

**PAGES FROM AN UNWRITTEN DIARY**



Charles V Stanford

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PAGES FROM  
AN UNWRITTEN DIARY

BY  
SIR CHARLES VILLIERS STANFORD

WITH PORTRAITS

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**AMICIS DILECTIS  
AMICVS  
VXORI DILECTISSIMAE  
CONIVX**

## PREFACE

HANS VON BÜLOW was once conducting a rehearsal of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, at which some ladies were invited to be present. They indulged in whisperings and chatterings which greatly disturbed the players. Bülow turned round and said "Ladies, we are not here to save the Capitol, but to make music." I fear that the contents of this book may suggest a tendency in one or other of these directions to my readers, according to the spirit in which they open its pages. Those that look for music may happen upon cackling, those that affect the cackling may be bored by the music. My main hope is that there may be some who like both; my chief dread that there are others who like neither.

A few of the records it contains may, and I trust will, be of some future value. They are my only excuse for inflicting upon the public a volume which is so prolific of the first person singular. In all such books the "I's" must needs stand out like telegraph poles.

I trust that I have not in the course of its pages

wounded any susceptibilities ; but, to guard against such an eventuality, I will adopt the formula which was used with such success by the officer, as recorded on p. 161 of this book : "I apologize for anything I have said, am saying, or may at any future time say."

C. V. S.

*June, 1914.*

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# PAGES FROM AN UNWRITTEN DIARY

## CHAPTER I

Old Dublin—The Hennis—Legal and medical luminaries—Archbishop Trench—Trinity College and its Fellows—Dean Dickin-son and other ecclesiastics.

A TOWN mouse I was born and bred, and the town which sheltered me was one likely to leave its mark upon its youngest citizens, and to lay up for them vivid and stirring memories. Dublin, as I woke to it, was a city of glaring contrasts. Grandeur and squalor lived next door to each other, squalor sometimes under the roof of grandeur. Society, "The Quality" as the Irishman calls it, had deserted its centre and made its home in the outskirts: houses of perfect architectural proportions had become tenements; Adam's ceilings and Angelica Kauffmann's designs looked down upon squalling families in rags and tatters. The hall where Handel conducted the first performance of the "Messiah" had become a low theatre. The two old cathedrals stood in a region compared to which the Seven Dials was a Paradise. But the well-to-do classes, who had turned their faces outwards, had built up a town which, if it had its usual quota of dull featureless streets, was not wanting in a good sprinkling of private houses of artistic merit, and in open

spaces and squares of a beauty quite unique in this country. Best of all, they entrusted the designing of their public buildings to an architect of genius, James Gandon, who had those rare gifts, a style of his own without extravagance and an unerring sense of dignity. Two great monuments of his skill, the Law Courts and the Custom-House, with the impressive group in College Green, gave Dublin the *cachet* which distinguishes it from all its sister cities. Beauty was everywhere, dirt was everywhere too, trying its best to conceal it. A perspective of quays and bridges, which rivals that of its prototype, Pisa, looked down on a salmon river so polluted that to drive along it at low tide recalled to the passing traveller Coleridge's description of Cologne. It was an amazing tribute to the endurance of the monarch of fish that, though unable to hold his nose, he could plough through this ditch to the upper waters of the Liffey; (and I have seen him jumping at the falls of Leixlip, the Lach's Leap, many miles above). To the North stretched a street of a breadth comparable to the famous Unter den Linden in Berlin, with a massive central column to Nelson's memory, which accentuated its noble proportions. To the South stood the semicircle of the old Parliament House, the statues of Burke, of Goldsmith, and of William of glorious, pious, and immortal memory, guarding the hill up to the gloomy castle; and so one passed into Merrion Square where Medicine on the North side gazed at Law on the South, along streets upon which the distant Dublin mountains smiled, and a canal lined by tall old trees where the smell of the turf was wafted from the smoke of barges

from Athlone. Thus semi-consciously did famous names in the country's history become familiar to a young mind. Fitzwilliam, Carlisle, Sackville, Harcourt, Dorset, Grafton, Usher, Heytesbury, Grattan, Herbert, all these were household words. It was in Herbert Street (No. 2) I was born, and all round were names of Herbert history: Wilton, Mount Merrion, Sidney and many more. So much for the setting of the scene.

The characters were as varied as the city. The division line between the two religions was indelibly marked; great exceptions only accentuating the rule. But in spite of an antagonism which was only too naturally intensified by close contact, I was seldom if ever conscious of personal intolerance. It showed itself more in the markedly Low Church spirit of the Protestant inhabitants, who resented on principle an East-end organ and choir in their Parish Church, while they inwardly preferred a Cathedral service, when they could go there for relief. I remember a grotesque row, nearly destructive of close friendships, which was caused by a very sensible attempt to place the choir in our church (St. Stephen's) near the organ at the East end. This heresy lasted only for one Sunday; there were shrieks of "Puseyism," but the loudest protesters were to be found in the stalls of St. Patrick's the same afternoon. The feeling, as I afterwards came to know, was accentuated by the Oxford Movement, which in Ireland resulted in a twofold secession, the one in the direction of Rome, the other in that of Plymouth. It had split families, my own amongst them, and it took years for the bitterness to die down. The influence which helped most to heal

the wounds, and to keep Dublin from undiluted Calvinism was the music of the Cathedrals, of which more anon.

The circle in which my family moved was that of the law : and a very brilliant and gifted group it was. I knew many of them as a boy ; my grandfather, William Henn, Master in Chancery, a winning sympathetic personality whose charm, as Bishop Graves told me, was irresistible, and whose memories, if he had yielded to the Bishop's entreaties to write them, would have been priceless. Like all his race he was a crack shot and a masterly fisherman. He had killed snipe on the fields which bordered on what is now Merrion Square. He tied his own flies, many of which are still in active service. In his large study on an unfavourable day he used to practise with the top joint of his rod casting at a particular boot in the formidable row of a dozen pairs or so along the wall. He was a cultured musician and an expert flute-player, and for many years was the most popular of Presidents of the most ancient body of the kind in Ireland, the Hibernian Catch Club. His grandchildren adored him for his many little whimsical kindnesses. They still remember the half guilty merriment, with which he used to purloin tiny glass tubes of homœopathic pilules belonging to my grandmother (an ardent follower of Dr. Luther), empty out the globules, and substitute infinitesimal quantities of port and sherry which he distributed to them in secret.

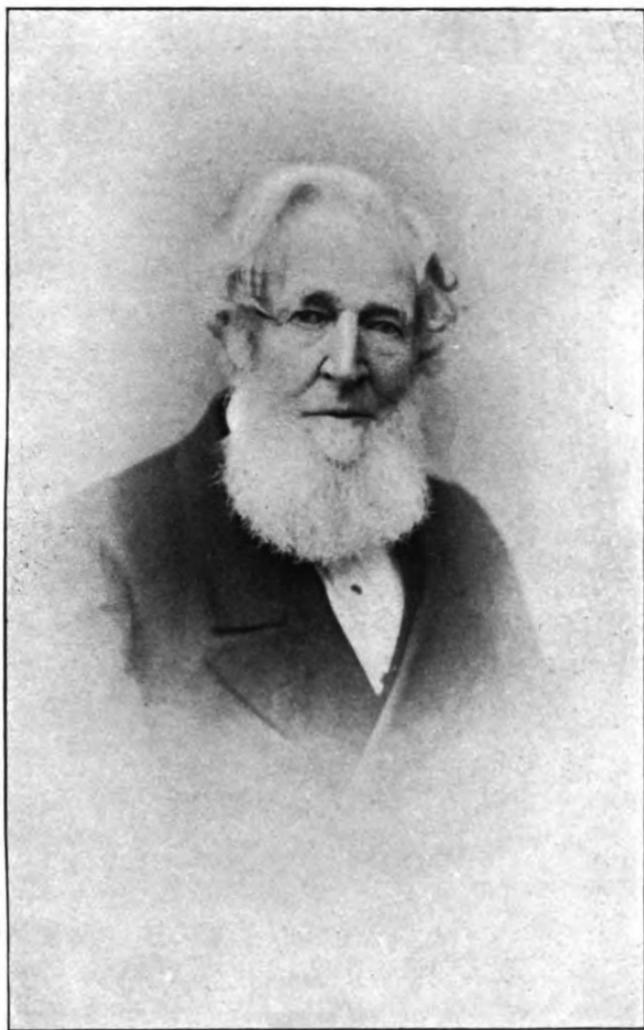
His brother, Jonathan Henn, Q.C., became famous through his defence of O'Connell, for, alone of all the row of brilliant barristers who were his colleagues at

the trial, he discovered the flaw in the indictment which procured the "Liberator's" acquittal by the House of Lords. A lawyer of the first class, gifted with a wit and an eloquence which had scarcely a rival, he always preferred sport to law: he refused his first brief, for which he had waited fifteen years, for the sake of a day's salmon fishing. This passion, for he was a superb angler, he kept to the last, catching a 30-pounder on the day he completed his eightieth year, an achievement which he celebrated by a family dinner. But his distaste for politics and his intense nervousness before speaking led him to retire comparatively early from active work: and when Sir Robert Peel was anxious to make him a Law officer of the Crown, he answered that "he would rather not do his dirty work in Parliament for him." He was guardian of three nephews, the sons of his youngest sister, of whom the second was an able officer in the Engineers, and the youngest became famous at the English Bar as Henn-Collins, Master of the Rolls, and afterwards a Lord of Appeal. He had the quaintest ways and loved the most humorous paradoxes. I possess a large two-volume French Dictionary which he sent me in the month of June as a Christmas Box, excusing himself by writing "Who knows where I shall be next Christmas? Better too soon than never." He suddenly descended upon our house with a full-sized grand pianoforte, when he thought I had had enough of a small upright. He taught me whist, of which he himself was a past-master, "as part of a liberal education," and instilled all the leads and finesses into my juvenile mind with a zeal worthy of a teacher explaining the

difficulties of Thucydides or Æschylus. His last accomplishment was to learn the then brand new game of croquet, and I had many a hard tussle with him when he was past eighty. He still remains in my memory as clearly as if I saw him yesterday, with his strikingly handsome face, of the Norman oblong type which was so marked in most of his relations, and which he inherited from his mother, one of the Lovetts of Liscombe.\* His youngest brother Richard, was a typical sailor-man, who fought at Copenhagen as a midshipman.

Many other famous colleagues and successors of Jonathan Henn at the Bar were familiar figures of my boyhood. Blackburne (Lord of Appeal), Brewster (Lord Chancellor), the Fitzgeralds, Monahan (Chief Justice), Walter Berwick (the Judge in Bankruptcy), most kindly and humorous of men, who taught me to dap for trout, and who possessed a pocket-knife with an entire tool-box in it (the envy of my youth and of which I was speedily given the double) by which alone his ashes were identified after the burning of the Irish Mail at Abergele. T. B. C. Smith (Master of the Rolls) nicknamed "Troublesome, Bothersome, Cranky Smith" in accordance with his initials. Fitzgibbon also, Master in Chancery, my father's chief, who was a martyr to asthma, and had a back so round and bent, that the jarvey of the cab, in which my father accompanied him one day to the Courts, whispered to him

\* The history of the Lovetts of Liscombe has recently been written by Mr. R. J. A. Lovett, the thirty-second lineal descendant of Richard de Louvet, Master of the Wolfhounds to William the Conqueror.



JONATHAN HENN, Q.C.  
(.État. 80.)

“If only the poor Master’s head was turned the other way, what a beautiful chest he’d have!” Whiteside, the hero of the Yelverton case, a tall dignified figure, as beloved by his friends as he was honoured and respected by his opponents: full of boyish fun, and of cosmopolitan experiences. He once amused a large collection of friends at a garden-party, by performing for me the Battle of Prague upon his white hat, illustrating the “groans of the wounded” with a high tenor voice. He had a wholesome contempt for snobbishness, but resented any slight upon his office. The late Lord St. Leonards once invited him, shortly after he became Lord Chief Justice, to dine at Thames Ditton Lodge, which is some little distance from the station. When Whiteside and his wife arrived, they found no vehicle of any sort to take them dry shod to the house. The Chief was equal to the occasion, stopped a baker’s cart in the road, put Mrs. Whiteside on the box, placed himself on the top of the cart with his long legs extending far beyond it, and insisted on the baker driving them up the avenue and ringing the bell for the flunkeys to help them down. His Lordship, who was very punctilious, was far from pleased, but as Whiteside laughingly said, it served him right. His predecessor in the chief justiceship, Lefroy, I visited when he was ninety-four, with my father, about a case of arson in the County of Meath which he had tried two years before. He had written to ask him to bring his notes of the case, as there was a point about which he was uncertain. I sat in the corner and heard him go through from memory every detail of the trial, and ask if his statement corresponded with the records; he

had not, my father said, missed a single point. His niece, who had a bad lisp, always called him "The old Thief," a nickname which went the rounds. Keogh, the Napoleonic, and Morris, both renowned for wit and rapid repartee, were of a later generation, amongst which stood out two striking figures, Lawson and Murphy, who might both have been surnamed "The Fearless," for they carried their lives in their hands, while doing their duty in the black days of the Phoenix Park murders. Of Keatinge, the Judge of the Court of Probate and Divorce, I have an exceptionally vivid memory, for when I was about ten years old I managed to get engaged to two young ladies (of eight and ten respectively) at the same time. This weighed so heavily on my tender conscience that I consulted my father as to the best means of disentangling the difficulty. He immediately said that the only way was to write fully to Judge Keatinge. The Judge replied in a formidable blue envelope inscribed "On Her Majesty's Service," and threatened me with committal for contempt, if I did not carry out his instructions. These he sent me in another long legal document, pointing out the penal consequences of bigamy, and prescribing a course of action which would obviate my committing the crime. All this elaborate joke I of course swallowed in solemn seriousness, accompanied by a wholesome dread of the assizes.

An interesting group in its way was the phalanx of physicians and surgeons. Amongst the latter were Colles (of wrist fracture fame); Butcher, a picturesque figure, who dressed à la Lytton with well oiled ringlets, velvet waistcoat, white silk stock with two diamond

pins linked by a chain, and ruffles to his sleeves, and went by the nickname of Jehu "because he drove furiously"; he had hands like a woman's for delicacy and refinement, and a fore-arm so splendidly developed that a cast of it was taken for the College of Surgeons; he was such a past-master of the noble art of self-defence, that he boxed creditably with Jem Mace, the then Champion of England. He was the uncle of two brilliant men of our own day, Henry, the Edinburgh Professor and M.P. for Cambridge University, and J. G., the member for York. The grim Cusack and the kindly John Hamilton were Butcher's ablest colleagues. The Physicians too were a world-renowned body. Stokes, the friend of George Petrie and almost as distinguished in archæology as in medicine, Henry Marsh, Dominic Corrigan, Cruise, Philip Smyly, the most handsome of men, and Meldon the most adipose. The last-named Æsculapius gave occasion to one of Father Healy's most witty repartees. The doctor's proportions made it impossible for a second person to occupy his carriage. A friend of Healy's of a critical turn of mind was rallying him on his acceptance of certain historical *data* in theology.

THE FRIEND. "How can a sensible man like you, Healy, believe that Jonah really came out of the whale's belly?"

HEALY. "I don't know, I saw something quite as peculiar to-day. I saw Meldon getting out of a fly!"

Charles Tottenham of Ballycurry was another familiar figure. A stout powerful man with a characteristic stutter, and rather large prominent eyes which

struck terror into those who did not know the kindness and humour behind them. The Devil's Glen, one of the show places in the County Wicklow, was on his estate, and the public were allowed to visit it at certain fixed times. On one of the forbidden days, he met two ladies taking an unauthorized walk in his grounds, and demanded somewhat peremptorily to know their business.

THE LEADING LADY. "Who are you?"

MR. T. "Mr. Tottenham of Ballycurry."

THE L. L. "We were hoping to see the Devil's Glen, but we did not expect to meet the Proprietor."

MR. T. (*roaring with laughter*). "Come and have some lunch."

And he acted himself as cicerone to the visitors. His method of endearing himself to small children was to say "Quecck" and to drive a forefinger into their ribs. I used to hide in the topmost room when I saw him in the offing.

The list of memorable Dublin figures in the sixties would not be complete without mention of the clergy, and the Dons of Trinity. I once heard Whately preach; but he was too old and infirm for his voice to reach me. His successor in the Archbishopric, Trench, began his first sermon in our church by terrifying me with the orotund and tragic delivery of his text, "I am tahrmented in this flā-āme." It did not strike me at the time how suitable the quotation was to his own position in the trembling Establishment of the Irish Church. A Dublin wag shortly after eulogized Palmerston for his engineering skill in putting a Trench in the Irish See. Trench's

speeches on all occasions were delivered with an intensity of emotional expression which often quarrelled somewhat ludicrously with their contents. I remember a children's party at the Palace, where the very lively proceedings wound up with a short dramatic piece. Before the curtain rose, the Archbishop, leaning on a prie-dieu chair in the precise attitude of a preacher, led us to imagine for a moment that we were all to be serious and say our prayers; but the speech bewrayed him for all his episcopal enunciation. "My young friends . . . I would ask your kind indulgence . . . for this little plā-ā-āy (*in a very high and agonized voice*). Applause to ahl is dear!—(*then beginning low and rising high*)—but esp-ash-ily to those, who are unskilled in acting. Therefore (*very tragically*), my young friends . . . I would sa-a-y—(*long pause*)—Applahd!"

Tennyson told me that Trench had exactly the same style of oratory when he was at Cambridge. On one occasion he was making an inordinately long speech at the Union which began to bore his audience, when Charles Buller, who was sitting next to him, tried to pull him down into his seat; but Trench speaking in the same sonorous oratorical voice interpolated in one of his sentences, "Charlie Buller! if you continue to pull me by the coat-tails, I will hit <sup>></sup> you in the <sup>></sup>eye." <sub><</sub>

Of a vastly different type was Salmon, the great mathematician and Provost of Trinity, who never missed a good concert, but worked problems on his programme all the while. He was capable too of a kindly sarcasm comparable in its gentler way with that of the Master of Trinity, Cambridge: a Junior Fellow of

the College who was credited, rightly or wrongly, with a certain tendency to romance, was inveighing against the corporal punishment of boys, and clinched his argument by stating that "he had once been flogged, and that was for telling the truth," when Salmon intervened with the soft reminder, "and it cured you, —". At one time the Provost was suffering from sciatica, and a benighted faddist begged him to try the effect of Christian Science. Some weeks after a friend asked him, "Well, Provost, did Christian Science cure the sciatica?" "No," replied the soft Cork voice, "but the sciatica cured the Christian Science."

Many of Salmon's contemporaries were men of mark and fame. Jellett, one of three wonderfully gifted brothers; Magee (afterwards Archbishop of York), whose eloquence carried me away even in my 'teens; Butcher, afterwards Bishop of Meath and brother of the surgeon; Todd, antiquarian as much as theologian; Graves (afterwards Bishop of Limerick), almost Salmon's rival as a mathematician, and a keen clear-sighted critic of music and of art, of whom, as a godfather who was somewhat exceptional in his interest in his godchildren, I have countless happy memories. Of his pretty wit and broadminded views I had an amusing experience. I arrived late one Saturday at his picturesque house, Parknasilla, on Kenmare River, famous for mackerel trolling. The next morning I looked out on a perfect day, with the gulls hovering over the obvious shoals of fish, and remembered with heart-searchings that I was staying with a Bishop and that it was Sunday. But at one o'clock, after a long talk with him on many interesting subjects, he stopped me

at the door, saying, "Remember in this house on Sunday after two o'clock you do what you like : and better men than you or I have fished !" I caught about fifty in an hour.

Archdeacon Lee, tall, combative, with prominent goggle eyes, and West, Dean of St. Patrick's, short, square, and humorous, were two striking figures. On one occasion they had a serious difference which came before Archbishop Trench ; West emerged from the contest triumphant, and said to a friend whom he met upon the Palace steps, " And Ishbibenob, which was of the sons of the giant, thought to have slain (pointing to himself) David." Of Hercules Dickinson, Dean of the Chapel Royal, " the only established clergyman in Ireland " as he called himself, a volume could be written by itself. Among all the wits in Dublin he had but one rival, and he went by the sobriquet of " The Protestant Father Healy." The records of his repartee are numberless ; but at the risk of the charge of " old chestnuts," I may quote one or two of the most brilliant. When the Synod of the Irish Church first met after the Disestablishment, a great feud arose as to its division into a House of Bishops, and a Lower House of Clergy and Laymen. Lord James Butler took a lead in opposing the creation of an Upper House, Dickinson in supporting it. When the division was taken, Dickinson was victorious. The next day he met his opponent in Stephen's Green :

LORD JAMES BUTLER. " Hullo, Dickinson, have you heard the latest news about me ?"

DICKINSON. " No, my Lord."

L. J. B. " They are going to make me a Bishop."

D. (*in a flash*). "Well, my Lord, I have heard of a Bishop of your name, but I cannot see any Analogy in your case."

The Synod was a great field for his wit. Having been misquoted by a very Low Church layman called Brush, he called out "I have never given Mr. Brush any handle to make such sweeping assertions about me." When Roe built the new Synod House, a small but inane party worried the Church-body to paint texts over the various rooms. The Dean destroyed this fad for good, by suggesting for the Refreshment Room "The place where the wild asses quench their thirst!" The same party demanded that a special form of prayer should be drawn up for the meetings of the Synod. Quoth Dickinson, "You have it all ready made. The form of Prayer for those at Sea, of course." When Canon Marrable, a leading Evangelical, raised a hurricane, because the architect of Christ Church Cathedral had designed the figure of a Lamb to surmount the Choir Screen, Dickinson allayed the storm thus:—"Christ Church is really becoming a Zoological garden. They have already a Lamb in stone and an Ass in Marrable." The Dean was driving one day on an outside car to the North Wall, following another car on which was a brother clergyman, Jordan by name. In crossing the drawbridge the horse of Mr. Jordan's car jibbed and backed down the bridge. Dickinson, as he sped by, called out "What ailedst thee, Jordan, that thou wast driven back?"

Some short-sighted persons thought the Dean unduly flippant, but it is not too much to say that to his well-calculated ridicule, kindly wit, and sympathetic

personality was largely due the healing of sharp differences and the softening of rancorous party feeling which at the outset threatened the solidarity of the newly constituted Irish Church.

But if the Irish Church could rightly boast of intellects of the highest order, it also sheltered men whose zeal oftentimes outran their knowledge. I can recall the peroration of a sermon preached by a Trinity Don, Benjamin Dickson, which took the palm for exaggerated hyperbole:—"The sun, like an antelope, bounding from pinnacle to pinnacle of the heavens, until at last it culminates in the meridian"; and the Rev. A—— D——, pillar of the Evangelicals, more famous for oratory than for book-learning, who preached upon the text "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," and ended with this grotesque amplification of the Greek  $\epsilon\upsilon$ , (=bravo), "It is not well-thought, it is not well-intended, it is not well-sentimentalized, but it is well DONE." And lastly the best-remembered of all by old visitors to St. Patrick's Cathedral, Minor Canon Westby. Endowed with a voice of supernatural compass, ranging from deep bass to falsetto treble, this great man used to read the lessons with a dramatic emphasis, a disregard alike of commas and of quantities, which filled congregations with ill-concealed delight, and his colleagues with a holy terror. "(*ff*) The wicked Flee, (*pp*) when no man purthueth but the righteouth, (*cres.*) ith ath bold ath a Lion," was one of his most famous readings, delivered with an exaggerated lisp, a failing which he so markedly emphasized as to make it seem that *s* should always be pronounced *th*. The difficulty of

ending the unfinished lesson from the Acts of the Apostles (ch. xxi.), which so many readers conceal by addition or subtraction, he boldly faced by the simplest of methods, "He thpake unto them in the Hebrew tongue (*pause*) thaying 'Here endeth the Thecond lethon.'" His false quantities at the end of the Epistles would have been enough to turn a pundit's hair grey, had he not insisted upon his version with an accentuated certainty which carried conviction that Westby was right *contra mundum*. "Epaphōdītūth thalute thee," and "Let him be Anathēēma \* Marā-nāthā" were but two of many striking instances. Delivered without a blush, they carried such a feeling of sublime inevitableness, that even now if I had to read the lessons I believe I should unwittingly follow his pronounciation. But his crowning achievement was a sermon upon Job, in which he tackled the mighty problem as to whether the book was allegorical or historical. On the allegory theory his scorn was poured out in tones which echoed down the aisles and reverberated back into the choir. The climax was reached when he rolled out this memorable period, delivered with tremendous earnestness, and with all the air of triumphing over a crushed adversary—"And they tell uth, mee brethren, that Job wath an allegory! Boilth, mee brethren, thore boilth, (*this re-echoed from the vaults of the nave!*) From the crown of hith head (*soprano*), to the thole of hith foot (*bass*), he wath all over Thore Boilth! Now mee brethren (*this very softly and insinuatingly*) if Job wath an

\* Was Westby unconsciously or pedantically correct? Probably the former.

allegory, how *could* he have boilth?" And then, as some flippant newspapers of the sporting persuasion say, the organ played, and Sir Robert Stewart's fingers drowned the titters of the congregation and the scandalized protests of the Dean and Chapter.

## CHAPTER II

Music in old Dublin—Petrie and Folk-song—Irish composers—Singers—John Stanford—Lablache—Mendelssohn at Birmingham—Chamber music—A professional violinist—An amateur tenor.

MUSIC in Dublin in the fifties and sixties demands from me, as in private duty bound, a place to itself. The whole island, as is abundantly proved by its unequalled wealth of Folk-Song and Dance, was richly endowed with the love of music; the two vital elements of the art, Rhythm and Melody, were equally prominent in this, the most natural outcome of Irish imagination and invention. The originality and distinctiveness of its style were as marked as in the Keltic type of ornament, of which the finest examples are in the Book of Kells and the Missals at St. Gall. The researches of Petrie and of Bunting had laid bare a mine of treasures which no other country could surpass, if indeed it could equal, either in quality or quantity. But before the days of railways and of steamers the country, save for a chance visit from over-seas, was isolated and left to its own resources. Among great European composers its only visitor was Handel. The natural result was a levelling-up of the amateur element, a process which left its mark long after communication with the outer world became more easy and frequent. The standard of the professional musician was not appreciably higher than

that of the cultured *dilettante*; the latter in many instances far outclassed the former. It is to the amateurs of Ireland that we owe the first serious publication of undiluted Irish music. The Church, the Law, Medicine, Science and Literature all counted amongst their ranks ardent lovers of music, and these were backed and encouraged by many patriotic colleagues who were not themselves actively musical. Any fortunate possessor of the first volume of the original printed collection of Dr. Petrie will find the roll of honour in the list of the Council of "The Society for the Preservation and Publication of the Melodies of Ireland," founded in 1851. It includes many names of note from every rank and profession: the late Duke of Leinster, Sir Francis Brady (afterwards President of the Irish Academy of Music), F. W. Burton (afterwards Director of the National Gallery), Charles Graves (Bishop of Limerick), Benjamin Lee Guinness (father of Lord Ardilaun), Thomas Rice Henn (son of the Master, and Recorder of Galway), Henry Hudson, Robert Lyons, John Macdonnell, W. R. Wilde and William Stokes (all prominent physicians), and that most fascinating and human of antiquarians, Dr. J. H. Todd. These men with their devoted President, Petrie, at their head did a greater if less world-famed work than Moore.

Thomas Moore and his collaborator Sir John Stevenson, ransacked many old collections such as those of Burke Thumoth and Holden, but were far from being pious in their methods. If Moore satisfied himself with a tragic or romantic poem, he would ruthlessly twist a "Ploughman's whistle" or a "Reel" to fit it.

If he found a tune in the scale of G with an F natural, he would sharpen the unfamiliar note, regardless of the character of the modal scale which gave the whole distinction to the melody. In a way the charm and wide appeal of his polished and musical verse were a drawback to the very plan which he set out to accomplish, for many of the distorted tunes, which he, Procrustes-like, lengthened and lopped, became so familiar to the world in their "transmogrified" shape and contents, that their fine old flavour became obliterated and forgotten. Unfortunately his collaborator, Stevenson, who was a man of a certain genius, was such a devotee of the great Haydn, that he read all the native music through Austrian spectacles and acquiesced in, if he did not suggest, the destruction of modal scales. There was therefore a reason for the term "Preservation" in Petrie's Society. Petrie would never accept those modern emendations in spite of the prestige of the Irish poet. Bunting wavered, but Petrie never. He had noted the tunes himself (in a handwriting which shows in every note the accomplished and routined musician) over turf-fires in the cottages of Arranmore, and in the wilds of the West, and as he found them so he left them. It is almost a tragedy, that Ireland to this day is so loyal to the memory of her best-known poet, that she resents the alteration of a note of his work, looks on it as blasphemy to restore his tunes to their natural and proved form, and is still, under official sanction, teaching her young children to sing the wrong and wholly un-Irish scales which Moore and Stevenson stereotyped. Truly she fills with France the rôle of the most innately Conservative country in

Europe. No worshipper of Cobden or of Herbart could be more bigoted. But this very loyalty to one of her great men compels the admiration of those who hold that celebrities can sometimes err, and occasionally betray ignorance. The pity of it was that Moore dabbled in an art which he did not fully understand, and especially in that branch of it which precisely demands the most thorough experience: and that he lived before the days when the study and appreciation of Folk - Music became a finished craft, and when such men as he had learnt to look before they leap.

Of composers Ireland could boast but few in the early part of the nineteenth century, and those not of the highest rank. How could it? The means of hearing instrumental music was limited to one-man instruments. Musicians were not in the position to know, except from hearsay or pianoforte arrangement, the wealth of chamber and orchestral music which was to be found across the seas. They had not the means, as England had, to entice it to their own shores. Balfe and Wallace made their operatic careers elsewhere. Of residents the only man of any mark was Stevenson. His *métier* was, as it had to be, vocal: and more particularly that part of vocal music which had to do with the Cathedrals and the Catch Club. But he could write a melody of intimate charm, such as the soprano solo "Turn thee again unto thy rest" in the anthem "I am well pleased," far superior to those of his English contemporaries; dramatic recitatives which showed him to have the true spirit of the footlights (and must have startled some of the Deans

and Canons); quartets and glees (one of them, "Alone on the sea-beaten rock," is a veritable gem of its kind) which proved him to be a consummate master of vocal writing. I have heard many quaint stories of his peculiarities and witticisms from an old Irish musician, Henry Toole, who knew him well. One of his glees was sung at the Hibernian Catch Club after a dinner presided over by the Lord Lieutenant of the day (Lord Hardwicke I believe). The Viceroy was so full of admiration and, as my informant wickedly added, "claret," that he knighted him on the spot. The next morning Ulster King-at-Arms sent his merry men to Sir John to collect the fees:

STEVENSON (*grandiosely*). "Ah! You may un-knight me if you like, but no hundred pounds out of me!"

His friend, Dr. John Smith, afterwards Professor of Music in Dublin University, perpetrated an oratorio on the Book of Revelation with which he used to bore Stevenson out of his life, perpetually bringing it to play and to sing to him. When the final inevitable fugue was produced to the words "I John am alone . . ." with a portentous running passage on the last syllable, his knighted namesake came in at the entry of the second voice with the words "And so am I . . ." sung in the true *buffo* manner. To one of his sons who was treating him with less than filial respect he suddenly burst out "Well John, I'd rather be a natural son than an unnatural son!" The descendants of this humorous and courtly old worthy still exist. His daughter married Lord Headfort, and the present generation of their house is fourth in descent from him.

Dr. Smith, the only link between his day and mine, was an Englishman who had come over as a tenor singer to the Cathedral choirs. He must have assimilated some of the same Irish inconsequence which Minor Canon Westby afterwards immortalized, for he is still remembered by a few as the composer of a service in which he laid down (by his declamation of the words) a new theory of the universe: "Ās it wās īn the bēgīnnīng; thē bēgīnnīng īs nōw aũd ēvēr shall bē!"

When I first had sense enough to look round, and to take note of my surroundings, I found myself in a centre of real music, where amateurs were cultivated performers, who had taken their art as seriously as if it were their means of livelihood. The conditions of musical life had vastly improved, but steam, though it had brought great artists from outside into touch with Dublin, had not robbed the resident music-lover of his self-reliance. An excellent Choral Society, "The Society of Antient Concerts," had been founded in 1834 by a brilliant boy of eighteen, Joseph Robinson, the youngest of "four wonderful brothers" as their townsmen dubbed them; and this grew and prospered so exceedingly that it built its own concert room, which still exists; a hall of about the same size as the old Gewandhaus at Leipzig. Though the Society's productions were conservative in the main as its name implied, it opened its doors widely to anything new. It gave the works of Mendelssohn as soon as they appeared, "Elijah" was produced in 1847. Robinson would never consent to maimed rights and his band was always complete, even when he had to send to

Liverpool or Manchester for the means. He was an expert singer as well as a magnetic conductor, and his chorus, which had the sympathetic timbre familiar to Irish ears, was trained to perfection.\* The singers were as keen as those of any North Country Choir: so much so that their zeal occasionally bordered upon the comical. Robinson used to recall with infinite amusement a performance of Handel's "L'Allegro," which began with a laughter as universal in the audience as in the singers and the poem. The Chorus, "Populous cities please me then," starts with a crotchet rest on the first beat of the bar. Robinson solemnly warned the choir at rehearsal to respect the silence on his first down beat: but at the concert an enthusiastic bass threw discretion to the winds and shot out a *fortissimo* and *staccatissimo* "Pop."

The Society had not the means to employ an orchestra on all occasions, but it possessed a great asset in its organist, Dr. (afterwards Sir Robert) Stewart, whose *métier* was the orchestral treatment of his instrument, and who, unlike most of his contemporaries (and I fear many of his successors) knew his full scores from memory. The late Mr. G. A. Crawford, known to many as a great authority upon musical hymnology, told me that he was at a rehearsal of "Elijah" when Stewart was replacing the band upon his instrument with amazing skill. Madame Rudersdorff had on this occasion a pitched battle with Stewart, because he played the flute shake at the end of "O rest in the Lord" on the middle B of the stave.

\* A fuller account of Joseph Robinson will be found in my "Studies and Memories," p. 117 *et seq.*

MADAME R. "That shake should be an octave higher."

STEWART. "You are mistaken, Madame."

MADAME R. "I know it is."

STEWART. "I am afraid you do not know the score."

MADAME R. "Show me the score."

STEWART. "I can't now, it's only in my head. But I will bring it to-night!"

He did and of course got a proper apology. These were in the days when "Elijah" was far less known, and was, comparatively speaking, a modern novelty. I remember sitting with Stewart in St. Paul's when Sir John Stainer was accompanying the "Sanctus" in the second part of the same oratorio, and his amusement at a mistake in the orchestral treatment upon which he made the whispered comment, "He did not look at his full score."

For his soloists Robinson, fortunately for the treasurer of his society, had a wonderful body of finished amateur singers to draw upon. Mrs. Hercules MacDonnell, a dramatic soprano with a voice which would have rivalled even the greatest *prima donna* of her day, was in every sense an artist both technically and musically. So great a judge as Costa valued her powers at the highest estimate, and lamented that she was not enrolled in the ranks of the great public singers. Mary Lucy Lady de Vere, the wife of Sir Vere de Vere of Curragh Chase, and sister-in-law of the poet Aubrey de Vere, was a *coloratura* soprano of perfect style and winning charm. Mrs. Geale (née Josephine Clarke), the cleverest and most gifted of

them all, called by Prince Puckler Muskau "that pretty little devil, José," \* had by some extraordinary art manufactured for herself a tenor voice of rare Italian quality which she controlled with the best Italian skill. She was a niece of Lady Morgan, whom Thackeray is supposed to have taken as the prototype of Becky Sharp. That there was some basis for this belief is proved by a correspondence between the novelist and Mrs. Hercules MacDonnell, who invited him to dinner and asked Lady Morgan to be of the party. Thackeray accepted, but evidently heard later of the lady whom he was asked to meet; for a second letter came from him, excusing himself from having to forego the invitation. When Queen Victoria came to Ireland during the Viceroyalty of Lord Clarendon, a musical evening was arranged at the Viceregal Lodge at which Jenny Lind was the star. A trio for soprano, tenor, and bass from an Italian opera was one of the items, the two other singers being Mrs. Geale and my father. Madame Goldschmidt at the rehearsal wished to wait for the tenor, but to her amazement Mrs. Geale said, "I am she." When it was over, no one was more appreciative of her powers than that most critical of artists. In later days my father once wrote and asked "José" to come and sing once more at his house, but her reply was characteristic:—"My dear John, I am the miserable remains of a well-spent voice!"

Of the men, the two most distinguished were Mr. Hercules MacDonnell (a son of a former Provost of

\* See "Picturesque Dublin, Old and New," by Frances Gerard, p. 57.

Trinity) who had a baritone voice of great power, and possessed a dramatic temperament which gave great incisiveness to his delivery ; and my father, John Stanford, whose bass with a compass from high F to low C was one of the finest in quality and in style that I have ever heard anywhere. He studied with Crivelli and in Paris, spoke Italian like a native, and in more than one respect resembled (in the opinion of those best competent to judge of both) his half-countryman, Lablache.

I have never understood the feeling which prompts the belittling of or (at best) the silence about a remarkable man because he happens to be a relation or a close friend. It is a common failing, and sometimes becomes a disease. My friend, Henry Bradshaw, the wisest and most perspicacious of Cambridge Dons, once in my presence trounced, strong Liberal though he was, a man who attacked the late Lord Salisbury for giving some important appointment to a near relative of his own. I can hear his indignant protest now, and how he drove in the common-sense fact that so clever and so upright a man as Lord Salisbury would know the weak points of his own relations far better than ignoramuses of the outside world would, and that he was all the sounder judge of their strong points, and of their suitability for the purposes of the country. I feel therefore no compunction in describing my father as I knew him, and in claiming for him a place, which he would have been the very last to claim for himself, in the foremost ranks of those who deserved well of his native country for his devoted services to the art he best loved. As a matter of fact he was the backbone

of the whole fabric, but the world sees faces and heads while the spine is invisible. He never cared for publicity, but more often than not gave the initiative idea upon which a movement started, and exerted every influence to support it on its career. In person a magnificently built man of six feet four, with a strikingly handsome face "of the type of a French General of the Old Guard," as Lionel Tennyson said to me, he had made himself in the intervals of his legal work, a past-master in the art of singing. His scales were those of a first-class instrumentalist, and his capabilities of interpretation ranged from oratorios to the most patter *buffo* which he tossed off with the ease and fluency of an Italian. As he was a born actor, with a great love for the stage, it was with the greatest difficulty that his very Low Church family prevented him from becoming an operatic singer, a scandal which in their opinion would have shaken their character and traditions to the core. Ireland, for all its love of music, looked on the professional with a doubtful eye. But the vacations of the legal profession, more prolonged then than they are now, gave him plenty of opportunity for perfecting his singing, and enlarging his knowledge. The most interesting and perhaps the most valuable of his experiences was due to a visit which he paid to Lord Dunraven (father of the present peer), an intimate friend of all the Dublin music-lovers, in London. Lord Dunraven was an enthusiast for Mozart, and in the forties finding a number of his Irish friends in London, he arranged for a series of rehearsals of Mozart's "Don Giovanni" at the house of Sir Robert Gore Booth in Buckingham Gate. The



JOHN STANFORD,  
(Ætat. 57.)

artist engaged to conduct them was no less a man than Lablache. My father sang the part of Leporello, and Lablache instantly called him "his second self," and gave him all the traditions and *tempi* of the opera, which were instilled in turn into me, as soon as I was able to scramble through the accompaniments. As Lablache sang as far back as 1824 in Vienna, these readings probably approach as near as can be to Mozart's own wishes. My father always described Lablache's voice as a seemingly illimitable force, which gave the impression of a reserve of double the amount of power which he used, and which, to quote his own simile, "enveloped you like a feather bed." Staudigl, the creator of the part of Elijah, he considered as the next best, though "his voice was rather of the quality of a trombone."

These rehearsals in Buckingham Gate gave rise to one very humorous episode. The house, which is still in existence, stands back in a shallow blind alley in which is the entrance door. The rooms on the drawing-room floor open on a balcony over it. After the first rehearsal Lablache, who was famous for breadth and thickness as well as for length, requested that a four-wheeler should be called to cart him away. The entire company crept out on to the balcony to watch the manner in which the Leviathan would get in. He managed it by opening both doors, stepping across, and then squeezing himself round into the back seat, shut a door with each hand, and departed with an arm hanging out of each window. After the second rehearsal the great man again demanded his cab, and again the party spied on him, but they were doomed

to disappointment. He knew their game, slowly stalked round the corner into the open street, beckoning the cabby to follow him, and when the vehicle was out of sight as slowly returned for the pleasure of making a long—very long—nose at the balcony. After that public snub, the household left him in peace.

An amusing instance of Lablache's love of a joke was told me by his son-in-law, Rokitansky, the leading bass singer of the Vienna Opera. When Tom Thumb was exhibiting himself at a Paris Music Hall, two men from the provinces journeyed up to see him. After they had bought their programmes, they found to their chagrin that the little dwarf's name was not in the bill. They complained bitterly to a gentleman, who was sitting beside them. He comforted them by saying that Tom Thumb was still in Paris, and that he was sure if they called at a certain house, the address of which he wrote down, he would receive them privately. They duly went the next day, and knocked at the door.

LOUD VOICE (*within*). "Entrez!"

They enter and see an enormous figure standing in the room.

LABLACHE (for it was he). "What have you come for?"

VISITOR (*nervously*). "We came to see General Tom Thumb."

After a short silence :

LABLACHE. "I am the General Tom Thumb."

VISITOR (*surprised*). "But we thought you were quite small."



Grattan Cooke (  )  
Recit -  
1846  
Birmingham  
Festival -

FROM A SKETCH (? OF MENDELSSOHN) BY GRATTAN COOKE.  
The notes are both the initials of the artist, and those of the boy's recitative,  
"There is nothing" (Elijah).

LABLACHE. "Before the public, yes! But at home I prefer to be comfortable."

When "Elijah" was produced at Birmingham in 1846, my father accompanied Joseph Robinson to the rehearsal and the first performance. They both made great friends with Mendelssohn, whom Robinson had previously met in London, and he extemporized for them on the new organ after the rehearsal, and joined them in a very Irish supper party at the "Woolpack" Inn, where the fun was fast and furious and Mendelssohn as full of fun as any Hibernian. His impressions of Mendelssohn's *tempi* exactly tallied with all the other opinions which I have heard from men of his time who had experience of them. His Allegros were very quick, and his Adagios very slow. There was an entire absence of sentimentality. My father told me that the composer's conducting of the "Midsummer Night's Dream" overture was so rapid that he seemed to be whipping cream! After the first rehearsal of "Elijah," Grattan Cooke the oboist came up with a long face, and said "It is very unkind of you, Dr. Mendelssohn, to have forgotten the oboe so much." "I will put it right for you," said M. "give me your part:" he added the long C where the boy sings "There is nothing," holding the pause for so long a time at performance that Cooke was nearly blue in the face. I still possess a thumbnail sketch of Cooke blowing this note, which was drawn by himself at the rehearsal.\* After Birmingham my father immediately studied the part of Elijah with all Mendels-

\* It is possible that this figure represents Mendelssohn, and that the G. C. is a joke upon the phrase "There is nothing."

sohn's readings fresh in his mind, and sang it at the Antient Concerts the next year. These traditions he handed on to me, and I had good cause to remember them; for my very juvenile fingers could never get over the keys quick enough for his singing of "Is not His word like a fire?" the pace of which was like a hurricane, but so rhythmical and clear that not a note or a passage was blurred. The later humdrum *tempo*, à la Handel, of "Thanks be to God" was unthinkable to him. It began at the pace of the descending scale at the close, and the only ritardando was in the middle of the movement, at the words "But the Lord." The final bass song "For the mountains shall depart" he would never sing, for he said, with truth, that it had nothing to do with the centre figure who had gone up in the fiery chariot, and that technically it was written in the baritone *tessitura*, while all the rest was pure bass. He ascribed this to the fact that the composer wrote the part with Staudigl as his prototype, and Staudigl had a phenomenal range from low C to the high tenor G.

One of my father's best parts was Harapha in "Samson." On one occasion when he was singing it at a concert, my mother who was sitting in the room to her great amusement heard the lady next her say to her companion, "That is Mr. Stanford, the most conceited man in Dublin." The time came for "Honour and Arms." After the second part of the Aria the *da capo* repeat of the first part began: whereat the good lady loudly remarked with a triumphant air "There, didn't I tell you? He's encoring himself without so much as a hand being raised to him." The

Dublin mouth found it very difficult and puzzling to pronounce the name of Mendelssohn. My father once heard a customer in a music shop ask for "Mendollyson's songs without music." It came to grief too over that of Joachim, who was announced at a Dublin party by the butler in stentorian tones as "Mr. Jehoiakim."

My father's energies however were not confined to vocal matters. Himself a fair violoncellist of no mean merit, who could tackle the Beethoven trios and sonatas without disgrace, he took a leading part in the founding of the Academy of Music, and in inviting to Dublin an excellent player of his favourite instrument, who was also an admirable all-round musician, Wilhelm Elsner of Frankfurt. This most lovable German of the best type suited the place to a nicety. He had a quick wit and a ready tongue; saw the point of a joke as well as any Kelt, caught a most amusing broken brogue which he never lost, and made himself famous by perpetuating the following jest, probably the best of his many witticisms. Ludwig Straus (of Monday Pop. fame) had been engaged by him to lead one of a series of quartet concerts. At the end of the performance a lady came up to Elsner and the following extraordinary conversation took place (for which I as an eyewitness can vouch).

FAIR STRANGER (*ecstatically*). "Oh! Mr. Elsner, is that the Mr. Strauss that writes the waltzes?"

ELSNER. "No, Madam."

F. S. (*suddenly changing from ecstasy to horror*). "You don't mean to tell me that that is the man who wrote the Life of Our Lord?"

ELSNER (*soothingly*). "Oh no Ma'am, he was an Infidel, but this is a Fiddle." When he related this exploit, he would laughingly add "Not so bad for a poor German!"

The chief violinist in Dublin was a great character, with a face which might have been the model for the typical Irishman of the comic papers. He was a rough player, but an admirable leader of an orchestra and often as a conductor managed to make sows' ears resemble silk purses. Though he was by force of circumstances essentially provincial, he had sharp eyes and kept them open, and he was the first musician in his own town to be a whole-hearted Wagnerian. His name quarrelled with his face; it was incongruous to hear the servant announce "Mr. Levey," and see, not dark hair and a pronounced nose, but an unmistakable Paddy enter the room. The Gallery at the theatre knew better, and greeted him every night as he entered the orchestra with shouts of "The top of the mornin' to ye, O'Shaughnessy," the good old Irish name, which he had dropped for what he considered to be a more musical one. Joachim was much amused to see a Levi, of whom he knew many in Germany, with a snub nose and a most Hibernian grin. Levey distinguished himself (or perhaps it is an honour of which his better half should share the credit) by increasing the population of Dublin with three sons at a blow, an event which is immortalized in an autograph in my possession signed by Mario, "Cento figli e felicità!" Two of these "Triolen" were afterwards well known in musical circles, one of them as conductor at Drury Lane, the other as a curious but

certainly gifted violinist, who went one better than his father and changed his name to Paganini Redivivus. The sons of Levi however were the sons of O'Shaughnessy, and so they remained in physiognomy, in nature and in wit.

In the course of this chapter, I have made no mention of those singers who were afflicted with the disease (as von Bülow termed it) of a tenor voice. One specimen of the tribe amongst the amateurs was to be found, but he was principally distinguished for the Dublin brogue with which he pronounced the Italian language. It was not the "French of Stratford-atte-Bowe," but the Tuscan of the Liberties of St. Patrick's. His singing of "O! Quel amor che palpito" can scarcely be described phonetically in print: it can be imagined by any person who is conversant with Dublin *patois*. But his Christian name, or rather the name which he considered sufficiently dignified for a tenor singer, was no less a one than Hamlet. He acted up to the spirit of the melancholy Dane, but his audience, when they were not as melancholy as he, were consumed with inward giggles. He had, like other people, a mother, and she, on one memorable occasion, spoilt the show. For at a large party just as he drew himself up to pour forth Kevin Street Verdi, her clear voice rang through the hushed room, and maternal admiration revealed in one fatal moment the skeleton in the tenor cupboard. She addressed him as "Peter," and all the agonized singer could do was to raise a protesting hand, and say one word in a tone of mingled sorrow and reproach, "Mothah!"

## CHAPTER III

The two Dublin Cathedrals—Their choirs—Handelian and other traditions—Sir Robert Stewart.

DUBLIN is one of the very few cities which boast the possession of two ancient Cathedrals. They are within ten minutes' walk of each other. The older, Christ Church, stands on a low hill near the river; the younger, St. Patrick's, now called the National Cathedral, is a picturesque building in the pure Early English style, much resembling its contemporary at Salisbury, but on a far smaller scale. In those early days, it had a tragic poetry about it, which has long been swept away. As I entered the north door, I saw a dark gloomy transept leading into a nave of lovely proportions, which were indeed hard to appreciate; for it was a mass of cracked, often half-broken masonry, with fairy pointed arches peeping through a forest of rough supporting beams and rotting scaffolding, an old regimental flag or two giving a splash of colour in the midst of the surrounding devastation. Many were the ghosts which I felt must be there, and to this day I have a recurrent dream of wandering about an old grim Church, sometimes (if I am inclined to nightmare) in the "Friars' walk" above without any parapet to stop a fall, but it is always the nave of old St. Patrick's. For safety as well as for convenience the arch between the nave and the choir was completely closed, and the organ stood upon the screen facing east. High up in

the choir near the organ was what can only be described as a private box, known I believe as "The Dean's Closet," whence favoured visitors could look down on the crowd below. This curious structure lent additional force to the satirical title of the afternoon service, "Paddy's Opera." The service, indeed, never gave me the impression that the congregation had come to say their prayers: truth to tell they came to hear the music: and as soon as the anthem began in its rubrical place, to my juvenile amazement the bulk of the congregation walked out of their seats and stood under the desks and the noses of the singers, with all the air of a concert audience, only stopping short at applause. I remember wondering if they would clap after a well-sung solo, and why my mother had not brought her opera-glasses so that we might see better from our stage-box. After the anthem there was a general stampede out of the church. The whole atmosphere filled me with a kind of eerie uneasiness, uncertainty whether the nave would not collapse and pen us in for ever and ever, and whether the pedals of the organ would not shake the choir arches down too. This uncanny feeling was intensified by one of the worst thunderstorms I remember in Dublin, which came on in the middle of the service, and reverberated from the tumble-down aisles at the back. I was glad to get out, but would not have missed the impression. I suppose that my feelings must have betrayed me somewhat, for I was never again taken there by my parents. I gather that the organ, as I heard it, was of very antique mechanism. I put my fingers on it once, and can recall the exceeding yellowness of the

keys, and the general ricketiness of everything connected with it, including the giddy steps which went up to the loft. But the diapason tone was perfect, and the 16-foot pedals superb, which is no wonder; for it contained several of the stops, unspoilt and unaltered, of the organ which Renatus Harris built in the Temple Church to compete with that of "Father" Smith.

Not long after my gloomy and thunderous visit to the private box, the poetry and history of the old tumbling arches brought home their appeal, and the Cathedral found a friend in Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness, who saved the fabric and restored it in the form in which it now stands. On the architectural merits and demerits of the restoration I will not dwell; it looked for all the world like a brand-new coin from the mint. The romance was gone, the form which could only be guessed at in a forest of supports and picturesque buttresses was laid bare and naked to every eye. The screen was knocked down, the organ was packed away in a side aisle, everything was cleaned up and brought up to date; there was no more possibility of an applauding audience, no private box, no grim darkness or shadowy triforium, and the ghosts were gone to protest against their eviction to the forefathers of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings. The last vestige of the old theatrical days disappeared, when, with great canniness, the show anthem was removed from the middle of the service, and placed at the end after a sermon, often long, which the old pittites had perforce to sit out in patience and in decency, if they wished to hear the music.

Christ Church Cathedral, considerably the elder of the two, was mainly Norman in style. The transepts wholly so, the choir Pointed and Transition, and what remained of architecture in the nave, Early English of a date anterior to St. Patrick's. A large volume has been published, fully describing the restoration by Street, but unfortunately skimming over its condition before Mr. Henry Roe undertook the restoration of the fabric. The structural condition of the building was in a less parlous state than that of St. Patrick's, but it was far more spoilt by such works as had been undertaken in previous centuries. One side of the nave had fallen down, and had been replaced by a blank wall. The choir originally ended in a short apse with two side chapels, but they had either collapsed or been knocked down, and a long and hideous room (I can call it nothing else) of more than double the length had been added on where the Lady Chapel had once stood; this barbaric structure was not even straight, but turned off at an angle from the line of the Cathedral. All that remained of the apse was two pointed Norman arches with their zigzag mouldings. As in St. Patrick's, the organ was on a screen which entirely shut off the nave. In spite of the havoc wrought by past rebuilders, the great dignity of the church survived. The music was as good as, often better than that at St. Patrick's, but there was no theatrical crowd here. Something in the noble atmosphere of the place made it unthinkable. Street's restoration was far more pious than that of the many cooks who spoilt the broth of St. Patrick's. He explored the crypt, thereby confirming Canon

Seymour's discovery of the ancient design, and he exactly reproduced the old East end. As the north side of the nave was well preserved, he had no difficulty in reproducing the south. While the excavations of the crypt were in progress, my father happened by accident on a most curious discovery. A cousin of his, St. John by name, who was a keen amateur violin-maker, was anxious to get some well-seasoned wood for his work. My father made inquiries and found that the best store for old timber was on the north side of the river, and at some distance from it. He went one day to inspect it, and the timber merchant told him that his best wood was kept in an old vaulted gallery of exceptional dryness. He took him along a kind of aisle with Gothic arches of great age, at the end of which was an obviously ancient ecclesiastical door. Being asked whither it led, he answered that there was a passage beyond which it was dangerous to penetrate for any distance, and that the tradition always had been of a communication under the Liffey with Christ Church. When my father was visiting the Cathedral crypt shortly after, he found a door of an architecture exactly corresponding with that at the timber merchant's and on the north side next the river. The passage was most probably a means of escape for the monks in the time of the Danes. It is impossible not to admire the innate artistic feeling and the conscientious thoroughness of workmen, who were as careful about their dog-tooth ornaments and delicate arches at an emergency exit, as about those in the Cathedral itself.

These two historical buildings were the cradle and the nursery of music in Ireland. In them were trained the singers who made the first performance of the "Messiah" possible, and who compelled the warmest appreciation of the great Handel himself. But it was found either unsatisfactory or impossible to carry on a full Cathedral Service with a complete choir at both churches; and the other competitors, Trinity College Chapel and the Chapel Royal, required once on Sunday a full musical equipment. When I was a boy, one organist and one choir did duty for three of them: Trinity at 9.30 a.m., Christ Church at 11 a.m., St. Patrick's at 3 p.m., and Christ Church again in the evening. At Trinity after the anthem, the choir all decamped out of Chapel, and made off hot-foot for the Cathedral, dropping four or five singers on the way to do duty at the Chapel Royal. They all combined at three for "Paddy's Opera," and those that had any voice left dissipated the remains of it in the evening at Christ Church. They must speedily have been reduced to the state of mind which the late Walter Bache so unblushingly described to a professional friend, who meeting him one day after a long absence from London, asked him if he was still organist of — Church. "No, no," said Bache. "It was really too d——d demoralizing." And he had only to listen to "Dearly beloved brethren" twice a day, while the Dublin choir-men had four doses extending from 9.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. What a satire upon their duties must the reading of the injunctions about "vain repetitions" have sounded in their ears!

The personnel of this ubiquitous choir was highly efficient as regards individual singers. What *ensemble* they had was the result of their reduplicated services, for rehearsals were seldom and scanty, more often than not confined to a haphazard ten minutes at the piano while the surplices were being put on. There was no question of the beauty of voice and finished style of many of the men: the salary of the posts was very high, and the attractions of Dublin as a teaching centre very considerable; so the Cathedrals were able to skim the cream off many of the English choirs in addition to securing the best Irish voices. There was Hemsley, the purest and most sympathetic of altos, a finished vocalist and a most conscientious artist, well-remembered for his faultless attire, and for the dainty dallying of his lavender-gloved hands with the pages of his score. Peele, most stalwart and straightforward of tenors, who betook himself to medicine and died of nursing the poor in an epidemic of virulent typhus fever. "Dick" Smith, the nephew of "the beginning is now" Professor, a breezy and matter-of-fact baritone who had been in the navy, and brought a refreshing flavour of salt-water into the Cathedral stalls: no one could sing "Rule Britannia" with a better spirit and clearer runs than he. Grattan Kelly, a thunderous and self-confident bass who with his colleague Benjamin Mullen, made "The Lord is a man of war" sound like an Ossianic battle of the bards. What Handel would have said to the vocal emendations which this hero introduced into the "Messiah" I tremble to think. I remember one of them, a passage from "For behold darkness shall



rendering of the introduction to the oratorio in *double dots*, a reading which gives far more point to the rhythm, and removes all the feeling of stodginess which a strict adherence to the printed note-values emphasizes. If I remember rightly, the late Sir William Cusins strongly insisted on this very point, and he most probably got the tradition through Mrs. Anderson from Sir George Smart. No such monstrous caricature as the *pianissimo* start of the chorus "For unto us a Child is born" was ever heard in Dublin. The ludicrous suggestion which such a rendering gives of the necessity of "hushing up the facts" was enough to kill it with ridicule in an Irish mind. Hans Richter, when he directed it for the first time in his life at the Birmingham Festival of 1885, made such satirical criticisms upon this Costa-monger *nuance*, that it never could be ventured on again by any self-respecting conductor. He also, from the natural intuition for the right *tempo* with which he was so gifted, saw that movements in  $\frac{1}{8}$  and  $\frac{3}{8}$  time, such as the Pastoral Symphony and "Come unto Me," were to be played "alla Siciliana" and not as funeral dirges, and in this his judgment exactly coincided with the Dublin use. To give its true value to the Irish tradition, it should not be forgotten that for years after Handel had stereotyped his own reading in Dublin, there was no other influence to disturb it; for the town was by force of circumstances self-contained, save for a few moneyed travellers, until steam-packets began to cross St. George's Channel. Let us then give Grattan Kelly and Mullen and their colleagues and successors the benefit of the doubt.

Two of the elder brothers of Joseph Robinson survived and sang in my time. The doyen, Francis, had a perfectly trained if somewhat small tenor, and was a most thorough and capable musician as well. The second, William, was a grotesque caricature of his youngest brother. Every line in Joseph's face (and they were very marked and of a Jewish type) was exaggerated in William's; and he carried beyond the point of comicality the ultra-nasal quality of his junior's vocal production. His bass voice in all conscience went, by nature, low enough—he would have nearly qualified for a Russian Choir—but he never could resist giving the impression of still deeper notes than he possessed, by trusting to a forefinger dramatically pointed at the floor, emitting the while a raucous "aw" with an air of celestial solemnity.

The controlling force which held this motley crew together was the organist, Robert Prescott Stewart. With the exception of his early experiences as a choir-boy in Christ Church, this, in many ways, most remarkable man was wholly self-taught. He evolved his own organ-playing, his own knowledge of orchestration in particular and composition in general, his own general familiarity with the literature of European countries. How he did it is a mystery to me, for his grasp of every detail of contemporary progress was unmistakable, and he certainly had no one to teach him at home. To this spontaneous bringing up was probably due a certain carelessness of detail and irresponsible love of ornamental incrustations upon familiar masterpieces which were calculated to shock the accurate artist. But the compensation came in his new

view of the instrument upon which he excelled. He was practically the first organist in this country to phrase with his feet. Pedal passages with him were as carefully "bowed" as if they were played by violoncellos and double-basses. He abolished for good and all in Ireland the then all-pervading organist's trick of adding the sharp seventh to every common chord. "A fine rolling effect" I once heard an adherent of the old school term it. "Imagine," I can hear Stewart say, "the trombones playing a persistent B natural at the opening of the Finale of the C minor Symphony of Beethoven! Why perpetuate this barbarism upon an equally loud wind instrument because it happens to be in Church?" Another *bête noire* of his was the pedal note which was always bumped upon the first beat of the bar in old music which started on the second beat. He used to term *Te Deums* and *Magnificats* of this sort "door-knocker services." In spite of the stiff mechanism of the organs of his early days, before the pneumatic action came to the rescue of perspiring players, he had a perfect pianoforte touch and an excellent technique, so good in fact that it encouraged him to indulge at times in the most unecclesiastical fireworks. When he was more than usually bored with some dryasdust anthem, they scintillated and danced about the score in a most dazzling fashion, and the singers had to keep their wits about them when they were accompanied by unfamiliar and unauthorized figures. He shared S. S. Wesley's dislike of and contempt for mediocre eighteenth-century productions: as he had to play them, he dressed them up in clothes which made them tolerable to himself.

Although he had no reverence for stuff of poor quality merely because it was dignified by the mustiness of age, he was never flippant over the genuine masterpieces. Here he often threw a new light upon picturesque ideas which had been smothered by years of perfunctory dryasdust treatment. He spied out the Dantesque colour of Blow's "I was in the spirit," with its recurrent circles of seraph voices, an effect which in modern days has been so dramatically realized by Boïto in the Prelude to "Mefistofele." His admiration for Gibbons and for Purcell was infectious. Bach was his chief deity, and that too in a surrounding atmosphere of Handel-worshippers, who looked upon Sebastian as an interloper and a purely mathematical puzzle-maker. His treatment of Bach, which I have often heard mercilessly attacked, was only an intelligent anticipation of the principles of phrasing, upon which Schweitzer lays such stress. Stewart applied the same method of "bowing" to his organ music, that Joachim and others have laid down in practice and by precept for the violin works. He used to be sharply criticized for the rapid pace with which he played many of the Preludes and Fugues. Recent authorities have held that Bach himself played his music so quickly that his pupils despaired of imitating him.\* As an example of Stewart's manner of phrasing I can give two quotations, marked as he played them :



\* This view is subject, of course, to the proviso "as quickly as the stiff mechanism permitted."

This phrasing, as I said above, he carried out with the pedals as well as on the manuals, and it made the construction of the Fugue come out as clear as crystal. And :



It is quite true that Stewart was so imbued with this principle that like many other men who are keen about a pet theory, he applied it in cases to which it was unsuitable, and he often lost in solidity and dignity of style in consequence. But to players who could apply the excellent maxim which my grandmother formulated to my father "Copy my perfections and not my imperfections," and who had wits enough to discern the strong point of his renderings, his methods were a most valuable example.

His memory was exceptional. I often sat by him on the organ seat, and seldom saw him trouble to open his book. He used to pick up the list of chants and services, read it, throw it down, and accompany everything without a note on the desk. On one occasion this power was put to a severe test. Robinson had undertaken to conduct a performance of Handel's "Samson" at Belfast; no orchestra was available and he brought down Stewart to play the accompaniments on the fine organ in the Ulster Hall. Stewart's eyes, which were never very strong, struck work, oddly enough just as the tenor singer was beginning "Total eclipse." He turned round to a companion who was beside him on the organ seat and said "I can't see," and accompanied the whole of the rest from memory.

The blindness was happily only due to a temporary disturbance, which afterwards passed away; but Robinson, and my father, who was singing the bass part, were in entire ignorance of any hitch and knew nothing of the anxiety above them till the close of the first part. This incident was enough to prove his pluck and nerve.

He had a great admiration for S. S. Wesley's work, and was anxious to hear him play. Knowing his peculiarities, he travelled down secretly to Winchester, and sat himself down in a corner of the choir for service. But Wesley's quick eye detected him, and instead of the usual voluntary at the close, he played about eight commonplace bars and vanished.

Stewart's wide knowledge of instrumentation led him in later years to rely more on his own arrangements from orchestral works than on the literature of his instrument for the pieces he chose to play. He did not (like Best) write them down, but played them direct from the score. He did not draw the line at works which would seem the most unsuitable for the organ; but his nimble fingers and command of phrasing made one forgive him, even when he astonished his hearers by a performance of the overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream"! His facility in such feats was somewhat of a snare, but his over-indulgence in them, to the exclusion of pure organ-music, may be the more easily condoned as orchestras in Dublin were to seek, and his opportunities for hearing the greater repertoire correspondingly limited.

His compositions are more facile and brilliant than deep. He had a distinct vein of melodic invention of a

type common to other Irishmen of his day, such as Balfe or Wallace, but more refined in style and backed by a much sounder technique. A short choral work "Echo and the Lovers" which is, I believe, unpublished, was a little gem of its mock-antique kind. He knew well how to orchestrate, and one of his favourite books was "our Hector's" (as he called Berlioz) treatise on Instrumentation. He never appreciated Schumann nor Brahms, but went to Baireuth for the first performance of the "Ring" in 1876 and became a devotee of Wagner. His propensities, like those of most Kelts, were for the opera-house rather than the concert-room. The articles which he wrote for the *Dublin Daily Express* on the Nibelungen were, with those written by Mr. Hercules MacDonnell for the *Irish Times*, almost the best which appeared in any of the public press. Written far away from the clash of party, and the intrigues of the foreign stage, they are especially valuable for their freedom from prejudice and their fresh, but not inexperienced, outlook. I well remember the first lessons he gave me on the organ; and that record may be of some use to masters of our own day in a similar situation. The first maxim was "Remember that your left hand is a tenor and not a bass": and the first exercise was the 100th Psalm, which he wrote out for me placing the melody in the pedals (coupled to the 4-foot flute on the choir without any pedal-stops) and the lower parts only given to the hands. To a beginner this sensation somewhat resembled the topsy-turvydom experienced by those who have "looped the loop." A little more dead-in-earnestness, and a greater grasp of the big things in life and art would have made Stewart an outstanding

man. But his easy-going nature, and the sloppy *laissez-faire* atmosphere which surrounded him prevented his attainment of the highest place. It was hard, even for one gifted with so brilliant a brain, to live in a circle of half-baked musicians without being affected by their standard, and still harder to occupy a position in which he had no rival to excel or to learn from. He left his mark however on the "melancholy island," which was responsible both for his witty and versatile gifts and for the lack of opportunity to give value and effect to them.

## CHAPTER IV

Early days—Jenny Lind—The local orchestra—Pianoforte training—Joachim—The Duke of Wellington and Mr. Seed—Sayers and Heenan—The Dublin Sunday—Passing visitors—George Osborne and Berlioz.

I HAVE but few memories of any interest before 1860. I saw once (in 1858) the famous disciple of Dr. Hahne-mann, Dr. Luther, the direct descendant of Martin Luther; but I expect the true reason of my still vivid recollection of his burly figure and striking personality is to be found in the fact that on running into the room to see him I made my entry head first, and the leg of the drawing-room table divorced me from my best front tooth. He did not carry out his principle of "*Similia similibus curantur*," I am glad to say, on that occasion, by knocking out the other. Two years previously I had been given my first newspaper to read, and well remember what was in it, the fall of Sebastopol. It is a grim proof of the horror which pervaded every household in the two following years, that I never was shown another until the Indian Mutiny was over, and did not know of its having taken place until one afternoon five years afterwards. I went with my father to see Lady Campbell (the daughter of Lord Edward Fitzgerald of 1798 fame), and we were met on the steps by a stalwart handsome military-looking man. To my astonishment my father and he embraced and kissed each other like two girls. I had never been in France, and the unfamiliar spectacle made me ask the



On the way back, just outside Holyhead, I was kept on deck (it was disgustingly rough) to see the *Great Eastern* which was lying outside the harbour. My early drawing-books are full of her, with her five funnels, six masts and huge paddle-boxes. She was then I believe on her way to Liverpool, preparing to start on her first Transatlantic voyage. A few days later came the famous storm which wrecked the *Royal Charter* not far from the very spot where the *Leviathan* (as she was called) was anchored. During that storm I heard my first concert; and owing to it one of the performers was unable to arrive in time to sing. The work was the "Messiah," the belated passenger was Lockey, the tenor who sang at the first performance of the "Elijah," to whom Mendelssohn paid such a glowing tribute; but one singer was there, whose voice and beauty of interpretation came home even to a child of seven, Jenny Lind in her prime. I did not hear the sound of her voice again until 1873, when she suddenly and unexpectedly began the soprano solo in Bach's "Ich hatte viel Bekümmerniss," (My spirit was in heaviness) at a private amateur performance, the first given in this country, conducted by Arthur Sullivan in Arthur Coleridge's house. I was not even aware that she was in the room, still less whose throat the voice was coming from; but it brought back 1859 in a flash, and I recognized the sound and the singer.

In 1892 while staying at St. Leonard's I paid a visit to Lockey, a big giant of a man with a striking head and physiognomy, and had the satisfaction of poking a little fun at him about his failure to appear in 1859, and the fatality that the absentee was, of course, a

tenor: but he too recalled the *Royal Charter* storm, and said that not even the most doughty of basses could have faced it. He was most interesting about Mendelssohn and the "Elijah" performance at Birmingham. He told me that the composer impressed upon him the supreme importance of simplicity of rendering, that such tricks of *portamento* as many tenors have indulged in (*e.g.*, in "If with all your hearts"), were anathema to him; that the metronomic pace of "O rest in the Lord" was exactly that at which he conducted it, and had taught it to Mrs. Lockey (the Miss Williams of the first performance), and that he nearly cut out that song altogether from dread of its being dragged and over-sentimentalized.

My next musical experience was the rehearsal for a concert of the Dublin Philharmonic Society, the successor of an older body called "The Anacreontic Society." They had an orchestra of the type which Chorley happily termed "scrannel." The brass was very blatant, and the strings excessively stringy. The conductor, a worthy named Bussell, who was a kindly Englishman of exceptional stodginess, scarcely knew one end of the stick from the other, and was certainly incapable of reading a score to any advantage either to himself or to his myrmidons. So tired did the press become of calling attention to his shortcomings, that they used to end all notices of Philharmonic Concerts by saying, "Mr. Bussell conducted himself as usual." To this rehearsal came Charles Hallé. The noise of the brass had, I am ashamed to say, brought the unwilling tears to my eyes, and caused them to overflow enough to attract attention. Hallé, who was waiting

for his term of martyrdom, caught sight of this little tragedy, and began the first of a series of kindnesses to me in which he never failed to his dying day, by cheering me up with little jokes, and soothing my small nerves most effectually. He told me that if I cried at the brass, that I should have a much worse time in later life. I reminded him of this episode in later years, and he said it was no wonder that the Dublin brass had moved me to tears, for it had nearly had the same effect upon himself.

My musical education had hitherto been confined to the pianoforte, with an occasional lesson in harmony from "the beginning is now" Dr. Smith and from Dr. Francis Robinson: and the lady who took over my instrumental training from my mother was my godmother, an admirable amateur pianist, Miss Elizabeth Meeke. She had been one of Moscheles' favourite pupils in the days when that famous master lived in London and was fresh from his close intercourse with Beethoven, and with him she had studied all the works of the immortal Netherlander, wrongly termed a German from the accident of his birth in the Rhineland. (He was no more German than César Franck was French.) Miss Meeke was an ample lady with a sweeping and swishing silk dress, and hands of exactly the same build and type as Madame Schumann's, whose style she closely resembled both in touch and in interpretation. Her personality was vividly recalled to me on a recent occasion in a comically incongruous way. I was sitting in the stalls at a performance given by the "Follies," my neighbour, oddly enough, happening to be a cousin who like myself was Miss Meeke's godchild.

That most whimsical and gifted actor, Mr. Pelissier, appeared in the guise of a commanding dame of mature years in order to give a recitation with pianoforte accompaniment. My cousin and I gave one look at each other, we both ejaculated simultaneously "Meeke" (she always was called by her surname by her friends young as well as old) and we both collapsed into such hopeless hysterics that we had in consideration for our neighbours to bury our heads in our hands.

Some of the Beethoven traditions which this first-rate teacher gave me are interesting in view of the modern deviations from them which are now to be found every day. Chief among them was her insistence (on the authority of Moscheles) that *acciacaturas*, mordents and such-like are to be played before and not on the beat: Beethoven in this respect differing in his method from earlier masters: and that when two successive notes were slurred, e.g. , the first is accented almost like a *sforzando*, and the second is definitely *staccato*. This latter rule will be found to apply with equal force in the works of Brahms; in orchestral passages where this slur occurs, I have frequently heard him call out "Absetzen! Absetzen!" (Take it off!) when he was directing his own compositions. For one ever-useful accomplishment, the value of which to any artist is incalculable, I have wholly to thank Miss Meeke. She taught me, before I was twelve years old, to read at sight. The method she used to enable me to acquire ease and fluency in this difficult branch of musicianship was daring but wholly effective. She made me play every day at the end of my lesson, a Mazurka of

Chopin : never letting me stop for a mistake, and, if I did shy at a difficulty, reiterating " Go on, go on, don't stutter !" By the time I had played through the whole fifty-two Mazurkas, I could read most music of the calibre which my fingers could tackle with comparative ease. The effectiveness of her method was, I feel sure, due to two main causes :—the principle of non-stop runs, and entire unfamiliarity with the style of music tackled. At the time she placed Chopin on the desk I knew no more of his compositions than a Red Indian.

She always held that a beautiful touch was a gift, which can be developed by careful training but cannot be manufactured by machinery ; and that the safest way of fostering it was one widely different from that in vogue at the present day. She believed in making the player sit at a sufficient height to keep the upper line of the forearm absolutely straight to the first joint of the fingers, the end of the fingers falling like little hammers upon the keys. To get command of the instrument, the player therefore had to sit up to his work. Nowadays they sit below it. This, in my experience, leads to banging and forcing the tone, and I confess that I seldom now hear the velvety quality which used to distinguish her playing and that of others of her time who carried out the same plan. It may be that the fault lies at the door of the modern pianoforte ; and that, like the race between guns and armour, the finger force has had to give place to fist force, in order to make an impression on the latest types of battleship grand. Noise *versus* sonority. As the superficial imitators of Wagner's instrumentation so often attain a plethora of the

former at the expense of the latter, so do the quasi-disciples of Liszt and of Rubinstein. It is the age of the *hit* instead of the *pressure*. If it is old-fashioned to prefer the pressure, I am happy to be still in the ranks of the out-of-date. I shall always prefer beauty of tone to strength of muscle. And beauty of tone was precisely what I found to be the predominant quality in both Liszt and Rubinstein. When Liszt raised his arms above his head, he did so, to be frank, simply to make a theatrical display which would catch the eyes of an audience. He was quite capable of showing off, with his tongue in his cheek. All the same he had brains enough to know that the poise of a hand, whether at the distance of two feet or two inches above the keys, makes no difference to the tone. A careful observer of his playing would have noticed that no matter how high was the upward lift of his arms, the downward fall was always in time to allow of his hands being in the same position to strike the keys as if the brachial flourish had not been made at all. To hit the key from a height would be to risk wrong notes and damage to the instrument. It was magnificent but it was humbug. Liszt knew it; he always played for musicians with an immovable body and a quiet repressed dignity, reserving his acrobatic performances for audiences whom he in his heart despised. Rubinstein's arm exercises on the other hand gave the impression of a wild genius who had not complete control over his own nature. With him the displays were spontaneous and part of the man: his sincerity was on the face of him. If he exaggerated in phrasing or in gesture, he did it in spite of

himself. He often smashed a hammer, or a string if the hammer was strong enough to stand it; and I preferred him when he was in his least destructive mood.

The soundness of the method in which I had been trained was still more brought home to me at the only interview, a most interesting one, which I had with Sigismund Thalberg in 1862. This princely person was, in spite of the ephemeral rubbish which he wrote, an artist, as well as pianist, of the highest calibre. A son of Prince Dietrichstein, he inherited all the strong points of good breeding and refinement, which, well directed, must stand an artist in good stead in his profession, as in any other walk in life. He was too sincere and also too witty to pose. It is well known that Liszt rated him highest amongst his contemporaries. The story goes that a rather tactless friend asked Liszt whom he considered to be the greatest pianist of the day.

LISZT. "Thalberg of course!"

TACTLESS FRIEND. "And where do you place yourself?"

LISZT (*grandioso*). "*Hors concours.*"

I went with trembling limbs to play for Thalberg at the house of a friend with whom he was staying in Dublin. After my small performance, he proceeded spontaneously to give me a most valuable lesson. The lines of it were precisely the same as my godmother's. The one trick which he warned me against, one which I had picked up during my old teacher's absence from Dublin when I had been placed in other hands, was that of raising my wrist above the flat level of my hand as I struck a note. "If you go on doing that

you will thump," said T. I felt a little inclined to giggle inwardly, for the teacher who had encouraged this very failing was standing beside me, and I knew quite well that she did thump mightily.

This spring of 1862 was to become ever-memorable to me. I was taken to a concert, where I saw and heard for the first time the greatest artist of our time, Joseph Joachim. The pieces he played were the Kreutzer Sonata, and the G minor fugue of Bach. He was then only thirty-one. His massive mouth and chin had no beard to hide it. The impression he gave me at once was that of the inevitable rightness of every note and phrase he played. In the last volume of Hans von Bülow's letters, it is obvious that he had the same feeling, for he often uses the term "Joachimsch" as a synonym for "perfect." When I went to see Joachim the next morning, he was in an instant as much a boy as I, and a friendship began which lasted unbroken till his death. I can never over-estimate the value of that forty-five years' influence in my life and in my work. It had the double power of giving impulse and controlling it with brake-power. A purist of almost microscopic accuracy, his criticism, even when it seemed to border on the pedantic, kept experiment within the bounds of beauty, and made one weigh and measure all departures from the normal by the standard of artistic merit. I was able to gauge the true span of Joachim's art by comparison with that of another great violinist who came to Dublin within a few weeks of his visit, Henri Vieuxtemps. Joachim thought of the music he played, Vieuxtemps of Vieuxtemps. The former a

composer himself of remarkable gifts and originality of style, (his playing has blinded too many to the outstanding value of his works even to this day), made it his business to bring home Bach and Beethoven to his public; the latter exploited *Airs Variés* and concertos *ad libitum*, but they always bore the name of Vieuxtemps. This self-advertising policy does not tell in the long run, for even at the immature age of ten it annoyed me too much to leave any marked memory of Vieuxtemps' undoubtedly great gifts as a player.

In the same year I heard for the first time Madame Patti in the first opera I ever saw, Flotow's "*Marta*," that old war-horse of the early impresarios which was always trotted out when some other opera was insufficiently rehearsed. I was strung up to a high pitch of dramatic excitement about this piece of vapidty, and had a shock when the *diva* as an encore in an Italian opera, came down to the footlights out of the picture, and interpolated "Coming thro' the rye." I confess that it had much the same effect upon me as would have been produced by a comic song in the middle of the anthem at St. Patrick's. Children love illusions, and resent their being destroyed.

The first organ upon which I tried to play was a very curious instrument, with an interesting history. The builder's name I do not know, but it was very ancient, with black naturals and white sharps. It stood under the north arch of the chancel of St. Stephen's Church where its restored and enlarged carcass still is. It was formerly in the gallery at the West end, and before it was purchased for the church had been the property of Lord Mornington, the Professor

of Music in Dublin University, who was responsible for the authorship of the famous glee "Here in a cool grot" and of the still more famous Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington. When a subscription was being raised in order to remove the organ to the East end, one of the churchwardens, by name Stephen Seed, an excellent man gifted with a somewhat ludicrously ornate style of epistolary correspondence, bethought him of addressing a letter in his best English to the Duke, in the hopes of getting a substantial contribution. After reminding him that the organ had once belonged to his lamented father, he added that "Your Grace's own famous fingers may not infrequently have wandered over the keys." The Duke was not to be drawn, but answered with his own hand, as he always did, somewhat in these characteristically laconic terms: "F.M. The Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. Seed, and begs to say that if he ever played upon the organ in question, it must have been when he was quite an infant." The church was more or less a square room with galleries all round three sides, and a Georgian attempt at a chancel. Our pew was facing that of a family whose young hopeful was a great friend of mine: and I used to be consumed with envy every Sunday morning at seeing him sent home before the dreaded sermon began. I had to sit it out, but consoled myself and developed a certain amount of practice in mental arithmetic by studying the Golden Numbers and Sunday Letters in the preface to the Prayer-Book. I was fascinated by contemplating the years up to A.D. 8500 and the injunction to "guide your eye sideways to

the left hand," and to add to the year its fourth part, omitting fractions (a great relief), and all the other permutations and combinations for fixing the date of Easter which helped to distract me during the dry theological disquisitions which were as Greek to me. The only words in the sermon of those days which really appealed to me were "and now." They came like balm to a wounded spirit. Occasionally a preacher used to score off me in the middle of my heathenish sums, by saying these two words at the beginning of a totally different sentence from the expected coda, and my resentment was deep. I was however much better off than some cousins of mine, who were expected, awful thought, to recite a *résumé* of the sermon when they returned home.

One Sunday two of these young martyrs were staying with us, and had for once in their lives a relief from their ordeal and the experience of hearing a very different sort of *précis*. After church, my father made a careful reconnaissance of the lie of the land, and when he saw the coast was clear we crept up in guilty silence to the schoolroom at the top of the house. He produced from his pocket a copy of the renowned sporting paper *Bell's Life*, and read out with great dramatic gusto, round by round, the historical fight between Sayers and Heenan, the Benicia Boy. We sat round open-mouthed, I got my first lesson in the vocabulary of the prize ring, and we went down to dinner knowing all about canisters, potato traps, bread-baskets, chancery, and the tapping of claret.\* Our

\* A full and Homeric account of this great battle was given in the *Times* of April 18, 1860.



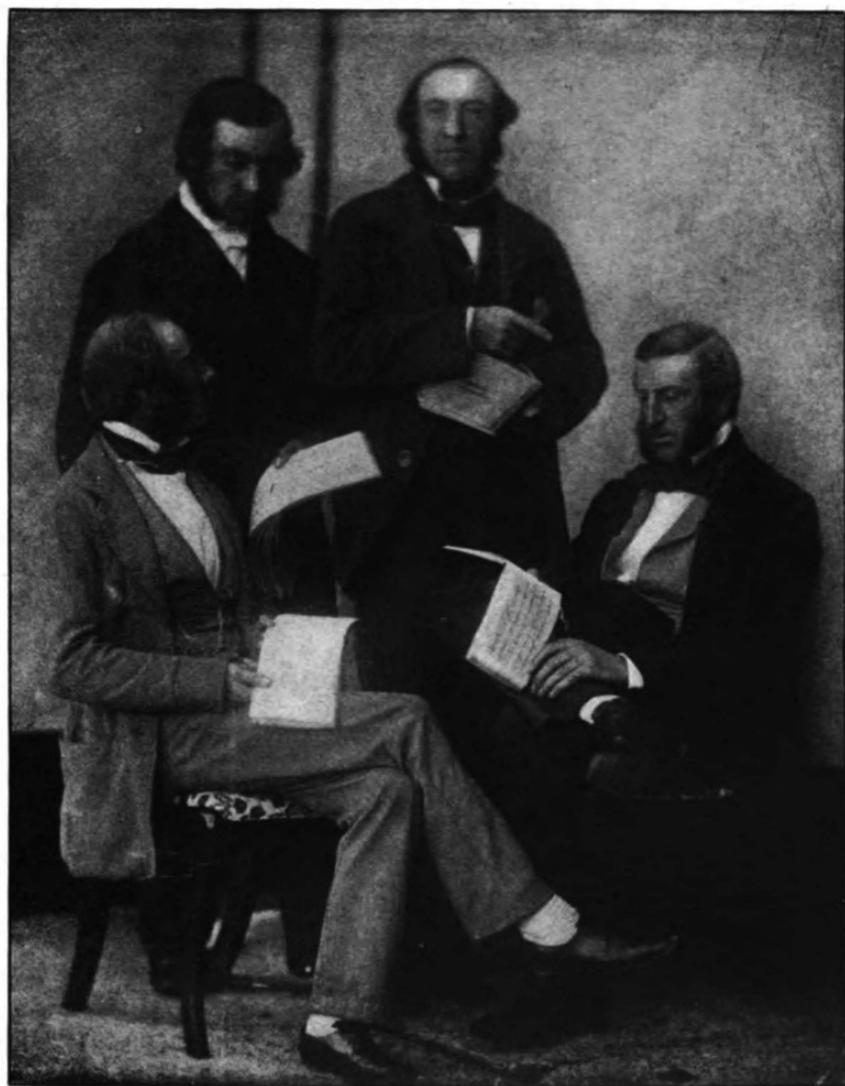
MARY STANFORD.  
(Etat. Circa 21.)

return from the higher regions was as strategically perfect as our ascent, and I think we were never found out. Our precautions were of course ridiculously unnecessary, for my mother, most gentle of women, was far too full of fun not to appreciate the joke of our manœuvres. If it had not been for the sanguinary details, she would have been as thrilled by the battle as we were. The Irish Sunday was nearly as dour and stiff as the Scotch, but there was a leaven of fun which lightened it in my happy surroundings. One cousin of mine, who had a great gift for drawing animals, was only allowed to draw churches on Sunday; but my father once shattered the tradition by suggesting that the boy might be allowed to draw a horse and cart, provided that he gave his word that it was driving to Divine service. One other unexpected Sunday pleasure I can also recall, when I was first made acquainted with one of the great classics of the English language. I had been asked to stay with my mother's cousin, Christina Lady Waterford, in the County Armagh. After church I was sent for to the drawing-room and expected "What is your name? N. or M." but to my great relief, the catechism was not, and in its place was produced . . . Lear's "Book of Nonsense." I was not half-adventurous enough to please my hostess, whose sons were, happily for the country, made of more martial stuff, so she christened me "The Prince of Crocks."

Our house used to be, during the early sixties, a great port of call for some very interesting visitors on their way from England to the country parts of Ireland. I have often found the late Lord Dunraven, most fascinating and witty of men, recuperating from the

night journey by a sleep on the sofa in the dining-room when I came down for breakfast; John Palliser with his stirring accounts of blockade-running during the American Civil War, who used to make me play him one of the forty-eight Preludes and Fugues of Bach before he would go away: his brother, the handsome Colonel who invented chilled shot; and my mother's cousins, Aubrey de Vere, the poet, who used to visit Wordsworth's grave every year, and Stephen Spring Rice, who would arrive fresh from Farringford and the Tennysons, brimful of stories of the great bard. I recall, with a still surviving sense of horror at my youthful impertinence, a pressing request I wrote to Spring Rice that he would get Tennyson to write a poem for me to set. He gave me a very kindly and timely set-down, but so great was the reverence of Tennyson for babes and sucklings that I dare say he would not have thought my proposal quite so ridiculously impertinent as I still blush to think it. At any rate it showed a small boy's love for his poetry.

One other meteoric visitor from over the sea was an Irish musician, one of the most kindly, upright and loyal friends that a boy or man could wish to have, George Alexander Osborne. The son of an organist at Limerick, the creamy brogue of which he never lost, he migrated in his 'teens to Belgium and afterwards to Paris, where he became the intimate friend of Rossini, Chopin and Berlioz. Before the revolution of 1848 he changed his abode and became one of the leading teachers of the pianoforte in London, where his house was for many years an international home of musical life. His brilliant Irish humour, his detesta-



AN ORPHEUS QUARTET.

(Photographed by Ch. Graves, Bishop of Limerick, circa 1860)

The Earl of  
Dunraven.

Rev. Augustus  
Maunsell

Joseph  
Robinson

John  
Stanford

tion of little artistic jealousies, and his stalwart support of every artist and composer who was worth his salt made him, as a natural consequence, a centre of attraction to them all. He had the rare gift of perpetual youth, and of keeping well abreast of every progressive movement. He was one of the sturdy small band, headed by Sainton, who appreciated at its true value Wagner's spadework at the Philharmonic in 1855, where, as he told me, his eyes were first opened to the true rendering of Beethoven's symphonies. He was equally hard-working in the support of Berlioz at the New Philharmonic, was one of the first musicians in England to recognize Schumann and Brahms, and one of the very few Britons who went to Baireuth in 1876, having with him Davison and Gröneisen, and fighting their prejudices like a good-natured demon. His relations with De Bériot, with whom he wrote a once well-known series of duets, led to his close acquaintance with all the leading violinists of the day. Wieniawski, who was one of his most intimate friends, married his niece. He told me many curious stories of his Parisian days, notably one of tragic memory for him. Nourrit, the celebrated tenor singer of the Grand Opéra, to whom he was greatly attached, had been away in Italy and returned to find that his successor Duprez had supplanted him in the affections of the Parisian public. He went with Osborne and Berlioz to hear his rival, and after the performance his two friends walked with him up and down the boulevards until the small hours of the morning trying to dissuade him from suicide. They succeeded in persuading him to return to Italy, where

they knew that Rossini and Donizetti would make the rough ways smooth for him. They were right in this prediction, but his nerve was too much shaken, and they saw him no more; at Naples he threw himself out of a window after a concert, at which he had had a great ovation in which he could not bring himself to believe. Osborne described most graphically this terrible walk, and the extraordinary contrasts of the glare and glitter of the lively street and the broken-hearted artist between them, Berlioz chaffing him and Osborne soothing him. My old friend closely resembled Rossini, a fact which that witty and lazy Italian fully recognized and often exploited. For if he found Osborne at an evening party at which he was bored, he would go up to him and whisper "Now, cher ami, I give you full leave to be Rossini for the rest of the evening," and decamp to his bed. I have no doubt that his double acted the part to perfection.

He also told me a most amusing story, which shed a characteristic light on Berlioz's literary methods. It may be remembered by readers of that masterly work (? of fiction) Berlioz's "Memoirs," that he describes at length the first performance at the Invalides of his huge Requiem; how it was conducted by Habeneck, his old foe of the Conservatoire, how the four brass bands were distributed at the four corners of the orchestra, and how vitally important were the four beats which the conductor has to give, in order to insure the exact entry for the "terrible explosion." He says that with his habitual mistrust, he had stationed himself behind Habeneck and continues:—"Just in the one bar where the conductor's beat is

absolutely necessary, Habeneck lowers his stick, coolly takes his snuffbox out of his pocket, and leisurely takes a pinch. I always had my eye upon him, turned round quickly, and stepping in front of him I put out my arm and gave the four slow beats of the change of *tempo*. The orchestra followed me accurately. I conducted the piece to the end, and got the effect I wanted. When Habeneck saw that the *Tuba mirum* was rescued, he said, 'What a cold perspiration I have had! We should have been lost without you!' 'Yes I know,' was my answer, fixing him with a significant look." I asked Osborne if he remembered anything about this episode, and he said that he had reason to, for he was sitting in the nave with Berlioz, that he never stood up, that Habeneck never put down his bâton, did not take a pinch of snuff, and that there was no necessity or opportunity for fixed significant flashes of the composer's eye. Moreover that when the "Memoirs" were published, he asked Berlioz why upon earth he had put upon record such a wholesale piece of pure invention; that Berlioz burst out laughing and said that the story seemed to him far too good a one to be lost! So much for imagination in autobiography. It is dangerous ground; it makes me think with a certain tremor of the incursions of foolish humanity, and whether it is not safer to be, like Disraeli, on the side of the Angels.

## CHAPTER V

London in 1862—The Exhibition—Chorley—The theatres—  
Moscheles—School and schoolfellows—The English police—  
Music in Dublin.

THE summer of 1862 was an eventful one for me, as I went to London for the first time, and saw the Exhibition of that year which was held in a big building where the Natural History Museum now stands. We stayed with my grand-uncle Jonathan Henn in Clifford Street, off Bond Street. The first impressions London gave me were funereal, for we drove from Euston along a street which then, even more than now, consisted mainly of a succession of sample tombstones and cemetery sculptures. The second was the extraordinary narrowness of the hall doors and halls as compared with the breadth and airiness of those in Dublin. The Exhibition was fascinating to any youngster, and the Austrian court especially so: but the main attraction to me was the collection of pictures, where I made my first acquaintance with the works of Leighton, Millais, Watts, and the French and Belgian schools. We had exceptional chances of seeing these in ease and quiet, as Sir Richard Mayne, the Chief of the Police, was a connection of my mother's, and he gave us the run of the picture galleries on Sundays. There was good music to be heard there sporadically. I heard Sauret, and, I think, his brother, both boys at the time, give two or three excellent recitals in the French court.

But London itself was a far greater exhibition. My father used to chuckle over my first visit to Westminster Abbey, how I made a bee-line for a spot in the Poets' Corner and poked about for a slab on the floor, and how on his asking me what I was looking for, I answered "Maücöly's tomb," a queer corruption of the great name of Macaulay. St. Paul's was, except for its vast size, a disappointment to me. The organ stood on a screen which cut the Cathedral in two, and that, as I look back at those days, accounted for this feeling. Wren was right when he railed at it. I know that it destroyed the effect of the Church as I saw it then. The only excuse for its position would have been an imposing case of a size proportionate to its surroundings; as it was, it had the appearance of a mere box of whistles. The singing was second-rate and sounded sloppy, as did that in Westminster Abbey; and the Temple Church was far ahead of both of them. In one respect the Thames of that day was more picturesque than now, for Hungerford Bridge, now carted away to span the Avon at Clifton, was a very different object in the landscape from the unsightly and barbarous structure which took its place at Charing Cross. I remember going to a musical party at Notting Hill at the house of Mr. Arthur O'Leary (who this year gave me my first lessons in composition), if only for the annoyance of being stopped by two turnpikes on the way.

I had pianoforte lessons from Pauer, principally in Mozart, to which he gave special interest by telling me that he was himself a pupil of Mozart's second son, Wolfgang. Of the elder son, Karl, Joachim told me a

touching story which he had heard from Mendelssohn. When Mendelssohn visited Italy in 1831, he had an introduction to the wife of the military commandant at Milan, Dorothea von Ertmann, the intimate friend of Beethoven. Her name is immortalized on the title-page of the Sonata, Op. 101. Mendelssohn was invited to her house, and had played her own special sonata and a great deal of Beethoven besides, when a little modest Austrian official who had been sitting in the corner came up and said timidly, "Ach! Wollen sie nicht etwas vom lieben Vater spielen?" (Won't you play something of my dear father's?)

MENDELSSOHN. "Who was your father?"

AUSTRIAN OFFICIAL. "Ach! Mozart."

"And," said Mendelssohn, "I *did* play Mozart for him, and for the rest of the evening." This little touch of filial jealousy moved him deeply.

I was taken also to see Chorley, the redoubtable critic of the *Athenæum*, whose eccentric ideas of colour-schemes betrayed him into wearing a red waist-coat, whether to show off or to soften the crudeness of his red beard, I know not. Not having to write about me in the newspaper, he was very kind and encouraging. His name recalls one of Sir George Grove's favourite stories: Chorley had during the Crimean War produced a play at the Haymarket Theatre; he asked Douglas Jerrold to dinner and took him to see one of the later performances. When they entered their box, the theatre was almost empty.

CHORLEY (*looking despairingly round*). "Ah! Jerrold, it's the war."

JERROLD. "No, Chorley, it's the piece!"

The first private hearing of Sullivan's "Tempest" took place at this time in Chorley's drawing-room, and my parents were present, and foretold a future for the composer (then twenty years' old) at once.

My theatrical visits in 1862 were, naturally enough, few. I saw Dion Boucicault at Drury Lane in the "Colleen Bawn" (the real water gave me the cold shivers), and in a terrible melodrama called "The Relief of Lucknow" in which he played an Irish patriot with a brogue, whose richness far transcended any I ever heard in Ireland. The amount of gun-powder expended in the course of the piece exceeded anything I ever smelt before or since in any theatre. It gave my mother such a headache that she took to her bed for the next twenty-four hours. One performance, to which I was not taken, roused such an enthusiasm amongst all the male members of our party, that I chafed at the limitation of my years. I was to some extent mollified by a present of the printed play in Lacy's edition, which I read so often that I believe I could have acted any part in it without a prompter. It was not great literature, but it was a collection of the most appalling puns I ever saw in print. The little yellow paper book however has never quite consoled me for not having seen it on the stage with the *prima donna* who turned the heads of all the elder generation in our house. The theatre was the Strand, the piece was the burlesque of "Esmeralda," and the *prima donna* was the present Lady Bancroft. In this particular alone was my London education woefully neglected.

After these dissipations I returned to Dublin and

the top schoolroom, sacred to the memory of *Bell's Life* and Tom Sayers. My godmother had left Ireland, and my next teacher was a curious, clever and somewhat eccentrically clothed lady, Miss Flynn by name. She also had been a pupil of Moscheles at Leipzig, and had studied, but with many tears, under Mendelssohn, who was a most impatient teacher.\* She did not copy her master in this respect, at any rate with me. She gave lessons in all weathers with very short sleeves and a muff in which she kept a powder puff for frequent use. Rumour had it that at one time she was hopelessly devoted to Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator. For Moscheles she cherished a most loyal affection, and used frequently to tell a story of his tactful kindness, which afterwards appeared without her name and from his point of view in his *Life*. It may be repeated here in her version. Miss Flynn, when a pupil at the Leipzig Conservatorium, had been set down to play a pianoforte solo at one of the students' evening concerts, "Abend-unterhaltungen" as they were termed. There was an inexorable rule that all pieces should be played from notes and not by heart. Miss F., being I suppose a little proud of her memory, left her music at home and arrived at the hall without it. Mendelssohn descended upon her, as she described it, like a hawk; sent her home to fetch it, and told her that the audience should be kept waiting till she came back. On her return she found to her relief that the public was not in the least impatient or resentful.

\* The Bishop of Limerick told me that in the course of a walk at Interlaken in 1847 Felix confided in him his deep regret at this failing.

After the concert she found out the reason. Moscheles had immediately gone up on to the platform, struck a chord or two on the pianoforte, made a wry face and sent for the tuner. He deservedly earned Miss Flynn's undying gratitude.

A somewhat more comic rescue was effected by him at a later time, when, after the memory rule had been abolished, a young lady played the *Lied ohne Worte* usually called "The Bee's Wedding" without notes, could not remember the change before the coda which ends the piece, and in consequence kept going round and round the unfortunate composition until the repetition became a nightmare and threatened to be prolonged to infinity. Moscheles, however, noiselessly crept up behind her on the platform, and at the crucial passage placed his fingers over hers and put a welcome end to the labyrinthine struggles of the player, amidst rounds of cheers, and roars of relieved laughter. Miss Flynn had a most unholy affection for the works of Dussek, and, however good his music may be for developing technique, I got so sick of them that I put them in a back drawer as fast as I learned them.

When this excellent dame left Dublin, I found my last Dublin masters in Stewart, who taught me composition and orchestration, and in yet another pupil of Moscheles, then fresh from Leipzig, Michael Quarry, the son of a learned clergyman in the county of Cork. He opened my eyes to Schumann, whose music I had never seen; to the choral works of Bach, and to Brahms. We spent hours over four-hand arrangements of the Serenades, the Sextets, and the Hungarian Dances; and he taught me the Handel

Variations, and even the D minor Concerto. It was a new world which opened to my eyes, when I first read the score of the St. Matthew Passion, which till then had never penetrated to Ireland. Until I saw it, I did not even know that Bach had written anything which was not a fugue for pianoforte or for organ.

The school to which I was sent to learn my Latin and Greek must have a special account to itself: for though only a day-school, it had a very unique character of its own, and many of the most able Irishmen of my day laid the foundations of their careers in the training which they received there. It was for all practical purposes a one-man school. There were no under-masters save an obviously contemned mathematician, for the chief had no love for either that science or its practitioners. The master, H. Tilney Bassett by name, was an Englishman who had been educated under Valpy at Norwich, and had come over to drive a little accuracy of scholarship into youthful Keltic heads. A long, spare man with raven-black hair, smoothed down and glistening, a keen eye and clean-shaven face, he might have passed for the born actor, which in fact he was. He could recite like any professional, and roll out Homer and Æschylus with all the declamation and tone-colour of a practised tragedian. He at times reminded me irresistibly of Mr. Micawber, though he had none of that hopeful creature's flummery. He was a devourer of every new book or classical edition, and must have half-ruined himself in buying them, for his daily visit after school hours was to Mr. McGee, the genial University bookseller, and he seldom came out empty-handed.

When I was first taken to the class, he came down all smiles and geniality, told me how happy we should be together, fathered me upstairs to a well-remembered top room, full of rather scared-looking boys, and gave me a Latin grammar to amuse myself with. But in one dramatic moment all the scene changed, and I saw with some dismay the reason of the nervous expression on my companions' faces. He had evidently come down to fetch me in the middle of a severe ratiog of some ill-prepared youth, and he suddenly went for him with what I can only call a yell of fury. Until I got accustomed to his dramatic ways, I thought I should witness some form of violence approaching wilful murder. It was all magnificent acting, even to the boxing of the ears in which he believed as the best panacea for all shortcomings. I speak as an on-looker, for there were a few favoured individuals whom he never belaboured; whether from some predilection for them or from some orders behind the scene I know not, for I am sure we all deserved an equal measure of the whip and the spur. He had some wonderfully, but grimly, comical ways of administering *toko*, such as this little scene will illustrate :

Small boy makes some grotesquely bad shot at a translation. Bassett, (in an enticing siren-like voice), "Come you here, you little hypocrite, come—you—here" (long drawn out). Then, playfully to the class and pointing, "Look at the little feet (*leggiero*), tripping across the floor" (in a tragic *crescendo*) "to their DOOM."

Small boy has come up, holding his Virgil, in the midst of a silence which might be felt. B.'s hand

comes down like a thunderbolt on the book, which falls, half-shattered, to the floor.

The next moment or two is occupied by manual exercises upon ears and hands, which make one realize what a resounding tone the flesh of the human face can produce when the palm of the hand comes into rapid contact with it. Tears of the culprit, a short silence, and B. is heard to say in a surprised and lively tone, pointing the while at the ill-used volume, "You've dropped your book!"

In spite of all the alarms and excursions, tingling cheeks and smarting hands, there are few of Bassett's old pupils who do not remember him with both affection and gratitude. I think that many sound reasons contributed to this feeling. He was always just, and that most of all appeals to boys; he could be as tender as any woman if a youngster was in trouble or sorrow at home; he was so thorough in his work that there is not a man amongst us who does not feel the effects of it to this day. He did not suffer fools with any gladness at all, but for all that he rammed an unusual amount of knowledge into their heads. We knew by his approaching step on the stairs whether it was going to be a sunny or a stormy morning. If a first-class actor visited Dublin, and he had been at the theatre the night before, all was smooth and the falsest quantities were corrected in peace. When he left the room, pandemonium reigned supreme. The stairs were steep and narrow, and the descent for small boys had to be strategic. One lively hero, now in high judicial office, used to take an unholy pleasure in lifting the body in front of him

with the well-aimed toe of his boot from the top of a flight to the bottom, and the helter-skelter down the house was like a human avalanche, the juniors dodging and running for their lives.

When I look back on that motley crowd, I am often amazed by the number of names of men who were in it, who have left their mark on their time. Sir Conyngham Greene, Ambassador to Japan; Dunbar Barton, Chancery Judge of the High Court; Herbert Greene, Fellow and Tutor of Magdalen, Oxford; Arthur Larcom, formerly of the Foreign Office; A. D. Godley, Fellow of Magdalen and Public Orator of Oxford University; S. G. Hamilton, of Balliol and Hertford; Thomas and William Lefanu (the sons of William the genial brother of the novelist); Hercules West, the witty author of the immortal "Edgiana" and a high classic at Cambridge; Woulfe Flanagan, and many more were among my contemporaries; and after us came others of no less distinction, amongst them Lord Plunket, late Governor of New Zealand, Sir Francis May, Governor of Hong Kong, and Plunket Greene, of whose quality I had an early taste when he was about three years old. His brother Conyngham had invited a large posse of fellow-Bassetians to an afternoon scrimmage at St. Valérie, near Bray, County Wicklow. I was seized upon by the household to show my prowess on the pianoforte, and while I was engrossed in a show-piece, a small mischievous mite in socks and petticoats crept silently up behind me, and picking my pockets of a motley collection of contents, held them up in triumph for the admiration of the room. All my virtuosity went for nothing.

The thief was bustled off and I saw him no more until he appeared as a full-blown artist on the concert platform ; but he has not lost his capacity for leger-de-main or for a practical joke.

I had but one personal experience of the prize ring. The boy, whose good fortune in being sent home before the sermon I have already enviously alluded to, had, after a chequered career at a public school, been sent to the redoubtable Bassett to be disciplined. He arrived in the top room, and proceeded to bully us all in general, and, I suppose for auld lang syne, me in particular. I bethought me of the great *Bell's Life* drama, and its lessons had been reinforced by a more recent study of "Tom Brown." So I confided my woes to the butler at home, (he bore the historic name of Patrick Ford, but was no relation of the notorious admirer of this country), knowing that he was well versed in the science of the clenched fist. By his advice I endured all the kicks and cuffs for some little time without apparent resentment, while every afternoon, when we had the house to ourselves, he gave me surreptitious lessons in the dining-room, taught me various feints and defences, and generally equipped me for the inevitable fray. He had the wisdom of the serpent, and when he thought I was trained to a proper pitch, gave the word to let fly. The opportunity was not long delayed, and when the expected kick came, I "got home with my right." There was only one round, for being small I could not hit my bull's-eye, and nearly demolished a front tooth instead, and so ended at one blow the kicks and discomforts, and my first, and happily last, experience of that most

uncanny sensation, a sharp knuckle in contact with an upper central incisor. It is odd how awe-inspiring an effect a ridiculous set-to of this sort has upon the most rowdy collection of boys. I was conscious of a silence as in church, and of a hushed attention as rigorous as that at Baireuth. When I knocked at our door, Mr. Ford answered with an anxious rapidity, and his relief at seeing his pupil with a whole skin and eyes unimpaired was not untinged with paternal triumph.

It was owing to Bassett's insistence that I was sent to Cambridge, for though he anticipated (with truth as it turned out) that my music would eventually kill my classics, he brought home, by arguments too forcible to resist, that in either branch, it was wiser to enlarge my horizon. He had at least driven into my head the technique of languages, and so well were all his old pupils grounded in the "harmony and counterpoint" of them, the Latin and Greek grammar, that whatever other classical sins we committed, genders and tenses were not of them. Some of his pupils went on to Harrow, and on one occasion, famous in Bassetian records, no less than five of their names were read out by Dr. Montagu Butler, at the top of the list of distinctions gained at the University in one year. He was very fond in a dramatic way, of music, and told me many tales of Bexfield, the organist at Norwich in his boyhood, of his amazing stretch of hand and generally abnormal style of playing, and of his successor Zachariah Buck who rivalled a famous Divine in the art of washing his hands with invisible soap and imaginary water.

Buck was mainly devoted to teaching his choristers how to shake, not in the manner of Bassett's pupils but with their voices. He was a smooth-mannered man with a great faculty for trying to say the things which would most please his hearers. He put his foot in it once badly. The Queen's Band had been engaged to give an orchestral concert in St. Andrew's Hall, and all the music-lovers of the town came to hear the unaccustomed strains of a full orchestra, amongst them a lady of very downright opinions and speech. To the great disappointment of this dame, a whole part of the programme was devoted, not to Beethoven and Mozart as she hoped, but to the compositions of a Royal Personage. Between the parts Dr. Zachariah, who held her in great awe and respect, came up and in his most unctuous tones said :

"Oh, Miss ——, is it not beautiful? is it not beautiful?"

Miss —— (*tartly and bristlingly*). "No, Dr. Buck, it is *not*. And what is more *you know perfectly well* that it is *not*!"

Exit Zachariah, with deprecating gestures and all the airs of a distressed courtier.

During my school years, I had many opportunities of building up musical experience. During the summer vacations of 1864 and 1868 we went to Norwood, and lived close to the Crystal Palace, then a centre of the best music to be heard. There was a dinner at the hospitable house of John Scott Russell, the famous engineer and builder of the *Great Eastern*, where I first met Arthur Sullivan, Frederic Clay, and that most unique of men, George Grove. Grove was

the heart and soul of Crystal Palace music, and pioneered me into the gallery of the concert-room now sacred to his and many other memories, showed me where to sit and study the orchestral instruments at rehearsal, plied me with full scores, and infected me, as he did anyone who came into contact with him, with his own enthusiasm. It was a queer mixture of experiences. Tietjens, Giuglini, Trebelli, Santley at operatic concerts in the transept; Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Strauss and Lanner in the concert-room, with Blondin on the tight-rope and Léotard on the flying trapeze thrown in. Blondin made me tremble, but Léotard never. Such a graceful figure of a man was never seen; his most daring feats were accomplished with an ease and a certainty which made fear impossible, and yet it was before the days of County Councils, and he had no net. He was, I believe, a French barrister, and a caricature of the time depicted Disraeli in the garb of Léotard flying into court over the wigs and gowns of judges and Q.C.'s. Our great hero, however, was a still surer acrobat than he, the chimpanzee, whose cage was in the tropical court. It was he who one Sunday morning discovered the fire which destroyed the end of the Palace, attracting the attendant by his cries and pointing with quivering finger at a wreath of smoke which was issuing through the boards. He died afterwards of the fright, but he saved the rest of the building. I have his photograph still.

In Dublin we had flashes of good music. A chamber concert now and then, an occasional visit from Joachim, Piatti, Hallé, and one from Rubinstein whose

extraordinary playing of Schumann's "Études Symphoniques" at last awoke the town to the beauties of that great master, whose works had been a sealed book to the inhabitants, and caused a *furor* which has seldom been equalled there. A few amateurs had become devotees of his songs, owing to the influence of a most cultivated tenor singer, Dr. (afterwards Sir) William Stokes, the son of the famous physician who was Petrie's most intimate friend. He tackled with thorough artistry the whole of the "Dichterliebe," and never lost an opportunity of making all the composer's songs known. One autumn he returned from Dresden, fresh from the first performance there of Wagner's "Meistersinger," bringing with him many excerpts from the score, and also the five songs which contained the studies for "Tristan and Isolde." These were my first introduction to the music of Wagner, and I confess that the beauty and mastery in every line of them seriously handicapped me in appreciating "Lohengrin" and "Tannhäuser," when I was able to procure them.

I remember the day when I saw "Lohengrin" in a shop and carried it off in great excitement, expecting to renew the delights of my first acquaintance with the later works, and how curiously it disappointed me, after I had revelled in the prelude and the coming of the swan. I liked the drama far better than the music: and both it and, in a lesser degree, "Tannhäuser" seemed to have an inherent weakness in melody which I could not then define, in comparison with the later works. I can define it now, or at any rate the cause which produced this effect upon

me then, as it does still. In his earlier work he used chromatic intervals as an essential part of a diatonic tune. In his later they became purely ornamental. A comparison between the melody of the song to the Evening Star, and the March in "Tannhäuser," with that of the "Preislied" will illustrate my point.\* This early impression did not falsify itself in later years, when I first heard these two operas in Dresden. The odd feeling of amateurishness which the earlier melodies gave me at first was intensified, not diminished, upon the stage. I recognized the bigness and atmospheric power of the man, but I was repelled by his prolixity and by the slowness of the action. When I heard Weber's "Euryanthe" almost immediately after, it seemed, in spite of its involved and hopeless plot, far superior to both "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin" in their own line of business. I only record the effect of these works on the mind of a boy of sixteen, as compared with that of the later operas of the master.

I was now not without considerable knowledge of the technique and requirements of the operatic stage. The opera company of Her Majesty's Theatre used to pay a prolonged visit to Dublin every autumn. Many standard works now relegated in this country to the scrap-heap, were given in first-rate style to one of the most appreciative audiences to be found anywhere. To all of these performances I went night after night, standing in the queue for two hours at the pit door,

\* See my treatise on Composition, pp. 45-47, where I give full reasons for this view, and suggest the origin of Wagner's early penchant, which he afterwards so sternly eliminated from his work.

(there were no stalls in the theatre), and fighting my way in through a crowd which would rejoice the heart of any impresario nowadays. In addition, my friendship with Levey (O'Shaughnessy), who was leader of the orchestra, enabled me to have the run of the house at rehearsals, and I got, from close observation, my first lessons in stage-management and in the tyranny of the footlights. I used to watch all the tricks of the trade, seated at the foot of a long ladder, at the top of which was working a scene painter, with whom I made great friends ; this great artist (for he was no less) was John O'Connor who became the head of his craft in later days in London, and whose delicate water-colours were scarcely inferior in skill to his scenic body-colours. We met again years afterwards, when he painted the wonderful setting of the early Greek Plays at Cambridge, and had many a gossip over the humours of the Dublin Theatre Royal, which, together with its more serious artistic aspects, I must leave to the next chapter.

## CHAPTER VI

The Dublin theatres—Operas and singers—An omnibus fatality—  
Dr. Haughton and the science of humane hanging—Visits of  
Royalties and Statesmen—Dublin street cries—Joachim and  
Fenianism—Irish temperament.

THE old Theatre Royal at Dublin was a composite structure, which was originally the home, if I am not mistaken, of the Royal Dublin Society before that body removed to its present quarters at Leinster House. Although it was not built for the purpose even of a lecture theatre, some genius transformed it into one of the best houses for seeing and hearing that I have ever had the good fortune to know. The stage was large, the auditorium was admirably designed, and its size was about midway between the Lyceum and Drury Lane theatres in London. There were no stalls, the pit filling the whole floor, and there were four tiers. The occupants of the top gallery, where wit and humour were concentrated, had a kind of hereditary feud with the pittites, chaffing them everlastingly and at times objurgating them so loudly that wise men preferred to get as near the middle of the house as possible in order to insure comparative safety from a possible orange or other less savoury missile from above. As the "gods" were in possession long before the "Quality" arrived, they used to while away the time partly by singing airs, more often than not belonging to the opera which they had come to hear,

quite as well as or better than they were afterwards given on the stage, and partly by indulging in too audible criticisms of the members of society as they arrived. When one well-known lady, Mrs. W—— of K——, fainted in the dress circle, they would call a cruel attention to the fact that her cheeks had not lost their rosy tinge; when a well-known raconteur was earnestly talking to a lady in a conspicuous red opera cloak, a soft but clear whisper would come from Paradise like a warning angel, "Don't believe a word he's sayin' to ye, Ma'am." These irresponsible wits used to shout criticisms in a way sorely trying to the risible faculties of the singers. A tenor whose voice was somewhat thin, and who trusted for his final high note to *falseto*, had the mortification of hearing Micky on one side of the gallery ask a friend opposite "Jim! was that the gas?" Another, Tombesi by name, who roared in taurine fashion and rushed to the footlights to deliver himself, was pulled up by hearing an anxious and soothing piece of advice, "Tom, be aisy!" The gods had internecine quarrels also, mostly the sham battles of the rival singers and their friends aloft, whereat their old enemies, the pit, would rise *en masse* and turn round with a roar of protest, drowning all the proceedings on the stage the while. It was during one of these demonstrations that the well-known dialogue occurred: "Throw him over! Throw him over!" "Don't was(h)te him, kill a fiddler wid him!" Most of these ebullitions took place in the entr'actes, or when an inferior artist had irritated the deities. In a really good performance there was a silence that might be felt. The yearly visit of the Italian Opera

Company was one of the chief events of the Dublin year. "The Italians are coming!" was the cry, which may be translated phonetically into the Dublin dialect thus: "Ze Retadgeds are cummid!"

The operas I heard were of all schools and were thoroughly well given. The list, which I found inscribed in the fly-leaves of my Liddell and Scott Greek Dictionary, may be interesting. "Don Giovanni" is the first, the chief singers being Grisi, Mario, and Ciampi. Grisi's voice was departing, but her splendid acting and dignified stage presence was unimpaired by years. Mario's singing of "Dalla sua pace" was absolute perfection. Though his voice was, naturally enough, past its prime, (so much so that he omitted "Il mio tesoro" to the resentment of the gallery), he gave an object-lesson in the interpretation of Mozart which I would not have missed, and could not forget. That he was a past-master in all styles was evident from his singing in the quartet "E scherzo" from Verdi's "Ballo in Maschera," which was given the next day at a concert. Even my father, who had often heard him in early days, considered this performance the equal of any of his former achievements. In subsequent years came Tietjens, Sinico, Ilma di Murska, Schalchi, Trebelli, Gardoni, Mongini, Bettini, Santley, Bossi, Bagagiolo, Foli, and many more.

Of Tietjens it is almost unnecessary to speak; a grander voice and a more consummate artist it would be difficult to imagine. She worked so hard at her technique (she practised her scales every morning to the end of her life) that she almost turned her rather intractable dramatic organ into a *coloratura* soprano,

and even tackled with success such a florid part as Semiramide. She once looked with kindly eyes on a boyish song of mine, and sang it in public in Dublin. I then had a personal experience of her thoroughness in rehearsing. She took as much pains with it as if it had been written by Beethoven, and insisted on three rehearsals, which took the best part of an hour each, in the middle of the operatic season. She had humour too. A young lady of my acquaintance, who was much cockered at home, was so wildly excited about the coming of the *diva*, that she went to bed for some days before her first visit to the opera, in order not to catch a cold which might frighten her parents into putting an embargo on the theatre. Between the acts she was taken to see the great *prima donna*.

MISS B. (*ecstatically*). "Oh, Madame Tietjens, I never heard you sing before."

TIETJENS. "Ach, my dear, vare vere you born?"

Madame Sinico was a most finished artist, of the type which von Bülow used to define as a first clarinet; brilliant, incisive, and thoroughly musical. Ilma di Murska was perhaps the cleverest and most versatile of them all. She had a phenomenal range, which enabled her to sing the Queen of Night in the "Zauberflöte" at its original pitch with ridiculous ease, and was one of the best *coloratura* singers I ever heard. As a proof of her versatility I have been told that her conception and performance of Senta in the "Flying Dutchman" was no less remarkable. She sang it at the first London performance in Wood's short season. Gardoni was a delicate tenor of the same class as Mario, but not so powerful or magnetic. Bettini, the

husband of Madame Trebelli, was a light tenor who could sing scales galore, and who, therefore, was the best Almaviva (in the "Barber") of the time. Santley, the sole survivor of this galaxy, was in his prime. Foli, a "Tipperary boy," Foley by name and recognized as such by the gods, was *vox et præterea* little, but the voice was of true bass quality. Mongini was a robust tenor of the school of Tamagno. Trebelli was, after Tietjens, the greatest artist of all the women.

With this company I heard the following operas:—

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| MOZART.    | "Nozze di Figaro."<br>"Flauto Magico."  |
| BEETHOVEN. | "Fidelio."  |
| ROSSINI.   | "Barbiere di Siviglia."   |
| CHERUBINI. | "Les deux Journées."  |
| MEYERBEER. | "Robert le Diable."<br>"Les Huguenots."   |
| WEBER.     | "Der Freischütz."<br>"Oberon." (The quartet in this work, with Tietjens and Santley, was a feat to be remembered, and such a rendering of "Ocean, thou mighty monster" I have never heard since.) |
| DONIZETTI. | "Figlia del Reggimento."<br>"Lucrezia Borgia."  |
| VERDI.     | "Traviata."<br>"Rigoletto."   |
| A. THOMAS. | "Hamlet" (with Christine Nilsson).  |
| GOUNOD.    | "Faust."<br>"Mireille."   |

The performance of "Fidelio" was remarkable in more ways than one. Carl Formes came over on purpose to sing Rocco. He sang persistently flat, but, for all that, his superb acting and grip of the intention of the composer made me forget his vocal shortcomings.

Gardoni's Florestan was equally musical. Tietjens' acting in the prisoners' chorus, and her singing of the great concerted pieces in the second act brought very different tears to my eyes from those which the Philharmonic brass had evoked. Santley's Pizarro was unsurpassable. Most surprising of all, the very complicated *ensemble* in the first Finale ( $\frac{9}{8}$  time), which is none too easy for an ordinary audience to grasp, aroused such an enthusiasm that the performance had to stop until the whole movement was perforce repeated. The demonstration exceeded any I witnessed in other operas, and Tietjens, when she went to her carriage was met by a mob from the top gallery, who unharnessed the horses and dragged her to her hotel. It was a triumph for Beethoven's opera, the like of which has seldom or never been seen. How Beethoven appeals to the Irish mind, however untutored, was proved by the account of a violinist friend of mine. He went with a party of singers and a pianist on tour: and at Limerick played, what they had certainly never heard before, the last violin sonata in G. He had to repeat the first movement *in toto!* And the audience tried hard to encore the remainder.

The dramatic performances at the Theatre Royal were quite as interesting in their way. It was at the time one of the few provincial houses which had a company of its own, and went on the German principle of "Gast-Vorstellungen," famous actors coming either singly or with their own companies. The Keans, Charles Mathews, Buckstone and in later days Irving were constant visitors. My father saw Edmund Kean play "Hamlet," and a harlequin on the same evening.

I saw in the sixties Sothern in "Lord Dundreary," a wonderful piece of fooling not unmixed with satire, and many other first-rate players. Schneider horrified the Mrs. Grundys in "La Grande Duchesse," but all the same had all Dublin at her feet. After the death of Harris the manager, the responsibilities of the theatre were laid upon the able shoulders of Mr. Michael Gunn, the son of a worthy old gentleman who in my boyhood was the only reliable pianoforte tuner in Dublin. He met his death in a curiously Hibernian manner. He lived at Rathmines, and used to come to his work every morning in the omnibus, a cranky antediluvian old vehicle, which plied between the suburbs and the centre of the town. One morning when it was crossing the bridge over the canal at Portobello, the horses shied and the omnibus fell into the lock. The water was at low level, and if a malign ignorance of the laws of nature had not intervened, the passengers would have escaped with a shaking and a wetting. But the lock-keeper was so accustomed to see barges rise with the water, that he opened the sluices to float the omnibus, and drowned every one of the occupants.

The Fenian rising at this time caused a certain amount of mild excitement in Dublin circles. We knew the race too well to expect anything so serious as barricades, and the native love of a scrimmage with the "Polis" was the most we had to dread. One flash of the pan at Tallaght near Dublin was the nearest approach to a pitched battle. It lasted a few minutes only, and a wag compared the Fenians to the Persians, pointing out that the Persians fled from Greece, but

the Fenians fled from Tallaght (the village is pronounced Talla). There were Homeric accounts in the papers of three country policemen vanquishing an army of three thousand, and the whole affair had a strong family resemblance to Smith O'Brien's historic cabbage garden. The more serious developments of the movement were over the channel, at Chester and Manchester. There was quite a crop of trials for high treason, with the antique sentences of hanging, drawing and quartering which were never carried out.

But the frequent donning of the black cap set a certain Fellow of Trinity thinking, and though his humanitarian cogitations eventually took an all too practical shape, he had no chance of putting them to the test until a less patriotic and more vulgar criminal provided him with his opportunity. Dr. Samuel Houghton, mathematician, physiologist, ecclesiastic, physicist, zoologist, geologist, an Admirable Crichton in fact, who, though a Jack-of-all-trades, was certainly master of some, had witnessed the hanging of several murderers and came to the conclusion that the shortness of the rope used was ineffective and cruel. He shut himself up in the company of  $x$ 's and  $y$ 's and evolved a formula, by which he insured the immediate fracture of the neck by a fixed ratio between the weight of the falling body and the length of the rope. This is now known roughly by the term "Long Drop." Unfortunately he made one mistake; he decided upon silk as the material of which the rope should be made. The time came to put his theories into practice (such opportunities are happily of the rarest in Ireland), and

he persuaded the hangman to adopt his principles and to use his silk rope. The result was appallingly illegal, for he beheaded his man instead of conforming to the prescribed sentence. The unhappy operator rushed to Haughton's rooms in College to disclose the dire result; Haughton hit the table with his fist and exclaimed "Begad, I forgot to account for the elasticity of the rope." He rectified this little slip, and on the next occasion he was triumphantly successful, but very nearly at the loss of his own life. In his anxiety to verify the result of his own invention, he went down into the pit below the trap-door, forgot the length of his own calculations, and was all but brained by the victim's heels. But, as he said to me in a vivid description which he gave me with his own lips, "There wasn't as much as a kick in him." Haughton's merciful discovery has been adopted ever since. His devotion to animals was no less sincere than his labours for suffering humanity. He was Chairman of Committee at the Zoological Gardens, and all the beasts knew him personally. My father went to one of the Committee breakfasts at the Gardens, and he was taken off by Haughton to see his "pet patient," which turned out to be the biggest of the tigers. It had been suffering from an ingrowing claw, which had caused a bad abscess in the paw. The Professor had ordered him to be tied down, and his paw to be drawn out below the bars. He had operated coolly, unheeding of the terrific growls and roars of the brute, and cured him. When he took my father in to see him, the animal began to purr like a cat, rolled itself against the bars, and thrust out its paw for Haughton's inspection. It was

only the insistence of the keepers which restrained him from going into the cage to stroke it at close quarters.

When the Fenian bubble had burst, Dublin had a more congenial excitement. The Princess of Wales paid her first visit to Ireland accompanied by the Prince, and had even momentarily disconcerting proofs of the affection of the tattered crowds. An exceptionally grimy old woman was reported to have insisted on shaking hands with her with appropriately flowery blessings as she drove through College Green. The *clou de la pièce* was the Installation of the Prince as a Knight of St. Patrick, which took place, for the only time in recent years, in the Cathedral. It was a most picturesque ceremony, presided over by a Grand Master of commanding presence and most regal mien, the late Duke (then Marquis) of Abercorn. The Chancel of the Cathedral was exclusively tenanted by the Knights of the Order, the organist, Sir Robert Stewart, whose seat was next the stalls, and by myself, whom Stewart had smuggled in to turn over his music and to pull his stops. As he played by heart, and was well furnished both with composition pedals and very nimble fingers, my presence was absurdly unnecessary; but polite fiction secured me the best view possible of a pageant, and its medieval setting, which may never be seen again. Shortly before Disraeli had visited St. Patrick's. The Disestablishment question was becoming acute, and Magee preached a most eloquent sermon, on the text (directed full at the Conservative leader) "Come over and help us." That brilliant piece of oratory won him the Bishopric of Peterborough. Dizzy saw he

was too great a man to be isolated by the melancholy ocean.

I cannot close my account of Dublin as I knew it without a short tribute to two of its more obscure classes: the beggars and the street vendors. Blind Zozimus, the *improvisatore* amongst beggars, who used to roll out his spontaneous epics on Carlisle Bridge, I never saw. Hughy, of the mincing voice, who always announced an approaching visit to his friend Lord Fingal as a means for abstracting a penny towards his railway fare, and Anthony Doherty who called every boy indiscriminately "Master Richard" and carried a basket, the contents of which were mythical and carefully hidden from the eye of man, were historical figures. So also was Mrs. "Murphy," the flower-seller, who had social aspirations, and married; when her husband prematurely died, this *grande dame* put an announcement in the *Daily Express* (the *Morning Post* of Dublin):

"MURPHY.—On the 10th inst. at 101, Kevin Street,  
— Murphy, Esq. Deeply regretted."

She had never ascertained the Christian name of her spouse!

Two wondrous old-clothes women used to visit Herbert Street every morning, one at 7.45 a.m., the other at 8 a.m. The words of their calls were equally indistinguishable, but that of the earlier visitor sounded thus (in a rich contralto):



and she went by the name of Dowdow. The latter sang in a twittery treble :



and she was called Eewee. One fatal morning Dowdow was a quarter of an hour late, and collided with Eewee opposite our house. The noise of Eewee's vituperations echoed down the street, and on rushing to the window, I witnessed the discomfiture of the soprano by the overawing personality of Dowdow, who, being an ample dignified dame, secured her victory by preserving a complete silence, and dropping a series of elaborate and satirical curtseys. This was my first experience of the triumph of mind over matter. Three curious street cries may be noted :

## STRAWBERRIES.



## HERRINGS.



## FREETSTONE.



Such was Dublin, the town of laughter mixed with tears. Before I left it in 1870, its glory was beginning slowly to depart, whether from increased facilities for

travelling or from tinkering legislation, who can say? Perhaps from both. My eldest aunt, Kate Henn, a person of the broadest views and sympathies, and one of the first pioneers of the higher education of women in Ireland, ascribed the decadence to three things, all of which she had lived through and the results of which she had watched. She said that in her young days the country parishes of Ireland could boast of three cultivated men to guide them, the parish priest, the Protestant vicar, and the landlord. Before 1840 the priests were of necessity travelled men, who had had opportunities of rubbing shoulders with Frenchmen and Italians. The Maynooth Grant narrowed their experiences and stunted their education. The Irish Church Disestablishment worked in the same retrograde fashion on the Protestant parson, and the Land Bill expatriated the landlord. So the country districts lost touch with any vivifying or elevating influence: and she added with a fine irony a fourth cause of friction, Dublin Castle, calling it a remnant of the worst side of Home Rule, which had outlived the Act of Union, and stood directly in the path of the complete realization of the effects of that measure; the representation of Royalty becoming a mere mouth-piece of Party, *sans* stability, *sans* permanent knowledge of the country, *sans* dignity, *sans* any of the experience necessary to a responsible chief. This simple and thorough statement always seemed to me to be the acme of common sense, and I could see the results of the policy she so disapproved acting slowly on every interest, practical and artistic, in Dublin.

Even the flagstones became more and more out of the square and collected more mud in the interstices.

A letter from Joachim to his wife written in March 1868, gives such an interesting view of the Irish character as it appeared to an intelligent foreign eye, that I quote the passage in full.

“Ich kam in Dublin nicht zum schreiben, die Concerete brauchten viel Probirens, mit zwei Irländern ! und einem deutschen Cellisten, der ein Frankfurter und recht gut ist, Elsner. Er lebt seit Jahren mit Weib und Kind in Dublin. Das ist eine schöne Stadt, nur Schade, dass man so viel Armuth, Trunkenheit und nackten Schmutz im Volk sieht. England hat da viel auf dem Gewissen und fängt an, das zu empfinden. Der republikanische Fenianismus ist aber von America importirt, hat keine Zukunft in der grünen Insel, die eigentlich ziemlich feudal scheint, gern Pomp bewundert, und seine Aristocratie gern verhätscheln würde, wenn man seine Eigenliebe pflegte und dem Volk auch Aufmerksamkeit und Liebe zeigte. Von Aufgeregtheit und Rebellion merkte ich keine Spur ; es lautet so was in der Regel in der Ferne schlimmer, als man nahbei findet.”

(“I had no time to write in Dublin, the concerts needed so many rehearsals, with two Irishmen ! and a German Cellist who comes from Frankfurt and is an excellent player, Elsner. He has lived for several years in Dublin with his wife and family. Dublin is a beautiful town, the only pity of it is that one sees so much poverty, drunkenness and naked dirt in the people. England has much on her conscience, and is beginning to find it out. But the republican Fenian-

ism is imported from America, and has no future in the green island, which seems to be essentially feudal (in its tendencies), likes to admire pomp, and would be glad to be close friends with its aristocracy, if they were tender to its idiosyncrasies, and also showed consideration and love for the people. Of excitement and rebellion I saw no sign. It seems much worse from a distance than at close quarters.”)

Music, the favourite art, declined and languished, and everything became tainted with politics, wire-pulling and discontent. The only quality which remained indestructible was humour. Unfortunately England usually sent officials to manage Irishmen who either had no sense of it, or a sense of the satirical and biting side of it which appealed to them less than no humour at all. Pat dislikes sarcasm however witty: he thinks it purely ill-natured. He will laugh at any joke, even a practical joke, if it does not hurt. He will have none of it if it does. The cause of much of the friction between the typical Irishman and the typical Englishman always appeared to me to be easy enough to diagnose. If one Kelt offends another and apologizes, the injured party does not only forgive, he entirely and completely forgets. Tempers in Ireland are quick but not bad. The Englishman does not appreciate this distinction; he may quite honestly forgive, but he never forgets. In this natural disability lies, I feel sure, in great things as well as in small, the true source of the proverbial incompatibility of the Irish and English temperaments. The late Lord Morris (himself a strong Unionist) once summed up the Irish question as “a stupid nation trying to govern a clever

one": I should have liked to answer that very outspoken dictum by substituting "slow" for "stupid" and "quick" for "clever." The slowness, which in England's history has mainly tended towards sureness, develops a less valuable quality, when it produces a constitutional inability to rub the sponge over the slate, and to meet generosity of admission with generosity of appreciation.

## CHAPTER VII

Education of musicians—Cambridge in 1870—The German Reeds and John Parry—Birmingham Festival—Cambridge Dons—The C.U.M.S.—Sterndale Bennett—Musical undergraduates—The IOUX Indians.

WALKING up Regent Street in the spring of 1870 with my father, he suddenly stopped opposite Peter Robinson's shop and put the momentous question "what I was going to be?" The answer came out quite as promptly, "A musician." I knew his hankering for the Bar, and also the traditional prejudice that all Irishmen of his school had against an artistic career: he was silent, but only for a moment, and accepted the situation. But he laid down his conditions, which were a general University education first, and a specifically musical study abroad afterwards. (There was at that time no means of getting the best possible musical training in this country.) He was no believer in specializing without general knowledge, and experience has convinced me that he was entirely and absolutely right. Without exception the greatest artists and composers I have known have been men of all-round ability, wide reading and a general education (even when self-acquired) on a par with that of any University, or profession. This is equally true of the most world-famous executants as of the greatest composers. Liszt, Joachim, Hans von Bülow, to mention only three of the outstanding

names of the nineteenth century, were all highly cultivated men, who could hold their own in any surroundings. When Joachim came to Leipzig as a boy, he was placed by Mendelssohn under the care of Professor Klengel for general education, and he afterwards was a student at Göttingen University. Von Bülow was an Encyclopædia in himself. A master of Latin and Greek, with a profound knowledge of philosophy, he once amazed the Professor of Geology at Cambridge by discussing the most technical branches of that science, as if it had been his main study in life. So it was with Mozart (an expert mathematician), Beethoven, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Berlioz, Wagner and Brahms. The Russian School of the present day consists largely of men who have been trained for other walks in life; the navy, the engineers, the foreign office have all got representatives in the list of composers. Borodin was great in chemistry, Rimsky-Korsakow was a distinguished naval officer.

In England this broad view of general culture for the musical profession had not yet taken hold, save in an isolated instance or two, such as Sterndale Bennett and Hugo Pierson. After 1875 the atmosphere began to change; the entry of many of my colleagues who were public school and university men into the profession could scarcely fail to raise the standard of music as well as the status of its adherents. The last forty-five years have witnessed a revolution in the quality of the work and in the appreciation of the workers, which, at times resisted by short-sighted contemporaries who held that art was only possible in the ranks of Bohemian ignora-

muses, and as sturdily fought for by those of wider views and more cosmopolitan experience, must have its effect upon future generations and be rated by them at its true value. A great deal has been written about the Renaissance of Music in England during the last half-century. The true seed of this development is to be found in such a scheme of preparation as my father held to be essential. True art must have all-round education to back it. It must stand accusations of "academicism," (the latest catchword for the works of all men who learn their business before they practise it), and such like pigeon-holed epithets, without flinching from main principles, if it is to worry through and make its mark. The work of those who force their way through paths most beset with drawbacks and difficulties, is the most likely to live.

My father and I had come to London on the way to Cambridge where I had entered for a scholarship at Trinity Hall. I did not succeed in winning it, but I laid the foundation of some valuable friendships. Alfred Pretor, one of my examiners (the editor of "Cicero's Letters" and of "Persius"), was an enthusiastic musical amateur, who pioneered me into all the organ-lofts, as a relief from iambics and hexameters: and I found in the diapasons of Father Smith a great consolation after the scratching of quill pens upon paper. We saw many faces of famous men who had hitherto been but names to me: Adams, the discoverer of Neptune, turned out to be as keen a rose-grower as an astronomer, and found his way, through the medium of "Senator Vaisse" and "Marshal Niel,"

straight to the gardener heart of my father. Miller, the chirpy and seraphic Professor of Mineralogy, and his artistic wife, whose pen-and-ink sketches were of microscopic perfection, were hospitable figures in the scene. "Ben" Latham, too, with his blunt contempt for music; did he not, when in later years he built himself a lordly pleasure-house, ask an undergraduate friend if it was absolutely necessary to include a piano-forte among his list of furniture, and receiving a decided answer in the affirmative, betake himself to the house of Broadwood, order a grand, and add (with his characteristic dropping of the *r*) "I should pwefer one without works"? A typical Saxon was "Ben," with the kindest of hearts hidden away under a thick armour of cynicism, apparently exulting in every prosaic quality, only to disclose in the first chapter of his book, "Angels," what a real poet he was.

As my father and I stood on the bridge of Clare, two undergraduates moored a canoe by the banks of the Fellows' garden, (it was vacation time and they thought they were safe), placed a gorgeous rug on the grass, and proceeded to discuss the contents of a large silver cup. But, to my father's sporting indignation, out came he who was then and still is the Master, and they had to beat a hurried and hazardous retreat. Phillips, President of Queens', and his most sympathetic Irish wife, were the prime movers in determining my migration to Cambridge. An organist scholarship, one of the first founded at the University, was vacant at his College, which he placed at my disposal, and this, with a classical scholarship to which I was subsequently elected, enabled me to enter the

University. Phillips was a tall commanding figure, with a gentle twinkle in his eye, who took longer to say a sentence of four or five words than the ordinary man took over one of fifty. "It is er-er-er-er-Er (*a great effort here*) a er-er very fine er-er-er-er-day," is a rough sample of his manner of speech. So slow were his tongue and his gait, that the satirical Thompson, Master of Trinity, seeing him walk or rather crawl down King's Parade, said to a friend "There goes old Phillips, he's slower than he looks. He'll be as slow in dying as he is in living."

I had a momentary sight too of one face, which is as living to me to-day as if I had seen it yesterday; the face of a unique man, with a head of Napoleonic grandeur, a fleeting smile of extraordinary charm, and a voice which betrayed in every accent and cadence the sympathy which bubbled up in him for everything and everybody, from angels to devils; sitting in a room so littered with letters and books that there was scarcely room for his teapot; the same face in 1870 as I afterwards was ever grateful for having known in later and more closely intimate days; the face of Henry Bradshaw. I only saw it for a brief minute that spring, when I went to ask him for an order for King's Chapel, but it left its mark on my memory, and it was a good day for me when Hallam Tennyson first took me to his rooms, and I saw my old friend the china teapot, with the strainer hanging to the spout, still standing in a nest of books, and experienced the quiet welcome which was as second nature to him, and which gave the impression that he had known his visitor for years.

With these silhouettes fresh in my memory, we went back to London, where we saw one entertainment of a consumedly humorous kind given in the hall where it was born and bred, the German Reeds and John Parry in the Gallery of Illustration. They were unassisted save by a pianoforte, but the performance was complete and perfect in its miniature way. They played a very funny piece, called "Out of Town"; John Parry, amongst other disguises, appearing as a fat schoolboy in nankeens, and Mrs. German Reed singing a ditty called, I think, "In Cheltenham," the refrain of which is still in my ears. Parry, with that wonderful lock of hair falling over his eye, gave *solus* a sketch called "A Charity Dinner," in which he peopled the stage with a host of imaginary diners, made speeches in various styles of ridiculous oratory, sang songs as a professional lady, taking off a pair of visionary white gloves to accompany herself, and ended by escorting a procession of invisible orphans round the dinner-table, touching some of them up with a white wand, boxing the ears of others, all in a most conventional claw-hammer evening coat. His pianoforte playing was masterly, and he had a touch to rival Thalberg himself. Before this excellent trio left their old haunts, they added to their company, and gave, amongst other musical pieces of great charm, Sullivan's "Cox and Box." In it I saw for the first time Arthur Cecil, whose singing (with a tiny but wholly sympathetic voice) of the Lullaby to the Bacon has never been excelled. The little company visited Cambridge when I was an undergraduate, and Mrs. German Reed came to tea

with me. I took her to see the "Backs" of the colleges, where the footpaths are all entered by walking between two iron posts. They were too close together for Mrs. G. R.'s anatomy, and she kept ejaculating, "Go on in front, my dear, while I squeeze Mrs. Reed through."

Before going up to Cambridge I crossed the Irish Channel once more to visit the Birmingham Festival, in company with Stewart and some other Irish friends. The hospitality of the place was unbounded. The music, with the exception of the material of the chorus, the individual excellence of the singers, and the colossal quality of the strings (Costa had forty-eight violins), was often dull. The inevitable "Elijah" and "Messiah" were of course the main props of the performance. I had never heard the "Elijah" performed complete before, nor any of it under such conditions. I felt then as I do still, that it was an artistic mistake to prolong the work beyond the ascent of the fiery chariot. "When a piece is over, it is over" was the acute remark of a Leipzig stage-manager to me in after-years; he added that no opera composer will ever realize this. This highly gifted man was one of the first to think of the possibility of staging the "Elijah," but he regarded this failing as a barrier to the full effect it would produce in action. Costa conducted his "Naaman" to a deservedly half-empty house. It was an odd study of an open-air Italian trying to conform to the traditions of the stained-glass window. The performance of Mozart's "Requiem," to which I had greatly looked forward, was simply execrable. With four first-class soloists

(Ilma di Murska was the soprano) who gave the impression of never having rehearsed together, and a chorus, languid from over-much work, the effect was lamentable. In justice to everyone it must be said that rehearsals in those days were both few in number and interminable in length; much therefore had to be left to chance, and to the belief in Field-Marshal Costa's right arm. The two most interesting figures were Gade, an alert little man with a face curiously resembling the pictures of Mozart, and Ferdinand Hiller, whose Schumannesque "Nala and Damayanti" was in too unfamiliar an idiom to admit of its proper rendering under the conditions which then prevailed. It was literally pulled through by the pluck of the soprano, an admirable artist, Miss Edith Wynne, who after an unaccompanied chorus had fallen the best part of half a tone, came in plumb on the right note without a help of any sort, and deserved the Victoria Cross for countless other hazardous rescues. I stayed at the Woolpack, next door to the room where Mendelssohn and Bennett supped with my father in 1846.\*

When I went up to Cambridge in October, I found many old Dublin friends amongst my contemporaries. The Butchers, the two most brilliant undergraduates of my day, Lawson (the son of the fearless judge), Lee, son of the Archdeacon, and Richard West, son of the Dean. The last named who was considerably the eldest of the party, was one of the wittiest, quaintest, and most artistic of them all. He was so uncannily well read that he did not need a Latin or Greek Dictionary. It used to be a standing joke to try and

\* See my "Studies and Memories," p. 122.

catch him out with some obscure word in Liddell and Scott, but he was never once stumped. He was a born caricaturist, and painted a collection of Dons in a style worthy of Pellegrini himself. Shilleto, standing with his back to the fire, behind a rampart of red-silk pocket-handkerchiefs, scattered across the hearthrug, taking a pinch of snuff, and saying "I have a theory about that word": the chapel-clerk of King's, a most unique figure: Dr. Guillemard, a very short man with an immense head, whose proportions were verified by a scale of feet, as in the maps: the cadaverous Paley, and many others. The fame of this irreverent picture-book reached the ears of Dr. Thompson, Master of Trinity, who sent a regal command for its inspection, and insisted upon West drawing a duplicate of Shilleto for him. Two of the examination stories of our time were of special delight to West. In the Mechanics paper of the Little-go the question was asked "Why cannot a pin stand on its point?" There were three answers of nearly equal merit:

1. "A point is that which has no parts and no magnitude; *ergo* a pin cannot stand on nothing."

2. "A pin cannot stand on its head, *a fortiori* it cannot stand on its point."

3. (The prize answer) "It will, if you stick it in."

The other had an element of tragedy in it. Sitting next West in the Senate House was a fellow-commoner of mature years, whom either examination-mania or the prospect of a family living had induced to try for a University degree. It was a classical paper, and West as he came out met me on the steps holding a slip of paper, which after careful manœuvring his

neighbour had, when the proctor was on another scent, pushed over to him. On it was written these agonized words: "I have a wife and six children. For God's sake tell me the English of *etiam*."

Music in Cambridge was then in a disorganized state. There was plenty of talent, but no means of concentrating it for useful purposes. The University Musical Society, which was one of the most ancient in England, was at low ebb. Originally founded by William Thomson (afterwards Lord Kelvin) and Mr. Blow at their college, Peterhouse, in 1843, the society had lived through days of varying prosperity, but always numbered amongst its leading members men of progressive views and active enthusiasm. Its early programmes had been plentifully sprinkled with works both new and unfamiliar. Schumann appears in the lists with a first performance of the Overture with the Rheinweiniied, and a (problematical) première of the Pianoforte Concerto, at all events one of its first appearances in an English programme: Wagner also, with the Finale of the first act of "Tannhäuser." Both these were given about 1860. The means were probably inadequate, but the will and the enthusiasm were there. The amateurs of those early days were men who had studied the art and were often little if at all inferior to contemporary professionals. Frank Hudson, a most brilliant violinist who had won the approval of Ernst, whom he visited when that great artist was a guest of Bulwer Lytton, and his elder brother, Percy (now Canon Pemberton, well known in more recent days as the honorary conductor and founder of the Hovingham Festivals) who was a skilled violoncellist,

were pillars of the house. C. J. E. Smith, commonly called Piano Smith, G. F. Cobb, William Austen Leigh, were all pianists, who had studied their art as well as their technique. Another Don, the Rev. J. R. Lunn of St. John's, was a wild pianistic enthusiast. He began the day by putting his egg into a saucepan, and timing its boiling by playing the Overture to "Figaro." He copied out a pocket edition of Bach's forty-eight Preludes and Fugues, which he used to read as he took his constitutional: if in the course of his walk he saw a friend, he would rush across the street and splutter out "Do you know the Recitativo più Adagio in Beethoven's Op. 110? It's *Grand*." I heard this worthy once at the York Festival of 1872. He was put down, near the end of a long programme, to play "Kreisleriana . . . Schumann." I anticipated at most one of the set of eight pieces. But he put the music in front of him, and went right through them all. After the third the applause in the room became more and more loud and prolonged, in the hopes of the pianist taking a kindly hint that they had had enough, but he accepted it all as well-deserved homage, and the performance ended in a mixed babel of coughs, jabber, and piano hammers. Lunn was wont to treat his audiences as if they were troublesome undergraduates at a lecture. He once ascended the platform a few minutes before the concert began, sat himself down at the piano and, without striking any notes, proceeded to go through an acrobatic exhibition of wrist and finger exercises, which caused a *crescendo* of merriment amongst the assembling public. This was too much for him, and he

shook an angry fist at the audience, making a face of concentrated fury the while, as he retired from the fray. Amongst the names of singers, the Society's records contain those of Arthur Coleridge, Spencer Lyttelton, and R. Webster, better known now as Lord Alverstone, who, despite a busy legal career, has been a lifelong and devoted supporter of the art.

The difficulty which stood in the way of progress was an obvious one. There were no sopranos save boys; the altos were a handful of choirmen; the Society was neither fish, flesh nor fowl. It did not try to be a first-class Männer-Gesangverein, for which there were ample materials if they were properly worked. The bad balance of voices damped the enthusiasm of the men. There was but one hope of salvation, the admission of women into the ranks. I found a strong advocate for this move in Ashton Dilke. He and I had the hardihood to propose the revolution in 1871, and found ourselves in a minority of two. Other methods had to be adopted to dish the conservatives, and having put hand to the plough there was no turning back. Hitherto no lady connected with the University had dreamed of taking her place in a chorus except in private. There was Mrs. Grundy to fight as well as the Tory undergraduate. But the hour had come, and with it the woman. Mrs. Dunn, a contralto with a voice of great richness and so well equipped musically that she could sing the Arias of Sebastian Bach in a way which earned the encomiums of Joachim, came to the rescue and obtained the active help of several ladies of wider views than had hitherto been countenanced

in the stiff severity of Cambridge; and with a little effort was founded a small choir called the "Amateur Vocal Guild," which gave two public concerts and scored an immediate success. At the second of these performances was produced Bach's Cantata, "Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit," for the first time in England. The effect of this rival society was such, that the Tories of the C.U.M.S. rubbed their eyes, and when they were offered a fusion, which was backed up by a strong letter from Sterndale Bennett (the University Professor of Music), the decision of the previous year was exactly reversed. A little later a private society "The Fitzwilliam," which had done a great deal of quiet good in spreading a taste for Bach, and other less-known composers, also joined the old Society, and it became a flourishing choral body of considerable numbers, with well-balanced parts.

The first united concert was devoted, as in duty bound, to a performance of Bennett's "May Queen," under the direction of the composer himself. We had a complete and excellent band, but so imbued was Bennett with old memories of orchestral collapses in Cambridge, that no power on earth would induce him to allow it to accompany the solos, a duty which I had to perform unwillingly on the pianoforte. I assured him that the players knew the work by heart, but all to no purpose. After this new start, the Society returned to its old progressive policy, and with the help of a first-rate orchestra now within its means, it began its mission of making known new works as well as of making the audiences familiar

with the best of the old. Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri" was the first important revival, which was followed by the first performance in England of the same composer's "Faust" music (Part 3), and Brahms' "Requiem."

Chamber music was also well to the fore, and the public performances of quartets and concerted pieces by finished players gave a speedy impulse to the music-loving undergraduates, who formed a string quartet of their own. This devoted four used to practise assiduously, often into the small hours of the morning, in rooms in the great court tower of Trinity facing the chapel. They played steadily through all the quartets of Haydn, and many of those of other great masters; I well recollect hearing about midnight a blood-curdling sound issuing from the upper windows, which resolved itself into the "Terremoto" from Haydn's "Seven Last Words." This little band of players, who numbered amongst them W. Blakesley, son of the Dean of Lincoln, F. O. Bower, now Professor of Botany at Glasgow University, and his brother, and later Mr. Abdy Williams, the musical historian, eventually founded a series of weekly concerts in connection with the University Musical Society, called "The Wednesday Pops," which gave abundant opportunities for talented students to be heard both in vocal and instrumental works. For more difficult and important compositions a complete orchestra was brought down from London. The committee at first considered me extravagant in such things as the engagement of four horns, and they had to be shown by ocular demonstration that

those instruments were only capable of playing one note at a time each, and that the omission of any of them meant gaps in the sound. But a little experience, and the good effects produced in the exchequer by the consistently high standard of performance, soon dissipated their qualms. They were happy too in the possession of some excellent vocalists among their members which minimized the most expensive item in the budget. G. R. Murray came up from Eton, a full-blown tenor, who made his *début* by one of the accidents which so often discover great ability. At the first performance of Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri," a most arduous and difficult work then practically unknown in England, the tenor singer engaged fell ill, and Murray took his place, reading the long part at sight at rehearsal, and giving it the effect of a finished reading at the performance. If von Bülow had heard him, he would have hesitated to class him amongst "diseases," as he termed tenors in general. The baritones too had a strong representative in H. E. Thorndike, afterwards a well-known professional singer.

Such is the short history of the regeneration of the body known to Cambridge men, as the C.U.M.S. Grove's "Dictionary of Music" did not say a word too much, when it put on record that the society had become a pioneer and a power in the country.

During a brief Christmas visit to Ireland in 1870, I renewed some old friendships which recalled earlier days. There was a great gathering at Adare, where I saw Lord Dunraven for the last time. I went on the

road home to stay with the Bishop of Limerick, where a most comical and irresponsible dramatic entertainment took place. A dramatic sketch (it could not be called a play) had been written by the Bishop's three sons, and I was called in to supply the music. The orchestra available consisted of a pianoforte and a gong. It was a skit on Darwinism, and the characters were primitive men who had retained the Simian caudal appendage. The plot was merely an exposition of the manners and customs of a tribe called "The IOUX Indians." Various folk-songs of this tailed crew were included in the piece, notably a dirge at a cannibal dinner, of which the refrain was :

"Pass the pepper, pass the salt,  
Our insides shall be his vault !"

The crowning achievement was an IOUX National Anthem, each verse of which was followed by a dance of barbaric grandeur with gong *obbligato* to which the tail-whirling gave an original, or rather aboriginal flavour. This hymn deserves quotation in full :

"Our native land is IOU.  
Man-meat we're very partial to,  
We drink both castor-oil, and glue :  
                    We really do !  
*Chorus.* We really do !  
And when we've none our tails we chew.

(*Gong, three strokes, and dance.*)

"Our dress consists of quills and tape,  
Red blankets, postage stamps and crape,  
For which we hunt the long-legged ape :  
                    He can't escape !  
*Chorus.* He can't escape !  
These from his shoulder-blades we scrrrrape.

(*Gong and dance.*)

“ Our manners are both mild and meek,  
*crescendo* We shout and roar and scream and squeak,  
*pp* And then sit silent for a week,  
                    And play Bézique,  
*Chorus.* And play Bézique,  
Until our joints with stiffness creak.

*(Gong and dance.)*

“ Then to the music of the Gong  
A-combing of our tresses long,  
We bound into the battle throng,  
To wrong the right, and right the wrong !  
                    Oh, come along !  
*Chorus.* Oh, come along !”

## CHAPTER VIII

Trinity College in 1873—The Master—T. A. Walmisley—The Schumann Festival at Bonn—Brahms—Paris after the Commune.

THE organist at Trinity College, Dr. J. L. Hopkins (a cousin of Dr. E. J. Hopkins of the Temple Church) became an invalid in 1872, just after the first rebuilding of its renowned organ, and the establishment of periodical recitals in the College Chapel. During his enforced absence his place was taken by Mr. Gerard Cobb, Fellow and Junior Bursar of the College, who was a cultivated amateur, and I, on some occasions, helped to fill the gap. Hopkins died in 1873, and I was elected as his successor, the College having generously accepted the condition that I was to study in Germany after taking my degree.

When I migrated from Queens' to Trinity, I found myself in a little world peopled by many old friends, and governed by a race of remarkable rulers. Amongst the Fellows were such well-known men as Adam Sedgwick, the geologist, Munro, the editor of "Lucretius," E. W. Blore, son of the architect and famous among old Etonians as a cricketer, R. Burn, the archæologist, Coutts Trotter, learned in chemistry and physiology, and my staircase neighbour and old friend R. C. Jebb, a brother Irishman whose "oak" used to stand open till the small hours, and with whom I had many an illuminating midnight talk. His rooms and mine,

which were on the first floor, were once the home of Sir Isaac Newton, and below were two sets which had been occupied by Thackeray and Macaulay. Amongst my contemporaries were Frank Balfour, the pioneer of Animal Morphology, who was killed on the Alps at the zenith of his fame, his brothers Gerald and Eustace, Hallam (now Lord) Tennyson, and his brother Lionel, Charles Brookfield, A. W. Verrall the brilliant scholar, Arthur Lyttelton (afterwards Bishop of Southampton), F. Jenkinson (now the University Librarian), Henry and John George Butcher and many more. Over us all towered a tall, dignified and strikingly handsome figure, W. H. Thompson, the successor of Whewell in the Mastership.

This *ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν*, the contemporary and friend of Arthur Hallam, Tennyson, Trench, Blakesley, Merivale, and other great Englishmen of the thirties, filled the post of head of the College with a dignity and impressiveness which was at once a parallel and a foil to that of his colleague at Oxford, Dean Liddell. He concealed, sometimes too successfully, a kindly heart under sarcastic armour. The expression of his face was stern when in repose; a drooping eyelid and a downward curve of his tight lips gave an impression of innate satirical force which belied the humanity within. It is obvious that he did not know himself the effect produced by his own facial expression. Herkomer painted his portrait for the Hall, a most vivid and characteristic work; when the artist had reached the point of allowing his sitter to see the picture, Thompson looked at it with sad surprise, and said "I did not know that I had such a contempt for mankind." I had an early

taste of both his kindness and his satire. Before my election to the organistship, the Fellows paid me the, I believe unique, compliment of asking me, an undergraduate, to dine at the High Table. This required a special vote of the Seniority, and Mr. Cobb, who was present, told me that the Master's comment on the proposal was, "Could we refuse anything to an undergraduate who plays like St. Cecilia?" Cobb added that he hoped that I would not adopt the Saint's organ technique, and keep my thumbs below the keys. But Thompson had his little corrective ready. I had been giving some recitals in the Chapel, and was no doubt, as youngsters will be, rather exuberant in my style. When shortly afterwards my election to the organist's post was proposed, he said not a word till it was carried, but when all was finally settled, he delivered himself of this double-edged comment: "Mr. Stanford's playing always charms, and occasionally . . . astonishes: and I may add that the less it astonishes, the more it charms." When I paid him my duty visit after my appointment, I prepared to receive cavalry. He masked his attack at first, and was all charm, but the charge came right enough. After informing me of the duties required, and the wishes of the College, he embarked on my coming visit to Germany, and wound up, as if it were a slip of the tongue, "And may I ask, shall you have in Leipzig any recreation in the intervals of organ-blowing?" I formed square, and repelled the attack by assuming that he had said "playing," and by a successful control of my risible muscles. His idea of music was excessively vague, and he soon showed that his judgment was not always founded on

knowledge. It was the custom at the time for the organist to play a set piece before the anthem on Sunday evening. On one occasion I chose an arrangement of an Aria from Bach's St. Matthew Passion. He sent for Mr. Cobb the next morning and asked him to request the organist not to play such secular music in Chapel. Cobb, bubbling with inward laughter, broke it to him gently that the piece was from one of the most sacred works ever composed. The Master was not to be beaten, and said, "Tell him then to confine his repertoire to such music as is, I believe, played at the Monday Popular Concerts." Cobb answered with becoming gravity, that I was certain to conform to such a broad-minded request.

Thompson was not always complimentary to the musical profession. When the late Mr. Edmund Gurney, a Fellow of Trinity and author of the "Power of Sound" told him of his intention to enter its ranks, he was surprised by the consolatory rejoinder, "Well, Mr. Gurney, it is a *grade* better than dancing." He gave a party to the recipients of honorary degrees in 1876, when Macfarren, Goss, and Sullivan were present in their doctors' robes, and he asked the Junior Bursar "Who are all those painted jays?" He could also be severe upon himself. When he held a canonry of Ely Cathedral, then an appanage of the Greek Professorship, he complained of the dampness of his study, saying that even his sermons could not keep dry on the shelves.

On a later occasion I had to consult the Master about the possibility of starting a scheme of pensions for the choirmen, which would make it easier to dis-

pense, without hardship, of the services of singers who were past their work. After a long and for him somewhat dry discussion, the old wit peeped out. He launched into a description of his early visits to Rome, and wound up by saying "I often visited the Sistine Chapel, and in my young days the singing of those gentlemen, (*pianissimo*) if I may so term them, was most beautiful." Some of the Master's best sayings have, after the manner of the world, been diverted from the real author and credited to other humorists of his time. I have often heard the well-known "We are none of us infallible, not even the youngest amongst us" ascribed to Jowett, though the saying is no more like the style of the Master of Balliol than that of Bacon is like Shakespeare's. As a matter of fact I heard this sentence reported, hot from the mint, out of the mouth of one of the Fellows, as he came down the stairs from a College meeting for the discussion of the new statutes, when Thompson had said it. He made another apposite jest at the same meeting; he rang for a glass of water, the butler brought it and as he came in turned up the lights:

THOMPSON. "Hinc lucem et pocula sacra."

He very occasionally preached in Chapel. When he did everyone was agog for some moment of pointed wit. There was rarely more than one, and very often the rest of the discourse was dull enough to show off the gem. He preached on the parable of the ten talents, and the moment came in the peroration, when he addressed successively the Fellows, and the undergraduates, saying to the former "To those of you who have two, or even three talents," and to the latter "To

those of you that have but one talent, and that, I fear, occasionally hidden in a napkin." At the time of the last University Commission, Coutts Trotter, a big burly man, very shy and often gauche in consequence, who was a tutor of the College and a leading Radical, published a brochure quoting the emoluments of College officers, and arguing for the abolition of such expensive luxuries as Masterships of Colleges. On his way to Chapel the Master met Trotter and the skirmish began by "Good-morning, Mr. Trotter. I have read your pamphlet, and, until I did, I did not know how much you and I were overpaid." I heard from the organ-loft the immediate sequel. He preached, and I knew from the tone of his voice that we were in for a good thing. His text, given slowly and distinctly twice over, was "The law is our school-master." The sting came, not in the tail of the sermon, but in the opening sentence :

"The word translated 'school-master' may perhaps be better translated 'pedagogue,' or (looking round at the stalls and especially at Coutts Trotter's) . . . tutor . . . tutor. He was occasionally a civilized, but more ordinarily quite a rude uncouth person." The excellent Trotter gave a great heave in his seat, and a gentle swish of smothered laughter came from the seven hundred undergraduates. When I went up to the University, Charles Kingsley was Professor of Modern History, and resigning shortly afterwards was succeeded by Seeley. Thompson went to Seeley's first lecture, and being asked by a friend as he came out what he thought of it, killed two birds with one stone thus, "I did not know that we should miss Kingsley so soon!"

This double-edged satire was a favourite weapon of his. When Dean Howson preached a University Sermon, Thompson's criticism was "I was thinking what a very clever man Conybeare must have been."\* Dean Farrar, who was a most popular man in the University Pulpit, but, alas, was no favourite of the Master's, was staying at the Lodge, and his host accompanied him to St. Mary's.

As Thompson was coming out of church he met a lady who bubbled over to him in her admiration of the Dean's oratory.

LADY. "What wonderful taste he has, Master!"

THOMPSON. "Yes, yes! And unfortunately all of it is so very bad."

When he and Farrar returned to the Lodge, the visiting-card of an Oxford magnate was lying on the hall-table.

THOMPSON (*picking it up and showing it to the Dean*). "That shows that Mr. — came neither to see me nor to hear you."

In those days Magdalene College, which stands at the other side of the river Cam, largely consisted of sporting men, some of whom were old Trinity undergraduates who had failed in their May exams., and had migrated thither. An Oxford Don on his visiting Thompson asked him if there was not also a Magdalene at Cambridge.

THOMPSON (*with the air of trying to remember*). "Yes, I believe there is. A transpontine Institution for fallen undergraduates."

\* Conybeare and Howson were joint-authors of a standard work upon St. Paul's Epistles.

The Master was always in the van of University progress, and, as J. W. Clark the Registrar told me, never failed at a crisis, even when hampered by illness, to record his vote. Before one crucial division he came into the Senate House, stood in the doorway surveying the serried ranks of country parsons who had swarmed up to oppose his pet legislation, turned to a neighbour and said, "Until I came here to-day, I did not understand to the full the meaning of that most excellent term, the 'Inferior Clergy.'" When the See of Ripon fell vacant, and an unexpected appointment was made to it, someone said to Thompson, "Who is this man Bickersteth, who has been made Bishop of Ripon?"

THOMPSON. "I am told that he was a Queens' man and a Junior Optime, and as far as I can ascertain, he has done nothing unworthy of those antecedents."

He would scarify a Don who was over-particular about his personal appearance: "The time Mr. — can spare from the decoration of his person, he devotes to the neglect of his duties." He wrote from Marienbad, where he was taking the waters, a pathetic complaint that Society in that town consisted "rather of the chosen than of the choice people." He could also smooth down an offended spirit. The secretary of the C.C.S. Society, best known as "The Apostles," the foundation of which dated from the Master's undergraduate days, was anxious to get photographs of all the early members for collection in an album, and in this project Thompson took a lively interest, helping in every possible way. Amongst the answers was one very crusty missive from Merivale, Dean of Ely, who

saw in the suggestion another sign of the general decadence of the modern Cambridge man, and expressed himself accordingly. The secretary in distress sent the epistle to the Master, who replied in a long letter which entirely ignored the difficulty until the postscript, which ran "Don't mind old Merivale's growls: whom the Dean loveth etc.!" He could also pay a pretty compliment. When my daughter was born, he immediately christened her "The Tenth Muse."

He sometimes took a naughty joy in inspiring Mrs. Thompson to make a joke, which he would afterwards demolish. At one of his breakfasts Henry Butcher and Lamb (a mathematical scholar) were placed on each side of their hostess.

MRS. T. "What a curious position I am in, sitting between the butcher and the lamb!"

(Subdued titter of the undergraduates.)

THE MASTER. "There is nothing in this world so rude as to make jokes upon persons' names."

(Collapse of the audience, and a deathly silence.)

The last time I saw him, he, a life-long Liberal, was sitting in the Fellows' reading-room on the Sunday morning in 1886 when the elections which sealed the fate of the first Home Rule Bill were announced. Another Don, equally Liberal and equally Unionist was reading out the results of the pollings to him with great gusto. When the list was finished, I said to the Master, "I wonder if Mr. Gladstone is reading the lessons this morning?"

THOMPSON. "If he does, he will choose the one containing 'Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof.'"

The organistship had in former days been held by at least one exceptionally gifted musician, Thomas Attwood Walmisley. He was almost the first Englishman to know and admire the B minor Mass of Sebastian Bach, and told Arthur Coleridge as far back as 1850 that the "Confiteor" in this work was in his opinion the greatest thing in music. He infected Coleridge so thoroughly with his own enthusiasm for the Mass that he unwittingly prepared the way for its complete performance in England, which Coleridge brought to pass in 1876, when, with the help of Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, he founded the Bach Choir. Walmisley unfortunately, like some others of his time, was a victim of four o'clock dinners in Hall, and long symposiums in the Combination Room after; and being a somewhat lonely bachelor, the excellent port of the College cellars was, at times, more his master than his servant. One catastrophe gave occasion for an admirable witticism of his bosom friend, W. G. Clark, the editor of "Shakespeare." There was once such a crash of sound in the organ-loft at evening Chapel, that popular imagination pictured Walmisley sitting on the keys and playing on the seat. For this anticipation of Schönberg he was summoned to appear next day before the Seniority. In the morning Clark, who lived close by, came in to comfort and cheer him. He found the dejected organist sitting gloomily by a table on which was a tell-tale empty bottle, in a thick atmosphere of tobacco.

WALMISLEY. "Oh what am I to say to them, Clark, what am I to say to them?"

CLARK. "Nothing easier, my dear fellow. Say 'I

am become like a bottle in the smoke, yet I do not forget thy statutes.' ”

After Walmisley's death, the question was raised as to the advisability of changing the dinner-hour, and preceding it by the evening service. This move was precipitated by another accident in the Chapel itself, not in the curtained recesses of the organ-screen. One of the Fellows on reaching his seat, instead of going through the usual formula with his College cap, remained standing, beamed round upon the congregation with an engaging smile, slowly raised the sleeves of his surplice and twisted them into a gigantic white tie, before taking his seat. This sealed the fate of early Hall.

Curious things used to take place in the early days at the far East end of the Chapel, which was known by the name of “Iniquity corner.” At that time no awe-inspiring Don sat in that region to keep a watchful eye on the frivolous youngster. There were rumours even of secret rubbers of whist. Criticism on the music and other subjects was freely bandied about. One historical conversation there is still remembered. Kinglake, the historian of the Crimean War, was standing next a bigoted Low Church undergraduate during the singing of the anthem, and the following dialogue took place :

LOW CHURCH UNDERGRADUATE. “Do you approve of this sort of thing, Sir?”

KINGLAKE. “It seems to me very charming and interesting.”

L. C. U. (*angrily*). “Do you think that the Early Christians would have approved of this sort of thing?”

K. (*soothingly*). "My dear Sir, do please remember what snobs those early Christians were."

This species of Sunday relaxation was not confined to the Universities. Arthur Coleridge told me of a boy at Eton, who was much devoted to racing, and who used to invent any subterfuge which would enable him to go to Epsom or Ascot, capturing two caterpillars and conveying them into College Chapel, where he caused a barrier of prayer-books, which he called Tattenham Corner, to be built at the end of the desk, and started the crawly creatures on a race. He then passed down the order "At the words 'Lighten our darkness,' turn the caterpillars round."

The relative merits of the youngster at the Trinity organ, and his older neighbour at that of St. John's, Dr. Garrett, used to be freely discussed by the undergraduates. One such argument became a standing joke :

TRINITY UNDERGRADUATE. "You should hear our man's mountains skip like rams and his little hills like young sheep."

ST. JOHN'S UNDERGRADUATE. "Oh, that's nothing : you should hear ours grin like a dog and run about the city."

My uncle, Mr. Thomas Rice Henn of Paradise Hill, Co. Clare, once came to visit me in the organ-loft, and most unwittingly did me an ill turn, for which I never had the heart to chide him. He was the happy possessor of one of those natures to which every belonging is the best of its kind in the world. When he repurchased Paradise Hill, an old seat of the Henns, upon the shore of the tidal river Fergus (an affluent of the

Shannon), he told my father that the view from the house was the finest in the world. John Stanford wickedly asked "What happens to the view when the tide goes out, Tom?" Tom said that there was a good deal of mud, in truth, but that it was the finest mud in Europe, and one barrowful of it made the best manure in the three kingdoms. On the Sunday evening that he came up to sit with me, fortune arranged that the very tenor, whose superannuation and pension I had just been discussing with the Master at the Sistine interview above, should sing (*sic*) "Comfort ye my people." The performance was truly awful, but my uncle, taking the singer under his wing as if he were part (through me) of his own property, said, "I pledge you my word and conscience, that is the finest tenor I have heard since Mario"; and what was worse he went down after the service and told him so. My scheme of improvements became proportionately more difficult of attainment.

Music in Cambridge was lucky enough at this opportune moment to be helped on its upward course by a visit from one who was destined to be one of its most powerful friends. A letter was received from Sterndale Bennett, expressing a wish that a concert should be organized in aid of the funds for erecting a statue to Sebastian Bach in his birthplace, Eisenach: and stating that Joachim would give his services on the occasion. It was the great violinist's second appearance in the University town. His first was at a concert given in the Senate House under Walmisley in 1846 at the Installation of the Prince Consort as Chancellor. He was then a boy of fifteen. He

described to me with a merry twinkle in his eye the setting down he received from the undergraduates in the gallery. He was playing the Mendelssohn Concerto and as he began the slow movement, the "boys" called out "Oh pray no more!" This, for him, unique experience was abundantly atoned for and wiped out by the ringing cheers which greeted him at his yearly visit in later days.

In the summer of the same year I went abroad for the first time, and with my friend, Frank McClintock (now Dean of Armagh), made straight for the Schumann Festival at Bonn. We arrived in time for the open rehearsals, and so heard everything twice over. It was a memorable gathering. Joachim was conductor; Frau Joachim, Frau Wilt of Vienna, and Stockhausen were solo singers; Frau Schumann and Ernst Rudorff the pianists. Amongst the audience were a crowd of notabilities from all nations, including a large contingent from Ireland. Brahms was there, and Ferdinand Hiller, who had conducted the Beethoven Festival in the same hall three years before. There had been rumours that the programme would also contain "The German Requiem," but the project fell through, owing, I believe, to some local friction which caused Brahms to interdict its performance, and which probably accounted for his not being in the very best of humours. Although we were disappointed of this hope, the programme was a most interesting and perfectly chosen one. The chief works given were—

1. "Paradise and the Peri" and the D minor Symphony (the former work was conducted by von Wasielewsky, the biographer of Schumann).

2. Overture to "Manfred." Nachtlied for chorus and orchestra. The Pianoforte Concerto. The music to "Faust," Part 3. The C major Symphony.

3. A chamber-concert, at which was given the string quartet in A major, the Variations for two pianofortes, and the Pianoforte Quintet, while Stockhausen sang the "Löwenbraut" cycle.

The outstanding features of the Festival were the inspired playing of the composer's widow, and the singing of Frau Joachim and Stockhausen. The last-named artist's performance of Dr. Marianus in "Faust" was, as Grove truly termed it, divine. The phrase "Gnade bedürftend," so trying for any singer, was delivered with an ease and a reverence of which I have seldom or never heard the like. The surroundings of this gathering were in exact keeping with the high ideal standard of the music and its rendering. There was an atmosphere of pure art about the place both in performers and in listeners, which gave the indefinable feeling that it was good to be there. It was a clean tribute to a clean man. There was nothing which jarred, nothing of intrigue or small jealousies. Everyone was doing his best, however small his share; famous solo violinists playing at the back desks of the orchestra, no one grumbling, everyone as sunny as the Rhine Valley. A more marked contrast to the entourage of Baireuth as I saw it later in 1876 it would be impossible to imagine.

Bonn itself with its broad square dominated by the Beethoven statue, its sweeping river, and its bands of students singing four-part songs in the small hours of

the morning made a perfect setting for the Festival. There were of course drawbacks, principally the street smells which assaulted the sensitive nose (Bonn was innocent of any system of drainage) : some of them so appalling that it was possible to see the slight mist containing the odour a few yards ahead, and to prepare for it with thumb and finger. The hotels too were so overcrowded that the meals were interminable. On the second day at the Goldener Stern, we sat down to dinner at 11.30 a.m., and the banquet lasted up to nearly 4 p.m. ; we could not well leave before the end because we had barely enough to eat as it was. My neighbour kept what he called a "log of the dinner," and the intervals between the courses worked out at about forty-five minutes each. On the day after the Festival everyone went to Rolandseck, and the beer flowed with a volume almost comparable to the river below. I made the acquaintance of Ferdinand Hiller, with whom I dined next day at Cologne, in his pretty flat over the bridge, and met there for the first time Brahms, then beardless, and (I gathered from lack of love of his host) rather silent and unapproachable. He looked lively enough at Rolandseck.

I went on with my companion to Heidelberg and Switzerland, returning home by way of Paris, then just beginning to recover from the disasters of 1871, and with its empty shells of palaces still blackened by the smoke of the Commune. I was lucky enough to see an opera in one building which was destroyed by fire almost immediately afterwards, the old house of the Grand Opéra in the Rue Drouot. It was a

splendid house for sound, far better than the present gorgeous building, and the performance was first rate. The opera was Meyerbeer's "Prophète." The tenor was, if I remember rightly, Achard by name, and Fides was sung by Madame Devriès. In spite of its obvious appeals to the claqué, I had an unwilling admiration for much of the music, which I retain to this day. The vulgarity, it is true, does not ring with the sincerity of an early Verdi, and is therefore all the more disturbing. But the invention and the dramatic force, which Weber recognized, and the very strength of which led him to deplore his contemporary's lapse into popularity hunting, was there and self-evident.

I confess that I am a man of many likes, and I have often been told that my likes are somewhat incompatible with each other. A well-known lady musician sitting next me at the rehearsal of an early Richter concert at which Brahms' C minor Symphony and Wagner's "Meistersinger" Overture were given, when I expressed my admiration for both, told me that it was impossible for me to like the one if I liked the other. My answer was that I was one degree happier than she was, for I liked one thing in the world more than she could. I cannot therefore join in the decrying of Meyerbeer, root and branch. If he was a strayed sheep, he certainly showed too many signs of repentance, fitful it may be, to be permanently excluded from the fold. One other opera I saw, Offenbach's "Orphée aux Enfers," given under the composer's own direction at the Gaiété: a marvellous production, mounted regardless of expense, and sung with a verve,

a dash and a finesse such as only France can attain. Impudent music perhaps but fascinating too. Offenbach always seemed to reflect in his work the spirit of his "cheeky" reply to a questioner who asked him if he was not born at Bonn. "No, Beethoven was born at Bonn ; I was born at Cologne."

## CHAPTER IX

Musical education in England—Societies and opera in London—  
Leipzig in 1874—The German theatres and concert-rooms—  
Liszt—Wieniawski—The Thomas-Kirche.

THE lot of the music student in this country at the present day is a much smoother one than that of his predecessors of forty years ago. There were then practically no schools for composition in England; the leading composer, Sterndale Bennett, was driven to teaching the pianoforte, and was, from his nature and surroundings, wholly out of sympathy with any modern music since that of his close friend, Mendelssohn. The only really valuable scholarship for musicians was the travelling one, which had been founded by Jenny Lind and others in memory of Mendelssohn. *Autres temps, autres mœurs.* These aids to education have now multiplied to an excessive extent. The days when the late Archbishop Temple forced his way to the highest position in the land through the severest deprivations seem to be gone. Most modern students would rebel at an empty coal-scuttle, surreptitiously filled by a neighbouring friend, or at an economy in light such as necessitated reading by the gas lamp on the staircase. It remains to be seen whether the smoothing of early difficulties will result in a race of hardy men. When England woke up to her deficiencies and opened her purse, she spent the contents upon education and forgot to insure the career, which would *ipso facto* have furnished the incentive to work,

and provided the school to prepare for it. To this short-sighted British policy we owe the main reason for our musical isolation. We remain and seem likely to remain the only European nation without a National Opera. Without such an institution at the head and front of the art, there can be no incentive, and no career, save for a few persons of outstanding gift. The cream can always find a market, but unless provision is made for an adequate supply of milk, there will be no cream. The rank and file of orchestra, chorus, and subordinate singers are the milk, and for them there is no such certain livelihood in this country as is forthcoming in the rest of the civilized world. The composers find that in opera there is no opening for them at all except in that type which a real artist would consider a degradation of his ideals. "Wahn! Wahn! überall Wahn!" Which I will freely translate "Scholarships! Scholarships! everlastingly Scholarships!" Amongst my contemporaries there was not one who had the advantages which a modern young composer finds ready to his hand. How far necessity of individual effort thrown on its own resources makes for the strength and permanency of work, and was responsible for the so-called "Renaissance of English Music," future generations of musical historians and critics may have a weighty word to say.

Not only was there in England in the early seventies a lack of means to teach composition—the man to teach it, and the surroundings which enable a student to hear and judge of his own work, (a part of the training which is even more important than word-of-mouth tuition)—but the opportunities of hearing first-

rate music were far fewer. The Philharmonic Concerts were given in Hanover Square Rooms, a hall which though acoustically excellent, was, like the old Gewandhaus at Leipzig, too small to seat many more than the subscribers. The New Philharmonic Concerts in St. James's Hall, which had started with some success owing to the co-operation of Berlioz, had fallen into the hands of a hopelessly incompetent conductor. This worthy, on one occasion, had to conduct the overture to "Der Freischütz" and began the Allegro at rehearsal by beating four crochets in the bar, each beat at the pace of the minims. The orchestra, seeing some fun in prospect, implicitly followed his stick, and began the movement at twice as slow a rate as the proper time.

THE CONDUCTOR (*tapping*). "No! No! gentlemen, that's not the overture to the 'Freischütz.'" "

(Begins again, same result; same remonstrance rather more accentuated.)

THE LEADER OF THE VIOLINS (*half whispering*). "Try two beats."

THE CONDUCTOR. "Sh-Sh! Don't speak to me, Sir."

(Begins again, beating two. The Allegro proceeds all right.)

THE CONDUCTOR. "Ah! gentlemen! That's the way to play the 'Freischütz' overture."

The only orchestral performances, which were at once enlightening and progressive, were the Saturday Concerts at the Crystal Palace. Here Grove and Manns reigned supreme, and having no committee to worry them, made Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Wagner household words in musical circles.

Chamber music was almost entirely restricted to the Monday (and later Saturday) Popular Concerts, which however did yeoman's service for it, as far as works of the older repertory were concerned; only occasionally, under the pressure of Joachim, venturing, not without heart-searching and apology, upon a later Beethoven quartet or a work of Brahms. Progress in this direction was made the more difficult by the analytical programmes, in which Davison (the then critic of the *Times*) used often to prejudice the audience, by various clever quips and hints, against the novelty they were about to hear. He was in this respect the very antithesis of Grove, who made it his first business to infect an audience, through his programme notes, with his own enthusiasms. Both extremes were on principle open to the criticism that an audience should be allowed to judge for itself without previous bias in one direction or the other; but these were early days and tyro hearers needed an enlightening lead. No one can doubt whose was the better way.

The Italian Operas (there were two of them) were, save as to the gallery, closed to the limited purse of a student: with the exception of an isolated couple of performances of the "Flying Dutchman" no work of Wagner's had been heard there. It was not until 1875 (twenty-five years after its production) that "Lohengrin" made its first nervous appearance on a London stage, to be rescued from mediocrity by the Elsa of Madame Albani at Covent Garden, an impersonation which earned even the difficult encomiums of von Bülow, and by the Ortrud of Madame Tietjens

at Her Majesty's, where the hostile apathy of Costa had permitted the orchestra to play from parts riddled with literally hundreds of the most obvious mistakes. When Richter a few years later conducted it there, he spent hours in putting Costa's parts right.

The serious student of composition therefore had both for tuition and experience to betake himself abroad, and the centre which was most attractive was Leipzig; partly from its traditions, partly from the apostolical succession of Englishmen who had gone there, partly from the excellent opportunities it offered of hearing all schools of music both in the theatre and in the concert-room, and from the central position which placed it within easy reach of Berlin, Dresden and Weimar. Berlin at that time was a dismal, ill-lit and second-rate city, with one good thoroughfare (Unter den Linden) flanked by palaces and public buildings of striking architectural aspiration but of cold and even repellent effect. The other main streets had on each side deep ditches, bad traps for the unwary walker or driver in the dark, at the bottom of which lay a stagnant deposit of a milky green colour, occasionally veiled by duckweed. The opera was poor, with a few good artists who stood out amongst their colleagues like the palaces in the town. There were no first-rate concerts and few attractions for the student. *Quantum mutatus ab illo*. When I first visited old Berlin in 1874, its rise as a musical centre was just beginning. Joachim had taken the direction of the Hochschule für Musik and had gathered round him a strong body of professors of the first rank, Kiel, Frau Schumann, Stockhausen,

Rudorff, and others. He had formed his quartet, and given an early impulse to the start of the Philharmonic orchestra, of which the direction was later taken over by Hans von Bülow. Weimar was a much smaller centre, dominated by Liszt and his adherents, with no school save for the pianoforte, but possessing an opera and an orchestra capable of tackling the most advanced works with efficient, if small, material. Dresden was mainly devoted to opera, and there was no outstanding figure, except Julius Rietz who was getting old, to attract a student of composition.

Leipzig, then, was the best centre for him. The orchestra was one of the best in Germany. The concerts at which they played were given in the Gewandhaus Saal, a somewhat small room, too small indeed for works demanding much brass, but of perfect acoustical properties for such music as that of Mozart and Beethoven. It was quite innocent of windows (a wicked Russian wag of my time suggested that they had been hermetically sealed, in order to preserve the same air which Mendelssohn had breathed), and was capable of a truly wonderful Turkish-bath temperature. About half a dozen chairs at the back and a small square room behind were available for non-subscribers. The concerts were given every Thursday in winter at half-past six, and no one who arrived on the stairs, which were as draughty and cold as the room was hot and stuffy, later than half-past four or five had a chance of getting in. Only twice in three years did I, by a superhuman physical effort and a timely sprint when

the doors opened, succeed in getting into one of the six seats in the concert-room itself. The subscribers were only very partially musical although they considered themselves paragons in critical judgment. This was not surprising, for the seats were held by families who retained them religiously for their descendants and took the chance of their sons and grandsons developing musical tastes. The only responsive audience was to be found at the rehearsals, which were open to students and others who were unable to get into the concerts. How far behind London this close corporation was in broadminded appreciation was proved to me by two performances, the one at Leipzig, the other at the London Philharmonic, within a few months of each other, of Brahms' smaller Serenade without violins. At the Gewandhaus it went literally without a hand being raised to applaud: at St. James's Hall two of the movements were so vociferously encored that they had to be repeated. At a concert devoted to the French School, Berlioz' "Harold in Italy" was loudly hissed, in the very room where the composer had been so hospitably welcomed by Mendelssohn and Schumann. The form of the programmes was practically a fixture. I can give as a specimen that of March 4, 1875 :

## PART I.

|  |     |     |                   |
|--|-----|-----|-------------------|
| Overture Leonora No. 1                     | ... | ... | <i>Beethoven.</i> |
| Aria for soprano, from "Davidde penitente" |     |     | <i>Mozart.</i>    |
| Violin Concerto No. 1                      | ... | ... | <i>Max Bruch.</i> |
| Songs with pianoforte accompaniment        |     | ... | <i>Jensen.</i>    |
| Adagio for violin                          | ... | ..  | <i>Spohr.</i>     |

## PART II.

|                     |     |     |                      |
|---------------------|-----|-----|----------------------|
| Symphony in C major | ... | ... | ... <i>Schubert.</i> |
|---------------------|-----|-----|----------------------|

The first thing which struck me was the dead silence which prevailed when any artist, no matter how well known, ascended the platform. It was chilling to the bone. Only in the very rarest of instances did the orchestra make up for the lack of welcome on the part of the stiff-necked public, by a flourish of trumpets, "Tusch" as it is termed. Franz Lachner, Joachim and Frau Schumann were the only recipients of this honour in my time. Julius Rietz, the predecessor of Reinecke in the conductorship, could be nearly as chilling to the artists as the audience. A soprano singer at rehearsal, whose intonation was unusually poor, had a rough time at his hands. After recommencing two or three times, Rietz turned to the lady and said "Will you be good enough to give the orchestra your A?" Reinecke was not quite so uncompromising in his methods, but could not by any means be termed an inspiring conductor. He was at his best as an interpreter of Mozart. Since then the new concert-room has, owing to its much greater seating capacity, found room for newer and redder blood.

The theatre was first-rate, both in operas and in plays, which alternated on its adaptable stage. The list of singers was very strong, including such artists as Peschka-Leutner, a soprano of wide powers and finished technique; Ernst, nephew of the violinist, a very tall handsome tenor with a most sympathetic timbre; Gura, *facile princeps* as Hans Sachs, a painter as well as a singer, one of the best Don Juans and Counts I have ever seen, an artist to his fingertips; Ehrke, the greatest of Beckmessers, and a

superlatively comic *buffo*, whose face was, like John Parry's, an irresistible laugh-raiser, and whose attempts to be serious in tragic parts when his voice was wanted to complete the caste, always quarrelled with the twinkle in his eye. Most of this company afterwards migrated *en bloc* to Hamburg, and carried on their shoulders the first season of German Opera at Drury Lane under Hans Richter. The great range of the repertoire almost constituted an historical series, and was of the highest value to a student. I give a list of some of those I heard during my sojourn.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| MOZART.    | "Don Juan," "Figaro," "Seraglio," "Magic Flute," "Cosi fan Tutte."                         |
| BEETHOVEN. | "Fidelio."   |
| WEBER.     | "Freischütz," "Oberon," "Euryanthe."   |
| MERSCHNER. | "Hans Heiling," "Vampyr."  |
| LORTZING.  | "Czar und Zimmermann," "Wildschütz."   |
| SPOHR.     | "Jessonda."  |
| ROSSINI.   | "William Tell."  |
| MEYERBEER. | "Huguenots," "Prophète," "Africaine."  |
| SCHUMANN.  | "Genoveva."  |
| AUBER.     | "Fra Diavolo," "Masaniello."   |
| VERDI.     | "Trovatore," "Rigoletto," "Aida."  |
| GOETZ.     | "Taming of the Shrew."   |
| WAGNER.    | All except "Tristan," "Parsifal," and the "Ring," which was given in its entirety in 1878. |

Wagner came from Baireuth to hear "Jessonda" in 1874. He sat, characteristically enough, in the centre seat of the first row of the dress-circle, where the Royal Box in a Court theatre is usually placed. It was an interesting proof of his loyalty to Spohr, who, by producing "The Flying Dutchman" at Cassel, was one of the first to forward his work, and who had fought tooth-and-nail for "Tannhäuser"

also when the Elector banned it, owing to the composer's share in the revolution of 1849. A stall cost three shillings, except in the last two rows, which were the best for hearing, where it cost but eighteen-pence. In addition to the operas, we had cycles of the plays of Shakespeare, Goethe and Schiller. "Egmont" was given with Beethoven's music, and the "Midsummer Night's Dream" with Mendelssohn's. The orchestra was the same as that of the Gewandhaus. The manager was that master actor, Friedrich Haase, the only German, I believe, who was ever invited to play at the Théâtre Français. He was equally great in tragedy, comedy and farce. His impersonation of Count Alva in "Egmont" remains, with Salvini's Othello, one of my greatest stage impressions. He looked like a living Velasquez picture, his voice was sympathetic and his gesture restrained and dignified to the highest degree. That he could play with the light touch of a Frenchman was proved by his performance of the part of the old man in a short French piece, known in England as "A Quiet Rubber." It is a singular coincidence that his part in this little comedy was acted in London by John Hare. (Haase is the German word for Hare.) Haase had half a dozen ways of clearing his throat when he was playing an old man; he suited the method to each part; never did it more than twice or thrice in the piece, and unfailingly brought down the house every time. The leading tragic actress was Fräulein Ellmenreich, afterwards one of the most distinguished of the famous Meiningen Company.

This mighty array of masterpieces was not always congenial to the subordinate performers, a fact which was one evening brought home to me most amusingly. I was sitting in the front row of the stalls and, leaning over the orchestra barrier between the acts, I asked the second oboe player what his favourite opera was, fully expecting to hear him say (at least) "Fidelio" or the "Meistersinger." He looked up at me with a sleepy and blasé expression, and said in broad Saxonese, "Liebestrank," (Donizetti's "Elisir d'Amore"). After this shock to my enthusiasm was past, it occurred to me that this opera represented to him the minimum of work for his pay. I was present at an appalling fiasco, "Santa Chiara," an opera by the then reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. This farrago is principally remembered for the sake of the witticism it evoked from Brahms. It was given at Vienna, and after the performance several friends of his began to attack the music in no measured terms. "Sh-Sh!" said J. B. "You must not speak like that of Grand Ducal Operas; you never know who may have written them."

From what one may call adventitious concerts I had also an occasional thrill; such as the meteoric appearance of Liszt at a semi-private gathering in his honour. He was only present as a listener, but everyone so markedly refused to leave the room after various young people had tremblingly performed, that he happily took the hint and sat down at the piano. The moment his fingers touched the keys, I realized the immense gap between him and all other pianists. He was the very reverse of all my antici-

pations, which inclined me, perhaps from the caricatures familiar to me in my boyhood, to expect to see an inspired acrobat, with high-action arms, and wild locks falling on the keys. I saw instead a dignified composed figure, who sat like a rock, never indulging in a theatrical gesture, or helping out his amazingly full tone with the splashes and crashes of a charlatan, producing all his effects with the simplest means, and giving the impression of such ease that the most difficult passages sounded like child's play. It was the very reverse of the style of the young lady to whom von Bülow, after hearing her performance, went up with a deep bow and said "I congratulate you, Mademoiselle, upon playing the easiest possible passages with the greatest possible difficulty." I and my companion, a very punctilious person, were so overwhelmed by the performance and the personality, that we could not but "cap" him as he stalked out into the street. He had a magnetism and a charm which was all-compelling. We understood how he could meet Kings and Emperors on an equality, and fascinate with all the wiles of the serpent. He had two smiles: the one angelical, for artists, the other diabolical, for the satellite Countesses. How innately kind he could be was proved by a little incident which occurred in Berlin shortly after his visit to Leipzig. A young lady pianist had announced a recital, advertising herself (in the hope of attracting a larger audience) as a "pupil of Liszt." As she had never laid eyes upon him in her life, she was horrified to read in the papers on the morning of her concert that the Abbé had arrived in the city. The only

thing to be done was to make a clean breast of it; she went to his hotel and asked for an interview. When she was shown in she confessed with many tears, and asked for absolution. Liszt asked her the name of the pieces she was going to play, chose one and made her sit down at the piano and play it. Then he gave her some hints about her performance, and dismissed her with a pat on the cheek, and the remark "Now, my dear, you can call yourself a pupil of Liszt." This was on a par with the exceedingly astute and yet kindly diplomacy which he showed in a small German town in his younger days, where he was announced to give two recitals on successive evenings. At the first concert there was only a handful of people present. Instead of showing annoyance with those who did come, as is usual with human-kind, he made a little speech, saying, that the room was very large and cold for so small a gathering, that he had an excellent instrument in his sitting-room at the hotel, where everyone would be more comfortable, and if they would do him the pleasure to come round there in half an hour when he had arranged for their reception, he would play them his programme. They came and he provided them also with a champagne supper. At the next concert crowds were turned away at the doors, but there was no champagne. His power of dealing with Kings, when they did not show proper respect to him and his art, was none the less effective because it was courtier-like. The well-known story of his ceasing to play at the Russian Court, because the Czar and his friends were talking, was a case in point. When Liszt

stopped, an aide-de-camp came up and told him to continue, but he replied with the most dignified air "Quand le Czar parle, tout le monde se tait." I saw Liszt only twice at close quarters, once at the unveiling of the Bach Statue at Eisenach, and once at the Grosvenor Gallery (now the Æolian Hall) when he visited England for the last time. Both Liszt and Wagner had one common characteristic in their physiognomy: a magnificent head from the nose upwards and a repellent mouth and chin. A renowned friend of both once said to me, "These great men are better a little distance off."

Another great artist, Wieniawski, paid his last visit to Leipzig when I was there. He had grown very unwieldy, and the disproportion between the sizes of the player and his violin must have recalled memories of Spohr to those who knew that master. But his skill and artistry were unabated. He played the Beethoven Concerto in a wholly individual way. The reading was quite as true to the composer in its style as Joachim's; and exemplified how Tennyson's dictum, that "poetry is like shot silk with many glancing colours, and every reader must find his own interpretation according to his ability, and according to his sympathy with the poet," can apply with the same force to music. If Joachim's effects were like flames, Wieniawski's were like sparks. The brilliancy of the Finale could not have been excelled. It was Beethoven in an unbuttoned mood but none the less Beethoven.

Choral music was also to the fore; its chief home was, as was right and proper, under the shadow of the Thomas-Schule. E. F. Richter, the descendant of

Sebastian Bach in the Cantorship, directed the choir, and every Saturday at midday, there was an excellent performance of unaccompanied motets of all schools. Larger choral works were given at intervals in the Thomas-Kirche by a Gesangverein conducted by Riedel. The historic church, now restored out of all knowledge, was in 1874 in practically the same state as it was in the time of Bach. It was hideous enough, with its dirty green paint, but the acoustical properties were admirable. The little galleries aloft called "The Dove's Nest" whence the choristers sung the Chorale in the opening chorus of the St. Matthew Passion were still there. The Silbermann organ was more or less untouched. To an English ear it seemed all pedal reeds and manual mixtures. The quality never appealed to me any more than the instruments of the same builder at Dresden. The mechanism was truly horrible, the keys almost needed a Nasmyth hammer to depress them, and the pedals were so broad and clumsy that it was a matter of luck to put down a right note. After an experience of attempting to play upon it, I recalled the Master of Trinity's prophetic jest, and inwardly admitted a preference for "organ-blowing," and the need for "recreation" in the intervals of an even severer form of penal servitude.

## CHAPTER X

Leipzig ancient and modern—Reinecke and the Gewandhaus—  
Dresden in 1875—The Leipzig fair—Student duels—Friedrich  
Kiel.

PRESENT-DAY visitors to Leipzig will find little of the old charm left. The “milliards” of 1870 have done their work, and destroyed the reverence of the Saxon merchants for their ancient monuments. The impulse to hack, mutilate and even exterminate every historical landmark seems to have seized the rulers of the town. Almost the only remnants of old days are the Altmarkt and the Rathhaus, and this last building, comparable in its quaint way with the architecture of Nürnberg and Hildesheim, was only saved by a miracle. The Thomas-Schule, home of Bach and his successors in the Cantorship, a noble old house of nearly as many stories as the ancient houses in Edinburgh, is razed to the ground, and the younger generation have forgotten where it stood. The unique triangular Pleissenburg with its knife-like glacis has shared the same fate, and its old moat is levelled up. The old Gewandhaus is gone. Bach’s two churches are restored beyond recognition. In place of these deeply interesting and picturesque monuments of their forefathers’ taste, blocks of Americo-Parisian flats have sprung up like mushrooms. So much for the reverence of modern Germany. And the Leipzigers had no excuse. There was plenty of room on the outer side of the ring of

boulevards to work their sweet will in building everything they wanted. The new Gewandhaus Concert Hall (the best of their modern buildings) stands there now, but the destruction of the old room with all its memories and traditions was an inexcusable and unnecessary vandalism. The old inner town only needed underground treatment of a sanitary nature to make it comfortable as well as habitable. The Brühl, a street where Shylocks innumerable with long curly locks could be seen daily in the gaberdine, any one of them fit to go on the stage for the "Merchant of Venice" without additional make-up, had a few years ago retained most of its character with one important exception. There was one house in that street which was famous for having seen the birth of Leipzig's most famous son, Richard Wagner. That was enough for the rebuilding magnates. Down it came, memorial tablet and all, while its neighbours, unknown to history, were allowed to stand in peace.

Before all these transmogrifications began, Leipzig had all the charm and quiet attractiveness of a University town mixed with the elements of progressive commercial prosperity. Everyone was there to work, and the atmosphere encouraged it. Physiologists came to study with Ludwig; the University attracted historians, philosophers, and lawyers; and the musical facilities acted as a magnet to all parts of the world.

The conditions of living were of the simplest, and the student of ample means would have found it hard to spend more money than his poorer brethren. My first rooms were bare enough; it was only after repeated

importunity that I permanently installed the luxury of the morning tub. The basins were about double the size of a saucer, the hot-water jug held about a tumblerful, and had to be filled and poured out in instalments. The beds everywhere were a torture to anyone taller than five foot six, and recalled Dicky Doyle's pictures of Brown, Jones and Robinson on their Rhine tour. All the bedclothes were buttoned up together in a sort of flat sack, with a huge and puffy down quilt, rather like a Gargantuan pillow, which was put on top of all in winter; the result being that if the sleeper moved an inch, everything collapsed into a heap on the floor. There was no carpet or rug, and an enormous stove turned the room into a Turkish bath in the winter; there were double windows, of which the landlady never opened the outer; and if I succeeded in letting the air in when her back was turned, she would rush in and expound on the dangers of pneumonia. Her holy horror at finding I had taken a cold bath one morning when the temperature outside was 22 degrees below zero, Fahrenheit, (the coldest day I can remember), was a sight to see. The coffee for breakfast was of a sort known in Saxony as "Blümchenkaffee" (Little flower coffee), so called because when it is poured out, the little painted flower at the bottom of the cup is plainly visible to the naked eye. An amusing skit of von Bülow on this national drink is to be found in his Letters, vol. vii., page 66. It is a song entitled (in the Saxon brogue) "Neue Blümchenkaffeepatrioten-hymne." My fellow-students and I used to have an unspeakable dinner at one o'clock, described in glorious

language on the menu as "Suppe, zwei Gänge und Dessert" (literally, soup, two goes, and sweets), for tenpence. How my digestion ever survived this meal, I cannot imagine; still less how our poorer brethren thrived on one of a similar sort a few doors off which cost sixpence.

In my second year we struck, and launched out into comparative luxury, with ices on Sunday in the depth of winter, at an hotel, for one and sixpence. At this table d'hôte I sat day after day for weeks next Robert Franz, but conversation with him was impossible for he was stone-deaf. Supper after the opera was of about the same quality and cost as the dinner: so our commissariat expenses worked out at about three and sixpence a day. We were regarded rather in the light of extravagant British gourmets by our German friends. I once nearly had experience of starvation, through an absurd fault of my own. I forgot that it took the best part of a week to get a reply from my bankers in England: I ran short of cash, and had to eke out a miserable existence, mostly upon chocolate, for five days, because I was far too shy to ask anyone to lend me a few shillings to go on with. When the supplies arrived, I had a memorable feast which cost the enormous sum of four shillings.

My master in composition was Karl Reinecke, to whom Sterndale Bennett had given me an introduction. Of all the dry musicians I have ever known he was the most desiccated. He had not a good word for any contemporary composer, even for those of his own kidney. He loathed Wagner, once describing Elsa to me as a young woman without brains enough to make

out the list of clothes for the wash, sneered at Brahms, and had no enthusiasm of any sort. But he enjoyed himself hugely when he was expounding and writing canons, and had a fairly good idea of teaching them. His composition training had no method about it whatever. He occasionally made an astute criticism and that was all. He never gave a pupil a chance of hearing his own work, the only really valuable means of training, and the better the music, the less he inclined to encourage it. He was in fact the embodiment of the typical "Philister." What progress I made in my first two years in Germany was due rather to the advice of my pianoforte master, Papperitz, a broad-minded sympathetic teacher, than to "Reinecke-Fuchs" as he used to be called. A visit which Joachim paid to Leipzig, in the course of which he devoted an hour into examining my work, led to my transferring my training to that most delightful of men and most able of teachers, Friedrich Kiel in Berlin.

In the autumn of 1875 after visiting Vienna and tasting for the first time the joys of Strauss waltzes under Strauss leadership, I took up my abode in rather more homelike quarters in Leipzig, where I was joined for some weeks by Arthur Duke Coleridge. From my room in the Lindenstrasse, this enthusiastic amateur worked all the preliminary organization of the performance of Bach's B minor Mass in London, and of the foundation of the Bach Choir. In company with Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Alderson, we visited Dresden and stayed at a Pension well known to all Cambridge men in the Räcknitzstrasse. This visit was made memorable to all our party by a little con-

cert which we organized for our fellow-visitors. The programme was drawn up in true German fashion and we had it printed at the theatre office. A reproduction is to be found on the opposite page, but for the benefit of those who are unfamiliar with the German language and the ways of their theatre bills, I append a translation. It should be pointed out that it was to a certain extent a skit on the ubiquitous "Verboten" (Forbidden) which meets the eye at every turn, and on the customary enumeration, at the foot of opera announcements, of the enforced absence of singers from the cast.

The last of the six regulations given was founded upon a notice on the cages of animals at the Dresden Zoological Gardens, and is reminiscent of a somewhat similar one which was pinned on the door of a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, "You are requested not to tease Mr. ——. He is placed here for your instruction and amusement."

The Dresden Opera, which in 1874 was housed in a temporary wooden building, pending the completion of the present house, had owing to the cramped surroundings a smaller repertoire than the Stadt-Theater at Leipzig. It had however preserved a tradition which gave it a special position among its rivals in Germany, that of presenting French Opéra Comique with a lighter touch and in a more finished style than was to be expected amongst Teutons. The name of Auber was seldom absent for long from the bills, and we saw in the early days of its existence, not long after the first production in Paris, "Le Roi l'a dit" of Délibes, given with rare finesse and charm. In one opera, "Der

Mit aufgehobenem Abonnement.

# CONCERT

zum Besten unserer edlen Selbst

IM SAALE KRETZSCHMER

den 24. September 1875.

1. **Hochzeitsmusik** (vierhändig) von *Jensen*.
2. **Scena** aus der Oper „*Genoveva*“ von *R. Schumann*
3. **Pianoforte-Solo.**
4. **Schlussgesang** aus „*Lohengrin*“ von *Rich. Wagner*.
5. **Sarabande** für Pianoforte von *Ferd. Hiller*.
6. **Lieder** von *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*:
  - a) **Sehnsucht**, b) **Frühlingslied.**
7. **Fantasia** für Pianoforte von *Chopin*
8. **Aria** aus „*Euryanthe*“ von *C. M. v. Weber*.
9. a) **Ungarische Tänze**,  
b) **Walzer**,  
} von *Joh. Brahms*, vierhändig.
10. **Lied** von *Lindblad*.
11. **Marsch** aus „*Tannhäuser*“ von *Rich. Wagner*

Anfang um 6 Uhr. Ende ganz unbestimmt.

Alles Husten, Niesen und Schwatzen ist bei 6 Thlr. Strafe verboten.

Es wird höflichst gebeten, nicht zu rauchen

Während der Aufführung der Musik bleiben die Thüren geschlossen und die Türen aufgemacht.  
Das Mitbringen von Hunden, Katzen, Regenschirmen und Trümmerschalen ist in jedem Falle untersagt.  
Die Frauen dürfen die baumwollenen Strümpfe ihrer Nachbarn nicht stricken.  
Man bittet, die Aufhänger nicht zu necken.

Ausserordentliche Preise der Plätze.

## MITGLIEDER:

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Fräulein G . . . . . L | Signor <i>Carlo Saroldi</i> .   |
| Fräulein M . . . . . L | Herr Hof-Kapellmeister <i>Stanford</i> .                                |
| Fräulein H             | Herr K. K. Kammer-sänger <i>Colestidge</i><br>aus Kensington (als Gast) |

Krank: Herr *Alderson*. Unpässlich: Herr *Rawlins*.  
Contractlich beurlaubt: Herr *Gerard F. Cobb*.

*Subscription List Suspended.***CONCERT**

FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR NOBLE SELVES

IN THE

KRETZSCHMAR HALL,

ON SEPTEMBER 24, 1875.

*PROGRAMME.**Beginning at six o'clock. End quite uncertain.*

All coughing, sneezing and chattering is forbidden under a fine  
of six thalers.

You are politely begged not to smoke.

During the performance of the music the doors remain closed  
and the ears open.

The with-bringing of dogs, cats, umbrellas and goloshes  
is in all cases forbidden.

The ladies must not knit the woollen stockings of their neighbours.

You are requested not to tease the performers.

*Extraordinary prices of seats.**PERFORMERS.*

Miss G. L. ... SIGNOR CARLO SAROLDI.

Miss M. L. ... MR. HOF-KAPELLMEISTER STANFORD.

Miss H. ... MR. IMPERIAL AND ROYAL CHAMBER-SINGER  
COLERIDGE from Kensington (as guest).

Ill, Mr. ALDERSON.\* Indisposed, Mr. RAWLINS.†

On leave by contract, Mr. GERARD COBB.‡

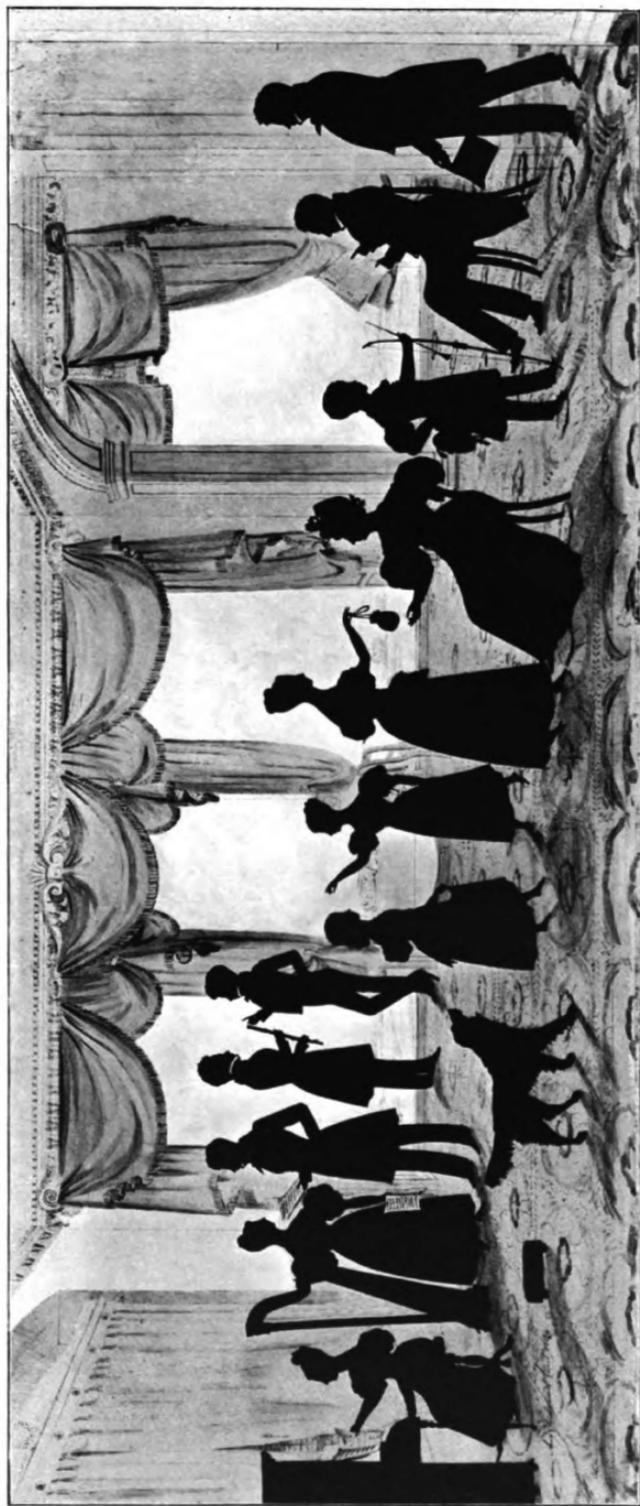
\* Afterwards Charity Commissioner.

† Now K.C.

‡ Late Fellow and Junior Bursar of Trinity College, Cambridge: an old frequenter of the Pension Kretzschmar.

Freischütz," Dresden, as in private duty bound, excelled. So obsessed were English and Germans alike in the old days by this masterpiece, that it became a household word. When my mother with her family visited Dresden as a girl about 1835, they were accompanied by an aunt, who was, save for a few words, very innocent of the German language, but liked to exploit those she knew. Coming down rather late for breakfast (Frühstück) at the Hotel de Saxe, she called out "Kellner! Freischütz für ein." This large order for one man, one opera, suggested an anticipation of the idiosyncrasies of King Ludwig of Bavaria. The fame of the Dresden performances was great enough even in those days to induce an Irish family to drive across Europe to see them and the renowned picture gallery next door.

Dresden, as well as Leipzig, boasted an annual fair called by the short name of "Vogelschiessen" (Bird-shooting). It took its name from a huge effigy of an eagle raised high on a pole, at which competitors shot bolts from a cross-bow, and received prizes when they hit the mark. This very ancient custom can be traced as far back as the early days of the Emperor Charles the Fifth. Alma Tadema told me that one of the best-remembered exploits of that monarch took place at the opening of a "Vogelschiessen" in Antwerp, of which the first act was to be the Emperor's shot at the effigy. He aimed carefully, but turned round and shot the heavy bolt into the crowd. It was more amusing sport. At Leipzig the fair, or Messe, was a more serious business than at Dresden. The giants and adipose ladies were accessories rather than essentials.



A GROUP OF THE HENN FAMILY BY EDOUARD, 1834.

Kate Henn.  
Ob. 1801.

Susanna.  
Ob. 1801.

Rev. William  
Henn.  
Ob. 1853.

Thomas  
Rise Henn.  
K.C.  
Ob. 1888.

Jane  
Henn  
(Holmes)  
Ob. 1905.

Ellen  
Ia. Touche  
Ob. 1913.

Mary  
(Starford)  
Ob. 1867.

Mrs. Henn.  
Ob. 1867.

Richard  
Henn  
d. young.

William  
Henn, M.C.  
Ob. 1858.

Richard Henn,  
Commander R.N.  
Ob. 1864.

At the restaurants the sole topic of conversation which reached the ear was commercial, expressed in terms of thousands of thalers. A perfect army of Russian and Polish Jews occupied the town. The boulevards were thickly lined with hundreds of temporary booths, and the mixture of languages competed with the tower of Babel. The theatre gave itself up to spectacular melodramas, the favourite being "A Journey round the World in Eighty Days" of Jules Verne; panoramas and music-halls drove out all concerts, and the opera had (save for a few old stagers like the "Trovatore") to take a back seat.

Of the "Mensur" or student duels I happily saw nothing except the results on the seamed cheeks of the men in general, and of the "grand coup" upon an American friend, whom I found one day with his head enveloped in a surgical yashmak which only allowed his eyes to be seen. The "grand coup" is a semi-circular cut which extends from the corner of the mouth to the top of the scalp. By way of mitigating the shock of this unanæsthetized operation the patient immediately consumes an unusual quantity of Lager beer. How he survives is as great a mystery to me, as the glorification in the proprietors' own estimation of the most disfiguring scars. This type of student is on the look out for the very slightest excuse for a challenge. He resembles the noted duellist in Dublin at the beginning of the eighteenth century, who inspired such awe that a young officer seeing him enter the room at a party went up to him and said, "Sir, I apologize for anything I have said, am saying, or may at any future time say!" I was standing one day

talking to a friend on the bridge over the ornamental water in the Johannes Park. There had been heavy snow and frost and the ice was crowded with skaters. As I talked, my hand knocked off the parapet about as much snow as would cover a five-shilling piece, which fell unnoticed by me on the cap of one of these fire-eaters. I saw this man make for the bank and tear off his skates, and was still more surprised when he made a straight line for me and demanded my card. I happily had not got one, whereat he fired a whole volley of abuse at me, of which I feigned as much ignorance as if it were Hebrew. As he got no change out of a foreigner on whom apparently his oratory was quite thrown away, he eventually took himself off, muttering curses upon British ignorance of foreign languages, and I felt that the tip of my nose was saved. An English friend of mine some little time later had a similar experience, but tackled it in a far more heroic manner. He accepted the challenge, but claimed the right of naming weapons, and chose those of Sayers and the Benicia Boy. Whereat the German denied that fists were weapons at all and called him a coward. Then the British blood got up, and named pistols over a table: gave the time and place, and turned up, all ready for his latter end, to find an empty room and no opponent.

A more ludicrous finish to a similar incident occurred at Heidelberg in 1876, which was witnessed by an old friend of mine. An American from the Far West, of great stature and physique, had a first-floor flat in one of the old houses in the Market Place. A long flight of stairs descended straight from his door and was

continuous with the stone steps outside. He was peculiar in his dress, and wore an extra wide Panama hat, enduring without taking the least notice the various saucy remarks which were levelled at him by the Heidelbergers while he ate his dinner. How matters came to a head can best be described in the dramatic form of a play without words.

SCENE : A restaurant filled with University students, pegs along the wall on which they hang their caps. C. P. S. (my friend) at a table *r* ; an empty table *l*. Enter the American, who hangs up his Panama wide-awake on a peg, not noticing that he displaces a student's cap in doing so, and sits down at the table *r*.

Two students rise and, taking out their visiting-cards, place them beside the American's plate.

The American looks first at the cards and then at the men, and sweeps the pasteboards to the floor with a swish of his mighty elbow.

The students assail the American with the finest excerpts from their rich minatory vocabulary.

The American, quite undisturbed, continues to eat his Rindfleisch and Kartoffeln, as if he were stone-deaf. He finishes his repast, puts on his Panama and sallies forth homewards. The two students follow him still objurgating, C. P. S. bringing up the rear as an interested spectator. The Colossus arrives at his house, ascends his stairs, unlocks his door and slams it to. The students then plan an assault : Student A going up to the door, Student B standing in support half-way up the stairs. Student A pulls the loud and frequent bell. The next sight which meets the expectant gaze

of a crowd of undergraduates collected in the Market Place is a mingled mass of bodies rolling down the stairs into the gutter: the American having lifted Student A bodily into the air, and aimed this human missile at Student B with deadly effect. The upper door slams again. Silence reigns and a careful diagnosis of the victims is made, to ascertain if their features are too much destroyed to be of future use in the "Mensur." The American next day eats his meal in peace, and can knock down and even tread on as many caps as he likes with impunity.

A well-known Dublin physician once escaped the consequence of a duel by a very simple expedient. He drove to the appointed spot in the Phoenix Park, and when he emerged from his carriage appeared to the amazement of his adversary as innocent of clothes as Father Adam himself. The seconds remonstrated with him alleging that it was an additional insult to their principal; but the doctor, with great coolness, pointed out that his opponent was a dead shot, and that the bullet would carry with it portions of clothing into his person, which might cause additional irritation to the wound; that he was prepared therefore to absorb lead undiluted, but not lead mixed with cloth or tweed. *Solvuntur risu tabulæ.*

My third winter I spent partly at Berlin, and partly at Leipzig, studying with Friedrich Kiel, in whom I found a master at once sympathetic and able. As a teacher of counterpoint, canon and fugue, he was *facile princeps* of his time, but he was no dryasdust musician. He could compose a specimen canon as quickly as he could write a letter, (a gift which he

shared with Brahms), but he could appreciate and discuss with the enthusiasm of a young man all the modern developments of his day. He was not only respected but beloved by every pupil who came under him : and from the accounts I have heard of César Franck, I feel sure that both these masters had in their methods and in their natures very much in common. It may interest contrapuntists to know that he founded his teaching not upon the traditional Canto Fermo, but upon Chorale tunes. He always insisted upon the importance of doing unshackled work alongside the technical, in order to keep the mind fresh ; and had a fascinating way of criticizing the effect of the technical work upon the free. His first word to me was that an exercise or a canon was of no use which did not sound well, that the best were those which passed unnoticed. His second word was "Entwicklung, Entwicklung, immer Entwicklung !" ("Development, always development !" or perhaps even better "Evolution, always Evolution !") He would illustrate this by pointing out the difference between the real natural growth of a theme, as in Beethoven, and its mere repetition or transformation, as in Liszt. I never heard him say a hard word of anyone, and he always tried to emphasize the best points even in the works of men with whom he had the least affinity. At the close of 1877 I ended my Wander-jahren and returned to Cambridge and "organ-blowing."

## CHAPTER XI

Developments of Cambridge music—Brahms' "Requiem"—Baireuth in 1876—Berlin—Joachim at Cambridge—Brahms' first Symphony—James Davison—Wagner in London.

IN the intervals of my Leipzig studies, I was able to supervise the summer concerts of the University Musical Society at Cambridge; and owing to the increasing efficiency of the undergraduates it became possible to produce many new and unfamiliar masterpieces, amongst them Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri" (1874), and the third part of "Faust" (1875). The orchestra, led by Ludwig Straus, was complete and the chorus was well balanced in tone. The summer of 1876 saw the production of Brahms' "Requiem." This masterpiece had made its first visit privately at the house of Lady Thompson (formerly Miss Kate Loder) under the direction of Stockhausen. We had hoped to give its first public performance in England at Cambridge, but were just anticipated by the Royal Academy of Music, which produced it at the Hanover Square Rooms under John Hullah, and by the Philharmonic a short time after. It created such an enthusiasm amongst the undergraduates in the chorus, many of the best of whom were first-class cricketers, such as the Lytteltons, G. H. Longman, and others, that the matches used to be arranged to permit of their attendances at the practices. The final rehearsal was interrupted for a

short space by the intervention of one of our best student violinists, W. H. Blakesley. He was a confirmed snuff-taker, going so far as to lament on one occasion that Nature had set the nose on the human face the wrong way up; for, he said, if the nostrils had been set in the upward direction, they could have been filled to the brim with his favourite form of tobacco and even patted down. He had a particularly attractive brand of snuff which was concocted from a prescription used by George the Fourth, and he sent his box round the band with fatal consequences, for I had to stop the rehearsal for a sensible time to allow the general sneezing to subside. The soprano soloist was the same as at the two London performances, Miss Sophie Ferrari (now Mrs. Pagden), who, by her perfect phrasing and purity of style, gave a reading to the difficult fourth number which I have never heard surpassed.

In the same summer I went to the long-expected performance of the "Nibelungen Ring" at Baireuth. I had secured places for the second cycle, which was a fortunate choice as it was, by all accounts, superior in every way to the first. To visit the head-centre of modernity was in those days a perilous business. Partisanship ran to such fever-heat that even friendships were broken, and the friction was almost intolerable. Macfarren, the successor of Sterndale Bennett in the Cambridge Professorship, roundly and loudly rated me in a music-shop in Bond Street, when I informed him of my approaching journey: ending with an expression of contemptuous pity for my having to sit through an opera consisting wholly of the chord of

E flat on a pedal ; a criticism which suggested that he did not know much of it beyond the opening pages of the "Rheingold." He and many others of his kidney looked upon a pilgrim to the Wagnerian shrine as a brazen-faced traitor to musical art. If feeling was so strained in this country, it was a thousand times more so in Germany itself. France, still rankling under the insult of the Aristophanic farce "Die Capitulation," which Wagner had published at the moment of her greatest troubles, kept sternly aloof. There was but a sprinkling of English and Americans. The mass of the public consisted of the theatrical world, and of such professional musicians as were identified with Wagnerismus to the exclusion of every other contemporary writer.

The atmosphere was not sympathetic, and gave a feeling of polemic prejudice which militated against whole-hearted appreciation or valuable discrimination. "He that is not with me is against me" was the motto of the whole Festival. The theatre was not finished as far as the exterior went ; the road up the hill from the station was very much in the rough, and after rain was a sea of mud. The town was hopelessly unprepared for the incursion of so many strangers. The commissariat department was nearly depleted before the end of the week, and the quality of the food was as poor as the quantity. We stayed opposite Wagner's villa "Wahnfried," and could hear Liszt's ebullitions of enthusiasm under our ground-floor windows, as he took his constitutional after the performances. We sat just behind him in the opera-house, and we noted with some amusement the con-

trariness which showed itself in his obvious admiration (real or feigned, who shall say?) of the duller and uglier passages.

The orchestra, of which the backbone came from Meiningen, was admirable. Richter, then a young fair-haired Viking, was in command. The stage effects were, with a few exceptions, in advance of most theatres. Steam was used, I believe for the first time, for stage purposes; but the noise of its escape was so great that it often nearly drowned the music. The close of the "Rheingold," and the Walkürenritt were, scenically speaking, failures, as was also the end of the "Götterdämmerung." The dragon, which was made by "Dykwynkyn," the property man at Drury Lane, was a gruesome beast, redolent of English pantomime. The best sets were the depths of the Rhine, the first two acts of the "Walküre," and "Siegfried." The outstanding moments in the music were, then, as now, the first and last acts of the "Walküre," the second act of "Siegfried," and the third act of the "Götterdämmerung." It seemed to me then, as it does still, far too long for the enjoyment of average human nature. The theatre seats have not yet been devised which will insure the hearer against overmastering bodily fatigue, and certainly the cane-bottomed stalls of Baireuth did not mitigate suffering.

Mr. Hercules McDonnell, who came from Dublin for the Festival, put his clever finger on the weak spot of the work, when he said that the underlying mischief was the composer being his own librettist: the librettist having no composer to keep him within bounds, and the composer having no librettist to warn him of

undue length. No one can now deny the prevalence of the failing known as "stage-waits." A fad, which first obtruded itself in "The Flying Dutchman," of making the hero and heroine stand motionless and stare at each other for the best part of five minutes, grew upon the composer as he developed, and to such an extent, that in "Parsifal" his chief figure has to stand rooted to the ground for nearly an hour. This may be all very well in theory and on paper, but just as the long sitting tells on the audience, so the long standing is a torture to the actor. Concerning all these human failings, I preserved a stony silence and felt even inclined to champion them when I heard the fulminations of Davison, Joseph Bennett and others of the ultra-Tory battalions, on a terrace outside between the acts. It was as good as a play to see this little band of malcontents, defending themselves as best they could against the onslaughts of broad-minded George Osborne, as he brought his best Limerick brogue to bear upon them.

The cast was very unequal, some of the chief parts being in the hands of artists who were histrionically admirable, but whose vocal powers were below the requirements of the music. This was markedly the case with Albert Niemann (Siegmond), the Tannhäuser of the Paris performance, who was head and shoulders above all his companions as an actor, but whose voice was long past his prime. Unger also, the Siegfried, was not of sufficient calibre to carry out his arduous rôle. The best of the men were Carl Hill (Alberich), Schlosser (Mime), Vogl (Loge) and Betz (Wotan). The women were far better. Materna,

next perhaps to Tietjens in her line, the two Lehmanns (Rhine-daughters) and Marianne Brandt (Waltraute) the cleverest of all, who reminded many both in feature and in voice of Madame Viardot-Garcia. Wagner appeared on the stage at the close of the cycle, but happily did not make one of his unfortunate speeches. I regretted seeing him in the flesh. The music was the music of Jekyll, but the face was the face of Hyde. Whatever magnetism there was in the man, his physiognomy did its best to counteract. The brow and head was most impressive, the mouth and chin equally repulsive. Together they made a most curious combination of genius and meanness which exactly corresponded to the Wagner of the Liszt letters, and the autobiography. In one respect opera at Baireuth in the lifetime of the composer had a virtue which has gradually tended to disappear since his death. The composer did not permit his conductor to exaggerate slowness of pace. This was especially noticeable, when Levi directed "Parsifal" in 1883 (the year of the composer's death). Dannreuther, who stayed at "Wahnfried" for the rehearsals in 1882, told me that Wagner frequently called out from the stalls, "Schneller! Schneller! Die Leute werden sich langweilen" (Quicker, quicker, the people will be bored). With the advent of Mottl, every movement became slower and slower. His playing of the Prelude was, by my watch, five minutes slower than Levi's. The Ring suffered in the same way, unless Richter was at the helm. The disease of exaggerated Adagios spread to an alarming extent, and Mottl's fad became a cult.

After Baireuth I went to study with Kiel in Berlin. He was a rare man and a rare master. He lived alone in a top-floor flat, clad, for most of the day, in a dressing-gown and slippers. His method of teaching by criticism rather than by rule of thumb is one which I have found of the greatest service in training young composers. I learnt more from him in three months, than from all the others in three years. While at Berlin I was able to arrange for the first English performance of Brahms' C minor Symphony (No. 1). The University of Cambridge had offered honorary degrees to Joachim and Brahms, which were to be conferred in the spring of 1877; and the programme of the concert, which was to be coincident with the ceremony, was thereby completed. The Symphony had been first given at Carlsruhe, but was still in manuscript. The autograph showed its age on the face of it; the first movement dated in its original form from 1862. The final fixture was made after a concert of the Joachim Quartet at the Sing-Akademie when the same composer's quartet in B flat was produced. I sat next a most interesting and communicative person, who turned out to be Lasker, the leader of the National Liberals, at that time the largest party in the Reichstag.

During my stay at Berlin I saw many of the heroes of the war of 1870, whose signatures I had noted in the visitors' book of the Grand Hotel de Blois, when I paid a visit to that town three years after the war. The page in that now historical volume, was shown to me by the head waiter, and contained the autographs of Bismarck, von Roon, Moltke and the (then) Crown

Prince : the first three in stiff uncompromising German characters, the last in French, "Frédéric Guillaume." I pointed out the pretty tactfulness of the Prince, and the waiter replied with a burst of evident affection, "Ah ! ce cher Fritz ! Il a partout fait comme ça !" I saw also in Berlin one familiar face, that of Sir Michael Costa, who had come *incog.* to swallow "Tristan and Isolde," and looked as if the meal had disagreed with him. The drains in the German capital were in process of reconstruction, with somewhat deadly results upon the unacclimatized inhabitants ; and I changed my headquarters (none too soon) to Leipzig, finding there an entirely new opera company, the Haase régime having come to an end, and his singers having migrated to Hamburg. The new personnel was in most respects inferior to the old, but it contained one most promising artist, who some years afterwards became famous as a Wagnerian soprano, Rosa Hasselbeck, who married Joseph Sucher the conductor, a Viennese contemporary of Hans Richter. The only opera with any claims to unfamiliarity which I saw was Schubert's "Häusliche Krieg," which in spite of its weak libretto, was a fascinating specimen of the purest Viennese type, and had a great success with the public.

On my return to Cambridge in January 1877, I found the organization of the Joachim-Brahms concert well advanced and everything promised success for the responsible undertaking. We were however to experience a severe disappointment. The rumour of Brahms' approaching visit got about with disastrous speed, and the Crystal Palace authorities publicly

announced that they hoped for a special concert of his works conducted by himself. This ill-timed advertisement reached his ears and effectually stopped his coming. It had been a hard task to induce him to consider the journey at all, and it had necessitated all the pressure of Joachim and the humouring of Madame Schumann to get him within range of an acceptance, so greatly did he dread the inevitable lionizing which he would have had to face. He intended to visit Cambridge only, and to leave London severely alone. Curiously enough he told Mr. John Farmer that his chief interest in London would be to explore the East End and the Docks. As soon as he saw what the Crystal Palace meant to do, he retired into his shell, and the opportunity was lost for good. The concert was fixed for March 8, and the programme was as follows :

## PART I.

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| Overture, "The Wood Nymphs," Op. 20 ...      | <i>Sterndale Bennett.</i> |
| Violin Concerto, Op. 61 (Joachim) ...        | <i>Beethoven.</i>         |
| "A Song of Destiny," Op. 54 ...              | <i>Brahms.</i>            |
| Violin Solos, Andante and Allegro in C major | <i>J. S. Bach.</i>        |
| Elegiac Overture (in memory of Kleist), MS.  | <i>Joachim.</i>           |

## PART II.

|                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Symphony in C minor (MS.) | ... <i>Brahms.</i> |
|---------------------------|--------------------|

There was an orchestra of fifty-one, led by Alfred Burnett, and a chorus of about 150. The two preliminary orchestral rehearsals were held at the Academy of Music in Tenterden Street, Hanover Square: Joachim conducting the Symphony and his own Overture. The Symphony gave a great deal of trouble, partly owing to the short and somewhat jerky

beat of Joachim, which his own men followed with ease but which were enigmatical to English players accustomed to Costa's definite sweep of the bâton, and partly owing to the inferior technique of the horn-players, who were then the weak spot of British orchestras. It was not until the later advent of Hans Richter (himself an excellent horn-player) that this department of the band reached the same level of excellence as the strings and woodwind. It was reserved for him to discover in Paersch and Borsdorf, neither of whom had been known in the ranks of the leading orchestras, the founders of the modern school of horn-playing in England, which has grown and prospered so markedly since 1880.

The London rehearsals attracted every professional and amateur musician within reach, and also many leading literary and artistic notabilities such as Robert Browning, George Henry Lewes, Leighton, Felix Moscheles, and other leading painters. A still more representative gathering came down to Cambridge to witness the conferring of the degree upon Joachim, and to be present at the concert. Amongst the ranks of musicians there was hardly an absentee, Grove, Manns, Manuel Garcia (then a mere babe of seventy-two), Osborne, Dannreuther and many more. Hallé was detained by a concert in Manchester. The performance of the Symphony, as of all the other pieces, was worthy of the work and of the occasion. Joachim wrote to Brahms "Deine Sinfonie ging recht gut, und wurde mit Enthusiasmus aufgenommen, namentlich das Adagio und der letzte Satz taten's den Leuten an . . . Seit Cambridge ist das Schicksal des Werkes für

England festgestellt, die Hauptblätter sind alle sehr warm, und je öfter sie nun gehört wird, desto besser fürs Verständniss." This performance put the crown on Joachim's unceasing and loyal efforts to win for Brahms an abiding place in this country. Never had a composer a more trusty friend. The newspapers to which Joachim referred were represented by James Davison of the *Times*, Joseph Bennett of the *Telegraph*, Grüneisen of the *Athenæum*, and Ebenezer Prout.

There was a most interesting gathering in Coutts Trotter's rooms at Trinity, when Joachim, Grove, Robert Browning, and Hueffer (destined to be Davison's successor as critic of the *Times*) had a warm controversy on the subject of Beethoven's last Quartets. The member of the party who talked most and knew least about the subject, was, curiously enough, Browning. I remember remarking *sotto voce* to my neighbour that his arguments explained to me that the true reason of the obscurity of many references to music in his poems was the superficiality and exiguity of his technical knowledge. When Jebb was writing his masterly Greek translation of "Abt Vogler," he too became well aware of this weakness, and was able with infinite skill to gloss over the solecisms of the original. "Sliding by semitones till I sink to the minor," is indeed the refuge of the destitute amateur improviser. But Browning was too consummate a master of his own craft to commit such blatant blunders as others of his day, when they ventured upon the perilous paths of an art they did not know. Black wrote of "Mozart's Sonata in A sharp," and even George Eliot, most careful of writers,

spoke of "a long-drawn organ-stop," comparing a piece of wooden mechanism with a sound. The *Times* too once described the organ on the Handel Festival platform as possessing "wonderful ramifications of fugues and diapasons."

With Davison I had, in company with Fuller Maitland (then an undergraduate of Trinity) a most interesting talk at his hotel. It was enough to show that whatever prejudices he had, and they were many and often none too genuine, his musical heart was in the right place. He was cynical enough to dislike wearing that heart upon his sleeve, and often did his best to conceal his convictions under a cloud of witty verbiage. But on this occasion he became human, under the influence of his artistic surroundings. The criticisms he made upon the Symphony were surprisingly sound. The only weak spot which he saw in it was one concerning which a good deal may be said, and he did not insist on it so much as to give it a disproportionate importance. He held that so great were the first and last movements, that their mighty wings were too large for the body of the intermediate Adagio and Scherzo: and that the latter especially, the charm of which he entirely endorsed, was painted in too miniature a style to balance effectively its overpowering companions. There is no doubt that Davison, like his less-capable brethren, had hitherto mixed up Brahms and Wagner in one category of hated "music of the future," and that his eyes were opened by the Symphony to the true position of each. He began to see that the two composers were as distinct in their method and as different in their

aims as were Beethoven and Weber; and from that day he altered his lead, followed of course by his flock. The Musical Society followed up this historic *première* in the following summer by two more works by the same master which were new to England, the Rhapsody for Alto Solo and male chorus Op. 53, and the second set of Liebeslieder Waltzes. It also revived an old classic, unknown in this country, Astorga's "Stabat Mater."

In the autumn of 1877 Wagner came to England, and with him Hans Richter. A series of concerts were given at the Albert Hall, consisting mainly of excerpts from the "Ring," for the purpose of paying off the Baireuth deficit. They were musically successful; financially they failed in their object, at all events temporarily. But there can be little doubt that they carried on the pioneer work of Dannreuther and of Walter Bache, who had spent time and money without stint in making Wagner a known quantity to the English public. In that sense they paved the way for the success which established the Baireuth Theatre on a firm footing after 1882. Indirectly they brought about the regeneration of the London orchestras; first by a visit as conductor of Hans von Bülow, who directed two Wagner concerts at St. James's Hall, and led the players a dance with his thorough and uncompromising methods; and afterwards by the advent of Hans Richter, whose mastery with the bâton made an instant success with players and public alike. Wagner was too old and too tired to carry through a concert single-handed; and although the old force and fire showed itself in occasional flashes, such as the con-

ducting of the *Kaisermarsch* at the opening of the Festival, the best results were obtained by his lieutenant, who possessed the patience and the equanimity which the composer lacked. Wilhelmj led the strings as at Baireuth. When the brass found themselves in difficulties owing to the novel technique, Richter taught them by example as well as by precept how to tackle them. The spectacle of a conductor who could play passages on the Bass Tuba was a new experience for the old stagers, and they appreciated the training of a man who could be practical as well as ornamental.

The attitude of the greater public was one rather of curiosity than of enthusiasm. One section was accustomed enough to operatic excerpts on the concert platform, but of a more showy kind, and mainly for the exploitation of star singers. Another section was devoted to classical concerts such as the Monday "Pops." and the Crystal Palace Saturdays, and did not relish the incursion of the stage into the concert-room. The day for "the Wagner Concert" *per se* had not arrived, and the undertaking had to suffer the inevitable loss consequent on breaking new ground. The Press was mainly hostile at heart, for which Wagner had his own sharp pen to thank, and his personality did not magnetize the οἱ πολλοί. Two of the most distinguished literary celebrities of the day, George Henry Lewes and George Eliot, whom I met during the Festival Week, and who could not be considered lacking in appreciation of what was either German or new, both spoke to me of this curious lack of personal attraction at any rate to a casual visitor.

George Eliot said to me of the Wagners, "She is a genius. He is an *épiciër!*" a very curious and interesting summing up of her impressions, which quite supported my own distant view of this composite and extraordinary man. When I ventured on challenging her epithet as applied to Wagner the composer, she confessed that the personality prejudiced her as to his work. If the strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde had been written, I think she would have appreciated the parallel, which the autobiography has finally brought home to the world.

## CHAPTER XII

The Cambridge A.D.C.—J. W. Clark—Greek Plays—J. K. Stephen  
—“The Veiled Prophet”—Ernst Frank—Hanover in 1881.

THE dramatic world at Cambridge demands a place in my records of the seventies. The club, known to the world as the A.D.C., which was founded by Burnand, had been nursed through a stormy and often chequered career by the tender and sympathetic care of John Willis Clark, its guide, philosopher and friend. This least donnish and most cosmopolitan of Dons was able, partly by ridicule and partly by diplomacy, to ward off the frowns of hostile tutors and strait-laced Deans; he weaned the infant from its early burlesque playthings, and brought it up to the point of producing the legitimate drama. Any reader of the Life of “J,” as Clark was called by his intimates, will find a most illuminating chapter from the pen of Mr. Walter Pollock concerning his dramatic experiences and knowledge. In a diminutive theatre of its own this body of student-actors (often more actors than students) produced the most ambitious plays in a surprisingly finished style. They spared no pains, and took care to get the best possible stage-managers to coach them. It was a pleasure to hear the English language spoken without the mouthings and contortions which were only too common among professionals in the early part of the nineteenth century. The gestures may have been often homely, but they were genuine and sincere:

Clark's close acquaintance with the French stage in general and the Théâtre Français in particular had a marked influence upon the little Cambridge stage. The ladies' parts were the chief difficulty; feminine features often being marred by a raucous bass voice which effectually destroyed the illusion of a love-scene. One of the best "leading ladies" of my time was so proud of his histrionic genius that he, being a man of means, got a complete trousseau from a Paris milliner, while a more modestly-minded colleague had to content himself with a curious medley of boating-flannels and silk skirts. Budding actors were not rare. Several became well known on the professional stage: chief among them Charles Brookfield, who was *facile princeps* as a character actor, and made his mark in such widely different parts as Sir John Vesey in "Money," and the burglar in "The Ticket-of-Leave Man." The cast of both these and successive plays was remarkable for a list of names which are now public property: James Lowther (now Speaker of the House of Commons), Milnes (now Lord Crewe), Alfred Lyttelton, Algernon Lawley, William Elliot, Charles and Harry Newton, and many more.

Coe, the stage-manager of the Haymarket, came down to rehearse "Money," but devoted himself principally to perfecting the "Old Member" in his request for snuff in the Club scene, and to teaching "Stout" how to shake hands. This process involved seizing with his left hand the right hand of a brother actor, and raising his own right to a great height, from which it should descend with a rush and a smack into the receiving palm. Stout was absolutely in-

capable of a straight aim, and missed every time, until Coe's "Dear Boy" gradually tended to melt into more sulphurous epithets. The example set by these carefully rehearsed and admirably acted plays had its effect upon the succeeding generation, who did their duty by Goldsmith and Sheridan, and even attained to a most creditable performance of Shakespeare's "Henry IV.," Part I. Their musical efforts were limited to the production of Sullivan's "Cox and Box," in which I officiated as the orchestra. Out of the parent stem of the A.D.C. however sprouted an offshoot, which found the ground prepared for it, and rapidly grew in health and strength, the Cambridge Greek Play.

In my undergraduate days there was but one theatre in Cambridge, a ramshackle old house in the suburb of Barnwell, interesting to an Irishman as having been exactly modelled on the Theatre Royal in Dublin, though of smaller size. This none too respectable house was kept sternly closed during term-time, and the only performances to be seen on its boards took place in the Long Vacation. The two plays I saw there were "Macbeth" (with Locke's music so-called) and "Richard III." The former recalled Hogarth's "Strolling Players in a Barn." The latter was so screamingly funny, that the whole theatre treated it as a first-class burlesque; and the actor who played the King had to interrupt his speech in the tent, come down to the footlights and impress upon his audience that "Richard was one of the 'eaviest parts in the 'ole range of the drrrama," a protest which only accentuated the general merriment. A good Providence intervened

shortly afterwards ; the "Stadttheater" of Cambridge became a Salvation Army Barracks, and the Proctors breathed again.

But the taste for the drama was spreading, thanks to the influence of Clark ; and a leading spirit in the town, Mr. Redfarn, who took a deep interest in things theatrical, built a temporary room with a workable stage on the site where its successor, the Cambridge Theatre, now stands. The University authorities gave it their long-delayed countenance, and its position was definitely consolidated by the production of Sophocles' "Ajax" in the original Greek, the first of a series which has been continued at regular intervals to the present day. The temporary structure lent itself more easily to the conventions of the Greek Drama than does its more civilized successor. It was possible to place the chorus on a semicircular platform in front of the footlights, and thereby to give the actors full play on the stage proper. The committee, of which Sir Richard Jebb was chairman, were fortunate in finding ready to their hand an ideal representative of Ajax in James Kenneth Stephen, the most brilliant undergraduate of his day, afterwards to become famous as J. K. S., the witty author of "Lapsus Calami" and a formidable rival of Calverley in his own domain. Stephen had never given his most intimate friends an inkling of his possession of dramatic gifts. He possessed so strong a personality, that it seemed most improbable that he would be capable of merging it in the portrayal of another. Solid, four-square, with a most determined mouth and chin, he gave the impression of a budding Lord Chancellor rather than

of a tragedian. But the wonderful charm of his smile and the fire of his eye betrayed the poetic tenderness within. Amongst his numerous skits and parodies it is not possible to find one ill-natured line. He hit hard, but always above the belt, and his unfailing humour healed a wound even in the inflicting of it. His premature death was as irreparable a loss to his country, as it has been to his friends. I possess a characteristic little poem, which he wrote as a Christmas Card for my daughter (then four years old), and which was illustrated by Mr. Henry Ford (then an undergraduate). As the writing is somewhat small, even in the original, I transcribe it here :

## I.

In the days of the past, which are dear to the poet,  
 When Ireland was happy and bristled with kings,  
 The men were all heroes, and knew how to show it  
 By constantly doing remarkable things.  
 All the women were fair to be seen,  
 From the peasant right up to the queen,  
 But I think I know one who is fairer,  
 In charm and accomplishments rarer  
 Than any historical bearer  
 Of the glorious name Geraldine.

## II.

But beauty is best when 'tis blended with glory,  
 Bright eyes should encourage the deeds of brave men,  
 And I want you to shine in our century's story,  
 And to cause Mrs. Markham to take up her pen ;  
 I hope you will shortly be seen  
 Ascending the throne of a queen :  
 You know you're of Irish extraction,  
 Your name is suggestive of faction,  
 And of many a wonderful action ;  
 It's a glorious name, Geraldine.

## III.

Ah well! To discover the future is pleasant,  
 'Tis sweet to indulge the prophetic boast,  
 But, since Christmas is coming, let's think of the present,  
 And will you allow me to give you a toast?  
     Here's the health of the fair Geraldine,  
     With seventeen times seventeen,  
 And some day, Ma'am, the flower of the nation,  
 Elate with judicious potation,  
 Will repeat with a wild acclamation  
     The glorious name, Geraldine.

J. K. S.

Stephen's fellow-actors in the play included many well-known scholars, whose dramatic gifts and mighty stature gave a surprising dignity to the production. The chorus was most efficient, and the orchestra consisted of picked professional players. The music was composed by Macfarren, who had considerable difficulty in setting the original Greek, and was not altogether successful in consequence. The first musical triumph was achieved in the second venture, when Hubert Parry wrote the music for "The Birds" of Aristophanes. It became possible thereafter to appreciate the proper balance of music in the scheme, and to produce the plays of the greatest of all the tragic writers, Æschylus, whose method so greatly depends upon the intimate connection of the chorus with the action. In "The Birds" again actors were found, who were exactly suited for the parts of Peithetairus and Euelpides, in Montagu James (now Provost of King's) and Harry Newton, who had made a remarkable success in the part of Falstaff at the A.D.C. The scenery was a monument to John O'Connor's poetical fancy. His conception of the second act (which was

# TO GERALDINE.

In the days of the past, which are dead to the first,  
 When Ireland was happy and built with the King,  
 All the men were old ~~men~~ heavy & slow had their wit  
 They constantly doing remarkable things,  
 All the women were faint to be seen  
 From the forehead to the tip of the nose,  
 But I think I know one who is fairer,  
 In the count & accomplishments rarer,  
 Than any low peasant creature  
 Of the glorious name Geraldine.

But beauty is but when 'tis blended with show,  
 Bright eyes should be as the shed of lion man,  
 And I urge you to think in our century, they  
 Must cause old blackam to take up his pen.

Thanks you will thank to be seen  
 At reaching the throne of a queen:

You know you're of Irish extraction  
 You have a suggestion of bracken,  
 And of many a ~~bracken~~ <sup>bracken</sup> ~~bracken~~ <sup>bracken</sup> ~~bracken~~ <sup>bracken</sup>  
 It's a glorious name, Geraldine.

Oh, well! To do so on the fortune is pleasant,  
 'Tis worth to wish for the prophetic coat,  
 But since Christmas is coming, let's think of the treat,  
 And will you allow me to give you a treat?

Here's the health of the fair Geraldine,  
 With thirteen times repetition,  
 And may day all 'em, the place of the nation,  
 Plate with judicious pretation,  
 Will refresh with a wild acclamation  
 The glorious name Geraldine J.K.S.

## A CHRISTMAS CARD.

Poem by J. K. Stephen. Drawn by H. J. Ford.

(The King at the top left-hand corner is a portrait of J. K. S.)

unfortunately lost sight of in a more recent repetition of the play) was strikingly original. He painted a bird's-eye view of the earth as seen through the clouds which formed the wings, and gave the impression to the audience that they were looking down a funnel of vapour, across which the chorus of birds would fly at intervals. An unrehearsed effect of exceeding comicality was produced by one of the actors scattering a quantity of corn on the front platform to keep the chorus quiet. The "Eumenides" of Æschylus, and the "Œdipus Rex" of Sophocles followed; after witnessing the former of them, undoubtedly one of the greatest practical dramas which exists, the Master of Trinity (Thompson) paid a genuine and sincere compliment to music, by saying that he had for the first time appreciated the choric rhythms of Æschylus at their true value. This play was also repeated in later days, and the deep impression produced on the first occasion was redoubled.

The list has since been amplified by performances of the "Ion" and "Iphigenia in Tauris" of Euripides, the "Agamemnon," and "The Wasps." The difficulty in choosing the plays was considerably increased by the impossibility of representing a female chorus by male singers. The male speaking voice can be chosen so as to minimize incongruity to a certain extent, but with the singing voice this is not feasible. To hazard the effect of fifteen baritones and tenors expressing feminine sentiments in women's garb, would be too perilous in its challenge to mirth among the audience. The situation even amongst the actor contingent was sometimes dangerously strained. On one occasion in the

great scene between Jocasta and Œdipus, Jocasta's wig came off bodily, and the sensation of mingled agony and amusement was overpowering; so much so that Miss Mary Anderson who was in the audience buried her face in her hands and wept. The innovation of a female chorus is yet to be tried, and it is the most obvious method of widening the repertoire. Its adoption would bring the Agamemnon Trilogy within the range of practical politics, by rendering possible the production of the most dramatic and poignant of the three, the "Choëphoroe."

A step forward in this desirable direction was made by a performance of Gluck's "Orpheus," given under conditions similar to the Greek tragedies. The performers were mainly amateurs, the chorus wholly so. The mounting and the colour design was supervised by Alma Tadema, whose brilliant idea it was to dress the chorus in the Elysian Fields in a stuff commonly known as butter-muslin, which gave a tone of rich yellow to the whole scene.

This performance was the first serious attempt in this country to present Gluck's opera in the true Greek spirit which permeates it; and to those who had only seen it in the pseudo-classic medley of Roman and Eastern costumes for which Covent Garden ransacked the recesses of its ancient wardrobes, the *coup d'œil* was something of a revelation. What the celibate Fellows of my *in statu pupillari* days would have thought of the wives and daughters of their Benedick successors taking part in a dramatic performance with all its incidental paraphernalia of powder and rouge, I tremble to think. The make-ups were

patent in Cambridge Society for days after, for the company were not adepts at the removal of adventitious colours, and there was even a malicious guess or two that the bloom upon the forbidden fruit was too becoming to be at once obliterated. Certainly Orpheus proved his power of taming that most intractable of animals, the old-fashioned Don.

In 1877 I prevailed upon a Cambridge undergraduate, now the well-known musical historian and bibliographer, Mr. Barclay Squire, to convert Thomas Moore's poem “The Veiled Prophet,” from “Lalla Rookh,” into a libretto for a grand opera. When we had nearly completed our labours I awoke to the fact that there was no opera-house to produce it. The only chance seemed to be in Germany, and I bethought me of the conductor who had brought out Goetz' “Taming of the Shrew” at Mannheim, and who had recently been appointed by Devrient to be chief Capellmeister at the Frankfurt Stadt-Theater, Ernst Frank. He treated my letter, although it was backed by no introduction, in precisely the same kindly spirit, as that in which he received Goetz : and cordially invited me to bring the score to him at the first available opportunity. When Goetz toiled up the stairs to see him at Mannheim, the following conversation took place, of which I had a verbatim report :

GOETZ. “I am (*nämlich*) Hermann Goetz from Zürich.”

FRANK. “What can I do for you?”

Long silence, during which Goetz looks so shy that he seems to wish for the earth to swallow him up. At last—

GOETZ (*apologetically*). "I have (*nämlich*) written an opera."

FRANK (*cheerily*). "So much the better."

GOETZ (*with a gulp of relief*). "You are the first to say that to me. All the others say, so much the worse!"

This little scene gives the measure of the man. He was ever ready to encourage and, if he believed in his man, to act. He carried through the "Taming of the Shrew," and he did the same for me, but under circumstances of far greater difficulty. I paid my first visit to him in the late summer of 1878; he gave me invaluable help in the reconstruction of some of the scenes, and undertook, when the score was completed, to submit it to Devrient the manager.

The year following, just as the opera was finished, he wrote to say that Devrient had resigned the Directorship under circumstances which obliged him as a loyal friend to do the same, but recommended me, though with the added advice "Blessed is he that expecteth nothing, for he shall not be disappointed," to try elsewhere, pending developments. He armed me with an excellent German translation, which he had prepared himself. I went to Berlin, and Joachim arranged for a Star Chamber consisting of Eckert and Radecke, the two chief conductors of the Opera House, to sit upon it in his drawing-room. It was a very hot afternoon, even for Berlin, and I ploughed through the score in one of the most stiff and unsympathetic atmospheres it was ever my misfortune to endure. After the three acts had ended in a silence so oppressive that I longed for a request, accompanied by suitable expletives, to take myself and my music away to

a still hotter climate, we adjourned to a supper of crayfish, which evidently appealed more to the Capellmeisters' taste; and I went back to my hotel in total ignorance of the verdict. As the silence remained unbroken, I bethought me of a desperate step and wrote to Liszt asking if I might bring the score to Weimar. I felt as if I had been somewhat rash in trying to ford the Rubicon. But Weimar was silent, and I confess to a feeling of relief that it was. I do not believe to this day that Liszt was ever allowed to see my letter, and one of his closest friends and admirers assured me that his silence was in itself sufficient proof that my request was intercepted by some secretarial busybody. Anyhow I steered successfully between the Scylla of Tory Berlin and the Charybdis of Radical Weimar, though I returned home empty.

But my suspense did not last long. On a fateful occasion Hans von Bülow, then conductor at Hanover, suddenly exploded one of his verbal shells from his seat in the orchestra. At a performance of "Lohengrin," Anton Schott, the tenor who provided von Bülow with the axiom that a "tenor voice is a disease," sang the title-part in a way so antipathetic to him, that he called out "Schweinritter," (Knight of the Swine), and had such a quarrel with the knight of the swan that he was obliged to retire. In his place was appointed Ernst Frank, who had not been at his post more than a few days before he wrote to me to bring the opera to Hanover. I went in the spring of 1880; experienced with him and his most kindly chief, Hans von Bronsart, a very different séance from that at Berlin, and the opera was accepted for the ensuing winter. I

went over at Christmas and Frank spent as much labour and trouble over the work as if it were an established masterpiece instead of a "first kitten": he was full of hints for improvements and those ever-blessed helps to theatrical success, cuts; giving me every opportunity of testing orchestral, solo, and choral effects, and of working out the dramatic points of the ballet. He was highly amused at my comparison of the stage-door of the Hof-Theater with those at home, and at my appreciation of the fact that it was as dignified an entrance to the house as that provided for the public.

The singers one and all worked for the piece and not for themselves. There was no discontent, no requests for vocal emendations or additions to appease any individual singer. The orchestra, of which the violinists were mostly old pupils of Joachim, was one of the best in Germany. The players spared time even for individual study. On one morning I heard a curious sound in the dark theatre, and peering round from the stage I saw the drummer all alone practising the entire opera by himself. The chief soprano, Fraulein Börs, was the singer in whose musicianship Bülow trusted so implicitly that he called her his first clarinet. The tenor was Schott, (the "swine-knight"), who certainly needed no such epithets from me. The baritone was the weakest spot, both vocally and intellectually. After the first performance, Frank stood still in the street, took off his broad wide-awake, made a low bow and said, "Denken sie mal, meine Herrn und Damen, die Oper ist ja aufgeführt."

Though the opera was successful enough with the

public to gladden his kindly heart, it met in the Hanoverian Press with the fate which all the theatre magnates anticipated. The local papers were at war with the Prussian Intendant ; he despised them and let them know it, with the natural consequence that anything he brought out was *ipso facto* written down. In addition they hated von Bülow, who was von Bronsart's close friend, and thought that an opera, so speedily produced, must be a legacy from the "verflossene Capellmeister" as they termed him. Added to these damnatory facts was the final touch that the opera came from England, and there was no music in England and never could be. Fortunately for Frank, the Hanover Press was alone in its attitude, and he got the reward for his single-minded pluck and enterprise in all the reports of the correspondents from Vienna and elsewhere.

While at Hanover, I experienced a warm welcome at the hands of General von Zglinitzki and his family. His wife and sister-in-law were direct descendants of Mrs. Siddons. Grove, who knew the trio well, picturesquely described them as Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. Minerva had an extraordinary resemblance to her famous ancestress. Prince Albrecht of Prussia, at that time the Regent of Hanover, was very fond of music, but his taste stopped short at Gluck. Mozart he tolerated but considered somewhat futurist in his tendencies. The Intendant, with a touch of waggery, composed a Bach polka, founded on two fugues of the forty-eight, to suit a Court Ball. The opening phrase ran thus :



It was a worthy companion of his friend von Bülow's Quadrilles on themes from Berlioz' "Benvenuto Cellini." But I fear that neither of these strokes of genius attained the dignity of a performance. The Prince had a rare knack of making his state concerts musically interesting. At one of them I heard an excellent rendering of the complete Second Finale to Mozart's "Don Juan," which had for years been wholly neglected. No doubt it is, from the ordinary theatrical standpoint, as redundant as the entry of Fortinbras after Hamlet's death. But that serious thinker and true artist, Forbes Robertson, realized the dramatic fitness of Shakespeare's own ending to the play, and restored it. Mozart's colossal ending is slowly but surely making its way back to its proper place. It was first given in England at the Lyceum Theatre, when the students of the Royal College of Music performed the opera. The Munich authorities have replaced it, and there is yet hope that devils and red fire will not always give the cue for hats and cloaks. This irreverent tampering with masterpieces is nothing new. The fifth act of the "Huguenots" is fast becoming a dead letter. Rossini's "William Tell" was so hacked and cut about during the composer's lifetime, that when a friend told him that it was announced for

performance one evening by itself at the Grand Opéra, he asked in irony, "What! All of it?" In theatres like that at Hanover, which were not wholly dependent upon the whims of the public, and could afford to educate them to a higher level of taste, vandalisms such as these were rare. In Dresden, for example, I have seen the "Huguenots," the "Prophète" and "Tell" produced with as much piety and care as the "Ring" or "Tristan": neither there nor at Hanover was there any distinction of persons.

Such is the inner value of subvention. It makes for education, enables the serious-minded section of its public to see the historical plays of Shakespeare, the tragedies of Lessing, Goethe and Schiller, and so to keep their acquaintance with the classics green. The house is not lit up by a superfluity of diamonds, nor is its policy governed by the passing fads of fickle Society. Music is placed on a par with its sister arts, and its masterpieces are as easily within the reach of every section of the public, as those of Raphael and Michael Angelo. In no country can this be done without State or Municipal support, any more than school education can be independent of the rates and taxes. The future of music is safe only where it is considered, as the Greeks in their wisdom considered it, part and parcel of a nation's educational welfare. In England it has too long suffered under the neglect of those who, like Thompson of Trinity, considered it only "a grade better than dancing," and relegated it to the position of a luxurious amusement. To rescue it from centuries of this misguided and distorted judgment needs public spirit and money, and the man to foster the one and to

dispense the other. In Germany this was accomplished partly by the strong advocacy of Martin Luther, partly by the wisdom of the heads of small principalities. In England native music has to recover from the ban of Oliver Cromwell and from the lack of any genuinely artistic support from Society and its chiefs. As Luther discountenanced painting and so killed for centuries in Germany an art for which Dürer and Cranach had laid the soundest of foundations, so did the Puritans destroy music in this country. Its rescue depends upon the foundation, support and sure continuance of a National Theatre, and a National Opera.

## CHAPTER XIII

Richter Concerts—Hermann Franke—Brahms at Hamburg—Costa  
—Birmingham Festival of 1882—Gounod—Meyerbeer—Parry's  
"Prometheus"—R. C. Rowe.

IN the winter of 1878-79, a year after Wagner's visit to the Albert Hall, an interview took place at my house at Cambridge which had far-reaching effects upon orchestral concerts and upon orchestral playing in this country. A former pupil of Joachim, Hermann Franke, who had settled in London about the year 1873, had made great efforts to widen the sphere of chamber music, and had given several series of concerts at the Royal Academy concert-room, in which he not only produced works passed by at St. James's Hall, but also looked about for unknown British work, and had the courage to perform it. He had organized the orchestra at the Wagner Festival, and sat at the first desk with Wilhelmj. In appreciation of his work Wagner gave him his photograph with the poetical inscription,

"Hermann Franke,  
Zum ewigen Danke.  
"R. W."

Franke's enthusiasms and ambitions were far more enjoyment to him than playing the violin, and they speedily overshadowed his instrumental powers. Like the rest of the orchestra, he was fascinated by the personality and dominant force of Hans Richter, and laid his plans to secure him for further concerts where

he could show the British public his mastery of the works of other composers besides Wagner. Franke came down suddenly to Cambridge, and consulted with me as to the possibility of establishing a series of concerts in London under Richter's conductorship. The way seemed clear enough for such an undertaking. The Philharmonic was in somewhat feeble hands, the only other orchestral body was directed by Dr. Wylde, the hero of the "Freischütz" overture episode described in a former chapter. Manns, practically the only metropolitan conductor of merit, confined his energies to the Crystal Palace, Hallé to Manchester. The outcome of our conversation was the establishing of the Richter Concerts, in which I was able, thanks to my personal acquaintance with several enthusiastic amateurs of means, to assist by building up a guarantee fund.

The first series took place in May, 1879, and consisted of three orchestral and one chamber concert. The Third, Fifth and Seventh Symphonies of Beethoven were given with a perfection which was nothing less than a revelation to the public, too long accustomed to persistent *mezzofortes*, and humdrum phrasing. Richter's popularity with the band was increased by his quaint efforts to express himself in English. Le Bon, the oboist, who played an A natural instead of an A flat was so startled by hearing Richter call out "As" (the German for A flat) that he began to pack up his instrument and take up his hat, until a German neighbour assured him that there was no allusion to long ears. A *pizzicato* which gave the impression of being produced by nail power, he corrected by the request to

play "not with the horns but with the meat." "Do not hurry with the syncopes (dissyllable)" was another of his axioms. The concerts were so successful artistically, that they established themselves for years, not however without serious pecuniary difficulty. The Guarnerius fiddle of the plucky founder had, it was said, to be sold for the cause, but the sacrifice was made without a murmur from its possessor.

In course of time Franke found it impossible to carry the whole weight of responsibility on his own shoulders, and posterity has done him the usual kindness of forgetting the fact that the inception of the whole scheme was his, and his alone. I once heard Richter indignantly condemn this injustice by saying, "Er hat's gewagt," (He dared to do it). The eventual success of the venture led on to a series of German opera performances, the first which had been given in London for half a century, which took place at Drury Lane Theatre in the summer of 1882. The company included most of my Leipzig favourites, Peschka-Leutner, Gura, Ehrke and others, and the repertoire contained such masterpieces as "Fidelio," "Euryanthe," (not heard since the visit of Schröder-Devrient), and the "Meistersinger," which made its first English appearance on May 20. The season was, of course, financially as disastrous as most of such new ventures are; but it did its work for the good of the country, and made possible the subsequent developments in a similar direction which are now so familiar a part of London life. All this great advance was due to the single-minded energy of one man, whose artistic ideals were too strong to admit of sufficient grasp of business

detail, and who had by retiring from the fray to leave the fruits of eventual victory to others, and to pay the wholly undeserved penalty of public oblivion.

During the winter of 1880 I went with a highly gifted Fellow of Trinity, the late Richard C. Rowe, to Hamburg, and we chanced by good luck on a concert at which Brahms played his Second Concerto in B flat, then a novelty. The reception given to the composer by his native town was as enthusiastic as we anticipated. His pianoforte playing was not so much that of a finished pianist, as of a composer who despised virtuosity. The skips, which are many and perilous in the solo part, were accomplished regardless of accuracy, and it is not an exaggeration to say that there were handfuls of wrong notes. The touch was somewhat hard, and lacking in force-control; it was at its best in the slow movement, where he produced the true velvety quality, probably because he was not so hampered by his own difficulties. But never since have I heard a rendering of the concerto, so complete in its outlook or so big in its interpretation. The wrong notes did not really matter, they did not disturb his hearers any more than himself. He took it for granted that the public knew that he had written the right notes, and did not worry himself over such little trifles as hitting the wrong ones. His attitude at the piano was precisely that in Professor von Beckerath's sketch. The short legs straight down to the pedals, which they seemed only just to reach, the head thrown back and slightly tilted as if listening to the band rather than to himself, the shoulders hunched up and the arms almost as straight as the legs and well above the key-

board. His figure was curiously ill-proportioned. He had the chest development and height from the waist of a muscular man of five foot ten, but his legs were so short as to reduce him well below middle height. His eyes were, I think, the most beautiful I ever saw; blue, and of a depth so liquid that (as I once heard a friend of his say) "You could take a header into them." This was my only experience of Brahms as a pianist. As a conductor I saw him at Leipzig in 1881, and late in his life in Berlin in 1895. At Leipzig he conducted the performance of the Tragic and Academic Festival overtures, and at Berlin the two concertos played by D'Albert.

At Leipzig he was always a little "out of tune." He never quite forgave the first reception of his D minor Concerto at the Gewandhaus, and he used to vent his bottled-up wrath by satirical remarks to the Directors. One of them, a tall and rather pompous gentleman who wore a white waistcoat with all the air of Augustus Harris at his zenith, asked Brahms before the concert with a patronizing smile, "Whither are you going to lead us to-night, Mr. Brahms? To Heaven?"

BRAHMS. "It's all the same to me which direction you take."

His conducting of the D minor Concerto threw an entirely new light on the whole composition, especially as regards the rhythmical swing of the first movement. Written in the troublesome *tempo* of  $\frac{3}{4}$ , most conductors either take it too quickly by beating two in a bar or too slowly by beating six. Brahms beat it in an uneven four (-0-0), which entirely did away with

undue dragging or hurrying, and kept the line of movement insistent up to the last note. His *tempo* was very elastic, as much so in places as von Bülow's, though more restrained, but he never allowed his liberties with the time to interfere with the general balance: they were of the true nature of *rubato*. He loathed having his slow movements played in an inexorable four-square. On one occasion at a performance of his C minor Symphony he was sitting in a box next to a friend of mine, and in the Andante, which was being played with a metronomic stiffness, he suddenly seized his neighbour by the shoulder and ejaculating "Heraus!" literally pushed him out of the concert-room.

Just before leaving Hanover in 1881, I received an invitation to compose an orchestral work for the Birmingham Festival of 1882. I wrote the Serenade in G, and knowing that it would require at least two rehearsals, I luckily anticipated the rush of the Festival preparations by a preliminary canter on my own account. This invitation led to my first meeting with Costa, whose last Festival it was destined to be. I got a message from the great man to call upon him at Eccleston Square, and found him in his study clad in a rather antique dressing-gown and surrounded by what looked like architectural maps and plans. He quite belied my anticipations of a haughty and stand-off reception, and was most genial and hospitable. He apologized for not conducting my work, on the score that he never made himself responsible for living writers' compositions, though he had none the less read through my MS. He then produced the plans,

in order to instruct me where each instrument was placed, and who the players were. He had the seating (to an inch) both of St. George's Hall, where the London rehearsals were held, and of the Birmingham Town Hall, and described to me with great accuracy the height of the players above the conductor at the latter room. When I went up to rehearse in St. George's Hall, he planted himself at my elbow following every note of the score, and giving me a secret prod when he wanted a passage repeated which I had passed over. The first movement (in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time) ended with a long *accelerando*, which I could not get to move on to my satisfaction. It was my own fault, for I continued beating three to a bar. Costa prodded, and whispered to me under his breath "One beat will do it." So it did, and his next prod was one of satisfaction accompanied by a most un-Costa-like wink. His care not to let the band know that he was coaching me was excessive, and both in London and in Birmingham I had good reason to be grateful for his tactful kindness.

He was not at all so kindly to Gounod, who conducted the first performance of the "Redemption" on the same occasion. He disliked the Frenchman's pose and resented the suggestion of "The Assumption of Gounod" which his attitude pictured. I fully expected to see a miracle: the opening of the Town Hall ceiling and the ascent of the composer into a layer of Black Country fog. There was nearly an open breach about the number of harps. Gounod wanted six, Costa would only consent (with many grumbles) to

four. The secretary came to Costa in despair saying that "M. Gounod insists on six harps."

COSTA. "The old fool! he thinks that he will go to Heaven with six harps! He shall have four" (*banging the table*).

When it came to the final rehearsal, somehow six harps were there; but the orchestral steward went in fear of his life. The next morning Costa chose a silent moment to score off him, by suddenly turning in his seat and calling out "Where that fool——?"

Costa loved a big noise, but he had a sense of proportion. In spite of his forty-eight violins and the rest to match, when he directed Mozart's G minor Symphony he surprised me by playing it with a small picked band of forty-five. Gounod sat in front of me at this concert, and his ravings over Mozart were too exaggerated and theatrical to ring true. I could not help recalling the description given to me by Charles Hallé of his powers of *blague*. Hallé had visited Paris to give a recital, which took place at the Salle Érard in the afternoon; and he had gone to a party in the evening where he met Gounod. Gounod seized him by both hands and thanked him profusely for the pleasure his recital had given him, instancing one passage in a Beethoven Sonata which he hummed, which proved to him that "No one—no one, my dear friend, except you could have interpreted that passage in so masterly a way. Even with my eyes shut, I should have known that Hallé was playing." Immediately after up came Madame Gounod, who began by apologizing for her and her husband's absence from the concert owing to a previous engagement. Hallé

used to act to perfection the slow and silent vanishing away of Ch. G. after this *exposé*.

Costa was a martinet, but could be a very kindly one. He was in his place to the second both at rehearsal and at concert, and woe to any player who was late. His first bassoon was once an hour behind time, and when Costa asked the reason, excused himself by reporting the arrival of an additional future bassoon in his family.

COSTA. "Very well, Mr. —, I will excuse you this time, but do not let it occur again."

Manns once borrowed the parts of Beethoven's Mass in D from the Sacred Harmonic Society. All went well until the *Benedictus*, when the trombones did not play. Manns' wrath was appeased by the explanation that the parts were pasted over. By his order the paper was torn off, and Beethoven restored. Shortly after the Sacred Harmonic Society gave a performance of the same work, and at the *Benedictus* the trombones played. Fury of Costa, who had cut them out. Trombones explain that there is no cut.

COSTA. "Send for the librarian."

(Enter that official trembling.)

"What have you done with my parts?"

LIBRARIAN. "They were lent to the Crystal Palace, and Mr. Manns must have restored them."

COSTA. "You are dismissed!" (And he was.)

On the other hand orchestral players had no warmer champion and friend. He fought their battles tooth and nail, and raised both their pay and their position in the profession. He cordially disliked Wagner and all his work. I have already recorded how he left

so many mistakes in the parts of "Lohengrin" that Richter, on succeeding him, could only account for them by malice prepense. His rancorous battle with Sterndale Bennett is well known. His Italian blood must have had a Corsican strain, for he never relinquished a vendetta. He was G.C.O. in his own territory. When Meyerbeer came over for the rehearsals of the "Prophète," and made some suggestions he ordered him off the stage and out of the theatre. This must have sorely tried that most punctilious of Hebrews. Alfred Mellon, who rehearsed his March for the opening of the Exhibition of 1862, thought it would gain effect in the big building by the addition of some instruments of percussion. After great pressure Meyerbeer added them and brought the parts over himself in his hand-bag. The morning after the function, when Mellon was sleeping soundly after his labours, his servant knocked at 7 a.m. and said a gentleman wanted to see him. Mellon told him to send his early visitor to a hot place, and that he could call later. The answer came back that it was Mr. Meyerbeer on his way to the Paris mail. He ran down in a dressing-gown, to find that gentleman demanding his extra percussion parts, for fear that Mellon would use them again at a subsequent performance in a smaller room: and he refused to go until he got them.

After the 1882 Festival we went to Monte Generoso, and had experience of the worst floods I have ever seen. After a long spell of doubtful weather, three thunderstorms met over our devoted hotel, and over most of the rest of the range of mountains to the

North of Italy, and deluged the plains below. We got with difficulty to the station outside Verona, and made our entry into the town between two banks of mud standing three feet high on either side of the streets. The only bridge left was the old Roman structure. The buildings on each side were mostly like dolls' houses with the front taken off. Two or three fell into the Adige as I watched. Going on to Venice the next day, we were turned out at Padua and had to drive along an interminable road between two muddy lakes, which extended at least half-way to the sea-city, in a most rickety vehicle, drawn by a shying horse. Venice made up for the risky journey, and the floods to an unusual extent counteracted the per- fumes at low tide. There was a pleasing uncertainty as to our exit; so many were the broken bridges, and so dangerous the sunken and (far from) permanent way on the railways. But we contrived to escape from an unduly long imprisonment by way of Trieste and Vienna. I saw one sight in Venice which alone repayed the journey: Charles Hallé in a frock-coat and a white top hat reading the *Daily Telegraph* while seated in a gondola and floating under the Bridge of Sighs.

Meantime music in Cambridge was progressing steadily, and was leading the way in the encouragement of native music. Hubert Parry's remarkable setting of scenes from "Prometheus Unbound," a work far in advance of any choral work of the kind which had hitherto been created by any Englishman since the days of Henry Purcell, had been brought out at Gloucester, and was attacked by the greater part of the Press, headed by Joseph Bennett, mainly on the

score of its pronounced sympathy with modern developments. The University Society cared nothing for their fulminations, and produced it, with the success anticipated by less prejudiced musicians, in 1881. It is both amusing and informing to compare the later attitude of the Hanslick of the *Daily Telegraph*, and his compliments to the "English Bach" as he termed him, with the denial of any ability and the lack of foresight displayed in his criticism of "Prometheus." But the music had the stuff to enable it to "worry through," albeit, as usual, against the collar; and it marked the first forward English step in the modern development of native choral music. The Cambridge performance very properly resulted in an invitation to the composer to write a second symphony (his first had been produced at Birmingham), and he wrote for them the work in F major, known as the Cambridge Symphony. This was given in 1883. Parry's name was familiar to Cambridge men from the early seventies, when his earlier pianoforte pieces and songs frequently figured in the performances. His duet for two pianofortes in E minor was a particular favourite, and had been repeated on several occasions.

The Chamber Concerts included the whole of the later quartets of Beethoven, led by Joachim, at a time when it was a matter of difficulty to get an occasional hearing of one of them in St. James's Hall; they were supposed to be unattractive to the paying public, and Joachim only succeeded in getting them played by arranging a special "Pop." on an off day for the benefit of the "superior person," as J. W. Clark used to describe him. The exclusive amateur however

attended in such numbers that the management shortly awoke to the fact that these quartets were anything but "caviare to the general." At Cambridge a performance of any of them meant a sold-out house. The chamber music of Brahms was given frequently from 1874 onwards.

In 1880 Mr. Richard Gompertz, one of Joachim's best pupils, settled in Cambridge, and was of the greatest help in organizing the talent of student-players. Mr. Galpin (now well known as one of the greatest authorities upon the history and construction of antique wind instruments), who was an exceptionally gifted clarinettist, was equally indefatigable in working up a local orchestra, which by his indomitable efforts reached the number of eighty-two, so complete in every department that it performed, and most creditably, the *Kaisermarsch* of Wagner in 1882, and several symphonies of Beethoven and Mozart, besides taking part in a private performance of some movements of Beethoven's *Mass in D*. The efficiency of this band was entirely due to the drastic methods employed by Galpin to insure attendance at rehearsals. He used to make quasi-proctorial rounds of the Colleges and lodging-houses at breakfast-time, or even at bath-time, and obtained what almost amounted to affidavits from half-dressed players that they would be present in the evening. What pains and penalties he threatened, or what rewards he offered, I never knew: but the orchestra was to all appearances always complete, and any hapless perjurers got a wiggling the next morning.

What Galpin did for orchestral playing, R. C. Rowe

did for chamber music. Rowe came up to the University a finished pianist, but carefully concealed the fact even from his most intimate friends until he had taken his degree; he came out third wrangler and was bracketed Smith's prizeman with Mr. (now Sir) Donald Macalister and Mr. Parker Smith. His great talents then suddenly disclosed themselves to an astonished world, who little dreamt that they had been nourishing a pianist of the first rank in their bosoms. His playing of such difficult works as Schumann's Fantasia in C amazed so fastidious a critic as Joachim himself. He could read anything at first sight with consummate ease. The morning on which the printed copy of Brahms' Second Concerto arrived, he played the solo part straight off with an insight into its character and construction which was almost uncanny. He had a perfect touch, which belied the description he used to give of his German master's early criticisms upon it. "Your tosh (touch)! it is not zat you have a bad tosh, you have no tosh at all! Your somm (thumb)! it is von pokare." If that was true of his youthful pupil, the master certainly succeeded in manufacturing one of the very best of touches. Rowe had something of the "Undine" in him; he could produce the most divine and ideal effects, and suddenly destroy them all by some elfish somersault. I witnessed a well-deserved revenge upon him once, when after playing quite angelically the F sharp major Romance of Schumann, the sound had scarcely ceased before he, as if ashamed of his own poetry, banged down a chord of F major in one hand and E major in the other. This was too much

for the nerves of one of his entranced listeners, who promptly and angrily seized a book and threw it at his head. His only protest was a little cynical "Ha! ha! ha!" which only made matters worse. Many people would have characterized him as a freak, for his home surroundings gave no clue to the artistic temperament which overflowed in him. An Anglo-Saxon of the Puritan type in appearance, he was as warm in expression and in colour as any Southern Italian. He never, to my knowledge, composed a note: but I am confident that he could have done so if he had chosen. He remains in my memory as an intensely interesting and entirely unsolved enigma. He died young, not much over thirty years of age, in the autumn of 1884. I put him among the small category of unique personalities whom I have known.

## CHAPTER XIV

Foundation of the Royal College of Music—Scholarships—Belaieff and music publishing—George Grove.

IN 1882 the movement initiated by the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh for founding an endowed music-school in London began to take shape. The attempts to combine forces with the existing Royal Academy had definitely failed, and meetings were held all over the country to obtain funds for the proposed new Institution. At the head and forefront of this effort was the ever-enthusiastic George Grove, whose views of the possibilities of music in this country were less hide-bound and more cosmopolitan than those of most of the leading professional musicians of the day. The movement was an unqualified success: whether it would have been wiser to have imitated the policy of France and other European countries is a question which can now be discussed without affecting the future of the Institution, which the campaign resulted in founding. Other countries began by providing the place where music is produced, and followed it up by creating the schools to educate composers to write for and artists to perform in it. In Paris there was a State Opera in 1672, but the Conservatoire only came into existence 123 years later.

Foreign nations provide a career before they educate for it, and do not risk turning out shoals of artists the majority of whom find, when they have completed their

pupillage, that they have no outlet for their talents. England, I take leave to think, began at the wrong end. If the great effort made in 1881-82 had been directed towards founding a National Opera, there would have been no lack of proper education to prepare for it. Men and women of gift and grit, but of small means, would have pinched themselves to qualify for it here as they do elsewhere. Scholarships would have been less easy to obtain, less numerous to compete for, and would be looked upon more as necessities than as ornaments. The provision of scholarships has been a sort of epidemic in the country, to the imperilling of individual effort. The world is being made much too easy for its youth. We are beginning to pay the price of overpampering by the overcrowding of the ranks of the profession and by feeding them with the all too numerous survivors of the unfit. The first sign of danger is the decrease of male pupils, due to the inexorable law that the man is the bread-winner, and that he is obliged to take to professions which pay or promise a career, and to shun those which do not. At the present time our music institutions are steadily tending towards becoming ladies' schools. The male element is chiefly confined to departments for which there is a market and a demand, the orchestra and the organ-loft. In the philanthropic desire to provide for the taught, the teachers are forgotten; and the great bulk of these have to give casual lessons wherever they can, at almost starvation wages, which hold out little or no prospect of providing a competency for their old age. The taught in their turn exchange the certain emoluments of their scholarships for the uncertain

pickings of the teacher. The larger the number of teachers the smaller the pickings. Unless, then, the educational movement is soon capped by another to provide what all other civilized countries have had the wisdom to insure, a career, the attractions of the musical profession will wane in proportion to the decrease of its earning power, and the plethora of scholarships may lack a sufficient number of competitors to fill them, or at best fall to those who only desire them for temporary instruction and amusement, or for boasting a small handle to their names.

A superabundance of scholarships has other sequelæ. Only too frequently the less thinking of their holders forget or ignore the fact that their tuition is being paid for by the public. Having no pecuniary responsibility themselves, they are tempted to adopt an attitude of freedom and laxity as to their duties, which they would never assume if they or their families had to pay hard-earned cash out of their own pockets for their training. I have even known cases of less-educated scholars, who seemed to consider it a concession to perform their duties with any regularity at all, and to look upon elasticity of treatment as a right. These instances are happily so far rare, but they point inexorably to the danger of multiplying to excess endowments which tend to diminish personal responsibility, and individual initiative. Grove saw this when he earnestly consulted the Masters of Trinity and Balliol, Thompson and Jowett, about the possibility of confining the endowments of scholars to those who absolutely needed pecuniary assistance to receive an education at all. Both advised him that any such

differentiation by pocket was, as the world went, impossible, and that only differentiation by brains was practically feasible. He had, with the greatest reluctance, to follow that advice: modifying it as far as he could by the addition of a sum for maintenance over and above the tuition fees which the scholarships provided, and adapting the amount to the need of each individual.

These dangers were apparent to some men of foresight in the eighties; but so much dust had been raised by old-standing controversies as to the relative values of existing Institutions, the best place on the map of London for their locale, and other such small questions, that the bigger issues were clouded and forgotten. The proverbial luck of this country may enable her music, like her War Office, to muddle through. By dint of the enlistment of private enterprise, it has succeeded in doing so at a quicker rate of progress than prevailed before 1880, in spite of the absence of any such State encouragement as has been at the disposal of her sister art of painting. As soon as private enterprise does as much for the encouragement of the educated as it has hitherto done for their education, the rate of progress will surprise its supporters.

There were two meetings at the inception of the plan for founding the Royal College, one at St. James's Palace and one at the Office of the Duchy of Cornwall. The former was principally remarkable for the presence of many political notabilities, who were more or less constrained by the impetus of the movement to come and show their sympathy with it. Mr. Glad-

stone made a speech, which, after his manner, concealed the vaguest of nothings under a cover of most facile verbiage. He blessed the proposal and emphasized the love for music in the country, while keeping free of any suspicion of tangible support, beyond the £500 a year which the Royal Academy of Music already received, talked charming fables about the smiles which pervaded the faces of small children tripping gaily to school to sing their little songs, and sat down without saying one syllable about the larger policy of founding a central Institution for production, which would refine the masses through the medium of the one art which can most easily reach their hearts and illuminate their lives. It was charming piffle, but piffle none the less. At the later meeting, which consisted mainly of musicians, old and young, the questions discussed were mostly those of organization and method. The wisest speech was that of Benedict, then an old man, who could remember Beethoven whom he visited with his master, Weber. He laid down two vital principles, the first that it would be a vast mistake to cheapen the cost of training, for the reason that such a policy would cheapen also the estimation in which the training was held: the second, that the term of training should be of sufficient length to permit of efficiency being attained, and that no pupil should be accepted who did not undertake to go through the course. He carried the meeting with him, and it is not too much to say that to the adoption of his principles, albeit not carried out in their entirety, the success of the Royal College has been largely due. Endow-

ment of education having triumphed over endowment of production, it must be admitted that the policy adopted was thoroughly well carried out, and was successful, as indeed it was bound to be, in unearthing a surprising amount of hidden talent in the British Isles.

The first election of scholars was a most dramatic and moving occasion. The examiners sat round a large horseshoe table in the Council Room of the Albert Hall, and had first to hear the performance of some of the candidates whose merits were too equal to be decided upon by the preliminary judges. When the soprano singers were brought in, Madame Goldschmidt (Jenny Lind) did not test them at the piano-forte, but sang from her seat a series of amazing roulades and cadenzas which the trembling young women had to imitate as best they could, divided between anxiety for themselves and astonishment at the Chopin-like passages which came so easily out of the throat of an elderly lady at the table. Some of them made surprisingly good attempts at the ordeal. When the names of the successful fifty were decided upon, they were ushered into the room in a body. By some misunderstanding outside, as I afterwards ascertained, they were one and all under the impression that they were those who had failed. When Grove told them that they were the scholars, this motley crowd of boys and girls, of every walk in life from the mill and the mine up to the educated school, gave simultaneously what I can only call a colossal gulp. The effect of it was so touching that Madame Goldschmidt's face collapsed into her pocket-

handkerchief, and most of us had a curious lump in our throats.

I have always regretted that no shorthand writer was present to take down the memorable speech with which Grove dignified and gave the true note to the proceedings. It was worthy of the friend of Tom Hughes, and of Hughes's master, Arnold of Rugby. In the short ten minutes which it took to deliver, it placed the whole of English musical education on the highest plane, and gave a lofty tone to the Institution which it could not fail to live up to. There was no pedantry, and no exclusiveness. He set out to impress the young minds with the supreme importance of general culture in the attainments of the best art: and he ended with insistence upon the necessity of loyalty as great on the part of the taught as on that of the teachers. His last sentence I remember well. It had a touch of homely bathos, which went home far more effectively than any flowery peroration. To appreciate its effect upon paper is impossible, and divorced from its context it seems almost a trivial truism; but it suited its mixed audience and everyone felt that the sentence was the right thing in the right place. "If you do well, you will be praised for it; if you do badly, you will be punished for it." The sentence crystallized one of Grove's greatest gifts. He never stinted his praise, when it was deserved, or closed his mouth to gratitude or appreciation. In that none too British quality lay the secret of the affection and the reverence in which he was held, and of his extraordinary faculty of getting not merely the best work out of his men,

but even more and better work than his men thought themselves capable of doing.

Not the least of his successes was his complete triumph over the one unpleasant difficulty in the path of his new post: the soreness which the foundation of the College had (from the days of Sterndale Bennett) caused in the hearts of the friends of the Royal Academy. Macfarren's antagonism was a hard nut, but Grove's tact and irresistible goodness of heart cracked it. He never lost an opportunity of smoothing natural susceptibilities, and by the time Mackenzie took office at the Academy there was no more antagonism between the two Institutions, than between Trinity and King's, or Balliol and Christ Church. Grove loved healthy rivalry, but had no stomach for petty jealousies.

The very fact that the College was new, and therefore had its own traditions to make, was an advantage to those who administered it. In my department, that of composition and the training of the orchestra, I was fortunately able to profit by personal experience of the obvious lacunæ in the curricula of foreign conservatoires. Two of the most glaring faults I was able to make impossible. Young composers were taught abroad upon paper, and only the most picked and finished examples of their work ever reached the point of a hearing. We went on the principle that a hearing of a composition is the best lesson the writer can get, and that the perspiration and agony from which a composer suffers when he hears the sounds of his own inexperience is the most valuable part of his training. School orchestras abroad were seldom complete, and

were restricted in their repertoire to the most classical music, all modern developments being stringently placed upon the Index Expurgatorius. We adopted the principle that for effective training the players should know everything, old and new (provided that it was genuine music), irrespective of all individual likes and dislikes, and so make themselves competent to join any orchestra after completing their studies with a fair measure of knowledge of any music they would be called upon to play. The provision of scholarships for wind instruments made this policy all the easier to carry out; and in this department the players who have been educated at the College have seldom or never been stranded in after-life.\* The complexion of the lists of players in our concert orchestras, once international, has become practically national. This praiseworthy care for our own compatriots was warmly supported by Sullivan, who, having the exclusive choice of his orchestra at Leeds, made it entirely English, with results which somewhat amazed foreign composers when they visited that Festival. I heard Humperdinck say to him after a very smooth reading of a new work that he supposed that there were many foreigners in the band, and Sullivan was able to answer "Not one," with an amused and not untriumphant smile.

The foundation of the College orchestra, and the choice of good singers who were attracted to the school, made it possible to go a step farther and pro-

\* Out of twenty-six wind-instrument players in the Philharmonic Orchestra this year (1914), eleven are old scholars of the Royal College.

duce annually a complete opera on the stage. The choice of unfamiliar works was large, and the list of those hitherto given is a thoroughly representative one. Many of the singers have reached the top of the ladder, and have been main supports in Wagnerian and other performances, showing what might have been the consequences of the endowment of a National Opera.

The composer's lot has been a harder one. In a country where the royalty ballad commands the publishing market, the writer of serious music has but an exiguous chance. Trained in the writing of orchestral and chamber works he emerges from the chrysalis to find that there is little chance of seeing his work printed and accessible, and none of getting any financial return for it. He is therefore driven to lower himself to write rubbish, or to amuse himself by filling his shelves with dust-attracting manuscripts. We might drive a coach-and-four through hide-bound traditions in the schools, but the royalty ballad with its large profits and quick returns was too insuperable a barrier to negotiate outside. The type of publisher who had an eye to the dignity which some good music gave to his catalogue, even if the cost took longer to recoup, such as Birchall, who brought out and paid for the works of Beethoven when his name was still the possession of the few, had practically disappeared. Germany was taking care to bring its best work before the eyes of the world. France was not far behind. Russian music had found a friend and a business man in Belaieff, who grasping the fact that the music of his country was a sealed book to Western Europe, set

up a house to print and publish it, with the far-reaching success which all the musical world knows. *Amour propre* and patriotism did their share elsewhere; the size of the banker's balance was the only consideration here. Book publishers, with wider minds and broader views, knew that English literature demanded to be fed by something more tangible than the yellow-back or the "shilling shocker," and gave histories, biographies and scientific masterpieces their chance even when profits were problematical or temporarily small; conscious that the literary as well as the financial credit of this country had its claims to active support. If their houses had been ruled by the principles which govern those of their brethren of music, we should have had no Darwin, no Herbert Spencer, no Lecky, no Tennyson, and no Browning to enrich the world's libraries, and to keep up the name and fame of the country.

Foreigners often quote "English music is no music." I cannot blame them for so classifying work which they are not able to see, and are quite justified in not taking on trust. The stray publication of an isolated work or two, even if it possess special merit, is of no use. What tells is, as Belaieff proved, the weight of numbers and the comprehensiveness of the catalogue. It was not until the Russian publisher could show a list of imposing size containing all manner of compositions, of varying value but of consistently high aim, that the rest of Europe began to rub its eyes and make practical use of its contents. Thirty years ago it only knew vaguely of Glinka and of Rubinstein. A few students had heard the name of Tschaikowsky. Of the living

masters of the Russian School the world in general knew as little as it did of the Russian opera and ballet, or even of the existence of Moussorgsky. It was print and the consequent accessibility to their compositions which did the work ; print and print alone can do the same for the buried manuscripts of this country. Without it the task of training gifted young men in the highest walks of creative music will be destined to suffer the fate of Penelope's web. This is only another instance of the danger of providing education before insuring a career. Efforts of various kind have been made to meet this crying necessity, some of them at least on a comparatively large scale and with the best possible intentions : but they are all mainly in the direction of the sporadic performance of manuscript works, which are heard but once, go back to their shelves, and are forgotten in a week. Belaieff's policy was to print and purchase such works as were considered by his advisers to deserve publication, and it was only in after-years that he founded special concerts for their performance. Thirty years of experience in directing the studies and watching the subsequent development of composers has only accentuated year by year in increasing force my convictions of the prime necessity of a strong move in the direction I have indicated, if the system and even the fact of training them is to be justified in the eyes of the artistic world by tangible and visible results.

Curiously enough Grove, with all his winning charm and broad mind, never in his heart believed in the creative work of his own country. He was steeped in Beethoven and Schubert, and in later days

guardedly admitted Brahms and fractions of Wagner into his fold. But the long years from 1830 to 1880 were as a millstone round his neck which left their mark upon him. A half-century of barren mediocrity had accustomed him to look abroad for anything and everything. The occasional oases which he sighted only made the desert seem more arid: when the promised land came in sight, he was too old or rather (for he was never old) his opinions were too set, and his consequent prejudices too fixed, to allow him to trust his own eyesight, and he mistook it for a mirage. But this was a trifling defect of judgment in a keen and powerful personality. For singers and singing he had not the same interest as for instrumental music. The singing department at the Royal College was always a trial to him, and the vagaries of some of the vocal pupils were perpetual pin-pricks. He could not understand why attendance at the choral classes should be less regular than at that of the orchestra, a feeling which many of us cordially shared. On one occasion he burst out to Sir Walter Parratt: "Oh! these singers! You may praise them, you may blame them, you may coax them, you may threaten them, you may blarney them, you may curse them . . . *they'll beat you in the end!*"

His multifarious interests kept him in every other respect in perpetual possession of that rare quality, an open mind. His was a nature and a force that had a power of setting men in other walks in life thinking. When he ferreted out the possibility of the existence of another Schubert Symphony, which his own enthusiasm had exalted into a certainty, the

insistence of his pet theory almost roused that most equable of librarians, C. F. Pohl of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna, to active wrath. When I visited Vienna he complained to me bitterly that Grove's statements practically amounted to an accusation of carelessness in the administration of his library.

I spoke of this to Henry Bradshaw on my return, with a hint from myself that "G." had strained his conclusions beyond the justification of his premises. Bradshaw replied that it did not matter if he did; the main point was that it would make people look, and if they did not find what he bargained for, they would probably find in the course of their search something else, perhaps just as important. Such men, he said, kept the world alive. Grove's fascination was extraordinary. I felt it from the first evening I saw him in the Scott Russells' drawing-room in 1864. Nature had made him from the painter's and the sculptor's point of view the reverse of beautiful. His intellect made him more attractive than many an Adonis. His walk was once graphically described to me as one of a man with two left legs and somebody else's arms; but it had more character in it than that of the best-drilled officer of the Guards. Never was Britisher less British. If he got a nasty or a hasty letter from an old friend, he would send it back saying that he would rather not have it, and would wait for a nicer one. He made such hosts of friends that he once wrote me an answer to a request to come and dine at a house where we were staying of which the hosts were unknown to him, saying that he had so many

old friends that he was positively afraid to add more to the number. I don't believe that he had one enemy: if he had, it was certainly the enemy's fault. Costa was once very angry with him, but vented it all upon Sainton. A set of classical concerts were given under Costa's conductorship in the early days of the Crystal Palace. The rehearsals were taken by Sainton, and the Field-Marshal only appeared at the performances. He asked Grove to name any work he would particularly like to hear. Grove asked for Beethoven's Overture to "Coriolan," and Costa ordered it to be put in as the last piece in the programme. He did not know it, and after the concert flew at Sainton, saying, "Tell Grove, I will never play that work again: it ends *pianissimo*!" Grove in his turn fell upon Costa for his tea-garden big drum and cymbals in "Israel in Egypt."

He had a quaint method for suggesting his mild contempt for persons whose vogue was greater than their abilities. It consisted of alluding to them with the prefix of the epithet "old" to their names. The adjective had nothing to do with age, for he applied it to people far younger than himself, but the tone in which it was said always suggested a certain pity for incompetence. Poetry had almost as much attraction for him as music. The little green books, with which from time to time Tennyson enriched the world, were to be seen in his hand within five minutes of publication. He seized me one morning as I came into the College, hurried me into his room, and read to me, with the tears running down his cheeks, the last lines (about Edward Fitzgerald) in "Teiresias." I think

his two special pets were Schubert and Tennyson. He was one of the first to recognize the force and the genius of Rudyard Kipling, and welcomed "Recessional" as a true descendant of the royal line. In a word he was unique: like nobody else in the world, and both from contrast and by personal force one of the most vivid and vivifying influences in English life in general, and in the musical section of it, to which his later years were devoted, in particular. From his opening speech at the College to the day he resigned, he kept the highest ideals steadily before the eyes of every man and woman within its walls, and by his insistence, by example as well as precept, upon general culture, raised the *niveau* of musical education in England to a height to which it had never before attained. This fact alone is a monument to his memory, and to an influence which succeeding generations may find it difficult to emulate but impossible to destroy.

## CHAPTER XV

Tennyson—Irving—Browning—Leighton and Millais—Fred Walker and Thackeray—R. Pendlebury—Church music at Cambridge.

IN the Christmas vacation of 1879 I was saddled with the appalling burthen of examining some thousand papers on music for the local examinations of the University. Knowledge of the art at that time amongst the youth of the country was limited in extent and superficial in quality. The dulness of the process of paper-marking was however relieved by some "howlers" which still live in my memory: notably the names of three oratorios, which were cited in answer to a request for the names of some of the choral works of Handel and Mendelssohn. The three novel titles were "Jacabenus," a portmanteau word for "Judas Maccabæus" and "Jack and the Beanstalk" which was worthy of Lewis Carroll himself, another version of the same oratorio dubbed "Judius Macabeth," and best of all a modest general-servant title of a score, which would only need to be written to command instant success, and even acceptance at the Albert Hall, "Eliza."

I migrated to the Hotel at Freshwater to get some Atlantic air in the intervals of this penal servitude. From my window I saw on the first morning a figure in a large cloak with a broad-brimmed wide-awake pounding up the avenue in the rain and wind, in company with a young man and a grey Irish deer-

hound. It was Tennyson. I had already had experience of his kindness, when I was an unknown student at Leipzig. He had heard of me through his sons, and asked me to write the music for "Queen Mary," when that tragedy was produced by Mrs. Bateman at the Lyceum Theatre. His friendly intentions were defeated at the last moment by the conductor who, as it appeared, desired the commission for himself, and by the manageress who discovered rather late in the day, and after I had been instructed what instruments were available and had scored it accordingly, that there was not sufficient room for the players without sacrificing two rows of stalls. Tennyson privately, and without telling me a word, offered to pay for the loss of the stalls for a certain number of nights, but his offer was refused. When the performance took place, there turned out to be as many players in the orchestra as the score required. It was my first experience (and unhappily not my last) of stage intrigue. Henry Irving, who played Philip, but who had not at that time any voice in the management, was as perturbed about the matter as the poet himself, and took care when "Becket" was produced in 1893 to make more than ample amends for the disappointment.

Irving was the most generous of men. His stage-manager, Loveday, told me one day that when Mrs. Bateman gave up the management of the theatre, Irving, who succeeded her, had to dispense with many of her stage hands and replace them with more efficient successors, but continued to pay everyone of them his full wages. My experience of him was as follows :

I had a visit from genial Bram Stoker, his secretary, who told me that Irving had visited Lord Tennyson a short time before his death in 1892, had arranged to produce "Becket," and that Tennyson had expressed a wish that I should compose the music for it, to which suggestion Irving had warmly agreed.

BRAM STOKER. "Will you undertake it?"

C. V. S. "Nothing would give me greater pleasure."

B. S. "Very well. The Chief dislikes talking business, so will you tell me what your terms will be?"

C. V. S. "No terms. It will be of the greatest interest to me to write it, and if only out of respect and affection for Lord Tennyson, I should not ask for anything."

B. S. "The Chief won't let you do that."

C. V. S. "He will, if you tell him what I say."

B. S. "He will not. I know him. You had better tell me what you think fair."

C. V. S. "If he must, he must. I don't know what to say: you know what he gives other people for such work."

B. S. "Would you accept (for the performance right only of course) two hundred pounds?"

C. V. S. "It's a great deal too much."

B. S. "The Chief won't let you take less."

C. V. S. "He's an impossible man. Well, so be it."

B. S. "Then you are to come down and see him tomorrow morning, and he will go through the points of the play with you."

I go down to the Lyceum Theatre next day, and Irving shows me everything he wants. But at the end of the discussion,

IRVING. "I am much obliged to you for agreeing to the terms Stoker suggested."

C. V. S. "They are a great deal too much."

I. "They are not ; two hundred pounds was it? We'll make it three."

C. V. S. "You will not."

I. "Then you shan't write the music. I mean what I say."

C. V. S. "You're an impossible man!" [Exit.

When the music was delivered, the cheque was for three, not two hundred, and for guineas not pounds. He gave me as many rehearsals as I wanted, and the whole atmosphere of the theatre from the leading actor down to the call-boy was one of consideration, thoroughness, and unruffled temper.

Irving thought "Becket" the finest tragedy since "King John." He played it in my opinion with greater insight and picturesqueness than any of his parts. So imbued was he with the spirit of the play, that an actor-friend of mine who went to see him after a performance and found him sitting in his room in the Archbishop's dress, when he had finished his business, was dismissed (quite genuinely) with a "God bless you" and an uplifted hand accompanying an Episcopal benediction. Irving told me that he never missed coming down behind the curtain to hear the last entr'acte (the funeral march), and curiously enough it must have been the very last note of music which he heard.

As Tennyson was the first to give me a helping hand in 1875 in his first theatrical venture, so his final kindly act was to express a wish that I should be simi-

larly connected with his last tragedy. There never was a more loyal friend. He was seventy when I first saw him on that stormy morning at Freshwater, but the mind was that of a man in his prime, and he had the rare faculty of adapting his age to his surroundings, a boy with boys and a man with men. He knew little about music, but was a past-master in an art which has a vast deal to do with music, declamation. He instinctively felt how words should be set, and his fine ear could detect the slightest slip in an accent, or a stress which was faulty or ill-balanced. I often accompanied him in his clockwork constitutional from eleven till one, and the different personalities of all sorts and kinds in various walks in life, who used to appear at intervals and join the little procession, gave additional interest to our peregrinations over the Downs. Sometimes it was a poet like the deft and delicate William Allingham, or the keen-witted Sir Alfred Lyall; sometimes a broad-minded cleric like Dean Bradley, Jowett, Montagu Butler (now Master of Trinity), or the poet's sunny neighbour Father Hathornwaite, the Roman Catholic priest at Freshwater, whom Tennyson would chaff about the Inquisition and Papal Infallibility without hurting a hair of his head; sometimes a diplomat like Cecil Spring Rice, and in earlier days Lord Dufferin, for whom he had the most warm admiration. If a divine were too obviously clerical, he would shock him sometimes and whisper "I thought that white tie wanted some of the starch to be taken out of it." He came to Trinity once in later life, after his son Lionel's death, and stayed in the College guest-room, visiting his haunts for the last time. The Vice-Master, who

knew that he appreciated good port, unearthed a bottle of the famous '34 for his consumption. Tennyson, after his custom, put it in a tumbler and added hot water, to the horror of his hosts. He heard of their wounded feelings, and charged me to tell them that "Horace mixed water with his Falernian." He once told me of a conversation he had with the late Queen Victoria, which is so touching that it should be put on record. He was walking up and down the terrace at Osborne with her, and was so silent that the Queen asked him what he was thinking about. He said "I was thinking how lonely Your Majesty was up there." "And," he said, "she cried, and I was sorry I had said it, but it was uppermost in my thoughts and out it came."

When he wrote the "Carmen Sæculare" for the Jubilee of 1887, he sent for me and asked me to set it. It was at the Queen's suggestion that he added the final lines (which are the finest in the poem) and he sent me the MS. of the final draft, with the new ending. It was he who suggested its complete performance at Buckingham Palace, when the Queen was paying one of her rare visits to London: and the orchestra and singers so outnumbered the listeners as to suggest the solitary operas given before King Ludwig of Bavaria. The Queen appreciated the humanity of Tennyson as she did that of downright old Adam Sedgwick, the geologist. Sedgwick was the first person she sent for after the death of Prince Consort. What manner of man he was can be gauged from a short and sharp conversation he had on his return to Cambridge from Windsor with the somewhat frivolous and gossiping

wife of the Master of a College whom he met on King's Parade.

FRIVOLOUS MISTRESS. "Oh, Professor Sedgwick, I hear you have been to Court."

SEDGWICK. "To Court? No, Ma'am. I've not been to Court, Ma'am. I've been to visit a Christian woman in her affliction, Ma'am." (*Stalks away.*)

Robert Browning I first met at Cambridge, and afterwards saw many times at Arthur Coleridge's. He was to all superficial observers the very reverse of what his admirers pictured him in their mind's eye. No one who met him without knowing him would have guessed him to be a poet. His matter-of-fact society manner, and his almost dapper appearance, belied the inner fire. His shell was very thick, and his oddly rasping voice gave the impression of its being very hard as well. Leighton had a shell also, but it was of velvety smoothness. I had the good-fortune to penetrate both, especially that of the latter, and to be able to appreciate the concealed force and humanity within. They were both boys, Leighton markedly so. In many ways these two opposite poles closely resembled each other. They had the same detestation of humbug, though their own shells unwittingly gave the unfamiliar and unthinking a hint of that commodity in themselves. Those who had once broken the shell were never again conscious of its existence. Browning shed it when he came to see the "Eumenides" at Cambridge; when his last word to me was a request to use my influence to let him see the "Cyclops" of Euripides before he died. This wish was unfortunately never fulfilled, owing I believe to the ultra-scholarly

hesitation about producing a Greek play with a corrupt text. I venture to think that the drama would succeed in spite of lost words and obscure emendations.

Leighton shed his shell when he came down to the University in 1893; I spent a whole morning in showing him at his request all the nooks and crannies of Cambridge which few visitors trouble about, and even residents are too familiar with to admire. He was a keen and far-sighted critic of music. His visit coincided with that of Tschaikowsky to the University; and though the work of that composer was then an unfamiliar quantity in English ears, Leighton laid his finger on the weak spots in the Russian's armour with unerring judgment. He did not deny a certain picturesqueness to his work though he suspected a tendency to brutality, but he looked upon it as inherently superficial, and more likely to attract most when heard first. This opinion curiously enough was similar to that of one of the most able of American musicians, who told me that the first time he heard the Pathetic Symphony, he thought it was one of the greatest symphonies in musical literature, the second time he felt very uncertain of its real intrinsic value, and after the third time it was worn out for him, and he never wanted to hear it again. Leighton was a devotee of finish, and an inveterate enemy of slovenliness. He carried this conviction to such a pitch that it affected his own work. I always felt that if he had left a picture as it was a week before he considered it finished, it would have been an infinitely more vital work of art. Beautiful complexions do not require enamelling, and he, in his almost excessive devotion to

detail, deceived himself as to the point where finish was complete, and over-elaboration began. Another instance of my stage-manager's dictum "Wenn ein Stück aus ist, es ist aus."

Millais, on the other hand, the incarnation of a hearty John Bull, with his colossal technique and his vivid range of styles, was the very converse of his friend. He needed no shell; his outspoken tongue and sea-breezy temperament told in an instant what the man was made of. Never a thought, much less a word, of jealousy or envy disturbed the close friendship of this great pair. They are a standard example to the artistic world to live and let live. They held out a hand to every rising man who deserved it, and even to some who did not. To visit either of them was to hear in abundance warm appreciation of their colleagues and successors, expressed without stint and without afterthought.

Through Millais, I chanced to learn the true version of an incident concerning Fred Walker and Thackeray, which I had heard from a close friend of Walker's, Watts the translator of "Don Quixote." I will give first Watts's version as Walker described it to him, and afterwards Millais'. Walker in his early days was anxious to get illustrating work, and went to Thackeray to know if he might see him on the subject. When he was shown into Thackeray's room, after a few preliminary words as to what he wanted, his host turned his back upon him at the fireplace and said curtly, "Draw my back." Walker nettled at what he took for extreme rudeness, did so, and told Watts that when Thackeray saw his drawing,

he completely changed his tone, and became most helpful and kindly. Millais had the true version of the story from Thackeray himself. He said that the shy youth came in almost trembling, and hardly able to get a word out. He saw that if he looked at him he would be paralyzed, and hit on the expedient of turning his back on him and asking him to draw it. This put the boy at his ease, and he got the admirable result which he expected from the very look of his face as he entered the room. I told Watts this, and he lamented bitterly that Walker was not alive to know the real truth of the story.

In one of the last of the many talks I had with Leighton, he spoke with the greatest interest of Charles Furse, then a little-known artist, whose work was more smiled upon at Munich than at Burlington House. It was just after his small portrait of Lord Roberts had been hung at the Academy, in the same year that G. F. Watts exhibited "The Rich Man who had Many Possessions." I had gone through the galleries with Piatti, the great violoncellist, who was one of the soundest critics of painting, and had as an unerring eye for engravings and drawings as for the maker and authenticity of a violin. When we had finished our inspection, Piatti said "There are two pictures in the Academy which will live, Watts's 'Rich Man' and Furse's 'Lord Roberts.'" He remarked how Watts had succeeded so admirably in surmounting what Apelles considered the greatest difficulty to a painter, suggesting the expression of a face which is turned away: and he pointed out the why and wherefore of the solid "old master" feeling

of Furse's small canvas. Leighton was highly impressed by this work; he knew of Furse's diatribes against Royal Academy methods and begged me to bring him to see him, saying "Tell him I won't bite his head off, and I am sure he will not bite off mine." Unfortunately Furse's illness, which obliged him to go abroad for change of climate, prevented this most interesting meeting between Leighton and the descendant of Sir Joshua Reynolds's sister.

Furse was in the Transvaal soon after the Jameson Raid, and painted a sketch of the field from the English position. When he took it at Kruger's request to show it to him, Kruger was too ignorant of the laws of perspective to understand why the English close by should be bigger than the Boers in the distance, and rebuked him for not painting his warriors on the same scale as the painter's countrymen. Furse's description of the Boer President's habitat was most picturesque. He sat in a long gallery-like room, the floor was covered with a brilliant Maple carpet, and a circle of chairs was set round the fire, occupied by old Boers, who were as broad as they were long, all smoking "Mein Heer van Dunck"-like pipes; their end of the carpet having degenerated owing to their Hannibal Chollop-like habits, from blazing scarlet flowers into a dark surface, shining and greasy enough to suggest a strip of ancient and fish-like linoleum.

The catholicity of Leighton's taste and powers was more reflected in his work than the casual observer is aware of. He not only valued the best qualities of so-called impressionism, but could paint an impres-

sionist picture if he liked. There is at least one in existence, a landscape in Algiers, which is so unlike his familiar style as to baffle the cleverest expert. He only hated a sort of impressionism which was an excuse for weakness or sloppiness of drawing, or was used as a cloak for inferior technique. He never mentioned to me the post-impressionist craze, although there is little doubt that he saw the first-fruits of it in Paris, when as far back as 1894-95 the same pictures (*sic*) were exhibited there, which worked their way by force of notoriety to the Grafton Galleries some fifteen years later. The repertoire of these gentry was small, and when I saw the collection in London it was not substantially different from or larger than that which I had visited with Maurice Bouchor in Paris. Leighton, who was alive to every novelty, might quite easily have seen it, but it is not surprising that it did not call for his comment any more than other negligible freaks. Happily perhaps for himself he did not live long enough to see how the power of till-filling can be developed by well-advertised ugliness, and organic pictorial disease. As a figure-head Leighton was unsurpassable. During his Presidency I sat next Burne Jones at an Academy dinner, and B. J. burst out suddenly, "Look at him! Look at Jupiter Olympus! Who on earth can ever succeed him?" I sometimes wonder that it never entered into the head even of the unimaginative governments of this country to follow the precedent of Rubens, and make him an ambassador. He had all the equipment for such a post at his fingers' ends; spoke German,

French and Italian like a native, even so far as to be an adept at foreign slang, and was a born diplomat with an iron hand in his velvet glove. His death was almost as great a loss to the art of music as to his own. His active sympathy with every musician of high aim and sincerity of purpose brought together the two professions in closer relations than they had ever experienced before. He set thereby an example which was followed by many of his brethren to the great mutual advantage of both branches of the artistic world.

In the smaller world of Cambridge the bequest of Lord Fitzwilliam had furthered a similar good work. The Fitzwilliam Museum, which he founded, contained treasures of music even more valuable than those of the sister art. Priceless manuscripts of Henry Purcell, Handel and the early Italian masters were placed within reach of students, and the initiative of the founder was carried on by Mr. Pendlebury, a famous Senior Wrangler and Fellow of St. John's, who presented the museum with a practically complete collection of the works (in full score) of modern masters, a roomful of treasures which he took care to keep complete by annual additions up to the end of his life. Pendlebury's researches in the course of forming his library were so thorough and world-wide, that he was probably the first man in this country to discover the modern Russian School, and the shelves of the collection contain all the important early works of Tschaikowsky, which he sent to Russia to acquire as far back as the seventies. He was a silent quiet enthusiast, devoted to problems, music, and the

Alps. He climbed Monte Rosa from the Italian side, had his head split open by a falling rock, and came back, so covered up with bandages as to be unrecognizable, to comfort himself with a full score by his own fire. His favourite instrument was the double-bass, and in order to play as little out of tune as possible he accurately measured out distances and cut depressions on the finger-board to guide him to the desired notes.

In the department of Church music it was not possible to effect much at Cambridge either in the way of reviving the best of the old or of producing the best of the new. Sporadically an old masterpiece of Gibbons or Purcell would creep in, but the humdrum policy of a deep-set conservatism stood as a brick wall to keep out progress in one direction and education in the other. The ideals of Deans were that "the daily round, the common task (of repeating old chestnuts) should furnish all we ought to ask." No amount of persuasive eloquence, that the youth of England ought to hear the finest English work or get the advantage of knowing what the best masters of the Cathedral School of this country could accomplish, made the least impression. An unknown Gibbons anthem was looked on as providing a possible excuse for non-attendance at Chapel. The principle was to attract with "bright" services: "brightness" too often being synonymous with "tinsel." The organ-loft however sometimes welcomed very interesting guests. My only meeting with Charles Darwin was there, when he came up to hear some Bach, and beamed upon the music with his kindly smile and marvellous eyes. Another visitor was Baron Bram-

well, who disliked church-going but was devoted to music. He was on circuit with Mr. Justice Denman, and was staying at the Lodge (which is a Royal Residence, and therefore used as the Judges' Lodgings). Thompson had had his little joke at Bramwell's expense in the afternoon, when Denman had explained that he was going alone to the University sermon (a function which the Judges of Assize customarily attended), saying that his brother Bramwell had looked up precedents and found that it was sufficient if one of them was present in state. Denman added that "we are both of one mind in the matter."

THOMPSON. "May I ask if you are both also of one soul?"

Bramwell's one expressed wish to me was not to play him any Bach, for the reason that he "preferred Offenbach to Bach often." I believe that Arthur Coleridge, who was a great friend of his, inveigled him once into going to hear the B minor Mass, and that finished off the Judge, as far as Bach was concerned, for good and all.

Another distinguished visitor was Dvořák, who was nearly driven crazy by the chanting of the psalms, which he thought simply a barbarous repetition of a poor tune. One of my most picturesque and dignified guests was François Devouassoud, the famous Alpine guide who accompanied Mr. Douglas Freshfield upon most of his mountaineering expeditions: a tall, handsome, solidly built figure of a man, to whom the most nervous giddy head would trust itself with a sense of complete security. I played for him the big Toccata in C major of Bach, whether well or ill I forget; but the compli-

ment he paid me at the close gives the idea of the grace and finished courtesy of this nature's gentleman. I translate the French, and unfortunately thereby rob the sentence of its native charm. "If, Monsieur, you were to climb an ice-slope as easily as you play those pedals, you would be the first mountaineer in Europe!"

## CHAPTER XVI

Hamburg in 1884—Richter at Birmingham—Vienna—The Bach Festival at Eisenach—Leeds in 1886—Ireland in the Early Eighties.

IN the spring of 1884 I went to Hamburg at the invitation of Pollini, (the manager of the Stadt-Theater), and of Josef Sucher, the conductor, to be present at the first performance of my opera "Savonarola," which was to be produced on the occasion of the conductor's benefit. The performance was careful and admirable in every detail. The title-part was sung by Ernst, whose stage appearance was an exact reproduction of the well-known portrait, and the cast included three artists well known at Baireuth, Frau Sucher, Krauss and Landau. If I had been a born Hamburger I could not have met with greater kindness than I was shown by everyone concerned. Riccius, the veteran critic and friend of Schumann, asked me to his house, and was as interesting and helpful in his arm-chair as he was a week afterwards in print. A more unprejudiced and judicially minded writer I could not imagine. His fault-finding was as good as a lesson from a first-rate master, and his praise correspondingly valuable. His two other colleagues, Armbrust (the doyen of Hamburg organists) and Krause, a first-rate blind musician, were in their way as knowledgeable and as courteous. Pollini was not wrong when he told me that the Musical Press of Hamburg was the most independent and the most able in Germany.

"We are on velvet here with such critics," was his comment. I had to return immediately to London for the *première* of my "Canterbury Pilgrims," which was excellently given by Carl Rosa at Drury Lane.

Rosa, the best friend whom English Opera ever had, who came nearer to establishing it on a permanent basis than any other manager, was carrying out a policy of encouraging British work for the stage, and had begun by producing Goring Thomas's "Esmeralda" and Mackenzie's "Colomba." A first-rate man of business, he had perforce to keep a careful eye on the main chance. The London Press was at best patronizing in its tone, and was under the control of ancients who were wedded by long custom to the Italian régime. One of these was a writer who was the reverse of English both in race and in methods; he rivalled a Berlin writer whom von Bülow wittily destroyed with an epigram: "Der T—— ist für so wenig bestechlich, dass er beinahe an die Unbestechlichkeit grenzt" (T—— is bribable for so small a sum, that he almost borders upon the unbribable). His London counterpart, whom I had fortunately been warned against years before by my father, had put out tentacles in my direction which I ignored, and as a consequence conducted a campaign against both the "Canterbury Pilgrims" and "Savonarola," when the latter opera was given, with maimed rights, a bearded hero, insufficient rehearsals and incompetent stage-management, at Covent Garden in the summer. In addition the owner of the libretto having refused to allow it to be sold in the theatre, the public knew nothing of its meaning in a foreign tongue, and I

scarcely recognized the opera I had seen at Hamburg a few weeks before. (A legal "draughtsman" summed up the situation in the annexed sketch.)



*Performance of the music of Savonarola  
"in perfect silence, - so far as words are  
"concerned" -*

*June 1884*

This cleverly unscrupulous critic worked his caucus well; but he sometimes made a slip even when eulogizing those whom he took under his wing. On one occasion, in the course of an article upon Arthur

Sullivan, he wrote a (probably mythical) account of an (equally fabulous) interview in former days with that genial composer : couching part of it in queer scriptural language. He told how Sullivan once drove up to his door in a neat brougham (I wonder he did not describe it as a fiery chariot) and came into his room bearing a bunch of early asparagus. "Here," said Arthur Sullivan, "is some asparagus which I have just received from abroad. I have made me three portions, one for my mother, one for myself, and the third I bring you." This paragraph suggested an epigram, the writing of which was too tempting to resist.

"In times of ancient Greece, the bean  
Was made forbidden fare,  
In case the spirit of a friend  
Had transmigrated there.  
Some latter-day philosophers  
Profess a faith analogous ;  
The spirit of a five-pound note  
May lurk within asparagus."

*L. E. loquitur.*

"A bribe in vegetable guise  
Is surely not a sin,  
Conveyed in language Biblical,  
And innocent of tin."

*THE PUBLIC loquitur.*

"Where fools might hesitate to tread,  
An Engel rushes in."

The gentleman had, as was not unanticipated, to rush out not long after, and to seek security from the English Law in a French attic. The late Canon Ainger very properly rebuked me for rhyming "analogous" to "asparagus," but admitted that even Byron, the discoverer of rhymes to "Jehoshaphat"

and "Sennacherib," would have found it difficult to hit on any better word for the purpose.

In 1885 the Birmingham Festival authorities secured a successor to Costa (who died the previous year) in Hans Richter, who remodelled the orchestra, rectified the balance of strings and wind, and made the programmes of the evening concerts, which had mostly consisted of a farrago of operatic airs and selections, as artistically interesting as those of the morning. This Festival set an example of sufficient rehearsal and preparation, and of the selection throughout of worthy music, which has since been followed by all other gatherings of the kind. A comparison between the second part of an evening Festival Concert at Leeds in 1858 under Costa, and at Birmingham in 1897 under Richter, will show the progress which was made in forty years. The principles of selection of the type of 1858 ruled unchallenged until 1885, when such a conglomeration of unsuitabilities became for ever impossible.

## LEEDS FESTIVAL OF 1858.

|                                  |     |     |                    |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|--------------------|
| Overture in D major ...          | ... | ... | <i>J. S. Bach.</i> |
| Song, "Phœbe Dearest" ...        | ... | ... | <i>Hatton.</i>     |
| Duo "Lasciami" ("Tancredi") ...  | ... | ... | <i>Rossini.</i>    |
| Aria, "Convien partir" ...       | ... | ... | <i>Donizetti.</i>  |
| Fantasia for Pianoforte ...      | ... | ... | <i>Thalberg.</i>   |
| Brindisi, "Il segreto" ...       | ... | ... | <i>Donizetti.</i>  |
| Song, "As burns the charger" ... | ... | ... | <i>Shield.</i>     |
| Duo, "Quanto amore" ...          | ... | ... | <i>Donizetti.</i>  |
| Aria, "Non più andrai" ...       | ... | ... | <i>Mozart.</i>     |
| Ballad, "The Green Trees" ...    | ... | ... | <i>Balfe.</i>      |
| Prayer from "Mosè in Egitto" ... | ... | ... | <i>Rossini.</i>    |
| Overture to "Oberon" ...         | ... | ... | <i>Weber.</i>      |

Imagine John Sebastian looking down from the Elysian fields on his name figuring at the head of this olla podrida of rubbish, and comforting Weber with the assurance that he left a good taste in the mouth of such audience as was left him, or which was not too busy finding its hats and coats to listen: Mozart meanwhile rubbing his hands that he only kept the public waiting three minutes before it got back to its Balfe. Compare this with the

## BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL OF 1895.

|                                     |     |     |                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------|
| Overture, Leonore, No. 3            | ... | ... | <i>Beethoven.</i> |
| Scena, "Ocean, thou mighty monster" | ... | ... | <i>Weber.</i>     |
| Variations on a theme of Haydn      | ... | ... | <i>Brahms.</i>    |
| Liebeslied from the "Walküre"       | ... | ... | <i>Wagner.</i>    |
| Overture, "Medea"                   | ... | ... | <i>Cherubini.</i> |

The appointment of Richter at Birmingham caused a certain amount of heart-burning amongst some English musicians, but the crying need for reform necessitated the leadership of an exceptionally strong man, who could speak with European authority; for the Birmingham Festival was as important in its way as the Festival of the Lower Rhine, and as such affected our musical position amongst other nations. Apart from his great gifts as a conductor, his power of getting the best work out of his orchestral players, of saving time, and of minimizing grumbles was invaluable at such a moment; he was too international in his tastes and policy to justify any permanent feeling of grievance on the ground of patriotism. The appointment at this crisis turned out to be no hindrance but rather a great help to English music and English artists alike.

After the Festival I visited him at Vienna, and saw many of the musicians, amongst others Rokitansky, the witty son-in-law of Lablache. I made also my first near acquaintance with Brahms, who lived in the Carlgasse, No. 4, in a house now (of course) pulled down.\* I sat with him through a dress rehearsal of "Alceste" at the Opera. He was much tickled by a conversation I had had the previous year with the landlord of my hotel, the "Matschakerhof" in the Seilergasse. In the old Viennese hotels there are two dining-rooms, one on the ground floor, and one on the first. The food is identical, but the price is higher upstairs. Beethoven used to eat his midday dinner in the lower dining-room of this house, and I thought I would find out if the landlord knew of this historically interesting fact. I got my opportunity on the stairs one day.

C. V. S. "Do you know that Beethoven used to eat his dinner in there?" (*pointing out the room*).

LANDLORD (*puzzled*). "Beethoven? Beethoven? I don't know the name at all."

C. V. S. "Surely you know Beethoven, the great composer."

LANDLORD (*with a sudden spurt of memory*). "Oh, yes! I know the gentleman. Der Herr ist verreist" (The gentleman has left).

C. V. S. "Yes, I know. He left in 1827."

This interview I related to a number of the orchestral players, who were dining together at the Erz-Herzog Carl, and by a curious coincidence when I

\* The account of my first visit to Brahms I have described in "Studies and Memories," p. 112 *et seq.*

returned to Vienna in 1885 I picked up in the same room a copy of the *Leipzig Signale*, containing the whole story in quite correct terms, but ascribing the experience (of course) to another person, like the fate which befell the sayings of Thompson.

After visiting Vienna in 1884 I went on to the Festival at the unveiling of the Bach statue at Eisenach. It was a most interesting concourse of Sebastian lovers which gathered in the little picturesque Thuringian town. Two concerts were given in the church opposite to which the statue stands. One was devoted to the B minor Mass, and the other had a miscellaneous programme. The orchestra came from Meiningen and from Berlin; the chorus was local and extremely resonant and intelligent. Joachim conducted and played the Chaconne. Weimar sent a large contingent of artists to the ceremony, headed by Liszt, whose first greeting with Joachim after years of estrangement (consequent upon the 1860 manifesto) I witnessed at close quarters. Herr and Frau von Milde, Joachim and Liszt stood in one group. The first Telramund, the first Elsa, the first concert-meister, and the first conductor of the first performance of "Lohengrin." So the Wagnerians and anti-Wagnerians sunk their differences under the shadow of Sebastian Bach, tramped up in the afternoon to the scene of Tannhäuser's and Wolfram's songs, and looked across the valley at the Venusberg. When the date of the unveiling ceremony was fixed, the committee discovered that two old Miss Bachs of the same family as the Cantor were still living in Thuringia, and invited them to be present. But the old ladies replied

that they had never heard of such a person as Sebastian Bach, and that there must be some mistake. Spitta himself was unable to convince them of the fact.

I was able to compare the singing of the Thuringian chorus with that of the Birmingham and Leeds Festivals of 1885 and 1886. The mass of tone in England was greater, but the colour, word-declamation, and preservation of pitch were then (happily now no longer) superior at Eisenach. The chorus trainer at Leeds, James Broughton, who had brought his singers to a high pitch of excellence, had become an invalid and retired. His successor was not built on the same lines, and had not the same force, or control over his material. After the first performance of the "Revenge," in which the chorus fell once or twice slightly and were not dead sure of their intonation, I met James B. in the lobby, who said, with tears in his eyes, "To think that my children should lose their pitch like that!" I comforted him as much as I could by pointing out the passages in which they excelled, and the difficulties of getting four hundred singers to declaim a ballad written in an unfamiliar style. Broughton, who was a thorough Yorkshireman, rough and ready in speech, had most refined tastes and was an indefatigable curio-hunter. His small house was a veritable museum; so numerous were his watches and clocks, so delicate his china, and so space-consuming his antique bedsteads and hutches that it was scarcely possible to turn round without destroying some fragile work of art.

My host was a generous, large-hearted amateur, Walker Joy, who had been one of the prime movers in the foundation of the Festival of 1858. He told me

many anecdotes of his difficulties in dealing with the Committee of that time, who were mainly composed of business magnates, with little or no artistic sensibilities. When the conductor's and singers' fees were being hotly discussed, there was a general *idée fixe* that they might be offered guineas, but given pounds, the odd shillings to be considered as commission. Joy had some trouble in making them see that Sterndale Bennett would neither understand nor appreciate this local custom: still less foreigners like Piccolomini and Alboni. Joachim was present as Bennett's guest at the Festival, but though he frequently played at chamber concerts in the town in after-years, his first appearance at a Festival was in 1901. Walker Joy was devoted to organs and organ-building. He was Schulze's right-hand man when that master erected the organs at Doncaster and Leeds Parish Churches. His description of Schulze's ways and methods recalled the type of German who made Nuremberg famous in old days. Even his form of liquid nourishment was medieval, and to the modern working-man unthinkable: light Rhine wine, mixed with hot water and brown sugar. While building the Leeds organ, he got a telegram telling him of his wife's death. Joy found him working away with the tears rolling down his cheeks, but, he said, his return to Germany could not bring her to life again, and he would not desert his loved organ.

He built another fine instrument for Mr. Kennedy, a great lover of organs and a keen Alpine climber, who not infrequently ate his Christmas dinner on Mont Blanc. Kennedy built a special barn-like outhouse for

this organ. When it was completed he had a surprise visit from S. S. Wesley, who travelled north to see it. After dinner Wesley asked for the key of the outhouse, locked himself in and played away, leaving his host to hear as much as he could through the cracks of the door, and went off the next morning at cock-crow. This organ eventually found a home at Armley Church, where Joy had it rebuilt and restored with loving care. Another instrument which Schulze built for Charterhouse School, I was happily able, with Joy's help, to rescue from the scrap-heap, to which a modern firm, who had been consulted, wished to consign it in favour of one of their own make; following thereby the example of the Durham Cathedral authorities and their destruction of Father Smith's organ in favour of a brand-new one. Such vandalism, said Joy, was only comparable to lighting the fire with a Stradivarius. The generosity of this typical North Countryman was unbounded, but he hid his light under a bushel. He was one of the chief financial supporters of the choir in Leeds Parish Church in the days of Dr. Hook and Dr. Woodford, but would pretend that he only "paid for the washing of the surplices." He nursed S. S. Wesley through the severe illness from which he suffered after breaking his leg while fishing, and was one of the very few with whom that cantankerous genius never quarrelled. Music in the North never had a better friend.

During the troublous years in the early eighties which came to a climax in the Phoenix Park murders, I had paid a few visits to Ireland. The developments which followed this crime came very near home to me,

from an incident which closely affected my mother. She lived in Fitzwilliam Square, and had let her stables to a most respectable cab-proprietor who was wont to keep his cab at a stand at the corner of the square, from which the whole length of Fitzwilliam Street was visible. Mr. Justice Lawson, who with Forster and others was the most threatened man in Dublin, lived on the East side of the street, and used to start on foot every morning at 10.30 or so to walk to the Four Courts. One morning the cab-driver saw a doubtful-looking person pacing up and down opposite Lawson's house, and guessed that he was up to mischief. He proved to have good reason for his suspicions. Shortly afterwards Lawson came out, and as he started towards Merrion Square the man shadowed him. But the cabman left his cab to chance, and followed them picking up a policeman as he went. Just as Lawson was passing Kildare Street Club, the assassin rushed at him with a knife, and was just seized in time by his two pursuers. The knife turned out to be one of the same make and pattern as those used in the Phoenix Park, and helped to convict the murderers. Shortly after, the cabman came to my mother and told her that he had been bombarded with so many threatening letters that he would have to leave the country, and she got up a private subscription to start him and his family in Canada.

I had many talks about this crisis with Lord Justice Murphy, who was then Crown Prosecutor. He gave me a most terribly dramatic account of one day in the preliminary inquiry at the Police Court. The dock was filled with a row of the accused, in the centre of

which stood Carey and at the end Brady. At the far end from Brady was the witness-box, which was a chair, placed upon the Counsel's table below the dock. Every day the prisoners laughed and chaffed, knowing as well as Murphy did that the evidence so far available was not sufficiently conclusive. The moment came on the morning when in the midst of their usual hilariousness the row of conspirators became aware that Carey was not there. There was a sudden silence which could be felt. Murphy, who was sitting close to the witness-chair, saw Brady quietly changing places with each of his neighbours in turn and working his way silently to his end of the dock. When he arrived opposite the witness-chair, Murphy rose and asked the Magistrate for a special reason to have the witness-chair removed to the other end of the table. Brady at once leaned over and said to him: "You were right to do that, Sir; I was going to break his neck over the edge of the dock." "And he would have done it too," said Murphy, "for a more magnificent specimen of muscular humanity I never saw, nor a finer fellow with a more open honest face; only a prey to morbid fanaticism and distorted patriotism." He told me that he ascertained that Brady, when driving away from the scene of the murder, kept saying: "I *am* sorry I had to kill that other gentleman," meaning Lord Frederick Cavendish. Not long after this appalling crisis, there was a rapid revulsion to comparative quiet. The odd mixture of feeling amongst the lower classes was exactly voiced by a car-driver who drove Hans Richter through the Phoenix Park in after-years. As the outside car passed the spot, the jarvey leaned down to

Richter, pointed with his whip, and said: "That's where the little accident was, Sir." Richter's astonished reply was "Grossartig!"

But for all the tragedy, the humorous Irish withers were unwrung; laughter and tears, as ever, were close together. I was, a short time after, holding an examination in Dublin where players of the national instrument, the harp, were largely represented. Two rough fellows of the baser sort brought the harp into the room, and I, wishing to see if they could be drawn, said to them "I see the harp, but where's the crown?" The answer came like lightning, accompanied by a real Hibernian wink, "It's the *half-crown* we want." And this repartee was quickly followed by another. In my list, the surnames of examinees were placed first, and the Christian names second. It was one of the rules that examiners should ask the name of the candidate on his or her entering the room. One name which attracted my attention from its unfamiliarity was entered, "De Vine, Annie." When the bearer of this patronymic entered the room, I saw from her face that she had humour and gently asked "Are you De Vine Annie, or are you Annie De Vine?" Immediate answer (*in a soft brogue*) "You'll be able to tell that after you have heard me play!"

## CHAPTER XVII

The Queen's Jubilee in 1887—The Irish Symphony—Hans von Bülow—Dvořák.

THE year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, 1887, was a memorable one for all sorts and conditions of Britons. It brought this island into a closer touch with the rulers of other nations than it had experienced since the beginning of the century. Men saw with their eyes the ideal incarnation of Lohengrin riding down the London streets, the tragic figure of the German Crown Prince, and a crowd of other Kings to come, all doing honour to a lady, smaller than any of her guests in stature, but head and shoulders above them all in experience and in large-hearted sympathy. She ranked first in dignity, in the charm of her smile and in the clearness and beauty of her speaking voice. I met Manuel Garcia during the second Jubilee in 1897; he was then ninety-two, running upstairs with a lighter foot than most men of thirty-five, and with a mind as alert and as young as his physique. I said to him that he ought to round off the celebrations by going down to Windsor and giving the Queen a singing lesson (she still could sing with the purity of voice and intonation of which Mendelssohn wrote in 1842). Garcia answered "That would not do, for I never taught her. Lablache was her master. But I *should* like to go down and teach her how to live to ninety-two."

The Royal College Orchestra was commanded to go down to Windsor and give a concert after one of the banquets. One of the professors, who held pronounced republican opinions, sorely disgusted Grove by insisting on wearing a black tie, and would not even admit that the same courtesy should be shown to the Queen as was due to any lady at an evening party in her own house. But I observed with some amusement that he did not turn his back on the late King of Denmark when he came up and talked to him, but rather enjoyed the distinction so much that his republican tenets went by the board. The orchestra was about seventy-five strong, and when we arrived in the dark at the Castle we were directed to an entrance which led into a perfect labyrinth of passages. Grove headed the procession, and began by making for a likely-looking door which landed us in the kitchen. He was equal to the occasion, smiled round upon the army of white-capped officials, and ejaculating "Too many cooks," fled from the sacred precincts. We were eventually shepherded into a drawing-room, where the band occupied nearly half the space. The voices of the guests were soon heard approaching, the door was thrown open and the Queen came in. She gave one look at us, turned round, made a sweeping gesture with her arm, summoned an equerry (who looked very uncomfortable at what she confided to him) and departed. We were promptly ordered out again, and with a swiftness which would have done credit to Aladdin's Djinn, we found ourselves in an adequate space in the Waterloo Chamber. Grove's delight at the welcome change was as great as his misery had been a few minutes before at our having

to play in a room which would have been roofless after the first chord. The concert opened with an overture which was a great test for the audience, Beethoven's "Coriolan," for during the opening bars there are several pauses and silences. The back rows were not prepared for these cessations of sound, and the Babel of conversation which had gained in volume during the *fortissimo* chords was caught at its loudest each time. The memory of Liszt and the Czar crossed my mind, but even Liszt would have been nonplussed that evening: he would have had to say to the audience, "Quand la Reine se tait, tout le monde doit se taire." The greatest personality in the room gave an example of reverence for the art, which might well have been followed. I wondered if Lablache had ever confided to his Royal pupil the blow which he struck at the ostracism of artists in society houses, which finally abolished such invidious distinctions. At his first private engagement at Apsley House, he saw, as he went up to sing, a rope stretched between the platform and the guests. He lifted up his giant foot and kicked it over. It was never replaced.

The society functions at the Castle very nearly imperilled the first performance (under Richter) of my Irish Symphony. At the last moment several of the best players in the Richter orchestra, who were also members of the Queen's band, were ordered down to Windsor: and if it had not been for the unique sight-reading powers of their deputies and for Richter's vigilant eye, the difficulties of the work might well have brought about a catastrophe. But happily, no flaw was observable. The performance of this symphony

led to my making my first acquaintance with one of the most remarkable men, if not the most remarkable man, in the world of contemporary music, Hans von Bülow. Joachim suggested my sending him the score. He answered in a characteristic letter, which his polyglot pen wrote in French.\* He had just accepted the conductorship of the Berlin Philharmonic. He pointed out the difficulties in the way of a performance, "une formidable concurrence pour les 'novelties' de la part des compositeurs indigènes, lesquels profitent de la très regrettable tendance actuelle du 'chauvinisme' pour protester contre mes principes cosmopolitiques en matière d'art," and therefore could make no promises. I heard no more for months and assumed that the matter was forgotten and dropped.

In the following January I heard accidentally through a friend that the symphony was to be given at Hamburg in a few days. I had had no word from von Bülow, but I packed my bag and made straight for the Elbe, arriving late on the night before the rehearsal. Mr. Walter Ford (who came from Berlin to meet me) and I found out the concert-room, went "on the sly" after breakfast, and ensconced ourselves in the dark under the gallery. Hans was hard at work on the symphony. Whether it was second sight or brain-wave I know not, but we had not been there for a few minutes before he turned round, peered into the dark recesses at the back of the room, and called out my name. He had not heard a syllable about my coming. The Hamburg performance was intended by him as a trial

\* This letter will be found in the seventh volume of von Bülow's Letters, No. 122.

trip for Berlin, where he had almost arranged for its production a week or two later. After the concert he told me that it was in the Berlin programme, and asked me to remain in Germany for it. It was not until the last volume of his Letters was published that I knew how consistently and perpetually he had bombarded the Berlin authorities to include it. In the course of reading these highly entertaining missives I happened upon one which proves up to the hilt the innate kindness and thoughtfulness of the man, even for an artist whom he had never seen. The Irish Symphony and Brahms' E minor Symphony (No. 4) were written simultaneously. The slow movement of Brahms' work begins with a phrase which is note for note identical with a passage in the slow movement of mine. But the passage



is from an old Irish lament in Petrie's MSS. In October, 1887, von Bülow wrote to Wolff the agent in Berlin "Brahms No. 4 E moll spukt ein klein wenig darin—doch ist die Reminiscenz im Adagio vom Componisten—im Vorwort—als eine nationale Melodie bezeichnet, *worauf O. E. aufmerksam zu machen wäre*" ("Brahms No. 4. E minor, haunts it a tiny bit—but the reminiscence in the Adagio is pointed out by the composer in the prefatory note as a National melody. — *O. E. ought to have his attention called to this,*" the italics are mine). O. E. was Otto Eichberg, a prominent critic in the Berlin Press. Such was the

thoughtful care of the conductor for a young composer.

While at Hamburg I went with him to see a performance of "Figaro," whereat he railed, and said, "What we want in Germany is not a 'Busstag' but a 'Bussjahr' [all the theatres are closed on the Busstag, or fast day]; then the singers would have time to forget all their parts, and would have to learn them all over again." His quick eye saw the face of a young man in the audience whom he pointed out to me as Richard Strauss, and he told me of his "Don Juan" which had just been written. "He will interest you," he said, "I will catch him between the acts." He did so and introduced him in these words: "This is Strauss, *not* the waltz king! Ein geschickter Kerl, geht aber viel zu weit!" The last sentence with a touch of humorous irony, delivered straight at his friend. I went on with him to Berlin, where he amazed me by conducting both the rehearsals and the performance from memory. I asked him how on earth he could do it, and he would only say "Good for the newspapers."

George Osborne told me one extraordinary instance of his demoniac power of memorizing. He met him in Bond Street opposite Lamborn Cocks's music-shop, and Bülow said he was going down to give a recital the same evening at Brighton.

OSBORNE. "Of course you are going to play something of Sterndale Bennett's?"

VON BÜLOW. "Why?"

O. "It's his birthday."

v. B. "I don't know anything of his, tell me something."

O. "We are at his publisher's door. Come in and choose for yourself."

v. B. (*Turns over several pieces and picks out "The Lake," "The Mill Stream," and "The Fountain."*) "I will play those."

He learnt them by heart in the train and played them from memory in the evening. The fact that he did so was vouched for to me by a musician then resident in Brighton, the late Dr. Sawyer, who was at the concert. His wit, like his appearance, was that of a Frenchman rather than that of a German. It never failed him either in repartee or on paper.

Dannreuther told me of the torture he went through for a brief moment when von Bülow came to a party at his house. A lady asked her host to introduce her to the great man, and began her conversation with the question, "Oh! Monsieur von Bülow, vous connaissez Monsieur Wagner, n'est ce pas?" While the drops of perspiration were bursting out on Dannreuther's forehead, Bülow made a low bow and answered without a sign of surprise, "Mais oui, Madame, c'est le mari de ma femme." At an orchestral concert in St. James's Hall he sat down to rehearse a Beethoven Concerto. After the opening *tutti*, he did not begin, and everyone was agog to see what would happen. He solemnly walked up to the conductor's desk, removed his full score and replaced it with the piano part which was lying beside him.

The stories of his wars with Count von Hülsen, the Intendant of the Court Opera House at Berlin, give many instances of his caustic and drastic tongue and pen. The campaign began after a performance of

the "Prophète," conducted I believe by Deppe (a musician whom H. v. B. christened the Prince of Deppe-Litmold), the sloppiness of which roused his ire. Before a pianoforte recital which he gave next day, he addressed the audience, saying that he had the previous evening visited the Circus Hülsen and after his experience of the playing of the March, he thought it only fair to Meyerbeer to begin his recital with a proper rendering of it. He was immediately called upon by the Government officials to apologize in the Press. He did so with alacrity, but the apology took the form of an expression of regret, not to von Hülsen, but to Messrs. Renz and Wolff (the proprietors of two famous Circuses in Berlin) for having compared their excellent entertainment to the Court Opera. The next move in this Gilbertian battle was his removal from the honorary position of Hof-Pianist (Court Pianist). He answered this by putting upon his visiting card "Hans von Bülow, Volks-Pianist" (People's Pianist).

On the next occasion that he visited the Opera the Count had him summarily ejected by the attendants; but the satirical musician got the better of him again, not by word of mouth, but by opening a pianoforte recital next day (which was crammed by people expecting some reprisals) with the opening bars of Figaro's song,

"Se vuol ballare, Signor Contino,  
Il chitarrino le suonerò."

The whole audience took the joke, and roared with laughter which was echoed all over Berlin in a few hours.

Von Bülow's epistolary style was as original as his nature. When he wrote in English, he was just as vivid and amusing as in his own language, and he delighted in grubbing up words which are to be found in the Oxford Dictionary, but are quite unfamiliar to the average English ear. One letter, which he wrote to me shortly after the death of the two Emperors of Germany, is well worth printing as a specimen. I had asked him if he would pay us a visit at Cambridge in the summer of 1888, and give a pianoforte recital for the Musical Society, and had inquired if he would tell us precisely what his professional terms would be. This was his reply :

“ DEAR SIR,

“ HAMBURG,

“ *March 13, 1888.*

“ *Illustrissimo !*

“ A few hours after your kind note I received also the three piano scores you announced. Accept my hearty thanks for the friendly record you kept of the German conductor of the Irish Symphony.

“ In spite of the general funeralism I must start to-morrow morning for Berlin to prepare the next Philharmonic Concert accordingly to the exceptional circumstances. Whilst travelling I shall read your melodrams\* which most highly excite my interest.

“ As for my trip to London nothing as yet is definitively fixed. In no case I would come before the 1st of June, the month of birds, cats and poets being devoted to the cure of my neuralgias at Wiesbaden.

“ I should feel most happy if during my stay in L., I could be of any use to the ears of your residence.

\* They were the scores of the music to the Greek Plays.

Please dispose of my ten fingers—and do not mind your treasurer's nightmares. A visit to Cambridge would not be 'matter of business' for your

“ Most sincere admirer,

“ HANS V. BÜLOW.

“ Will you kindly excuse the involuntary laconisms of this line ?”

He came and played in King's College Hall a programme which was chosen (at his request) by Parry and myself. We sent the pieces, but not in order of performance as he thought. The first on the list was a work of Chopin. His answer was that to begin a concert with Chopin was like “preluding to a dinner by Rhubarb-pie.” This, like most of his funniest quips, was in a postscript. Another specimen I possess is couched as follows :—

“ Please don't shoot the organist : he is 'doing his best'—alias : excuse my bad English, I lack leisure for consulting the 'Anti-barbarus.' ”

It is impossible to estimate the services which “this poor would-not-be composer” (as he described himself to me) did for the good of art. He had no prejudices which were so set that he could not correct them. He was never ashamed to acknowledge himself in the wrong, as witness his letter to Verdi concerning the “Requiem.”\* His extraordinary loyalty to Wagner's efforts on behalf of German opera, in the teeth of the greatest wrong which one man can do to another, was one of the most convincing proofs of the greatness of mind which was in him. He laid many of the bricks

\* See Bülow's Letters, vol. vii., No. 412.

of the Baireuth Theatre with his pianoforte recitals. He did not cease to do so, when the composer made his home desolate; for he knew and said that his work was being done for the music and not for the man; the advice of friends and the sneers of foes had no power to dissuade him from his purpose. But he never saw the Baireuth Theatre until after Wagner's death, if then. Quixotic perhaps he was, in the eyes of the man of the world, but instinct with real unadulterated nobility. He was to his finger-tips a great gentleman. He could be, when the humour took him, dangerous, but a straight retort or a timely jest would disperse the thundercloud in a moment. An instance of this occurred at Weimar, where he used frequently to give his services at the annual concert for the Pension Fund of the Orchestra. Arriving for one of these functions, he was met at the station by Müller-Hartung and Strauss. He looked very cross, and began by saying, "Schaüsliches Nest, Weimar!" (Horrid hole, Weimar!). They tried to soothe him, but he went on "You play no Brahms here." They assured him that, only shortly before, one of Brahms' Symphonies had been played. "Aber wie?" (But how?) was his answer. He went on to the rehearsal, which was conducted by Lassen, an old friend of his. After the first movement of the Beethoven E flat Concerto, in the course of which he had given vent to a good deal of satire at the expense of the band, he called out to the players who were slowly taking out their mutes, "Jetzt, meine Herrn, mit Sardinien, ohne Oel" (Now gentlemen, with sardines without oil). Lassen leaned down and said smilingly,

“Und bitte, lieber Bülow, ohne Essig” (And please, dear B., without vinegar). Bülow got up and led a round of applause for the repartee; recovered his temper and was as merry as a sandboy for the rest of the visit. He told me that he was playing this same concerto in America, and had to request the conductor to get his band to put more life and colour into their reading. The conductor rapped his desk, and with a nasal twang, which v. B. imitated to the life, said, “A taste more ginger, gentlemen, please!”

Rockstro, who was at Leipzig with Joachim and Otto Goldschmidt, described to me how the two lads used to have internecine encounters, which they sank when v. B. appeared on the scene to stay with his relative, Frau Frege. They joined forces to defend themselves from v. B.'s satirical tongue, and gentle Rockstro had to pour such oil as he could upon the troubled waters. They were all then in short jackets, but they managed to make it appear that their coats had tails to tread on. Joachim and v. B. were the protagonists. The boys were fathers to the men. They kept up their altercations of squabbles and reconciliations to the end of their lives. The most serious breach was after the Weimar manifesto, when v. B. (as he afterwards confided to Joachim in an affectionate moment) considered the advisability of purchasing a pistol to shoot him at sight. But they had a deep underlying respect and admiration for each other, though their natures were so diverse as to make frictions unavoidable. He never stinted his praise. Joachim rarely expressed his. Therein lay the kernel of the whole matter. The one pined for outspoken

appreciation, which the other never volunteered. So it was with their predecessors at Leipzig, Mendelssohn and Schumann. There is scarcely a word of acknowledgment of Schumann's genius to be found in the whole range of Mendelssohn's voluminous correspondence. There is no nobler instance of generosity than Schumann's never-failing tributes to his contemporary's powers.

In 1891 Dvořák visited Cambridge to receive an honorary degree. He conducted a concert of the C.U.M.S. when his "Stabat Mater," and Symphony in G Major (No. 4) were performed. Madame Albani came down to do honour to the composer, and sang both the "Stabat" and an Aria from the "Spectre's Bride." The composer and his wife stayed at my house, and proved to be inconveniently early risers. I heard a noise in the garden in the small hours and saw the pair sitting under a tree in my garden at 6 a.m. He and Brahms must have had in common the gift of being satisfied with from four to five hours of sleep. Dvořák's interest in contemporary music, was, as far as I could gather, very limited. The only composer of his time who seemed to rouse his enthusiasm was Verdi. Of Brahms, to whom he owed all his public recognition, he scarcely spoke, and that little was not what I expected him to say. He struck me more as a wonderful melody-making and music-weaving machine, and gave no outward sign of the flaming spontaneity which must have been within. He did not show much interest, however much he felt, in anything outside his own *métier*. This may account to some extent for the lack of self-criticism, and

the necessity for the pruning-knife which is obvious even in his very best work. There was a curious resemblance in his musical organism to that of Franz Schubert. Both were simply bubbling with invention; both found the expression of it a matter of astonishing ease; both had the same weakness of not knowing, at all events in their longer works, when to stop. Brahms once said to Joachim that he wished that he had half Dvořák's invention. Beethoven might almost have said the same of Schubert, but Brahms wrote wholesome truth, when, after Dvořák had sent him a work which was not flawless in its workmanship, he answered "We cannot any longer write as beautiful music as Mozart did; so let us try to write as clean" ("So schön wie Mozart können wir nicht mehr schreiben; versuchen wir also so rein zu schreiben").

Simrock, the Berlin publisher, described to me the first visit he paid with Brahms to Dvořák in Prague, just after Brahms had discovered the beauties of his work. They found him in a small room littered with manuscripts, and I can scarcely remember how many of the now well-known works were carried off in Simrock's portmanteau for printing. Amongst the pile on the piano was the "Spectre's Bride," which Simrock did not believe in and would not print. As regards his own country he was right, for it has never made any mark in Germany. He always classed Dvořák's choral work far below his orchestral and chamber-music compositions. Events are so far tending to prove that the publisher was wise. The symphonies, the quartets and the songs, have already

outlived the "Requiem" and that curious excursion into semi-conventional oratorio style, "St. Ludmila." The American sojourn of the composer resulted in some works, which, however beautiful and poetical in themselves, proved his lack of acquaintance with the musical literature upon which he founded much of it. He assimilated nigger-tunes as he did the folk-songs of his native Bohemia, but did not know that many of them were only nigger translations from the Irish. His pictorial power was so great that he did not trouble to find out where his material came from. So it was with many of his themes. Many of them are, as far as notes go, almost common property; but if he had chosen the scale of C for one of them, he would have expressed it in a way which identified the writer. He is one of the phenomena of the nineteenth century,—a child of nature, who did not stop to think, and said on paper anything which came into his head. I once asked him whether he wrote as fast as his music suggested. He answered that he generally completed six pages of full score in a morning, that if six was multiplied by 365 the result was 2,190 pages, "which is far more music than anyone wants to listen to."

## CHAPTER XVIII

Robert Bridges and "Eden"—W. S. Rockstro—Rome and Florence  
—The Jubilee of the Cambridge University Musical Society—  
"Falstaff" at Milan and elsewhere—Verdi and Boito—Bach in  
Paris—Madame Viardot-Garcia.

AMONGST the many treasures in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, there is one more interesting than any to literary men, the original rough draft in dramatic form of Milton's "Paradise Lost." I was reading one day through this very fine scenario, when it occurred to me that it would be possible to take the sketch as it stood and found a dramatic oratorio upon it. There was happily one poet, as interested and knowledgeable in music as in his own craft, who was steeped to the lips in Milton, and whose style was more indebted to that master than any of his contemporaries, Mr. Robert Bridges, now Poet Laureate. To him I confided my idea, and it appealed as strongly to him as it did to me. The plan was in accordance with the scheme of a Masque, but it was divided, as the manuscript synopsis was, into Acts. The joint result was the oratorio of "Eden" which came out at the Birmingham Festival of 1891.

Bridges, who had a thorough knowledge of sixteenth-century music, suggested that the characteristics of the first act (Heaven) would be best attained by early modal methods, so as to contrast with the modern colouring of the second and third (Hell and Earth).

To do this with thoroughness necessitated my renewing my days of studentship, for in matters modal my education had been neglected by every master I had. The centre point of this neglect was the influence of Mendelssohn at Leipzig. He himself had never been trained on those lines, and never troubled about them. All the great composers up to his day had been so grounded, but Wagner, almost alone of Mendelssohn's contemporaries, had absorbed from Weinlig the principles which afterwards asserted themselves in "Lohengrin" and still more markedly in "Parsifal." The close of the latter opera is purely modal in style. Brahms, who was a past-master in sixteenth-century music and methods, imbibed his learning in Hamburg from Marxsen, and through him was a lineal descendant of Bach, as was also Wagner through Weinlig. Kiel may have known the business, but he did not teach it.

There was one musician in England who had the traditions at his fingers' ends, and had learned them all thoroughly before he went to study with Mendelssohn at Leipzig, W. S. Rockstro. I went off to Torquay to suck his brains, and worked away with him to repair this omission in my early training. Rockstro was a kind of nineteenth-century Fra Angelico. He had the best qualities of a pure-minded recluse, with a copious admixture of humour which enabled him to sympathize with the feelings of less saintly men. His prejudices, which were many, were never so rooted as to be impervious to argument. Some of them, such as his open dislike of Wagner, he completely put away in his latter years. His early musical education had been in the hands of an old London organist, who had

his traditions straight from Handel, and began his training upon the sixteenth-century models. Rockstro confessed to me his astonishment at Mendelssohn's entire ignorance of them, and lack of sympathy with them; short of that, he would hear no word against the work and influence of his friend, for friend he was, rather than master. With Rockstro's help and advice I was able to overcome the difficulties of that most fascinating study, and to understand the power, which he claimed for it outside its own sphere, of enabling a writer to stay in one key until its possibilities were exhausted; he used to instance the opening of the Finale of Beethoven's C minor Symphony as a case in point. He had a great contempt for mock-modal writing, and for allowing harmonies foreign to the style to creep in. "To do that," he would say, "was to put a bonnet on the Venus de Medici." The result of my Torquay visit was, happily, to extend his influence upon the younger generation. I induced Grove to appoint him at the Royal College in order that the composition students might have the advantage of early training in this most vital part of their equipment. Dr. Walford Davies amongst others had the benefit of it, and wrote a very vivid account of his intercourse with this singularly charming and child-like man of learning.

During a visit to Rome in 1892 I made my first acquaintance with the singers of the Sistine Chapel, who sang the "Lamentations" at the Church of St. John Lateran in Holy Week. After the adverse criticism I had heard of their performances, and the head-shakings of pessimists over their decadence, I was

most agreeably surprised. The tenor solos were sung (I was told) by a young monk whose voice would have made his fortune on the stage. The soprano was but little inferior to him, though memories of the Master of Trinity recurred to me, and rather took the taste away. The polish of the choral singing was remarkable. There were no rough edges, no apparent lacunæ for breath-taking, no easy-going humdrum phrasing. The true spirit of smoothness, which is the glory of the Roman school as compared with the Venetian and the Neapolitan, was preserved throughout. I visited in Rome one survivor of the great *bel-canto* singers, Contessa Gigliucci, better known as Clara Novello, who had sung at the first London performance of "St. Paul." She was as lively as a girl and full of reminiscences of her early days; "But," she said, "I won't ask you about any of my old friends, for they are either all dead or too old to be presentable."

On our return we spent a week at Florence. The first morning I was standing at the top of the staircase of the Uffizi, talking to a friend about Hans von Bülow, when as if by magic he came up the steps, seized me by the arm, and rushed me along the passages to the room where the portraits of painters from their own brush are hung. He took me straight up to those of Leighton and Millais, and said "There you have the characters of the two men as they are." Then he pointed to that of Watts and said "Your English Titian." In the afternoon he carried me off to see Madame Hillebrand, the widow of the author who translated the first English edition of "Grimm's Fairy Tales," beloved of my youth. While I was

talking to her, Bülow crawled round the bookshelves on his hands and knees until he discovered the well-known volumes, and deposited them on my lap. That most interesting lady was a daughter of Mrs. Taylor of Norwich, and had been Bülow's lifelong friend and champion; after her death another, whom she had befriended in his earlier and poorer days, did not scruple to cast undeserved stones at her in his autobiography,—Richard Wagner.

Bülow regaled us with a most racy account of an opera he had seen the night before, in which "there was one performer of the first magnitude, the drummer." Bülow's most famous exploit in Italy had been with a drummer at a rehearsal of the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven. The unfortunate man could not get the rhythm of the solo in the Scherzo,



After various objurgations—

BÜLOW. "What is your instrument called?"

DRUMMER. "Tympani."

BÜLOW. "There you have it. Tŷmpănī! Tŷmpănī!"

The drummer grasps the rhythm and triumphantly smacks his drums as loud as possible.

BÜLOW. "*Forte!*"

The drummer puts more force into it.

BÜLOW. "FORTE!!!"

The drummer nearly bursts the vellum.

BÜLOW. "FORTE!!! Not *fortissimo!*"

The last I saw of this witty, brilliant, and broad-minded man was the waving of his handkerchief from

Madame Hillebrand's steps. The world will be much older before it contains his equal.

In the spring of 1892 we set on foot the organization of the movement to celebrate the Jubilee of the University Musical Society in 1893. The first step taken was the invitation of Verdi and of Brahms to become *honoris causâ* Doctors of the University, and the programme outlined was Verdi's "Requiem" and Brahms' C minor Symphony. It was decided that if either of these composers accepted no other should be included. The answers of both were unfortunately in the negative. Verdi regretfully declined on the score of his age and the illness of his wife, and Brahms' answer, a most charming and appreciative letter, which is printed in the last volume of Kalbeck's Life, made it clear that the long journey was hateful to him. We had therefore to consider the claims of the other officers of the musical army, and determined to make the invitation include one leading representative of each nation. The choice was not difficult to make. Saint-Saëns was chosen for France, Max Bruch for Germany, Tschaikowsky (then far less known in England than since his death) for Russia, Boïto for Italy, and Grieg for the North. They all accepted and came, with the exception of Grieg, who had, through illness, to postpone his visit to the following year. The programme contained one specimen of each composer, chosen by himself. Saint-Saëns played the solo part in "Africa," Bruch conducted the scene of the Phœnicians from "Odysseus," Boïto the prologue to "Mefistofele," Tschaikowsky the symphonic poem "Francesca da Rimini" which, as he wrote to me, he

considered to be his best work in that style. Grieg was represented *in absentia* by "Peer Gynt." The functions passed off without any hitches or difficulties. Whatever friction there might be between the composers' respective foreign offices, there was in Cambridge an *entente cordiale* which embraced the whole of Europe.

The only debatable question arose as to the order of precedence at a banquet which was given to the new Doctors in King's College Hall. It fell to my lot to propose their healths, and after much heart-burning I found the solution of my difficulties in Lumley's "History of the Opera." When Lumley was director, he produced the historically famous *pas de quatre*, in which Taglioni, Carlotta Grisi, Fanny Elssler and Cerito danced. They each had a solo and each lady insisted on having hers first. Threatened with a wreck of his great scheme, Lumley hit upon the simple device of giving the solo dances in the order of the dancers' ages: the eldest to come first, and the youngest last. He was nearly checkmated again by the claims of each dancer to be the youngest, but, presumably with the help of a biographical dictionary or of some baptismal certificates, he stuck to his ship and weathered the storm. I adopted his principles with the happy result that France, the country which was the most likely to feel a slight, came out first, Germany second, Russia third, and Italy fourth. I confessed in my after-dinner speech the method by which I had tried to avoid complications which might cause a European war, and Saint-Saëns in his reply most wittily thanked me for

comparing four weather-beaten composers to "quatre jolies femmes." He was equally quick in appreciating a suggestion that the international difficulties were enhanced by the music which they had chosen to represent them, the Frenchman having invaded Africa, the German Greece, the Russian Hell, (by way of Italy), and the Italian Heaven, (by way of Germany). The audience was as diplomatic as could be wished. Whatever may have been their sympathies, their reception of each composer was so similar in warmth and in length that it might have been timed by a watch. Henschel's singing of "Mefistofele" was a tribute alike to the composer, to the work, and to his own artistic conception. Boito had never conducted it before, and had never heard the prologue given except upon the stage. He was highly delighted with the effect it produced in the concert-room, where no subtle detail of his intricate score was lost, and the sonority of the choral writing was enhanced tenfold.

Tschaikowsky stayed with the late F. W. Maitland, who spoke to me with enthusiasm of his culture and grasp of extra-musical subjects. He reminded me, in more ways than one, of his countryman Tourgénéw, whom I once met at Madame Viardot's. He had none of the Northern roughness, was as polished as a Frenchman in his manner, and had something of the Italian in his temperament. These international qualities may have been due to a dash of Hebrew blood, for Tschaikowsky means the "Son of Jacob." For all the belief which he had in himself, he was to all appearances the acme of modesty. A very curious

conversation took place in the train to Cambridge between him and a musical friend of mine. He told my friend of his having written the Pathetic Symphony (which had not yet been performed); that it originally was designed in three movements, but that after he had finished the third, something compelled him to add a tragic slow movement at the end; and he added that perhaps it was prophetic. It was; for he died the following year, and the cause of his death is to this day as mysterious as his prophesy.

I was able to give this European quartet a hearing of some of the best madrigals and part-songs of the English school, which the Magpie Minstrels, conducted by their founder Mr. Lionel Benson, sang admirably in the garden of my house in London. The evening was none too cold for any of the performers, but even so was rather trying to the draught-fearing Bruch, who looked like an Arctic explorer, having armed himself with goloshes, a waterproof wideawake and a thick mackintosh to combat the rigours of an English June.

In the early days of 1893 we were invited by Boïto to be present at the *première* of Verdi's "Falstaff." The Scala Theatre was a wonderful sight, crammed to the roof with an audience gathered from the four corners of the earth. The excitement was so tense that the least little point of danger set everyone on edge. So keen were the listeners for the success of the old hero, that they resented a single lapse from perfection. The performance had not started for two minutes before Maurel produced a high note in a way which displeased the stalls. In an instant they all

shouted out "Basta! Basta! Basta!" in most angry tones. I thought the next thing would be a rapid descent of the curtain, but Maurel paid no attention and went ahead. A few bars farther on he sang the same note with the right effect. "Ah! Ah! Ah!" said the stalls, equally loudly, with the unmistakable suggestion in their voices that he had better go on in the same style or it would be the worse for him. It was not ill-nature, obviously; the interruption sprang from pure and simple eagerness that everyone should do his level best; and it was the first and last hostile outburst of the evening. The number of times which Verdi had to appear were impossible to count, but on each entry he preserved the same dignified demeanour; he might have been a king receiving his subjects at a levée. There was no suspicion of arrogance, no suggestion of false modesty. He knew that his audience understood him and he acknowledged their tribute with the grace and nobility of a born leader of men. "Evviva Verdi!" sounded on all sides, recalling the old days of '48 and '59, when the walls of Austrian Milan were covered with this legend, and his name became the symbol of United Italy. ["Evviva V. (Vittorio) E. (Emanuele) R. (Re) D' I (d' Italia)."] His chief recognition at the hands of the monarch had been his nomination as a Senator in the Upper House. He had no taste for practical politics, and mainly amused himself by setting "Divide! Divide!" (ai Voti! ai Voti!) as a choral libretto, using the orders of the day as music paper. He had no taste for titular distinction. The morning after the performance I went to see him with Boïto, and he was pacing the room,

thoroughly out of temper. Boïto asked him what was the matter and he tossed a telegram to him from the King. It contained the offer to make him Marchese di Busseto.

BOÏTO. "Well, Master, what have you said?"

VERDI. "I have answered him, 'Musician I was born, musician I remain.'"

Having delivered his soul the Italian quicksilver asserted itself, and he beamed upon us again.

The return from the theatre to our hotel (where Verdi was also staying) was not unmixed with danger. The crowd which surrounded and followed his carriage was too densely packed for the narrow street, and it needed strong arms and wary elbows to preserve the ribs from fracture. A supper which the composer gave was not a little interesting from the presence of Madame Stolz, one of his greatest interpreters, who sang the soprano part at the first English performance of his "Requiem" when he conducted it at the Albert Hall.

I was destined to see three more *premières* of "Falstaff," in Paris (when the composer was present), in London, and in Hamburg. Of these the French performance was the best, and was memorable for the extraordinary vivacity and charm of Mdlle. Delna, who sang the part of Dame Quickly. Maurel too, was more at home in his own language, and the house (the Théâtre Lyrique, which then was the home of the burnt-out Opéra Comique) was of a size far more suitable to the style of the work than either the Scala or Covent Garden. The women's quartet in the second scene was musically audible, whereas in Italy

the *vibrato* of each and all of them was so excessive that it was literally impossible to distinguish a single note. This disease, which I had noticed as obsessing Paris in 1873, had been stamped out in France, but had extended to Italy. The German rendering was slow and heavy; it gave no hint of the fizzing champagne-like quality which is so imperative if the music is to receive its proper due. I saw Verdi for the last time after the Paris performance, and he talked to me at length and with the deepest interest of the modern strides which England had made in the art.

I was fortunate enough to hear one more Verdi *première*, the first performance of his "Stabat Mater," "Laudi alla Virgine," and "Te Deum" at a special Conservatoire Concert given in the Grand Opéra. The composer was not present, but Boïto came and sat with me in a stage box. I felt then, as I do still, that the composer would have been better advised to place the "Te Deum" first and the "Stabat" last. I wrote to him after the performance a short account of the Concert, and told him, apologizing for my temerity, that I thought the effect of the three pieces would be enhanced by the transposition of these two numbers. He wrote to me by return a letter which I transcribe here, which shows in every word the open-mindedness and simplicity of the man.

"GÈNES,

"19 *Avril*, 1898.

"CHER M. STANFORD,

"Je ne connais pas bien la langue anglaise, mais j'ai pu comprendre que vous jugez avec une grande indulgence les trois morceaux que vous avez entendu à Paris. Je ne m'en plains pas, et je vous en remercie.

“Quant à la disposition du ‘Te Deum’ et ‘Stabat’ je ne suis pas complètement de votre avis, mais vous faites des observations profondes et peut-être vous avez raison !

“Je suis un peu fatigué, et je vous demande pardon si je vous écris brièvement.

“Agréez mes sincères compliments et mes remerciements.

“Avec estime et amitié,

“G. VERDI.”

In Paris I renewed my acquaintance with a French poet whom I had first met in London, when he came over to hear a performance of the B minor Mass of Bach, Maurice Bouchor. This ardent Bach-worshipper was one of the leading spirits in popularizing Sebastian in Paris; he had translated many of the Cantatas into French (as Boïto did into Italian), and succeeded in getting many of them and of the longer works performed at the Conservatoire and elsewhere. He took me into nooks and corners of the city of which most travellers are totally ignorant, regaled me at a vegetarian banquet of indescribable oddity and indigestibility, being (as he said) “a sort of Buddhist who did not eat meat,” and showed me a side of simple *citoyen* life which is unknown save to its own denizens. He christened his son Jean Sebastien so that his initials might be J. S. B. I spoke about him next day to Madame Viardot-Garcia, asking her if she knew a poet of the name. She corrected me at once, “*Un poète? le poète.*” He has reaped his reward in the Parisian love of Bach’s works. When

the Leeds Chorus went over to sing in Paris, I wished to include the Motet "Singet dem Herrn," but hesitated to perform it complete. (It takes nearly twenty minutes to sing.) But Richter, whom I consulted about it, and who knew his Paris, told me not to fail to give it in its entirety, as the French audiences would resent any shortening of the work. His advice was followed, and the wisdom of it was proved by the event. I have seldom witnessed such enthusiasm as followed the performance; handkerchiefs and programmes were waved in the air, and the Frenchmen cheered like Britons at a football match.

In the course of a long talk with Madame Viardot she told me many interesting stories of Meyerbeer, and of the extraordinary precautions he took to insure a success for his operas. He always sat at the final rehearsal next Père David, the "Chef de Claque," and arranged with him the places where the applause was to come in. He even altered passages which David did not think quite effective enough to give him his cue. He used to wander about the back of the stage to hear if the scene-shifters had any criticisms to make amongst themselves, and to note if they whistled or hummed any of his tunes. I hoped, while she was on the subject of Meyerbeer, to lure her on to tell me herself the story of her tooth, and to show me its memorial, but I failed. I had not impudence enough to ask her to tell me the true version. The tale, as I have heard it, was that she had a disfiguring front tooth which somewhat protruded. She had been cast for the part of Fidès in the "Prophète," and several of her *intimes* begged her to have it out, with-

out success. At one of the final rehearsals Meyerbeer came to her and said that with infinite regret he must take the part away from her unless she had the offending incisor removed. This was too much for her; out it came, and she sent it to the composer. After the first performance, Meyerbeer came round to her room and presented her with a bracelet in the centre of which was a white enamel set in precious stones; the white enamel was the front tooth.

Madame Viardot was in every respect the ideal picture of a French Marquise of the old régime. In her youth her genius gave her face, which was naturally almost ugly, a greater fascination than regular features or picturesque beauty would have given it. She spoke nearly as many languages as Cardinal Mezzofanti. She was equally at home in Italian *fioriture*, in Gluck, Wagner, Meyerbeer, Schumann or Brahms. For the last named she had a deep admiration, and was the first person to sing (at sight) from the manuscript the Alto Rhapsody, when the composer was visiting Frau Schumann at Baden-Baden. When I was in Paris for the concert at which the Leeds Chorus appeared, she was most anxious to know and to hear Plunket Greene, who was singing some of the solos. She was too delicate to come to the concert, and the weather was too cold for her to risk going into hot rooms (she was well over eighty), but she asked us to dine, and to induce Greene to come in after dinner and see her. It was a small party, only Paul Viardot, Duvernoy the pianist, and ourselves. Just as we had finished dinner a ring came at the bell. She whispered to the servant, who brought her a tray

and poured out a glass of champagne. She rose and said "Now I am going to make an effect," motioned to the servant to throw open the door, went in alone with all the bearing of a tragedy queen, walked up to my astonished friend, dropped a low curtsey, and held out the tray. I inwardly wished for a Kodak. It was a small incident, but to the onlookers a most picturesque one, and it showed to perfection the reverence that one great artist can have for another, however much her junior. She did "make an effect," and one which will long live in the memories of those who saw it and her for the last time.

## CHAPTER XIX

The Bach Choir and Leeds Singers—An additional chapter of Mr. Labouchere's Biography.

ALTHOUGH I belong to a family which for generations has been steeped in the study and practice of the Law, I have always had a holy horror of law-suits, and have been fortunate enough to pass my life with a minimum of their discomfort and worry. The only active experience I have had was an injunction against me to prevent the performance of a work of which I held the performing right, and it collapsed in a few minutes. I was however once put in the disagreeable position of having to obtain an apology or bring a libel action. The circumstances, annoying enough at the time, were so humorous in their sequel that they are worth inflicting upon my readers, if only for the fact that they furnish, in a way, an additional chapter to Mr. Labouchere's biography, and illuminate somewhat amusingly his style and methods as a journalist. The little story requires a preamble, explaining the events which preceded and gave rise to the controversy.

I had been for some years Conductor of the Philharmonic Society at Leeds, a body which, although containing many singers who had been and might be selected to sing in the Festival chorus, had no connection either officially or musically with the Festival organization. I was also Conductor of the London

Bach Choir, a society which from its foundation had to engage some professional tenors and basses in order to preserve the proper balance of voices. The Committee, on my recommendation, thought it best to bring up these extra tenors and basses from the Philharmonic at Leeds, both on account of their excellent voices, and of their knowing and being well accustomed to my beat. This system had been adhered to for some time before 1900, the year in which Sullivan resigned the conductorship of the Leeds Festival, shortly before his premature death.

In that year I conducted a performance of the B minor Mass at a Bach Choir concert under the old conditions. I picked up a copy of *Truth* at my club and rubbed my eyes when I saw a paragraph in the music column concerning the Bach Choir concert, calling attention (without mentioning my name) to the fact that many of the Leeds *Festival* (*sic*) Chorus had been brought up to London to sing in it, and that this "had no connection—no of course not—with the vacant Conductorship of the Leeds Festival." The inference was so obvious and the insinuation so clear to everybody in touch with the musical body politic, that I had no option but to strangle the terminological inexactitude in its cradle. I knew that Sir George Lewis was Labouchere's solicitor, and telegraphed to him for an appointment. He fixed it for the same afternoon and I went off to Ely Place with the copy of *Truth* in my pocket. He must have wondered what mess I had been getting myself into, but speedily discovered that the mess was nearer Westminster than Kensington. Although I can lay no claims to being a

playwright, the various scenes which ensued are best described in dramatic form.

ELY PLACE.

SIR G. L. *at a table. Enter C. V. S.*

G. L. Good afternoon. What can I do for you?

S. I came to see you about a paragraph in this (*produces the copy of "Truth"*).

G. L. You must not come to me about that, I am Mr. Labouchere's solicitor.

S. I know, that's why I came. I don't want to have trouble about this, and thought that you might be able to prevent it.

G. L. What is it?

(*S. shows the offending sentence to L. and explains the true circumstances as above.*)

G. L. I think the best course would be to see Mr. Labouchere yourself. Do you know him?

S. I have met him at the Italian Lakes.

G. L. Go and see him then, you will find him very agreeable.

S. Yes, if you make the appointment.

G. L. I will. Just give me that copy.

(*L. finds the paragraph and underlines "No" before "connection," and "No of course not."*)

G. L. When you see Mr. Labouchere, show him that copy, and tell him I underlined those words.

(*L. whose attitude throughout has been most kind and sympathetic, dismisses me with a legal benediction.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

When the pencil was drawn under those words, I began to guess that the sentence might be more dangerous than I previously thought. I went from Ely Place to the Athenæum Club, and by a fortunate chance met in the hall no less a legal luminary than my cousin Henn Collins, then Lord Justice and afterwards Master of the Rolls. I told him of my visit to Lewis and of my impending interview with "Labby."

H. C. (*who was a great angler*). You have a difficult fish to play; you had better see to your tackle. Show me the paragraph.

(S. *shows it to him.*)

H. C. Do you know what this is? It's a libel, and a very bad libel. It is much worse by being put in the negative, and by the omission of your name.

S. ! ! !

H. C. Who underlined those words with pencil?

S. Sir George Lewis.

H. C. Exactly. Those are the words which constitute the libel. Now you've got your stout tackle. Go and play your fish.

As this advice came from one of the soundest legal heads in the country, and from a man who would have been the first to discourage any litigation that was not absolutely imperative, I shotted my guns before the coming battle at Westminster, arranged for a consultation with Sir Edward Clarke and drew up with him the form of apology on which I was to insist.

The appointment was made for the next morning. I could not write shorthand or take surreptitious notes, but so vividly was the dialogue phonographed in my memory, that I wrote it down without difficulty immediately after leaving the house. I transcribe the notes here.

SCENE.—MR. LABOUCHERE'S study. MR. L. *smoking a cigarette, advances smilingly and greets S. warmly.*

L. How do you do? Glad to see you.

S. Rather a different climate from where we met last, Cadenabbia.

L. Yes, indeed. Now what is this "par"? I have never seen it. I suppose it was written by —— as —— is ill and away.

S. No. It is written by the musical critic in the music column.

L. Who is the musical critic? I am sure I've forgotten.

S. Mr. P—— B——!

L. B—— of course, to be sure. Well, what has he said?

S. There is the "par." You will notice some words underlined

in pencil. Sir George Lewis did that, he asked me to show them to you.

L. (*reads*). H'm. Well, what does it mean?

S. The circumstances are these. The Leeds Festival Conductorship is one of the most important musical posts in England. I have been conductor of the Leeds Philharmonic Society (which is an entirely different organization) for the last three years, and during that time the Committee of the London Bach Choir, which I also conduct, have supplemented their men's voices by engaging some of the Leeds Philharmonic singers, because they knew my beat, and were accustomed to sing under me. This has been done ever since. Sullivan resigned the Leeds Festival Conductorship only last October. The remark therefore, has, on the face of it, no truth in it. My name is not mentioned, but everyone who knows the musical world would tell you that it can only refer to me.

L. How?

S. Because I am the only professional musician connected with the Bach Choir who could be even mentioned for the post.

L. What is there to object to in it?

S. It accuses me practically of bribery and corruption in order to get the vacant post.

L. (*laughs*). This is not politics but music. I don't understand music, and don't know who Bach is. How can it possibly hurt you?

S. I have already explained exactly. It accuses me of an unworthy scheming to obtain an important place.

L. Not at all. You would be only doing what Ministers, and City men and even Judges are doing every day. Why should you not employ the Leeds singers, if by so doing you would get a better chance of the Conductorship? You would be quite justified; anyone would. In politics it is done every day.

S. Then I am thankful that I am not a politician.

L. I see no harm in it.

S. Our codes of morality are therefore different. I see very great harm in it.

L. When I was Member for Middlesex, a man whose vote was of importance to me wanted a post for which he was quite unsuited. I went to the Whip and asked for it. The Whip asked me if he was a suitable man for the position. I said "Not at all," but that his vote was of importance. He got the place. I was quite right.

S. I can only repeat that I am very glad that I am not a politician.

L. Now, look here. I am going down to a meeting at Northampton to-morrow. A very stupid vestryman I know of will be in the chair. He will make some futile and idiotic remarks, and I shall get up and say that I have listened with much interest to the weighty words of our friend, the Chairman; that I shall find them most valuable, and lay them to heart when I return to Westminster. What do you call that?

S. I don't like to say anything offensive to you in your own room, Mr. Labouchere, but you have a sense of humour and will not take it amiss if I call it humbug.

L. It is humbug.

S. You are a cynic in fact.

L. Yes, I am.

S. But not right through. There is something hidden up at the back of you that does not approve of that sort of thing.

L. (*testily*). There is not. I thoroughly approve of it. I think it is the best thing to say of the vestryman.

S. But supposing you got the vestryman an important salaried post for the purpose of securing his vote, how about your next election? Your paper has accused me, not of humbug, but of bribery.

L. (*changing his tone*). Now, take it that this business should come into court, what would happen? My Counsel (C—— for instance) would get up and say how touchy musicians and artists generally are. Here is a piece of chaff in a newspaper, obviously meant as chaff. No malice in it; nothing serious is imputed, and so on.

S. It has nothing whatever to say to music. It is a question of a salaried and important post for which your paper says I am scheming in an underhand and corrupt manner. It has nothing to do with the touchiness of musicians.

L. I am only putting the case as if it was a libel and got into court.

S. It is a libel, and a very bad libel. I did not mention the word until you did.

L. It may be a libel, but it is not a bad libel.

S. I have perhaps one of the very best authorities on English law for saying that it is "a libel, and a very bad libel." The authority is that of a person I should not employ, and who could not have anything to say to the case.

L. I don't believe in all that lawyers say.

S. You would probably respect the opinion I got if I chose to name the person who gave it.

L. Well, I dare say something could be said by the correspondent to the effect that no harm was meant.

S. That would not do at all. That form of apology would be worse than none.

L. What form do you want?

S. My own form of apology as it stands, printed at the head of your next music column.

L. I never did and would not do such a thing.

S. I am sorry to hear it.

L. Let me see your form of apology. (*Reads it to himself.*) I would rather have an action for libel than insert this.

S. I say again that I am excessively sorry to hear you say so: that was precisely what I came here to-day hoping that you would not say.

L. No editor could put in such a "par," for we have touchiness in the Journalistic profession also, and I have to consider it. (*Hands back the form.*)

S. I cannot see that. When one gentleman offends another or unwittingly does him an injury, it is rather to his credit to apologize. Why should it not be to the credit of a newspaper to do the same? There is nothing to be ashamed of.

L. Look at this sentence "reflects on the honour, etc." It does not. I don't consider that it does.

S. I have already said that we must agree to differ on that point. I say that it does, and that it would equally reflect on the honour of any man who was eligible for such an important post, and was said to have used such unworthy means to obtain it.

L. Is it an important post?

S. It has been termed one of the blue ribands of the musical profession.

L. But look at this point. If this apology was inserted, Mr. P—— B—— (or whoever he is) would resign to-morrow.

S. That's no affair of mine, but Mr. P—— B—— has the hide of a rhinoceros, and I am willing to lay a bet that he would not resign.

L. If it was my City Editor he would have to resign and I could not keep him.

S. That I understand. The money article might mean thousands

to investors. This only concerns one individual who has his character to keep, and his own professional position to safeguard.

L. I could not keep him if I put in this apology.

S. Well, when I came into this room I was well aware that I was within my rights in demanding his dismissal; but he has, I believe, a wife and family and I do not wish to lose him his place. If you put in the apology I will go so far as to personally request you not to dismiss him.

L. Does he know anything about music?

S. (*laughs*). Not much, I think. He is a clever journalist with what the Germans call a *Nase* for hitting on the right thing or the plausible thing to say. A—— H—— had the same faculty, but he had generosity to back it, instead of malignity and innuendo.

L. This is not meant maliciously.

S. Is it not? Ask him. Ask him here in this room in front of me. "Confrontez moi avec cet homme!" I shall be delighted to hear his explanation. I could ask nothing better. This remark is founded on guesswork meant definitely to hurt and injure me. It is kite-flying of a malignant kind.

L. Well—let me read that thing again. (*Reads.*) Will you come and meet me at the office and discuss it with V—— and B——? I can assure you that it is nothing of a trap or anything of that sort; it would be private, and nothing that you said would be quoted.

S. No, my interviews on the subject end in this room.

L. Well, will you meet us at Lewis's?

S. No. That would be a legal matter, and I have come to you personally and privately.

L. (*with an inexpressibly sly and dangerous look in his eye*). You know if I have any business of this sort in a court, I never (*ahem!*) go into personal matters, nor suggest that my Counsel should cross-examine a man unfairly or about extraneous matters.

S. (*recalling the "no, of course not" style*). It would not matter to me if he did, Mr. Labouchere. If he tried he could not find anything to cross-examine about, and it would only injure his own side. You need not lay any such conditions on your Counsel. It would give him needless trouble.

L. (*rapidly changing the subject and his expression of countenance*). When Archibald Forbes once brought an action against me, it was for some words in an article which I had struck out in the proof, and the idiot of a printer took it as a line underneath and printed

the words in *italics*! If I had said so in court and it was solemn truth, no one would have believed me.

S. ! ! !

L. Well, will you send me a letter demanding the insertion of the apology? Write it "Dear Sir, I demand, etc.," and keep a copy.

S. I always do keep copies of important letters.

L. Well, send me that, and I will take it to V—— and discuss it with him.

S. On one condition.

L. What?

S. That you give me your word, that if this form of apology does not go in, nothing else shall go in.

L. (*Long pause.*) Very well, nothing else shall go in if yours does not.

S. Thank you, good-bye.

L. Good-bye, very glad to have seen you. Hope we shall meet again some day at Cadenabbia.

[*Exit S.*

So ended a duel which fairly exhausted both sides, but to which "Labby" afterwards alluded as a very pleasant and agreeable interview. He did insert an apology, but I am sorry to say that in spite of his final promise, he altered it in his own favour: so slightly however that the matter was not worth pursuing farther. He had an unmistakable attractiveness in spite of his cynical professions of faith or unfaith. It was impossible not to see that he was *au fond* a gentleman. If he offended against the canons of his class, he did so from sheer love of the *outré*. Try as hard as he could, he could not even in the most strenuous moments of our battle, conceal that he had once breathed the air of the playing-fields at Eton. For all his crooked politics and thinly veiled threats, I came away with the feeling that I could not help liking the man. No one could help

admiring the rapidity and keenness of his intellectual powers. I was not a little sorry that Mr. P—— B—— had let him in for such a tussle and so nearly got him into a difficult and expensive mess. I never saw him again, but I have no doubt that, if I had, the greeting would have been as cordial as it was in his own house. The journalist who flew the libellous kite did not resign, but Mr. Labouchere did not take my bet, and so lost nothing in material cash. The music column was carefully edited thereafter, and its attitude during Mr. P—— B——'s régime, if not exactly bordering upon friendly, kept strictly, if with difficulty, within the bounds of legality. The mouse had had his playtime in the absence of the cat, and during the illness of the kitten. So the Irish Terrier had to intervene.

## CHAPTER XX

Modern tendencies and modern audiences—Colour-worship—  
von Bülow and his views—The Church and its duties to the art  
—The influence of the *Motu proprio* decree—Hymn tunes—  
Concert-rooms and the Government—Financial policy and  
musical societies—National Opera—Conclusion.

DURING the years covered by these records, there was little or no sign of the "touchiness" which Mr. Labouchere attributed to musicians as well as to his own profession. One of the strongest points of the forward movement which began in the seventies was the loyalty with which each and all of the leading spirits stood shoulder to shoulder in the advance. Another was the patent fact, on which Grove often laid special stress, that no two of the leaders were alike in method or in style. In aims they were one, in the methods of attaining them they were as diverse as were their tastes and brains. There was no Wagnerianer or Brahmsianer split in the British Islands. The motto was "Live and let live." The problem for the future is whether this consolidation will be allowed to continue. There are not wanting signs of cliquism, and even of antagonisms, which are always stones in the path of progress, and need to be cleared away rather than built into walls. A clique is a boon to the ready writer, and provides him with pepper and spice, which is more attractive than plain and wholesome fare. The process of setting people

and styles by the ears is too highly amusing to be sternly resisted. Headlines have become the staple fare of the newspapers, grown now so large that a real catastrophe would require a whole page devoted to it in letters a foot long, in order to produce any effect upon the public eye. Men's nerves are so highly strung in an age of telegrams, telephones, motors, biplanes, and seventy-miles-an-hour expresses, that they find it an effort to take any pleasure in the quieter walks of slow and sure progress. This feverishness has resulted in the modern tendency to deride or at best to tolerate what is old and tried, and to draw a dividing-line between those who preserve their veneration for their forebears (however open-minded they may be concerning the experiments of modernity), and those who have or pretend to have no sympathy for them at all, and to have learnt nothing from them. Such an expression of opinion as "Beethoven was an old rotter" would have been unthinkable amongst my contemporaries, even when we were sowing our wildest oats.

It has also resulted in pushing experiment, an admirable thing in itself, beyond the bounds of beauty, and in suggesting an appeal to sensationalism and morbidity rather than to sane and sober judgment. The first necessity of an explorer is to make sure of his base: the more intrepid he is, the more secure must his base be. If he is unduly rash, the motive of his exploration will generally prove to be egoistic; love of personal notoriety rather than of future usefulness to the community. If the rashness has a fatal result, he gets the reward of inch-long headlines, but

only for a day. After that, Lethe. The mass of the public cares nothing for these things. An impressionable minority, which allows itself to be blown this way and that by fads and fashions, is the only fraction which is affected. This minority believes itself to be marching in the van of progress, but it is really skirmishing on its own account, to find some new excitement when the effects of the last are exhausted. The mass meantime has begun, *mirabile dictu*, and in England too, which takes so many kicks lying down, to hiss. Three hisses from a British audience, so steeped in courteous propriety, are the equivalent of torn-up benches in a Southern climate. We suffer fools, and those whom we know in our hearts to be fools, far too gladly. A little inoculation of the "Basta! Basta!" with which the Scala audience kept its singers up to the mark would do our own public infinite good, and slay some of the more malignant bacteria. By a peculiar perversion of judgment, this first sign of protest is being itself turned into an additional advertisement of the article which provokes it; the minority bubbles up in indignation at the bad taste of the mass, but the mass will last the longer, and the frothy minority will fizzle out.

The chief test of a new coin is the soundness of the metal of which it is coined. No capable musician can fail to discern power of invention (and true conviction in expressing it) even in the most complicated and multi-coloured work. New methods of expression are too fascinating a study to any thinking artist to permit him to pass by on the other side. What he has to determine is whether those methods have sufficient

inventive material to be worth the expression of them, or are but iridescent colours without solidity to back them ; bubbles from an infinitesimal layer of soap. If a man allows himself to be so fascinated by the beauty and variety of the changing tints as to peer into them too closely, his eye will suffer when the bubble bursts.

The worship of colour for its own sake is the rock upon which modern superficial taste is in danger of splitting. The amazing development of orchestral technique since the days of Berlioz, and after him of Wagner, has resulted in permutations and combinations of such beauty of sheer physical sound, that the casual listener can find no time to analyze the structure or to diagnose the material upon which that sound is superimposed. The musicians who are well accustomed to the fascination of the orchestral siren can do so, but they are necessarily few and far between, and for the nonce are but raising their voices, if they are so minded, in the wilderness. As in all showy beauty, the colour will either fade or be superseded (if that be possible) by more blazing tints, and there will be in the future only the substratum of solid invention to keep the art-work alive. The true test of the modern colour-movement therefore is not now, but fifty years hence. We can only argue from the past. The world of music is not substantially different from what it has been. It has always exalted those of its contemporary composers who dealt in frills and furbelows above those who considered the body more important than its clothes. Only a few wise heads knew of the existence of Bach. Rossini was rated by

the mass of the public far higher than Weber, Spohr than Beethoven, Meyerbeer than Wagner. Simrock himself said that he made Böhm pay for Brahms. The *coloratura* of the voice in Mercadante and in Rossini played the same rôle in the past that the colour of the orchestra does now. Wagner killed vocal rockets; and instrumental Catherine-wheels have taken their place. But where is Mercadante now? and the bulk of Rossini, except the immortal "Barber" and "Tell"? Dead as mutton, even for singing masters.

The one and only positive test which can be applied to a modern orchestral score is that of proving its contents upon a colourless instrument. Pictures can be similarly tested by photography or by copying in black and white. No amount of masterly colouring can conceal bad drawing or inferior technique or faulty design when the inexorable camera comes into play. If Sir Joshua Reynolds had relied on his pigments, and scamped his drawing, his pictures would have been in the scrap-heap long ago. So it is with orchestral music. Apply the same test from which the Beethoven symphonies, the arrangements of Wagner's operas, the chamber and orchestral works of Brahms have emerged triumphantly, arrange them for what Bülow contemptuously called the "Hammerkistl," the domestic pianoforte, and if they give real pleasure to listen to as music under these black and white conditions they will have proved their inherent value. I once went to a pianoforte recital in Germany given by a great artist, in company with a conductor of ultra-modern tastes. The pianist played an astounding

arrangement of his own of one of my friend's favourite war-horses in the orchestra, one which when played upon the instruments for which it was written has a most striking and brilliant effect. The piano arrangement, which was appallingly difficult, contained almost every note of the score, and was as close a reproduction as it was possible to imagine. When the piece was over I looked at my neighbour and saw mingled surprise and disappointment in his face. He ejaculated "I had no notion it could sound so ugly. Schreckliches Stück!" It was only a photograph, like one of myself which I once showed to Ernst Frank. expressing my disappointment at its non-prepossessing appearance. "Don't flatter yourself," said Frank. "It's exactly like you." So was the piano arrangement, exactly like its prototype's score.

The fascination of this class of music does not merely attract the listener; it is quite as powerful in its magnetism for conductors. The technical difficulties are usually so great that the drilling of the players and the gradual emerging of the composer's effects are in themselves a joy to the wielder of the stick (who has not got to negotiate the hard passages himself, and cannot play wrong notes or out of tune). To the wittier and wiser of them the pleasure goes when the study and the practice is over, and when the high lights have been put on. Then the work begins to pall, as some of the greatest of them have candidly admitted. If that is so, the inherent value cannot be commensurate with the technical difficulties. The effect produced must be one rather of astonishment than of charm. It is the *haute école* and acrobatic con-

tortions of a horse rather than the natural grace of its career across country.

That Bülow, who was a modern of the moderns, foresaw the dangers of this cult is clear from a most illuminating English letter which he addressed to Mr. Asger Hammerich in Baltimore. Hammerich had evidently sent him some compositions by a pupil or friend which were written with more regard to being "up-to-date" than to good workmanship and musical invention. Bülow's answer is scathing, but not lacking in ironical fun. He advises that the young man be sent to a "musical orthopædic institution": states that he has no liking for "ugly preposterous *mock* music," that "the world *fra di noi* has enough of one 'Hector'"; and winds up by saying that the young man would do better to "avoid his criticisms." This from the pupil of Liszt, the worker for Wagner, and the first fighter for Richard Strauss, comes with the force and impact of a Dreadnought shell. As a pronouncement from a Reinecke or a Hiller it would have had no weight; from one of the high-priests of the modern religion, it is as irresistible as it is convincing. It hits the flaw in the young composer's armour: his tendency to scamp his technique or neglect it, while relying upon instrumentation to cover his musical nakedness. Thackeray, when he pictorially satirized Louis XIV., unwittingly put his finger on the weak spot in many other walks in life. *Rex, Ludovicus*, and *Ludovicus Rex* were the titles of three little sketches which stood in a frame for many years on Henry Bradshaw's mantelpiece. *Rex* was the full-bottomed wig, gorgeous robes, gold-headed cane and

buckled shoes of a King without any figure inside them. *Ludovicus* was an old, wizened, and bent figure of a man in thin underclothing. *Ludovicus Rex* the miserable little object put into the magnificent garments of the first sketch.

It must not be imagined for a moment that the cult of colour and the neglect of invention is carrying all before it in the country. In the perhaps exceptional outlook upon the younger and coming men which I have been privileged to possess, I have not noticed any predilections for it in sound and really artistic temperaments. The "wild men" have generally been those who disliked the necessity of learning their letters before they could read, and preferred to write before they could spell. But they are and always have been in the minority. Most of them find wisdom by eating their bread with tears. All of them are the better for suffering, through aural experience, from their own shortcomings, than from dogmatic tutoring and misapplication of the terms "right" and "wrong." The material in this country is surprisingly large. The best of it will take long to worry its way through into acceptance, as the best always does. If the country is not in too great a hurry, it will get its reward. If it is impatient, it will "discover" only flashy and ephemeral talent, and in its disappointment will delay the success of the more solid stuff. The main consideration in the upbringing of young students, is, I am convinced, the destruction of any Index Expurgatorius. If the fruit is forbidden, they will eat it in secret, and probably before they give the wholesomer kinds a fair trial. I always recommend to them

a variant of an old adage, "Say your prayers and keep your ears open."

The Church says its prayers, but it does not sufficiently fulfil the latter portion of this injunction. It does not even always keep its ears clean. I am far from denying that in respect of performance, of demeanour, and of general efficiency the conduct of the musical part of the service is an immense advance upon the conditions which prevailed thirty or forty years ago. So far the Church has moved with the age, but only so far. It has troubled itself far more over externals than essentials. The essentials are the musical works which are performed. The world would expect that an Institution which more than any other has kept alive musical art in this country, and is alone in having a free hand, unhampered by the financial considerations of a box-office, to produce not merely the masterpieces with which English composers endowed them in past ages, but the best and soundest of modern work, would be as reverential in its preservation of the old as it was eclectic in its selection of the new. An unfamiliar novelty, which perhaps needs many hearings to win appreciation and which therefore, if written for a concert-room or a theatre dependent on its receipts for existence, fails to bring home its appeal perhaps for years, ought to find in the Church the chance of an unshackled repetition, and a speedier acceptance. Just as a subvention enables German theatres to give cycles of the historical plays of Shakespeare, and of masterpieces of Goethe, Schiller and Lessing which appeal mostly to the cultured few, but are wisely looked upon as a necessary stimulus to Education, so in

England is the Church, and the Church alone, in a position to fulfil the same office for its own art-possessions. Is it fulfilling this duty? I can only answer in the negative.

The late Bishop of London (Dr. Creighton) in his opening speech at the discussion of Church music, when the Church Congress met at the Albert Hall, lamented, with some admixture of sarcasm, that the authorities at St. Paul's had chosen for the opening of an English Congress in an English Cathedral in the English Capital, an anthem by Brahms, and another by Spohr. Excellent composers, as he said, but had England none of her own? He seemed to have heard of such names as Tallis, Byrd, Purcell, Blow, Boyce, and the Wesleys, and to wonder whether their works had been relegated to the waste-paper basket. This speech was the one hopeful sign in recent ecclesiastical oratory: but I fear that it fell for the most part upon deaf ears. Sugary sentimentalism is the order of the day, and unhappily music of that quality can be and is turned out by the bushel. The more syrup supplied, the more the craving for it: but it brings gout nearer every moment.

The movement which started a short time ago at the Vatican for the better presentation of sixteenth-century music, for the revival and study of Palestrina and others of the polyphonic vocal school, and for the expunging of irrelevant and unsuitable music, came none too soon. The initiative, in all probability, came from Ratisbon, where the traditions of the Sistine Choir had been more zealously and effectively preserved by Proske and others than they were in their

own home. It was a one-sided policy which left more recent music and orchestral accompaniments wholly out of account, and swept or endeavoured to sweep all later work, good and bad together, into the dust-heap. From a preservative point of view it was invaluable; as a preventative it will probably act more slowly. The spirit in Italy which sees no incongruity in a performance of Rossini's Tarantella "Già la Luna" played as an outgoing voluntary after Benediction (an experience which I had at Como), will be difficult to discipline. Even more recently at the English home of the monks of Solesmes, famed for their printing of early Church music, I was startled to hear the organist burst out into the lively march from Bizet's "L'Arlésienne" in the middle of vespers:—an ETTY VENUS in the centre of a group of Bellini Madonnas. A more curious foil to the very plain Chant which preceded and succeeded it could not be imagined. The drastic attitude of the Roman purifiers is therefore the more comprehensible from the glaring abuses with which they have to deal near home, and it is not surprising that they should rush to the opposite extreme in exclusiveness. The banning of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven is a sorry proof of the danger of too much zeal. Richter once picturesquely contrasted the Church music of these masters with that of Northern climes, by the analogy of their respective climates. They suited the open air and a sunny sky, he said; while the music of the North needed Gothic arches and stained-glass windows. I find it difficult to believe that the Hof-Kirche at Dresden and the Hof-Burg-

Kapelle at Vienna will readily acquiesce in the abolition of their staple food.

The *Motu proprio* decree has had its effect in this country in rousing a desire amongst the more serious and cultivated Church musicians and amateurs to bring back the masterpieces of the early English school into our choir lists. By the republication of semi-forgotten works, and the consistent pressure of individual enthusiasts, matters are slowly improving. But equally strong pressure will become necessary if the inclusion of inferior contemporary compositions is to proceed apace, unchecked and uncensored. The worst sign of the times is the modern hymn-tune. It represents for the Church the equivalent of the royalty ballad for the concert-room. We have masses of fine solid melodies, harmonized with dignity and reticence by their writers, dating from Elizabethan times, as representative of the English Church as the German Chorales are of the Lutheran. The majority of these have had to make way for whole stacks of sentimentalized rubbish, decked out in gewgaws, and as ill-suited to their surroundings as a music-hall song in the Baireuth Theatre. Their genesis is not far to seek, for many of the hymns to which they are set are little better, "more remarkable for their piety than their poetry" as was wittily said of them, equally devoid of simplicity and of good taste. Not a few of these tunes are disguised dance music, waltzes and polkas which only need a rhythmical bass to expose their true nature. They degrade religion and its services with slimy and sticky appeals to the senses, instead of ennobling and strengthening the higher

instincts. Such tunes are the most insidious destroyers of taste. They are easy enough to catch the ear of the most remote congregation in a country parish. They are flashy enough to seduce the untutored listener, and to spoil his palate for wholesome and simple fare ; much as the latest comic song will temporarily extinguish the best folk-tune.

Our hymn-books are about four times too large. Our population is smaller than that of Germany, but Germany finds a fraction of our number of tunes quite sufficient for her purpose. Her Chorales were the feeding-bottle of Sebastian Bach ; and upon the foundation of their influence his music was built. Imagine the style which an English Church composer would develop whose early taste was formed by familiarity with " O Paradise ! " and such-like tunes ! If ever a censor was wanted, it is here ; an authority who would not only wipe out the rubbish, but insist on the proper speed. Fine modern tunes like S. S. Wesley's " The Church's one Foundation " are rattled through at a pace which would make its composer turn in his grave. The older melodies, written by men who had a sense of fitness and decency to back their musicianship, are played and sung as if the whole congregation had to catch a train. The performance recalls the feat of a famous Dublin parson, who was gifted with such a genius for clear elocution and vivid declamation that he could get through the Morning Prayer including the Litany, when he was so minded, in twenty minutes. It did not make for reverence, but it gave him the distinction of making a record.

The outlook in our concert-rooms is more satisfactory, and the increase in the number of first-class instrumentalists has led to the formation of several admirable orchestras. Forty years ago there were only two, one in London and one in Manchester. Although concerts of orchestral music were given by several Societies, and by Manns at the Crystal Palace "Saturdays" (who had a smaller and independent band of his own on other weekdays), the rank and file of the players was always the same. Now we have enough players to supply the country. Birmingham has a large and improving band. Godfrey has a small but most efficient body of players, permanently stationed at Bournemouth, with which he performs every composition of every nationality including his own. Scotland is provided for. What is most wanted is decentralization. London is overcrowded with players, whom provincial cities with a little of the enterprise and foresight of those on the Continent could employ to the better education and refinement of their inhabitants. If Britain's music has not in recent years (outside patriotic Bournemouth) received the consideration which British societies and organizations ought to give to it, the fault largely lies in the fact that it is produced by fits and starts, is seldom repeated sufficiently to become familiar, and is too often unrelieved by contrasting specimens from the music of other nations. When Jullien conducted the promenade concerts, immortalized by Dicky Doyle in "Mr. Pips his Diary," the mass of the public was wholly unfamiliar with Beethoven's symphonies, which were only known to the few hundred frequenters of

the Philharmonic. An enthusiastic admirer of Beethoven, Jullien determined to make him a household word. He did so, not by giving "Beethoven evenings" which would have meant playing to empty benches, nor even by performing a whole symphony at a time, but by introducing one Beethoven movement into a popular programme. It was not long before the single movement grew into whole symphonies, and his aim was accomplished. The mistake which is now made about native productions lies in expecting a full house for wholly unknown or very partially familiar work, instead of providing an attractive general programme in which one native work shall have a carefully chosen place. The only conductor who carried out this principle was Manns, and he did more for the encouragement of native work than any of his London successors. The "Apathy of the Public," so often quoted when a silly All-British programme naturally fails to attract, would speedily disappear with careful nursing by its concert-givers on those lines.

The demolition of the best concert-room in London, St. James's Hall, was a most serious blow to musical London. It had the unusual advantage of suiting both orchestral and chamber music. Without it the Monday Popular Concerts would have been an impossibility, for it held enough to pay well. It has no successor. It was a going financial concern which returned large dividends (even after the opening of Queen's Hall) to its shareholders. When it was pulled down, I determined to take the bull by the horns and to see whether a paternal Government would at last do for music a tithe of what it does for her

sister arts. The opportunity had come in the removal of the War Office from its old quarters in Pall Mall to Whitehall. No better site for a concert-room could have been imagined. Of a capacity large enough to provide two halls, one for Orchestral and one for Chamber music, as in the New Gewandhaus at Leipzig, it was far away from bells and other distracting noises, while within close reach of omnibuses to all parts of London. I imagined also the possibility of founding under its roof a sound agency for artists. The Government would have at its command a Hall admirably suited for such political matters as Colonial Conferences or other receptions. To clinch the argument, I was able to produce the balance-sheets of the extinct St. James's Hall, which proved that such a building, with proper management, would result in sufficient profit to pay off its own cost within a reasonable period.

Armed with this proposal I made the plunge, and had a long and most interesting interview with the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Prime Minister. I laid the whole facts and figures before him, and showed him the architectural plans of the Leipzig Gewandhaus, pointing out what had been unquestioningly and ungrudgingly done in a town inhabited by thousands instead of millions. I also laid stress on the important point, that if this undertaking were carried out, music, the most neglected of all the arts by English Governments, would be the only one of them to show a profit on its balance-sheet. Other points, such as the possibility it would give of encouraging societies by providing them with a less costly habitat, and of reaching the ears of the music-

loving poorer classes, were self-evident. The analogy of the Government treatment of such Art Institutions as the National Gallery, Tate Gallery, Victoria and Albert Museum, and others, furnished what is always so necessary in political departments, a precedent. Finally it involved no taxation, but rather suggested a good business proposition. The Prime Minister was and continued to be deeply interested in the idea. It got as far as the Treasury. The Treasury, which is now allowing the disbursement of unproductive millions, put its foot down upon that of a few productive thousands. It did so on the truly amazing grounds (as I was afterwards given to understand) that the plan had a dangerously socialistic tendency. The chief executioner was, by the irony of fate, the only official in that Department who had musical attainments enough to obtain a musical degree. He did a bad day's work. In the course of my conversation with the Prime Minister, I told him of the unique suitability of the War Office site, and foretold that if it were not taken advantage of, its place would be taken by yet another Club caravanserai. He deprecated warmly such an idea, but the prophecy is come true. The Automobile Club is incomplete without a tablet to the Treasury Bachelor of Music, whose dread of Socialism insured it its palatial residence.

Since those days the lavish expenditure of public money and the consequent excessive taxation has affected music more disastrously than any other profession. Always liable in this country to be classed rather as a luxury than as an educational and refining factor, it is one of the first to suffer from reduced banker's

balances. Subscribers to Societies throughout the country have retired, the committees which used to engage first-class artists were forced to draw in their horns and content themselves with those of less experience and smaller cost. Those who, from their position in the profession, command larger fees cannot reduce them without penalizing their younger brethren, and many of them are left with a tithe of their former income. Many useful local organizations are closing down altogether. The leading Festivals, which until recently were drawing large sums over and above their expenditure, are now almost invariably heavy losers; the losses are traced, not to the casual visitors, but to the formerly reliable bulk of local subscribers of the middle classes. Their committees try every conceivable method of attracting them, but their balance at the bank is, of necessity, the primary consideration. To some extent this falling off may be due to the increase of good local music in intervening years. The days when Sullivan spoke of a Festival town as a boa-constrictor, which ate a large meal once in three years and slept for the rest of the time, are gone. On the other hand, the excellent and numerous concerts of Cologne, Aix-la-Chapelle and Düsseldorf have in no way affected the receipts of the Lower Rhine Festivals, which are held by turn in each of these cities. Competition Festivals are flourishing, but they are of little or no value as media for the performance of great works. They have a sporting element to back them, and cup-hunting has its attractions even for seriously minded choral bodies. As long as the prize fever is discouraged, and the sport

is kept subsidiary to artistic considerations, they will accomplish their share of general good in the future as they have in the past.

Of the Opera there is but little to say, which has not already been said. As far as London is concerned it is and remains an exotic. Its supporters are not the greater public but a fraction of Society, the list of whose names does not take up more than half a column of the newspapers. Without them the edifice would fall, for there is nothing national about it save the orchestra and a few singers. The foreigner looks upon it as a Tom Tiddler's ground, as he does upon the United States. And yet so persistent is the talk about the need of a National Opera and so numerous, if spasmodic, the attempts to attain to it, that there is always a substratum of hope that something will be done before long. If it is, it will have to be the work of private enterprise, sufficiently large and sustained to see the institution outgrow its infantile ailments and attain maturity. The other arts have found their benefactors in this country, and some day perhaps one will arise whose tastes lie in the direction of National Opera. He will have the advantage of being first in a new field, without any competitors to dispute his title; and will earn and deserve a niche to himself in English History.

Here my unwritten diary comes to a full stop. If I were to turn over to the next page I might find all sorts and kinds of opinions which would deserve to be placed upon the Index, or classed with forbidden fruit.

There are many mountains close around, which, as Robert Schumann wisely said, need to be more distant before one can estimate their relative heights and appreciate the beauty of their formation. It is easy enough to write impressions of twenty to forty years ago, but hard indeed of days close at hand without perhaps unwittingly touching some too tender spot, and overrating, as well as underrating, men and things with a judgment too undigested to be of any value. One of the characteristics of old age is to remember clearly enough the happenings of youth, but to forget names, places and events of its own time. Although I cannot yet claim the privileges of senility, this not unkindly provision, which Nature has made for veterans, has given me a timely hint to write *Finis*. A friend of mine, when he heard of my temerity in undertaking to write down my memories, told me that I had no business to do such a thing at my age, and that I should in decency wait till I was over seventy. But time flies, and my memory might have fled with it. Perhaps I should have been wiser to follow his counsel; my readers will be the best judge of that. Any criticism which they consider unduly harsh, they will at least believe to have been put down from conviction; this will smooth over many a rough place, and blunt the edge of too sharp a word. Not a few books of reminiscences contain but a half-pennyworth of bread to an intolerable deal of sack. The present volume, I fear, follows Falstaff's recipe only too closely. It may therefore, like his, deserve to be written down as "Monstrous!" My only hope is that

there may be a few crumbs of incident or record to comfort the reader and redeem the book from uselessness, and that they may recall to some of my contemporaries a few happy memories of old times, old haunts, and (best of all) old and valued friends.

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