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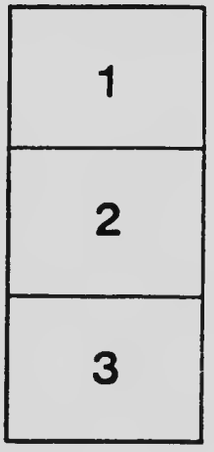

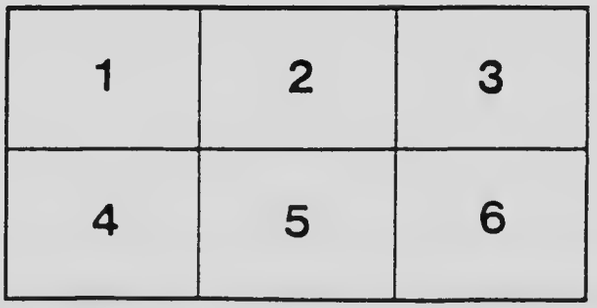

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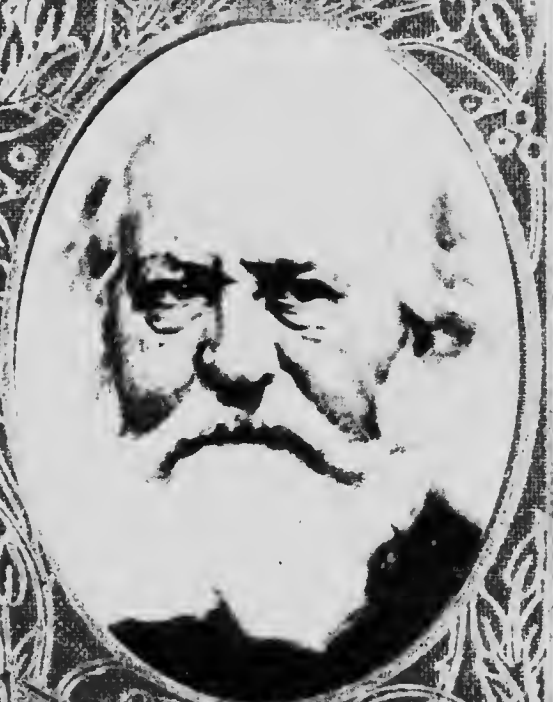
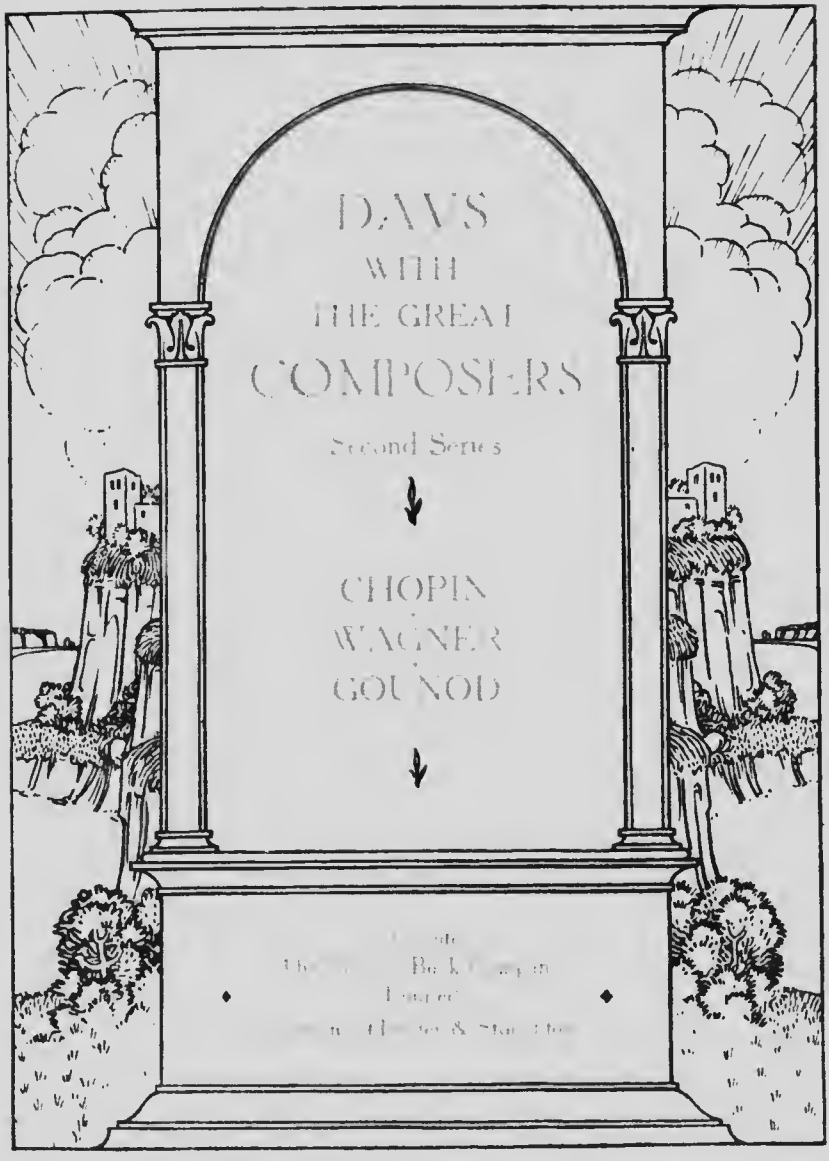


VARIATIONS ON "LA CI DAREM LA MANO."

"One perceives new light appearing on the old subject,—the high-born roué and the peasant maiden reveal themselves."


NORMAN A
PRICE


DAYS
WITH
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Second Series
CHOPIN
WAGNER
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A DAY WITH FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN.

PERIOD, the year 1837: scene, Chaussée d'Antin, Paris: time, about 9 a.m. one April morning. A thin, under-sized, slightly-built man, of delicate, almost effeminate physique, was trifling somewhat fastidiously with his coffee and roll, and devoting considerable attention to the flowers which adorned his table. His clear blue eyes were riveted on these flowers, as if to drink in their very soul and essence: and indeed he himself had been compared to a convolvulus balancing its heaven-coloured cup upon an incredibly slight stem. There was, undoubtedly, something flower-like about Frédéric Chopin: a refinement of exquisite grace in body and mind, a tenderness and sweetness of thought, coupled with a potentiality of passionate feeling corresponding with the passionate scents of his beloved blossoms. And even those who laid a want of moral and intellectual manliness to his charge, and alleged

this want as a limitation of his province in music, could not but confess the extraordinary compensations with which Nature had endowed a form so fragile, a health so feeble, and a musical genius of such narrow restrictions. For the fame of Frédéric Chopin, his perfect artistry, and peculiar individuality as a pianist and a composer, were, and are, unique. "The Shelley of music," pale, Ariel-like, impassioned, he stands alone, unparalleled, for ever. And the very difficulties and temptations which might have ruined robuster temperaments, were transformed, for Chopin, into special dispensations of Providence. His pecuniary means were never abundant, ("from first to last," it has been said, "his artistic career was singularly free from any taint of money worship.") He would not even dispose of any composition which did not satisfy his exigent standard of self-criticism; but then, "I am a revolutionary and don't care for money," he declared, at the very outset. And the infirmities of his health created, so to speak, a special haven of seclusion for him in the midst of gay, noisy, laughter-loving Paris. He dwelt in an atmosphere of quietude: he had succeeded, so far as might be, in simplifying

his life to the uttermost: and yet it was a full and a laborious life.

Although the most fashionable musician of the day, both as pianist, teacher, and composer, Chopin preserved intact his child-like simplicity, his aristocratic serenity; his own feelings, his own impressions, were the only events to which he was at all susceptible. The steady upward sweep of his career had neither dizzied nor dazzled him: and the creator of Ballades, Nocturnes, Polonaises, Sonatas, pianoforte works innumerable, was the same modest, unassuming young man whom Schumann had welcomed with "Hats off, gentlemen! a genius!" Yet only six years had passed since those memorable words were spoken: since his timid *Opus 2* was ushered into the world without any preliminary advertisement or encomium,—"*La ci darem la mano*, varié pour le piano par Frédéric Chopin." "It seems to me," wrote Schumann in his generous and enthusiastic review, "that every composer presents a different character of note-forms to the eye. . . . But here it seemed as if eyes, strange to me, were glaring up at me,—flower-eyes, basilisk eyes, peacock's eyes,

maiden's eyes; in many places it looked yet brighter—I thought I saw Mozart's *La ci darem la mano* sound through a thousand chords; Leporello seemed to wink at me, and Don Juan hurried past in his white mantle. . . ." One cannot, at first thoughts, discern any analogy between the Mozart and the Chopin standpoint: for Chopin, as has been said, considers different subjects, but his views in considering them are always the same. Still, as has been the case with all great musicians, Mozart was, in his eyes, the ideal type,—*the* tone-poet *par excellence*,—the more so that Mozart, of all composers, least seldom deigned to descend the steps which lead from the beautiful to the banal. And presently one perceives new light appearing on the old subject,—the high-born roué and the peasant maiden reveal themselves in a flood of flashing iridescence. And in the gossamer fabric of those variations, "filled with moonshine and fairy magic, we feel," again to quote Schumann, "that we have beheld a heavenly vision."

The composer, withdrawing his gaze from the flowers with which he had held a silent

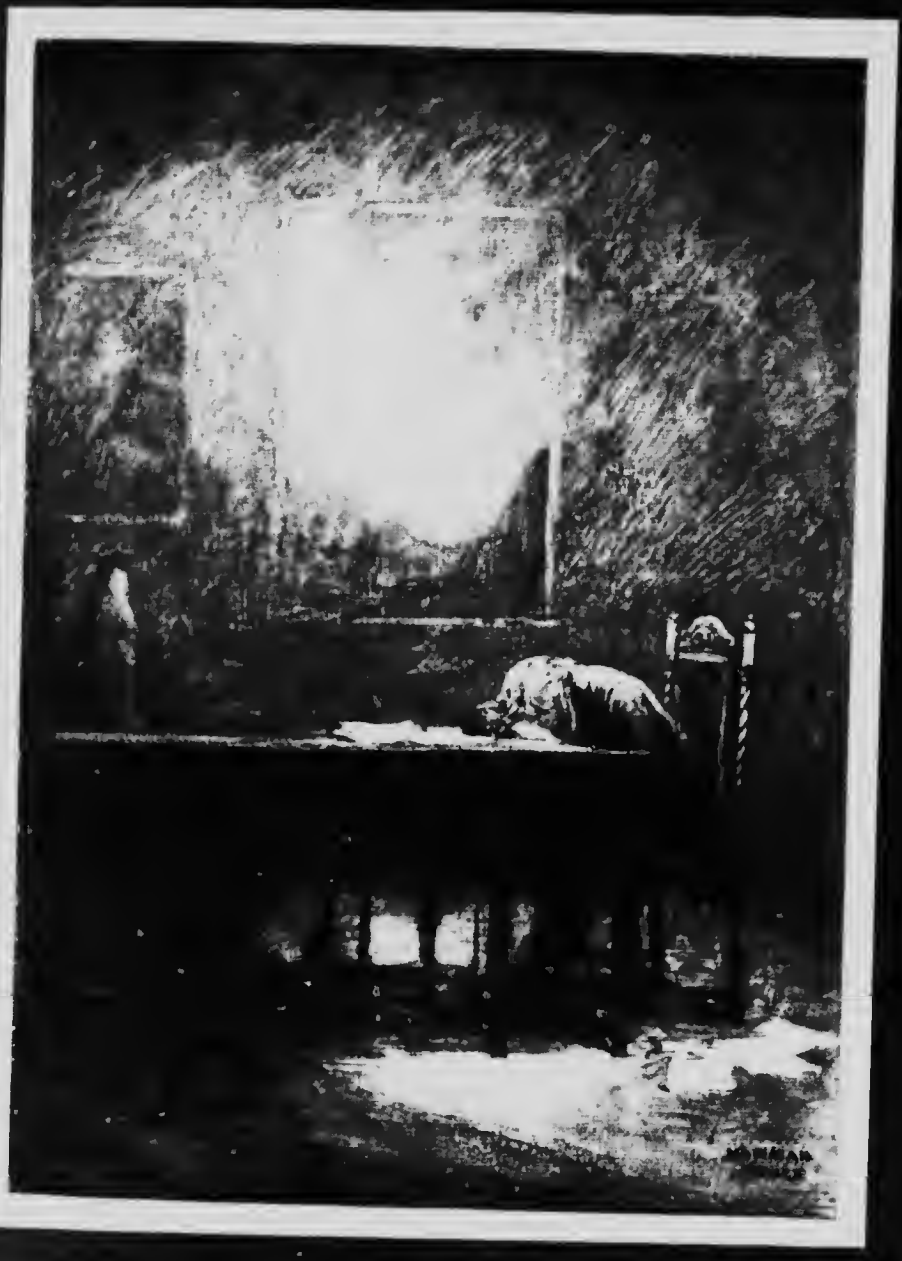
conversation, moved across to his pianoforte; it was a Pleyel, a make which he particularly liked on account of its "slightly veiled, yet silvery sonorousness," as Liszt has described it, "and its easy touch, permitting him to elicit tones which one might think proceeded from one of those harmonicas which were so ingeniously constructed by the ancient masters, by the union of crystal and water."

This pianoforte was at once the throne and the kingdom of Chopin. He had deliberately elected to confine himself to what might be considered the straitened area of pianoforte works: and yet he had evoked, from a soil which one could suppose almost exhausted, a fertility of fresh and luxuriant efflorescence. To us habituated to the radiant outcome of Chopin's exclusiveness in this respect, no such immediate revelation of surprise and novelty is possible, as broke upon the musical world of 1831-7: yet it is as well to realise with what conviction, what intuition he had refused to "scatter each light spray of melody over a hundred orchestral desks," and had concentrated the resources of his art into

"a sphere more limited, indeed, but far more idealised!" That a composer could turn his back deliberately upon the "big bow-wow style," could forego opera, oratorio, symphony, all the colour and splendour of choral and orchestral work, in favour of the few octaves of ivory on the keyboard,—could recognise his own deficient strength to deal with large masses of sound,—this was a fact so startling to the connoisseurs of the early nineteenth century, that perhaps no lesser man could have reconciled them to it. But the magic of Chopin,—as a personality, as an executant, as a creative power,—lay heavy upon all who came into contact with him. And he not only inaugurated a new régime in art,—one, indeed, so exclusively his own that he has had no successor: but he evolved a treatment of pianoforte music, "which, considered as a pure expression of technical intelligence, is almost without rival in the history of the art." "It is to him we owe the extension of chords, struck together in arpeggio, or *en batterie:* the chromatic sinuosities of which his pages offer such striking examples; the little groups of superadded notes, falling like light drops of pearly dew upon the melodic figure. This species of adornment had

ÉTUDE IN C MINOR.
CHOPIN AT THE PIANO.

"As with velvety touch his fingers ran through his Étude in C Minor, 'one of the truest and saddest utterances of despairing patriotism to which he had ever given a voice,' Chopin bowed down his head over the pianoforte, and a wave of sorrow swept over his soul."



hitherto been modelled only upon the *fioriture* of the great old school of Italian song; the embellishments for the voice had been servilely copied by the piano, although become stereotyped and monotonous. He imparted to them such charms of novelty, surprise, and variety as were unsuited for the vocalist bu in perfect keeping with the character of the instrument." (*Liszt*).

Yet, all being said and done, it was not in his technical perfection that the charm of Chopin dwelt; it was in the "core of flame," the magical tenderness, the deep and melancholy fervour of patriotism which inspired him. He had "arrived as *the* Romantic in the midst of the renaissance of Romance," and from out all his works, "cannons buried in flowers," as Schumann found them, there exhaled

"Eternal Passion,
Eternal Pain!"

And now, as with velvety touch his fingers ran through his *Étude* in C-minor, "one of the truest and saddest utterances of despairing patriotism" to which he had ever given a voice, Chopin bowed down his head over the pianoforte, and

a wave of sorrow swept across his soul. Fêted, caressed, idolised by the Parisians he might be: his thoughts were still in exile. To his own poor compatriots his heart went out, and his hands in unceasing beneficence,—to the noble sufferings of Poland he was acutely responsive. "Fate," it has been written, "rendered Chopin still more individual and interesting in endowing him with an original, pronounced nationality. . . . and because this nationality wanders in mourning robes, in the thoughtful artist it deeply attracts us." A tinge of this "sharp nationality,"—although expressed in different degrees, and a thousand ways modified and varied,—is percep tible in all that Chopin wrote, in his longest as well as his shortest compositions. But it is especially evidenced in the Polonaises and Mazurkas.

The Polonaises, according to Liszt, have been less studied than they deserve, on account of the executive difficulties they present: yet they rank among Chopin's highest inspirations. In the Polonaise (originally a stately dance for men only), the noblest traditions of ancient Poland

are embodied, the firm resolve and indomitable daring of its bygone warriors. "We can almost catch the resolute, heavy tread of men facing all the bitter injustice which the most cruel and relentless destiny can offer, with the manly pride of unfaltering courage. . . The progress of the music suggests to our imagination such magnificent groups as were designed by Paul Veronese, robed in the rich costume of days long past; we see, passing at intervals before us, brocades of gold, velvets, damasked satins, silvery-soft and flexible sables, hanging sleeves gracefully thrown back upon the shoulders, embossed sabres, boots yellow as gold or red with trampled blood, sashes with long and undulating fringes. . . From the faded background of times long passed, these vivid groups start forth; gorgeous carpets from Persia lie at their feet, filigreed furniture from Constantinople stands around; all is marked by the sumptuous prodigality of the Magnates who drew, in ruby goblets embossed with medallions, wine from the fountains of Tokay, and shod their fleet Arabian steeds with silver." (*Liszt.*)

The Mazurkas of Chopin, on the other hand, are feminine through and through. To

comprehend them fully, one should have known the Polish women. "A subtle vapour of love floats like an ambient fluid around them," they reveal rich glimpses of amber-beaded shoes, gloves perfumed with Turkish rose-attar, "head-dresses glittering with rubies or leafy with emeralds, stomachers embroidered with pearls." Here and there, spurs jingle, and an under-current of impending calamity makes itself audible through the joyous rhythm of the dance, as though it were the eve of battle, and a certain bravado of suppressed sobs intermingled with the smiling whispers of the partners.

But perhaps, of all his most poignantly patriotic achievements, the greatest and most heart-rending is the Funeral March from the first Sonata. No one who has ever heard these thrilling accents, with all the added effect of a military band and muffled drums, can forget the emotions they arouse. The Funeral March has been likened to "all that the funeral train of an entire nation, accepting its own ruin and death, can be imagined to feel,"— as, in desolating woe and majestic sorrow, it "accompanies the mighty

escort on its way to the city of the Dead. . . . The intensity of mystic hope: the devout appeal to infinite mercy, . . . the noble endurance of many disasters, . . . quavers and trembles there with irresistible vibrations."—"And these pages," said one of Chopin's fellow-countrymen, "could only have been written by a Pole."

Chopin now roused himself from his mournful reverie, for he heard strange footsteps at the door, and knew that his day's work had begun. Inwardly a dreamer of dreams, he was outwardly as industrious, as assiduous, as methodical a man as ever justified his existence by steady routine of unremitting tasks. Not that every day could contribute an equal quota of work: the master's health, which so largely influenced his spirits, also affected his artistic output in no small degree. And whereas on his better days he could be buoyant with a very extravagance of gaiety, "playing fantastic tricks at the pianoforte, or mimicking his rivals with inimitable skill and good-natured satire," at other times this "tricksy sprite" forsook him, and he was peevish, fretful, almost morbid in his sensitiveness.

At the present moment, however, with one of those curious revulsions of feeling peculiar to the artistic temperament, Chopin ascended from the abysses of melancholy to the heights of a charming, unpremeditated cheerfulness. He greeted, with his most expressive gestures, with the "innate grace of a Polish welcome," the pupils who now entered for their daily lessons. They were by no means novices,—they had been under the tuition of such fashionable and successful pianists as Moscheles, Herz, and Kalkbrenner: but had forsaken these notabilities to bow before the shrine of Frédéric Chopin. "Really," he murmured to himself, "if I were a little sillier than I already am, I might imagine myself a genius: but I feel daily how much I have still to learn. . . . As for Paris,—I don't think there is a city upon earth where there are more pianists to be found, or—more donkeys. I am only one among many!"

Chopin, unlike most musicians, thoroughly enjoyed giving lessons in his art. He was a delightful teacher, gentle, tactful, kindly. "Put your whole soul into it," was his favourite advice

to a pupil : and it was one which he carried out to the full himself. He was alert and attentive throughout,—he gave of his very best. He would protract a lesson hours beyond its limit, and sometimes reward the pupil with an improvisation of his own. The qualities which he regarded as paramount were delicacy of touch, intelligence of conception, purity of feeling ; "the worst of sins, in his estimation, was a dull, correct, mechanical dexterity"—and this aroused his ire more evidently than a whole series of the most flagrant mistakes. But even then, "his anger was nothing but a cry of physical pain, and he softened at once if the culprit showed any signs of distress."

Every pupil had to begin at the beginning, with Clementi's time-honoured *Gradus*, and to plod steadily through the whole course of technical exercises and studies, until perhaps by happy chance he arrived at those *Études* of Chopin's own, which, "avowedly classed as exercises of dexterity, stand to those of other writers as pictures to freehand drawings." Yet who could adequately perform these *Études*

except himself? For Chopin was never able to transmit to any of his pupils the personal equation which was the root and essence of his playing. He had studied execution, "not as his highest aim, but as the painter studies colour and colour-grouping": he stood nearest as a pianist to Liszt, in the especial qualities of magical grace and tenderness: and he fulfilled, in himself, the *dictum* of Schumann, "The playing of an instrument must be one with itself: he who cannot play *with* it, cannot play it at all." Therefore, now, when he slid lightly, almost imperceptibly, into his pupil's place upon the music-stool, and his delicate feminine fingers became one with the flashing keys, the students understood, with a mingling of despair and ecstasy, the impossibility of attaining his "incommunicable style."—"It was not so much a method as a manner: something too intimate and personal to be expressed: the concrete language of principle and formula." "Imagine," one enthusiastic hearer has said, "that an Æolian harp possessed all the scales, and that an artist's hand struck them with all kinds of fantastic, elegant embellishments, ever rendering audible a deep fundamental tone, and a softly-flowing

upper voice,—and you will have some idea of his playing. . . . When the *Étude* was ended, we felt as though we had seen a lovely form in a dream, and, half-awake, we strove to seize it again,—but such things cannot be described, still less can they be fitly praised."

Yet even Chopin's method of fingering, "entirely original and unorthodox," was not one which could be imparted to his pupils,—much less "that fascination so ineffably poetic," as Liszt puts it, "that charm subtle and penetrating as the delicate perfume of verbena." —"Four-and-twenty black slaves, four-and-twenty white," served this magician as their master: and were responsive to his utmost bidding.

Throughout the whole of his playing, Chopin employed a certain *rocking* movement, with the most enchanting effect. Not the rocking of the performer's body, but the undulation of the melody, "like a skiff upon the bosom of tossing waves." This peculiar style of execution was, so to speak, his idiosyncrasy, his sign-manual; it set the seal upon all his compositions, in which

it is indicated by the term *tempo rubato*. But, to quote Moscheles, "the *rubato*, which, with his interpreters, degenerates into disregard of time, was with him only a charming originality of manner,"—a flexible, fluctuating, languorous movement, a measured, rhythmic balance and sway. To his own countrymen and countrywomen alone was this characteristic comprehensible: they alone were able in some degree to attain it. "An innate, intuitive understanding of his meaning aided them in following all the fluctuations of his depths of aerial and spiritu. . blue."

But the morning had gone by all too quickly, under the spell of Chopin's personality. The pupils must needs depart,—yet they implored the master for one more kindness before they should tear themselves away. An improvisation is what they clamoured for,—and Chopin was a born *improvisatore*. He smiled with benevolent sweetness upon their pleadings, and, letting his fingers glide into an entrancing rhythm, he poured forth what should some day be known to the world as his 6th Valse (in D-flat, Op. 69, No.

VALSE IN D FLAT, No. VI.
THE SWALLOWS.

"We hear the swallows twittering above the autumn garden, making ready for their flight to southern skies, while a vision of youth and beauty stands among the September flowers and bids good-bye to them."

1)—the "one-minute Valse," it has been termed, from the extreme rapidity of the *tempo*,—that exquisite commingling of sight and sound, in which we hear the swallows twittering above the autumn garden, making ready for their flight to southern skies, while a vision of youth and beauty stands among the September flowers, and bids good-bye to them. The swallows are all in a fever of happy excitement and expectation—*molto vivace*, like the Valse: and a delicate thrill of responsive joy is wakened in the maiden's face. This music is built of very gossamer threads, such stuff as dreams are made of,—yet, while its ethereal echoes still floated across the room, the composer had passed into another phase. A hand had reached and claimed him from the past,—and the starry eyes of Constance Gladkowska, his first love, gazed at him across a world of shifting memories. He drifted, with a perceptible slackening of *tempo*, and a definite change of thought, into the wistful strains of the Valse in D-flat (Op. 70, No. 3.) which he afterwards avowed to have been inspired by that sweet remembrance, who "wore a white dress," he mused, "and had roses in her hair, and was charmingly beautiful." Vague, elusive, phan-

tasmal, she had always been for him, even in reality. She had sung for him at a concert,—she had given him a ring when he left Warsaw for Paris: she had lived on, "calm, but sad," standing aloof from him and his success, earnest and tender-looking "like the Madonnas of Luini." And the D-flat Valse is a sketch of her, from memory: in whose grave and pensive beauty one may still trace the features of Constance Gladkowska.

Chopin suddenly aroused himself, as a seer might do from visions. In accordance with his habit at the close of every piece, he struck the keys up and down with one finger, as though to tear himself forcibly away, to drag himself back into "the light of common day." With the friendliest of smiles he dismissed his students for the day; and set to work with renewed vigour upon a task more intimately congenial,—the evolution, the clothing with substantial form, of his filmy dreams, his spontaneous and sensuous imaginings.

To the mind of Chopin, melodies arrived with the most facile ease, sometimes almost with

"fatal fluency." He had, as it were, a troop of lovely attendant spirits waiting around him,—the slightest lifting of his wand could summon one to his side. It was subsequently that his real work began,—in anxious elaboration, in hesitating selection, in the most sedulous care as to how a passage should eventually present itself to the world. "He would spend weeks writing and re-writing a single page." It may be questioned whether such power of improvisation as Chopin possessed does not eventually weaken a man's capacity for inflexible and inexorable choice,—does not lower the pressure of the selective faculty, and induce a certain vacillation in the quest of some elusive best-of-all. Be that as it may, never did any composer expend more time and trouble upon the shaping of his beautiful fantasies. "Often a whole round of changes was rung, only that the passage might return, after all, to its original form. . . Perfection of form was Chopin's ostensible ideal. . . Every effect was studied with deliberate purpose, and wrought to the highest degree of finish that it would bear; . . tried by every test, and confronted with every alternative which a scrupulous ingenuity could propose."

His method, in short, comprised the extraordinary paradox of a creative power which produced without conscious effort, and a self-critical power which spared no effort. The result was an elaboration of exquisite filigree work, a perfection of symmetrical form, which no one has ever attempted to parallel.

Chopin, indeed, as we have already pointed out, always occupied a solitary niche in the temple of Music: he stands isolate and unapproached,—one cannot ascribe his art to any known source, and its characteristics have never been transmitted. All that he wrote can be contained in a few thin volumes; his harvest was that of quality, not quantity. He had a reverential worship for his art and for its great exponents, notably Mozart, Hummel, Schubert, and Beethoven: but even in the *chefs-d'œuvre* of these masters he only sought that which was in affinity with his own ideals. "All savage wildness was repulsive to him;" all that savoured of rude strength or fierce passion offended his fastidious taste with a sense of vulgarity: his poetic conceptions were of a

fragile, mysterious, evasive nature; and his mind was a sensitive plant, unable to bear the rough winds that blow through certain giant forests of Beethoven. The saying—*"Le style, c'est l'homme"* was never better verified than in his case: and in the "felicitous perfection of style" of Chopin the musician, we trace the delicate lineaments, mental and physical, the plastic and melodious being of Chopin the man.

Having set down, with clarity and precision, the two Valses which he had improvised that morning,—having bestowed abundant labour upon the polishing of every jewelled phrase,—the composer allowed himself to rest, for the nonce, content; and proceeded, with a little shrug of distaste, to overhaul the proofs which, received some days ago, still littered his piano. And here he pursued a diametrically opposite plan to his patient craftsmanship of the last hour. Correcting proofs was to him, above all, a detestable if necessary evil. He had spent so much work and worry over the MSS. that he positively revolted against the printed page. Once his compositions were "set up," he apparently

considered his responsibility at an end. Good or bad, right or wrong, there they were, for people to make the best of; and "no composer, without exception, has allowed so many misprints to pass unnoticed." After a brief perfunctory survey of these obnoxious proofs, Chopin hastily fastened them up again; and endeavoured to wipe them off his mind by a few minutes' brilliant pianoforte practice, a flow of rounded pearls and glittering diamonds.

He then, after a light and hasty lunch, devoted himself a while to that regular correspondence which he kept up with the members of his family—and with them only. For he wrote letters to no others: it might almost have been thought, as Liszt says, that he was under a vow never to address a stranger by letter. "It was curious enough to see how he resorted to all kinds of expedients, to escape the necessity of tracing the most insignificant note," insomuch that he would often traverse Paris from end to end, to decline, *vivâ-voce*, an invitation to dinner, or to impart some trivial piece

of information, rather than put his pen to a few lines on paper. Indeed, to the majority of his friends, Chopin's very handwriting was unknown; and the only people who possessed specimens of it, were one or two of his beautiful country-women who treasured little *billets* written in Polish. Possibly this was due to his dislike of the French language (which he spoke like a native, but considered cold and wanting in sonority) and his love of his own expressive and emotional mother-tongue. But, generous, courteous, and amiable as Chopin's friends found him, the real warmth of his affection was reserved for his own people in Poland. He never wearied of procuring pleasant little surprises to send them, pretty little novelties and graceful gifts; and his letters were almost invariably accompanied by these presents; while he, on the other hand, attached the greatest preciousness and importance to every little mark of remembrance which he received from home. If any trifling souvenir arrived from Warsaw, that day was a red-letter day for Chopin; and indeed, so precious to him were those little tokens of love, that he could hardly bear them to be touched by strangers, and

evinced a visible uneasiness did anyone finger them but himself.

He now made up, with deft fingers, a little parcel of charming *bagatelles* to despatch along with his homeward letters; and having paced around his apartment, inspecting with looks of pleasure the various little *objets de luxe* and flowers which beautified it, and chiefly those dear evidences of his homeland of which, as we have said, he was so pardonably jealous,—Chopin reluctantly dragged himself away from his own peaceful privacy, and went out into the brightness of the afternoon. The master, lingering here and there before some gay shop-window filled with alluring *bijouterie*, or luxuriant with massed colour of blooms, bent his steps towards the house of Prince Csartoryski, where he was an intimate and welcome guest, and was assured of a reunion with some of his dearest compatriots,—Prince Lubomirski, the Countess Platen, Madame de Komar, and the Countess Delphine Potocka,—that indescribably lovely woman, the incarnation of *spirituelle* grace and beauty, who queened it over the choicest

Parisian society. By her, Chopin's second Concerto had been inspired: to her indefinable fascination, her enchanting voice, he yielded the devoutest homage. There was much akin between the peculiar character of her charm, and the traits of his own compositions,—an ineffable wistful sweetness, with a strain of vehement, passionate patriotism perceptible throughout. And it has been truly observed that Chopin could only understand that which closely resembled himself, in some point or other —everything else "only existed for him as a sort of annoying dream." For him, always plunged in reveries, realities were too hard,—he struck against them unwittingly, and was pained. As a child, he could never handle a sharp instrument without hurting himself: as a man, he never found himself face to face with a being of different calibre, without being wounded by a sense of latent contradiction and antagonism. But he had an almost miraculous power of remaining deaf and blind to anything disagreeable to him: and those whose predilections were patently the reverse of his own, passed as mere phantoms before his senses: his polished aristocracy of bearing concealing any hint of

his real feelings, and his superb courtesy disarming all suspicion. His prepossessing person, his delicate constitution, rendered him interesting in the eyes of women: and the originality of his highly-cultured mind won him the regard of the most enlightened men. He made no attempt to maintain an equal standard of luxury in living with that of his friends, whether nobles or celebrities: in manners, in habits, in dress, he preserved an instinctive refinement, an exquisite rightness: and without doubt, few musicians, of obscure origin and slender means, have enjoyed in their life-time the friendship, fame, and affection which were showered upon Chopin—without spoiling him in the least.

In the salons of the exiled Polish aristocracy, Chopin was, and felt himself, at home,—an honoured guest, an acclaimed maestro, a friend by right of birth: and here, to a select and chosen audience, he could give of his very best in the way of performance: for Chopin's pianoforte style, like that of his bent in creative work, was fundamentally opposed to any idea

of large spaces, crowded hearers, and a sense of playing to the gallery. His instinctively timid and seclusive nature retired into itself at the rough touch of publicity: and it may be said that none knew Chopin's real gifts as an executant, his true mastery and magic, save such as had the privilege to hear in private the man who had been declared by all the greatest contemporary judges of music,—Berlioz, Moscheles, Mendelssohn, — as "the most interesting and original pianist of the day." The man, therefore, who could do himself such scant justice on the concert platform was in his element among his Polish friends, people whose hearts were, in blood, in tradition, in sympathy, attuned to his own: and as Prince Lubomirski, or the young, impetuous Orda, or the spirit-like Countess Potocka, were held hushed and spellbound by his enchanting strains, they endorsed with enthusiasm the words of Henrietta Voigt, in Leipzig,—"The sensitiveness of his imagination, style, and character communicates itself immediately to the sensitive hearer. I held my breath while I listened. Wonderful is the airy grace with which his fingers glide, almost fly, over the keyboard, producing a tone

like velvet. . . . . And I was also especially delighted with his childlike, natural demeanour when he played."

One delicate and fantastic piece of embroidery succeeded another,—the *Andante Spianato* passed almost imperceptibly into the F-minor *Fantasia,*—melodies falling out of "faery lands forlorn,"—or some "body-and-soul-inspiring valse" veiled the hours in "its soft dark flood," such as that plaintive reverie, the valse in A-flat (Op. 69, No. 1), instinct with ashes of roses and tender memories of the past. In these reluctant, lingering, deeply-pathetic phrases, one seems to see an old man, brooding before the fire upon the days of his youth long past. A spark of the ancient vigour revives in him,—his soul responds, *con anima,* to some gallant inspiring summons: the gracious phantasmal form of the Well-Beloved lays cooling hands upon his brow. . . *Et puis, bon soir.* The shadows of age and night descend around him, the fluctuating, flickering light sinks down again. . . . Dead cinders fall with infinitesimal

VALSE IN A FLAT, No. IX.
THE REVERIE OF AGE.

"Instinct with ashes of roses and tender memories of the past. In these reluctant, lingering, deeply-pathetic phrases, one seems to see an old man, brooding before the fire upon the days of his youth long past."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sounds, like footsteps retreating in the distance. . . . . The dream is done. . . .

The afternoon was closing into dusk, when Chopin, rejecting all the allurements of evening Paris, hurried home to his own apartments in the Chaussée d'Antin. He had promised himself an evening *chez lui,* far more precious in his eyes than the receipt of flatteries and adulations which awaited him without. He had invited a few choice friends to bear him company, artistic temperaments with which he was thoroughly *en rapport;* and in a short while these had arrived with eager expectation, for to be received into the intimacy of Chopin's private life was an honour to which few could lay claim.

It was not without a struggle, without a touch of misanthropic repugnance, as Liszt puts it, that the composer had been induced to open his doors and his piano, even to his most faithful friends. But, once he had overcome his tendency to refuse himself, a visit to Chopin was a pleasure inestimable: he knew how to

receive his visitors with the most charming ease and grace, placing everything that was his at their disposal with an almost Oriental humility.

And now, as darkness invaded the large flower-scented room, a mental atmosphere elusive and indefinite stole in and suffused the night with sweetness. The corners of the room were dark; all sense of space was obliterated. Here and there some tall piece of furniture revealed its shadowy outlines. The light which was concentrated at the pianoforte, mingled softly with the fitful firelight: and a single portrait caught these blended gleams. In the "luminous zone" around the Pleyel sat a number of men, whose natures had singularly fitted them to be recipients of those confidences which Chopin poured forth to his piano. Heller was there, worshipping at the shrine of his fellow-musician; and Adolphe Nourrit, that "noble artist at once ascetic and passionate," his constitution already "undermined by a melancholy passion for the Beautiful." Heine, seated nearest to Chopin, conversed with him in

mysterious whispers over the twinkling keys; and Chopin translated his answers into fairy arabesques of sound. Between these two kindred spirits, a glance, a word, a tone sufficed for mutual understanding: and they spoke, in a sort of delicious humorous nonsense to which the rest had no clue, of the mysterious dreamland which they both had visited, and gave each other news from that ethereal region. . . "Do the roses always glow there with so triumphant a flame? do the trees at midnight sing always so harmoniously?". . . .

Meyerbeer,—a great name his in those days,—sat next to Heine, and marvelled at the coruscations of a genius so totally unlike his own. Eugène Delacroix, the master-painter, sat silent and absorbed, revolving splendid schemes. The venerable Mickiewicz was listening with enrapt attention to the Polish songs which Chopin translated into wordless music: while the greater poet, Mickiewicz, "the Dante of the North," remained brooding and apart, in a vision of his country's wrongs. Last but not least, aloof from the others, seated with her arms before

her on the table, was that "large-brained woman and large-hearted man, self-styled George Sand," drinking in the ceaseless current of sound with all the fervour of a strong and ardent nature. Rarely did her deep sympathetic contralto vibrate upon the magnetic air of that dusky room : her dark eyes veiled their thrilling gaze beneath the nebulous dimness of the night. Only that perfume of violets which she loved, softly exhaling from her dress, revealed the presence of a woman, "whose every thought is fragrant," as Heine said. For this "great soul, simple, affectionate, without vanity, without pedantry, humane, equitable, patient, kind," in Matthew Arnold's words,—this powerful personality, was prepared to obliterate herself at a moment's notice in honour of the frail, feeble, woman-like, fastidious bundle of nerves called Chopin : and she who was "never weary,—never despondent,—never out of humour," could bear with all his little petulances and caprices, as a mother with a sick child. Yet, it may be, she was of too strong intellectual capacity to exist as the bosom-friend of such a man. Her genius was too electrical, her physique too energetic : and the admiration which she had inspired in

the delicate organisation of Chopin was consuming him, "as a wine too spirituous shatters the fragile vase."

"And now, my dears," said their host, turning round upon the music-stool, "I have played myself out,—very nearly. I do not often confess to fatigue—yet it is hardly a malady to be ashamed of. Before I rise from the piano, however, I will play two or three short *morceaux,*—and what they shall be, I leave to the decision of the three most silent people here: I address you, Delacroix,—you, Mickiewicz,— and you, Madame Sand."

"For this hour, and this half-light," said Delacroix, with gratitude, "I will suggest a Nocturne,—your No. 6 in G-minor. For in that divine composition the outlines of a noble picture were revealed to me,—a young novice leaning at her window on a night of stars, while her lover beseeches her vainly from below, and the solemn tones of the organ inspire her to repudiate all earthly love."

"And for me," said Mickiewicz, arousing himself, "I choose your F-minor Nocturne,—the fifteenth, is it not?—where the melancholy valour of young warriors, marching to a forlorn hope, echoes with a desperate gaiety through the snowy forest."

"But I," said Madame Sand,—her warm, rich tones, like those of a violoncello, falling with singular effect across the shadows,—"I will implore our Frédéric for that loveliest, to my mind, of all his Nocturnes—the fourth, in F-major. The very breath of midsummer distils from it: it is all a wafting of roses and hay and syringa, the passionate scents of a June garden. And in that garden I see two lovers whispering in the twilight: whose vows shall never be broken, nor the rapture of their first love fade. For they are enshrined in this immortal melody. . . .—Don't you remember, my friends, how the night-wind arises with vehemence, and rustles excitedly in the leaves awhile—and then it dies down into pulsing sighs, while that *chant d'amour* recommences?"

NOCTURNE IN F MAJOR, No. IV.

"And in that garden I see two lovers—in the twilight; whose vows shall never be broken, nor the rapture of their first love fade, for they are enshrined in this immortal melody."


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"I am at your bidding," answered Chopin: and he played the three Nocturnes as he was desired.

When all his guests were gone, and, coughing wearily, he sought his bed,—to lie down, but not to repose,— the night-wind, of which George Sand had spoken, came rustling to him from gardens far away—gardens a thousand miles remote from Paris,—and it spoke to him, in Polish accents, of days which he had long forgotten. . .

"Joy and woe are woven fair,
A garment for the soul to wear;
Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine."

William Blake's words, in their touching truth and simplicity, might well have wandered through the unrestful dreams of Frédéric Chopin.

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"That tremendous love-duo, sustained at the supreme altitude of emotion, where . . . the hero and heroine 'lose themselves in the Nirvana of love . . . dissolve into their common soul, which, vast and unfathomable, seems to them the soul of the whole universe.'"

A DAY WITH WAGNER.

IT is before six o'clock on a July morning in 1873, when Richard Wagner rises to devote several hours to work: for he has an incurable passion for hard work, and is more than eager every day to resume the labours of yesterday. No one is allowed to enter the room where he sits, with a glass of wine before him on the table: his spare, agile form clothed in garb of amazing colour and construction. His sensitive skin, which shudders involuntarily at the touch of cotton, is invariably clad in silk attire, and he delights to indulge in the most rococo combinations of design. His present dressing-gown is of quilted pink satin with a lighter satin lining, and stuffed with eiderdown, with an extra padded ruching inserted all round. If this is not warm enough for chilly mornings,

Wagner puts on a heavy lined fur cloak instead. And he is utterly at a loss without three indispensable articles—his velvet cap, his spectacles, and his snuff box.

On dit that bright, not to say gaudy colours, and flamboyant designs, exhilarate and inspire Wagner, and moreover, that he changes his dress and the upholstery of his surroundings to suit the peculiar character of whatever opera he is engaged upon. Be that as it may, many of his greatest works have been composed without these external stimulants; in poverty, discomfort, exile, and obloquy. If ever a man, by strenuous toil and resolute persistence in the face of all obstacles, earned the right to indulge his fads and fancies, it is Richard Wagner. By long and stormy ways in the pursuit of an incalculable ideal, he has come to his own at last: and some slight indulgence in the "eccentricities of genius" may now be freely accorded him.

The room itself in which he works is equally indicative of Wagner's own avowal that he is "by nature luxurious, prodigal, and

extravagant, much more than Sardanapalus and all the old Emperors put together . . . . better qualified to squander sixty thousand francs in six months than to earn it." This room apparently represents his *beau-idéal* of a library, work-room and reception-room combined. Large and spacious, fitted so as to afford possibilities of the most brilliant lighting, with wall-lamps and chandeliers: filled with rich furniture, with gorgeous curtains and hangings — silks, satins, damasks, velvets: its shelves of musical scores, and of books innumerable, testify to Wagner's personal *penchants* as regards authors and musicians. His literary library is unusually well-stocked and well-chosen. Few visitors to the villa have encountered its equal. Himself a poet and dramatist, he has a fine collection of poetical and dramatic works: many being translations, for Wagner is not a good linguist. History, mythology, philosophy, occupy considerable space: his own treatises and essays on the philosophy and theory of music are represented also. Volumes on various erudite and recondite subjects, far beyond the ordinary reader, evince the composer's wide scope and eclectic tastes: and volumes of orchestral and

operatic works proclaim his special predilections in the "tone-art"—notably, and paramount, his worship of Beethoven, an admiration bordering on fanaticism. "I do not recall clearly," he has written, "what I was intended to become, but I remember that one evening I heard a Beethoven symphony for the first time, that I had an attack of fever thereafter, and that, when I had recovered, I had become a musician. This may explain why, although in course of ti[illegible] I became familiar with other beautiful music, I still loved and worshipped Beethoven above all. I ceased to know any other pleasure but that of immersing myself in the depths of his genius, until I came to imagine myself a part of him." But, besides Beethoven, Wagner has a profound admiration for that greatest master of musical thought, that inexhaustible well of beauty, Sebastian Bach. "How warm, how healthy and natural is his music," says he, "how full of feeling,—what strange cries in it now and then!" Mozart also occupies a lofty pinnacle in his mind, "the glorious master with his incomparable dramatic talent" . . . . "I believe in God, Mozart, Beethoven," was Wagner's early *credo*. Last, and by no means

least, his love of Weber is manifested in a collection of various works by that insufficiently appreciated genius. It has been remarked that "the composer in whom Wagner's music really has its roots, is not Beethoven, but Weber." He himself has acknowledged his indebtedness, in his article on *The Music of the Future*. "Should I be granted the satisfaction of seeing my *Tannhäuser* well received by the Paris public . . . . I should owe this success in a large measure to the very noticeable connection of this opera with those of my predecessors, amongst whom I specially call attention to Weber."

It is, in quantity, therefore, not a very extended répertoire, musically speaking, which figures upon Wagner's library shelves: it owes all to quality. The conspicuous absence of certain great names is due to his strongly-marked idiosyncrasies. Richard Wagner has never been one to follow the multitude in obeisance to any artistic fame: he has chosen either to lead popular opinion, or to ignore it.

Around him, as he sits so diligently transcribing "thoughts that breathe and words that

burn," a score of friendly eyes look down. The lofty walls are hung with portraits. Here his mother, there his wife Cosima,—his patron King Ludwig, his friend Liszt, his idol Beethoven; Schiller, and Goethe, and Schopenhauer, and others endeared to him by intellect or friendship. A splendid Steinway grand piano occupies one corner of the room: and mention must not be omitted of a magnificent dog which lies stretched in sympathetic silence at his master's feet: for Wagner, whether he walks, or writes, or rests, is never unaccompanied by a dog, and he insists that his beloved "Peps" helped him to compose *Tannhäuser*, by howling most vociferously, with his eyes peering deep into his master's, whenever the music went against the grain with him. Whereupon Wagner would reconstruct it. . . . . The man has a perfect passion for animals: he is contemplating writing a "History of My Dogs." And it is noteworthy that, wherever possible in his operas, he introduces animals: as a matter of fact, the *Meister-singer*, *Tristan*, and the *Fliegende Holländer* are the only plots in which they do *not* occur. Often they are associated with particularly beautiful and significant music: as will be

LOHENGRIN IS BROUGHT BY THE SWAN.

"The violins, in high harmonic positions, in the key of A, 'which is the purest for strings and the most magic in effect,' always announce the approach of Lohengrin, as the Swan glides up with the mysterious Knight."

remembered by those who are familiar with the swans in *Lohengrin* and *Parsifal*, and the bird and the Dragon in *Siegfried* — wherein a bear also appears. In *Rienzi* and *Tannhäuser* *Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung*, there are horses: and amongst other creatures in various operas, may be enumerated a dove, a ram, a toad, a snake, ravens, and hunting-dogs. In short, Wagner's love of animals has been coupled with his stubborn honesty and uncompromising purpose, as the most prominent traits in his character.

In personal appearance there is nothing about the great operatic composer to indicate the immense resources of his intellect, and the abundant love and happiness which he is capable of feeling. A man of barely middle height, and of no particular presence, his most pronounced features are a massive—almost too massive—forehead, and an obstinate chin. The latter to some extent contradicts the expressive serenity of his eyes, and the refinement of his mouth. His hair and whiskers are but slightly touched with grey; but his face is lined with past pains, for Wagner has suffered all his life.

Not only have repeated failures, perpetual frustrations, troubles financial, artistic and domestic, set their mark upon him: he has been since childhood the victim of erysipelas, heart-trouble, dyspepsia, and insomnia, — the latter maladies probably produced by continual sedentary work. Really good health he has never known: nor, indeed, are his habits conducive to it. He does not over-eat or over-drink or over-smoke: but he is a veritable slave to snuff: and, like many other men of genius, he has to pay the penalty of inordinate work at inordinate hours, in a ruined digestion and an impaired temper.

In speaking of work, it must be remembered that Wagner has imposed upon himself a colossal task,—one which no previous composer has attempted,—in combining the art of the poet with that of the musician,—in regarding an opera as a co-ordinate whole; words, music, orchestration all simultaneously conceived and produced, inseparable. Wagner is wont to compare poetry to a husband and music to a wife,—thus, to a certain extent, subordinating the feminine element to the masculine,—where-

as the reverse has hitherto always been the case: the music has occupied the position of the "predominant partner." And, in order to accomplish his ends in this union, his method of creating a "music-drama" is in the highest degree systematic. He does not dog the heels of a desultory inspiration, but maps out with clear purpose and insight the progress and culmination of his work. His usual plan is this: first, to select a subject, and rough out the plot in prose. This subject-matter is to some extent pre-determined for him: for, as he has declared, Love is the main subject of all the dramas he has ever written, from the *Fliegende Hollander* to *Parsifal*. Love, human or divine — love, triumphant or despairing — love, in selfishness or in self-sacrifice: love, regarded, according to Schopenhauer's theory, as "the highest of all moral and hygienic laws." The solitary rival which he permits to this all-powerful passion is gold, — and that only as evidenced in the misshapen dwarf Alberich of the *Rheingold*. Look back in memory upon the Wagnerian stories; you will perceive that love is imminent and immanent from the very outset. "All his heroes and heroines," it has

been said, "fall in love at their first meeting,—or before." And it will also be evident that in almost every case the woman is ready to sacrifice her life, if need be, for the lover. Hers is the final and the noblest joy, the joy of self-renunciation. Senta and Vanderdecken, Elizabeth and Tannhäuser, Elsa and Lohengrin,—Eva and Walter, Siegmund and Sieglinde, Siegfried and Brünnhilde,—here, indeed, is a glorious pageantry of true lovers such as you shall not match in all the world: and, last and greatest of them, Tristan and Isolde, lovers *par excellence*, whose story is, in Wagner's words, "the simplest of musical conceptions, but full-blooded; with the black flag waving at the end:" or, as Liszt has put it, "something to weep over and flare up in enthusiasm. What ravishing magic! What an incredible wealth of beauty!" In *Tristan und Isolde*, "a poem for poets, a score for musicians," love with all its attributes, all its possibilities, its glory heightened to a more vivid glow against the lowering shadow of inevitable doom, finds its ultimate consummation of expression: above all in that tremendous love-duo, sustained at the supreme altitude of emotion, where "the orchestra

becomes a perfect Oriental garden of fresh and fragrant melodies," and the hero and heroine "lose themselves," to quote Catulle Mendès, "in the Nirvana of Love . . . dissolve into their common soul, which, vast and unfathomable, seems to them the soul of the whole universe."

But we must return to the sedulous workman at his table. About nine o'clock, breakfast is brought in to him—separately from the rest of the household—and he swallows it hurriedly after his usual headlong fashion: his one idea is to get on with work. Having made a sketch in prose of the main lines of his plot, he proceeds to put it into verse, not without the most careful discrimination and selection, and having first thoroughly assured himself that the idea is full of latent success.

But he goes much further than this. "It would be quite impossible for me," he has stated, "to compose to an opera-'book' written by another person, and for this reason: it is not my way to choose a certain subject, elaborate it into verse, and then excogitate

music suitable to accompany it. Indeed, such a method would put me under the disadvantage of having to be inspired twice by the same subject, which is impossible. My method is different from that. In the first place, no subjects attract me save such as present themselves to me as of simultaneous poetic and musical importance. Thus, before I begin to make a verse, or even to project a scene, I am already intoxicated by the musical fragrance of my task. I have all the tones, all the characteristic motives, in my hand, so that when the verses are finished and the scenes arranged, the opera is practically finished so far as I am concerned, and the detailed execution of the work is little more than a quiet after-labour, which has been preceded by the real moments of creation."

Wagner has for many years adhered to this conviction : he has expressed it with vehemence and certainty in his essay on Beethoven, where he demonstrates how even that mighty genius, incapable of expressing his highest inspirations in sound alone, invoked the aid of poetry for his *magnum opus* in the Ninth Symphony. In this, according to Wagner's theory, he returned

to the original tradition of all nations, in which bard and singer, poet and minstrel, were one and the same : an ideal and natural condition of identity, which had suffered a temporary dislocation and divorce for some two hundred years.

Owing to this plan of giving contemporaneous evolution to both words and sounds, of regarding both as the expression of the same emotion, —the verses, twin-born with the music, are almost finished before he commits them to paper : and the music, chiefly conceived upon his lonely walks, is also only waiting its final capture in actual black-and-white notation. Wagner's memory is of unparalleled power and magnitude : he can conduct, from memory alone, whole symphonies of his beloved Beethoven, every note in the complex scores visible and audible to his mind. And although he likes to have a piano in his room, so that, if necessary, he may re-mould and re-model to a certain extent, he cannot attempt to transfer to the limitations of the key-board the amazing architectonics of his piled-up score. Wagner thinks entirely in orchestral terms, and lives habitually in a region of orchestral colours ; merely using the piano as

a very inadequate sketch-book to which he can have recourse when necessary.

He is at present engaged in working out his instrumental score from sketches on scraps of music-paper, written in pencil and almost illegible. It is a task detestable to his impatient and impetuous soul: yet, with one of those contradictions which are so characteristic of great men, his completed scores are as neat, clean, and presentable, as his rough jottings are wild and almost incomprehensible. Not a blot, not a blur, not an erasure, disfigures his eminently legible pages: and his writing itself is exceptionally good. "These scores," he has told Liszt, "will be my most finished master-works in caligraphy! . . . Meyerbeer, in former days, admired nothing in my scores more than the neat writing. This tribute of admiration has now become a curse to me: I *must* write neat scores as long as I live!" So that Wagner's *Reinschrift*, or clean copy, is a marvel of lucidity and elegance.

Yet what the compiling of this instrumental score must mean, in severe manual labour no

less than in brain work, only he can realize who himself is an orchestral writer. No one else can possibly comprehend the innumerable transpositions and super-positions and juxta-positions, the questions of balance, and colour, and combination, which go to the building-up of an orchestral work: and above all, in such scores as Wagner's. "Any one who *does* comprehend it," as the composer Heinrich Dorn has exclaimed, "must be doubly astounded at this exhausting and colossal activity."

In the full score of *Die Walküre* alone, it has been calculated, there are at least a million notes,—that is, taking them in sequence,—not taking into account their incredible multitude of recapitulations or combinations, in the construction of the whole, bar by bar. Moreover, the orchestra, as employed by Wagner, is no longer the small select paint-box, so to speak, with which Mozart and Beethoven produced such noble effects. In Wagner's opinion, they had but narrow and meagre means at their disposal. He supplements, doubles, triples or quadruples the existing instruments in their various divisions: he adds new instruments,

hitherto rigorously excluded from classic orchestras; he invents unheard-of concatenations of sound, undreamed-of usages of tint and tone. Wholly original, unorthodox, unconventional, yet convinced of his own capacity, he bids the orchestra assume a rôle and an importance, which never in opera has been heretofore acceded to it. It is no longer treated, in his own phrase, as a big guitar to accompany arias. "He entrusts to it the function of revealing the soul, the passions, the feelings, even the most transient emotions, of his characters; the orchestra becomes the echo, the transparent veil, through which we hear all their heart-beats:" whether, in the *Feuer-zauber* scene, to use the language of Saint-Saëns, "the violins flame, the harps crackle, the drums scintillate," around the wall of fire which hides Brünnhilde, or the two sets of forest horns, making answer to each other in different keys, descend into dreamy silence before the passionate embrace of Tristan and Isolde: whether the violins, in high "harmonic" positions, in the key of A, "which is the purest for strings and the most magic in effect," always announce the approach of Lohengrin,

as the Swan glides up with the mysterious Knight ; or, in the introduction to the first act of *Die Walküre*, the rainstorm pelts and pours upon the roof of Hunding's hut, in the "agitated tremolos and runs of the violins," while the double-basses mutter growling thunder in the distance, until at last, in that clashing cataclysm of sound with which the storm rides in upon the full orchestra, appears that sinister and terrible motive identical with the Storm-God. Or again, when upon the chord of E-flat, rising and falling in long waves from the highest to the lowest octaves, the water-maidens of *Rheingold* become visible in their graceful play, and their song rocks like a cradle-song, in exquisite modulations, half-nonsense-words such as a cradle song might be, "*Weia, waga, woge du Welle.*" Nor is it only *en masse*, and in the depicting of a whole scene, as it progresses, that Wagner has led the way into a new tone-world whither henceforth so many shall hope to follow, whilst those "who come to scoff, remain to pray." He uses certain instruments to certain ends: and certain keys for certain purposes. In *Lohengrin*, for instance, he breaks through the monotonous "harp conventionality," which has

always been used for portraying celestial matters, and takes, instead of harps—with infinitely thrilling effect—violins and wood-wind, in prolonged notes, in the highest positions. Ortrud is almost invariably indicated by the English horn, the bass-clarinet, and the key of F-sharp minor: Elsa by the high wood-wind: the King by the brass. All this, without mention being made of what is perhaps Wagner's most salient musical characteristic, or what strikes the lay mind as such,—the association of his *dramatis personæ* with certain definite melodies or motives. For he is the prophet, if not the inventor, of the *leit-motiv* and all subsequent developments which follow on it.

But now the morning has reached the hour of twelve: and the composer's long isolation is ended. His wife comes in, taking it for granted that he has worked long enough, and sits down to tell him the news of the day, to read his letters aloud to him, to listen to his enthusiastic projects, and write, at his dictation, some of the enormous multiplicity of letters which must be despatched. Cosima Wagner, the daughter of

Liszt, is a perfect wife for the eccentric musician, whose first marriage was in all respects unhappy. She almost worships her husband, and delights to serve and wait upon his smallest wishes. She is full of intelligent sympathy for his art, and of loving indulgence to his weaknesses. He may cram the drawing-room, like the study, with irrelevant cascades of velvet, or unnecessary draperies of silk—for he has, as we have indicated already, "a passionate love for luminous stuffs that spread themselves like sheets of flame or fall in splendid folds." He may garb himself in bizarre and almost ludicrous concoctions, such as a coat and trousers of golden satin embroidered with pearl flowers. Cosima Wagner knows the real honest heart at the back of all these ebullitions, and is aware that in his ideal German, Hans Sachs of *Der Meistersinger*, "the type of all that is noble and self-sacrificing in human nature," her husband recognises many of his own best traits. There is only one thing which he will *not* sacrifice. All others if need be,—but not his dreams, his aspirations in art, for whose sake he has been content to endure so many years of privation, derision and disaster.

A DAY WITH WAGNER.

"Happy the genius," Wagner has declared, "on whom fortune has never smiled. Genius is so much unto itself! What more could fortune add? . . . When I am alone, and the musical fibres within me vibrate, and heterogeneous sounds form themselves into chords whence at last springs the melody which reveals to me my inner self: if then the heart in loud beats marks the impetuous rhythms, and rapture finds vent in divine tears through the mortal, no-longer-seeing eyes,—then do I often say to myself, what a fool you are not to remain always by yourself, to live only for these unique delights! . . . What can this public, with its most brilliant reception, offer you to equal in value even the one hundredth part of that holy rapture which comes from within?" But the vivid elation which supports him during the hours of work, sinks as suddenly as it rose; leaving him weary and flaccid as he lays down his pen after the prolonged and eager effort. To-day, indeed, he has not undergone the stress of emotion which he suffers during the actual throes of the creative impulse,—in which, as many great authors have done, he identifies himself absolutely with the characters of his story, and finds their joys and

ELIZABETH AND THE PASSING OF THE PILGRIMS.

"Elizabeth in her cruel and death-dealing disappointment when she sees that Tannhäuser is not among the company of the pilgrims returning from Rome."

sorrows reflected in himself. Such is frequently the case with Wagner. When he was engaged upon *Lohengrin*, he endured, as he has observed, "actual deep grief—which often found vent in scalding tears—when I realized the inevitable tragic necessity of the separation, the distraction of the two lovers." The composition of *Tannhäuser*, again, "acted upon me like real magic: whenever and wherever I took up my subject, I was all aglow and trembling with excitement . . . The first breath always transported me back into the fragrant atmosphere that had intoxicated me at its first conception." He revelled with Tannhäuser in the sensuous delights of the Venusberg,—shared with Wolfram his pure and noble ecstasy of devotion to Elizabeth,—agonized with Elizabeth in her cruel and death-dealing disappointment, when she sees that Tannhäuser is not among the company of the pilgrims returning from Rome. All these varied and poignant sensations inevitably end by plunging the composer, himself a mere medium for their expression, into a depth of reaction so profound as to be almost melancholia: in which he is capable of questioning whether indeed he has pursued some Fata

Morgana of the intellect, and if he be merely the dupe of a monstrous vanity. But his present lassitude is more physical than mental: and the soothing influence of his wife is very sweet to him. Moreover, he has a healthy human appetite, and is by no means reluctant to betake himself, at one o'clock, into his richly-furnished dining-room, and to make a good dinner of roast meat, or preferably game: with a draught of good Rhine wine. "Your oatmeal gruel does not please me," he avers. "Game, while providing a maximum of nourishment, requires a minimum of digestive power: and it is imperative to gain strength through nourishment." After this, Wagner retires to his bedroom for an hour's siesta: by which means he restores his temporarily flagging energies, and re-appears, as alert as ever, in the course of the afternoon. There is now in evidence perhaps somewhat less of the genius, and somewhat more of the husband, father and friend; and he visits his little son Siegfried in the morning,—the child for whom, and in celebration of his mother's birthday, he composed his refined and lovely *Siegfried Idyll:* "music as tender and melodious as Schubert's, and as full of the most

exquisite charm as any part of his own music-dramas," written for a "diminutive orchestra consisting only of strings, wood-wind, one trumpet, and two horns." The old German lullaby, *Schlafe Kindchen*, is one of the main themes of this charming orchestral cradle-song: other subjects are taken from the score of *Siegfried*. Did Wagner, in presenting his little infant with this jewel-work of art, dream of some day to come when he should listen, may be, to sterner music; when, perhaps, he should, like his namesake Siegfried, forge his sword *Needful* upon the glowing anvil of life, among the deafening clangours of the smithy, and under the eyes of malevolent earth-folk? "The most beautiful of my life's dreams," Wagner has termed *Siegfried*, and it is the farthest removed from the old conventional operatic type. There is no chorus in it, throughout the concerted *ensemble:* there are never more than two persons on the stage at once. No female voice (with the exceptions of Erda and the Forest-Bird) is heard until almost the end. In short, we are there, as has been said, "transported to a new world which music alone makes possible."

Friends begin to arrive one by one, and are warmly welcomed : for these *are* friends, staunch and loyal ones, and not such parasites as desire to crawl in under the shadow of a great name, or such "curious impertinents" as would poke and pry into the privacy of famous men. All that Wagner has ever craved for in human intercourse, "was *appreciation* : his only longing was to be *understood.*" And mere personal popularity is a matter more or less of indifference to him, so long as the children of his brain, his music-dramas, are valued and worshipped at their proper worth. For indiscriminate and ignorant homage to himself he has no use whatever. He complains bitterly, as so many other men of genius have complained, of the penalty which intellect must pay to intrusiveness. "What one of our class," says he, "sacrifices, in his intercourse with all sorts of persons, utter strangers, — what annoyances and torments attend it,—no one else can have any conception of ; these tortures are the greater, because men who are our very antipodes believe that we are really like themselves, for they understand just as much in us as we have in common with them, and do not know how little, how very little—

that is. . . . I make the most subtle arrangements to secure isolation, compel myself to be alone, and take pains to attain my object. . . . Talking, letter-writing, business complications, —these are my life-foes: undisturbed peaceful creativeness and work are, on the contrary, my life's preservers."

Yet, despite Wagner's protestations of preference for seclusion, he is naturally a companionable and gregarious man. Strangers are often agreeably surprised by the cordial and demonstrative delight with which he receives them: he is capable of dancing with joy and tossing up his cap like a boy, in sheer ebullience of enthusiasm. He has a curious, indefinable personal magnetism, exercised in apparent unconsciousness of its power, over all with whom he comes in contact. "When in his presence," said Herkomer, "you lose your own identity: you are sadly inclined to forget that there is something else in the world besides Wagner and his music. You are under an influence that sets every nerve at its highest key. . . . I doubt whether any man since Napoleon I. has been known to exercise such

powers of fascination over his admirers as Richard Wagner does daily." His face lights up with dignity and splendour, his eyes are luminous with excitement. Never still a moment, never seated, but always moving to and fro with quick nervous gestures,—sometimes searching for his *sine quà non* the snuff-box, which has a constant trick of disappearing,—sometimes hunting after his spectacles, which may be in any recondite place, even to hanging on a chandelier,—sometimes pulling his velvet cap off and squeezing it to and fro as he speaks,—you might set down Wagner, were he other than he is, as a fussy, fidgety, nervously-excitable old man. But nobody ever regards him as this for a moment.

Every one is literally carried away, swept off the feet, by the flood of his eloquence, the imperious magic of his personality. He dominates every hearer, as he has dominated Fate and Fortune: and he talks, talks, talks, with illimitable vivacity and variety, upon every possible topic: while his guests are ready to laugh or weep at his bidding, to follow him to the wildest vistas of vision, to struggle after him to

SIEGFRIED FORGING HIS SWORD NEEDFUL.

"He should, like his namesake Siegfried, forge his sword *Needful* upon the glowing anvil of life, among the deafening clangours of the smithy, and under the eyes of malevolent earth-folk."


NORMAN
PRICE

apparently unattainable heights of ecstacy, or to "caverns measureless to man" of the deepest philosophical speculations. And with all this he interblends the liveliest possible wit, and the most engaging mirthfulness,—playing all sorts of pranks, singing some amusing fragment such as the Cobbler's song from the *Meistersinger,* or roaring with laughter as he recites a humorous anecdote.

Those who have accused Wagner of unsociability, of professional jealousy, of selfish egotism and tactless *brusquerie*, can never have been admitted into the charmed circle of his home: or they would have fallen under the same spell which binds his friends in a league of what amounts to almost fanatical worship. Nor can they have realized that true democracy, one of his finest traits, which makes him as considerate and as courteous to a servant as to a "Highness," as polite to a cook as to a king. That he has a temper which in scope and size is on a level with his other mental attributes, an authentic composer's temper of the most volcanic type, nobody of course can gainsay. But this is a malady incident to many men

who can plead no mitigating circumstances of insomnia, dyspepsia, over-work, over-worry and the facing of almost insuperable difficulties. Whilst, in Wagner's case, his eruptions of ungovernable rage are followed by a correspondingly great remorse, all that can be done to assuage or allay any pain he may have caused, he will do with a whole heart. And so little is his temper an integral part of his real character, that an expression of "infinite kindness, almost celestial kindness," is what most strikes some people on first meeting him. He is of the most keenly sympathetic disposition : so that it has been alleged, "He can never be perfectly happy,—because he will always have someone about him whose sorrow he must share."

As the afternoon passes on, the visitors severally depart. And the master of the house sits down, to find repose for a short interval in his favourite occupation of reading. Nothing affords him more peace and contentment than to lose himself in some fine book. Peace settles down upon his restless limbs and feverish brain : "an expression of incomparable tender-

ness hovers over his features, and a pallor, which is not the pallor of ill-health, suffuses his face like a light cloud."

It may readily be imagined that Wagner has had to find time for a very large amount of reading, among the exigencies of his creative work. He has had to study many books to acquaint himself with the masterpieces of literature, for the selection of his dramatic material. And for the six years after the completion of *Lohengrin*, whilst abuse was being hurled upon his music in every quarter, as "the negation of art, of melody, of common-sense," he withheld himself with stern self-control from writing another bar. He expended his energies upon the production of theoretical treatises, by which he hoped to cleave a path for the passage of the "Music of the Future,"—treatises such as *Art and Revolution*, *Art and Climate*, *Opera and Drama*, *Judaism in Music*, — so complex, so learned, so abstruse, and, *bien entendu*, so deadly uninteresting to the musical in addition to the unmusical reader, that it is very much to be doubted if anyone has ever succeeded in plodding through them save the author himself. Still,

they pre-supposed an enormous amount of study; and although they were not written under the direct impulse of the Schopenhauer philosophy, which has so largely influenced Wagner's later theories, they tend in some manner to prepare the way for it. This philosophy, very roughly put, amounts to the statement that the musical composer is the only truly *creative* artist, because he cannot borrow anything from nature, and is shut up, like the deaf Beethoven, with his own inner consciousness, and his own — practically clairvoyant — inceptions.

This is what one may call a domesticated day, an "At Home" day with Richard Wagner. He is not obliged to go out and conduct a rehearsal with his orchestra in the Bayreuth theatre,—storming, hissing, gyrating, stamping, like one demoniacally possessed, and anon smiling sweetly and almost ceasing to move at all. He has no royal audience to attend in the palace of his devout adorer and patron, King Ludwig: he has no desire, to-day, to visit his favourite resort at Angermann's, where he is wont to "set the table in a roar" above the

glasses of *Bairisch bier*, as he exhales innumerable jests and reminiscences. The afternoon is still delightfully warm, warm enough even for this man so singularly susceptible to damp and cold, who can hardly bear to live through the detested winter, and never, if possible, starts new work until the spring. In his favourite attitude, with his hands behind his back, thrust deep into specially-made capacious overcoat pockets, and accompanied by his dog, the composer goes out for a lonely walk, and for a silent inter-communion with Nature. This, in common with most other great musicians, he finds his most prolific time. And, slowly pacing in solitary silence, while the summer evening bathes him in light and odorous warmth, he rises into that "clarified, ethereal atmosphere" which he has described, that "ecstatic sense of isolation," which fills him with "voluptuous thrills such as we experience on a lofty Alpine summit, when with our head in the blue ocean of air, we look down on the mountain ridges and valleys beneath." And he becomes aware of mysteries,—voices and melodies penetrating to his consciousness from the innermost soul of things. One of the characters with which he is

at present concerned—a character out of the music-drama he is creating — appears to his mind's eye—gazing, even visibly moving towards him—"which may even frighten him, but which he must endure. At last its lips move, the mouth is opened, and a voice from the spirit world," so he himself has endeavoured to explain this transcendent experience, "tells him something quite real, entirely intelligible, but also so unheard-of . . . that it awakes him from his dream. Everything has vanished, but in his mind's ear the sounds continue, he has had an 'idea,' a so-called musical 'motive.' Heaven knows whether others may have heard it just the same or somewhat similar." What does he care? It is his motive, given him in a perfectly legitimate way by that remarkable apparition, during the wonderful moment of his trance.

These experiences are not the property of the ordinary man: nor are they capable of intelligible explanation in lucid terms to any who have not been through them. The visions of saints and mystics, the ecstasies of devotees, the hallucinations of seers, are of the same

THE NORNS SPINNING DESTINY.

"The three weird sisters, the Norns in their dark and filmy raiment, who, sitting in the faint grey dusk of the *Götterdämmerung*, fasten their golden cord from rock to rock, and unravel from its fibres the hidden things of future, past and present."

calibre, and on the same plane, with the means whereby music is vouchsafed to the musician. He dwells for what may be a moment, or a thousand years—for here time and space are obliterated as in dreams—among trailing clouds of glory, which are sound-vibrations rather than light-vibrations, and his being is as an instrument of seven strings for invisible fingers to play upon. Were it not that these occasions have by dint of repetition become natural, instead of supernatural, events, they would be more than the human mind is capable of sustaining.

Wagner returns to his house, transpierced with glorious imaginations: better and greater they seem to him than all which have hitherto been yielded him. For he is at present contemplating that noblest and abstrusest work of any, *Parsifal*, "steeped in a dense cloud of religious mysticism," and he desires that his utterances in this, the culminating, consummate work of his skill as a master of resources, shall be fraught with actual divine inspirations,—to result in something new beyond all previous attempts toward novelty. The Norn who

presided over his birth deposited, says he, upon his cradle, "the never-contented spirit that ever seeks the new." And the three Weird Sisters, the Norns in their dark and filmy raiment, who, sitting in the faint grey dusk of the *Götterdämmerung*, fasten their golden cord from rock to rock, and unravel from its fibres the hidden things of future, past and present,—these three grey Fates have watched above him sixty years, nor is their gift of *newness* yet outworn. A modern Perseus seeking to the Graiæ, he still invokes their benison: and still, in secret, unexpected ways, it is bestowed in marvellous fulness on him.

He sits down to spend the twilight hour, as is his wont, in quiet conversation with his wife. To her alone can he confide his most intricate hopes and schemes, and be certain of loving understanding. She is the embodiment of his dreams. She is the verification of his belief that "women are the music of life." When his hand is tired, she writes, to his dictation, the greater part of that multitude of letters in which he loves to expound and to display his views upon "tone-art," as well as those

to more personal friends, like Liszt, who relish a gossipy epistle. Supper, about half-past seven, being over, the composer enjoys a rest in his comfortable and luxurious drawing-room, while one of Frau Wagner's daughters reads aloud for an hour or so, from some book of his selecting, and he listens, all attention: sometimes filling the room with mighty laughter, sometimes making parenthetical explanations or remarks. Occasionally he will himself read out a scene of Shakespeare (in German) with such masterly dramatic effect, that it sounds (in his own characterization of Shakespeare) "like an improvization of the highest poetic value." Or, if he is feeling merry and cheerful, he will render a comic scene, with inimitable *verve* and gaiety, and frank enjoyment of its humours.

The night is now here: the Villa Wahnfried is brilliantly lighted up from top to bottom. Unconquerable drowsiness assails each faculty of this indomitable man, and with reluctance he brings to a close a day which has been so full of work and pleasure. The great red lamp burns cosily in his bedroom, and the summer stars shine down upon Bayreuth, as his wife

goes hand in hand with him to bid their sleeping boy good-night. "O du, mein holder Abendstern!" (O thou, my lovely evening-star!) he softly sings to her, in the well-known melody from *Tannhäuser*, as an almost palpable atmosphere of love and happiness surrounds the sleeping and the waking. Richard Wagner, young in spite of all his years, — Titanic in spite of all his troubles,—has surely earned a night's repose.

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QUAND TU CHANTES.

"On thy singing thou bearest
Lovely visions of yore,—
Sing on, sing on, my fairest,
Sing on for evermore!"

(*Sérénade.*)

A DAY WITH CHARLES GOUNOD.

IF, some winter morning, in the year 1888, one should have arrived at the corner of the Boulevard Malesherbes in Paris, he would recognise, in the "elegant Renaissance frontage" of a three-story building, a house which might justly have been termed the Hôtel Gounod. For the great composer's married daughter occupies the ground-floor, his sister-in-law the first floor; his married son Jean resides upon the third; and the second floor is the dwelling of Charles Gounod himself, that hale and hearty septuagenarian, whom all Paris delights to honour.

It is possible that some of this honour might be conveniently abrogated,—with advantage to the maestro himself; for it means, as we shall see, a perpetual claim upon his time and attention, a series of demands calculated to outwear the most robust good-nature. When the visitor has ascended the staircases of carved dark oak,

with their medallions of composers adorning the cornice, with their rich dark Eastern carpets and curtained doorways, giving desultory glimpses of ideally-refined rooms,—when he has passed through the winter-garden with its flowers and palms, and at length arrived at the *étage* of the great musician, he will not be kept one moment without the door. However deeply occupied Charles Gounod may be, the visitor must not suffer in consequence. He has often declared that he will lock and bolt his door; but it still stands wide to all comers; and the guest is immediately welcomed into the immense apartment, two floors in height, which is the master's work-room, study, library, reception-room in one. Panelled and vaulted with oak,—lighted by broad stained-glass windows,—plentifully furnished with Persian rugs, low easy chairs, small antique tables, divans and sofas of the most alluring; adorned with carved mantles, statuettes, paintings and *objets d'art;* there certainly never was a more desirable apartment, nor one better adapted for the fulfilment of its various purposes. A large organ dominates it: a Pleyel grand piano seems to take up no space at all. A writing-table fitted

with a moveable keyboard is the chief *habitat* of the composer: one side of the room is taken up with book-cases, containing not only musical scores, which might reasonably be expected, but innumerable works on theology and philosophy, and the writings of the ancient fathers of the Church. "An indefinable atmosphere of warmth, tenderness, and trust" pervades all things; and among these evidences of comfort, well-being, art, and a liberal education, the tall old man, in his black velvet cap and black velvet smoking-jacket, comes forward with his cordial, friendly air: he receives the stranger as though a friend of long standing; one is put at ease instantly.

A fine man, this Gounod. Quick and lithe of movement, full of graceful gesticulation,—flexible and alert, both of mind and body. His eyes are a clear, calm blue,—his face full of expression; his fair beard is slightly frosted, his manner simple and easy. And, surveying him as he stands amongst his luxurious possessions, himself so fit, so sane, so successful, one thinks, with a pang of comparison, of Beethoven and his three-legged chairs . . . . of Schubert and his dingy lodging . . . .

Times indeed have changed since then! Instead of the somewhat squalid, hermit-like existence of those great geniuses, in their back streets of Vienna,—shy, reserved men with whom the times were always out of joint,—here is a composer idolised by the public, besieged by troops of callers, absolutely pestered by society and society's claims. "Nowadays," Gounod himself has exclaimed with conviction, "nowadays, the artist is nowhere his own master. He belongs to the world at large. He is worse than its target. He is its prey. His own personal life is almost entirely absorbed, swamped, squandered in his so-called social obligations . . . . And once we begin to tot up the amount of time levied on the artist's working hours, by the constantly increasing number of small calls struggling and fighting for his attention all day long, it is to be wondered how, by what extra activity, what effort of concentration, he contrives to perform his chief duty."

Moreover, former composers, such as the above-named, have "scorned delights and lived laborious days" of indefatigable, solitary toil,—their work wrought out at red-heat upon the

anvil of the brain,—the artist a very music-smith for the moment, wielding his mighty harmonies, forging his majestic melodies, like Vulcan himself in Gounod's own famous song :

"So loud the heavy hammers fall,
So red the furnace flame is glowing;
And at my will, and to my call,
I set the mighty bellows blowing,—
I reign at leisure, Lord of all!
Yet from my aspect black,
I see men shudder back,
I hear from roof and rafter
Re-echo mocking laughter,—
My fate, sharp tongues do tell,
Is merited full well!
And from their scornful jesting,
I hide in toil unresting,
Or I fly
To shelter lone,—and there, unknown,
I watch the darkening days go by.
(*Philémon et Baucis.*)

This modern master suffers no such stress and strain. He is perfectly sincere and self-possessed in his art : he knows no violent ups and downs. He pursues the even tenor of his way, pouring forth his compositions with fluent grace, rather than wresting them with savage resolution, like Beethoven, from the Fate that

guards the hidden treasures of genius. He is naïvely susceptible to praise,—he frankly rejoices and basks in it: he is extremely sensitive to adverse criticism. But these are superficial, child-like traits, characteristic of the man's inveterate youthfulness and simplicity; "his soul," as he truly avows, "looks forth from a crystal mirror." And below the surface abides an equally child-like content with himself, his achievements, and his limitations. "Success," says he comfortably, "is more the result of a certain concatenation of favourable elements and successful conditions, than a proof and criterion of the intrinsic value of a work. . . . I can trust time to allot me, like any other man, my proper place, or to cast me down if I have been unduly exalted." In short, as has been observed of him, "Gounod is a thoroughly sincere artist; he worships Bach, and adores Mozart: but he has never dreamed of being Bach or Mozart. He is Gounod, and there his ambition ends."

And, indeed, in gazing upon his comely, kindly face, and noting his attractive surroundings, it would seem a very pleasant thing to be Gounod. However much he may

VULCAN'S SONG.

"So loud the heavy hammers fall,
So red the furnace flame is glowing;
And at my will, and to my call,
I set the mighty bellows blowing,
I reign at leisure, Lord of all!"

(Philémon et Baucis.)

complain of constant interruption, and of the penalties involved in being a public idol, one realises that he rather enjovs a *souffrant* po. . He presents, at the moment, the tranquil and unruffled mien of one who has never known any serious fluctuations in his calm routine. He is able to put forth, at once and without effort, his natural power of fascination: he exercises, almost involuntarily, his singular gift of charm: and the visitor who may have entered nervous, embarrassed, uncertain of a welcome, finds himself simply overwhelmed by illimitable kindnesses. For kindness,—the desire to please, to smooth, to gratify,—is a predominant and spontaneous growth with Charles Gounod.

Gounod's friendship—and he offers no less to the veriest unknown—has "some vague quality borrowed from love, which makes it warm and luminous." It has often been said of him that the last person he sees is the one he loves best: nor does this phrase imply the least insincerity or instability of affection: it is the direct outcome of his own desire to be loved, that desire which pervades every fibre of his being. "All love, all serenity, all youth," he has been described, and he himself avers with

enthusiasm, "Love! I am full of it, and that is why I have crammed so much into my operas. . . . Love alone makes man. Friendship is but another form of the same feeling. Divine love is the source of all love."

Never did a more brilliant conversationalist charm the ear of a stranger. This is no half-taught visionary, knowing little or nothing beyond his special art; but a man of wide learning, a patrician to his finger-tips, a man of catholic tastes, immense reading. Fluent and vivacious, scattering a sparkling shower of brilliant metaphors,—one moment quoting Bacon, and Saint Augustine the next,—his "searching and subtle intellect, developed by sound education and constant worship of the beautiful," delights in every problem which can yield it food for thought.

Yet one can scarcely expect to be left long in undisputed possession of so popular a personage. Somebody else—whom one naturally resents—is already at the door. "Why do you not shut your door against intruders?" Gounod was asked once: and he replied, "That is what they all tell me: only each of my advisers

regar is the others as intruders, and makes an exception of himself. Now, what am I to do?" And the new arrival is not one likely to be turned away, or postponed: she is a charming young vocalist, who has come in quest of advice. Naturally she aspires to be a *prima donna:* will the master give his opinion upon her voice, her production, her dramatic intelligence? "The truth is so hard to come at!" she sighs, "one's teachers alternately scold or flatter. . . . but she has ventured to bring one or two songs." . . . . .

Gounod has often maintained that he can take the measure of singers, before they have even opened their lips. "I see it in their eyes," he declares, "one always has the voice in one's eyes." And, indubitably, the possession of a "singing face" is not one to be gainsaid. However, he is always delighted to help, to teach, to advise,—always anxious to further the novice and the beginner, whose untried steps are set upon the thorny parts of art. He seats himself without hesitation at the pianoforte, and, gently stroking the young girl's hand, with a reassuring smile, "Sing, then, my child," says he.

She places before him his own enchanting song, *Sérénade,* or *Berceuse,* as it is indifferently termed,—a setting of Victor Hugo's verses *Quand tu chantes.*

When thy song at the twilight doth flow,
Close on my breast,
Dost thou hear how my heart's answer low
Sinks into rest?
On thy singing thou bearest
Lovely visions of yore,—
Sing on, sing on, my fairest,
Sing on for evermore!

When thy smile, l[illegible] the dawning of love,
Lights up my heart,
And, as changeful as sunbeams above,
Swift doth depart,
Ah! the joy that thou wearest
Shall be ne'er clouded o'er!
Laugh on, laugh on, my fairest,
Laugh on for evermore!

When thy sleep, in the wood-shadows green,
Charmeth my eyes,—
When thy breathings, like music serene,
Softly arise,
To thy beauty the rarest,
All my homage I pour,—
Sleep on, sleep on, my fairest,
Sleep on for evermore!

A DAY WITH CHARLES GOUNOD.

"Sweetly sung, *chère enfant,*" says the maestro, giving her an approving pat on the shoulder, "but you have much to learn. Your diction is at fault,—muffled and indistinct. You must not set yourself to produce certain mysterious sounds on certain notes, and call them singing: the words, which inspire the music, must first be audible. Lyric sound is finest when it is most akin to speech. Pure diction is the first law of song. The purely vocal sound, however beautiful, requires to be varied by the *word*, which alone gives expression, dramatic feeling, warmth and life. And, above all, no sentiment, I beg of you. Meaning, expression, significance—but not sentimentality."

This excellent advice is somewhat beyond the comprehension of the little novice: and she replies, with hesitation, "Dear master, I am desolated that I do not quite understand your meaning! Pity my stupidity: but these things have never been said to me before." The composer, with kindly patience, expounds his meaning in simpler phrases; and, to exemplify it, sings the song over again himself, in a sweet *passé* tenor voice: it hardly carries beyond the pianoforte, yet it is full of expression and

emotion. "And now, *ma petite*," says he, "go home, and study, study, study. But not necessarily the trivial *chansons* of Charles Gounod. Devote yourself to an endeavour to render the immortal music of Mozart. I tell you, *Don Giovanni* is my musical gospel, and I preach it in season and out of season to everybody."

The young *cantatrice* is heard to mumble under her breath that she very much prefers *Faust* to *Don Giovanni*. Gounod is patently pleased with this artless flattery. No one has ever known, better than he, the intoxication and delight of popular adulation; but nevertheless he accepts this new homage, even in the very act of shaking his head and deprecating it . . .

"And I have studied *Faust* very hard, very hard indeed," continues the girl, producing her well-worn vocal score. "In the solo, it may be confessed, I was nervous,—I did not do myself justice—but if you would hear me in the Garden Scene,—in truth, Monsieur Gounod, I believe you would think less poorly of me."

"It is hardly fair, my child," says he, "that I should be your colleague . . . this scene,—I, old, grizzled, with my voice that is but an echo of

its past. You need some younger man with whom to render that intense and passionate scene: one whom you could truly imagine to be Faust. Otherwise, how shall you throw the necessary ardour into your part? If the singer do not infuse some personal feeling into the song, neither the natural qualities of her voice, nor her acquired technical knowledge, will enable her to thrill her hearers,—no matter how beautiful may be the phrases she is rendering. But what do I see! The very man we are in want of! My friend, I salute you!" And the vivacious maestro suits the action to the word, springing up and embracing his new guest,—a well-known tenor of the Opéra, who enters with the assured ease of a familiar visitor.

It does not require much persuasion for this experienced vocalist to unite his voice with that of the charming little soprano, and the vast room is shortly filled with the surging, swaying melodies of the Garden Duet from *Faust*.

(*Faust*)
Yet awhile, yet awhile,
Let me stay, let me view thee,
Let me gaze on thy lovely form!

From yon blue sky above,
How bright the star of love
Pours its throbbing glances to thee,
Those glances long and warm!

(*Margherita*)

O, how still! O, how strange
Are the mysteries that bind me!
New delight, like a magic spell,
Sets my soul aglow:
My thoughts, so calm of yore,
Through golden raptures range,—
Sweet enchantments now enwind me—
O tell me, why do I tremble so? . . . .

(*Faust*)

By yonder night, all starry bright,
Glimmering o'er thee,
By the joy deep and divine
That makes thee mine,
I love thee, I adore thee!

(*Margherita*)

Speak, let me hear
That thou art near,—
Leave me never,
For I am thine, thine for ever,—
Yes, I would die for thee!

(*Faust.*)

FAUST AND MARGHERITA IN THE GARDEN.

"Yet awhile, yet awhile,
Let me stay, let me view thee,
Let me gaze on thy lovely form!
From yon blue sky above,
How bright the star of love
Pours its throbbing glances to thee,
Those glances long and warm!"

(Faust.)

One feels, in listening to these entrancing and voluptuous strains, that no composer has ever before voiced earthly love with such perfection: they are, like Milton's definition of true poetry, "simple, sensuous, and impassioned," and instinct with a wealth of pure melody, such as in these days of declamatory music is to be met with less and less. Many musicians have essayed the story of *Faust;* for the subject, with its commingling of the poignantly human and the weirdly supernatural, is one that appeals to all. Spohr has treated it conscientiously; Berlioz fantastically; Schumann with deep, mystical intuition. Rossini, and even Beethoven, had each contemplated, but never carried out, a superlative *Faust* of his own, which should be his *magnum opus* and eclipse all else that he had done. But for Gounod it was reserved to create a work which should be the most popular opera of the century: and which, if it does not stand on the same lofty plane, the same stern psychological altitude, as the great dramatic *Faust* of Goethe from which all these others are derived, yet has a charm, an *esprit,* a plenitude of beautiful detail, which render it a very garden of delights.

A DAY WITH CHARLES GOUNOD.

Strange to say, Gounod's *Faust* was not a success at first: the music was considered almost revolutionary; the scenes were too unusual in their defiance of the conventional Italian-opera-traditions. "Nothing but noise," the critics declared . . . "No unity in book or score . . . Devoid of any inspiration," etc., etc. But, slowly and surely, the various numbers "caught on" with the capricious public: beginning, as usual, with the least artistic. First, the *Soldiers' Chorus*, that inspiriting march, full of *verve* and *entrain*, seized the popular fancy; then the Waltz, gay, melodious, fascinating; the Garden Duet soon won its first appreciation,—presently the various solos were recognised as each a masterpiece in its way, exactly expressive of the situation and character, admirably written from the vocalist's point of view: and so on, until *Faust* in its entirety became a name to conjure with, acceptable to every audience and in every country of Europe.

One questions the veteran composer of the reasons for this tardy fame: and he replies that the public are slow to welcome the unknown. "Every artist," says he, "is the issue from those who preceded him: but that does not

imply that he imitates them . . . In the collaboration of the artist with nature, it is his own personal emotion which gives his work its original character . . . To pass from interior and tangible realities to emotion, and from emotion to reason, is the progressive march of intellectual development. And this," continues Gounod, warming to his subject, "is admirably summed up by St. Augustine in one of the luminous and concise formulæ with which his works abound. Have you read St. Augustine's *De Musica?* No? Nor his *De Civitate Dei?* No? Nor his *Confessions?* My friend, I counsel you to study this great author,—my favourite of all others—you will learn inconceivably much . . . . . Well, St. Augustine, as I was saying, puts the matter in a nutshell. *De exterioribus ad interiora; de interioribus ad superiora:* From outside to inside, from inside to on high. That is the career of art."

"Dear master, you become too learned for me," says the young girl, emboldened by her success in the *Nuit d'amour* duet. "How should one learn to sing, *par exemple*, by studying these austere old books?"

"Far more," retorts the master, "than by confining oneself to *chansons* and *solfeggi*. What! shall one nourish half one's artistic propensities, and leave the rest to starve? A man—or a woman—should not be lop-sided, but all-round, in his mental equipment, and in his power to appreciate the "fair and fit." I insist emphatically, that a student of music should not only regard the particular modes of expression proper to his own art, but also great paintings, great poems, great sculptures, all the masterpieces of human thought. Go to Phidias, —to Michelangelo,—to Dante,—to Shakespeare."

"But all this is not music," objects the tenor.

"Music! no, it is not music!" exclaims Gounod, "but it is art—ancient and modern art, immortal and universal art: and from it the *artist*,—not the mere *artisan*,—must derive his sustenance, draw his strength, his ideas, and his life! It is impossible to communicate genius, because genius is not transferable—it is an essentially personal gift. But what *is* transferable is the language by which genius manifests itself, without which it is dumb and

helpless. . . . . I tell you, my friends, unless one puts himself *au fait* with every dialect of that language, he runs the risk of being dumb and helpless himself."

Gounod is notoriously fond of harping upon this subject,—the development of the artist rather than the virtuoso. In him, however, as in so many other great composers, the artist has been present from the very outset,—although he has not, on that account, neglected technical equipment. "Inspiration and counterpoint," in his own words, "are all the needful baggage of a musician." Musical genius is seldom long in making its presence perceptible; its "trailing clouds of glory" are circumambient round the soul in very infancy. And Gounod loves to record, for the benefit of those young folk whom he delights to help forward, how his whole artistic career was influenced and determined by "three musical shocks," as he calls them. The first occurred when he was only six years old: it was a performance of Weber's *Der Freischütz*. The impressive scenes, the supernatural effects, together with the beauty and exhilaration of the music, took a strong hold of his infant imagination, already predisposed to

receive such effects: the opera had a distinct bearing henceforth upon his childish thoughts. The second "shock" was experienced at twelve years of age,—when, having been awarded an extra school holiday for good conduct, he went to hear Rossini's *Otello*, with Malibran as Desdemona. And the schoolboy was aware of his "true artist's soul vibrating to the passionate notes of the incomparable Malibran,— . . . the dramatic appeal of a golden voice," which stirred the very depth of his nascent ambition. "If the time should only come," he dreamed, "when I can write an opera for *her!*" And from this time on he was possessed by a feverish longing to end his classical studies and devote himself to music. He was not quite fourteen when the third "shock" settled the question of his calling once and for ever: when, on hearing *Don Giovanni*, "his whole artistic temperament was galvanised into irresistible ardour" . . . "You seem very fond of that music," his mother remarked on his return from the opera. "Oh! mother, it is not *that* music,—it is *Music!*" Mozart, henceforth, was installed as the chief object of his idolatry. "All the conditions of art," he has declared, "are united in *Don*

Giovanni. . . . Does it not contain, together with the exquisite and incomparable charm of pure music, the most complete and constant expression of living truth, of human truth,—and consequently all the psychological force that can be required of a drama? . . . When I was very young, I used to say 'I'—later on I said '*I and Mozart;*' then '*Mozart and I;*' and now I say, '*Mozart.*' Who has run through the great gamut of human passions as he has done? . . . Oh! divine Mozart! Hast thou reposed in the bosom of infinite Beauty? Prodigal Fortune has given thee all . . . and has made of thee the unexcelled musician."

And now he repeats, with zest, the well-known anecdote about Rossini: who, being asked whom he considered the first of musicians, replied at once, "Beethoven." "What about Mozart?" he was questioned. "Oh, Mozart," said Rossini, "he is not the first,—he is the only one!"

"Still indulging in Mozart-worship, Monsieur?" says a laughing voice . and the old man turns to greet his librettist, Jules Barbier, "a personality eminently Parisian,"—tall, handsome, fair, blue-eyed, animated. And it is then

to be seen that quite a small crowd of strangers have joined the original handful of folk. They have crept into the great room, unannounced and unnoticed, under the flow of the master's eloquence. Here a violinist, carrying his case,—there a young pianist with a music-roll: a composer hugging his MS.—a lyric-writer with a sheaf of songs,—a teacher of singing who is exploiting some new method,—a lady autograph-hunter,—there they all are, each desirous to interview the master alone, and not knowing how to set about it. Severally and singly they introduce themselves: and none can boast of being distinguished above the others. With adroit amiability, and a real desire to be of use,—with youthful *élan* and vivacity, Gounod encounters each applicant in turn, and meets, as far as possible, the wishes of all. He patiently listens to a rendering, by some crude half-fledged contralto, of the lovely Goatherd's-Song from *Sappho*, that Arcadian melody "thyme-and-lavender-scented like an idyll of Theocritus": he hears some budding baritone attempt an excerpt from "that delicately-carved jewel set with many precious stones," *Philémon et Baucis*. To the various claimants on his good nature he

THE JEWEL SONG

"Ah! .... .. how bright
And fair they sparkle on my sight . . .
Look! how clear they shine.
Necklace white, bracelet bright!
And all are mine

(Faust.)

lends a sympathetic ear,—not one goes away disappointed. Finally, with a sigh of relief, it must be confessed, he sees the last intruder disappear: and, with Jules Barbier, snatches a brief leisure for the luncheon-hour: for even famous composers must be fed.

And now a little time is allowed him, wherein to assert his own individuality,—to "meditate," as he puts it, "before the altar of one's soul,—one's glance turned inward: that is in what true labour consists. . . These folk," he complains to Barbier, "who come and waste and fritter away one's days without the slightest scruple, they don't know what one's work means. They say, 'Musical composition is such an easy thing! It is not a matter of work. It comes of itself: it is an inspiration!' I wish they could realise what it *does* mean!" says he, shrugging his shoulders as he regards the half-finished scores, the publishers' letters, the proofs demanding instant attention. And before he can devote himself to these, the master must needs attend to some portion of his huge correspondence. Constantly importuned to be present at concerts, festivals, rehearsals: continually implored to conduct performances of his works:

begged for letters of introduction, for interviews, for advice, for lectures,—it is almost impossible for him to cope single-handed with the wearisome piles of letters. Nothing but his unfailing good-temper and patience could ever carry him through.

A tithe of these importunate missives disposed of, Gounod is at last alone and free. He spends some precious time in the composition of sacred music, a class of work particularly near and dear to him, though it may be questioned whether it is the branch of art in which he is most successful. In youth he studied theology earnestly, believing himself called to the priesthood: he was even known for a while as the Abbé Gounod: and although he eventually turned his steps into more secular paths, the influence of this early theological training has unmistakably remained with him. It is evidenced not only in his preference of serious and philosophical subjects of discourse, but in his *penchant* for composing religious works. Canticles, hymns, masses, oratorios, and other forms of church music without number, in turn have emanated from his prolific brain: sometimes treated in a modern spirit, sometimes as a

deliberate following of the antique style, a resuscitation of the method of Palestrina, "impersonal, mystical, majestic." "When Christ entered Jerusalem," says Gounod, "He said that if men should be silent, the stones would immediately cry out,—*lapides clamabunt.* Well, a choral mass must symbolise these words; it must be an edifice, a stone, austere, grave, massive, and solemn."

Nor does he consider this in any sense a retrograde movement towards earlier forms of art. "One is eternally speaking," he avers, "of the progress of art; the expression is unmeaning. The artist may progress in his art; but art itself does not. Art is not like science, whose domain ranges over successive and accumulative discoveries of the laws of nature. Art rests on two elements, ever and always the same,—an instinct or sensibility, whence proceed emotion and expression,—and a technical knowledge susceptible of growth, but in the *individual*, not the *art*."

Moreover, Gounod is a sincere Christian believer,—liberal, tolerant, enlightened. "Every one of his religious compositions," it has been said, "is a confession of faith . . . he aims at

being an apostle as well as an artist." He himself selects his words from the Scriptures: and in the oratorio, *The Redemption*, his avowed aim was "to present," as he expressed it, under a lyric form, "the three great facts on which the existence of the Christian Church depends; . . . the Passion and death of the Saviour: His glorious life on earth from His Resurrection to His Ascension: and the spread of Christianity through the teaching of the Apostles."

Yet, as a believer, he has patience with "honest doubt;" the more so, that being "certain of what he knows, he does not care what he does not know." He declares himself equally certain of knowing that too, some day, "when I shall behold the spring of all love, of all devotion . . . when I shall be clothed in the garments of the beautiful, the true, and the good: when I shall share in the final and universal communion . . . It is therefore I can preach patience," he once assured a doubter, "because I am far nearer the dawn than you are: but it will come, never fear. Everything will be explained then: light will dawn on all things."

And now, as he sits absorbed in thought, his fine face ennobled by elevated aims, one can understand to some extent how far he is influenced by his own subtle and suggestive teaching,—"Art is one of the three incarnations of the ideal in the real; one of the three operations of that Spirit which is to renew the face of the earth; one of the three revivals of Nature in man; one of the three forms, in a word, of that principle of separate immortality which constitutes the perpetual resurrection of humanity at large, by virtue of its three creative powers, distinct in function, though practically identical: *viz.*,—Love, the essence of human life: Science, the essence of truth: and Art, the essence of beauty."

But now he rises to receive a welcome visitor, Madame Miolhan-Carvalho, the original exponent of his *Margherita.* An inordinately thin woman, with an inordinately thin reedy voice, which, to quote the hypercritical, "broke in half in the middle and had four notes missing," this Madame Miolhan, by energy and perseverance, has transformed her meagre vocal endowment into a thing of flexibility and charm: so that even the exigent composer himself could

hardly desire a better performance than she could give of his brilliant soprano air, the Jewel Song.

The *Faust* music has been termed the half-way house between the classical and popular styles: but undoubtedly, for sheer embodiment of innocent and girlish joy, few composers have surpassed the elation, animation, and *brio* of the Jewel Song. We can see, without stage effects, the immeasurable gratification of Margherita, as she trills her long-drawn note of wonder and surprise:

Ah! . . . . . how bright
And fair they sparkle on my sight!
Ah! but now
I am transformed, I know not how!
Breast and brow,—Margherita,
Is it thou? Tell me now,
Mirror, mirror, tell me truly!
No, no! this is not thou,
Glowing and gleaming so newly,
'Tis a royal princess,
Some King's daughter, no less,—
This is not thou, this is not thou,
To whom monarchs shall bow,
And their homage shall render,
Ah! but might it only be
He were here to look on me!

Clad in such beauty rare now,
Would he not find me fair now?
Decked in all this royal splendour,
He, too, would homage render! . . .
. . . Here are more gems for my adorning,
Look! how clear they shine!
Necklace white, bracelet bright,
And all are mine!
Heav'ns! how heavy their weight,
Glistening like stars of the morning!
Ah! I laugh to see myself in such array!
Ah! behold, I am fairer than the day!
Clad in such beauty rare now,
Would he not call me fair now?

(*Faust.*)

Other friends and relatives are entering one by one, and the master's grandchildren are nestling happily against his knee, while he discourses and disserts upon musical matters, with all the enthusiasm of a lad of twenty. He discusses the bizarre genius of Berlioz, "who was one of the greatest emotional influences of my youth," says he, "though he is so no longer"; he bestows cordial and honest praise upon Saint-Saëns. He speaks with fervent respect of Sebastian Bach,—"The whole of music is in that man!" He dwells with lingering pleasure on the names of Palestrina, Weber,

Beethoven, "the Michelangelo of music,"—of Glück, whose art he compares to "antique statuary, with its noble and pure lines,"—of Rossini, the varied and prolific Italian. . . . His vast erudition is lost sight of in his picturesque eloquence: and however strong his prejudices in affairs of art, he makes obvious endeavour to repress them in passing judgment upon contemporary composers. Yet it cannot be concealed that the so-called "Music-of-the-Future" is abhorrent to his lyrical soul,—and that if his benevolent heart has one *bête noir*, it is Richard Wagner. His friends, with sly maliciousness, attempt to draw him out on this subject: at first in vain. "I know what I think," growls Gounod, "but I would rather not say it. . . . We won't discuss him" . . . . But presently, rising to carefully-thrown bait, "Wagner," says he, "has not the stature of his brain qualities. He is a visionary haunted by the colossal."

Then, on being reminded that he himself has generously written articles in praise and defence of the much-abused Wagner, he allows that "One cannot see a man attacked, vituperated, denied a hearing, without saying a word

THE BALCONY SCENE IN "ROMEO ET JULIETTE."

"Parting from thee is grown so sweet a sorrow,
I could repeat my fond good-night,
Again, and still again, until the morrow
With rosy ray shall spring to sight!"

(Roméo et Juliette.)

in his favour. The *camaraderie* of art, its *esprit de corps*, would demand as much of a fellow-musician. Besides, there are many who are his devout adherents—though I myself am scarcely to be numbered amongst them . . . . . Ah! my friends, believe me, art is happiness: but I derive none from that tortured music of to-day, which pretends to be the last word in modernity. It is not a fountain flowing clear and free,—it is not grace and beauty, it is not love. These new musicians have talent,—enormous talent,—any amount of talent you like; but they have never knelt before anything, neither before plastic beauty, nor eternal love: neither before the masters, nor before God."

"At least," ventures one of his hearers, "it is interesting to watch the development of these new ideas, to hazard a guess as to where such byways of revolt may lead. And, if only from mere novelty, the music of which we speak is interesting—its declamatory treatment of the voice, its extraordinary usage of the orchestra."

"Heaven preserve us from interesting music!" ejaculates the master. "Music must be fine—that is quite enough. . . . I may be wrong"—he suddenly modifies his heated tone

to one of perfect calm, in the manner of which he alone possesses the secret,—"I may be wrong, but at any rate my music is *mine*, it is my flesh, my blood, my bones. If it is liked, that is because it is true, sincere, living. If it be lacking in other, perhaps greater, qualities,—well, it is undeniably so: that is something: an open want is no less creditable than an obvious possession to a man who values truth, and is as his Creator made him. But come, my friends, I do not want to be interesting, I want to be loved: *voilà tout*. I am seventy: yet I have never so fully understood the intensity of Love, which is supposed to be *par excellence* the feeling of youth. If I were a painter I know that I should make a faithful portrait of Love, because I have an inward vision, an intuition of it,—because I am constantly in contact with Love, in its purest and noblest sense,—because I have been able, in my operas, to find a free outlet for it." And he expounds and explains how his pre-eminently lyrical faculty has expressed all phases of Love. The desperate and heart-broken *Sappho*, the imperial *Reine de Saba*, the tender sweetness of *Mireille*, are contrasted by

him with the delineation of sacred love where the worshippers, kings and shepherds, kneel adoring by the manger of *Bethlehem*,—with the heart-felt devotion of the *Ave Maria* skilfully educed from Bach's first Prelude. He points out how the boyish love of Siebel, embodied in *Le parlate d'amor*, is surpassed by the man's mature emotion of *Salve dimora*: he contrasts, again, Valentine's brotherly affection with the lingering avowal of Margherita, shy and slow as befits a maid of Northern Europe: whereas in *Roméo et Juliette* all the ardour of the South flings the lovers, almost at first sight, into each other's arms.

"Never," his hearers agree, "never has a more marvellous, more spontaneous hymn of love exhaled, than the duet *de l'Alouette* in Juliette's room."

"There are three great duets in *Roméo*," interjects Madame Miolhan-Carvalho, "and I who speak have never been able to decide which was the most entrancing. For which could one choose,—the *Alouette*,—or the great and tragic final duo in Juliette's sepulchre—or that inexpressibly lovely farewell, in which smiles and tears are mingled, when Roméo, in a frenzy of

passion, throws a kiss across the divine chant of the violins?"

"Let us hear it," is the simultaneous demand,—and, the songstress selecting a suitable *Roméo*, that magical duet begins :

(*Roméo*)

Night all celestial ! I implore thee,
Leave thou my soul in this dream of delight !
I fear lest I may wake, and find once more the
Cold reality of morning light.

(*Juliette*)

Roméo !
Speak, my dearest !
But one word—then farewell :
For till the dawn thou must not bide,—
Tell me truly, dost thou seek me for thy bride ?

. . . . . .

(*Roméo*)

Stay but a little longer;
Leave me not here forsaken,
Dearest, let but thy hand
Linger softly in mine !

(*Juliette*)

Nay, for the light is stronger,—
Soon all the world will waken,—
Dearest, now let my hand
Loose itself out of thine!
Adieu! adieu!

(*Both.*)

Parting from thee is grown so sweet a sorrow,
I could repeat my fond good-night,
Again, and still again, until the morrow
With rosy ray shall spring to sight!
Farewell, my love, until the morrow's light!

"*Adieu, adieu! the plaintive anthem fades*" into Roméo's impassioned solo, alone beneath the balcony. The very air of Italy, warm, fragrant, exquisite, fills the Parisian room, as the music trembles into silence. Divested of all stage accessories, all appurtenances of extraneous sight and sound, its enchanting phrases have shone out in their authentic sweetness, "beauty unadorned adorned the most." One fears even to draw a sigh of admiration, lest the brooding echoes should be jarred.

A DAY WITH CHARLES GOUNOD.

In a silence almost reverent, the guests disperse themselves: the master, lost in a dream of love and loveliness, sits solitary in his easy chair. All too soon the outer world will again make urgent claim upon him: for he must spend the whole evening in social functions whence there is no escape, and will literally not have a moment to call his own. But now as the winter evening deepens into darkness, he remains for a little space plunged in a fathomless deep of reverie: and celestial voices call and make answer above it, like nightingales over the darkness of a mid-May wood . . . "*O ma lyre immortelle!*" he quotes in a pensive murmur to himself, "I think I have not touched thy notes in vain."

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