

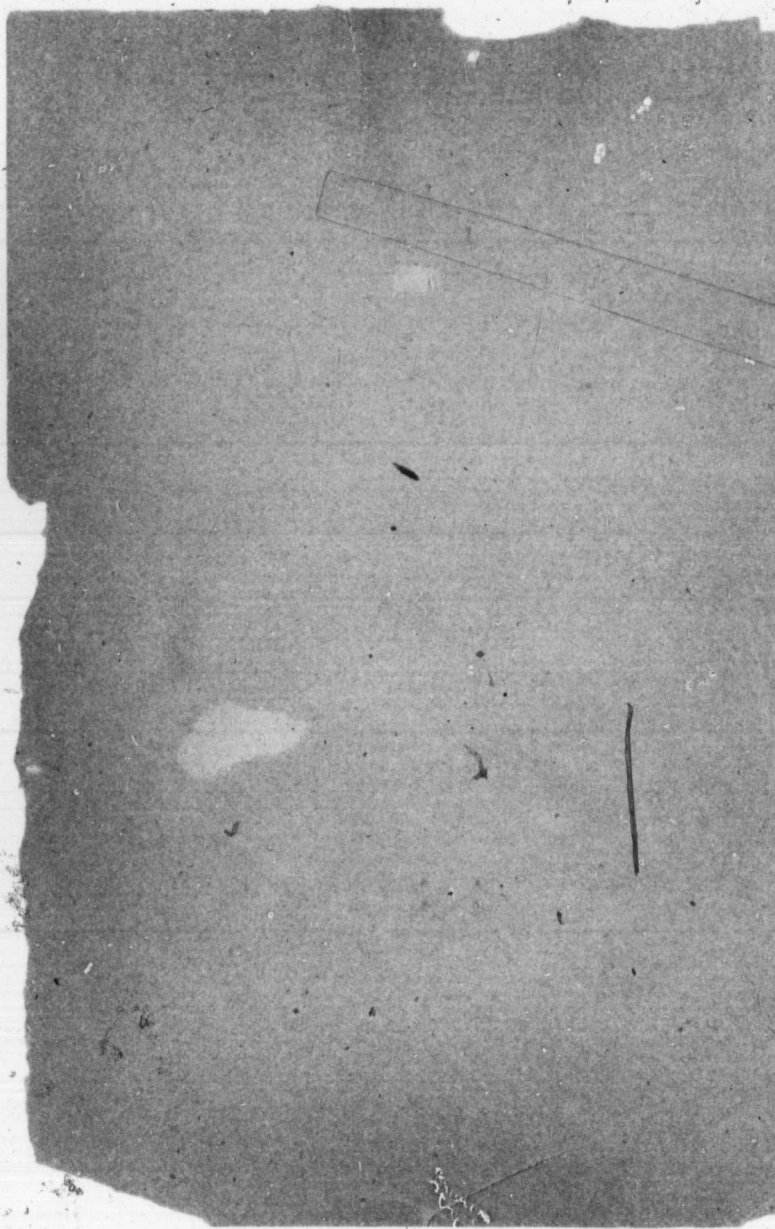
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The

"Scratch Club."





THE  
"SCRATCH CLUB"

BY H. A. CLARKE, MUS. DOC.

Professor of Music, University of Pennsylvania.



THE POET-LORE COMPANY,  
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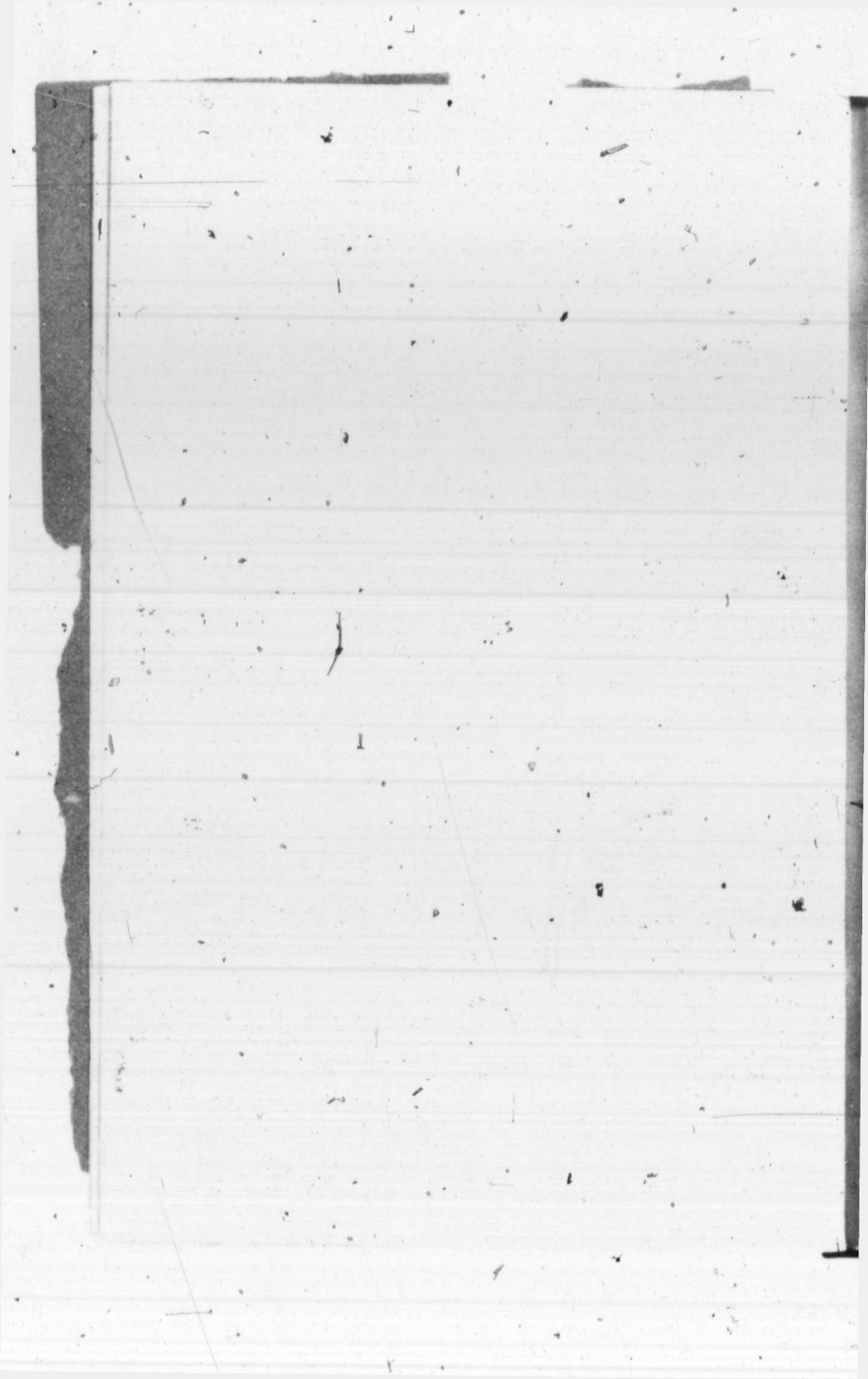
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To C. E. CLAGHORN, Esq.,

*Dear Sir: You are in a measure responsible for this book, much of which has grown from a suggestion of yours, I have therefore taken the liberty of inscribing your name at the head of it, in acknowledgment not only of this—but of many kindnesses. It also seemed to me appropriate, that a book which is in some degree a reflection of "professional" opinions on musical matters, should bear the name of an amateur so well known to be in hearty sympathy with all that is best in the Art of Music.*

*Yours Sincerely,*

*H. A. CLARKE.*



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## INTRODUCTION.

IT has been my privilege, during the past winter, to be admitted as a listener, at the meetings of certain of my musical friends, at which they devote themselves to the playing—or, as they call it, the “scratching”—of quartettes, quintets, and like compositions, of the best writers. I am one of that numerous class who, while possessed of no musical knowledge, and (my professional friends might say) very little musical taste, yet can extract a great deal of pleasure from hearing my friends' performance. But my chief reason for attending so assiduously at their reunions is, that, being of a somewhat philosophical turn, I derive a great deal of instruction and amusement, from the discussion of subjects connected with their art, with which they always finish the evening, with the accompaniment of a cigar and a modest glass or two of beer. It occasionally happens, in accordance with an understanding they have, that, one of their number will read an essay on some musical subject. They allow themselves large latitude in the interpretation of this understanding, admitting willingly anything—sketch, story, or what not, provided only that its subject is, in some way, connected with music. These gentlemen, although all professional musicians of acknowledged ability, and high standing, are yet, only amateurs on string instruments; still, their large musical experience and knowledge enable them to play with a thorough understanding of the requirements of this kind of music, that is beyond the reach of mere amateurs of the art. The first violin—Mr. Dalton—a pianist of some repute, is a middle-aged gentleman, an uncompromising admirer of the classical German school. The second violin—Mr. Parks—teaches singing, is possessed of a very good tenor voice, and has a strong leaning towards the “Italian Opera” school of music, for which leaning he is sometimes rather rudely snubbed by his older companions. He is the youngest of the party. The viola (or Tenor as musicians love to call it), Mr.

Crabbe—is somewhat of an original. He is past the prime of life, indeed, might be called an old man—has travelled extensively, is familiar with all musical "schools"—and an admirer, without fear or favor, of what commends itself to him as "good music" in all. He is apt at times, to be rather severe on those who are not gifted with a like Catholicity, and will at times give vent to the most outrageous and heterodox opinions, greatly to the exasperation of the first violin, and of the violoncello. This last gentleman—Mr. Hazel—is an Englishman. All of his enthusiasm is bestowed on Handel. He compares all musicians with him, and all suffer by the comparison. In short, he has that profound reverence for Handel that is characteristic of nearly all English—men and musicians.

The discussions are often enlivened by the occasional presence of others, some players, some, like myself, only hearers; notably by the presence of the Rev. Dr. Goodman, an Episcopal clergyman, with an enthusiasm for good music, and a great love for a lively discussion. Although totally ignorant of music, his native shrewdness and trained reasoning powers make his remarks always worthy of attention, while his exceeding good nature and his polite deference to the opinions of the "experts" have endeared him to the quartet, which never seems quite itself when his genial, kindly face is absent.

As to myself, I never join in the talk, preferring not to expose my ignorance to the scorn of the first violin, or the sarcasm of the viola. My share has been to make mental notes of the conversations, which I have attempted to reproduce, not without first obtaining the permission of my friends, for what looks somewhat like a breach of the rules of hospitality. I only gained their consent by representing to them that the music-loving public might gain something by getting a glimpse of the way in which musicians talk about music. With this introduction, I will retire to my place as a listener, and let my friends speak for themselves.

THE AUTHOR.

## FIRST EVENING.

### *Discussion on Organ Music and Fugues.*

THE fiddles are put away, the cigars lighted, and the beer glasses filled. The talk soon falls into its usual channel. After some desultory remarks, critical and commendatory, on a recent organ concert, in which our English friend, who is, by the way, a first-rate organist, took part, the clergyman, backed by Violoncello, waxed enthusiastic on the subject of organ-playing, lauding it as superior to all other instrumental music, and so on. This brought out Viola, and the following conversation ensued :

*Crabbe.* Oh, well, organ-playing is doubtless a very clever thing, and a very difficult thing to do well, but, after all, it is nothing but good machinery ; a machine would do it not only as well as, but better than the best organist. With all other instruments the case is quite different. They all respond more or less to the mood of the player ; the skilful use of the bow, the touch, the breath, produce infinite varieties and shades of expression, but on the organ you can but put down the key and the pipe will sound, and every sound is just the same in force and quality as every other one on the same stop, barring the slight difference produced by that clumsy contrivance you call a "swell." In short, the organ has no expression.

*Dalton.* I know but little about the organ, but it strikes me that must be the reason why the movements from

symphonies and sonatas that organists so often play are so unsatisfactory to one who is familiar with their effect when given by the instruments for which they were written.

*Crabbe.* Certainly it is; these things depend for their effect on delicate shading, an impossibility or, at best, a caricature on the organ.

*Dr. Goodman.* Won't you tell us what you think the organ is good for?

*Hazel.* To play organ music on. Handel, Bach, Rink—that's the music for the organ.

*Crabbe.* Then why do you organists try so often to make it sound like a bad orchestra, or worse brass band?

*Hazel.* We organists, like other men, must sometimes give up our own notions, to cater to the taste, or rather the lack of taste, of those who pay us for playing.

*Parks.* Won't somebody enlighten me as to what good organ music really ought to be? I must confess to a liking for the things Crabbe and Hazel so unsparingly condemn. I have heard some of the melodies from the Italian opera—

*Crabbe.* Pshaw! Hercules working with the distaff.

*Parks.* Why? I don't understand you.

*Crabbe.* Never mind, just now. I am going to answer your first question. Good organ music is of two kinds: first, the even, passionless sounds of the instrument are admirably suited to slow, massive successions of chords; second, to the tangled, intricate devices of contrapuntal writing, particularly fugues, provided they are not played too fast, as is apt to be the case with so many organists, who seem to be more concerned to exhibit their dexterity than to produce the effect intended by the composer.

*Hazel.* It is the *only* instrument for fugues.

*Dalton.* It is at least better suited to fugues than the

orchestra is. I could never find any pleasure in listening to an orchestral fugue. It is like putting Pegasus to work in a brick machine, to tie down this mighty power for expression to such mechanical work.

*Hazel.* I think you go too far. Won't you make an exception of, say, for example, the overture to "Elijah"?

*Dalton.* Well, yes. It is one of the exceptions that proves the rule—from its rarity. It is truly a wonderful combination of a formal style, with the expression of intense emotion.

*Crabbe.* Don't you think that the form, in this case, helps the expression of the emotion the composer wishes to depict? The gathering murmurs of the hungry, thirsty, wretched people are easily represented by the recurring themes of the fugue, and the increasing volume of sound from the gradually augmented orchestra.

*Dalton.* Perhaps you are right; but the genius of the composer is shown in his knowing how to use these factors to the best advantage; above all, by the restless, excited character of the themes he has chosen.

*Parks.* I am glad for one to hear that expression of any kind can be got out of a fugue. I have always thought they were things that some musicians pretended to like, just because nobody else did; and it gave them an air of superior knowledge or taste, or whatever it may be.

*Crabbe.* Ah! Parks you have something to learn yet; the opera does not exhaust the possibilities of music. Have we not actually succeeded in making you enjoy quartets! Perhaps, after some ages of transmigrations, you, even you, may come to find some beauty in a fugue.

*Parks.* I am more than willing to wait—

*Crabbe.* Comfortable in the belief that music has never produced anything grander than the "Aria" and "Cabaletta" of your favorite authors.

*Dalton.* Crabbe, you always seem to ignore the fact that there are other Italian writers besides the opera-makers.

*Crabbe.* Who are they? since Palestrina.

*Parks.* Why! Rossini, Verdi.

*Crabbe.* Ohe, jam satis!

*Parks.* Well, I have heard you admit, when you forgot to be ill natured, that Rossini had genius and that Verdi had made some great advances.

*Crabbe.* Humph! a badly digested meal of Wagnerism.

*Parks.* Oh, come now! Didn't you say once that "Aida" gave promise of a healthy new life in Italian opera?

*Crabbe.* I take it back; I have given up prophesying.

*Hazel.* Don't you think the prospect hopeful?

*Crabbe.* Why; from "Aida" to "Mephistofele"? No.

*Dr. Goodman.* We began with organ-playing and—

*Crabbe.* Have reached the devil.

*Dr. Goodman.* Hush! don't interrupt me; I want to ask a question. You and Hazel say that the organ is particularly suited to fugues because it has no expression, and yet you all admit or imply that a fugue may have expression. How is an ignorant layman to reconcile these contradictions?

*Crabbe.* I have been wondering, Doctor, what made you fall into a brown study some five minutes ago.

*Parks.* I don't see any difficulty. A fugue for the organ must be what these gentlemen call organ music. If for other instruments, it must *not* be organ music.

*Crabbe.* Profound! What a gift it is to be able to go to the bottom of a matter like that! So lucid, too! Hasn't he let a flood of light on your ignorance, Doctor?

*Hazel.* Parks is not so far out as you pretend to think. As a rule, the fugue is less a matter of expression than of construction. It *may* have emotion, it *must* have a cer-

tain formal construction ; if it has the former, it is suited to instruments that are capable of giving expression ; if not, it is suited to the organ.

*Dr. Goodman.* I think that all your instrumental fugues must give way to the vocal fugue. When I hear an instrumental fugue, I am lost after the subject or theme, or whatever you call it, is given out ; all the rest is a jumble of sound. Occasionally I may hear the theme struggling to break through. Sometimes it tries to swim on the top of the jumble ; sometimes it tries to dive and come out below it ; but all the other parts chase it frantically and choke it off, until, with a final crash, it gives up the struggle. But when I hear a good choir sing a fugue, I can hear the theme every time it comes in, because it has the words to help me recognize it.

*Crabbe.* Talk of a jumble ! What can equal that produced by four parts, singing different words ! I have a good idea. How would it do to let the part that has the theme be the only one to sing the words, while the others sing la-la ?

*Hazel.* A great part of the effect of a fugue depends on the words that are set to it. Look at the fugues in Handel's oratorios.

*Dalton.* Some of them are certainly the finest things of the kind ever written, but a great many are just as certainly very tedious. It seems to me that they should always be sung to such words as a large crowd would keep repeating.

*Crabbe.* Like the name of a popular candidate at a political meeting—"Mulhooly for ever," with "Down with the ring," for a counter subject, eh ?

*Dalton.* A base illustration, but it expresses my meaning. Now your idol, Handel, is the best one I know of to go to for examples. Take the chorus, "And He shall

purify," in the "Messiah;" of course the construction is very fine, and so forth, but what sense or artistic propriety is there in saying these words over and over again, except they be looked on as a mere excuse for an elaborate fugue? Or, take a worse example, the chorus, "And with His stripes we are healed," in which words with very painful and solemn associations are repeated until they lose their meaning. Now for an example of the other kind, what I call good words for a fugue, take "Blessing and honor, glory and power," or that splendid chorus in "Judas," "We never will bow down." In both we have presented to us the idea of a vast assembly moved by one impulse or emotion to repeat, in one case, an ascription of praise; in the other, a determined purpose to a certain course of action.

*Crabbe.* It is a pity Handel didn't stop that last chorus you cited, after the choral, "We worship God;" what follows is somewhat of an anticlimax, and spoils the effect.

*Hazel.* Crabbe, why don't you re-write the classical composers?

*Dr. Goodman.* Dalton, I can't help thinking that your view is the right one; it commends itself to what you have called "artistic propriety," which, I take it, is only another name for common sense, applied to matters of art.

*Hazel.* I would be sorry to lose all the vocal fugues that don't square with his rule.

*Dalton.* So would I. I only meant to give my views of what the vocal fugue ought to be to get the fullest effect of the form.

*Crabbe.* There is one kind of vocal fugue sanctified by the custom of the "classics," that is, to me, intolerable. I mean the "Amen" fugues that so many oratorios, masses and cantatas drag after them like a cumbrous tail.



*Parks.* Like a fair mermaid, with fishy continuation.

*Crabbe.* Be quiet! You can't improve on my metaphor. What can be more senseless than this long-winded reiteration of "Amen" after the story, or plot, or musical interest has ended?

*Hazel.* I would be sorry to lose the "Amen" chorus that ends the "Messiah."

*Crabbe.* Of course you would; but I am sure that every candid, unprejudiced hearer must feel that the "Oratorio" ends with "Blessing and honor." This is the climax; artistic propriety requires that it should end here.

*Dr. Goodman.* The design of this oratorio being to show forth, first, the promise of Messiah's coming; then, his humiliation; and, finally, his triumph. When the last point is reached the interest has culminated; anything added is impertinent and superfluous.

*Hazel.* Poor Handel! How I wish he had had the advantage of your criticisms. I wonder how much of the "Messiah" would be left after you wise men had eliminated all that does not fit your ideas of artistic propriety.

Crabbe was about to make some reply when Dr. Goodman rose to go, saying, that the discussion had interested him so much that it had kept him far beyond his usual hour. The rest followed his example and the party broke up.

## SECOND EVENING.

*The Power of Music for Expression. Crabbe and Parks analyse the "Aurora" Sonata.*

NO one was present as audience but the writer. The talk was about the "power of musical expression" and programme music, and took a turn that brought out Crabbe to the astonishment of his friends, as follows:

*Crabbe.* As a rule, all attempts to describe or interpret music by language are failures. Still, I have often been struck with the openness with which certain compositions seem to lend themselves to verbal interpretation. One of the best examples I know is that great sonata known as the "Aurora" by Beethoven. The three movements of this sonata give three differing aspects of the opening day. In the first, we have its grandeur, the mighty rush of the chariot of Apollo, surrounded by the flying Hours, darting his far-reaching arrows, slaying the python Darkness, conquering Erebus; the idea is the same as that portrayed in Guido's glorious fresco. The second movement conveys the mysterious aspect of the dawn, the slow, noiseless spreading of the dim light stealing gradually from hilltop to hilltop, now tinging with tender blush some vanishing gray cloud, now gilding the cross of some tall spire, while solemn darkness still lingers at its base—the mystery of light overcoming darkness—the myth of Eos. The last movement is, the joyous awakening of nature to the new day, the song of birds, the cheerful rural sounds, the songs of light-hearted hinds who "jocund drive their teams afield," or lead their

flocks over the dew-spangled, widespread downs. It is life renewed and refreshed after the death-like trance of night.

*Omnes.* Oh! Oh!!

*Parks.* Let's make a Daltonesque fugue on "oh" as an adequate expression of our feelings.

*Dalton.* Such a burst of eloquence from such an "enthusiasmus damper," as Schnabel would say.

*Parks.* (who has long waited an opportunity to "pitch into" Crabbe). I don't agree with you at all in your interpretation except that in general terms it does represent different aspects of the dawn. Now, to me, the first movement represents the rising with the sun of the jovial (let us call him) farmer, anxious to get through the day's chores, calling to his sleepy household to bestir themselves and "shake off dull sloth" and "catch the early worm," and so on. The myth, "Early to bed and early to rise, make a man healthy, wealthy and wise." But the most wonderful exhibition of the artist's skill is expended on the second movement, short as it is. What can it mean but the slow awakening of the farmer's boy; we see the gradual dawn of consciousness stealing over his drowsy face, his cavernous yawns are skilfully represented by the extended arpeggios, with intervening pauses towards the end; the ritardando portrays his unwillingness to move, but knowing well the futility of his desire to linger, the genius of the composer is again displayed by his proceeding without a close to the last movement, as, fully aroused, the boy springs from his cot. Now, you are right in saying that the last movement is a musical picture of rural sounds, but you should particularize more. It is all very pretty, to talk of "lowing cattle standing knee-deep in sweet meadow grass," or hinds "driving their teams afield," or the "distant

bleating on heather-clad hills." But you wilfully ignore a large, in fact, the larger part of the sounds that make up a rural morning, because, I suppose, they won't fit with "artistic propriety" into your rhapsody. But why should you not hear the solemn bass of the venerable porker, and the shrill, youthful treble of the hungry "shoat," as well as the "moo-ing" of the cows, or the self-satisfied cackle of dame partlet, who has achieved the matutinal egg, as well as the distant "baa" of a sheep.

*Hazel.* What are we coming to? Crabbe an enthusiast and Parks a satirist. What next?

*Crabbe.* Every one gets from music only what he brings to the hearing of it. To me it suggests poetical images. Your mind, I suppose, doesn't rise above pigs and chickens.

*Dalton.* Parks, you haven't made much by your elaborate onslaught.

*Parks.* I have made all I wanted. I didn't say these things were suggested to me. I only say, why should they not be, as well as Crabbe's poetical images?

*Crabbe.* Well, there is really no reason against it: Music has no defining power; it only suggests vaguely.

*Hazel.* You are evidently not a believer in descriptive music.

*Crabbe.* Decidedly not. It is nonsense to say that music can describe, when it is necessary to write a programme to tell you what it is meant to describe. It is simply begging the question to say that the programme is only a guide to the listener, to tell him what emotions he is to call up, as though emotions were like organ stops that can be "drawn" at will. The programme is an admission that the music is unequal to the task. If music can describe one thing, why not another! If a storm, or a ship sailing—in six-eight time of course—why not the

conduct of a dinner party! with, let us say, a *maestoso* for the brass, to "suggest" roast beef; a passionate tremolo on the strings for the entrees; a hurried movement on the unsatisfactory bassoons for the clearing of the table, with episodes for the triangle and cymbals to represent the occasional breakage of a glass or plate; the cold "blue" tones of the flute for ice cream; the mellow *chalméau* of the clarionets for the wines; by Liszt! I will write such a symphony, with a printed "menu" on white velvet for a programme, and will wager that my music will describe so well, that if the audience come hungry they will not be "sent empty away."

*Dalton.* You forget the soup.

*Crabbe.* Oh, I will begin before the soup with a movement for twenty-four kettledrums, *à la* Berlioz, to represent feelingly the emptiness of the guests; then a liquid melody for the soup.

*Hazel.* I'm off, now you've got to talking nonsense. Good night.

*Crabbe.* Wait! A counterpoint between the bass trombone and piccolo, to represent the combined strength and sparkle of the champagne—another hint from Berlioz, only he uses it in his "Requiem" to represent the groans of the lost and the careless, happy whistling of the blessed.

*Hazel.* Come, Dalton. He is outrageous.

### THIRD EVENING.

#### *Discussion of Church Music and Music in the Public Schools.*

THE talking was done chiefly by Dr. Goodman, Crabbe, and Dalton. The Doctor, who has a great notion for the teaching of music in the public schools, asked many questions, to get at the views of his professional friends. From music in schools to music in churches was an easy transition. The talk brought out many remarks that appeared to me worth setting down.

*Dr. Goodman.* I am sorry that you all seem disposed to throw cold water on my pet notion of "music in the public schools." Do you really think it is impossible to have it well taught there?

*Dalton.* Not impossible; but nearly so. The first difficulty is to secure capable musicians as teachers. It is a fatal mistake to suppose that any one who can read vocal music is, therefore, fitted to teach it. Another great difficulty, at least in *our* public schools, is the liability of teachers to all sorts of "official" interference from people connected with the "school system." But apart from all such considerations, I do not believe that any progress worth the trouble and expense can be made without a selective process. All people are *not* musical; all children can *not* be taught to sing. There is such a thing as having "no ear" for music; and there is enough of bad singing in the world already without spending labor and

money to make more, by trying to teach children with unmusical organizations to sing. The only way is: get a good musician; pay him well; let him alone; let him sift out all the children with neither ear nor voice;—the result will be worth having.

*Crabbe.* I have never yet heard a school class sing in which there were not some who growled away on one note, or sang a fourth or fifth below the melody. Who ever heard a school class sing as well as the worst boy-choir? I never did.

*Dr. Goodman.* Do not certain professed trainers of children's singing classes claim that all children can be taught to sing, if the process is commenced early enough?

*Crabbe.* Oh, yes! There are people who say they can teach any one to sing who has vocal chords, tongue, and teeth. But defend me from such singing. I suppose any one with hands and eyes may be taught to daub canvas or spoil marble; but is it worth while? Then why try to make people sing, to whom nature has denied the first requisites? As Dalton says, there is enough of bad singing in the world already.

*Dr. Goodman.* You gentlemen may be right; but don't they have music taught successfully in the schools of many of our cities?

*Dalton.* If we may believe the newspapers, or the reports of school-boards, yes. But I have never heard it, nor have I ever met a capable musician who has heard any school-singing that possesses the least artistic value. To vary Crabbe's idea, put together all the choir boys in the city, and you will get a chorus such as no school in the country could furnish. The comparison may seem unfair, but when you consider that three month's training will make a boy, with ear and voice, a good choir-singer, and three years in the public school will *not* make a pro-

miscuous class sing half as well, the apparent unfairness vanishes.

*Hazel.* Perhaps the amount of time devoted to practicing may have something to do with it.

*Dalton.* That inequality vanishes when you take into account the difference between the difficult anthems sung by the one, and the simple, generally stupid, little songs sung by the other. No! the difference is to be found in the fact that, in the one case, boys with voice and ear are trained by a good musician, and in the other, a crowd, many of whom have neither voice nor ear, are mistreated by a person lacking all the necessary qualifications.

*Dr. Goodman.* Well, it is evident to me that you musicians are "down" on music in the schools unless it should be taught in the way you have indicated, which is, I fear, at present, and for some time to come, too Utopian to hope for. To change the subject, let me have some of your views on church music; how can we make it better?

*Crabbe.* Oh, forbear! The subject is too hopeless. I only know one way; that is, convince all the people to whom Providence has denied a correct ear and a good voice, that it is an indication that Providence does not consider it *their* duty to sing, also, all those who *have* good voices and ears that it is their duty to learn to sing properly—a labor that Hercules himself could not perform.

*Dr. Goodman.* We all know we can expect no help from such a pessimistic growler. What do you say, Dalton?

*Dalton.* The improvement of church music can only be attained by a process that would reach through several generations. It would have to begin in the schools, supposing it were possible to have music taught there in the way I have indicated. If children were taught to appre-



ciate good music—I don't mean classical music, that bugbear of the ignorant—but music of a more refined class than the negro minstrel song, or the vulgar comic opera melody; also to appreciate the difference in style that will make one kind of music appropriate for secular, another for sacred purposes, we might hope in time for the growth of a healthy popular taste in church music.

*Dr. Goodman.* Won't you explain what you mean by "appropriate style" for each kind of music?

*Dalton.* In secular music, beauty and artistic excellence are the prime objects to be sought. In sacred music these things should be carefully subordinated, or kept out of sight altogether. It should be characterized by fervor, not passion; dignity, not dramatic force; simplicity, not ornateness; above all, it should never descend to mere prettiness.

*Crabbe.* O shades of Phillips and Sankey! and ye! ye innumerable hosts of composers and compilers of spiritual songs, who sweep up "melodies" from the coulisses of the variety theatre and the "temples" of negro minstrelsy, where will be your occupation should this ever be?

*Parks.* Crabbe declaims like "Pythoness possessed."

*Dr. Goodman.* He does injustice to a very worthy and useful class of writers; men who have accomplished great good in their way.

*Crabbe.* Oh, I thought our object was to find out how to improve church music, not to decide as to the amount of good any class of men have done.

*Dalton.* It is a subject I approach with diffidence; but I think it is doubtful if the emotions roused by such music are of a nature permanently to affect their subjects. However, be this as it may, there can be no doubt that dignity and grandeur better become public worship than sentimentality and maudlin sweetness.

*Dr. Goodman.* Why is it that the Romanists and my high church and ritualistic brethren have so much better music than any other churches? It seems as if the music grew worse in proportion to the theological freedom of the church.

*Dalton.* I think this can be easily accounted for. In proportion as the conduct of public worship passes out of the control of the educated it deteriorates. Now in the churches you specified the clergy have the sole control of every part of public worship, and they are prepared for their work by a special training, of which the study of music forms an important part. Hence they not only recognize the fact that music is an important part of public worship—this all pretend to do—but they act on their belief, and spare no pains or labor to make the music worthy of its high mission.

*Crabbe.* Spoken like an oracle. Now for the other churches.

*Dalton.* All other denominations and shades of denominations are culpably remiss in this matter. They pretend to attach great importance to the musical part of their services, but never take one step towards making it worthy or appropriate. In their colleges for training ministers the study of music is ignored as a trifling occupation more befitting "worldlings" than men engaged in the serious business of religion. In their churches the music is left to the control of what is called the "music committee"—men who may possess every gift and grace, save a little knowledge of the affairs they are supposed to administer.

*Crabbe.* Oh, it would upset the patience of Job, the nonsense talked about music—the coolness with which ignorance praises or condemns. Your music committee will call "St. Ann's," "London," or "Dundee" stupid, old-

fashioned, pokey, and go into raptures over "When the swallows" or "Robin Adair," converted into good Christian tunes. The authors of a long line of glorious Scotch and English psalmody must make way for the namby-pamby sentiment and clap-trap jingle of—well, I won't say who; there are so many it would be invidious to name one. All musicians know whom I mean.

*Dr. Goodman.* Why don't the organists try to bring about a better state of affairs? Surely it would be possible for the choir-master and the minister to work together harmoniously for such a purpose.

*Hazel.* Would it? If the minister is a wise man he carefully leaves the music to the committee, confining himself to vague generalities about "congregational singing" and "plain choral music," and so on. If he is not wise, he takes sides with the committee, and he and they look on the organist as their natural enemy; a sworn foe to everything "pious" or "spiritual" in church music. If he is very foolish, he will take sides with the organist and attempt reforms, with the certain result of pulling a hornet's nest about his ears.

*Dr. Goodman.* I am ashamed to say that I belong to what you call the wise class. I am mortally afraid of both organist and committee. I am sure my organist is a good musician, and has very just and proper notions about church music. But the committee seem to regard him as some sort of a dangerous animal that must be closely watched and constantly snubbed, lest he should scandalize the church by some unimagined innovations.

*Crabbe.* Or dance them all to perdition, like the "pied piper of Hamelin." I think your committee do well to be watchful. Who can tell what "heresies, false doctrines and schisms," glazed over with good music, like sugar-coated pills, an emissary of the evil one in the shape

of an organist, might administer to the unsuspecting flock?

*Hazel.* O bosh! be serious. It seems to me that it never occurs to a committee that it is possible a musician may have juster notions about the proprieties of public worship than even they. Many people seem to think that when a man becomes a musician he forfeits all claim to the possession of common sense in all other affairs of life; is, in fact, a sort of inspired idiot.

*Crabbe.* Don't you think a good many musicians act in a way to give color to such a belief?

*Dalton* (indignantly). No; there is no class of men to whom so much injustice is done in popular apprehension. People at large class all musicians, from the educated gentleman to the mere fiddler or hornblower, together. Who does so with lawyers, or doctors, or even with shopkeepers? I am sure that, take the highest class of resident musicians in any of our large cities, you will find a class of men that, for general intelligence and information, will compare more than favorably with any other class in the community. I am sure the conversation of half a dozen musicians is far more intellectual than that of the same number of brokers or merchants, whose souls have no ideal beyond cent. per cent.

*Hazel.* Come, come, Dalton; you are getting warmer than there is any occasion for. All sensible people are of the same opinion, and the opinion of the Philistines is not worth minding.

*Dr. Goodman.* We have wandered far from our subject, which is to me at least a very interesting one; but I am afraid it is too late to resume it. I mean to think it over, and at some future time will have a lot of questions to ask. Good night.

## FOURTH EVENING.

### *Dr. Goodman Reads an Old Sermon.*

DR. GOODMAN made his appearance this evening, armed with a volume, and in response to the inquiries of the club as to its contents, replied: "It is a volume of sermons by an English Nonconformist divine of the last century. There is in it a sermon that would, I think, entertain you. It appears to have been called forth by the visit of Haydn to London in 1790. The good man seems to have thought it his duty to warn his people against the seductions of the concert room in moving terms. If you wish, I will read some of it after the evening's music." This being warmly assented to, the Doctor, after the "scratching," read as follows:

"Dear brethren, you will find my text for this morning's discourse in the third chapter of the prophet Daniel, part of the fourth and the whole of the fifth verses, where you will read as follows: 'It is commanded, at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up.' My subject naturally divides itself into the following heads: First, the occasion on which this vast assembly was gathered together; second, the instruments of music mentioned in the text; third, the use of instruments of music in public worship; lastly, the use of instruments of music as a means of amusement or dissipation.

"Figure to yourselves, my hearers, a large open plain

or meadow, green with the early growth of grass, bright with the blossoms of blooming flowers. The fervid sun of the eastern clime is slowly rising above the distant horizon, but what is the sight his blessed beams reveal? What is the meaning of this dense array, this gathering of the multitudes, this mighty concourse of interested spectators? The serious, awe-struck faces forbid the notion that it is a gathering of merry-makers, a parade of pleasure-seekers; but look! what is this that rises proudly, towering above the plain, glittering in the morning sunbeams, awful in its mute-menacing, mysterious grandeur? 'Tis the image of burnished gold, the god of Nebuchadnezzar, the vile idol of unbelief, the unclean thing that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up in his pride to affront the fair face of day with its hideous assumption of divinity. Look! Why turn the faces of the multitude, with eager glances, all one way? Behold! in all his glory, in his pride, in his wantonness, in his blazing golden chariot, surrounded by a glittering throng of courtiers, forth rides Nebuchadnezzar, the lord of Babylon, to see with his own eyes that the decree he made, in the lust of absolute power, that all should worship the golden image, is obeyed.

"My theme to-day forbids that I should dwell on the heroic conduct of the dauntless Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, though it were far more congenial to contemplate than the subject on which I must enlarge; sweeter far it is, dear brethren beloved, to dwell on the actions of the just than to explore the devious doings of those who depart from righteousness. But needs must be that the watchman on the wall gives timely warning to careless dwellers at ease in Zion; and in our day the ever-wakeful Enemy, lying in wait for souls, taking on himself the form of an angel of light, in the eyes of some who, having eyes, see not,—he, I say, has beguiled many unstable souls, by sweet strains of sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, and has invaded even the sanctuary with the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, until our places of sweet communion have come to resemble the plain of Dura in everything but the golden image. Let us, my hearers, be found with the Shadrachs,

the Meshachs, the Abednegos, protesting even unto the fiery furnace. But list! a herald in gorgeous garments is preparing to speak. The murmurings of the multitude sink to silence as, with haughty step, he ascends the platform whereon the golden image rests. He takes his station and, in stentorian tones, delivers the royal proclamation to the assembled peoples, and tongues, and nations, commanding them to bow down and worship the golden image when they hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer and all kinds of music.

"Before proceeding with this scene, we will, in a few words, discuss the nature of the instruments of music mentioned in the text, from which we may perchance draw some instructive lessons. These instruments are of several kinds: instruments with strings plucked by the fingers, like unto the 'lascivious lute' spoken of by the playwright (whose works none of you, I trust, read; the reading of such books being necessary only to the complete furnishing of the Christian minister, taught and guided by grace, that he may be the better fitted to controvert the insidious evils they inculcate). Next, instruments blown by the breath, which is the life of man that perisheth. Ah! why should he waste this precious breath, which is his life, in blowing seductive sounds from the instruments of his own devising, in piping that others may dance? Next, we have what the heaven-taught apostle uses as the figure of all that is most worthless, the 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.' Can we not recognize here, beloved, in this train of instruments of music, doubtless set down by the prophet for our instruction, an antitype of what the devotees of the world and the flesh—I had almost added, of the devil—in our day call an orchestra. Good reason have they to feel proud of the origin of their orchestra. Its inventor, its first patron was the good-despising Nebuchadnezzar, and the first recorded orchestral performance took place on the plain of Dura, some two thousand years ago, and signalized the setting up of a hitherto unknown form of devil-worship. Ah! it behooves us to look carefully into these carnal gratifications, these ticklings of the fleshly ear. Can a thorn bring forth figs! Can an association of vag-

abonds, of reprobates, as it is too well known all these fiddling and piping musicians are, bring forth works meet for repentance, or help to raise the burdens from sin-laden souls, discourse they never so sweetly with their cornets, and sackbuts, and psalteries, or, as we would say, their flutes, their fiddles, their hautboys? I do violence to your sanctified understanding, dear brethren, in asking such questions, and will now resume the main thread of my discourse.

"What was the occasion for which this motley array, this gathering of the leas, this convocation of the men of Belial, this orchestra was gathered together? Our text is explicit on this point. It was to add to the imposing solemnity. It was to lend the aid of sweet sounds to the promulgation of a lying faith. It was to temper by its tuneful softness, to awe by its blatant noisiness the hearts of the people to accept a new religion; or, on the other hand, to rouse by its vigorous strains the enmity of the carnal heart toward all who might hesitate to fulfil the mandate of the king. And how it succeeded in both these offices we know too well. Of all that countless throng but three stood erect, and they were three despised Jewish captives. And against them the people raged and the countenance of the king grew dark. Who shall say how much of this was traceable directly to the strains of these emissaries of the Evil one, these diabolical discourses of dulcet sounds, this orchestra? See to it then, ye who grow rapturous over the strains of Haydn and Mozart, that ye are not partakers of the sin of Nebuchadnezzar. Let the great ones of the land, in whose houses, at whose feasts, are the harp, the viol and the lute, see to it that they add not to their condemnation, that they have spoken fair and hugged to their hearts these pestilent purveyors of sounding symphonies, with their rabble rout of pipers and fiddlers, all the spiritual descendants of the king of Babylon's evil crew. Oh, my soul is moved to her depths when I see the thoughtless people throng the gates that lead to the concert room, to listen with feigned estases to the strummings and thrummings of a Haydn or a Mozart, the while they treat with light scorn the sweet songs that we raise, 'making melody in our



hearts,' if not in our lips, as we pour forth with untaught fervor our hymns of praise, trusting alone to the instrument with which the Creator has gifted us, unpolluted by the accompaniment of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, organ, or any other of the many kinds of music. As saith the poet Burns, himself I fear unregenerate, 'perhaps 'Dundee's' wild warbling measures rise, or noble 'Elgin' beats the heavenward flame.' What piping of flutes, or groaning of organs, or rasping of fiddles can give any delight to the earnest soul that breathes her prayer in 'Dundee's wild warbling measures,' or lifts her voice heavenward in praise on the wings of 'noble Elgin'? But I weary you and will pass on. Man is a composite creature, possessed of three avenues through which temptation may assail him: the avenue of the flesh, the avenue of the spirit and the avenue of the will. The first is the path by which enter all the lower, coarser forms of temptation; the second is the path by which enter all these more refined forms of temptation, to which the world gives the name of fine arts to fulfil their soul-destroying mission, by diverting the affections from the more serious spiritual affairs of life. Now, doubtless, Nebuchadnezzar had in his employment many eminent music composers who strove with each other to secure his favor and countenance by catering to this sensual love of fine art, which he doubtless possessed in an eminent degree; it being one of the things that those in every age who desire to be distinguished above their fellows, or who fill exalted stations, look upon as a crowning proof of their gentler nurture. He, then, knowing full well the power of this profane music on the unregenerate heart, acted with the wisdom of the children of this world, when he chose it as the signal for this act of idol worship. He was deeply skilled in the human heart and knew that the moral nature of the hearers being undermined by its appeals, they would be the less likely to offer resistance to his command, to worship the production of a sister 'fine art.' Ah! how true it is, if the door is opened to one evil, a legion swarm in. This will-destroying, soul-unnerving music opened the door, and was forthwith followed by the idolatrous bowing, and

this by the loosing the evil passions of rage and hate against the steadfast Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego."

*Dr. Goodman.* (I will skip his denunciations of music in church and proceed to his exordium).

"Beloved, I have been led to make these remarks by the arrival of one in our midst whom the whole world wonders after, calling him a divine genius, inspired, and I know not what else. I allude to the German musician, Haydn, who is sojourning for a space in this, the modern Babylon, to hear whose music the vain people, ever weariless in their search after some new thing, throng nightly to the concert room. True, we have no plain of Dura in our midst, with its visible, palpable image of gold set up: but we have a worse image in our hearts, the love of being thought more refined and 'cultivated,' as the phrase is; than our fellows, people of taste, people of fashion. How many deluded souls bow down to this grim idol, moved thereto by the strains of this modern musical magician; how many, though loathing in their secret soul this horrid mixture of groanings and squealings, and soul-affrighting shocks of sound, called a symphony, I believe, yet with smiles, profess their love for it, and thus bow down, fearing the scorn and laughter of their associates! Brethren, I look with fear on these things and would affectionately warn you lest you enter into temptation. Go not near, stop your ears and fly lest ye be taken in the net. Look abroad and see the moral darkness that settles, deep as night, on those lands where profane music is most cultivated. The infidelism of Germany, the impiety of France, the superstition of Italy; then look at our own happy land, with quiet Sabbaths, made vocal with the sweet notes of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Would ye lose, would ye barter away these things? No! then beloved hearers, shun the concert room; look on the siren sound of sackbut and psaltery as an invitation to bow in false worship. Would ye have music? Sing psalms, raise your voices in sweet accord; but beware these flutes and fiddles. Finally, let

us all search our hearts to discover if we have any secret inclination and fleshly longing for these sinful gratifications. What deep longing of man's nature can be satisfied by the notes of a fiddle? Can a hungry soul find sustenance in the tones of a flute? or a broken heart be healed by the groaning of a grumbo? [an old name for the violoncello]. No, these things can feed no aspirations after a higher life; but while they soothe with soft and sensuous sweetness, surely send us, with ever-increasing swiftness, down that woeful way that hath its end in outer darkness."

*Dr. Goodman.* But enough of the reverend gentleman's vaticinations. You see, though, how you musicians were esteemed by some worthy people of the last century.

*Dalton.* I fear that kind of people is not yet as extinct as the dodo.

*Crabbe.* I had no idea that the orchestra was of such respectable antiquity. Quite likely it was not original with that grazing monarch. I shouldn't wonder if the people marched away from the tower of Babel with bands—"of sackbut, psaltery"—and so on.

*Hazel.* The old gentleman had a great opinion of the potency of music, to say nothing of its malevolent effect.

*Crabbe.* What a curious tendency the human mind has, when under the influence of one set of ideas, to look upon all others as useless if not wicked.

*Dr. Goodman.* Ah, well, after all, it is a very difficult thing to decide how much of the world's amusement is harmless to the professed seeker of another world.

*Crabbe.* There are too many crooked, cross-grained moralists to whom the very word amusement savors of wickedness.

*Dalton.* Every one ought to decide for himself what amusements he can allow himself without deterioration to his morals; if only he would stop there and not try to make all the world cut their cloaks by his pattern.

*Dr. Goodman.* True, doubtless, but the question of charity steps in to modify this right; after settling the first point, every man should ask himself, "What amusements can I indulge myself in without giving cause of offence to weaker men?"

*Crabbe.* Oh, hang the weaker vessels! they always hang like millstones about the necks of the strong.

*Parks.* I don't think *you* have ever let yourself play "Sinbad" to any of these "old men of the sea."

*Dr. Goodman.* O Crabbe! what a poor opinion any one would have of you who built it upon your own account of yourself.

*Crabbe.* Doctor, you mollify me. I was about to squelch that venomous Parks, who never loses an opportunity of barking at me.

*Hazel.* Like the little dog behind the fence at the big dog in the street.

*Parks.* Thank you, Hazel; I'll pay you for that.

*Dr. Goodman.* Come away, come away, big dogs and little dogs, or you will all be snarling at each other presently.

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FIFTH EVENING.

*The Relative Merits of Vocal and Instrumental Music.*

THE discussion this evening was of a fragmentary character; many subjects were started, but none held the attention of the party long. Nevertheless, I have made some notes which I think will bear publica-

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tion. The first subject to call out any argument was the relative superiority of vocal and instrumental music. The Doctor and Parks took the side of vocal, Dalton, of instrumental, and Crabbe, sometimes one sometimes the other, as his inclination or love of opposition led him.

*Dr. Goodman.* Nothing you can say will convince me that any mere construction of wood, catgut or wire, can equal the instrument devised by the Creator, in quality, power or expression. Why do instrumentalists say of a player that he makes his instrument sing or talk?

*Crabbe.* I am afraid your respect for the works of the Creator may bias your judgment somewhat. The only way to judge of the comparative merits of the natural and artificial instruments is, to look on each as a mechanism for the production of sound, and compare their range, power, quality, and so forth. Physiologists and acousticians tell us that the voice is a reed instrument of the hautboy species, that is, a double reed. Its range is remarkable, when we consider the limited means by which the sounds are produced; the same is true of its power and quality; in all these it is far surpassed by artificial instruments. Its only superiority, if such it is, is the power of combining language with music, thereby giving expression to definite emotions.

*Dalton.* Do you think this combination of language with sound is a superiority, or the gain in definiteness? I do not; words seem to me to limit and curb the expression of music.

*Crabbe.* I merely call it the *only* claim of the voice to superiority; a claim that is more than counterbalanced by the greater range-power and quality of other instruments, especially of the string instruments.

*Dr. Goodman.* O you fiddlers! I would all the world

had the faith in more important matters that you have in your catgut and horse-hair contrivances.

*Parks.* I like string instruments as well as anybody ; but still I think the voice is far ahead of them for intensity, passion, and expression.

*Crabbe.* Oh, ho ! you have a pretty good tenor, haven't you ?

*Parks.* Well, yes ; I flatter myself.

*Crabbe.* There is nothing like having a voice, or thinking you have one, to convince you of the superiority of vocal music. A solo pianist is apt to be a conceited animal ; a solo violinist, to look on common men as inferior beings ; but for a pure, lofty, undoubting conviction of his superiority to all mankind commend me to a solo tenor ; he has all the vanities of both sexes with the graces of neither.

*Parks.* I have heard it said that all viola players are men who failed as violinists. It must be this that has embittered your life, and made you so envious of all who are more gifted than yourself.

*Dr. Goodman.* Come, come, gentlemen ; you are getting personal and rude ; let us return to the subject we were discussing.

*Crabbe.* I confess I spoke rather warmly ; but when I think of the cool impudence with which singers will take liberties with the greatest masters, because, forsooth, they think they can improve them, or make their music more suitable to their precious voices, as if their voices were the only things in the universe to be considered, great as my patience is, it must give way.

*Dalton.* What a contrast to the great instrumentalist ! He prides himself on his conscientious adherence to his text ; thinks it almost sacrilege to alter a note of Mozart or Beethoven. I think it a good argument for the supe-

riority of instrumental music—this difference in their regard for their authors between the vocalist and the instrumentalist—their different views of artistic morals. The player always sinks his individuality in his work, strives to divine what his author means; the singer too often finds in his work only food for his self-esteem.

*Parks.* You are too sweeping. I have known many singers just as conscientious as any player that ever lived.

*Dalton.* So have I; still the rule holds good.

*Dr. Goodman.* Well, never mind the vanities of poor humanities. All mankind are only too amenable to the charge of "magnifying their office." As some one said, I forget who, "No man can be happy unless he thinks he can do some one thing better than his fellows, if it is only that he can take a larger bite out of a pie than they." Possibly the singers do think that their bite is uncommonly large. It does no harm so long as the public are satisfied, which it must be, judging from the prices it pays to hear them.

*Crabbe.* It does do harm—to artistic morals, and no feelings or emotions can be lowered in tone without reacting on all the rest.

*Dr. Goodman.* I am sure you are totally mistaken. Your assertion is true only when applied to the moral or intellectual nature. The artistic and the moral *may* exist side by side; but either may also exist in the most highly developed state without the other. History is full of examples of a high state of art culture with a low state of morals, and the reverse. Again, artistic fitness and moral fitness may be as wide asunder as the poles; for my part, I sometimes think that too much devotion to art results in a deterioration of morals, for many reasons; one is, that mankind do not seem to hold the artist as bound by the same moral law as other men are—but I don't want

to preach. Do you remember in one of our discussions, I think on fugues, something was said about the right kind of music for certain words, or something to that effect. I would like to hear more about it, which is of greater importance in the combination—poem or music?

*Dalton.* The poem, of course. If it were not, it would be a gain every way to "sol-fa" all vocal music.

*Crabbe.* Judging from most of the singing I have heard, I should say the words would better be left out; but I don't think the singers are of your opinion.

*Dr. Goodman.* Why? what do you mean?

*Crabbe.* I mean that the majority of singers treat the words as, of no importance, and slur them over, or chew them up, or swallow them whole; anything but sing them.

*Dalton.* You are descending from principles to personals. I am sure you know what I mean.

*Parks.* Dalton; I thought you considered instrumental music far above vocal. How can you say then that the words are the most important in the combination?

*Dalton.* It is a case in which the "greater must serve the lesser."

*Dr. Goodman.* What! Is music greater than poetry?

*Dalton.* In a certain sense, yes. It takes up expression where poetry drops it, carrying it to a region beyond the reach of poetry. As a teacher or educator—the highest province of poetry—music is totally wanting. But where mere expression of emotion is concerned, music can take poetry up on eagle wings and carry it beyond the clouds.

*Crabbe.* Provided, of course, that the poem can "sit" on the eagle's back, or that the eagle will "fit" its back to the poem. After all, it is only a small class of poems that are suited to musical illustration; they must be lyric: descriptive, didactic, philosophic poetry—the highest class—is utterly unfit for music. It is only the poetry of



emotion that, like the linnet in the fable, can mount the back of your eagle and be carried above the clouds.

*Dr. Goodman.* When you began, I did not think you were about to hang such a graceful pendant to Dalton's eloquent remarks.

*Parks.* Strange that he should, for he is one of that kind who think eloquence only another name for insincerity, and call it "gush."

*Crabbe.* No man, by taking thought, can be eloquent, He must first be earnest; then, if he has anything to say, eloquence will come of itself. I don't mean anything personal, Dalton.

*Dr. Goodman.* It is doubtless true that many people have the feeling Parks mentioned. It may be that they have a latent consciousness that the proper province of art is in art; hence its methods are misplaced when dealing with more serious subjects; the too eloquent preacher is open to the suspicion that he is more conscious of his art than concerned about his message. I agree with Crabbe that all real eloquence is an outgrowth of earnestness. I know of nothing more unpleasant than the artificial eloquence of the professional elocutionist, when the pronunciation of every syllable, every motion of hands, feet, or head, is the result of a rule, and is never varied from a hair's breadth.

*Crabbe.* Dalton said once that the "conversation of musicians was more interesting than that of brokers or other business men;" ours, this evening is more remarkable for "wandering" than for interest.

*Dalton.* That is the chief pleasure of conversation, touching a hundred subjects, lingering with none.

*Parks.* Sipping the sweets of countless flowers.

*Crabbe.* Skimming the milk of countless cows.

*Dr. Goodman.* Well! that is a metaphor with a vengeance—fitting conclusion to our evening's conversation.

## SIXTH EVENING.

### *Musical Prejudices.*

THIS evening was spent discussing "Musical Prejudices." Crabbe was in his element, and contrived to say something disagreeable to everyone present. The conversation became interesting after he had delivered himself as follows :

*Crabbe.* In no part of music has prejudice had a larger share than in the deference paid to great names, even by good musicians, and, of course, by amateurs who wish to get credit for knowing what is what. This deference is either the result of timidity and a desire to be on the safe side, or of a mistaken idea that, because a composer is great, *all* his works must be equally good. But if it is true that "Homer sometimes nods and Shakespeare wrote more than one dull play," there is nothing derogatory to the genius of Bach or Handel, Beethoven or Mozart in saying that they have all written some things that the world could very well spare—things that are stumbling-blocks to the weak, things that delude the humbugs into feigned raptures and make the unlearned, but humble-minded, long for that inner light that enables others to see beauties in what seems, to their dull comprehension, such mighty poor stuff.

*Dalton.* I protest against applying the word "stuff" to

anything that the great men you have mentioned—at least, Mozart and Beethoven—ever wrote; every note should be treasured as a precious legacy by the world.

*Hazel.* You may apply it to the rest, but you can't show me a note by Handel that the world can spare. Grandeur in musical conception began and ended with him. Ever since, there has been an increasing prominence given to the merely passionate and sentimental, or, as it is called, the romantic side of music.

*Crabbe.* No writer has reached such a pitch of dignity and grandeur as Handel, I willingly confess; but, I must add, I don't think any other has written so much that is insufferably tedious, and so, far from filling the conditions we agreed on the other evening, as necessary to the union of words and music.

*Hazel.* You must make some allowance for the taste of the time when he wrote.

*Crabbe.* Truth in art is above the fashion of any and all times. The moment you say that an artist is to be judged by the taste of the time when he lived, you say his work is not for "all time," but a day. Who would think of asking that allowances should be made for Michel Angelo, or Milton, or Shakespeare? Or, if they require it, it is for their faults or failures, not for the things for which the world honors them. What Handel wrote for his time ought not to live or be counted great, and just so far as he wrote for his time, he failed in his true calling as a great artist.

*Parks.* But a man must live, and Handel had hard work at one time to do so.

*Crabbe.* I am not blaming him for what he did. I only say that his "pot-boiling" work should not be held up as a model for all ages. He is great enough without it, and great enough to be freely criticized.

*Hazel.* I don't think Handel need fear any criticism that you, or any man living, can make on his work; let us have some.

*Crabbe.* Well, I think that nothing but the most determined prejudice could make any one profess to admire the unmeaning, interminable runs with which his music is overloaded. Take, for example, the opening solo in the "Messiah;" nothing could be more beautiful than the first part, "Comfort Ye My People," perfectly adapted to the words, simple and chaste; but does anybody really like the second part, "Every Valley," when the process of exaltation is made audible, if not visible, by the long "division," as it was called, on the word exalt?

*Dalton.* It is a case of exalting the music at the expense of the words.

*Crabbe.* Another good example, the solo "Why do the Nations;" there is some artistic fitness in the run on the word "rage," but when the word "anointed" is made to drag through another serpent-like succession of sounds, the effect is almost ludicrous. But the ludicrous is fairly reached in the chorus, "All We, Like Sheep," where the word "turn" is set to such a lively run that it suggests the picture of a flock of sheep capering merrily, in giddy fashion, on their hind legs, and rather proud, and not the least bit penitent, at their turning their own way so cleverly.

*Hazel.* It is rank blasphemy to speak that way of Handel's music; no musician should, no matter how he thinks.

*Crabbe.* There it is! Keep on lying, rather than shock established prejudices. I prefer to tell the truth, or what I think to be the truth; I don't even hesitate to say that, if one-half of the "Messiah" were left out, the rest would gain by the omission.

*Hazel.* Defend me from "Handel" improved by Crabbe.

*Crabbe.* Bach and Handel lived at the close of one and the opening of another epoch in music. They had a great deal of the formalism, not to say "pedantry," that was the chief characteristic of the old—notably of the Belgian school—with whom the construction of an enigmatic canon, or an ingenious double counterpoint, or an upside down or wrong end foremost imitation was looked upon as a supreme effort of genius (the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were nothing if not pedantic). But in spite of this formalism, both of these men, being gifted with superhuman genius, were able to rise far above the "manner" of their day and to produce works that, untouched by time, will ever remain the most wonderful monuments of the art.

*Parks.* Whew! What a burst!

*Crabbe* (not noticing him). The great work that Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven did was to free music completely from all artificial bonds and make "beauty," not "construction," its ideal.

*Dalton.* Therefore I maintain that that glorious triumvirate are the supremest representatives of the art, their work its most lasting monuments.

*Crabbe.* You include everything they wrote?

*Dalton.* Everything.

*Crabbe.* I think I know some things by all three that the musical world is quite content to forget. Possibly they were "pot-boilers;" if so, I, for one, object to being compelled to admire.

*Dalton.* But you must remember that these men grew great by degrees. Haydn had to evolve the "form" before their greatest works became possible.

*Crabbe.* Don't you see? you admit the whole of my argument. Tried by the standard of "perfection in art,"

all their tentative work, be it never so interesting, *must* fall short. It is by their mature, fully-developed work that we must judge them; the interest in the rest is historical or biographical rather than "artistic" in the highest sense.

*Hazel.* You are never satisfied unless you can find spots on the sun.

*Crabbe.* Well, we know the spots are there and are an inseparable necessity of his constitution.

*Dalton.* But why descant on them?

*Crabbe.* Because it is just as necessary to a proper understanding of the sun to see the spots as to see the radiance. I like to think that the greatest men were, after all, men of like passions, faults, and failings as ourselves—not impossible monsters; the knowledge of their failures increases a thousandfold my sympathy for their successes.

*Dr. Goodman* (who has been a silent listener). We can feel no sympathy with absolute perfection, either of good or evil. Angels are above, devils beneath, human sympathy. It is only where we recognize the capability for either, and the struggle to rise from the lower to the higher, that our sympathies are aroused. I am very much pleased with your saying that the very failures of genius should move us to a closer sympathy with their successes. However, I have always thought your "bark" worse than your "bite;" but I must away. I owe you all a very pleasant evening.

## SEVENTH EVENING.

### *Crabbe Reads a Translation of an Egyptian Papyrus.*

THIS evening was devoted to the hearing of a long letter, read by Mr. Crabbe, which he had received from a friend of his, a learned Egyptologist, attached to the British Museum, with whom he maintains a regular correspondence. This gentleman, a Mr. Wormall, spends all his time and ingenuity in deciphering papyrus manuscripts and hieroglyphic tablets, and is looked up to as an authority in such matters. Mr. Crabbe had obtained the promise from him that, if ever he met with anything concerning the music of ancient Egypt, he would communicate it to him. This letter was the result of this promise. Mr. Crabbe was pleased to say that he thought it might prove "a valuable contribution to our discussion of church music;" but, as usual, we could not tell whether he was in earnest or was merely indulging his satirical vein. The reader must judge for himself.

"LONDON, Nov. 4th, 18—.

"MY DEAR CRABBE:

"I have lately devoted much time and study to a manuscript, unfortunately very much damaged, belonging to the reign of Menoph—a king of the sixth dynasty, according to Manetho, but, as modern research would seem to indicate, of the seventh dynasty, although even modern authorities are divided. You may consult Ebers and Lepsius for the arguments in favor of the sixth, and Niebuhr and Rawlinson for those in favor of the seventh

dynasty. I incline, for several reasons, to the opinion of the former, although I grant much weight to the arguments of the latter authorities, particularly the discovery by Niebuhr of a cartouche at the site of the city of Isamen, a name evidently compounded of the name of the goddess Isis and the root of the word Menoph, the name of the king in question. This root 'Men' is the name of the mythical founder of Egypt, and was borne by the kings who claimed descent from him. Now this city seems to have been built in the time of the seventh dynasty, possibly by this very king Menoph, who gave it the name Isamen to perpetuate his achievement and his devotion to Isis. This cartouche in question was carved on one of the pillars of the propylon of a temple now in ruins, and bears the name of Menoph, with a statement which the former authorities thus translate: 'Built in honor of the memory,' etc. This would be conclusive evidence were it not that the latter authorities have thrown grave doubts on its accuracy, claiming that it should read, 'Built that the memory should be honored,' etc. The first translation is decidedly in the past; the second is rather ambiguous, but the well-known scholarship of the latter authorities entitles their opinion to grave consideration; but I am afraid I bore you with this long discussion of a subject that is only of interest to professed Egyptologists, so I will at once proceed to my translation of the papyrus, occasionally adding such notes as may help you to understand some of its allusions:

'By command of the chief priests have I, Phe-thar-pehn, the scribe, set down in order, for the instruction of those who come after, this chronicle of the dissensions which arose during the reign of Menoph, King of Kings, Ruler of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Lotos, etc. (I will omit the long string of titles, which is repeated every time his name is introduced), which dissensions resulted in the overthrow of the ancient schools of the musicians and the establishment of the never-to-be-too-much-lauded (this is one word in the original) sacred music which we now enjoy under the favor of our Dread Lord Menoph (King, etc., etc.), in this his city of Isa-



men, where dwells and is worshipped the great goddess Phthah (probably the Demeter of Greek, and Ceres of Latin mythology). In all the world is the fame of our temple spread, and the mysteries and glories of our worship are known to all peoples and kindreds. From the days of Menes, the divine ancestor of our Lord Menoph (King, etc., etc.), have we celebrated without ceasing the mysteries of the goddess. (This claim to an unknown antiquity is common to many religions; it is also another illustration of the desire of the Egyptians to ignore the reign of the Hyksos, or shepherd kings, a monotheistic race, who put an end, for a long period, to the idolatrous worship of the Egyptians.) As the time for the swelling of Nilus draweth nigh, when Sothis looks upon the descent of Osiris to the shades (a poetical way of saying that Sothis, the dog star, rises, as Osiris, the sun, is setting—what astronomers call the heliacal rising of a star; this heliacal rising of the dog star occurs at the time of the annual inundation of the Nile valley), the priests proclaim a solemn feast, with offerings to propitiate the goddess, that she may send a plenteous harvest. From all the country, far and near, the people throng to our sacred city of the great king Menoph (King of, etc., etc.), the dwelling-place of Phthah, to witness and bear their part in the temple services, and secure the benefit of the priestly intercessions, for which they give to the priests offerings according to their means or their necessities, for the support of the priests and the services of the temple, whereby large sums of money are stored in the treasury of the temple, to the honor of the goddess and the joy of her priests. When the set time has come the gates of the temple are thrown open, and the multitudes press in and fill the court of the people. Thick darkness is in all the temple, and silence soon falls on the people as they wait the coming of the priests and the signs of the presence of the goddess. Suddenly the holy place (or chancel, as we would call it,) is filled with a blaze of light, while darkness still rests on the people. Now is heard the distant sound of flutes and the ring of cymbals (the ancient cymbal was much smaller than our modern noisy affair), which grow nearer and louder as, robed in white stoles and crowned with wreaths of the sacred lotos flower, the

long train of ministering priests enters in solemn procession, swinging their smoking censers, which fill the vast space with the odor of nard, and frankincense, and other precious spices. Following the priests walk the chief musicians, who also belong to the priestly caste, reverend men with snow-white hair, dressed in glistening white robes girded with golden girdles, each one bearing on his left arm a golden four-stringed lyre, in his right hand an ivory plectrum wherewith he struck the sounding strings. In their train followed the players on the cymbals, the sistrum, the crotalum, and the flute. In their company walked the singers, beautiful youths and maidens, whose duty is to sing the hymn to the goddess or to make loud music with voices and instruments while the priests move in mystic dance round the feet of the goddess. When the dance is ended, and the offerings of flour, maize, barley, and onions are laid on the altar in front of the goddess, the youths and maidens, led by the chief musicians, sing the ancient hymn to the music brought down to the earth by the great Phthah herself, as it is taught by the priests. Now this ancient music is of four sounds, sacred to the gods, that may not be used for any profane purpose without incurring their resentment. (This means, I suppose, that the oldest Egyptian music was constructed in a scale of four sounds, probably what was afterwards known as the Pythagorean tetrachord.) Loud rises the sound of voices and instruments as they sing this hymn in the hearing of the goddess and of the expectant multitude :

"Great goddess Phthah,  
 Giver of fruitful seasons,  
 Mother of life, hear!  
 Thy smile ripens the fields;  
 Thou givest plenteous harvests!  
 Bearer of the lotos flower,  
 Deign to accept the maize,  
 The onions, the barley we bring.  
 Great goddess Phthah,  
 Mother of life, hear!  
 Supplicate thy holy priests,  
 Waiting thy people stand."

(I only give you the literal meaning. The peculiar form of poetry common to all ancient Semitic peoples,

called parallelism, does not easily accommodate itself to our tongue.) Soon as the sound of the music ceases, the sacred flame and smoke burst from the mouth and nostrils of the goddess, and the people, with holy awe, prostrate themselves, as they whisper: "A present goddess! The great mother hears our prayers!" Now it came to pass that a certain man of the chief musicians, called Mhi-nem, was moved—some said by vain thoughts; others, better informed, said by the goddess herself—to add three notes to the old scale (making, I suppose, the scale called by the Greeks the scale of conjunct tetrachords) and to invent melodies conformed thereto. Thereupon great uproar and dissension arose in the schools of the musicians. Many—and they were venerable men—denounced the new songs, saying they were lewd and unseemly for the worship of the goddess, appealing to the senses by their wicked beauty; also saying, the goddess will withdraw her presence if the vain inventions of vain men are intruded into her sanctuary. Many—and they were younger men—said that the goddess had wearied of the old song, and hence had inspired Mhi-nem to invent a new song. Also, they said, "If the new song is more beautiful than the old, it is, therefore, the more worthy to offer to the goddess." But the priests, as yet, said nothing publicly, but said among themselves, "Wait; we must first see will it profit our temple. It must be good if it brings more people to our services. We will wait." Nor did the goddess vouchsafe any sign of her pleasure. When the dissension was at its height, the priests, to set the matter at rest, gave command that at the next solemn service the new song of the musician Mhi-nem should be sung, that all the people might see and judge whether the goddess would accept it or not.

At the appointed time a greater multitude than ever presented themselves at the temple gates, for the rumor of the dissension, and of the beauty of the new song had spread abroad over the whole land. And many pious came, fearing the goddess would be offended. Many curious came to see what would happen and to hear the new song. So the treasury was filled to overflowing, and the hearts of the priests were glad, as they said one to another, "With this wealth we can spread the fame of our

goddess through the whole earth, until all people believe in her and us only." And now, as ever before, the solemn procession of priests, and musicians, and singers entered the temple to the sound of flutes, and cymbals, and all instruments of music, and moved in mystic dance round the feet of the goddess, and swung their smoking censers; and, when they had ended, rose the song—the new song of Mhi-nem—from the clear voices of the youths and maidens, while the players on the flute, and cymbals, and sistrum, and crotalum made loud music; and when the hymn was ended, and the waiting multitude gazed with awe upon the goddess, suddenly, with more brilliance than ever, forth burst the sacred flame and smoke from the mouth and nostrils of the goddess, and the people fell on their faces and cried, "A present goddess."

"Then spake the priests: "It is the will of the goddess that she be served with the new song, as has been made plain in the sight of all men; and forasmuch as the new song is liked by the people, which has caused greater multitudes than ever to assemble themselves in her temple, to the honor of the goddess and the spread of our religion, we therefore give commandment that all such as are skilled in music shall diligently seek out and invent such new songs as they may, that our religion may — (here there is a piece torn off) the whole world be brought to acknowledge the one true —"

"After this I could only pick out a word here and there, but I think the most important part of the MSS. is before you.

"Ever sincerely yours,

"I. WORMALL, D.C.L."

*Crabbe.* So you see the church in Egypt, ten thousand years ago, was divided on the music question; and they settled it just as some modern churches I have heard of have done.

*Dr. Goodman.* Perhaps the whole story is allegorical, and is meant to teach that the outward form of worship is

a matter of indifference to the superior powers, provided the intention is good.

*Crabbe.* Is "good intention" a sufficient warrant for any course of action? The intention of those worthy people who turn their churches into a "sacred concert" room may be good—that is, their desire to bring more people under the influence of preaching and so forth—but it may be questioned if they are justified in using such means.

*Dr. Goodman.* You have slightly misunderstood my use of the word. I quite agree with you that musical or any other display is to be reprehended if its only design is to draw people to church. It is always a shock to my feelings to see the musical performances that our churches vie with one another in giving at Christmas and Easter advertised, like public amusements, in the secular papers. Do not understand me as finding fault with either public concerts or secular papers. I only object to the turning of what should be a solemn service into an attraction for the idle and curious.

*Dalton.* I have heard that the churches that do not make any musical display are nearly deserted on the festivals you mention.

*Crabbe.* It is nice to see the papers next morning. Criticisms on the church music, the last new actress, the variety theatre, side by side—as they ought to be, when the churches adopt their methods of advertising. I like that Rhadamanthine impartiality of the papers.

*Dr. Goodman.* Alas! It is hard to detect all the insidious ways in which evil will get itself done that good may come; evil well knowing all the time—what men will never learn, apparently—that the good will never come. It is the ever-varying form of the temptation, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship

me." To every man it comes some time or another, not only in religion, but in art, in politics, in business, when he is tempted, for the sake of the good end, to employ the questionable expedient. Let us separate with this serious thought.

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## EIGHTH EVENING.

### *Acoustics and Music. Crabbe Announces His Discovery of a Theory of Color Harmony.*

THE evening's discussion was commenced by the following remark from Dr. Goodman :

*Dr. Goodman.* I have never regretted so much my ignorance of the science of music as I did the other day when reading a pamphlet on the formation of the scale. I was surprised to learn how imperfect our scale is and how easy it would be to improve it. It seems to me—in fact, I have seen it so stated—that music is largely indebted to the modern discoveries in the science of acoustics.

*Hazel.* Doctor, you have started such a large subject that it is difficult to know where to begin to answer you. First, though, as to the scale; it would be a gain, in some ways, to have a scale in perfect tune; especially is this true as to organs. I have seen, in London, an organ in the Temple Church which is enharmonic; it certainly sounds very pure, but the difficulty of playing it is immense.

*Dalton.* I think the best way out of the discussion about the tempered and untempered scale is to say boldly that the tempered scale is every way the best. First, because it is the only scale in which a system of harmony is possible. Harmony—I use the term to include the whole art of composition—is based on the possibility of establishing a close relationship among a definite number of scales, alike in every respect but pitch. This relationship would be impossible but for the fact that the series of sounds from which these scales are formed must be such that they may enter into the harmonic combinations; *i. e.*, the chords of all the scales. For example, the sound, G, in the scale of C, is, in our scale, the same as the sound, G, in the scale of E $\flat$ ; it is, therefore, possible to sound in succession the chords of C and E $\flat$ ; but if this G is tuned perfectly true in the scale of C, it would be untrue in the scale of E $\flat$ ; therefore the connection between these chords would be destroyed. This might be continued indefinitely, and its logical conclusion would be that no scale is related to any other scale, and we would have to do as it is said the Greeks did—tune our instruments in whatever key we wished to play in. The second reason, and the best, is that the tempered scale is the scale of Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and the whole host of those who have raised music to its high place among the fine arts. I will back their ear and taste against all the acousticians, armed with all the sirens, and Savart wheels, and resonators, and tuning-forks in the world, as to what sounds well and what does not.

*Crabbe.* Whew! Keep your temper, Dalton.

*Dalton.* Oh, I can't, when a man who measures and analyzes sounds tells me he can improve the scale that has furnished to the world the deathless creations of

musical genius. "Let the shoemaker stick to his last." Sounds, no matter how pure, how sweet, are *not* music. There is more music in the worst "scratched" quartette of Mozart than there would be in the most faultless enharmonic "rendering" of—well, the major part of modern American church anthems, let us say.

*Crabbe.* Oh, lame and impotent conclusion! Your indignation evaporated too suddenly.

*Dr. Goodman.* I had no idea I should raise such a tempest. I am almost afraid to ask any more questions, but haven't the acousticians explained the composite nature of sounds, and the origin of chords, and made some very curious discoveries of what are called, I think, residual tones; that is, sounds that remain in the ear after the sound that excited them has ceased. I was told by a well-known physicist that this discovery had important bearings on melody. I understood him to mean that a melody would be agreeable when its sounds were linked by these residual tones, and the reverse.

*Dalton.* To begin with the first part of your question; Yes, they have explained the composite nature of sounds; they have not quite explained the origin of chords; for instance, the theory that the minor chord is formed by a combination of the overtones of two roots. The reasoning by which it is attempted to prove this would be just as conclusive if applied to a theory that it was a combination of the overtones of three roots. Thus the chord C, E ♭, G results, they say, from a combination of the overtones of C and E ♭. True, G is an overtone of C and also of E ♭, but C and E ♭ are overtones of A ♭; then why not say that C, E ♭, G is a combination of the overtones of A ♭, and C? Again, C is an overtone of F, E ♭ of A ♭, G of C, then the chord of C minor is a combination of the overtones of F, A ♭, and C. This sort of rea-



soning may be made to prove anything. After all, questions like this are only of interest to the acoustician. The old explanation of consonance is sufficient; that is, if any explanation is needed. The musician knows what sounds he can combine, the *why* is of no more importance to him than the chemical processes by which his pigments are prepared are to the painter.

*Dr. Goodman.* Well, what about melody and residual tones? May there not be some gain to the musician here?

*Dalton.* I will believe it when I hear such a melody as Mozart or Mendelssohn have made constructed by a deduction from this theory. As well expect a picture like Titian's or Raphael's to come into existence as a deduction from the undulatory theory of light and the vibrations of colors.

*Dr. Goodman.* I think your views might be thus stated: Given, a science; deduce an art; impossible. Or, given, an art; reduce it to scientific terms; equally impossible. There is, therefore, no science of music, or of painting, or of sculpture, or of poetry, but all these arts are, in a sense, independent of the material world, although based on and working through matter, in accordance with the limitations of our present existence, even as the highest manifestations of the intellect and the will are forced to do.

*Crabbe.* When the artist finds the material wherewith to express his idéal, his concern for it is ended. "Why" is the question of science, not of art. Art admires the rainbow, and is content with any or no account of it; science looks on it as an illustration of the unequal refrangibility and dispersion of light.

*Dalton.* Crabbe has been reading Hugo, and has imbibed some of his antithetical, epigrammatic sententiousness.

*Parks.* "Words of learned length and thunderous sound."

*Crabbe.* Dalton, you said something a while ago on the vibrations of colors; it has suggested a brilliant discovery to me. It might be of great help to the painters if they were familiar with these vibrations, for instance, say, of "Titian's red." If they knew this they might be able to "tune up" some of their reds to the right pitch. Why should not the painter "harmonize" his colors according to the ratios of their vibrations, as well as the musician his sounds? I think I have discovered a profound principle. There *must* be a harmony of colors, precisely like the harmony of sounds. Painters have been working in the dark. If this theory were elaborated it would put an end forever to all crude, inharmonious blendings and contrastings of color. Some one tried to make a color symphony once, but failed; it must have been through ignorance of the "thorough bass" of color. I believe his symphony "went" equally well backwards or forwards.

*Parks (sotto voce).* Must have been like Wagner.

*Crabbe.* Eh! what! Don't interrupt me! I will give you an outline of my theory. The pitch of each color being determined, its compass would be the number of shades of which it is capable—its pianos and fortes, its different intensities. As there are three primary colors, we might have three scales—the natural, red, the color of lowest vibration rate. Natural, we call it, because "celestial rosy red" is the pleasantest of all colors. Then the unnatural, yellow, the jaundice color, shade of envy, jealousy, and so on. Last, the supernatural, blue. Humanity has already discovered that this is the right key for the supernatural. Witness the familiar sayings: "Everything looks blue," as an antithesis to "Everything is

rosy," or, as we say, such a one looks "blue," when we would say he looks as far as possible from his natural condition. I need not multiply illustrations, but will only refer to "blue Monday," "blue blazes," "blue stocking," "blue ruin."

*Dalton.* For pity's sake, stop. When you get hold of an absurd notion you are like a colt turned out at grass.

*Crabbe.* I am serious. I see dimly the outlines of a glorious science that will do for painters what thorough bass has done for musicians. Your supercilious cavils will not hinder me from developing it.

*Hazel.* Silence is the best soil in which to rear such delicate plants.

*Crabbe.* With my usual generosity, I wanted all my friends to share in the glory of this discovery. You have missed your best chance for immortality. I shall begin the study of optics to-morrow. This is the plan on which I shall work: I will question all my lady friends (who know more about it than the painters, and are not hampered by any "theories of color"), and, by comparing their opinions, will construct my table of contrasts and combinations; then determine the vibration rate of each color; and then—the rest is easy.

*Dalton.* Don't go on. Some of us might try to anticipate your discoveries. Better —

*Crabbe.* Stop! I have changed my plan. I will study optics first, and deduce my rules for painting from the laws of light and color. This will give a scientific basis to painting, and will be in the line of those philosophers who say the rules of musical composition can be deduced from the laws of acoustics. Just think of it! The day may come when we will be able to state a symphony or picture in algebraic symbols, and there will be nothing left for those troublesome, conceited creatures, who think

they are "inspired," to do but to translate the formulæ of the mathematician into notes and colors.

*Hazel.* I begin to see what you are taking such a round-about way to arrive at.

*Parks.* He made it up before he came here, and is trying to pass it off as "extempore."

*Dalton* (coming out of a reverie). What the plays and toys of childhood are to that happy period of life, art is to children of a larger growth—a something to which the emotions and the imagination can give themselves up without any questionings; a loophole, through which we get glimpses of a world in which the hard, pitiless laws of science are unknown. Or, science binds us to the universe of matter; art sets us free, and introduces us to a world above the laws of matter.

*Crabbe.* Or, science is the school where the stern master, with hateful textbook, sways his birchen sceptre, and spares not, lest he should spoil the child. Art is the Christmas pantomime, where the ordinary rules and responsibilities of life are abrogated, where the turkeys run about ready-cooked, with knife and fork under their wing, and the loaves and fishes come in at the window or down the chimney without the intervention of the baker or fishwife, and —

*Dalton.* Do you think you have improved on my discourse?

*Crabbe.* By no means. Would I had that poetic gift! I have only brought it down to ordinary understandings.

*Dr. Goodman.* What has possessed you two this evening? You have had a talking match all to yourselves, and have been sparring nearly all the time. Hazel looks as if his thoughts were in cloud-land, and Parks is asleep with his mouth open. Rouse him, Hazel, and let us be off.

*Hazel.* I have been dreaming with my eyes open ; perhaps I will tell you my dream—or parable, let me call it—sometime.

*Dalton.* Good ! Remember, we are to have Hazel's parable first thing at our next meeting.

*Crabbe.* Will you "open your parable" on the piano? as you don't play the harp.

*Dr. Goodman.* Hold your railing tongue, and come away. Parks, "shake off dull sleep," and join us.

*Crabbe.* Parks looks like an anaconda just fed, or as I fancy the prodigal son did after he had made a "square meal" on the fatted calf.

*Dr. Goodman.* Oh, shocking ! You are intolerable.

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## NINTH EVENING.

### *More Discussion on Vocal and Instrumental Music.*

AS soon as the playing was over this evening Mr. Dalton called on Mr. Hazel to produce his parable, but Hazel excused himself on the plea that he had been too busy to finish writing it, but would, without fail, read it at the next meeting. The conversation, after various expressions of disappointment, gradually settled to a discussion on instruments and their combinations.

*Parks.* Why is it that so few have succeeded in writing good string compositions, even among those who have written good operas and good orchestral compositions?

*Dalton.* Simply because it is so much harder to be interesting with only four strings. The multiplied contrasts of quality in the tone of the instruments in a full orchestra serve to cover paucity of ideas, and will even give effectiveness to commonplaces.

*Crabbe.* Your modern composer understands that well. Whenever he feels that his audience are getting sleepy he skilfully brings in a solo passage for the cymbals or a flash of lightning from a piccolo, to rouse them and make the injudicious exclaim, "How fine!"

*Dr. Goodman.* In what order do you musicians rank musical compositions? I mean, what do you consider the highest examples of the art?

*Dalton.* Well, I suppose Parks would put opera first; Hazel, oratorio. My private opinion is that the compositions for string instruments alone fill the highest place; next, those for string instruments and piano; then the symphony; then the oratorio; then the opera; after these, the deluge of music that covers the world.

*Hazel.* I think you draw the lines too hard and fast; an oratorio of Handel or an opera of Mozart is as great a work of genius as any string composition in existence.

*Dalton.* True. But I base my classification on the fact that only a few—and those the greatest—have succeeded in this form; and it is a confirmation of my opinion that those who have succeeded in this form are also the greatest in all other forms of composition—the string composition, with or without piano. The oratorio, the symphony, the opera, the mass treated like an oratorio—these all suggest the names of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven in the first rank; Mendelssohn, Schumann, Schubert, who, if not in all respects in the first rank, are very near it. I purposely omit Handel, as he lived before the days of chamber music in its modern forms. Now the multi-

tude of writers who have attained a deservedly high rank as opera writers is a proof that it is, compared with writing a good quartette, an easy thing to write a good opera.

*Crabbe.* I think the best test is the comparative popularity of the various forms of composition. A thousand like an opera where a hundred like a symphony or an oratorio or four like a quartette, because the merit of art bears always an inverse proportion to its popularity.

*Parks.* But if it is the mission of art to provide refined amusement, does it not follow that the form of art that provides amusement for the largest number, provided it is not immoral, is the best art, and the worthiest to be encouraged?

*Dalton.* I have said nothing about encouraging any form of art. The question at present is, "Which is the most refined form of this amusement?" if it be only an amusement. I blame no one for not liking quartette music, I merely pity his lack of a sense that gives me so much pleasure.

*Dr. Goodman.* I am glad you are not one of those rabid musicians who look upon all the world who do not accept their dicta as fools and willfully blind.

*Hazel.* In which category do you put the concertos for various solo instruments with orchestral accompaniments?

*Dalton.* With a few exceptions, I don't like any of them. I particularly dislike the combination of piano and orchestra; the piano suffers too much in the union, its powers of expression are so limited and its sounds so evanescent.

*Crabbe.* Yes; the orchestra always seems to stoop a long way down to encourage the poor tinkler.

*Dalton.* Then there is something crude and mechanical about the form of the concerto; the alternation of solo and tutti, with the same theme, grows monotonous; in-

deed, the audience generally seem to think the *tuttis* are put in to give them an opportunity to applaud, an opinion in which the soloist too often coincides.

*Hazel.* I hope you don't include all concertos in your strictures.

*Dalton.* I said at the beginning that there were some exceptions.

*Crabbe.* Hazel, you are an excellent buffer to break the force of Dalton's sweeping criticisms.

*Dalton.* There is but one instrument that can hold its own against the orchestra—that is the voice.

*Parks.* I remember you said once that the voice was not to be compared with other instruments, it was so inferior.

*Dalton.* All artificial instruments form a republic, of which the violin is president. The human voice is not a member of this republic, and therefore not to be judged by its laws.

*Parks.* That sounds like an admission of its superiority.

*Dalton.* It does not follow that because it is independent of the rules that govern other instruments that it is therefore superior; independence sometimes means inferiority.

*Crabbe.* Yes; for example, college boys are not held accountable to the same laws by which grown men have to regulate their conduct.

*Dr. Goodman.* What is your opinion about instrumental solos? Do you include them in the same category as the concertos?

*Dalton.* I think the piano is the solo instrument *par excellence*, if for no other reason than that all other instruments require an accompaniment. But there is a better reason. It is the only instrument in which melody, harmony, accompaniment, and expression are under the con-



trol of one mind. It is the only single instrument on which a complete composition can be played.

*Hazel.* All of which is equally true of the organ.

*Dalton.* Yes; barring the expression.

*Crabbe.* Oh, yes, says the shoemaker, "There is nothing like leather."

*Parks.* What do you mean?

*Crabbe.* Why, you and Dalton think there is nothing like piano—I beg your pardon, the voice is your eidolon. Hazel thinks there is nothing like organ. Now I think there is nothing like fiddle, especially the tenor fiddle, and Dalton's argument about one man power is all nonsense. Doesn't it follow that four men full of expression can get out four times as much of it as one man full of expression? Then the fourfold variety of expression furnishes a much wider field for the enjoyment of the listeners than the unfold (I am not sure there is such a word; I claim it, if there is not). With regard to the piano being the only instrument that one man can play a complete composition on, I admit its truth; but is it an advantage? Why, put four men at a quartette, and they will get more out of it, and put more into it, too, than the composer ever dreamed of. As for the organ, I think it is not without meaning that a slight transposition of the letters make it "groan." There is an occult, supernatural origin of names, and wise men of old put great faith in anagrams, which we, in our conceit, despise.

*Dalton.* Crabbe, you came into the world a thousand years too late. That speech is just in the rambling, quasi-argumentative, wholly foolish vein of a court jester.

*Crabbe.* Ah, well! We need a counterpoise to your wisdom; or, rather, a counter-levity. We would all be swamped else.

*Parks.* I would like to stay ; it is such fun to hear you two growl at each other ; but it is too late.

*Dr. Goodman.* I think I shall have to take to running away when you get at loggerheads. I am tired of the office of peacemaker.

*Crabbe.* I am sorry, Doctor, to see you shirk one of the duties of the Christian minister that is pronounced especially blessed. I'll go with you, and reason with you about it.

## TENTH EVENING.

### *Hazel Reads an Allegory.*

**A**FTER this evening's music, Hazel, without waiting to be called on, produced from his pocket a roll of manuscript of such portentous dimensions that the club was somewhat alarmed, and was only reassured on his protesting that it would not take more than half an hour to read it. After each one had lit a cigar and settled himself in the most comfortable chair he could find (*Parks* stretched himself on the sofa), Hazel proceeded to read as follows :

"Long ago, before the ages of history were born, there dwelt, on a wide, well-watered plain that spread away to the horizon from the foot of a lofty mountain-range, a happy people, scattered in small villages over its wide extent. They were simple-minded and ignorant ; they

thought that the mountains, that stood like sentinels over the plain, marked the boundaries of the world. Here they had dwelt for ages in content and security, knowing nothing of the world that lay beyond these mountain ramparts or beyond the sea that embraced in its liquid circle the greater part of the plain. Their days were spent in tending their flocks or in sowing and reaping the fields that stretched in gentle undulations on every side of the villages. Stretched on couches of fragrant heather, their nights brought hours of sweet repose that restored strength to the tired limbs worn with their daily toil. Generations passed, nor wished nor thought of change. High up, in one of the inaccessible peaks of the mountains, dwelt a bright spirit called Kallitekne. Her dwelling was in a small cave, jewelled with gems wrought by the fairy fingers of the frost into strange and beautiful shapes, which gleamed and burned under the rays of the morning sun, and flashed back with undiminished lustre the crimson hues of his parting glance. This spirit knew all the secrets that are hidden in words, and colors, and sounds; her magic touch could transform the lowliest objects, till they seemed transfused with divine beauty. The common words with which men speak of common things, her wand transformed into poetry. The colors that the prodigal sun scattered so lavishly on cloud and hilltop, or on forest and flower, she seized and transmuted them, and they became painting. She caught the sounds that rose from the hum of village life, or murmured in the trees, or prattled in the countless springs that descended the mountain slopes, and they became music. But poetry, painting, and music were as yet unknown to man. Willing was Kallitekne to impart her gifts to men, but the time was not come, and she would be sought with patient, loving perseverance, lest her gifts should be undervalued. In a large cave, deep in the recesses of the mountain, bare of ornament, and unlit save by straggling rays of feeble light, that came, one could not say from where, dwelt another spirit, of severe but benign aspect. This spirit knew all the secrets of earth, air, and water. He weighed the winds and saw their viewless path. He knew the forces that bound

together each tiny atom in all the substances that built up the universe. He knew how the mountain peaks had grown in such fantastic forms; how the wide plains had been rolled out at their base. He had wrested its secret from the lightning flash; had measured the abysses that divide the stars. All nature was to him an open book in a familiar language. Willing, too, was he to impart his gifts to man, but only on the inexorable condition that they be sought with patience, submission, and, if need be, suffering, for thus only can his gifts be obtained and prized at their true value. From time to time there would arise clear-eyed men, into whose souls had entered some thoughts beyond the contented life of the plain. Such would look longingly toward the cloudlike peaks where dwelt the spirit, Kallitekne. She, ever ready to help the earnest suppliant, would breathe on them some of her magic power. Then, like children learning to talk, or like lips trying to speak an unfamiliar tongue, they would, in broken numbers, stammering and feeble at first, but ever increasing in strength, speak to their fellow men of the heroic deeds of old days; of the march of sun, moon, stars, and seasons; of the winter storm, that clothed the peaks with snow; of the spring, that brought the swallow and the nightingale; or of the daily avocations of farm and field, of shepherd and hunter, until their hearts glowed, and all common things were suffused with a glory not of earth. Others—like them, yet different—who looked lovingly on the changing tints of meadow and forest as the cloud shadows swept over them, or watched the swift-changing splendors that glowed on the mountain crests at rise or set of sun until the secret of their beauty possessed their inmost sense, they, with patient labor, sought for colored earths, and gums, and juices of plants; and, such is the might of the spirit's gift, with these poor materials, caught and fixed on wall or canvas the trembling hues of sunset, or the wide stretches of heathery upland, with pool and brook, grazing herd and flock. And men found a beauty in these things, whose existence they had never even suspected. There were yet others filled with vague longings that neither the living words of the poet nor the vivid

colors of the painter could satisfy. They listened ever for some voice that should give form to their shadowy desires; when the summer thunder rattled through the cliffs, filling other men's hearts with dread, they heard in it a hint of what they sought; when, in the cool spring nights, the nightingales made earth and air vocal with melody, they thought 'the voice we seek must be like this;' they listened to the melancholy murmur of the wind in the tall pines, the gentle prattle of the fountains, the roar of the torrents, the songs of the birds, the laugh and shout of happy children, and found in all a hint, but no more, of what they sought. Beautiful as were all these sounds, the spirit Kallitekne dwelt not in them. Then they grew weary with unsatisfied longing, and said: 'There is an ideal which can never be found in this life; we must wait until we pass through the gate of death, to the land beyond the mountain tops, where the sun goes to rest when he draws his golden curtains around him.' Then the spirit Kallitekne took pity on them and inspired them with new hope, and they found that, from the humble materials that lay about them, they could evoke a spell to satisfy their deepest longings, that even the grandeur of the thunder and the torrent or the sweetest notes of the nightingale did not possess. Then from the river's margin they cut reeds, from which they drew notes more mellow than the thrushes; from the fibres of plants, the sinews of animals, they twisted strings, and stretched them on the empty shell of the tortoise, and drew sounds from them that could cheat sorrow to repose, or rouse the faint-hearted to deeds of valor. Thus the arts began; each one, taking the common things of life, transformed them in the alembic of the human soul, and they came forth, dowered with eternal youth and beauty, as from a resurrection that, leaving the perishable body in the grave, springs forth the imperishable, undying spirit.

"Men also arose, of grave, thoughtful aspect, who looked on the heavens and the earth and saw their wonders; the circling course of planets, the waxing and waning of moons, the rush of comets, and the faint gleam of nebulae; they marked the gathering of the thunder-clouds and watched the whirling path of the storm; they

noted the passage of birds, the ways of animals, the growth of plant, blossom, and fruit; they pondered much on the strange forms and varied colors that were stamped on the weather beaten scarp of the mountains; they looked with clear-searching eyes on their fellow men, and were ever questioning—earth, air, and sky; bird, beast and rock; all men and themselves—'Why are these things so? Where shall we look for an answer?'

"Then they remembered the spirit that dwelt in the silence of the unlit cavern, waiting and patient. To him they went to seek the reasons of all things. But he said: 'It is forbidden that man should know the secrets of nature except he wrest them from her by patient toil. But I breathe on you my spirit of power; thus aided, there is no hidden, most-cherished secret of earth, air, or sky; of bird, beast, or plant; or even of man himself, that you cannot penetrate, save only the mystery that forever separates the thing made from the Maker.' With these words the spirit placed in the hand of each one a torch, with ray so feeble and uncertain one could scarcely say it burned, and continued: 'This torch is called Akriba. Husband it with jealous care; walk by its light with steadfast steps; fear not to go wherever its light may lead. If you preserve truth it will grow ever brighter, until it fills the world with its light. If false to your trust, it will be quenched, and deeper darkness will wrap the world, that is waiting, and has waited, and must for years wait for your guidance. Then these men went forth endowed with the power of this spirit and guided by the light of their torches. Through many years they watched, and waited, and pondered, ever hopeful and patient, though often reviled, and persecuted, and even put to death by their fellow men. Yet they found worthy successors, and passed the torch on when their hand grew too feeble to hold it, and young men filled with the same spirit bore it on, growing ever brighter, and sending its keen flash into many an obscure corner, burning in its pure flame many an outworn symbol, guiding men to nobler thoughts of the universe, yet teaching them humility, as they learned to recognize that they, too, spite of their fancied superiority, were but a part of the great harmonious

work of Him who works through the ages. Yet science, like art, wrought all her wonders with the commonest materials. As one picked up and pondered on the stones that strewed the path of the mountain torrent, and, following up the torrent's bed, saw the grooved lines that marked the bare surface of the rock, where some mighty force had ploughed it like an autumn furrow, a sudden flash of his torch showed him, back through dim ages, a sea of ice, covering mountain and valley, and moving ever, in slow, resistless majesty, to the ocean. One, with a piece of globular glass, flashed his torch into the marvellous world that peoples with strange life every drop of water or grain of dust. Another sent the flash of his torch through the universe, and revealed to wondering men the history of suns, stars, and worlds from that time in the dim eternity of the past when suns and stars, with their obedient worlds, were a formless chaos. Others there were who tamed the Titanic son of fire and water, or bridled with brass and iron the wild lightning. All these things, and countless others, were done by submitting humbly to the laws of nature and by following loyally wherever the light of the torch showed the way. Thus through many centuries grew the arts and sciences, each one helping and helped by all the others. But it came to pass that men began to dispute which spirit had bestowed the most valuable gifts, and the rivalry grew in bitterness, although there was perfect amity between the spirit of the mountain peak and the spirit of the unlit cave, both of whom had warned men that patience and humility were the chief requisites in all who would serve them. At last the dissension grew so bitter that the dwellers on the plain were divided into hostile camps, and, growing weary, at length, of ceaseless wrangling, they agreed to separate, and each build their city, with the breadth of the plain between them.

"Then arose a fair city, fair as a dream of Paradise, the home of the worshippers of Kallitekne, adorned with all that men have since deemed beautiful in architecture. Streets there were, gleaming with the cold chaste perfection that, ages after, was to revive in Athens. Wide avenues, where tall spires and graceful arches shot

heavenward, like springing flames. In others, slender minarets and bell-like domes seemed to float self-poised in air, rich with bewildering lace work wrought in stone, the far-off echo of the fame of which fired the genius of the builders of the Alhambra. Streets and buildings were peopled with statues of marble, bronze, silver, and gold, that made visible all the possibilities of beauty and dignity in the human form. Every wall of temple or dwelling-house glowed with pictured dreams, that strove to give reality to the vaguest, deepest aspirations of the soul for a solution of the mystery of life. Many and strange were the instruments of music they contrived, whose wailing, seductive tones, sunk the hearers in exhausting languor, or excited fierce emotions or half-formed purposes, while at the same time they destroyed the will to pursue them. So complete finally was their subjection to art that religion, will, moral sense—all succumbed, and all that was not art was base and fearful superstition, fostered and intensified by art. So they settled themselves in the belief that life was made for art; that knowledge was the vain pursuit of an ever-flying shadow; that religion was passive obedience to fate. They blindly neglected the commonest prudences for the preservation of healthy life. And a fierce pestilence seized them; weakened by effeminate living and overwrought emotion, they fell an easy prey to the destroyer, and death-like silence fell on the bright city of palaces. Grasses grew between the stones of the marble pavements, and slowly but surely rent them to fragments; the winds lodged seeds in the crevices of temple and tower, their tiny roots, swelled by summer rains, wedged apart the well-fitted stones, and brought pediment and architrave, towering spire and column to the ground in hideous confusion, which (as though their hurtful superstitions had taken living form and were loth to leave such congenial haunts) became a home for hissing, venomous serpents. But long before this final consummation blotted out their name and city, the spirit Kallitekue had forsaken them, and her counterfeit, called Nomiko, had possessed them, and hastened their fall.

"The followers of science also built a city. The situation was chosen with care on the banks of a deep rapid



river, that coursed, with many wanderings, over the plain on its way to the sea, not far from which the city was situated. Long lines of wide streets ran from the stone quays on the river's margin, crossed at equal distances by others as wide, all paved with wear-defying material and swept free even from dust; no horses were seen on the streets, but noiseless vehicles glided up and down filled with passengers or, on the streets set apart for the purpose, with loads of merchandise. At night, sun-like globes, on lofty towers, made the streets bright as mid-day. Wide parks and copious fountains of clear water were lavished everywhere. In one quarter were the dwelling-houses, almost destitute of ornament, but replete with everything that can minister to health or comfort. In another quarter, towering factories raised their blank walls and made the ground tremble with the roar and rattle of machinery. In another were reared vast gloomy warehouses in which were stored the products of the world, which large, swift vessels were discharging, day and night, on the quays. In another, vast laboratories were built, where silent, thoughtful men pored day after day over crucibles and retorts and batteries, and wrung from reluctant nature the secrets of her alchemy. Others, pondering over the scanty fragments of a life of older times—gathered from river bed, or stone quarry, or the deep, dark gallery of the mine,—traced with almost super-human skill, the course of life from its humble beginnings. Others with keen knife and still keener eyes, traced the path and noted the working of each vein, nerve, and artery in the human frame, and grew so skilled that disease was almost banished from their city. For years the city grew in prosperity, health, and knowledge, yet the people began to wear a strange look of weariness, as though the increase of knowledge had increased their sorrow. It seemed as if their capabilities for pleasure had evaporated under the ponderous exhaust glass of science.

"Poetry, painting, and music were almost forgotten, or were looked on with pitying indifference as the amusements of the unilluminated. All felt or affected indifference to art and practiced indifference to artists, looking on them from the lofty towers of science, much as a man

looks on a rather superior type of Simian or other inferior animal. The artists, one by one, left them and took up their abode in the rival city, and the people finally forgot Beauty and believed only in Utility, a divorce which ever has and ever will revenge itself on its perpetrators.

"An evil spirit, also, called Hypothesia, took possession of them and warped their understandings, till they vainly thought that, having followed to its inmost recess the hiding of the mind, they had surprised the secret of its origin and working; or, having traced by dim, uncertain signs the path of the Creator through the ages, they had solved the mystery of the generation of all things; or, seeing that the ever-changing combination of changeless atoms was the law of the material world, they said: 'Life and death are but names for chemical affinities and repulsions, even what Ignorance calls mind or soul is nought but the manifestation of a complex chemical union of these indestructible eternal atoms.' So they looked on religion as the dream of untaught savages; art as the amusement of children; emotion as weakness, and summed up the laborious result of experiment and speculation in the saying: 'Life is not worth living. It is too short to realize all the possibilities of attainment, and death stops its advance for ever.' So they grew ever more hopeless and railed at life as a cheat that lured them with a delusive show of potencies, soon to be quenched in endless night.

"At this time took place one of those mighty migrations that rolled their successive waves over the face of the world. A strong race of nomads pushed westward, seeking new homes and fresh pastures for their flocks. Then they were ignorant, and superstitious, and often cruel, but believing in good and evil, and therefore capable of attaining all things. With childlike wonder they saw the great city, and heard the roar of its thousand factories, and saw the swift motion of mighty engines or the moonlike radiance of its lofty light-towers. Then the child's spirit of destruction seized them, aided by superstitious fears of the wonders they saw. The people of the city, well-supplied with death-dealing appliances, easily drove them from the city and held them at bay.

But the countless hosts camped about the walls and waited until starvation came to help them against the doomed city. The belief that 'life was not worth living' also helped them still more fatally, for strong men, growing hopeless, forgot all ties of duty or kindred, of defenceless women and children, and destroyed with violent hands the life they thought so worthless, until none were left to defend the walls; then, with shouts of triumph, the savage hordes dashed through the streets, maddened with long waiting, killing indiscriminately old and young, women and children, and, with ponderous clubs and huge stones, they broke the costly works of the skilful engineers; others, torch in hand, fired the tall factories and warehouses, and many fell victims to their own destructiveness, as thundering explosions brought the lofty walls crashing to the ground. So complete was the desolation that a smouldering heap of ashes and smoke-blackened stones, charred beams and strangely-twisted bars of iron alone remained to mark the site of the prosperous city. Slowly, as the years went by, the winds scattered the soil of the plain over the ruins, the wild vine and bramble covered with bright verdure the unsightly stones; then seedling trees took root and grew vigorously, adding by the yearly fall of their leaves to the covering of the city's grave, till the very desert wanderers, who still had a dim tradition of the home of wonders their remote forefathers destroyed, pitched their tents and built their watchfires on its site, nor dreamed that the forest that sheltered them from sun and wind had its roots deep down in the decaying remains of the fabled city."

*Parks.* Well, what's the meaning of this long-winded story?

*Dalton.* It's visible enough. Even you might have swallowed it, for you have been asleep with your mouth open the last half hour.

*Dr. Goodman.* Very good, Hazel. You have carried out your plan and indicated your moral very well. If I may venture a criticism, I think your use of adjectives and epithets is a little too redundant. The noun and the

verb—the thing and the action performed—are what give vigor to writing. Adjectives soon grow tiresome unless sparingly used.

*Crabbe.* They are like needless modulations in music, which always betray paucity of invention. A symphony of Mozart or Beethoven won't have a fourth part of the modulating a nocturne of Chopin has.

*Parks.* There you go! Mozart, Beethoven—Beethoven, Mozart! You think music began and ended with them.

*Dr. Goodman.* Can't you suspend the everlasting musical wrangle for once, if only out of regard for Hazel? Have you nothing to say about his allegory?

*Crabbe.* I am very much pleased with it. I begin to have hopes of all of you. I have developed a poetic vein in Dalton; an allegoric vein in you. It only remains to make something of Parks; he has not shown any marked intellectual tendency yet; but it will come; it will come.

*Parks.* It may come when you don't expect it and in a way that will hardly please you.

*Crabbe.* I wager he is, by slow, difficult increments, producing some withering satire on us. Isn't it so, Parks?

*Parks.* Wait, and see.

*Crabbe.* We wait and tremble.

*Dr. Goodman.* You all seem determined to talk of anything but Hazel's paper. Come, Hazel; let us go together. I would like to say something more to you about it.

*Crabbe.* That's right. We will talk fast enough about it when you are gone, Hazel. We are afraid of making you vain.

*Dr. Goodman.* That is administering the pill first—the sugar-coating afterwards; Crabbe's favorite practice.

*Hazel.* Good night, and don't spare me! My evil star is in the sign Cancer.

## ELEVENTH EVENING.

### *Opera, Acting, and Music.*

THE talk was started this evening by Parks launching out in rapturous panegyric on a late performance by an Italian opera troupe. His enthusiasm roused the bile of Crabbe and Dalton, making them, of course, more and more depreciative as his enthusiasm rose.

*Parks.* In spite of all your sneers at sensuous music, I still say and think that music has reached its highest, most perfect expression in opera, particularly Italian opera; the best proof of which is the universality of its appreciation. No doubt the public is easily misled, but, in the long run, their judgment is pretty sure to be right.

*Dalton.* Yes; pretty sure to be right as to what they like. But that is no proof that they ought to like it; or, rather, I should say, no proof that opera is what you claim for it.

*Crabbe.* I have no hesitation in saying that it is, with nine out of ten hearers, the singing, the plot, the scenery, the acting—anything but the music—that they rave about. They say, "Wasn't Squallini wonderful in the shadow song? Such execution! such acting!" Or, "Didn't Howletti make an astonishing effect with his high C?" Or, "Marvellous bass that Growlouski! Went four octaves below the bass clef!" You never hear a word about the *music*, unless it be from some rash musician whose temerity leads him to say that he doesn't

think Donizetti or Bellini as good as Mozart or Gluck, when he is, deservedly snubbed by being told, "Oh, you musicians pretend to like nothing but 'scientific' music."

*Parks.* Well, music is meant to be beautiful, isn't it? And what is more beautiful than a melody of Bellini?

*Dalton.* Bellini was a genius. His melodies are beautiful; but can't you conceive the possibility of a much higher degree of beauty, that reveals itself only to a chosen few? Now there is a beauty in a quartette or sonata of Mozart or Beethoven, or a fugue of Bach, that to those that can see it makes all opera seem tawdry.

*Crabbe.* Right, Dalton! Cotton-velvet and spangles, stage tricks and scene painting, degrade music. I wonder if there are many operas that would bear being sung like oratorios. This would be a splendid test of their musical quality. Fancy "Lucia" or "Lucrezia" sung by the Boston "Handel and Haydn." I know very few operas that could stand it, say like "Fidelio," or "Don Giovanni," or "Acis and Galatea."

*Parks.* But that is not fair. The opera is made to be sung with certain surroundings, dress, scenery, and action. It is unjust to separate it from these and then condemn it because it is not oratorio.

*Dalton.* Don't you see? You give the question away when you say it *needs* these accessories to make it effective—that the music alone is not enough. Now the operas that Crabbe mentioned have been sung like cantatas, and have not lost their effect by the loss of the accessories.

*Dr. Goodman.* Judging from your remarks, I should gather that you both think oratorio or cantata is superior to opera. I am glad to hear it, for, although my profession has debarred me from much familiarity with the opera, it has always seemed to me an amusement befitting

a less refined state of society than exists now. I don't mean less refined in manners or morals, but in culture. I wish I could find some other word than this much-abused one, but it is the only one I can think of.

*Dalton.* I often wonder, when at an opera, that people don't laugh at the palpable absurdities it presents—the performance of commonplace actions, the enunciation of commonplace remarks to music—an absurdity that passes all bounds; when people fight duels, commit murder, or suicide, or treason, or Heaven knows what horrible crimes, yelling all the time at the top of their lung power solos or duos, even after they are dead or nearly so.

*Parks.* You see your practical nature refuses to sympathize with the poetical aspect of these things.

*Dalton.* My poetical nature revolts against the contact of these base, unpoetic things.

*Parks.* But art ennobles whatever it touches.

*Dalton.* In these cases the art does not touch them at all. It is forced into an unnatural union with them. Poetry may—and does—use the poorest, meanest materials or basest passions to teach the brightest, purest lessons. But this is not the mission of music. It has nothing to do with concrete passion or action, but only with those vague simulacra of passion and action we call the emotions.

*Crabbe.* I agree with Wagner, that opera subjects should be chosen from mythology or fairy-lore, because the incongruousness is not so apparent in a region where everything is supernatural.

*Dalton.* I have always thought this the best argument I know against making the combination of drama and music. It is equivalent to saying that the thing is so absurd that you must imagine yourself translated to the land of "Jenesaispasou" to keep it from doing violence to your understanding.

*Parks.* I believe you two would have all the world give up going to the opera. I don't think you'll succeed.

*Dalton.* We don't wish to do anything of the kind.

*Crabbe.* Not a bit. All this wisdom is poured out simply for the enlightenment of yourself. For my part, I gave up, long ago, thinking or caring anything about public taste. I always look askance on those "artists" who talk of elevating the public taste. It generally means putting a few dollars in the virtuoso's pocket. I am quite happy if the public taste prefers opera to oratorio, or opera bouffe to grand opera, or negro minstrelsy to all of them, but I don't like to hear a musician talk heresy without trying to open his eyes.

*Parks.* Very kind of you. I am satisfied so long as the majority of the music-loving are with me in my heresy.

*Crabbe.* "Ephraim is wedded to his idols; let him alone."

*Dr. Goodman.* Having disposed of Parks, tell me, some of you, why you think oratorio so much better than opera. I confess my preference is chiefly founded on the fact that the oratorio is drawn from the sacred story, and that the opera deals so largely with such immoral stories—stories that decent people would not read, yet strangely enough, will listen to and applaud when set to music.

*Dalton.* My admiration of oratorio is founded on the belief that it is a higher form of composition, it admits of more elaborate musical treatment, being unhampered by the necessities of action.

*Crabbe.* Over and above these reasons, I admire it because it does not give the same opportunity to the vanity of the singers. They play all sorts of pranks with opera airs, but the most conceited hardly dare to take liberties with the music of Handel and Mendelssohn. By the way, it is very difficult to find good solo singers for ora-



torio. Opera singers and song singers won't do at all; they are like fish out of water; they gasp and struggle to make "effects," and succeed only in convincing the judicious of their incapability. I could mention several that are well known in America. I could also mention several that will compare with any oratorio singers in the world.

*Dalton.* I will mention one—who, alas, is no more—that, to my thinking, surpassed all the oratorio singers we ever had—that was Parepa. The perfect vocalization, the strict adherence to the text, the freedom from commonplace attempts at "effects" by ritardandos or accelrandos not indicated in the score, the utter absence of self-display—these made up such an oratorio singer as will not soon again be heard.

*Crabbe.* I always thought it a pity she went on the stage. It was misdirected ambition.

*Dr. Goodman.* I never lost an opportunity of hearing her in concert or oratorio, and always with increasing pleasure.

*Crabbe.* Our discussion seems to have turned into a threnody on Parepa. I don't like these mortuary exertions, so I'm off.

*Parks.* It makes him think of the very different way people will "threnody" him some day.

## TWELFTH EVENING.

### *Herr Schnabel Enlivens the Proceedings.*

THE conversation was very much enlivened this evening by the presence of Herr Schnabel. The Herr is a type of a very numerous class of German musicians in America, who, presuming on the fact that Germany has produced the greatest musicians, despise the musicians of all other countries and think themselves the worthy successors of these great men, or even their superiors—or, at least, their only authorized interpreters, with about as much reason as the English playwrights of the present day would have to look with contempt on the dramatists of other nations because themselves were the countrymen of Shakespeare. These musicians, though often executants of no mean ability, are composers of no ability whatever; yet they gain great reputation for knowledge, among the ignorant, by the easy process of condemning the productions of all composers who are so unfortunate as to have been born outside of the Fatherland. The club enjoyed the Herr's "bouncing" hugely, and "drew him out" without mercy.

*Dalton.* Yes; what you say of German musicians is true. But can you tell me why it is so, Herr Schnabel?

*Schnabel.* Ja; it is only with the German mind that is found the mix of intellect and feeling to make the great musician. No other people look so close in the nature or dive so deep in the profound of the human soul. Music is the outcome, the flower, of German philosophy. I

know—I have study all the systems—as I have mastered the innermost motives that the all-human, experience-infolding soul of the great composer has known.

*Crabbe.* Why do you not give to the waiting world some of your own profound conceptions? Why has the genius of Germany lain fallow since Beethoven passed away?

*Schnabel.* It lies not fallow. We have taken up the work where the hand of Beethoven could no longer hold it. We have compose sinfonie—I have compose sinfonie. But the genius has always the enemies.

*Crabbe.* Why, is not Germany ever ready to recognize new developments of the national genius? Or, have you exiled yourself for the purpose of instructing us?

*Schnabel.* I come in America an art missionary, but they know it not. The American mind is too gross to enter the temple of art. Who think themselves musical will listen to Mozart, or Beethoven, or Mendelssohn, or Schumann, but they will not to know what has been since in music.

*Dalton.* No doubt we have much to learn. When are we to have the privilege of hearing your compositions?

*Schnabel.* Bah! I have said you Americans are too gross. I was most esteemed in Germany. They would not that I should leave them; but I am here.

*Crabbe.* It is strange that I never heard of you in Germany. I spent a number of years in Leipzig, where I heard all the Gewandhaus concerts. I often saw new names on the programmes but never remember seeing yours.

*Schnabel (con furia).* I have scorn the Gewandhaus. When I come in Leipzig with my compositions I find nothing but enemies. They plot against me, that I will not be heard; they turn pale at the face when they look over my sinfonie, and make excuses with sick smiles,

and hurry away. Enraged, I shake my foot of their dust, and say—I will go to America. America shall soon be the leader in music. But, they love my music not at all. It is nothing that I have enter in the temple and know the secrets of art, while all others stand on the threshold. The world is not ready—I must die for a hundred years—then they will know Schnabel and worship his memory. [Here the Herr bolted a huge draught of beer and bolted out, taking inadvertently a handful of cigars with him.]

*Dr. Goodman.* Well, I hope that is not a specimen of German musicians. A mixture of art slang, sham philosophy, and self-conceit.

*Crabbe.* Heaven forbid! whatever musical culture we may possess in America, we owe to German musicians chiefly, not men of this stamp, but artists whose reverence for the mighty men their country has produced, has made them modest about their own merits.

*Parks.* But they are always ready to crow about their great musicians, even the best of them.

*Dallon.* Who can blame them? They have reason.

*Crabbe.* The only fault is that they should think or say that, because the greatest musicians were Germans, therefore all German musicians are great, or if not great, at least better than all other musicians.

*Dallon.* It is a curious subject for speculation—why painting touched its highest point in Italy, literature in England and music in Germany. Is it owing to mental constitution or "environment," or climate, or what is it?

*Dr Goodman.* With regard to English literature, I think the causes of its pre-eminence are easily found. The chief cause is the possession for so much longer a time than other peoples of freedom of speech. The Anglo Saxon has always had a habit of boldly saying his say, whether in religion or politics. This has nourished the spirit of free inquiry and the habit of keen

observation. With regard to Italian painting, perhaps it is because painting became to them the highest expression of the peculiar religious feeling of their time, as church architecture was of an earlier time. Music would seem to me to be the natural expression of a dreamy, introspective, subjective people; a people who strive to analyze the vaguest, most fleeting impulses, who can spend whole lives in Nephelococugia, as the Germans do, in spite of their, at the same time, intensely practical nature. But there may be, likely are, other reasons too occult to trace.

*Crabbe.* If you are right, Doctor, I fear there is little hope for the production of a great school of American painters or musicians. And I don't know but that it is rather a hopeful indication of our mental health, particularly as we already hold our own with the rest of the world in literature.

*Dr Goodman.* I have no doubt that a high degree of artistic culture, in any art but pure wholesome literature, is not an indication of a healthful mental development.

*Dalton.* I wonder you are not afraid to say so, in these days of "culture," "high art," and "aestheticism."

*Dr. Goodman.* Oh, these things are only the whims of an hour, very few people and these not of much weight or influence are in earnest about them.

*Crabbe.* Hazel has been dumb all the evening. I suppose he is thinking how applicable his allegory is to what we are discussing.

*Hazel.* I have been lost in wonder all the evening at the boundless assurance of Herr Schnabel, it has deprived me of the power of thinking. Then whatever you may think, I think I have said my say on the subject of art and culture in my allegory, which you seem disposed to laugh at.

*Crabbe.* Oh, the tenderness of these incubators of one

egg to their featherless progeny! Truly I think your allegory was no laughing matter, indeed we all agreed that it was not, that night, after you left.

*Dr. Goodman.* Can't you let Hazel's allegory alone? Hazel, he spoke in warm terms of it to me.

*Crabbe.* I saw that Hazel was depressed, and hit on that as the best way to restore his vigorous mind to its wonted activity. My design was therapeutic.

*Dr. Goodman.* Well, from you, that is a handsome apology for a misdoing. Hazel, let us say good night while he is in such an unusually gracious mood.

### THIRTEENTH EVENING.

*Discussion on Musical Memory, Dr. Goodman  
Tells a Story—Crabbe Tells Another.*

THERE was very little playing this evening. Dalton was suffering from rheumatism in his wrist and had to give up. They talked of various matters, musical and otherwise, and drifted at last into anecdotes of musicians, and stories connected with music; several were told, but the writer only kept notes of two. Dr. Goodman's story was suggested by a discussion on musical memory. Dalton maintained that musical memory was a certain indication of musical ability, or at least always accompanied it; Parks, that musical ability was independent of memory, because many fine players could not play unless the music

was before them; Crabbe lamented that there was but the one word, "musician," to designate all, from the composer to the hand-organ grinder, and insisted that it was as absurd to call a mere player, no matter how good; a musician, as it would be to call an actor a dramatist, or an elocutionist, a poet. All but Parks were agreed as to the presence of musical memory being a sure indication of musical ability, and many well-known anecdotes of great musicians were cited in proof of it. So Parks finally gave in, Crabbe saying to him that he must certainly be a genius, because he had heard him whistle or hum every operatic air from Rossini to Verdi. Parks was about to reply when the Doctor cut in, saying that if they wished to hear his story they had better stop their discussion. On this they settled themselves to listen, and the Doctor told the following story :

"In the neighborhood of a small town called Wainford, in Devonshire, lived a wealthy gentleman and his wife, named Leighton. They had had three children in the course of their life, two of whom died, and left them with one little girl, who was, at the time my story begins, about five years old—a bright, affectionate little creature, idolized by her parents. Wandering through the country side was an old vagabond, a welcome guest in the kitchens of the small farmers and the tap-rooms of the taverns, who picked up a precarious livelihood by playing on a battered fiddle some dozen old airs. The course of his wanderings often brought him to Leighton Grange, where he was always sure of a shilling and a substantial dinner, his performance being highly relished by the little Bertha, especially a wild Irish or Scotch air, with which he always closed his programme, and which Bertha would make him play over and over again, asking for it by the name of 'Granny King,' which was her own version of the unpronounceable Gaelic name (probably 'Gearan-Eachin,' 'Hector's Appeal') which he gave it. In Mrs. Leighton's employ was a rather pretty girl, Mar-

E

tha Downs, of violent, ungovernable temper, but so much attached to her little charge, with whom she was always gentle and patient, that her mistress overlooked her violent outbursts, and, though she often warned her, still retained her in her service. This girl had a lover, a worthless fellow from the neighboring town, half blacksmith, whole poacher, who was constantly losing his situations on account of the troubles he got into with all the game-keepers in the county. When out of place, or out of luck, he found a ready sympathizer in Martha, who gave or lent him her earnings, and at length began appropriating small articles in the house to supply the wants of her needy lover. These petty thefts being discovered, and traced to her, she was merely discharged, the kindness of her mistress not allowing her to prosecute her. About three months after her departure, Bertha disappeared; how, was a mystery not unravelled for many weary years, although all the machinery of the police was put in motion, and stimulated to unwonted activity by the offer of immense rewards. Hopeless and heart-broken, her parents mourned their loss, waiting in vain for tidings of their child. The discharged servant, Martha, had never been seen in the village or the neighborhood since she left the Leightons, but it was she, as was long after discovered, who stole Bertha. She must have watched with extraordinary skill and patience for weeks for an opportunity to be revenged on her late mistress, and at the same time to gratify the strange affection she felt for Bertha by kidnapping her. This she contrived to do, and, returning swiftly to London, now her home, she completely eluded even suspicion. She soon grew tired of her self-imposed burden, and, being now married to her scampish lover, who found a congenial atmosphere for his talents in London, she sought for some means to get rid of Bertha, meanwhile treating her with constantly-increasing cruelty. Hearing of a childless couple who wished to adopt a little girl, she, by some means, gained access to them, taking Bertha with her. She told a well-contrived story, and the people, struck with the beauty of the pitiful little face, which pleaded more eloquently than the words of the unprincipled woman, took her to



their home and their hearts, calling her 'Elsie,' the name of the only child they ever had, who died when about the age of Bertha. She soon learned to love her adopted parents, and the fast-fading memories of her home and of her subsequent miseries were completely effaced. This gentleman, Mr. Halsom, was a confirmed invalid, and, finding the climate of England uncongenial, he went to the south of France to live, accompanied by his wife and Elsie. Here, after a residence of fifteen years, he died. His widow and Elsie, now a beautiful girl of twenty, returned to England; but during Mr. Halsom's long absence his affairs in England had gradually fallen into confusion through the dishonesty of his agent, and they found on their return that, instead of the comfortable independence they expected, they had to face the trials of bitter poverty. As a first resource, Mrs. Halsom decided to visit Wainford, where she had a near relative. Her small stock of money was exhausted in paying the fare from London, and, on arriving at Wainford, she found that her relative, an aunt with some means, had died some years before, and her son had turned her little property into cash and emigrated to America. Quite broken down by this last addition to her misfortunes, she fell ill, and poor Elsie had to bear the whole burden, not only of nursing her, but of providing for the wants of both. Some of the better class of people in the town, interesting themselves in her unhappy story, gave her work as a needlewoman, by which she contrived to keep herself and her mother from starving. She was neat and expeditious with her needle, and they all commended her industry so highly that when Mrs. Leighton happened to ask of some one that she would recommend a sewing-girl to her, Elsie's praises were sounded so loudly that Mrs. Leighton was impatient until she had this paragon of seamstresses under her roof. The good heart of the old lady warmed strangely to the sweet, patient girl who bore her heavy burden so uncomplainingly. She visited her adopted mother, and strove, by every means in her power, to alleviate her pains. But the kind offices came too late; she slowly faded and after a few months of suffering, quietly borne, died, and Elsie was again a homeless orphan.

Mrs. Leighton had grown so attached to her that she insisted on her living with her as a companion. This poor Elsie was only too happy to do, and once more her days grew bright, and passed swiftly, and her fair face wore a smile of calm content. One lovely summer morning Mr. and Mrs. Leighton were sitting in the veranda in front of their house, talking in low tones, as was their wont, of their long-lost child, when an old man, blind and infirm, wandered up the pathway towards the house, and, taking from under his threadbare coat a battered old violin, began to play. With a shock of mingled pain and pleasure they recognized the vagabond fiddler that used so to charm little Bertha, and whom they had seen but once since Bertha's disappearance, when, with a sum that supplied his wants for many a day, they dismissed him with a request not to return. With bitter tears streaming down their faces, they listened as he played, one after another, his familiar stock of tunes. Elsie, who was in the doorway when he began to play, was strangely affected, and unconsciously drew near. With trembling limbs and starting eyes, she looked wildly at the once-familiar scene; she listened with increasing agitation to the once-familiar airs. Soon the old fiddler reached his last tune—the old, wild Gaelic air. He had played but a few measures when Bertha, with a flood of long-forgotten memories welling up in her heart, carried back to her long-lost childhood, cried, 'It is "Granny King!" Oh, Mother! Father! Don't you know me? I am little Bertha!' Here my story ends. Who can describe their joy on being so strangely united? Needless is it, too, to say that the wanderings of the old fiddler were at an end, and that a comfortable cottage sheltered him for the rest of his years. My story is true. I knew Bertha well; she is now the mistress of her old home and the mother of several lovely children, and no wandering minstrel, be he never so tattered or poor, ever goes away empty from her hospitable door."

When the Doctor had finished his story every one lit a fresh cigar and tried to find a more comfortable position. Crabbe hinted that he thought the young woman ought

to, or might have, found out sooner who she was. Dalton said that very likely the knowledge or suspicion had for some time been unconsciously growing on her, and the old violin-player's melody was like the spark to the tinder, and made all her apparently-forgotten associations and memories flame up to sudden brightness. Parks wanted to know if they thought she gave sure indications of musical ability, but his question was ignored as irrelevant. Crabbe then said he would tell them a musical story, but memory had nothing to do with it. He had heard it from a friend whose business required his residence for a year in the town where the events narrated in the story took place. All the members pressed him to proceed with his story, knowing well that there would be fun of some sort in it, or Crabbe would not think it worth the telling.

Dibbleville is a quiet, out-of-the-way town in one of the New England States, no railroad runs within twenty miles of it, or ever thought it worth its while to construct a "Dibbleville Branch," no summer boarder has ever invaded it, or ever will. It has no scenery, no fishing, no boating, not even a grove of trees large enough to shelter summer flirtations. Nothing but wide cornfields, dusty roads, and white frame houses dotted irregularly over the fields, or, in Dibbleville proper, condensed into a straggling little cluster which ends abruptly with the street, at the picket fence, white-washed of course, of the white frame Congregational church, where good Father Alhove has preached and prayed, to nearly three generations of Dibbleville church-goers. Standing in front of the church you have at one view all the beauties of Dibbleville,—architectural of course I mean. On the right hand, the first house, with a lantern over the street door always lit o' nights, is the hard-worked village doctor's. I. McBolus, M. D.," is on his bright brass doorplate. Through the open windows of his office on the ground floor, you can occasionally catch a glimpse of some fear-

stricken rustic, gazing around him with awed visage on the big and little bottles of all colors that line the Doctor's shelves. After you pass the Doctor's garden the next house is the little cottage of the widow Smiles. Here she lives with her overgrown son Johnny, the pride of her heart. Then comes an open field where all the geese, ducks, and chickens of the village meet in daily convocation. Then the blacksmith's shop from which comes all day long the sough of the bellows, or the ring of the anvil, as "Old Jeff," as he is called, and "Young Jeff," his son, blow up the glowing fire, or hammer at the shoes for the sleepy horses that are tethered to the fence, while their scarcely less sleepy owners lounge on the benches in front of the neighboring tavern, exchanging scraps of talk about crops and fallows, or cows and calves, or pigs and politics. On the left side, opposite the Doctor's, is the country "store," kept by shrewd Nicholas Driver. No one can tell him who should have credit, and who be made to pay cash, or where is the best place in Boston to buy goods; he is reported the richest man in the county and probably is, and deserves to be. He has three assistants in the "store." The widow Smiles's Johnny presides over the grocery department. A pale, melancholy youth, who oils his hair, Edward Trimble, dispenses the yards of ribbon and calico, or papers of pins and needles to the farmers' buxom daughters, by whom (the daughters of course) he is thought "sweet," to the deep disgust of their hobnailed admirers. Bill Davis, a red-haired, square-set youth has charge of the hardware and shoe department. Old Nicholas sits at his raised desk, keeping a sharp eye on them all, only descending when the presence of some of the more important of the Dibblevillians requires some special attention from him in person. The next house, the only brick house in the village, is Lawyer Sharpe's, a keen, wiry little man, with gray hair, and gold spectacles. Then comes the new drug store, just opened, by a "Graduate Pharmacy," as his framed diploma announces, from Boston, a pale, pimply-faced young man, who looks as if he were always smelling at some nauseous drug. Doctor McBolus was rather inclined to look on the drug "store" and its proprietor,

Peter Pillick, as a needless innovation. But the ladies, young and old, took his part. They liked to go to his nicely kept store, to gossip with him and each other, and buy, or price, the little bottles of scent, or sweet-smelling soap, or other such trifles, displayed so temptingly in his glass cases; then he was so "gentlemanlike," and so well informed in all the customs of the best society in Boston that he was the authority on all questions of etiquette or good manners or good taste, for even Dibbleville had some rudiments of these things, so it was no wonder they admired him. Spite of his pimples, and his lank thin body he was a dangerous rival of even the Adonis, Ned Trimble. The rest of the village can be left to your imagination. Now there was a movement afoot which agitated Dibbleville society to its centre, and this is how it came about. Ned Trimble, that nothing might be wanting to complete his perfections, played the flute, the girls said "divinely." Peter Pillick played the fiddle pretty well, he was first violin in the church choir, Bill Davis was second violin in the choir, and old Jeff, a ponderous, good natured, bald-headed giant, played the bass on a system of his own. He stuck little white pegs in the fingerboard to mark the places to put his fingers and numbered the notes he had to play in this ingenious fashion: C 2 meant E on the C string; G 3, C on the G string and so on, up to A 3, but no higher. He never ventured beyond the first position. The Doctor's daughter, the belle of the village, played the melodeon; a simple youth, the son of a farmer, Dick Jones by name, played the accordeon; last, but not least, Harry Sanders, the son of a well-to-do farmer, played the cornet. A jovial merry fellow was Harry, a devoted admirer of pretty Polly, who always seemed rather inclined to him, in fact the whole village looked on it as a match, but when gentlemanly Peter made his appearance and immediately enrolled himself as chief of the brigade of Polly's worshippers, the fickle Polly flattered at his preference, cooled towards the faithful Harry. They had some words about it and Harry went off, much to Polly's secret sorrow. But I have not yet told what was agitating the village so deeply. Peter had lofty notions

about music, as became one who had lived in Boston, and seeing so much talent lying idle, he conceived the idea of forming an orchestra, and cultivating the musical taste of Dibbleville. This it was that set the young people agog, and made the old folks shake their heads, and wonder what "them boys and girls would be up to next." Peter broached his idea on Friday night after prayer meeting. The others entered warmly into it. A meeting was called for the next evening, before choir practice, at Peter's store, and the Dibbleville orchestra was organized. A difficulty was encountered at the start that for a time threatened to overwhelm the young orchestra—this was, Who should be conductor? Peter, as the originator, and the best musician, claimed this post as his by right. But the others convinced him that his violin was the mainstay of the orchestra, and that he couldn't play and conduct both. They luckily hit on a happy compromise. Peter was to be called leader and director of the orchestra, and Solomon Graves, the leader of the choir, was to be conductor under Peter's directions. This Solomon was a lanky black-haired youth, with long cadaverous face, the only son of a worthy farmer couple. His parents and himself thought he was a genius, but unfortunately, he had, in spite of his genius, failed as a preacher [*Crabbe*—(*sotto voce*) then he *must* have been stupid] and as a schoolmaster, and was now living at home, doing nothing but mooning vacantly round the fields. Among his other accomplishments he had picked up a little musical knowledge, enough to read at sight a psalm tune, and was thus qualified to act as choir master. The melodeon being an awkward instrument to carry about, the good-natured Doctor gave them permission to hold their rehearsals in his parlor. Tuesday was decided on as the evening for practice. Then the question arose as to what music they should play. Peter was in favor of attacking Mozart's symphonies at once, but reluctantly gave up the notion on finding that they could not be obtained, arranged for an orchestra of the peculiar construction of theirs. Old Jeff thought they had better confine their attention to "psalm toons." He had marked all the bass in the "Boston Academy's" collection, and he warn't a goin'

to fool away his time markin' sympathys, wotever they were." He was pacified by Peter promising to mark all his basses for him, and so gave up the "psalm toon" idea. But the chief difficulty was not yet overcome, that is, where could they get music that was so arranged that they could utilize all their forces? They were almost despairing, when Peter wrote to a friend in Boston to ask if he could help him. This friend knew a musician who arranged pieces for minor theatres or amateur orchestras. He undertook to furnish them with a choice selection of popular airs, "arranged for flute, two violins, violoncello, cornet, melodeon, and accordeon, by Herr Blasenbalg, composer, director, etc., etc., Boston." This ingenious Herr had hit on the expedient of utilizing the accordeon as follows: This machine was in the key of D, and had two drones which sounded the tonic and dominant chords. He gave it what few single notes it could play in the key the music happened to be in, and when the harmony fell on the tonic or dominant of D, he wrote directions to turn on the drones.

At last, Tuesday evening arrived, and punctual to the minute the members took their places. Polly tossed up her head and put on her most unconcerned look, to hide her pleasure at seeing Harry again. Dick Jones who was never in a parlor before, blushed and shuffled, and felt that he had more legs and arms than he ever suspected. Peter, important, bustled about, placing his forces, and giving imperious directions, which were echoed by Solomon, who was in all his glory, arrayed with a stout sapling for a baton. To it they went, with zeal and energy, Solomon beating vigorously, and gazing vacant and hopelessly lost at his score, trying to read all the parts at once. Their first piece was a simple waltz in the key of C. The melodeon and the strings got on pretty well, being old practitioners. The flute blew spasmodically two or three random notes at intervals, always stopping short with a knowing look as if he was up to his part and knew what he was about. The cornet gave it up at once after a single blast, and looked at Polly, until the waltz was done, when with a start he remembered where he was and blew the last two notes as a solo. But the unlucky

accordeon was the master spirit of confusion. Poor Dick was very nervous and anxious to do his best, but in his confusion he kept turning on his drones in the wrong places to the detriment of the harmony. When they ended, Solomon wiped his perspiring brow, and they all said to each other that it was not so bad for a first attempt. They were all in earnest and worked hard, and finally they managed to learn all their little stock of pieces very well, barring the unfortunate liability of the accordeon to come in unexpectedly with the tonic or dominant of D. Great was the curiosity of the country round to hear the orchestra. To gratify their friends, they finally agreed to give a concert, the proceeds to go to the purchase of books for the Sunday School. This being a religious object, the deacons, after some hesitation, consented to let them have the use of the church. Peter was particularly desirous that they should play some classical music to elevate the taste of the villagers, and decided on the Andante of the Surprise Symphony. This was arranged for them by the talented Herr Blasenbalg, and they went to work. Peter told them the story of the symphony, and insisted especially on the necessity, in his directions, that they should not spoil the "surprise" by letting anybody into the secret. Now it happened, unfortunately, that a spirit of insubordination had crept into the orchestra. Polly thought that the few chords she had to play were very stupid and not a bit pretty. Ned Trimble thought that the flute didn't have enough of the melody. Dick was indignant because Peter was always girding at him about his unfortunate tonic and dominant of D. All were more or less tired of Peter's airs of superiority. Another element of discord was introduced; in his desire to give effect to the "surprise," Peter had pressed into service young Jeff, who was an adept at the snare drum, and Johnny Smiles, who, armed with a hammer and his mother's old sheet-iron tea tray, about a yard wide, was to officiate as cymbals. Jeff and Johnny felt that they were slighted in that they had but one bang in the whole programme.

Hearing them commune together to this effect, Harry, moved by a spirit of mischief, and the desire to annoy his



rival in Polly's affection, conceived a deep plot, which he communicated to the malcontents, who pledged themselves to follow his directions. Even old Jeff was heard to growl that, "He didn't see nothin' so mighty surprisin' in Mr. Haden's Andant." At last the night of the concert came. The farmers with their wives and daughters came from all the country round, in such numbers that the long shed behind the church, would scarcely accommodate the crowd of buggies, wagons, and buckboards, that sought its shelter. The church was so crowded, that the Parson felt a twinge, compounded of regret for the "worldliness" of his people and a slight feeling of jealousy. The people all sat with solemn faces as befitted the "meetin' house" or talked in inaudible whispers, as people do in church. When the hour for beginning arrived, and the orchestra was in its place, Parson Alhope walked to the front of the platform to say a "few words," in the course of which he referred to "prasin' the Lord with instruments of ten strings" and to "David's harp of solemn sound," also to the "natural desire of youth for something amusin'," hinting that a meeting for prayer with "singin' and makin' melody in their hearts" would be far better, and altogether speaking as ministers do about things they don't quite like, because they are not at the head and front of them, and have to take a back-seat. [Dr. Goodman—A libel—I will say something about that when you finish.] He closed his few words by "offerin' up" a prayer for the Sabbath School, the Church, the State, the country, the "President and Congress then assembled," the whole world, and the heathen, and at last sat down, to the evident relief of the assembly, and the concert began. Solomon was in a very nervous state. Peter had bullied what little sense he had out of him, with multifarious directions as to his position, his beating, and so on; the consequence was that he nearly upset the first piece, by saying, as was his custom with his singing class, "one, two, three, sing"—however, they recovered themselves, and nothing marred the performance but the failure of Trimble to "come in" soon enough with a solo passage; he commenced a bar too late, but nothing daunted, kept on to

the end. Also, poor Dick's accordeon would burst in with the tonic and dominant of D in the most unexpected places. With trifling exceptions of this nature all went well, until the great piece of the evening, the last on the programme, was reached, the "Andant of the Surprise Sympathy," as they called it. Expectation was on tip-toe to hear this. Rumors of its "surprisin'" nature had been circulated everywhere. Rumors also of an unexpected surprise were whispered among the knowing ones. There was a long pause, while Peter buzzed about, swelling with importance, giving orders to his forces. At last they began, the flute, the two violins, and the violoncello, as delicately as a cat in walnut-shell shoes. Then, as Solomon raised his stick, his left hand, and himself, on his toes, to give emphasis to the "surprise,"—before he "came down"—Johnny led off with a furious solo on the tea tray; Young Jeff followed with a roll on the drum; Dick's accordeon went off with its "hee haw, hee haw," in the key of D, and Harry "blew a blast so long and loud," ending with several cavalry calls. Solomon was paralyzed. Peter, aghast, swore under his breath. Polly, who was in the secret, laughed till the tears rolled down her face. The audience, thinking it was all right, applauded vociferously. The Widow Smiles beamed on her neighbors, saying: "My Johnny got in ahead of all on 'em with his surprise." At last the conspirators stopped, out of breath, and the rest staggered on with the movement, Old Jeff with a broad grin on his jolly face. But every now and then, at a signal from Harry, the "surprise" came in again with a crash, always received by the audience with rapturous applause, and by Peter with a start and a look of anguish. At last it was over, Parson Alhope came forward, beaming with smiles, and desired to express his thanks, and the thanks of his brethren in the congregation to the young people for the innocent, delightful evening's entertainment they had provided. Especially would he commend the performance of the last selection, which was, he was told, a production of one of Germany's greatest musical geniuses. Without presuming to be critical, he would say that it exhibited, in a marked degree, the combination of sweet music, with un-

pleasant noises, which he was assured was characteristic of German music. Then, after requesting the congregation to rise and sing the long-metre doxology, he dismissed them with a blessing. As soon as his back was turned, Peter, boiling with rage, pitched into his recalcitrant orchestra; they sheltered themselves behind Harry's broad shoulders. He simply laughed at Peter's rage. Peter would willingly have proceeded to extremities with him, but a wholesome fear of Harry's stalwart arms dictated prudence. Happening to catch sight of the laughing Polly, he turned to her as a safer object on which to vent his wrath. But at his first word, he observed a sudden clenching of Harry's fists, and a flash in his eye, that warned him that this was more dangerous ground than the other, and with some indistinct allusions to "barbarians" and "country bumpkins" he slunk away, and Polly, quite out of conceit of him, swallowed her pride and penitently begged for Harry's forgiveness, which he was willing enough to grant. Thus ended the Dibbleville orchestra, why, the country people never could understand, and to this day they talk about the "surprise" as the grandest thing ever heard.

No sooner had Crabbe ended than Dr. Goodman, who seemed impatient for the opportunity, began with some warmth his protest against the libel, as he called it, that Crabbe had perpetrated on his order.

*Dr. Goodman.* I think that, as a class, ministers of all denominations are quite as liberal, if not more so, to all innocent amusements, as any other class in the community.

*Crabbe.* Perhaps so, Doctor, if we accept their definitions of what is innocent, definitions that are sometimes founded on distinctions that would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to understand, for example, chess is innocent, cards are wicked, croquet, well; I believe that is not quite determined yet. Why, is there anything more intrinsically wicked in playing any one game for amusement than another? I can easily believe that a simple-minded

country minister might be in doubt as to the innocence or propriety of any amusement not guided and directed by himself.

*Dr. Goodman.* Even admitting that to be true—which I do not—why do you include all ministers in your sweeping assertion?

*Crabbe.* Don't blame me for it. I only repeat the story, as I heard it from my friend. He, I can assure you is a man of keen observation, and must have seen something in your profession to warrant his remarks.

*Dr. Goodman.* That is a true proverb about "birds of a feather." I felt sure that was an interpolation of your own.

*Crabbe.* Fie, Doctor! Are you going to turn satirical?

*Dalton.* The Doctor seems to forget that all ministers are not gifted with his catholic charity, for all men and all things. I dare say many of his brethren would think he was guilty of a sinful waste of time, in coming here once a week to listen to four fiddles. Isn't it so Doctor?

*Dr. Goodman, (who has quite recovered his equanimity).* Ah, well; perhaps so. I am afraid we are not all as liberal as we might be to those who differ from our notions of right and wrong.

*Crabbe.* Then you forgive my friend?

*Dr. Goodman.* I don't care a pin for you or your friend. You may say anything satirical you please. I know that, as a rule, ministers are guided by conscience, and if they make mistakes they are generally on the right side.

*Crabbe.* What is a mistake on the right side? Can mistakes be right?

*Dalton.* Crabbe you are only talking for the sake of being disagreeable.

*Parks.* When Crabbe plays A, on the open string when it should be on the D string, it is a mistake on the right side, because it is more likely to be in tune.

*Crabbe.* Oh, I understand it now, that's the reason you sometimes leave out three or four bars, of course it is a mistake in one sense, but then your stopping is always a move in the right direction.

*Dalton.* You had better go home; you are getting dull; I never heard such elaborate attempts at sarcasm.

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FOURTEENTH EVENING.

*An Attack on Tenth rate Musicians, and a  
Rhapsody on Genius by Crabbe.*

**C**RABBE and Dalton were in a savage mood this evening and made fierce onslaughts on the whole race of tenth rate musicians, who supply the market with "arrangements," variations, and so forth. The vials of their wrath were drawn on the devoted heads of these poor people by an unfortunate remark of Doctor Goodman's, to the effect that the numerous and ever increasing host of writers of music was an indication that the talent or ability to write pleasing music was more widespread in our day than ever.

*Crabbe.* Composers are of three kinds; the fools who rush in, the angels who fear to tread, and the serene dwellers on Olympus.

*Dalton.* Severe, sententious, but true in the main.

*Hazel.* I hope there are no composers among us, I confess to several unpublished attempts.

*Crabbe.* Your modesty saves you from the first class.

*Dr. Goodman.* And I hope, goes with ability enough to entitle you to enter the second class, at least.

*Crabbe.* Prettily said, Doctor; but, remember, Hazel, happy is the man who discovers in secret that he is not a genius, and needs not to have the fact brayed in his ears by the many-throated public.

*Parks.* I think it is very unfair to be so hard on people because they write a little, and find some people to admire their compositions.

*Crabbe.* Compositions!!

*Parks.* All the world can't be expected to like grand compositions, and I think they have a right to have the kind of music they like.

*Hazel.* Parks has evidently been a sinner. I wonder which of Crabbe's classes he ranks himself in.

*Crabbe.* Oh, somewhere between the rushers and the fearers, probably disowned of both.

*Dalton.* You are too hard on him. Parks has certainly a vein of melody, he has never ventured beyond simple ballads and songs, but a daisy is as perfect in its way as an oak; a song then, as perfect a work of art as a symphony.

*Crabbe.* Stop! Dalton, Parks will hereafter be—daisy like—irrepressible.

*Parks.* Crabbe thinks that "because he is virtuous" nobody should have "cakes and ale."

*Crabbe.* No; cakes and ale are very good in their way, but I prefer nectar and ambrosia.

*Parks.* He wishes to be thought of kin to those "serene dwellers on Olympus" he spoke of just now:

*Dalton.* As usual, we begin by legitimate discussion,

and end in personalities. This is the Rome to which all our roads lead.

*Crabbe.* It is not my fault, I set out with an earnest purpose to discuss the tenth rate scribblers, when you interrupted me.

*Dr. Goodman.* Gentlemen, do let Crabbe have his say. I am anxious to hear why he condemns these poor people so severely.

*Crabbe.* I will make some allowance for ballad and song writers, the "vein of melody" with which Dalton (and I, also,) credited Parks often exists where there is neither knowledge nor capability to advance to anything higher. I will spare, also, the writers of dance music; bad as most of it is, it is quite good enough for the purpose and the people it is written for; but oh! these writers of "fantasies," "reveries," "nocturnes," and the rest of the fiddle-faddle of weak melody supported by two chords. Strange are the manifestations of human vanity and incapability! No sooner has a tyro learned the tonic and dominant chords, but he straightway inflicts a patient public by "composing" reveries or nocturnes, or some such drivel.

*Hazel.* I can bear witness, when I find a pupil with more aptness than the general for harmony, I am often amazed to find how soon they know more than I do. If I suggest that certain progressions might be better, they coolly insist that they prefer them as they are.

*Crabbe.* Ay. They find that the rules that guided the great composers are but arbitrary trammels on their genius.

*Dalton.* Yes; but these scribblers Crabbe has denounced are as angels of light in comparison with the "arrangers," the variation grinders, the "transcriptionists" who count up their "works" to opus 10,000.

*Crabbe.* They are something like, but not as good as, the playwrights who "adapt" novels to the stage.

*Parks.* Won't you except such writers as Liszt and Thalberg?

*Crabbe.* No. As composers, they must be judged by their original work; not by their musical commentaries on other men's ideas.

*Dalton.* I have a particular enmity for those men who take a well-known classical piano composition and torment it into some almost impossible display of their own finger dexterity, as Tausig did with that perfect work, the "Invitation to the Dance," or as another—I won't mention his name, as he is still living,—did with a waltz of Chopin's.

*Crabbe.* The greatest atrocity of this kind I have as yet heard of is that some piano prestidigitator has improved Weber's rondo, "Mobile Perpetuum," by changing the parts from one hand to the other! And yet these are the things a discriminating public applauds.

*Dalton.* Nor must we forget to include in our denunciation the writers of pieces "for the left hand alone."

*Crabbe.* With all my heart.

*Hazel.* Art is at its lowest when it seeks applause for mere technical excellence, or astounding tours de force.

*Crabbe.* Ay. Hazel is the man to say a thing that everybody knows in a concise, picturesque, even poetic way.

*Hazel.* I thought you had forgotten it, as you are wasting your heavy artillery on mere sparrows.

*Dalton.* Don't you think there are symptoms of a reaction from the pyrotechnic school? I think it has, in fact, reached its limit. There are no more surprises left for virtuosity; people are getting tired of its already stale achievements; and the great lights of music are be-



ginning to be seen again, as the smoke of the pyrotechnists clears off.

*Hazel.* Yes. I suppose there are more people study and play the sonatas of Beethoven and Mozart, and Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne worte" than ever.

*Dalton.* Truly, these composers are "crucified all day long," on grand, square, and upright pianos.

*Crabbe.* Just think of it! There is not an hour in the twenty-four when the "Sonata Pathetique" is not being played somewhere. As the sun rises, say at Hong Kong, the daughters of the English residents begin their daily practice. As the sun moves westward, the pianos in Australia awake. Still further, and the "Sonata Pathetique" begins in Russia. Then Germany, France, and England "take up the wondrous tale." Still westward, and a thousand pianos in our happy land begin to twang with it, from New England to the Pacific. Talk of Victoria's ceaseless drum-beat! It is nothing to it. They say that in every second of time some soul enters or quits this vain show we call "life." This seems a wonderful thing; but it is a trifle when you consider that all nature has conspired to bring it about. But when you think that one weak man has thought a thought, or written a piece of music, that for years has never ceased to sound from an ever-swelling number of pianos all round the world—I tell you that is something to wonder at. While we sit here talking, how many players are just beginning, or are in the middle of, or have just finished it! How many poor girls have shed, or are shedding, tears over its difficulties! How many "professors" are daily and hourly moved to inward, it may be, but not the less wicked, profanity over the bungling attempts of dull pupils to master it. Genius is an awful responsibility. Beethoven's genius is directly responsible for this ocean

of unuttered profanity. I wouldn't like to think at my last hour that I had written anything that would vex the ears of Heaven for years after I was dead.

*Parks.* Make our mind easy. There is no danger.

*Crabbe.* Oh, poor little wit! How he jumped with glistening eyes at the chance, and whipt out his little sting.

*Dr. Goodman.* I would like to know, Crabbe, how much of that was earnest, how much fun? That is a solemn truth, that "Genius is a great responsibility." It is genius that rules the world in every department, and it behooves its possessor to look well to it that he use it aright.

*Crabbe.* It is possible to mis-employ talent, but not genius. The man is master of his talents, but his genius masters him, and drives him whither it will, often against his inclination.

*Dalton.* I think "respectable mediocrity" bears wider rule than genius. Genius is apt to be too erratic to rule wisely.

*Dr. Goodman.* It may be that "respectable mediocrity" does rule, but it is only as a deputy or vice. Every possession we have in art, science, or government has been won for us by genius. The masses of mankind are moved like puppets by the ideas of the gifted few, and are, like puppets, unconscious of the power that moves them.

*Crabbe.* In other words, mediocrity, respectable and otherwise, is the engine with cranks, pistons, and wheels, all nicely adjusted, but dead and still. Genius is the steam that puts them in motion. I can carry my figure still farther. The fire that gets up the steam is the "environment" of the genius. The house rent, taxes, butcher's bill, or what not, that drives him to work—for

your true genius is generally lazy—this is what I meant a while ago, when I said genius drove its possessor against his inclination.

*Hazel.* "It is ever thus." No sooner does the talk take a serious turn than Crabbe, like Satan in Paradise, tries to spoil it.

*Parks.* Did he tempt you with a Crabbe apple?

*Crabbe.* Parks, the only excuse for a pun is, that it be *a propos*. Eschew that frame of mind that betrays the small wit; that is, a spider-like lying-in-wait to seize every poor fly, in the shape of a small joke, that offers itself.

*Parks.* You crush me with your Johnsonian manner. Are you the only one of us that is entitled to be funny?

*Crabbe.* He would be funny! Misguided youth, that is the ambition of an "end man," of a "circus clown." Wit and humor are never funny. Fun is the diversion of the low, the vulgar, the ignorant.

*Parks.* You needn't pitch in like that. I only used the word colloquially; every one does.

*Crabbe.* Enough. I forgive you this once.

*Hazel.* You'd better come with me now, Crabbe, and walk off your fit of virtuous indignation.

*Parks.* Yes; take a fun ambulation.

*Crabbe (et omnes).* Oh, horror.

## FIFTEENTH EVENING.

### *Parks Astonishes the Club with a Satirical Poem.*

EVER since our "Scratch" has been holding its weekly meetings, Parks has been breathing vague threatenings of an intention to "get even" with the other members, by way of revenge, for the many direct and indirect snubs and flings of one kind and another that they have put upon him. They had so often twitted him with his unfulfilled threat, and he had so often said "wait and you will see" that they began to fear that the winter would pass away without bringing on them his promised castigation.

They were therefore quite taken by surprise this evening, when he made his appearance with a small roll of manuscript, neatly tied with a pink ribbon. So great was their curiosity, they could hardly wait until the "Scratch" was over to hear its contents. All through the playing, Parks wore a smile of conscious triumph, as much as to say, "Won't I astonish these fellows!" At last the wished-for moment came, the club settled itself to listen, and Parks, after some feigning of reluctance, cleared his throat and read as follows:

O, muse! divinest of the tuneful nine,  
The first soprano in the choir divine,  
That under leadership of great Apollo  
Beat all the choruses of mortals hollow.  
Aid me, Polymnia, if that be thy name,  
Or thou, Calliope, fan to ardent flame,

The glowing tho'ts imprisoned in my breast  
That struggle fierce, as they would rend my vest.  
Fain would I sing—but not of love or arms,  
Of deeds of heroes, or of beauty's charms,  
Far other task my untried pen would prove.  
Might it but get in th' unaccustomed groove.  
The glories of the "Scratch" would be my theme,  
A nobler far than aught of these I deem.  
Then help me, muse, with syntax, words and rhyme,  
Nor tax with sin my rash attempt to climb.  
Who that hath heard hath ever failed to mark  
The look of high resolve, fixed firm and dark,  
That rests upon each face, when bow in hand,  
First fiddle raps upon his music stand,  
And, while with anxious glance he cons his score,  
The signal gives—one, two, three, four.  
Then from the quivering strings what sounds arise  
As each—his heart aflame—with vigor plies  
The grating horsehair o'er the catgut taut  
And wakes the spirit of the defunct cat  
That parted loth with all her nine-fold life  
And gave her entrails to the cruel knife,  
And wist not that her mewes would live again  
To serve the muse of music loving men.  
A Brisk Allegro first their mettle tries,  
Whose fugue-like theme forever faster flies.  
First fiddle boldly dashes at the strain  
And strains each nerve the tempo to maintain.  
His courage fails not, tho' his fingers trip,  
When he a sixth position high would grip.  
He "scamps" the phrase, how, each musician knows  
And comes in solid on the final close.  
Now to the "bass" the wandering theme descends  
And to th' attack, the 'Cello anxious bends,  
Two notes in tune he strikes upon the open strings,  
Then to the wind both time and tune he flings,  
As springing at a passage with his thumb,  
He draws a wail that strikes his hearers dumb.  
And makes them even wish that they were deaf  
As he mistakes a tenor for a treble clef,

Anon, with tune recovered on harmonic A,  
By easy stages, down he works his way  
Until he gains the port where he would be.  
In safety landed on the open C.  
But oh! what mortal pen can e'er aspire,  
Untaught, unaided by celestial fire,  
To paint the consternation deep that grows  
And in each luckless hearer's bosom glows,  
When, with a smile inquisitors might wear,  
Viola takes his turn to torment th' air.  
With gestures wild, and elbow, shoulder high,  
With stiffened wrist, resolved to do or die,  
His bow-arm plunges madly to and fro,  
His right hand knows not what his left would do,  
With lofty scorn expression marks he slights,  
Thinks "time was made for slaves" and so delights  
Like skilled professors of the manly art  
To knuckle "out of time" his suffering part.  
Anon, encountering with double stops  
He coolly from the maimed passage lops,  
One of the twain and leaves the empty chord  
To mourn the absence of its major third.  
Confusion worse confounded follows fast  
As each one strives to be, at least, not last,  
A closing organ point of sixteen bars  
Makes 'Cello, thankful, bless his lucky stars  
That—let the others wrangle as they may,  
He sure was right, no matter what they say.  
First fiddle beats the time with anxious face,  
Viola beats him in the flying race;  
All beat Beethoven out of form and shape  
And force the spirit of his muse t' escape.  
But list! how second fiddle bears his part  
In this attempt to storm the temple of art.  
With dainty steps he foots his dubious way  
Unhindered by these erring sons of clay,  
His modest merit courts not sounding praise,  
But like the violet, hides from public gaze.  
His be the meed—altho' 'tis all unsought,  
That in the "Scratch" he is the one bright spot.

These are thy glories, these the joys, O "Scratch,"  
From thy pursuit with fearful joy we snatch.  
But my tired pen, unequal to the strain,  
Must leave unsung the pleasures that remain;  
Tho' greater e'en than these my lines disclose,  
For inspiration's stream no longer flows.

Forgive, O muse! these uncouth words and rough,  
Nor blame a mortal that he found it tough  
To frame in fitting lines and sounding rhyme  
A theme so vast, transcendant, and sublime.  
My powers are weak and poor, and well you know it,  
So choose another time, another poet,

*Crabbe.* The last two lines are remarkable for being the only ones with any sense in the whole rigmorole.

*Hazel.* It's a scandalous libel. He's oftener wrong than any of us.

*Dalton.* You have overshot the mark. Your estimate of yourself is the only piece of unexaggerated satire in it.

*Hazel.* He "the only bright spot"—we might all exclaim with Lady Macbeth—"out, damned spot."

*Crabbe.* How any one can be a "spot" in a scratch, I don't know, unless he's a spot to be scratched, like a flea-bite.

*Dalton.* Oh, he's not the first scribbler that the exigencies of rhyme have compelled to talk nonsense.

*Parks,* Pitch in, gentlemen; the more you do, the surer I feel that I have hit you.

*Dalton.* If a man flings a spadeful of mud into a crowd it is no merit to him that he hits some one.

*Dr. Goodman,* (*anxious to change the subject and restore harmony.*) How does it happen, Dalton, that we have never had a lecture or essay, or even a story from you?

*Dalton.* If ever you should, I promise it will be more improving than some of the contributions we have had to listen to.

*Hazel.* Yes, and dry as Sahara.

*Parks.* Lectures! We have had nothing else from him as long as I can remember, and who can imagine Dalton telling a story.

*Dalton.* Just see! what insufferable airs he puts on, as if he had done a wonderful thing in writing that silly trash.

*Crabbe.* Can you wonder? Remember, Parks is the only one of us who, like Silas Wegg, has "dropt into poetry."

*Hazel.* "Dropt into poetry," indeed! Floundered into doggerel.

*Dr. Goodman.* Oh, dear, I fear you have soured all the milk of human kindness in our friends with your unlucky pasquinade. Why is it that men who play fiddles are so touchy about remarks as to the way they do it?

*Crabbe.* "Let the galled jade wince, my withers are unwring." Dalton, we demand a something from you at our next meeting. We care not if you exceed the satiric brilliancy of Parks.

*Dalton.* Agreed; and it won't be a lecture.

*Dr. Goodman.* For one, I feel sure it will be interesting whatever form it takes.

*Hazel.* It is no uncommon thing for people to display powers they were never suspected of possessing. Dalton may tell a better story than any of us.

*Crabbe.* Are we going to wind up with a love feast? "Claw me and I'll claw thee."

*Dr. Goodman.* Hush! Don't try to spoil everything.

*Dalton.* I have a very curious manuscript in my possession, a sort of autobiographical sketch. I will read it at one of our meetings. I am sure it will interest you.



## SIXTEENTH EVENING.

*Mr. Bullyer and Parks' Friend, Fred, Air their Views.*

TWO strangers were present at the meeting this evening. Mr. Bullyer, vulgar, and rich through transactions in wheat and pork, had a very high opinion of his taste in all matters connected with art, especially with music. This opinion was not hampered by the least tincture of knowledge. He had just returned from his first trip to Europe, and was convinced that he was thereby qualified to speak with unquestionable authority on all points connected with music. He therefore "laid down the law" with that exasperating self-satisfied arrogance that so often accompanies the total lack of knowledge. He gained admittance by forcing himself on Hazel, to his intense disgust. Mr. Bullyer occasionally condescends to patronize the church of which Hazel is the organist. He invited himself into the choir for the express purpose of teaching Hazel how to play the organ.

Parks brought a friend with him, a youth with a poetic eye and long hair. We failed to catch his name when Parks introduced him, but were satisfied with the loss. This youth was of the intensely æsthetic school. His ideal of the musician was drawn from "Charles Auchester." He, too, was totally ignorant of music, but made up for

it by his familiarity with the cant of the "Auchester" school of drivellers.

These two gentlemen furnished excellent entertainment to the club, who were alternately amused and exasperated with them. The last piece played was the C minor quartette of Beethoven. Hardly had they finished than the gushing youth spake as follows :

*Youth.* What an intensity of spiritual yearning after the infinite is there in Beethoven ! So different from the calm empyrean atmosphere of Mozart, who exhibits a soul that has obtained the mastery over the questionings that vex common men, and has reached the serene, self-poised calm of a lofty spirit that has overcome the baser things of life. Beethoven is like a strong, imprisoned spirit struggling towards the light, lonely and sad, his mighty pinions ever and anon beaten down by storms of passion, yet ever remounting with dauntless courage to soar towards the heaven he sees beckoning him upward, ever upward.

*Crabbe.* What a pity it seems that great men do not out-live their commentators. It would be so pleasant for them to know what their motives were for what they did and how they did it. We owe a debt of gratitude to the commentators. It is so pleasant to know that great works were produced as the result of "soul conflicts" of "strivings after the unattainable," and so on, never from such sordid considerations as the desire of profit, or the love of fame, or the jealousy of rivals.

*Youth.* Shame ! Would you destroy the noblest aspiration of our nature, bring down the lofty struggles of genius to the level of vulgar trade or equally vulgar love of fame ? Oh, no ! Genius works in a world apart, is untouched by the base passions of this earth.

*Crabbe.* Yes. Raphael and Angelo were bosom friends,

Handel and Buononcini, Gluck and Piccini, Mozart and Salieri, Beethoven and Haydn. I need not extend the list.

*Mr. Bullyer (who sat listening to this conversation with mingled impatience and amazement, now broke out).* What's the use of all that big talk; sounds like two noospapers pitchin' into each other. I've been waiting a chance to give you my opinion on several things. Its no use talking about music unless you've been to Europe as I have, and heard all the best things going there. If you want to hear what real music sounds like, just you go to Vienna and hear "Strosses orchester" play. I tell you, them fellows know how to do it. Don't talk to me of your pokey quartettes, four fellows scraping away without any toon. I've been nearly asleep all evening. Give me something lively. I heard a polka in Paris,—every now and then, pop, went a champagne cork as natural as life. I went everywhere and heard everything. I can tell the minute I hear a thing whether it's good. A fellow with a good ear don't need to know anything about music to tell that.

*Crabbe.* You're right. Sufficiency of ear supplies the lack of knowledge in more things than music.

*Bullyer.* Of course it does. I knew you'd agree with me. If you fellows would take my advice, you'd get some of those arrangements of good "toons" they play over there. You could get lots of people to come and hear you without their getting sleepy neither. I tell you what, Hazel, you must get some of them things and play them on the organ. I like to hear something that'll make the people go marching out of church, 'liven them up a bit after the sermon.

*Crabbe.* An antidote, as it were, to the serious part of the service.

*Bullyer.* Just so. Them preachers get a talking about dying and all sorts of things that make a fellow feel blue, an' a right lively piece on the organ after makes 'em feel all right again, you know.

*Dr. Goodman.* But, my dear sir, do you think it is well to try to efface any serious impression that may have been produced?

*Bullyer.* You're a preacher, and, of course, you'll take their part. Everything that's pleasant is wrong.

[*Dr. Goodman perceiving the kind of a man he has to deal with, with a sigh, forbears to answer.*]

*Crabbe.* Good, *Bullyer*. I do like a good argument. You have shut up the doctor. That's a good idea—to make the organist a counterpoise to the preacher. It stimulates the preacher to more strenuous efforts, it represses any tendency to vanity he may have; when, thinking he has been more than usually impressive, he remembers that the organist in five minutes can undo the effect it took him an hour to produce.

*Parks (aside).* I never can make out what *Crabbe* is driving at.

*Bullyer.* Yes, sir; you are one of the most sensible men I ever met. Come and see me sometime. I like sensible men, even if they are musicians. Hang scientific music, I say; let us have music people like, whether it is in church or out. Hazel, my boy, if you'd take my advice you'd get your people to get some A, 1, singers in your choir, and you'd arrange some of them things I've been telling you of for anthems. I tell you what! stock in your church would soon go up. Just you think over what I'm telling you. I'll come in your choir again soon and give you some fresh ideas. I must bid you fellows good-night now. [*Exit.*]

*Dallon.* Well, Doctor, can you wonder that church

music has fallen to so low a standard when such men have the power, which they too often have, to dictate to both minister and organist?

*Dr. Goodman.* I am afraid it is a symptom that some things of more moment than the music are at a low ebb in the churches.

*Youth.* The highest, truest expression of religion is the love of the Beautiful. Art is the expression in outward symbols of the Beautiful. Therefore, true worship demands that all that is worthiest in art should combine to elevate and purify the soul. Architecture, painting, poetry, sculpture, music—these make the fitting temple. The soul is subdued to its proper attitude only when alone, though surrounded by crowds, it kneels in some dim, vast cathedral, adorned with the pure emanations of the genius of architect, sculptor, and painter, and listens with holy awe to the solemn chant of robed choristers, while the majestic roll of the organ, in pulsing cadence, fills the vast space from marble floor to lofty, fretted roof with waves of sound that float the rapt soul to heaven.

*Dr. Goodman (aside to Crabbe).* "And he took a little child and set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Except ye be as this child ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

*Crabbe.* Ah, Doctor, how one such saying punctures all the vast wind-bags blown by these worshippers of the Ideal or Beautiful to raise men by balloon power to heaven.

*Hazel.* What are you two whispering together?

*Crabbe.* Oh, nothing! The elevating and illuminating power of gas.

*Parks.* What has that to do with what Fred is saying?

*Crabbe.* His mention of dim cathedrals suggested it.

Crabbe and the Doctor smiled together, to the others' mystification, and the party broke up.

## SEVENTEENTH EVENING.

### *Dalton Reads a Strange Story.*

“ACCORDING to promise,” Dalton said, “I will read to you the manuscript of which I spoke at our last meeting but one. It is, as you see, somewhat voluminous; but the writing is large and straggling, so it will not take very long to read it. It bears this strange title: ‘The Confession of a Lost Artist,’ and is as follows:—

“Who reads this record of a lost, despairing soul, let him take warning lest, if dowered with Heaven’s best gift, Genius, he despise it, and—proving unfaithful to the sacred trust—sell, for gold or honors, his birthright. This did I: Once I was happy. My life was bright with lofty hopes and a pure ambition; the ambition of an artist who loved his art as his life thrilled through my soul, nerving me to ever loftier efforts. But now, hopeless, prisoned, in chains, I sit alone, and wait in dull patience and black despair, while these awful granite walls that will soon close around me are built ever higher, higher, and nearer, nearer, by invisible hands. Higher, higher, closer, closer, the cold black stones, as though alive and eager to crush out my life into nothingness, are growing. Oh, that they would come quicker, that I might find oblivion under their mountain masses! I first became conscious of existence in the quaint old city of Nuremburg. A dreaming child, bereft of both parents, and left to the care, or rather the neglect, of an aunt already overburdened with a numerous family, my time was spent in wandering through the quiet old streets, where the houses, growing closer as they rose, until they

nearly met overhead, seemed to be whispering to each other mysterious secrets about the dead and gone generations that had lived in them. Every fantastic gable had its own history for me. The grinning monsters carved on the church porches were my familiar friends. I peopled the old buildings with a world of my own, until dream-land became my natural home, and the real world was barely tolerated as a hated necessity. No thought was taken for my education; but I contrived, Heaven knows how, to learn to read, and found fresh fuel for my dreams in the weird legends that clustered round every tower and tottering ruin in the old town. Thus passed my life until I was about fifteen years old, when my aunt, with a sudden access of religious zeal, determined that I must be catechised and confirmed according to the Lutheran custom. After many weary hours of study and wearier hours of questioning by the zealous young divine whose duty it was to prepare the children, I was pronounced ready for this, to me, unmeaning rite. I had never been in a church, and went thither, when the day of confirmation arrived, in company with a large number of boys and girls who were about my own age, unwillingly enough, little knowing what awaited me. The church where this ceremony took place possessed one of the most famous organs in all Germany, and an equally famous organist. Like a sudden awakening from death to life, or rather like the realization of my wildest dreams, the power of music seized on me as the sublime harmonies now rose and rushed over me in billows of sound, now gently and ever more softly, like music of retreating angels, seemed to draw me after them up to heaven. My destiny was fixed. I must be an organist. With a courage born of my strange exaltation, I went to the organist at the close of the service, of which I remember nothing, and with a child's directness said—'Teach me to play like you.' The good old man smiled gently, patted my head, and said, with pardonable vanity: 'I might teach you to play, but to play as I do—that is another thing.' Then, apparently observing, for the first time, my rapt, earnest look, he added, more seriously: 'My dear child, you look as if you had

seen an angel. What is the matter with you?' I tried to tell him, stammered out some incoherent words, when my overstrained nerves gave way, and I burst into a violent fit of weeping. He tried to soothe me, and soon succeeded by saying that if I would come to him every morning he would teach me to play, as he felt sure he could make something out of me. That my progress was rapid, I need not say. My kind old master soon grew proud of me, and would often say to admiring friends: 'Here is the lad to take my place when these old fingers have lost their cunning.' My fame soon began to spread, and by the time I was twenty, I was looked on as one of the most promising organists in Germany. I was now regularly engaged as assistant organist. My dear old friend was often ailing and I then took his place. At last, full of years and honors he died, blessing me with his latest breath; charging me earnestly to be true to my art, to reverence the gifts I possessed, as entrusted to me by Heaven, to be used for the glory of the giver. I was now formally installed in his place. Still my fame grew. People came from distant cities and heard me wonderingly, prophesying that yet another was to be added to Germany's long roll of rulers in the realms' of sound. Thus, day by day, my life unfolded, ever more and more bright, when the blight fell. It was my custom to give, on two evenings of the week, a concert of organ music. It chanced that I observed at one of these concerts,—ah! how should I describe her!—a poem in motion, music become a visible presence. The Epiphany of the purest ideal—Amalia—O, Amalia! Joy touching heaven, and woe deep as hell, are in that name for me. The walls are closing—it is dark—dark. I can go no farther. . . . The dull calm has returned, I must finish my dreadful task. . . . She was the only daughter of the old Count Oscar of Armerland. This proud but poor noble, dwelt in a partly ruined castle not far from the city. His naturally haughty temper was soured by ever increasing poverty, but I thought not of him. Like that sudden awakening of my sleeping soul when touched by the magic wand of music, on that memorable day long ago, the vision of Amalia awoke my heart to the power of love;



henceforth, music became for me the eloquence of a passion that words could only profane, people wept as they listened to the passionate wail that my agonized soul drew from the responsive keys of the organ. I had, as yet, no thought of offering to her my devotion, but was content to worship at a distance. Who can set limits to the power of sympathy. How did she divine the passion that inspired my music? I cannot tell. But so it was. Chance which determines the fate of so many things, determined ours. One evening, after the concert, her father engaged in solemn conversation with some of the chief men of the city; they prolonged their talk long after every one else had left the church. Amalia, meanwhile, had wandered round the old building, looking at the quaint monuments that marked the resting places of many a strong Ritter of the ancient time. It so chanced that she entered one of the transepts as I came down the stairs from the organ-loft, and we met—alone—face to face. There was one look—the words 'Amalia,' 'Ernst'—and clasped in each other's arms we sobbed our vows of eternal love. Our rapture was soon interrupted by her father calling her impatiently; she flew from me, and then—I felt with a strange shudder, the cold shadow of the huge despair that has since swallowed me. Why go over the old sad story?—stolen interviews few and short. Blind as we were, we knew that ours was a hopeless love; too soon, discovery came. Her father raged like a madman at the presumption of a "beggar's brat," as he called me, aspiring to the hand of his daughter. In his fury he struck her for disgracing her lofty name by stooping to love a plebeian such as I.

"Oh, the long nights of racking agony, the wild delirious days; yet, strangely, I think of them as belonging to some one else and pity him, pity him. I sit for hours and question myself, Was it I who endured? Then I fall to weeping; and oh, how I pity him, whether it was I or another who suffered. Something has gone from my memory of what followed. I can only, with labor, recall fragments. I heard, somewhere, that the old count had declared that his daughter having proved unworthy to be the wife of a man of noble birth, he would give her to

the first suitor who presented himself, who was rich enough to free him from his embarrassments, no matter what his station. This roused me to a new life. Riches became my sole desire. I dreamed of finding vast treasures, I spent days and nights searching through deserted ruined houses with the hope of finding some forgotten hoard. I still retained my skill as a player and composer. I bargained eagerly with publishers, exacting the last farthing they would give for my music; with every addition to my small hoard, my raging thirst for gold increased. I tortured myself forming vain plans to grow rich rapidly, when a strange event took place. One day a pleasant looking elderly man, quietly and becomingly dressed, was waiting for me when I descended from the organ loft, he approached me with the easy manner of a man of the world, complimented me on my performance, and in a patronizing way, inquired about my prospects. I was easily induced to pour out all my griefs and desires to any one who would listen, and told him eagerly of my wish to grow rich. He smiled a strange smile and said: 'I am rich—rich beyond your wildest dreams—but I would willingly give the half of it to possess your talent.' 'Ah!' I cried, 'I wish it were possible; without Amalia I value it not.' 'If you will consent,' he replied, 'nothing is easier.' As he spoke these words he fixed on me a look that seemed to burn into my brain. With some mad hope I said: 'I consent, with all my heart.' With a strange gesture he suddenly and unexpectedly put his hand on my head, I felt a shock, like fire, rush through my body, and fell insensible. When I regained consciousness I was alone, but held a closely folded paper in my hand; mechanically I opened and read it, without at first comprehending these strange words: 'Present this at the bank, Amalia is yours.' Suddenly their meaning flashed on me. Delirious with joy I rushed through the streets, entered the heavy gates of the temple of mammon, laid the paper before the attentive clerk. With a look of surprise he picked it up. I then observed for the first time some writing at the bottom of the sheet, what it was I know not, but its effect was magical. Amazed, stupefied, I stood silent while the head men of the bank crowded

around me, and congratulated me on my sudden rise to wealth. The news spread like wild fire through the city that a liberal stranger had made Ernst the organist wealthy, and now he would have nothing to do but to add to his fame as one of the greatest composers in Germany. I heard them speaking thus as I left the bank, but passed on unheeding, intent only on claiming Amalia as my own. Then I heard, I know not how, that she was away, no one knew where, or when she would return. Frantic at the delay in the fruition of my hopes, I wandered aimlessly about the streets for hours, until ready to sink with weariness and exhaustion, when, bethinking me of my old tried friend, my solace during so many weary hours, my organ, I turned my steps towards the church. The evening was approaching rapidly as I entered it. The ghastly forms on the sculptured arches and on the tombs of the knights seemed, in the dim light, to be nodding their heads to each other and leering at me as I passed up the deserted aisle, I thought I heard faint echoes of sardonic laughter as I opened the organ, and then, oh, horror! I discovered the price I had paid for my wealth. The key-board was a blank, to my bewildered gaze; little grinning devils seemed to toss the keys about and mix them in unmeaning confusion. I tried to put my hands on them. Lost—lost was all my skill; hideous discord followed the attempt. A satyr's head, among the grotesque carvings on the organ, suddenly assumed the face of the polite stranger, asking me, with mocking smiles, 'if I was tired of my bargain.' With a shriek of terror I sprang from the seat, which was instantly filled for a moment by a shadowy form, which turned on me the sad, reproachful gaze of my early, only benefactor. I strove to rush from the place, when again there surged through me that scorching fire. I seemed to sink into a limitless vault of awful darkness, across which, in flaming letters that seared my eyes, I read, 'Hope is not for Judas in art as in religion.' With a superhuman effort I rose to my feet to flee. The church was filled with a pale, unearthly light. All the grotesque and horrible monsters, carved by the cunning hands of long-forgotten artists, as symbols of evil pas-

sions—all were in motion. They glared on me, or leered on me, their new comrade, a hideous welcome. A huge stony serpent that coiled round a large pillar, twisted and untwisted his ponderous rings, and with glittering eyes fixed on me, hissed, 'Judas, Judas.' Maddened with shame, I rushed from the church and fled, I knew not whither—far from the city, over lonely country roads, for days and nights without rest. One evening I sank exhausted by a small inn in a quiet Alpine town. There was great bustle and preparation, going on to receive some important guest. Travel-stained and weary, I was thrust aside as of no importance, and was glad to accept the invitation of a servant, who, compassionating my worn appearance, invited me to take a seat in the kitchen. Stupefied with fatigue, I sank into the welcome seat, but was soon attracted by the noise and bustle that announced the arrival of a travelling carriage. As the party entered I heard the cheery voice of a man giving orders for their accommodation, then a slight remark accompanied by a rippling laugh from a woman's voice that sent the blood surging through my veins, and made me bound from my seat and rush wildly into the hall. My appearance was greeted with a scream from Amalia, who threw herself into the arms of the man, crying, 'Oh, my husband, save me from that madman.' At the sound of the word 'husband,' I sank as though blasted by a bolt from heaven. I remember no more.

"For years, long years, have I sat watching the building of these walls that are soon to crush me. I am calm and patient now. My doom is just. I sold my birth-right for gold."

*Omnès.* Where did you get that horrible story?

*Dalton.* It was the work of a maniac, an inmate of the insane asylum for years. From what I could gather of his history, he was a young musician of great promise, whose reason was upset on hearing that a young lady—whom he knew only by sight, but for whom he had conceived a romantic passion,—was about to be married.

*Hazel.* It has taken so long to read your weird story that it is too late to begin any discussion.

*Dr. Goodman.* I have a shrewd suspicion that Dalton invented it himself, as a sort of allegory to teach the important truth that sincerity is the one thing needful in all pursuits; that the artist debases his art when he makes its gains his chief concern.

*Crabbe.* You may be right; but I can't, for the life of me, imagine when, where, or how Dalton gained any knowledge of the "tender emotion."

*Dr. Goodman.* Crabbe, you make me ashamed for you. Come away and be scolded.

*Crabbe (sings).* Ach! "Ich habe gelebt und geliebet."

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## EIGHTEENTH EVENING.

### *A Discussion on General Musical Taste and International Copyright.*

THE discussion this evening was so interesting that I made very copious notes of it: The views expressed by the club on the question of the presence or absence of musical taste in America, seemed to me well worthy of preservation, even though they may not be quite correct, being the opinions of men who may be considered as experts. Their views on the International Copyright

wrangle, though somewhat warmly expressed, are, I think, in the main just; however, instead of obtruding my own opinion, I will retire to my customary obscurity and let them speak for themselves:

*Dr. Goodman.* I think, speaking of musical taste, that I remember on a former occasion hearing Crabbe say that he always looked with suspicion on artists who professed the aim of elevating the public taste, adding with—what shall I say?—his usual urbanity—that it was only a cover to "putting a few dollars in the artist's pocket."

*Crabbe.* I admit it all, Doctor, but—

*Parks.* The urbanity.

*Dr. Goodman.* Parks, don't try to emphasize my mild jest.

*Crabbe.* That awful poem has been the ruin of Parks. He sets up now for a wit.

*Hazel.* Upon—Oh, what a slender basis!

*Parks.* Anyway, the basis was fact, not "allegory."

*Dr. Goodman.* (*As Hazel is about to retort.*) Now do stop. I want very much to have some serious discussion. So please for one evening to forget both "poem" and "allegory." Dalton won't you answer me. I would like to know if the general musical culture of our people is, or is not, as high as that of other countries. I have a suspicion from certain things that I have heard or read that it is not, and I want to know why.

*Dalton.* Oh, Doctor, how easy it is to ask hard questions—how hard to answer them satisfactorily! To begin: I think the truest answer may be reached by deduction from this premise; the art of a people must be an indigenous growth if it is ever to reach the highest plane. It is only thus that art becomes the genuine expression of the national soul, if I may say so.

*Dr. Goodman.* I will grant that, but does it follow that

a people without an indigenous art are thereby incapacitated to appreciate the art of more fortunate peoples?

*Dalton.* I fear—yes—in a great degree. Music is, I venture to say, beyond all other arts, the most perfect expression of the national soul. Now, the development of a national soul, or artistic sense, (I wish I could find a better word to express my meaning), presupposes long years of undisturbed growth, until a people have become homogeneous in thought and feeling. The exact reverse of this is the case with our people, here we have a seething mass made up of units from every race on the face of the earth, a process of adjustment ever going on, but ever interrupted by fresh influx of new material. This provides the best possible medium for the growth of the useful—the material, but the worst possible for the beautiful—the ideal.

*Crabbe.* In other words your meaning is, It would take a thousand years of quiet simmering to amalgamate the ingredients of our national pot, and, with the lid on, to keep out fresh additions to the soup.

*Hazel.* Crabbe, it is too bad. I was just getting interested in Dalton's discourse when you must cut in and spoil it.

*Dalton.* Never mind; he expressed my idea exactly, but not quite in the way I was going to.

*Parks.* We have a better opinion of you than that.

*Dalton.* Now, I think that without this national soul, guided and trained by native artists, who are at once its creators and its product, there can be no such thing as a widespread high degree of culture.

*Crabbe.* But, in its place, a fierce wrangle, for the most part ignorant and therefore fiercely dogmatic, of "schools" and imitators of "schools" and advocates of "schools." "A great cry, but a great scarcity of wool."

*Dr. Goodman.* Don't be so savage; don't you think that this very conflict will result in some new thing, better perhaps than the world has yet known? Truth always comes forth purer and stronger from the fires of conflict.

*Dalton.* If it is a question of science or ethics, yes; but being a question of art, no.

*Hazel.* I fail to see why.

*Dalton.* Because there are absolute standards for these things. Conflict only makes them get themselves more and more in accord with eternal fact. But there is no such absolute standard for art, least of all for the art of music. Conflict tends to crystallize opinion into dogma, and dogma is the death of art.

*Crabbe.* True; for my part, I don't even believe in the rules of harmony, yet they are the only tangible things in music. When anyone begins to dogmatize in my hearing about music I always ask him to explain to me the difference between "Shoo fly" and "El mio Tesoro." Why is one vulgar, the other beautiful? Music will never be explained until the translation of sensation into emotion is explained. Here is the problem algebraically put: Let  $x$  be the mass of aerial vibrations of differing in tensities and amplitudes we call the fifth symphony, then let  $y$  be the auditory apparatus upon which they impinge, then  $xy$  must somehow =  $n$ , the emotion caused in the hearer.

*Parks.* Well, what a rignarole! I wonder if any other man living could get "Shoo fly," the "translation of sensation," and  $xy$ , into one breathless sentence.

*Crabbe.* Parks, in all many-sided minds the macrocosm lies infolded; the finite thus in a certain sense comprehending the infinite. In such minds the mutual interdependence of the apparently trivial and the apparently important assumes its true value, and therefore—



*Parks.* Oh, stop. I'm stunned.

*Dr Goodman.* Has no one else anything to add? Dalton has laid a philosophical foundation—

*Crabbe.* And it only remains for us, the unphilosophical, to build our wood, straw, or stubble on it, I suppose? Well, I will make my contribution. Although I am not quite sure whether it is a cause or an effect of misguided taste—I refer to the modern concert—this amusement is nowadays apt to be either all piano, or all violin, or all voice, and is given under the affected name of a "recital." I am old-fogy enough to prefer a judicious mixture of all three; and with regard to the singing, perhaps to my shame, I prefer songs in the concert-room, even (I blush to add) extending my preference to songs in my own tongue. Why must singers bring the opera into the concert-room? These grand scenas are despoiled of half their effect when separated from their proper surroundings. Now, I am sure that good songs, in a language "understood of the people," will always please even the most fastidious. But the evil does not stop at the concert-room, because the amateurs and the little singers must follow the bad example. Who has not suffered at a parlor concert or a musical tea from the labored attempt of some misguided girl to sing the great arias that great singers spend years of study to achieve? Who has not, with guilty conscience, joined in the compliments, the congratulations, that make the recording angels weep so that they cannot see to write them down? Not long ago I heard a poor girl at a parlor concert sing a German "lied," an Italian aria, and a Scotch song. The effect on me was to make me wonder that I had never before been struck with the resemblance of these languages to each other. Her last "effort" was an English song. At its conclusion, a grave gentleman, who had been a

very attentive listener, said to me, without malice evidently, "Will you be kind enough to tell me what language that was?" He looked injured when I replied, "English," and moved his chair away. Now, "how altered were the sprightly tone" were these young ladies, these mild tenors, many of whom have pretty voices, to study songs in their own language, first learning the words and how to pronounce them, then how to read them, then how to sing them. Think of the interested listeners! of the *tabula rasa* of the celestial book-keepers! Why! it would be a wellspring of happiness in two worlds.

*Dr. Goodman.* Oh, Crabbe! how you do manage to get the most incongruous ideas into juxtaposition. Yet, I heartily agree with you.

*Hazel.* Is it not a laudable ambition, though, for amateurs to attempt the things they are taught to admire?

*Daltor.* Was it "laudable ambition" in Marsyas to contend with Apollo for the prize in music!

*Dr. Goodman.* Your comparison is too harsh, yet it is very necessary to distinguish between an ambition that is laudable and one that is presumptuous; and it certainly seems somewhat presumptuous for amateurs to attempt what Crabbe says great artists take years of labor to accomplish.

*Crabbe.* I am sure that the "intelligent foreigner" must often laugh in his sleeve at some of the attempts to sing his language that he has to submit to. We have all heard foreigners sing our language; but how? I remember on one occasion hearing an esteemed singer of Teutonic extraction. She was "encored;" of course she came out and sang that nuisance of a Scotch song, in which the obtrusive young woman confides to the audience that all the young men within a mile of Edinbro' grin at her.

*Parks.* Oh, hold on; you are mixing two songs.

*Crabbe.* Yes; I remember now; I am. Well, at any rate, it was the song which begins, according to her, "Gin a pod-de-e-e meet a pod-de-e-e."

*Hazel.* I once saw the solemnity of an Episcopal service sadly upset by some German singers in the choir, who began the "Venite," "O gum! let us sing." The rector sent up word that he would read the remaining canticles.

*Dr. Goodman.* We seem to be trailing off into absurd reminiscences. Come, Hazel, it is your turn.

*Hazel.* Well, I have a theory that the copyright, I should say the copywrong, law—international, I mean—has a very detrimental effect on public taste.

*Dr. Goodman.* That is a surprising theory at least. Do proceed.

*Hazel.* Suppose a musician writes, say, a good song. Naturally he would like to get some money return for the pleasure the public might get from its possession. His desire is perfectly just, because the production of a high-class composition presupposes a long and severe training, and every man has a right to demand a return for his work if the public want it. Now, if it were a "pencil-sharpener," or a "fly-trap," or any other never so contemptible piece of mechanism, he might secure the sole right to make and sell it all over the civilized world; but being merely a piece of "fine art," anybody out of his own country may steal it.

*Crabbe.* But you forget "genius" is the property of the world, to use or abuse (generally the latter) as it pleaseth it. "Fly-traps" and "pencil-sharpeners" are concrete things, of which the money value is patent to the most obtuse of legislators. Genius should be above the sordid desire for "food, shelter, and raiment"—should seek

only fame. Then let it hang or starve, so the world (and the publishers) gain. Pardon my interruption, and proceed.

*Hazel.* One result of this is that the publisher says, and truly, "Why should I pay you for a song when I can pick and choose from all the songs in Europe for nothing?"

*Dr. Goodman.* I must confess I do not see yet why such a state of affairs should injure public taste.

*Hazel.* Wait a moment, I am coming to it. The sale of the best work in any art is necessarily slow, and the publisher is, on that account, afraid to put money into it. Therefore, the only good work he publishes is that that has already become well known in Europe, because he is sure to get a return for his outlay.

*Crabbe.* Well, isn't he quite right? Publishing houses do not pretend to be educational establishments, they are only commercial ventures.

*Hazel.* Yes, I know that. I am not blaming them, I am merely trying to get at a clear statement of the case.

*Dr. Goodman.* What do you suppose would be the effect of an international copyright?

*Hazel.* Just this. The publisher would have to pay for the foreign works he printed. The native artist, if unable to sell his work at home, would have the chance of selling it abroad. This would soon bring about a fair balance in the relation of the writer to the publisher.

*Dr. Goodman.* I can see how the case of the writer would be improved, but not yet, how the public taste is affected.

*Hazel.* Publishers make money from their copyrights, and the valuable copyrights are, as a rule, the worst kind of music, and they cost him nothing. There are thousands of ambitious amateur writers who, with laborious effort, torture out of the piano something that they and

their friends think is music, they rush off, glowing with ambition to the publisher. He blandly says; "Oh, yes, I will publish your music if you will take fifty copies, you can easily dispose of them amongst your friends." Now see the result. The "composition" costs the publisher nothing, the engraving is paid for (and more) by the fifty copies the author buys. He (the publisher) secures the copyright. If it should take, as many of these things do in the most unaccountable fashion, he reaps a golden harvest. If it does not take, he loses nothing.

*Dr. Goodman* I should call that a symptom not a cause of bad taste or low musical culture, because even if the copyright law were changed, I think publishers would go on in the same way as long as they made money by it.

*Dalton*. True; but I agree with Hazel in thinking that other circumstances would produce beneficial results, because good writers would have more inducement to write, and the production of a better class of music might in time produce a higher standard of popular taste.

*Crabbe*. H'm! problematical, very!

*Dr. Goodman*. Apart from any such consideration, I cannot see why the patent law and the copyright law should not be identical in their provisions. I also think that, when any work, be it book, machine, music or what not, meets with a success that was not anticipated, that the author or inventor should have a fair share of the profit.

*Crabbe*. The world is not quite ready for equity, has a hard struggle—too often a vain one—to secure law, and a veritable "Father Antic" it proves very often.

*Dr. Goodman*. It would be a good plan to make these rights inalienable. It would secure justice to the author and inventor, and do no injustice to the publisher and maker.

*Crabbe*. Don't you see what an injustice it would be to

the poor manufacturer, to take from him the chance of getting hold of the contrivance of some ingenious workman who, poor fellow, has no idea of its commercial value, for a trifle? Should not shrewdness be rewarded as well as ingenuity? Is it not the capital of the one, as genius is of the other? Ought it not to have free play, like all the other gifts of nature?

*Hazel* That's enough of sophistry, or is it sarcasm?

*Parks.* How sarcasm? It seems to me a good argument. Who would not jump at the chance of buying a valuable patent if he could get it cheap?

*Dalton.* Even "sports" consider it infamous to bet on a certainty, and I can see no difference between paying a man five dollars for what you know, but he does not, is worth fifty, and picking his pocket.

*Dr. Goodman.* There is a rule of life called the "golden rule," and there is a rule of business called "caveat emptor." What depths and heights divide them! I dare not despair, yet I hardly dare to hope that a time may come when mankind will walk by the first, and will be ashamed to remember that they ever lived by the last.

*Crabbe.* "When will that be,  
Say the bells of Stepnee?  
I do not know,  
Says the great bell of Bow."

*Hazel.* Let us make our exit after that neat, tasteful tag to Dr. Goodman's remarks, we have talked half the night away.

## NINETEENTH EVENING.

### *Dr. Goodman Tells a Story about a Stradivarius Violin.*

THE time has at length come when our weekly meetings must be suspended. The weather grows warm and the tired teachers are about to take their flight from the city to recuperate their flagging energies by sea-shore or on the mountains. This is our last meeting for this season. We have spent so many pleasant hours together that we feel somewhat saddened at the prospect of our long separation. Very little was said before the playing began, but the genius of music soon asserted herself, a solace, to the musical soul, for all the petty miseries of life. It seems strange to some people how others can go on, year after year, playing the quartettes of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, with ever increasing love and admiration. For instance, Crabbe has been a quartette player for nearly fifty years, yet he says—"I never sit down to a quartette without a thrill of pleasure that is indescribable." Even Parks, who learned to play the violin with the avowed intention of playing De Beriot (which he does creditably), and who was rather unwillingly brought into the quartette at first, has, more to his own than the others' surprise, discovered that pretty solos have lost their attractions for him, and even, though as yet he will not admit it, his beloved Italian opera is somehow losing its charm. The playing was kept up to a late hour. They seemed loth to stop without going over all their old favorites. When they ceased and lit their

cigars, there was very little conversation, except that each one, in a few words, told his plans for the summer and expressed his anticipations of their meeting again in the fall.

Dr. Goodman perceiving that the talk languished, said — "I have lately heard a strange story about a violin, from one of the actors in it, if you care to hear it, I will tell it, since you all seem unwilling to talk." They all assented warmly and the Doctor, producing a small roll of manuscript, said, "I have written the story out, fearing I might spoil it if I attempted to tell it." With this remark he read as follows:

"Halstrom is a large town in the iron district of Sweden, black and grimy with the smoke of huge blast furnaces that cover the hillsides, sending forth day and night their black clouds of smoke, lit occasionally by the glare from the tall chimneys that stand like the blasted trunks of a fire-swept pine forest, all over the district. Scattered here and there are the cottages of rough stone, with steep thatched roofs, where live the stalwart iron-workers, whose incessant labor transmutes the stubborn iron ore into the thousand and one useful shapes that find their way to all the world. A splendid race are these workers, tall, fair-haired and blue eyed, like their Viking ancestors, like them, too, stanch and true-hearted, brave and tender. Among the bravest and truest was Oscar Sweynsen, only son of his widowed mother. A prince among his fellows was Oscar at either work or merry-making. He had long loved Hilda, one of the fairest maidens in the town, and now, having reached a position in the iron works that brought him sufficient means, he proposed to her. She, not insensible to his good looks and well-known character, accepted him, but alas! when Hans Petersen, the son and heir of the rich old notary, sought her, dazzled with the glitter of his gold, she broke her faith with Oscar, and became the wife of Hans and went to live in the large stone house at the end of the town. Poor Oscar bore his disappointment bravely, as became him, he never



complained, but rarely smiled; worked harder than ever, but his merry face and laugh were never again seen and heard at the merry-makings. All his idle hours were spent at home playing on a violin of wonderful sweetness and power, the wild melancholy airs of his native land. This violin was an heirloom that had descended from his great grandfather. A restless rover, with great musical ability, he had visited nearly every city in Europe as a solo player, and had bought this violin of Stradivarius himself. It was his most cherished possession, and at his death he charged his son never to let it pass out of the family. His descendants had respected the wish of the old violin player, and, though none of them had ever been players, religiously kept the violin. Thus, in the course of time, it came into the possession of Oscar. He had inherited some of the musical instincts of his ancestor, but poverty and the necessity of hard work to support his widowed mother had debarred him from learning to play. However, his native talent found a way to overcome all obstacles. By dint of patience and practice he accomplished enough to enable him to play his exquisite native melodies with a pathos and expression that no amount of instruction could have bettered. Always attached to his violin, in his anguish at Hilda's desertion, it became his only solace. He would sit hour after hour, far into the night, pouring out his very soul in its rich, sweet sounds. His mother, to whom he, if possible, grew ever more tender, saw with wistful eyes the change that had come over her once gay son, and, fearing he would never recover while so near Hilda, she proposed to Oscar that they should leave their old home and go to America. Oscar gladly consented, having long had the desire, in secret, to put the breadth of the ocean between himself and his faithless love. So they sold the cottage and the homely furniture, and, bidding farewell to their sorrowing friends, sailed for the new world. In a few days over two weeks the ship was tied up to her pier in the Delaware, and Oscar and his mother stepped ashore, with a strange feeling of loneliness and homesickness, into the crowd and bustle of the new world. Their stock of means was but small, and the first necessity was

to procure some cheap lodging. This, after some search, they succeeded in doing. After a rest of one night, Oscar sallied forth to seek work. Their arrival in Philadelphia was unfortunately timed, being at the darkest period of the financial distress that followed the centennial year. Many large ironworks were closed, and those that still continued in operation had reduced their forces and were working on half-time. In vain Oscar visited, one after another, all the ironworks in and around the city; no room could be found for him. He and his mother lived as economically as possible, but their little store of cash rapidly diminished, and they saw want staring them in the face. Worn with anxiety, his mother fell sick, and Oscar was in despair. Looking through the advertisements in a daily paper in the hope of finding some employment, his eye was caught by an advertisement which read, 'Wanted to purchase, a violin; must be first class; price no object. Apply to D. Strotherick, 216 — St' Cold drops of perspiration stood on Oscar's face after reading this. He thought of his beloved mother sick, perhaps dying, wanting the barest necessities of life. He thought of his dearly-cherished violin, the solace of so many lonely hours; of the dying wish of his ancestor, faithfully regarded through so many generations. The struggle was short. He went home, took the violin, kissed his poor mother, who saw that something was agitating him, and went to see Mr. Strotherick. This gentleman was a wealthy amateur, with more knowledge of the genesis of instruments than ability to play them. Like all violinists, he was an enthusiast, and grew eloquent over the curves, the scroll, or the varnish of an Amati, or Maggini, or Stradivarius. And he now had in his hands the most perfect specimen of the last and greatest of these makers, that he had ever seen. His eyes glistened as they ran over its faultless curves, noting the even, straight grain of the belly, and the delicate feathered 'curls' on the back that met at the middle at just the right angle—not a flaw, not a scratch was to be seen. Asking a few questions about its history, which Oscar answered in as few simple words, Mr. Strotherick said, in his crisp, business-like way, 'It is the most perfect

"Strad" in America. I'll give you a thousand dollars for it.' Oscar, who had never conceived the possibility of so much money being in anyone's possession at one time, stared in amazement as Mr. Strotherick, with gradually augmenting enthusiasm over the violin, from which he could not take his eyes, repeated his offer. Oscar collected himself enough to say, 'Yes.' The money was paid, and he left instantly. Mr. Strotherick remained for some time absorbed in the contemplation of his newly-acquired treasure, when he remembered with a shock of vexation that he had not asked Oscar for his name, or a dozen other questions that occurred to him; had not even, so wrapt up was he in the violin, observed his personal appearance. Oscar's mother was soon provided with proper food and attention, and recovered rapidly; but to all her questions as to how he had found the means, he returned the unvarying answer, 'Wait till you are well and strong, then I'll tell you everything,' praying all the time that she might not remark that he never played now. It came at last. Seated one warm evening at the window of their little room, she said, 'Oscar, I long to hear some of the old tunes; do get your violin and play; it is so long since I have heard them.' Then, with few and tender words, he told her that her life was more to him than anything else in the world, and that their present comforts were the result of the sale. With streaming eyes the poor widow fell on her knees and grasped his hand, saying, through her sobs, 'O my son, I know what it must have cost to make this sacrifice. God is good to me that He gave me such a son; He will reward you, He will reward you.' Oscar gently raised her, saying he desired no other reward than to see so dear a mother well and happy. Her health was soon so far restored that she was able to go out, so he took her, one afternoon, out to the Park. They wandered among the trees, or sat watching the never-ending stream of carriages that rolled over the smooth drives, or the happy parties that laughed and lunched together in sequestered places. The fresh air and bright sun brought the smiles again to the widow's wan cheek. But their enjoyment was suddenly interrupted by a cry of terror. A little basket carriage drawn

by a spirited pony, driven by two little girls of about twelve and fifteen, left the drive, the pony having taken fright at something. It galloped across the sward towards the steep precipice that descends to the river. Without a word, Oscar sprang forward to intercept him. Reaching him just in time, he grasped his nostrils with one powerful hand, the end of the shaft with the other, and stopped him a few yards from the brink. A sympathizing crowd soon surrounded them. The frightened children were lifted from the carriage and transferred to the coach of an old lady, who undertook to take them home. The guards took charge of the pony. Oscar, meanwhile, quietly made his escape unnoticed from the crowd and returned to his mother, who, glowing with pride and affection, repeated her words, 'God is good; He will reward you, He will reward you.' When the children reached their home and recounted to their father, who was none other than Mr. Strotherick, their hairbreadth escape and the gallantry of their rescuer, his gratitude knew no bounds. He at once set to work to find out and reward their preserver. This was no easy matter, Oscar caring nothing for reward, and thinking little or nothing of his action. Mr. Strotherick advertised in vain; questioned over and over again his children, the Park guards, and the old lady who brought the children home. But the children had not observed him, neither had the old lady. The guards' only information was that he was apparently a working man, very tall and strong looking, with light hair and blue eyes. Mr. Strotherick was not the man to give up anything he had set his heart upon, so, with this slight clue, he engaged the services of a keen detective. This officer questioned everybody over again, found that a man answering to this description and accompanied by an elderly woman, had asked some questions of one of the guards, in broken English, also that his clothes were of a peculiar foreign-looking fashion. Next he found a conductor on a Twenty-third street car, who had taken such a couple to the Green street entrance of the Park. They got on his car at the transfer station. He had particularly observed them, his attention being attracted by their foreign look, and the great height and apparent strength of the man.

So the detective thought "they must have come from the lower end of the city." His next step was to ask the police in that district to keep a close lookout for such a man. He was soon rewarded. An officer, whose beat was in the neighborhood of Fourth and Lombard, saw Oscar one morning entering a small house on Fourth street. While in the act of telling the detective, Oscar came out of the house; addressing him at once the detective said: 'Mr. Strotherick, at 216,—street wants to see you on important business, and would like you to call as soon as possible.' He also took the precaution of securing Oscar's name and address. Oscar set out at once to see Mr. Strotherick, thinking that it was something about the violin that he wished to know. When he presented himself in Mr. Strotherick's office he was amazed to hear his feat recounted to him with every expression of gratitude that Mr. Strotherick's warm heart could suggest. To all his offers of reward Oscar returned a firm 'No,' saying finally, as he perceived Mr. Strotherick's distress at his refusal, that if he could help him in any way to obtain work at his trade he would consider himself more than repaid. This Mr. Strotherick pledged himself to do, and, learning that Oscar was an iron worker, he exclaimed 'the very thing'—so am I—my works are in Frankford; come to-morrow.' Oscar returned with the welcome news to his mother, and they at once left their dingy rooms on Fourth street and removed to one of the countless small houses in the northern part of the city that justify Philadelphia's boast as the city of homes. Oscar went to work manfully. His skill and steadiness soon secured promotion, and he became the trusted foreman of his department. It happened one evening after working hours that he had to call on Mr. Strotherick at his house in the city about some work that was to be begun on the following day. He was shown into the sitting room to wait the departure of a visitor with whom Mr. Strotherick was engaged. There, on a small table, in its open case, lay his violin. Tears stood in his eyes as he looked lovingly at it. Overcome by an impulse he could not control, he took it up, and began to play some of the old well-remembered airs. He was thus engaged when Mr.

Strotherick opened the door and stood amazed on seeing his foreman, the quiet, steady-going Oscar standing, rapt, with the tears rolling down his face, drawing such wild, passionate sounds from the violin, as he had never heard before. A moment more, and a sudden light burst on him; he recognized in Oscar the man who sold him the violin. Interrupting him in his impetuous way, he exclaimed, 'Why have you kept this secret, why didn't you tell me long ago?' Oscar replied: 'I knew you valued the violin, and I knew you would have wanted to give it back to me, therefore I didn't tell you.' At his reply Mr. Strotherick's patience gave way utterly. He stormed at Oscar, half in jest and half in earnest, called him 'pig-headed' and a hundred other pretty names, made him tell his history and the history of the violin, and in a greater fume than ever vowed that he would discharge Oscar and burn the violin if he refused to take it again, and wound up by shaking Oscar by both hands, saying with a quiver of his lips, 'I owe you the lives of my children; will you not make me happy and let me make you happy, by taking the violin again?' Oscar was not proof against this earnest appeal, and to Mr. Strotherick's great joy consented and bore off his treasure to his mother. They laughed and wept together over its recovery, the widow repeating 'Did I not tell you that God was good, and would reward you, and He has, He has, not only now, but will for all eternity reward the son who gave up, without a murmur, his most cherished possession for the sake of his mother.' Oscar continued to rise. He and the generous Mr. Strotherick are warm friends, and Oscar is now about to become a partner in the business. Many an evening do they spend together playing on and discussing the merits of the inexhaustible violin, for who ever knew a violin player with a fine instrument that had said all that he could say about his violin."

When the Doctor finished all agreed in expressing their thanks for his story. After a little desultory conversation they shook each other warmly by the hand, with many wishes for a pleasant summer and hopes for reunion in the fall, and the "Scratch Club" was gone.

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