain its place in the repertory.

In 1889, the indefatigable composer returned to the Opéra Comique with "Esclarmonde," which drew crowds to this theatre during several months.

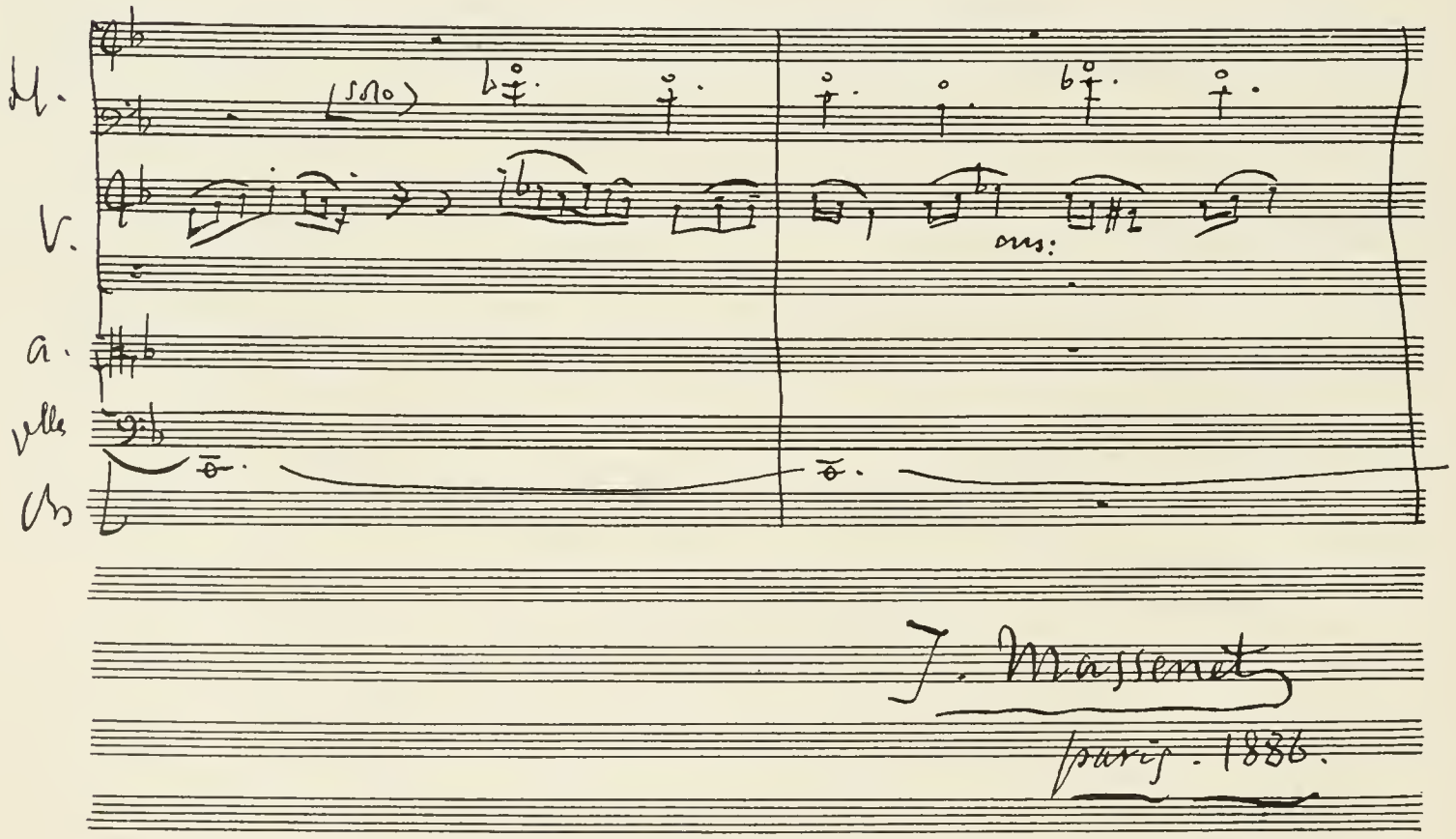
In the chronological order of the musician's dramatic works, "Esclarmonde" is followed by "Le Mage," a grand opera in four acts and six tableaux, the poem by M. Richepin, performed at the National Academy of Music in Paris. I have witnessed several renderings of this work, and have read the piano score. The more I have studied the opera the more am I impressed by its wonderful beauty. The individuality of the work, its passion and grace and delicacy, its originality as to form and harmony, are so numerous that it is unnecessary to criticise it more particularly.

All lovers of music know the extent of Massenet's skill as a master of harmony. He is a master in the full meaning of the expression. It would be impossible for a musician to carry to a higher degree

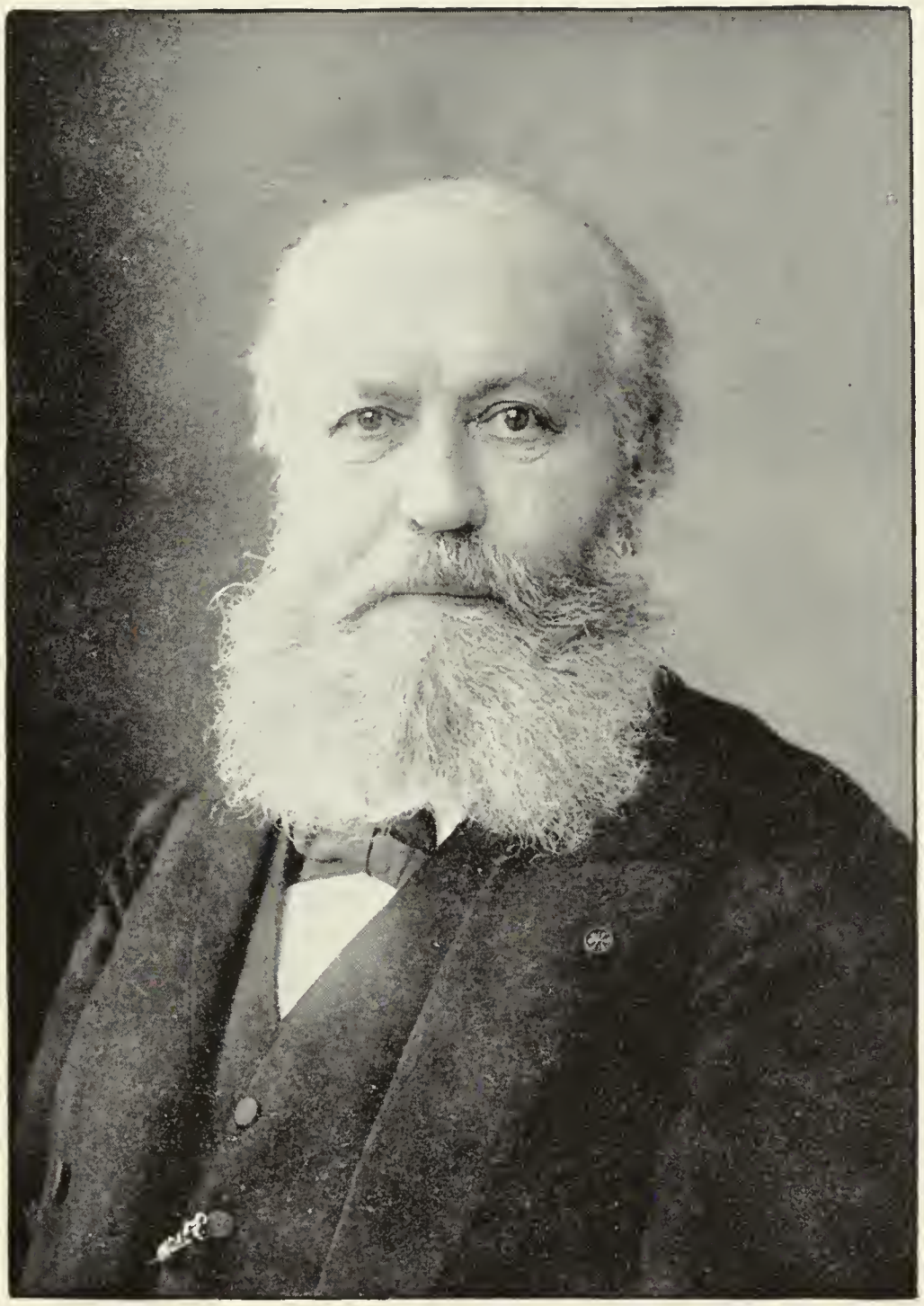
than he has done the complex art of orchestration or of counterpoint, so much honored of late years, though so often abused; or to have more happy facility as a harmonist. Were I to presume to criticise anything in the author of "Le Mage," I should limit myself to mentioning his too clearly apparent striving after *effect* by means of fresh combinations of instruments. Massenet has too great a wealth of truly musical ideas for him to labor so hard for *material* effects. The true effects in music are produced by the thought, by the idea, apart from the application of the thought or idea to any special instrument. There is scarce any charm of emotion produced by music save through the musician's imagination, that is, by the invention which results from the inward and profound emotion felt by the composer. Were it only necessary to be learned in any given art, only necessary to possess the power of cleverly combining notes and the tones of musical instruments, so as to produce fine musical works, every artist now living would write masterpieces; for, in truth, the study of technique has never been carried so far as it has been during the past twenty years. Technique is undoubtedly indispensable, but of itself it serves no purpose and is of no value, unless it be used as the exponent of the melodic conception which is the very soul of music.

M. Massenet has published seven suites for orchestra, which may be found in the repertory of every great musical society. To him we owe various scenes for chorus and orchestra: "Narcisse," and "Biblis"; a symphonic poem entitled "Visions," and a large number of fugitive melodies with pianoforte accompaniment. He has also completed the score of a ballet, "Le Carillon," as yet unpublished.

Oscar Comettant



Fac-simile of musical manuscript written by Massenet.



CHARLES GOUNOD

Reproduction of a photograph from life, by Nadar, of Paris.


GOUNOD

CHARLES GOUNOD

GOUNOD, the greatest living musician of France is descended from a family of artists. His grandfather, a very distinguished enchaser, bore the title of "sword cutler to the king," and as such occupied an apartment in the Louvre buildings, a favor which was granted to only artists of renown. His son, Jean François Gounod, who was born about 1760, was a painter of considerable talent. He was a pupil of Lépicié, and he and Carle Vernet, who occupied the same studio, competed at the Académie des Beaux-Arts for the "Prix de Rome." Carle Vernet obtained the first prize at this concours in 1782, and Jean François Gounod carried off the second in 1783. The latter, however, devoted himself especially to engraving, in order that he might always live with his father who was getting old and needed all his care and attention.

J. F. Gounod was serious, melancholy and quite original in character, as was shown by his conduct on the death of his father, who lived to be over ninety years of age. This loss was a great grief to him, and in the hope of diverting his mind and driving off melancholy, he undertook a tramp to Versailles. He had very little money in his pocket. However, being fatigued by his journey he entered a public house and went to bed. He remained several days at Versailles, but, far from being relieved of his sad thoughts, he was so overwhelmed by them that he dreaded to return to his rooms in the Louvre, where he had witnessed his father breathe his last. He wrote to a friend to say that he should not return to Paris, but intended to start immediately for Italy; he begged him to go to his room, take from his secretary all the money he might find there, and bring it to him at Versailles, receiving at the same time his adieux. Once in possession of his money, Gounod, who disliked encumbrance of any sort, furnished himself with a light carpet bag, and with this baggage set off on a journey which was at that time very long and very difficult. He travelled all over Italy, remaining there four or five years; then he returned to Paris, and to his rooms where nothing had been disturbed, and resumed work as if he had left it only the evening before.

One of J. F. Gounod's friends has written the following lines concerning him: "M. Gounod has made a reputation in engraving. He has produced little and his income could scarcely have been enough to suffice him. Nevertheless, he liked to work and engraving offered him the quiet and deliberation which suited his disposition. In general he spoke but little. When he was obliged to quit the Louvre, he was quite helpless in regard to the great confusion which always characterized his apartment; it was one mass of books, pasteboard, drawings and articles of all sorts scattered about, including a dismembered skeleton, whose bones were all pretty effectually separated from each other. Fortunately one of his cousins undertook to transfer for him everything that was transferable, otherwise Gounod would have abandoned all. He concluded to marry, for it was absolutely necessary that somebody should aid him in finding himself again. He was, nevertheless, a good and excellent man. His wife was charming, a very good musician, and it was she who educated her son. He was getting along in years when he married, and at his death this son was still very young."

Very young indeed, for the future author of "Faust," "Roméo et Juliette" and "Mireille," Charles Gounod, was scarcely five years old when he lost his father, whom he had not learned to know. Like Herold, like Adam, like Halévy, Charles Gounod was born at Paris, where he first saw the light June 17, 1818. His mother, a woman of fine character and high intelligence, neglected nothing

that could contribute to his literary and artistic education. She was his first music teacher. He began very young to feel an intense love for this art, which he was to make illustrious. A pupil of the Saint Louis lyceum, he was already an excellent pianist while still pursuing his classical studies at this establishment, and before completing these studies he took up a course of harmony with the famous theoretician, Reicha. He took the degree of bachelor when he was little more than sixteen years old, and was admitted to the Conservatoire in the class of counterpoint and fugue directed by Halévy, and soon after in the composition class of Lesueur, one of the greatest masters that ever glorified the French school. In the following year Gounod took part in the concours of the Institute for the "Prix de Rome," and carried off without opposition a second grand prize. He was thus exempted from the military service, since the rules of the "Concours de Rome" established at that time this exemption for any pupil having obtained a prize before the age of twenty. This was in 1837, and Gounod was only nineteen.

At the close of this same year Lesueur died, and Gounod passed under the instruction of Paër, with whom he finished his studies. In 1838 he presented himself again at the Institute, this time without success, but in 1839 he carried off a brilliant first prize with a cantata entitled "Fernand," the words of which were written by the marquis de Pastoret. This first prize was almost unanimously awarded to him, twenty-five votes out of twenty-seven being in his favor. He left at once for Rome and there devoted himself almost exclusively for three or four years, to the study and composition of religious music, being especially charmed and influenced by the works of the great Palestrina. In 1841 he had performed in the Saint-Louis-des Français church, on the occasion of the fête of king Louis-Philippe, a grand orchestra mass, with contralto and tenor solos. Towards the end of the following year he made a trip through Germany, pausing for a time in Vienna, where he gave in the Saint Charles church a Requiem mass which produced upon its hearers a most profound impression. Some idea of the effect produced may be had from an account addressed to one of the Paris papers of the day, and which seemed invested with a spirit of prophecy: "On All Soul's Day" said this writer, "there was performed at the Saint Charles church a Requiem, a quite recent work by M. Charles Gounod. One recognizes in this composition not only a very marked musical talent which has already obtained by its assiduity and experience a high degree of independence, but one sees in it also a great and wholly individual comprehension, which breaks away from the beaten tracks in order to create new forms. In the melodic phrases there are things which deeply touch and impress the hearer, things which disclose a grandeur of conception become very rare in our day, and which engrave themselves ineffaceably upon the soul, things which would do honor to any musician, and which seem to point to a great future. The solos were sung perfectly, and the choruses as well as the orchestra likewise deserve praise. M. Gounod directed in person the performance of his work."

It is plain that the pace of the young musician was not that of an ordinary artist, and that his first steps were directed toward glory, for rarely does one hear such praise accorded a composer of twenty-five years.

Meanwhile Gounod, already haunted by an idea which was long to pursue him, had dreamed of bidding farewell, not to his art, but to the world, and had seriously considered taking ecclesiastic orders. His mind possessed by this fancy, he had, during the latter part of his stay at Rome, left the villa Médécis, where at that time the French school was established, and had retired to the seminary. As soon as he returned to Paris, he entered as precentor the Missions Etrangères, where he wore the long robe and costume of the conventual house, and his resolution seemed thenceforth so certain that it was accepted as an accomplished fact. Indeed a special sheet, the *Revue et Gazette Musicale*, published the following under date of Feb. 15, 1846: "M. Gounod, composer and former winner of the grand Institute prize, has just taken orders." From this moment, Gounod was called "l' Abbé Gounod," just as, sixty years before, his master Lesueur was called "l'Abbé Lesueur," when he became precentor of the Metropolitan church. There was this difference, however, that Lesueur had never desired to become a priest, but according to the usage then in vogue at the Notre Dame church, Paris, he was obliged, in order to fulfill the functions of precentor, to don the priestly garb. Gounod, on the other hand, seemed to have made up his mind to a religious life, since in 1846 a

publisher brought out a series of religious choruses entitled "Offices of Holy Week, by the Abbé Charles Gounod."

In his retreat Gounod continued to occupy himself with religious music, and in 1849 he had performed at the Saint-Eustache church a grand solemn mass which was very well received. At this moment he seemed absolutely lost to profane art, and as he was brought very little before the public, people began to forget about him, when there appeared in the London Athenæum early in 1851, an article which was immediately republished in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale* of Paris, and which contained an enthusiastic eulogium on several of Gounod's compositions recently performed at a concert at St. Martin's Hall. "This music," said the writer, "brings before us no other composer ancient or modern, either by the form, the melody or the harmony. It is not new in the sense of being bizarre or whimsical; it is not old, if old means dry and stiff, the bare scaffolding, with no fine construction rising behind it; it is the work of an accomplished artist, it is the poetry of a new poet. * * * * * That the impression produced upon the audience was great and real there can be no doubt, but it is the music itself, not its reception, which to our minds presages for M. Gounod an uncommon career; for if there be not in his works a genius at once true and new, then must we go back to school and relearn the alphabet of the art and of criticism."

This article fell like a thunderclap on Paris, where people were scarcely giving Gounod a thought. A very distinguished French musical critic, Louis Viardot, was then in London with his wife, the worthy and noble sister of Malibran. This Athenæum article was attributed to him, not without reason, I think, and it was soon known that Mme. Viardot, whose experience, taste and musical knowledge everyone knows, was struck by the music of the young master, and that she was far from concealing her admiration for a talent so pure, so elegant and so exquisite.

Excited by such a success Gounod at once renounced his orders, and entered without more delay upon the militant career of the art interrupted for so many years. He soon produced in public a pretty symphony in E flat, which, performed in a remarkable manner by the Saint Cecilia Society, then a worthy rival of that of the Conservatoire, won him the congratulations and sincere encouragement of the critics. Then, thanks to the assistance of Mme. Viardot, he was charged with writing for the *Opéra* the score of a work in three acts, "Sapho," the libretto of which had been confided to a young poet, Emile Angier, who was likewise in the morning of his career, and likewise destined for glory, and in this work the great artist whom we have just named, was to take the principal rôle. Notwithstanding all, "Sapho" was not well received by the public, or at least only moderately so and scarcely achieved more than what is called in France a success of esteem. Yet the work was an exceedingly good one, but the first step on a stage so important as that of the *Opéra* is so difficult for a young composer to make! It must be said, however, that if the work as a whole was not judged entirely satisfactory, especially in regard to the scenic effects, etc., it presented a value which a fastidious critic stated in these terms: "The opera of "Sapho," without being a good dramatic work, is the work of a distinguished musician who has style and lofty tendencies. M. Gounod has perfectly seized and happily rendered all the lyric parts of the subject which he has treated, but he has been less happy in trying to express the conflict of passions and the contrast of characters." Certain pages in the score of "Sapho" were remarked as being quite individual in flavor, and the public were especially delighted with the beautiful song of the young shepherd, "Brontez le Thym, Brontes mes chêvres," as well as the admirable couplets of "Sapho," of a character so melancholy, and an inspiration so full of a delicate poetry. The work was performed on the 16th of April, 1851.

A year later the Comédie-Française produced a tragedy by Pousard, "Ulysse," for which Gounod had written a number of beautiful choruses, redolent with the perfume of antiquity and full of a manly energy. Very soon the young composer appeared again at the *Opéra* with a grand work in five acts called "La Nonne Sanglante," the libretto of which, although signed by the names of Scribe and Germain Delavigne, was absolutely devoid of interest. He made a mistake in accepting this libretto, previously refused by several of his colleagues, among others Meyerbeer and Halévy, and which could not excite his inspiration. Notwithstanding some remarkable bits, some vigorous and beautiful scenes, the score of "La Nonne Sanglante" was really only secondary

in value, and the work achieved a very mild success when it was produced Oct. 18, 1854, with Mlles. Werthermber, Poinsot and Dameron, MM. Gueymard, Depassio and Merly for interpreters. Its career was short, and it only lived through eleven performances. Gounod had not yet found his vein.

But better fortune was in store for him, and after a few years of silence he began the series of his successes by giving to the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, then very flourishing and very brilliant under the direction of M. Carvalho, "Le Médécin Malgré Lui." The libretto of this had been arranged for *Opéra-Comique* by MM. Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, who had preserved the greater part of Molière's prose. Although from a general point of view the comic sentiment may not be the dominant quality of his talent, yet that quality is far from lacking in Gounod, as is proved by "Le Médécin Malgré Lui," which remains one of the most curious and most original of his attempts. In this work, which was performed Jan. 15, 1858, the composer revived with a rare cleverness the old forms of French music, while adding thereto the most ingenious and most piquant artifices of the modern science, and by clothing the whole with his masterly style he produced a work of a very unique color, flavor and character. "Le Médécin Malgré Lui," which the public received with marked favor, seemed to prepare the great day of Gounod's artistic life. Fourteen months after the appearance of this work, that is to say, on March 19, 1859, the composer gave to the same theatre the work which was to establish his fame upon a fixed basis. The reader of course divines that I refer to "Faust," that masterpiece which can boast of such a brilliant, prolonged and universal success, and which will remain, perhaps, the author's best title to the remembrance and recognition of posterity.

But let it not be supposed that the triumphal career of "Faust" was not confronted at the outset with difficulties and obstacles which appeared insurmountable. When it was carried by the authors to the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, there was in preparation at the Porte Saint Martin theatre another drama built on Goethe's poem, and bearing the same name. M. Carvalho told Gounod that it would be necessary to await the result of the "Faust" at the Porte Saint Martin, for if that work won a success, it would be very difficult and very hazardous to offer another "Faust" to the public. So they waited, and the drama not proving a success, it was decided to proceed with the study of the opera. Gounod's "Faust" was presented in the form styled in France *Opéra Comique*, that is to say, the singing parts being interspersed with spoken dialogue. (It was not until later when "Faust" passed into the repertoire of the *Opéra* that this dialogue was replaced by recitatives.) The rôle of Marguerite was first given to Mme. Ugalde, but Mme. Carvalho having expressed a desire to take the rôle, after becoming acquainted with the music, the authors transferred it to her and consoled Mme. Ugalde by giving her the part of Mélodine in Victor Massé's opera, "La Fée Carabosse," which was being mounted at the same time. The rehearsals of "Faust" were very laborious. M. Carvalho, disconcerted by the new and daring character of the music, and by the poetic sentiment revealed in it, which he judged incompatible with stage requirements, picked a quarrel with the composer, declared his score too much developed, and constantly demanded new cuts and changes. Gounod, made uneasy by this lack of confidence, had yielded to several of these demands and had already consented to several suppressions, when at last M. Carvalho came to him one day with a proposition to suppress the beautiful final scene in the garden, fearing that this quiet scene, with no outburst or noise of any kind, would seem cold to the public and fail to produce an effect. This time Gounod, who had faith in his work and was conscious of its value, stood fast and immovable, declaring he would rather withdraw his score than to yield this point and consent to such a sacrifice. In short, after a whole series of combats and discussions of this sort, which were renewed daily, the work was finally brought out. Truth compels the confession that it was not fully understood at first; that the critics stood hesitating and undecided in the presence of a work so new in form, and that the public itself was of two minds regarding the value of the work, some applauding with enthusiasm while others harshly criticised. It is certain that the first reception was more cold and reserved than could have been desired, but gradually people began to understand and appreciate the beauties abounding in this exquisite score, and at last its success was complete, brilliant and incontestable, spreading first throughout France, then over Europe, then over the entire world, where "Faust" is to-day, and

long has been, considered a great masterpiece, and its author's best work. "Faust" has been played in all countries and translated into all languages. It is one of the first French works which Italy, before then so hostile and impenetrable to French music, has applauded with a sort of furor. In Germany, where for a number of years Spohr's "Faust" reigned supreme, it was received in a triumphal manner, and completely dethroned the latter. It excited enthusiasm, not only in Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Hamburg, Baden, Leipsic, Frankfort, Stuttgart and Darmstadt, not only in Milan, Rome, Venice, Naples, Florence, Genoa, Parma and Bologna, but in London, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Varsovie, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Brussels, Amsterdam, Madrid, Barcelona, Lisbon, etc., and even finally crossed the seas and became popular in the two Americas. It is perhaps the first work by a French composer which had such a rapid, complete and universal success. In Paris, "Faust" had been played more than four hundred times at the *Théâtre-Lyrique* when the *Opéra* signified a desire to appropriate it. The authors consented; but certain modifications were necessitated by this change of scene, and first of all the spoken dialogue had to be suppressed and replaced by recitatives. These changes effected, the work made its appearance at the *Opéra* March 3, 1869, and there continued its successful career, counting five hundred performances in the space of eighteen years. The five hundredth was given on the 4th of November, 1887, and the six hundredth took place in the beginning of the year 1892, so that in Paris alone, "Faust" has already reached its thousandth performance. Such a success is without parallel in the annals of the theatre in France.

CHARLES GOUNOD.

Reproduction of an engraving made from a photograph in 1859, about the time of the first production of Faust, Gounod being then in his forty-first year.

Gounod had borrowed "Le Médécin Malgré Lui" from Molière; he had appropriated material from Goethe's "Faust;" it was La Fontaine who furnished him the subject of a pretty opera, somewhat light in character, called "Philémon et Baucis," performed at the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, Feb. 18, 1860. The score of "Philémon et Baucis" is a pleasant one, full of charm, in which tenderness and grace alternates with fun and buffoonery. The work, which was in three acts, achieved only a moderate success at the *Théâtre-Lyrique*; its real success dates from its transfer to the *Opéra-Comique*, reduced to two acts. Since then it has never been taken from the repertoire of that theatre. But soon Gounod was to appear on the grand stage of the *Opéra* with a work of large proportions, "La Reine de Saba." Notwithstanding the fame which his previous works had made for him, he was no more fortunate with "La Reine de Saba" (Feb. 29, 1862) than he had been with "La Nonne Sanglante." It is true that this time the trouble lay principally in the libretto of his collaborators, which was absolutely devoid of interest. For it is but just to say that if the score

of "La Reine de Saba" is of unequal merit and of a secondary character, it nevertheless contains some superb and exquisite pages, like the noble air of Balkis, and the beautiful chorus of the Jewesses and the Sabians. However, it only lived through fifteen performances at Paris, though it should be remarked that in certain foreign cities it was received with great favor, and that in Brussels and Darmstadt, among others, its success was considerable.

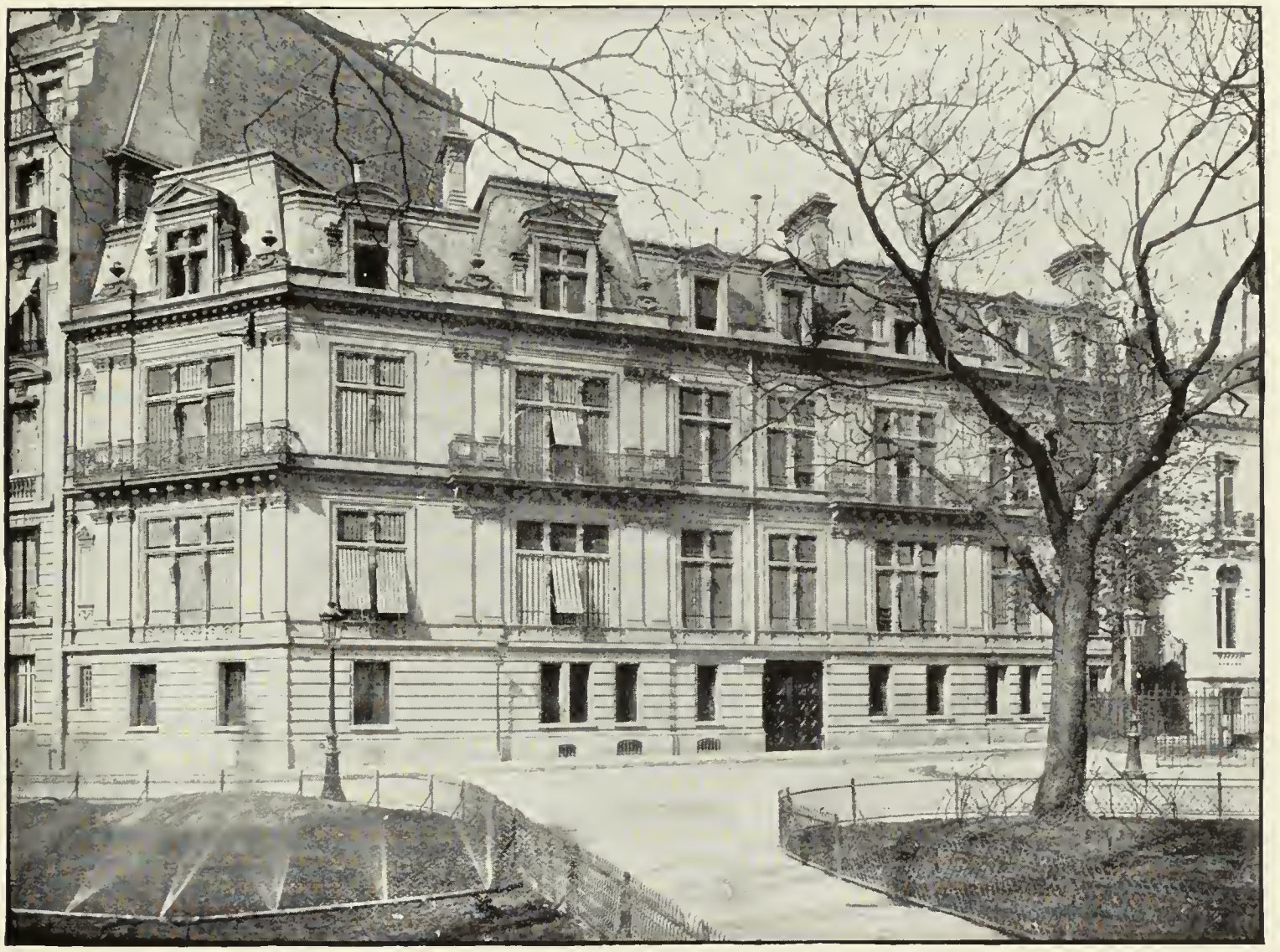
Gounod's unfortunate attempts at the *Opéra* led him to turn his attention anew to the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, where he brought out, March 19, 1864, a work entitled "Mireille," the subject of which was taken from a pretty provincial poem by Frederic Mistral, bearing the same title, (Mireio). This poem is an exquisite pastorale, written in that provincial language at once so musical, so sweet and harmonious, a language which is melody in itself. Unhappily, the libretto which Gounod set to music on this subject was badly chosen, being ill adapted to the stage, and therefore militated against the composer's work, although the latter contained some truly charming pages. The first act, particularly, radiant with light and sunshine, is charmingly poetic, and especially deserving of mention is the beautiful chorus of the magnarelles and the touching duet of Mireille and Vincent. The score contains still other charming bits, such as Magali's beautiful song and Taven's couplets: Voici la saison, mignonne. However, the defective libretto stood in the way of the success of the work, which at first remained undecided. It was found necessary to entirely rewrite the work, to make large suppressions, and reduce it from five to three acts, which did not result in its being any better received by the public. It was not until later, when it was transferred to the *Opéra-Comique* after having been subjected to still further revisions and cast in its final form, that "Mireille" at last found the success which its incontestable musical value merited. Thereafter, it never left the repertoire of that theatre.

No particular importance can be attached to a little work in two acts, "La Colombe," which Gounod gave to the *Opéra-Comique* in 1866, and which he had written some years before for the theatre at Baden; it was a sort of salon operetta, without special character or consequence. But the composer was yet to carry off one of the most brilliant victories of his career with "Roméo et Juliette" which made its first appearance at the *Théâtre-Lyrique* on the 27th of April, 1867. More fortunate than "Faust" and "Mireille," whose success had been so difficult to establish, "Roméo et Juliette" was well received from the very outset, and this superb score in which the passion of love and the sentiment of chivalry are so happily united, immediately found favor with the public. Nor has it ever ceased to excite public sympathy, and it has changed its biding-place from the *Théâtre-Lyrique* to the *Opéra-Comique*, and from that theatre to the *Opéra* without experiencing any diminution of public interest. "Roméo et Juliette" has exceeded the number of five hundred performances in Paris, one hundred of which were at the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, about three hundred at the *Opéra-Comique* and more than one hundred at the *Opéra*. Outside of France it has not been less successful, and it has made a part of the repertoire of all the great theatres of Europe.

Moreover, "Roméo et Juliette" marks the culminating point in the career of Gounod, who since then has not been able to equal its success. In 1870 the master went to London where he remained for several years, working and producing much. There it was that he wrote, among other things, an opera called "George Dandin," to the prose of Molière, which has not yet been performed; it was there also that he wrote, for the Universal Exposition at London in 1871, a grand cantata entitled "Gallia," which was performed later at Paris, where it was very favorably received. A warm welcome was also given to the music which Gounod wrote for "Jeanne d'Arc," a drama in verse by Jules Barbier which was performed at the Gaiety on Nov. 8, 1873. This music consisted of melodramas, interludes, choruses, etc., and contained some very interesting pages. The preceding year the Ventadour theatre had brought out a drama in verse by Ernest Legouvé for which Gounod had written a score of the same kind; this drama was called "Les Deux Reines de France."

In these two works the music was merely an accessory, and the composer was only the humble servant of the poet, whom he discreetly aided and supplemented. But Gounod had not given up the idea of appearing again before the public as a true dramatic musician. Ten years had elapsed since he had given "Roméo et Juliette," and the public

were growing impatient for a new work from him, when in 1877 the *Opéra-Comique* announced the performance of "Cinq-Mars." This was an artistic treat in which all Paris desired to participate, but which did not wholly justify the hopes which it had raised. The score of "Cinq-Mars" was certainly far from being worthless; it was written in a musical language that was superb and noble in style, but aside from a few exquisite pages, it did not have the freshness, the abundance and the generosity of inspiration which had hitherto characterized Gounod's work. It was unequal, cold at intervals, and one no longer felt that vigor of youth, that warmth of accent which had made the triumph of the master's great productions. In a word "Cinq-Mars" was received with sympathy but not enthu-



GOUNOD'S RESIDENCE ON BOULEVARD MALESHERBES IN PARIS.

From a photograph made in April, 1891.

siasm, and as soon as the novelty had passed it disappeared without causing any disquietude.

The following year Gounod presented himself again at the *Opéra*. For a long time past he had felt the desire to attempt one of the Corneille's masterpieces, and he had formed the plan of setting "Polyeucte" to music, and transforming it into a lyric drama. It was a subject half religious, half profane, which seemed peculiarly suited to his intellectual temperament. He charged his friend, Jules Barbier, with fashioning a libretto from Corneille's celebrated tragedy, which the latter followed step by step, even preserving some of the great poet's verses, and he wrote the music of this new "Polyeucte," which was performed at the *Opéra*, Oct. 7, 1878. But it was said that the author of "Faust" and "Roméo," both so successful at the *Opéra*, after having been born and bred elsewhere, could never succeed at that theatre with a work written expressly for it. "Polyeucte," indeed,

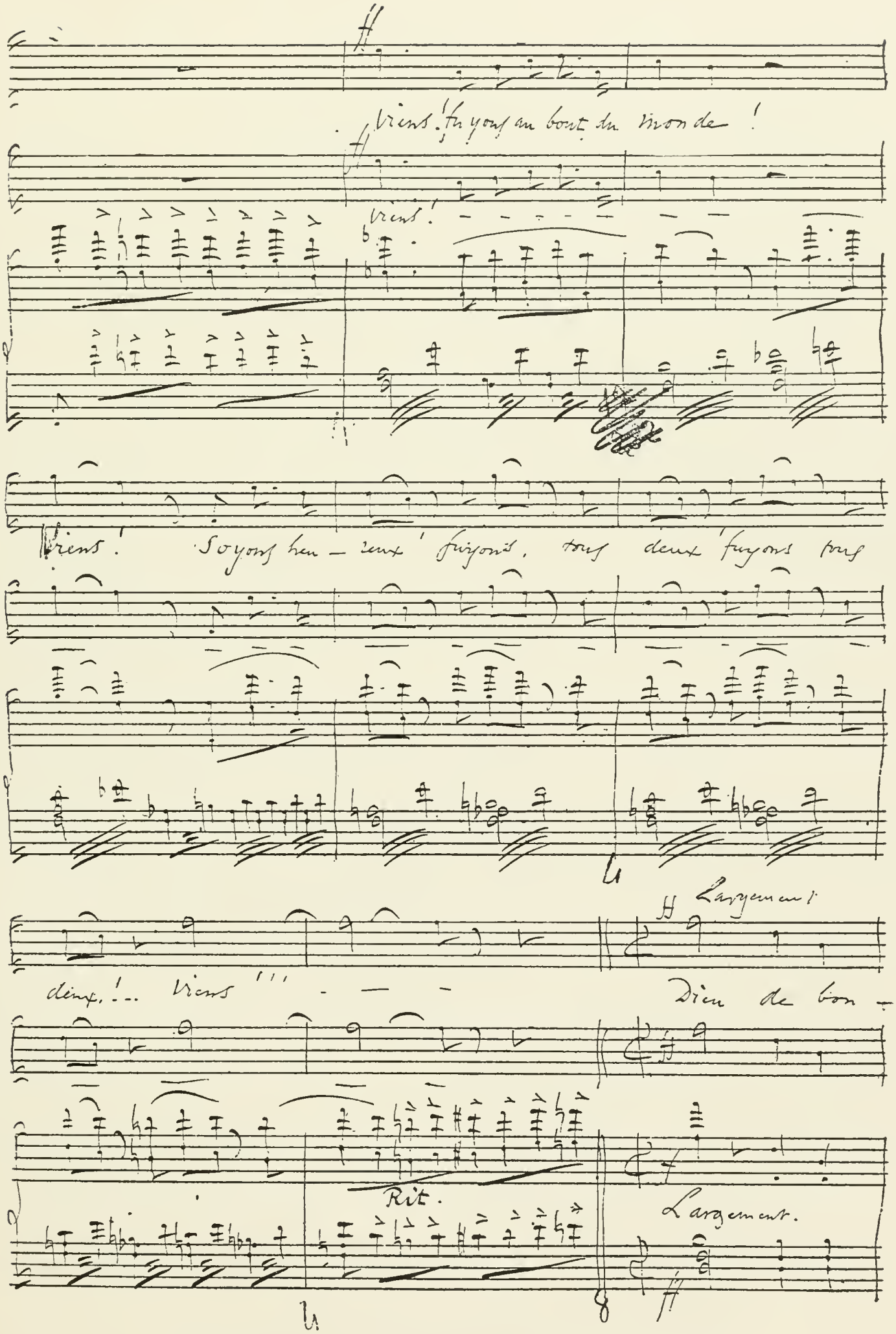
was not well received, and scarcely deserved to be, and its career ended with a series of twenty-nine performances. The composer was not much more fortunate with "Le Tribut de Zamora," another work which he gave to the *Opéra*, April 1, 1881. This work, however, had been staged with great splendor and magnificence, the costumes and decorations were very rich and elaborate, and what was still more important, the two principal rôles were taken by artists of the first rank, M. Lassalle and Mme. Gabrielle Krauss, the latter especially being very fine in the character of Xaïma. But nothing could counteract the insipidity and insignificance of the work, and notwithstanding the luxury brought to its support, notwithstanding the incontestable talent of its interpreters, "Le Tribut de Zamora" scarcely lived through fifty performances. This was the last dramatic effort of Charles Gounod, who seems to-day to have finally given up the theatre, and whose health has been steadily declining for a number of years.

But Gounod has not confined himself exclusively to the theatre; his very remarkable fertility has exercised itself in all directions, particularly in the religious genre, so well suited to his nature. Gounod's religious compositions are very numerous, and since he has renounced the stage he has achieved some striking successes in oratorio. "La Redemption," (1882) a sacred trilogy, of which he wrote the music and the French words, and "Mors et Vita," another sacred trilogy, the Latin text of which he arranged himself from the Catholic liturgy and the Vulgate, won for him triumphs which the great merit of these beautiful compositions fully justified. Since his youth Gounod has produced a great number of sacred works, several of which are of rare beauty, such as the "Messe des Orphéonistes" (1853), the "Messe de Sainte Cécile" (1855), a mass in C minor (1867), a mass of the Sacred Heart (1876), a mass to the memory of Joan of Arc (1887), a mass for two voices, a short mass in C major, three solemn masses, two Requiem masses, a "Stabat Mater," a "Te Deum," a hymn to Saint Augustin, "Les Sept Paroles du Christ," "Jésus sur le lac de Tibériade," a choral psalmody, "Tobie," a little oratorio, and a considerable number of motets of different kinds.

In profane music, and aside from the theatre, Gounod has shown himself scarcely less fertile. His two symphonies, (first in D, second in E flat) and his "Temple de l'Harmonie," cantata with choruses, are all compositions of great merit. I would mention also "Biondina," a pretty little lyric poem, and especially would I call attention to his beautiful male choruses, and to his songs of which he has written more than a hundred, and among which are to be found veritable masterpieces of poetry and sentiment, such as "Le Vallon," "Le Soir," "Medjé," "l'Envoi de Fleurs," "Le Printemps," "La Prière du Soir," "Venise," etc. In this style of composition Gounod's repertoire is varied, substantial and charming, and few French writers have given us a note so personal and original.

In attempting to characterize the genius of Gounod, and to determine the place which he should occupy in the history of contemporaneous art, it is necessary to consider principally "Faust" and "Roméo et Juliette." These are his two masterpieces, and it is through these works that the composer has truly revealed his personality and his genius; it is through these works that his name has become famous and will go down to posterity. It is of these works, then, that we must demand the secret of that powerful influence which Gounod has exerted for more than a quarter of a century over the art, over artists and over the public.

Although not performed until a year after "Le Médécin Malgré Lui," "Faust" was written first. In this work the musician had been intelligently served by his collaborators, who had taken from Goethe's masterpiece all that which pertained to the action and to the dramatic passion, and left judiciously alone all the psychological, philosophical and metaphysical dissertations. The libretto was admirably cut for the stage, varied in tone and coloring, and contained a fair quota of that fantastic element so effective on the stage and so well liked by the public. And never was the musician better inspired. The Kermesse scene is full of



Fac-simile autograph manuscript from Gounod's "Romeo and Juliet."

warmth and sunshine; the garden scene is one of an ethereal and enchanting poetry, and the words of passion are by turns softly languishing or full of an intense energy; the scene in the church, where Mephistopheles, pursuing Marguerite even to the very shades of the sanctuary, tries to arrest her prayer, and prevent the unfortunate victim from taking refuge in the Divine mercy, is stamped with a rare feeling of grandeur, and reveals a profoundly dramatic character. Finally, the episode of the death of Valentine and his malediction of Marguerite forms a pathetic and superb scene, which, with its numerous and varied incidents is surely one of the best of this remarkable work.

It is a singular thing that the two musicians whose personal and original genius characterize in some sort, from points of view otherwise very different, the reform tendencies of the present French school, should both fall upon these two great masterpieces, "Faust" and "Roméo et Juliette," each interpreting them after his own manner and according to his own temperament. It was Berlioz who first conceived the idea of appropriating them, and long before Gounod had dreamed of such a thing, had given us "Roméo et Juliette" and his "Damnation de Faust." Comparison between the works of these two artists is impossible, because of the dissimilarity of their natures and aspirations. In regard to "Faust," however, we may say that Berlioz, who did not make an opera of it, but a grand musical legend, preserving thus one of the peculiar characteristics of the original work, treated especially the energetic and picturesque part of the drama, whereas Gounod chose rather to reproduce the love poetry, the exalted reverie and that mystic and supernatural perfume which characterizes Goethe's poem. Although the charming Kermesse scene in Gounod's score, which is an episode apart from the action, is very well executed, highly colored, of a really exceptional musical interest, it cannot be denied that in picturesque sentiment Berlioz has singularly surpassed his rival in the various and typical episodes of his "Damnation de Faust," the latin song of the students, the soldier's chorus, the Hungarian march, the ballet of the sylphs, the military retreat, the chorus of the sylphs and gnomes, etc. On the other hand, whatever is tender and emotional, dreamy and poetic, has been admirably treated by Gounod, and it is by certain unobtrusive fragments, certain almost hidden passages in his score that the hand of a master, the inspiration of a poet is betrayed, that the man of genius is revealed. Witness Marguerite's response to Faust as he approaches her at the entrance of the chapel:

"Non, monsieur, je ne suis demoiselle ni belle,
Et je n'ai pas besoin qu'on me donne la main."

or Marguerite's reflection in her garden,

"Je voudrais bien savoir quel était ce jeune homme,
Si c'est un grand seigneur et comment il se nomme."

Not only are these two fragments perfect, finished, exquisite, from a musical point of view, but they exhale besides I know not what mysterious perfume. They give the hearer so complete a perception of the sentiment which Marguerite is fated to prove for "Faust," that they have, aside from the scenic import, a kind of mystic and profound meaning which seems impossible to translate into music, and which strikes, nevertheless, the most indifferent ears. It is this peculiar, we may say hitherto unknown sense, which gives Gounod's "Faust" its true color, its character at once tender and dreamy, mysterious and fascinating, melancholy and passionate, and which assigns to it a place apart, a unique place among the number of the most original works of contemporary art. It is easy to see in this work that Gounod's intellectual tendencies, his youthful sympathies, his leanings toward a religious and monastic life, have not been without influence on his musical temperament, and on the very nature of his talent.

If "Faust" is an exquisite work, "Roméo et Juliette" is a superb one, of a grand and spirited style, in which the external and material picture of a chivalric world contrasts strikingly with the internal analysis of a passionate love, constrained to conceal itself from all eyes, yet from this very cause becoming all the more powerful. If one wished to enter into what might be called a psychological analysis of the score, it would be necessary to discover how great were the difficulties of the composer in writing "Roméo" without repeating himself, after having written "Faust." For, although the subjects of the two works differ widely, we see the same situations reproduced in each, under the same scenic conditions, and the stumbling block was all the more troublesome since these situations were the most salient ones, and constituted, as it were, the very core of the dramatic action. Witness the balcony scene of "Roméo" and the garden scene of "Faust"

GOUNOD IN HIS STUDY.

Reproduction of a photograph from life made by Dornac & Cie., Paris.

or the duel of Roméo and Tybalt with the death of the latter, in the first, and the duel of Faust and Valentine, also mortal, in the second. Truly a musician must have a singular power, a very remarkable faculty of reiteration, to attempt successfully such a repetition of similar episodes.

And what scene so marvelous as that balcony scene of Roméo, chaste and passionate throughout! What earnest and trembling accents on the lips of the two fond lovers whom the world—a world of strife and contention—seems bound to separate forever! And what newness, what a winning fearlessness, what a balmy freshness in the melodic sentiment which the composer employs to express the sensations which stir the hearts of his tender heroes! Could love be expressed in a more exquisite and more touching manner?

On the other hand, and by contrast, what scene more striking in its grandeur, more spirited, more manly, than that of the double duel, Tybalt and Mercutio, Roméo and Tybalt! Here the musician has so wonderfully colored his inspiration that he has raised up a world of the past before our very eyes, and, while listening, we feel that surely we must be present at one of the cruel episodes of that long and bloody struggle between the Capulets and the Montagues. The insult slung by Tybalt in the face of Roméo, agitated, but contained, Mercutio's objurgations, the first duel of the latter with Tybalt, who strikes him to the heart, Roméo's rage at seeing his friend expire, the fury with which he throws himself in his turn upon Tybalt, and the second combat, fatal to the latter, all this the composer has rendered in an admirable manner, with a spirit, a verve, a power, a dramatic movement and a picturesque feeling which make of this episode a page full of grandeur, and worthy to compete with the painting of a Titian or of a Veronese. In considering this remarkable score, so rich from beginning to end and so varied in its unity, we cannot pass over the austere and touching marriage scene, the lark duo and the episode of the death of the two lovers. Truly, it is a work of the highest order, which yields in nothing to "Faust," and is perhaps superior to it in certain parts and in certain ways.

It is in "Faust" and "Roméo" that Gounod has not only given the full measure of his genius, but has made most conspicuous the true personal tendencies of that genius and his own originality. It is there that his musical phrase, so fascinating, so new in form and characteristic in outline, is developed in all its fullness and all its freedom. It is there that his harmonies, so rich, so refined, so piquant, and sometimes so unexpected, are the most abundantly and happily displayed. It is there that his ingenious instrumentation, full of color and grace and always elegant, that transparent instrumentation we might say, at the same time dignified and full, has embraced those exquisite passages which always thrill delicate and sensitive ears. It is there that passion speaks a truly enchanting language, that emotion attains the highest limits of its power, and it is the aggregate of all these qualities which make the master's genius stand out in bold relief and which shows it off in the most complete and striking fashion.

But if "Faust" and "Roméo" are worthy of so much admiration, that does not mean that no importance or sympathy should be attached to the composer's other works, which, though less perfect and less lofty in character, are none the less deserving of the most active appreciation on the part of the public and of true artists. "Philémon et Baucis," "Mireille," "Le Médécin Malgré Lui," are productions of unquestionable merit, and even in "Sapho" and "La Reine de Saba," weak and unequal as they undoubtedly are, one may find pages of the rarest beauty. It should be remarked that even in his least successful works, what we may always admire in Gounod is the noblesse of his language and the splendor of his style. It is necessary to add that if, as is generally believed, fertility is a sign of force, Gounod deserves to be classed among the strongest! Few artists, indeed, have produced more or in greater variety, opera, oratorio, symphony, religious music, cantatas, vocal chamber music, (set to French, English or Italian words) choruses with or without accompaniment, compositions for piano or organ, he has touched them all, and in all has given proof of the most substantial and brilliant qualities.

A very convincing proof of the power of Gounod's personality is the influence which he has exerted for more than quarter of a century on the young French school of music. The author of Faust has brought into the art a note entirely new and unknown before him. This dreamy, poetic note is stamped with a grace and melancholy which characterizes all of Gounod's work, and vainly have young musicians sought to reproduce and tried their

best to imitate the method's of a master whose genius they did not possess, and who remained for them inimitable. Nevertheless, this influence of Gounod is the sign and the proof of his creative power.

One could scarcely pass over, in speaking of such an artist, his literary proclivities, and the desire which he manifested on different occasions to set forth his ideas and the principles which he professed in matters of art. All French musicians of the present period are afflicted with a mania for writing. Not only great artists like Reyer and Saint-Saëns, following the example of Berlioz, Halévy and Adolpe Adam, undertake to criticise and make themselves the judges of their colleagues, but the most inconsequential composer of operettas gives himself today the airs of a writer, and believes himself called upon to deliver himself of long esthetic and philosophic discussions on the art of which he deems himself one of the noblest representatives.

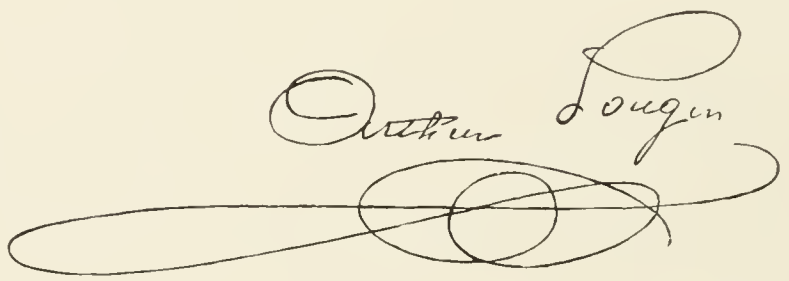
Gounod has not escaped the general contagion. It is only just to state, however, that he has not abused his pen in this connection, and that usually it has been occasion, rather than preconceived desire, that has caused him to take it up. The most important writing which we owe to Gounod is the remarkable volume which he has published under the title of "Le 'Don Juan' de Mozart," in which he expresses very clearly his profound admiration for the master, of whom he declares himself to be one of the most ardent, respectful and faithful of disciples. In addition to this Gounod has given to various journals or periodicals some articles of running criticism or of musical philosophy ("De la Routine en Matière d'Art," "Le Public," "La Critique," "Les Compositeurs Chefs d'Orchestre," "La Propriété Artistique," "l'Enseignement," "La Critique Musicale Anglaise," "Les Pères de l'Eglise de la Musique," etc.) He has also given an interesting preface to the volume of "Lettres Intimes" by Berlioz, and he has published a preface intended to accompany his score of "George Dandin," a score which has not yet seen the light and perhaps never will. He enumerated and discussed in this curious preface the reasons which led him to set prose to music — and what prose! That of Molière; in other words, the most compact, substantial and solid prose which it is possible to imagine. Some years since a report was spread abroad that Gounod was preparing a book in which he would refute the doctrines and theories of Richard Wagner. I do not know whether he really ever conceived such a project, but if he did I regret that he did not put it in execution. For it seems to me that whatever might be his ideas on this subject it would be an exceedingly interesting thing, to have an artist like Gounod express his opinions on an artist like Wagner.

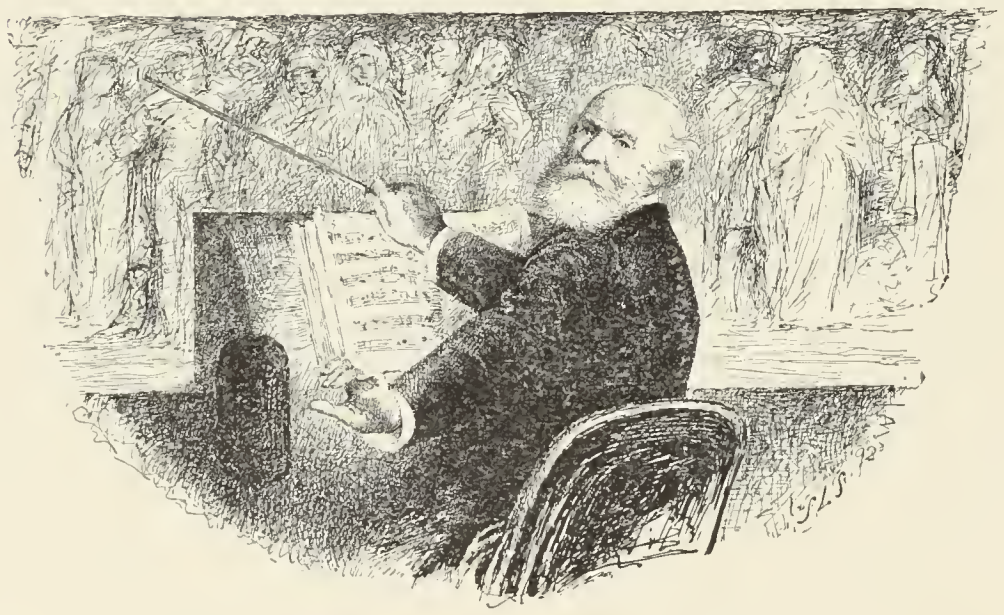
I return to Gounod the composer. However little enthusiasm his detractors — for he has them — may feel for his genius, they are none the less obliged to confess that genius, and the power and influence exerted by him upon the public — a public which everywhere, in all the countries of the world, has applauded his works. The artists who are sharply discussed are usually the ones who possess true worth. More noble than majestic, more tender than pathetic, more pensive than enthusiastic, more deliberate than spontaneous, the immense talent of the author of "Faust" glitters with a multitude of rare qualities, and in that talent one may almost say that study, constant and indefatigable study, has as great a part as inspiration. Not only is Gounod a fine man of letters, well versed in the knowledge of the languages and of masterpieces, but, from a musical point of view, few artists have, like him, been nourished by the marrow of lions. There is no great musician whom Gounod does not know, as it were, by heart, and he has only enthusiastic admiration for the old masters. It was he, who, listening one day at the Conservatoire to Beethoven's Choral Symphony, ran up to a friend and cried, his face all aglow and wildly waving the score, "It is the Bible of the musician!" On another occasion when, at a certain salon, conversation fell on music, and the proper rank of the different musicians was under discussion, he delivered himself of the following sentiment. "If the greatest masters, Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, could be annihilated by an unheard-of cataclysm, as the painters might be by fire, it would be easy to reconstruct all the music with Bach. In the firmament of art, Bach is a nebula which has not yet condensed."

I have said that study is almost as great a part as inspiration in the talent of Gounod, which may be said of all truly superior artists; one might add that this talent acquired a very individual color from the alliance of the artist's almost mystic sentiments with a very keen comprehension of the human passions

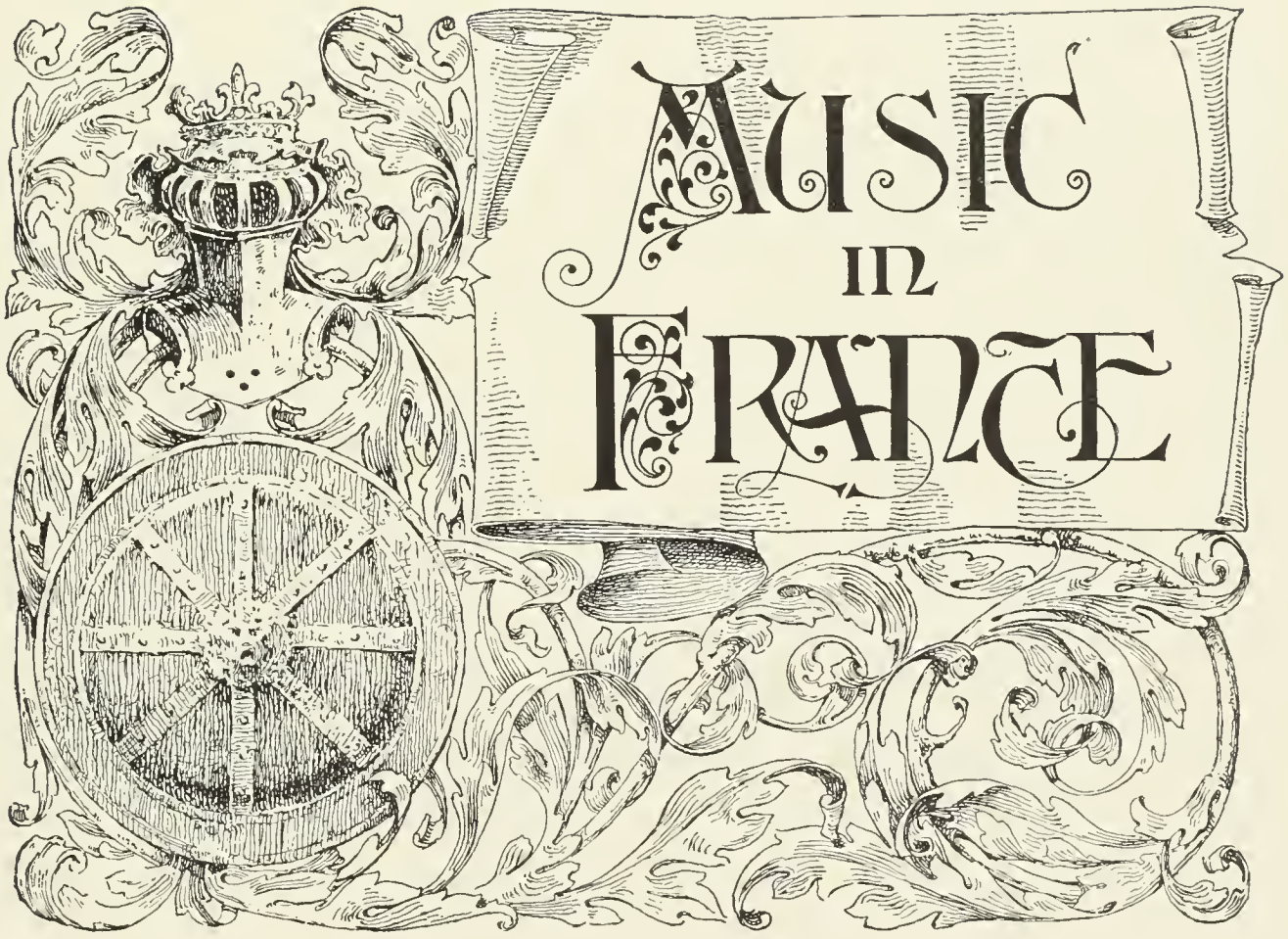
and the storms of the heart. There has remained by Gounod a sort of recollection of his first years vowed by him to theological studies and of his leaning toward a monastic life and the seclusion of the cloister; possibly it is this which characterizes his genius in such a special way, which gives it its originality, its peculiar and its exceptional flavor, although it is difficult to determine with precision how much his artistic personality gained and how much it lost by the influence of the ideas and aspirations of his youth upon his later imagination.

Musically and dramatically Gounod is more of a spiritualist than materialist, more poet than painter, more elegiac and vigorous than deeply pathetic; this is perhaps the reason that some have pronounced him lacking in dramatic sense. In this they are mistaken, for it is not dramatic sense, that is to say, impassioned perception, which sometimes fails Gounod; it is, properly speaking, temperament. But after all is said, the author of "Faust," of "Mireille" and of "Roméo" remains a true poet, an inspired creator, an artist of the first rank, and if not one of those who illumine the world with a dazzling light, at least one of those who charm it, who touch it, who make it listen and make it think, His part is a sufficiently beautiful one, with which he may well be satisfied.





PUBLISHERS' NOTE. — Since the foregoing was written, the death of Charles Gounod has been announced. On October 16, 1893, he was stricken with apoplexy, and lingered until the 18th. He died at St. Cloud, and was buried in the family vault at Auteuil.


MUSIC
IN
FRANCE

MUSIC IN FRANCE

IT is especially in its application to the theatre that music has reached its full development in France. Therefore a history of musical art in that country is especially a history of dramatic music, considered under the two forms which have there been adopted, the serious or grand opera and the *opéra-comique*, or opera combined with spoken dialogue, the latter form being about a century younger than the former. However, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries several great musicians had already acquired celebrity therein, such as Guillaume Dufay, Egide Binchois, Busnois, Josquin Deprés, Gombert, Jean Mouton, and above all Goudimel. But in the seventeenth century the musical renown of France paled before that of Germany and of Italy, although she still possessed some composers of merit, like Boësset, Bacilly, Michel Lambert, Moulinier, Cambefort, Mollier, Le Camus, Perdigal, etc.

Italian opera had been introduced into France by Mazarin, who, by agreement with the court, had on several occasions brought troupes of singers from his own country to perform *la Finta Pazza*, *Orfeo* and *Ercole amante*. On the other hand, and under the reigns of Henri IV., of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV., what was called the "*ballet de cour*" was much in vogue, and performed frequently at the royal palace, at the houses of the grand seigneurs and of the wealthy citizens. Now the "*ballet de cour*" with its dance, its dialogue of spoken song, and sometimes a well connected scenic action, contained the germs of modern French opera. Meanwhile, on the one hand the Italian opera and the "*ballet de cour*" were special and private institutions to which the great public were entire strangers; on the other, a foolish prejudice existed that it was impossible to write good music to French words.

It was at this time, however, that a writer, Pierre Perrin, and a composer, Robert Cambert, superintendent of music to Queen Anne of Austria, mother of Louis XIV., joined forces to write an attempt at French opera. This opera, which they called *la Pastorale*, was performed at the house of a rich citizen, and met with a prodigious success (1659). Ten years later Perrin received from the king letters-patent authorizing him to establish at Paris an "*Académie d'opéra*," in which works of this kind might be performed. It was a question of nothing less than a public theatre. Perrin organized his enterprise, had a theatre built, wrote the poem of a veritable opera entitled *Pomone*, to which Cambert composed the music, and this work, brought out in the month of March, 1671, for the inauguration of the new theatre, was received with such favor that it was kept on the boards for eight months. It may be said that French opera dates from this event.

But it was neither Perrin nor Cambert, its creators, who were to receive any benefit from its creation. Cambert was an artist of great merit, whose remarkable talent bade fair to overshadow that of Lully, then all-powerful with Louis XIV., and who considered himself the great arbiter of music in France. When Lully saw the success of the new theatre, he determined to confiscate it to his own benefit. Cleverly helping along the misunderstanding which, in spite of the success, was not long in springing up between Perrin and his associates, he made an offer to buy out Perrin, which the latter accepted. He then obtained from the king letters-patent which transferred upon him the privilege of the *Académie d'opéra*, stopped the performances and closed the theatre, had a new one built and inaugurated it Nov. 15, 1672, under the title of *Académie royale de musique*, by the first performance of his first opera, *les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus*.

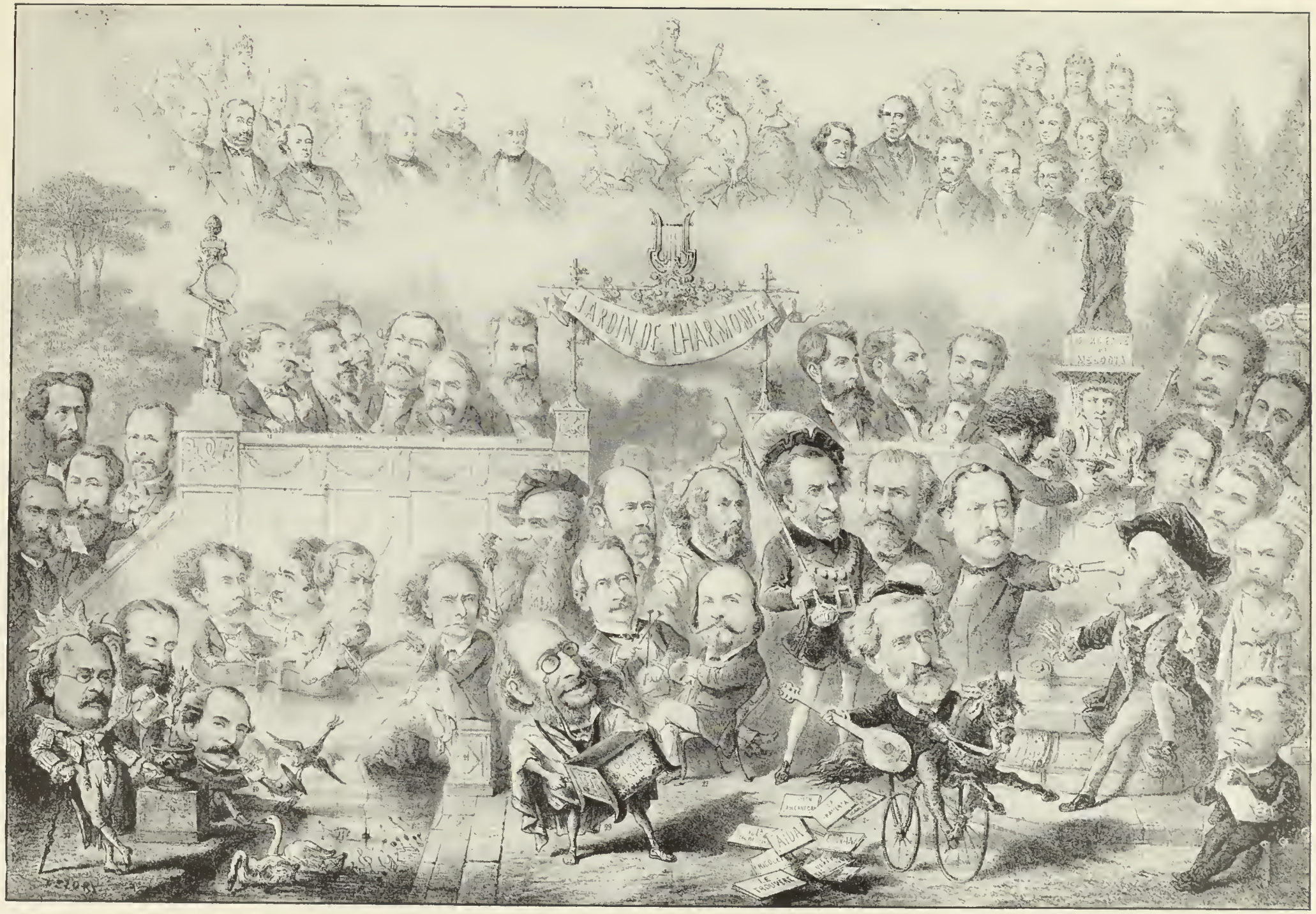
From the day that Lully took the direction of the *Opéra* (for it has never been given any other name) up to the time of his death in 1687, its splendor and

fortune left nothing to be desired. A musician of genius, having an innate sense of all that related to the stage, with an unusual faculty for managing, Lully was the king of his theatre, where everything passed through his hands. He did not confine himself to writing each year a new opera to one of the beautiful poems which Quinault furnished him; he staged the works himself, superintended the education of the singers whom he assembled at his own house in order to make them work, directed his orchestra, took charge of the decorations and costumes, and sometimes even gave the step to the dancers. This man was a universal artist. And as his operas were often masterpieces, as they were played in a really superior manner, as he spared nothing in furnishing them with richness and magnificence of spectacle, success never failed him, and the *Opéra* soon became the glory of Paris and the marvel not only of the French but of outsiders as well. It is this sumptuousness, this richness, this pomp of spectacle, joined to the merit of the works produced, which have distinguished the *Opéra* since the days of Lully up to our own time, and which have made it a unique theatre in the world. The most important of Lully's works are *Armide, Cadmus, Phaéton, Proserpine, Alceste, Bellerophon, Atys, Roland, Isis,* and the most famous singers of the time were Beaumavielle, Cledière, Dumèny, Mlle. Le Rochois, the two sisters Fanchon and Louisa Moreau and Mlle. Desmatins.

But Lully during his life had not permitted a single musician to make his appearance at the *Opéra,* so that when he was dead great difficulty was experienced in finding composers who were able to write new works. During the ten years which followed there was no success to record. His pupil Collasse brought out a few operas of little merit: *Achille et Polixène, Thétis et Pélée, Enée et Lavinie, Astrée, Jason.* Lully's son, Louis de Lully, wrote *Orphée*; with his brother Jean-Louis he wrote *Zéphyre et Flore,* and with Marais, *Alcide.* There were also *Médée,* by Charpentier; *Coronis,* by Teobaldo di Gatti; *Didon, Circé, Théagène et Chariclée, les Amours de Momus,* by Desmarets; *Méduse,* by Gervais; *Ariane et Bacchus,* by Marais; *Aricie,* by Lacoste, etc. Of all these works, *Thétis et Pélée* was about the only work that found favor with the public. It was necessary to await the coming of Campra to find an artist truly worthy of the *Opéra,* and who should do honor to the French school.

André Campra (1660–1744) was a musician of the first order. He was an original and fertile composer of sacred as well as profane music. He was chapel-master of Notre-Dame of Paris at the time of the performance of his first works, which obliged him to renounce these functions. He occupied a very important place in the history of dramatic music in France, and is properly the link which connects Lully to Rameau. His abundant and generous inspiration was fortified by a good and solid musical instruction. He was also gifted with a strong dramatic sentiment, and excited attention now by his tenderness, passion and pathos, now by his grace, elegance and vivacity. He broke with the traditions of Lully and his somewhat formal *noblesse,* in bring ing to the theatre the sense of rhythmic movement and force. One might say of his music that it saw, that it acted, that it felt. During his forty years service to the stage Campra offered to the public more than twenty important works. In the serious and dramatic *genre,* his *Hésione* and *Tancrède,* which are almost master-pieces, must be mentioned first; then *Alcine, Iphigénie en Tauride, Camille reine des Volsques, Hippodamie, Idoménée, Télèph.* In the light *genre,* and what was then called the *opéra-ballet,* he gave *l'Europe galante* (1697), which was his brilliant début on the stage of the *Opéra*; then the *Carnaval de Venise, les Amours de Mars et Vénus, Aréthuse, les Fêtes vénitiennes, le Ballet des âges, les Muses,* etc. Campra, who wrote also a great deal of excellent religious music, was the teacher of Destouches and Philidor. He lived long enough to witness Rameau's début and first successes, and rendered full justice to the genius of that great man. He is certainly one of the most interesting artists which France has produced.

By his side, but a little below him, his pupil Destouches deserves to be mentioned. André Cardinal Destouches (1672–1749), who first took military orders, and was an officer in the King's *mousquetaires,* afterwards gave himself up to music. He made his first appearance at the *Opéra* with a work entitled *Issé* (1698), to which his master Campra was not an entire stranger, and which was very successful. A musician by inspiration more than by study, Destouches distinguished himself more by grace and elegance than by force and depth. Among his other works, *Omphale, le Carnaval et la Folie,* and *Callirhoé,* were the ones best received by the public, which cared less for *Amadis de Grèce,*



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GARDEN OF HARMONY.

Reproduced from a lithograph drawn by Telory, representing in caricature the composers living at the date of publication. Above them are grouped the honored dead.

Télémaque, *Sémiramis* and *les Stratagèmes de l'amour*.

Among the composers who were represented at the *Opéra* during the first third of the eighteenth century was Mouret, whom his contemporaries christened "the musician of the graces." Mouret (1682–1739), who was lacking in force and vigor, was yet a musician full of charm and grace, some of whose works met with great success, — *les Fêtes de Thalie*, *les Amours des dieux*, *le Ballet des sens*, *les Amours de Ragonde*. He was less happy with the serious operas, such as *Ariane* and *Pirithoüs roi des Lapithes*.

Campra, Destouches and Mouret were certainly the best-known artists of that period, and those who did the most for the *Opéra*. With them we find Marais, who gave to that theatre *Alcyone*, his masterpiece, and *Semélé*; Collasse, who brought out *Canente* and *Polyxène et Pyrrhus*; and Gervais, who offered to the public *Hypermnestre* and *les Amours de Protée*. Then some new musicians appeared, whose works we will enumerate rapidly: *Philomèle*, *Créuse*, *Orion*, *Télégone*, *Biblis*, *Bradamante* by Lacoste; *Méléagre*, *Polydore*, *Manto la fée* by Batistin Struck; *les Fêtes de l'été*, by Montéclair, a talented artist who took part in the orchestra, where he was the first to introduce the *contrebasse*; *les Fêtes grecques et romaines*, *le Caprice d'Erato*, *Endymion*, by Colin de Blamont; *Arion*, by Matho; *les Amours déguisés*, *les Plaisirs de la Paix*, by Bourgeois; *Pyrrhus*, by Royer; *Médée et Jason*, *Théonoé*, by Salomon; *le Triomphe des Arts*, *la Vénitienne*, by Labarre; *Médus*, *roi des Mèdes*, *Cassandre*, by Bouvard; *la Reine des Péris*, by Jacques Aubert; *le Jugement de Pâris*, *les Plaisirs de la campagne*, *Diomède*, *Ajax*, by Bertin; *Pyrame et Thisbé*, *Tarsis et Julie*, *Pastorale hèroique*, by Rebel and Francœur; etc., etc.

At last came Rameau, who was to revolutionize the *Opéra* and to open a new and fertile period in the history of that theatre. Jean Philippe Rameau (1683–1764), though already celebrated as a theorist, clavecinist and organist, had just completed his fiftieth year when he made his brilliant début on the stage of the *Opéra* with his *Hippolyte et Aricie*. In the space of thirty years he brought out no less than twenty-two works which perpetuate his fame and his glory, but which during his life-time were discussed with a violence and injustice of which it is difficult to give any idea. A musician of powerful and dramatic inspiration, an audacious harmonist, Rameau gave to the choruses a hitherto unknown importance, while at the same time he wonderfully enriched the orchestra, and made it play an individual and considerable rôle. A daring innovator, he hesitated little to break with traditions, provided he could obtain the effects and results which he sought; and the novelty of these effects was just what frightened and exasperated the timid minds, and all those who are enemies to every sort of progress and evolution in matters of art. But the public, always indifferent to systems and theories provided one succeeds in touching and moving it, the public constantly defended Rameau against his adversaries and detractors, and it is thus that this great man was able to give to the *Opéra* such a generous number of works, some of which are masterpieces; *Castor et Pollux*, *les Indes galantes*, *les Fêtes d'Hébé*, *Dardanus*, *Zaïs*, *Platée*, *Naïs*, *Zoroastre*, *les Surprises de l'Amour*, *les Paladins*, and others of less importance.

While Rameau was pursuing the course of his triumphs, a new *genre* of dramatic music was gaining a foot-hold in France. I refer to the *opéra-comique* or dialogue opera, which was then called *Comédie à ariettes*, and of which it is necessary to know the origins.

Paris possessed at that time only three regular theatres, the *Opéra*, the *Comédie-Française* and the *Comédie Italienne* (where they had completely abandoned the Italian *genre*, and played only French works). During the two great annual fairs, however, the *foire Saint Germain* and the *foire Saint Laurent*, there were many temporary theatres and spectacles of all sorts. Each of these fairs, one of which was held in the spring and the other in the autumn, lasted about two months. From the end of the seventeenth century people had watched the establishment within their precincts of "*loges*" of marionnettes, of rope-dancers, of trained animals, and also second-rate theatres, which were much frequented by the lower classes and the *bourgeoisie*. These theatres only lasted during fair season, and their success was all the more pronounced for this reason. The most popular of them all was the one which took the name of *Opéra Comique*, so called because its performances were principally burlesque parodies of works represented at the *Opéra*, and which for this reason were qualified as "comic operas." During the period of Rameau's success

at the *Opéra* a troupe of Italian singers had given at that theatre some performances of Italian *Opéra bouffés*, which had made a great impression on the public. This was in 1752. The repertoire of these singers comprised some real masterpieces, such as *la Serva Padrona* and *il Maestro di Musica*, by Pergolese, *la Finta Cameriera* by Latilla, *la Scaltra governatrice* by Cocchi, *i Viaggiatori* by Leo, *la Donna superba* and *la Zingara* by Rinaldo de Capoue, etc. A great many people were infatuated with these operas, full of charm and melody, and the Parisian dillettanti were divided into two factions, one of which favored Italian and the other French music. The contest became serious, and each party sent forth storms of pamphlets and articles defending their own ideas and attacking their adversaries. This little war was dubbed "*la guerre des bouffons*." Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the famous philosopher who was at the head of the Italian *bouffons*, wrote at this time his little pastoral of the *Devin du village*, composing both the words and the music. This piece was conceived in the style of the Italian *intermezzi*, and was played at the *Opéra* with great success.

It was then that the director of the *Opéra Comique*, named Monnet, thought of a way to profit by the infatuation of the public for pieces of this sort, and had one set to French words, written for his theatre. He demanded a poem of the song-writer, Vadé, who gave him that of the *Troqueurs*. The music was written by the composer Dauvergne, who was afterwards orchestra leader and director of the *Opéra*, and *les Troqueurs*, performed July 30, 1753, at the *Opéra Comique*, met with a brilliant success. This little work, full of vivacity, grace and gaiety, is considered the first attempt at French *Opéra Comique*, and its appearance marked an important date in the history of dramatic music in France.

It need hardly be said that Monnet did not stop here. He had translations made for his theatre of the two Italian *intermèdes* played at the *Opéra*, *il Cinese* and *la Zingara*, after which he gave a number of little "*coméäies à ariettes*" written especially for the *Opéra-Comique* by composers hitherto unknown. The first of these composers was the Italian Duni, who wrote *le Peintre amoureux de son Modèle* and *la Veuve indécise*. One of the actors at the *Opéra-Comique*, Laruette, also composed several works, — *le Docteur Sangraão*, *le Médecin de l'amour*, *l'Ivrogne corrigé*. A little later two artists, Philidor and Monsigny, entered this field of labor, and won distinction and glory. Philidor, who had received from Campra a solid musical education, was the most learned musician of his time, and was gifted with a vivid and fertile imagination. He gave to the *Opéra-Comique*, *Blaise le Savetier*, *l'Huître et les Plaideurs*, *le Jardinier et son Seigneur*, *le Maréchal ferrant*, *le Soldat Magicien*, all of which were remarkably successful. Monsigny, a musician of genius more than of knowledge, but possessing a tender and pathetic soul, brought out *le Cadi dupé* and *On ne s'avise jamais de tout*.

The *Comédie-Italienne*, seeing how well the musical *genre* was received at the *Opéra-Comique*, resolved to follow its example. Accordingly it began by having translations made of certain pieces which the Italian *bouffons* had sung at the *Opéra*; *la Serva padrona*, *il Maestro di musica*, *Bertoldo in Corte*, *la Zingara*, *Tracolo*, *la Donna Superba*. Then it summoned to its side the composers who were working for the *Opéra-Comique*: Duni, who gave it *Mazet* and *l'Ile des fous*; Philidor, who contributed *le Quiproquo*, Laruette, who wrote *le Dépit généreux*. These attempts were as successful as similar ones had been at the *Opéra-Comique*. But the latter theatre was felt to be a dangerous rival by the *Italienne*, which resolved to be rid of it. The *Comédie-Italienne* was powerful, its actors bearing the title of "comedians to the king," and the king granting it an annual subvention from his private purse. It had little trouble in obtaining the suppression of a troublesome rival, whose doors it closed in 1762, and rejoiced in the possession of a free field. From that moment the *Comédie-Italienne* became the home of the light opera. Duni, Philidor and Monsigny, who had already written for it, became its regular contributors, and before long they were joined by Grétry. These four artists, who may be considered as the founders of *opéra-comique*, endowed the *Comédie-Italienne* with a long list of masterpieces, which formed a repertoire full of beauty, grace and charm, and which will continue to be the glory of the French musical school. Duni gave *les Deux Chasseurs et la Laitière*, *l'Ecole de la jeunesse*, *la Fée Urgèle*, *les Moissonneurs*, *la Clochette*, *les Sabots*, while Monsigny brought out *le Roi et le Fermier*, *le Déserteur*, *Rose et Colas*, *le Faucon*, *la Belle Arsène*, and Philidor wrote *Sancho Pança*, *le Bûcheron*, *le Sorcier*, *Tom Jones*, *les Femmes vengées*, *le jardinier de Sidon*. As for Grétry, he produced *Lucile*, *le Ta*

bleau parlant, Sylvain, les Deux Avares, Zémire et Azor, l'Ami de la Maison, l'Amitié à l'épreuve, le Magnifique, la Fausse Magie, l'Epreuve Villageoise, etc. With these justly celebrated artists should be named Gossec, who wrote *les Pêcheurs, le Faux Lord, Toinon et Toinette, la Double Déguisement,* and Dézèdes, who won applause with *Julie, l'Erreur d'un moment, les Trois Fermiers, Blaise et Babet, Alexis et Justine,* and other works. Various other composers, more or less forgotten, such as Kohault, Tarade, Vachon, Saint-Amans, Desbrosses, Cifolelli, Alexandre, Fridzeri, also contributed a number of works to the *Comédie-Italienne,* whose popularity increased day by day.

Meanwhile, the fortune of the *Opéra* was visibly declining. Rameau, the man of genius, had died without leaving a successor, and the works of certain lesser lights did not suffice to satisfy the desires and the curiosity of the public. These musicians were Berton, Trial, Rebel and Francœur (who always worked together), Laborde, Cardonne, and finally Dauvergne, perhaps the most distinguished of them all, who wrote during a very few years *Canente, Hercule mourant, Polyxène* and *la Vénitienne.* Philidor and Monsigny also made one appearance each at the *Opéra,* the first with *Ernelinde, princesse de Vorvège,* the second with *Aline, reine de Golconde,* two operas which, notwithstanding their real merit, received only a courteous welcome. The only great success which could be registered during this uninteresting period was that of *l'Union de l'Amour et des Arts,* a work by a young composer named Floquet, which the public received with considerable enthusiasm. But Floquet, who moreover died young, did not see a repetition of this triumph, although his second opera, *le Seigneur bienfaisant,* was received with some degree of sympathy. While Rameau was living, Mondonville had obtained a considerable success with two important works, *Titon et l'Aurore* and *Daphnis et Alcimadure;* he did not appear again on the stage, however. At the period at which we have arrived the dance is carrying all before it at the *Opéra,* thanks to the admirable corps of *danseurs* and *danseuses* which this theatre possesses. Vestris, father and son, Dupré, Laval, Lyonnois, Lany, Gardel, Dauberval, Mmes. Camargo, Puvigné, Vestris, Lany, Guimard, Heinel, Allard, Peslin, Carville. The singers of Rameau, who were Chassé, Jélyotte, Mlles. Fel, Chevalier, Coupé, have been succeeded by Légros, Larrivée, Glin, Sophie Arnould, Mme Larrivée, Mlles Duplant, Levasseur, Beaumesnil. These artists, who are not by any means without talent, are powerless to assure success

PHILIDOR

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

to works which are unworthy of them. But an important event is about to take place. Gluck is coming to Paris, and his masterpieces, which are to revolutionize the city and the court, will rouse the *Opéra* from its torpor, and restore its ancient glory, — the life, the movement, the *éclat,* of which it has been so sadly divested.

The future queen of France was at that time archduchess of Austria, the princess Marie Antoinette. She was betrothed to the Dauphin who was to be Louis XVI. Gluck had been her teacher in Vienna, and she was a powerful protector for him, assisting him to get some of his works performed at the *Opéra.* This great man had long cherished the hope of a reform in the lyric drama, which he wished to render more pathetic, more true, partly by freeing it of certain conventionalities, false as they were ridiculous, partly by doubling its dramatic power by means of a severe, touching, and solid declamation. Powerless to realize this reform in his own country, owing to the prejudice of the people and the vanity and ignorant obstinacy of the singers, he had turned his

eyes on France, where the soil seemed favorable to his projects, by reason of the artistic feeling of that country, its natural and enlightened taste, as well as its innate sense of everything relating to the theatre.

He was not mistaken, and it was with a veritable enthusiasm that France received the works which he submitted to its appreciation. It must be confessed, however, that this enthusiasm excited opposition, and that Gluck had to struggle against bitter adversaries and violent criticisms. His presence in Paris even revived the pen battle, which, twenty years before, had signalled the appearance of the *bouffons italiens* on the stage of the *Opéra*, and people were treated to a renewal of that deluge of pamphlets, libels, and writings of all sorts which had characterized that curious episode of the history of dramatic music in France. Once more two parties were formed, of which the one valiantly defended Gluck, and the other energetically combatted him. The contest became especially sharp when Piccinni was called to Paris and set up in opposition to Gluck, and this polemic was called "The quarrel of the Gluckists and the Piccinnists." Among the first were found Jean Jacques Rousseau, Suard, director of the *Journal de Paris*, and his collaborator the Abbé Arnaud. The Piccinnists counted in their ranks Marmontel, la Harpe, Ginguené, D'Alembert and Framery, and altogether these writers turned out about fifty pamphlets on the subject.

In reality, Gluck did not win without a struggle. But his genius asserted itself so powerfully that his victory was brilliant and complete. It is certain that the five master-pieces which he gave successfully to the *Opéra*, produced a deep impression on the public, stirred again the life and movement that seemed to have gone out of this theatre, and restored to it all its ancient splendor. The first one, *Iphigénie en Aulide*, appeared April 19, 1774, and was received with surprise mingled with admiration. Little accustomed to this musical language of a character at once sober, bold and severe, to this noble and intense dramatic expression, the spectators were electrified, and, carried away by their emotion, tendered to the composer their loudest applause and acclamations. *Orphée*, performed three months later, was the crowning point of his glory. This work, to be sure, had already been played in Italian at Vienna, as had also *Alceste*, which followed it, but in adapting both of these operas to the French stage Gluck made important changes in them which brought into relief the ideas and sentiments which he was striving to make prevail. He was rewarded by success. *Armide* and *Iphigénie en Tauride* achieved the reformation which he had dreamed of accomplishing in the character and style of the French opera.

It was during the latter part of his sojourn in France that Piccinni was called to Paris. There was no sense in thus calling together and bringing into conflict two artists who had nothing to quarrel about. If Piccinni was not able to cope successfully with Gluck, it is nevertheless true that he was a musician of a superior order, and that some of his French operas, such as *Roland*, *Atys*, *Didon* and *Pénélope*, are deserving of the warmest sympathy. It would seem as if the *Opéra* at this period had become the prey of foreign composers. After Gluck and Piccinni, it was Sacchini, then Salieri who contributed to its repertory. Sacchini brought out *Chimène*, *Renaud*, *Dardanus*, *Œdipe à Colone* and *Arvire et Evelina*. *Renaud* is a truly remarkable work, and as for *Œdipe à Colone*, in which pathos is pushed to its most sublime expression, it is one of the most admirable masterpieces with which the French stage has been graced. Salieri, a pupil of Gluck, was not unworthy of his master. Of the three works which he wrote for the *Opéra*, two at least, *les Danaïdes* and *Tarare* are powerful productions, and were received with great favor by the public. *Les Horaces* was less successful.

However, the *Opera* was not wholly closed to other composers, and it is necessary to mention here a number of works which were brought out there at this period. Grétry, among others, gave good proof of his fecundity in contributing successively: *Céphale et Procris*, *Andromaque*, *l'Embarras des richesses*, *la Caravane du Caire*, *Panurge dans l'ile des lanternes*, *Amphitrion*, and *Aspasie*. Only one of these operas, *Andromaque*, was serious, and it did not succeed. The others were of a demi-character, and some were downright comic, like *la Caravane* and *Panurge*, which were very successful. At the same time they were playing *Persée* and *Thémistocle*, by Philidor; *Thésée*, by Gossec; *Alexandre aux Indes*, by Méreaux; *Electre*, *Phèdre*, *Nephté*, by Lemoyne, a vigorous musician, but of a secondary order; *Démophon*, by Cherubini, who made with this opera his début in France; *la Toison d'or* and another *Démophon*, by Vogel, an artist of very promising talent, but who died young.

Meanwhile the *Comédie-Italienne* was pursuing its successful course with *opéra-comique*. Grétry, who was indefatigable, was giving it, one after another, *la Rosière de Salency*, *les Mariages Samnites*, *Motroca*, *le Jugement de Midas*, *l'Amant jaloux*, *les Evénements imprévus*, *Aucassin et Nicolette*, *les Méprises par ressemblance*, *le Comte d'Albert*, *Raoul Barbe-Bleue* and his admirable *Richard-Cœur-de-Lion*; Philidor brought out *les Femmes vengées* and *l'Amitié au village*; Piccinni wrote *le Faux Lord* and *le Dormeur éveillé*; Monsigny prematurely ended his career with *Félix* or *l'Enfant trouvé*, while Champein begun his with *les Dettes* and *la Mélomanie*, and Méreaux won applause with *le Retour de tendresse*.

Special mention must be made here of two artists of a rare originality and exceptional worth,

D'ALAYRAC.

From a drawing by Quenedey, by means of a physionotrace.

who made their first appearance about this time at the *Comédie Italienne*, which one of them especially was to enrich with a long series of masterpieces. These two artists were Martini and d'Alayrac. Martini (*il Tedesco*), who must not be confounded with Martini (*lo Spagnuolo*), was a German whose real name was Schwarzendorf. In going to establish himself in France he had abandoned this uneuphonious name, and adopted that of Martini. A learned musician, possessing the dramatic sense and gifted with a rare pathetic sentiment, he gave to the *Comédie-Italienne* several works which were distinguished by solid technical qualities and also by an inspiration full of grace and elegance; *l'Amoureux de quinze ans*, *le Fermier cru sourd*, *Henri IV*, *le Droit du Seigneur*. As to d'Alayrac, who had followed the army, and who, being an officer, had studied music only as an amateur, he became nevertheless, one of the most distinguished, most gifted, and most productive of French composers. His

first works at the *Comédie-Italienne*, *l'Amant statue*, *l'Eclipse totale*, *le Corsaire*, *les Deux Tuteurs*, had attracted attention to him; he achieved striking and prolonged successes with those which followed: *la Dot*, *Nina*, or *la Folle par amour*, *Azémia*, *Renaud d'Ast*, *les Deux Sérénades*, *Sargines*, *les Deux Petits Savoyards*, *Raoul sire de Créqui*. Some of these works were stamped with a gay and graceful vivacity, others with a melancholy and touching tenderness or with an intense and stirring dramatic sentiment. If d'Alayrac was not a profound musician, he possessed rare natural gifts, and an abundant inspiration full of elegance and charm.

It is necessary at least to mention here the names of a certain number of composers who gravitated about those whom I have just mentioned, and who, though less fertile and less happy, yet gave to the *Comédie-Italienne* some excellent and popular works. These artists were Rigel, Désormery, Saint-Georges (the famous violinist), Bianchi, Propiac, Deshayes, Bruni, Ragué, Cambini, Désaugiers, etc. It would be unjust also to ignore the writers who furnished all these composers with the poems, often charming, which the latter set to music. In this *genre* of *opéra-comique*, so essentially peculiar to France, the value of the poem is of great importance, and the names of Anseaume, Favart, Sedaine, Marmontel, Marsollier, Monvel and Laujon are intimately associated with those of Philidor, Monsigny, Dézèdes, Martini, d'Alayrac and their less celebrated confrères. As to the artists who were charged with interpreting these poets and musicians, they were absolutely of the first order, and their names have remained justly famous in the annals of French art. They were Claviral, Laruette, Chenard, Thomassin, Trial, Ménier, Narbonne, Michu, Mmes. Favart, Trial, Laruette, Dugazon, Colombe, Gontier, Adeline, Desbrosses, Carline and Rose Renaud, who formed in their *ensemble* a troupe equal to that of the *Comédie-Française*. Under such conditions it is easy to understand the popularity which *opéra-comique* obtained at the *Comédie-Italienne*, where it attracted all Paris.

This picture of the state of music in France in the eighteenth century would not be complete without due reference to the *Concert spirituel*. The *Concert spirituel* was an enterprise founded in 1725, and its entertainments were given during the periods of intermission which the theatres were obliged to observe on the occasion of religious festivals, notably during the three consecutive weeks from Passion Sunday to the Sunday of Quasimodo. These entertainments were very brilliant, and one heard there not only the best singers and virtuosos which France could produce, but soon there was not a foreign artist of any worth who did not hold it an honor to appear and be applauded there. It will suffice to recall such names as Besozzi, Heisser, Rodolphe, Viotti, Jarnowick, Farinelli, Caffarelli, Davide, Mengozzi, Mmes. Todi, Mara, etc. It goes without saying that religious and symphonic music occupied a good part of the programme. The orchestra and the choruses were large and excellent and the *Concert spirituel* was one of the most celebrated institutions of Paris.

Another enterprise of the same sort and likewise very interesting, was that of the *Concerts des amateurs*, founded about 1775, by a former general, M. de La Haye, and organized by subscription. The orchestra, excellent also, was directed by Gossec, and it was there that one heard for the first time the symphonies of Toesky, of Vanhall, of Van Malder, of Stamitz, of Gossec, and finally those of Haydn which were first heard in France in 1779. It was expressly for this institution, which took in 1780 the title of *Concert de la Loge Olympique*, that Haydn wrote several of his famous symphonies. These two enterprises, far from being unfriendly rivals, grew and prospered side by side, and gave every sign of a long and vigorous life, when the events which were to change the face of France and unsettle Europe came to give them a mortal blow. The Revolution was muttering, 1789 was approaching, and with the new regime was to open a new and brilliant phase for the history of French music.

To the Revolution, indeed, may be traced the three principal causes of this magnificent flight of musical art: first, the liberty of the theatres, decreed in 1791 by the National Assembly, and which resulted in several new theatres, devoted wholly or in part to the lyric *genre;* second, the founding of the *Conservatoire* (1794), which spread the instruction of music, and cultivated a general taste for it; finally, the celebration of the great public republican festivals, at which much attention was given to music, and for which grand symphonies and patriotic songs were written and performed. Bear in mind also that just at this time France saw the sudden development of a little group of gifted

musicians, — Méhul, Lesueur, Berton, Boieldieu, Catel, behind which was a whole army of charming composers of the lesser magnitude, such as Devienne, Gaveaux, Solié, Kreutzer, Jadin, Gresnick, Della Maria, and it is easy to believe that a period opening under such favorable auspices must have been a brilliant one for the art.

One more important fact remains to be cited, in order to explain the enormous development of the musical movement in France at this time. In 1789 a new lyric theatre was established under the name of the *Théâtre de Monsieur*, which it was to abandon a little later for that of *théâtre Feydeau*. This theatre, which played Italian opera and French *opéra comique*, brought before the Paris public the best troupe of Italian singers which it is possible to imagine. These singers, whom the great violinist Viotti sought out in Italy, were Raffanelli, Mandini, Mengozzi, Viganoni, Rovedino, Mmes. Morichelli, Baletti and Mandini. They performed the delightful operas of Paisiello, Guglielmi, Cimarosa, Piccinni, Sarti, Salieri, and their marvellous talent, quite as much as this easy, vivacious and melodious music, exercised a refining influence on the taste of the public and of the French singers. Then, the events of 1792 having caused them to disperse, the *théâtre de Monsieur* (become the *théâtre Feydeau*) devoted itself to French *opéra comique*, and thus entered into competition with the *Comédie Italienne*, which had abandoned this name and adopted that of *théâtre Favart*. For ten years these two theatres were engaged in an energetic and uninterrupted struggle, disastrous for both from a financial point of view, but beneficial to art, and astonishingly fruitful in results. There was during this period a marvellous blossoming out of masterpieces on these two rival stages, and it may truthfully be called the heroic epoch of French music.

In the course of these ten years, the composers who made the glory of these two theatres, and who, in almost every case, were just beginning their careers, manifested prodigious activity and an inexhaustible fertility. Such works appeared as *Euphrosine, Stratonice, Mélidore et Phrosine, la Caverne, le Jeune Henri, Ariodant, l'Irato*, by Méhul; *la Famille Suisse, Zoraïme et Zulnare, la Dot de Suzette, Beniouski, le Calife de Bagdad*, by Boieldieu; *Lodoïska, Médée, l'Hôtellerie portugaise, Elisa, les Deux Journées, la unition*, by Cherubini; *les Promesses de mariage, l'Amant à l'épreuve, les Rigueurs du Cloître, Montano et Stephanie, Ponce de Léon, le Délire*, by Berton; *la Caverne, Télémaque, Paul et*

LESUEUR.

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

Virginie, by Lesueur; *le Prisonnier, l'Oncle valet, l'Opéra Comique*, by Della Maria. Moreover, the ancients continued their career, and Grétry produced *Pierre le Grand, Lisbeth, Guillaume Tell, Elisca*, while d'Alayrac came forward with *la Soirée orageuse, Camille* or *le Souterrain, Roméo et Juliette, Gulnare, Adèle et Dorsan, Léon* or *le Château de Montenero, Philippe et Georgette, Adolphe et Clara, Ambroise* and *la Maison isolée*. Sometimes the lesser musicians met with great success, as for instance Devienne with *les Visitandines* and *les Comédiens ambulants;* Gaveaux with *l'Amour filial, le Traité nul, le Petit Matelot, le Diable couleur de rose;* Kreutzer with *Lodoïska* and *Paul et Virginie;* Solié with *le Diable à quatre, Jean et Geneviève, le Secret, le Jockey, le Chapitre second;* Bruni with *l'Officier de fortune, Toberne, la Rencontre en voyage, les Sabotiers, le Major Palmer* and *l'Auteur dans son ménage*. . .

It was not until 1801 that the rivalry between these two theatres ceased, a consolidation being effected in that year. The new theatre thus formed from the two old ones styled itself *Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique*, a name which it still bears to-day. But it has been observed that the decree of 1791 caused a great many other theatres to spring up, some of which were in part devoted to music; these latter were the *Théâtre-National*, the *Théâtre Louvois*, the *Théâtre Montansier*, the *Théâtre des Jeunes Artistes*, and some others of less importance. Their repertoires were furnished for the most part by the young composers who could not approach the great stages of the *Favart* and the *Feydeau*. It was these second-rate theatres that brought out *l'Amant jaloux*, *Selico* and *la Journée de l'Amour*, by Mengozzi; *les Brouilleries*, *l'Orage*, *les Noces de Lucette*, *l'Antipathie*, *le Pèlerin*, *le Mont Alphéa*, *les Petits Montagnards*, by the elder Foignet; *Alphonse et Leonore*, *le Petit Page*, *le Baiser donné et rendu*, *les Faux Monnayeurs*, *le Tuteur original*, by Gresnick; *Zélia*, *le Petit Orphée*, by Deshayes; *Lisidore et Monrose*, *le Tambourin de Provence*, by Scio; *le Coucou* and *Alisbelle*, by Jadin; *l'Histoire universelle*, *Madelon*, *Turlututu* and *les Deux Charbonniers*, by Cousin-Jacques; *Flora*, by Fay, etc.

It is easy to understand the development and the importance which such abundant production gave to dramatic music. It may be declared that from this period dates a true French school of music; that is to say, a company of artists united by the same ideas, the same traditions, the same tendencies, working towards the same end, professing the same principles, and giving musically, by their particular and personal understanding of the art, proofs of a very real and strongly characterized nationalism.

These doctrines and principles were greatly strengthened through the teaching of the *Conservatoire*, where the French musicians who professed them had every opportunity to apply and propagate them. Indeed, the *Conservatoire* founded in 1794 by the National Convention and placed under the direction of Sarrette, united in its corps of instructors all the distinguished artists which the country afforded. There were Méhul, Gossec and Cherubini for composition; Catel and Berton for harmony; Garat, Richer, Plantade, Mengozzi, Lasuze, Guichard and Jadin for melody; Rode, Kreutzer, Baillot and Grasset for the violin; Romberg and Levasseur for the violoncello; Louis Adam and Boieldieu for the piano; Lefèvre, Duvernoy, Ozi, Delcambre, Hugot, Devienne, Domnich and Sallentin for the wind instruments; and Tourette, Widerkehr, Gobert and Rogat for the solfeggio. Finally, to insure perfect unity to the system of instruction, Sarrette had the professors draw up a series of Methods called the *Méthodes du Conservatoire*, which were published at the expense of the Government for use in the various classes. Thus it was that Rode, Kreutzer and Baillot wrote a *Méthode de violon*, Louis Adam a *Methode de piano*, Mengozzi and his colleagues a *Méthode de chant*, etc. In this way the unity of the principles was rigorously maintained, and it is for this reason that the Paris *Conservatoire* has remained to this day at the head of all the establishments of this kind in Europe. It is for this reason also that it has preserved intact its vigor and its personality.

It was at this time, that is to say during the revolutionary period, that French composers had occasion to exercise their faculties in a special direction, in writing by order of the Government, for the great republican festivals, some elaborate choral and symphonic compositions, and patriotic songs designed to be sung in the open air by vast numbers of people. Already, in a burst of patriotic zeal, Rouget de Lisle, a natural musician, but without instruction, had endowed France with the best war song ever written, that Marseillaise (war song of the armies of the Rhine) which has become for his compatriots the symbol of independence and of liberty. On the occasions of the festivals of which I speak, France's most celebrated artists produced some noble and superb compositions, which, unhappily, were destined to disappear with the epoch and the circumstances which gave them birth. It was in this way that Méhul wrote, among other things, his majestic *Chant du depart* (the only one which has survived) and his splendid *Chant du 25 Messidor*, for three choruses and three orchestras; that Gossec gave the *Chant du 14 Juillet*, the *Hymne à la Victoire* and the *Hymne à l'Humanité;* Cherubini, another *Hymne à la Victoire*, and the *Ode sur le 18 Fructidor;* Catel, the *Hymne à l'Egalité*, the *Chant du 10 Août* and the *Chant pour l'anniversaire de la fondation de la République;* Grétry, the *Arbre de la Liberté;* Berton, the *Hymne pour la fête de l'Agriculture;* Lesueur, the *Chant du 9 Thermidor;* Pleyel, the *Hymne à la liberté*, etc., etc.

From all that has been said one may see clearly that the close of the eighteenth century was a de-

cisive period for the history of music in France, and that from this period must date the birth of the true musical school of that country, a school which has never ceased to flourish, and which is to-day more active, more alive and more vigorous than ever

With the consulate and the first empire comes a transformation in the artistic as well as the political conditions of the country. Liberty is no longer more than a name, and everything is regulated by an inflexible and all-powerful authority. Very naturally art feels the effects of this new situation. The great popular festivals disappear, and music loses with them one of its elements of expansion. The liberty of the theatres is suppressed, their number is considerably reduced, and only two lyric stages, the *Opéra* and the *Opéra-Comique* remain at the dis-

BERTON.

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

posal of the composers. But the impulse has been given, artists have been formed, the *Conservatoire* remains open, and French music will not lose the fruit of the efforts which it has been making for fifteen years to gain independence and personality. Two artists especially, very characteristic of their country and of a charming talent, are going to shed a brilliant lustre over the period about to open, and leave behind them some worthy successors. These two artists are Boieldieu, who on his return from a sojourn in Russia will signalize the second part of his career by a whole series of masterpieces, and Nicolas Isouard, who, though born at Malta and known under the Italian name of Nicolo, is nevertheless of French extraction, and like Boieldieu, will march to sure success with a great number of graceful and charming works. Moreover, if d'Alayrac and Grétry must disappear, if old age forces Gossec to silence, Méhul and Berton are still active, Catel remains full of vigor, and very soon will come

to the front those two talented artists Herold and Auber, who, each in his own *genre*, will raise to such a height the glory and fame of French art. It is the *Opéra-Comique* which will be the special field of all these musicians. As to the *Opéra*, it will reflect for a while the radiance of two famous composers, Lesueur and Spontini, to fall back after a few years, into an apathy from which it can be roused only by the thunder-clap of *la Muette de Portici*.

While d'Alayrac was giving his last works : *Picaros et Diego*, *une Heure de mariage*, *Gulistan*, *Lina ou le Mystère*, Méhul pursued the course of his brilliant career, and brought out in quick succession *une Folie*, *Héléna*, *les deux Aveugles de Tolède*, *Uthal*, *Gabrielle d'Estrées* and finally his admirable *Joseph*, which had a wide-spread reputation, and sufficed to immortalize his name. *La Journée aux aventures* and *Valentine de Milan* (posthumous work) were the last manifestations of his genius at the *Opéra-Comique*. During this time Berton had given to this theatre, *Aline, reine de Golconde*, *les Maris garçons*, *Françoise de Foix* and *Ninon chez Mme. de Sévigné ;* Catel had won applause with *l'Auberge de Bagnères*, *les Artistes par occasion*, *les Aubergistes de qualité* and *Wallace* or *le Ménestrel écossais*, and Nicolo entered the list with *Michel-Ange*, *l'Intrigue aux fenêtres*, *les Rendez-vous bourgeois*, *les Confidences*, *Cendrillon* and *le Billet de loterie*. With these works Nicolo had gained great favor with the public, but his star was destined to pale at the return of Boieldieu ; for notwithstanding his grace, his charm and facility, he was obliged to lay down his arms before his rival. Boieldieu gave *Jean de Paris*, which enchanted its hearers ; Nicolo responded with *le Prince de Catane ;* Boieldieu reappeared with *le Nouveau Seigneur de village ;* Nicolo replied with *Joconde* and *Jeannot et Colin*, his two masterpieces. But Boieldieu's *la Fête du village* carried all before it, and Nicolo, vanquished, gave up the fight and died after bringing out his *l'Une pour l'autre* and *les Deux Maris*. Boieldieu then gave successively *le Petit Chaperon rouge*, *les Voitures versées* and that delightful *Dame blanche*, which, played to-day after a lapse of seventy years, seems as fresh as on the day of its birth, and counts more than fifteen hundred performances. *La Dame blanche* was the crowning point of its author's glory, to which his last opera, *les Deux Nuits*, could add nothing.

But two stars were rising, Herold and Auber, who were beginning to endow the *Opéra-Comique* with a succession of charming works, stamped on the part of the first with passion, tenderness and melancholy ; on the part of the second with a lightness and airy grace that was full of charm. Both, moreover, were gifted with very personal qualities and an incontestable originality. Herold had made a brilliant début with *les Rosières* and *la Clochette*, after which he had written, among other works, *les Troqueurs*, *le Muletier*, and above all *Marie*, which gave proof already of his dramatic and passionate temperament. Auber, less happy at the outset, had quickly risen into eminence with *la Bergère Châtelaine*, *Emma* and *Leicester*, which promptly followed *la Neige*, *Léocadie*, *Fiorella* and *le Concert à la cour*. While these two artists were thus winning fame for themselves, some composers of lower rank, whose works are to-day well-nigh forgotten, were making a place by their side. They were Catrufo, Frédéric Kreubé, Bochsa, Dourlen, Fétis, and chief among them, Carafa, who is still remembered by such works as *le Solitaire*, *la Violette*, *le Valet de Chambre* and *Masaniello*.

With Boieldieu, with Herold, with Auber, the *genre* of *opéra-comique* assumed a musical importance, a fullness of form and an intensity of expression which was as yet almost unknown to it. More than this, in the hands of these richly gifted artists, style had taken a new character, an independence of rhythm which it certainly had not possessed in France before that time. The formula had disappeared and made way for a melodic form more nimble, more vivacious and more free in its movements. On the other hand, harmony had become more rich and more abundant, the orchestra had taken a distinct and considerable importance, and the union of the instruments and voices produced effects of which the preceding musicians had furnished no example. Rossini's powerful influence made itself felt by French musicians, and the means which he employed seemed to them good to apply to their own works. But whatever they appropriated in this way did not in the slightest degree affect the independence of their musical or dramatic inspiration.

The revolutionary period had not been so favorable to the *Opéra* as to the *Opéra-Comique*. During these disturbed times, not a single interesting work had appeared at this theatre, which contented itself with playing numberless so-called "patriotic" pieces in which political passions held a much larger place than the musical element. Only one serious work,

Adrien, appeared at that time, and if the title of another work, *Anacréon chez Polycrate*, be likewise remembered, it is solely out of respect for the name of its author, Grétry. When internal equilibrium was re-established by the advent of the consulate of Bonaparte, the political pieces disappeared from the repertoire of the *Opéra*, but few new works, if we except Catel's *Sémiramis* and Lesueur's *Ossian*, or *les Bardes*, obtained real success. One recalls such titles as *Astyanax*, by Kreutzer; *Tamerlan* and *Castor et Pollux*, by Winter; *Proserpine*, by Paisiello; and *Mahomet II.*, by Jadin; but not one of these operas was able to make a biding place for itself upon the stage.

It was reserved to Spontini to arouse at length from its lethargy both the theatre and the public, and it was *la Vestale* which was to accomplish the great deed. Although Spontini's music may be sometimes incorrect, it would be impossible to deny the superb power, the manly and heroic character of the genius of this great artist. Moreover, by the side of the weak and languishing works which appeared daily at the *Opéra*, the score of *la Vestale* (1807), abounding in life, in movement and passion, with its marvellous dramatic feeling, with its recitatives full of color and breadth, with its fine pathetic passages, could not but enthuse a public weary of so many inane productions, and which found itself at last in the presence of a noble, vigorous and really touching work which took a vital hold upon it, and quickened its heart-beats. This début of Spontini's was a master-stroke, and his success was complete, aided as it was by the brilliant talent of his interpreters: Laîné, Laïs, Dérivis, Mme. Branchu and Mlle. Maillard.

La Vestale had placed Spontini very high in public esteem. *Fernand Cortez*, produced two years later, added still more to his renown. There was in this new work a fullness of form, a power of expression, the secret of which had seemed to have been lost with Gluck; and if Spontini's purity of style was less great than that of his immortal master, the power of his work was augmented by the color, the movement, the scope which he gave to the orchestra. The triumph of *Fernand Cortez* was even greater perhaps than that of *la Vestale*, and Spontini was placed once for all in the first rank of composers who worked for the great French lyric stage.

Between Spontini's two master-pieces Lesueur had again appeared upon the stage of the *Opéra* with a new work, *la Mort d'Adam*, which was far from being as happy as his preceding opera, *Ossian*, or *les Bardes*. The truth is that Lesueur, though a great musician, was not a great dramatic musician, notwithstanding his successes at the *Opéra-Comique* with *la Caverne* and *Paul et Virginie*. Chapel-master at Notre-Dame, Paris, his severe, solemn and pompous style was better suited to the church than to the theatre; thus it is especially in his religious compositions, in his Masses, his Te Deum and his oratorios (*Déborah, Rachel, Ruth et Noémi, Ruth et Booz*) that one must look for the powerful and majestic genius of Lesueur.

La Mort d'Adam, brought out eight months before *Fernand Cortez*, had been coldly received; on the contrary, Catel's *les Bayadères*, performed eight months after, excited some degree of enthusiasm on the part of the public. Catel, an artist too little remembered to-day, was a musician of rare talent, a remarkable theoretician, and a composer of a generous and abundant inspiration. One need not seek in the *Bayadères*, the elements of a new theory applied to dramatic music; but it is an interesting work, of excellent style, pleasing in its form, full of grace and elegance, with a living orchestration written by a master-hand. One can scarcely understand, in studying his works, how the name of an artist so remarkable, so richly gifted as Catel, could have disappeared so completely from the musical world. Truly he deserves to be remembered, and his *Bayadères*, which kept its place in the repertoire of the *Opéra* for nearly twenty years, had quite a different value from the *Jérusalem délivrée* by Persuis, which appeared at this theatre shortly after, and which left the public wholly indifferent. Cherubini's *les Abencérages* did not succeed much better; but Cherubini, an artist of superior genius, though a trifle cold, had proved his talent at the *Opéra-Comique*, where he had made a striking and prolonged success. However, it is perhaps to his religious music, to his superb masses, especially his incomparable consecration mass, rather than to his operas, that Cherubini owed the high situation and the immense fame which he had come to conquer in France, his adopted country.

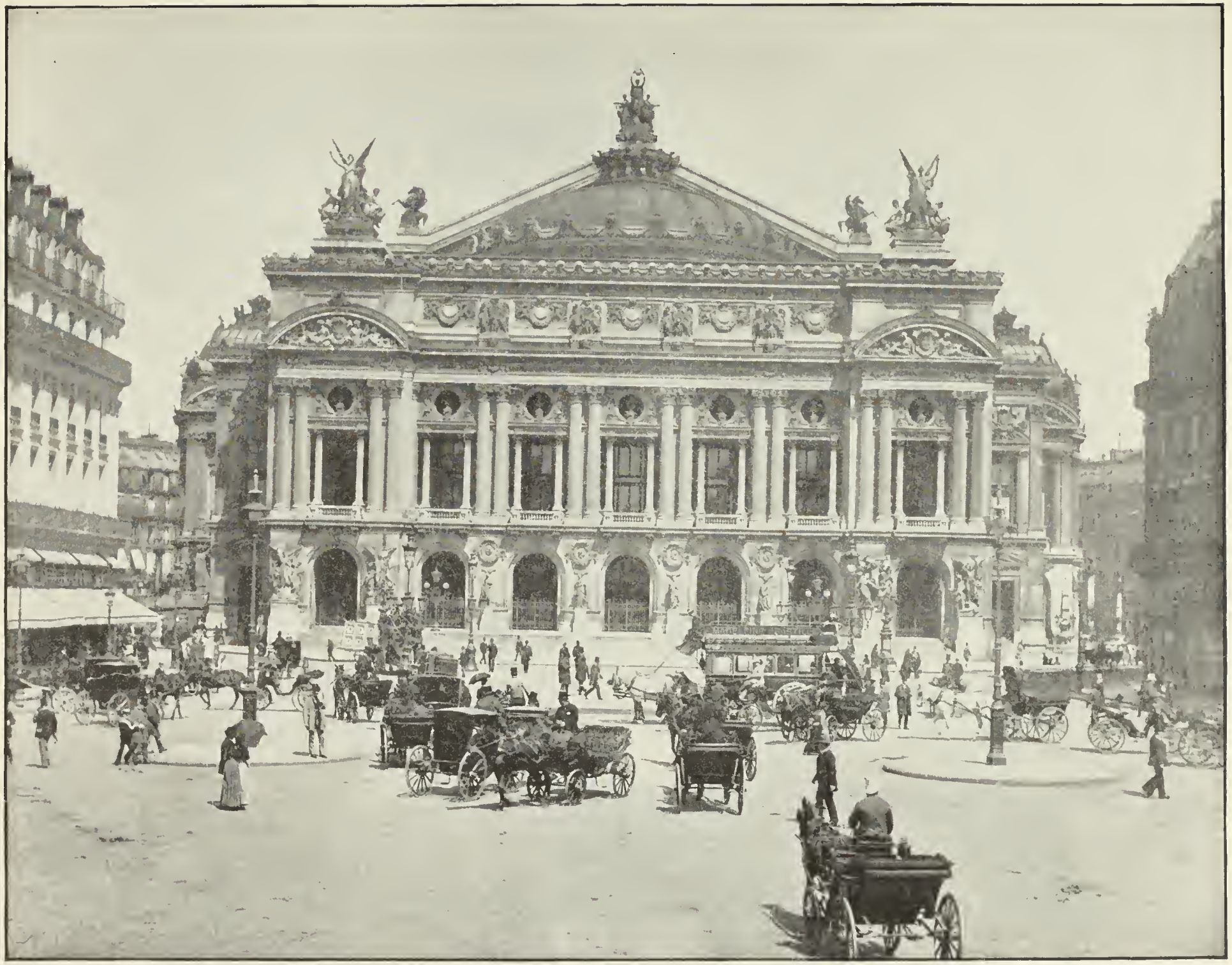
The *Opéra* was at that time, and had been for some years, in a difficult situation, which only grew worse from day to day. Gluck's five master-pieces, *Alceste*, *Armide*, *Orphée* and the two *Iphigénies* whose appearance had been so triumphant, had

completely killed the ancient repertoire and rendered thenceforth impossible the performance of the works which had preceded them. But the *Opéra* had lived on these masterpieces for nearly half a century, and as the spectators knew them all by heart, they at length wearied of listening to them. *La Vestale* and *Fernand Cortez* had offered a pleasing variety, but the majority of the new works, of little or no value, only appeared to disappear. *Les Bayadères* obtained a sort of *vogue*, and the same may be said of *Aladin* or *la Lampe merveilleuse*, a posthumous opera by Nicolo. But these were the two exceptions, and the public had only indifference or merited disdain for the works which were offered them during this barren period. Some of these were *Abel* and *la Princesse de Babylone* by Kreutzer, *Médée et Jason*, by Fontenelle ; *Alcibiade solitaire*, by Alexandre Piccinni ; *Nathalie* or *la Laitière Suisse*, by Reicha ; *Roger de Sicile*, by Berton ; *les Jeux floraux*, by Léopold Aymon ; all of which received the same welcome, and after a few meagre representations, disappeared, leaving no trace behind them. Spontini himself ran aground with a new work *Olympie*, which was powerless to renew the success of the older ones. Then there followed in rapid succession *la Mort du Tasse* and *Florestan*, by Garcia (the father of Malibran) ; *Sapho*, by Reicha ; *Virginie*, by Berton ; *Ipsiboé*, by Kreutzer ; and *la Belle au bois dormant*, by Carafa, and the public continued to remain impassive. Gluck's repertoire gave way more and more, but all efforts to replace it by works of value continued fruitless.

It was then that Rossini, that brilliant genius whose fame had spread over all Europe, was called to Paris and charged with writing some new works for the *Opéra*. People looked to him to rouse this theatre from the lethargic state into which it had fallen. But before committing himself too far, Rossini wished first to try the ground, and to familiarize himself with a language of whose secrets he had but a very imperfect knowledge. He commenced therefore by adapting to the French stage two of his Italian operas, *Maometto secondo*, which he called *le Siège de Corinthe*, and *Mosè* which became *Moïse*, and brought out one on Oct. 9, 1826, and the other on March 26, 1827. At last the public found something to wonder at in this living, vibrating, voluptuous music of the south, and received it with veritable enthusiasm. It comprehended the importance of the evolution wrought by Rossini in the style of dramatic music, was struck by the novelty of the means employed by the composer, and felt instinctively that an era of rejuvenation was about to open for the lyric drama, so long stuck fast in a rut from which it could not free itself.

However, it was not Rossini himself who was to give the signal for the important evolution which the grand lyric drama was about to undergo in France. This honor was reserved to a national composer, Auber, who excited great public enthusiasm by the production, on Feb. 29, 1828, of *la Muette de Portici*. *La Muette*, indeed, was the first work conceived in the ideas of the modern school, with the vast proportions, the great dramatic sentiment and the variety of means which are its distinguishing traits. *La Muette* was a revelation, in the sense that from the first stroke and without hesitation it gratified the unformed desires and satisfied the vague aspirations of the public. The ampleness of the developments, the originality and refinement of the harmony, the richness and solidity of the orchestra, the freshness and abundance of the flow of melody, the trimness and precision of the rhythm, finally a dramatic expression rising often to a towering height, such are the qualities which characterized this remarkable work, which was afterwards surpassed by *William Tell*, *les Huguenots* and *le Prophète*, but which, let it be remembered, remained the point of departure of the new era opened to dramatic music. The influence exercised by *la Muette* was so great, so powerful, that it was to the sounds of the superb duet of Masaniello and Pietro, — "Amour sacré de la patrie!" that the Belgian revolution of 1830 broke out, to which it served as a rallying cry.

From this moment the way was open, and the complete transformation of the lyric drama in the modern sense was about to be accomplished through the labors of Rossini, Meyerbeer and Halévy, three great musicians, three noble artists, of different temperaments, but whose efforts were all to converge towards the same end. After writing that charming bit of comedy, *le Comte Ory*, Rossini gave to the *Opéra* his splendid *William Tell*, and if this work, less happy than *la Muette*, did not obtain at once the success which it merited, it came off victorious in the end, and still remains one of the most magnificent masterpieces ever put upon the French lyric stage. Unfortunately, certain circumstances which remain a mystery to this day, arrested Rossini in his French career and prevented him from giving a



PARIS OPERA HOUSE.
From a photograph.

successor to this masterpiece. It was at this time that Auber brought out his two pretty operas, *le Philtre* and *le Dieu et la Bayadère*; then came Meyerbeer, who took the public by storm and scored a splendid triumph with his *Robert le Diable*.

At last there was a departure from the school of Gluck, and dramatic music had found in France a new form. After Auber and Meyerbeer, Halévy entered the list, and *la Juive* (1835), a superb and nobly inspired work, placed him in the first rank of artists on whom the future had good reason to count. Halévy approached Meyerbeer in the power of dramatic sentiment and the skill in managing great combinations, but he preserved his own personality, and was distinguished by characteristics which were his alone. In *la Reine de Chypre*, *Charles VI.*, *Guido et Ginevra*, as well as later in *le Juif errant*, and in *la Magicienne*, which deserved a better fate, these qualities stood out in bold relief. However, Halévy had given his full measure in *la Juive*, which he never surpassed, whereas Meyerbeer reached a greater height with *les Huguenots* than with *Robert*. *Les Huguenots* produced an immense impression, but after bearing away this victory, Meyerbeer was silent for thirteen years. It was during this time that Niedermeyer, a musician possessing undoubted talent, but not of the first order, ventured upon the stage of the *Opéra* with *Stradella*, followed by *Marie Stuart*, and a little later by *la Fronde*. Not one of these works held its place for any length of time upon the stage. It was then also that Berlioz came forward with his *Benvenuto Cellini*, which failed so completely that nothing was preserved intact but the beautiful overture known since then under the name of *Carnaval Romain*. Then Donizetti wrote for the *Opéra*, *la Favorite*, which met with great success, and *les Martyrs* (Poliuto), after which he gave in French his *Lucie de Lammermoor*, which was almost as successful as *la Favorite*. Soon Verdi appeared with an adaptation of his opera *i Lombardi* which he brought out under the title of *Jérusalem*, and in which the celebrated tenor Duprez appeared for the last time. The most renowned singers of this long period of the history of the *Opéra* were Adolphe Nourrit, Serda, Dérivis, Levasseur, Duprez, Barroilhet, Alizard, Mmes. Branchu, Jawurek, Cinti-Damoreau, Falcon, Dorus-Gras and Stoltz.

Returning to the *Opéra-Comique*, we will find there Herold's two great masterpieces, the works of Auber's second manner, and the first attempts of some young musicians such as Adolphe Adam, Halévy, Ambroise Thomas, Grisar, Hippolyte Monpou and Clapisson, some of whom were to become famous. But first it is necessary to note an important fact; the founding of the *Société des Concerts du Conservatoire* (1828), due to the enterprise of Cherubini, who had become director of the *Conservatoire*, and of Habeneck then leader of the orchestra at the *Opéra*. Under Habeneck's energetic and intelligent direction the *Société des concerts* soon became the most celebrated association of the kind in Europe, and it is acknowledged that nowhere, not even in Germany, have Beethoven's works been executed with greater perfection. Habeneck's successors have been Girard, Tilmant, George Hainl, Deldevez, Altès and Garcin.

At the *Opéra-Comique* Herold and Auber pursued their brilliant career. That of Herold was too soon cut off by death, leaving him only time to write two splendid masterpieces, *Zampa* and *Pré aux Clercs*. But for more than thirty years Auber occupied the stage of the *Opéra-Comique* with a series of charming works, among which should be mentioned especially *la Fiancée*, *Fra Diavolo*, *Lestocq*, *le Cheval de bronze*, *Actéon*, *l'Ambassadrice*, *le Domino noir*, *les Diamants de la couronne*, *la Part du Diable*, *la Sirène*, *Haydée*, *Jenny Bell*, *Manon Lescaut*, *le Premier jour de bonheur*. Very soon came Adolphe Adam and Halévy to take their places by the side of Auber. Adam was an amiable musician, full of good humor which sometimes bordered on vulgarity. Like Auber he showed a remarkable fertility, and won great success with *le Chalet*, *la Marquise*, *le Postillon de Lonjumeau*, *le Brasseur de Preston*, *la Reine d'un jour*, *la Rose de Péronne*, *la Roi d'Yvetot*, *Giralda*, *le Sourd*, *le Toreador* and other works. During this time he also wrote for the *Opéra* the charming music of several ballets: *Giselle*, *la Fille du Danube*, *le Corsaire*, *la Jolie Fille de Gand*. Halévy, a musician of less abundant inspiration, but more even than Adam, likewise attained marked successes, notably with *l'Eclair*, *les Mousquetaires de la reine*, *la Fée aux roses*, *le Val d'Andorre*. Next it was M. Ambroise Thomas, who made a most happy beginning with *la Double Echelle*, *le Panier fleuri*, *Mina*, *le Perruquier de la Régence*, and who afterwards won distinction with *Raymond* or *le Secret de la reine*, *le Songe d'un nuit d'été*, *le Caïd*, *Psyché*, *Mignon*, his masterpiece, and *Gille et Gillotin*.

To the same generation belonged Grisar, who gave to the *Opéra-Comique*, *Sarah*, *l'An mil*, *Gille ravisseur*, *les Porcherons*, *Bonsoir, monsieur Pantalon*, *le Carillonneur de Bruges;* Hippolyte Monpou, who brought out *le Luthier de Vienne*, *Piquillo*, *les Deux Reines;* Clapisson, who produced *la Figurante*, *la Perruche*, *le Code noir*, *Gibby la cornemuse;* Gomis, who wrote *le Diable à Séville*, *le Revenant*, *le Portefaix;* also a number of others whom I must limit myself to naming without mentioning their works: Batton, Gide, Rifaut, Thys, Despréaux, Eugène Prévost, the younger Boieldieu, Georges Bousquet, Justin Cadaux, Henry Potier, François Bazin, Eugène Gautier, Onslow, Théodore Labarre, Balfe, Ernest Boulanger, Duprato, Jules Cohen, etc.

Then came a new generation of musicians who gave a series of admirable works to the *Opéra Comique*. These men were Henri Reber, to whom we owe *la Nuit de Noël*, *les Papillotes de M. Benoit*, *le Père Gaillard*, *les Dames capitaines;* Victor Massé, who won much applause with *la Chanteuse voilée*, *Galatée*, *les Noces de Jeannette*, *la Nuit de Cleopâtre;* Félicien David, who scored a triumph with *Lalla Roukh*.

ADOLPHE ADAM.

From a drawing by F. Krüger, lithographed by Remij.

About this time another musical stage started up in Paris, which greatly facilitated the débuts of the young artists, and which increased production to a considerable extent. In 1847 Adam founded the *Opéra National*, which soon became the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, and which after a few struggles became one of the most important artistic institutions of Paris, and so remained until it disappeared in 1876. There, for more than twenty years, flourished a considerable repertoire of works, often very remarkable, which the *Opéra* and *Opéra-Comique* afterwards seized upon, and some of which were the glory of France and of their authors. It was at the *Théâtre-Lyrique* that M. Gounod, who had started his career at the *Opéra* with *Sappho* without great success, gave one after another *le Médecin malgré lui*, *Faust*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Mireille*, *Philémon et Baucis*. It was there that Aimé Maillart made himself known with *Gastibelza* and *les Dragons de Villars;* M. Reyer with *Maître Wolfram* and *la Statue;* M. Poise with *Bonsoir Voisin* and *les Charmeurs;* Bizet with *les Pêcheurs de perles* and *la Jolie Fille de Perth;* M. Gevaert with *Georgette*, *le Billet de Marguerite* and *les Lavandières de Santarem;* Th. Semet with *les Nuits d'Espagne*, *Gil Blas* and *la Demoiselle d'honneur*, Léo Delibes with *Maître Griffard* and *le Jardinier et son seigneur*. Several other young artists also appeared at the *Théâtre-Lyrique:* MM. Jules Cohen, Louis Deffès, Th. de Lajarte, Joncières, Vogel, Wekerlin, Boisselot, Dautresme. It was to this theatre also that Halévy gave *Jaguarita l'Indienne*, Grisar *les Amours du diable* and *la Chatte merveilleuse*, Adam *le Bijou perdu*, *le Muletier de Tolède*, *la Poupée de Nuremberg*, *Si j'étais roi!* Clapisson *la Fanchonnette*, *Margot*, *la Promise*, Berlioz *les Troyens*, Félicien

David *la Perle du Brésil*, Victor Massé *la Reine Topaze* and *la Fée Carabosse*.

But the *Théâtre-Lyrique* did not confine itself to

REBER.
From an engraving by C. Deblois, 1867.

bringing out new works, and a part of its brilliant existence was devoted to reviving the earlier works and translating foreign ones, all of which were mounted with extreme care and sung by first-class artists. Thus it attracted all Paris in offering to the public Gluck's *Orpheus*, Mozart's *Figaro*, *Don Juan*, *The Magic Flute* and *The Seraglio*, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Weber's *Oberon*, *Der Freischütz*, *Euryanthe* and *Abou Hassan*, Monsigny's *Félix*, Berton's *Aline*, Méhul's *Joseph*, Grétry's *Richard-Cœur-de-Lion*, Wagner's *Rienzi*, etc. One heard in these operas such artists as Michot, Troy, Montjauze, Ismaël, Barré, Wartel, Lutz, Puget, Mmes. Marie Cabel, Carvalho, Ugalde, Marie Sasse, Viardot, Marimon, Christine Nilsson, Charton-Demeur, de Maësen, Devriès, Lefebvre, Rey Balla, Rosine Bloch, Daram, etc.

The career of the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, interrupted in 1870, was renewed on various occasions, but always under difficult conditions. At long intervals it still brought out important works: *Paul et Virginie* by Victor Massé, *le Timbre d'argent*, *Etienne Marcel*, *Samson et Dalila* by M. Saint-Saëns, *Dimitri* by M. Joncières, *le Bravo* by M. Salvayre, *le Capitaine Fracasse*, by M. Emile Pessard, *les Amants de Vérone* by M. Richard Yrvid. But a number of years ago it seemed to disappear for good, a fact greatly to be deplored, since for more than a quarter of a century the *Théâtre-Lyrique* had rendered inestimable service, and its existence had lent to dramatic music in France a power of expansion which it is far from possessing to-day, owing to the absence of stimulus to the composers.

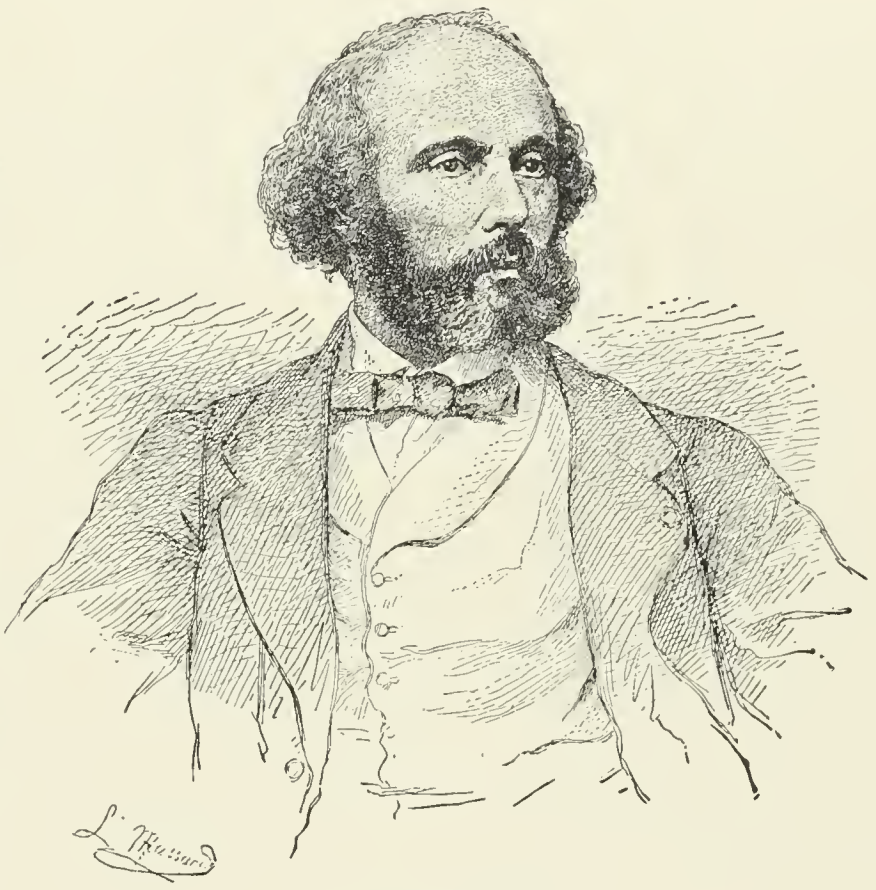
We have now arrived at the last period of this rapid sketch of the history of musical art in France during two centuries; that is to say, the contemporaneous period, of which Gounod is assuredly the most illustrious representative. After the appearance at the *Opéra* of Meyerbeer's *Prophet*, which did not receive at the outset the welcome which it merited, after the representation of two of Auber's works, justly forgotten to-day: *l'Enfant prodigue* and *Zerline*, Gounod gave to this theatre three operas which were not able to keep their place on the repertoire: *Sapho*, *la Nonne sanglante* and *la Reine de Saba*. It was at the *Théâtre-Lyrique* especially that Gounod was to triumph with *Faust*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Mireille*, *le Médecin malgré lui*, and *Philémon et Baucis*. Félicien David's *Herculanum* and the shameful downfall of Richard Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, due to a silly cabal, preceded the appearance of Meyerbeer's last work, *l'Africaine*, given a short time after his death. Afterwards came *Roland à Roncevaux* by Mermet, a production of no appreciable value, *les Vêpres Siciliennes* and *Don Carlos*, two operas written by Verdi expressly for France, and *Hamlet* by Ambroise Thomas, a work whose success seemed to mark a step in the history of the *Opéra*. It was also about this period that Léo Delibes first won renown with his delightful ballets: *la Source*, *Coppélia*, *Sylvia*.

The time was now approaching for the young French school to make its triumphant entry at the *Opéra*. If Ambroise Thomas appeared again with *Françoise de Rimini*, Gounod with *Polyeucte* and *le Tribut de Zamora*, rather feeble manifestations of their genius, which could add nothing to their glory, the standard was again uplifted by Massenet's *le Roi de Lahore*, *le Cid* and *le Mage*, Reyer's *Sigurd*, and *Salammbô*, Saint-Saëns' *Henri VIII.* and *Ascanio*, Paladilhe's *Patrie* and Bourgault-Du-

coudray's *Thamara*. Several young musicians also tried their hand at the ballet, and Guiraud brought out *Gretna-Green*, Edouard Lalo *Namouna*, Dubois *la Farandole*, Métra *Yedda*, Salvayre *le Fandango*, and Widor *la Korrigane*.

Very soon the young school also broke out at the *Opéra-Comique*. After *la Fille du régiment* and *Rita* by Donizetti, after *l'Etoile du Nord* and *le Pardon de Ploërmel*, by Meyerbeer, *Quentin Durward*, *le Capitaine Henriot* and *Château-Trompette* by Gevaert, *les Monténégrins* by Limnander, *Lara* by Aimé Maillart, *l'Ombre* by Flotow, *Cinq-Mars* by Gounod, *le Saphir* by Félicien David, *Vert-Vert* and *les Contes d'Hoffmann* by Offenbach, the young composers installed themselves as masters of this theatre, and there appeared successively *Djamileh* and *Carmen* by Bizet, *le Passant*, *l'Amour africain* and *Suzanne* by Paladilhe, *l'Amour médecin*, *Joli Gilles* and *les Surprises de l'amour* by Poise, *la Princesse jaune* and *Proserpine* by Saint-Saëns, *le Roi l'a dit* and *Lakmé* by Léo Delibes, *Don César de Bazan* and *Manon* by Massenet, *Piccolino* and *Galante Aventure* by Ernest Guiraud, *le Roi d'Ys* by Edouard Lalo, *les Amoureux de Catherine* by Henri Maréchal, *le Florentin* by Ch. Lenepveu, *Dante* by Benjamin Godard, *le Roi malgré lui* by Chabrier, *la Basoche* by André Messager, and *le Rêve* by Bruneau.

But this sketch would not be complete if mention were not made of a *genre* of music which was born on French soil, and which has been somewhat abused in France, owing to the extravagant success which it obtained at a certain time. I refer to the operetta, the creation of which may be ascribed to Hervé and Offenbach, and which, after having taken immediate possession of the *Folies-Nouvelles* and the *Bouffes-Parisiens*, has invaded half a dozen of the Paris theatres. Offenbach wrote more than eighty works of this kind of which the most important are *les Deux Aveugles*, *la Chanson de Fortunio*, *Bataclan*, *le Violoneux*, *Dragonnette*, *Croquefer*, *les Bavards*, *Madame Barbe-Bleue*, *la Grande-Duchesse de Gerolstein*, *la Vie parisienne*, *Orphée aux enfers*. Hervé, on his side, offered to the public *un Drame en* 1779, *Toinette et son carabinier*, *le Compositeur toqué*, *le Petit Faust*, *Chilpéric*, *les Turcs*, etc. Charles Lecocq, an artist more learned than either Hervé or Offenbach, has given to the Operetta a more truly musical character, and has obtained great success with *Fleur de Thé*, *la Fille de Madame Angot*, *le Petit Duc*, *la Marjolaine*, *la Camargo*, *Giroflé-Girofla*, *la Petite Mariée*, *les Cent Vierges*, *le Cœur et la Main*, *le Jour et la Nuit*. Several other composers, a little below Lecocq in genius, have won a reputation in the *genre* of operetta; especially should be named Edmond Audran (*la Mascotte*, *les Noces d'Olivette*, *Gillette de Narbonne*, *le Grand Mogol*, *Miss Helyett*), Louis Varney (*les Petits Mousquetaires*, *Fanfan la Tulipe*, *les Mousquetaires au couvent*), Léon Vasseur (*la Timbale d'argent*, *Mam'zelle Crénom*, *le Petit Parisien*), Lacome (*Madame Boniface*, *Jeanne*, *Jeannette et Jeanneton*, *Ma mie Rosette*), Serpette (*la Branche cassée*, *Madame le diable*, *le Petit Chaperon rouge*, *le Château de Tire-Larigot*), Robert Planquette (*les Cloches de Corneville*, *Rip*, *la Cantinière*, *Surcouf*); also Emile Jonas, Coedès, L. de Wenzel, Chassaigne, Raoul Pugno, Messager, Charles Grisart, Laurent de Rillé, etc.



FÉLICIEN DAVID.

From an engraving by L. Massârd.

Finally we must consider the great and serious efforts made for twenty years by the young French composers in the *genre* of symphonic and choral

music. These efforts, which denoted great vigor and force of will aided by powerful faculties, were crowned with brilliant success. Before that time

JACQUES OFFENBACH

In early manhood, when he was a member of the orchestra at the Opera Comique, in Paris. From a portrait by Laemlein, 1850, in the library of the Paris Opera.

symphonic musicians were rare in France, and of the few exceptions Hector Berlioz was without question the most glorious. We all know now how deserving of fame was this great artist, so scorned by his compatriots during his lifetime, but whose glory to-day is radiant. *The Damnation of Faust*, the fantastic symphony, *l'Enfance du Christ*, *Roméo et Juliette*, are works which the public daily applaud with enthusiasm. Félicien David deserves to be mentioned with Berlioz, were it only for his charming symphonic poem *le Désert*, and for his oratorios *l'Eden* and *Moïse au Sinaï*. Gounod, who has wrestled successfully with all kinds of music, brought himself into notice in his youth by some pretty symphonies, as did also Onslow, Henri Reber and Théodore Gouvy. But all these attempts were individual and isolated; now, they are of daily occurrence. It was to the founding of Pasdeloup's popular concerts of classical music that was due that interesting and curious movement on the part of our young composers in favor of symphonic music. Pasdeloup deserves lasting gratitude for his efforts in this direction, for he directed thus the education of the public, and rendered an incalculable service to the young composers. It was at these popular concerts that Georges Bizet, Saint-Saëns, Massenet, Ernest Guiraud, Lalo, Th. Dubois, and Charles Lefebvre first made their names known to the public by bringing out their symphonies, orchestral suites, overtures or grand religious works. By a singular phenomenon in the history of the art in France, it is with concert music that our artists first gain notoriety, and that they afterwards force the doors of the theatre, being no longer unknown to the public when they appear upon the stage. When, following Pasdeloup's example, MM. Colonne and Ch. Lamoureaux established their fine concert enterprises, the movement was generalized, all the young composers vied with each other in participating therein, and now there is never a programme of one of these concerts which does not bear the name of one or more of them for some important work. It was thus that Bizet brought out a symphony and his two overtures *Patrie* and *Cid;* Saint-Saëns several symphonies, concertos and his symphonic poems *le Déluge*, *Phaéton*, *la Danse macabre*, *le Rouet d'Omphale;* Massenet his orchestra suites, the Phèdre overture and his oratorios *Marie-Magdeleine*, *Eve*, *la Vierge;* Mlle. Augusta Holmès her symphonic poems *Irlande*, *Pologne*, *les Argonautes*, *Ludus pro Patria;* Lalo the *Fiesque* overture, the Norwegian Rhapsody and several concertos; Charles Lefebvre several symphonic pieces and the oratorios *Judith* and *Dalila;* Vincent d'Indy a chivaleresque symphony, the Wallenstein trilogy,

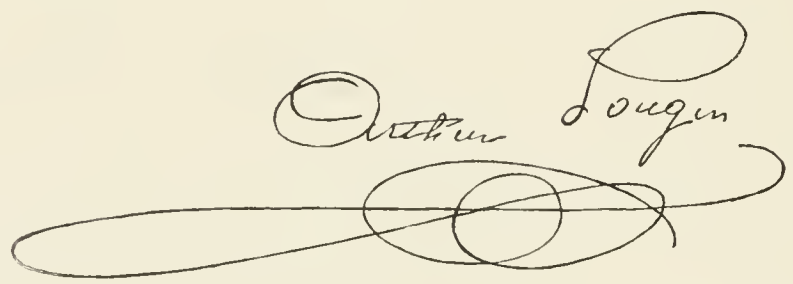
Meyerbeer. Halévy. Niedermeyer. Th. Labarre. Carafa. Berlioz. A. Boieldieu. Grisar. Donizetti. Adam. Auber. Clapisson. Montfort. A. Thomas. Spontini. Rossini.

PANTHÉON MUSICAL.

A humorous cartoon by C. T. Travies.

the overture of *Antoine et Cléopatre*, and the symphonic poem *la Cloche;* César Franck the oratorios *Rédemption*, *Ruth*, *les Béatitudes;* Th. Dubois some orchestral pieces and the oratorio *le Paradis perdu;* Benjamin Godard *le Tasse*, symphonic poem; Alphonse Duvernoy *la Tempête*, symphonic poem; Salvayre a *Stabat Mater* and the oratorio *la Résurrection;* Ch. Lenepveu a *Requiem;* Mme. de Grandval several suites, a mass, an oratorio *Sainte Agnès*, and a symphonic poem *la Forêt;* Chabrier an orchestra fantasia *España;* Henri Maréchal an oratorio *la Nativité*. After these must be mentioned the names of our young composers, MM. Gabriel Fauré, Henry Duparc, André Messager, Widor, Paul Lacombe, Bourgault-Ducoudray, Emile Pessard, Alexandre Guilmant, William Chaumet, Georges Pfeiffer, Joncières, Auguste Chapuis, Lucien Lambert, Alfred Bruneau, André Wormser, Gabriel Pierné, Paul Vidal, Emile Bernard, Mlle. Cécile Chaminade, etc.

The interest and originality of this movement consists not only in its power but in its generality, for to-day there is not one of the young musicians desiring to make a name who does not address himself to the concerts before turning his eyes towards the theatre, and who does not court the approbation of the public by some work of a serious character and incontestable technical skill. In any case the large number of important works written by so many different composers, prove beyond question the remarkable vitality, the power of expansion and the force of production of the French musical school at the end of the nineteenth century.



FREDERICK CHOPIN

Reproduction of a lithograph portrait after Ary Scheffer's painting from life

Chopin

FREDERICK CHOPIN

TO get sight of Chopin one has to look through a thick coating of Parisian varnish. Contemporaries who have written about him, George Sand, Count Wodzinski, the biographer Karasowski, Ferdinand Hiller, and even the friend and rival Liszt, have chosen to set up his image as a sort of lay figure draped in romantic sheen and glamour. With the exception of Fr. Niecks's biographical and critical volumes, Kleczynski's, Mikuli's and Lenz's short essays, the literature which deals with Chopin, as a man and as a musician, has a taint of the French *feuilleton*.* But Chopin was genuine, in spite of a certain air of effeminacy and the hectic flush on his delicate check, a true artist and a true man. Instinctively averse to anything that might savor of a *mise en scène*, a hater of all humbug, is it not a shame that his memory should have been defiled by making his music and his person the subject of high-flown verbiage? In a measure, some of his music may be taken to be autobiographical, since it exhibits, here and there, a perfervid warmth; his personal tastes were morbidly sensitive and fastidious, his appearance, especially during the three or four years before his death, was that of an exotic, his quasi-marital relations to Madame George Sand were the reverse of edifying; but for all that, and all that, need he be tricked out novelistically? It is a far cry from a poet to the puppet of a *romancier*. Let the facts of his life speak for themselves. It will be easy then to comment in some little detail upon his ways and his works.

Frederick Chopin was French on the father's side, Polish on the mother's. He was born on the 1st of March, 1809, at Zelazowa Wola, a village belonging to Countess Skarbeck, about twenty-eight English miles from Warsaw. Nicholas Chopin, the father, born 1770 at Nancy, in Lorraine, where the ex-king of Poland, Stanilas Leszczynski, held a little court, was educated there, and came to Warsaw, about 1787, as bookkeeper to a French acquaintance who had started a manufactory of snuff. This flourishing tobacco business came to grief during the political troubles which culminated in the third partition of Poland, 1795. About the beginning of this century he acted as tutor to the son of Countess Skarbeck at Zelazowa Wola, and there he met Justina Kryzanowska, a young lady of noble but poor family, whom he married in 1806, and who became the mother of four children, three daughters and one son, Frederick Chopin. On the establishment of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, 1807, efforts were made to bring about an improvement in matters of education. A Lyceum was founded at Warsaw, with Nicholas Chopin as the Professor of French. He held a similar professorship in the school of artillery and engineering (1812), in the military preparatory school (1815), and kept, besides, a private boarding school of his own.

Nicholas Chopin must have been a man of parts and character; for in those shifting times none but good and competent men could permanently

* Consult "Frederick Chopin," by Frederick Niecks, two volumes, London, 1888,—the best biography, thoroughly reliable Kleczynski, "Chopin: De l'interpretation de ses œuvres." Mikuli: Preface to the standard edition of Chopin's works, Leipzig. Lenz: "Die grossen Pianoforte Virtuosen unserer Zeit."

Liszt's "F. Chopin," an expansion of sundry articles in the *Gazette Musicale*, appeared in 1851–52 and was reprinted in 1879, a German version appeared in 1881. It is said that Madame de Wittgenstein was Liszt's collaborateur in this book on Chopin, as well as in "Des Bohemiens et de leur musique en Hongroie." Moritz Karasowski's "Friedrich Chopin," two volumes, appeared in 1877.

George Sand's "Histoire de ma vie," which affords some glimpses of Chopin, was published in *La Presse* (Paris, 1854) and subsequently in book form; the six volumes, containing her "Correspondence" (1812–1876), appeared between 1882 and 1884.

hold their own. But what of Madame Justina Chopin? did the composer derive his impressionable temperament from her? did he inherit his Slavonic melancholy, his Slavonic passion, from her? No letter of his to her has been preserved; and the only matter-of-fact witness is a Scotch lady, who met Justina Chopin in her old age, and who described her as a neat, quiet, intelligent old lady, whose activeness contrasted strongly with the languor of her son, "who had not a shadow of energy in him!"

What sort of education did Frederick Chopin receive at his father's school, and at the Warsaw Lyceum? A smattering of Latin, obligatory in the schools patronized by gentlefolk, a fair acquaintance with French (he never liked to write in French; he would traverse Paris rather than risk a little note), the rudiments of mathematics, a little geography. There is no trace of his having had any real acquaintance with Latin or Greek literature, or with Italian or German, or even with French, other than the writings of Rousseau and Voltaire, — *e. g.*, Rousseau's "La Nouvelle Heloise," the "Confessions," and Voltaire's "Dictionnaire philosophique," — which latter Madame George Sand probably put him up to.

What is meant by physical training never entered the mind of the father. Certainly such an idea would have been rejected by the son as anti-artistic, anti-spiritual. The stress in the father's teaching was laid on "*l'education dans les bons principes*," *i. e.*, a moral training, meaning little more than to preserve the manners and sentiments of an aristocracy already somewhat effete. And the curious thing is that Chopin's music so accurately reflects the sentiments of a *great* Polish aristocracy, such as may or might have been!

Frederick Chopin learnt the rudiments of music and of pianoforte playing from Adalbert Zywny, a native of Bohemia, and a good all-round musician, violinist, pianist and composer; who continued to instruct him until he was about twelve, according to what is described as the old German classical method; probably according to one of the "methods," or schoolbooks, based on C. Ph. E. Bach's "Versuch."* It would seem that the child's progress was rapid, for there is a record of his playing a concerto by Gyrowetz at a concert which took place on the 24th of February, 1818, before he had completed his ninth year. People talked of a second Mozart; and little Frederick became the pet of a host of aristocratic ladies with unpronounceable names. In 1820, Madame Catalani, the celebrated singer, heard him play, and presented him with a watch on which was engraved, "Donné par Madame Catalani à Frédéric Chopin, âgé de dix ans." He began to compose too — it is said, before he could wield a pen — mazurkas, polonaises, valses, etc. When he was about ten years old, a march of his was dedicated to the Russian Grand Duke Constantine, who ordered it to be scored for a military band and played on parade. It is doubtful whether his parents at this time contemplated his becoming a professional musician. Any way music was not permitted to interfere with school work, and he was coached for the Lyceum, which he entered in 1824. His father, like a wise man, chose to have him instructed in harmony and counterpoint. Joseph Elsner, also a good all-round musician, was engaged, and to him remains the honor of having been Chopin's only master in composition.

What, and how, Elsner taught Chopin can only be guessed at. In a letter written to Chopin in 1834 he speaks of himself as "your teacher of harmony and counterpoint, of little merit, but fortunate." Liszt writes: "Elsner taught Chopin those things that are the most difficult to learn and most rarely known: to be exacting to one's self, and to value the advantages that are obtained only by dint of patience and labor." Probably neither Zywny nor Elsner put Chopin through any severe scholastic drill; they appear to have permitted him rather to develop his singular gifts in his own way. Chopin himself was very grateful to Elsner. Allusions and messages to Elsner are frequent in his letters, and from first to last there is abundant evidence of affection and esteem between the two.

Frederick Chopin entered the fourth class at the Lyceum, and twice managed to gain a prize for something or other. There is no trace of his having taken up Greek or advanced mathematics, or that he ever exceeded the average schoolboy's modicum of Latin. His schoolfellows liked him for his lively ways and the scrapes he got into

* C. Ph. E. Bach's "Versuch ueber die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen" (Essay on the true way of playing the harpsichord). Türk's and Löhlein's "Schools" were the current popular imitations.

for lampooning the Dons. He often took part in private theatricals at his father's house, "being always ready with an improvisation when another fellow happened to forget his part." A Polish actor, who was stage manager on such occasions, gave it as his opinion that Frederick was born to be a great comedian.

In 1825 he again appeared in public, playing the first movement of a concerto by Moscheles, and improvising on a newly invented instrument, the aelopantaleon, — an attempt at combining the effects of the harmonium with those of the pianoforte. There is no direct record of the quality of his playing on this occasion, but a Warsaw correspondent of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Leipsic (this is the first professional notice of Chopin), reported that "young Chopin distinguished himself in his improvisations by the abundance of his ideas." Soon afterwards he played upon the aelomelodicon, another instrument of the harmonium kind, before the Russian Emperor Alexander I., who rewarded him with a diamond ring.

In 1825 also was published Chopin's op. 1, "Premier Rondeau," C minor. From this time onwards to 1827, when he left the Lyceum, it is clear that the study of music had got the upper hand. He seems to have tried his best to get through some school work as well: perhaps to the detriment of his health, as it has been suggested. At the final examination he just managed to pass *without* distinction.

FREDERICK CHOPIN.

Reproduction of portrait after a drawing by A. Duval.

Henceforth, with the full consent of his parents and the encouragement of Elsner, music was to be his sole aim and his profession. Taking the little Rondo in C minor as the gauge of his attainments in 1825, we must suppose that his powers developed rapidly; for in 1828 he was allowed to start on a journey to Berlin.* He must have practised assiduously, with a view to obtaining novel effects; and with the aid of the new pianoforte technique, which then dawned upon him, to have striven hard to get out of the beaten tracks in composing for the instrument. Excepting the Variations on "La ci darem," op. 2, and the

* There is no need to chronicle minor excursions, such as those to Reinerz, a little watering place in Silesia, where he stayed with his mother and sisters, and gave a charity concert; to the country residence of a member of the Skarbeck family, his father's friends; to the seat of Prince Radziwill, governor of Posen, and distinguished musical amateur. Liszt's assertion, by the way, that Prince Radziwill paid for Chopin's education, rests on mere gossip, and is entirely without foundation.

Trio, op. 8, which was then almost completed, and which he published himself, the efforts of these years are contained in the posthumous works: the Polonaises in G minor, D minor, and B flat, the Nocturne in E minor, the Rondo for two pianos, the Sonata, op. 4, etc.

In 1829, Hummel, then in the zenith of his fame, but with his powers as an executant beginning to decline, visited Warsaw. Paganini soon followed him. Unfortunately no trustworthy record remains as to the impression the performances of these masters produced upon Chopin. Chopin in those early days closely studied, imitated and emulated the concertos and certain minor pieces of Hummel; and we know that he continued to hold Hummel's work in high esteem all along, particularly for teaching purposes. Yet, admitting that Chopin in his early compositions appears as a disciple of Hummel, it is doubtful whether the example of Hummel as a player counts for much in the development of Chopin's style. Of Paganini, who so powerfully influenced Liszt, there is hardly a trace.*

About the middle of July, 1820, Chopin set out, accompanied by three friends, on a journey to Vienna. Some time previously, various manuscripts of his had been sent to Haslinger, a leading Viennese publisher. On presenting himself at Haslinger's with a letter of introduction from Elsner, he was received with profuse expressions of good-will, and told that one of his compositions would soon be in print, the Variations on Mozart's "La ci darem la mano," op. 2.

"Count Gallenberg,† who happened to come in opportunely," urged him to give a concert at the Kärntnerthor theatre, of which he was the lessee; a lucky chance, as it seemed to Chopin and actually proved to be.

He paid many visits in Vienna. And wherever he went he got the same advice: "Give a concert."

* A comparison of dates shows that Hummel, who was born 1778, and died in 1837, was Chopin's senior by thirty-one years; Chopin's date being 1809–49. Cramer, 1771–1858, was thirty-eight years older; Ries, 1784–1838, twenty-five years; Field, 1782–1837, twenty-seven years; Kalkbrenner, 1788–1849, twenty-one years; Moscheles, 1794–1870, fifteen years; Czerny, 1791–1857, eighteen years; Mendelssohn, 1809–47, was born a month before Chopin and died two years before him; Schumann (1810–56) was his junior by one year.

† The husband of the Contessa Giulia Guicciardi, to whom Beethoven's Sonata in C sharp minor, op. 27, is dedicated.

Capellmeister Würfel (one of Haslinger's people), who had known him at Warsaw, asserted that it would be "a disgrace to himself, his parents, and his teachers not to make an appearance in public," and that "no one who has composed anything new and wishes to make a noise in the world can do so unless he performs the work himself." Moreover, he was assured that the newspapers would say pleasant things. In short, Haslinger, an astute man of business, who had a vision of a monetary success with Chopin's pieces, was pulling the wires with a will! Various pianoforte makers offered their instruments. "As I claimed no honorarium" (of course, there was none to be had), "Gallenberg hastened on my appearance." On the 11th of August, 1829, when all the world was out of town, the concert took place, and Haslinger's journals pronounced it a great success.

Chopin improvised on a theme from "La Dame Blanche," and on a Polish tune, "Schmiel," which although it did not satisfy himself, pleased the audience. "The members of the orchestra cursed my badly written music" (*i. e.*, the defective band parts) "and were not at all favorably inclined towards me, until I began the improvisation; but then they joined in the applause." On the 18th of August he appeared again; producing the "Krakowiak," and repeating the Variations. There was a paying audience on this occasion; professional musicians were struck by the charm of his style; the critics appreciated him at something like his true value; everybody appeared kindly disposed towards him.

One of his peculiarities as an executant touched upon in the report of the "Theaterizeitung" was: "There were defects noticeable in the young man's playing, among which we may specially mention the non-observance of the indication by accent of the commencement of a bar," that is to say, he was remarkable for just and delicate phrasing, and did not choose to beat time with his fists! Another account emphasizes the fact that "he is a young man who goes his own way," and that "he desires to produce good music" rather than to please. "He executed the greatest difficulties with precision and accuracy, rendering all sorts of passages with the utmost neatness." The principal stricture amounted to no more than that his tone was "insufficient for a large room." He in his turn asserted that the Viennese people had a taste for

thumping, and that he would "rather be told he had played too delicately than too roughly." "It is *my* manner of playing." One likes to hear of his making friends with Count Moritz Lichnowski, Beethoven's friend, to whom the Sonatas op. 35 and 90 are dedicated; and with Schuppanzigh, Beethoven's leader of quartets. With Czerny, Chopin played duets on two pianos. "A good man, but nothing more;" on bidding farewell "Czerny was warmer than his compositions." A young and pretty lady pianist, Leopoldine Blahetka,* openly set her cap at him, offered her compositions as a souvenir, etc.

His musical education was now to receive its complement in an *éducation sentimentale*. To a Western mind the sentiments expressed in certain letters of his to the bosom friend Woyciechowski, a Polish country gentleman and quondam schoolfellow, appear over-warm and exaggerated. But we are told that sort of thing is Sarmatic, Slavonic, pertaining to the manners of the time. The advances of the Viennese young lady were met with a polite bow. "I have already found my ideal, which I worship faithfully and sincerely;" to wit, Constantia Gladkowska, a young and good-looking vocalist, pupil of the Warsaw Conservatoire. "Six months have elapsed, and I have not yet exchanged a syllable with her." "Whilst my thoughts were with her I composed the Adagio of my Concerto (the concerto in F minor) and early this morning she inspired a valse which I send along with this letter." (Op. 70, No. 3, a posthumous publication.) In other words, the ebullience of the springtime in human life had now taken hold of him; he wrote this, that, and the other beautiful piece of music, and attributed the inspiration to the lady's image, her indifference, her kindness, her coquetry. The attitude of sentimental exaggeration he chooses to adopt appears essentially musical, as Chopin conceived music.

We must suppose him, under the stimulant of his sentiments, Platonic or otherwise, to have composed piece after piece, concertos, études, polonaises, mazurkas, nocturnes, valses, even a number of songs. Before starting on his travels, he gave a farewell concert, which was so successful that he was advised to give a second, and a third.

* Her name occurs in Schumann's writings, "Music and Musicians."

Chopin left Warsaw on the 1st of November, 1830, never to return.

Rarely has a young musician begun his professional career better equipped with original compositions fit for performance in public. Besides the two Concertos, the Variations on "La ci darem," the "Krakowiak," the Fantasia on Polish airs, and the Polonaise in E flat, afterwards rewritten, and published as op. 22, all with orchestra, he was provided with a Trio for pianoforte and strings, an "Introduction and Polonaise," C major, for piano and violoncello, and a number of solo pieces, études, nocturnes, valses, polonaises, mazurkas. And rarely indeed has a musician's tour been carried out with so little substantial result. He was nine months in getting to Paris, stopping at Breslau, Dresden, Prague, Vienna, Munich, Stuttgart, making many friends, and gaining abundance of private applause; but it seems doubtful whether during all this long time he managed to secure a single five-pound note, either by the sale of manuscripts or by performances in public. The times were the reverse of favorable for musical enterprise. A general sense of insecurity, rumors of war, financial troubles, pervaded Europe.

At Vienna, Haslinger found that the sale of "good music" (Hummel and so forth) had practically ceased; "he therefore lays all MSS. (Chopin's and Elsner's included) aside, and prints only waltzes." Hummel himself was very polite, and called on Chopin with his son. "Aloys Schmitt has caught it from the critics, although he is already over forty years old, and composes eighty-year-old music!" Czerny "has again arranged an overture for eight pianos and sixteen performers, and seems to be very happy over it!" Young Döhler and young Thalberg were weighed in the balance and found wanting. "Thalberg plays well, but he is not my man." "He takes tenths as easily as I do octaves, and wears studs with diamonds. Moscheles does not at all astonish him; therefore it is no wonder that only the tuttis of my concerto find favor. For *he* also writes concertos." In July, 1831, Chopin travelled via Linz and Salzburg to Munich, where he had to wait some weeks for supplies from home. He gave a morning concert, at the latter city, playing his E minor Concerto, and the Fantasia on Polish airs. From Munich he proceeded to Stuttgart, and during his stay there learnt the news of the taking

of Warsaw by the Russians. Writing from Paris, Dec. 16, 1831, he says, "All this has caused me great pain. Who could have foreseen it?" His impassioned study in C minor (op. 10, No. 12), with its wild cry of despair, is said to have been conceived at this time.

Chopin arrived in Paris in the autumn of 1831, depressed, discouraged, and rather short of money. He was in the habit of saying that he had come to France *en route* for England and the United States; but Paris became his true home.

Apart from his genius for music, several things told in favor of his obtaining a good footing there in a comparatively short time. Some such things were his delicately refined appearance and manners, his knowledge of French (he spoke French with ease, though with a slight foreign accent), and the fact of his being a Pole. Just then, Poland's fate attracted much attention and sympathy in France. All sorts and conditions of Polish refugees arrived and were assisted by government. A Polish name, in certain circles, was as good as a letter of introduction. The Polish insurrection formed the subject of a play which night after night drew crowds, eager to see the representation of combats and dances in the national Polish costumes.

Chopin's personal appearance at this time is thus described by Prof. Niecks: "His face was clearly and finely cut, especially the nose with its wide nostrils; the forehead was high, the eyebrows delicate, the lips thin, and the lower one somewhat protruding." To this may be added "eyes of a tender brown," "beer colored," as Count Wodzinski quaintly has it, and rather dreamy; hair of a light chestnut, which he wore long; delicately formed hands; small feet; a pale complexion; and a prevailing expression of languor and melancholy which, however, was always ready to change to one of light-hearted merriment. "Chopin was at his best in the company of young people of his own nation." He brought a few letters of introduction to musicians and publishers, and set to work, with what for him was very great energy, to make acquaintances, and to pave the way for some appearance in public. Erelong he knew most musical people of note, and was on good terms with some of the leaders. Several aristocratic Polish families, who settled in Paris, welcomed him as they had done of old at Warsaw. He was asked to give lessons, etc.

There is plenty of what looks like genuine information to be had in print and from private sources as to his manner of life and work. Unfortunately, even the familiar letters of his friends and companions show the mythopœic faculty very busy indeed, so that one has to read between the lines, and carefully guard against mere gossip. It appears best to extract little touches from the master's own letters showing his relations to, and his estimate of, musicians and things musical: —

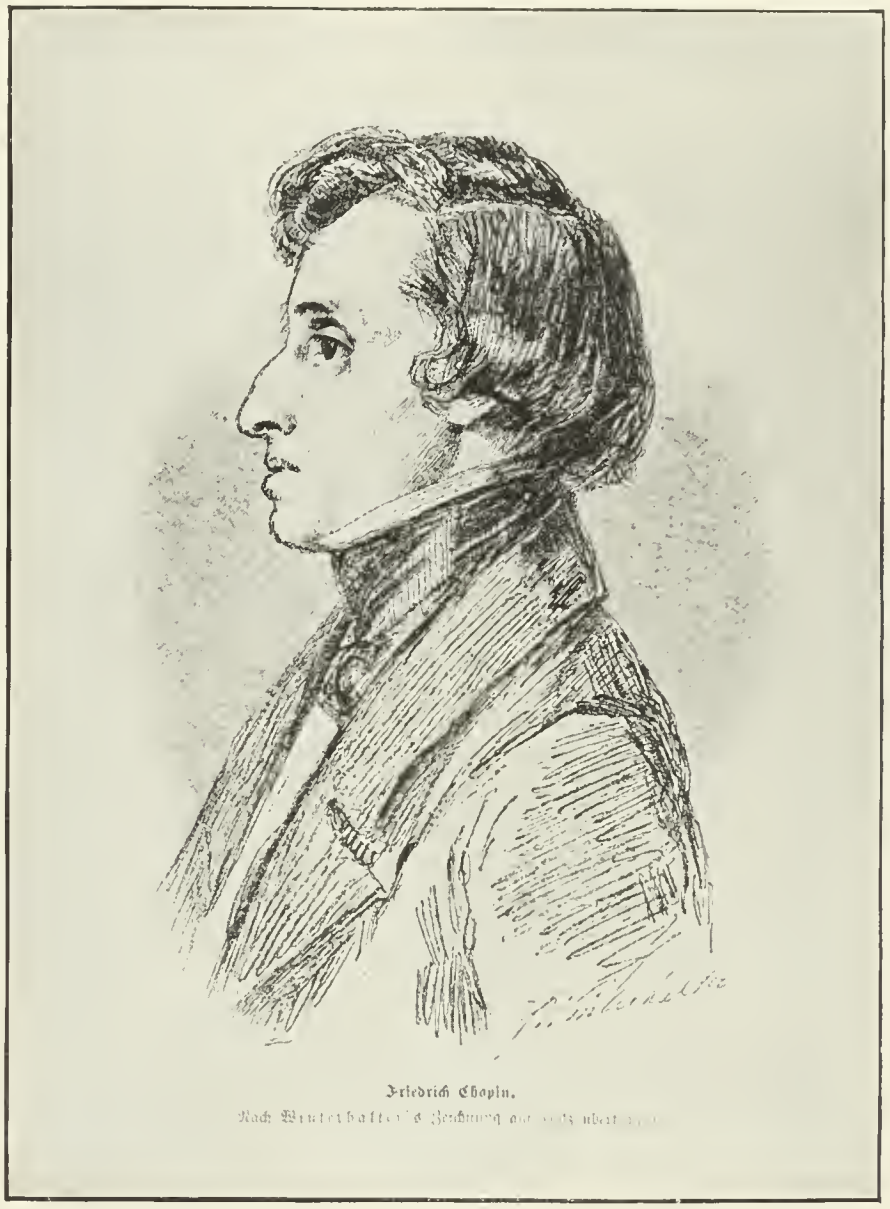
"There are more pianists in Paris than in any other town, and among them a greater percentage of impostors." "You will easily imagine how curious I was to hear Herz and Hiller; they are ciphers compared with Kalkbrenner. Honestly speaking, I play as well as Herz, but I wish I could play as well as Kalkbrenner. If Paganini is perfect, so also is he, but in another way. His repose, his touch, the ease of his playing, I cannot describe to you; one recognizes the master in every detail." Kalkbrenner offered to take Chopin as a pupil, — a preposterous offer it appears to us now, — and Chopin actually attended some of Kalkbrenner's classes! Whether he did this partly with a view to attain status in Paris is an open question. "Kalkbrenner remarked that I had the style of Cramer, but the touch of Field. It amused me that Kalkbrenner when he played to me made a mistake, and did not know how to go on; but it was wonderful to see how he found his way back again." "I told him I knew very well what I lack; *but I will not imitate him.*" "He has convinced me that I play well only when I am in the right mood for it, but less well when this is not the case. This cannot be said of him, whose playing is always the same." "Perhaps I cannot create a new school, however much I may wish to do so, because I do not really know the old one; but I certainly *do* know that my tone-poems have some individuality in them, and that I always strive to advance."

How odd all this sounds nowadays! It is, however, quite conceivable that Chopin, at that time, had not a complete command of technique, *i. e.*, the manipulative process by means of which an artistic result is produced with something like certainty, no matter whether the player be found in the mood for playing or not, which makes the performances of men of inferior talent such as Kalkbrenner, Moscheles, or Thalberg so much more

sure of success when they *recite* in public. Besides, it is admitted that Chopin did not particularly excel in the rendering of music other than his own. Whilst still attending Kalkbrenner's classes, Chopin wrote to Elsner in a bolder strain: "So much is clear to me, I shall never become a Kalkbrenner; he will not be able to alter my perhaps daring, but noble resolve, *to create a new era in art.* If I now continue my studies, I do so only in order to stand, at some future time, on my own feet." Elsner wanted him to attempt an opera, and it would seem that he actually once had a libretto in hand, but, in the end, he confined himself to recording some of his dreams at the pianoforte, wisely, as we all now think. The reverse side of the Kalkbrenner medal is amusing: Kalkbrenner had, as Marmontel records, "certain etroitesses de caractere," which "narrownesses" brought the evil tongue of his younger contemporaries down upon him. Heine called him a "mummy," and described him as being "dead long ago and having recently married!" "He looks like a bonbon that has been in the mud." When Chopin published his Concerto in E minor, he dedicated it to Kalkbrenner.

Other of Chopin's friends and acquaintances were Cherubini, Bellini, Baillot the violinist, Brod the oboe player, Franchomme the violoncellist (his friend for life), Hiller, Osborne, Pixis, Berlioz, Meyerbeer, Liszt, Delacroix.

After sundry delays and difficulties, Chopin's first concert came off on the 26th of February, 1832. The receipts failed to cover the expenses. The audience consisted chiefly of Poles, who, like most of the French people present, had free tickets. But it was a capital advertisement, many musical celebrities attended, and Chopin's performances astonished the experts. After this, says Hiller, "nothing more was heard about the lack of technique; and Mendelssohn applauded triumphantly." (Mendelssohn deemed Chopin worth twenty Kalkbrenners.) On May 20, 1832, Chopin played again in public at a concert given by the Prince de la Moskowa for the benefit of the poor.



FREDERICK CHOPIN.

Reproduction of a portrait after a sketch by Winterhalter.

There is no better evidence of his professional success than the following lines from a letter of his, written towards the end of January, 1833: "Pupils of the Conservatoire, nay, even private pupils of Moscheles, Herz, Kalkbrenner, choose to take lessons of me, and profess to regard me as the equal of Field." After some modest excuses for such apparent boasting, he continues: "To-day I have five lessons to give; you will think I must be amassing a fortune, but the inevitable cabriolet and the white gloves almost consume the earnings, and without these things people would deny my *bon ton*." With the latter remark he touches upon the dark side of his apparently brilliant life in Paris. All along circumstances compelled him to live after the fashion of people with ten times his means. This was a source of trouble and downright embarrassment to him later on, when his health

began to fail. In the winter of 1832–3 he took part, together with Hiller and Liszt, in a performance of Bach's Concerto for three harpsichords (of course they played upon grand pianofortes), and was again associated with Liszt, in a duet which they played during the intervals of a dramatic performance for the benefit of Miss Smithson, the Irish actress, and now bankrupt manageress, who afterwards became the wife of Berlioz.

John Field came to Paris after a long residence in Russia during the winter of 1832–3. He was then about fifty years of age, and past his prime both as a man and as musician. "Un talent de chambre de malade," was his description of Chopin, dictated probably by a comparison of Chopin's nocturnes with his own. What Chopin said or thought of Field as a player is not on record; that he acknowledged many an obligation to him as a composer is, however, certain. Field's *cantilena*, in the nocturnes, foreshadows Chopin's; so does his use of the pedals and the peculiar form of his accompaniments based on the effect of the pedals. But, after all, Field's *cantilena*, like Chopin's, rests on that of the Italian opera, and the most characteristic pedal effects derive from Beethoven.

About the same time Berlioz returned from Italy, and Chopin, through the mediation of Liszt, had frequent opportunities of meeting him. There cannot have been much sympathy between the two men at the outset; and as far as Chopin is concerned, it grew less in course of time. Chopin had a very exclusive taste with regard to the adjustment of artistic means to artistic ends, and a refined, emotional standard of his own. Some of the eccentricities and excesses in which Berlioz and Liszt were prone to indulge appeared to him ridiculous. Franchomme asserts that as early as 1833 (probably later), Chopin said that he had expected better things from Berlioz, and declared that Berlioz's music was such as to justify any man who chose to break with him. A singularly violent and exceptional expression of sentiment on the part of Chopin, if it is true as reported. "Il se mourait toute sa vie!" was Berlioz's sneer at Chopin (1852).

From 1833, when he published the three Nocturnes, op. 9, to 1847, when his last work, the Sonata for pianoforte and violoncello, op. 65, left the press, each year's catalogue of musical novelties contained some items signed Frédéric Chopin.

Publishers paid fair, sometimes rather high, prices, the musical press uttered its oracles in an appreciative, or depreciative, or abusive tone; professional pianists and the most advanced amateurs bought copies in a sufficient number to keep the ball rolling, etc. Schumann already in 1831 greeted the Variations, op. 2, with a shout, "Hats off, gentlemen! a genius!" and the musical world soon took up the cry. Before 1840 it was clear to those who had eyes to see and ears to hear that a great European reputation was being formed.

The winter of 1834–5 saw the last of Chopin as a professed virtuoso. He played in public subsequently, but on rare occasions, six or eight in all. The three quasi-private concerts he gave in 1841, 1842, and 1848 were distinctly *composer's* concerts, *i. e.*, the thing played was the point, rather than the manner of playing, however exquisite. The record of 1834–35 is as follows: On Dec. 7, 1834, he played an *Andante;* * at the third and last of Berlioz's concerts given at the Conservatoire, when the programme included Berlioz's overtures "Les Franc-Juges," "Roi Lear," and the Symphony, "Harold en Italie."

Again, on Christmas Day, 1834, he played, together with Liszt, Moscheles's "Grande Duo a quatre mains," op. 47, which was executed, as the *Gazette Musicale* reports, with a rare perfection of talent by the two greatest pianoforte virtuosos of our time. They also played a duo for two pianos on a theme of Mendelssohn's, written by Liszt, the manuscript of which has disappeared.

April 5, 1835, seems to be the true date of an unfortunate evening concert at which Chopin's playing of his Concerto in E minor met with so lukewarm a reception that he came to regard an appearance before a miscellaneous concourse of people as a kind of martyrdom. "The plaudits of his friends and a few connoisseurs alone disturbed the cold and somewhat bewildered attitude of the majority of the audience."† He appeared once more, and for the last time in public, at Habeneck's benefit, — the only one of the great and justly celebrated concerts of the *Societe des Concerts du Conservatoire* he ever took part in. Here, before

* Probably the *Andante spianato* which stands as the Introduction to the Polonaise in E flat, op. 22.

† Liszt used to relate that Chopin had already been sadly discouraged by the cold reception he met with at Berlioz's concert, some months ere this.

an audience accustomed to good music, he was more at ease, and had no reason to be dissatisfied with the welcome accorded to the "Polonaise avec introduction," *i. e.*, the Polonaise in E flat, op. 22, and to his playing.

In the summer of 1835, Chopin met his parents at Carlsbad. From that place he went to Dresden, and to Leipsic, where he was received by Mendelssohn, and introduced to his ardent admirer, and champion in the German musical press, Schumann. Clara Schumann, then Fräulein Wieck, played her future husband's Sonata in F sharp minor, op. 11, still in manuscript, to Chopin; and the latter in return "sang" (so the effect of his touch was described) a nocturne (E flat, op. 9). Here is Mendelssohn's deliberate opinion of Chopin (letter to his family, Oct. 6, 1835): "Chopin intended to stay only one day, so we spent it together, and had a great deal of music. . . . There is something thoroughly original and at the same time so very masterly in his playing, that he may be called a really perfect virtuoso; and as every kind of perfection is welcome and gratifying to me, that day was a pleasant one. . . . I was glad to be once more with a thorough musician, not with those half-virtuosos and half-classics, who would gladly combine in music *les honneurs de la vertu et les plaisirs du vice*, but with *one who has his perfect 'genre,' and well-defined direction.* To whatever extent it may differ from my own direction, I can get on with it well enough; but not so with those half-men." (He means Kalkbrenner, Herz, Thalberg, Döhler, etc.)

"On Sunday evening, Chopin made me play my oratorio to him ('St. Paul'), while certain Leipzigers crept into the room to stare at him. Between the first and second parts he dashed off some of his new Etudes and a new concerto movement, greatly to the astonishment of the said Leipzigers, and I afterwards resumed my 'Paulus'; it was just as if a Cherokee and a Kaffir had met and conversed."

Mendelssohn here and elsewhere lays the stress on Chopin's playing; as to the value of his compositions, Mendelssohn's *dictum* is vague, to say the least of it: "Sometimes one really does not know whether Chopin's music is right or wrong." The Preludes, op. 29, are probably the last of Chopin's publications which became known to Mendelssohn.

Schumann's reports of Chopin's playing and composing are rapid sketches, full of little characteristic traits, for the most part mere records of the moment, but all show a pleasant feeling of comradeship and genuine sympathy: —

"A never to be forgotten picture to see him sitting at the piano like a dreaming seer"; "he had the habit of passing, at the end of each piece, the finger quickly over the whizzing key-board, as if to get rid of his dream by force"; "imagine an æolian harp that has all the scales, and that these are jumbled together by the hand of an artist into all sorts of fantastic arabesques, but in such a manner that a deep fundamental tone and a softly singing upper part are always audible, and you have an idea of his playing." "He is the boldest, the proudest poet of our day."

Another and similar journey, to Marienbad, Dresden, Leipsic, was made in the following summer, the principal object of both tours being, it would seem, an affair of matrimony. Briefly stated, the facts are as follows: Three sons of Count Wodzinski had been educated at the school of Chopin's father. As a boy, Chopin had repeatedly stayed with their parents in the country, and made the acquaintance of their little sister, Maria. The family left Poland after the Russian occupation, and settled temporarily at Geneva. Chopin now and then wrote to them. He visited them at Dresden in 1835, when they were on the way back to Poland; and joined them again at Marienbad in 1836, where he proposed to Mdlle. Maria, still in her teens. He was rejected, on the ground, if we may accept the lady's statement, that "she could not run counter to her parents' wishes," etc. Not long afterwards she was married to a son of Chopin's godfather, Count Frederick Skarbeck. The little love story has been variously related, and turned into something like a novel. The present writer's impression is that the relatives on both sides (probably the younger people more than the elders) were at first desirous of a match; that the young lady was courted *comme il faut;* and that, eventually, a better *partie* was found for her. Among Chopin's posthumous works there is a plaintive little "Tempo di valse" in F minor (op. 69, No. 1) dated "Dresden, September, 1835, pour Mdlle. Marie," the autograph of which she treasured as *L'Adieu*.

Between July 11 and 22, 1837, Chopin, accompanied by Camille Pleyel and a Polish friend, paid a flying visit to London, to consult a doctor, and to

establish business connections which resulted in the successive publication of his works by the firm of Wessel & Co.

He played at Mr. James Broadwood's private residence in Bryanston Square; but, according to Moscheles's Diary, "visited nobody, and did not wish to be visited, as every conversation aggravates his chest complaint." Allusions to his frail health now become more and more frequent, whenever his name occurs in contemporary private records. There can be no doubt that the outward signs of phthisis, probably inherited from his father, now began to show themselves in an unmistakable manner.

It is hardly possible to-day to write a few just lines on Chopin's friendship with George Sand, Madame Dudevant. The witnesses, nine out of ten, are suspect. One cannot move a step without treading on dangerous ground. The old mythopœic faculty appears, again, to have been particularly busy, and even to have joined hands with a more recent gift of barefaced lying! It is hard to discern who is who, and what is what. Early in 1837, Liszt introduced Monsieur Frédéric to Madame George, or, with a slight and perhaps correct change in the appellations, Monsieur George to Mademoiselle Frédéric. Monsieur, or Madame, the senior by about five years, the mother of two children, and separated from her husband, was known for her literary gifts and the wild Bohemian life she had been leading. A pleasant acquaintance gradually developed into something like a civil marriage. It ended, after about nine years, in a complete rupture, which saddened the close of Chopin's life. The first hint at the intimacy is contained in the postscript to a letter written by Chopin in 1837, "I may perhaps go for a few days to George Sand's." He did in fact go to Nohant, Madame Sand's country house, near La Châtre, in Berry, in the summer of that year, and again in the summer of 1838. It was decided that they should spend the winter of 1838 in the south. One of the Balearic Islands, Majorca, was fixed upon. Madame Sand would economize, and write a book about the little-known island. Chopin would recover his health, and be happy in her company.

The little family party, Madame Sand, her son Maurice, her daughter Solange, a maid-servant, and Chopin, met at Perpignan, in the beginning of November, 1838, and proceeded by Port-Vendres and Barcelona to Palma. They returned to France by Barcelona and Marseilles early in March, 1839.

A few extracts from letters will show the shifting aspect of things outward and inward. Here is Chopin, basking in the sun (letter to Fontana, Palma, Majorca, Nov. 15): "I am at Palma, among palms, cedars, cactuses, aloes, and olive, orange, lemon, fig, and pomegranate trees, etc., which the Jardin des Plantes possesses only, thanks to its stoves. The sky is like a turquoise, the sea like lapis lazuli, the mountains like emeralds. The air? The air is just as it is in heaven."* "I shall probably take up my quarters in a delightful monastery in one of the most beautiful sites in all the world: sea, mountains, palm-trees, cemetery, church of the Knights of the Cross, ruins of mosques, thousand-year-old olive-trees! . . . Ah, my dear friend, I am now enjoying life a little more; I am near what is most beautiful! I am a better man."

The temperature was still sixty-four degrees Fahrenheit. They inhabited the villa Son-Vent (Sound of the Wind) "furnished; with a garden, and a magnificent view," for fifty francs *per month*. But the wet season set in suddenly, and the temperature fell to thirty-four Fahrenheit! The villa Son-Vent was more than draughty! "The walls were so thin" (Madame Sand writes) "that the lime with which the best room was plastered swelled like a sponge. . . . The house, without a chimney, was like a mantle of ice on our shoulders. . . . We could not accustom ourselves to the stifling odor of the braziers (charcoal fires in portable iron grates), and our invalid began to ail and cough. . . . We became an object of dread and horror to the population. We were accused and convicted of pulmonary phthisis, which is equivalent to the plague, in the prejudices regarding contagion entertained by Spanish physicians." "Gomez, the landlord, declared, in the Spanish style, that we *held* a person who *held* a disease, . . . and requested us to leave forthwith." He made them pay for the lime-washing of the entire house, which he *held* to have been infected by Chopin.

They resolved to take refuge in the monastery,

*See George Sand's "Un Hiver à Majorque," and the account of the sojourn at Palma in "Histoire de ma Vie." *Couleur de rose* both, but acceptable reading withal.


F. CHOPIN.
Nach dem Medaillon von Dorg.
Lith. v. F. Schauer in Berlin.

as no suitable lodgings could be got for love or money. Madame Sand to Madame Marliani: "*Mon Dieu*, how hard, difficult and miserable the physical life is here! It is beyond what one can imagine." "The good Chopin misses his piano very much. It has left Marseilles, we shall perhaps have it in a fortnight." "By a stroke of good fortune I have found for sale a clean suite of furniture, charming, for this country, but which a French peasant would not have. I had unheard-of trouble to procure a stove, wood, linen, and who knows what else. To-morrow we depart for the Carthusian monastery of Valdemosa, the most poetical residence on earth," etc.; the letter ends with a blunt statement: "in short, our expedition is, in many respects, a frightful *fiasco*."

Jan. 15, 1839, to Madame Marliani: "There are rains here of which one has elsewhere no idea; it is a frightful deluge. 'Le petit Chopin' is very depressed, and always coughs very much. His piano has at last arrived at Palma; but it is in the clutches of the custom-house officers, who demand from five to six hundred francs duty, and show themselves intractable." In February it was at last released on a payment of three hundred francs. Chopin finished, and sent to Paris the Préludes; and promised a Ballade, op. 38, in F, a Polonaise, op. 40, No. 2, in C minor, and a Scherzo, op. 39, in C sharp minor.

Madame Sand went to work, with the energy of despair, to make things endurable for Chopin; if her own account can be taken to represent the reality, her conduct under the most trying circumstances speaks greatly in favor of her kindness of heart and matronly instincts. Everything, it seems, devolved upon her. She acted as physician, nurse, schoolmistress, housekeeper, cook, factotum; worked as such all day, and wrote till midnight; her chief difficulties consisted in vain attempts to keep the rooms warm, or rather to keep the stove from smoking, and to contrive something which Chopin could eat. He grew more languid and listless, day by day; his cough and his mental disquiet increased. "He took an intense dislike to Majorca"; "the *pauvre grand artiste* was a detestable patient," etc. He began to spit blood, and was in a very bad way indeed.

He insisted upon a speedy return to France; on their return, early in March, he was carefully nursed at Marseilles till May; and after a little excursion to Genoa, the summer was spent at Nohant.

Chopin had got into debt. Naturally, he was anxious to make the most of his manuscripts; and money transactions with publishers form the staple of his letters at this period.

Reference has already been made to the shady side of the life in Paris. Chopin had to live on what he could get from publishers and pupils. It is true, publishers were always ready to pay a good price for his manuscripts, and his terms for lessons were high, twenty or even twenty-five francs per lesson of about three quarters of an hour. But he did not compose for the market, and paying pupils in sufficient number were forthcoming only during the season, that is to say, from about the middle of October to the end of June. His health did not permit him to exceed an average of five or six lessons per day. His tastes inclined towards elegance and a certain amount of luxury, his lodgings were expensive, he had to keep a man-servant; moreover, he was rarely without some parasite, some needy compatriot, who adored him, wrote his business letters, ran his errands, and shared his purse. Several attempts at saving something for a rainy day proved futile; and when illness set in during the troubled times previous to the revolution of 1848, the master was indeed in sad plight. The numerous publications in 1840 and 1841 extend from op. 35 to 50, and include some of his finest works.

During the greater part of seven years after the return from Majorca, 1840–47, we must suppose Chopin fairly content and happy, in the retired but busy life he led as a member of Madame Sand's family. They resided, first at No. 16 Rue Pigalle, then in the quiet and aristocratic-looking Cité (court or square) d'Orleans when they were in Paris, and generally spent the summer holidays at Nohant. Chopin played a good deal in private; appeared at St. Cloud before the Royal family, together with Moscheles, in the winter of 1839; gave a little concert of his own on the 26th April, 1841, at Pleyel's rooms; and another on the 21st February, 1842. Barring these concerts, and the meeting with Moscheles, of which some little account ought, but for want of space cannot be given, there is nothing that demands special record before 1847, when Chopin returned to bachelor's quarters.

"Semi-public benefit concerts" is perhaps the best description of the two occasions when Chopin did himself justice before a select audi-

ence. The arrangements on both occasions were perfect from his particular point of view,—no business muddles, slight expenses, no preliminary puffing in the press, tickets taken up eagerly in private, a gathering of intelligent and refined people, mostly friends and pupils; a rare success, both artistically and pecuniarily. Hardly anything that is tangible can be got from the printed reports concerning these performances; not even from Liszt's rather high-flown account.

Moscheles, like Mendelssohn, seems now and then to have found it difficult to make up his mind whether Chopin's music was "right or wrong." Being neither a hostile nor a particularly sympathetic witness, his testimony may fairly be taken to represent the average opinion of contemporary craftsmen.* It is curious to contrast his hesitation and reserve with the warm impulse of Schumann.

The incidents which led to the cessation of Chopin's friendship with Madame Sand need not be discussed here. Let it suffice to say that she published "Lucrezia Floriani," a novel in which Chopin figures as Prince Karol, in 1847.

In October of this year the Sonata, op. 65, in G minor, for piano and violoncello, his last publication, left the press.

The approach of the revolution was already being felt, when he gave his last concert in Paris, on Feb. 16, 1848. He took part in a Trio by Mozart, together with Alard and Franchomme, and in the Scherzo, Adagio, and Finale of his Sonata with violoncello; and played, besides, a number of solo pieces, amongst which the Berceuse, the Valse in D flat, op. 64, and the Barcarolle are specially mentioned. Sir Charles Hallé, who was present, relates that Chopin, to husband the little power remaining to him, played the *forte* version of the subject towards the end of the Barcarolle *pianissimo*, and with all manner of refinements. Such substitution of delicate gradations for effects of powerful sonority seems to have been a habit he gradually acquired as debility gained upon him.

The disturbances in Paris brought about the usual exodus of artists. Chopin repaired to London, where he arrived on the 21st of April (1848). "M. Chopin's visit is an event for which we most heartily thank the French Republic," writes the critic of the Athenæum, H. F. Chorley. "He was but the ghost of his former self," Chorley told the present writer in 1863; "they had to carry him upstairs at Broadwood's and elsewhere." He played at Lady Blessington's at Gore House, Kensington; also at Stafford House, the Duchess of Sutherland's. Erard sent him a piano, so did Broadwood, so did Pleyel, "which makes three," he wrote from 48 Dover Street, Piccadilly; "but I do not find time to play them." He gave two morning concerts, one at Mrs. Sartoris's (Adelaide Kemble); the other at Lady Falmouth's. He also appeared at Manchester, Aug. 28, 1848, "sixty guineas in prospect." "His playing was too delicate to create enthusiasm, and I felt truly sorry for him," reports Mr. Oshorne. Another sum of sixty pounds is said to have been harvested at Glasgow. On the 4th of October there was an evening concert at Edinburgh, followed by visits to Scotch friends, Miss J. W. Sterling (to whom he had dedicated the Nocturne op. 55), and her many relatives.

Chopin to Grzymala, letter dated "Keir, Perthshire, Sunday," Oct. 1, 1848 (Stirling Castle in view before him): "No post, no railway, also no carriage (not even for taking the air), no boat, not a dog to be seen—all desolate, desolate!" He was desperate. "Things are getting worse with me every day. I feel weaker; I cannot compose, not for want of inclination, but for physical reasons." He was nearing the end. Both in England and in Scotland, the most diverse people had been treating him with considerate kindness; everywhere, persons of the most heterogeneous sort had shown some dim conception as to *whom* they were dealing with; but to him, in his agony, it was all desolate, desolate! He returned to Paris, and breathed his last between three and four in the morning of Oct. 17, 1849.

After a rather pretentious funeral service at the Madeleine, when Mozart's Requiem was sung, the body was buried at Père-Lachaise, near the graves of Cherubini and Bellini, "tout Paris" being present. *Il y avait foule. Un tas de grédins et de farceurs sont venus la pour se faire de la réclame, comme d'habitude . . . ça fera de la copie, etc.* An ill-designed and badly executed monument, showing a false date of birth, was gotten up by subscription.

Chopin has been called exclusive, difficult to get at, and the like. Let it be granted that he appeared so, yet why should he be blamed for stav-

* See Moscheles's Diary.

ing off obtrusive strangers with distant politeness? How else can an artist in a quasi-public position defend himself against importunity? It would indeed be far from the mark to fancy Chopin "cold." His emotional nature was volcanic. But music absorbed his energy. From first to last he set the best of himself to music. Is it fair, or even decorous, to demand anything else?

The range of his reading was narrow, hence the few books that pleased him can well serve to illustrate his mental ways. Rousseau's "Nouvelle Héloise" was his song of songs; next to that he delighted in "Consuélo" and other of George Sand's novels; and it may be surmised that he would have read these latter with avidity, even if the authoress had not been his friend. Stephen Heller told the writer that Chopin read and liked a French translation of Ossian. Possibly he did really admire the musical suggestiveness of Macpherson's spurious stuff. He read little poetry, however. Too much of a foreigner to have an ear for the harmonies of French verse, with little Latin and a minimum of Italian, Polish verse was all he had to fall back upon; for one can hardly fancy Chopin reading German verse, though he understood the language. He was lavish in his praise of Mickiewicz, some of whose poems are supposed to have suggested the Ballades.* In spite of his connection with George Sand and her friends, he did not consciously take part in the romantic movement in France, yet he, rather than Berlioz, is in very truth the musical poet of French romanticism.

When teaching, Chopin took great pains with his pupils' touch. Scales had to be played *legato* and with full tone, very slowly at first, and gradually advancing to a quicker pace. The passing of the thumb was facilitated by a slight turning of the wrist. The scales with many black keys (B, F sharp, D flat) were taken first; C major, last of all. In about the same order he gave Clementi's "Préludes et Exercises," beginning with the "exercise" in A flat in the second book. After these he recommended a selection from Cramer's Etudes, Clementi's "Gradus," Moscheles's studies, sundry suites and preludes and fugues of Bach's, and finally some of his own Etudes. A few of Field's and his own nocturnes were also used as studies for the production of a rich singing tone. "Everything, he said, is to be read *cantabile*, even the rapid passages; everything must be made to sing, the bass, the inner parts, etc." Double notes and chords are to be struck together, no *arpeggio* is permitted, unless indicated by the composer. Shakes, which he generally began in the old traditional way, with the auxiliary note, had to be played with perfect regularity — he did not care so much for rapidity — all little ornamental notes with delicate grace, and usually a little precipitated towards the next main note. Whatever Chopin expected his pupil to do, he was always ready to do himself. To favorite pupils he played a great deal, — Bach's fugues and his own works, by preference.

In the notation of fingering, especially of that peculiar to himself, Chopin was not sparing.* In this respect pianoforte playing owes him great innovations, which, on account of their expediency, were soon adopted, notwithstanding the horror with which authorities like Kalkbrenner and Moscheles at first regarded them. Thus, for instance, Chopin, without hesitation, would pass the thumb under the little finger or *vice versa*, both with a distinct bend of the wrist. With one and the same finger he often took two adjoining keys, and this not only when gliding down from a black to the next white key. The passing of the longer fingers over the shorter without the aid of the thumb (see Etude No. 2, op. 10) he made use of very frequently, and not only in passages where the thumb happens to be stationary. The fingering of chromatic thirds based on such practice (he has marked it in Etude No. 5, op. 25) affords the possibility of perfect *legato* with a quiet hand.

Madame Dubois states that Chopin made her begin with the second book of Clementi's "Préludes et Exercises," and that she also studied under him the same composer's "Gradus" and Bach's forty-eight preludes and fugues, a large number of which latter he used to play from memory. Of his high opinion of the teaching value of Bach's pieces we may form an idea from what he said at her last lesson: "Practise them constantly, this will be your best means to get on." The pieces she studied under him included the following: Hummel, Rondo brillant sur un theme russe (op. 98), La Bella capricciosa, Sonata in F sharp minor

* The German translation of the Polish poet's works affords no clew.

* See Mikuli's edition, the fingering there given being in the main taken from Chopin's pencil marks on copies belonging to his pupils.

CHOPIN'S TOMB IN PÈRE LACHAISE, PARIS.

From a photograph made specially for this work.

(op. 81), the Concertos in A minor and B minor, and the Septet; Field, Concertos in A flat and E flat, and several nocturnes; Beethoven, three Concertos in C minor, G, and E flat, and several Sonatas (the "Moonlight," op. 27, No. 2; the one with the Funeral March, op. 26; and the Appassionata, op. 57); Weber, the Sonatas in C and A flat (Chopin, says Lenz, made his pupils play these two works with extreme care); Schubert, the "Ländler," all the waltzes, some of the duets, the marches, polonaises, and the "Divertissement à la hongroise"; Mendelssohn, only the G minor Concerto and some of the songs without words; Liszt, "La Tarantelle de Rossini," and the Septet from "Lucia," "mais ce genre de musique ne lui allait pas." (Nothing of Schumann's is mentioned here, and very little elsewhere.)

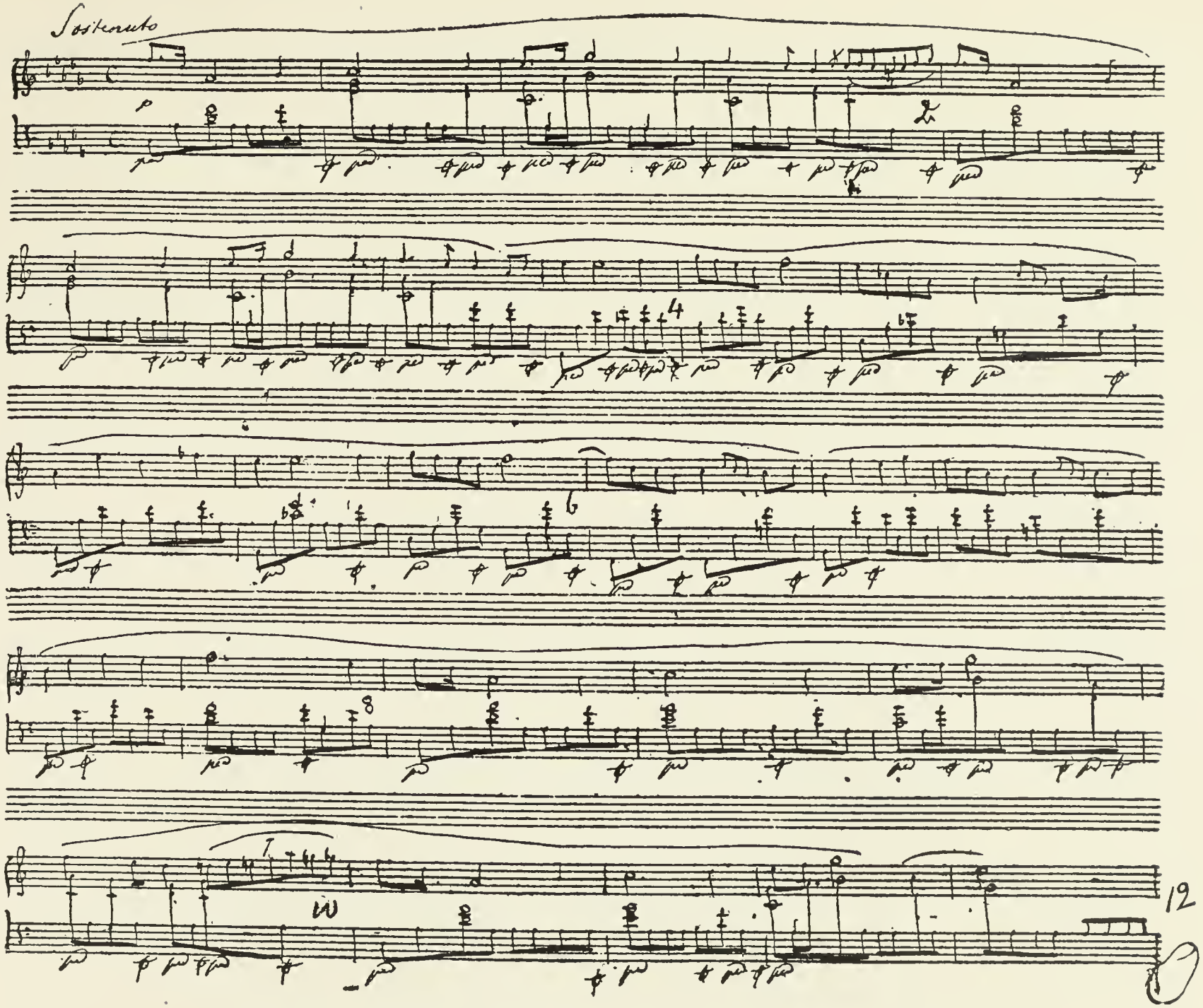
As regards correct time, Chopin was scrupulously particular. It will surprise many to hear that he always kept a metronome on his teaching piano. His *tempo rubato* was *not* an eccentric swaying to and fro in point of speed. "The singing hand, he taught, may deviate; the accompanying must keep time!" "Fancy a tree with its branches swayed by the wind, the stem is the steady time, the moving leaves are the melodic inflections." It follows that certain "readings" of Chopin, which form the stock in trade of many an accredited virtuoso, are mere caricatures.

He disliked exaggerated accentuation. "It produces an effect of didactic pedantry." "You must *sing* if you wish to play, hear good singers, and learn to sing yourself." Every promising pupil was sent to his friend, Henri Reber, for harmony and counterpoint: "you ought to know what you are about, from a grammarian's point of view." Pupils were also advised to practise *ensemble* playing; duos, trios, quartets, if first-class partners could be had, otherwise pianoforte duets. He liked to have a second pianoforte at hand to accompany the pupil, and to show by example what he wanted.

To a student the perfect finish of Chopin's pieces affords ample evidence of the care and labor he has expended upon them. A comparison of the posthumous pieces with those he published himself shows that he must have rejected copy enough to fill scores of pages. As he preferred forms in which some sort of rhythmic or melodic type is prescribed at the outset, he virtually set himself the task of saying the same sort of thing over and over again. Yet he seems inexhaustible; each Prelude, Etude, Impromptu, Scherzo, Nocturne, Ballade, Polonaise and Mazurka presents an aspect of the subject not pointed out before, each has a birthright of its own. Chopin appears as one of the rarest inventors, not only as regards the technicalities of pianoforte playing, but as regards composition. That is to say, besides being a great master of his instrument, he is a great singer, in that high sense in which Keats and Coleridge and Tennyson are singers. He has told us of new things well worth hearing, and has found new ways of saying such things. He is a master of style, a master of puissant and refined rhythm and harmony, a fascinating melodist. The emotional materials he embodies are not of the highest. His bias is romantic and sentimental. In his earliest productions, his matter, and also his way of putting things, are frequently weak; in his latest, now and then turgid. He was particularly careful to avoid melodic rhythmic or harmonic commonplaces; a vulgar melody or a halting rhythm was revolting to him; and as for refined harmony, he strove so hard to attain it that in a few of his last pieces he may be said to have overshot the mark, and to have subtilized his progressions into obtuseness.

His pupils and other witnesses agree in using the same words and phrases to convey a notion of the effect of his pieces and his mode of playing them: "veiled, graduated, accentuated, evanescent," "the harmonic notes vaguely blending, yet the transitions from chord to chord and phrase to phrase clearly indicated," "ever changing and undulating rhythms," "indescribable effects of *chiaroscuro*" (*i. e.*, effects of sustained tone produced with the aid of the pedals).

One damaging remark can be applied without injustice to everything he wrote with orchestral accompaniments: the result is more satisfactory if the accompaniments are played upon a second piano! Chopin was not at home in the orchestra; his scoring is singularly inept; he does not know enough about orchestral instruments, alone or in



Fac-simile of musical manuscript written by Chopin. Prelude in D flat, op. 28, No. 15.

combination, to employ them with proper effect. His *tuttis* lack sonority, and when the pianoforte enters, the would-be accompaniment fails to blend with the solo instrument.

In his two Concertos he intends the orchestra to play the roll it plays in the concertos of Hummel and Moscheles; but with the latter masters, whatever is expected of the orchestra, be it ever so little, actually comes to pass, whereas with Chopin the case is often reversed. One or two fine effects, however, ought not to be overlooked, — the lovely alternation of strings, *pianissimo* and *unisono*, with soft chords of wood-winds, in the beginning of the Larghetto in the F minor Concerto, and the long *tremolo* of strings, interspersed with solemn *pizzicati* of the double-basses, which supports the *recitativo* of the pianoforte in the same movement. Here the composer's imagination was at work. Notwithstanding the drawback of weak scoring, Chopin's concertos rank with those of Hummel in A minor and B minor, and Moscheles in G minor, which works, as far as Hummel is concerned, they closely resemble in design, rival in the novel and telling treatment of the solo instrument, and surpass in warmth and beauty. The Fantasia on Polish airs, op. 13, and the Variations on "La ci darem," op. 2, fascinating from a virtuoso's point of view, and very clever as compositions, yet appear hardly worth offering to the public nowadays. The "Krakowiak," op. 14, a bright and effective piece, akin to the rondos in the concertos, deserves, however, to be heard again. The orchestra here has little to do; and it is at least not a source of annoyance. With regard to the Polonaise in E flat, op. 22, it will be best to do as Chopin himself did, that is, to drop the orchestra altogether. He was wont to play the introductory *Andante spianato* in G as a solo, and he permitted his pupils to do the same with the Polonaise. If the Concertos are to be played on two pianos, — certainly the most effective way, — Mikuli's arrangement of the orchestra parts for a second piano will be found serviceable, it is simple, and adheres faithfully to the composer's text. The Trio in G minor, for piano, violin and violoncello, op. 8, is an immature work. The Sonata in G minor, for piano and violoncello, op. 65, betrays loss of power, despite of the pains he has taken with it.

The solo sonatas may fitly be mentioned here. Two only count: op. 35, in B flat minor, and op. 58, in B minor; the third, op. 4, in C minor, being immature.

Op. 35, the Sonata with the Funeral March, is an original and a great work, — Chopin's own, from the first note to the last. There is no hint as to the composer's meaning in the title of any of the movements. All we know is that the highly emotional music was called forth by the fierce struggle for independence in Poland, and that the spiritual connection of one movement with another is to be sought in this direction. The Sonata might have been headed *Poland*. The first movement conveys a sense of strife — of a resolve to conquer or die. It is a true sonata movement, having the usual two contrasting subjects, an admirable working-out section, and the proper recapitulation. Then follows a Scherzo having something of the same fierce impulse, with a *piu lento* exquisitely tender. Then the *marcia funebre*, with the divine *cantilena* we all know by heart. Finally there is a wail of unutterable desolation, as of the night-wind's cry, as it rushes over the graves of vanquished men.* Carl Tausig used to play this movement exactly as Chopin directs it to be played; *i. e.*, with the soft pedal only (*una corda* throughout and *no* loud pedal), *legato*, *presto*, *pianissimo*, and with hardly any gradation of tone. The effect was weird in the extreme, and perfectly convincing. This is the movement of which Mendelssohn is reported to have said, "Oh! I abhor it! There is no music, no art!" and of which Schumann asserted that it contained "more mockery than music." But, supposing it to be on the verge of, or even outside the pale of music proper, what is it to be called? A piece of genius? Yes, unique in its way, and thus on a par with the three movements preceding it. The Sonata, op. 58, published some five years later (1845), is less concise and definite in outline, and less well designed, particularly the first movement, of which the working-out section is lax as well as overwrought, and consequently somewhat chaotic in effect; the long-drawn-out melodies, however, in the *allegro maestoso* and the *Largo* are remarkable, even in Chopin, the supreme master of elegiac melody.

The majority of Chopin's Etudes, unlike Clementi's and Cramer's, have no didactic purpose; the best are characteristic pieces, studies for mas-

* See the corollary, Preludes, op. 28, No. 14, in E flat minor.

ters, not for pupils. The "Studien" of Moscheles, op. 70 and 95, "Etudes," op. 2 and 5, of Henselt, "Etudes d'execution transcendante" and "Etudes de Concert" of Liszt, may be said to vie with them. But if we look for originality, beauty and variety of effect, both Moscheles's and Henselt's studies are left far behind; and Liszt's, remarkable though they are from a virtuoso's point of view, lack the musical calibre of Chopin's.* In a number of instances Chopin contrives to exhibit the subject of an Etude in different aspects and under different lights. The Etude in A flat, for instance (op. 10, No. 10), is a veritable pattern card of diverse aspects of the leading figure. Other such Etudes are op. 25, Nos. 3 and 5. But, technicalities apart, the most glorious of the Etudes are the two in C minor, op. 10 and 25, No. 12, op. 25, No. 11, in A minor, — poems in the form of studies. The Preludes, op. 28, go hand in hand with the Etudes; they are for the most part only sketches towards Etudes, yet highly original and valuable.

The Impromptus have the same shape as certain Impromptus of Schubert's. The exquisite matter and manner are of course Chopin's own. Two or three of the early Nocturnes, op. 9, No. 2, parts of op. 32, Nos. 1 and 2, show traces of Field; in all the rest Chopin speaks his own language. The Nocturne in G, op. 37, No. 2, must be mentioned as one of the most original and subtly beautiful pianoforte pieces extant. Other superb pieces are the tragic Nocturne in C minor, op. 48, No. 1; the dreamy and perhaps somewhat too elaborate Nocturne, op. 62, No. 1, in B major; and the Duet-Nocturne in E flat, op. 55, No. 2, which professed students of Chopin appear to have overlooked.

"I do not care for the 'Ladies-Chopin,' *i. e.*, certain drawing-room pieces of Chopin's," Wagner remarked to the writer in 1877, "there is too much of the Parisian *salon* in that." Yet, whether one cares for the *salon* or not, the *esprit* and *finesse*, the refinement and cheerful gayety, of French society seem to be more accurately caught and reflected in Chopin's lighter pieces than anywhere else in art. Undoubtedly, within these confines of elegance and pleasant trifling, Chopin is unrivalled. But let no one suppose that the true weight and significance of his music, at its best, is here apparent. It is difficult to say anything adequate of that glorification of Polish national music which Chopin has accomplished in his Polonaises and Mazurkas. His Polish pieces form a literature apart and for themselves. They range from mere trifles to grandiose pictures, such as the Polonaise in A, A flat, F sharp minor.

And what shall be said of the four Scherzos, the four Ballades, the Fantasia, op. 49, the Barcarolle, the Berceuse, etc.? "J'en passe — et des meilleurs!"

In the Ballades, Chopin delights in a form of expression peculiar to himself; the music here appeals to the imagination, like a narrative poem. The third Ballade, in A flat, is the most perfect as a well-balanced, carefully designed piece; the second, in F, is the most fantastic, one longs for a clew to the mysterious tale the music unfolds; the first is perhaps the most impassioned; the fourth is distinctly the most elaborate, as it is the richest, weightiest, and one of the most important of all his works.

Has Chopin in any way realized his aspiration to create a new era in music or, at least, in music for the pianoforte? Why has no school of pianists arisen from him? The answer to the second question is that the only specially gifted professional pupil he ever had, "little Filtsch," the Hungarian, died young.† The dozen or more men and women of average talent, who were proud to call themselves his pupils, have done plenty of good work in their time, and it cannot therefore be said that his efforts as a teacher were in vain. But it is always a mere matter of chance whether or not a man of genius has the good fortune to meet with the right sort of disciples.

Chopin, none the less, has made his mark, — an indelible mark. *He has given us a new vision and a new version of beauty.* His influence is apparent in Schumann, in Liszt, in Wagner, in the music of most living men. *He is the poet of the piano*, the greatest specialist in the treatment of the instrument. Whose pianoforte music, indeed, among contemporaneous and later masters, will stand a comparison with his? Not Liszt's, assuredly; not Schumann's, — Schumann who now and then

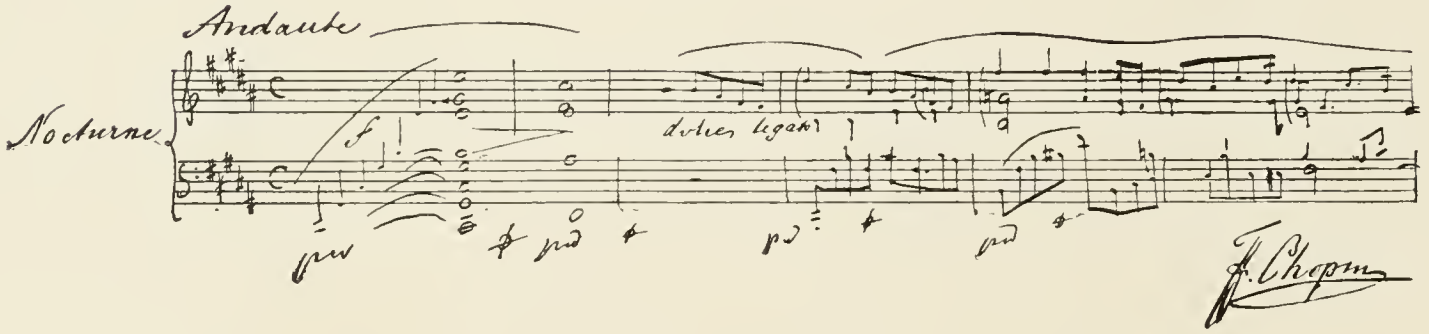
* In two instances at least they are merely Chopin at second hand. Compare Liszt's Etude de Concert in F minor (No. 2) and his Etude d'execution No. 10, in the same key.

Henselt, too, imitates and dilutes Chopin. Compare his op. 5, Nos. 2, 9, 10.

† Filtsch was a genius as regards the pianoforte. "When that youngster starts on his travels," said Liszt, "I shall shut up shop."

worked on lines parallel to Chopin's; not Mendelssohn's, or Brahms's, whose means and ends are radically different, and whose leaning towards abstract music is patent, even when they are consciously aiming at pianoforte effects. Chopin at the pianoforte and as a composer for the instrument is unique, inimitable, endowed with a sense of beauty peculiarly his own. If perchance Keats had lived and written verse for ten years longer, we might have had something like a literary equivalent to the bulk of Chopin's music. In the vast mass of work extant for the harpsichord and the pianoforte three groups of compositions stand forth, conspicuous and pre-eminent: Bach's Preludes, Fugues, Suites, Partitas; Beethoven's Sonatas; Chopin's pieces, from op. 9 to op. 65.

Edward Dannreuther



ANTON DVOŘÁK

Reproduct'on of a photograph from life by Collier, Birmingham, England.

ANTON DVOŘÁK*

IN his novelette "A Pilgrimage to Beethoven," Richard Wagner describes his hero as entering Bohemia, "the land of harp-players and street-musicians," where he came across an itinerant band on a country road playing, for *their own* amusement, Beethoven's septet "with a precision and a depth of feeling rarely equalled by a trained virtuoso." This imaginary scene strikingly illustrates the opinion which prevails in Germany regarding the Bohemians, who are supposed to be all natural musicians who do not need to learn their art any more than a duck needs to learn to swim. A German writer, H. Krigar, relates that in travelling through Bohemia he often heard, in villages and in the country, small bands, which, like the gypsies, played without their notes, and who could rarely tell the origin of a piece they had just played to perfection. "Such are the endowments of the German Bohemians," he continues. "If we penetrate into the interior of the country we come upon the Slavic race, the Czechish population, which, as regards musical talent, does not fall below the German, but rather manifests a still more pronounced and striking peculiarity in its musical doings, which are an accurate mirror of the Czech character. Of all branches of the Slavic race this one is the most gifted artistically."

A Bohemian writer, E. Meliš, in a historic sketch of music in his country, notes the fact that in the eighteenth century music was greatly fostered by the custom which prevailed among the nobility of keeping private bands. The people had their folk-songs and their dance tunes, and musical instruction was carefully attended to in the primary schools, as the historian Burney noted. "The second half of the eighteenth century," says Meliš, "was the golden age of Bohemian music; in the metropolis, as in the country, everybody breathed a musical atmosphere; on every clear summer night serenades and nocturnes resounded on all the streets; all the nobles and monasteries had their orchestras," etc. As early as 1732 Prague's fame as a centre of musical activity was such that Gluck went there to pursue his studies, and every musician knows that in 1785 Mozart's *Figaro* was so badly sung and so unfavorably received in Vienna, while in Prague it was a brilliant success, that he wrote his next opera, *Don Juan*, for the Bohemian capital, where it was at once appreciated, while in Vienna this opera too was coldly received; so that Mozart had reason to exclaim: "The Bohemians understand me." Among the famous musicians that Bohemia herself has given to the world may be named the national composers Smetana, and Czermak; Kalliwoda, pianist and composer; Dreyschock, pianist; Tomaschek, organist and composer; Dussek, pianist and composer; Czibulka, director and composer; Benda, violinist and composer; Kittl, composer (for one of whose operas Wagner furnished the libretto); Dionys Weber, theorist, composer and first director of the Prague Conservatory, founded in 1810; Labitzky, known as "the Bohemian Strauss"; the great heroic tenor Tichatschek, the first singer who mastered Wagner's heroic rôles; and A. W. Ambros, the distinguished musical critic and historian.

All these names are well-known to those who are familiar with the musical records and literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but as regards the list of composers it will be noted that none of the names rises to the first or even the second rank. It remained for our generation to produce a Bohemian composer of the first rank, if originality is the criterion of rank. In Anton Dvořák the national musical endowment for the first time reached that sustained climax which we call genius. He was born on Sept. 8, 1841, the offspring of a humble couple who dwelt in the little

* Pronounced Dvorzhák.

town of Mühlhausen, near Prague. His father, Franz Dvořák, was a tavern keeper who also slaughtered animals for his own use and that of his neighbors; and young Anton was intended to be his assistant and successor. But the fates had ordained him for a higher function.

Franz Dvořák, like other inn-keepers, always engaged a strolling or village band during the church fairs, to play for the dancing couples assembled in his tavern. From those bands young Anton received his first musical impressions. "Entranced he stood before the fiddlers and trumpeters," says Krigar, "and followed the music with reddened cheeks and sparkling eyes. It was not music of an elevated kind that those bands played; nevertheless the genuine Bohemian polkas and marches sufficed to set the musical child's pulse throbbing." His father was fond of music and was a good performer on the zither. Unlike the fathers of so many other musical geniuses, he saw no harm in Anton's love of music, but encouraged it by giving him in charge of a school teacher, who taught him to sing and to play the violin. Two years later he had made sufficient progress on the violin to be able to play a solo at a church fair successfully. He also had a vocal solo, but in this he was less successful; he became frightened, his voice faltered and his passage was spoiled. This failure made such a painful impression on his sensibility that he could never be induced to sing again in public.

He was now sent to live with a relative in Zlonitz, where a musician named Liehmann taught him the organ and harmony. Liehmann was a church organist whose ecclesiastic functions did not make him any the less devoted to worldly music. He was fond of composing dance pieces and arranging them for orchestra. Anton had to copy the parts from the score, which was good practice for him, as it gave him an insight into the mysteries of instrumentation. His ambition soon led him to compose a polka of his own and arrange it for orchestra. The teacher was not initiated into the secret, as he wished to have all the responsibility and credit for this performance for himself. The intention was good, but it led to a slight disaster. After the piece had been completed, he took it home, intending to surprise his parents with it at a church fair. The parts were distributed to the musicians and the polka began; but hardly had the musicians played a few bars when they stopped abruptly; and with good reason; for never before had such dire cacophony been heard in the peaceful village of Mühlhausen. Poor Anton would have welcomed an earthquake to swallow him up with his mortification, and everybody was mystified until the trumpeter discovered that the young composer had erroneously written the F trumpet in F instead of transposing it. The part was rewritten in the proper key, and the polka was played to everyone's satisfaction. Perhaps poor Anton would have been less mortified had he known that the great Schumann once made a similar mistake in scoring one of his symphonies.

In allowing his son to take music lessons, Franz Dvořák had no intention of training him to be a professional musician. He had eight children to support, and Anton, being the oldest, was expected to assist him in this task, when he became a youth, by engaging in a more lucrative business than that of a Bohemian musician. But Anton begged him, with tears in his eyes, to be allowed to devote himself to music, and his father finally consented. Anton remained in Zlonitz till 1856, and then spent a year at Kammitz, near Bodenbach, to learn the German language and to continue his organ and harmony lessons. In the following year his father succeeded in saving enough money to send him to Prague, where an opportunity of getting an appointment as organist might present itself. Krejci and Pitsch of the Conservatory were his teachers, and the organ course was to last three years. His father's contributions soon ceased, and the young man was now thrown on his own resources. He was a good violinist, it is true, and he succeeded in getting a position as violin player in a local tavern band, but the income from this source was barely enough to keep body and soul together.

Matters were somewhat improved by the establishment, in 1862, of a National Theatre of whose orchestra Dvořák became a member. But he was still too poor to be able to buy a piano or such scores as he wanted for his studies, and it was lucky for him that he found in Carl Bendl, conductor of a local choral society, a friend who was willing to place his musical library at his disposal. He was also befriended by the conductor of the National Theatre, Smetana, and with such encouragement he began to make serious efforts at composition, his first string quartet being written in 1862. Of course it remained unnoticed, but he consoled himself by

greedily devouring the scores of Beethoven's and Mendelssohn's symphonies and chamber music, and Schumann's songs, which he studied day and night. Under this influence he composed in the following two or three years two symphonies, an opera, a number of songs, and other things, most of which he subsequently destroyed, considering them merely as exercises and experiments — a proceeding which many other composers might have followed to advantage.

In 1873 he succeeded at last in getting an appointment as organist at St. Adelbert's church. The salary was anything but princely, yet, by eking it out with music lessons, he was able to give up his position in the theatre orchestra and to get married. In the same year he also came forward prominently for the first time as a composer. He had written a cantata, "The Heirs of the White Mountains," which was produced with a success partly due to its own merits and partly to its patriotic subject — a powerful ally in case of an obscure composer. This created an appetite for more of his works, and several were produced at local concerts. An opera of his, "The King and the Charcoal Burner" was also rehearsed at the National Theatre, but "turned out to be quite impracticable, owing to the wildly unconventional style of the music, and the composer actually had the courage to rewrite it altogether, preserving scarcely a note of the original score." In this new version it was successful and still further added to the composer's reputation, stimulating him also to renewed efforts in composition, his favorite models being Beethoven and Schubert. Later on a second Czech opera of his was produced.

Meanwhile his salary as organist, which at first was thirty florins, had been increased to sixty, and finally to one hundred and twenty florins (sixty dollars) a year. Teaching was irksome to him, and as he wished to be free to devote more of his time to composition — the most unremunerative of all occupations to a beginner — he had the happy thought of applying to the ministry of education in Vienna for one of the annual stipends which it allows to "young, poor and talented artists." Usually these stipends are given to students of painting and architecture, who have to make expensive journeys to complete their education; but in this case an exception was wisely made in favor of a musician. Dr. Hanslick, who was one of the commissioners presiding over this pension fund, and who has ever since taken a special pride in the genius he helped to "discover," relates this interesting event in the following words: "Among those who applied for a stipend are many who possess only two of the three required qualifications — youth, poverty and talent — dispensing with the third. We were therefore agreeably surprised one day when we received from an applicant in Prague, Anton Dvořák, proofs of a decided, though still immature talent for composition. We remember especially a symphony, written in a rather disorderly and unconventional style, but at the same time giving evidence of so much talent that Herbeck, who at that time was a member of our commission, took a lively interest in it. Since that date [1875–1879] Dvořák has annually received an artist stipend which has released him from oppressive musical drudgery. Unfortunately it seemed as if there the matter was to end. Although such pecuniary assistance by the state also doubtless implies a moral support, Dvořák remained in his own country without position and publisher. Not till Brahms was elected a member of the commission in place of Herbeck [deceased] did the appreciation for Dvořák take the desired practical turn. Brahms, who supports, with word and deed, every serious ambition of a pronounced talent — unnoticed, silently, as Schumann used to do — procured a publisher for Dvořák, whose modesty amounts to bashfulness. Simrock now published his 'Slavic Dances' and 'Moravian Sounds.'"

These delightful compositions immediately made their way into all the German concert halls, and Dvořák awoke one morning to find himself famous, so that the publishers were not only willing to print his new compositions, but also those which he had been accumulating in his desk in former years, with the self-confidence of genius, which creates for the pleasure of creating, regardless of the world's attitude.

The battle was won. At thirty-six Dvořák's name was established, and it is worthy of note that the critics and conductors of the conservative school united with those of the Wagnerian school in doing homage to his genius. The conservative English critic, Mr. Joseph Bennett, declared that "Now that Wagner is dead, no more interesting figure than Dvořák remains for the contemplation of music-lovers, while the Bohemian's claims to attention rest upon a basis so different from those of the German as to stand

quite apart." This English opinion is here quoted on purpose to call attention to the fact that although Dvořák was "discovered" by German composers and critics, it was in England that he subsequently received the most practical and substantial encouragement. In 1887 Dvořák remarked to a London journalist, "You will think it strange that a complete performance of my *Stabat Mater*, which all the English choral societies do very often, has never yet been given in Germany. And except at Vienna, where it was sung in a church, with the organ only, it has not been performed in Germany."

The cause of Dvořák's early popularity in England lies largely in the fact that large choral societies abound in that country, each of which is eager to secure interesting novelties for its annual or biennial festivals. It was the London Musical Society that first introduced the *Stabat Mater*, in 1883, and the composer personally conducted it. In 1884 he conducted it at the Worcester Festival, where he was invited to write a cantata for the Birmingham Festival in 1885. This gave rise to his finest work, *The Spectre's Bride*. In 1886, he wrote the oratorio *St. Ludmilla* for the Leeds Festival. He has also conducted some of his works at concerts of the London Philharmonic Society, greatly to their advantage, as he renders his works with the requisite Slavic *rubato*, and, as Mr. Shedlock wrote regarding his reading of the *Stabat Mater*, "by many delicate nuances and momentary changes of *tempo* added greatly to the meaning and effect of the music." In 1891, the University of Cambridge conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Music, on which occasion the *Stabat Mater* was sung, the soloists being Mme. Albani, Miss Hilda Wilson, Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Henschel, who gave their services gratuitously.

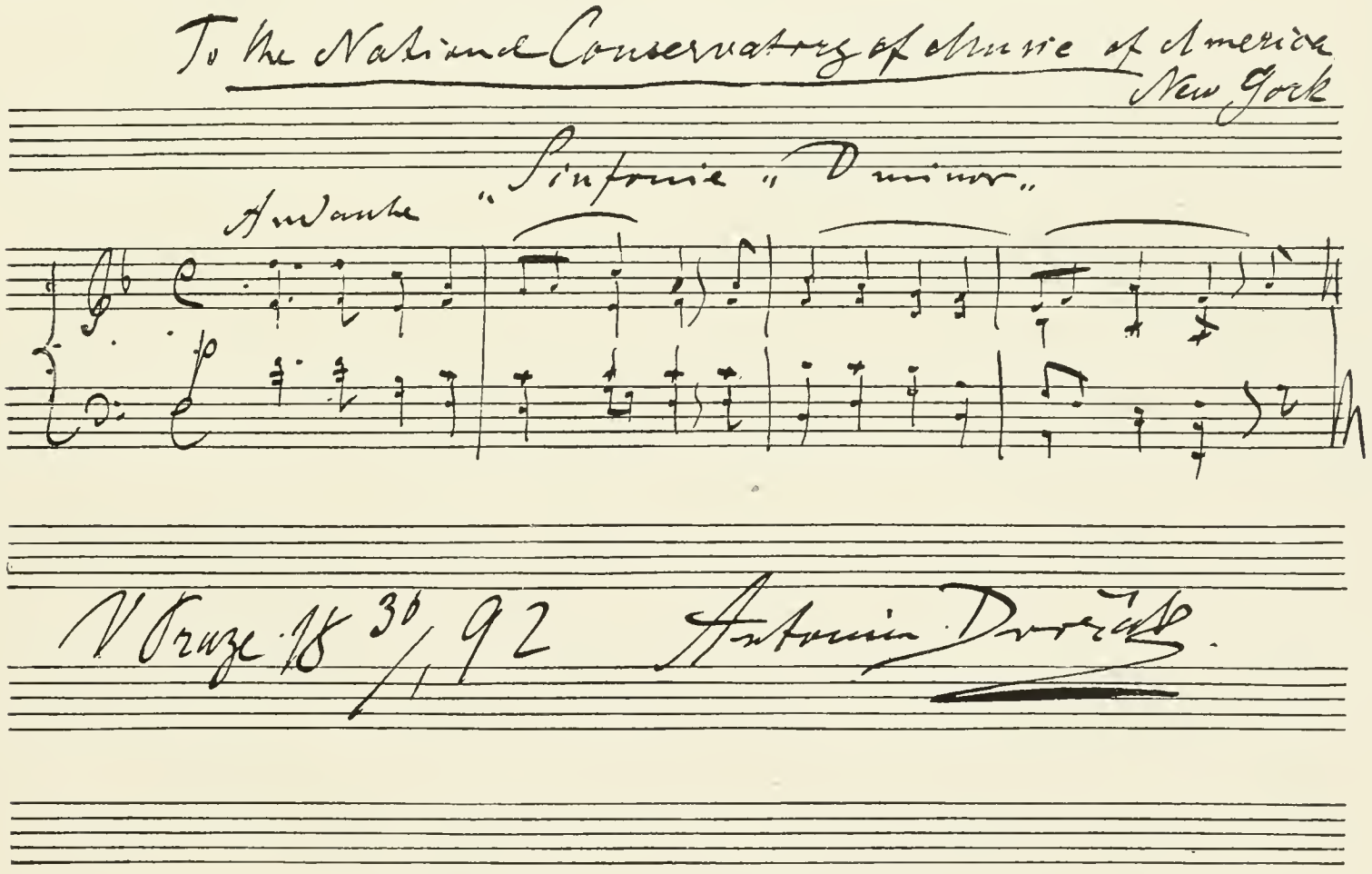
In the same year Mrs. Jeannette M. Thurber, president of the National Conservatory of Music, in New York, succeeded in persuading Dvořák to leave the Conservatory at Prague, where he had been teaching for some years, and accept the post of Director of the National Conservatory. The preliminary contract is for three years. Dr. Dvořák receives $15,000 a year, and while he is expected to superintend the advanced pupils, he will still have plenty of time to devote to his compositions. His brain teems with new ideas, and it is his habit to sit up all night composing. Personally he is very modest, and the childlike simplicity of his manners at once proclaims him a genius and endears him to all who come into contact with him. To Mrs. Thurber he once remarked that the only thing that made him angry was a lack of fire in a performance!

As Dr. Dvořák is still in the best period of his creative career, an attempt to pass a comprehensive and final judgment on his work would be premature. But so much may be said safely, that, apart from the originality of his musical ideas, he will be granted an honorable place in the history of music for having turned the rivulet of Bohemian national music into the general European current, thereby enriching and coloring it as Chopin, Liszt and Grieg did by introducing the Polish, Hungarian and Scandinavian tributaries. The great variety of Bohemian rhythms may be inferred from the fact that there are more than forty different kinds of national Bohemian dances, the best known being the polka, while Dvořák has also given the furiant and the elegiac dumka general vogue, raising them even to symphonic rank.

In saying that Dvořák turned the stream of Bohemian nationalism into the general current of European music, I by no means meant to convey the idea that he merely selected current folk-songs and incorporated them in his works. The fact is that he hardly ever adopts a ready-made tune, as many even of the greatest composers have done, but he creates new Slavic tunes in the mould of the folk-songs. Like Robert Franz, he presents that modern phenomenon of a great composer creating those folk-songs which formerly came anonymously from the people themselves. In playing for the dancing youths and maidens of his native village his mind became so imbued with the spirit of Bohemian rhythms that when he began to compose, everything was tinged with national colors; and so far is this from being a defect that his greatest admirers must hope that he will

never abandon this trait for a monotonous "Cosmopolitanism" in music which suggests the growing uniformity of modern costume. Variety is the spice of life.

Dr. Dvořák's fourth symphony is marked opus 88, and it was preceded by works in almost every branch of composition. The least important are his pianoforte pieces. For that instrument he seems almost to show a slight contempt, like Wagner and other born orchestral composers. Most of his compositions for piano are dance pieces — mazurkas, waltzes, furiants ("a sort of wild scherzo") and other Slavic dances. His concerto for piano, opus 33, bristles with difficulties which are not always showy and pianistic, and therefore not "grateful" (*dankbar*), as the German players say. His songs are much more in vogue, and among them are some real gems. Some of the best and best-known are the "Moravian Echoes" and the "Gypsy Songs," in both of which collections, as in the piano pieces, the Bohemian peculiarities of rhythm and melody are charmingly conspicuous. In recent years Dr. Dvořák has devoted himself less to piano and song than to chamber music, orchestral works, opera and oratorio. His chamber music includes several quartets, a quintet, a sextet, three trios, a violin sonata, etc. Among these the trio in F minor and the sextet are especially noticeable.



Fac-simile autograph musical manuscript written by Anton Dvořák.

As an orchestral writer Dr. Dvořák has few equals and hardly a superior among living composers. It is in this department in particular that he pleases both the followers of the classical and of the modern schools, because, while retaining the orthodox symphonic forms, he at the same time enriches his melodies with the most modern harmonies and frequent, novel modulations, and clothes them in a delightfully colored and refined orchestral garb. Indeed one might say that, as regards instrumentation, Wagner's mantle has fallen on Dvořák, whose orchestral colors are modern, varied and richly colored, without ever offending one by the noisy extravagance of Richard Strauss and other young men of the time. The wildness of Dvořák's furiants is not sensational extravagance, but natural Bohemianism. Among the best-known orchestral pieces are a serenade, symphonic variations, the four symphonies, the "Hositzka" overture (which is as deeply, as frantically national as the Hungarian Rokoczy march), and the Scherzo Capriccioso, his masterwork. Were I asked to make up a programme of a dozen of my

favorite orchestral pieces, this Scherzo would be one of the first in the list. It is the most Wagnerian of his pieces in orchestration, and at the same time the most original.

Of the symphonies lack of space prevents a detailed analysis, but it may be said in a general way that in the last two the Slavic element has become less noticeable than in former works, and that, while thoroughly original, they betray occasionally the influence of the German classical composers, pre-eminently of Schubert. Indeed, if it is necessary to class Dvořák, I should place him in the Schubert school. Schubert has not yet had full justice done to him, neither as regards the rank he can justly claim among composers, nor as regards his influence on other composers. The most important section in Rubinstein's book "Music and its Masters" is that in which he seeks to prove that Schubert is one of the three greatest of all composers. He might have added among his proofs the great influence Schubert has exerted on Liszt, Franz, and Dvořák in particular. It is not so much by an occasional reminiscence (as by a certain cadence in the first movement of the fourth symphony which recalls "Death and the Maiden") that Dvořák suggests Schubert as by a general artistic resemblance. He is particularly addicted to the delicious and frequent intermingling or alternation of major and minor — a device by which Schubert enriched a certain harmonic monontony of his predecessors and which is perhaps his most valuable innovation. Dvořák also resembles Schubert by the wonderful variety and inexhaustible fancy shown in the treatment of minute details; by his freedom as regards tonality, and his habit of repeating the same idea in different keys; by the chaste simplicity of instrumentation with which he secures some of the most exquisite orchestral effects; by the spontaneity of invention and consequent rapid workmanship, leading occasionally to excessive diffuseness and an inability to stop at the right place. As regards the rapidity with which his pen travels Mr. Joseph Bennett say: "I have his own authority for stating that the *Stabat Mater* was begun and finished, even to scoring, within six weeks — a feat, in its way, quite as remarkable as Handel's composition of the *Messiah* — while the symphony in D was completed in three weeks." Schubert, we all know, composed six of the "Winterreise" songs on one morning, and wrote almost one thousand pieces in eighteen years.

Dvořák has written no fewer than six operas; but their fate has been such as to lead one to suspect that their composer also shares Schubert's trait of being dramatic in songs and in orchestral details without yet having the theatrical instinct for bold *al fresco* operatic strokes. The names of his operas are: *Der König und der Köhler*, *Die Dickschädel*, *Wanda*, *Der Bauer ein Schelm*, *Dimitrij*, and *Kakobi*. He seems to have been unfortunate in his librettos, which helps to account for the fact that but one or two of his operas have been heard outside of Prague. I have been informed that he is anxious to write an opera on an American subject, if he can get a good libretto. Of his last opera, Ludwig Hartmann says that while retaining the Czech spirit it betrays the influence of Wagner: "Altogether enchanting, inexhaustible in their melodiousness and quaintness of rhythm are the brighter portions of the work, accompanied as they are by a running commentary of an orchestra *à la Meistersinger*."

Next to his orchestral pieces, the best and best-known of Dvořák's works are his choral compositions, of which there are five. The *Heirs of the White Mountains* is an early work of local fame merely; but his *Stabat Mater* established his fame in England, and by the favor it found called forth the delightfully romantic and dramatic *Spectre's Bride*, his master-work of this class. In the oratorio *Ludmilla* he not only had an inferior subject, but he attempted to suppress his own individuality and adapt his style to the English taste formed on Handel and Mendelssohn, the result being somewhat unsatisfactory. Full atonement for this was made, however, by his last choral work, the *Requiem*, which has all the characteristics of his best works — original themes, novel modulations and exquisite orchestration. The voices, both solo and choral, are treated with the same skill as the instruments, and there are several bits of *a capella* song of ravishing effect. Nor is the Slavic color absent, especially in a plaintive theme which keeps recurring as a sort of leading motive.

Henry T. Finck

MICHAEL IVANOVITCH GLINKA

Reproduction of an oil portait.

MICHAEL IVANOVITCH GLINKA

MICHAEL IVANOVITCH GLINKA was born June 1, 1804, at a little village, Novospasskoïe, in the government of Smolensk. It may here be remarked that, even when allowance is made for forgetfulness of the Russian Calendar, the dates of important events in the life of Glinka, as given by leading biographers, as Pougin, Fouque, and Cui, do not agree. I have followed in this article the dates fixed by Dr. Hugo Riemann in his "Musik-Lexikon" (1887). Glinka's father was a retired army captain. Michael was raised and spoiled by his grandmother. He was nervous and sickly, and his health was not improved by a dress of furs, confinement in an overheated room, and a diet of cakes and sweetmeats. Until his death he was the prey of quacks and the support of physicians.

The sounds of church bells delighted his early years, and he imitated them by striking metal basins. Then he heard the orchestra of his maternal uncle; he listened greedily to peasant songs and the music of strolling players. A governess taught him Russian, German, French, geography and the elements of music. He studied the piano and the violin: the latter he abandoned afterward, as he found early faults beyond correction.

In 1817 he attended at St. Petersburg a school founded for children of the nobility; he added Latin, English and Persian to his list of languages; he became proficient in mathematics and zoology. He took for a time piano lessons of John Field; then he studied the piano with Carl Meyer, who taught him without price. Harmony was repugnant to Glinka; nevertheless he composed, and he learned the use of orchestral instruments. When he was twenty years old, he went to the Caucasus to drink mineral waters; he was injured physically thereby, but his imagination was quickened. On his return to St. Petersburg he was appointed assistant secretary of the Department of Public Highways. The work was light; he had ample time to amuse himself with music; he associated with rich amateurs who gave concerts; he wrote melancholy romances.

In 1830 his physician recommended a change of climate, and Glinka travelled with Ivanof, afterward a famous tenor. They passed leisurely through Germany and Switzerland, and at Milan they studied. Glinka tried to learn counterpoint under Basili, but the study was irksome. He preferred to hear the singers at the opera house and write piano pieces. The Italian women looked kindly on him, and he moved them by his playing. Other towns in Italy were visited, but it was on his return to Milan that he determined to write Russian music. He crossed the Alps, visited Vienna, where he submitted to "a homœopathic cure," and listened to the orchestra of the first Strauss. At Berlin he studied composition for five months under Dehn. In 1836 the elder Glinka died; the son left Berlin for Novospasskoïe.

He had fallen in love with a Jewess of Berlin. She was a singer and for her he wrote "six studies for contralto" besides love-letters. And he longed to see her, so that he sought the pretext of accompanying a German girl, his sister's maid, to Berlin. He started with her, but, as her papers were not in order, he was obliged to go to St. Petersburg, where he saw his mother and met Maria Pétrovna Ivanof, young and pretty. He courted Maria vigorously and married her. The maid returned to Berlin alone; the Jewess dropped out of Glinka's life as the boy Xury out of "Robinson Crusoe."

Maria was not a woman of sense or tact. Glinka was at first passionately fond of her, and it is said that she inspired the trio of the first act of "A Life for the Czar." Maria cared more for dress and balls than for music or her husband. She complained because he spent money for music paper; she

nagged him, a man of naturally sweet disposition. Her mother, a mother-in-law of comedy, came to her aid. There were quarrels; then there was a separation. Maria married again: Glinka lived with his mother, and when she died, with his sister, Mrs. Schestakof, who was devoted to him in life, and to his memory.

Living in St. Petersburg, Glinka associated with Pushkin, Gogol and other spirits of the Russian renaissance. He meditated Russian opera. A libretto shown him by Joukowski pleased him on account of its romantic, popular and national character. He began with the overture, and worked feverishly. In the spring of 1836 he signed a paper by which he renounced the rights of authorship, and the opera was rehearsed under the generous Cavos, who had written an opera with the same subject in Italian. "A Life for the Czar" was first given Dec. 9, 1836, at the Bolshoï theatre. The Czar was present, and there was a brilliant audience. The success was overwhelming. The Czar, to whom the opera was dedicated, sent Glinka a ring valued at four thousand roubles.

Early in 1837 Glinka was made Instructor of the Chorus of the Imperial Chapel; the yearly salary was twenty-five hundred roubles, lodging at court, and heating. He taught diligently; in 1838 he was sent by the Czar to Little Russia in search of fresh voices; he brought back nineteen boys of talent, with whom Nicolas was pleased mightily, so that he gave Glinka friendly taps and fifteen-hundred roubles. The trouble with his wife weighed heavily on the composer, and in December, 1839, he resigned his position. He then worked at his second opera, "Ruslan and Ludmilla." The text was taken from a romance in verse by Pushkin. The first performance was Nov. 27, 1842. With the exception of the first act, the opera fell flat: there were hisses. Glinka ascribed the failure to malicious singers, lack of rehearsal, and inadequate scenic decoration. The third evening Mrs. Pétrof sang the part of Ludmilla and was loudly applauded. There were thirty-two performances during the winter of '42–43; the next season the opera was shelved; and not until after Glinka's death was it heard again; then frequently and with delight. Glinka was sore distressed. He sought comfort in Paris.

There Berlioz included some of his works in a series of concerts. In April, 1845, Glinka gave a concert of his own. The life in Paris pleased him. He was seen often with grisettes and cheap actresses; he drank freely of the wines of France. In 1845 he travelled in Spain, where he collected folk-songs. Returning with the orchestral pieces "Jota aragonaise" and "A night at Madrid," he visited his mother, and then wandered from town to town. His mother died. In 1852 he went back to Paris and spent much time at the Jardin des Plantes, watching the monkeys. He returned to Russia *via* Berlin, visited his sister and wrote his memoirs, which were not published until in 1870. He made sketches for an opera "The Bigamist"; he meditated orchestral works; but in the spring of 1856 he went to Berlin, to study again under Dehn. He seemed happy and contented. In leaving the royal concert hall where the trio from "A Life for the Czar" was sung with flattering success, he caught cold; inflammation of the lungs set in; his stomach and other organs were diseased, and he did not rally. He died Feb. 15, 1857. In May of the same year the body was borne to Russia and buried in the cemetery of the Nevsky Monastery. Many honors were paid his memory, and in 1892 his name was given to one of the finest streets in St. Petersburg.

According to his sister, Glinka was like a child in disposition, tender, affectionate: "capricious perhaps, a little spoiled, for he was fond of having his own way." He was quick to acknowledge a fault and atone for it. He was grateful for any kindness. He was incapable of looking after his affairs; household economy was distasteful to him. "His faults were excessive sensitiveness and diffidence."

He was a slave to superstition. Three burning candles frightened him; he was subject to fantastic hallucinations; the letter that announced his mother's death gave him a nervous shock before he opened the envelope. He feared perfumes, odors of every sort; camphor was to him rank poison. He could not endure the thought of spices in his food. He once said, "I do not like laurel on my head or in my soup."

In constant fear of death he consulted physicians and hunted out strange cures. He carried with him a medicine chest. He considered the advantages of magnetism and trances. In Berlin in 1856 he abandoned "triumphant globules of belladonna" and sought advice of a "cultured allopath," who recommended much exercise and little medicine.

According to the testimony of all that knew him,

MICHAEL IVANOVITCH GLINKA.

Reproduction of a Russian portrait of Glinka in his thirty-ninth year.

Glinka was "un homme distingué." He was a man of the world, polished, free from self-display, an observer of all social duties. His bearing was characterized by feline grace. A cosmopolitan, he was devoted to the Russian government, and he was a firm believer in the national church. The sufferings of his last years brought excusable irritability in argument, so that Dehn, his host, was in the habit of saying to guests, "Please leave your umbrellas, galoshes, and politics in the hall."

Glinka was generous in his treatment of the young musicians of his day. Nothing musical frightened him because it was new or unexpected. He was especially fond of the music of Bach, Handel, Beethoven and Berlioz. He composed only when he was in the vein; he was modest in his estimate of his own musical worth; at the same time he said to his sister, "They will understand your Micha when he is dead, and 'Ruslan' in a hundred years." Unfortunately, perhaps, for his art, he never felt the spur of poverty.

A catalogue of Glinka's works in chronological order may be found in Pougin's *Supplément* to Fétis' *Biographie universelle des Musiciens*, 1878, vol. 1, pp. 387, 388. This catalogue includes songs, piano pieces, chamber music, vocal quartets, choruses, orchestral pieces and two operas. The works of his youth do not call for attention. The study of singing under Belloli was of advantage to him, as is seen in the vocal compositions of the middle and the later period. Nor would it be worth the while to examine minutely his compositions for orchestra, piano and other instruments, although such an orchestral fantasia as "Kamarinskaïa" shows undeniable talent. As the composer of two national operas, Glinka demands respectful consideration.

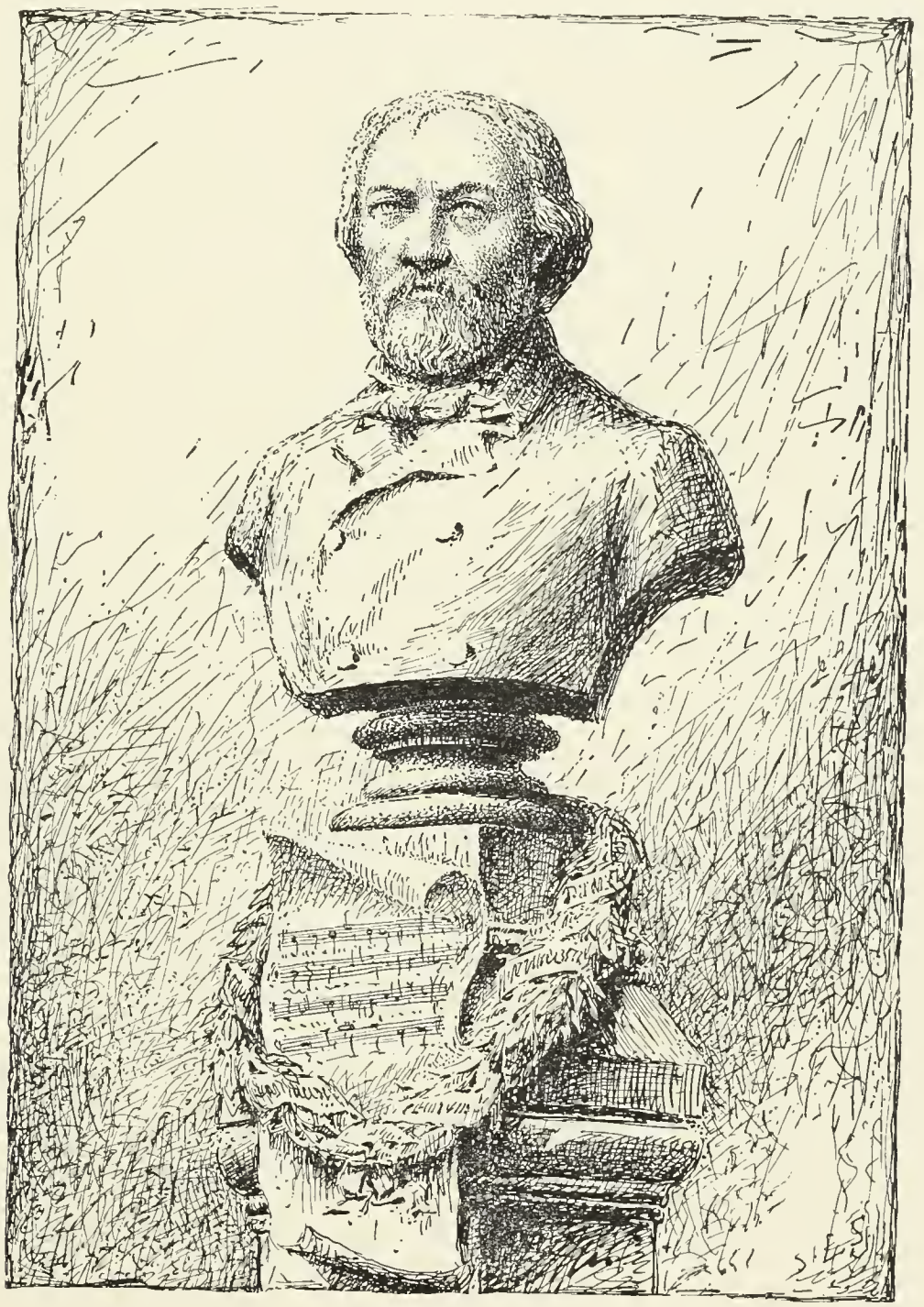
Before the performance of "A Life for the Czar" foreign opera-makers ruled in Russia. Sarti, Cimarosa, Paisiello, Martini, Steibelt, Boïeldieu, Cavos visited or tarried in the Russian opera house. Foreigners, as Araja, Sarti, Soliva, Sapienza and Cavos wrote operas with Russian texts; there were also Russian opera-makers, as Volkoff, Fomine, the brothers Titoff, Alabieff, Verstowski. These men wrote operas of merit or of little worth; no one of them can be regarded as a creator or renovator in the school of Russian music.

Even when he was merely a boyish amateur, Glinka collected folk-songs and had ideas concerning dramatic music. In 1826 he wrote, "music truly dramatic fits exactly the sense of the words." He noted carefully all songs of the people: he listened attentively to Finnish postillion, Persian diplomat, Spanish idler. In Milan under an Italian sky, intimate with famous singers of the Italian school, he despised his compositions; and longing for Russia brought with it the ambition to write Russian music; music "with the ineffable ecstacy or infinite bitterness" of Russian sentiment; for he could not endure the *sentimento brillante* of the Italian composers of that day. When he studied for the first time with Dehn, his themes were generally of Russian origin. "The desire of creating national music haunts me," in 1832 he declared in a letter; "my opera must be absolutely national, both the text and the music; I wish my dear landsfolk to find themselves therein at home." And yet modesty delayed the completion of the opera.

In "A Life for the Czar" Glinka attempted the combination of two nationalities, Russian and Polish. Each nation should be characterized by the rhythm, the tonality, the particular harmonic structure of the music. Rubinstein, who should here speak with authority, claims this as the result of the attempt: "The character of each nationality is maintained throughout, and at the same time the nationalities are united with rare technical mastery." Yet the opera shows decided traces of the influence of the Italian conventionality of the day. There is the trio in the first act, for instance; and, in fact, nearly all of the ensemble work of the first act is free from Russian character. Nor in this act is the melodic form of pronounced originality.

The dashing Poles were to be represented by incisive rhythms, brilliant themes, while the Russians were to be described as restless, melancholy, in moods of shifting tonality. Only in the great triumphant hymn of Russian patriotism at the end of the opera was there to be tumultuous joy without alloy. It is a singular fact that the scenes in which the Poles are chiefly concerned are the most char-

acteristic of the opera; so that Fouque perhaps is justified in saying, "Glinka thought to exalt Russia, and, lo, it is Poland that triumphed." On the other hand, there are features of marked originality — or originality based on comparatively unknown folk-song — in the two last acts. Glinka employs, for instance, in the melancholy romance of Vania, the G scale with the F natural, as does Mascagni in the first act of "L'Amico Fritz." The Russian composers of to-day do not regard "A Life for the Czar" as the best or the most characteristic work of Glinka. It is true that César Cui, perhaps from patriotism,



BUST OF GLINKA.

Redrawn for this work, by Sidney L. Smith, from an illustration in a Russian magazine.

speaks of its "remarkable originality" and "profound depth," going as far in one direction as Tadé Bulgarine in the other, when he wrote the bitter attacks after the first performance.

The text of "Ruslan and Ludmilla" is a fairy story. Here Glinka combines the Russian and the Circassian nationalities. He himself said that he wrote the music in fragments; and the loose structure of the libretto warred undoubtedly against the immediate success of the opera, although to-day "Ruslan" is regarded in Russia as Glinka's masterpiece. In this opera he turned deliberately his

back on European musical conventionalities and traditions, and looked confidently toward the East. He dreamed of strange scales, of new moods, of old church tones curiously modified; he pursued new rhythms; he sought painfully after unheard-of harmonies. Here in a word was the founding of the modern Russian school, which, according to Gustave Bertrand, wishes to have a language of its own as well as a style. "So afraid is it still of being accused of imitation, that it pretends to repudiate the Italo-Franco-Germanic scale, and the whole system of tonalities and modulations, which have been considered for three centuries the base of musical civilization; it would fain set up another system of scales, another grammar, another syntax."

Now this music of "Ruslan" is as foreign as is the original text, and yet it is impossible to deny its passages of rugged power, strange, exotic beauty, overwhelming effect. Fifty years ago was this music written, and we find in it much of the ultra-modern Russian school. Take the wild, barbarous music that accompanies the seizure and carrying away of Ludmilla by two monsters, the music of Tchernomor the magician, "the descending scale, terrible, harsh, with its bizarre harmonies," and the haunting measures that follow (page 65 of Fürstner's edition for voice and piano): do not these measures seem as though they were signed by Tschaikowsky, or Rimsky-Korsakoff, or by any one of the men that sit at the feet of Glinka? It is in this opera that we realize the mighty influence of the composer on the men that followed him; it is in this work that we realize that Glinka was a revolutionary.

Fouque has drawn a parallel between Glinka and Wagner; but when he claims that Glinka was the first in Europe to employ a *rappel caractéristique*, he forgets history and such men as Grétry and Weber. Other theories or practices of Glinka and Wagner were anticipated by Georg Reinbech in the preface to his heroic opera "Orestes"; but theories were not enough to save "Orestes" from the dustbin of antiquity. It is that which a composer may do with his theories or in spite of them that is of the first importance to the inquirer into the worth of his music. Nor is the fact that Glinka believed that in opera the music should be intimately connected with the meaning of the words enough to make him a remarkable figure in the history of music; for his belief was shared by Frenchmen and Italians who died long before he saw the light. Glinka was great in this: that for his own people he founded a school; that by the influence of his music he has turned Russian musicians who followed him away from the contemplation and the imitation of the great works of Italian, French and German masters. The Frenchman Berlioz, himself a revolutionary, wrote of Glinka that "his talent is supple; he can be simple, even naive, without descending to that which is common or vulgar. His melodies have passages of a strange fascination. He is a master of harmony, and he writes for the instruments with a care and a knowledge of their most secret resources, which makes his instrumentation among the most fresh and vivacious of all modern instrumentations."

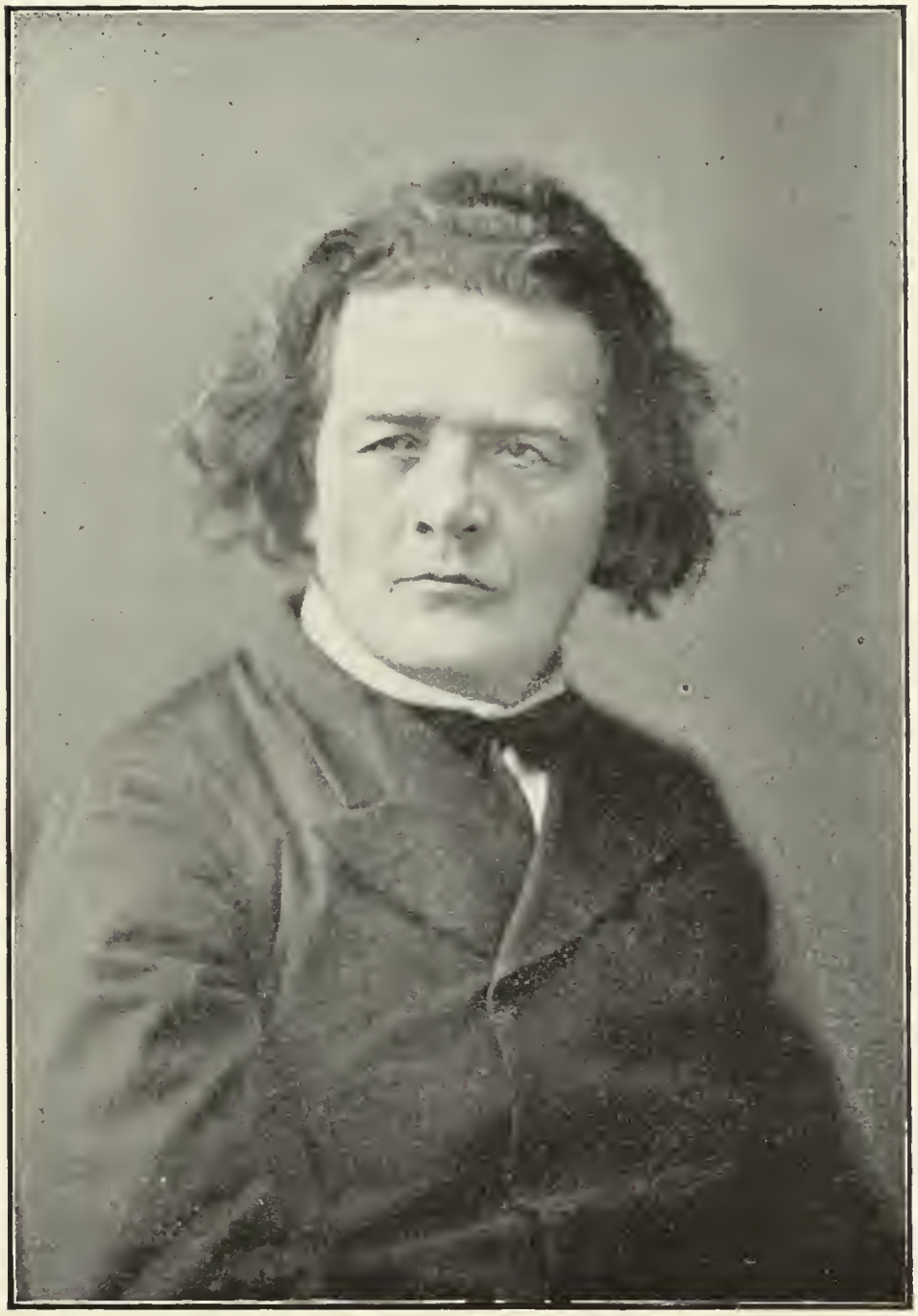
But the music of Glinka is known chiefly in Russia, and his operas do not find an abiding place outside the boundaries of Russia. Will not the intense nationality of Glinka's best music prevent universal recognition and affection?

Pushkin wrote a prologue to the story on which the libretto of Ruslan is founded, and in this prologue are found these words:

> "By the side of the Blue Sea is a great and green oak tree, girt with a golden chain.
> Day and night, a marvellous and learned cat crawls around this oak.
> When the cat crawls to the right he sings a song; when he crawls to the left he tells a story.
> It is there you must sit down and learn the understanding of Russian legends. . . .
> There the spirit of Russia and the fantasy of our ancestors come to life again.

Pushkin and Glinka sit beneath this oak; they listen to the cat that crawls about the oak. To him who is unable to tarry by the side of the Blue Sea will the music that comes from far away be moving, irresistible, pertaining to common humanity? Or will the music of this ultra-Russian school entertain for a time on account of its apparent singularity, and then be forgotten by the Western hearer of paler blood and carefully combed imagination?

Philip Hale



ANTON RUBINSTEIN

Reproduction of a photograph from life, by J. Ganz, of Brussels.

ANTON RUBINSTEIN

IT is related of Chopin that he would go from one end of Paris to another rather than write a short note. Rubinstein appears to have felt a similar disinclination to letter-writing, or literary work of any sort, unlike many other modern composers, especially the three whom he dislikes most of all, Wagner, Liszt and Berlioz. As if by way of retaliation, the writers on music ignored him almost completely, so that, if we except a few essays, brief biographic notices (full of errors), and the current criticism of new works in the newspapers, it may be said that there was no Rubinstein literature until a few years ago. In November, 1889, however, Russia celebrated the Rubinstein Jubilee, and on this occasion there appeared two brief, but valuable books on the great pianist composer. One of these is entitled "Anton Rubinstein; A Biographical Sketch" by Alexander M'Arthur (Edinburgh, Adams Charles Black, 1889), which is described in the preface as "a series of facts in the life of Anton Rubinstein, collected in St. Petersburg from intimate friends of the composer-pianist, from Russian journals, books and papers, and from such information as came to light during various conversations held with himself"—Mr. M'Arthur having been for some time Rubinstein's secretary. Still more valuable is an autobiographic sketch which appeared about the same time. Rubinstein did not write this himself, but a stenographer took down the story of his life and Rubinstein revised the proofs, so that it may be regarded as authentic and accurate (English translation by Aline Delano; Boston, Little, Brown & Co.) Besides these two booklets on Rubinstein there is only one other that I have been able to find—an 80-page treatise, "Anton Rubinstein," by Bernhard Vogel (Leipsic, Max Hesse, 1887), devoted chiefly to an analysis of Rubinstein's principal works.

Anton Rubinstein's birth place was the village of Wechwotinez, near Jassy, in Moldavia. Owing to a lapse of memory on his mother's part he believed all his life that his birthday was November 18, 1829, but an examination of the local records showed that he was born on the 16th (28th new style); however, he says, "now that I am in my sixtieth year it is rather late to alter this family fête day, and so I shall continue to celebrate the 18th (30th) of November." His father, Gregor Rubinstein, was a Polish Jew, and his mother, Kaléria Christofòrovna (née Levenstein), a German Jewess, born in Prussian Silesia.

About the time of Anton's birth the oppression of Jews by the Emperor Nicholas had reached the highest degree of cruel persecution. To escape this and save his possessions, Roman Rubinstein, Anton's grandfather, gathered together all the members of the several branches of the Rubinstein family, sixty in all, and had them baptized as Christians. Four years after this event, when Anton was five, his father moved to Moscow, where he started a pin and pencil factory. The importance of this event in Anton's life cannot be overestimated, for if his family had remained in the small village, he would not have had an opportunity to cultivate his musical proclivities.

It was his mother who first discovered his talent. She had received a good musical education, played the piano well, and often noticed how her oldest little boy listened while she played, or else sang to himself, or tried to make a toy violin. So she made up her mind to become his teacher, and the little curly headed boy learned so rapidly that she soon found him more than a match; whereupon she resolved to give him the benefit of the best instruction obtainable in Moscow. Professor Alexander Villoing, who was reputed the best local teacher, was consulted, and he came to hear Anton play. "My mother then told him how she had earnestly hoped that he would consent to become

my teacher, but that owing to our limited means she was unable to pay a large price for lessons. Villoing hastened to reply that he was not pressed for money, and would willingly undertake my musical education free of charge, and with him my lessons began and ended, for no other teacher did I have."

Anton was between five and six years old when his mother commenced to teach him. She gave more time to him than to her other children, as she found him a more apt pupil. Professor Villoing was not much of a virtuoso, but he knew how to teach, and was especially careful in regard to the correct position of the hands, and the production of a good tone. In his absence Anton's mother watched over his exercises. "In those days the method of teaching was very stern," writes Rubinstein; "ferules, punches and even slaps on the face were of frequent occurrence." But the result was a thorough foundation in technique, and Rubinstein adds that in all his life he never met a better teacher than Villoing. Though a strict master, he soon came to seem like a friend or second father to Anton, who found his lessons a pleasure and a recreation: "I cannot call them lessons; they were a musical education."

So great was Anton's interest in music and his progress so rapid, that his general education was rather neglected at the time. "I do not remember when or how I learned my alphabet."

Villoing was evidently proud of his pupil who, when he was in his tenth year, began to be talked of in Moscow as a prodigy; and he finally succeeded in overcoming Gregor Rubinstein's opposition, and Anton was permitted to make his first public appearance at a charity concert, on July 23, 1839. He played pieces by Hummel, Thalberg, Liszt, Field and Henselt, was warmly applauded, and a local paper spoke of his "beautiful, clear tone," and the wonderful manner in which the child artist entered into the composers' ideas.

The success of this concert convinced Mme. Rubinstein that her son was destined to be a great artist, and in order to afford him greater advantages than Moscow offered, she was now anxious to send him to the Paris Conservatory. Villoing not only approved this plan but even offered to accompany his pupil. Strange to say Anton was refused admission to the Conservatory. "Whether they considered me too young, or too far advanced in music, I cannot tell, but I suspect that Villoing, who regarded me as his own creation, was reluctant to part with me, or to intrust my musical education to any other than himself, even to the teachers in the Paris Conservatory." Possibly the policy of Cherubini had something to do with his exclusion. Seventeen years previously that austere musician had refused Liszt (then 12 years of age) permission to enter the same conservatory because he disliked prodigies. To some extent this dislike was justified, as the world was at that time full of prodigies, most of whom came to naught.

Anton did not feel disappointed at this exclusion. His lessons with Villoing continued and he was allowed to give a few concerts in the piano rooms of some great manufacturers, on which occasions he met Liszt, Chopin and other famous musicians. Villoing was pleased with the success of his pupil, who writes, however, that he looked on all this in the light of an amusement, and that, while his teacher was strict, he himself was "a great rogue." Thus the year spent in Paris was of little benefit to his musical progress, except in so far as it gave him opportunity to hear Chopin (at his own house) and Liszt, whose playing made him cry and who, at one of Anton's concerts, embraced the lad and predicted that he would be his successor. Liszt advised Villoing to take his pupil to Germany for further study; but before acting on this advice a series of concerts was given by Anton in England, Holland, Norway, Sweden and Germany. In London he does not appear to have attracted much attention, although the *Examiner* devoted to him a long article in which these significant lines occur: "To gratify those whose taste leads them to prefer fashionable music, he plays the fantasias of Liszt, Thalberg, Herz, etc; but when exhibiting before real connoisseurs he chooses for his purpose the elaborate compositions of the old German school — the learned and difficult fugues of Sebastian Bach and Handel — all which he executes with an ease as well as precision which very few masters are able to attain; and to add to the wonder, he plays everything from memory, this faculty being, apparently, as fully developed in him as it is now and then, though rarely, in adults who have perfected it by long practice."

He was also received by "the young and handsome Queen Victoria," as he writes, "and subse-

quently in all the aristocratic circles. Although but a boy of 12, I felt no shyness or timidity in the presence of these formal lords and ladies." When he returned to St. Petersburg, after an absence of four years, he was summoned to the Winter Palace and presented to the Imperial family. The Emperor, who was in a playful mood, caressed him and exclaimed, "How is your Excellency?" On another occasion, after a charity concert, he was, at the desire of the Empress Alexandra, placed on a table and caressed by Her Majesty. "I looked at my concerts in the light of a plaything," he adds, "like a child that I was, and as I was regarded." He also relates that at that time he was a devoted imitator of Liszt, "of his manners and movements, his trick of tossing back his hair, his way of holding his hands, of all the peculiar movements of his playing, which naturally called forth a smile from those who had heard Liszt, and perhaps also increased the interest felt in the boy-virtuoso."

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From a photograph from life by W. & D. Downey, London.

The proceeds of these concerts were just sufficient to defray traveling expenses; but Anton had received from aristocratic admirers several valuable presents which were pawned (never to be redeemed) on his return to Moscow, and the proceeds from which were greatly needed, as his father's business affairs had not prospered. His mother, meanwhile, had made up her mind that the life of a traveling prodigy was not the best way of developing her son's talent, so she decided to take him to Berlin with his sister Lùba and his younger brother, Nicholas. Of this brother Anton says that "besides his excellent technique he had already given signs of ability in original composition; in fact he began to compose at the age of five. "They arrived in Berlin in 1844, and remained for two years. Both the brothers took lessons in composition of Dehn, and Nicholas also had piano lessons of Kullak, while Anton from this time on was his own piano teacher. He gave no concerts during these two years, but played occasionally in society and at clubs. In composition he could not have had a better instructor than Dehn, who was also the teacher of Glinka and Kiel. Anton's mother was also acquainted with Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer, on whom she called occasionally with her children and took counsel regarding their musical education.

In 1846 Anton's father died, his mother returned to Moscow with Lùba and Nicholas, while Anton, a youth of sixteen, started for Vienna to carve his fortune. The fact that Vienna harbored Liszt, "the King of musicians," on whose protection he relied, was one reason why he selected that city in

preference to any other musical centre. But Liszt was not in his usual amiable mood when Anton called, and he gave him to understand that every man must pave his own way. Nor did the letters of introduction which he had brought from Berlin open a friendly house to him. He gave some lessons for a mere pittance, lived in an attic, and often had, for several days, not enough money to pay for his dinner, and so went hungry.

His only solace was composition. Before leaving Berlin he had already succeeded in finding publishers for a few of the pieces, including a study for the piano on the subject of Undine, which was even honored by a notice from the pen of that professional discoverer of geniuses, Schumann, who praised it for its melodious character, while objecting to some errors in the harmony, and pointing out that in a piece by so young a composer, real originality was of course out of the question. Concerning his Viennese compositions in the attic, Rubinstein says: "What did I not write in these days of hunger! Every sort of composition, not only in the department of music — operas, oratorios, symphonies and songs — but articles philosophic, literary, and critical as well." Of this music but a small part appeared in print, and in most cases the young composer had to be glad to find a publisher without expecting any remuneration.

Two months after Anton had taken up his residence in the garret, Liszt called upon him and tried to make amends for his previous curt behavior by inviting him to dinner; an invitation which the poor fellow accepted only too gladly, for the pangs of hunger had been gnawing him for several days. "After this," he writes, "I was always on good terms with Liszt until the time of his death."

In 1847 he undertook a concert tour in Hungary with the flutist Heindel. At its close these two, with another friend, decided to emigrate to America, via Berlin and Hamburg. When they got to Berlin in 1848 Rubinstein told his former teacher of their plan, but Dehn dissuaded him, and so he abandoned his companions, and took up his residence in Berlin once more, "Leading the Bohemian life of an artist — feasting when money was plenty and going hungry when it was gone." But 1848 was not a good year for getting an artistic footing in Berlin, for the great revolution had broken out. He witnessed some of its stormy scenes, but his occupation was gone; there was no demand for lessons or concerts, and finally he concluded that the wisest thing he could do was to return to St. Petersburg.

The sixth chapter of Rubinstein's autobiography is devoted to a detailed narrative of the adventures which befell him on his return to his native country — incidents which he presents in an amusing light, but which must have been very annoying, if not alarming, at the time. He had forgotten to provide himself with a passport, in consequence of which he narrowly escaped arrest, and was even threatened with deportation to Siberia. What was worse still, the police suspected the box in which he carried his manuscripts of being a receptacle of seditious documents in cryptograph, so it was detained, and the contents afterwards sold to merchants as waste paper before Rubinstein had heard of their being advertised; and so his early works were lost, excepting such as he reproduced from memory.

The five years from 1849 to 1854 were spent mostly in St. Petersburg where the young pianist-composer, now in his twenties, continued to lead the same kind of life that he had led in Berlin — rich one moment, poor the next, indulging in luxuries to-day and walking to-morrow because he could not pay his cab fare. In giving lessons he adapted his charges to the wealth of his pupils, some paying him one rouble an hour, others twenty-five.

The Grand Duchess Helen, sister of the Emperor Nicholas, a great patroness of the arts and artists, took him under her protection, and made him "accompanist in general to the court singers" and gave him frequent opportunity to play before the emperor and the aristocracy at her soirées to which the best artists were always invited.

It was during these years, too, that he came forward prominently for the first time as a composer. "I wrote operas in Italian and German," he says, "for at that time, with the exception of Glinka, there were no Russian composers — nothing but amateurs, dilettanti landlords, dilettanti clerks; musicians — real artists — who looked upon their art as the very essence of their lives, were nowhere to be found. * * * * * The Russian opera was as yet in embryo, as far as regards the singers."

The first of Rubinstein's operas was *Dimitry*

Donskoi, which was produced in 1852. The composer conducted personally, but the singing was so wretched that the opera failed to please the public, although in later years it won some popularity. At the request of the Grand Duchess Helen, he next wrote three one-act operas to illustrate some of the various nationalities of the vast Russian Empire. One of these, produced in 1853, was entitled *Thomas the Fool*, but the singing was so outrageous that Rubinstein fled from the theatre, and on the following day he appeared at the office to demand the return of his score. The other two of these operas, *Vengeance* and the *Siberian Hunter*, were never performed; indeed, ill luck once more befell him regarding his early works, for the MMS. of these operas were burned with the theatre. A copy of the *Siberian Hunter*, however, still exists, as Mr. M'Arthur informs us, in Rubinstein's musical library at Peterhof.

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A most characteristic silhouette sketch by Mrs. Behr made in 1886 in St. Petersburg. The fac-simile autograph is Rubinstein's name in Russian.

In the mean time Mme. Rubinstein's policy of interrupting her son's career as a child prodigy and causing him to settle down to study his art seriously, had been proven a wise course. For, had Anton continued to amuse the curiosity of prodigy lovers, he might have degenerated into a mere tricky virtuoso, or come to grief entirely through overworked nerves. Instead of this he had allowed his faculties to mature, and now, thirteen years after his first concert tour, the young man of 25 made up his mind to show the world what he had learned in the interim. A concert tour was undertaken, lasting from 1854 to 1858, during which time he visited the principal cities of Germany, Austria, France and England. His main object was not to shine as a pianist, but to introduce himself to the world as a composer. But, as usual in such cases, the public and the cities were much quicker in appreciating his interpretative than his creative genius.

The question is often asked whether Rubinstein was ever a pupil of Liszt. He was not — at least he never took lessons of Liszt. In a wider sense, however, he may be called a pupil of Liszt, for we have already seen how greatly the little Anton had been affected by Liszt's playing in Paris, and how he had copied his method and his mannerisms.

In 1854 once more he came under Liszt's influence. At that time Liszt was living at Weimar, the centre of an admiring host of pupils and musicians, the patron-general, so to speak, of all young and ambitious composers, including the exiled Wagner. It was natural that Rubinstein, eager for recognition as a creative musician, should also have turned to Weimar. He was cordially received by Liszt, in whose house he lived five or six months, dining at the house of the Princess Witgenstein, who had been the cause of Liszt's giving up the life of a virtuoso and following the more thorny path of a composer. But though Liszt, during these months, may have often played for Rubinstein and given him hints, indirectly, in piano playing, he failed to make an impression on him as a composer; for Rubinstein writes in his autobiography that he always esteemed Liszt as "a great performer, a performing virtuoso, indeed,

but no composer;" adding, "I shall doubtless be devoured piecemeal for giving such an opinion."

The odd fact is mentioned by Rubinstein that in Russia he was considered a German and in Germany a Russian. But although at the time of the Crimean war all Europe was hostile to Russia, this hostility did not extend to the domain of music, and Rubinstein, the pianist, was applauded everywhere as the true successor of Liszt. To England he could not go at first because it was closed to all Russians; but after the war, in 1857, he went there, and although some of the critics attacked him, popular sentiment was overwhelmingly on his side, and the conductor of the Musical Union, John Ellah, wrote that never since the last appearance of Mendelssohn in 1847 had so much enthusiasm been expressed as at Rubinstein's début in 1857.

The winter of 1856 to 1857 Rubinstein had spent at Nice, where the Grand Duchess Helen had bought a villa, and the widowed Empress Alexandra was lamenting her late husband, and the result of the Crimean war. At the numerous social gatherings of this winter, musical subjects were frequently discussed, says Rubinstein, "and all acknowledged that the state of music in Russia was deplorable. We all agreed, unanimously — the Grand Duchess favoring it particularly — that on her return to St. Petersburg something must be done for the musical education of Russian society, and it was there in Nice, under the beautiful skies of Italy, that the first conception of the Russian Musical Society in St. Petersburg took its origin."

Having returned to St. Petersburg, Rubinstein devoted all his energies to the founding of the national Conservatory, and it was in 1862 that Russia received its first high school of music. Previous to that, musical education had consisted chiefly in the memorizing of a few simple tunes in the family circle. There were no professional musicians but only amateurs, and the profession of musician was not recognized officially. To secure the necessary funds for the conservatory, Rubinstein and his colleagues went about from house to house, like Russian priests, soliciting subscriptions. Concerts were also given to add to the funds. Rubinstein assumed the directorship, and such famous teachers as Wieniawsky and Leschetizki asked only a rouble a lesson. The result was that the classes were soon crowded and the school prospered in spite of its enemies, who denounced the school as the production of "a set of Germans, professional pedants," and who opened a rival school where tuition was given free. That Rubinstein should have enemies among the Russian musicians was not to be wondered at, for he had, some years previously, written for a Viennese journal an article on Russian music in which he spoke very highly of Glinka, while the other composers fared ill at his hands.

That he should have given so much of his time to the elementary and difficult task of founding a Conservatory, is the more to his credit when we bear in mind that all this time he might have made a fortune by giving concerts in the various cities of Europe. For several years, however, he confined his labors chiefly to St. Petersburg, where he often appeared as pianist and conductor. In 1865 he married Vera Tschekouanoff, who accompanied him in a concert tour the same year. In 1867 he resigned from the position of director of the Conservatory and once more devoted himself chiefly to concerts. The number of pupils had in the meantime grown to 700, and among them we find such eminent names as Tschaïkowsky and Madame Essipoff. The cause of his leaving the Conservatory was a disagreement with its professors as to the objects and methods of instruction.

Of the concert tours which now followed, the most gigantic was that which he undertook to America in 1872 with the violinist Wieniawsky. For 215 concerts he was to receive $40,000 and the violinist half that sum; and this contract was carried out to the letter.

"For a time," he writes, "I was entirely under the control of the manager. May heaven preserve us from such slavery! Under these conditions there is no chance for art — one grows into an automaton, performing mechanical work; no dignity remains to the artist, he is lost. * * * It often happened that we gave two or three concerts in as many different cities on the same day. The receipts and the success were invariably gratifying, but it was all so tedious that I began to despise myself and my art." This, combined with his great aversion to an ocean trip, has prevented him from returning to America, although managers have often offered him immense sums, the highest being $125,000 for fifty concerts, which he refused in 1891. It is interesting to note that Rubinstein

Leipzig den 2ten ~~Oktober~~ November 1854

Hoch geehrter Herr

Da Sie Wünschen mir das Instrument des Herrn Boehm für meinen Concertsaal zu senden, so will ich Ihnen auf dem Wege von Schotts, Hofmeisters &c. Anfragen antworten. Vorerst muß ich bemerken, daß Sie mit den 6 Etuden und 6 Preludien genug Lagerstücke haben, und wir einen großen Vorrath Ihrer Fabrikate müßten, um Sie auf Ihre 3 Concerte Stücke die Sie auf Ihrer Liste angezeigt haben einen Concert für Klavier allein anhängen. Dazu noch die Benachrichtigung, daß wir den Briefwechsel mit Ihnen in steter Verbindung zu bleiben und möglichst schnellen Herausgaben unseres bis jetzt fertigen Verlags, zu bewerkstelligen — Also Ihr Honorar-Anspruch für die Werken ist ja 300 Rth. mit dem Octett und 250 Rth. ohne Octett. Indeß glaube ich daß die Herausgabe des Octetts wenigstens noch so lange Anstand haben wird, bis unser Lager für Klavier nicht vollständig ist.

Wenn Sie so gut sein wollten mir bis 12 Uhr die Antwort zuzuschicken, würden Sie mir sehr verbunden sein und die Manuscripte um 3 Uhr in das Magazin bringen.

Mit hoher Achtung ergebenst

Ant. Rubinstein

Fac-simile autograph letter from Rubinstein to one of his publishers.

found the Americans more musical than the English, whom he regards as the least musical nation in the world, only two per cent. of them having, in his opinion, any knowledge of this art, while of the French sixteen per cent., and of the Germans, fifty per cent. are musical.

The proceeds of this American tour laid the foundation of Rubinstein's prosperity. On his return to Russia he bought a villa at Peterhof, near St. Petersburg, which thenceforth remained his refuge, where he could compose without interruption in the intervals between his concert tours. In 1885–1886 he prepared a grand finale for his career as pianist by giving a series of seven historical concerts in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Vienna, Berlin, London, Paris and Leipsic. They were intended to illustrate the gradual development of piano-forte music; and with his usual generosity he repeated each concert on the subsequent day for the benefit of students. The instructive programmes are reprinted in M'Arthur's biography, pages 86–90.

In 1887 Rubinstein was asked to resume the directorship of the national Conservatory and accepted the offer on condition that he could manage everything in his own way. This he proceeded to do with a vengeance, for he not only turned away pupils, and completely altered the programme of study, but also sent off professors and gave others lower places. The result was a great outcry and commotion, but in the end things adjusted themselves again. Although he refused to play any more in public except for charity, he continued to give, for the benefit of students and privileged friends, lecture-recitals at which, according to Mr. M'Arthur, he was almost always in good humor, enthusiastic, "In love with the music he was interpreting, and his remarks to the pupils delightfully witty and learned."

Only one more event of special biographic importance remains to be recorded — the official jubilee on Nov. 30, 1889, of his first public appearance as pianist fifty years previously, coinciding within a few months with his sixtieth birthday. The festivities lasted six days and were participated in by the royal family, the aristocracy and the artistic circles of the Russian capital.

There was a reception at which fifty-four addresses were presented to Rubinstein, and a number of pieces played by former pupils of the Conservatory, including Tschaïkowsky. There were also concerts at which Rubinstein played, and performances were given of his *Tower of Babel* and *Feramors*, and of his new opera, *Goruscha*, the festivities winding up with a grand ball. "During the first day," writes Mr. M'Arthur in the New York *Musical Courier* (Jan. 15, 1890), "300 telegrams were received, and Rubinstein was presented with the citizenship of the borough of Peterhof — a great honor in Russia — an annuity of 3000 roubles from the Czar's private treasury, and numerous local and foreign honors." Many years previously he had already been appointed Imperial concert-director and court pianist, and in 1869 he had received the Vladimir order, which raised him to noble rank. In 1877 the President of France, MacMahon, handed him personally the order of the Legion of Honor.

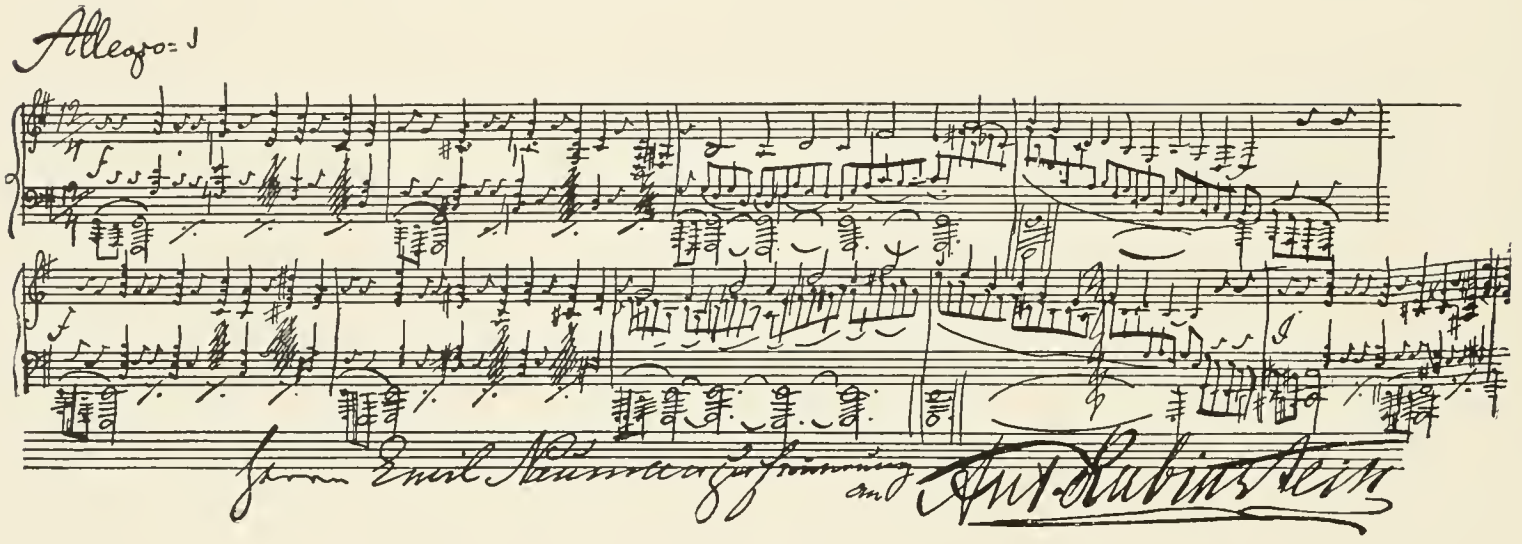
Rubinstein's head has often been compared to Beethoven's, and his long, shaggy, dark hair, thrown back from his broad, high forehead, gives him a strikingly leonine appearance. "I am simply much hair and little nose," he once said of himself, and Mr. M'Arthur adds these graphic touches: "A peculiar droop of the upper eye-lids at the right and left sides of the forehead, gives an odd expression to his face, and the serene thoughtfulness of his forehead is strongly at variance with the lines of passion and impetuosity about his mouth. He wears neither beard nor moustachios."

His extensive travels made him a good linguist. He understands Italian and Spanish, and besides Russian speaks German, French and English fluently. He was always fond of good company and a game of whist. He is very sensitive to female charms and chivalrous toward women; the amount of marriage dowers he has given to penniless maidens when he was amassing wealth on his concert tours is said to be a standing joke among his friends. Had he saved all his earnings he might be a millionaire. A foot-note in his autobiography states that "It has been ascertained that during the twenty-eight years which have elapsed since the foundation of the Conservatory, Rubinstein devoted the proceeds of his charity concerts, amounting to more than 300,000 roubles, to the benefit of the poor and to other good works." The time which he gave to the Conservatory and its pupils, financially considered, was worth at least another sum of that size.

At the piano, Rubinstein, in his childhood, imitated the mannerisms of Liszt, as we have seen, but in mature years he preserved a quiet, dignified deportment which added much to the impressiveness of his performances. His massive, manly, leonine appearance in itself seemed to augment the force of his playing of a tumultuous, agitated movement; but the same hands which at one moment seemed to be the paws of an angry lion, at the next moment danced on the keyboard with the dainty lightness of fairy fingers. No one has ever *sung* more beautifully on the keyboard than Rubinstein, no one ever brought an audience to a higher pitch of excitement than he has by his impetuous exhibitions of passionate pianism. For several decades critics have delighted in making comparisons between Rubinstein and Dr. Hans von Bülow. The latter is represented as an objective pianist, who interprets each composer truthfully, as an object is reflected in a mirror, and Rubinstein as a subjective pianist who adds to each piece more or less of his own personality. There is some truth in this; for Rubinstein is a genius, and a genius cannot help coloring everything with his own moods and passions; but it would be entirely wrong to say that Rubinstein's Mozart is less Mozartean, his Beethoven less Beethovenish, his Schumann less Schumannesque than Bülow's. His practices as a teacher as well as his playing refute this notion. He was always angry when a pupil brought him an "edited" edition of the classics, and insisted on having the unadulterated article. In cases where he undoubtedly gave a personal version of a piece — as for instance of Chopin's funeral march, which he began very softly, swelling it gradually to fortissimo and ending again pianissimo — as if to suggest a passing procession, he did not allow his pupils to copy his example. If at times he has allowed his hands to run away with his judgment, like a pair of unruly horses, it was less with the view to dazzle the public with a display of digital virtuosity than because his animal spirits overpowered him. He never played at the audience but only for himself, it seemed; and to an ignorant American who once asked him why he did'nt play "something for the soul," he said, "well, I have played for the soul, for *my* soul, not for yours."

Being a creative genius, Rubinstein preferred composing to practising, and in consequence his technique occasionally became "rusty," and wrong notes were struck. But neither this nor his occasional capriciousness in the treatment of a composition, nor the fact that he hardly ever played a piece twice in the same way, detracted in the least from his popularity; his concerts were always crowded, the enthusiasm unbounded. And the secret of this success was that Rubinstein, (as Wagner said of Liszt) did not simply reproduce when he was playing, but actually re-produced or re-created the pieces. When he could give so much pleasure to the musical world by his playing, it seemed cruel that he should have ceased his career as performer with his historical concerts so many years ago; but there was a special reason for this in the gradual weakening of his memory. He himself relates that up to his fiftieth year his memory was prodigious, but that since that time he has been conscious of a growing weakness. "I began to feel an uncertainty; something like a nervous dread often takes possession of me while I am on the stage in presence of a large audience. * * * This sense of uncertainty has often inflicted upon me tortures only to be compared with those of the Inquisition, while the public listening to me imagines that I am perfectly calm."

What it means to have a musical memory like his is graphically shown by the figures provided by an enthusiast in Vienna who made his pupils count all the notes played by Rubinstein at one concert and found that there were 62,990. As Rubinstein could have given more than a dozen such concerts without exhausting his mental repertory, he must have had about a million notes stowed away in their proper place in his memory! No wonder that such elaborate machinery should occasionally get out of gear after forty years of constant use. Mr. Joseffy relates an incident he once witnessed at a Rubinstein concert. The Russian lion was playing the Schumann concerto when suddenly his memory failed him, and for several pages of the score he could not find his place. The conductor, becoming nervous, handed him his score, but Rubinstein seized it and angrily dashed it on the floor — which action seems to have aroused his memory to a sense of its duty, and the rest of the piece was played with tremendous passion.



Fac-simile autograph manuscript written for E. Naumann, the musical historian.

Rubinstein, the pianist, is still much better known to the public than Rubinstein, the composer, although his activity as a creative musician is even more astounding than his skill as a virtuoso. On the occasion of his Jubilee the publisher of most of his works, Bartholf Senff of Leipsic, issued a "Rubinstein Katalog" containing a list of all his compositions, excepting the not inconsiderable number of his early works that were lost or accidentally burnt — including a piano concerto and two operas. This catalogue contains forty-eight pages, and in looking through it one never ceases wondering why so few of these pieces are known to the public, and where the composer found time, amid his labors at the Conservatory, and his constant travels as virtuoso, to write such an enormous number of pieces. As he is still busy with his pen, a definitive list of his works cannot be given. The "Katolog" (1889) ends with opus 113, but this does not include ten youthful compositions, and many other pieces (page 21–24 of "Katalog") that have no opus number; and it must also be remembered that a single "opus" often includes from half-a-dozen to a dozen or more songs or pianoforte pieces. Of his operas Senff has published not only the vocal scores, but all the principal songs separately, with arrangements for piano solo, for violin, for violoncello, etc.— for a full list of which the reader must be referred to the "Katalog," in which he will find many a gem that will delight his soul. In this brief essay only his principal works can be referred to.

His own instrument is naturally the most abundantly provided for. In the pianoforte solo section of the "Katalog" there are no fewer than 142 publications of single pieces, collections, operatic scores and potpourries, arrangements of songs, etc. Among his best-known pieces are the Melodie in F, opus 3, the Romances, opus 26, No. 1, and opus 44, No. 1, the Barcarolle, opus 30, the Impromptu, opus 44, No. 3. His pianoforte pieces might be divided into three classes. The first is nothing but drawing-room music, sometimes rather trivial and insipid; the second embraces a number of pieces which show the influence on Rubinstein's genius of Chopin, Mendelssohn, and occasionally of Schumann and Schubert; the third includes many compositions, especially of the later period, which are Rubinstein, pure and simple. The influence of Chopin is especially perceptible in such pieces as the Mazourka, opus 5, and the Melancolie, opus 51; while Mendelssohn peeps out of the Romance, opus 26, No. 1, and many of his weaker pieces. The Valse Allemande, opus 82, is Schubert in every bar, evidently intentionally, and the literal quotation of the *Freischütz* Waltz in No. 5 of this piece recalls the fact that Rubinstein is also a great admirer of Weber. Of his piano pieces for four hands special favorable mention is due the delightful series of pieces grouped together under the name of Bal Costumé. These have also been arranged for orchestra, in which dress they are still more charming.

In writing for the piano Rubinstein followed the modern tendency towards short forms. He wrote only four sonatas. But in his concertos, chamber music and orchestral works he strictly followed classical models and precedent. Of his six concertos the best known are the fourth and fifth, which deserve to be ranked with the concertos of Schumann and Beethoven. In them the piano assumes a symphonic rôle which makes it equivalent to a second orchestra. His chamber music includes sonatas for violin and piano, 'cello and piano, trios, quartets, etc. His early trios are rather Mendelssohnish, but the later ones are highly original. In the andante of the fourth, opus 85, there is a cantabile of simply divine beauty —a melody such as no other composer but Chopin or Schubert could have written. It is first taken up by the violoncello, an instrument for which, in my opinion, Rubinstein has written more admirably than any other master. The three Morceaux, opus 11, No. 2, are delightfully melodious and Rubinsteinesque. Of his two sonatas for 'cello and piano the first is the better known, but is inferior in value to the second, the slow movement of which is in that broad, melodious vein, quivering with emotion, which no other living composer, and but two or three of the dead, could command.

There are splendid things, too, in his two concertos for 'cello, and in his violin concertos. All of Rubinstein's chamber music is shamefully neglected in our concert halls, but its day will come. Special attention may also be called to the marvellous passage in G major for piano alone, in the second movement of this sonata—a passage which is perhaps more characteristically Rubinsteinesque than anything else he has written.

In all of his chamber music Rubinstein shows such remarkable skill and true musical instinct in the treatment of instruments that one would expect to find him in his orchestral works one of the greatest masters of instrumentation. But his orchestration, while often fine, and sometimes superb, is, on the whole, his weakest point; and the cause of this must be sought in his stubborn and persistent hostility to the innovations of Wagner, Liszt and Berlioz—even to those which other conservative composers have approved and appropriated. His most important orchestral works are six symphonies, an overture triomphale, three musical "character-pictures," *Faust*, *Ivan the Terrible* and *Don Quixote* (the last with fine humorous touches), and an *Eroica Fantasia*. Here may also be mentioned the exquisite ballet music which he wrote for the operas *Feramors*, *Demon* and *Nero*, the last named being especially fascinating and piquant. In this department Rubinstein has no rival, either among the dead or the living. He has also written an elaborate ballet in three acts entitled *The Vine*. Of his symphonies the grandest are the second and fourth, called the *Ocean* and the *Dramatic*. The Ocean symphony appeared first in four movements; later on the composer added an adagio and a scherzo, and later still a seventh movement, "The Storm"— so that there are now three editions of this work, which is generally considered his greatest, although future generations will probably esteem the *Dramatic* symphony still more highly.

In his book on "Music and its Masters," (1891) Rubinstein justly names Schubert as one of the five greatest composers the world has seen, in spite of certain faults due to the fact that he never used a file. "God created woman," he says, "certainly the most beautiful of his works, *but full of faults*—he did not file at her, being convinced that she would neutralize all imperfections by her charms; so Schubert with his compositions—his melody outweighs all faults, if there are any." Doubtless Rubinstein here intended, between the lines, an apology of himself too. His critics have pointed out with tiresome iteration that the gold in his works is mixed with too much alloy. This is doubtless true, but criticism should not be synonymous with fault-finding, and where there is so much melodic gold as in Rubinstein, critics would be more just if they more frequently called attention to that, and to the distinct vein of true creative genius that runs through most of his works.

In the same book Rubinstein places instrumental above vocal music; and here again it is easy to read between the lines that he does this for personal reason. As a whole he has been more successful in his instrumental than in his vocal works. The lyric songs must be excepted; in the department of the Lied he has only three or four superiors, and his songs are the most widely known of all his works. Among them are many jewels of the purest water, especially those which have an oriental coloring, like the "Asra," "Pan-

doro," "Mein Herz Schmückt Sich," etc. His vocal duos are also charming. Some of his songs exist in three and four separate arrangements for the piano.

It is strange that Rubinstein, if he really considered vocal and operatic music so inferior to instrumental, should have written as many operas as Wagner. The list includes the Russian works: *Dimitri Donskoi*, the *Siberian Hunter*, *Toms the Fool*, *The Revenge*, *The Demon*, *Kalaschnikoff*; the German operas: *The Children of the Heath*, *Feramors*, *the Maccabees*, *Nero*, *Sulamith*, and the one-act comic operas, *Among Robbers* and *The Parrot*. *The Demon* is popular in Russia where it has been performed perhaps 200 times, but outside of Russia only *Feramors*, the *Maccabees* and *Nero* have had any success, and that only temporary. Like Schumann's *Genoveva*, these operas are brimful of good music, but they are not dramatic. Rubinstein was unfortunate in appearing with his operas at a time when Wagner was teaching the world the magic power of genuine dramatic music. At an earlier period, when musical interest alone, without dramatic realism, sufficed to make operas popular (as witness the success of the Italian composers), he might have been the hero of the day. He knew instinctively what the trouble was and consequently hated Wagner cordially. Had he been more sensible and tried to *learn* from Wagner, his operas would not have been such failures. At the same time it must be said that with all their dramatic shortcomings these operas deserve to be heard more frequently, for the sake of their often ravishingly beautiful music.

The same may be said of his oratorios, or rather sacred operas, in which he has tried to revive the practice of the first oratorio composer Cavalieri (17th century) — and which Handel would have tried in England had not the censor interfered — of giving oratorios with costume, scenery and action. Rubinstein's plan, as explained in a long essay in the *Leipzig Signale*, was to erect special theatres in large cities for the performance of such sacred operas; and he sums up his plan in these words: "Thus I myself allowed my *Paradise Lost* to appear as an oratorio, although in my imagination I had composed it for the stage; later, however, prompted by my idea, which I had never abandoned, I changed it and called it a sacred opera. The same thing happened with the *Tower of Babel*. And since I have not given up hope to this day that my plan will sooner or later be carried out, I am writing my *Cain and Abel*, *Moses*, the *Song of Songs* and *Christus* in this manner, no matter, whether the day of their scenic representation may ever come or not." Of the sacred operas here mentioned only *Cain and Abel* and *Christus* remain to be written.

Henry T. Finck

PUBLISHERS' NOTE. — At the time the above was written, Anton Gregor Rubinstein was in the full vigor of health. He died of heart disease at Peternof, near St. Petersburg, on November 20, 1894.

PETER ILITSCH TSCHAÏKOWSKY

Reproduction of a photograph from life by Sarony, of New York.

PETER ILITSCH TSCHAÏKOWSKY

THE development of musical ability among the Russians will form one of the most fascinating subjects of study for the future historian of music. The influence of racial traits and of natural environments as revealed in the music of their composers is striking. Perhaps the more thoughtful student may even read the music of these northern masters by the light of a subtle saying of Confucius: "If you would know whether a country is well governed and of good morals, listen to its music." The deep gloom and insatiable unrest of the oppressed subjects of a cruel autocracy may be discovered in all Russian music. Among the few who have sent the message of the north around the world of tones, Peter Ilitsch Tschaïkowsky stands forth a conspicuous figure by reason of the intensity of the nationalism of his works, and the rugged, sombre eloquence with which he makes the national feeling exercise an influence upon every hearer.

It is not many years since the name of Tschaïkowsky was unknown to the lovers of music in America. Now his compositions are very familiar in those cities where the higher forms of music are sufficiently well understood to enable the public to meet a new style without being plunged into a state of doubt. Indeed, the best work of all the Slav composers finds a ready appreciation in America, where a considerable part of the country possesses physical and climatic conditions not unlike those of Russia. The American mind, accustomed to the larger forms, the vaster expanses, and the more capricious moods of nature, is well prepared to sympathize with Russian music, and it is largely on this account that Tschaïkowsky figures so much oftener upon the concert programmes of New York, Boston and Chicago than on those of London and Paris. Familiar, however, as his compositions are to us, we know little about the life of Tschaïkowsky; and indeed it has not been one of those lives which make fascinating biography, for his career has been that of a peaceful and industrious composer. The writer of this article is indebted to Mr. Tschaïkowsky himself and to his Moscow publisher, Mr. P. T. Jurgenson, for the facts herein given.

Peter Ilitsch Tschaïkowsky was born on April 25, 1840, at Votkinsk, in the government of Viatka, in the Ural district, where his father was employed as an engineer in the government mines. The composer says that, like all in whom a real musical bent has shown itself, he displayed an inclination for music at an early age. When he was five years old he began to take lessons of a lady, and in a few months was able to play such things as Kalkbrenner's "Le Fou" and other fashionable salon pieces of the time, so that he frequently astonished his friends in the Ural country with his virtuosity. However, his parents did not intend that he should be a musician, nor yet a poor and hard working government employee. When the boy was ten years old, his father was appointed director of the Technological Institute at St. Petersburg, and after the removal of the family to that city, young Tschaïkowsky was entered as a student in the law school, to which the sons of high-class government employees alone are admitted. This school possessed a musical library, a piano and a teacher, who, according to Mr. Tschaïkowsky's own account, gave such technical instruction as was deemed requisite for the accomplishments of the fashionable young students. The future composer remained nine years at this school, but he achieved very little progress in music at that time, and his parents were unable to discern any future for him better than that of a government office holder. In an article written by Otto Neitzel for "Nord und Sud," the composer

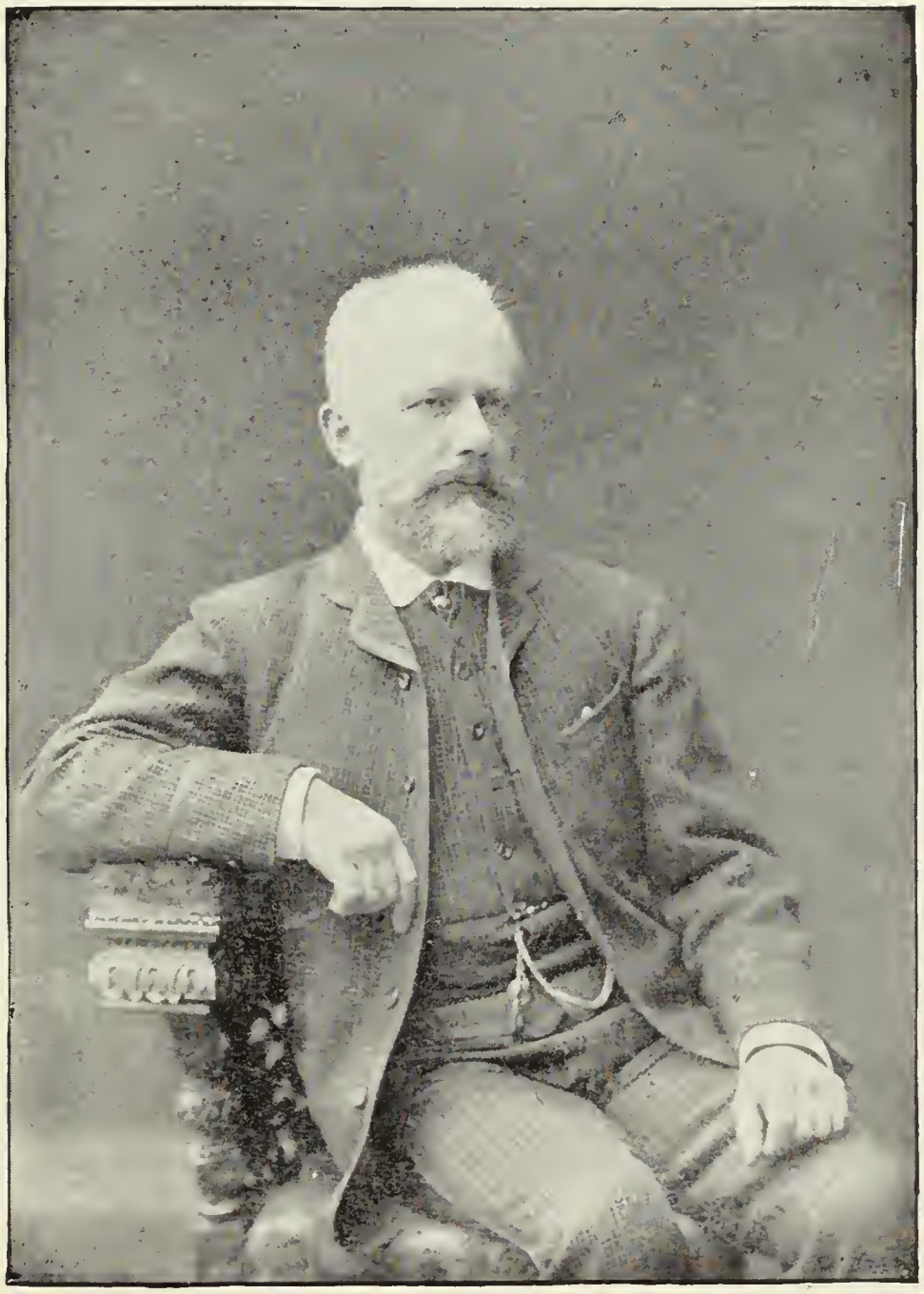
speaks as follows in an autobiographical communication to the author:

"I was seventeen years old when I made the acquaintance of an Italian singing master named Piccioli, the first person who interested himself in my musical condition. The influence he gained over me was enormous, and even now I have not quite outgrown it. He was an out-and-out enemy of German music, and through him I became an enthusiastic admirer of Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti, considering it as an accepted fact that Mozart and Beethoven did excellent service only in sending one to sleep." The composer lost his exclusive fondness for Italian music in later years, but, he adds, "there are melodies of Bellini which I can never hear without the tears rushing to my eyes." About this time his father saw that his musical gifts were worth cultivating, and put him under Rudolph Kündiger, a competent teacher of the piano, who had gone to St. Petersburg from Nuremburg. Kündiger took his pupil to concerts of classic music and his prejudices began to disappear. One night he heard Mozart's "Don Giovanni," which came to him as a revelation. "It is impossible to describe the delight, the rapture, the intoxication with which it inspired me. For weeks I did nothing but play the opera through from the vocal score. Among all the great masters Mozart is the one to whom I feel myself most attracted."

He left the law school in 1859 and was occupied two years as an under-secretary in the ministry of Justice. He was then a fairly accomplished dilletant and did not push forward his musical knowledge. In 1861 he became acquainted with a young officer who had studied under Zaremba and who was astonished at the young man's improvisations. The officer was convinced that his friend's duty was plain, and he therefore urged him earnestly to resign his office and devote himself to music. He succeeded in persuading the young man to do the latter, and at once introduced him to Zaremba. In the following year Rubinstein founded the St. Petersburg Conservatory and Zaremba became teacher of theory there. Tschaïkowsky enrolled himself as a pupil, still retaining his government position. It became impossible for him to continue his two courses of labor, and his father's kindness enabled him to devote himself wholly to music. He now entered upon an exhaustive course of study, embracing harmony, counterpoint and fugue under Zaremba, and instrumentation and composition under Rubinstein, of whom he speaks with the highest admiration. He completed his course at the Conservatory in 1865, receiving a diploma and a prize medal for a cantata on Schiller's "An die Freude."

In 1866 Rubinstein's brother Nicolas established the Moscow Conservatory and invited Tschaïkowsky to be his teacher in harmony, composition and history of music. The invitation was opportune, for the composer's father had lost his property and had been retired from office on account of old age, so the young man was glad to get an opening to earn his own living. His history during the ensuing ten years was uneventful. He spent his days in teaching and composing. He disliked teaching very heartily, and the burden of this task, together with the labor of original production, brought on in 1877 a severe attack of nervous prostration. On recovering from his illness, he returned to the Conservatory, but remained there only a short time. Since 1878 his whole labor has been composing. He passed some time in Italy and in Switzerland, but of recent years has resided most of the time at Kiev, near Moscow.

In 1891 Tschaïkowsky visited America, conducting performances of his own works in New York, Pittsburgh and other cities. His first appearance in this country was at the concert given to open the new Music Hall in New York on May 5, when he conducted the Symphony Society's orchestra in a performance of his "Marche Solenelle." On the afternoon of May 7, he conducted his third suite with splendid vigor and firmness. He aroused great enthusiasm, being recalled several times with cheers and waving of handkerchiefs. On the evening of May 8 he conducted two *a capella* choruses, a "Pater Noster" and a "Legend," which had not been heard before in this country. Apropos of his conducting he relates that up to the age of forty-six he always suffered from stage fright at the desk and was a failure as a director. But when his opera "Tscharodyeika" ("The Witch"), was in preparation, Altani, the conductor at Moscow, was taken sick, and he himself was compelled to conduct the rehearsals. He succeeded in finally mastering his terror and continued to direct even after Altani's recovery.



PETER ILITSCH TSCHAÏKOWSKY.

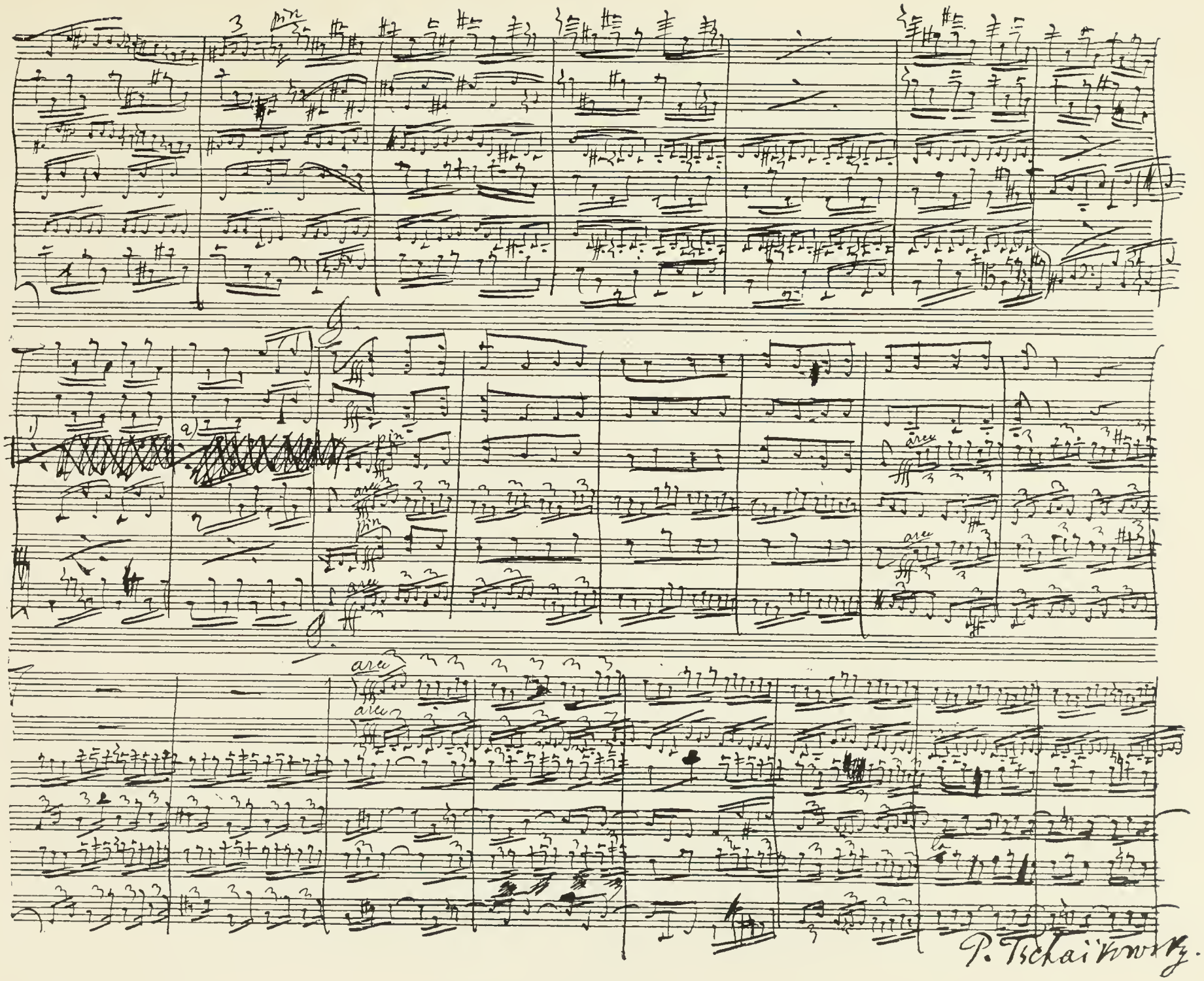
Reproduction of a photograph from life by K. Shapiro of St. Petersburg.

The following are Tschaïkowsky's principal works: operas—"Voyevoda," 1869; "Opritchnnyk," 1874; "Vakula, the Smith," 1876; "Yevgenyie Onégin," 1879; "The Maid of Orleans," 1881; "Mazeppa," 1882; "Tscharodyeika," 1887. Two masses, a Coronation cantata for soli, chorus and orchestra; five symphonies—G minor, opus 13; C, opus 17; D, opus 26; F minor, opus 36; and E Minor, opus 64; symphony on Byron's "Manfred," opus 58; fantasies for orchestra—"Francesca da Rimini," opus 32; "Romeo and Juliet," no opus number; "Hamlet," opus 67; three suites for orchestra, "Marche Slave," opus 31, Coronation march, two concertos for piano and orchestra, opus 28 in B flat minor and opus 44 in G major, and a concerto for violin and orchestra, opus 35 in D, in addition to many other orchestral works, chamber music, sonatas, songs, piano pieces, etc.

Tschaïkowsky's operas are wholly unknown outside of Russia. This is probably due to the fact that the composer trod the path opened by Glinka in his "Life for the Czar." This work was the first Russian opera, and in company with the same composer's "Russlan and Ludamilla" has been regarded by Russians as of national importance. Rubinstein's "Dimitri Donskoi" and other Russian works together with the operas of Tschaïkowsky have compelled a recognition of the existence of a school of Russian opera, though it must be admitted that outside of the Czar's dominions there are few who have heard the productions of this school and fewer still who are capable of pronouncing upon their artistic value. It would require a much more intimate acquaintance with Russian life and thought than foreigners are likely to obtain in the present circumstances to enable any American to speak judiciously of the operas of their composers. It may be said, however, arguing from general principles, that these works, employing as they do national character and the folk-melody of the people, must have an artistic value in so far at least as they lead their public by the ties of patriotism to the consideration of music in its higher forms.

In this country, and outside of Russia generally, Tschaïkowsky is known by his instrumental and choral works and songs. In America his orchestral compositions are those which have made his name most familiar, though Adele aus der Ohe, Franz Rummel, and other pianists have taught the public the value of his piano concertos. In considering the works of any Russian composer who has striven to retain national characteristics and to avoid sinking the traits of his country beneath the sea of imitation of Germany, it is necessary to take account of the important part which song plays in the daily life of the Russian. There is no people which has a more extensive list of folk-songs. They have appropriate songs for all periods of life, for all seasons of the year, for all sports and occupations. There are the Bylinas, or metric romances of the minstrels, telling the deeds of dread Cossacks or more dreadful robbers; the Kolyadki, or season songs, for Christmas and New Years, seed time and harvest; the Khorovod, or spring songs of the young; the Zaplachki, or songs of sorrow; and yet others for marriages, christenings and other ceremonies of domestic life. In what is called Great Russia the happier moods of song prevail, while in Little Russia we meet with more songs in which the irresistible melancholy of tender and sensitive natures is expressed. Curious and unrestrained rhythms, uncommon cadences, closing on the supertonic sometimes, free and pliable metres, and dark harmonies are the salient characteristics of these Russian melodies.

We would naturally expect to find some of these characteristics reproduced in the music of so distinctively national a composer as Tschaïkowsky. An examination of his most individual productions shows us that his deeper sympathy has been with the melancholy of Little Russia, which lies just to the eastward of Poland and assimilates the emotional moods of that unhappy country. Largeness of form, grandeur of outline, we find in the music of Tschaïkowsky, but always in company with an under-color, a priming (to borrow a term from a sister art) of sadness and of discontent. Despite the limits of Little Russia this under-current of feeling is an inseparable trait of the national character, and is to be accounted for by the years of oppression which the common people of the entire empire have suffered. As the writer has already noted, Confucius declared it to be his belief that the songs of a people betrayed the character of its government and its morals. In any nation where the hand of government is so powerful as to influence the hourly feeling of the people the belief of Confucius will surely find good



Fac-simile musical manuscript of a page from a Sextet for stringed instruments written by Tschaïkowsky. In the letter accompanying this manuscript, dated Jan. 26, 1892, he speaks of it as his latest composition.

support. There is always melancholy, or the result of melancholy, in Russian music, even when it is bold and vigorous, it is still sombre, foreboding and sometimes desperate.

The music of Tschaïkowsky, then, is largely distinguished by its eloquent voicing of national feeling. The composer is, in the higher sense of an often abused word, a representative man. Whether the future will regard Tschaïkowsky as a creative genius or not is a question that cannot be discussed with profit at this time. We of the present are entirely too close to the man, too directly under the domination of his personal force, to fairly measure his artistic value. We are quite as likely to underrate him as to overestimate him. But we cannot be mistaken in regard to the immense vigor of his intellect, the fine sincerity of his art, and the fullness of his equipment. Nor shall we be likely to go far astray in our views of the value of the new matter which he has beautifully formulated for us, if he has not himself originated it. If we are to praise poets who have enshrined in their verse national legends almost, if not quite, as highly as those who have given birth to new fancies, surely we are justified in offering our gratitude and our admiration to a musician who has sung to all the world the song of a remote and little known people. It is not to be questioned, in the writer's opinion, that Tschaïkowsky has done this, even when he has sought his inspiration in the literatures of other nations than his own. Surely the Manfred, the Hamlet, the Romeo of Tschaïkowsky were children of the Little Father who sits upon the banks of the Neva.

Let us, in considering the music of this composer, not lose sight of that vigor which sometimes seems to be the outcome of a certain grim determination always present in the Russian heart. Let us not fall into the error of supposing that Tschaïkowsky breathes always the measures of a hopeless grief. Must we not read in the intense spiritual struggle that is depicted in the "Hamlet" overture-fantasy and in the "Manfred" symphony the uprising of an inward revolt that is continually surging within the Russian soul? There is a splendid force in much of this man's music, such as we find in the final movements of the C major and E minor symphonies, which is quite as nationally characteristic as the weird grimness of the valse in the latter work—the valse of a people that is fully ready to dance the carmagnole in the streets of St. Petersburg when the hour comes.

How do the melancholy and the vigor of which we have taken a view express themselves musically? In the first place there is the broad dignity of pathetic utterance common to all music. We find it in the opening measures of the "Hamlet," in the truly inspired andante of the E minor symphony. Phrases such as the composer has used here belong to the universal voice of human song. But more characteristic melodies are such as that which Tschaïkowsky has employed to indicate the grief of Ophelia in the "Hamlet" overture. In these we find the rhythms and cadences of the composer's native land. If, on the other hand, we turn to the last movements of the symphonies in C and E minor we meet with ideas which are undoubtedly sprung from the song-tunes of Greater Russia, translated into dances. And such dances! In them the wildest barbarism, the grossest uncouthness, the unrestrained passion of a puissant race are let loose, and we get a glimpse of what might be the triumphant madness of a people whom an iron hand restrains.

Minor modes and sombre chromatic harmony play a most important part in Tschaïkowsky's larger orchestral compositions, and these are intensified by the marvelously gloomy eloquence of the instrumentation. No composer has used the deeper accents of the orchestra with more telling effect. The unison of the English horn with the lower strings in the cantabile of the "Hamlet" overture-fantasy is a striking example of his skill in this particular; and constantly in his works we meet with solos for the bassoon, with combinations of bassoons and clarinets, bassoons and English horns, divided violas, and the overwhelming sadness of the French horn in slow measures. Indeed it is impossible to avoid a conviction that the instrumental color of some of the most influential passages in Tschaïkowsky's compositions contributes quite as much to their effect upon the hearer as the individuality of the themes or the nature of the harmonies.

Perhaps we shall do well now to pass from generalization to an examination of one or two of the composer's representative works. The "Romeo and Juliet" overture-fantasy begins with an introductory section founded on two themes,

one of which is one of the two chief melodies of the whole work. The composer's leaning toward melancholy and sombre instrumental color is at once shown in the sad theme in F sharp minor, announced by clarinets and bassoons. The second melody, also minor, is uttered by flutes and clarinets, the accompaniment being on the violas. These two themes are worked up by the common orchestral device of gradually adding to the number of instrumental voices, and increasing the tempo until the first subject is repeated by the full wood choir with string accompaniment, and the second by the violins with an accompaniment by the oboes, bassoons and harp. We begin to see that there is trouble ahead of us and the composer's mind is intent upon the impending struggle between the Capulets and Montagues.

A sharp, vigorous theme in C and B minor is announced by strings, wood and horns in unison. A figure expressive of rage is worked up after this, and we have a grand orchestral picture of the war of the two houses. A decrescendo follows, and the English horn and muted violins sing a new melody in B flat minor. All the strings muted now breathe a passage in close harmony. This is worked up in a crescendo by the use of the harp and scale passages in the wood, and passes into a new tempo marked *dolce ma sensibile*. Some interesting episodal bits lead into a somewhat extended development of the C and B minor theme, in which the composer uses much variety of color and a plentitude of force. After a decrescendo a new melody appears in the oboe and clarinet, and leads, through a general amplification in the wood-wind into the theme previously given out in B flat minor by the English horn. This melody is now sung by the strings and flutes, and it leads to the finale, in which the vigorous theme in C and B minor is treated in a new fashion, and the work closes with a solemn presentation of the former English horn theme. The reader will perceive that the struggle of the two houses and the melancholy fate of the lovers rather than the throbbing intensity of their passion have been the sources of the composer's inspiration in this work, and that his voicing of these things has led him to use just such harmonies, melodies and instrumental treatment as have already been described.

In regard to the "Manfred" symphony the writer can do no better than to quote the appreciative words of Mr. Krehbiel: "It is a highly imaginative and beautiful work, quite as remarkable for the deep, poetical feeling pervading it as for the ingenuity of its instrumentation, which would not be shamed by a comparison with the best efforts of Berlioz. It would not be altogether fanciful if one should cite a dozen or so compositions of the young Russian school as arguments that the musical sceptre which the Teutons have wielded for so long is in danger of passing into Slavic hands. * * * Look out for the Muscovite! He's a dangerous power in politics, and the musical supremacy of Germany is being threatened."

The four movements into which the work is divided represent Manfred seeking forgetfulness of his lost Astarte in mountain wanderings, the Witch of the Alps, the peace of a mountaineer's existence, and the culmination of the tragedy in orgies in the hall of Arimanes and the death of Manfred, after the summons to Astarte. In this last movement we meet with a full exhibition of that desperate energy of which the writer has already spoken, but the movement is neither so beautiful nor so irresistibly eloquent as the first in which the abandonment of Manfred's grief is voiced in all the gloom of dark orchestral color. The close of the movement is a broad and eloquent melody with organ accompaniment, in which the writer of this article may be pardoned for discerning evidence of the aspiration which dwells in the souls of every oppressed people.

The composer's fifth symphony displays all of his national and personal characteristics in a high light. In this work, too, he has made use of the *idée fixe* after the manner of Berlioz, repeating the gloomy, threatening motive of the introduction to the first movement at effective points throughout the entire work, to which further compactness is given by the employment of the first subject of the first movement as the final measures of the last. The symphony as a whole is one of the composer's most characteristic works, and it bears well one of the most exacting tests to which music can be subjected, namely, repetition. The andante is one of the most spontaneously beautiful utterances of any contemporaneous composer.

In another symphony, that in F minor, Tschaïkowsky has shown that the strong influence which the pure beauty of the Italian writers exercised over

his youthful mind has never been wholly removed. The andantino in modo di canzona, and the scherzo pizzicato ostinato of the F minor symphony are set between a long and learned first movement and a last movement which is full of the tragic rudeness of the Russian. The andantino is ravishingly sweet and full of graceful tenderness. The continuous pizzicato of the scherzo is a playful bit of writing, yet even here the Russian nature makes itself felt in the extravagance of the humor. The movement is felt to be just a little more farcical than the requirements of symphonic dignity demand.

A charming evidence of Tschaïkowsky's love for Mozart is found in the suite called "Mozartiana." It consists of four movements, a gigue, a minuet, a prayer, and a theme with variations, and was made by the Russian composer with the design of calling attention to some of Mozart's more modest works. The result is so delightful as to make the hearer wish that the composer had spent more time at such labors. The gigue and minuet are in Mozart's most charming style and are winning in the freshness of their beauty and the grace of their movement. The prayer is full of poetic dignity and the work as a whole is a modernized edition of Mozart, especially as to instrumentation, which reflects great credit on Tschaïkowsky.

In conclusion it may be as well to quote the opinions of two excellent critics on Tschaïkowsky. M. Arthur Pougin has written his views in the supplement to Fétis's "Biographie Universelle des Musiciens," and as they are most frequently repeated, their principal points may be reproduced here. "M. Tschaïkowsky," he says, "is one of the most highly gifted and interesting of the artists, belonging to the young musical school of Russia. Of somewhat undecided spirit perhaps, and a little too much imbued with the vexatious ideas which for a quarter of a century have exercised so many minds, his rather cloudy eclecticism has, no doubt, prevented him from giving us the full measure of his worth. * * * But none the less it remains that Mr. Tschaïkowsky is a very remarkable artist, a learned and often inspired master of all the secrets of his art, knowing and using in a surprising manner the resources of the orchestra, and open only to the charge of sometimes sacrificing the ideal side of music to the search after wild and massive effects." The opinion of Mr. Edward Dannreuther, recorded in Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," appears to the present writer to be based on a keener insight into the origin, nature and purpose of this composer's work. "Tschaïkowsky's compositions," says this writer, "more or less bear the impress of Slavonic temperament — fiery exultation on a basis of languid melancholy. He is fond of huge and fantastic outlines, of bold modulations and strongly marked rhythms, of subtle melodic turns and exuberant figuration; and he delights in gorgeous effects of orchestration. His music everywhere makes the impression of genuine spontaneous originality."

The writer does not wish to be charged with having produced another man's views simply for the sake of discrediting them, but M. Pougin's objection to Tschaïkowsky's "cloudy eclecticism" seems to have been made with the composer's own account of his early musical tastes, rather than with his most admirable works, in mind. It appears to the present writer that the national and personal characteristics of the composer dominate in his music, and that the "full measure of his worth" is shown in them. By the "vexatious ideas" which have troubled him, M. Pougin undoubtedly means the beliefs of the romantic school as to the emotional communicativeness of music. The present writer has already expressed his firm conviction that the troubled spirit that breathes through so much of Tschaïkowsky's music is of a political rather than an æsthetic origin.

W. J. Henderson.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE. — Since the above was written, the death of Peter Ilitsch Tschaïkowsky has been announced. He was attacked by cholera in St. Petersburg and died there October 5, 1893, after an illness of only a few hours.