

embers there, embers that were perhaps almost dead. Music and dreams die away, and the pianist wanders off into one of those rich plaintive airs that steal to the heart the quickest; airs such as one most lover to hear in the silent evening on the sweet string of the guitar to a fine manly voice across an expanse of water. The fire fades from the old man's eyes, and tears rise there in its stead; let us not follow the thoughts of pure, tender, yet inexpressible sadness with which his heart communes with the past. 'Tis a part of his first dream, only another phase of it. Such is the influence of music, the sister, often the prompter, the fountain of poetry, and the friend of all that is good, and pure, and brave, for music never stirs an emotion in the breast of man but what prompts him to goodness and wisdom. How many, and how beautiful are the legends and stories that illustrate this might of the sound-world, especially in those distant ages, when man's passions were free, and but little restrained by the bonds of fixed principles; indeed, scarcely worked upon by anything but the inspiration of the moment. Then had poetry and music inseparably connected their fullest influence. Figures familiar to our imaginations are those of the venerable stern-willed Druid, sweeping the wild strings of his "sweet but awful" lyre, and moulding the simple hearts of his awe-struck hearers to deeds of sacred daring; the wild hot-hearted viking surrounded by blue-eyed heroes, nerving with his rude war-songs the eager fingers of those fearless kings of the sea; Orpheus in the mythical days of Greece, one of the earliest types of the sweet musician, in whose story we find proof of what sway the minstrel held in those rude times; David, the poet and musician soothing the gloom from the heart of Saul.

So the modern soldier's heart is stirred at the sound of martial music; amid the roar of battle his ear catches for a moment the clear full sound; a vision of honour rises before his eyes, the approving face of his stern old general, a cross, a ribbon, some memento of courage in the hour of danger—his soul springs to his fingers as he grasps his musket and rushes on through fire and smoke in pursuit of the uncertain phantom glory.

How grandly the poet Dryden in "Alexander's Feast" describes how

Long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute;
Timotheus, to his breathing lute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage—or kindle soft desire.

How vanity, pleasure, pity and revenge rose and swelled by turns in the hero's breast, as the cunning fingers of that royal bard rung the changing measures from the sounding strings. Those were days when minstrelsy held a sway that man knows not now. For the simple music of the minstrel, who was poet as well as musician, touches not the refined ear of civilization as it did that of rude nature in the olden days, when men had little to influence them but what they heard and saw in the every day world around them. So it is that the poet is not the prophet, the seer looked up to and revered by all classes of mankind, that he once was. The rapsodist who, as he sang the mighty songs of Homer in the streets of some princely Grecian city, brought often warlike fervour, the ambition of heroic deeds, often deepest pity, that vented itself in tears, to the hearts of the simple Greeks that gathered around

him till the way was choked with eager listeners; the troubadour, minstrel and bard among the impulsive imaginative Albigenes; the sweet minnesinger who trilled forth his stirring music, the very essence of the ballad poetry in the old baronial halls of Germany amid steel-clad warriors, who revered him more perhaps than they did many of the priests of the sacred faith; these were spirits that ruled the wild hearts of men such as the world may never know again. And we feel a twinge of regret often for the old times, when we see the poor starving vagabond of our own day, the worthless shadow of the old wandering harper—when we listen to the little dark-skinned Italian boys who play with harp and violin at the corners of our streets, yet kind reader remember charity, for even they doubtless lighten many a simple heart among the crowd that gathers round them, and perhaps once in a while you yourself have stopped on a winter's day to listen with delight to the pealing notes of "Viva Garibaldi," and watch the little ill-clad foot beating time on the cold snow, the sad smile that lights the swarthy face of the little wanderer as he recalls old days, happy days, among the hills of his native sunny Italy. Forget not your purse, reader.

With regard to the wonderful influence which music exercises over people of certain temperaments, you remember the fine passage in *The Newcomes*, the most beautiful I think in the novel, where Thackeray describes the character and occupations of poor J. J., the young artist: "poor" did I say yes, men would call him poor, because he was deformed, and indulged but little in the frivolities of the world, and yet he was one of those really happy people, who know very little of the cares that most men suffer, who live from year to year in their own thoughts, and pleasant thoughts they are too; whose lives are with very few interruptions, happy dreams. There the novelist describes how he would sit and listen to the music of the old piano, as it rang beneath the skillful fingers of kind-hearted Miss Cann, and lose himself in the fair world of sound. His imagination would wander at random among the strange medley of treasured figures and scenes, which he had gathered from his scanty collection of novels and books of poetry. He would be transported perhaps into some old moonlit street in Madrid. A vision would rise before him—a swarthy Spanish lover in the dark shadow of a linden with plaintive guitar, the music of whose well-tryed strings mingled sweetly with the rich manly Spanish voice, and rose imploringly to the flowery window, where his whole heart lay buried; and the poor J. J.'s slender white fingers, the proverbial artist's fingers, would seize the pencil, that faithful friend and skilful servant, whose well-worn point had so often served to give vent to the fair day dreams of the delicate young artist; and as his mind wandered on from one dream to another, these long-loved reminiscences of favourite pages assumed shapes bright and real, vivid little sketches that grew perhaps in after days into famous paintings. But enough—space limits. All that I have left to do is to offer my humble prayer that every human being, who has the power given him by nature to use this spell, this mighty charm of music, may not fail to cultivate his ability, for he will be able perhaps to confer more pure happiness, more moral good on mankind than most of the votaries of severer learnings and professions, who affect to look down on those who make the study of music their profession.