

then in a pathetic piece of harmony the thought is expanded:

"For, lo, the grass with'reth,  
And the flower thereof decayeth."

The first passage, "Behold all flesh," etc., is repeated, being declaimed loudly the second time an octave higher than before, like a stern arresting announcement.

The exhortation to patience follows,

"Now therefore be patient  
Unto the coming of Christ;"

then the promise of Faith and Hope,

"See how the husbandman waiteth  
For the precious fruit of the earth,  
Till he receive the early and latter rain;  
So be ye patient."

The opening theme of this section is again given as before (all the musical masters are loth to leave their best bursts of inspiration), and then follows the great authoritative assurance,

"Albeit the Lord's word endureth,  
Endureth for evermore."

The chorus proceeds and finishes with a new musical treatment of the same idea of contrast as appears in Section 1,

"The redeemed of the Lord shall rejoice,  
Tears and sighing shall flee from them,  
Joy everlasting shall be upon their heads."

Here the exquisite crescendos and diminuendos and grand fortissimo outbursts describe to perfection the varying emotions; and in no part of the work is the composer's imaginative power more wondrously displayed.

Section 3.

A baritone voice at once sings the prayer,

"Lord make me to know,  
Know the measure of my days on earth."

\* \* \* \* \*  
"Surely all my days here,  
Are as a hand-breadth to Thee,"

which is taken up by the chorus. Here again are expressive light and shade passages, as where the tones ring out high and loud on "my lifetime, Lord," and sink down to a reverent softness on the words "is nought to Thee." At one time there is an agony of awe-struck acknowledgment, at another the serenity of uncomplaining resignation in the treatment of the phrase,

"Make me to know  
That I must perish."

Then comes a transition from the idea of the vanity of man's best state to the answer to the query, "Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in Thee," the section ending in a magnificent fugal passage with a grand bracing rush of harmonies on the words,

"But the righteous souls are in the hand of  
God,  
Nor pain nor grief shall nigh them come."

Section 4.

This is the most charmingly tuneful of the choruses. It is a smoothly flowing strain of melodious sweetness, a devoutly rapt tribute to the loveliness of the House of God. "How lovely is Thy dwelling-place, O Lord of Hosts," etc. Sung in a fine old cathedral, it is an

exquisite piece of tone painting set in a beautifully appropriate frame,

"Where through the long drawn aisle and  
fretted vault,  
The pealing anthem swells the note of  
praise;"

the singers enjoying the benefit of both visible and near sources of inspiration in the arching ceiling, the long vista of the nave, the noble pillars, and the upturned earnest human faces of the great congregation suggestive of the living stones that are built up a spiritual house. "For the temple of God is within you, whose temple ye are."

Section 5.

Again we note a contrast in the words of the piece—

"Ye now are sorrowful,  
Howbeit ye shall again behold me,  
And your heart shall be joyful,  
Yea, I will comfort you,  
As one whom his own mother com-  
forteth."

Here, I take it, the idea meant to be conveyed is that of the departed soul imparting comfort to those mourning his loss.

"Dare I say,  
No spirit ever brake the band  
That stays him from the native land  
Where first he walk'd when claspt in clay?"

A soprano voice first alone, and then along with the chorus sings the phrase, "Ye are now sorrowful," &c., the music of which throbs with a keen and yearning sympathy. The strain is so high set as to severely tax the resources of even an exceptional voice; but the heart-melting significance of the solo soprano carolling high, clear and sweet—

"Your joy no man taketh from you,"  
and

"Ye shall again behold me,"

against the subdued tender reiterations by the chorus of—

"Yea, I will comfort you,  
As one whom his own mother com-  
forteth,"

can only be realised and appreciated by hearing a satisfying rendering of it.

The music is of that soul-stirring character which gives rise to reflections rich in suggestion, but difficult of expression. Mr. J. A. Symonds' vivid lines from his fine sonnet "The Chorister," afford some description of the effect of the solo—

"But hark,  
One swift soprano soaring like a lark  
Startles the stillness; throbs that soul of  
fire,  
Beats around arch and aisle, floods echoing  
dark

With exquisite aspiration; higher, higher,  
Yeams in sharp anguish of untold desire."

Perhaps the pure spirit of the music finds the most perfect literary utterance in Tennyson's beautiful verses, part 94 of "In Memoriam":

"How pure at heart and sound in head,  
With what divine affections bold,  
Should be the man whose thought  
would hold,  
An hour's communion with the dead.  
In vain shalt thou or any call  
The spirits from their golden day,  
Except like them thou too canst say,  
My spirit is at peace with all,

They haunt the silence of the breast,  
Imaginations calm and fair,  
The memory like a cloudless air,  
The conscience as a sea at rest."

Section 6.

This section is remarkable for the composer's powerfully original treatment of the resurrection scene. The climax of the work is reached here, both in the difficulties of execution and the elaborate grandeur of the effects. Especially impressive is the transition from the sustained fortissimo on the word *Where?* ("O Death where is thy sting?") to the second great fugal passage—

"Worthy art Thou to be praised,  
Lord of honour and might,"

which reaches the highest heights of praise and adoration—

"For thy good pleasure,  
All things have their being,  
And were created  
Worthy art Thou, Lord," etc.

Section 7.

The tone of the last chorus is one of solemn rapture and reverent gratefulness.

"Blessed are the dead  
Which die in the Lord,"

Well may the mourning find the blessedness of comfort, seeing that the dead are blessed.

"They rest from their labours,  
And their works do follow them.

Blessed are the dead which die in the  
Lord,  
Blessed, Blessed."

The closing word and note and tone of the work are as the opening. "Blessed" is softly, tenderly, lingeringly breathed.

II.—A SONG OF DESTINY.

Brahms' Song of Destiny deals with a contrast. First the joy and peace of the spirits in heaven are impressively suggested; second, the restless, hapless weariness of human existence is forcibly figured forth. The song has some of those touches of awe-struck reverential feeling which make the same composer's Requiem memorable. The first part recalls the exquisite sweetness of the Requiem chorus "How lovely is Thy dwelling-place." The same subdued ecstasy, the same enrapt sense of bliss and purity and peace are in both.

Brahms' tone painting is full of interest. For instance how graphically he treats the figure of man living "blindly," and "blindly" passing away. Those grand outbursts on the word "blindly"—what a vivid presentiment of the idea of groping, distraction, despair, overwhelmment, in darkness. What an eloquent moving language he makes music. In the solemn intervals in which the closing phrase is repeated, "at last does he pass away," is expressed the running out of the last grains of the sands of time in the individual's life; the final breathings ere, as it appears to the physical sense, the total darkness falls.

Brahms' music in these examples has the majesty that commands, the sympathy that soothes, the mystery that arrests and controls. It reflects the religious attitude of a strong mind wistfully "believing where it cannot prove," of a large heart imploring yet adoring. In a true and deep sense may it be said of such as he, "Being dead he yet speaketh."

WILLIAM PORTEOUS.

