

steam vessels which are to bridge the Atlantic or the Pacific, usher in a new day, the type of a new era."

The following line: of Frances Ridley Havergal, too, give us the poetry of noise, but more as it approaches the realm of music:—

"The murmur of a waterfall far away,
The rustle when a robin lights upon a spray,
The lapping of a lowland stream on dipping boughs,
The sound of grazing from a herd of gentle cows,
The echo, from a wooded hill, of cuckoo's call,
The quivering through the meadow grass at evening fall—
Too subtle are these harmonies for pen and rule,
Such music is not understood by any school,
But, when the brain is overwrought, it hath a spell,
Beyond all human skill, to make it well."

Some may object to my calling this the poetry of noise, because such sounds are so closely related to music. Invent another term then, if you will, and I shall readily acquiesce. Call it, if you like, the poetry of non-musical sound but do not lose the idea of the inspiration that comes to us in such waftings of sweet disturbances blended into harmony.

But I must draw back my concession. There is, after all, no poetry of noise; no poetry of non-musical sound. There is in these cases only the poetry of the landscape, or the commonwealth, of which "these subtle harmonies" are but a part, and a part, too, which cannot be taken out of its setting without being robbed of its charm. The poetry of noise is really then the poetry of Nature. If sound is uppermost it is like the voice part of the song to which the accompaniment is not an *ad libitum* but an *obligato*. Who would think of treating a single element in the following symphony as anything short of an *obligato*?

"My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one and come away."

In this orchestra of nature no single instrument of sight, sound or smell could be dispensed with. Neither could any of them be taken out of the fraternity and yet remain as poetical as before. It would have been otherwise if, instead of the singing of birds, we had the music of the flute and the lyre; especially if such music had attained the perfection of modern days. The music of flutes and lyres, as these are represented in the resources of the modern orchestra, may, with perfect safety, be transplanted from its setting in the most dream-like of garden scenery to the darkness of a prison cell. Instead of the music losing anything by the transference its effect will be enhanced. Goethe has somewhere said that the best way to hear music is with the eyes shut. If anyone demurs to this, I'm afraid he cannot be reckoned among the class of true musicians. Such an one, possibly, goes to the garden party for the poetry of sociality, or of courtship; to the opera for the poetry of character and scenery; to the children's concert for the poetry of human sympathy, but in no case does he go for the "poetry of sound" alone.

And there you have the distinction between music proper and those things which are only the audible or the visible adjuncts of poetry in other forms. For love of the poetry of mere *sound* will the true musician go to the organ recital, the chamber concert and the orchestral symphony. For this he purchases Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words." For this he enrolls as a student of harmony and counterpoint. For this he is willing to plod on with patient laboriousness in the effort to acquire the requisites for the production of sound, whether these are movements of feet and fingers upon the organ, or the skilful management of the lungs and larynx in that most wonderful and most useful of all musical instruments—the human voice.

Music is always the result of a combination of two things—mechanical technique and artistic inspiration. If you have only the first, I "had as lief," as Hodge might say, the street organ grinder "had spoke my lines." If

you have only the second, you will be as helpless as the colored "fiddler" who awoke at the last moment to the dreadful discovery: "I've fatched de fiddle, sure enough, but I've done forgot de bow!"

Music is the triumph of mind over machinery. But, like Alexander's world, the machinery must be there before it can be conquered. And, oh, what machinery nature and art have furnished for the true poet to operate upon! Are we aware that the reed which vibrates with the wind sings in chords like an Æolian harp? Are we aware that the planing machine, too, sings in chords? Are we aware that one string of the violoncello is in itself a world of harmony, or, that the same is true of the monotonous repetition of one low note by certain bass voices selected for certain choirs? Carwen says, in one of his books on worship music: "Some of the bass voices in Russia are so deep that they sing a special part, generally moving an octave below the ordinary bass, and hence they are called 'octavists.' I am told on the best authority that all these men take the 'C' on the second leger line below the bass staff, and that the best of them can take the 'F' on the fourth leger line below the bass staff. These deep voices throw up harmonies which enrich the upper parts and add a wondrous fulness to the harmony." The study of this array of machinery is the fairy land of acoustical science into which we are led by such books as those of Tyndall and Blaserna. But only the true poet knows how to use aright this wondrous machinery after he has acquired possession of it. That marvellous Russian basso is only a bit of machinery until the poet for him composes what he shall sing, and the poet *within* him tells how he shall sing it.

One thing more about limiting music's sphere to sound alone; we must not mix up the music with even the words to which it is set. Music and words might quite dissolve partnership in many cases without loss to either. We want no music to Tennyson's "Brook." We need no words to Hadyn's "Hymn to the Emperor." Each is a complete poem in itself. Each has a melodiousness of its own. Each has an imaginativeness of its own.

I have already referred to the melodiousness of the poetry of literature; but something remains to be said of the imaginativeness of the poetry of sound. Some persons simply do not believe in this imaginativeness of the poetry of mere sound. Music, to them, is realistic or it is nothing; sweet to the ear as jelly to the palate, sweet to the mind as recollections to the memory; sweet concords *plus* dancing and marching rhythms, suffusing the senses and suggesting scenes of gaiety. When the associations of the garrison town and the evening dance have been exhausted the music has to join affinity with the words of a song, comic or otherwise, else its popularity will cease.

But while the imaginativeness of "Songs without words" is not believed in by some, it is believed in by others who nevertheless fail to make it a reality in their own case. In his "Chapter on Ears" Charles Lamb has the following: "Above all, those insufferable concertos, and *pieces* of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension. *Words* are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying; to be stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up langour by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze upon empty frames, and be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book, *all stops*, and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this *empty instrumental music*." It is refreshing for those