

For Every Music Lover eBook

For Every Music Lover

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Preface

We cannot gain experience by being brought into contact with the experiences of others, nor can we know music by reading about it. Only by taking it into our hearts and homes, by admitting it to our intimate companionship, can we approach a knowledge of the art that has enriched so many lives, even though it has never yet completely fulfilled its function. At the same time, every music lover is helped to new ideas, inspired to fresh efforts, by suggestions and statements from those who have themselves had deep experiences in their search for the inner sanctuary of the Temple of Art.

Musicians have been too much inclined to treat their art as something to be exclusively appropriated by a favored class of men and women, and are themselves greatly to blame for its mistaken isolation. True, music has its privileged class. To this belongs the mind of creative genius that can formulate in tones the universal passions, the eternal verities of the soul. In it may also be numbered those gifted beings whose interpretative powers peculiarly adapt them to spread abroad the utterances of genius. Precisely in the same way religion has its prophets and its ministers. Music, as well as religion, is meant for everyone, and the business of its ministers and teachers is to convey to all the message of its prophets.

The nineteenth century was the period of achievement. There is every reason to believe that the twentieth century will be the period of still nobler achievement, beyond all in the realm of the spirit. Then will music find its most splendid opportunity, and in our own free soil it will yield its richest fruitage. Amid the favorable conditions of liberty it will flourish to the utmost, and will come to afford blessed relief from the pressure of materialism. During the era we are entering no unworthy teacher will be permitted to trifle with the unfolding musical instincts of childhood. The study of music will take an honored place in the curriculum of every school, academy, college and university, as an essential factor in culture. Then music among us will come to reflect our deepest, truest consciousness, the American world-view.

It is with a desire to stimulate thought and incite to action that the present volume has been prepared for every music lover. The essays contained in it have not previously appeared in print. They are composed to a large extent of materials used by the author in her lectures and informal talks on music and its history. That her readers may be led to seek further acquaintance with the divine art is her earnest wish.

Many thanks are due L. C. Page & Company, of Boston, for kind permission to use the portrait of Corelli, from their "Famous Violinists," by Henry C. Lahee.

Aubertine Woodward Moore.
Madison, wis.



FOR EVERY MUSIC LOVER



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I

The Origin and Function of Music

One of the most interesting of the many interesting stories of our civilization is the story of Music. It affords an intimate knowledge of the inner life of man as manifested in different epochs of the world's history. He who has failed to follow it has failed to comprehend the noblest phenomena of human progress.

Mythology and legendary lore abound in delightful traditions in regard to the birth of music. The untutored philosophers of primitive humanity and the learned philosophers of ancient civilizations alike strove to solve the sweet, elusive mystery surrounding the art. Through the myths and legends based on their speculations runs a suggestion of divine origin.

The Egyptians of old saw in their sublime god, Osiris, and his ideal spouse, Isis, the authors of music. Among the Hindus it was regarded as a priceless gift from the great god Brahma, who was its creator and whose peerless consort, Sarasvati, was its guardian. Poetic fancies in these lines permeate the early literature of diverse peoples.

This is not surprising. Abundant testimony proves that the existence of music is coeval with that of mankind; that it is based on the modulations of the human voice and the agitations of the human muscles and nerves caused by the infinite variations of the spiritual and emotional sensations, needs and aspirations of humanity; that it has grown with man's growth, developed with man's development, and that its origin is as divine as that of man.

[Illustration: *Mozart*]

The inevitable dualism which Emerson found bisecting all nature appears also in music, which is both spiritual and material. The spiritual part of music appeals to the spiritual part of man, addressing each heart according to the cravings and capacities of each. The material part of music may be compared to the body in which man's spirit is housed. It is the vehicle which conveys the message of music from soul to soul through the medium of the human ear with its matchless harp of nerve-fibres and its splendid sounding-board, the eardrum.

Music is the mirror which most perfectly reflects man's inner being and the essence of all things. Ruskin saw clearly that he alone can love art well who loves better what art mirrors. This may especially be applied to music, which offers, as a Beethoven has said, a more lofty revelation than all wisdom and philosophy.

Having no model in nature, being neither an imitation of any actual object, nor a repetition of anything experienced, music stands alone among the arts. It represents

the real thing, as Schopenhauer has it, the thing itself, not the mere semblance. Were we able to give a thoroughly satisfactory explanation of music, he declares, we should have the true philosophy of the universe.

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“Music is a kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the Infinite, and impels us for a moment to gaze into it,” exclaimed Carlyle. Wagner found in music the conscious language of feeling, that which ennobles the sensual and realizes the spiritual. “Music is the harmonious voice of creation, an echo of the invisible world, one note of the divine concord which the entire universe is destined one day to sound,” wrote Mazzini. Literature is rich in noble definitions of the divine art.

From a matter of fact standpoint music consists of a vast concourse of tones which are its raw materials and bear within themselves the possibility of being moulded into form. Utterances and actions illustrating these raw materials are common to all living creatures. A dog, reiterating short barks of joy, or giving vent to prolonged howls of distress, is actuated by an impulse similar to that of the human infant as it uplifts its voice to express its small emotions. The sounds uttered by primeval man as the direct expression of his emotions were unquestionably of a like nature.

The tendency to manifest feeling by means of sound is universally admitted, and sound, freighted with feeling, is peculiarly exciting to human beings. The agitations of a mob may be increased by the emotional tones of its prime movers, and we all know that the power of an orator depends more on his skill in handling his voice than on what he says.

A craving for sympathy exists in all animate beings. It is strong in mankind and becomes peculiarly intense in the type known as artistic. The fulness of his own emotions compels the musician to utterance. To strike a sympathetic chord in other sensitive breasts it becomes necessary to devise forms of expression that may be unmistakably intelligible.

Out of such elements the tone-language has grown, precisely as the word-language grew out of men’s early attempts to communicate facts to one another. Its story records a slow, painstaking building up of principles to control its raw materials; for music, as we understand it, cannot exist without some kind of design. Vague sounds produce vague, fleeting impressions. Definiteness in tonal relations and rhythmic plan is requisite to produce a defined, enduring impression. In primitive states of music rhythmic sounds were heard, defined by the pulses but with little or no change of pitch, and sounds varying in pitch without regularity of impulse. A high degree of intellectuality was reached before our modern scales were evolved from long-continued attempts at making well-balanced successions of sounds. As musical art advanced rhythm and melodic expression became united.



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The study of the origin, function and evolution of music, according to modern scientific methods, is a matter of comparatively recent date. As late as 1835 a French writer of the history of music expressed profound regret that he had been unable to determine when music was invented, or to discover the inventor's name. It was his opinion that musical man had profited largely from the voices of the feathered tribes. He seriously asserted that the duck had evidently furnished a model for the clarinet and oboe, and Sir Chanticleer for the trumpet. An entire chapter of his book he devoted to surmises concerning the "Music before the Flood." The poor man felt himself superior to the poetic fancies of the ancients, which at least foreshadowed the Truth, but had found no firm ground on which to stand.

Much finer were the instincts of Capellmeister Wolfgang Kasper, Prince of Waldthurn, whose historical treatise on Music appeared in Dresden in 1690. He boldly declared the author of music to be the good God himself, who fashioned the air to transmit musical sounds, the ear to receive them, the soul of man to throb with emotions demanding utterance, and all nature to be filled with sources of inspiration. The good Capellmeister was in close touch with the Truth.

It was in 1835, the same year that the French writer mentioned offered his wild speculations, that Herbert Spencer, from the standpoint of a scientist, produced his essay on the "Origin and Function of Music," which has proved invaluable in arousing discriminating thought in these lines. Many years elapsed before its worth to musicians was realized. To-day it is widely known and far-reaching in its influence.

In those inner agitations which cause muscular expansion and contraction, and find expression in the inflections and cadences of the voice, Herbert Spencer saw the foundations of music. He unhesitatingly defined it as emotional speech, the language of the feelings, whose function was to increase the sympathies and broaden the horizon of mankind. Besides frankly placing music at the head of the fine arts, he declared that those sensations of unexperienced felicity it arouses, those impressions of an unknown, ideal existence it calls forth, may be regarded as a prophecy to the fulfilment of which music is itself partly instrumental. Our strange capacity for being affected by melody and harmony cannot but imply that it is possible to realize the delights they suggest. On these suppositions might be comprehended the power and significance of music which must otherwise remain a mystery. The progress of musical culture, he thought, could not be too much applauded as a noble means of ministering to human welfare. Mr. Spencer's theory has of late led to much controversy. Its author has been censured for setting forth no explanation of the place of harmony in modern music, and for not realizing what a musical composition is. In his last volume, "Facts and Comments," which

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contains many valuable thoughts not previously published, he declares that his critics have obviously confounded the origin of a thing and that which originates from it. "Here we have a striking example of the way in which an hypothesis is made to appear untenable by representing it as being something which it does not profess to be," he says. "I gave an account of the origin of music, and now I am blamed because my conception of the origin of music does not include a conception of music as fully developed. If to some one who said that an oak comes from an acorn it were replied that he had manifestly never seen an oak, since an acorn contains no trace of all its complexities of form and structure, the reply would not be thought a rational one;" but he believes it would be quite as rational as to suppose he had not realized what a musical composition is because his theory of the origin of music says nothing about the characteristics of an overture or a quartet.

Of the music of primeval man we can form an estimate from the music of still existing uncivilized races. As the vocabulary of their speech is limited, so the notes of their music are few, but expressive gestures and modulations of the voice supplement both. With advancing civilization the emotions of which the human heart are capable become more complex and demand larger means of expression. Some belief in the healing, helpful, uplifting power of music has always prevailed. It remains for independent, practical, modern man to present the art to the world as a thing of law and order, whose ineffable beauty and beneficence may reach the lives of the average man and woman.

Without the growth of the individual, music cannot grow; without freedom of thought, neither the language of tones nor that of words can gain full, free utterance. Freedom is essential to the life of the indwelling spirit. Wherever the flow of thought and fancy is impeded, or the energies of the individual held in check, there music is cramped. In China, where conditions have crushed spiritual and intellectual liberty, the art remains to this day in a crude rhythmical or percussion state, although it was early honored as the gift of superior beings. The Chinese philosopher detected a grand world music in the harmonious order of the heavens and the earth, and wrote voluminous works on musical theory. When it came to putting this into practice tones were combined in a pedantic fashion.

In all ages and climes music has ministered to religion and education. The sacred Vedas bear testimony to the high place it held in Hindu worship and life. Proud records of stone reveal its dignified role in the civilization of Egypt, where Plato stated there had existed ten thousand years before his day music that could only have emanated from gods or godlike men. The art was taught by the temple priests, and the education of no young person was complete without a knowledge of it.

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Egyptian musical culture impressed itself on the Greeks, and also on the Israelites, whose tone-language gained warmth and coloring from various Oriental sources. Hebrew scriptures abound in tributes to the worth of music which was intimately related to the political life, mental consciousness and national sentiment of the Children of Israel. Through music they approached the unseen King of kings with the plaintive outpourings of their grief-laden hearts and with their joyful hymns of praise and thanksgiving.

From the polished Greeks we gained a basis for the scientific laws governing our musical art. The splendid music of which we read in ancient writings has for the most part vanished with the lives it enriched. Relegated to the guardianship of exclusive classes its most sacred secrets were kept from the people, and it could not possibly have attained the expansion we know.

Music has been called the handmaiden of Christianity, but may more appropriately be designated its loyal helpmeet. Whatever synagogue or other melodies may have first served to voice the sentiments kindled by the Gospel of Glad Tidings it was inevitable that the new religious thought should seek and find new musical expression.

In shaping a ritual for general use, an accompaniment of suitable music had to be considered. The fathers of the church constituted themselves also the guides of music. Those forms which give symmetry and proportion to the outward structure of the tonal art were pruned and polished under ecclesiastical surveillance until spontaneity was endangered. Happily in the spirit of Christianity is that which ever proves a remedy for the mistakes of law-givers. The religion that inculcates respect for the individual has furthered the advance of music and of spirituality.

Beyond the confines of the church was another musical growth, springing up by the wayside and in remote places. Folk-music it is called, and it gives untrammelled utterance to human longings, human grief and despair, and human wondering over the mysteries of life, death and the great Beyond. Untutored people had always found vent in this kind of music for pent-up feelings, and the folk-music of the Christian world, during the Crusades, gained a new element in the fragments of Oriental melody transplanted into its midst. In time, through the combined wisdom of gifted composers and large-minded ecclesiastical rulers, the music of the church and the music of the people became united, and modern music was born.

Architecture, painting, sculpture and poetry possess practical proofs of their past achievements and on these their present endeavors are builded. Modern music has been compelled to be the architect of its own fortunes. It is the one new art of our era, and, as the youngest in the family of arts, it has but recently reached a high state of development.

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During those eleven Christian centuries, from the latter part of the fourth century, when the corner-stone for our musical system was laid, until the wonderful exploration period of the fifteenth was well advanced, the masters of music were absorbed in controlling the elements of their art. Since then event has crowded upon event with rapidly increasing ratio. During the past two centuries the progress of the art has been like a tale in fairyland. We now possess a magnificent musical vocabulary, a splendid musical literature, yet so accustomed are we to grand treasure-troves we perhaps prize them no more than the meagre stores of the past were prized.

Music is often mentioned in literature as a means of discipline, inspiration and refreshment. We read in Homer that Achilles was instructed in the art that he might learn to moderate his passions; Pythagoras, father of Musical Science, counseled his disciples to refresh themselves at the fount of music before retiring to their couches at night in order to restore the inner harmony of their souls, and to seek strength in the morning from the same source. Plato taught that music is as essential to the mind as air is to the body, and that children should be familiarized with harmonies and rhythms that they might be more gentle, harmonious and rhythmical, consequently better fitted for speech and action.

“Song brings of itself a cheerfulness that wakes the heart to joy,” exclaimed Euripides, and certain it is a large measure of joy surrounds those who live in an atmosphere of music. It has a magic wand that lifts man beyond the petty worries of his existence. “Music is a shower-bath of the soul,” said Schopenhauer, “washing away all that is impure.” Or as Auerbach put it: “Music washes from the soul the dust of everyday life.”

Realizing the influence of music, Martin Luther sang the Reformation into the hearts of the people with his noble chorals in which every one might join. He called music a mistress of order and good manners, and introduced it into the schools as a means of refinement and discipline, in whose presence anger and all evil would depart. “A schoolmaster,” said he, “ought to have skill in music, otherwise I would not regard him; neither should we ordain young men to the office of preaching unless they have been well exercised in the art, for it maketh a fine people.” It were well if teachers and ministers to-day more generally appreciated the value of music to them and their work.

Music is an essential factor in great national movements. Every commander knows how inspiring and comforting it is to his men. Napoleon Bonaparte, who was not readily lifted out of himself and who complained that music jarred his nerves, was shrewd enough to observe its effect on marching troops, and to order the bands of different regiments to play daily in front of hospitals to soothe and cheer the wounded. The one tune he prized, Malbrook, he hummed as he started for his last campaign. In the solitude of St. Helena he said: “Of all liberal arts music has the greatest influence over the passions, and it is that to which the legislator ought to give the most encouragement.”

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An art that in some form is found in the varied activities of all people, at all times, must be the common heritage of humanity. "It does not speak to one class but to mankind," said Robert Franz, the German song writer. Alexander Bain called it the most available, universal and influential of the fine arts, and Dr. Marx, the musical theorist, thought music beneficial to the moral and spiritual estate of the masses.

Truly indeed has it been said that its universality gives music its high worth. Mirroring neither your inner life alone nor mine, but the world's essence, the transfiguration of what seems real, the divine Ideal, some spark of which glows in every bosom, each individual may feel in it whatever he is capable of feeling. The soul's language, it takes up the thread dropped by words and gives utterance to those refined sentiments and holy aspirations words are inadequate to awaken or express. Its message is borne from heart to heart, revealing to each things unseen, according as it is prepared to receive them.

In the Merchant of Venice, Shakespeare made Lorenzo speak to Jessica of the harmony that is in immortal souls and say that "whilst this muddy vesture of decay doth grossly close it in we cannot hear it." To refine this muddy vesture, to render the spirit attentive, to bring light, sweetness, strength, harmony and beauty into daily life is the central function of music which, from the cradle to the grave, is man's most intimate companion.

Richard Wagner devoutly believed it would prepare the way for an unspoiled, unfettered humanity, illumined by a perception of Truth and Beauty and united by a bond of sympathy and love. This ideal union is the goal at which Tolstoi aims in his "What is Art?" He defines art as a human activity to be enjoyed by all, whose purpose is the transmission of the most exalted feelings to which men have arisen; but the union he proposes would have to be consummated by a leveling process. All art that cannot without preparation reach the uncultured classes is denounced by him. He is most bitter in his denunciation of Wagner, who fought for a democratic art, but who wished to attain it by raising the lowliest of his fellow-creatures to an ever loftier plane of high thinking and feeling.

According to Tolstoi, art began to degenerate when it separated itself from religion. There must have been dense mist before the Russian sage's mental vision when he fancied this separation possible. Art, especially musical art, is a vital part of religion, and cannot be put asunder from it. Like thought, music, since the bonds of church and state have been broken, has spread wide its pinions and soared to hitherto unsuspected heights. All noble music is sacred.

Amid the marvelous material progress of to-day music is more needed than ever. Unburdened by the responsibility of fact, it brings relief to the soul from the grinding pressure of constant grappling with knowledge. The benefits of knowledge are great,

but it is also beneficial to be uplifted, as we may be by music, from out the perplexing labyrinth of the work-a-day world toward the realm of the Divine Ideal.

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As a means of culture music is a potent factor in human civilization. It is destined to wield even greater influence than has yet been known. It has become the household art of to-day. As it enters more and more fully into the heart of the home and social life it will more and more enrich human existence and aid in ushering in the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

If music can do so much for mankind, why are not all musicians great and good? Ah, my friend, that is a hard question to answer, and can only be fairly treated by asking another equally difficult question: Why are not all people who have enjoyed the advantages of religion wise and noble? Consider the gigantic machinery that has been put in motion to promulgate Christianity, and note how slow men have been to appropriate the teachings of its founder. Slow progress furnishes no argument against the mission either of religion or its comrade music.

In common with religion music kindles our finer sensibilities and brings us into an atmosphere superior to that which ordinarily surrounds us. It requires wisdom to beautify commonplace conditions with what has been enjoyed in aerial regions. Rightly applied, music can lend itself to this illumination. As it is better known, its advantages will be more completely realized.

II

Blunders in Music Study

Like a voice from the Unseen, the Eternal, music speaks to the soul of man. Its informing word being delivered in the language of the emotional nature finds some response to its appeal in every normal human breast. Shakespeare indicated this truth when he had his Lorenzo, in the Merchant of Venice, say:

"The man that hath no music in himself, Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils; The motions of his spirit are dull as night, And his affections dark as Erebus; Let no such man be trusted."

It is not the normal soul, fresh from its Creator's hands, that is fit for such dire evils, but the soul perverted by false conditions and surroundings. Where vice has become congenial and the impure reigns supreme, that which rouses and expresses noble aspirations and pure emotions can find no room. Normal instincts may also be dulled, the inner being made, as it were, musically deaf and dumb, by a false education which stifles and dwarfs the finer feelings, or by circumstances which permit these to remain dormant.

The emotional natures of human beings differ as widely in kind and degree as the intellectual and physical natures. In some people sensibility predominates, and the



irresistible activity of fancy and feeling compels the expression in rhythmic tone combinations of ideals grasped intuitively. Thus musical genius manifests itself. No amount of education can bring it into being, but true culture and wise guidance are needed to equip it for its bold flight. "Neither

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diligence without genius, nor genius without education will produce anything thorough," as we read in Horace. Other people with marked aptitude for musical expression have reproductive rather than creative endowments. To them belongs talent in a greater or less degree, and they are adapted to promulgate the message which genius formulated for mankind. Talent may be ripened and brightened by suitable environments and fostering care.

There are besides persons led by genius or talent into other avenues than those of the tone-world, and the great public with its diverse grades of emotional and intellectual gifts. The cultivation of the aesthetic tastes is profitable to all, and no agency contributes so freely to it as music. Too many people engaged in purely scientific or practical pursuits have failed to realize this. In those nations known as musical, and that have become so through generations occupied with the art, music study is placed on an equal footing with any other worthy pursuit and no life interest is permitted to exclude musical enthusiasm.

Unless disabled by physical defects, every one displays some sense of musical sound and rhythmic motion. It is a constant occurrence for children, without a word of direction, to mark the time of a stirring tune with hands, feet and swaying motions of the body. A lullaby will almost invariably soothe a restless infant, and most children old enough to distinguish and articulate groups of tones will make some attempt at singing the melodies they have often heard. The average child begins music lessons with evident pleasure.

It should be no more difficult to strengthen the musical instincts than any other faculties. On the contrary, it too often chances that a child whose early song efforts have been in excellent time and tune, and not without expression, who has marched in time and beat time accurately, will, after a period of instruction, utterly disregard sense of rhythm, sing out of tune, play wrong notes, or fail to notice when the musical instrument used is ever so cruelly out of tune. Uneducated people, trusting to intuitive perceptions, promptly decide that such or such a child, or person, has been spoiled by cultivation. This is merely a failure to trace a result to its rightful cause, which lies not in cultivation, but in certain blunders in music study.

These blunders begin with the preliminary course on the piano or violin, for instance, when a child, having no previous training in the rudiments of music, starts with one weekly lesson, and is required to practice a prescribed period daily without supervision. To the difficulties of an introduction to a musical instrument are added those of learning to read notes, to locate them, to appreciate time values and much else. The teacher, it may be, knows little of the inner life of music, still less of child nature. Manifold perplexities arise, and faltering through these the pupil acquires a halting use of the musical vocabulary, with other bad habits equally hard to correct. A constant repetition

of false notes, wrong phrasing, irregular accents, faulty rhythms and a meaningless jumble of notes dulls the outer ear and deadens the inner tone-sense. Where there is genius, or decided talent, no obstacle can wholly bar the way to music. Otherwise, it retreats before the blundering approach.

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Many a mother when advised to direct her child's practicing, or at least to encourage it by her presence, has excused herself on the plea that it would bore her to listen. If the work bores the mother it is not surprising that the child attacks it with mind fixed on metal more attractive and eyes seeking the clock. Occupations which are repellent in early life leave behind them a memory calculated to render them forever distasteful. It is therefore a grave mistake not to make music study from the outset throb with vital interest. An appeal to the intellect will quicken the aesthetic instincts, be they never so slender, and almost any one will love work that engages all the faculties.

Those pupils are fortunate who come under the influence of a teacher with strong, well-balanced personality and ripe knowledge, and are treated as rational beings, capable of feeling, thinking and acting. Too many music teachers learn their business by experimenting on beginners. It has been suggested as a safeguard against their blunders, and all ignorance, carelessness and imposture, that music might be placed under the same legal protection accorded other important factors in social life, and that no one be permitted to teach it without a license granted by a competent board of judges after the applicant had passed a successful examination, theoretical and practical. This would be well if there was any certainty of choosing suitable persons to select the judges.

A practical Vienna musician, H. Geisler, has recently created no little sensation by asserting that the pianoforte, although indispensable for the advanced artist, is worthless, even harmful, in primary training, and that the methods used in teaching it are based on a total misapprehension of the musical development prescribed by nature. Sensual and intellectual perceptions must actively exist, he feels, before they can be expressed by means of an instrument. It is a mistake to presume that manual practice can call them into being, or to disregard the supremacy of the tone-sense. He considers the human voice the primitive educational instrument of music and believes the reasonable order of musical education to be: hearing, singing, performing.

This order is to be commended, and might readily be followed if primary instruction was given in classes, which being less expensive than private tuition, would admit of more frequent lessons and the services of a competent teacher. Classes afford the best opportunity for training the ear to accuracy in pitch, the eye to steadiness in reading notes, the mind to comprehension of key relationships, form and rhythmic movement, and the heart to a realization of the beauty and purport of music. In classes the stimulating effect of healthy competition may be felt, an impulse given to writing notes, transposing phrases and melodies, strengthening musical sentiment and refining the taste.

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Both the French Solfege method and the English Tonic Sol-fa system prove the advantage of rudimentary training in classes. Mrs. John Spencer Curwen, wife of the president of the London Tonic Sol-fa College, and daughter-in-law of the late Rev. John Curwen, founder of the movement it represents, has applied to pianoforte teaching the logical principles underlying the system, which are those accepted by modern educators as the psychological basis of all education. From her point of view the music lesson may be made attractive from the moment the pupil is placed at the instrument.

Time is taught by her as a mental science, with the pulse as the central fact. She proceeds rhythmically rather than arithmetically, making constant appeals to that within the child which is associated with music. As the ear is expected to verify every fact, whether of time or pitch, she deems essential to profitable practicing the daily supervision of some person who understands the teacher's requirements.

Many times a child who can readily explain the relative value of every note and dot will stumble in the time movement when confronted with a mixture of the same notes and dots. This is because no mental connection has been established between the mechanical time sign and its sound, which is the outgrowth of instinctive impulses. Time confusion may also be caused by confiding too implicitly in loud and persistent counting, instead of trusting to the intelligently guided rhythmic pulse.

The keenness of musical perception in the blind is a subject of frequent comment. It is due to the fact that neither outer nor inner ear is distracted by the organ of sight, and the mind is compelled to concentrate itself with peculiar intensity on the tone-images aroused for its contemplation. When one of the senses is weakened or lost, the others become strong through the requirements made on them. This shows how much may be gained in music study by throwing responsibility on those faculties it is desirable to develop.

There are numerous promising schemes for class work in operation in our own country, some of them offering excellent advantages to the student. From the music study in our public schools valuable results ought to come in time. Thus far, unfortunately, it is too often conducted by teachers who are themselves without trained musical ability and who permit their pupils to shout rather than sing music of an inferior order to the accompaniment of a piano wretchedly out of tune.

The much beloved Phillips Brooks once said: "A school song in the heart of a child will do as much for his character as a fact in his memory, or a principle in his intellect." Unquestionably a love for good music, inspired during the formative period, is calculated to open unlimited possibilities, and ours could readily be molded into a musical nation if a firm foundation for musical knowledge and appreciation were laid in our schools. After the rudiments were mastered, it could easily be decided which pupils had a natural bent demanding special training.



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Where music study becomes compulsory the blunder of permitting the compulsion to be felt must be avoided. Socrates of old, in Plato's Republic, advised making early education a sort of amusement. Those who heed his counsel should not forget that in turning music study altogether into play work there is danger of weakening the will. The tottering footsteps should be guided wisely, as well as tenderly, in the first approach to the Temple of Art, that the pupil may learn to walk, as well as to observe and think independently. We most prize beauty that we are able to discern for ourselves. We gain strength by intelligently conquering our own problems and perplexities. "Nothing is impossible," as Mirabeau has said, "for one who can will."

The aim of music study is to know music, to gain a correct conception of how it should sound, and so, as far as possible, to make it sound. This aim can never be reached by the mere cultivation of technical adroitness. Untold sacrifices are made to-day to what becomes the unrighteous mammon of technique when the mechanical side of practice is exalted above its interpretative aspects. Schumann deemed brilliancy of execution only valuable when it served a higher purpose. That higher purpose is to reach and express the soul of music. Unless enriched by it, all mechanism is dead. It is not desirable that every one should perform acrobatic feats on some musical instrument, or indulge in vocal pyrotechnics, but it is desirable to extract music out of whatever technique may be attained. Instead of racing onward with feverish haste to ever increased technical skill at the expense of other development, it were well for the student to pause until each composition attacked, be it but an exercise, could be interpreted with accuracy, intelligence, and feeling. We should then have more musicianly players and singers. We should more often be brought under the magic spell of exquisitely shaded tone that may make a simple little melody alive with beauty.

[Illustration: *Brahms*]

A grave blunder of our present music study is the neglect of ensemble playing and singing. Some of the noblest music written is for part-singing and for two or more instruments. Much profit and delight will be the result of making its acquaintance. Four and eight hand piano arrangements of the great overtures and symphonies, too, are valuable and enjoyable. They prepare the way for an appreciation of an orchestral performance of these masterpieces, and broaden the musical horizon. Where there are several music students in a family it is a pity for them to confine their efforts exclusively to the piano, although every musician should have some knowledge of this household instrument. That is a happy home whose members are united by the playing or singing of noble concerted music.

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It is an absurd error to suppose that fine soloists cannot succeed in ensemble work, or as accompanists. Those who fail have been poorly grounded in their art. They may give dazzling performances of works bristling with technical difficulties, yet make a sad failure of some slow, tender movement that calls for musicianly understanding and delicate treatment. The truth is, the requirements for an artistic accompanist, or for artistic concerted work, are the same as for an artistic soloist: well directed musical aptitude, love of art, an ear attuned to listening and large experience in sight-reading.

The music pupils' public recital contributes no little to the blunders of the day in music study. Especially with piano pupils, the work of the year is likely to be shaped with reference to the supreme occasion when results attained may be exhibited in the presence of assembled parents and friends. The popular demand being for the mastery of technique, showy pieces are prepared whose mechanism so claims the attention that the principles underlying both technics and interpretation are neglected. Well-controlled hands, fingers, wrists and arms, with excellent manipulation of the keyboard, may be admired at the recital, but little of that effective playing is heard which finds its way to the hearer's heart. A dead monotony will too often recall the letter that killeth because devoid of the spirit that giveth life.

Sounding notes, even sounding them smoothly, clearly, and rapidly, is not necessarily making music, and a succession of them without warmth and coloring is truly as inartistic as painting without shading. If it were more commonly realized that it is an essential part of the music teacher's vocation to train the mind and the emotions and through them the will and the character, there would be a higher standard for the music pupils' recital. No one would be permitted to play, or sing in public who could not give an artistic, as well as a technically correct performance.

Music students should lose no opportunity to hear the best music, both vocal and instrumental. Heard with understanding ears one good concert is often worth a dozen lessons, yet many students know nothing in music beyond what they have practiced themselves, or heard their fellow-students give at rehearsals or recitals. If they attend concerts at all, it is rather to observe some schoolmaster method in their own particular branch than actually to enjoy music. Trying to gain a musical education without a wide acquaintance with the literature of music is like attempting to form literary taste without knowing the world's great books. To bathe in the glow of the mighty masterpieces of genius neutralizes much that is evil. In music they are the only authoritative illustrations between notes and the ideals they represent; they form the models and maxims by means of which we approach a knowledge of music.

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In view of hearing good music, breathing a musical atmosphere and being glorified into artists, vast numbers of American girls seek foreign musical centres. They are apt to go without suitable equipment, mental or musical, and with inadequate pecuniary provisions. They expect to attain in a few months what they are doomed to discover would take years to accomplish, and cannot fail to suffer for the blunder. Many of them return home disappointed in their aims, and ruined in health. Many of them are stranded in strange lands. A crusade should be started against indiscriminate going abroad for music study, without thorough preparation in every respect.

The fact is, a free, true, fearless hero, such as Wagner found in his Siegfried, is needed to slay, with his invincible sword, the dragon of sordid materialism, and awaken the slumbering bride of genuine art. A storm-god is wanted to swing his hammer and finally dissipate the clouds that obscure the popular vision. Some one has called for a plumed knight at the literary tournament, with visor down, lance in hand, booted and spurred for the fight with prevalent errors. One is equally needed at the musical tournament.

III

The Musical Education That Educates

There is a musical education that educates, a musical education that refines, strengthens, broadens the character and the views, that ripens every God-given instinct and force. It arouses noble thoughts and lofty ideals; it quickens the perceptions, opening up a world of beauty that is closed to the unobservant; it bears its fortunate possessor into a charmed atmosphere, where inspiring, elevating influences prevail. Its aim is nothing short of the absolutely symmetrical development of the spiritual, intellectual and physical being, in view of making the well-rounded musician, the well-balanced individual.

The profits derived from a musical education are proportionate to the investment. Careless work, an utter disregard of principles, in other words, a mere dabbling with music, will afford but superficial results. It is precisely the same with a haphazard pursuit of any branch of art, science, or literature. Through music the soul of mankind may be elevated, the secret recesses of thought and feeling stirred, and every emotion of which the individual is capable made active. In order to attain its full benefits it is imperative to use it as a profound living force, not as a mere surface decoration.

“The musician ever shrouded in himself must cultivate his inmost being that he may turn it outward,” said Goethe. A true musical education provides culture for the inmost being. It tends to enlarge the sympathies, enrich social relations and invest daily life with gracious dignity. Those who gain it beautify their own lives and thus become able to make the world seem more beautiful to others. Those who are never able to give utterance to the wealth of thought and feeling it has aroused in their hearts and

imagination are still happy in possessing the store. After all, our main business in art, as in life, is to strive. Honest effort meets with its own reward, even where it does not lead to what the world calls success.

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It has been said that he who sows thoughts will reap deeds, habits, character. The force of these words is exemplified in the proper study of music, which results in a rich harvest of self-restraint, self-reliance, industry, patience, perseverance, powers of observation, retentive memory, painstaking effort, strength of mind and character. To possess these qualities at their best abundant thought must be sown. Merely to ring changes on the emotions will not elevate to the heights. The musical education that educates makes of the reasoning powers a lever that keeps the emotions in their rightful channel.

Aristotle, who dominated the world's thought for upwards of two thousand years, attributed his acquirements to the command he had gained over his mind. Fixedness of purpose, steady, undivided attention, mental concentration, accuracy, alertness, keen perception and wise discrimination are essential to achievement. This is true of giant minds; it is equally true of average intellects. The right musical education will conduce to these habits. Musical education without them must inevitably be a failure.

Music study is many-sided. To make it truly educative it must be pursued from both theoretical and practical standpoints. It should include technical training which affords facility to express whatever a person may have for expression; intellectual training which enables a person to grasp the constructive laws of the art, its scope, history and aesthetics, with all that calls into play the analytic and imaginative faculties; and spiritual development which imparts warmth and glow to everything. Even those who do not advance far in music study would do well, as they proceed, to touch the art on as many sides as possible, in view of enlarging the musical sense, sharpening the musical perception, concentrating and multiplying the agencies by virtue of which musical knowledge and proficiency are attained.

"Truth," said Madox-Brown, the Pre-Raphaelite, "is the means of art, its end the quickening of the soul." Music does more than quicken the soul; it reveals the soul, makes it conscious of itself. Springing from the deepest and best that is implanted in man, it fertilizes the soil from which it uprises. Both beauty and truth are essential to its welfare. As Hamilton W. Mabie has said: "We need beauty just as truly as we need truth, for it is as much a part of our lives. We have learned in part the lesson of morality, but we have yet to learn the lesson of beauty." This must be learned through the culture of the aesthetic taste, a matter of slow growth, which should begin with the rudiments, and is best fostered in an atmosphere saturated with good music.

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Too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of hearing good music. When it falls on listening ears it removes all desire for anything coarse or unrefined. Constant companionship with it prepares the ear to hear, the inner being to receive, and cannot fail to bring forth fruit. The creations of noble minds form practical working-forces in shaping character, purifying taste and elevating standards. A literary scholar cannot be made of one who has not been brought into close touch with the productions of the great masters in literature, nor an artistic painter, or sculptor, of one who has never known a great painting or piece of statuary. Neither can a thorough musician be made of any one who is ignorant of the master-works of music. It is well to realize, with Goethe, that the effect of good music is not caused by its novelty, but strikes more deeply the more we are familiar with it.

The human voice being practically the foundation of music and the first music teacher, every well-educated musician should be able to use it, and should have a clear understanding of its possibilities and limitations, no matter what his specialty may be. Composers and performers alike will derive benefit from some dealing with the vocal element. Vocal culture is conducive to health, and aids in gaining command of the nerves and muscles. They who profit by it will best understand the varied nuances of intonation, expression and coloring of which music is capable, and will learn how to make a musical instrument sing. Likewise vocalists should familiarize themselves with other domains of their art, and should be able to handle some instrument, more especially the piano or organ, that they may be brought into intimate relations with the harmonic structure of music.

To make music study most effective the scientific methods of other departments of learning must be applied to it. For the supreme good of both art and science need to be brought into close fellowship. Art is the child of feeling and imagination; science the child of reason. Art requires the illumination of science; science the insight of art. Music combines within itself the qualities of art and science. As a science it is a well-ordered system of laws, and cannot be comprehended without knowledge of these. As an art, it is its business to awaken a mood, to express a sentiment; it is knowledge made efficient by skill—thought, effect, taste and feeling brought into active exercise.

No art, no science, affords opportunity for more magnificent mental discipline than music. Moreover, a careful, earnest study of the art furnishes a stimulus to activity in other fruitful fields. Although subordinate to life and character it contributes freely to these, and its best results come from life that is exceeding rich, and character that is strong, true and enlightened through broad, general culture. The musical education that educates develops something more than mere players and singers; it develops thinking, feeling musicians, in whom large personalities may be recognized.



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Stephen A. Emory of Boston, whose studies in harmony are widely used, and who left behind him an influence as a teacher that is far-reaching, divined the true secret of musical education, from the rudiments upward, and expressed his views freely and clearly. He thought it indispensable for the musician to make music the central point of his efforts and equally indispensable for him to have, as supports to this, knowledge and theories from countless sources. "It must be as a noble river," he said of the pursuit of music; "though small and unobserved in its source, winding at first alone its tortuous way through opposing obstacles, yet ever broadening and deepening, fed by countless streams on either hand till it rolls onward in a mighty sweep, at once a glory and a blessing to the earth."

To conquer music a musician must have conquered self. As music can no more be absolutely conquered than self, the effort to gain the mastery over both necessitates a continual healthy, earnest striving, which makes the individual grow in strength, grace and happiness. That musician has been rightly trained whose every thought, mood and feeling, every muscle and fibre, have been brought under the subjection of his will. Professor Huxley uttered the following words that may well be applied to a musical education:

"That man, I think, has had a liberal education, who has been so trained in his youth that his body is the ready servant of his will and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength and in smooth working order; ready, like the steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of nature and of the laws of her operations, one, who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to feel, by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of nature, or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself."

The correctness of applying the last clause to the musician will be questioned by those who delight in enlarging on the petty jealousies of musicians. It will be learned in time that these foibles belong only to petty musicians, and that no one knows better how to respect others as himself than one who has enjoyed the privilege of the musical education that educates.

IV

How to Interpret Music

Certain learned college professors were once heard discussing methods of literary criticism and interpretation. They spoke of external and technical forms, and how magnificently these were illustrated in the world's acknowledged masterpieces of

literature. Every work read or studied, they decided, should be carefully weighed, measured and analyzed, and should be judged solely by the maxims and laws deduced from classical standards. The critical faculty must never be permitted to slumber or to sleep. Above all, the literary student should beware of trusting to impressions.

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Not a word was uttered in regard to the contents of the masterpieces in question, the special emotions, the overwhelming passions they revealed, the mighty experiences of which they were the result. Nothing was said about the source of a great book in the life of its author, or its value as a record of what many minds and hearts of an entire epoch have thought, felt and desired. The learned professors were so deeply concerned with what they considered the demands of strict scholarship that they lost sight of the spirit which animates every true work of art. To them literature consisted of words, phrases, sentences, figures of speech, classical allusions, and well-constructed forms. They regarded it apparently as an artificial product, compounded according to traditional and cautiously prescribed recipes.

An aged man of letters present, one who was characterized by his ripe scholarship, his richly cultured personality, sat listening in silence to the conversation. Suddenly he rose up, and, in vibrant tones, exclaimed: "Where hath the soul of literature fled, its vital part? If we are to trample upon our impressions the best that is within us will be chilled. Of what avail is education if it does not lead to the unfolding of our God-given intuitions? Friends, if the trend of modern criticism be to divorce literature from life, the throb and thrill of great art will soon cease to be felt."

The lesson conveyed by these words may with equal propriety be applied to the field of music. Viewing certain current tendencies the cultured musician is often moved to wonder where the soul of music has fled. The critical faculty is keenly alive to-day, but musical criticism, shorn of its better part, musical appreciation, can never lead to the insight requisite for true musical interpretation. Observation and perception, intellectual discernment and spiritual penetration are essential to gain insight into a great musical composition until its musical ideas, the very grade and texture of its style, are absolutely appropriated.

In his "Death in the Desert," Robert Browning tells of the three souls that make up the soul of man: the soul which Does; the soul which Knows, feels, thinks and wills, and the soul which Is and which constitutes man's real self. Appreciation of music requires the utmost activity of all three souls. The more we are, the broader our culture, the more we think, feel and know, the more we will find in music. Dr. Hiram Corson, commenting on Browning's words, says the rectification, or adjustment of what Is, that which constitutes our true being, should transcend all other aims of education. If this fact were more generally accepted and enforced it could soon no longer be said that few persons reach maturity without the petrification of some faculty of mind and heart.

Every faculty we possess needs to be keenly alive for the interpretation of the best in music. One who is accustomed to earnest thinking, quick observation and sympathetic penetration will see, hear and feel much that utterly escapes those whose best faculties have been permitted to lie dormant, or become petrified. The interpreter of music must have vital knowledge of the inner, spiritual element of every work of art he attempts to

reproduce. His imagination must be kindled by it, and musical imagination is infinitely more precious than musical mechanism.

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It is by no means intended to underrate technical proficiency. No one can be a satisfactory exponent of music whose technique is deficient, however profound may be his musicianly understanding and feeling. At the same time, with every tone, every measure, mechanically correct, a performance may fail to move the listener, because it lacks warmth and glow. Only they can make others feel who feel themselves, but sentiment is apt to be confounded with sentimentality unless it is guided by a scholarly mind. The more feeling is spiritualized with thought the nobler it will be. Heart and head need to operate in company with well-controlled physical forces, in order that a fine interpretation of music may be attained. Faultless technique, in the service of a lofty ideal, indeed ceases to be mechanical and becomes artistic.

A musical work of art originates in the deep well of the fertile imagination of genius, and can only be drawn forth when the composer is in that highly exalted frame of mind we call inspiration. The theme, or musical subject, is a vital spark of the divine fire, and has flashed unbidden into his consciousness, demanding undivided attention for its logical development. With infinite care he molds and groups the musical factors which are his working forces, and of which he has both an intuitive and a practical knowledge. The manifold forms he fashions all combine for one purpose, and lead persistently to one grand climax, from which they may return to the repose whence they came. Unity in diversity is the goal he sets before himself. All aglow though he is with the joy of artistic production, he dare not permit his mind to waver from the task in hand.

Music is not to be played with, and the labor of composition is no trifling matter. It demands the keenest mental activity, the most profound mental concentration. It demands consecration. The composer thinks and works in tones, in an ideal realm, far removed from the realities of the external world. His business is to bring his theme to its most magnificent unfolding, treating it with absolute definiteness, that his intention may be perfectly clear.

It is the business of the interpreter of music to be so thoroughly acquainted with the elements of which music is composed that he can promptly recognize the color, complexion and individual character of every interval, chord and chord-combination, every consonance and dissonance, every timbre and nuance, and every degree of phrasing and rhythm. He must have so complete a mastery of his materials and working forces that his imagination may be influenced unimpeded by the emanations from the composer's imagination which animate the moving forms he commands.

It is his business to respond with his whole being to the appeal of the musical masterpiece he attempts to interpret, and so express the emotions aroused by it from their slumbers in his own bosom that a responsive echo may be found in the bosoms of the listeners. A most ingeniously constructed music-box, with the presentation of a complicated piece of music, may fail to move a heart that will be stirred to its depths by a simple song, into which the singer's whole soul has been thrown.



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Though the mind of the inventive genius be a mystery that may not fully be explained, its product is within the grasp of the intelligent seeker. The aesthetic principles of musical construction rest on certain elementary laws governing both the human organism and the phenomena of sound, and may become familiar to any one who is capable of study. In the same way the established canons of musical expression, observed by the skilful artist, consciously or unconsciously, are traceable to natural causes. Without realizing the inherent properties of music, as well as its technical possibilities and limitations, we cannot know the art.

The tonal language is one that is not translatable into words. It is composed of an infinite variety of tone-forms, now sharply contrasted, now gradually blending into one another, all logically connected, all tending to form a perfect whole. The profusion of harmonic, melodic, dynamic and rhythmic changes it brings forth invests it with a meaning far beyond that of words, a musical meaning. Every masterpiece of music clothes in tonal form some idea which originated in the composer's mind. To the interpreter it is given to invest it with living sound.

Chords and chord combinations all have their individual characteristics. Some cause satisfaction, for instance, others unrest. When a chord of the dominant seventh is heard, the educated musician knows that a solution is demanded. The unspoiled ear and taste instinctively feel something unfinished, and are disturbed if it be not followed by a return to the key chord. Where the faculties are dormant or petrified, its significance will be unobserved.

The story is told of a young lady whose musical education had been utterly hollow and false, but who, having been overwhelmed with flattery for her voice and her singing, was deluded into a belief that she was destined to shine as a star on the operatic stage. She consulted the famous basso, Karl Formes, who good-naturedly had her sing for him. He perceived at once that she possessed neither striking talent nor adequate training.

As a supreme test he struck on the piano a chord of the dominant seventh, and asked the young aspirant for dramatic glory what she thought it meant. Presuming it to be incumbent upon a prospective prima donna to have uppermost in her mind the grand passion, she replied, in a sentimental tone, "Love!" Promptly Karl Formes sounded the solution to the chord. "There is your answer," quoth he. "I ask a question, and it is thought I speak of love. Go home, my good girl, and seek some other avocation. You have a fair voice, but you are tone-deaf. You can never make a musician."

A favorite motto of the piano teacher Leschetitzky is, "Think ten times before you play once." If this rule were more generally observed we should have better interpreters of music. A great composition should completely occupy mind and heart before it is attacked by fingers or voice. In that case it would be analyzed as to its form, its tonal structure, its harmonic relations, its phrasing and rhythms, and its musical intention



would become luminous. The interpreter would understand where accents and other indications of expression should occur and why they should so occur, and would be able, in however feeble a way, to find and reveal the true heart music that lies hidden in the notes.

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It is never too early in a course of music study to consider the requirements of musical expression. Persistent observance of them will inevitably quicken the artistic sense. The rules to which they have given rise are for the most part simple and easily explained. For obvious reasons, all musical interpretation is expected to imitate song as closely as possible. The human voice, the primitive musical instrument, in moments of excitement, ascends to a higher pitch, increasing in intensity of tone as it sweeps upward. Consequently every progression from lower to higher tones, whether played or sung, demands a crescendo unless some plainly denoted characteristic of the music calls for different treatment. A descending passage, as a return to tranquillity, requires a decrescendo.

“The outpouring of a feeling toward its object, whether to the endless heavens, or forth into the boundless world, or toward a definite, limited goal, resembles the surging, the pressing onward of a flood,” said the great teacher, Dr. Adolph Kullak. “Reversely, that feeling which draws its object into itself has a more tranquillizing movement, that especially when the possession of the object is assured, appeases itself in equable onward flow toward the goal of a normal state of satisfaction. The emotional life is an undulating play of up-surging and subsidence, of pressing forward beyond temporal limitations and of resigned yielding to temporal necessities. The crescendo and decrescendo are the means employed in music for the portrayal of this manifestation of emotional life.”

Another important matter which may to a great extent be reduced to rule is that of accentuation. Through it a tone-picture is invested with animation, and a clue is given to the disposition of tonal forms. Accents are always required to mark the entrance of a theme, a phrase or a melody. Where there are several voices, or parts, as in a fugue, each voice denotes its appearance with an accent. Every daring assertion hazarded in music, as in speech, demands special emphasis. Dissonances need to be brought out in such prominence that they may not appear to be accidental misconceptions, and that confident expectation may be aroused of their ultimate resolution. Accentuation must be regulated by the claims of musical delivery. At all times too gentle an accent is without effect, too glaring an accent is to be condemned.

Hans von Buelow strenuously advised young musicians to cultivate their ears and strive to attain musical beauty in what is termed phrasing, which he regarded as the real beginning of greatness in a performer. Phrasing and time keeping are two of the prime essentials in musical delivery, and cannot be neglected with impunity.

Time may well be called the pulse of music. Upon some occasions the pulse beats more rapidly than others. It is incumbent on the interpreter of music to ascertain the harmonic and other causes which determine the tempo of a musical composition, as well as those which make slight variations from it admissible. Among other points to be noted is the fact that sudden transition from repose to restless activity calls for an *accelerando*, while the reverse requires a *rallentando*.



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It is absolutely imperative for one who would interpret music to cultivate the memory. The musician who cannot play or sing without notes is compelled to expend a large amount of mental activity on reading these, and will find it difficult to heed the manifold requirements of musical expression and delivery, of which a few hints have here been given. A musical composition is never thoroughly understood until it has been intelligently memorized. One who can play or sing without notes is as free as a bird to soar aloft in the blue ether of musical imagination.

[Illustration: *Franz Liszt*]

Every interpreter of music longs for appreciative listeners, and young musicians, in especial, often lament the lack of these. It is well to remember that the genuine musical artist is able to create an atmosphere whose influences may compel an average audience to sympathetic listening. A good plan for the artist is to be surrounded in fancy with an audience having sensitively attuned ears, intellectual minds, and warm, throbbing hearts. Music played in private before such an imaginary audience will gain in quality, and when repeated before an actual public will hold that public captive.

We have it from Ruskin that all fatal faults in art that might otherwise be good arise from one or other of three things: either from the pretence to feel what we do not; the indolence in exercise necessary to obtain the power of expressing the Truth; or the presumptuous insistence upon, or indulgence in, our own powers and delights, with no care or wish that they should be useful to other people, so only they should be admired by them.

These three fatal faults must be avoided, or conquered, by the person who would interpret music.

V

How to Listen to Music

Listening is an art. It requires close and accurate attention, sympathy, imagination and genuine culture. Listening to music is an art of high degree. Many derive exquisite enjoyment from it, for music is potent and universal in its appeal. To listen intelligently to music is an accomplishment few have acquired.

A great painting presents itself as a completed whole before the observer's eye. It holds on the canvas the fixed place given it by the master from whose genius it proceeded. No intermediary force is needed to come between it and the impression it makes on the beholder. Music, on the contrary, must be aroused from the written, or printed page to living tone by the hand or voice of the interpreter, and but a fragment at a time can be made perceptible to the listener's ear. Like a panorama, it comes and goes before the

imagination, its kaleidoscopic tints and forms now sharply contrasted, now almost imperceptibly graduated one into the other, but all shaping themselves into a logical union, stamped with the design of a creative mind. Properly to inspect the successive musical images, and grasp their significance, in parts and as a whole, demands keen mental alertness.

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Many are content to listen to music for the mere sensuous impression it creates as it wraps itself about the inner being, lulling a perturbed spirit to rest, or awakening longing and aspiration, joy and sadness, according to the nature of the music and the hearer's mood. Some even take pleasure in formulating into words the sensations evoked by the ebb and flow of the tonal waves, and fancy they are thus deriving intellectual profit from music.

From both ways of listening helpful results may accrue, but by no means the greatest. Music is far beyond words, and in attempting to translate it into these we miss its musical meaning, the best that is in it. As listeners we derive our highest aesthetic and intellectual satisfaction from the ability to follow, even anticipate, the composer's intention, now finding our expectations fulfilled, now being agreeably disappointed. Failure to catch the opening phrase and preliminary rhythms of the composition makes it impossible to appreciate the tonal forms into which they develop. Nor may the mind linger over any one part, if we would grasp the work as an unbroken whole. That musical creation alone can afford the noblest delights that prompts and rewards the act of thus closely following the composer's thought.

An instance of absolute knowledge of music appears in an anecdote told of Johann Sebastian Bach. When he was present at the performance of a fugue and one of his two most musical sons was with him, he would, as soon as the theme was heard, whisper what devices and developments he thought should be introduced. If the composer had conformed to his idea of construction he would jog his son to call attention to the fact. Otherwise, his exceeding modesty and reverent comprehension of the difficulties of the art made him the most lenient of critics.

Few have reached the luminous heights this master of masters trod. Even a well-cultivated ear and taste may often be baffled by the intricacies of a fugue, symphony or other great work of musical art heard for the first time. The best listener beyond the pale of genius will at times feel as one astray in a labyrinth of beauty to which for the moment no clue appears. A single representation will rarely suffice to reveal the full worth of a masterpiece of music. By hearing it often, by admitting it, or some reproduction of it, to our own fireside, we will become familiar with its contents and learn truly to know it.

Those who are fortunate enough to have been surrounded from childhood up by the choicest gems of the tonal language, and whose minds are of the deceptive order, will insensibly attain a refinement of taste and delicacy of perception no learned dissertation on music could afford. At the same time, an acquaintance with the materials and elements of which the art is composed and with the laws that govern them, is essential to enable even one who has heard much to gain the complete enjoyment that comes from understanding. Confident as we are that Prometheus captured his fire from Heaven, we ought to learn something of its attributes before we accept it at his hands,

that we may be able to distinguish a true spark of the divine flame from a phosphorescent will-o'-the-wisp.

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The idea so largely accepted that music is an unfathomable mystery, like all half truths has wrought much mischief, and has greatly retarded musical progress in social life. Behind the Divine Art, as behind Religion, lies the inscrutable mystery of Life, and in both there is a Holy of Holies only the consecrated may enter. Before the portals of this are reached there is a broad, fertile field for intellectual activity that all may work to advantage, preparing the way to the inner sanctuary.

The musician is continually confronted with fresh evidence of the popular ignorance, even among students of music, in regard to the outward form and inner grace of what is conceded to be the most popular of all arts. In a roomful of professed music lovers a definition of counterpoint was recently called for, and no one present could give an intelligent answer. This led to a discussion of musical questions which resulted in the disclosure that not one of the company could define melody, harmony or rhythm, or had the slightest conception of the meaning of the simplest component parts of the art in whose service they were making plentiful sacrifices. Some knowledge of these things is absolutely imperative, not alone to the student, but to one as well who would listen intelligently to music.

Sound and motion constitute the essence of music. Its raw materials are an infinitely rich mass of musical sounds that bear within themselves the possibility of being molded into form. By the musical builders of the past they have been carefully considered, mathematically calculated, and have finally resolved themselves into a recognized scale, composed of tones and half tones. These are the composer's plastic resources. He shapes them precisely as the sculptor fashions the pliable clay with which he strives to bring his ideal to realization.

All sounds are the result of atmospheric vibrations affecting the ear. Musical sound, or tone, is produced by regular vibrations, and differs from mere noise whose vibrations are irregular and confused. The pitch of a musical tone rises in proportion with the rapidity of the vibrations that produce it. Tones may be perceived by the human ear ranging from about sixteen vibrations in a second to nearly forty thousand, more than eleven octaves. Only about seven octaves are used in music. The science of acoustics is full of interesting facts of this kind, and is of profound value to any one who would gain an insight into the structure of music. It is unfortunately much neglected.

The prime elements of music are Melody, Harmony and Rhythm. They are perhaps as little realized as its raw materials. Melody is a well ordered succession of musical sounds, heard one at a time, and selected from a defined, accepted series, not taken at random from a heterogeneous store. Harmony is a combination of well-ordered sounds heard simultaneously, and with suitable concord, or agreement. Rhythm is measured movement, or the periodical recurrence of accent; and signifies symmetry and proportion.

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Melody, unexhausted and inexhaustible, is the initial force, or, as Dr. Marx has called it, the life-blood of music. Within itself it bears the germ of harmony and rhythm. A succession of tones without harmonious and rhythmic regulation would be felt to lack something. Melody has been designated the golden thread running through the maze of tone, by which the ear is guided and the heart reached. Helmholtz styled it the essential basis of music. In a special sense, it is artistically constructed song. The creation of an expressive melody is a sure mark of genius.

Harmony arranges musical sounds with reference to their union, and is regulated by artistic and aesthetic rules and requirements. It has endless modes of transforming, inverting and intensifying its materials, thus continually affording new means of development. All the intervals and chords used in music had to be discovered, one by one. It often took more than a century to bring into a general use a chord effect introduced by some adventuresome spirit. Our scale intervals are the slowly gained triumphs of the human mind. Modern music did not emerge from the darkness of the past until harmony, as we know it, came into active being.

Both melody and harmony are controlled by rhythm. It is the master force of the musical organism. Before man was the ebb and flow of nature had its rhythm. On this elementary rhythm, the one model music finds in nature, the inventive mind of man has builded the wonderfully impressive art rhythms existing in the masterpieces of music.

Melodies are made up of smaller fragments, known as motives, phrases and periods, or sentences, all of which are judiciously repeated and varied, and derive their individuality from the characteristics of their intervals and rhythms.

A motive is the text of a musical composition, the theme of its discourse. The most simple motive, with proper handling, may grow into a majestic structure. In Beethoven's Fifth Symphony three G flats in eighth notes, followed by an E flat in a half note, form a text, as of Fate knocking at the door, which, when developed, leads to tremendous conflict ending in victory. Those notes that repeat and modify the motive and are combined under one slur constitute the phrase, which is similar to a clause in a sentence of words. A period, or sentence, in music, comprises a musical idea, complete in itself, though of a nature to produce, when united with other harmonious ideas, a perfect whole.

A simple melody is usually composed of eight measures, or some number divisible by four. There are exceptions, as in "God Save the King," our "America," of which the first part contains six measures, the second part eight.

Habit and instinct show us that no melody can end satisfactorily without some cadence leading to a note belonging to the tonic or key chord. Very often the first part of a melody will end on a note of the dominant chord, from which a progression will arise in the second part that leads satisfactorily to a concluding note in the tonic chord.



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Counterpoint, literally point against point, is the art of so composing music in parts that several parts move simultaneously, making harmony by their combination. During the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the masters of counterpoint shaped the musical materials in use to-day. So anxious were they to attain perfection of form they often lost sight of the spirit which alone can give vitality to musical utterances. The great Bach infused this into his fugues, the highest manifestation of the contrapuntal, or polyphonic music of old.

Meanwhile the growth of the individual led to the growth of monophony in music, in which one voice stands out prominently, with an accompaniment of other voices. Its instrumental flower was reached in the symphony. Melody reigns supreme in monophonic music. Both the canon and the fugue form a commonwealth, in which all voices are rated alike. Viewed rightly, this suits the modern democratic instinct, and there is to-day a tendency to return to polyphonic writing. It is individuality in union. In the hands of genius it affords the most refined kind of harmony.

A thorough knowledge of counterpoint shows the mistake of regarding it merely as a dull relic of a dead past. It is a living reality that, if correctly studied, leads to a solid, dignified, flowing style, rich in design, and independent in its individuality. Counterpoint, said a critic in the London Musical News, shows the student how to make a harmonic phrase like a well-shaped tree, of which every bough, twig and leaf secures for itself the greatest independence, the fullest measure of light and air. Composer, interpreter and listener may all profit by a comprehension of counterpoint.

From its infancy modern music has been affected by two perpetually warring factors, the Classical and the Romantic. The first demands reverence for established ideals of formal beauty; the second, striking a note of revolt, compels recognition of new ideals. As in all other departments of art and life, progress in music comes through the continual conflict between the conservative and the radical forces. A position viewed as hazardous and unsuitable in one age, becomes the accepted position of the next, and those who have been denounced as musical heretics come to be regarded as musical heroes. Very often the untutored public, trusting to natural instincts, will be in advance of the learned critic in accepting some startling innovation. Old laws may pass away, new laws may come, but the eternal verities on which all manifestations of Truth and Beauty are based can never cease to be.

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“The scientific laws of music are transitory, because they have been tentatively constructed during the gradual development of the musical faculty,” says W. H. Hadow, in his valuable “Studies in Modern Music.” “No power in man is born at full growth; it begins in germ, and progresses according to the particular laws that condition its nature. Hence it requires one kind of treatment at one stage, another at another, both being perfectly right and true in relation to their proper period. But there are behind these special rules certain psychological laws which seem, so far as we can understand them, to be coeval with humanity itself; and these form the permanent code by which music is to be judged. The reason why, in past ages, the critics have been so often and so disastrously at fault is that they have mistaken the transitory for the permanent, the rules of musical science for the laws of musical philosophy.”

An acquaintance with form as the manifestation of law is essential to an intelligent hearing of music. The listener should have at least a rudimentary knowledge of musical construction from the simplest ballad to the most complex symphony. Having this knowledge it will be possible to receive undisturbed the impressions music has to give, and to distinguish the trivial and commonplace from the noble and beautiful.

The oftener good music is heard the more completely it will be appreciated. Therefore, they listen best to music who hear the best continually. The assertion is often heard that a person must be educated up to an enjoyment of high class music. Certainly, one who has heard nothing else must be educated down to an enjoyment of ragtime, with its crude rhythms.

“We know a true poem to the extent to which our spirits respond to the spiritual appeal it makes,” says Dr. Hiram Corson. It is the same with a true musical composition. We must take something to it, in order to receive something from it. Beyond knowledge comes the intuitive feeling which is enriched by knowledge. Through it we may feel the breath of life, the spiritual appeal, which belongs to every great work of art and which must forever remain inexplicable.

VI

The Piano and Piano Players

When Pythagoras, Father of Musical Science, some six centuries before our era, marked and sounded musical intervals by mathematical division on a string stretched across a board, he was unconsciously laying the foundation for our modern pianoforte. How soon keys were added to the monochord, as this measuring instrument was named, cannot positively be ascertained. We may safely assume it was not slow in adopting the rude keyboard ascribed by tradition to Pan pipes, and applied to the portable organ of early Christian communities.

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After the tenth century the development of the monochord seems to have begun in earnest. Two or more strings of equal length are now divided and set in motion by flat metal wedges, attached to the key levers, and called tangents, because they touched the strings. In response to the demand for increased range, as many as twenty keys were brought to act on a few strings, commanding often three octaves. Guido d'Arezzo, the famous sight-reading music teacher of the eleventh century, advised his pupils to "exercise the hand in the use of the monochord," showing his knowledge of the keyboard. The keyed monochord gained the name clavichord. Its box-like case was first placed on a table, later on its own stand, and increased in elegance. Not until the eighteenth century was each key provided with a separate string.

No unimpeded triumphal progress can be claimed for the various claviers or keyboard instruments that came into use. Dance music found in them a congenial field, thus causing many serious-minded people to regard them as dangerous tempters to vanity and folly. In the year 1529, Pietro Bembo, a grave theoretician, wrote to his daughter Helena, at her convent school: "As to your request to be allowed to learn the clavier, I answer that you cannot yet, owing to your youth, understand that playing is only suited for volatile, frivolous women; whereas I desire you to be the most lovable maiden in the world. Also, it would bring you but little pleasure or renown if you should play badly; while to play well you would be obliged to devote ten or twelve years to practice, without being able to think of anything else. Consider a moment whether this would become you. If your friends wish you to play in order to give them pleasure, tell them you do not desire to make yourself ridiculous in their eyes, and be content with your books and your domestic occupations."

A different view was entertained in England during Queen Elizabeth's reign, where claviers were in vogue styled virginals, because, as an ancient chronicle explained, "virgins do most commonly play on them." The virginal was usually of oblong shape, often resembling a lady's workbox. With the Virgin Queen it was a prime favorite, although not named expressly for her as the flattering fashion of the time led many to assume. If she actually did justice to some of the airs with variations in the "Queen Elizabeth Virginal Book," she must indeed have been proficient on the instrument. Quaint Dr. Charles Burney (1726-1814) declares, in his "History of Music," that no performer of his day could play them without at least a month's practice.

The clavier gave promise of its destined career in the Elizabethan age. Shakespeare immortalized it, and William Byrd (1546-1623) became the first clavier master. He and Dr. John Bull (1563-1628), says Oscar Bie, in his great work on "The Clavier and Its Masters," "represent the two types which run through the entire history of the clavier. Byrd was the more intimate, delicate, spiritual intellect; Bull the untamed genius, the brilliant executant, the less exquisitely refined artist. It is significant that these two types stand together on the threshold of clavier art." Bull had gained his degree at Oxford, the founding of whose chair of music is popularly attributed to Alfred the Great.

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As early as the year 1400 claviers had appeared whose strings were plucked by quills attached to jacks at the end of the key levers. To this group belonged the virginal, or virginals, the clavicembalo, the harpsichord, or clavecin, and the spinet. Stops were added, as in the organ, that varied effects might be produced, and a second keyboard was often placed above the first. The case was either rectangular, or followed the outlines of the harp, a progenitor of this clavier type. It was often highly ornamented, and handsomely mounted. Each string from the first had its due length and was tuned to its proper note.

The secular music principle of the sixteenth century that called into active being the orchestra led also to a desire for richer musical expression in home and social life than the fashionable lute afforded, and the clavier advanced in favor. In France, by 1530, the dance, that promoter of pure instrumental music, was freely transcribed for the clavier. Little more than a century later, Jean Baptiste Lully (1633-1687) extensively employed the instrument in the orchestration of his operas, and wrote solo dances for it.

Francois Couperin (1668-1733), now well-nigh forgotten, although once mentioned in the same breath with Moliere, wrote the pioneer clavier instruction book. In it he directs scholars how to avoid a harsh tone, and how to form a legato style. He advises parents to select teachers on whom implicit reliance may be placed, and teachers to keep the claviers of beginners under lock and key that there may be no practicing without supervision. His suggestions deserve consideration to-day.

He was the first to encourage professional clavier-playing among women. His daughter Marguerite was the first woman appointed official court clavier player. He composed for the clavier little picture tunes, designed to depict sentiments, moods, phases of character and scenes from life. He fashioned many charming turns of expression, introduced an occasional tempo rubato, foreshadowed the intellectual element in music and laid the corner-stone of modern piano-playing. Jean Philippe Rameau (1683-1764) continued Couperin's work.

What is generally recognized as the first period of clavier-virtuosity begins with the Neapolitan Domenico Scarlatti (1683-1757), and Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), the German of Germans. The style of Scarlatti is peculiarly the product of Italian love of beautiful tone, and what he wrote, though without depth of motive, kept well in view the technical possibilities of the harpsichord. His "Cat's Fugue," and his one movement sonatas still appear on concert programmes. In a collection of thirty sonatas he explained his purpose in these words: "Amateur, or professor, whoever thou art, seek not in these compositions for any profound feeling. They are only a frolic of art, meant to increase thy confidence in the clavier."



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In Germany, with grand old Father Bach, the keyboard instrument was found capable of mirroring a mighty soul. The germ of all modern musical design lies in his clavier writings. It has been aptly said of this master of masters that he constructed a great university of music, from which all must graduate who would accomplish anything of value in music. Men of genius, from Mozart to the present time, have extolled him for the beauty of his melodies and harmonies, the expressiveness of his modulations, the wealth, spontaneity and logical clearness of his ideas, and the superb architecture of his productions. Students miss the soul of Bach because of the soulless, mechanical way in which they deface his legacy to them.

His "Twelve Little Preludes" alone contain the materials for an entire system of music. The "Inventions," too often treated as dry-as-dust studies, are laden with beautiful figures and devices that furnish inspiration for all time. As indicated by their title, which signifies a compound of appropriate expression and just disposition of the members, they were designed to cultivate the elements of musical taste, as well as freedom and equality of the fingers. His "Well Tempered Clavichord" has been called the pianist's Sacred Book. Its Preludes and Fugues illustrate every shade of human feeling, and were especially designed to exemplify the mode of tuning known as equal temperament, introduced into general use by Bach, and still employed by your piano tuner and mine.

Forkel, his biographer, has finely said that Bach considered the voices of his fugues a select company of persons conversing together. Each was allowed to speak only when there was something to say bearing on the subject in hand. A highly characteristic motive, or theme, as significant as the noblest "typical phrase," developing into equally characteristic progressions and cadences, is a striking feature of the Bach fugue. His "Suites" exalted forever the familiar dance tunes of the German people. His wonderful "Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue" ushered the recitative into purely instrumental music.

As a teacher he was genial, kind, encouraging and in every respect a model. He obliged his pupils to write and understand as well as sound the notes. In his noble modesty he never held himself aloof as superior to others. When pupils were discouraged he reminded them how hard he had always been compelled to work, and assured them that equal industry would lead them to success. He gave the thumb its proper place on the keyboard, and materially improved fingering. Tranquillity and poetic beauty being prime essentials of his playing, he preferred to the more brilliant harpsichord, or spinet, the clavichord, whose thrilling, tremulous tone, owing to its construction, was exceedingly sensitive to the player's touch. The early hammer-clavier, or pianoforte, invented in 1711, by the Italian Cristofori, who derived the hammer idea from the dulcimer, did not attract him because of its extreme crudeness. Nevertheless, it was destined to develop into the musical instrument essential to the perfect interpretation of his clavier music.



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His son and pupil, Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788), proceeding on the principles established by his illustrious father, prepared the way for the modern pianist. His important theoretical work, "The True Art of Clavier Playing," was pronounced by Haydn the school of schools for all time. It was highly extolled by Mozart, and to it Clementi ascribed his knowledge and skill. In his compositions he was an active agent in the crystallization of the sonata form. From him Haydn gained much that he later transferred to the orchestra.

Impulse to the second period of clavier virtuosity was given by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) and Muzio Clementi (1752-1832). Mozart, who led the Viennese school, developed the singing style of playing and the smooth flowing legato. Leaving behind him the triumphs of his wonder-boyhood with spinet and harpsichord, he boldly entered the public concert-hall with the pianoforte, now greatly advanced by the improvements of Silbermann. Mozart brought into use its special features, showed its capacity for tone-shading and for the reflection of sentiment, and may well be said to have launched it on its career. Tradition declares that his hand was fashioned for clavier keys, and that its graceful movements afforded the eye no less pleasure than the ear. His noble technique, based on his profound study of the Bachs, was spiritualized by his own glowing fancy. In his playing, as in his compositions, every note was a pearl of great price. With his piano concertos he showed how clavier and orchestra may converse earnestly together without either having its individuality marred. The same equilibrium is maintained in his piano and violin sonatas and his other concerted chamber music, amid all their persuasive and eloquent discourse. His charming four-hand and double piano pieces, written for himself and his gifted sister Marianne, and his solo clavier sonatas would prove his wealth of musical invention had he not written another note.

Clementi, born in Rome, passed most of his life in London, where he attracted many pupils. Without great creative genius, he occupied himself chiefly with the technical problems of the pianoforte. He opened the way for the sonority of tone and imposing diction of the modern style. His music abounded in bold, brilliant passages of single and double notes. He is even credited with having trilled in octaves with one hand. Taking upon himself the management of an English piano factory, he extended the keyboard, in 1793, to five and a half octaves. Seven octaves were not reached until 1851. His "Gradus ad Parnassum" became the parent of Etude literature. Carl Tausig said: "There is but one god in technique, Bach, and Clementi is his prophet."

Losing the spirituality of a Mozart the Viennese school was destined to degenerate into empty bravura playing. Before its downfall it produced a Hummel, a Moscheles and a Czerny, each of whom left in their piano studies a valuable bequest to technique. Karl Czerny (1791-1857), called king of piano teachers, numbered among his pupils, Liszt, Doehler, Thalberg and Jaell. The Clementi school was continued in that familiar writer of Etudes, Johann Baptist Cramer (1771-1858), and began to show respect for the damper pedal. Its most eminent virtuoso was John Field (1782-1837) of Dublin.



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Between these two schools stood Ludwig von Beethoven (1770-1827), a giant on lofty heights. Every accent of his dramatic music was embodied in his piano compositions. Tones furnished him unmistakably a language that needed no commentary. "In him," says Oscar Bie, "there were no tricks of technique to be admired, no mere virtuosity to praise; but he stirred his hearers to the depths of their hearts. Amid his storm and stress, whispering and listening, his awakening of the soul, an original naturalism of piano-playing was recognized, side by side with the naturalism of his creative art. Rhythm was the life of his playing." A union of conception and technique was a high aim of Beethoven, and he prized the latter only as it fulfilled the requirements of his idealism. "The high development of the mechanical in pianoforte playing," he wrote to a friend, "will end in banishing all genuine emotion from music." His prophetic words might serve as a warning to-day.

[Illustration: *Lillian Nordica*]

The past century has given us the golden age of the pianoforte. Advanced knowledge of acoustics and improved methods of construction have made it the magnificent instrument we know in concert hall and home, and to which we now apply the more intimate name, piano. Oscar Bie calls it the music teacher of all mankind that has become great with the growth of modern music. As a photograph may convey to the home an excellent conception of a master painting in some distant art gallery, so the piano, in addition to the musical creations it has inspired, may present to the domestic circle intelligent reproductions of mighty choral, operatic and instrumental works. Through its medium the broad field of musical history and literature may be surveyed in private with profit and pleasure.

Piano composers and virtuosos rapidly increase. Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) stood on the threshold of the fairyland of romance. His scheme of a dialogue, in the opening adagio of his "Invitation to the Dance," followed by an entrancing waltz and a grave concluding dialogue, betokens what he might have accomplished for the piano had he lived longer. Franz Schubert (1797-1828) and Robert Schumann (1810-1856) were the evangelists par excellence of the new romantic school. Schubert, closely allied in spirit to the master-builder, Beethoven, was unsurpassed in the refinement of his musical sentiment. The melody flooding his soul beautified his piano compositions, to which only a delicate touch may do justice. His Impromptus and Moments Musical, small impressionist pieces, in which isolated musical ideas are clothed in brief artistic forms adapted to the timbre of the instrument, may well be thought to have placed piano literature on a new basis.

The romantic temperament of Robert Schumann was nurtured on German romantic literature and music. His impressions of nature, life and literature he imprisoned in tones. He was a profound student of Bach, to whom he traced "the power of combination, poetry and humor in the new music." Infusing his own vital emotions into polyphonic forms he gave the piano far grander tone-pictures than those of Couperin.

The dreamy fervor and the glowing fire of an impassioned nature may be felt in his works, but also many times the lack of balance that belongs with the malady by which he was assailed.



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His love of music became early interwoven with love for Clara, the gifted daughter and pupil of his teacher, Friedrich Wieck. To her he dedicated his creative power. An attempt to gain flexibility by means of a mechanical contrivance having lamed his fingers, he turned from a pianist's career to composition and musical criticism. In becoming his wife Clara gave him both hands in more senses than one, and they shone together as a double star in the art firmament. Madame Schumann had acquired a splendid foundation for her career through the wise guidance of her father, whose pedagogic ideas every piano student might consider with profit. Her playing was distinguished by its musicianly intelligence and fine artistic feeling. Earnest simplicity surrounded her public and her private life, and the element of personal display was wholly foreign to her. She was the ideal woman, artist and teacher who remained in active service until a short time before her death, in 1896.

Those were charmed days in Leipsic when the Schumanns and Mendelssohn formed the centre of an enthusiastic circle of musicians, and created a far-reaching musical atmosphere. Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847), in his work for the piano, adapted to drawing-room use technical devices of his day, and in his "Songs without Words" gave a decisive short-story form to piano literature. His playing is described as possessing an organ firmness of touch without organ ponderosity, and having an expression that moved deeply without intoxicating. Living in genial surroundings, he was never forced to struggle, and although he climbed through flowery paths, he never reached the goal he longed for until his heart broke.

Delicate, sensitive, fastidious, Frederic Chopin (1809-1849) delivered his musical message with persuasive eloquence through the medium of the piano. It was his chosen comrade. With it he exchanged the most subtle confidences. Gaining a profound knowledge of its resources he raised it to an independent power. Polish patriotism steeped in Parisian elegance shaped his genius, and his compositions portray the emotions of his people in exquisitely polished tonal language. Spontaneous as was his creative power he was most painstaking in regard to the setting of his musical ideas and would often devote weeks to re-writing a single page that every detail might be perfect. The best that was in him he gave to music and to the piano. He enlarged the musical vocabulary, he re-created and enriched technique and diction, and to him the musician of to-day owes a debt that should never be forgotten. "He is of the race of eagles," said his teacher, Elsner. "Let all who aspire follow him in his flights toward regions sublime."



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The man who, by his demands on the piano, induced improvements in its manufacture that materially increased its sonority and made it available for the modern idea, was Franz Liszt (1811-1886). He will always be remembered as the creator of orchestral piano-playing and of the symphonic poem. The impetuous rhythms and unfathomable mysteries of Magyar and gipsy life surrounding him in Hungary, the land of his birth, strongly influenced the shaping of his genius. Like the wandering children of nature who had filled the dreams of his childhood, he became a wanderer and marched a conqueror, radiant with triumphs, through the musical world. Chopin, who shrank from concert-playing, once said to him: "You are destined for it. You have the force to overwhelm, control, compel the public."

The bewitching tones of the gipsy violinist, Bihary, had fallen on his boyish ears "like drops of some fiery, volatile essence," stimulating him to effort. On the threshold of manhood he was inspired to apply the methods of Paganini to the piano. All his early realistic and revolutionary ideas found vent in his pianistic achievements. He gained marvelous fulness of chord power, great dynamic variety, and numerous unexpected solutions of the tone problem. Many technical means of expression were invented by him, and a wholly new fingering was required for his purposes. He taught the use of a loose wrist, absolute independence of the fingers and a new manipulation of the pedals. To carry out his designs the third or sustaining pedal became necessary. His highest ambition, in his own words, was "to leave to piano players the foot-prints of attained advance." In 1839 he ventured on the first pure piano recital ever given in the concert hall. His series of performances in this line, covering the entire range of piano literature, in addition to his own compositions, given entirely without notes, led the public to expect playing by heart from all other artists.

As a great pianist, a composer of original conceptions, a magnetic conductor, an influential teacher, an intelligent writer on musical subjects and a devoted promoter of the interests of art, he stands out in bold relief, one of the grand figures in the history of music. His piano paraphrases and transcriptions are poetic re-settings of tone-creations he had thoroughly assimilated and made his own. In his original works, which Saint-Saens was perhaps the first to appreciate, students are now beginning to discover the ripe fruits of his genius. Faithful ones among the pupils who flocked about him in classic Weimar spread wide his influence, but also much harm was done in his name by charlatans who, calling themselves Liszt pupils, cast broadcast the fallacy that piano pounding was genuine pianistic power.



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Large hearted, liberal minded, whole souled in his devotion to his art and its true interests, Franz Liszt seemed wholly without personal jealousies, and befriended and brought into public notice a large number of artists. Hector Berlioz declared that to him belonged “the sincere admiration of earnest minds, as well as the involuntary homage of the envious.” At the opening of the Baireuth Temple of German Art, in 1876, Richard Wagner paid him this tribute in the midst of a joyful company: “Here is one who first gave me faith in my work when no one knew anything of me. But for him, my dear friend, Franz Liszt, you might not have had a note from me to-day.”

A rival of Liszt in the concert field, especially before a Parisian public, was Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871), who visited this country in 1855 and literally popularized the piano in America. Alfred Jaell and Henri Herz, who had preceded him, doubtless prepared the way for his triumphs. He and the “Creole Chopin,” Louis Moreau Gottschalk, attracted much attention by several joint appearances in our musical centres of the time. Thalberg was a pupil of Hummel, and felt the influence of his teacher’s cold, severely classic style. He possessed a well-trained, fascinating mechanism, with scales, chords, arpeggios and octaves that were marvels of neatness and accuracy, and a tone that was mellow and liquid, though lacking in warmth. His operatic transcriptions, in which a central melody is enfolded in arabesques, chords and running passages, have long since become antiquated, but his art of singing on the piano and many of his original studies still remain valuable to the pianist.

When Liszt and Thalberg were in possession of the concert platform, they occupied the attention of cartoonists as fully as Paderewski at a later date. Liszt, his hair floating wildly, was represented as darting through the air on wide-stretched pinions with keyboards attached—a play on Fluegel, the German for grand piano. Thalberg, owing to his dignified repose, was caricatured as posing in a stiff, rigid manner before a box of keys.

Rubinstein and Von Buelow offer two more contrasting personalities. Anton Rubinstein (1830-1894) was the impressionist, the subjective artist, who re-created every composition he played. The Russian tone-colorist he has been called, and the warmth and glow with which he invested every nuance can never be forgotten by those who were privileged to hear his Titanic interpretations, over whose very blemishes was cast the glamor of the impassioned temperament that caused them. “May Heaven forgive me for every wrong note I have struck!” he exclaimed to a youthful admirer after one of his concerts in this country during the season of 1872-3. Certainly the listener under the spell of his magnetism could forgive, almost forget. Hans von Buelow (1830-1894) was the objective artist, whose scholarly attainments and musicianly discernment unraveled the most tangled web of phrasing and interpretation. His Beethoven recitals, when he was in America in 1875-6, were of especial value to piano students. As a piano virtuoso, a teacher, a conductor and an editor of musical works, he was a marked educational factor in music.



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In his youth Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), the great apostle of modern intellectual music, made his debut before the musical world as a brilliant and versatile pianist. Once, when about to play in public Beethoven's magnificent Kreutzer Sonata, with Remenyi, who was the first to recognize his genius, he discovered that the piano was half a tone below concert pitch, and rather than spoil the effect by having the violin tuned down, the boy of nineteen unhesitatingly transposed the piano part which he was playing from memory into a higher key. The fire, energy and breadth of his rendering, together with the splendid musicianship displayed by this feat, deeply impressed the great violinist Joachim, who was present, and who became enthusiastic in his praise. Schumann, on making his acquaintance, proclaimed the advent of a genius who wrote music in which the spirit of the age found its consummation, and who, at the piano, unveiled wonders. By others he has been called the greatest contrapuntist after Bach, the greatest architectonist after Beethoven, the man of creative power who assimilated the older forms and invested them with a new life entirely his own. His piano works are a rich addition to the pianist's store, but whoever would unveil their beautiful proportions, all aglow as they are with sacred fire, must have taken a master's degree.

Two pupils of Liszt stand out prominently—Carl Tausig (1841-1871) and Eugene D'Albert (1864- —). The first was distinguished by his extraordinary sense for style, and was thought to surpass his master in absolute flawlessness of technique. To the second Oscar Bie attributes the crown of piano playing in our time. Peter Iljitch Tchaikowsky (1840-1893), the distinguished representative of the modern Russian school, was an original, dramatic and fertile composer and wrote for the piano some of his highly colored and very characteristic music. Edward Grieg (1843- —), the national tone-poet of Norway, has given the piano some of his most delightful efforts, fresh with the breezes of the North.

The veteran French composer, Charles Camille Saint-Saens (1835- —), has won great renown as a pianist, and was one of the most precocious children on record, having begun the study of the piano when under three years of age. He was the teacher that knew how to develop the individuality of the young Russian, Leopold Godowsky, who has done such remarkable work on two continents, as a teacher and piano virtuoso.

Perhaps the most famous piano teacher of recent times is Theodore Leschetitzky, of Vienna. His method is that of common sense, based on keen analytical faculties, and he never trains the hand apart from the musical sense. His most renowned pupil is Ignace Jan Paderewski, the magnetic Pole, whose exquisite touch and tone long made him the idol of the concert room, and who, with time, has gained in robustness, but also in recklessness of style. Another gifted pupil of the Viennese master is Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler, of Chicago, an artiste of rare temperament, musical feeling and nervous power, of whom Dr. Hanslick said that her virtuosity was stupendous, her delicacy in the finest florid work as marvelous as her fascinating energy in the forte passages.



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The great tidal wave set in motion by the piano has swept over the civilized world, carrying with it hosts of accomplished pianists. Of some of those who are familiar figures in our musical centres it has been said that Teresa Carreno learned from Rubinstein the art of piano necromancy; that Rosenthal is an amazing technician whose interpretations lack tenderness; that De Pachmann is on terms of intimacy with Chopin, and that Rafael Joseffy, the disciple of Tausig, combines all that is best in the others with striking methods of his own.

Great is the piano, splendid its literature, many its earnest students, numerous its worthy exponents. That it is so often made a means of empty show is not the fault of the piano, it is due to a tendency of the day that calls for superficial glamor. Herbert Spencer was not so wrong as some of the critics seem to think when, in his last volume, he said that teachers of music and music performers were often corrupters of music. Those certainly are corrupters of music who use the piano solely for meaningless technical feats.

VII

The Poetry and Leadership of Chopin

"The piano bard, the piano rhapsodist, the piano mind, the piano soul is Chopin," said Rubinstein. "Tragic, romantic, lyric, heroic, dramatic, fantastic, soulful, sweet, dreamy, brilliant, grand, simple, all possible expressions are found in his compositions and all are sung by him on his instrument."

In these few, bold strokes one who knew him by virtue of close art and race kinship, presents an incomparable outline sketch of the Polish tone-poet who explored the harmonic vastness of the pianoforte and made his own all its mystic secrets.

Born and bred on Poland's soil, son of a French father and a Polish mother, Frederic Chopin (1809-1849) combined within himself two natures, each complementing the other, both uniting to form a personality not understood by every casual observer. He is described as kind, courteous, possessed of the most captivating grace and ease of manner, now inclined to languorous melancholy, now scintillating with a joyous vivacity that was contagious. His sensitive nature, like the most exquisitely constructed sounding-board, vibrated with the despairing sadness, the suppressed wrath, and the sublime fortitude of the brave, haughty, unhappy people he loved, and with his own homesickness when afar from his cherished native land.

Patriot and tone-poet in every fibre of his being, his genius inevitably claimed as its own the soul's divinest language, pure music, unfettered by words. The profound reserve of his nature made it peculiarly agreeable to him to gratify the haunting demands of his lyric muse through the medium of the one musical instrument that lends itself in privacy



to the exploitation of all the mysteries of harmony. Strong conviction in regard to his own calling and clear perception of the hidden powers and future mission of the piano early compelled him to consecrate to it his unfaltering devotion. He evolved from its more intimate domain effects in sympathy with those of the orchestra, yet purely individual. He enriched it with new melodic, harmonic and rhythmic devices adapted to itself alone, and endowed it with a warmth of tone-coloring that spiritualized it for all time.



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To the piano he confided all the conflicts that raged within him, all the courage and living hope that sustained him. In giving tonal form to the deep things of the soul, which are universal in their essence and application, he embodied universal rather than merely individual emotional experiences, and thus unbared what was most sacred to himself without jarring on the innate reticence which made purely personal confidences impossible. Although his mode of expression was peculiarly his own, he had received a strong impulse from the popular music of Poland. As a child he had become familiar with the folk-songs and dances heard in the harvest-fields and at market and village festivals. They were his earliest models; on them were builded his first themes. As Bach glorified the melodies of the German people, so Chopin glorified those of the Poles. The national tonality became to him a vehicle to be freighted with his own individual conceptions.

“I should like to be to my people what Uhland was to the Germans,” he once said to a friend. He addressed himself to the heart of this people and immortalized its joys, sorrows and caprices by the force of his splendid art. Those who have attempted to interpret him as the sentimental hero of minor moods, the tone-poet in whom the weakness of despair predominates, have missed the leaping flames, the vivid intensity and the heroic manliness permeated with genuine love of beauty that animated him. True art softens the harshest accents of suffering by placing superior to it some elevating idea. So in the most melancholy strains of his music one who heeds well may detect the presence of a lofty ideal that uplifts and strengthens the travailing soul. It has been said of him that he had a sad heart but a joyful mind.

The two teachers of Chopin were Adalbert Zwiny, a Bohemian violinist, who taught the piano, and Joseph Elsner, a violinist, organist and theorist. “From Zwiny and Elsner even the greatest dunce must learn something,” he is quoted as saying. Neither of these men attempted to hamper his free growth by rigid technical restraints. Their guidance left him master of his own genius, at liberty to “soar like the lark into the ethereal blue of the skies.” He respected them both. A revering affection was cherished by him for Elsner, to whom he owed his sense of personal responsibility to his art, his habits of serious study and his intimate acquaintance with Bach.

There is food for thought in the fact that this Prince Charming of the piano, whose magic touch awakened the Sleeping Beauty of the instrument of wood and wires, never had a lesson in his life from a mere piano specialist. Liszt once said Chopin was the only pianist he ever knew that could play the violin on the piano. If he could do so it was because he had harkened to the voice of the violin and resolved to show that the piano, too, could produce thrilling effects. In the same way he had listened to the human voice, and determined that the song of his own instrument should be heard. Those who give ear to the piano alone will never learn the secret of calling forth its supreme eloquence.



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We can see and hear this “Raphael of Music” at the piano, so many and so eloquent have been the descriptions given of his playing. It is easy to fancy him sweeping the ivory keys with his gossamer touch that enveloped with ethereal beauty the most unaccustomed of his complicated chromatic modulations. We can feel his individuality pulsating through every tone evoked by those individualized fingers of his as they weave measures for sylphs of dreamland, or summon to warfare heroes of the ideal world. We are entranced by his luxuriant tone-coloring, induced to a large extent by his original management of the pedals. We marvel at his softly whispered, yet ever clearly distinct pianissimo, at the full, round tone of its relative fortissimo, that was never harsh or noisy, and at all the exquisitely graded nuances that lay between, with those time fluctuations expressive of the ebb and flow of his poetic inner being. No wonder Balzac maintained that if Chopin should but drum on the table his fingers would evoke subtle-sounding music.

And what an example he has left for teachers. Delicately strung as he was, he must often have endured tortures from the best of his pupils, but so thoroughly was he consecrated to his art that he never faltered in his efforts to lift those who confided in him to the aerial heights he had found. A vivid picture of his method of teaching is given in the lectures on “Frederic Chopin’s Works and Their Proper Interpretation,” by the Pole, Jean Kleczynski.

The basis of this method consisted in refinement of touch, for the attainment of which a natural, easy position of the hand was considered by Chopin a prime requisite. He prepared each hand with infinite care before permitting any attempt at the reproduction of musical ideas. In order to place it to advantage he caused it to be thrown lightly on the keyboard so that the five fingers rested on the notes E, F sharp, G sharp, A sharp and B, and without change of position required the practice of exercises calculated to insure independence. The pupil was instructed to go through these exercises first staccato, effected by a free movement of the wrist, an admirable means of counteracting heaviness and clumsiness, then legato-staccato, then accented legato, then pure legato, modifying the power from pp to ff, and the movement from andante to prestissimo.

He was exceedingly particular about arpeggio work, and insisted upon the repetition of every note and passage until all harshness and roughness of tone were eliminated. “Is that a dog barking?” he was known to exclaim to an unlucky pupil whose attack in the opening arpeggio of a Clementi study lacked the desired quality. A very independent use of the thumb was prescribed by him. He never hesitated about placing it on a black key when convenient, and had it passed by muscle action alone in scales and broken chords whose zealous practice in different forms of touch, accent, rhythm and tone were demanded by him.

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Individualization of the fingers was one of his strong points, and he believed in assigning to each of them its appropriate part. "In a good mechanism," he said, "the aim is not to play everything with an equal sound, but to acquire beautiful quality of touch and perfect shading." Of prime importance in his eyes was a clear, elastic, singing tone, one whose exquisite delicacy could never be confounded with feebleness. Every dynamic nuance he exacted of fingers that fell with freedom and elasticity on the keys, and he knew how to augment the warmth and richness of tone-coloring by setting in vibration sympathetic harmonics of the principal notes through judicious employment of the damper pedal.

By precept and example he advocated frequent playing of the preludes and fugues of Bach as a means of cultivating musical intelligence, muscular independence and touch and tone discrimination. His musical heroes were Bach and Mozart, for they represented to him nature, strong individuality and poetry in music. At one time he undertook to write a method or school of piano-playing, but never progressed beyond the opening sentences. A message directly from him would have been invaluable to students, and might have averted many unlucky misapprehensions of himself and his works. Those of his contemporaries who have harkened with rapture to his playing have declared that he alone could adequately interpret his tone-creations, or make perfectly intelligible his method. Pupils of his and their pupils have faithfully endeavored to transmit to the musical world the tradition of his individual style. The elect few have come into touch with his vision of beauty, but it has been mercilessly misinterpreted by thousands of ruthless aspirants to musical honors, in the schoolroom, the students' recital and the concert hall.

Whoever plays Chopin with sledge-hammer fingers will deaden all sense of his poetry, charm and grace. Whoever approaches him with weak sentimentalism will miss altogether his dignity and strength. It has been said of him that he was Woman in his tenderness and realization of the beautiful; and Man in his energy and force of mind. The highest type of artist and human being is thus represented. To interpret him requires simplicity, purity of style, refined technique, poetic imagination and genuine sentiment—not fitful, fictitious sentimentality.

In regard to the much discussed tempo rubato of Chopin many and fatal blunders have been made. Players without number have gone stumbling over the piano keys with a tottering, spasmodic gait, serenely fancying they are heeding the master's design. Reckless, out-of-time playing disfigures what is meant to express the fluctuation of thought, the soul's agitation, the rolling of the waves of time and eternity. The rubato, from rubare, to rob, represents a pliable movement that is certainly as old as the Greek drama in declamation, and was employed in intoning the Gregorian

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chant. The recitative of the sixteenth century gave it prominence, and it passed into instrumental music. Indications of it in Bach are too often neglected. Beethoven used it effectively. Chopin appropriated it as one of his most potent auxiliaries. In playing he emphasized the saying of Mozart: "Let your left hand be the orchestra conductor," while his right hand balanced and swayed the melody and its arabesques according to the natural pulsation of the emotions. "You see that tree," exclaimed Liszt; "its leaves tremble with every breath of the wind, but the tree remains unshaken—that is the rubato." There are storms to which even the tree yields. To realize them, to divine the laws which regulate the undulating, tempest-tossed rubato, requires highly matured artistic taste and absolute musical control.

Too sensitive to enjoy playing before miscellaneous audiences whose unsympathetic curiosity, he declared, paralyzed him, Chopin was at his best when interpreting music in private, for a choice circle of friends or pupils, or when absorbed in composition. It is not too much to say for him that he ushered in a new era for his chosen instrument, spiritualizing its timbre, liberating it from traditional orchestral and choral effects, and elevating it to an independent power in the world of music. Besides enriching the technique of the piano, he augmented the materials of musical expression, contributing fresh charms to those prime factors of music melody, harmony and rhythm. New chord extensions, passages of double notes, arabesques and harmonic combinations were devised by him and he so systematized the use of the pedals that the most varied nuances could be produced by them.

In melody and general conception his tone-poems sprang spontaneously from his glowing fancy, but they were subjected to the most severe tests before they were permitted to go out into the world. Every ingenious device that gave character to his exquisite cantilena, and softened his most startling chord progressions, was evolved by the vivid imagination of this master from hitherto hidden qualities of the pianoforte. Without him neither it nor modern music could have been what it is. An accentuation like the ringing of distant bells is frequently heard in his music. To him bell tones were ever ringing, reminding him of home, summoning him to the heights.

James Huneker, the raconteur of the *Musical Courier*, discussing the compositions of Chopin, in his delightful and inspiring book, "Chopin, the Man and His Music," calls the studies Titanic experiments; the preludes, moods in miniature; the nocturnes, night and its melancholy mysteries; the ballades, faery dramas; the polonaises, heroic hymns of battle; the walses and mazurkas, dances of the soul; the scherzos, the work of Chopin the conqueror. In the sonatas and concertos he sees the princely Pole bravely carrying his banner amid classical currents. For the impromptus alone he has found no name and says of them: "To write of the four impromptus in their own key of unrestrained feeling and pondered intention would not be as easy as recapturing the first 'careless rapture of the lark.'"



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Unquestionably the poetry of Chopin is of the most exquisite lyric character, his leadership is supreme. So original was his conception, so finished his workmanship, so sublime his purpose, that we may well exclaim with Schumann, "He is the boldest, proudest poetic spirit of the time." "His greatness is his aristocracy," says Oscar Bie. "He stands among musicians in his faultless vesture, a noble from head to foot."

[Illustration: *Paganini*]

VIII

Violins and Violinists—Fact and Fable

That fine old bard who shaped the character of Volker the Fiddler in the Nibelungen Lay, had a glowing vision of the power of music and of the violin. Players on the videl, or fiddle, abounded in the days of chivalry, but Volker, glorified by genius, rises superior to his fellow minstrels. The inspiring force of his martial strains renewed the courage of way-worn heroes. His gentle measures, pure and melodious as a prayer, lulled them to sorely-needed rest.

And what a wonderful bow he wielded! It was mighty and long, fashioned like a sword, with a keen-edged outer blade, and in his good right hand could deal a deft blow on either side. Ever ready for action was he, and his friendship for Hagen of Tronje furnished the main elements of that grim warrior's power. Together they were long invincible, smiting the foe with giant strokes, accompanied by music.

The modern German poet, Wilhelm Jordan, in his Sigfridsage, clothes Volker with the attributes of a violin king he loved, and represents him tenderly handling the violin. His noble portrayal of a violinist testifies no more fully to the mission of the musician than the creation of the Nibelungen bard. In August Wilhelmj, once hailed by Henrietta Sontag as the coming Paganini, Richard Wagner saw "Volker the Fiddler living anew, until death a warrior true." So he wrote in a dedicatory verse beneath a portrait of himself, presented to "Volker-Wilhelmj as a souvenir of the first Baireuth festival."

The idea of a magic fiddle and a wonderworking fiddler was strongly rooted in the popular imagination of many peoples, through many ages. Typical illustrations are the Wonderful Musician of Grimm's Fairy Tales, whose fiddling attracted man and beast, and the lad of Norse folk-lore who won a fiddle that could make people dance to any tune he chose. In Norway the traditional violin teacher is the cascade-haunting musical genius Fossegrim, who, when suitably propitiated, seizes the right hand of one that seeks his aid and moves it across the strings until blood gushes from the finger-tips. Thenceforth the pupil becomes a master, and can make trees leap, rivers stay their course and people bow to his will.



Those of us who were brought up on English nursery rhymes early loved the fiddle. Old King Cole, that merry old soul, was a prime favorite, notwithstanding his fondness for pipe and bowl, because when he called for them he called for his fiddlers three and their very fine fiddles. According to Robert of Gloucester, the real King Cole, a popular monarch of Britain in the third century, was the father of St. Helena, the zealous friend of church music. The nursery satire of doubtful antiquity is our sole evidence of his devotion to the art.



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That John who stoutly refused to sell his fiddle in order to buy his wife a gown placed the ideal above the material. It is to be hoped Mrs. John enjoyed music more than gay attire. Certainly the dame who was forced to dance without her shoe until the master found his fiddling-stick knew the worth of the fiddler's art.

It may have been from a play on the word catgut that so many of these ditties represent pussy in relation with the fiddle. True fiddler's magic belonged to the cat whose fiddling made the cow jump over the moon, the little dog laugh and the dish run away with the spoon. Rarely accomplished too was the cat that came fiddling out of the barn with a pair of bagpipes under her arm, singing "Fiddle cum fee, the mouse has married the humble bee."

Scientists tell us that crickets, grasshoppers, locusts and the like are fiddlers. Their hind legs are their fiddle-bows, and by drawing these briskly up and down the projecting veins of their wing-covers they produce the sounds that characterize them. Was it in imitation of these small winged creatures that man first experimented with the friction of bow and strings as a means of making music? Scarcely. It was the result of similar instinct on a larger human scale.

String instruments played with a bow may be traced to a remote period among various Oriental peoples. An example of their simplest form exists in the ravanastron, or banjo-fiddle, supposed to have been invented by King Ravana, who reigned in Ceylon some 5,000 years ago. It is formed of a small cylindrical sounding-body, with a stick running through it for a neck, a bridge, and a single string of silk, or at most two strings. Its primitive bow was a long hairless cane rod which produced sound when drawn across the silk. Better tone was derived from strings plucked with fingers or plectrum, and so the rude contrivance remained long undeveloped.

The European violin is the logical outcome of the appliance of the bow to those progenitors of the pianoforte, the Greek monochord and lyre, precisely as our music is the outgrowth of the diatonic scale developed by the Greeks from those instruments. Numerous obstacles stand in the way of defining its story, but it is known that from the ninth century to the thirteenth bow instruments gained in importance. They divided into two classes—the viol proper, with flat back and breast and indented sides, to which belonged the veille, videl, or as it has been called, guitar-fiddle, and the pear-shaped type, such as the gigue and rebec. The latter is what Chaucer calls the rubible.

Possibly an impulse was given the fiddle by the Moorish rebab, brought into Spain in the eighth century, but ancient Celtic bards had long before this used a bow instrument—the chrotta or crwth, derived from the lyre, which was introduced by the Romans in their colonizing expeditions. As early as 560 A. D., Venantius Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers, wrote to the Duke of Champagne:

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*"Let the barbarians praise thee with the harp,
Let the British crwth sing."*

This instrument, whose name signifies bulging box, was common in Britain, and was used in Wales until a comparatively recent period. One of its distinguishing features was an opening in the lower part for the admission of the fingers while playing. A fine specimen is preserved in the South Kensington Museum, corresponding well to the following description by a Welsh poet of the fifteenth century: "A fair coffer with a bow, a girdle, a finger-board and a bridge; its value is a pound; it has a frontlet formed like a wheel with the short-nosed bow across. In its centre are the circled sounding-holes, and the bulging of its back is somewhat like an old man, but on its breast harmony reigns, from the sycamore melodious music is obtained. Six pegs, if we screw them, will tighten all its chords; six advantageous strings are found, which, in a skilful hand, produce a varied sound."

In this same museum is a curious wedge-shaped boxwood fiddle, decorated with allegorical scenes, and dated 1578. Dr. Burney states that it has no more tone than a violin with a sordine. It is said to have been presented by Queen Elizabeth to the Earl of Leicester, and bears both of their coats-of-arms in silver on the sounding-board. Besides her other accomplishments, the Virgin Queen, we are told, was a violinist. During her reign we find the violin mentioned among instruments accompanying the drama and various festivities, and viols of diverse kinds were freely used. Shakespeare, in *Twelfth Night*, has Sir Toby enumerate among Sir Andrew Aguecheek's attractions skill on the viol-de-gamboys, Sir Toby's blunder for the viola da gamba, a fashionable bass viol held between the knees. A part was written for this instrument in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, and a number of celebrated performers on it are recorded in the eighteenth century. Two of these were ladies, Mrs. Sarah Ottey and Miss Ford.

Violers and fiddlers formed an essential part of the retinue of many monarchs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Charles II., of England, had twenty-four at his court, with red bonnets and flaunting livery, who played for him while he was dining according to the custom he had known at the French court during his exile. Place was grudgingly yielded to the violin by friends of the less insistent viol. Butler, in *Hudibras*, styled it "a squeaking engine." Earlier writers mention "the scolding violin," and describing the Maypole dance tell of not hearing the "minstrelsie for the fiddling." Thus all along its course it has had its opponents and deriders as well as its friends.

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The soft-toned viol had deeply indented sides to permit a free use of the bow, was mostly supplied with frets like a guitar, and had usually from five to seven strings. Its different sizes corresponded with the soprano, contralto, tenor and bass of the human voice. An extremely interesting treble viol much in vogue in the eighteenth century was the viola d'amore, with fourteen strings, the seven of gut and silver being supplemented by seven sympathetic wire strings running below the finger-board and tuned in unison with the bowstrings, vibrating harmoniously while these are played. A remarkably well preserved specimen of this instrument, made by Eberle of Prague, in 1733, and superbly carved on pegbox and scroll, is in the fine private violin collection of Mr. D. H. Carr, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It is one of the few genuine viola d'amores extant. The owner says of it: "The tone is simply wonderful, mellow, pure and strong, and of that exquisite harmony that comes from the throne of Nature. I know of no other genuine viola d'amore, and it compares with the modern copies I have seen as a Raphael or a Rubens with some cheap lithograph." These modern copies are the result of recent efforts to revive the use of this fascinating instrument. A barytone of a kindred nature was the viola di bordone or drone viol, so called because there was a suggestion of the buzzing of drone-flies, or humble bees, in the tones of its sympathetic strings, which often numbered as many as twenty-four. These violas recall the Hardanger peasant fiddle of Norway, of unknown origin and antiquity, whose delicate metallic under strings quaver tremulously and mysteriously when the bow sets in motion the main strings.

At one time every family of distinction in Britain deemed a chest of viols, consisting for the most part of two trebles, two altos, a barytone and a bass, as indispensable to the household as the piano is thought to-day. It was made effective in accompanying the madrigal, that delightful flower of the Elizabethan age. Singers not always being available for all of the difficult voice parts viols of the same compass supplied the lack. It was but a step for masters of music to compose pieces marked "to be sung or played," thus contributing to the forces that were lifting instrumental music above mere accompaniment for song or dance.

When musicians make demands musical instrument makers are ever ready to meet them, and the viol steadily improved. One who contributed to its progress was Gasper Duiffoprugcar (1514-1572) a luthier and mosaic inlayer, known in the Tyrol, in Bologna, Paris and Lyons. The belief that he originated the violin rests chiefly on the elaborately ornamented forgeries bearing his name, the work of French imitators from 1800 to 1840. There is an etching, supposed to be a copy of a portrait of himself carved on one of his viols with this motto: "I lived in the wood until I was slain by the relentless axe. In life I was silent, but in death my melody is exquisite."



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The words might apply to the perfected violin, whose evolution was going on all through that period of literary and artistic activity known as the Renaissance. When or at whose hands it gained its present form is unknown. The same doubt encircles its first master player. Perhaps the earliest worthy of mention is one Baltzarini, a Piedmontese, appointed by Catherine de Medici, in 1577, to lead the music at the French court, and said to have started the heroic and historical ballet in France.

He is sometimes confounded with Thomas Baltzar, a violinist of Lubec, who, in 1656 introduced the practice of shifting in London, where he wholly eclipsed David Mell, a much admired clockmaker fiddler, although the latter, as a contemporary stoutly averred, "played sweeter, was a well-bred gentleman, and was not given to excessive drinking as Baltzar was." His marvelous feat of "running his fingers to the end of the finger-board and back again with all alacrity" caused a learned Oxford connoisseur of music to look if he had hoofs. Notwithstanding the jovial tastes of this German, he was appointed leader, by Charles II., of the famous violins, and had the final honor of a burial in Westminster Abbey.

Here reposed also in due time his successor in the royal band, John Banister, who had been sent by the king to France for study, and who was the first Englishman, unless the amateur Mell be counted, to distinguish himself as a performer on the violin. He wrote music for Shakespeare's *Tempest*, and was the first to attempt, in London, concerts at which the audience paid for seats. Announcements of the initial performance, September 30, 1672, read: "These are to give notice that at Mr. Banister's house (now called the Musick School) over against the George Tavern in White Friars, this present Monday will be performed musick by excellent masters, beginning precisely at four o'clock in the afternoon and every afternoon for the future at precisely the same hour."

Credit for shaping the first violin has been given Gasparo Bertolotti (1542-1609), called Gasparo da Salo, from his birthplace, a suburb of Brescia, that pearl of Lombardy so long a bone of contention among nations. Violins were doubtless made before his time, but none are known to-day dated earlier than his. A pretty legend tells how this skilful viol-maker imprisoned in his first violin the golden tones of the soprano voice of Marietta, the maiden he loved and from whom death parted him. Her likeness, so the story runs, is preserved in the angel face, by Benevenuto Cellini, adorning the head. The instrument thus famed was purchased for 3,000 Neapolitan ducats by Cardinal Aldobrandini, who presented it to the treasury at Innsprueck. Here it remained as a curiosity until the French took the city in 1809, when it was carried to Vienna and sold to a wealthy Bohemian collector, after whose death it came into the possession of Ole Bull.



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Gasparo's pupil, Giovanni Paolo Maggini (1581-1631), improved the principles of violin-building, and gave the world the modern viola and violoncello. A rich viola-like quality characterizes the Maggini violin. De Bériot used one in his concerts, and its plaintive tone was thought well suited to his style. He refused to part with it for 20,000 francs when Wieniawski, in 1859, wished to buy it. To-day it would command a far higher price. It is stated on authority that not more than fifty instruments of its make now exist, although a large number of French imitations claim recognition.

While Gasparo was founding the so-called Brescian school, Andrea Amati (1520-1580), a viol and rebec maker of picturesque Cremona, began to make violins, doubtless to fill the orders of his patrons. He must have believed the pinnacle of fame reached when King Charles IX. of France, in 1566, commissioned him to construct twenty-four violins, twelve large and twelve small pattern. They were kept in the Chapel Royal, Versailles, until 1790, when they were seized by the mob in the French Revolution, and but one of them is known to have escaped destruction. Heron-Allen, in his work on violin making, gives a picture of it, obtained through the courtesy of its owner, George Somers, an English gentleman. Its tone is described as mellow and extremely beautiful, but lacking in brilliancy.

As the Amati brothers, Antonio and Geronimo (Hieronymous) Amati continued their father's trade, producing instruments similar to his. The family reached its flower in Nicolo Amati (1596-1684), son of Geronimo. He originated the "Grand Amatis," and attained a purer, more resonant tone than his predecessors, although not always adapted to modern concert use. One of his violins was the favorite instrument of the French virtuoso Delphine Jean Alard (1815-1888), long violin professor at the Paris Conservatoire. It has been described as sounding like the melodious voice of a child heard beside the rising tide. Another fine specimen was exhibited by Mr. J. D. Partello, in 1893, at the World's Fair, in Chicago.

Nicolo Amati's influence was felt in his famous pupils. Foremost among these was Antonio Stradivarius (1644-1737), whose praises have been sung by poets, and whose life was one of unwavering service. His first attempts were mere copies, but after he was equipped with his master's splendid legacy of tools and wood, his originality asserted itself. His "Golden" period was from 1700 to 1725, but he accomplished good work until death overtook him. From his bench were sent out some seven thousand instruments, including tenors and violoncellos. Of these perhaps two thousand were violins.



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A romance encircling this master of Cremona tells that in youth he loved his master's daughter, but that failing to win her heart and hand, he gave himself wholly to his work. He married, finally, a wealthy widow whose means enabled him to pursue his avocation undisturbed by monetary anxieties. His labors steadily increased the family property until "as rich as Stradivarius" became a common saying in Cremona. Because of his achievements and his personal worth, he was held in high esteem. Members of royal families, prelates of the church, men of wealth and culture throughout Europe, were his personal friends as well as his clients. His handsome home, with his workshop and the roofshed where he stored his wood, was, until recently, exhibited to visitors. To-day not a vestige of it remains. Weary of the importunities of relic-seekers, the Cremonese have torn it down, and have banished violins and every reminder of them from the town.

The tone of a Stradivarius, in good condition, is round, full and exceedingly brilliant, and displays remarkable equality as the player passes from string to string. Dr. Joseph Joachim, owner of the famous Buda-Pesth Strad, writes of the maker that he "seems to have given his violins a soul that speaks and a heart that beats." The Tuscan Strad, one of a set ordered by Marquis Ariberti for the Prince of Tuscany, in 1690, was sold two hundred years later to Mr. Brandt by a London firm for L2,000. Lady Halle, court violinist to Queen Alexandra, owns the concert Strad of Ernst (1814-1865), composer of the celebrated Elegie, and values it at \$10,000. A magnificent Stradivarius violin, with an exceedingly romantic history, belongs to Carl Gaertner, the veteran violinist and musician of Philadelphia, and could not be purchased at any price.

Another violin-builder from Nicolo Amati's workshop was Andrea Guarnerius (1630-1695), whose sons, Giuseppe and Pietro, followed in his footsteps. The family name reached its highest distinction in his nephew, Giuseppe (Joseph) Guarnerius (1683-1745), called del Gesu, because on his labels the initials I. H. S., surmounted by a Roman cross, were placed after his name, indicating that he belonged to a Jesuit society.

This Joseph of Cremona figures in story as a man of fascinating, restless personality, who for weeks would squander time and talents and then set to work with a zeal equalling that of Master Stradivarius. Tradition has it that he was once imprisoned for some bit of lawlessness, and was saved from despair by the jailor's daughter who brought him the tools and materials required for violin-building. What he esteemed the masterpiece of his lonely cell he presented as a souvenir to his gentle friend.

The violin about which this legend is woven, dated 1742, was bought by Ole Bull from the famous Taxis collection, and is now the property of his son, Mr. Alexander Bull. It has an unusually rich, sonorous tone and splendid carrying powers. Similar qualities are attributed to the Paganini Guarnerius del Gesu, 1743, known as the "Canon" and kept under glass at the Genoa Museum. Mr. Hart, a violin authority, places highest in this make the "King Joseph," 1737, long in the private collections of Mr. Hawley,



Hartford, Connecticut, and of Mr. Ralph Granger, Paradise Valley, California, and recently put on the market by Lyon & Healy, of Chicago.



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An interesting Nicolo Amati pupil was Jacob Steiner (1621-1683), a Tyrolese, who, although bearing a glittering title, "violin maker to the Austrian Emperor," was harassed with financial perplexities and died insane. His most noted violins were the sixteen "Elector Steiners," one sent to each of the Electors and four to the Emperor. During his life the average price of his violins was six florins. A century after his death the Duke of Orleans, Louis Philippe's grandfather, paid 3,500 florins for one of them. It is also recorded that an American gentleman on La Fayette's staff, in the Revolutionary War, exchanged for a Steiner 1,500 acres of the tract where Pittsburg now stands. Mozart's violin, in the Mozarteum at Salzburg, is a Steiner.

Many violin-makers did good work in the past, many are achieving success to-day. It has been confidently asserted that the violin reached its highest possibilities in the old Brescian and Cremona days. Why should this be the case? The same well-defined principles, based on acoustics and other modern sciences, that have led to the steady improvement of other musical instruments ought surely to be of some advantage to the violin. Indeed, who knows but the day may come when the present will be considered its golden age.

While the men of Cremona were still fashioning their models the want of good strings was felt. This was met by Angelo Angelucci, known as the string-maker of Naples, a man who loved music and passed much time with violinists. Through his painstaking efforts such perfection was reached that Tartini, who was born the same year as he, 1692, could play his most difficult compositions two hundred times on the Angelucci strings, whereas he was continually interrupted by the snapping of others. Improvements in the bow, often called the tongue of the violin, are due to the house of Tourte, in Paris, in the eighteenth century, lightness, elasticity and spring coming to it from Francis Tourte, Jr.

Three eminent virtuosi, Corelli, Tartini and Viotti, whose united careers spanned a period of 150 years, prepared the way for modern methods of violin-playing. Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) left his home in Fusignano, near Bologna, a young violinist, for an extended concert tour. His gentle, sensitive disposition proving unfitted to cope with the jealousy of Lully, chief violinist in France, and with sundry annoyances in other lands, he returned to Italy and entered the service of Cardinal Ottoboni in Rome. In the private apartments of the prelate there gathered a choice company of music lovers every Monday afternoon to hear his latest compositions. Besides his solos these comprised groups of idealized dance tunes with harmony of mood for their bond of union, and played by two violins, a viola, violoncello and harpsichord. They were the parents of modern Chamber Music, the place of assemblage furnishing the name.

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Refined taste and purity of tone, we are told, distinguished the playing of Corelli, and to him are attributed the systematization of bowing and the introduction of chord-playing. He heads the list of musicians who protest against talking where there is music. On one occasion when his patron was addressing some remarks to another person, he laid down his violin, and on being asked the reason said "he feared the music was disturbing the conversation." This did not prevent him from being held in the highest esteem. After his death Cardinal Ottoboni had a costly monument erected over his grave in the Pantheon, and for many years a solemn service, consisting of selections from his works, was performed there on the anniversary of his funeral.

It was during a period of retirement in the monastery of Assisi that Giuseppi Tartini (1692-1770) resolved to quit the law course in the University of Padua and seek a career with his violin. He became a great master of this, a composer of works still regarded as classics, and a scientific writer on musical physics. His letter to his pupil, Signora Maddelena Lombardini, contains invaluable advice on violin practice and study, especially on the use of the bow, and his treatise on the acoustic phenomenon known as "the third sound," together with his work on musical embellishments, may at any time be read with profit.

It was after hearing the eccentric violinist Veracini that His Satanic Majesty appeared to Tartini in a dream and played for him a violin solo surpassing in marvelous character anything that he had ever heard or imagined. Trying to write it down in the morning he produced his famous "Devil's Sonata," with its double shakes and sinister laugh, a favorite of the violinist, but to the composer ever inferior to the music of his dreams. It is rather curious that anything of a diabolic nature should be associated with this man of amiable and gentle disposition, whose care of his scholars, according to Dr. Burney, was constantly paternal. Nardini, his favorite and most famous pupil, came from Leghorn to Padua to attend him, with filial devotion, in his last illness.

The talents of Corelli and Tartini seem to have been combined in the Piedmontese, Giovanni Battiste Viotti (1753-1824), a man of poetic, philanthropic mind, whose sensitive, retiring disposition unfitted him for public life. Wherever he appeared he outshone all other performers, yet there was constantly something occurring to wound him. At the Court of Versailles he left the platform in disgust because the noisy entrance of a distinguished guest interrupted his concerto. In London, after his means had been crippled by the French Revolution, he was accused of political intrigue.

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While living in seclusion near Hamburg he composed some of his finest works, among them six violin duets, which he prefaced with the words: "This work is the fruit of leisure afforded me by misfortune. Some of the pieces were dictated by trouble, others by hope." At one time he embarked in a mercantile enterprise, in London, his transactions being regulated by the strictest integrity, but, as was inevitable, he soon returned to Paris and his art. After he had abandoned the concert room one of his greatest pleasures was in improvising violin parts to the piano performances of his friend, Madame Montegerault, to the delight of all present. He never had more than seven or eight pupils, but his influence has been widely felt. Many anecdotes are told of his kindness and generosity, and it is an interesting fact that among those who sought his advice and patronage was no less a personage than Rossini.

It must be because genius is little understood that its manifestations have so often been attributed to evil influences. The popular mind could only explain the achievements of the Genoese wizard of the bow, Nicolo Paganini (1784-1840) by the belief that he had sold himself body and soul to the devil who stood ever at his elbow when he played. When, after a taxing concert season, the weary violinist retired to a Swiss monastery for rest and practice amid peaceful surroundings, rumor had it that he was imprisoned for some dark deed. To crown the delusion, his spectre was long supposed to stalk abroad, giving fantastic performances on the violin. It is his apparition Gilbert Parker conjures up in "The Tall Master."

Paganini is described as a man of tall, gaunt figure, melancholy countenance and highly wrought nervous temperament. His successors have all profited by his development of the violin's resources, the result of combined genius and labor. He was practically a pioneer in the effective use of chords, arpeggio passages, octaves and tenths, double and triple harmonics and succession of harmonics in thirds and in sixths. His long fingers were of invaluable service to him in unusual stretches, and his fondness for pizzicato passages may be traced to his familiarity with the twang of his father's mandolin. He shone chiefly in his own compositions, which were written in keys best suited to the violin. Students will find all that he knew of his instrument and everything he did in his *Le Stregghe* (The Witches), the *Rondo de la Clochette*, and the *Carnaval de Venise*, which have been handed down precisely as he left them in manuscript.

Signora Calcagno, who at one time dazzled Italy by the boldness and brilliancy of her violin playing, was his pupil when she was seven years old. The only other person who could boast having direct instructions from him was his young fellow townsman, Camillo Ernesto Sivori (1815-1894), who was in his day a great celebrity in European musical centres, and who was familiar to concert-goers in this country, especially in Boston, during the late forties and early fifties. He was thought to produce a small but electric tone, and to play invariably in tune. To him his master willed his Stradivarius violin, besides having given him in life the famous Vuillaume copy of his Guarnerius, a set of manuscript violin studies and a high artistic ideal.



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A scholarly teacher and composer for the violin was the German Ludwig Spohr (1784-1859), who was born the same year as the wizard Paganini, and who, although having less scintillant genius than the weird Italian, is believed to have had a more beneficent influence over violin playing in his treatment of the instrument. He set an example of purity of style and roundness of tone, and raised the violin concerto to its present dignity. His violin school is a standard work.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present time the lists of excellent violinists have rapidly increased and heights of technical skill have been reached by many that would have dazzled early violin masters. The special tendencies of gifted leaders have divided players into defined schools. Among noted exponents of the French school may be mentioned Alard and his pupil Sarasate, Dancla and Sauret. Charles August de Beriot (1802-1870) was the actual founder of the Belgian school whose famous members include the names of Vieuxtemps, Leonard, Wieniawski, Thomson and Ysaye. Ferdinand David (1810-1873), first head of the violin department at the Leipsic Conservatory, gave impulse to the German school. Among his famous pupils are Dr. Joseph Joachim, known as one of the musical giants of the nineteenth century; August Wilhelmj, the favorite of Wagner, and Carl Gaertner, who, with his violin has done so much to cultivate a taste for classical music in Philadelphia. Among the many lady violinists who have attained a high degree of excellence are Madame Norman Neruda, now Lady Halle, Teresina Tua, Camilla Urso, Geraldine Morgan, Maud Powell and Leonora Jackson.

The only violinist whose memory was ever honored with public monuments was Ole Bull (1810-1880), who has been called the Paganini of the North. Two statues of him have been unveiled by his countrymen, one in his native city, Bergen, Norway, and one in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These tributes have been paid not so much to the violinist who swayed the emotions of an audience and who could sing a melody on his instrument into the hearts of his hearers, as to the patriot, the man who turned the eyes of the world to his sturdy little fatherland, and who gave the strongest impulse for everything it has accomplished in the past half century in art and in literature. Another patriot violinist was the Hungarian Eduard Remenyi (1830-1898), who first introduced Johannes Brahms to Liszt, and should always be remembered as the discoverer of Brahms.

The great demand of the day in the violin field, as in that of other musical instruments, is for dazzling pyrotechnic feats. It has perhaps reached its climax in the young Bohemian Jan Kubelik, whose playing has been pronounced technically stupendous. In the mad rush for advanced technique, the soul of music it is meant to convey is, alas, too often forgotten.

[Illustration: *Jenny Lind*]

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Queens of Song

Our first queen of song was Vittoria Archilei, that Florentine lady of noble birth who labored faithfully with the famous "Academy" to discover the secret of the Greek drama. It was she who furthered the success of the embryo operas of Emilio del Cavaleri, late in the sixteenth century, and roused enthusiasm by her splendid interpretation for Jacopo Peri's "Eurydice," the first opera presented to the public. She was called "Euterpe" by her Italian contemporaries because her superb voice, artistic skill, musical fire and intelligence fitted her to be the muse of music. Her memory has been too little honored.

When Lully was giving opera to France he secured the co-operation of Marthe le Rochois, a gifted student of declamation and song at the Paris Academie Royale de Musique, for whose establishment he had obtained letters patent in 1672. So great was his confidence in her judgment that he consulted her in all that pertained to his work. Her greatest public triumph was in his "Armide." This earliest French queen of song is described as a brunette, with mediocre figure and plain face, who had wonderful magnetism and sparkling black eyes that mirrored the changeful sentiments of an impassioned soul. Her acting and voice-control were pronounced remarkable. Her superior powers, unspoiled simplicity, frankness and generosity are extolled by that quaint historian of the opera, Dury de Noinville. On her retirement from the stage, in 1697, the king awarded her a pension of 1,000 livres in token of appreciation, and to this the Duc de Sully added 500 livres. She died in Paris in the seventieth year of her age, her home having long been the resort of eminent artists and literary people.

Katherine Tofts, who made her debut in Clayton's "Arsinoe, Queen of Cyprus," about 1702, was the first dramatic songstress of English birth, and is described by Colley Cibber as a beautiful woman with a clear, silvery-toned, flexible soprano. Her professional career brought her fortune as well as fame, but was short-lived. In the height of her bloom her reason gave way, and although judicious treatment restored it for a time, she did not return to the stage. As the wife of Mr. Joseph Smith, art connoisseur and collector of rare books and prints, she went to Venice, where her husband was British Consul, and lived in much state until, her malady returning, it became necessary to seclude her. Wandering through the garden of her home she fancied herself the queen of former days. Steele, in the "Tattler," attributes her disorder to her stage habit of absorbing herself in imaginary great personages.

While Mrs. Tofts reigned in Clayton's opera, Signora Francesca Margarita de l'Epine, a native of Tuscany, sang Italian airs before and after it. Tall, swarthy, brusque in manner, she had a voice and a style that made her famous. It was she who inaugurated the custom of giving farewell concerts. Meeting with brilliant success at a performance announced as her last appearance, "she continued," says Dr. Burney, "to sing more last and positively last times and never left England at all." There was a rivalry between the

two queens of song, which being a novelty, furnished gossip and laughter for all London. Hughes, that “agreeable poet,” wrote of it:



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*"Music has learned the discords of the State,
And concerts jar with Whig and Tory hate."*

Retiring in 1722 with a fortune of ten thousand pounds, Margarita married the learned Dr. Pepusch, who was enabled by her means to pursue with ease his scientific studies. In his library she found Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book, and being a skilled harpsichordist, she so well mastered its intricacies that people thronged to her home to hear her play.

London was divided by another pair of rival queens of song in 1725-6. One of these, Francesca Cuzzoni, a native of Parma, had created such a furore on her first appearance, three years earlier, that the opera directors who had engaged her for the season at two thousand guineas were encouraged to charge four guineas for admission, and her costumes were adopted by fashionable youth and beauty. Although ugly and ill-made, she had a sweet, clear dramatic contralto with unrivalled high notes, intonations so fixed it seemed impossible for her to sing out of tune, and a native flexibility that left unimpeded her creative fancy. Handel, in whose operas she sang, composed airs calculated to display her charms, but she, confident of her supremacy, rewarded him with conduct so capricious that, finding her at last intolerable, he sent to Italy for the noble Venetian lady, Faustina Bordoni. She was elegant in figure, handsome of face, had an amiable disposition, a ringing mezzo-soprano, with a compass from B-flat to G in altissimo, and was renowned for her brilliant execution, distinct enunciation, beautiful shake, happy memory for embellishments and fine expression.

However pleased the directors may have been at first to have two popular songstresses, they were soon dismayed at the fierce rivalry that sprang up between them and was fanned to flames by Master Handel himself, who now composed exclusively for Faustina. By increasing the salary of her more tractable rival they finally disposed of Cuzzoni, who thenceforth through her exaggerated demands, managed to disgust her patrons wherever she appeared. Her reckless extravagance left her wholly destitute after losing her voice and her husband, Signor Sandoni, a harpsichord-maker. She passed her last years in Bologna, subsisting on a miserable pittance earned by covering buttons.

Faustina married Adolphe Hasse, the German dramatic composer, and at forty-seven sang before Frederick the Great, who was charmed with the freshness of her voice. The couple lived until 1783, the one eighty-three, the other eighty-four years of age. Dr. Burney visited them when they were advanced in the seventies and found Faustina a sprightly, sensible old lady, with a delightful store of reminiscences, and her husband a communicative, rational old gentleman, quite free from "pedantry, pride and prejudice."



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Gertrude Elizabeth Mara, Germany's earliest noted queen of song, began her public career in 1755 as a child violinist of six, traveling with her father, Johann Schmaeling, a respectable musician of Hesse-Cassel. In London her musical gifts proved to include a phenomenal soprano voice, which developed a compass from G to E altissimo, unrivalled portamento di voce, pure enunciation and precise intonation. She became skilled in harmony, theory, sight-reading and harpsichord playing. When she sang, her glowing countenance, her supreme acting and the lights and shades of her voice made people forget the plainness of her features and the insignificance of her form and stature. Her rendering of Handel's airs, especially "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth," was pronounced faultless.

Frederick the Great, who as soon expected pleasure from the neighing of a horse as from a German songstress, vanquished on hearing her, retained her as court singer. While in his service she became the wife of Jean Mara, a handsome, dissipated court violoncellist, whom she loved devotedly, but who led her a sorry life. Returning to London later she taught singing at two guineas a lesson. Upon fear being expressed that her price, double that of other teachers, would limit her class, she said her pupils having her voice as a model could learn in half the time required for those who had only the tinkling of a piano to imitate. Though she believed singing should be taught by a singer, a tenderness for her own experience made her insist that the best way to begin the musical education was by having the pupil learn to play the violin. When she heard a songstress extolled for rapid vocalization she would ask: "Can she sing six plain notes?" This question might afford young singers food for reflection. Madame Mara passed her declining years teaching singing near her native place, and died at Reval, in 1833. Two years earlier, on her eighty-third birthday, Goethe offered her a poetic tribute.

At a London farewell concert given by Madame Mara in 1802, she was assisted by Mrs. Elizabeth Billington, who has been ranked first among English-born queens of song. Her pure soprano had a range of three octaves, from A to A, with flute-like upper tones. She sang with neatness, agility and precision, could detect the least false intonation of instrument or voice, and was attractive in appearance. Haydn eulogized her genius in his diary, and in the studio of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was painting her portrait as St. Cecilia, exclaimed: "You have represented Mrs. Billington listening to the angels, you should have made them listening to her." It was she who introduced Mozart's operas into England. She only lived to be forty-eight, breaking down in 1818, from the effects of brutal treatment of her second husband, a Frenchman, named Felissent.



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Last of the eighteenth century queens of song was Angelica Catalani, born some forty miles from Rome in 1779, destined by her father, a local magistrate, for the cloister, and borne beyond its walls by her magnificent voice, with its compass of three octaves, from G to G. She is described as a tall, fair woman with a splendid presence, large blue eyes, features of perfect symmetry and a winning smile. So great was her natural facility she could rise with ease from the faintest sound to the most superb crescendo, could send her tones sweeping through the air with the most delicious undulations, imitating the swell and fall of a bell, and could trill like a bird on each note of a chromatic passage. She dazzled her listeners, but left the heart untouched.

Her domestic life was a happy one, and her husband, Captain de Vallebregue, adored her, although he knew so little about music that once when she complained that the piano was too high he had six inches cut off its legs. Surrounded by adulation at home and abroad, her self-conceit became inordinate, tempting her to the most absurd feats of skill. Her excessive love of display and lack of artistic judgment and knowledge finally led her so far astray in pitch that she lost all prestige. After seventeen years of retirement, she died of cholera in 1849, in Paris. A few days before she was stricken with the dire epidemic Jenny Lind sought and received her blessing.

A queen of song who profoundly impressed her age was Giuditta Pasta, born near Milan in 1798, of Hebrew parentage. For her Bellini wrote "La Sonnambula" and "Norma," Donizetti his "Anna Bolena," Pacini his "Niobe," and she was the star of Rossini's leading operas of the time. Her voice, a mezzo-soprano, at first unequal, weak, of slender range and lacking flexibility, acquired, through her wonderful genius and industry a range of two octaves and a half, reaching D in altissimo, together with a sweetness, a fluency, and a chaste, expressive style. Although below medium height, in impassioned moments she seemed to rise to queenly stature. Both acting and singing were governed by ripe judgment, profound sensibility and noble simplicity. She died at Lake Como in 1865.

So many queens of song have reigned from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present time that only a few brilliant names may here be mentioned. Among these Henrietta Sontag was the greatest German singer of the first half of the century. A distinguished traveler tells of having found her when she was eight years old, in 1812, sitting on a table, where her mother had placed her, and singing the grand aria of the Queen of the Night from the "Magic Flute," her voice, "pure, penetrating and of angelic tone," flowing as "unconsciously as a limpid rill from the mountain side." At fifteen she made her regular debut, and we are told that she sang "with the volubility of a bird." During her four years at the Conservatory of Prague she had won the prize in every class of vocal music, piano and harmony.



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Acquitting herself with ease in both German and Italian, and being exceedingly versatile, she won equal renown in the operas of Weber, Mozart, Rossini, and Donizetti. Paris, in special, marveled at the little German who could give satisfaction in Grand Opera. Her voice, a pure soprano, reached to D in alt., with upper notes like silvery bell-tones, and its natural pliability was cultivated by taste and incessant study. She was of medium stature, elegant form, with light hair, fair complexion and soft, expressive blue eyes that lent an enchantment to features that were not otherwise striking. In demeanor she was artless, unaffected and ladylike. Romantic stories were continually in circulation regarding suitors for her hand. As the wife of Count Rossi, an attache of the Sardinian legation, she retired to private life in 1830, and passed many happy years with her husband in various capitols of Europe. When, in 1848, owing to financial shipwreck, she returned to the stage her voice still charmed by its exquisite purity, spirituelle quality and supreme finish. In 1852 she came to America and created an immense furore in the musical and fashionable world. She died of cholera in Mexico in 1854.

Born the same year as Madame Sontag was Wilhelmine Schroeder-Devrient, one of the world's noblest interpreters of German opera and German Lieder, although surpassed by others in vocal resources. She grew up on the stage, and was trained by her father, Friedrich Schroeder, a baritone singer, and her mother, Sophie Schroeder, known as the "Siddons of Germany." Her dramatic soprano was capable of producing the most tender, powerful, truthful and intensely thrilling effects, although it was not specially tractable and was at times even harsh. It was she who by her magnificent interpretation of Leonore, in Beethoven's "Fidelio," first revealed the beauty of the part to the public. In Wagner's operas she appeared as Senta, in the "Flying Dutchman"; Venus, in "Tannhaeuser," and actually created the role of Adriano Colonna, in "Rienzi." Goethe, who had earlier failed to appreciate Schubert's matchless setting to his "Erl King," when he heard Madame Schroeder-Devrient sing it, exclaimed: "Had music instead of words been my vehicle of thought, it is thus I should have framed the legend." She died in 1860.

Full of caprice, radiating the fire of genius, wayward and playful as a child, Maria Felicita Malibran swept like a dazzling meteor across the musical firmament. M. Arthur Pougin thus epitomizes her story:

"Daughter of a Spaniard, born in France, married in America, died in England, buried in Belgium. Comedienne at five, married at seventeen, dead at twenty-eight—immortal. Beautiful, brilliant, gay as a ray of sunlight, with frequent shadings of melancholy; heart full of warmth and abandon; devoted to the point of sacrifice; courageous to temerity; ardent for pleasure as for work; with a will and energy indomitable. A singer without a peer, and a lyric tragedienne capable of exciting the instinctive enthusiasm of the masses and the reasonable admiration of connoisseurs. Pianist, composer, poet, she drew and painted with taste; spoke fluently five languages; was expert in all feminine

work, skilled in sport and outdoor exercises, and possessed of a striking originality. Such was Malibran in part, for the whole could never be expressed.”



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Her genius developed under the iron control of her father, Manuel del Popolo Garcia, who compelled to submission her seemingly intractable voice until it became sonorous, superb, a brilliant and fascinating contralto, with a range of over three octaves, reaching E in alt. Her own indomitable will and exceptional artistic intelligence were prime factors in the training. In her heart-searching tones and passionate acting her glowing soul was felt. When she was but seventeen, her father, seeking an ideal climate, started with his family for Mexico. In New York she contracted her unfortunate marriage with the French banker, M. Malibran. She soon returned to Paris and the stage, and later having obtained a divorce, married the famous violinist De Beriot, with whom she had a brief but happy union.

Madame Malibran was said to be equally at home in any known school of her time. Mozart and Cimarosa, Boieldieu and Rossini, Cherubini and Bellini were all grasped with the same sympathetic comprehension. Sontag was her rival, Pasta was yet in the height of her fame, but no contrasts whatever dimmed the glory of Malibran. A rare personal charm added to her artistic graces. Mr. Chorley describing her, in his recollections, said that she was better than beautiful, inasmuch as a "speaking Spanish human countenance by Murillo is ten times more fascinating than many a faultless face such as Guido could paint." When her death was announced, in 1836, Ole Bull, who had known her well, exclaimed: "I cannot realize it. A woman with a soul of fire, so highly endowed, so intense. How I wept on seeing her as Desdemona! It is not possible she is dead."

Pauline Garcia, thirteen years younger than her remarkable sister, and with a voice similar in quality, also did justice to her father's rigorous discipline and became famous. She married M. Viardot, opera director and critic, and after a brilliant career as a singer, gave long and valuable service as a vocal teacher in Paris. She remained in the full tide of her activity until she was long past the allotted threescore years and ten. It is an interesting fact that Madame Mathilde Marchesi, author of a noted vocal method, 24 books of Vocalises, a volume of reminiscences, and other works, and once famed as a singer, is only five years younger than Madame Viardot-Garcia, but at seventy-six is still teaching—still shining as an authority on the art of song. Singers seem often to have been long-lived. In truth, there is that in music which is life-giving.

A songstress whose name will always be mentioned in the same breath with that of the tenor Mario, who became her husband, and with whom she toured the United States in 1854, was Giulia Grisi. She was born in Milan in 1812, made her debut at sixteen, and had an undisputed reign of over a quarter of a century. Her voice, a pure soprano of finest quality, brilliant and vibrating, spanned two octaves, from C to C. She possessed the gift of beauty, and was said to unite the tragic inspiration of Pasta with the fire and energy of Malibran. A favorite role with her was that of the Druid priestess in "Norma." Her delivery of "Casta Diva" was said to be a transcendent effort of vocalization.



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Living to-day in London at the advanced age of ninety-seven is the elder brother of Malibran and Viardot-Garcia, Manuel Garcia, the inventor of the laryngoscope, author of the renowned "Art of Song," and teacher of Jenny Lind. It was in 1841 that the ever-beloved Swedish Nightingale, then twenty-one years old, sought him in Paris, with a voice worn from over-exertion and lack of proper management. In ten months she had gained all that master could teach her in tone production, blending of the registers and breath-control. Her own genius, her splendid individuality, her indefatigable perseverance, did the rest in investing her dramatic soprano with that sympathetic timbre, that power of expressing every phase of her artistic conception, that bird-like quality of the upper notes, that marvelous beauty and equality of the entire range of two octaves and three quarters (from B below the stave to G on the fourth line), that exquisite sonority, that penetrating pianissimo, that unrivalled messa di voce, that mastery over technique of which so much has been written and said.

Jenny Lind was to Sweden what Ole Bull was to Norway, the inspirer of noble achievement. The faithful interpreter of the acknowledged masterpieces of genius in opera, oratorio and song, she also freely poured forth in gracious waves the poetic, the rugged, and the exquisitely polished lays of the Northland, making them known for the first time to thousands of people. It was through her pure and noble womanhood, quite as much as through her artistic excellence that she swayed the public and left so deep and enduring an impression. True to the backbone in her artistic allegiance, she believed that art, the expression and embodiment of the spiritual principle animating it, could not fail to elevate to a high spiritual and moral standard the genuine artist.

She had lived thirty-five happy years with her husband, Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, pianist, conductor and composer, who still survives her, when death overtook her at their home on the Malvern Hills, November 2, 1887. When the end drew near, one of her daughters threw open the window shutters to admit the morning sun. As it came streaming into the room, Jenny Lind uplifted her voice, and it rang out firm and clear as she sang the opening measures of Schumann's glorious "To the Sunshine." The notes were her last. A bust of her was unveiled in Westminster Abbey in 1894.

A Swedish songstress with a powerful, well-trained voice, who before Jenny Lind won operatic laurels in foreign lands, was Henrietta Nissen-Saloman, also a pupil of Garcia. Later, the brilliant Swedish soprano, Christine Nilsson, with a voice of wonderful sweetness and beauty, reaching with ease F in alt., with the most thorough skill in vocalization, with dramatic intuitions, expressive powers and magnetic presence, charmed the public on two continents in such roles as Marguerite, Mignon, Elsa, Ophelia and Lucia. She, too, bore through the world with her the northern songs she had learned to cherish in childhood.

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Still another delightful dramatic soprano from the land of Jenny Lind is Sigrid Arnoldson, who has a beautiful voice, winning personality, and pronounced musical intelligence. She is still in her prime.

When the name of Adelina Patti is mentioned, we always think of long enduring vocal powers, many farewells and high prices. Catalani, in her full splendor, earned about \$100,000 a season. Malibran's profits for eighty-five concerts at La Scala ran to \$95,000. Jenny Lind received \$208,675 for ninety-five concerts under Barnum's management. Patti has had as much as \$8,395 for one performance, and long received a fee of \$5,000 a night. In coloratura roles she has been pronounced the greatest singer of her time, both in opera and concert. Her voice, noted for its wide compass, exceeding sweetness, marvelous flexibility and perfect equality, has been so wonderfully well cared for that even now, in her sixtieth year, she enjoys singing, although she rarely appears in public. Her sister, Carlotta, was also a coloratura vocalist of exquisite technique.

Queens of song now pass in swift review before the mind's eye. We recall Marietta Alboni, the greatest contralto of the middle of the last century, with a voice rich, mellow, liquid, pure and endowed with passionate tenderness, the only pupil of Rossini; Theresa Tietiens, with her mighty dramatic soprano, whose tones were softer than velvet, and her noble acting; Marie Piccolomini, a winning mezzo-soprano; Parepa Rosa, with her sweet, strong voice and imposing stage presence; Pescha Leutner, the star of 1856; Louisa Pyne, the English Sontag; Parodi, pupil of Pasta; Etelka Gerster, whose beautiful soprano could fascinate if it could not awe; Pauline Lucca, whose originality, artistic temperament and intelligence placed her in the front rank of dramatic sopranos, and many others.

Amalie Materna, dramatic soprano at the Vienna Court Theatre from 1869 to 1896, with great musical and dramatic intelligence, with a voice of remarkable compass, volume, richness and sustaining power, vibrant with passionate intensity, and with a noble stage presence, proved to be Wagner's ideal Bruennhilde and introduced the role at Bayreuth in 1876. She was also the creator of Kundry at the same place in 1882. She aroused unbounded enthusiasm as Elizabeth in "Tannhaeuser," and as Isolde in "Tristan and Isolde." She is not forgotten by those who heard her in various cities of this country.

The same may be said of Marianne Brandt, who sang the part of Kundry at the second "Parsifal" representation at Bayreuth, having been Frau Materna's alternate in 1882. With her superbly rich, deep-toned voice and her splendid vocal and dramatic control she thrilled her audiences in her Wagnerian roles, in Beethoven's "Fidelio," and in all she attempted, whether in opera or concert. She was a magnificent horsewoman, and was perhaps the only Bruennhilde who was able to give full play on the stage to her Valkyrie charger. It is told



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by an eye witness that before a first appearance in a German city she was borne furiously on the stage at rehearsal by her spirited, prancing steed, and when she drew him up suddenly, rearing and pawing the air, near the footlights, the members of the orchestra dropped their instruments and fled affrighted. It was not long, however, before she succeeded in winning their confidence, and all went well at the evening performance.

Six more radiant queens of song whose reign belongs to these modern times must be mentioned in conclusion: Sembrich, Nordica, Calve, Melba, Sanderson and Eames. These are but a few of the many present day rulers in the realms of song.

Marcella Sembrich, a coloratura soprano from Galicia, has a light, penetrating, marvelously sweet, and exceedingly flexible voice, with an almost perfect vocal mechanism. As one of her admirers has said, her tones are as clear as silver bells, and there is something buoyant and jubilant in her mode of song. With her genuine art and engaging personality she holds her audiences entranced and, being wise enough to keep within her special genre, she always succeeds as an actress. She is a pupil of the Lampertis, father and son, studied the piano with Liszt, becoming an excellent interpreter of Chopin, and is no mean violinist.

An American, born in Farmington, Me., Lillian Nordica pursued her vocal and musical studies at the New England Conservatory, in Boston, and after much experience in church, concert and oratorio singing, studied for the opera in Milan, under Signor Sangiovanni. She made her operatic debut at Brescia in "Traviata," and in Paris as Marguerite, in "Faust." Her superb, liquid soprano is pure, smooth and equal throughout its entire large compass. She combines feeling with that artistic understanding which regulates it, and has been pronounced one of the most conscientious and intelligent singers of the day. An admirable actress and extremely versatile, she has been successful in Mozart's operas, and has won high renown in her Wagnerian roles.

Emma Calve, a Spaniard, possessed of all a Spaniard's fire, thrills, bewilders, her hearers, though the more thoughtful among them wonder if they were not moved rather by her tremendous passionate force and powerful magnetism than by her vocal and histrionic art. Her voice is superb, yet she often loses a vocal opportunity for dramatic effect, often mars its beauty in the excitement that tears a passion to tatters. Withal there is a charm to her singing that can never be forgotten by those who have heard it. Her first triumph was won as the interpreter of Santuzza, in "Cavalleria Rusticana," Mascagni himself preparing her for the role. She next created a furore as Carmen, and with her fascinating gestures, complete abandon, grace, and dazzling beauty made the part one of the most original and bewitching impersonations on the stage.



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The Australian, Nellie Melba, who takes her stage name from Melbourne, her birthplace, has been compared to Patti as a vocal technician. Her voice is divine, but she seems powerless to animate her brilliant singing with the warmth that glows in her eyes. As an actress she completely veils whatever emotions she may feel, and while her marvelous vocalization overwhelms her audiences, she meets with her greatest triumphs in operas that make the least demands on the dramatic powers.

Massenet wrote the title roles of his "Esclarmonde" and his "Thais" for a California girl, Sybil Sanderson, and himself trained her for their stage presentation. Her success was assured when she made her debut in the first-named opera at the Opera Comique, in Paris, in 1889. She has a voice of that light, pure, flexible quality so characteristic of our countrywomen, and is an admirable actress. She is a pupil of Madame Marchesi.

Another distinguished pupil of the same teacher is Emma Eames, who was born in China of New England parents, and was educated in Boston and in Paris. Her voice too is exceedingly flexible, is fresh, pure and clear, her intonations are correct and her personality most attractive. She has been very successful in Wagnerian roles, makes a superb Elsa, and, in the "Meistersinger," an ideal Eva. During her early years on the stage her extreme calmness amounted almost to aggravating frigidity, but with time she has thawed. She may well be considered a conscientious artist endowed with rare musical intuition.

There is no possession more perishable, more delicate, than the human voice. When one considers the joy it is capable of shedding about it, the blessings that may follow in its train, it seems sad to think of the reckless waste caused by its neglect and mismanagement. Its life is brief enough at best. Let it be cherished to the utmost.

In America where there are to-day more fine voices among women than in any other country and where time and means are so freely expended on the musical education of girls, the twentieth century should produce nobler queens of song than the world has yet known. First, the American girl must learn that the real things of life are more to be prized than false semblances, and that genuine musical culture resting on a foundation built with painstaking care and consecrated artistic zeal, is of far higher and more enduring value than the most dazzling feats of display which lack solid, intrinsic support.

X

The Opera and Its Reformers

The evolution of the drama is intimately associated with that of music and both are inseparably entwined with the unfolding of the spiritual life of the human race. Man is essentially dramatic by nature, and both history and tradition show it to have been among his earliest instincts to express his inner emotions by action and song.



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From this tendency arose the Greek religious drama. We find it in legendary times at the altar of Dionysus, master of the resources of vitality, in whose train followed the Muses, actual leaders and conductors of human existence. At seed-time and harvest festivals a rude chorus, grouped about the altar, told the story of the god's wanderings and adventures, in simple words, accompanied by gesture, dance and music. This expression of thought and feeling mirrored the emotions of the worshipers, kindled the imagination, and strengthened the innate instinct for freedom. Gradually the narrative detaching itself from the choral parts fell to individual singers, the acting became more and more a distinct feature of the occasion, ever increasing dramatic quality characterized the song, and the materials were at hand for the Greek drama so fruitful to us in its results.

Greek poetry, in its matchless beauty, may still be enjoyed by all who have powers of literary appreciation. Of Greek music we know little beyond the theories which form the basis for modern musical science and the fact that it was highly esteemed. Aristotle tells us that it was an essential element in Greek stage plays and their greatest embellishment. Both Aeschylus and Sophocles were practical musicians and composed music for their dramas. Euripides, less musician than poet, was at least able to have the music for his works prepared under his direction. Indeed, words, music and scenic effect were inseparably connected in the Greek dramas.

[Illustration: *Corelli*]

The enthusiasm these aroused is indicated by the fact that travelers from distant lands undertook perilous journeys to attend the famous performances at Athens, often remaining in their seats twenty-four hours before the play began in order to secure desirable places. Fully fifty thousand spectators could be accommodated in the Lenaean Theatre, whose stage machinery would make ours seem like a toy model. Many of its theatrical exhibitions cost more than the Peloponnesian War.

In Greek life, at the period of its glory, music and the drama were esteemed elevating factors in culture. The supreme things of human existence were pictured in them. They expressed the world-view of an entire people. Under Roman dominion, with its corrupting slavery, they degenerated into mere sources of diversion, and finally became associated with evil and degrading practices.

For this reason and because at best they represented pagan ideals, theatrical representations were discouraged by the fathers of the primitive Christian Church. The dramatic instinct was not condemned, and its imperative needs were appealed to in the church service, which early set forth in symbols all that was too mysterious and awe-inspiring for words. In order further to reach the mind through the senses, scenes from the Scriptures were read in the churches, illustrated with living pictures and music. Gradually the

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characters personated began to speak and to move. The drama rose anew at the foot of the altar. Christian priests were its reformers, its guardians and its actors. Designed for the amusement as well as the instruction of the gaping multitudes, it was necessarily a pretty crude affair. Satan was introduced as the clown, and laughter was provoked at his discomfiture when routed, or at the destruction of those who wilfully cast themselves into his clutches. It is not strange that the pious and learned St. Augustine, in the fourth century, regretted the polished dramatic performances at Alexandria that in his youth had afforded him so much genuine enjoyment. Among the people the church play became so popular that in the course of time it was found necessary to erect more spacious stages in the open air.

Thus arose the Mystery, Miracle, Morality and Passion Plays, the direct progenitors of the Opera and the Oratorio. The descent of the Opera may be traced also to another source, to the secular play which persisted in the face of ecclesiastical disfavor and the ban that excluded its players from the church sacraments.

Strolling histriones, jongleurs and minstrels passed from court to court, appeared in castle yards, market places or village greens, recited, acted, sang, danced and played on musical instruments. They afforded a welcome means of communication with the outside world; they broke up the monotony of life when events were few. As modern music rests on the two pillars of the Gregorian chant and the folk-song, so the opera rests on the two pillars of the religious drama and the people's play.

During the high tide of the revival of Greek learning in Italy, late in the sixteenth century, a group of the aspiring young nobility of Florence, gentlemen and gentlewomen, adopting the dignified name of the "Academy," resolved to recover the much discussed music of the Greek drama. The place of rendezvous was the palace of Count Bardi, a member of one of the oldest patrician families in Tuscany. Edifying discourse and laudable exercises were indulged in by the guests, among whom were several persons of genius and learning. The meetings were presided over by the host, himself a poet and composer, as well as a patron of the fine arts.

The culture of the times demanded a higher gratification for man's dramatic cravings than either rude religious or secular plays afforded. Other music was required to depict the emotions than that of the contrapuntist, with its puzzling intricacies. So thought these ardent Hellenists, and a burning zeal possessed them to mate dramatic poetry with a music that would heighten and intensify its expression and effect. They who seek are sure to find, even if it be not always the object of their search. In the earnest quest of these reformers for dramatic truth an unexpected treasure was disclosed.



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Vincenzo Galilei, father of Galileo Galilei, opened the way. He was the active champion of monody, in which a principal melody was intoned or sung to the accompaniment of subordinate harmonies, believing that in music designed to arouse personal feeling individualism should predominate. The art music of the time was polyphonic, that is, constructed by so interweaving melodies that harmonies resulted. Of solos in our modern sense nothing was known beyond the folk-songs, instinctive outpourings of the human heart, and these learned composers had merely used as pegs on which to hang their counterpoint. Not content with giving his ideas to the world in the form of a dialogue, Galilei composed two musical monologues, between 1581 and 1590, one to the scene of Count Ugolino, in Dante's "Inferno," and one to a passage in the Lamentations of Jeremiah. These the chroniclers tell us he sang very sweetly, accompanying himself on the lute. He was also a fine performer on the viola.

A dramatic representation at a court marriage, in 1590, in which the artificially constructed ecclesiastical music ill-fitted the text lauding the bride's loveliness, gave a new impulse to the "Academy" efforts. Soon there was produced at court, by a company of highborn ladies and gentlemen, two pastoral plays: "Il Satiro" and "La Disperazione di Fileno," so set to music that they could be sung or declaimed throughout. The author of the text was Signora Laura Guidiccioni, of the Lucchesini family, renowned in her day for her poetic gifts and brilliant attainments. Signor Emilio del Cavalieri was the composer, and he triumphantly announced his music as that "of the ancients recovered," having power to "excite grief, pity, joy and pleasure."

These two "musical dramas," as they were called, contained the germs of modern opera, despite their crudities of harmony and monotonous melody. That noble songstress, Vittoria Archilei, known as "Euterpe" among her Italian contemporaries, greatly enhanced the success of the new venture with her superb voice, artistic skill, musical fire and splendid intelligence. She "whose excellence in music is generally known," as we are told, and who was able to "draw tears from her audience" at the right moment, also aroused enthusiasm for a third work of a similar nature by the same authors, "Il Giuoco della Cieco," that appeared in 1595.

Besides being the first to tell the entire story of a play musically and to utilize the solo, Cavalieri introduced various ornaments into vocal music and increased the demands on instrumentation. He did not succeed, however, in satisfying the Academicians with his attempt to grasp the medium between speech and song, and his choruses were thought tedious because of their employment of the intricate polyphonic style. Further reform was desired.



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This came through Jacopo Peri, maestro at the Medician court, and after 1601 at the court of Ferrara. In studying Greek dramas, as he states in one of his writings, he became convinced that their musical expression was that of highly colored emotional speech. Closely observing diverse modes of utterance in daily life, he endeavored to reproduce soft, gentle words by half-spoken, half-sung tones, sustained by an instrumental bass, and to express excitement by extended intervals, lively tempo and suitable distribution of dissonances in the accompaniment. To him may be attributed the first dramatic recitative. It appeared in his "Daphne," a "Dramma per la Musica," written to text by the poet Rinuccini and privately performed at the Palazzo Corsi, in 1597. This was actually the first opera, although the term was not applied to such compositions until half a century later. Several solos were added by the court singer, Giulio Caccini, who composed a number of songs for a single voice, "in imitation of Galilei," as a contemporary stated, "but in a more beautiful and pleasing style." Invited three years later to produce a similar work for the festivities attending the marriage of Henry IV. of France with Maria di Medici, Peri wrote his "Eurydice," and once more Signora Archilei interpreted the leading role, greatly to the composer's satisfaction. It was the first opera performed in public. The singing had a bald accompaniment of an orchestra placed behind the scenes and consisting of a clavicembalo, or harpsichord, a viola da gamba, a theorbo, or large lute, and a flute, the last being used to imitate Pan-pipes in the hands of one of the characters.

Seven years afterward, for another court marriage, a musical drama was written by a man of genius who completely broke the fetters of ancient polyphony. This was Claudio Monteverde, then in his thirty-ninth year, and chapel master to the Duke of Mantua. He was the first composer to use unprepared chords of the seventh, dominant and diminished, and to emphasize passionate situations with dissonances. He invented the tremolo and the pizzicato, and originated the vocal duet. His keen dramatic sense enabled him to arouse interest through contrasts, conspicuously characteristic passages, and independent orchestral preludes, interludes and bits of descriptive tone-painting.

His opera, "Orfeo," 1608, had an orchestra of two harpsichords, two bass viols, two violas di gamba, ten tenor viols, two little French violins, one harp, two large guitars, three small organs, four trombones, two cornets, one piccolo, one clarion and three trumpets. In "Tancredi e Clorinda," produced in Venice, in 1624, a string quartet indicated the galloping of horses, a prototype of the "Ride of the Valkyries." Like Abbe Liszt, he took holy orders late in life, without ceasing to compose. At seventy-four years of age, when the fire of his genius burned brightly as ever, he wrote his last opera "L'Incoronazione di Poppea." It may truly be said that Monteverde was the great operatic reformer, the Wagner, of the seventeenth century, as Gluck was of the eighteenth.



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An epoch-making event in opera history was the opening, in 1637, of the first public opera house in commercial Venice whose wealth afforded her citizens leisure to cultivate art. Soon popular demand led to the erection of many Italian opera-houses. At the same time growing taste for magnificence of stage setting and brilliant, dazzling, even extravagant song effects, caused neglect of Academician principles. The learned and gifted Neapolitan composer, Alessandro Scarlatti, father of the famous harpsichordist, gave an impulse in his operas, during the last quarter of the century, to sensuous charm and beauty of melody. He invested recitative with classic value, enlarged the aria, and devised the da capo which became a menace to dramatic truth.

In France, the troubadours had borne melody into the domain of sentiment, and laid a solid foundation for musical growth. Adam de la Halle's pastoral, "Robin et Marion," was an actual prototype of the opera. During the seventeenth century Corneille and Moliere refined the dramatic taste of their compatriots. Attempts to introduce Italian opera only resulted in arousing a desire for an opera in accord with French ideals.

This was gratified by Jean Battiste Lully, who had come to the French court from Italy in boyhood, and had risen, in 1672, from a subordinate position to that of chief musician. Undertaking to make reforms, he succeeded in giving his adopted country a national opera. He established the overture, gave recitative rhetorical force, added coloring to the orchestra, and introduced the ballet. New life was infused into the traditions he left when Jean Philippe Rameau, in 1733, at fifty years of age, wrote his first opera. He was well-known as a theorist and composer, and was the author of a harmony treatise in which were set forth the laws of chord inversions and derivations, a stroke of genius that hopelessly entangled him in perplexities. His instrumentation was more highly colored, his rhythms more varied than those of his predecessor, and his sincerity of purpose more evident. In common with other reformers he was accused of "sacrificing the pleasures of the ear to vain harmonic speculations." Some of his many operas were written to works of Racine. He died in 1764, in his eighty-first year.

A century earlier the English reached the culmination of their Golden Age of musical productiveness in Henry Purcell, known as the most original genius England has produced. His dramatic powers were fostered by the popular masques with their gorgeous show of color and rhythm, and in mere boyhood he wrote music for several of them. In 1677, when only nineteen, he produced his first opera. He attempted no reform, but his instinct for the true relation between the accents of speech and those of melody and recitative seems to have been unerring. Saturated with native English melody, tingling with fertile fancy and controlled by education, whether he wrote for stage, church, or chamber, he evinced a freshness and vigor, a breezy picturesqueness and a wealth of rhythmic phrases and patterns, and many new orchestral devices. In 1710, fifteen years after his early death, the giant Handel began to dominate musical England, flooding the stage with operas of the Italian type and finally ushering in the reign of the oratorio. The delicate plant of English opera never took root.

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Italian influence had almost caused the decline of French opera when Christopher Willibald Gluck turned to Paris, in 1774, as its regenerator. In Vienna, twelve years earlier, he had already produced his "Orfeo," whose calm, classic grandeur seemed the embodiment of the Greek art spirit. His choice of subjects indicates the enterprise on which he had embarked. He sought simplicity, subjugation of music to poetic sentiment, dramatic sincerity and organic unity. His operatic version of Racine's "Iphigenie en Aulide" called forth unbounded enthusiasm in the French metropolis directly after his arrival, and led to the warfare with the brilliant Italian Piccini, which was as hot as any Wagner controversy.

The homage of all time is due this man of genius for the splendid courage with which he attacked shams. He claimed it to be the divine right of the dramatic composer to have his works sung precisely as he had written them, and protested against the innovations that had been permitted to suit the caprices and gratify the vanity of singers. It was his idea that the Sinfonia, in other words the Overture or Prelude, should indicate the subject and prepare the spectators for the characters of the pieces, and that the instrumental coloring should be adapted to the mood of the situation, thus anticipating modern procedure. He prepared the way for the work of Cherubini, Auber, Gounod, Thomas, Massenet, Saint-Saens and others.

In Germany, Italian opera, early introduced, long remained fashionable. Native dramatic tastes, once fostered by minnesingers and strolling players, were kept alive by the "singspiel," or song-play, composed of spoken dialogue and popular song, which furnished the actual beginnings of German national music drama. The threshold of this was reached, the sanctuary of its treasures unlocked, by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who, without thought of being a reformer, unconsciously infused German spirit into Italian forms. It was during the last five years of his brief life, from 1786 to 1791, that he produced his operatic masterpieces, "The Marriage of Figaro," "Don Giovanni," and "The Magic Flute." His marvelous musical and poetic genius, supported by profound scholarship, led him into hitherto untried regions of expression, and to him it was given to bring humanity on the stage, splendidly depicting the inner being of each character in tones. Wagner said of him that he had instinctively found dramatic truth and had cast brilliant light on the relations of musician and poet.

Ludwig van Beethoven, the great tone-poet, guided by his profound comprehension of the deep things of life and his active sympathies to absolute truthfulness in delineating human passions, made the next advance in his one opera, "Fidelio," written in 1805. Ranked, though it is, rather as a symphony for voice and orchestra than as the musical complement of a dramatic poem, there is nevertheless infused into some of its chief numbers more potent dramatic expression than is found in any previous opera. Thoroughly cosmopolitan in subject, it is nevertheless German in that its lofty earnestness of tone offers a protest against all shallowness and sensationalism. The entire story of the opera is told in tones in the overture.



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The next German to write overtures with a deliberate purpose to foreshadow what followed was Carl Maria von Weber, whose greatest opera, "Der Freischuetz," appeared in 1821. The initial force of the German romantic school, he founded his operas on romantic themes, and depicted in tones the things of the weird, fantastic and elfish world that kindled his imagination. He has been called the connecting link between Mozart and Wagner, and in many of his theories he anticipated the latter. National to the core, he embodied in his music the finest qualities of the folk-song, and noble tone-painter that he was he excelled his predecessors in his employment of the orchestra as a means of dramatic characterization.

Richard Wagner was long regarded as the great iconoclast whose business it was to destroy all that had gone before him in art, but no one ever more profoundly revered Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Weber than he. The public was persistently informed that his compositions were beyond ordinary comprehension, and yet designed, as they were, to picture man's essential life, they have slowly but surely found their way to the popular heart. It was the very essence of his musical dramatic creed that to have blood in its veins and sincerity in its soul art must come from the people and be addressed to the people. He chose the national myth and hero tradition as the basis of his music-drama because of the universality of their content and application, and because he believed they reflected the German world-view. Himself he regarded as the Siegfried whose mission it was to slay the dragon of sordid materialism and awaken the slumbering bride of German art.

Bach and Chopin had anticipated him in some of his most startling chord progressions. The motives of Bach's fugues and Beethoven's sonatas and symphonies, and the so-called "leading motives" of the Frenchman, Hector Berlioz, had preceded his "typical motives." Moreover, the orchestration of Berlioz had been a precursor of his orchestral tone-coloring. Nevertheless, everything he touched was so characteristically applied by him as to produce new impressions, and to emphasize the idea of music as a language. So peculiarly were music and poetry blended in the delicate tissue of his genius that one seemed inseparable from the other. United, he believed it to be their mission to inculcate high moral lessons of patriotism and love.

He gave the death-blow to an opera whose sole aim is to tickle the ear. Many an exquisite melody of Rossini and other Italian composers will long continue to live, but their productions as wholes have mostly ceased to be satisfying to those of us who have Teutonic blood in our veins. The Italian opera composer who holds the highest place to-day in the heart of the serious musician is that grand old man of music, Giuseppe Verdi, whose genius enabled him to yield four times to the spirit of the age, during his long career, and who in his ripe old age endeavored to give Italy what Wagner had given the German nation.

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XI

Certain Famous Oratorios

About the middle of the sixteenth century, San Filippo Neri, a zealous Florentine priest, opened the chapel, or oratory, of his church in Rome, for popular hours with his congregation. His main object being "to allure young people to pious offices and to detain them from worldly pleasure," he endeavored to make the occasions attractive as well as edifying, and supplemented religious discourse and spiritual songs with dramatized versions of Biblical stories provided with suitable music. Associated with him in his labors for a good cause, was no less a composer than that great reformer of Catholic church music, Giovanni Pierluigi Sante da Palestrina, whose harmonies were declared by a music-loving Pope to be those of the celestial Jerusalem. The laudable enterprise proved successful. People flocked from all quarters to enjoy the gratuitous entertainments, and a form of sacred musical art resulted that derived from them its name.

Roswitha, a nun of the Gandersheim cloister, in the tenth century, made the earliest attempt recorded to invest church plays with artistic worth. Her six religious dramas, written in Latin for the use and edification of her sister nuns, were published in a French setting, in 1845. It was a woman, too, Laura Guidiccioni, a brilliant member of the Florence group of aristocratic truth-seekers in art, who wrote the text of the first religious musical dramatic composition to which the name oratorio became attached. It was set to music of a declamatory style by Emilio del Cavaliere, the author's collaborator in the pastoral plays that were really embryo operas. The title of the piece, "The Representation of the Body and the Soul," indicates the allegorical nature of the subject.

Its initial performance occurred at Rome, February, 1600, in the oratory of San Filippo's church, Santa Maria della Vallicella. The composer had died some months earlier, but his minute stage directions were accurately observed. Behind the scenes was placed an orchestra comprising a double lyre, a harpsichord, a large guitar and two flutes, to which was added a violin for the leading part in the ritornels, that is, instrumental preludes and interludes. The chorus had seats assigned on the stage, but rose to sing, employing suitable movements and gestures. Time, Morality, Pleasure, and other solo characters bore in their hands musical instruments and seemed to play as they acted and declaimed their parts, while the playing actually came from the concealed instruments. The World, the Body and Human Life illustrated the transitoriness of earthly affairs by flinging away the gorgeous decorations they had worn when they appeared on the stage, and displaying their utter poverty and wretchedness in the face of death and dissolution. The representation ended with a ballet, danced "sedately and reverently" to music by the chorus.

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Some idea of the oratorio in its infancy may be gained from this description. Except that the subject had a religious bearing, it differed little from the opera. With Giacomo Carissimi, director of music at San Apollinare, Rome, from 1628 until his death, in 1674, the paths of the two diverged. He laid down lines that have been followed in the oratorio ever since. Dancing and acting were excluded by him, and the role of narrator introduced. His broad, simple treatment of chords enhanced the purity and beauty of everything he wrote, and in his hand recitative gained character, grace and musical expressiveness. Only a small portion of his epoch-making work has been preserved, but quite enough to make clear his title "Father of Oratorio and Cantata."

His pupil, Alessandro Scarlatti, founder of the Neapolitan school and practically the musical dictator of Naples, from 1694 to 1725, was an incredibly prolific composer in almost every known species of musical form. His many improvements in vocal and instrumental music operated greatly to the advantage of the oratorio. Possessing feeling for orchestration to an unusual degree for his time, he grouped musical instruments of different timbres with marked boldness and skill, and was the first specially to orchestrate recitative. His genius and knowledge enabled him to restore counterpoint to its rightful place, and his oratorios show great gain in elasticity and form.

Another Alessandro, he who bore the surname Stradella and was the hero of Flotow's opera of that name, has figured so freely in romance that it is not easy to separate truth from fiction in accounts of his life. Dr. Parry says of him that he had a remarkable instinct for choral effects, even piling progressions into a climax, that his solo music aims at definiteness of structure, that, in 1676, he used a double orchestra whose principal instruments were violins, and that his oratorios were specially significant, as he cultivated all the resources of that form of art. His most celebrated composition is an oratorio, "San Giovanni Battista," and one of the airs attached to it "Pieta Signore," a beautiful, symmetrical, heart-searching melody, is sung to-day, although it is by no means as well known as it deserves.

According to tradition, its tender, worshipful strains sung in the church of the Holy Apostles, at Rome, by the composer himself, once stayed the hand of an assassin whom jealousy had prompted to slay the "Apollo della Musica." So Alessandro Stradella was called, because of his great gifts as singer and composer, and his manly beauty. A jubilant multitude surrounded him in life, and loud lamentation arose, when, at length, he fell a victim to envy and malice. Thus the graceful legend runs. Recent writers are trying to make us believe that the famous "Pieta Signore" was a later interpolation in "San Giovanni Battista," and that it may be attributed to this or that composer, a century or more after the death of Stradella, in 1681. Unless absolute proof be afforded us, let us forbear from plucking this gem from his crown.



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Composer of fifty operas and many other works, magnificent organist and harpsichordist, with musical genius of a Titanic order, intellect that was swift, sure and keen, an indomitable will, a lofty philosophy, and a lordly personality, George Friedrich Handel, seemingly defeated by outrageous fortune, wheeled about like some invincible general whose business it was to win the battle and entering the field of the oratorio gained a colossal victory. He had for some time passed the half century milestone of his life when he scored his greatest achievements in this line, and with magic touch transformed existing materials into the art-form we know to-day. His "Messiah," which alone would have sufficed to immortalize him, was produced, in one of his herculean bursts of power, within twenty-three days, when he was well-advanced in his fifty-seventh year. It was first given to the public, in Dublin, April 13, 1742, seven months after its completion. The enthusiasm it awakened was repeated when it was performed later in London. Here, indeed, the audience became so transported that at the opening of the Hallelujah chorus every one present, led by the king, rose and remained standing, a custom we follow to-day.

Herder calls the "Messiah" a Christian epopee, in musical sounds. It is certainly written in the large, grand style of a noble epic, for it had large matters to express, and its composer regarded music as a means of addressing heart and soul. The theme is treated with reverence, delicacy and judgment, and the leading tone is that of a mighty hymn of rejoicing. Following an overture that is in itself a revelation, the opening tenor recitative, "Comfort Ye, My People," has a convincing ring that all is and will be well, mingled with infinite tenderness, and the succeeding aria, "Every Valley," is pervaded with the freshness of earth newly arisen amid great glory. The heart-rending desolation of selections like the contralto air, "He was Despised," only serves to accentuate the triumph of other portions. Throughout there is a warmth, a contrapuntal splendor, a breadth, an elasticity, a richness of orchestration, unknown in previous oratorio, unless in parts of some of the master's own works. Even in the duet and choruses remodeled from his chamber duets, there is that jubilant character that makes them blend perfectly with the great whole.

Born and educated on German soil, steeped during his wanderer's years in the spirit of the Italian muse, and finally nourished on the cathedral music of England, Handel became thoroughly cosmopolitan, appropriating what he chose from the influences that surrounded him. The English regard him as one of their national glories, call him the "Saxon Goliath," the "Michael Angelo of music," a "Bold Briareus with a hundred hands," and have carved his form in enduring marble above his tomb in Westminster Abbey. Nothing they have said can equal the tribute paid him by the dying giant Beethoven, who pointing to Handel's works exclaimed: "There is the truth."



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Another lofty, yet wholly different personality, born also in 1685, is found in Johann Sebastian Bach, whose Passion Oratorios, a direct outgrowth of the Passion plays of old, furnish materials and inspiration for all time. Handel worked in and for the public and fought his battles in the great world. Bach was the lonely scholar who lived apart from outside turmoil and unabashed in the presence of earthly monarchs, reigned supreme in the tone-world. A typical Teuton, his music, intensely earnest, highly intellectual, contains the essence of Teutonism, and gives full, rich, copious expression to the inmost being of humanity. The spirit of Protestant Germany is embodied in his religious tone productions which have proved to Protestantism a tower of strength. His service in developing the choral alone is inestimable. Nothing that he has written, better represents the majesty and sublimity of his style than his "Saint Matthew Passion" with its surpassing utterances of human sorrow and infinite tenderness.

In the year 1790, when Joseph Haydn had accepted an invitation to make a professional visit to London, his young friend, Mozart, endeavored to dissuade him from going on account of his age, but Haydn persisted, declaring that he was still active and strong. Eight years later, at sixty-six years of age, he wrote his celebrated oratorio "The Creation," with all the vigor and sparkle of youth. The rambles of years in the beautiful grounds of Esterhazy had attuned his soul to communion with nature, and this work plainly shows his power of putting into tones the secrets nature revealed to him. Blissful joyousness and child-like naivete are among its characteristic features.

The style of Beethoven as a composer of sacred music is reflected in his single oratorio "Christ on the Mount of Olives," that like his single opera stands apart, amply sufficient to prove what he was capable of accomplishing. Mendelssohn, in his "St. Paul" and his "Elijah," embodied a high ideal, building on his predecessors and attaining, especially in the latter, an eclectic spirit that manifests keen discrimination. The oratorios of Liszt, the "Christus," "St. Elizabeth" and some lesser works, reveal high purpose and original treatment of a revelation in tones of sacred events. In the oratorios of the Frenchman Gounod, preeminently in his "Redemption," it is interesting to find modern chorals based on those of the German Bach, and, in fact, as it has been aptly said, a modernized treatment of Bach's passion form.

What may be the next step in the evolution of the oratorio it were difficult to estimate. Whether modern efforts can ever surpass, or even equal, the sublime productions in this field, or whether creative genius will be turned into wholly new channels, the future alone may determine.

[Illustration: *Saint-Saens*]

XII

Symphony and Symphonic Poem



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That adventurous spirit, Claudio Monteverde, who nearly three hundred years ago made himself responsible for the first feeble utterances of an orchestra that tried to say something for itself, divined the possibilities of expression in varying combinations of tone-quality and gave vigorous impulse to the germ of the symphony already existing in the formless instrumental preludes and interludes of his predecessors among opera-makers. His revelation of the charm that lies in exploring the resources of instrumentation led to ever increasing demands on the orchestra. The prelude developed into the operatic overture whose business it became to prepare the spectator for what followed. That music was capable of conveying an impression in her own tone-language was apparent, and in due time the symphony rose majestic from the forge of genius.

Prominent among the materials welded into it was the dance of obscure origin. As the vocal aria was the result of the simple folk-song combined with the intense craving of song's master molders for individual expression, so instrumental music striving to walk alone, without support from words, gained vital elements through the discovery that various phases of mental disposition might be indicated by alternating dance tunes differing in rhythm and movement, according to Nature's own law of contrasts. That unity of purpose was essential to the effectiveness of the diversity was instinctively discerned.

The touch of authority was given to this kind of music, during the last two decades of the seventeenth century, by Arcangelo Corelli when he presented in the camera, or private apartment, of Cardinal Ottoboni's palace, in Rome, his idealized dance groups, thoroughly united by harmony of mood, yet affording a wholly new tone-picture of this mood in each of several movements. These compositions were usually written for the harpsichord and perhaps three instruments of the viol order, the master himself playing the leading melody on the violin. He called them sonatas from sonare, to sound, a name originally applied to any piece that was sounded by instruments, not sung by the human voice. They prefigured the solo sonata, the entire class of chamber music named from the place where they were performed, and the symphony which is a sonata for the orchestra. Absolute music was set once for all on the right path by them. They ushered in a new era of Art.

Purcell, in England, Domenico Scarlatti and Sammartini, in Italy, the Bachs, in Germany, and others continued to fashion the sonata form. It ceased to be a mere grouping of dances, the name suite being applied to that, and struck out into independent excursions in the domain of fancy. The prevailing melody of its monophonic style proved suitable to furnish a subject for the most animated discussion. Three contrasting movements were adopted, comprising a summons to attention, an appeal to both intellect and emotions, and a lively reaction after excitement.



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A German critic has jocosely remarked that the early writers meant the sonata to show first what they could do, second what they could feel, and third how glad they were to have finished. Time vastly increased its importance. Two subjects, a melody in the tonic, another usually in the dominant, came to set forth the exposition of the opening movement, leading to a free development, with various episodes, and an assured return to the original statement. The prevailing character being thus defined, the story readily unfolds, aided by related keys, in a slow movement and perhaps a minuet or scherzo, and gains its denouement in a stirring finale, written in the original key. Each movement has its own subjects, its individual development, with harmony of plan and idea for a bond of union.

The name symphony, from *sinfonia*, a consonance of sounds, applied originally to any selection played by a full band and later to instrumental overtures, was given by Joseph Haydn to the orchestral sonata form inaugurated by him. His thirty years of musical service to the house of Esterhazy, with an orchestra increasing from 16 to 24 pieces to experiment on, as the solo virtuoso experiments on piano or violin, brought him wholly under the spell of the instruments. Their individual characteristics afforded him continually new suggestions in regard to tone-coloring, and he rose often to audacity, for his time, in his harmonic devices. Grace and spirit, originality of invention, joyous abandon, a fancy controlled by a studious mind, a profusion of quaint humor and a proper division of light and shade, combine to give the dominant note to his music. His symphonies recall the fairy tale, with its sparkling "once upon a time," and yet like it are not without their mysterious shadows. In everything he has written is felt that faculty of smiling amid grief and disappointment and pain that made Haydn, the Father of the Symphony, exclaim in his old age, "Life is a charming affair."

With Mozart, whose life-work began after, but ended before that of Haydn, influencing and being influenced by the latter, the symphony broadened in scope and grew richer in warmth of melodious expression, definiteness of plan and completeness of form. His profoundly poetic musical nature, with its high capacity for joy and sorrow and infinite longing, was reflected in all that he wrote. By means of a generous employment of free counterpoint, in other words a kind of polyphony in which the various voices use different melodies in harmonious combination, he gained a potent auxiliary in his cunning workmanship, and emphasized the folly of rejecting the contrapuntal experiences, of, for instance, a Sebastian Bach. Musical instruments, as well as musical materials, were his servants in developing the glowing fancies of his marvelously constructive brain. The crowning glory of his graceful perfection of outline and detail is the noble spirit of serenity which illumines all its beauty.

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Beethoven further advanced the technique of the symphony, and proved its power to “strike fire from the soul of man.” Varying his themes while repeating them, adding spice to his episodes and working out his entire scheme with consummate skill, he was able to construct from a motive of a few notes a mighty epic tone-poem. He translated into superb orchestral pages the dreams of the human heart, the soul’s longing for liberty and all the holiest aspirations of the inner being. He discussed in tones problems of man’s life and destiny, ever displaying sublime faith that Fate, however cruel, is powerless to crush the spiritual being, the real individuality. His conflicts never fail to end in triumph. Well may it be said that the ultimate purpose of a symphony of Beethoven is to tell of those things from the deepest depths of which events are mere shadows, and that as high feeling demands lofty utterance his tonal forms are inevitably worthy of their contents.

Twenty-six years younger than Beethoven Schubert lived but a year after he had passed away and died in 1828, two years later than Weber, and felt the glow of the spirit of romanticism. From the perennial fount of song within his breast there streamed fresh melodious strains through his symphonies, the ninth and last of which, the C major, ranks him with the great symphonists. Intense poetic sentiment, dreamy yet strong musical individuality, romantic fulness of plan to embody in tones the passionate emotions of a storm and stress period, and much originality of orchestral treatment characterize the symphonies of Schumann. He rises to towering heights in some passages, but in his daring explorations through the tone-world he is often betrayed into a vagueness of form, largely traceable perhaps to lack of early technical discipline, as well as to lack of mental clarity. Ultra romanticism was foreign to the nature and repulsive to the tastes of the refined, elegant Mendelssohn, yet in spite of himself its influence crept gently into his polished works. As a symphonist he displayed fertility in picturesque sonorities, facility in tracing the outlines and filling in the details of form, keen sense of balance of orchestral tone, thorough scientific knowledge of his materials, and, as some one has said, became all but a master in the highest sense. His overtures are unquestionably romantic, and as their histrionic and scenic titles indicate, partake of the nature of programme music.

This brings us to Hector Berlioz, the famous French symphonist, the exponent par excellence of programme music, that is, music intended to illustrate a special story. He lived from 1803 to 1869, and because of his audacity in using new and startling tonal effects was called the most flagrant musical heretic of the nineteenth century. He was the first to impress on the world the idea of music as a definite language. His recurrent themes, called “fixed ideas,” prefigured Wagner’s “leading motives.”

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His skill in combining instruments added new lustre to orchestration. The personal style he created for himself was the result of his studies of older masterpieces, above all those of Gluck which he knew by heart, and of his philosophic researches. His four famous symphonic works are: "Fantastic Symphony," "Grand Funeral and Triumphal Symphony," "Harold in Italy" and "Romeo and Juliet." In a preface to the first he thus explains his ideas: "The plan of a musical drama without words, requires to be explained beforehand. The programme (which is indispensable to the perfect comprehension of the work) ought therefore to be considered in the light of the spoken text of an opera, serving to lead up to the piece of music, and indicate the character and expression."

From programme music came the symphonic poem of which Franz Liszt was the creator. Although he found this culmination of the romantic ideal in the field of instrumental music in his maturer years, he displayed in it the full power of his genius. His great works in this line are a "Faust Symphony," "Les Preludes," "Orpheus," "Prometheus," "Mazeppa" and "Hamlet." Symphonic in form, although less restricted than the symphony, these works are designed to give tone-pictures of the subjects designated, or at least of the moods they awaken. "Mazeppa," for instance, is described as depicting in a wild movement, rising to frenzy, the death ride of the hero, a brief andante proclaims his collapse, the following march, introduced by trumpet fanfares and increasing to the noblest triumph, his elevation and coronation.

Camille Saint-Saens, without doubt the most original and intellectual modern French composer, who at sixty-seven years of age is still in the midst of his activity, and who has made his own the spirit of the classic composers, owes to the symphonic poem a great part of his reputation, and has also written symphonies of great value. His orchestration is distinguished by its clarity, power and exquisite coloring. The orchestral music of Tchaikowsky, who died in 1893, symphonies and symphonic poems, are saturated with the glowing Russian spirit, are intensely dramatic, sometimes rising to tempestuous bursts of passion that are only held in check by the composer's scholarly control of his materials. A strong national flavor is also felt in the work of Christian Sinding, the Norwegian, whose D minor symphony has been styled "a piece born of the gloomy romanticism of the North." Edward Grieg, known as the incarnation of the strong, vigorous, breezy spirit of the land of the midnight sun, has put some of his most characteristic work into symphonic poems and orchestral suites. The first composer to convey a message from the North in tones to the European world was Gade, the Dane, known as the Symphony Master of the North, who was born in 1817 and died in 1890.



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It is impossible to mention in a brief essay all the great workers in symphonic forms. One Titanic spirit, Johannes Brahms, (1833-1897) who succeeded in striking the dominant note of musical sublimity amid modern unrest, is reserved for our final consideration. Of him Schumann said, "This John is a prophet who will also write revelations," and he has revealed to those who can read that high art is the abiding-place of reason, that it is moreover compounded of profundity of feeling yoked with profundity of intellectual mastery. Dr. Riemann writes of him, "From Bach he inherited the depth, from Haydn, the humor, from Mozart, the charm, from Beethoven, the strength, from Schubert, the intimateness of his art. Truly a wonderfully gifted nature that was able to absorb such a fulness of great gifts and still not lose the best of gifts—the strong individuality which makes the master."

Wonderful is the power of instrumental music, absolute music without words, that may convey impressions, deep and lasting, no words could give. All hail to the memory of Johannes Brahms, who has reminded us of its true mission and delivered a message that will ring through the twentieth century.

[Transcriber's Note: In the caption for the illustration featuring Ms. Nordica, the spelling of her first name was corrected from "Lilian" to "Lillian."]