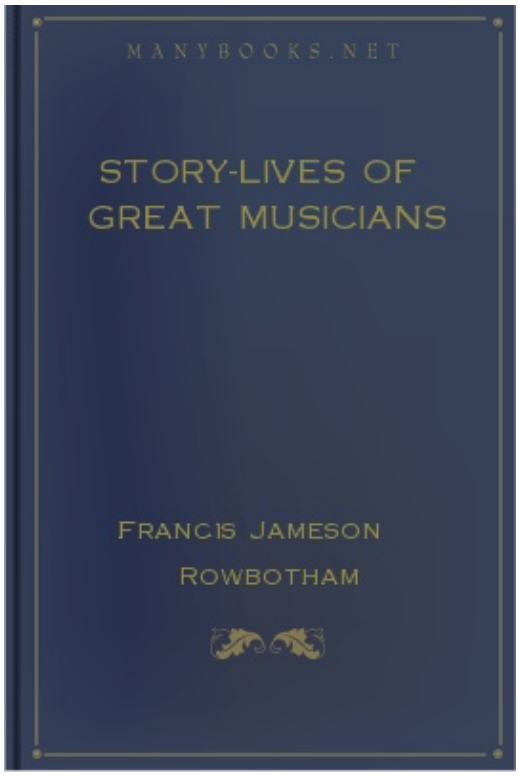

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[Illustration: BEETHOVEN. *Frontispiece.* From photo RISCHGITZ.]

STORY-LIVES

OF

GREAT MUSICIANS

BY FRANCIS JAMESON ROWBOTHAM AUTHOR OF 'STORY-LIVES OF GREAT AUTHORS,' 'TALES FROM PLUTARCH,' ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY *PUBLISHERS*

TO THE MEMORY OF FREDERICK WESTLAKE, R.A.M.

PREFACE

Following the plan of his previous volume of *Great Authors*, the writer has here endeavoured to weave into more or less story form a few of the facts and incidents in the lives of some great musicians. It is hoped that young readers--and especially those to whom music is a subject of study--will take a greater interest in some of the masterpieces of composition when they have learnt something about the composers themselves, and the circumstances under which they wrote.

The author desires to express his acknowledgments for the assistance he has derived from the following works:

Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*; Bitter's *Life of Sebastian Bach* (translated by J.E. Kay-Shuttleworth); Rockstro's *Life of George Frederick Handel*; Williams's *Handel* in 'The Master Musicians'; Townsend's *Haydn* in 'The Great Musicians'; Jahn's *W.A. Mozart* (translated by P.D. Townsend); Schindler's *Life of Beethoven*; Nohl's *Life of Beethoven*; von Hellborn's *Franz Schubert* (translated by A.D. Coleridge); Benedict's *Sketch of the Life and Works of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*; Hensel's *The Mendelssohn Family*; Hiller's *Mendelssohn: Letters and Recollections*; Devrient's *Recollections of F.M. Bartholdy* (translated by C.N. Macfarren).

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STORY-LIVES OF GREAT MUSICIANS

BACH

'Christoph, I wish you would let me have that book of manuscript music which you have in your cupboard--the one which contains pieces by Pachelbel, and Frohberger, and Buxtehude, and ever so many others--you know which I mean. I will take such care of it if you will only lend it to me for a little while.'

Christoph was about to leave the room, but he turned sharply to his little brother as the latter put his request.

'No, Sebastian, I will certainly not lend you the book, and I wonder that you have the impertinence to ask me such a thing! The idea of your thinking that you could study such masters as Buxtehude and Frohberger--a child like you! Get on with what I have set you to learn, and do not let me hear any more of such fancies!'

With that Christoph shut the door behind him, and Sebastian was left to ponder sadly upon his elder brother's harshness in refusing to accede to his simple request. The disappointment was very keen, for little Sebastian had been longing to get possession of that precious volume. For several days past he had spent hours in his brother's absence gazing at its covers through the lattice doors of the cupboard, and feasting his eyes upon the names of the musicians which were written on the back in bold letters in Christoph's hand.

[Illustration: '*Gazing at its covers through the lattice doors of the cupboard.*']

What harm could there be in his *trying* to play the works of those masters? It seemed so unreasonable to the ten-year-old child, for he was passionately fond of music, and exceedingly quick at learning; yet Christoph persistently kept him to simple pieces such as he could master without the slightest difficulty, and which, therefore, afforded him no gratification whatever. He longed to be studying more advanced works, and there were times when this longing seemed insupportable--when the soul of this earnest child-musician rose in revolt against the tyrannical treatment of his elder brother. Christoph's lack of appreciation of Sebastian's capacity and gift for music was, moreover, so marked as to crush the feelings of love and respect which otherwise would have found a place in Sebastian's heart for the brother whom the sad circumstances of his childhood had made his guardian.

[Illustration: BACH. From photo RISCHGITZ.]

Johann Sebastian Bach, as the young musician was named, was an orphan. Ten years before the period at which our story opens--on March 21, 1685--he had first seen the light in the long, low-roofed cottage, which is still standing in the little German town of Eisenach, nestling at the foot of the wooded heights which form part of the romantically beautiful district of the Thuringer Wald. It is a country abounding in legendary lore, which, taking its birth from the recesses of the interminable forest, and perpetuated in ballad, has for ages found a home in the sequestered valleys lying locked between the hills. On one of the latter, overlooking the town, stands the Wartburg, in which Luther made his home, and where he translated the Bible into the German tongue.

Sebastian's father, Johann Ambrosius Bach, organist of Eisenach, was the descendant of a long race of musicians of the name who had followed music not merely as a means of livelihood, but with the earnest desire of furthering its artistic aims. For close upon two hundred years before Sebastian was born the family

of Bach had thus laboured to develop and improve their art in the only direction in which it was practised in the Germany of those days--namely, as a fitting accompaniment to the simple, but deeply devotional, services of the Lutheran Church. So greatly had the influence of this ancient and closely-united family made itself felt in regard to church music that at Erfurt, where its members had practised the art for generations, all musicians were known as 'the Bachs,' although no Bach had actually resided in the town for many years.

That Sebastian should have shown a fondness for music at a very early age is not, therefore, to be wondered at; but, beyond learning the violin from his father, he had not progressed far in his studies when, in his tenth year, he found himself bereft of both his parents and taken into the charge of his brother Christoph, who filled the post of organist at the neighbouring town of Ohrdruff. Christoph, who was fourteen years older than Sebastian, possessed nothing more than an ordinary amount of talent for music, and in addition lacked the sense to appreciate the gift which his little brother at once began to display in response to his teaching. To give Sebastian lessons on the clavier and send him to the Lyceum to learn Latin and singing and other school subjects seemed to Christoph to comprise the full extent of his responsibilities; but that Sebastian possessed genius which called for sympathy and encouragement at his hands appears only to have aroused in him a feeling of coldness and indifference, amounting at times to stern repression.

Beneath this shadow of ill-feeling Sebastian suffered in silence, but, fortunately, the force of his genius was too strong to be crushed, and the spirit which was lacking in his brother's lessons he supplied for himself. The injustice of the denial with which Christoph had met his request for the loan of the manuscript music-book had fired him with the determination to possess himself of the treasure at all costs, and even the drudgery of playing over and over again pieces which he already knew by heart appeared to him in the new light of stepping-stones to the attainment of his cherished desire. Yet for some time it was difficult to see how the book was to be abstracted without his brother's knowledge.

One night, long after the other inmates of the house had retired, Sebastian stood at the open casement of his chamber, buried in thought. The moon was flooding the valley with her silvery light, rendering the most distant objects clear and distinct, and throwing into still deeper shadow the sombre hills which encompassed the town. But the boy had no thoughts to bestow upon the music of the scene thus spread before his eyes; his mind was absorbed by a great project which he was resolved upon carrying out that night, and to which the presence of the moon lent a promise of success. Perfect stillness reigned in the house, and Sebastian, deeming that the opportune moment had arrived for embarking upon his venture, closed the casement and crept softly downstairs to the parlour.

The moonlight shining into the room revealed the position of every object, and a glance sufficed to show him that the treasure he sought was in its accustomed place, but the cupboard, of course, was locked. He squeezed his little hands through the lattice-bars, and after much effort managed to reach the manuscript book. To draw it towards him required even more dexterity, but at length that was accomplished; and then came the crowning feat--to get it through the bars. During this time Sebastian had been tormented by fears lest his brother should have discovered his absence from his bedroom, and nothing but his firm determination to accomplish his purpose prevented him from quitting the room and returning to his bed.

For a long time his efforts to pull the book through the bars were in vain, but after trying each bar in turn he found one which was weaker than the rest, and having brought the book to this spot, he succeeded at last in forcing a passage for it by bending the bar, and the coveted volume was freed from its prison!

Breathless with exertion and excitement, the child hugged his treasure to his breast and stole back to his chamber. On gaining this haven of safety, he listened for some time to ascertain whether his movements had aroused the household, but finding that everything remained as silent as before, he drew a chair to the little table before the window, and by the light of the moon, which still streamed into the room, he feasted his eyes upon the pages before him. Then, taking his pen and some manuscript music-paper with which he had provided himself, he began his task of copying out the pieces contained in the book.

An hour or more slipped away in this absorbing occupation, and it was not until the moon had shifted her position, so that her rays no longer afforded the necessary light, that Sebastian ceased to ply his pen. Then, having hidden the book away and removed all traces of his work, the now wearied little musician sought his pillow and fell fast asleep.

This was but the beginning of endless nights of toil pursued whilst the house lay hushed in slumber. For six months, whenever the moon sent her friendly rays through his casement, did Sebastian prosecute his task, until the night arrived when he found himself at the last page. The fear of discovery had ceased to haunt him as time went on, and now he could only reflect with joy at the accomplishment of his long task, and creep into bed utterly unmindful of everything else--even of the precaution of putting his work out of sight!

[Illustration: '*By the light of the moon he began his task.*']

Alas, for poor Sebastian! he was to pay dearly for this act of forgetfulness. As he lay sleeping--his dreams filled with the realization of the fruits of his untiring industry--the books lying open on the table where he had left them, and the moonbeams falling gently on the page whereon his fingers had traced those last passages but a few minutes before, the door opened, and a figure stole softly into the room. It was Christoph himself, who, fancying he heard sounds proceeding from Sebastian's chamber, had come to seek the cause. His glance fell upon the open books. With a stride he was at the table, bending over them. The next moment he raised his head and darted an angry glance at the child's sleeping figure. But Sebastian only smiled, and murmured something in his sleep, and the elder brother turned once more to examine the writing. As he scanned the pages which witnessed Sebastian's heart-work throughout those long months his face hardened. There was no pity in his breast for the child who had thus displayed his devotion to the art which he himself must have loved after his own fashion--no sympathy for one who had spent so many hours snatched from sleep in acquiring that which he, Christoph, had had it in his power to bestow as a free gift--only anger and jealousy at the thought that he had been outwitted by his little brother. With his mouth curved into a cruel smile, Christoph seized the manuscript book and the copy, and, taking them from the room, hid them away in a new place where Sebastian could not possibly find them.

[Illustration: '*Christoph seized the manuscript book and the copy.*']

It was well for Sebastian that his love of music enabled him to overcome the bitter disappointment occasioned by his brother's cruelty, and so to continue the struggle for knowledge in the face of such terrible odds. But there was one thing which served to comfort him in his hour of trial, and of which Christoph was powerless to rob him, and that was the *memory* of the beautiful music he had copied with such infinite pains. This in itself must have been a resource of priceless value to him in helping him to bear with his brother's oppression.

A new life opened for Sebastian when, at the age of fifteen, he quitted his brother's roof and, with a school-fellow from Ohrdruff, entered the Michael Gymnasium, or Latin School, attached to the Church of St. Michael at Lüneburg. The discovery that he possessed a beautiful soprano voice gave him a place at once amongst those scholars who were selected to sing the principal parts in the Church services in return for a free education. Lüneburg possessed two schools, attached respectively to the Churches of St. Michael and St. John, and the rivalry between the two was so keen that when, as was the custom during the winter months, the scholars were sent out to sing in the streets in order to collect money for their support, the respective routes to be traversed had to be carefully marked out so as to prevent a collision.

Bach had not been long at St. Michael's, however, ere his wonderful voice, which had attracted much attention at the services of the church, began to break; but, fortunately, his knowledge of the violin and clavier enabled him to retain his place in the school and to enjoy the educational advantages which it offered. He was working hard at his musical studies, spending a portion of each day in the convent library, where the works of the best composers were to be found. But all his thoughts and aspirations were beginning to centre themselves upon the instrument which, before all others, had the power to stir his musical soul to its depths. His love for the

organ soon developed into a passion which overcame every obstacle offered to its gratification. The extremes of hunger and bodily fatigue were alike powerless to restrain his desire to study the capacities of the organ as these were brought forth by the ablest hands. His poverty forbade the hope of his receiving instruction on the instrument, though later on he gained much valuable help from his friendship with the organist of St. John's Church at Lüneburg. In those early days, however, Bach was almost entirely self-dependent--a penniless scholar, fortunate in finding his services rewarded by the plainest and meagrest of fare, yet swayed and urged forwards by a fixed determination to conquer and attain the knowledge upon which he had set his hopes.

[Illustration: '*During the winter months the scholars were sent out to sing in the streets.*']

Hamburg, which in those days merited the description applied to it of the 'Paradise of German music,' is situated at a distance of about twenty-five English miles from Lüneburg; but when Bach was told that the renowned Johann Adam Reinken, the 'father of German organists,' played the organ at St. Katherine's Church in the city, he seized the first opportunity that presented itself of tramping the whole way thither in order to hear him. With Bach to listen was to learn; but to enjoy this privilege he had to secrete himself in a corner of the church where he could not be seen, for he had been warned that such great players as Reinken resented the intrusion of strangers whilst they were practising.

The deep joy of listening to such a master must have seemed to Sebastian a fitting reward for his long tramp, and we may picture him on his homeward journey, weary and footsore, but with his mind stored with the memories of what he has heard. This visit to Hamburg was the precursor of many others, though, of course, such expeditions could only be undertaken when, by means of street singing, or in some other way, he had contrived to save a few shillings to pay for food and lodging. But he often went short of food rather than deprive himself of a chance of hearing his beloved Reinken. On one occasion he had yielded to the temptation of lingering at Hamburg until his funds were almost exhausted, and he was confronted by the prospect of a long walk with no means of satisfying his hunger until he reached the end of his journey. Nevertheless, he set forth with a light heart, for his stock of knowledge had been greatly enriched by the prolonged visit, and, after all, what were five-and-twenty miles to the young musician, possessed of limbs replete with strength and a head full of glorious dreams?

He had not proceeded many miles, however, ere the keen wind made his want of food painfully apparent, and the music within him became drowned by the clamourings of Nature. At this juncture he found himself opposite a small hostelry, from the open door of which a most savoury odour was issuing--an odour so rich in the promise of all that he needed that it brought him to a standstill. The kitchen window was nigh, and he could not resist the temptation of peering into the room to ascertain what was in preparation. At that moment he heard a window above him thrown open, and a couple of herrings' heads were tossed into the road. Probably some benevolent guest, attracted by the youth's starving looks, had taken this means of bestowing upon him the remains of his repast. The herring was a favourite article of food in Germany, and poor Bach was only too glad to avail himself of this feeble chance of satisfying his cravings. But what was his astonishment, upon pulling the heads to pieces, to find that each contained a Danish ducat! The acquisition of so much wealth fairly took his breath away, and for a moment he almost forgot that he was famishing. On realising his good fortune, he lost no time in entering the inn and regaling himself at the expense of his unknown benefactor. The money did more than this, however, for it enabled him to reckon upon another visit to Hamburg in the near future.

That distance formed no obstacle to Bach's ardent desire to obtain knowledge is proved by the fact that he performed several journeys on foot to Celle, which was distant some forty-five English miles to the south of Lüneburg, in order that he might hear the band at the ducal Court. The Duke's musicians were chiefly Frenchmen, and French instrumental music formed the principal part of their work. There was but little opportunity in Germany of hearing this important branch of music, and Bach seized upon the first chance that presented itself. He was now making rapid progress with his studies, and his friendship with Böhm, the organist of St. John's Church at Lüneburg, was a great incentive to him in his love for the organ.

After remaining three years at the Lüneburg school, Bach obtained a post as violinist in the private band of Prince Johann Ernst, brother of the reigning Duke of Saxe-Weimar. This, however, was merely to fill up the time until he could secure an appointment in the direction in which his affections as well as his genius were guiding him. The opportunity for which he sought was not long in coming. A visit to the old Thuringian town of Arnstadt, in which three members of his family had successively filled the post of organist in past years, took him to the new church to inspect the organ which had just been erected by the consistory. Arnstadt, in fact, was one of the centres in which the influence of the Bach family had made itself felt, and whence several of its members had gone forth to other parts of the country. The savour of the former presence of the Bachs was still fresh in the minds of the townspeople; the consistory of the new church, moreover, were on the look out for a thoroughly capable organist, and Bach's request to be allowed to try the organ was, therefore, willingly granted.

No sooner had they heard him play than they offered him the post, and, furthermore, stated their willingness to augment the pay attached to it by a contribution from the town funds. Bach, therefore, found himself installed as organist with a salary of fifty florins, with, in addition, thirty thalers for board and lodging--equivalent in all to about eight pounds thirteen shillings of English money--a small enough salary indeed! but one which in those days was considered to be a fair emolument for the services of a young player. On August 14, 1703, Bach, who was then eighteen years old, entered upon his duties, having previously taken a 'solemn pledge of diligence and faithfulness, and all that appertaineth to an honourable servant and organist before God and the worshipful Corporation.'

The requirements of the post left him plenty of leisure in which to pursue his studies and improve his playing. Up to this point he had done very little in the shape of actual composition, his aim having been to perfect himself in a knowledge of the requirements of the instrument on which he had fixed his heart's choice, to which end he had spared no diligence in studying the works of the greatest masters. Now, however, he set about teaching himself the art of composition, for which purpose he took a number of concertos written for the violin by Vivaldi, and set them for the pianoforte. By this means he learnt to grasp the connection of musical ideas and the manner in which they should be worked out, and as this exercise implied the rewriting of many passages in order to adapt them for the piano, he gradually attained facility in expressing his own musical thoughts on paper without first playing them on an instrument. Thus, without assistance from anybody, he worked on alone, very often till far into the night, to perfect himself in this important branch of his art.

From the outset, however, his playing at the new church excited attention and admiration, and that it should, nevertheless, have failed to entirely satisfy the authorities was due, not to any lack of power, but simply to the extraordinary manner in which the services were accompanied. The fact is that Bach had no sooner seated himself at the organ than he straightway forgot that choir and congregation were depending upon him, and began to indulge his fancy to such lengths that the singing soon ceased altogether, and the people remained mute with astonishment and admiration. Naturally, these flights of genius were not exactly in accordance with the wishes of the consistory, who, moreover, saw little prospect of their choir becoming efficiently trained under the circumstances. Yet, notwithstanding there were frequent disputes between Bach and the elders of the church with regard to his vagaries, so marvellously were the authorities influenced by the power and beauty of his playing that they overlooked his faults for the sake of his genius.

That Bach must have tried their patience sorely cannot be denied. On one occasion, being specially desirous of visiting Lübeck, in order to hear the celebrated organist Buxtehude perform on the organ at the Marien-Kirche during Advent, he obtained a month's leave of absence for the purpose. Fifty miles lay between Arnstadt and the town which formed his destination, but Bach resolutely performed the entire journey on foot, so eager was he to profit by the playing of this master. Once at Lübeck, he became so wrapped up in the musical attractions of the town that he completely forgot his promise to return to his post until reminded by his empty purse of the fact that he could no longer prolong his stay. By this time he had gratuitously extended his leave from one month to three! Hence it is not surprising that on his return to

Arnstadt the consistory should have expressed serious displeasure at his neglect. On the other hand, it affords a striking proof of the esteem in which his playing was held that the authorities should have allowed him to retain his post in spite of all that had happened.

It was not long before the services of the young musician were sought by the Church authorities of several important towns, whither the fame of his organ-playing had spread. He longed to find a wider scope wherein to prosecute his aims for raising the standard of Church music. Arnstadt had become too narrow for his desires, and, consequently, when, in 1707, he was offered the post of organist of St. Blasius', at Mühlhausen, near Eisenach, he accepted it at once. The invitation was coupled with a request that he would name his own salary--a compliment to his powers to which he modestly responded by fixing the sum at that which he had lately received; but, in addition to pay, his emolument comprised certain dues of corn, wood, and fish, to be delivered free at his door. His post at Arnstadt was filled by his cousin, Johann Ernst, to whom, as he was very poor, and had an aged mother and a sick sister to support, Bach generously handed over the last quarter's salary which was due to him on leaving.

With this improvement in his worldly prospects Bach deemed that he might prudently marry. He had been contemplating this step since the time, some months before, when he had incurred the displeasure of the Arnstadt authorities by introducing a 'stranger maiden' into the choir--a proceeding altogether contrary to rule, but one which, like the rest of his faults, was condoned for the sake of hearing him play. The 'stranger maiden' was no other than his cousin, Maria Barbara, the youngest daughter of Michael Bach, of Gehren, with whom he had fallen in love, and to whom he was married on October 17, 1707.

It was customary in those days for organists to maintain their instruments in repair, and Bach's first duty on entering upon his new post was to undertake some extensive alterations in the organ committed to his charge. The completion of these repairs, however, was left to his successor, for Bach did not retain his position at Mühlhausen for more than a year. He was filled with a desire to raise the standard of Church music, reverently desirous of clothing the old services in a new dress--one which should elevate the thoughts of the worshippers to a higher plane by giving to the words of Scripture a fuller and more sympathetic interpretation. In this longing for freedom from the old modes of Church music, by which, owing to the rigid simplicity of the Lutheran services, the truths of religion were trammelled and obscured, Bach hoped to have secured the support and sympathy of his congregation; but he soon found that his efforts were unappreciated. For us, who now see this longing for the first time clearly expressed in his life, and who know what important fruits it was destined to bear in the future, this stage in the career of Sebastian Bach possesses a peculiar interest. In his letter to the town council announcing his resignation he explains that he has 'always striven to make the improvement of Church music, to the honour of God, his aim,' but that he has met with opposition such as he sees no chance of being enabled to overcome in the future. Moreover, he states that, 'poor as is his mode of living, he has not enough to subsist on after paying his house-rent and other necessary expenses.'

The shortness of his means, with a wife and the near prospect of a family to provide for, no doubt had a good deal to do with Bach's decision to resign his post at St. Blasius' at once. He had, in fact, already received the offer of a more important engagement. An invitation to perform before Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Weimar early in the year 1708 had been seized upon in the hope that it might lead to an appointment at the Court. The hope was not disappointed, for the Duke was so delighted with Bach's playing that he immediately offered him the post of Court and Chamber Organist. Bach had always been on the best of terms with the elders of St. Blasius' Church, however, and the separation was accompanied by marks of friendliness on both sides. Thus we see Bach acting once more on his own initiative--choosing his path deliberately as he saw the opportunity for furthering the great objects he had in view.

The wider scope for which he had been longing was now within his grasp, and from the date of his appointment at Weimar he began to compose those masterpieces for the organ which in after-years were to help to make his name famous. Hitherto we have followed the fortunes of Sebastian Bach as a zealous student, self-dependent, and almost entirely self-instructed as regards his art, battling against poverty with stolid

indifference to the drawbacks and discomforts that fell to his share, unmindful of fatigue, seeking neither praise nor reward, but with his mind wholly set upon the accomplishment of his life-purpose--the furtherance of his beloved art. The promise of his childish days had been largely sown in sorrow and disappointment. He had not been hailed as a prodigy of genius. No crowd of wondering admirers had gathered to listen to his childish efforts, and to prognosticate for him the favours of fame and fortune in the near future. Not even his parents, loving him as they doubtless did, could have done more than dared to entertain the hope that he would do honour and credit to the musical name which he bore ere they sank into their untimely graves, and left him to fight the battle of life alone. No; the childhood and youth of Sebastian Bach were stages in the life of a genius which were entirely destitute of the advantages of either wealth or the patronage of the great, and as such they command our interest and respect.

Henceforth we have to picture Bach as settled in his Weimar home, no longer as a student, but as a player and composer whose fame was gradually spreading throughout the country. So rapid had his progress been both on the organ and the pianoforte that he was even led to overestimate his own powers, and one day remarked somewhat boastingly to a friend that he could play any piece, however difficult, at sight without a mistake. The friend, disbelieving his statement, invited him to breakfast shortly afterwards, and placed several pieces on the pianoforte, amongst them being one which, though apparently simple, was in reality extremely difficult. He then left the room to prepare breakfast, and Bach, seating himself at the instrument, began to play over the pieces. Coming to the difficult work, he struck into it very boldly, but after proceeding a little way he came to a stop, then tried it again from the beginning, and once more halted at the same place. His host then appeared bringing in the breakfast, and Bach, turning to him, exclaimed, 'You are right. One cannot play everything at sight--it is impossible!'

In August, 1712, Zachau, the organist of the Liebfrauen-Kirche at Halle, and Handel's old master, died, and Bach, whose knowledge and practical skill in the matter of organ construction had now become widely known, was asked to plan a new instrument for the church. He accordingly made his plans, and then, induced by the thought of having a fine organ under his control, he applied for the vacant post. The elders of the church, having heard a sacred cantata which he composed for the occasion performed under his direction in the following year, were most willing to accede to his application, but Bach, fearing that his independence would be threatened by the conditions attached to the position, withdrew at the last moment. Nevertheless, so great was the appreciation in which his abilities were held that when the new organ was completed he was invited to Halle for the purpose of inspecting it and testing its capabilities.

In 1714 Duke Wilhelm Ernst raised him to the position of Hof-Concertmeister--a step which afforded increased scope for the exercise of his powers. Every autumn for several years he utilised his leave of absence by journeying to the principal towns in order to give performances on the organ and clavier, by means of which his reputation was greatly enhanced. It was on one of these tours that he found himself in Dresden at a time when expectation was rife concerning the powers of a remarkable French player who had just arrived in the town. Jean Marchand, as the Frenchman was named, had achieved a great reputation in his own country, where, in addition to filling the post of organist to the King at Versailles, he was regarded as the most fashionable music-master of the day. His conceited and overbearing manners, however, had led to his banishment from the French Court, and he had undertaken a tour in Italy with triumphant success before coming to the German capital. Bach found everybody discussing the Frenchman's wonderful playing, and it was whispered that he had been already offered an appointment in Dresden. The friends of Bach insisted that he should engage Marchand forthwith in a contest in defence of the musical honour of his nation, and as Bach was by no means indisposed to pit himself against the conceited Frenchman, he gave his consent to the challenge being dispatched. Marchand, for his part, showed an equal readiness to meet Bach, foreseeing an easy victory over his antagonist. The King promised to grace the contest with his presence, and the time and place were duly fixed. It was agreed that the contestants were to set each other problems to be worked out on the piano, the victory to be adjudged by the connoisseurs who were present.

The day fixed for the trial arrived. A brilliant company assembled, and at the appointed time Bach made his

appearance; but his adversary had not arrived. The audience awaited his coming for some time with impatience, and at length the news was brought that Marchand had left the city suddenly that morning! It transpired that on the previous day Bach had been performing on the organ in one of the principal churches of the town, and Marchand, attracted by the crowd, made his way into the building and listened to Bach's wonderful playing. So greatly had the music impressed him that, when he learnt who the player was, he began to tremble for his success at the coming contest. As the time approached his fears grew apace, and at length, without a word to anybody concerning his intentions, he fled from the city.

The year 1717, in which the above event took place, was marked by a further advancement in Bach's fortunes, for on his return from Dresden he was appointed Capellmeister to the young Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. His new position left him abundant leisure in which to follow the bent of his genius in regard to the composition of instrumental music, and many of his finest works were written at this time. His relations with the Prince were of the most cordial character. The latter was an enthusiastic lover of music, and on his frequent journeys to various towns in order to gratify his taste he insisted on having Bach as his travelling companion. Thus, for several years Bach continued to lead a life which in every respect brought him much happiness, and added not a little to his fame. Then a great sorrow befell him, for during one of these expeditions with the Prince, when, owing to their movements, he was unable to receive news from home, his wife died suddenly, and when he returned to Cöthen it was to find the family plunged into grief, and the mother already buried.

The close of the year 1721 saw Bach married to his second wife, Anna Magdalena Wülkens, a daughter of the Court trumpeter at Weissenfels. Anna Magdalena was in every way suited for the wife of a musician, for she had a deep love for music, in addition to possessing a beautiful voice. Moreover, as time went on, her reverence for her husband's genius, which she used every effort to promote and encourage, did not fail to make itself felt in influencing the musical tastes of her children.

Life, meanwhile, at the Court had not proceeded so happily for Bach as heretofore, and in the year of his marriage he made a journey to Hamburg with the object of competing for the post of organist at the Jacobi-Kirche. His playing on this occasion excited the greatest admiration, though, as a matter of fact, this was not the first time he had awakened the enthusiasm of Hamburg audiences by his performances; but the organ on which he now played was an exceptionally fine one, and responded so perfectly to his touch as to assist in imparting to his improvisation the character of an inspired performance. When the trial came to an end, every one present felt certain of the result. Not one of the competitors had approached Bach in feeling or execution. Yet, notwithstanding the popular verdict in his favour, the prize was snatched from him and given to another--younger, unknown, and even insignificant man, who, however, was enabled to offer four thousand marks for the position, whilst Bach could only present his genius.

Nevertheless, Bach, with his characteristic indifference to fortune, made no protest against this unfair treatment, but went quietly on with his work at Cöthen, waiting for a fresh opportunity to present itself. He had now become personally known to the famous and aged organist of Hamburg, Reinken. At one of his visits he improvised on a theme composed by the master in the latter's presence, and when he had finished, Reinken seized him by the hand, and as he shook it exclaimed with emotion, 'I thought that this art was dead, but I see that it still lives in you!' This was the last meeting between Bach and the organist from whose playing he had derived so much profit, for shortly afterwards Reinken died at the age of ninety-nine, holding his post up to the last.

His life at Cöthen was largely devoted to composition. His only pupils appear to have been his wife and his sons, in whose musical education he evinced the deepest interest, and for whose benefit he wrote many works, including several books of studies and his famous 'Art of Fugue.'[1] Another of his great works, the 'Wohltemperirte Klavier' (Well-tempered Clavichord), better known in England under the title of 'The Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues,' was begun at this time. It is, perhaps, the most popular of all Bach's works, and the idea of writing it is said to have occurred to him whilst staying at a place where no musical instrument

of any kind was available. That he should have sat down to write the first part of this monumental work (the second part was not completed until twenty years later) in a place where from sheer force of circumstances his fingers would otherwise have been condemned to idleness is not surprising when we consider the mental activity by which Bach's character was distinguished. He could not, in fact, be idle. When not playing, or composing, or teaching, he would often be found hard at work engraving his compositions on copper, or engaged in manufacturing some kind of musical instrument--at least two instruments are known to have been of his own inventing. The one idea which seems to have pervaded his whole life from beginning to end was to be of the greatest use to the greatest number of his fellow-creatures, and it was this noble purpose which was urging him at this time to discover a wider sphere of work. The Cöthen post, while it gave him abundant leisure for composition, did not satisfy his longing to be of greater use in the furtherance of his art--a longing which can only be appreciated when we study the works which at this period were occupying his mind. Moreover, the Prince, who had recently married, no longer showed the same devotion to music as heretofore--a change of feeling that necessarily produced a corresponding slackening of the ties of friendship and interest which had formerly existed between the Prince and his Capellmeister. The opportunity which Bach sought came at length when, in 1723, he was appointed cantor of the Thomas-Schule at Leipzig, and director of the music in the Churches of St. Thomas and St. Nicholas in the town.

With this appointment Bach entered upon the final stage of his career, for he retained the Leipzig post until his death. The story of his connection with the Thomas-Schule is one that redounds to his honour, for, in spite of considerable opposition at the hands of the authorities, who failed to appreciate his genius and hampered his activity by petty restrictions and accusations; in spite, also, of the poverty of the material with which he was called upon to deal, he laboured unceasingly to raise the standard of efficiency in the scholars whose training was committed to his charge, and from whose ranks the choirs in the two churches under his control had to be furnished. Apart from his duties, however, those twenty-seven years of Leipzig work and intercourse are marked out for us as comprising the period during which he wrote and dedicated to the service of the Church those masterpieces of undying beauty--the Passions according to St. Matthew[2] and St. John. In these works, and in the 'High Mass in B Minor,' which also belongs to this time, but more especially in the first-named work, we seem to witness the crowning-point of those generations of striving for the advancement of the art which have indissolubly linked the name of Bach with the history of music. Bach himself stood on the top step of the ladder: with him the vital forces of the race exhausted themselves; and further power of development stopped short.'

The life at Leipzig was distinguished by the simplicity which had always been Bach's chief characteristic. That he was imbued by deeply religious feelings is evidenced by the works to which we have just referred; his genius, in fact, found its highest and noblest expression in the interpretation of the spirit of the sacred writings. Next to his art--if, indeed, they can be considered apart--came his devotion to his family, in the training and welfare of whom he took an absorbing interest. Outside these twin centres of attraction he hardly ever ventured, and though his fame brought him notice, and to some extent honour as well, his desire for retirement became stronger as the years went on.

His modest, retiring disposition is well illustrated by an incident which marked the latter period of his busy life. His third son, Carl Philip Emanuel, had entered the service of Frederick the Great, and was acting as cembalist in the royal orchestra. His Majesty, who was exceedingly fond of music, and a considerable player on the flute, had repeatedly expressed a wish to see Bach, and from time to time sent messages to this effect to the old composer through the latter's son. Bach, however, intent upon his work, for a long time ignored these intimations of royal favour, until at length, in 1747, Carl brought to him an imperative demand from his royal master which Bach saw that he could not disobey without incurring the King's displeasure. Accordingly, he set out for Potsdam with his son Friedemann. The King was about to begin his evening music when a servant brought to him a list of the strangers who had arrived at the castle that day. Frederick glanced at the paper, and then turned to his musicians with a smile. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'old Bach has come!' and down went his flute. Bach was immediately sent for--he had not time even to change his travelling-dress--and with many excuses he presented himself to the King. His Majesty received him with marked kindness and respect, and when the

courtiers smiled at the old musician's embarrassment and his somewhat flowery speeches, Frederick frowned his disapproval. He then conducted Bach through the palace, showing him the various points of interest, and insisted on his trying his Silbermann pianofortes, of which he had quite a collection. Bach extemporised on each of the instruments, and then Frederick gave him a theme which he reproduced as a fantasia, to the astonishment of all present. The King next requested him to play a six-part fugue, and Bach extemporised one on a theme selected by himself. The King, who stood behind the composer's chair, clapped his hands with delight, and exclaimed repeatedly, 'Only one Bach! Only one Bach!' It was a visit replete with honours for the old master, and when he returned home he expressed his gratitude by writing down and elaborating the piece which he had composed on the King's theme, dedicating it to His Majesty under the title of 'Musikalisches Opfer' (Musical Offering), and sending it to Potsdam with a letter begging its acceptance.

Late in life, and just after he had completed his great work, 'The Art of Fugue,' Bach became totally blind--the result, no doubt, of the heavy strain to which he had subjected his sight when, in order to educate himself, he had copied out entire many of the works of older masters. Nor can we overlook the fact that, when a child, his sight must have been injured by the long, self-imposed task of copying music by moonlight. He suffered a great deal in consequence of the drugs which were administered in the hope of restoring his eye-sight, but, notwithstanding, he continued to work up to the last. On the morning of the day on which he died--July 28, 1750--he startled those about him by suddenly regaining his sight, 'but it was the last flickering of the expiring flame. He was allowed to see the light of this world once more before leaving it for ever.' A few hours later he became unconscious, and passed away in his sleep.

[Illustration: '*The King exclaimed repeatedly, "Only one Bach! Only one Bach!"*']

Considered apart from his works, the life of Sebastian Bach stands out as a noble example of untiring industry and perseverance; but we miss the brilliancy and fire which in the case of many other great musicians have served to render their lives so outwardly striking and marvellous. The genius of Bach was a mighty power working unseen, buried beneath a simple exterior. Unlike Handel, that other great master of his time with whom he has been so often compared, Bach lived a life of comparative retirement, never travelling beyond the confines of his own country, making no bid for popularity, and to the last remaining unaffected by praise or censure. All his life long he was seeking knowledge and truth, never contenting himself with a belief in his own unaided powers or judgment, but always showing the keenest interest in the progress of his art as evinced by the works of other musicians of his day. One little instance will serve, perhaps, to bring out clearly this marked difference between these two great men: Bach was truly desirous of making Handel's acquaintance, and tried on several occasions to gratify this wish. On the last occasion he travelled to Halle on learning that Handel was revisiting his birthplace from the scene of his triumphs in London, only to find on his arrival that his contemporary had departed for England earlier in the day. Handel, on the other hand, is not known to have expressed the least desire to meet the man whose fame rested upon so solid a foundation of excellence. The one was self-centred, the other wholly centred upon art for art's sake--yet both were great.

It is convenient to speak of Bach's life as having been divided into three stages or periods, each marked off from the rest by the nature of the works to which it gave birth. Thus, the Weimar period is that to which is assigned the major portion of his organ music. The Cöthen period, on the other hand, produced few compositions for the organ, but was mainly devoted to instrumental chamber music; whilst to the Leipzig period belongs the production of nearly all his finest Church compositions.

Bach was laid to rest in the churchyard of St. John's Church at Leipzig, but neither stone nor cross exists to mark the spot. Only the register of deaths preserved in the town library remains to tell us that 'A man, aged sixty-seven, M. Johann Sebastian Bach, Musical Director and Singing Master of the St. Thomas School, was carried to his grave in the hearse, July 30, 1750.'

FOOTNOTES:

[1] The word 'fugue' is derived from the Latin *fugare*, 'to put to flight,' and aptly expresses the manner in which the various parts of a fugue, as they are successively introduced, seem to 'chase the subject, or motive, throughout the piece.'

[2] For an account of the revival of this great work, exactly one hundred years after its first production, see the story of Mendelssohn.

BACH'S PRINCIPAL COMPOSITIONS

Passion Music (St. John). 1724. Passion Music (St. Matthew), for double choir. 1729. Passion Music (St. Luke). 1734. Mass in B minor, 1732-1738. 4 Short Masses in F, A, G minor, and G. [These consist of settings of the Kyrie and Gloria only, being the parts sung in the Lutheran service.] 4 Sanctuses in C, D, D minor, and G. Magnificat in D. 1723. Funeral Ode. 1727. Christmas Oratorio, in six sections, for performance on successive days. 1734. Easter Oratorio. 1736. 191 Church Cantatas. 3 Wedding Cantatas. 6 Motets for five or eight voices. 22 Secular Cantatas. 371 Chorales for four voices, many of them taken from the works named above. [Of these compositions the Matthew Passion, the John Passion, the Christmas Oratorio, the Magnificat, the Motets, and 25 of the Church Cantatas have been printed with English words.] The Well-Tempered Clavier (48 Preludes and Fugues). } 1722-1744. } Klavier-Uebung, or Clavier Practice, in four parts. } 1731-1742. } Musicalisches Opfer (Musical Offering). 1747. } For clavier The Art of Fugue. 1749. } alone. Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue. } 6 Partitas. } 6 English Suites. } 6 French Suites. } 3 Sonatas for clavier and flute. 6 Sonatas and 1 Suite for clavier and violin. 3 Sonatas for clavier and viol da gamba. 7 Concertos for clavier and orchestra. 1 Concerto for clavier, violin, and flute. 6 Concertos ('Brandenburg Concertos') for several instruments. 2 Concertos for violin and orchestra. 1 Concerto for 2 violins. 3 Concertos for 2 claviers. 2 Concertos for 3 claviers. 3 Sonatas and 3 Partitas for violin alone. 6 Suites for violoncello. 3 Sonatas for flute. 4 Overtures. } 1 Symphony. } For orchestra. 6 Sonatas. } 18 Preludes and Fugues. } 3 Toccatas. } For organ. 113 Preludes. } 24 Chorales. }

HANDEL

HANDEL

In a garret choked with lumber of various kinds, to which the dust of years had imparted the greyish hue of neglect and decay, a little fair-haired boy was seated before a spinet, fingering its yellow keys with a tenderness that betokened his fondness for the instrument. The level rays of the setting sun streaming through the dimmed casement lighted up the child's head with its clustering curls, as he bent over the keyboard. The little spinet was almost dumb, and the voice which had cheered so many lonely hours spent in its companionship was hardly more than a whisper. Yet even so the boy loved to listen to it, for the spinet could speak to him as no living voice could speak; its sweet, faint sounds stirred the heart within him as nothing else in the whole of his childish world had the power to move it, awakening and creating fresh sounds that grew ever stronger as the hours flew by unheeded. To him the greatest joy of existence was to steal away to his garret next the sky and whisper his secrets to the friendly spinet.

[Illustration: *Handel's birthplace, Halle, Saxony.*]

George Frederick Handel, as the boy was named, was the son of a surgeon of Halle, Lower Saxony, in which town the child was born on February 23, 1685. Even before he could speak little George had shown a remarkable fondness for music, and the only toys he cared for were such as were capable of producing musical sounds. With this love for music, however, the father showed no sympathy whatever; he regarded the art with contempt, as something beneath the serious notice of one who aspired to be a gentleman, and that his child should have expressed an earnest desire to be taught to play only served to make him angry. He had decided that George was to be a lawyer, and in order that nothing should interfere with the carrying out of this intention he refused to allow the boy to attend school, lest his fondness for music should induce some one to

teach him his notes. Poor George was therefore compelled to stifle his longing whilst in his father's presence, and content himself with 'making music' in the seclusion of his own chamber. It may seem strange that Handel's mother should not have interposed in order that her boy should be taught music, but there is no doubt that the elderly surgeon ruled his household with a firm hand, which not even his wife's intercession would have made him relax. Moreover, Dorothea Handel was by nature far too gentle and submissive to seek to turn her husband from his decision. 'Meister Görge,' as he was styled, had been twice married. Dorothea, his second wife, was much younger than her husband, and possessed a gentle disposition that served to win her a place in the hearts of all who knew her, and that little George Frederick had his mother's sympathy in his love for music we cannot doubt.

[Illustration: HANDEL. From photo RISCHGITZ.]

Handel was about five years of age when the wistful glances which he bestowed upon other children who were more fortunate than he in being permitted to learn music aroused the active sympathy of a kind friend, who procured for him a dumb spinet--a small harpsichord having its sound deadened by strips of cloth tied round the strings. The instrument was secretly conveyed to a lumber-room in the surgeon's house, where a corner had been cleared for its reception, and thither would Handel delightedly repair at such times as he could do so without attracting notice. Hour after hour would pass whilst thus enrapt, until the shades of evening fell, or the moonbeams creeping across the instrument aroused him from his reverie. Often when the house was hushed in slumber the child would leave his bed, and steal away to the garret in order to commune with his beloved art. Day after day he laboured thus, mastering his difficulties one by one, his love and his genius preventing him from feeling the hardest work a drudgery.

For some time this secret practising continued without arousing suspicion on the part of the other inmates of the house. One night, however, when the child had resorted to his favourite spot, he was suddenly missed by those below, and, as it was known that he had been sent to bed, some fears were felt as to what could have become of him. The servants were summoned, but could give no account of him; the father was fetched from his study, whither he had retired, and a search began. The alarm increased when it was ascertained that the child was in none of the living-rooms of the house, and it was decided that the garrets and lofts must be searched. Calling for a lantern, the surgeon ascended the stairs leading to the lumber-room; it was possible that the boy might have found his way thither on some childish expedition, and there fallen asleep. Great was the father's surprise, on reaching the top-most landing, to hear faint musical sounds proceeding from behind the closed door. Noiselessly retracing his steps, he summoned the rest of the household, and then, ascending the stairs in a body, they paused outside to listen. Sure enough the old garret was full of melodic sounds! Now near, now far off, they seemed to the listeners to be wafted from another world; there was something uncanny about it, and the maids gazed into each other's faces with a scared expression, as the master softly lifted the latch, and, having peeped into the room, beckoned silently to the rest to follow him.

It might have been one of the angel choir itself whom these good people of the under-world had stumbled upon unawares! 'Meister Görge,' lifting his lantern above his head, peered forward into the darkness, whilst the women clasped their hands in astonishment at the vision presented to their gaze. For there, seated before the spinet, was the white-robed figure of the child, his face half turned towards them, and his eyes, as they caught the light of the lantern, revealing the dreamy, rapt expression of one who is lost to every earthly surrounding.

[Illustration: '*Beckoned silently to the rest to follow him.*']

This discovery does not seem to have produced any outburst of anger on the part of the father. Possibly he was touched by the child's devotion, or by his entreaties, and felt unwilling to deprive him of what, after all, he could only regard in the light of an amusement. At any rate, little Handel appears to have continued his practising without interruption. The progress which he made with his studies, however, made him long for an opportunity of hearing others play, and, very naturally, of being allowed to express his musical thoughts upon

an instrument capable of responding with a fuller sound, though the fulfilment of this latter wish was more than he dared hope for whilst his father remained obdurate. One day, when Handel was seven years old, his father announced his intention of paying a visit to the castle of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels to see his son--a step-brother of George Frederick--who acted as valet de chambre to the Duke. Handel was most anxious to be allowed to accompany his father, because he had heard that the Duke kept a great company of musicians to perform in his chapel. But the father refused his consent, and the boy turned away with a look of fixed determination in his eyes, which it was well, perhaps, that the elderly surgeon did not perceive. 'I will go,' muttered the boy to himself, as he sought the seclusion of his garret; 'I will go, even if I have to run every inch of the way!'

Handel did not know then that no fewer than forty miles lay between his home and the ducal castle, but having formed his bold resolution he awaited the moment when his father set forth on his journey, and then, running behind the closed carriage, he did his best to keep pace with it. The roads were long and muddy, and although he panted on bravely for a long distance, the child's strength began at last to fail, and, fearing that he would be left behind, he called to the coachman to stop. At the sound of the boy's voice his father thrust his head out of the window, and was about to give vent to his anger at George's disobedience; but a glance at the poor little bedraggled figure in the road, with its pleading face, melted the surgeon's heart. They were at too great a distance from home to turn back, and so Handel was lifted into the carriage and carried to Weissenfels, where he arrived tired and footsore, but supremely happy at having won his point.

Handel had certainly not formed too bright a picture of the musical delights of the Duke's home. The musicians were most friendly towards him, and, as he was by no means shy where his beloved art was concerned, they soon became good friends. His delight was great when he was told that he might try the beautiful organ in the chapel. The organist stood beside him and arranged the stops, whilst the child, with a feeling of coming joy that was almost akin to fear, placed his fingers upon the keys. The next moment his hesitation had vanished, and the sounds were coming in response--one minute low and deep, then mysteriously calling to him from distant corners of the dim galleries, like sweet angel voices which he had the power to summon by the pressure of his fingers. In his lonely garret, fingering his spinet, he had longed for such an opportunity as this, to be enabled to make the great organ-pipes sing to him in whispers, or to thunder back to him in grand, deep chords that would set the whole air vibrating with music. And now the opportunity he craved for had come, and he could speak his musical thoughts into this noble instrument, which had the power to draw from the depths of his soul all that that soul contained. Ah, Handel was glad now that he had persevered and worked so hard at his music. He was glad, too, that he had undertaken that long, toilsome run behind his father's carriage, for it had brought to him the greatest joy of his life.

[Illustration: '*He called to the coachman to stop.*']

On several occasions after this the organist came to the chapel on purpose to listen to Handel as the latter played, and he was so struck by the boy's genius that he determined to surprise the Duke by letting Handel play His Highness out of chapel. Accordingly, on the following Sunday, when the service was concluded, the organist lifted Handel on to the organ-stool, and desired him to play. If the young player had needed courage and self-confidence, it must have been at this moment when bidden to perform before the Duke and all his people. But he needed neither, for he instantly forgot all else but the music which he was burning to express, and without a moment's hesitation complied with the organist's request.

The Duke and his friends had risen to their feet as Handel began to play, but the former, who was a good musician himself, instantly detected a difference in the playing, and, glancing towards the organ-loft, he was astonished to behold the figure of a child bending over the keys. But as he listened his astonishment became greater, for it was no longer the child's figure that arrested his attention, but the melody which was pouring forth from the instrument. Instead of walking out of the chapel, the Duke remained standing where he had risen, with his gaze riveted upon the child player, and of course the members of the household likewise kept their places. At length, when Handel ceased to play, the Duke turned to those about him with the inquiry:

'Who is that child? Does anybody know his name?' As no one present seemed to know, the organist was sent for to explain matters. After a few words from this official the Duke commanded that Handel should be brought before him. When the boy appeared he patted him on the head, and praised his performance, telling him that he was sure that he would make a good musician. At this point, however, the organist interposed with the remark that he understood that the boy's father had refused to let him follow up his musical studies. 'What!' cried the Duke in astonishment, 'is it possible that he can contemplate anything so foolish and unjust as to stifle the genius of his own son! I cannot believe it. Who is the father? Where does he live?' On being told that the surgeon was staying in the palace, the Duke sent for him, and having told him how much he admired his son's performance, he pointed out to him that he would be doing a great wrong to the child if he persisted in placing any obstacle in the way of his advancement. 'I need hardly say,' concluded the kindly Duke, 'that such action on your part would, in my opinion, be quite unworthy of a member of your own honourable profession.' The father listened with respect to what the Duke had to say, and then (though with obvious reluctance) consented to allow the boy to pursue his studies. 'Come,' said the Duke, as he saw that his point was won, 'that is good, and, believe me, you will never regret it.' He finally turned to little Handel, and, patting him once more on the head, bade him work hard at his music, and then took his leave. The child would have thanked him, but his heart was too full for words, and tears of gratitude started to his eyes as the kindly nobleman turned away. At last the wish of his heart would be fulfilled. Happy was the journey that had so happy an ending for the young musician.

[Illustration: '*The Duke praised his performance.*']

As it was now settled that Handel should devote himself to music, it became necessary to place him with a good teacher. Friederich Zachau, an excellent musician, and the organist of the cathedral at Halle, was chosen to instruct the boy in composition as well as to give him lessons on the organ, harpsichord, violin, and hautboy. Zachau was extremely pleased with his pupil, and, perceiving his extraordinary aptitude and genius, he did his best to bring him on. The organist possessed a large collection of music by composers of different countries, and he showed Handel how one nation differed from another in its style of musical expression, or, to put it another way, how the people of a particular country felt with regard to the art. Zachau also taught him to compare the work of various composers, so that he might recognise the various styles, as well as the faults and excellencies of each. All this time, too, Handel was set work in composition. Before long he was actually composing the regular weekly services for the church, in addition to playing the organ whenever Zachau desired to absent himself--yet at this time Handel could not have been more than eight years old.

It was at the end of three years' hard work that Zachau took his pupil by the hand, and said: 'You must now find another teacher, for I can teach you no more.' Well and faithfully indeed had Zachau discharged his duty toward the pupil for whom, to use his own words, he felt he could never do enough, and grateful must Handel have been for all his care and attention. The parting was sad for both master and pupil, but with both the art which they loved stood before all else, and so Handel was sent to Berlin to pursue his studies.

It is hardly to be wondered at that the people of Berlin should have regarded as a prodigy a child of eleven who was capable of composing music for Church services, as well as of playing the organ and harpsichord in a masterly fashion. There were two well-known musicians living in Berlin at the time, named Ariosti and Buononcini, to whom Handel was of course introduced. The former received the boy very kindly and gave him every encouragement, but Buononcini took a dislike to him from the first, and seems to have done his best to injure the little player's reputation. Under the pretence of testing Handel's powers he composed a most difficult piece for the harpsichord, and, setting it before the child, requested him to play it at sight. The piece bristled with complications, and Buononcini confidently anticipated that Handel would break down over its performance. To his chagrin, however, the boy played it through with perfect ease and correctness, and from that moment Buononcini regarded him as a serious rival. Indeed, Handel's skill in improvising both on the organ and pianoforte created astonishment in all who heard him, and despite Buononcini's hostility he made many friends. The Elector himself was so delighted with his playing that he offered him a post at Court, and even expressed his willingness to send him to Italy to pursue his studies. Handel's father, however, refused his

consent to both proposals; no doubt he thought that if the boy developed according to the promise which he showed it would be necessary to keep him free from Court engagements, since it had happened in the case of others that great difficulty had been experienced in breaking away from such connections. The royal patrons of music were most anxious to obtain the services of the best musicians, and naturally were very loath to part with them when once secured. It was therefore determined that Handel should return to Halle, and be placed once more under the care of his old master. As may be imagined, Zachau was delighted to receive his pupil back again, and, with no less joy on his part, Handel set to work with increased energy to master the science of composition.

Whilst Handel was delighting the people of Berlin with his playing, a little boy, who was destined to become one of the greatest of musicians, was injuring his sight by copying out by moonlight the manuscript music which he had taken from his elder brother's cupboard, and helping to support himself by singing in the street, and at weddings and funerals, snatching every moment that could be spared from such work for adding to his knowledge of composition and playing. That little boy was Johann Sebastian Bach.

About this time Handel formed a friendship with a young student named Telemann, who was studying law at Leipzig. Curiously enough, Telemann's history up to this point bore a close resemblance to that of Handel. From a child he had been passionately devoted to music, but it was his parents' wish that he should study law, and now, in obedience to his mother's desire, he had come to Leipzig University. The love of music, however, was strong within him, and the meeting with Handel seems to have fired his passion anew. Yet he resolutely set his face against the temptation to stray from the path laid down for him, and to strengthen his resistance he put all his manuscript compositions in the fire--all save one, which lay forgotten in an old desk. It happened that a friend lighted upon this solitary manuscript by accident, and recognising its beauty showed it to the Church authorities of Leipzig. They in turn were so delighted with it that they immediately offered the composer the post of organist at the Neukirche, at the same time sending him a sum of money for the manuscript, and requesting him to compose regularly for the Church. At this juncture Telemann abandoned the struggle against his love for the art, and to his mother, who was supplying him with the means of living, he wrote, saying that he could no longer hold out against what he felt to be his true sphere of work, and mentioning that he had already begun to receive remuneration for the compositions. At the same time he returned the money which she had sent towards his education, and begged her not to think too hardly of him. The fact that his talent for music could produce money seems to have melted the mother's heart, for she instantly wrote to her son, and not only returned the money he had sent, but gave him her blessing into the bargain.

From this point Handel and Telemann became fast friends, and worked together at their musical studies, and it is interesting to record that the latter afterwards became one of the most celebrated German composers of his day. So numerous were his compositions, in fact, that it is told that he could not reckon them, and perhaps no other composer ever possessed such a facility in composition, especially in Church music. When reminded of his extraordinary talent, however, he used to say laughingly that a good composer ought to be able to set a placard to music.

The death of Handel's father, which took place at this period, left his mother with very small means, and Handel at once determined that he must work for his own living, so as not to deprive his mother of any portion of her limited income, to which, indeed, he hoped to make some addition ere long. But for the present, it was necessary that his education should be completed in accordance with his father's injunction, and so Handel continued to attend the University classes in classics. From this time he acted as deputy organist at the Cathedral and Castle of Halle, and a few years later, when the post fell vacant, he was duly appointed organist, with a salary of £7 10s. a year and free lodging. The duties were many, and included attendance on Sundays, festivals, and extra occasions, the care of the organ, and obedience to the priests and elders of the church. The organ was of the old-fashioned kind, in which the bellows were worked by the feet of the blower, who for this reason was called a 'bellows-treader' (*Bälgentreter*). Handel was now seventeen, and longing for greater things; but he could not expect to earn much in so small a town as Halle, and so, in January, 1703, he

said good-bye to his mother and his old friend Zachau, and set out for Hamburg to seek his fortune.

His first engagement at Hamburg was a very small one. The Opera House orchestra needed a *ripieno* (supplementary violin), and Handel accepted the post. What reason he had for letting it be understood that he possessed only a slight skill in playing is not shown, for to play *ripieno* meant that he was expected simply to help out the orchestra when additional harmonies were required, and to give support to the solo parts. As may be imagined, this must have seemed very easy work to Handel, nor was it long before he found an opportunity of showing what he was capable of doing. At that time it was the custom for the conductor to preside at the harpsichord, where, with the score of the piece before him, he kept a check upon the players, and, where necessary, beat the time. One day the conductor was absent through some accidental cause, and no arrangement had been made to fill his place. Handel thereupon without a word stepped up and took his seat at the instrument, and conducted so ably as to excite the astonishment of the other performers. Having thus revealed his powers, he was thereafter permanently established in the post.

Handel had not been long in Hamburg before he made the acquaintance of a most remarkable man named Mattheson. In addition to being an exceedingly clever musician and composer, Mattheson was a good linguist and a writer on a variety of musical subjects. He had formed a resolve to write a book for every year of his life, and he accomplished more than this, for he lived to be eighty-three years of age, and at the time of his death he had published no fewer than eighty-eight volumes. Despite the vanity which formed so large a part of his character, Handel could not fail to be attracted by so accomplished a man, and their acquaintance soon ripened into a friendship which lasted for many years. Shortly after they became known to each other the post of organist in the church of Lübeck fell vacant, and Handel and his friend determined to compete for it. Accordingly, they set out together in the coach, with the evident intention of enjoying themselves. They had a poulterer as fellow-traveller, who seems to have been quite of the same opinion, and as they journeyed to Lübeck they told stories, composed 'double fugues,' (which it is to be hoped the poulterer appreciated), and altogether had a very merry time. On reaching their destination they paid a round of visits to the organs and harpsichords in the town, trying them all in succession, and it was then arranged between them that Handel should compete only on the organ and Mattheson on the harpsichord. Matters, however, were not destined to be carried to the point of actual trial, for they suddenly discovered that the successful competitor would be required to wed the daughter of the retiring organist, and as neither musician contemplated taking so serious a step, they promptly retreated to Hamburg without even seeking an audience of the would-be bride!

The self-will and determination which marked the character of Handel as a child clung to him through life, and not even the closest ties of friendship prevented his obstinate temper from asserting itself whenever occasion arose. Handel's temper, opposed to Mattheson's vanity, gave rise to a quarrel between the two friends which might have been attended by very serious consequences. Mattheson had written an opera called 'Cleopatra,' in which he himself took the part of Antony, and it had been his custom after the death of this character to take his place at the harpsichord and conduct the rest of the opera. This had been the arrangement with the former conductor, and Mattheson did not doubt that it would be adhered to when Handel presided at the pianoforte. But Mattheson had clearly reckoned without his host, for when the actor-composer, having departed this life on the stage, suddenly reappeared through the orchestra door and walked up to Handel's side with the request that the latter would yield his place to him, he was met by a flat refusal on the part of the conductor in possession. Possibly Handel may have been struck by the absurdity of a personage whose decease had only a few moments before been witnessed by the audience desiring to reassume his mortal dress in the orchestra. Mattheson's vanity, on the other hand, was no doubt deeply injured by his being made to look foolish, and he left the theatre in a rage.

At the conclusion of the piece Handel found his friend awaiting him at the entrance. An altercation took place, and it is said that Mattheson went so far as to box Handel's ears. A public insult such as this could only be wiped out by a resort to swords, and the belligerents at once adjourned to the market-place, where, surrounded by a ring of curious onlookers, they drew their weapons. After several angry thrusts on either side, the point of Mattheson's sword actually touched his adversary's breast, but, fortunately, was turned aside by a large metal

button which Handel wore on his coat. The consciousness of how narrowly he had missed injuring, if not actually killing, his friend brought Mattheson suddenly to his senses, and, the bystanders at this juncture interposing between them, the duellists shook hands, and thenceforth, it is said, became better friends than ever.

[Illustration: '*A resort to swords.*']

The life at Hamburg was a very busy one--full of teaching, study, and composition. With the growth of his fame the number of his pupils increased, and Handel was enabled not only to be independent of his mother's help, but even to send her money from time to time. He now began to practise a habit which remained with him always--that of saving money whenever he could. Unlike most students of his age, he was impressed by the fact that, in order to produce with success works which were essentially works of art, one should be to some extent independent. It was during these student days that he composed his first opera, 'Almira, Queen of Castile,' which was produced in Hamburg on January 8, 1705. Its success induced him to follow it up with others, and then, in the following year, he set out for Italy. It was a journey he had been looking forward to during these years of hard work--ever since the time, in fact, when the Elector's offer had been refused by his father. Now he could go with the feeling that he was a composer of some note, confident that his works would at least obtain a hearing from the Italians. But this tour was not undertaken with the idea of making a holiday: it was to be a time of hard, continuous work as regards both operas and sacred music, by which his fame as a composer was to be greatly enhanced.

At Florence, where he stayed for some time, he composed the opera 'Rodrigo,' which was received with great applause. The Grand Duke was so delighted with it that he presented Handel on the first performance with fifty pounds and a service of plate. At Venice he brought out another opera, 'Agrippina,' the success of which was even greater than any previously produced. The audience were most enthusiastic, rising from their seats and waving their arms, whilst cries of 'Viva il caro Sassone!' (Long live the dear Saxon) resounded through the house. That a German composer should thus have taken Italian audiences by storm is an indication of the power which Handel wielded through his music, especially when we consider the rivalry which existed between the two countries in regard to the art. At the same time it must be remembered that the works of Handel which were performed in Italy were composed under Italian skies, after close study of the productions and methods of the masters of Italian opera, and when the composer himself was imbued with what he had observed of the tastes and customs of the people. The quality of his works, however, must have served to convince the Italians of the strength which the sister country was capable of putting forth in support of her claim to be regarded as a home of musical art.

Whilst on this tour Handel was present at a masked ball when Scarlatti, the celebrated Italian performer, aroused great applause by his playing on the harpsichord. Handel, whose identity was unknown to both Scarlatti and the audience, was next invited to play, and excited so much astonishment by his performance that Scarlatti, who had been listening intently, exclaimed aloud, 'It is either the famous Saxon himself, or the devil!' Later on, at Rome, the two performers competed in a friendly manner on the organ and pianoforte, and though it was undecided as to which should have the palm for the latter instrument, Scarlatti himself admitted Handel's superiority on the organ, and ever afterwards, when people praised him for his playing, he would tell them how Handel played, and at the same time cross himself in token of his great reverence for his gifted rival.

In Rome itself Handel's interest was deeply aroused, and he returned for a second visit to the city in 1709. It was here that he composed and produced his first oratorio, the 'Resurrection,' which added to his fame as a writer of sacred music. During this second visit he witnessed the arrival of the Pifferari, a band of shepherd-fifers, who each year left their flocks on the Calabrian hills, and journeyed to Rome to celebrate the birth of Christ by singing and playing an ancient chant in memory of the shepherds of Bethlehem. Handel must have retained this simple melody in his mind, for many years later he introduced a version of it into his great oratorio, the 'Messiah,' where, under the title of the 'Pastoral Symphony,' it accompanies the scene of 'the

shepherds abiding in the field.'

The following year Handel returned to Germany, and went to Hanover, where he was most kindly received by the Elector (afterwards King George I. of England). The post of Capellmeister, with a salary of about £300, was offered and accepted, but Handel had a further favour to prefer. He had for long cherished a desire to visit England, whither the noise of his fame had already extended, and whence he had received many pressing invitations. His request for leave of absence for this purpose was at once granted by his royal master, but ere Handel could turn his steps to these shores a stronger claim upon him remained to be satisfied: this was to visit his mother and his old master, Zachau. We may imagine the meeting--the mother proud of her son, Zachau equally proud of his pupil. How glad the hearts of both must have been to welcome back one who had so abundantly justified their confidence in his powers! Short as the time had been, the young musician had accomplished a great work for his country, for his compositions had sufficed to show the Italians the height to which the music of Germany had risen. It now remained for him to bring the English under his subjection, and of his success in this direction he had little fear. When the autumn came Handel took leave of his dear ones, and, with the sorrow of parting tempered by joyful anticipations, he set sail for England.

Italian opera had of late become the fashion in the musical world of London, but so much dissatisfaction had been aroused by the manner in which it was produced that it needed all the genius and power of such a master as Handel had shown himself to be to restore it to popular favour. We have, therefore, to think of Handel coming to London, with the fame of his Italian tour clinging to him, to a people longing for music which they could appreciate. That fame had paved the way for a cordial reception; he must next show them what he could do. In the February following his arrival Handel produced his opera 'Rinaldo' at the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket, having expended just a fortnight in composing and completing it! The opera was a triumphant success. For fifteen nights in succession (a long run in those days) the house was crowded with an enthusiastic audience, and the charming airs which were first uttered within the walls of the Haymarket Theatre were afterwards wafted to the furthest corners of the three kingdoms. Even to-day, when many of us hear for the first time the airs 'Lascia ch'io pianga' and 'Cara sposa,' we seem to fall at once under the spell of their charm; and can we not imagine the effect which these beautiful songs produced upon the Londoners of nearly two centuries ago, as they were voiced by the great singer Nicolini? We have mentioned but two of the airs which have ever remained popular, but the opera abounded in graceful melodies that could not fail to captivate the ear of a people who had been languishing for the sunshine.

It is interesting to recall the manner in which the opera was put upon the stage in those days. Every effort seems to have been made to render the scenes as realistic as possible, though occasionally this straining after effect was carried to an excess that excited ridicule. Thus, in the scene for Act II of 'Rinaldo,' representing the garden of Armida, the stage was filled with living birds, which were let loose from cages. As the opera was produced in the winter months, the only birds available were sparrows--a fact which gave rise to sarcastic comments in the papers. The practice, however, might have been justly condemned on account of its cruelty.

Handel was now firmly established in the favour of English music-lovers. They had expected great things of him, and they were not disappointed. There was a body of true musicians in London at that time to whom the presence of the composer must have given special delight. Regular concerts, where amateur musicians could meet for the purpose of playing and hearing the best music, were unknown, and it was left to the enterprising zeal of one humble individual to originate the idea of the regular weekly concerts in London which later on became so widely known and appreciated. In a small shop near Clerkenwell Green lived a small-coal dealer named Thomas Britton. In those days 'small-coal,' or charcoal, was extensively used amongst the poorer classes, and regularly each morning Britton would shoulder his large sack of the fuel and go his round through the streets, disposing of his burden in pennyworths to the inhabitants. When the round was finished he returned home, changed his clothes, forgot that he was a small-coal man, and became a musician. Nor were there wanting many belonging to far higher stations in life who were ready to testify to the deep love for the art which distinguished the small-coal dealer. In a long, low-pitched room above the shop, which had originally formed part of a stable, Britton had collected a large number of musical instruments of various

kinds, as well as the scores of some of the best music of the day. To this humble apartment would repair numbers of amateur and professional musicians belonging to all ranks of society, from the highest to the lowest. No one paid for admission, and the sole qualification expected of the visitor was that he or she should be a lover of the art. Thus, at the weekly gatherings in the small-coal man's loft, might have been seen peers of the realm, poets and artists, singers and performers, both known and unknown, mingling freely together, drinking coffee provided by the host at one penny per dish, and settling themselves down to enjoy the best chamber music of the day. Handel was not long in finding his way thither, and he became a regular attendant, always presiding at the harpsichord. The fame of Britton's assemblies grew apace, and led eventually to the establishment of regular weekly chamber concerts in London.

This first visit to England seems to have implanted in Handel a sincere affection for the country and its people, and although he returned to Hanover and took up his duties again at Court, he felt convinced that London was the centre in which his genius could have its fullest play. It was not long, therefore, before he obtained fresh leave of absence to visit England, giving in return a promise to present himself at his post within a 'reasonable' time. How he carried out this promise we shall see from what follows. London was only too glad to see him again, and his acquaintances became more numerous than ever. Lord Burlington invited him to stay at his seat, Burlington House (now the Royal Academy), in Piccadilly, where the only duty expected of him in return for the comforts of a luxurious home and the society of the great was that he should conduct the Earl's chamber concerts. It is difficult to realise that Burlington House stood then in the midst of fields, whilst Piccadilly itself was considered to be so far from town that surprise was felt that Lord Burlington should have removed himself to such a distance from the centre of life and fashion. The loneliness of Piccadilly at that period may be surmised from the fact that it was not safe to traverse the thoroughfare after nightfall unless protected by an escort strong enough to repell the attacks of highwaymen who haunted the neighbourhood.

The time passed so quickly amidst the pleasures of society and the unceasing devotion to composition that Handel himself probably failed to realise that he was gratuitously extending his leave of absence beyond all 'reasonable' bounds. His fame had made great progress all this while, and when the wars in Flanders at length came to an end with the signing of the peace of Utrecht, he was called upon to compose the *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, which were performed at the Thanksgiving Service held at St. Paul's, and attended by the Queen in state. To signalise this great event, as well as to mark the royal favour in which the composer was held, Queen Anne awarded Handel a life pension of £200. It is small wonder, then, that he should have been slow to sever, even for a time, his connection with the world of London. Amongst his numerous acquaintance of this time was a certain Dr. Greene, a musician of some ability, but more perseverance, whose attentions to the composer were so persistent as to partake of the nature of persecution. Handel was never the man to cultivate an acquaintance for which he had no liking, and it was a part of his character to make no effort to conceal his dislikes either for persons or things. When, therefore, Dr. Greene sent him a manuscript anthem of his own to look over, Handel put it on one side and forgot it. Some time afterwards Dr. Greene went to take coffee with the great man, and having waited vainly for some reference to his manuscript until his patience was exhausted, he burst out with: 'Well, Mr. Handel, and what do you think of my anthem?' 'Your antum?' cried Handel in his broken English. 'Ah, yes, I do recollect, I did tink dat it vanted air,' '*Air!*' exclaimed the astonished and indignant composer. 'Yes, air,' responded Handel, 'and so I did hang it out of de vindow.'

[Illustration: '*A grand procession of decorated barges from Whitehall to Limehouse.*']

The death of the Queen must have awakened Handel with a shock to a sense of his neglect of duty, for the Elector of Hanover thereupon came to England as her successor. That King George would be likely to receive Handel with favour was out of the question, notwithstanding the monarch's love of music and the fame which had grown about his Capellmeister's name. The offence lay far too deep for that, and Handel realised that he must employ some special means of grace to secure his master's pardon. The opportunity he sought for came ere long. A royal entertainment on the Thames was arranged, in which there was to be a grand procession of decorated barges from Whitehall to Limehouse. An orchestra was provided, and Handel was requested by the

Lord Chamberlain to compose the music for the fête, in the hope that by so doing he might pave the way towards a reconciliation. Handel acquiesced, and the result was the series of pieces which have since been known as the 'Water Music,' The King was so delighted with the performance that he had it repeated, and, learning that Handel was conducting it in person, he sent for him, and not only granted him a full pardon, but conferred upon him an additional pension of £200. Nor did the royal favour stop here, for he was shortly afterwards appointed music-master to the daughters of the Prince of Wales at a salary of £200 a year. Handel was thus raised to a position of independence, for as the original grant from Queen Anne continued in force he enjoyed a total income of £600 a year, a sum which in those days was equivalent to a considerable fortune.

It was not long after this that Handel was appointed chapel-master to the Duke of Chandos, at the latter's palace of Cannons, near Edgware. The post up till then had been held by a certain Dr. Pepusch, but he resigned at once in favour of Handel. Anything more princely in style than Cannons could hardly be imagined; its size and magnificence were the talk of the country for miles around, whilst the fabulous riches of its owner and his luxuriousness of living earned for him the title of 'The Grand Duke,' The palace itself has long since disappeared, but the chapel originally attached to it has been preserved, and now forms the parish church of Whitchurch, or Little Stanmore. The interior is furnished and decorated after the fashion of the Italian churches, but it is not on account of its structural beauty that the church has become the object of interest to thousands of pilgrims who annually make their way to the village of Edgware; it is the knowledge that it was here that Handel composed his first English oratorio, 'Esther,' as well as numerous anthems and other minor works. The manuscript score of this fine work--which is but rarely heard now--is to be seen in the Royal Collection of Handel manuscripts at Buckingham Palace, though a portion of it is missing. No one who finds his way to the church of Little Stanmore should fail to notice the organ, for it is the instrument used by Handel from 1718 to 1721, and on which he played the organ parts of 'Esther,' when the oratorio was performed for the first time in the Duke's chapel. With the lavishness that was his chief characteristic the Duke handed to the composer on this occasion £1,000, but in so doing he may have been actuated by a sincere desire to add to Handel's independence. Those were very happy and busy years which Handel passed at Cannons. Amongst the numerous compositions for the harpsichord belonging to this period is the suite of pieces which includes the air, with variations, popularly known as 'The Harmonious Blacksmith,' The origin of this title has for long been a matter of discussion; it is quite certain that Handel himself did not so name the piece, for the manuscript bears the title only of 'Air et Doubles,' nor was it ever known by any other name during the composer's lifetime. Yet there are few of us, perhaps, who willingly reject as fable the story which for many years after Handel's death was believed to have given a true account of its origin. According to this story Handel was one day walking to Cannons through the village of Edgware, when he was overtaken by a heavy shower of rain, and sought shelter within the smithy. The blacksmith was singing at his work, and the strokes of his hammer on the anvil kept time to his song. Handel, it is said, was so struck both by the air and its accompaniment that on reaching home he wrote down the tune with a set of variations upon it. Assuming this story to have no foundation in fact, no satisfactory explanation has been forthcoming to account for the origin of the title, and when, in 1835, the story was investigated, it was claimed that both anvil and hammer had been traced as having passed through several hands. The blacksmith's name was said to have been Powell, and the anvil is described as bearing a capital P, and, further, that 'when struck with the hammer it gives, first, the note B, but immediately afterwards sounds E. These notes correspond very nearly with the B-flat and E-flat of our present concert pitch, and therefore coincide very closely with the E-natural and B-natural of Handel's times,'[3] Again, with regard to the air itself, the contention that Handel took it from another composer has never been proved, and there is 'absolutely nothing to show that it is not the work of Handel.'[4]

[Illustration: '*The strokes of his hammer on the anvil kept time to his song.*']

It is difficult for us to imagine the road leading from the Marble Arch (then called Tyburn) to Edgware as being infested by highwaymen. This fact, like that regarding the condition of Piccadilly, serves to show in a striking manner how circumscribed the London of those days must have been. Handel must often have had to travel between Cannons and London, but we do not hear of his having been robbed by the way. The Duke, however, was attacked on more than one occasion, and he always performed the journey with an escort of his

favourite Swiss Guards, of whom a body was kept to protect the palace.

For several years the production of opera 'after the Italian style,' which Handel on his coming over had done so much to stimulate, had languished for lack of funds. To many Londoners who were fond of music the sight of the closed doors of the King's Theatre in the Haymarket imparted a feeling of regret and loss. When, therefore, a number of rich patrons of music met together and decided to form themselves into a society for the purpose of reviving the opera in London, the project was received with signs of general pleasure. The King was greatly interested, and subscribed £1,000 to the venture. Handel was at once engaged in the double capacity of composer and 'impressario,' the latter duty charging him with the selection and engagement of singers. The new society was to be called the Royal Academy of Music, but we must not confuse this body with the Royal Academy of Music existing at the present day, which was founded in 1822.

Handel now set out for Germany with the object of visiting Dresden, where the Elector of Saxony was maintaining a company of the best singers for the performance of Italian opera. On his return journey he paid a visit to Halle, where he found his mother alive, and overjoyed to see him, though the cheery welcome of his old master Zachau could no longer be heard, for the old man had gone to his rest. There was another sad note about this visit, for on the very day that Handel left for England Sebastian Bach, filled with a longing to meet his great contemporary, arrived at Halle, whither he had journeyed from Cöthen, only to find that he was a few hours too late. This was the last chance of their meeting, for when Handel paid his next visit to Germany Bach was dead.

Early in the following year the doors of the theatre in the Haymarket were besieged by a huge crowd, anxious to secure seats for the performance of Handel's new opera, 'Radamisto,' which was being produced by the Royal Academy of Music. The applause was deafening, and the success of the opera was assured. But Handel was not to be left to enjoy his honours in peace; an opposition party had already arisen, who were moved to do him evil partly from envy, and partly because he had stirred them up to resentment by his dominancy and self-will. From Hamburg came his old enemy, Buononcini, to try his fortune with the new society, and it was not long ere the rival composers were engaged with a third musician, whose name is uncertain (though some state it to have been that of Handel's friend of his Hamburg days--Ariosti), in the composition of a new opera. It was arranged that this work should form a kind of competition, with the object of determining whether Handel or Buononcini was the better composer. Thus Handel wrote the third act, and Buononcini the second, the first act being committed to the hands of the third musician, whose claim to be regarded as a rival was very small in comparison with the others. When the new work, 'Muzio Scævola,' was performed Handel's act was pronounced by the principal judges to be much superior to that of Buononcini's; the latter's friends, however, refused to accept a defeat, and being joined by others, the battle waxed exceedingly hot. The newspapers took it up, and very soon nothing else was talked about but the rival merits of the two composers. Numerous verses were composed on either side, as well as others which poked fun at both parties. Amongst the latter was an epigram written by John Byrom, the Lancashire poet, which, without the knowledge of the author, got into all the papers, and was considered to hit off the situation more neatly than any which had gone before. Thus it runs:

'Some say, compar'd to Buononcini, That Mynheer Handel's but a Ninny; Others aver, that he to Handel Is scarcely fit to hold a Candle; Strange all this Difference should be, 'Twixt Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee!'

That Handel showed scant consideration for those who differed from him in regard to his works is proved by his treatment of the artists who were engaged to perform for him. He could not be thwarted from his bent, nor cajoled into doing anything that he disliked, whilst his stubborn pride prevented him from yielding to any, whether great or small. When, in 1723, his opera 'Ottone' was about to be produced, he had engaged as prima donna the great Continental singer, Francesca Cuzzoni. The lady does not appear to have possessed the sweetest of tempers, and she showed her independence by not putting in an appearance in England until the rehearsals were far advanced. This could not have been pleasing to the composer, but when on her presenting herself at the theatre she flatly refused to sing the aria 'Falsa Immagine' in the way Handel had written it, he

burst into a rage, and seizing her in his arms, cried: 'Madam, you are a very she-devil, but I vill have you know dat I am Beelzebub, de prince of devils!' with which he made as if to throw her out of the window. Cuzzoni was so frightened by his fury that she promised to do as she was bid. Accordingly, she sang as he directed, and made one of her greatest successes with the song. How much the public appreciated the singing of this gifted artist we may guess when it is told that the directors obtained as much as five guineas for each seat when she was advertised to sing.

Although he would brook no contradiction on the part of those who were engaged to execute his works, Handel spared no pains to help them over a difficulty, or to show how his music should be expressed. At times, however, his temper took the form of the most unsparing sarcasm. One day a singer at rehearsal protested against the manner in which Handel was accompanying him on the harpsichord, and in a fit of anger exclaimed: 'If you continue to accompany me in that fashion I will jump from the platform on to the harpsichord, and smash it!' 'Vat!' cried Handel, looking up in surprise, 'do you say you vill jump? Den I vill advertise it at once, for people vould come to see you jump dat vill never come to hear you sing!'

We have not space to describe the whole of the works which Handel wrote for the Royal Academy of Music. His industry was untiring, and the fertility of his genius was such that within a period of eight years from the beginning of the Society's work he had composed and produced no fewer than fourteen operas. Amongst this number was the opera called 'Scipione,' in which is to be found a 'Triumphal March in D,' which the Grenadier Guards claim to have been specially composed for their regiment by Handel before its inclusion in the opera. The Guards are very proud of their march, and the band still plays it under the title of the 'Royal Guards March.'

During the whole of this time, however, Handel's enemies never ceased their opposition, and, despite successes, it was soon apparent that the rival parties were bent on destroying each other. The enormous cost incurred in producing operatic works, added to the losses occasioned by quarrels and dissensions amongst the singers, many of whom deserted Handel to join his enemies, at length brought the Royal Academy to the end of its resources. In 1727, when the society was tottering to its fall, the rival theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields brought out the famous work called 'The Beggar's Opera,' written by John Gay, which formed the first English ballad opera. Its success was stupendous; London was taken completely by storm, and everybody was soon singing and humming its catching airs. Fickle as the public taste had hitherto shown itself to be in regard to musical productions, it now became fixed on the new work, and opera in the 'Italian style' was completely deserted. What was the secret of this wonderful success? Simply this: a poet seized upon a number of the most entrancing airs which the musical genius of England and Scotland had produced, many of them belonging to ancient times, together with the favourite melodies of the day, and he set them to words which were utterly unworthy of the sentiment inspired by these beautiful compositions. The richest stores of ballad music were pillaged for this degrading work; the march in Handel's 'Rinaldo' was stolen to form a robber's chorus, whilst the exploits of Captain Macheath and his highwaymen companions were held up as models of daring and gallantry when performed to the most captivating of airs. The public hailed the piece with delight; the ladies modelled their dresses on the stage costume of 'Polly,' the heroine, and decorated their fans with the words of her songs, and for sixty-two nights the walls of the Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre shook with thunders of applause from gallery, pit, and stalls. In thus speaking of a work which not only held London captive for so long, but was afterwards performed in every part of the kingdom, we must not forget that its remarkable popularity was due in some measure to the brightness of its dialogue; to its witty sayings hitting off men and manners of the day; but, above all, to the exquisite beauty of its melodies, which served to lay a glamour over what otherwise would have undoubtedly been condemned as vulgar.

The success of the 'Beggar's Opera' completed the ruin of the Royal Academy of Music, but Handel, undismayed by the failure of this great scheme, and setting his enemies at defiance, went once more to Italy to collect a new company of singers, for he was determined to carry on the work himself with the fortune which his operas had brought him. On his way home he paid a visit to Halle, where he found his aged mother stricken by illness. She lingered until the following year (1730), when she died at the age of eighty. For

several years Handel struggled to build up the fortunes of Italian opera in London, but the persistent rivalry and opposition of his enemies, combined with the decadence of musical taste on the part of the public, caused his losses to accumulate, until, in 1737, he found himself, after repeated failures, deeply in debt, and with his health broken down by overwork and anxiety. The whole of his fortune of £10,000 had been swallowed up in this disastrous enterprise, and it was a poor consolation for him to know that his rivals failed in the same year with a loss of £12,000. Not even at this juncture, however, would his indomitable will submit to the force of circumstances. After a brief rest at Aix la Chapelle, with a course of vapour baths, he returned to London prepared to begin the battle afresh, and although he had lost to a great extent the favour of the rich, his popularity was such that a statue of himself was executed by public subscription, and erected in Vauxhall Gardens, an honour which, as has been truly observed, had been paid to no other composer during his lifetime.

It was only after several failures that Handel was at length convinced that it was useless to attempt to re-awaken the interest of English audiences in Italian opera, and yet, although he made no concealment of his regret at the abandonment of a line of composition in which he had so greatly excelled, it was with no diminished vigour or determination that he now, at the age of fifty-five, turned his attention to work of a serious character. And if we admit that Handel excelled in operatic work, what shall we say of the oratorios which formed the later creations of his genius? To many of us, perhaps, his name is so intimately associated with the titles of his religious works that we are almost ready to believe that all which had gone before was merely in the nature of preparation for such noble works as 'Saul,' 'Israel in Egypt,' 'Samson,' 'Jephtha,' and, above all, the 'Messiah.' It is on the 'Messiah' alone that our space permits us to dwell, and we will endeavour to relate the story of how this great oratorio came to be written.

It was in 1741 that the plan of writing the 'Messiah' was formed, but it is not known whether the subject originated with Handel himself, or was suggested to him by a friend named Mr. Charles Jennens, a man of great literary tastes and acquirements, who lived a retired life in the country. It is certain, however, that Mr. Jennens selected and wrote out the passages from the Scriptures, and sent them to Handel to set to music, and for the care and choice exercised in this compilation we owe to Mr. Jennens a deep debt of gratitude. Towards the end of this year Handel received an invitation from the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to visit Dublin, as the Irish people were very desirous of hearing some of his compositions performed in their country. Handel accepted the invitation very willingly, for he saw in the tone in which it was conveyed an assurance of the sympathy of the sister isle, as well as a prospect of being enabled to retrieve his fallen fortunes. He left England at the beginning of November, having previously sent a promise to Dublin that he would devote a portion of the money realised by his performances to three charitable institutions in that city. The music of the 'Messiah' must have been actually composed before he set foot upon the ship at Chester, for at the end of the following month we find him writing to Mr. Jennens from Dublin, and referring to the latter's oratorio, '"Messiah," which I set to music before I left England,'[5] Moreover, he must have had the manuscript score with him on his voyage, though his friends in London were ignorant of the fact; for we learn that being detained at Chester for some days by contrary winds, he got together at his inn several of the choir boys from the cathedral in order to try over some of the choral passages in the work. Needless to say, the title of the oratorio was not allowed to transpire on this occasion, but many of us may feel curious to know whether any of these young singers felt impressed by the beauty of the parts which it was their envied lot to 'try over' in the composer's room at the hostelry. One at least of these trial performers must have carried away an unpleasant experience of the great man's impetuous temper. 'Can you sing at sight?' was the question put to each before he was asked to sing, and one broke down lamentably at the start. 'What de devil you mean!' cried Handel, snatching the music from his hands. 'Did not you say you could sing at sight?' 'Yes, sir, I did,' responded the confused singer, 'but not at *first* sight!'

The welcome extended to Handel by the people of Dublin was a very warm one; the performances were a great success, and then we get the first public mention of the new oratorio. At the 'Musick Hall in Fishamble Street, Dublin' is to be performed 'Mr. Handel's new grand Oratorio, called the "Messiah," in which the Gentlemen of the Choirs of both Cathedrals will assist, with some Concertos on the Organ, by Mr. Handel.' It was further announced that the proceeds would be devoted to two charitable institutions, and 'for the Relief of

the Prisoners in the several Gaols.' These latter were miserable persons who had been imprisoned for debt, and whose sufferings through neglect and poverty were such as to excite deep compassion. Four hundred pounds was the sum realised by this performance, which took place on Monday, April 13, 1742, and no doubt the poor prisoners felt very grateful to the composer, who had thus put into practice the very precepts which his sacred work inspired. So great was the success of this first performance that a second was called for, the announcement of which contained an earnest appeal to the ladies to leave their hoops behind them. This singular request was obeyed, with the result that accommodation was found for one hundred more persons than on the first occasion.

[Illustration: '"*Did not you say you could sing at sight?*"' '"*Yes, sir, but not at* first *sight!*"']

The citizens of Dublin seem to have been very loath to part with Handel, whilst he, for his part, must have felt in the warmth of his reception some recompense for the neglect from which he had been made to suffer in London. The visit was therefore prolonged for many months, and it was not until March 23, 1743, that a London audience gathered to witness their first performance of the 'Messiah'. How is it possible to give, in a few words, an idea of this great work? When we hear the 'Messiah' performed we are struck by its magnificence and beauty of expression; the language of Scripture seems to be clothed, as it were, in a beautiful garment of music which, ever changing as the oratorio proceeds, appears to give the fullest and most exact expression to each portion of the sacred story. At one time the music blazes forth like a jewelled crown when it catches the sun; at another it soars heavenwards like the song of the lark; once again it pours forth like the thunderous roar of a huge cataract, filling our ears with the majesty of its volume; then, again, it sinks to the tender moan of the wind as it sweeps through the trees; but everywhere and at all times it seems to exactly fit the words, and to give them their noblest expression. The oratorio opens with an overture, grand, yet simple, and designed to prepare our minds for the story which follows. Then we hear the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'Comfort ye my people,' telling of the coming of the Messiah, and relating the signs by which His approach is to be heralded--'Ev'ry valley shall be exalted,' etc.--and leading up to the revelation, 'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light,' and so to the mighty outburst of harmony--'Wonderful! Counsellor!'--with which the prophecy reaches its culminating point. When these words are thundered forth in chorus we seem to have suddenly presented to our eyes a picture of the Messiah as He was revealed to the mind of the Prophet. But note attentively what follows. With the concluding notes of that grand choral outburst still ringing in our ears--the designation of a mighty Prince, a great Counsellor--we find ourselves, at the ushering in of the Nativity, not, as the words of the chorus would seem to predict, at the welcoming scene of a great Prince in all his splendour, but in the presence of a group of lowly shepherds tending their flocks in the quiet fields of Judæa. How wonderfully striking is the contrast between the grandeur of the concluding chorus and the simplicity and quiet beauty of the scene now presented to us by the Pastoral Symphony! It is founded upon the ancient melody which Handel had heard the Calabrian shepherds play at Rome[6] many years before, and soon the air is ringing with the chorus of the heavenly host, 'Glory to God in the highest,' followed by the joyful outburst, 'Rejoice greatly.' Then comes the revelation of what Christ shall be to His people--'He shall feed His flock like a Shepherd,' 'His yoke is easy and His burthen is light--' with which the first part comes to an end.

In the second part we are shown the incidents leading up to the Passion, and our emotions are deeply stirred by the pathetic music indicating the sufferings of our Lord. What could be more touchingly beautiful than the air, 'He was despised and rejected of men'? in the writing of which Handel is said to have burst into tears. Then, the Passion past, we have the realisation of all that that sacrifice meant, the awakening of hope, followed by the triumphal chorus, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates!' and after a succession of beautiful airs and choruses we reach the culminating point of the Recognition in that grand hymn of praise, the 'Hallelujah Chorus,' with which the second part concludes.

Scarcely have the glorious hallelujahs of the last chorus died away ere the beautiful strains of the air, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' are ringing in our ears; from this we are led to the chorus, 'Worthy is the Lamb,' indicating the glorification of the sacrifice, and the marvellous concluding chorus of the 'Amen,' which

strikingly portrays the unified assent of heaven and earth to the Godhead of Christ.

On the occasion of the first performance of the 'Messiah' in London, at which the King was present, the vast audience were so impressed by the grandeur of the music and the reverence which it inspired that when the 'Hallelujah Chorus' began, and the words, 'For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,' rang out, they one and all, including the King, sprang to their feet as if by a given signal, and stood until the last notes of the chorus had been sounded. From that time forward it has been the custom at performances of the oratorio to stand during the 'Hallelujah Chorus.'

No other sacred musical work has been the means of securing for the sick and needy so much relief as that which the 'Messiah' has effected by its frequent performances in various parts of England and on the Continent. Handel, as we have seen, gave the proceeds of its first performance to help the sick and miserable, and his good example has been followed by many others. Later on his compassion was aroused by the poor, helpless little inmates of the Foundling Hospital. We all know the Foundling Hospital, in Guilford Street, Russell Square, but perhaps we do not all know why it is that Handel's portrait is there accorded the place of honour, or why the foundlings should hold the composer's memory in such reverence. Handel did not, it is true, establish the hospital; it was founded in 1741 by one Captain Coram, out of the profits of a trading vessel of which he was the master. But nine years later (in 1750) he presented the hospital with a fine organ, and, in order to inaugurate the opening of the instrument, he announced that he would perform upon it the music of the 'Messiah.' So great was the demand for seats upon this occasion that it was found necessary to repeat the performance. Handel afterwards presented a manuscript score of the oratorio to the Foundling, and undertook to give an annual performance of the work for the benefit of the charity. Eleven performances under his direction were given at the Foundling before his death, by which a sum of £6,955 was added to the hospital funds. Nor did this good work cease with the composer's death, for we learn that the annual performances continued to be given, and that seventeen of these brought the total amount by which the 'Messiah' benefited the hospital up to £10,299, a fact which of itself speaks volumes for the appreciation in which the oratorio was held.

In connection with the gift of the 'Messiah' score to the Foundling an amusing story is told, which serves to illustrate the imperiousness of Handel's temper. The directors of the hospital were desirous of retaining for themselves the exclusive right to perform the 'Messiah,' and with this idea they sought to obtain an Act of Parliament confirming their rights. When Handel heard of the proposal, however, he burst out in a rage with, 'Te teufel! for what sall de Foundlings put mein moosic in de Parliament? Te teufel! mein moosic sall not go to de Parliament!' And it is hardly necessary to add that 'de moosic' did not go to 'de Parliament.'

It is difficult, within the compass of this little story, to convey a just idea of the extraordinary amount of work which Handel's life comprised. One oratorio after another followed the 'Messiah,' none of them entitled to rank with that great work for either loftiness of subject or grandeur of expression, yet many containing passages of unrivalled beauty. 'Jephtha,' which was the last oratorio he composed, contains the magnificent recitative, 'Deeper and deeper still,' and the beautiful song, 'Waft her, angels.' It was while writing 'Jephtha' that Handel became blind, but, though greatly affected by this loss, it did not daunt his courage or lessen his power of work. He was then in his sixty-eighth year, and had lived down most of the hostility which formerly had been so rife against him. Who, indeed, could for long withstand so imperious a will, backed by such unquenchable genius? With increased fame, moreover, his fortunes had built themselves up once more, so that when he died he left £20,000 to be disposed of by his executors.

The range of Handel's compositions was gigantic; there was no branch of the art which his genius did not penetrate and adorn, but it is as a writer of choruses that his power is seen at its best. 'No one,' writes Mr. Julian Marshall, in his biography of the composer, 'before or since has so well understood how to extract from a body of voices such grand results by such artfully simple means as those he used.' No master, we may add, has given us music which expresses with greater clearness, beauty, or force the passages of Scripture it is intended to illumine than that which is to be found in the choral parts of Handel's oratorios. Handel was the

greatest master of counterpoint the world has ever seen, and this power enabled him to give musical expression to written words with an ease and fluency which can only be described as marvellous. Yet it is not its marvellous character which strikes us when we hear his work for the first time so much as its oneness with the subject it portrays; we feel that it is like some grand painting, in which colour and form are so charmingly blended as to make a perfect and indivisible whole.

It is often alleged that Handel copied from other composers, and that such was the case there is abundant evidence to show. It must be remembered, however, that in his day people did not attach to originality of ideas the value which we allow to them now. Handel, however, did more than this: he not only borrowed ideas or themes which--to a great extent, at least--were regarded as common property, but he actually embodied in some of his works *entire passages* taken from the compositions of comparatively unknown composers. For this no justification is possible; nor, on the other hand, can it be urged that Handel stole other men's brains because he lacked power to use his own. The only thing that it seems possible to say by way of explaining a practice which must be condemned as dishonest is that Handel in all probability did not realise his offence or view it in the light in which we view it at the present day. Everything in his life and character argues against the idea of his committing an action which he held to be mean or dishonest. No man could have been more fearlessly independent, either in thought or action, and, whatever other faults he possessed, his character has always been regarded as strictly honourable.

Handel was a big man, with a very commanding presence and a fiery temper, which, as we have seen, was apt to explode at trifles. He did not hesitate to launch the most virulent abuse at the heads of those who ventured to talk whilst he was conducting, and at such times not even the presence of royalty could make him restrain his anger. But when Handel raved the Princess of Wales would turn to her friends, and say softly, 'Hush, hush! Handel is angry.' He had a rooted dislike to hearing his orchestra tune up in his presence, and he gave strict orders that the performers were to get this business over before he arrived. One night, however, when the Prince of Wales was to be present, a wag gained access to the orchestra and secretly untuned every instrument. When the Prince arrived and the audience were all seated, Handel 'gave the signal to begin *con spirito*, when such a discord arose that the enraged musician started from his seat, overturned the double-bass, seized a kettledrum, threw it at the leader of the orchestra, and lost his wig. He advanced bareheaded to the front of the orchestra, but was so choked with passion that he could not speak. Here he stood, staring and stamping, amidst general convulsions of laughter, until the Prince presently, with much difficulty, appeased his wrath, and prevailed on him to resume his seat.'

Handel's fondness for the pleasures of the table was one of the weaknesses which his enemies did not fail to make the most of, and which has given rise to more than one story. For instance, it is told that he went into a dining-house one day and ordered 'dinner for three.' The waiter, having received the order, disappeared, and was absent so long that Handel lost patience, and, ringing the bell, demanded to know why the meal was delayed. 'Sir,' replied the waiter, 'I was awaiting the arrival of the company.' 'De gompany!' cried the famished musician, in a voice which made the glasses jingle, and caused the waiter to start back in dismay, 'I am de gompany!'

Dr. Burney, the eminent musician and friend of Handel, has described the composer's countenance as having been 'full of fire and dignity.' 'His general look,' continues the doctor, 'was somewhat heavy and sour, but when he did smile it was the sun bursting out of a black cloud. There was a sudden flash of intelligence, wit, and good humour beaming in his countenance which I hardly ever saw in any other.' His sense of humour was keen, and he could relish a joke--especially when it was not directed towards himself. When visiting Dublin he was accompanied by the celebrated violinist Dubourg, who was engaged to play at his performances. One evening Dubourg was delighting the audience with an extempore cadenza, and wandered so far away from the original key that he found it no easy matter to return to it. At length, after some moments of suspense, the shake was heard which announced that the violinist was about to return to the theme; Handel thereupon looked up from the harpsichord, and, in a voice loud enough to be heard throughout the hall, exclaimed, with significant emphasis, 'Velcome *home* again, Mr. Dubourg!'

In bringing our story of Handel's life to a close, we are tempted to make a brief comparison between Handel and that other great master who lived and worked at the same time--Sebastian Bach. When we compare the two men we perceive this marked difference between them--namely, that, while Bach evinced a complete indifference with regard to public praise, but a very deep interest in the works of other musicians, Handel cared a great deal for what the public thought of his works, and was too much absorbed in his own music to give much attention to the compositions of others. The one wrote for posterity; he published but little, and it was only when half a century had passed since his death that the musical world awoke to a sense of the inestimable value which attached to the works which that life had produced. Handel, on the other hand, studied the tastes of his own day as regards both sacred and secular music, and devoted the whole of his life to the supply of that demand on the part of the public which he had done so much to create and develop.

Full as was Handel's life as regards the fulfilment of its great object, it was in other ways extremely simple. Few things outside his incessant round of work interested him, but he was fond of going to the theatre, and he had a passion for attending picture sales. Of his charity we have spoken, but we may add that he was always ready to help those in distress, and he helped to found the Society for Aiding Distressed Musicians. The last occasion in which he appeared in public was at a performance of the 'Messiah' at Covent Garden, on April 6, 1759. On the 14th of the same month his death took place at the house in Brook Street where he had resided for many years. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, where a grand monument was later on erected to his memory. His chief manuscripts came into the possession of King George III., and are preserved in the musical library at Buckingham Palace.

FOOTNOTES:

[3] Rockstro's 'Life of G.F. Handel,' 1883.

[4] Grove's 'Dictionary of Music.'

[5] It is a fact that this stupendous work was completed in twenty-four days!

[6] In the manuscript score preserved at Buckingham Palace the symphony is marked 'Pifa,' a shortening of the Italian word 'Pifferare,' to play on the fife.

HANDEL'S PRINCIPAL COMPOSITIONS

8 ORATORIOS, etc. La Resurrezione (1708); two Passions (1704 and 1716); Acis and Galatea (1720); Esther (1720); Deborah (1733); Athalia (1733); Alexander's Feast (1736); Saul (1738); Israel in Egypt (1738); Ode for St. Cecilia's Day (1739); L'Allegro, il Penseroso, ed il Moderato (1740); The Messiah (1741); Samson (1741); Joseph (1743); Semele (1743); Belshazzar (1744); Hercules (1744); Occasional Oratorio (1746); Judas Maccabæus (1746); Alexander Balus (1747); Joshua (1747); Solomon (1748); Susanna (1748); Theodora (1749); The Choice of Hercules (1750); Jephtha (1751); The Triumph of Time and Truth (1757). Utrecht Te Deum and Jubilate. 1713. 12 Chandos Anthems. 1718-1720. 2 Chandos Te Deums. 1718-1720. 4 Coronation Anthems (Let thy Hand be Strengthened, My Heart is inditing, The King shall Rejoice, and Zadok the Priest). 1727. Funeral Anthem (The Ways of Zion do Mourn). 1737. Dettingen Te Deum. 1743. 40 OPERAS, mostly remembered only by a single aria. The following may be named: Almira (1705); Rodrigo (1707); Agrippina (1709); Rinaldo (1711); Radamisto (1720); Muzio Scævola (Act III. only--1721); Ottone (1722); Scipione (1726); Admeto (1726); Ezio (1732); Serse (1738). Water Music. 1715. 17 Suites de Pièces for the clavecin. 40 Concertos for various instruments.

HAYDN

HAYDN

The Cathedral of St. Stephen, standing in the central square of Vienna, looked grey and cheerless in the misty atmosphere of a November evening. Evensong had just concluded, the worshippers had dispersed, and the great square itself was silent and deserted, save for one or two hurrying pedestrians crossing it on their homeward way. One of these, however, formed an exception to the rest, for he seemed to be in no hurry to leave the square. On reaching the further side he hesitated, glanced up at the clock, and then, turning about, paced listlessly up and down, as if uncertain whether to go or remain. Not even the rain, which now began to fall in that silent, hopeless fashion which predicts a thoroughly wet evening, appeared to assist the wanderer in coming to a decision. He was a mere stripling, short of stature, shabbily clothed, and with a keen look on his pale face that betokened a want of food and rest.

The square was dimly lighted by lamps stationed at wide intervals, and the shadows cast by the great building effectually concealed the form of the youth as he entered them in the course of his restless walk. It was evident that he was in a state of acute distress, and equally evident that this spot held some peculiar attraction for him, for now and again he cast a glance at the church walls, or lingered beside the closed door which was used by the members of the choir. Presently, as he was passing, the door opened, emitting a stream of yellow light across the wet pavement, and a number of youths sallied forth, talking and laughing together as they came. At the sound of the creaking hinges the destitute boy shrank back into the shadow, as if he were afraid of being recognised--which, indeed, was the case. Nevertheless, on catching a glimpse of one young face, as the figure of its owner almost brushed against him, he could not refrain from exclaiming under his breath, 'Michael!'

So low was the tone in which the name was uttered, that, although the chorister's face, with the light from the doorway falling upon it, was turned for a second in the speaker's direction, the boy failed to grasp the meaning of the sound, and hurried on with his companions; and with a deep sigh the poor wanderer turned away.

At that moment a young man who was crossing the square from the opposite side paused to turn up the collar of his coat. In so doing he became aware that a pair of eyes was regarding him with a sorrowful, appealing gaze from the depths of the shadows. In another moment he had advanced to the youth's side and laid his hand upon his shoulder.

'Joseph! can it be you? Man, how wet you are!' The outcast shivered under the friendly touch. 'What are you doing? Where have you been living?' continued the questioner, drawing the youth into the light of a lamp, and regarding his pale, tired face with astonishment.

[Illustration: HAYDN. From photo RISCHGITZ.]

'Nothing--nowhere. I am starving, that is all,' was the reply.

'Starving--you! This is Reutter's handiwork,' said the other angrily. 'Have you seen your brother Michael? I met them coming out just now. Was he not with the rest?' he added in a gentler tone, still keeping his hand on the lad's shoulder.

'Yes, he was there; but he didn't see me,' replied the wanderer hesitatingly, adding, 'I was afraid the others might notice my distress.'

The friend bit his lip and seemed to be meditating. At last he spoke. 'Well, see here, Joseph, we cannot stand longer in the rain; come home with me. You know I haven't a palace to offer you, but such as it is you are welcome to a share of it for one night at least.' And so saying he drew Joseph's arm within his own, and, bidding him walk fast, the pair quitted the square.

Well might honest Franz Spangler, who held no higher or more lucrative post than that of tenor singer in the choir of St. Michael's Church, warn his young friend not to expect the luxury of a home replete with comforts.

Indeed, anyone comparing the two young men as they threaded the narrow streets leading to Spangler's abode would have found it no easy matter to determine which presented the shabbier appearance; though, having decided this point to his satisfaction, he would have been at no trouble in estimating the sort of house to which the chorister would be likely to introduce his friend.

Situated in the poorest quarter of the town, the house presented a sufficiently poverty-stricken appearance to warrant the meanest opinion being entertained with regard to Spangler's powers of hospitality. The kind-hearted singer was, in fact, almost as poor as the youth whom he had befriended, with the additional responsibility entailed by a wife and child. Nevertheless, to the homeless, starving lad who now followed his protector up the crazy stairs leading to the garret which comprised the latter's home, the chorister seemed by comparison prosperous and well-to-do. Was it not luxury to be invited to seat himself beside the scanty fire burning in the stove, and to feel its warmth slowly penetrating to his chilled bones? Was it not luxury to one who had tramped the streets--those endless, pitiless streets--during the past eight-and-forty hours, without food or shelter, to taste the warm bread-and-milk which his kindly hostess had contrived to eke out of her small stock? Finally, was it not the height of luxury to such an one to stretch his weary limbs beside the dying embers, and sleep the sleep which exhausted nature demanded?

The heart of Spangler might well have been touched by the distress into which his young friend had fallen, seeing that he was already acquainted with some of the circumstances to which his forlorn condition was due. And life had promised so differently for poor Joseph but a short while ago! When, some four years prior to this meeting, he had welcomed the coming of his younger brother Michael to the Cantorei, or choir-school of St. Stephen's, he could not have divined that this brother would, indirectly, be the cause of his being turned adrift into the streets. Yet such was the melancholy fact, and as to the manner in which this was brought about we may properly inquire while the subject of this history lies wrapped in slumber beside the garret stove.

About fifteen leagues to the southward of Vienna, and amidst the marshy flats bordering upon the River Leitha, lies the little village of Rohrau, which derives its name from its situation. At the extreme end of the long, straggling street which comprises the village stands, close to the river banks, a low, thatched building--half house, half cottage--with a wheelwright's shop adjoining. The house stands back a little way from the road, with a patch of greensward before it, on which, in the days to which our story belongs, one might have seen a waggon or two in process of repair, and possibly have caught a glimpse of the worthy wheelwright himself at his work.

Mathias Haydn, master wheelwright, and sexton of the little church standing on the hill outside the village, was in the fullest sense entitled to rank as a worthy: he was not only a deeply religious man, but one who was looked up to and respected by every one in the village and for many a mile around. There was an air of refinement about his home which raised it far above the level of the homes by which it was surrounded. A strong taste for music formed a part of Mathias's nature, and it was shared to a great extent by his wife Maria. Regularly each Sunday evening, when the duties of the day were finished, he would bring out his harp, which he had learnt to play by ear, and accompany himself in songs and hymns. He had a pleasing tenor voice, and sang with great expression. The wife also sang well, and, joining in with her husband on these occasions, their example soon induced the children to add their voices to the concert.

The long winter evenings were those specially devoted to music. It was at one of such times, when the village street was deserted, and the keen wind was sweeping it from end to end, sporting with the snow, lifting it in whirling clouds, and building up drifts at every corner; whilst away on the lonely marshes the ice-bound river lay shimmering in the frosty moonlight, and the blast soughed through the tall reeds and grasses, that the following little scene was being enacted within the kitchen of the wheelwright's cottage.

[Illustration: '*He was imitating the playing of a violin.*']

On the oaken settle next the stove sat a child of about five years of age, following with the closest attention his

father's performance on the harp. In his hands were two sticks, with which he was imitating the playing of a violin, keeping accurate time with his bow to the rhythm of the music. The rapt expression on the boy's face was not lost upon the father, and thoughts which more than once had occupied Mathias's mind as he watched his child's clever imitation of the village schoolmaster's playing of the violin were recurring with redoubled force on this occasion. And when the boy lifted up his sweet treble voice in unison with the rest its beauty sent a thrill through the father's heart. His own life had been a keen disappointment with respect to his passionate love for music--a love which had made him yearn to know more of the art for which he had so profound a reverence. Hence the determination that his child should have every chance that he could afford of developing such talents as he possessed gathered strength as he perceived the manifestations of delight on the part of little Joseph every time the harp was produced, and as he noted the quickness and accuracy with which the boy learnt the simple melodies that were played to him. And as time went on these thoughts kindled a hope in the father's breast that his little Joseph might one day become a musician, and perhaps--who could tell?--he might even rise to be a Capellmeister!

Joseph Haydn, the subject of our story and the centre of his father's hopes, was born on March 31, 1732, and had attained his sixth year when the first step towards the settlement of his future was taken by his parents. Previous to this event Mathias had confided to his wife the hopes which he entertained with regard to Joseph's musical career, in the expectation that she would share them. Maria, however, did not incline to her husband's views on the subject. She cherished a strong desire that Joseph should eventually join the priesthood, and fancied that she detected in the boy's reverence for sacred music a natural leaning in that direction.

Matters were at this juncture when an unexpected visit was paid to the cottage by a distant relative named Johann Mathias Frankh, the schoolmaster of Hainburg, a small town about four leagues from Rohrau. Frankh, who was himself a fair musician, happened to visit the family at the moment when they were engaged in their evening concert, and the sight of Joseph with his toy violin at once attracted his attention. The purity and accuracy of the child's singing, moreover, soon convinced the schoolmaster that he had in him the makings of a good musician, and without knowing anything of the parents' wishes or intentions, he immediately proposed that Joseph should be placed under his instruction. 'If you will let Sepperl (the Austrian diminutive for Joseph) come to me,' said he, 'I will take care that he is properly taught. I can see that he promises well.'

Mathias gave a willing consent to the proposition, and Maria's objections having been overruled (she kept to herself the hope that this might, after all, prove to be but a stepping-stone to the fulfilment of her wishes), in a very short time Joseph and his father were seated in the waggon and jogging on their way to Hainburg.

The new world into which Joseph found himself launched had many drawbacks, but one excellent side. His 'cousin,' as he termed Frankh, was a strict but careful teacher, and under his care the boy not only learned to sing well, but also acquired a good deal of knowledge regarding the various musical instruments in use at that time. In other respects, too, his education was looked after; and as his quickness at learning was remarkable, and his cousin did not scruple to employ physical force to enable his pupil to master his difficulties, Joseph made rapid progress, despite the fact that he was often flogged when he should have been fed. The strict discipline to which he was subjected may not have been without its value in inducing habits of method and order in the boy's studies; but in many ways his life was rendered unnecessarily hard. The schoolmaster was a married man, but his wife showed the utmost indifference towards the little fellow who had hoped to find in her a second mother, but who found instead that he was neglected in every way. Next to religion itself, Mathias and Maria had instilled into their children a positive reverence for personal cleanliness. Joseph's distress, therefore, at finding himself bereft of a mother's care became greater day by day as he saw the rents in his clothing passed over and the means of keeping his body in the state to which he had been accustomed unprovided. What this meant to a sensitive child with a rooted aversion to dirt may be imagined; nor were his sufferings in any way reduced by the attention which his destitute, neglected state drew upon him. Try as he might to forget his misery in his books, he could not but be aware of the pitying glances which were cast at him by those whom he encountered in his walks, or who passed by as he sat reading on the step outside his cousin's door.

Though ashamed of his appearance, Joseph was in no danger of losing his self-respect--the love of cleanliness and order had been too deeply implanted to be easily uprooted; moreover, his childish reason whispered to him that the present state of things could not last for ever, and in the meantime he bravely resolved to make the best of it. He was receiving lessons on the clavier and violin, but the training of his voice occupied the foremost place, and when not in school the boy was nearly always to be found in the church, listening to the organ or the singing. In a very short time he had made such progress as to be admitted to the choir, where he joined his sweet young voice in the singing of the Masses.

Already his mind was beginning to feed upon those higher branches of music which his natural gifts enabled him to appreciate. His reverential nature was strongly shown in regard to his music, and it was in the church alone that he could obtain the gratification of a sense which was surely leading him on to greater things. As the days went by he was conscious of a yearning for something that his present surroundings could not supply. His thoughts were constantly travelling towards a city wherein he had centred his hopes, and where he knew he should find his heart's desires. That city was Vienna. It was before his eyes as he stood in the choir of Hainburg Church; it came between him and his book as he sat in the schoolroom conning his lesson; it was in his dreams as he slept, as it was foremost in his thoughts on waking. But Vienna lay afar off; and looking down at his ragged clothing, and reflecting upon the poverty that surrounded him, Joseph wondered if it would ever be possible for him to realise his dream.

'Sepperl, come here; I want you.' It was his cousin Frankh's voice, calling to him as he was leaving the schoolroom one morning. 'There is to be a procession through the town next week, in honour of a respected citizen who died yesterday. They have asked me to supply a drummer, and I thought of you at once. Come, I will show you how to make the stroke,' and, taking Joseph by the hand, he led him into the yard where, having improvised a drum by turning a tub bottom uppermost, Frankh placed a stick in the boy's hand and bade him beat the time of a march. A few attempts sufficed to convince Frankh of his pupil's proficiency, and Joseph was duly installed in the drummer's place. Owing, however, to his small stature, it was found necessary to call in the help of a schoolboy of his own height, and as this boy happened to be a hunchback, he was enabled to carry the drums on his back at the proper level for Joseph to beat them. The comical effect thus produced proved too much for the gravity of many of the bystanders, but Joseph went through his business with solemnity, secretly deriving much pleasure from this public exhibition of his skill, and thereafter he always retained an affection for the instrument as well as a knowledge of how it should be played.[7]

Haydn had just completed the second year of his school life at Hainburg, when an event happened which brought the realisation of his dreams suddenly within his grasp. The Capellmeister of St. Stephen's Cathedral, in Vienna, George Reutter, was paying a visit to his friend, the pastor of Hainburg, and in the course of conversation he mentioned that he was in want of some good voices for the cathedral choir. 'Then I think I can find you one at least,' replied his friend; 'he is a scholar of Frankh's, the schoolmaster here, and possesses an excellent voice. Shall we send for him?' Reutter agreed, and a message was accordingly dispatched to Frankh.

In due course the schoolmaster appeared, leading Haydn by the hand, and the pair were ushered into the presence of Reutter.

The Capellmeister eyed the boy kindly, and, drawing him to his knee, said, 'Well, my little fellow, can you make a shake?'

Joseph looked up brightly. 'No, sir; but, then, no more can my cousin Frankh here.'

Reutter laughed at this outspokenness, and then, telling Haydn to attend to him, he proceeded to show him how the shake was to be performed. After a few attempts Joseph succeeded in satisfying his instructor, who praised him for his quickness. During the experiment the boy's eyes had been fixed on a dish of cherries standing on the pastor's table. Reutter, perceiving the longing thus silently expressed, reached out his hand for the dish, and telling Joseph that he had earned his reward, he emptied the contents into the boy's pockets.

Haydn was next requested to sing a portion of a Mass which he knew by heart, and when this trial was finished the Capellmeister expressed his willingness to take him into the Cantorei of St. Stephen's.

The boy's heart leapt within him as he heard the words. It was so unexpected; it seemed almost too good to be true! Then suddenly the thought of his ragged clothing swept across his mind, and the tears started to his eyes. Surely, they would never admit such an urchin as he to the famous choir-school! Reutter, however, did not seem to heed his untidy state, and Haydn took heart of hope that after all this might be remedied. In the letter which he wrote to his parents, asking for their consent, he included an appeal for money wherewith to purchase new clothing. Mathias had a large family to support on his slender earnings, but he contrived to send a few florins for the purpose, and as both parents at the same time gave a willing assent to his leaving Hainburg, Joseph felt that every obstacle to the fulfilment of his happiness had now been removed. The parting with his teacher, however, was not accomplished without some regrets, for, after all, Frankh, despite his severity, had done well by his pupil, and that pupil was not slow in expressing his gratitude for all that he owed to his relative's instruction.

Possibly, if Joseph could have looked across the leagues which lay between him and the city to which he was journeying with a power of prophetic vision that enabled him to realise a portion of the future that awaited him, he might have experienced some degree of misgiving. But, happily for him, no cloud arose to obscure the sunny picture which his imagination had drawn of the life that was opening before him. Roseate, indeed, were the hues in which his fancy had painted that picture, and foremost of all the objects that it contained was the famous cathedral, with its magnificent spire pointing into the clouds, its richly-sculptured stones, its glorious nave, flanked by noble pillars, and its lofty vaulted roof, echoing to the voices of the choir, or reverberating to the notes of the organ, the whole flooded by the soft light falling from the painted windows. To picture all this from the descriptions which had been given to him was to conjure up a vision of indescribable beauty. And then, the Cantorei itself--had not his cousin Frankh assured him that he would be taught singing and to play the clavier and violin by the best masters, in addition to Latin, writing, and cyphering? Lastly, there was the life which went on outside the cathedral and the choir-school--the life of a city within whose walls music had established a home, wherein she flourished as nowhere else in the wide world could she be said to flourish.

[Illustration: *St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna.*]

All this, and more, had the eight-year-old musician learnt from conversation and report during his two years' sojourn at Hainburg; and of all this was he thinking as he travelled to Vienna with a heart and mind yearning to enter into the joys and labours of such an existence.

With what fervour he embarked upon his studies at the Cantorei, as well as how quickly he progressed under the care of his teachers, may be imagined. Child though he was, nothing in the shape of learning came hard to him, and difficulties seemed to be created only in order to be successfully overcome. Very soon came the desire to compose; but just here the toughest obstacle of all, perhaps, presented itself--the studies comprised no instruction in counterpoint. Still, Joseph was not to be daunted. Seizing upon every scrap of music-paper that he could find, he covered it with notes. 'If only the paper is nice and full, it must be right,' he said to himself, as he bent his energies to the task.

Reutter, however, gave him no encouragement to proceed in this direction. 'What are you about, Haydn?' inquired the Capellmeister one day, as he lighted upon the boy suddenly in the midst of a composition. Joseph looked up with a flush mantling in his cheeks. 'I am composing, sir,' he answered. 'Let me see it,' requested the master. It was a sketch of a 'Salve Regina' for twelve voices. Reutter glanced at the work, and then tossed it back. 'Why don't you try to write it for *two* voices before attempting it in twelve?' was his only comment, uttered in a sharp tone, in which sarcasm was too plainly apparent. Joseph blushed deeper than before. 'Oh,' he said simply; it was all he could say, for the master's sneer had struck home. 'And if you must try your hand at composition,' continued Reutter in a somewhat kinder tone than before, as he observed the tears spring to the boy's eyes, 'let me advise you to write variations on the motets and vespers which are played in the church.'

With this parting piece of counsel he passed on, leaving poor Haydn as much in the dark as before with regard to how he ought to proceed. 'If only he would instruct me in counterpoint, how I would thank him!' was the thought uppermost in Joseph's mind, as he put his despised work out of sight.

But no instruction in the art of composition was forthcoming from either the Capellmeister or any of the teachers, and Haydn was thrown back upon his own resources. He possessed the talent, however, as well as the perseverance, and of neither of these qualifications could they dispossess him, and so, taking to heart Reutter's well-meant admonition, he set to work afresh. His resources in the shape of pocket-money were almost nil, yet by dint of scraping and denying himself he managed to save sufficient to purchase two volumes, upon the outsides of which his eyes had often feasted as the books lay temptingly displayed upon the shelf of the second-hand bookseller. One of these works was Fux's 'Gradus ad Parnassum' (a treatise on composition and counterpoint), and the other Mattheson's 'Vollkommene Capellmeister' (the Complete Chapel-master).

[Illustration: '*He managed to save sufficient to purchase two volumes.*']

Precious indeed were these hardly-acquired volumes. Every moment that could be snatched from schoolwork or choir-practice was devoted to mastering the difficulties of the 'Gradus,' and in acquiring knowledge concerning the high office which he had secretly set his heart upon obtaining. There was unconscious humour in the fact that, following upon Reutter's reproof to his over-ambitious strivings, the chorister should have set himself to study the duties of his master's post. Yet the temptation to smile is checked by the thought of the lonely student giving up his play-hours to self-imposed study, battling in grim earnest with problems that might well have turned the edge of a determination less keen than that which was set to conquer them, and battling thus unassisted and often, no doubt, against the craving for food and fresh air which is inseparable from boyhood.

It would be wrong, however, to suppose that Haydn absented himself wholly from his companions and their merry games. There was within him a soul for play as well as for work, and there were occasions when the spirit of mischief obtained the ascendancy. The choir was frequently required to perform in the Royal Chapel when the Court was in residence at Schönbrunn. The palace there had been newly erected, and the workmen had not removed the scaffolding, a fact which was hailed with delight by the choir-boys as affording an unlooked-for means of relaxation. One after another climbed the poles, each striving to outdo the rest in attaining the highest point. In vain did the Empress Maria Theresa, who had perceived them from her windows, issue prohibitions and threaten dire punishment to the offenders--the sport went on unchecked. At length a moment arrived when Joseph, who had beaten his companions by climbing to the top of the tallest pole, and was daring them to come up to him, was detected by the Empress in the very act. The Hofcompositor was sent for, and the figure of Haydn rocking himself to and fro on the pole duly pointed out. 'Give that fair-haired blockhead einen recenten Schilling' (slang for a 'good hiding'); 'he is the ringleader of them all,' said the Empress. The descent of Joseph from his elevated perch, and the descent of the Hofcompositor's rod, were events which speedily followed the royal command.

A love of fun formed an essential part of Haydn's nature, but music came before anything else. Even when playing with his fellow-choristers in the cathedral square he would break away from the game at the first sound of the organ, and enter the church to listen. His desire to perfect himself in music was so strong that to the ordinary hours of study and practice he voluntarily added several more each day, with the result that he was often working sixteen or eighteen hours out of the twenty-four.

Five years had passed amidst these happy surroundings when Haydn awoke one morning with the joyous thought that that day was to witness the arrival of his younger brother Michael at the Cantorei. How eagerly he had looked forward to this break in his life, with what zeal he had planned how he was to assist Michael in his work, when he had smoothed the young one's entry, helped him over his shyness, and shown him all the delightful scenes and circumstances which his new life would comprise. It had infused new vigour into his

resolutions, and fired him with fresh ardour for his own work, this coming of his brother to share with him the pleasures which he had possessed for so long alone.

Joseph's unselfish and generous feelings may have helped to blind his vision to the little cloud which, almost from the moment when Michael's pure young treble notes first soared aloft into the cathedral's vast recesses, had begun to shut out some of the sunshine that had gladdened his own existence. Certain it is that he had no inkling of the sorrow which his brother's advent was destined to bring upon him. Michael's progress was remarkably rapid, and it was soon apparent that Joseph's prospects were as surely declining. The voice which hitherto had enabled him to hold the chief place in the choir showed signs of breaking, and one after another of the solo parts which formerly he alone had been selected to sing were assigned to the new chorister. Joseph's failing powers were unmistakably betrayed when he sang before the Court, and, though intended only as a joke, the Empress's remark to Reutter that Haydn's singing had come to resemble the crowing of a cock, sufficed to open the Capellmeister's eyes to the fact that Joseph must be put back. Consequently, at the celebration of St. Leopold in the presence of the Emperor and Empress, the singing of the 'Salve Regina' fell to the lot of Michael, whose rendering so entranced his royal hearers that they presented the young chorister with a sum of twenty ducats.

To no one could it have been plainer than to poor Joseph himself that the sun of his glory at St. Stephen's had set never to rise again. His place was now virtually taken by the brother whose coming he had welcomed, and the royal favours which heretofore had been allotted to him were transferred to Michael for good. Mortified as he must have felt at the slight thus accorded to him, Haydn cherished no feelings of resentment towards the brother by whom he had been supplanted. He had the good sense to attribute his misfortune to his failing voice alone and to fall back upon the belief in his own powers to make his way as a musician, which formed his one unfailing resource and comfort during those darkening hours.

How long Haydn might have remained at the Cantorei, in spite of his breaking voice, and the consequent lessening of his importance as a member of the choir, cannot be told; but an incident which happened at this period settled his future as far as St. Stephen's was concerned, in a manner as summary as it was unexpected.

It is odd that Haydn's actual dismissal from the school must be laid at the door of his love of fun, and that one who was so hard-working and so wrapped up in his music should have been unable to resist the temptation to play off a practical joke upon one of his colleagues under the very eyes of the Capellmeister. Nevertheless, such was the case, and a bright new pair of scissors, which had found their way into his possession, was the means by which Joseph executed his joke, and at the same time severed his connection with the Cantorei. It was the fashion in those days for boys to wear pigtails, and Haydn's gaze was one day riveted upon the movements of a pigtail belonging to the chorister seated immediately in front of him. The pigtail was twitched to and fro, or jerked up and down, in accordance with the movements of its owner's head, with a vivacity which was at once fascinating and exasperating to behold. The new scissors were being opened and closed in Joseph's fingers--the itching to cut something was too strong to be resisted--the tantalising pigtail was twitching under his very nose--and the next moment, ere the owner of the scissors could realise the crime he was committing, the once active pigtail lay as dead as any doornail upon the floor.

The punishment meted out to Haydn for this offence was slight--a mere caning on the hand; but the indignity and disgrace of being caned before the whole school was not to be borne. He pleaded for forgiveness: 'Rather than submit to such a disgrace he would leave the school.' Reutter had for long been seeking an excuse for turning the lad adrift; a chorister without a voice was useless to him, and here was his chance. 'You must take your caning first, and then you shall have your dismissal,' he said, with cruel meaning in his tone, for he knew Haydn's spirit.

Joseph underwent the disgrace, and then, whilst the physical pain of it yet lingered, he packed up his two precious volumes, placed the remainder of his belongings on his brother's bed, and choking back the rage that was almost suffocating him, he walked quickly out of the building into the street.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *The tantalising pigtail.*']

Having thus related the manner in which our hero was launched upon the sea of adversity, without means of subsistence, and with no better companion in his misery than the wrath aroused by the sense of his harsh and unjust treatment, we must return to the point at which we left him stretched beside the stove in Spangler's garret. At the same time we desire to correct an impression which the reader may have formed from the opening portion of our story that, at the moment of his chancing upon this friend in need, Joseph was longing to return to the comfortable quarters which he had quitted in such fiery haste. Such an impression would be far from representing the true state of Haydn's feelings at the time. He had, indeed, hoped to encounter Michael--to speak a word with him, to beg of him, in fact, a crust of bread; but his heart failed him when he saw his brother amongst his companions, and pride stepped in as well to prevent him from exposing his distress to so many curious eyes. Thus far he had yielded to the promptings of hunger, but his resolution not to re-enter the school had stood firm, in spite of the cravings of nature, in spite of his friendless position, in spite of the long dreary vista of want which the past eight-and-forty hours had opened to his eyes. He had acted upon the impulse of the moment, but the bitterness of the cause which prompted that action remained--nay, more, it was already acting like a tonic upon a nature disciplined to look difficulties bravely in the face. Those few hours of sound sleep put new life into his frame, and when he awoke it was with the resolve to refrain from any further attempt to see his brother, lest his desperate condition should unsettle the younger one and render him unhappy. It would be a hard, uphill fight, but he would fight it alone--not even his parents should hear of him again unless he succeeded.

'Now, Joseph, what do you propose to do?' was the inquiry of his host, when the morning fast had been broken by a porringer of bread-and-milk. 'Have you made up your mind to go back to the school? or will you send word to your people that you intend to return home?'

'I will never go back to the school,' answered Joseph firmly, 'and as for going home, that is even further from my intentions than the other.' And then he told his friend of the poverty which reigned at home in consequence of the large and growing family, and the disgrace which he should feel in casting himself as a burden upon those he loved, especially after what had occurred. 'Sooner than do that,' he exclaimed, 'I would rather starve in the streets. But, indeed, I believe it will not be so bad as that; I have made up my mind to support myself by music, and *I will never give in!*'

Now Spangler, albeit a man of humble attainments, and a being, moreover, who had set no very high ideals before his eyes, was not, as we have seen, destitute of the quality of sympathy, nor could he entirely obliterate from his memory a time when he himself had been fired by a spark of ambition, and had recognised a longing to accomplish something great. True, the spark had been but a feeble one at best, and the unceasing demands upon his powers to supply the bare necessaries of life, occasioned by an early and imprudent marriage, had done their best to crush it out of existence. Nevertheless, the memory of that time remained, and being freshly stirred by the contemplation of his young friend's forlorn state, it united itself with the stronger germ of sympathy, and blossomed out into a generous proposal that Haydn should continue to occupy a corner of his garret until such time as he could obtain employment.

Haydn gratefully accepted the kindly offer, assuring Spangler that he would repay his hospitality both in money and thanks. He gave this assurance in the belief that its fulfilment could only be a question of a short time. But many weary months, spent in fruitless applications for employment and equally futile endeavours to secure pupils, were destined to pass ere the first vestiges of success made themselves apparent. Haydn was now seventeen, and possessed of the appetite of a schoolboy; how to satisfy his natural cravings, therefore, must have been almost as difficult a problem as that of obtaining work. The rigours of an Austrian winter, too, added not a little to his miseries, ill-fed and thinly clad as he was, but still he struggled on, hopeful that the advent of spring would bring good luck with the sunshine.

Spring came at last, and found him still without means of subsistence, yet not without the solace of hope. Notwithstanding the uncongeniality of his surroundings, he had found opportunities for study, and never had his treasured volumes seemed more precious to him than during those long winter months, when despair haunted him like a shadow from which there seemed no means of escape. His sole earnings had been the pence flung to him from the windows as he stood singing in the snow-covered streets, either alone or in the company of other youths as destitute as himself. But now spring had come; the glorious sun had chased away the snow and the biting frost, and the poor chorister felt its genial rays quickening the life-blood in his veins, and awakening his cramped muscles to action. It is only the pinched and starved human beings of this great Northern Hemisphere who really know what a beneficent food-giver is the sun.

One morning, as Haydn stood idly wondering what he should do next, a procession of men and women, headed by several priests, passed by, bound for the shrine of the Virgin at Mariazell. Struck with an idea, Haydn joined the cavalcade, and on reaching the church in which the pilgrims were to assemble, he sought out the choirmaster, and, telling him how and where he had been trained, begged for employment. With a contemptuous glance at the ex-chorister's ragged clothing, however, the master bade him begone, saying 'that he had had enough of lazy rascals such as he coming from Vienna to seek for work.' The tears started to the lad's eyes as he turned away. Would nobody hold out a helping hand? He had been speculating upon this opportunity as he trudged along the road until it seemed almost a certainty; and must this cup, too, be dashed from his lips?

A few minutes later he perceived the choristers entering the church by a side-door, and, emboldened by hunger, he slipped in amongst them, donned a surplice, and took his place in the stalls. Finding himself next to the principal soloist, he requested that he might be allowed to share the latter's copy. The request was indignantly refused, but Haydn, who knew the service almost by heart, resolved to await his opportunity. When the moment arrived for the singing of the solo, he snatched the copy from the chorister's hands, and, lifting up his voice, sang the part with such exquisite finish and beauty of expression as to electrify the rest of the choir and excite the admiration of the master.

At the conclusion of the service Haydn was sent for by the choirmaster, who, after expressing his regret for his former abruptness, asked him to stay with them until the following day. Poor starving Haydn was only too glad to accept the invitation, and when the morrow arrived he was told that he might extend his stay for several days longer. When, therefore, he finally returned to Vienna, it was with a small sum of money jingling in his pockets and a frame invigorated by a liberal supply of such food as it had not been his privilege to taste since the day when he quitted the Cantorei of St. Stephen's.

It was the first gleam of sunshine that had crossed his path since those happy days, and it served to dispel some of the gloomy desperation which, during the long, dark days of winter, had laid constant siege to his resolutions, which had, indeed, once or twice nearly shaken them from that bed-rock of belief in his own unaided powers which, coupled with his simple faith in God, had sustained him and sent him forward from day to day. Often had he lain, shivering and famished, beneath his scanty coverlet in the corner of the garret allotted to him, watching the stars shining through the skylight above his head, and praying, with all the earnestness of a warrior-knight of the Middle Ages, for strength to battle with the temptation of despair. If music--the music that raises and ennobles, that strengthens, and uplifts the soul of man to heights which bring him nearer and ever nearer to a true conception of God--were destined to find a voice in Haydn's soul, that music must have owed its inception to those midnight hours of silent communion--those struggles with natural want--which were passed beneath the rafters of his miserable lodging.

And gradually his determination prevailed. The tide of fortune sent some ripples of success to his feet. A few pupils were induced by the trifling charge which he made to let him give them lessons on the clavier; a like desire for economy probably induced others to employ his services occasionally as violin-player at balls and other entertainments; whilst one or two aspirants for musical honours permitted him to undertake the revision and arrangement of their compositions at a small fee. Such cheering signs of improved prospects, feeble in

themselves, assumed in Haydn's eyes the aspect of rewards for which he could not be sufficiently grateful.

And then the tide of success came with something like a rush. A worthy tradesman, named Buchholz, who loved music, and had occasionally invited Haydn to sing and play to him after business hours, was touched by his distress, and as a proof of his faith in the struggling musician's honour, as well as with a desire to help him on his way, he lent him the sum of a hundred and fifty florins, to be repaid, without interest, when opportunity permitted.

To Haydn such a sum seemed a veritable fortune, and, indeed, it brought with it the power of effecting great changes in his life. He was now enabled to quit the tenement of Spangler and take a garret of his own, or what was, in truth, a portion partitioned off from a larger garret. As an exchange the new abode was not without its drawbacks. Semi-darkness prevailed even at midday; there was no stove, and as the summer had come and gone and winter was once more upon the city its discomforts were speedily made manifest by the rain and snow, which found their way through the broken roof. Nor were his neighbours in the least inclined to respect his desire for quietude. Nevertheless, in spite of these hardships, Haydn was happy--'too happy,' as he himself put it, 'to envy the lot of Kings'; for had he not added to his priceless treasures the first six sonatas of Emmanuel Bach, which he lost no time in mastering? More than this, he had become the possessor of a little clavier--a poor, worm-eaten instrument, it is true, but one which brought much solace to him in his loneliness.

On the third story of the house in which Haydn was living lodged an Italian poet of some celebrity--Metastasio by name--between whom and the friendless ex-chorister an acquaintance sprang up which resulted in Haydn's introduction as music-teacher to the poet's favourite pupil, Marianne Martinez. Upon the heels of this piece of good fortune followed a second. Through Metastasio's interest Haydn became acquainted with Nicolo Porpora, the most eminent teacher of singing and composition of his day, who was at the time giving singing-lessons to Marianne. But before sufficient time had elapsed for the latter introduction to produce any definite result, Haydn had found employment in a new and unlooked-for direction.

It was a common fashion in Vienna at that day for poor and struggling musicians to earn a few florins by serenading personages of note in the town; but as the number of would-be serenaders was always far in excess of the number of celebrities who aspired to be thus honoured, the pecuniary advantages, as a rule, were very small. It happened, however, that Felix Kurz, the manager of one of the principal Viennese theatres, had lately married a beautiful woman, whose charms were the theme of conversation in fashionable circles, and it occurred to Haydn and two of his companions to serenade the lady with music of the former's own composing. Accordingly, the trio repaired one night to Madame Kurz's windows and began their performance. Presently the door opened, and the figure of Kurz appeared, enfolded in a dressing-gown. Beckoning to Haydn, he inquired, 'Whose music is that which you were playing just now?' 'My own,' replied the serenader. 'Indeed!' responded Kurz, opening his eyes in surprise. 'Then just step inside, if you please,' Haydn obeyed wonderingly, and having been first introduced to madame, who complimented him on his performance, he was conducted by the manager to the parlour, where refreshments were produced for himself and his companions. 'Come and see me to-morrow,' said Kurz to Haydn at parting. 'I think I have some work for you.'

When Haydn put in an appearance on the following day the manager at once proceeded to business. He explained that he had just written a comic opera, to which he had given the title of 'The Devil on Two Sticks,' and was looking out for a musician to set it to music. He had been struck by Haydn's serenade on the previous night, and believed that he would do. 'Now,' he continued, 'there is a tempest scene at sea for which appropriate music is needed. Let me hear what you would suggest.'

[Illustration: '"*Whose music is that which you were playing just now?*"']

Haydn seated himself at the harpsichord, but as he had never seen the sea in his life, he felt at a loss how to begin. After trying a few chords he mentioned his difficulty to Kurz. 'Oh, I haven't seen it, either,' responded the manager airily; 'but I imagine it is something like this'--and he began to throw his arms into the air as he

paced up and down. 'Picture a mountain rising, then a valley sinking; then a second mountain, and another valley--mountains and abysses following one another--there you are!'

In vain Haydn grappled with the subject--trying it in fifths, in fourths, then in octaves--the excited manager meanwhile tossing his arms about, and shouting and gesticulating. It was all to no purpose. At length, losing all patience, Haydn cried, 'The devil take the tempest!' at the same moment plumping his hands with a crash on to the extreme ends of the keyboard, and then rapidly bringing them together. 'That's it, that's it! You've got it now!' cried the delighted Kurz, springing at the astonished composer and embracing him with fervour.

From that moment all went well, and the opera was completed to the author's satisfaction, albeit Haydn, glad as he was to receive his reward, felt that he had little cause for self-congratulation at the results from a musicianly point of view. The opera was duly produced, and received with some measure of approval; but its life was no longer than its merits deserved, and Haydn himself was not desirous of delaying its interment, for he had higher work in view.

We must now return to his acquaintanceship with Porpora. The singing-master had observed Haydn's skill in playing the harpsichord, and thinking that he saw his way to turning the poor musician's abilities to a useful purpose, he offered to employ him as accompanist. Haydn gladly accepted the proposal, hoping that he would thus be enabled to pick up something of the master's method. Though ostensibly engaged to play the accompaniments of Porpora's songs when the latter was giving his pupils their lessons, Joseph soon found that he was regarded in no higher light than that of an ordinary serving-man. The discovery of this fact, however, occasioned him no dismay, nor did he exhibit the slightest repugnance at being called upon to clean his master's shoes, brush his coat, or dress his periwig. In vain did the sour old man hurl such epithets as 'fool,' 'blockhead,' 'dolt,' at his musical valet in return for the latter's attempts to minister to his personal comforts. Haydn's sole object was to be near Porpora in order that he might garner each crumb of knowledge--each hint, however small--that the great man chanced to let fall from his stores of learning; and the master, noting his perseverance and also the gentleness with which he took his buffetings and sarcasms, gradually softened towards his dependent, and, beginning by giving him a stray piece of advice now and then, ended by answering all his questions, and setting him right where he needed correction in his compositions. To crown all, Porpora brought Haydn under the notice of the nobleman in whose house he was teaching, with the result that, when the nobleman took his family to the baths of Mannersdorf for several months, Haydn, to his delight, was allowed to accompany the party in the capacity of Porpora's accompanist.

This piece of good fortune proved to be the turning-point in his career, for the eminent musicians whom he met at Mannersdorf not only received him very kindly, but evinced the greatest interest in his compositions, many of which were performed during this visit. His acquaintance with one of these musicians--a well-known violinist named Dittersdorf--ripened into friendship, and led to Haydn's receiving violin lessons at this master's hands. Another solid advantage accruing from his association with Porpora lay in the fact that the nobleman himself, struck by Haydn's progress, and desirous of helping on one who showed so great a talent for art, allotted him a pension of six sequins (£3) a month. Haydn's action on receiving the first instalment of this generous bounty was consistent with his desire to maintain a neat appearance, as well as an indication of the distress which his privations had hitherto caused him to suffer: he instantly repaired to the nearest tailor's and purchased a suit of black.

On his return to Vienna fortune continued to smile upon him, as if anxious to atone for her neglect in the past. One after another sought his aid in teaching and composing, with the result that he was enabled to raise his terms and move into decent lodgings. His struggles, if not actually ended, had become so lightened as to leave his mind free to pursue the higher walks of his art in comparative peace. From another quarter, too, the hand of friendship was extended to him. He received a summons to present himself at the house of the Countess Thun, whose devotion to music was only equalled by her generous patronage of those in whom she discerned the signs of genius. The Countess had lately heard one of Haydn's clavier sonatas performed, manuscript copies of which had, in accordance with the custom prevailing amongst unknown composers, been sent to the

houses of the aristocracy, and, being charmed with the beauty of the work, she had inquired the name of the composer, with the object of engaging his services.

It is probable that the Countess had formed a very different conception of Haydn's appearance from his work, for she could scarcely conceal her surprise when he was ushered into her presence. That one so ill-dressed and--it must be confessed--so uncouth of manner could be the composer of such charming music seemed impossible. Her face showed this so plainly that Haydn, knowing her generous character, ventured to relate the story of his struggles. As he proceeded with his simple narrative, the Countess's eyes filled with tears. She was one of the noblest of women, and her heart was touched by the reflection that the art which she loved should demand so much sacrifice and suffering from those whose lives were wholly given up to its ennoblement. She had supposed that one who could write such music must have the command of money and the influence of wealthy patrons--yet how different were the facts! Haydn's relation ended, the Countess assured him that thenceforth he might count upon her as his friend and well-wisher as well as pupil, and the happy young musician, having attempted to express his thanks, withdrew with a heart overflowing with gratitude.

A future bright with promise had now dawned for Haydn. His works were to be heard in the best musical circles of Vienna, and praise and encouragement flowed in from every quarter. A wealthy music patron, Karl von Fürnberg, who had recognised his genius, persuaded him to compose his first quartet, and thus turned his attention to the branch of composition in which he was later on to excel. At the instance of this patron Haydn, in 1759, received the appointment of music-director to a rich Bohemian nobleman named Count Ferdinand Morzin, who was an ardent lover of music, and maintained a small orchestra at his country seat. This was a great step in his advancement, and the year which witnessed it is also memorable as having been that in which he composed his first symphony.

Haydn was now twenty-six, and no longer an unknown musician. One point with regard to his compositions had already struck many whose judgment carried weight, and had aroused some criticism on the part of the connoisseurs: this point was their originality. He appeared to have marked out for himself an independent line of work, and to be following it up with a boldness that, in the eyes of certain of his critics, savoured of an open defiance of established rules. But the fact was overlooked by these critics that the circumstances of Haydn's life had thrown him back upon himself and compelled him to be original. His knowledge of counterpoint, to the rules of which he showed a seeming disregard, had been derived almost entirely from self-study. Without a single helping hand to guide him, he had mastered the formidable difficulties of his 'Gradus'; and lighted only by his inborn genius, he had deliberately chosen the path which he felt to be that which would conduct him to the highest levels of his art. The independence thus gained--and which speedily showed itself in all that he wrote--was a possession born of suffering and solitude, though never of ignorance, and as such it represented the truest as well as the freest expression of his musical soul. With the dawn of brighter days he had procured and studied all the works on theory that were to be obtained, only to find himself strengthened in his determination to adhere to the line which those hours of lonely study and reflection had shown him to be the right one for him to adopt. Few, indeed, of those who had risen to be masters in music could claim to have been less influenced by the composers of their own or a previous day than could Joseph Haydn; and the progress of our story will show in what manner opportunity favoured the further growth and development of that independence which even at the present stage had impressed its stamp upon his works.

We must first of all, however, relate what befell our hero in a very different sphere from that in which we have hitherto followed his fortunes.

Some time before the period at which our story has arrived, Haydn had been engaged to teach the harpsichord to the two daughters of a wig-maker named Keller. As the lessons progressed the teacher became conscious of a growing attachment for the younger of his pupils. There was something spiritual about the character of this maiden which appealed strongly to his musical temperament, though probably the loneliness of his life at the

time may have added force to his longing to possess her for his wife. His poverty, however, must have convinced him of the hopelessness of declaring himself at the moment, and for some time his love remained as a cherished secret, fed by the hope which formed almost his sole resource. But now that fortune had smiled upon him he ventured to press his cause with assurance--albeit it must be confessed that this assurance rested on no more secure basis than a salary of some twenty pounds a year and the prospect of an extended teaching connection. But his hopes were doomed to disappointment, for the maiden had in the meantime elected to take the veil, prompted so to do, most probably, by the very same leanings which had rendered her nature so attractive to poor Haydn.

Could he but have been content to bear with his disappointment, seeking in his art the consolation which she had it in her power to bestow, Haydn would have been saved much unhappiness in the future. Most likely he would have adopted this course in the end, had his will and his self-regard been stronger; but neither, it seems, was proof against the blandishments of the match-making perruquier. Anxious to secure an alliance with one who showed so much promise, Keller brought all his powers of persuasion to bear in favour of Haydn's accepting the hand of his eldest daughter, and, sad to relate, he succeeded. Maria Anna was not only three years older than the man who pledged his faith to her before the altar of St. Stephen's, but she comprised in her nature as much of the quality of the virago as her younger sister had exhibited of the angel. She was heartless and extravagant, prone to outbursts of uncontrollable temper, and in every way utterly unfitted to be the wife of a man whose fame had yet to be compassed. Indeed, she soon showed that she had not the slightest reverence either for her husband or his art; for all she cared, Haydn might just as well have been a cobbler as an artist, provided he supplied her with money to satisfy her extravagant desires.

Fortunately for Haydn, the circumstances of his life were about to undergo an important change. Count Morzin was compelled to reduce his establishment, and hence dismissed his band and its director. What might otherwise have proved a great misfortune for Haydn was, however, the means of securing for him a post which not only raised him to the position which he had set his heart on attaining, but precluded the possibility of his wife's living with him. Amongst those who had visited Count Morzin's house and listened with delight to the performance of Haydn's compositions was the then reigning Prince of Hungary, Paul Anton Esterhazy. No sooner had the Prince been made aware of Count Morzin's intentions than he offered Haydn the post of second Capellmeister at his country seat of Eisenstadt. The chief Capellmeister, whose name was Werner, was old and infirm, but the Prince retained him in his position on account of his length of service. To Haydn, however, was assigned the sole control of the orchestra, as well as a free hand in regard to most of the musical arrangements.

It is needless to recount the joyful feelings with which Haydn received the news of his appointment, offering as it did the most exceptional opportunities for prosecuting his beloved art. Not even in his wildest dreams could he have pictured such magnificence as that which greeted him on his arrival at the Palace of Eisenstadt. For generations past the Esterhazys had been devotedly attached to music, and the reigning Prince had spared neither pains nor expense to equip his establishment with the means of performing not only the fullest Church services, but complete operas as well. The sight of the huge building, with its spacious halls and apartments and its troops of servants; the enchanting grounds, decked with parterres of choicest flowers; and the lakes and fountains scintillating in the sunshine, must have presented to the young musician, fresh from his lodging in the crowded city, a vision of endless beauty. The very air of the place breathed a music of its own, as, laden with the perfumes of countless blossoms, it was wafted into the apartments set aside for his use. Hard work lay before him; but what work could be too hard when performed amidst such exquisite surroundings as these, and for a master whose unstinting generosity and fatherly care for those about him were so widely known? From the outset Haydn realised that here he would enjoy the freest scope for the exercise of his gifts, with the additional advantage, for which the greatest masters might well have envied him, of being able to give practical effect to whatever he wrote before committing it to the judgment of the world outside.

No wonder, then, that under such favouring conditions as these compositions poured from his pen; nor was it long ere the musicians whom he commanded had learnt to regard him with affection, and to vie with each

other in their eagerness to fulfil his wishes.

In about a year from the date of Haydn's engagement Prince Paul Anton died, and the event marked a further advancement in the composer's fortunes. Prince Nicolaus, who succeeded his brother, was a passionate lover of the arts and sciences, in addition to being one of the most generous and warm-hearted of men. His succession implied an added magnificence and pomp to what seemed already perfect. To Haydn he gave an assurance of his good-will and appreciation by raising his salary from four hundred to six hundred florins, and, later, to seven hundred and eighty-two florins (or £78), allowed him to select additional musicians, and at the same time gave him to understand that he should look for an increase in the number of performances. The Prince himself played the baryton, or viola di bardone--a stringed instrument of sweet, resonant tone, which, like the viol da gamba, to which it bore some resemblance, has long since ceased to be heard. As the Prince prided himself on his playing, Haydn was required to produce endless pieces for the instrument, and he was even at considerable pains to acquire a knowledge of the baryton itself, thinking thereby to afford his master pleasure. To his chagrin, however, he discovered that his efforts in this direction were not at all appreciated by the royal performer, who had no fancy to see himself outskilled.

In 1766 Werner died, and Haydn succeeded to the full title. He had thus reached the summit of his boyish ambition, and could look back with pride to those early days when he studied the 'Complete Chapel-master' in his lonely garret, and longed for the day to come when his father's dream might be realised. And what of the parents whom he had left behind in the little village? How had they fared during these long years of struggle and success? The mother died seven years before Haydn received his appointment to the Esterhazy family, and while he was still striving to make his way; and the pleasure which success had brought to him must have been tinged with the regret that she had not lived to witness it. Mathias had married again, but he managed to find his way to Eisenstadt, where, to his pride and joy, he heard Joseph addressed as 'Herr Capellmeister!' Thither, also, came Michael, who had been appointed director and concertmeister to Archbishop Sigismund of Salzburg, to spend several happy days with his elder brother.

Haydn's fame as a composer had spread far beyond the walls of Eisenstadt. Musicians of Leipzig, Paris, Amsterdam, and even London, were playing his symphonies, trios, and quartets, whilst the *Wiener Diarium*--the Austrian official gazette--for 1766 refers to him as 'the favourite of our nation,' and pays him the high compliment of comparing him with Gellert, the most esteemed poet of the day. 'What Gellert is to poetry Haydn is to music,' writes the critic.

Werner's death was shortly followed by an event which implied a still greater change in Haydn's surroundings. Prince Nicolaus had been engaged in carrying out a scheme for the rebuilding of his shooting-box near Süttör on a scale of magnificence rivalling that of Versailles in its palmiest days, and, the works being completed, the Prince moved thither with the major portion of his household. No more lonely spot or one more unhealthy in its natural state, could have been chosen than that which formed the site of the new residence. Standing in the middle of a salt marsh, forming the southern extremity of the great lake called the Neusiedler-See, Esterház, as the palace was named, was quite cut off from the outside world. The work of draining and reclaiming the land, however, had effected such an improvement that what in its primitive condition had been little better than desolate swamp, resounding to the harsh cries of wild-fowl, was now become a scene of veritable enchantment. The thick wood which lay behind the house had been transformed into shady groves and open glades for deer, whilst the front windows of the palace looked upon extensive flower-gardens, with a profusion of hothouses, summerhouses, arbours, and temples. The castle itself comprised a hundred and sixty-two apartments, splendidly decorated, and filled with costly collections of art. Even Eisenstadt itself paled before the beauty and magnificence of this new palace of Aladdin which the genie of wealth had raised on the dismal marsh.

The provision for music and acting was on a scale as elaborate as that of the rest of the palace. A splendid theatre, designed and equipped for the performance of operas and dramatic works, had been reared near the castle, and beside this stood a smaller theatre, fitted up for the marionette performances, to the perfecting of

which the Prince had devoted much attention. The orchestra was reinforced by travelling players of eminence, whilst, in addition to singers especially engaged from Italy, various strolling companies were invited to give their services from time to time. It was an essential part of the scheme that this body of musicians and actors--temporary as well as permanent--should form one family, with Haydn as its head; but the appellation of 'Father Haydn,' by which the Capellmeister was known to the members of his orchestra, had its origin in an affection which owed nothing to discipline or arrangement. 'Friend, go back to the first *allegro*,' was the wording of a direction written by Haydn on the cover of one of his confrère's music-books, and it may be taken as an indication of the happy relations which existed between the chief of orchestra and his men.

A picture of the daily life at Esterház from spring to autumn would show a constant round of life in its fullest and gayest sense. Visitors poured in at its hospitable gates in an unbroken stream; and the strain upon those whose duty it was to provide amusement for the pleasure-seekers must have been enormous. If there was abundance of work, however, there was no lack of helpers, and thus Esterház became a little world in itself--a centre of music and acting, as well as an emporium of art treasures. Thither came the Empress Maria Theresa on a visit, and Haydn seized the opportunity of reminding her of the chastisement which she had ordered him to receive when, as a fair-haired chorister, he had clambered up the scaffolding-poles of the royal palace. 'Ah, well!' replied the Empress with a smile; 'you must see yourself, my dear Haydn, that the whipping has produced good fruit!'

Prince Nicolaus, though an excellent master, and one for whom Haydn entertained a deep affection, was, nevertheless, somewhat unreasonable in expecting his Capelle to share his devotion to Esterház as an almost continuous residence. The visits to Vienna were getting fewer and shorter--even the winter at Eisenstadt had been reduced to its shortest limits--and, admitting the attractions of the new palace as a summer residence, the musicians were pining to see their wives and families, and to breathe once more the air of the city. In 1772 the stay at Esterház was prolonged so far into the autumn that the musicians became impatient. The Prince had made no announcement of the date of his departure, and Haydn at length resolved to convey to his royal master a delicate hint of the orchestra's desire to be set free. He therefore announced the performance of what he called 'The Farewell Symphony'; and when the evening arrived, sixteen performers took their seats in the orchestra to carry out the Capellmeister's scheme, whilst the Prince, having no suspicion of what was intended, occupied his accustomed place. All went as usual until the last movement was reached, when one pair of performers rose from their chairs, extinguished their candles, and quietly left the orchestra. The music proceeded, and a little later a second pair arose, went through the same pantomime, and disappeared, the Prince watching their movements with a puzzled expression that almost destroyed the gravity of the rest of the performers. Pair after pair thus left the building, until at last only Tomasini (the Prince's favourite violinist) and Haydn remained. Finally, Tomasini blew out his candle, bowed to the Prince, and retreated, and as Haydn prepared to follow his example, the Prince's eyes were opened to their drift. Good-humouredly regarding the whole thing in the light of a joke, he exclaimed, 'If all go, we may as well go too!' and immediately quitting the theatre, he gave directions for the departure of the household.

We must pass over the years which intervened between the date of the 'Farewell Symphony' (the merits of which as a musical work must not be confused with the circumstances under which it was written), and the year 1790, when, to his great grief, Haydn lost the master to whom he had become so deeply attached. The Prince left Haydn a pension of one thousand florins, on condition that he retained his post as Capellmeister to the family. Prince Anton, however, who succeeded his brother, had no taste for music. The Capelle was practically disbanded, and though Haydn kept his official position, his constant presence at the palace was no longer necessary, and he took up his residence in Vienna.

Some three years before this event several attempts had been made by English musicians of eminence to induce him to come to London and play at the professional concerts, but he had resisted these offers with one and the same excuse--he could not leave the master whom he loved. On the last occasion Salomon, the well-known musician and concert-director, had dispatched a publisher named Bland to Esterház to endeavour to persuade Haydn to alter his mind. Bland was shown into a room adjoining that in which Haydn happened to

be shaving, and whilst seated there he overheard the composer growling to himself over the bluntness of his razors. At length Bland caught the exclamation, 'Ach! I would give my best quartet for a good razor!' and without more ado, he rushed off to his lodgings and returned in a few minutes with a pair of razors, which he presented to Haydn. The Capellmeister accepted the gift with a smile, and rewarded the enterprising publisher with a copy of his latest quartet, which, later on, was produced in London, and has ever since been known by the title of the 'Rasirmesser' (Razor) quartet.

The death of Prince Nicolaus removed the only obstacle to Haydn's undertaking a journey to London; consequently, when one morning he found a visitor awaiting him at his house, who announced his business thus: 'My name is Salomon; I have come from London to fetch you; we will settle terms to-morrow,' Haydn regarded the matter as practically settled.

Mozart was in Vienna at the date of Salomon's visit. Haydn had been strongly drawn towards the young musician ever since the time, five years before, when, after listening to one of Mozart's quartets, he had delighted the heart of Leopold Mozart by declaring that his son was the greatest composer he had ever heard. Mozart's affection for Haydn was equally warm, and now, on hearing that the latter contemplated a journey to England, he tried to persuade him against it, urging that he was advanced in years and unacquainted with the English language. Haydn listened to his friend's objections, and then observed with a smile, 'No matter; I speak a language which is understood all over the world.' 'Then,' said Mozart, grasping Haydn's hand as he spoke, it is good-bye, for we shall never meet again!' The words were prophetic, for only a year later Haydn in London was stunned by the news of Mozart's death.

It was a stormy December day when Haydn and Salomon set sail from Calais, and the passage to Dover was a long and trying one for the travellers. Nevertheless, Haydn, taking his stand on the deck, enjoyed his first sight of the waves, and as the spray dashed in his face he recalled with a smile how he had attempted to write the tempest music for the actor-manager Kurz. A long interval separated him from those days of keen want and fierce struggle, when he strove, almost against hope, to establish a foothold for himself in the music-loving city of Vienna! Now he was travelling to a greater city, not as an unknown, struggling student, but with the assurance of a welcome befitting one whom fame had already claimed for her own.

[Illustration: '*Haydn enjoyed his first sight of the waves.*']

The night of his arrival in London was passed at Bland's music warehouse, No. 45, High Holborn,[8] but the following day he went to live with Salomon at the latter's lodgings, No. 18, Great Pulteney Street, Golden Square.[9] Salomon had by no means overestimated the warmth of the welcome which London was prepared to give to the composer whose works were already familiar to English music-lovers. From every quarter admiration and attentions were lavished upon him; all the most celebrated people besought his acquaintance, and he was invited everywhere. Yet his equanimity never deserted him. He took everything very simply, and as if it were his due, and thoroughly enjoyed the river parties and picnics which were arranged in his honour. Not so, however, the lengthy dinners or evening entertainments in town, where his ignorance of the language and customs of his hosts made him feel less at his ease. The incessant noise of the streets was a source of great discomfort to one who had been so long accustomed to the silence of the country; and he positively refused to fashion himself to the late hours of London. When, later on, he removed his lodging to Lisson Grove, he writes in a strain of rejoicing to a Vienna friend that he has at length found himself in the country amid lovely scenery, where he lives as if he were in a monastery! It is difficult for us to imagine the Lisson Grove of a century ago, when the road stretched away through green fields and woodland spaces.

The first of Salomon's concerts was held on March 11, 1791, at the Hanover Square Rooms. The hall was crowded, and the performance of Haydn's 'Symphony' (Salomon, No. 2) was received with great applause; nor would the audience remain satisfied until the *adagio* movement had been repeated--an event of such rare occurrence in those days as to call for comment in the newspapers. This marked the beginning of a most successful series of concerts, at each of which Haydn received a great ovation. His benefit took place on May

16, and realized £350.

The Handel Commemoration Festival--the fifth and last of the century--was held in Westminster Abbey during this visit, and it must have been a moving sight to Haydn to observe the crowds flocking to the Abbey early on that summer morning in order to hear the master's greatest work. Haydn had secured a seat close to the King's box--a position which commanded a view of the nave and the vast concourse of listeners. Rarely had those venerable walls looked down upon such a sea of expectant faces as that which was turned towards the distant bank of musicians and singers when the moment drew nigh for the performance to begin. There was reverence expressed in the hushed silence which pervaded every nook and corner of the Abbey at that supreme moment--a befitting reverence both for the dead composer whose immortal work was to be celebrated, and for the sacredness of the subject which he had chosen for illustration. As the oratorio proceeded Haydn became more and more impressed. He had never heard the 'Messiah' performed on so grand a scale before, and when the opening chords of the 'Hallelujah Chorus' rang through the nave and the entire audience sprang to their feet, he burst into tears, exclaiming to those around him, 'He is the master of us all!'

[Illustration: '*Lisson Grove a century ago.*']

The first week in July found him at Oxford, at Commemoration, whither he had gone to receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Music. Three grand concerts were given in his honour, the principal singers and performers having been brought from London, and on each occasion his compositions were greeted with great applause. He appeared at the third concert clad in his Doctor's gown, and met with an enthusiastic reception. It was evident, however, that he was not feeling quite at home in his new vestment, for when the students clapped their hands and shouted he raised the gown as high as he could, exclaiming as he did so, 'I thank you,' whereupon the applause was redoubled. Haydn writes to a friend that he had to walk about for three whole days clad in this guise, and he only wishes that his Vienna friends could have seen him.

Amidst the wealth of incident which signalised his visit two little scenes found a cherished corner in Haydn's memory. He was invited by the Prince of Wales to visit Oatlands Park as the guest of the Duke of York, who was spending his honeymoon there with his young bride, the Princess of Prussia. The seventeen-year-old bride welcomed the sight of Haydn's kindly face and the familiar sound of the German tongue, and in one of his letters he describes how the *liebe Kleine* sat beside him as he played his 'Symphony,' humming the well-known airs to herself, and urging him to go on playing until long past midnight. The Princess also sang and played to him, whilst the Prince of Wales played the violoncello, their attention being entirely given to Haydn's works. It was during this visit that the portrait by Hoppner was painted, which hangs in the gallery at Hampton Court.

The second picture, though one of a very different kind, he himself described as having afforded him one of the greatest pleasures of his visit. He went to St. Paul's to witness the gathering of the charity children at their anniversary meeting, and the sight of the children's faces and the sound of their young voices echoing through the vast building touched him deeply, and no doubt recalled to his mind the singing of the choristers in St. Stephen's Cathedral in bygone days.

Frau Haydn had evidently heard reports of her husband's successes, for she troubled him with a letter at this time, in which she related how she had found a small house and garden in the suburbs of Vienna, which she felt would exactly suit her requirements when she became a widow. She therefore begged that he would send her the money--a matter of two thousand gulden--to complete the purchase. Haydn did not comply with this simple request, but on his return journey to Vienna he inspected the house, approved it, and bought it for himself!

It was in passing through Bonn, on his homeward journey, that Haydn met Beethoven, and praised the composition which the young assistant Hof-organist submitted to him.[10] The reception accorded to the composer on his arrival at Vienna was in every way worthy of the fame which his London visit had added to

his reputation, and every one was anxious to hear the symphonies which had taken the Londoners by storm.

The success of this visit led to a repetition in 1794. On this occasion Haydn was accompanied by his faithful copyist and servant, Johann Elssler, a son of the copyist to Prince Esterhazy, to whom, since his birth, Haydn had acted as benefactor. Elssler's attachment to his master was coupled with the greatest veneration for his genius, and it was even reported that at such times as he thought himself unobserved he would stop with the censer before his master's portrait, as if it were an altar.

Once more Haydn was to pass through a series of successes under Salomon's direction. His symphonies formed part of all the London programmes. His popularity reached a height that rendered him the 'lion' of the season. He was frequently invited to Buckingham Palace to perform to the King and Queen, and he was not allowed to depart without a pressing request on the part of her Majesty that he would settle in England. When London went to Bath, Haydn went there too, in company with Dr. Burney, the eminent musician, and at once became the centre of fashion and interest.

A description of all the incidents which this second visit comprised would extend our story to an undue length. We will therefore content ourselves by describing a touching little incident that marked his homeward journey in August of the following year. To Haydn's complete surprise he was invited by Count Harrach and a party of noblemen and gentlemen to accompany them to the Count's park, situated close to Rohrau, where a monument and bust of himself had been erected. He was next taken to Rohrau itself, to inspect his old home and birthplace, which had been preserved with every mark of loving care by those who held the composer in such high esteem.

Haydn's emotions were deeply stirred by this action on the part of his countrymen, as well as by the sight of his dear old home. Memories of his happy childhood crowded upon him as he stood before the door, and, prompted by a sudden impulse, he stooped and imprinted a kiss upon the threshold; then, bidding his friends enter the cottage, he pointed to the settle which stood beside the stove, and told them that it was when seated on that settle, listening to his parents' singing, that his musical career had begun. What, after all, were the grand palaces, in which he had passed so many years of his life, with their costly furniture and troops of servants, compared with that dear old cottage home in which he had dreamed his childish dreams of music, and listened to the hammers in the workshop beating out the time as he played on his toy violin?

During his London visits Haydn had often expressed his admiration for the English 'God save the King,' and he regretted that his own country had no National Anthem of its own. This thought weighed the more with him after his return because war had broken out with France, and he felt that the people needed a means of giving expression to their loyalty. He accordingly wrote the song 'Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser,' or 'The Emperor's Hymn,' which was performed for the first time simultaneously at the Vienna National Theatre and the principal theatres of the country on the Emperor's birthday, February 12, 1797. This beautiful air was always a favourite one with Haydn during the remainder of his life.

A portrait of Haydn at this time shows a man of short, substantial build, and a somewhat ill-proportioned frame. The face, of which the aquiline nose, projecting under-lip, and massive jaw were strongly marked features, was very dark, and its habitual expression was dignified and earnest, with an inclination to sternness. The dark grey eyes, however, shone with a benevolent light that afforded an insight into their owner's true nature--indeed, he used to say of himself humorously that 'anyone could see by the look of him that he was a good-natured sort of fellow.' He always wore a wig, with side-curls and a pigtail, and the wig partly concealed his broad forehead. His dignified expression relaxed in conversation, but although he was not at all averse to joking, his laughter was always moderate and controlled. Towards children he showed a love and sympathy that never failed to win their confidence and affection. The title of 'Papa Haydn,' by which he was known both to young and old during his lifetime and with which his memory has ever since been coupled, was the natural outcome of the universal affection in which he was held by all classes. He was the 'father' of his chapel, sympathising with them in their difficulties, and interceding in their behalf with the Prince whenever occasion

arose. In the same way his interest went out to all young and struggling men of talent, to whom he gave advice and help. But the title 'Papa Haydn' may claim to possess a further significance in its use at the present time, 'as if musicians of all countries claimed descent from him.'

Along with his indomitable industry went a love of order and method by which every action was ruled, every habit framed. He rose very early to begin work, for Nature seemed sweetest to him in her waking hours; but he would never put a pen to paper or see a visitor until he was fully dressed; and even when old age prevented his leaving the house he maintained the same degree of punctiliousness in regard to his appearance. His devoutness formed an indissoluble part of his nature, and he regarded his genius as a gift of God which he was bound to use thankfully for the benefit of mankind and to the glory of Him who gave it. He never wrote a score without the words 'In nomine Domini' appearing as an inscription, whilst 'Laus Deo' came at the end.

Haydn's love of humour is brought out in many of his compositions, notably in the 'Surprise Symphony,' where the drums come in with a tremendous bang at the end of the *andante* movement. He is said to have invented this part in order to arouse the attention of the audience and make the ladies scream. Again, in the 'Toy Symphony,' he shows a child-like appreciation of drollery in producing genuine music out of such toy instruments as tin whistles, jew's-harps, toy trumpets, etc. The 'Toy Symphony' was composed at Eisenstadt, where, having visited a village fair and purchased a number of toy instruments, Haydn was seized with the idea of making his orchestra play upon them--an order which upset their gravity so much that they could hardly keep time for laughing. A little story illustrative of his love of fun may be told here. During his second visit to London he came in contact with a certain amateur violinist whose professed fondness for the extreme upper notes of his instrument was such as to incite Haydn to perpetrate a joke at his expense. He therefore wrote a seemingly simple sonata for piano and violin, which he called 'Jacob's Dream,' and dispatched it anonymously to the conceited violinist. The player was charmed with the manner in which the piece began. It was apparent that the composer thoroughly understood the instrument! As he proceeded, however, the notes rose higher and higher, like the steps of a ladder, and at length, seeing that there was no prospect of their ever descending again, the perspiration broke out on his forehead, and, flinging the music from him with disgust, he declared that the writer knew nothing whatever of the violin!

* * * * *

Haydn was now sixty-five, but the crowning work of his life had yet to be achieved. Whilst in London Salomon had shown him a poem, founded upon 'Paradise Lost,' which had been written many years before, in the hope that Handel would have set it to music. Haydn carried the poem home, and later on conceived the idea of writing an oratorio on the subject. From the moment of its inception the task of composing the 'Creation,' as the new work was called, became a labour of increasing love with Haydn. 'Never was I so pious,' he writes, 'as when composing the "Creation." I knelt down every day and prayed God to strengthen me for the work.' The oratorio was first publicly performed in Vienna on March 19, 1799, and created a profound impression. Haydn himself was almost overcome by the sensations which the occasion aroused. In a short time the 'Creation' was heard in every principal city of Europe. In places where no means existed for its production choral societies were formed for this special object, so that for many years the work took equal rank in popular favour with the 'Messiah.' As a work of art, however, the 'Creation' differs essentially, both in character and style, from Handel's masterpiece. We have here none of the declamatory passages which are so prominent in the 'Messiah,' the story of the Creation being unfolded to us in a series of wonderful tone-pictures--strengthened where necessary by choruses, but keeping throughout to the epic character of the poem. Many of the passages are strikingly beautiful. Who that has heard them can ever forget the airs, 'With Verdure Clad,' and 'In Native Worth,' or the splendid chorus, 'The Heavens are telling the Glory of God'?

Whilst music-lovers were descanting on the beauties of the 'Creation,' Haydn was busily composing a second oratorio founded upon Thomson's famous poem, 'The Seasons.' The desire for work was as strong as ever, but his health was declining, and the strain involved by so great an undertaking proved too much for his strength. '"The Seasons" gave me my finishing stroke,' was Haydn's often-repeated remark to his friends after the

oratorio had left his hands. But no trace of diminished power is visible in the work itself, and the success which attended its production was such as to place it on a level with the 'Creation.'

With these two great works the flow of composition from the master's pen fittingly closed. Upon the subject of his life-work as a whole we may not dwell in this brief story. The history of music has accorded to Haydn the high position which his works entitled him to occupy, and the feeling of gratitude for those great gifts having been vouchsafed to us is one that has grown deeper and deeper with the passing years. Musicians and music-lovers all the world over give expression to this gratitude by pointing to what he has accomplished for the symphony, the quartet, and the sonata--to mention the three branches of composition to which his genius was specially directed. Acknowledged on every hand as the father of instrumental music, Haydn compels our admiration by 'his inexhaustible invention as shown in the originality of his themes and melodies; the life and spontaneity of the ideas; the clearness which makes his compositions as interesting to the amateur as to the artist; the child-like cheerfulness and drollery which charm away trouble and care.' His insistence on the importance of melody was a marked characteristic. 'It is the air which is the charm of music,' he once remarked to the composer Kelly, 'and it is that which is most difficult to produce. The invention of a fine melody is a work of genius.'

The honourable peace which should have been the companion of his old age was marred by much physical suffering, through which, however, at intervals his genial nature forced its way like sunshine through clouds. Nor were his declining years without the solace of numerous friends--indeed, by none to whom his great gifts and kindly personality had brought pleasure and instruction was the old composer forgotten, and nothing gave him keener delight than to gather his friends about him to talk over the chief events of his life, and to exhibit his collection of diplomas, souvenirs, and other mementoes, which had been presented to him by his royal and noble patrons.

Perhaps no more touching example could be given of the affectionate esteem in which Haydn was held by all classes of music-lovers than that afforded by the last occasion on which he appeared in public. He had been for a long time living in retirement in the house which he purchased on the outskirts of Vienna, but having expressed a wish to be present at a performance of the 'Creation' at the University on March 27, 1808, he was carried to the hall in his arm-chair. The enthusiasm evoked by the spectacle of the aged composer being borne into the arena was in itself a convincing proof that his popularity had not lessened. But the emotions of the audience were more deeply stirred when, at the passage 'And there was light,' Haydn lifted his hand and, pointing upwards, exclaimed, 'It came from thence!' At this point his agitation was so great that it was deemed prudent to remove him to his home; and as the carriers lifted him up and bore him towards the door, the people flocked about his chair to touch his hand and bid him farewell. At the door itself the crowd was denser than ever, and pressing through the throng came Beethoven, who, bending over his old master, kissed him fervently on the hand and forehead. As he passed through the exit Haydn turned to take a last look at those who were standing and waving their farewells, and as he did so he raised his hands as if in the act of blessing them. The next moment the heavy portière fell, and Haydn passed for ever from the public sight.

A year later the old musician lay stretched upon his bed listening to the booming of the French cannon, which were bombarding the city. Presently the crash of a ball which fell close to his house caused the servants to utter a cry of fear, whereupon their master called out to them, 'Children, don't be frightened. No harm can happen to you while Haydn is by.'

One day, shortly after this event, when Vienna was in the occupation of the French, the faithful Elssler reported that a French officer desired to pay his respects to the composer whom France held in such veneration. The interview was granted, and the officer, before taking his leave, sang 'In Native Worth,' from the 'Creation,' with so much feeling and expression that Haydn's eyes filled with tears, and he embraced the singer with warmth and tenderness.

[Illustration: '*Haydn's eyes filled with tears.*']

The end was now very near, and Haydn awaited the dread summons with the resignation that was born of his implicit and child-like faith in God. On May 26, 1809, he summoned the members of his household to his presence, and, having been carried to the piano, he played his favourite composition, 'The Emperor's Hymn,' three times over, with great solemnity. There was something inexpressibly touching in the master's selection of this air, which had been inspired by his love of country and his loyalty to his Sovereign; for none knew better than they who now stood around his chair how deeply he had suffered by reason of the indignities which had been offered to his country. These faithful friends realised that this solemn expression of devotion to his King was intended to be a personal farewell, and as the familiar strains of their noble anthem rang through the apartment, their silent tears gave expression to the love and reverence in which the master was held. Five days later, as dawn hovered on the sable fringe of night, Haydn sank to rest.

Owing to the fact that Vienna at the time of Haydn's death was in the hands of the French, his funeral was conducted without the ostentation by which, under happier circumstances, it would have been marked. Nevertheless, there were many mourners, and amongst them a number of French officers of high rank, whilst a guard of honour was formed around the coffin by the French soldiers. A performance of Mozart's 'Requiem' was given in his honour at the Schotten-Kirche, and as the news of his death spread abroad funeral services were held in all the principal cities of Europe. The burial took place in the Hundsthurm churchyard, near the suburb in which he lived; but in 1820 Prince Esterhazy commanded the remains to be exhumed and reinterred, with fitting ceremonial, in the upper parish church at Eisenstadt, where 'a simple stone with a Latin inscription is inserted in the wall over the vault, to inform the passer-by that a great man rests below.'

FOOTNOTES:

[7] The drums on which Haydn performed on this occasion are still preserved in the choir of the church at Hainburg.

[8] Since included in the building of the First Avenue Hotel.

[9] The house has since been rebuilt to form the warehouse of Messrs. Chatto and Windus.

[10] See story of Beethoven, p. 233.

HAYDEN'S PRINCIPAL COMPOSITIONS

OPERAS: The Devil on Two Sticks. 1752 (?) Acis und Galatea. 1762. La Vera Costanza. 1776. Orfeo ed Euridice. 1793. ORATORIOS: Il Ritorno di Tobia. 1775. [The well-known motet 'Insanæ et vanæ curæ' is taken from this oratorio.] The Seven Words from the Cross. 1794. [Originally composed as a series of pieces for orchestra in 1787.] The Creation. 1798. The Seasons. 1801. MASSES: Mass in F (Novello, No. 11). 1751 (?) Mass of B.V.M. in E-flat (No. 12). 1766. Mass of St. Nicholas in G (No. 7). 1772. Mass of St. John in B-flat (No. 8). 1778. Mass of St. Cecilia in C (No. 5). 1780. Mass of Mariazell in C (No. 15). 1782. Mass in C (No. 2). 1790. Mass in B-flat (No. 1). 1796. Imperial Mass in D (No. 3). 1798. [Known in Germany as the 'Nelson Mass.'] Mass in B-flat (No. 4). 1801. Mass in B-flat (No. 6). 1801. Mass in B-flat (No. 16). Two other Masses not printed. The four Masses, No. 9 (in C), No. 10 (in C minor), No. 13 (in C), and No. 14 (Kyrie and Gloria only, in D), are not authentic. Stabat Mater. 1773. 2 Te Deums. 12 Canzonets. 1790. 142 Symphonies. [It will be sufficient to mention the 12 'Grand' Symphonies, composed for Salomon's concerts, and a few others with distinguishing names.] Grand No. 1 in C. 1791-1792. Grand No. 2 in D. 1791. Grand No. 3 in G (The Surprise). 1791. Grand No. 4 in B-flat. 1791-1792. Grand No. 5 in C minor. 1791. Grand No. 6 in D. 1791. Grand No. 7 in D minor. 1795. Grand No. 8 in E-flat. 1795 (?) Grand No. 9 in B-flat. 1795. Grand No. 10 in E-flat. 1793. Grand No. 11 in D minor (The Clock). 1794. Grand No. 12 in G (Military). 1794. Symphony in C (Le Midi). 1761. Symphony in G (Le Soir). 1761 (?) Symphony in D (Le Matin). 1767 (?) Symphony in A (The Farewell--Letter B). 1772. Symphony in E minor (Trauer-symphonie--Letter I). 1772 (?) Symphony in D minor (Lamentations). 1772. Symphony in C (Maria Theresa). 1773. Symphony in E-flat

(The Schoolmaster). 1774. Symphony in A (Feuer-symphonie). 1774. Symphony in C (Roxelane). 1777 (?) Symphony in D (La Chasse). 1781 (?) Symphony in C (L'Ours). 1784-1786. Symphony in G minor (La Poule). 1784-1786. Symphony in B-flat (La Reine de France). 1786 (?) Symphony in G (Letter V). 1787. Symphony in C (Letter R). 1788. Symphony in G (Letter Q--The Oxford). 1788 (?) Symphony in C (Toy Symphony). 1788 (?) 83 Quartets for strings. [The earliest were composed in 1753. The quartet including variations on Haydn's 'Emperor's Hymn' (Op. 76, No. 3) was composed in 1797.] 21 Trios for strings. 31 Trios for clavier and strings. 3 Concertos for pianoforte and orchestra. 1790. 9 Concertos for violin and orchestra. 22 Concertos for other instruments. 8 Sonatas for clavier and violin. 34 Sonatas for clavier solo.

MOZART

MOZART

In a small, barely-furnished apartment in the Archbishop's palace at Salzburg, in Austria-Hungary, on a winter's morning in the year 1766, a boy of ten years of age was seated at a table, his head resting upon his hand and his eyes turned towards the window. Before him were scattered a number of sheets of manuscript music-paper, several of which were covered with notes, which his childish fingers had patiently traced amidst a plentiful sprinkling of blots and smears.

There was something pathetic about the appearance of the motionless little figure, with its pale face, surmounted by a profusion of brown curls, and the fixed, earnest expression in the large dark eyes--a pathetic seriousness that implied a depth of reflection far beyond his years, and to which the work upon which he was engaged lent additional significance. Thus absorbed, the child paid no heed to the entry of a servant bearing a tray, upon which was spread a simple breakfast; and, following the instructions which he had received, the man laid the tray on the table and quitted the room in silence. Outside the door, however, the old servant paused for a moment in a listening attitude, as if to catch the chink of moving cup and platter, and thus be assured that the child had begun his meal. But as no sound came from within, old Hans shook his head gravely, turned the key in the lock, and, muttering to himself, descended the stairs.

[Illustration: '*He paid no heed to the entry of a servant.*']

The old servitor was puzzled, and somewhat troubled in mind as well, by the boy's deep abstraction. That his master the Archbishop cherished any feelings of harshness or resentment towards the solitary little prisoner Hans refused to believe. Indeed, the Archbishop had confided to him that he merely desired to test the child's powers of writing original music. But to the old man's mind such a test was far too severe to be applied to one so young, and something in the boy's far-away look had touched his heart and tempted him to disobey the stringent command which he had received not to converse with the little writer. Even now, as he was descending the stairs, he felt almost like a criminal in leaving the boy locked in his room without a word of comfort or encouragement, and he was half inclined to turn back on some excuse to speak with the prisoner and inquire how he felt. At that moment, however, the ringing of a distant bell summoned him to his master's presence.

[Illustration: MOZART. From photo RISCHGITZ.]

Archbishop Sigismund was pacing to and fro in the dining-room when his servant entered, his forehead puckered with a frown, and his eyes fixed on the carpet. But he at once checked himself in his walk, and, turning to Hans, said abruptly: 'Have you taken the child his food?' 'Yes, your Grace,' was the reply. 'And--er--how did he seem--well, eh?' 'Quite well, your Grace.' 'You are sure of that?' a trifle anxiously. 'Perfectly sure, your Grace,' replied the old man, though he would have liked to have added a word as to his doubts concerning the child's happiness; but the Archbishop dismissed him with a wave of the hand, and, turning away, seated himself at the breakfast-table.

* * * * *

Several floors above that on which Archbishop Sigismund was eating his breakfast the little captive sat patiently toiling at his allotted task. In a sense the old man was right; for the test was as severe a one as the mind of a man who was a good judge of music, and who doubted the truth of what he had heard concerning his little captive's astonishing genius, could well have devised. The boy was required to set to music the first part of a sacred cantata founded upon the 'First and greatest Commandment'--'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength' (Mark xii. 30). The Archbishop fully realised the magnitude of the test, and he expected failure--he looked for the child to break down. The time allotted for its fulfilment was one week, at the expiration of which he would find a few boyish attempts at composition, and nothing more.

And why was Archbishop Sigismund so desirous of testing the boy's powers of composition? A short time before the date at which our story opens Leopold Mozart, Vice-Capellmeister at the Archbishop's court, had related to his master some wonderful stories of his little son Wolfgang--how the child had astonished and delighted every one by his playing; how, when the father carried him and his sister Marianne to Vienna and Paris and London, they had been invited to play at the Courts, and how little Wolfgang had been praised by the royal families and loaded with presents; and how he had already composed some wonderful things, including several sonatas for the pianoforte, and a symphony--the latter when he was only eight years old.

There was no exaggeration in Leopold Mozart's description of his child's powers, as to which, indeed, accounts from less partial sources had already reached the Archbishop's ears. None the less, however, was the old ecclesiastic inclined to attribute to a parent's pardonable pride the anticipations which the father had formed with regard to the boy's future, and more especially as those anticipations rested upon the assumption that the child was a miraculous genius. That Wolfgang could play remarkably well for a child of his age was sufficient in itself to justify the extraordinary praise which he had received; but that he was gifted to the extent of writing original music of a sort worthy to be recorded the Archbishop may be excused for doubting. At any rate, he resolved to settle the matter to his own satisfaction by setting the boy to work under conditions which precluded every chance of his being enabled to copy from the works of other composers, and also--and this was a great point with the Archbishop--of his being helped by his father. Leopold readily assented to the conditions of the test proposed by his master, and so little Wolfgang was duly installed as a close prisoner in the palace, and supplied with music-paper, pens, and ink, and a subject on which to write, in the manner in which we have already described.

And now we must leave him for a space weaving harmonies in his attic chamber whilst we recount his history up to the present point.

Born on January 27, 1756, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart had attained his third year when the father's attention was first drawn to his fondness for music. In his little daughter Marianne, who was five years older than Wolfgang, he had rejoiced to discover an extraordinary gift for playing, and it was not long ere her music-lessons from her father became a source of attraction for her little brother, who would cast aside his toys and take his stand beside the piano as soon as he perceived that Marianne's lesson was about to begin. There he would remain until the lesson was finished, listening intently to everything that was played or spoken. At other times he would amuse himself by finding simple chords on the instrument, striking them over and over again, and bending his head to catch the harmonies thus produced. At length Leopold Mozart began to teach him, half in fun at first, but very soon in earnest, for it was apparent that the child regarded the lessons seriously.

The father could not conceal his joy at the discovery of such early promise on the part of his little son, whose progress, indeed, was so rapid as to call for special care to prevent his learning too fast. Marianne had a manuscript book in which her father used to write simple pieces for her to learn, and very soon he was entering in the book similar pieces for Wolfgang.[11] The rapidity and ease with which the boy mastered

these tasks opened his father's eyes to the fact that Wolfgang possessed capacities far above those of an ordinary child. In a short time the boy began to write in the book little compositions of his own, some of them plainly showing that his skill in composing had forged beyond the point at which his tiny fingers had the power to express his ideas.

One day, when Leopold Mozart had brought Herr Schachtner, the Court trumpeter, home to dinner, they found Wolfgang busily employed with his pen. In answer to his father's inquiry what he was doing, Wolfgang replied that he was writing a concerto for the pianoforte. Leopold asked to see it, but the boy was not anxious to have his work inspected, and objected that it was not finished. 'Never mind,' said Leopold, 'let me see it. It must be something very fine.' Taking the paper into his hand, the father and his friend glanced at it curiously. The sheet was bedaubed with ink-smears which almost concealed the notes; the child had dipped his pen each time to the bottom of the ink-bottle, so that when it reached the paper it had dropped a huge blot. This had not disturbed him in the least, however, for he had merely rubbed his hand over the offending blot and proceeded with his writing.

At first sight both Leopold and his friend laughed to see the manner in which the composer had traced the notes over the smudges, but soon Schachtner observed the father's eyes fill with tears of delight and wonderment as he began to follow out the theme. 'Look, Herr Schachtner!' he cried. 'See how correct and orderly it is! Only it could never be of any use, for it is so extraordinarily difficult that no one in the world could play it.'

Wolfgang at this looked up quickly into his father's face. 'That is why it is a concerto,' he explained, with flushed cheeks. 'People must practise until they can play it perfectly. Look! This is how it goes;' and he began to play it on the piano, but only succeeded in bringing out sufficient to show his hearers what he meant it to be.

His ear for music was wonderfully fine, for when only seven years old he could detect the difference of half a quarter of a tone between two violins. It was an ear of such extreme delicacy, in fact, that anything in the shape of rude or harsh sounds caused him positive distress. On one occasion Schachtner, at the request of Leopold Mozart, who imagined that Wolfgang's aversion to loud sounds was a mere childish fancy, blew a blast upon the trumpet towards the child, but he regretted it the next moment, for the boy nearly fainted away at the shock.

'What took others months of practice to achieve came to him as a gift of God,' his father used to say; and truly there seems to have been something of the miraculous about Wolfgang's powers. His violin lessons had hardly begun when one evening, as Leopold Mozart, Herr Schachtner, and Herr Wentzl were about to play a set of six trios composed by the last-named musician, Wolfgang put in a plea that he might be allowed to play second violin! Needless to say, his request was refused as a matter of course. The child, however, persisted, and at length he was told that if he were careful to make no sound he might sit beside Herr Schachtner with his violin and bow, to make believe that he was playing.

The first trio began, but it had not proceeded far ere Schachtner's attention was drawn to the boy at his side. He was actually playing the part--and playing it correctly! The second violin ceased bowing in astonishment, and allowed Wolfgang to go on alone, which he did to the end. Schachtner and the father exchanged glances, and the former perceived that Leopold's eyes were full of tears. After this trial the boy was allowed to play in the remaining pieces, unaccompanied by Schachtner. At the conclusion, emboldened by success, he volunteered to play the first violin's part--an offer which was greeted with laughter; but, nothing daunted, he seized his violin and began, and although he made many mistakes, and was on the point of breaking down several times, he persisted to the end.

With his devotion to music and all that concerned the art, Wolfgang possessed a lovable, affectionate nature that yielded a ready obedience to his parents' wishes. For his mother, Anna Maria, and his sister Marianne he

showed great fondness, but before either of these he placed his father. 'Next to God comes papa,' he used to say. He could be very merry on occasions, but a natural seriousness which showed itself in connection with his love for music gave rise to fears that he would not survive his childhood. Music to him was all-absorbing--everything else had to yield to it, and nothing could take its place. When Herr Schachtner, who had grown very fond of the child, carried him from one room to another the march had to be accompanied by the beating of a drum, and the only toys he cared for were such as could make music. When musical sounds were not actually forthcoming the rhythmical movements of his body and limbs implied their existence beneath the surface.

The family were in poor circumstances, for Leopold Mozart had no means beyond the salary which he received from the Court. The discovery of his children's gifts, therefore, offered the father a strong inducement to turn their powers to advantage, both for the supply of the family's needs and to provide for Wolfgang and Marianne a sound education in music. With this object he determined to travel with the children, as Salzburg itself offered no facilities for making their talents known. A first experiment in January, 1762, proved so successful that in the following September they set out for Vienna with the object of playing before the Imperial Court. Wolfgang was at this time six years old, and Marianne eleven. At Linz, where they stopped for several days, they gave a successful concert under the patronage of the Governor-General of the province. Every one was delighted with the playing of the children, and they were fortunate in securing the presence of a young nobleman who happened to be visiting at the Governor's house on his way to Vienna, for he was sure to carry the news of what he had heard to the capital. From this point they continued their journey by water as far as the monastery of Ips, where they purposed resting for the night.

The grey old building, seated on the banks of the Danube, with the waters of the river lapping the base of its walls, looked invitingly restful to the travellers who sought its seclusion on that sultry September afternoon. Three friars who formed part of the travelling party entered the monastery at the same time, and on their retiring to say Mass in the chapel Wolfgang contrived to slip in behind them unperceived and to make his way into the organ-loft. Shortly afterwards the Franciscan monks, who were entertaining a party of guests in the refectory, were startled at hearing the organ pealing forth from the chapel. One of the hosts left the table to ascertain who the player could be, and, hastily returning, beckoned the company to follow him. On reaching the chapel they paused to listen, holding their breath, as their companion pointed to the tiny figure of a child seated in the loft. Was it possible, they asked themselves, that a child could produce such beautiful music? They remained standing, rooted to the spot by the enchanting strains which poured from the organ, until Wolfgang, happening to espy them, brought his voluntary to a close and crept meekly down from his perch.

[Illustration: '*They remained standing, rooted to the spot.*']

Throughout the remainder of their journey to Vienna Wolfgang was the life of the party, full of spirits and eager curiosity to learn the name and history of everything they met. At the customs-house on the frontier he made friends with the officials, and secured an easy pass for the party by playing an air on his violin. Every one was charmed with his conversation and sprightly intelligence, and, above all, with his music.

When they reached Vienna it was to find that the fame of the children's playing had preceded them through the reports of those who had witnessed the performance at Linz. A Court introduction was easily obtained, for the royal family were desirous of hearing the prodigies, and an early day was fixed for the visit to Schönbrunn. It was fortunate for Leopold Mozart that the Imperial family were devoted to art. Charles VI. was an accomplished musician; his daughter, the afterwards Empress Maria Theresa (of whom we have already heard in our story of Haydn), had from an early age shown a fondness and talent for music; whilst the Emperor Joseph not only sang well, but played the harpsichord and violoncello.

A kind and gracious welcome awaited the party on their arrival at the palace. The Emperor took to Wolfgang at once, and was so delighted with his performance that he called him 'kleinen Hexenmeister' (little magician), and forthwith set to work to test his powers to the uttermost. Not only was the boy made to play difficult

pieces at sight, but he instantly complied with the Emperor's joking suggestion that he should play with one finger. The keyboard was then covered with a cloth, so as to conceal the notes, but Wolfgang played just as finely as before, receiving for this crowning feat the loud applause of the company. The children were treated with great kindness by both the Emperor and Empress; and Wolfgang showed his affection for the august lady by climbing into her lap and giving her a hug, just as he might have done to his mother. The performance at Court was repeated on several occasions, each time with greater applause; and amongst the audience was the beautiful Marie Antoinette, who, later on, became Queen of the French. The boy evinced a strong fancy for the Princess, and one day, when he happened to slip on the polished floor and was helped to his feet by the Princess's hand, he turned to her with a grave air and said, 'You are very good, and I will marry you,' 'Why, pray?' inquired Marie, with a smile. 'Out of gratitude, of course,' responded Wolfgang, still more gravely.

He was not in the least shy at being called upon to perform before personages of the highest rank, his behaviour to all being that of a simple, unspoilt child. But when it came to the point of playing, the serious concentration of which we have before spoken would take possession of him, and everything else had to take a secondary place. Not even the Emperor himself could then claim precedence of the composer, should the latter happen to be present. 'Where is Herr Wagenseil? Is he here?' inquired Wolfgang on one occasion, when about to play a concerto composed by the Court musician. 'Pray let him come; he knows something about it.' The father understood this request to be in keeping with the boy's desire to play before a capable judge--a condition upon which he invariably insisted whenever practicable. At the bidding of the youthful performer Herr Wagenseil approached. 'Ah, Herr Wagenseil!' said Mozart, turning to him, 'I am about to play one of your concertos, and I want you to turn over for me.' The Emperor happened to be standing next to the boy, but he smilingly made way for the composer at once.

Needless to say, after the favours shown them at Court, the children at once became the rage in Vienna society. Invitations poured in from every quarter, and as for Wolfgang, all the ladies lost their hearts to the little fellow. The visit, however, was not without alloy, for Wolfgang contracted scarlet fever, and on recovery was shunned for fear of infection; but, on the whole, Leopold Mozart had good reason to be satisfied with the success of his experiment. The children were loaded with presents, but they valued none more than those which were bestowed by the hands of the royal family, Wolfgang's present consisting of a violet-coloured suit, trimmed with broad gold braid, which had been made for the Archduke Maximilian; and Marianne's of a pretty white silk dress. A painting of Wolfgang in his gala suit, which was executed at the time of their visit, is still preserved.

The following year Leopold Mozart undertook a longer journey, with the object of making Paris the end of their travels, but they stopped at various towns by the way for the purpose of giving concerts. At Frankfort the first performance was so successful that it was decided to give three more. An announcement in the newspaper at the time describes Mozart as capable of naming 'all notes played at a distance, whether singly or in chords, on the clavier, or on any other instrument, bell, glass, or clock.' Leopold also gave out as an additional attraction that Wolfgang would play with the keyboard covered--a fact which shows that the Emperor's test had not been forgotten. It was whilst they were at Frankfort that a boy of fourteen came to one of the concerts and saw Mozart in his frizzled wig and sword, and heard him play. That boy was Goethe the poet.

They stayed five months in Paris, played before the Court at Versailles, and excited astonishment and enthusiasm both there and wherever else they performed. The mother accompanied them on this long expedition, and on New Year's Day the family were conducted to the royal supper-room, where the Queen drew Wolfgang to her side, fed him with sweetmeats, and conversed with him in German.

[Illustration: '*Played before the Court at Versailles.*']

From Paris they journeyed, in April, 1764, to London, finding lodgings in Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane. London, with its crowded, busy thoroughfares, its thronged markets, and its discordant street-cries, must have

seemed a strange place to the little travellers after their experience of Continental cities. In regard to music itself, also, the contrast must have been equally striking. The English were not reckoned to be a musical nation, however much we loved music in our homes and in the simple services of our churches; moreover, there was an absence of the patronage extended to the art by the rich and powerful classes, such as one would have met with on the Continent. Hence its cultivation was slow, and pursued under immense disadvantages. Nevertheless, the English knew how to appreciate good music, and London was the centre to which all the greatest performers were attracted, because they were sure, not only of receiving the heartiest of welcomes, but of reaping more money by their performances as well. English liberality and English appreciation have always secured for our country the very best that the arts could produce.

Leopold's first care on reaching London was to obtain an introduction at Court. In this he was again fortunate, for King George III. and his Consort were exceedingly fond of music, and it was not long before an invitation came for the children to attend at the royal palace. King George showed the greatest interest in Wolfgang, placing before him a number of difficult pieces by Bach and Handel, with the request that he would play them at sight. The manner in which the boy fulfilled his tasks evoked the enthusiastic applause of the great company present at the performance, and the plaudits were redoubled when, after accompanying the Queen in a song, he selected the bass part of one of Handel's airs and improvised a charming melody to it. The King was so impressed with his powers that he would not let him go until he had tried the organ, in the playing of which Wolfgang achieved a further triumph.

June 4 was fixed for celebrating the King's birthday, and for several days before this event the coaches had been arriving in London loaded with passengers from all parts of the country. Leopold Mozart had fixed the following day--June 5--as the date for his first public concert, and as the fame of the young musicians had by this time been noised abroad, the hall was filled to overflowing. The father was staggered by the success of the concert. 'To think,' he wrote home the next day, 'that we took one hundred guineas in three hours!' That so great a sum should be willingly paid in order to hear a child of eight perform must, indeed, have been astonishing to one who had hitherto had no experience of English munificence. Many of the performers, moreover, declined to take any fee for their services--a fact which served to add to the father's gratitude and astonishment. The advertisement of the concert described Wolfgang and Marianne as 'prodigies of Nature,' and expressed the hope that Wolfgang would meet with success in a country which had afforded such marked appreciation and protection to his countryman Handel.

A few weeks later Wolfgang played the harpsichord and organ at Ranelagh Gardens, a celebrated pleasure resort of the Londoners of those days, on behalf of a public charity, and held the delighted attention of a huge crowd which had gathered to hear him. Not long after this Leopold Mozart was seized with severe illness, and when he was recovering, the family removed to Chelsea for the sake of the air and quiet. Chelsea at that time was a riverside village, and the lodgings of the Mozarts were in Five Fields, a name which conveys a pleasant suggestion of the country, but, alas! it has long since lost its ancient signification with its change to Lower Ebury Street, Pimlico.

[Illustration: '*Chelsea at that time was a riverside village.*']

As the children were not allowed to play any instrument, Wolfgang spent the time in composition, and one day he confided to Marianne that he was composing a symphony, and begged her not to forget to remind him to give a good part to the horns, the horn being a very favourite instrument with him in those days. The great work was duly completed, and the father having regained his strength, the family returned to town. They were accorded a further gracious reception at Court, and in token of his gratitude Leopold Mozart printed six of Wolfgang's sonatas for harpsichord and violin, and dedicated them to the Queen, whose acceptance of the works was accompanied by a present of fifty guineas. At the concerts which followed the overtures were all of Wolfgang's composing, and on one occasion the children won great applause by the performance of a duet for four hands, written by Wolfgang, a style of composition which was then quite new. The novelty of the prodigies, however, had to some extent worn off, and the public were by no means so eager to patronise their

performances. Leopold endeavoured to reawaken interest in their doings by announcing private exhibitions of the children's skill 'every day from twelve to three--admittance two shillings and sixpence each person,' but despite the smallness of the fee, and the fact that it included the privilege of testing the powers of the performers by the audience, the number of visitors was very small.

In July, 1765, the family left London to visit the Hague, but now for the first time heavy misfortune attended their journey. Both Wolfgang and Marianne fell ill--the latter so dangerously as to cause Leopold the deepest anxiety. No sooner had Marianne recovered than Wolfgang was struck down a second time with violent fever, and it was several weeks before he was sufficiently strong to resume his travels. During his convalescence, however, he was so eager to pursue his studies that he had a board laid across the bed to serve as a table on which to compose. Their reception at the Hague was gracious and kindly, both the Prince of Orange and his sister, Princess Caroline of Nassau-Weilburg, showing a deep interest in their playing. After leaving the Hague they paid a second visit to Paris, where they added to their former triumphs, in addition to playing at many towns by the way, and, finally, the long tour was brought to a close by the return of the family to Salzburg in November, 1766.

Up till now we have seen Mozart chiefly in the light of a musical prodigy, exciting delight and astonishment by the exhibition of his marvellous powers. By those around him, however, Wolfgang was beloved for his own sake--for the simple, affectionate boy that he was. Notwithstanding the praise which had been lavished upon him during his travels, he remained unspoilt, and, apart from his music, as child-like as ever. When not engaged in actual composition, his mind, in the course of his long journeys, had been occupied with the creation of an imaginary kingdom, peopled entirely by children, to which he had given the title of 'Rücken.' Of this kingdom he supposed himself to be king, and he was never tired of planning and arranging its buildings, drawing maps of the towns, framing the laws under which it was to be governed, and generally providing for the comfort and happiness of his subjects. It was all the outcome of a natural tenderness of heart which was equally shown in his relations with strangers and friends--a desire to place others before himself.

At times, however, he could assert himself with considerable force. On one occasion, shortly after his return to Salzburg, a gentleman of rank in the town called upon the family, and being desirous of conversing with Wolfgang, was at a loss how to address him. The formal pronoun *sie* could hardly be used to a child; *du*, on the other hand, implied a familiarity which might be resented by so celebrated an artist; the gentleman, therefore, took refuge in *wir*, and thus began: 'So *we* have been in France and England,' '*we* have been introduced at Court'; '*we* have been honoured'; when Wolfgang interrupted him hastily. 'And yet, sir, I do not remember to have seen you anywhere but in Salzburg!'

* * * * *

We must now return to the point at which we left our hero in his room in the Archbishop's palace. The little musician realises that upon his shoulders rests the burden of justifying to the Archbishop his father's expressed belief in his powers, and love and gratitude whisper to him that he cannot do too much in striving to uphold the judgment of his beloved parent. His gratitude to his father was only what might have been looked for in one so naturally thoughtful for others. Leopold Mozart had, indeed, made great sacrifices for his children, and he was prepared to go to even greater lengths of self-denial in order to procure for them a good education, and to found a musical career for the son in whose God-sent gifts he placed the most implicit faith. 'I offer my children to my country,' he wrote to a friend at this time. 'If it will have none of them, that is not my fault, and will be my country's loss.'

And so, prompted by love and gratitude, Wolfgang works on until at last the long task is finished, and the composer lays down his pen with a sigh of relief. 'What will the Archbishop think of the work? Will he laugh at it, and tell the father that he is mistaken in believing that his son can write good music? Would this week of toil be thrown away, and the sheets be cast into the fire?'

Such are the thoughts of the child-musician as he glances anxiously through the manuscript. 'Yet, no; it has some good points--as a musician he is sure of that--and surely his Grace will not fail to observe those good points.'

Mozart's fears were groundless. When the old Archbishop came to inspect the work, his face showed the pleasure and astonishment which he felt. Boyish the workmanship may have been, yet there was nothing of boyishness about the music itself. Wolfgang had taken the Italian oratorio as his model, and the result showed how completely he had mastered its forms. Such was the verdict which the connoisseurs passed upon the work, nor did those judges fail to call attention to its dignity and delicacy of expression, its well-chosen harmonies, and the flowing melodies that were a foreshadowing of the Mozart of later years. The cantata--the two remaining parts of which were composed by the Court musicians--was performed with great success during Lent, 1767, by the students of Salzburg University, and in the programme the eye of the composer met the words, 'The first part of this work was set to music by Herr Wolfgang Mozart, aged ten years.'

Wolfgang's studies had been much interrupted by travel, and now that they were home again his father began to give him regular instruction in counterpoint as a solid groundwork for future composition. There were many little breaks in these studies, however, and one which afforded Wolfgang immense delight whenever it came round was to visit the monastery of Seeon, with the monks of which he was on a footing of firm friendship. For one of the priests, known as Father Johannes, the boy had a deep affection; and whenever the good man made his appearance, Wolfgang would spring to embrace him, and, stroking his cheeks, would sing his greeting to a little air of his own:

[Illustration: Mein Han-serl! liebs Han-serl! liebs Han-serl!]

The monks were always teasing Wolfgang about his tune. On Father Johannes' fête-day the boy presented him with an offertory of his own composing, in which he introduced the little melody as a birthday greeting. The caressing little air runs through the piece, and is 'twice interrupted by the words, "Ecce Agnus Dei, qui tollit peccata mundi" (Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world), given in a quiet, serious manner that has a charming effect.' Good Father Johannes had no need to feel ashamed of the moisture which gathered in his eyes as he scanned this tender little offering of his child-friend on his birthday morning.

But the visits to the old monastery were to be interrupted by a further period of travel. Vienna was making great preparations for celebrating the betrothal of the Archduchess Josepha, who had made herself beloved of the people, and Leopold Mozart was desirous of being present with his children at the festivities. Accordingly, they set out in September, 1767, but no sooner had they arrived at the capital than they were met by the news that the Princess had been struck down with small-pox. A few days later the tidings of her death spread grief and consternation throughout the city. The dread of infection caused the nobility to flee the place, and Leopold hastened to remove the children to Olmütz. Their efforts to escape, however, were vain, for both children developed the disease, and for nine days Wolfgang was quite blind. A good Samaritan, in the person of Count von Podstatzky, Dean of Olmütz, received the family into his house, with a noble indifference to the risk which he incurred, and treated them with every kindness and consideration, so that with good nursing Wolfgang and Marianne soon recovered.

It was with renewed hopes that Leopold and his children once more bent their steps to Vienna, only, however, to meet with fresh disappointments. The Imperial family received them very kindly, but the public evinced little desire to attend their performances. The Empress lived in retirement, and the Emperor was practising a rigid economy in regard to matters of entertainment and display--an example which was followed as a matter of course by the nobility. Moreover, the public taste for art was at a very low ebb, the preference being for music of the lightest description. As if these were not sufficiently serious obstacles to contend with, the twelve-year-old musician was subjected to marked hostility on the part of the chief performers of the city, who not only held aloof from his performances, but did not scruple to vent their envy by speaking disparagingly of his powers. That his son should be thus slighted without being heard seemed to fill Leopold's

cup of bitterness to overflowing. To oppose such a phalanx of jealous rivals was impossible, and he had made up his mind to shake the dust of Vienna from his feet and return home, when the arrival of a messenger from the palace turned his sorrow into joy.

'See here, Wolfgang,' cried the delighted father, as he sought the boy's side after the departure of the royal messenger, 'is not this a recompense for our trials and waiting? Here are the Emperor's commands to you to compose an opera--an opera, mark you!--for performance at the Royal Theatre!' and Leopold gave the astonished Wolfgang a hearty embrace, as he thrust the important missive into the boy's hand.

Wolfgang read the letter through with the seriousness which always characterised his manner when his beloved art was mentioned, and then, lifting his face to his father's, he threw his arms around Leopold's neck, exclaiming as he did so, 'It shall be done, papa--the Emperor's commands shall be obeyed!'

Fired with zeal to deserve the confidence thus reposed in his powers, Mozart set himself to work to accomplish his gigantic task. In a short time, with assiduous labour, he had produced no fewer than five hundred and fifty-eight pages of music, and 'La finta Semplice,' as the opera was called, was ready for rehearsal. In the meanwhile, however, the envious ones had formed themselves into a cabal with the object of hindering, and, if possible, preventing its production. All kinds of mean and untrue things were whispered about the work, of which not a single note had yet been seen or heard by any of these detractors. The music was declared to be worthless, and when this slander had been disproved by the testimony of those who were capable judges, another sprang up to the effect that the work was the production, not of Mozart himself, but of his father. This, too, was swept aside only to be supplanted by a fresh outburst of jealousy. Before long these evil reports found their way to the singers and performers, who, from being at first loud in their praises of the opera, began to express a disinclination to take part in the performance, for fear of losing their reputation. Then Affligio, the manager who had undertaken to produce the work, in like manner began to draw back, and put off the rehearsals from time to time. Finally, after a series of such postponements, when brought to bay by Leopold's insistence, the manager declared that he would produce the opera if the father desired it, but that it should not benefit the Mozarts, as he would take care that it should be hissed off the stage. The Emperor was powerless to interfere, as Affligio held the theatre independently of the Court, and nothing remained to be done but to withdraw the opera.

This was a great blow to Mozart and his father, but, though momentarily crushed by disappointment, they comforted each other with the hope that the work would see the light at a later period. It was now imperative that they should return to Salzburg immediately, more especially as Leopold had received an intimation from the Archbishop that his salary must cease so long as he stayed away. Their circumstances were, in fact, much straitened owing to the ill success of their visit, and during the weary months of suspense and waiting they had been living upon the profits of their previous travels. They were not allowed to leave Vienna, however, without a ray of sunshine to cheer them on their homeward journey. Wolfgang had written an operetta, 'Bastien und Bastienne,' founded upon a burlesque of one of Rousseau's operas, and he had the pleasure of hearing his little work performed before a select company of connoisseurs, and of receiving their praises. Nor would the Emperor let him depart without a further sign of royal favour, for he was commanded to write a Mass, an offertorium, and a trumpet concerto to celebrate the dedication of a new chapel in the city. The occasion was an important one, for the ceremony was graced by the presence of the Imperial Court, and it must have been a happy moment for Wolfgang when, having conducted his compositions, he bowed his acknowledgments of the hearty applause which followed. With this comforting assurance of the royal regard was brought to a close an expedition which to both father and son had been filled with trial and disappointment.

Old Archbishop Sigismund, too, was forward in showing his sympathy with Wolfgang on his return to Salzburg; for with a kindness which was unexpected even at the hands of one who had already proved himself to be a true friend, he gave orders that 'La finta Semplice' should be performed in his palace. It was a fitting reward for the Archbishop to bestow upon one whom he had subjected to so severe a test, and both Mozart

and his father were full of gratitude. Sigismund, moreover, showed his appreciation of Mozart's genius by making him his concertmeister, though no salary was attached to the appointment. As regards the opera itself, as Mozart was shortly to write a work of a much higher character, not much need be said; at the same time, when we learn that the best judges of the day pronounced it to be in many respects superior to the operas which were then in possession of the stage, and that it pointed 'unmistakably to a glorious future for its composer,' we may appreciate the remark with which one who was himself a great musical judge sums up the opinion passed upon Mozart's first opera: 'Surely, this is extraordinary praise for the work of a boy!'

Leopold Mozart was now resolved upon undertaking a journey to Italy with a view to completing Wolfgang's musical education. At that day Italy stood foremost in the world as the home of music. Of Italy could it be truly said, as it could be said of no other country, that music was native to the soil. The craving for music pervaded every class--to prince, and peer, and peasant alike, music was as natural a possession as the very air they breathed. It was bound up with the people's sentiments and passions, to which it afforded the truest expression, and it was connected to an equal degree with their surroundings and conditions of life. Consequently, every facility existed for the development and encouragement of the art, whilst on every hand there was a steady demand for the best that that art could produce. Thus, as has been well said, there came to be formed in Italy 'a sort of musical climate, in which artists found it easy to breathe.' More than this, it became evident to musicians of other countries, as the years went on, that he who aspired to do great things with his art, and to establish a reputation for himself as singer, player, or composer, must imbibe this atmosphere--for a time, at least--and put the finishing touches to his education under the influence of the Italian schools of composition and execution.

In respect to musical art Germany and Italy were rivals. The music of Germany was to a very great extent independent; but the spirit of creation in Germany was not so universally diffused as in Italy, being, as a matter of fact, chiefly confined to the northern Protestant portion of the country. Again, the operas performed at the German Courts were Italian; the music to be heard in the German Catholic churches was written by Italian composers; whilst both singers and performers were either drawn from, or had been educated in, Italy. The two countries, as we have said, were rivals, and every succeeding year witnessed the growth of this spirit in Germany; but for long Italy held the supremacy in instrumental as well as in every other class of music, as the result of that inborn love of music which pervaded every grade of society throughout the country.

And so in December, 1769, Mozart, who was now thirteen years of age, came to Italy to listen to the brightly-clad peasants singing at their work in the sunny fields; to watch them dancing on the vine-trellised terraces that overlooked the deep blue waters of the lakes; to witness the wonderful processions of the priests through the narrow streets of the towns; and, above all, to hear the grand music in the cathedrals.

Mozart's bright, happy nature was never more in evidence than on the occasion of this journey, which he seemed to regard as having been planned solely for pleasure. His merry jokes and light-hearted conversation served to ingratiate him in the affections of all. Leopold kept up a regular correspondence with those at home, but Wolfgang never failed to add a little letter of his own, addressed either to his mother or to Marianne, in which he joked about the incidents of the journey, the people whom they met, or the friends they had left behind. The letters were a mixture of German and Italian, with an occasional bit of Salzburg *patois* thrown in to make Marianne laugh. But he relapsed into a serious style whenever he referred to his playing or the performers whom they had heard in the course of their travels.

The young musician had, indeed, no lack of work before him, for, in addition to the regular performances which formed the chief business of the tour, he was set difficult problems to solve at sight by the various professors who desired to test his powers. The fame of his playing preceded him everywhere, so that the further they penetrated into Italy the more numerous became the demands to hear him. At Roveredo, where it was announced that he would play the organ at St. Thomas's Church, the crowd was so great that the monks of the adjoining monastery had to form a circle around Mozart to keep back the press until the steps leading to the organ-loft had been gained. The vast audience listened spellbound to the performance, and then refused to

disperse until they had gained a glimpse of the boy-player. At Verona, where another triumph awaited him, and where one of his symphonies was performed, the Receiver-General ordered his portrait to be painted, and wrote a letter to the mother full of warm praise of her wonderful son.

On reaching Milan the chief musician of the city subjected Mozart to the severest tests, from which he emerged victorious, and after astonishing everybody by his playing and improvisation, he was commissioned to write an opera for the ensuing season. It was at Bologna, however, that he met with the most flattering reception. The city contained many artists of the highest rank, over whom Padre Martini, the famous composer of Church music and the first connoisseur of the country, reigned like a king. Martini was, in fact, worshipped by Italian lovers of the art, who deferred to his opinion in all questions affecting music. But the Padre was very old, and had given up attending concerts, so that every one was astonished when the coming of Mozart brought the aged musician from his retirement to form one of the brilliant gathering assembled at Count Pallavicini's mansion to witness the boy's playing. It was a great compliment to Mozart, but an even greater compliment to the country from which he came, and Wolfgang put forth his best powers, with the result that he earned the judge's warmly expressed commendation. Leopold was overjoyed at Wolfgang's success, and opined that Bologna would form a centre from which the boy's fame would spread all over Italy, an opinion that was justified by the results. As for Martini, he took to Wolfgang at once, insisted that he should visit him regularly whilst they remained in Milan, and gave him fugue subjects to work out at his lodgings. Mozart worked hard at these tasks, and the Padre expressed himself as perfectly satisfied with the boy's knowledge of composition.

The journey to Rome, in fact, was a succession of triumphs, which it would require a volume by itself to attempt to describe in detail. At Florence he was invited to play before the Court of the Archduke Leopold, and solved, 'as easily as if he were eating a bit of bread,' the difficult problems proposed by the Court music-director, who was regarded as one of the best contrapuntists of the day. Here he met Thomas Linley, a boy of about his own age, the son of the English composer, who was studying the violin under Nardini. Linley's playing was already exciting much attention, and as he showed great promise in his compositions as well, people were building high hopes as to his future. Mozart and he instantly became close friends, and when the time came for parting neither could restrain his tears. They were destined never to meet again, for a few years later poor Linley was drowned through the upsetting of a boat whilst on a pleasure excursion in Lincolnshire. Mozart never forgot the bright friendship which had flashed into his life during those few days spent at Florence, and many years afterwards he would refer in terms of endearment to the young genius whose career had been thus untimely cut off.

It was Holy Week when Mozart and his father reached Rome, and the city lay under the spell of that solemn time. The travellers at once bent their steps to the Sistine Chapel in order to hear the celebrated *Miserere*, written by Allegri, performed. Wolfgang had been looking forward to this moment during the latter stages of his journey with the deepest interest. He had heard from his father of the jealous guarding of this wonderful work by the Romans; how it was expressly forbidden to be performed in any other building than the Sistine; and how the choristers were under strict injunctions not to remove their parts of the score from the chapel. His anxiety, therefore, to hear a work of which the fame had spread throughout the whole of Europe, had hastened his progress to the Holy City.

It would, indeed, be difficult to imagine anything more beautiful and impressive than the singing of this wonderful *Miserere*.[12] It is introduced into the solemn service called 'Tenebræ' (Darkness), during which the six tall altar candles, by which the chapel is illuminated, are extinguished one by one, until only a single candle is left, and this is removed to a space behind the altar. Then, in almost complete darkness, the *Miserere* begins. A single voice is heard singing the beautiful antiphon, as the short piece which ushers in the *Miserere* is called; the sweet notes die away into silence--a silence so profound that the listener hardly dares to breathe lest he should disturb it. Then at length the first sad notes of the Supplication are heard, like the softest wailing of an anguished spirit; they gradually increase in force until the whole building is ringing with the plaintive melody in all its thrilling intensity.

The solemnity of the service and the beauty of the music left a deep impression on the mind of the young musician who heard it for the first time. Leopold Mozart, too, was greatly affected by what he had heard, and when they left the chapel to seek their lodgings neither of them spoke a word. Once within doors, however, Wolfgang asked for pen and paper, and, sitting down there and then, he wrote out the whole of the *Miserere* from memory. On Good Friday, when the work was to be performed for the second time, he took his copy with him to the Sistine, and, concealing it in his cocked hat, he made one or two corrections in pencil as the service proceeded. It was not long before the news of this extraordinary feat reached the ears of the Papal musicians, and Wolfgang received orders to perform his version in the presence of Christoforo, the principal soprano of the Sistine, who could not conceal his amazement at finding it correct in every particular.

No better introduction than this was needed to secure for Mozart a cordial welcome at the houses of the great, and during their stay in Rome they were fêted to their hearts' content.

At Naples, which was their next stopping-place, Wolfgang played at the Conservatorio alla Pietà before a brilliant gathering, and excited so much astonishment that several of the audience openly declared that his powers were derived from a ring which he wore upon his finger. 'He wears a charm!' they cried; and when Mozart, hearing their remarks, smilingly laid aside the supposed magic ring, and played even more brilliantly than before, the enthusiasm was redoubled. After this the Neapolitans vied with one another to show them honour and attention. A carriage was provided for their use, in which they drove about amongst the fashionable crowds on the Strada Nuova and the quay, on which occasions Leopold wore a maroon-coloured coat of watered silk, with sky-blue facings, and Wolfgang one of apple-green, with rose-coloured facings and silver buttons.

We have not space, however, in which to describe all the events of Mozart's wonderful tour, and so we may only mention how they returned to Rome at the instance of the Pope, who not only granted Wolfgang a private audience, but bestowed upon him the Order of the Golden Spur, thus entitling him to be styled 'Signor Cavaliere Amadeo'; how, when next he wrote to Marianne, he jokingly concluded his letter as follows: 'Mademoiselle, j'ai l'honneur d'être votre très-humble serviteur et frère, Chevalier de Mozart'; and how his portrait was once more painted in Rome by Battoni. A still greater distinction was conferred upon him on his arrival at Bologna, for the Accademia Filarmonica admitted him to their ranks as 'compositore,' notwithstanding that their statutes required that members should be at least twenty years of age. To test his qualifications for election he was given an antiphon to set in four parts, and locked up in a room to fulfil his task. At the expiration of half an hour he asked to be let out, to the astonishment of the officials, who could scarcely credit that he had completed the work in so short a time. The composition was then examined by the professors, who next voted upon it, and finally, amidst clapping of hands, it was declared that Mozart had been duly elected.

After some further intercourse with Padre Martini, who, before leaving, presented Mozart with a testimonial, the travellers proceeded to Milan, where Wolfgang set to work at once on the opera which he had been commissioned to write. It was a great task, and we find him writing to his mother and sister, begging them to pray for its success, 'so that they may all live happily together again,' 'Mitridate,' as the work was called, was at length finished, after three months' hard labour, some of which was devoted to fighting the opposition emanating from both singers and rivals. The first performance took place on December 26, 1770, and was conducted by Wolfgang, whose appearance in the orchestra was the signal for a great outburst of cheering, to be repeated again and again as the opera proceeded. Then came loud cries of 'Evviva il Maestro! Evviva il Maestrino!' in response to which Mozart gravely bowed his acknowledgments, and at the same time bent his glance towards the spot where his father sat with his eyes covered with his hand, in order to hide the tears of pride and joy which filled them to overflowing. Mingled with these feelings, however, Leopold felt a deep thankfulness in his heart that he had been spared to watch over his son's career, and to be a witness of his success.

'Mitridate' had indeed succeeded even beyond their utmost hopes; it was repeated twenty times before

crowded houses, and its success brought with it the honour of election as 'Maestro di Capella' (the Italian equivalent of the German title 'Capellmeister') by the Accademia Filarmonica. Mozart's position was now assured, and he had nothing more to fear from intrigues or cabals. So that when, in August, 1771, we find him once more in Milan, he is on cordial terms with all his fellow-artists, and hard at work composing a dramatic serenata for the approaching marriage of the Archduke Ferdinand with Princess Beatrice of Modena. He is working amidst a Babel of sounds, for in the room above dwells a violinist, in the room below another, whilst a singing-master lives next door, and an oboist opposite. But he is not dismayed. 'It is capital for composing,' he writes to Marianne; 'it gives one new ideas.'

The serenata, 'Ascanio in Alba'--an allegorical pastoral play--was a great success, and Hasse, a master of opera, who had also composed a work for the occasion, was fain to admit that he stood nowhere compared with Mozart. 'This boy,' he exclaimed, 'will cause us all to be forgotten.' The Empress, who had commissioned Mozart to write the work, was so pleased with the result that, in addition to the stipulated fee, she presented the composer with a gold watch with her portrait set in diamonds at the back.

Our story of Mozart's life has now reached the point which marks the beginning of a series of misfortunes and trials of a far more serious character than those with which his earlier struggles for fame had been associated. There was no foreshadowing of these troubles at the moment when the travellers set out on their return journey to Salzburg, whither they were carrying the hopes which had been built upon their successes in Milan. Shortly after their return, however, to their great grief the good Archbishop Sigismund died, and both Leopold and Wolfgang realised that they had lost their best protector and friend. The news of the appointment of Hieronymus, Count von Colloredo, as his successor was received by the townspeople with feelings of displeasure and even dismay, for it was well known that the character of Hieronymus was almost entirely opposite to that which had made Sigismund beloved by his subjects. The Mozarts, father and son, were soon made to taste the bitterness of the change. Appreciation for art formed no part of the new Archbishop's nature, and he lost no opportunity of showing his contempt for those who followed it as a profession. Notwithstanding the fame which had now gathered about Mozart, whose latest opera, 'La finta Giardiniera,' had been produced in Munich, at the carnival of 1775, with the greatest success, the Archbishop persistently refused to recognise his genius, or to grant any facilities for enabling his dependents to better their condition of life. Once, during his master's absence in Vienna, Leopold had gone to the capital with Wolfgang, hoping to be able to secure some appointment at the Court which might relieve them of their necessities, but the effort was in vain. To his wife he wrote: 'Things will and must alter; take comfort, God will help us.' But they returned empty-handed.

Despite the fact that monetary anxieties were daily growing more pressing, and the aspect of affairs at the Salzburg Court remained as hopeless as ever, Wolfgang worked at his compositions with untiring diligence, and by the time he had attained his twenty-first year he had accumulated a mass of music that embraced every branch of the art, in addition to numberless carefully worked out studies of other masters. But Hieronymus viewed his Concertmeister's industry with disdain. Even when, by happening to be in Vienna shortly after 'La finta Giardiniera' had taken the Viennese by storm, he had been made the unwilling recipient of congratulations at the hands of the nobility upon the possession of so gifted a composer, he had contrived to evade an admission of Mozart's genius by protesting, with a sardonic smile and outspread hands, that he knew nothing about such matters. Even this disclaimer, however, did not prevent the Archbishop from making use of Wolfgang's powers whenever their display could be made to add to his own glorification. But nothing softened his ill-nature; no degree of praise which was justly awarded either to Mozart as a composer, or to his father for the care with which he had conducted his son's musical training, availed to remove or even to mitigate the deeply-rooted dislike which Hieronymus bore to father and son. He professed to regard them both in the light of professional beggars, and he never lost an opportunity of speaking slightingly of Wolfgang's compositions.

It was not long before the relations with the Archbishop became strained to breaking-point. Wolfgang was now twenty-one, with a reputation as a composer, but with no settled future; it was clear that nothing was to

be hoped for by his remaining in Salzburg, and Leopold therefore resolved to undertake a professional tour with his son. For this purpose a prolonged leave of absence was necessary; but the Archbishop met Leopold's application with a curt refusal.

Even Wolfgang's docile nature would bend no further under such treatment, and he forthwith requested to be relieved of his duties. The salary connected with his post of Concertmeister was trifling in amount, and Hieronymus was fully aware of the value of the services which he professed to estimate so lightly. But that one for whom he had expressed contempt should thus presume to take action on his own behalf rendered him furious. He would have nothing to do with either father or son. 'After the Gospel, you are both free to seek your fortunes wherever you please!' was his reply to Wolfgang's application. This hasty decision, however, he afterwards retracted with respect to Leopold, and the father realised that the only course left open to him was to allow Wolfgang and his mother to travel together.

Arrangements were accordingly made, and early in the morning of September 23, 1777, the carriage which was to convey the travellers drew up at the door of Leopold's house. Now that the actual moment of parting had arrived the father could with difficulty restrain his emotion, and it was only when the carriage had driven off that he remembered that he had forgotten to bestow a blessing on his dear ones. Rushing to the window, he stretched forth his hand, to find that he was too late--the travellers were already out of sight.

Wolfgang's spirits, however, rose as the towers of Salzburg faded into the haze of that September morning. No sorrow of parting could stifle the sense of freedom that was springing up in his breast; he had escaped from a town which was intimately associated in his mind with tyranny and oppression, to seek his fortune in a new and wider world, where he was confident that his gifts would meet with the recognition they deserved. Thus buoyed with hope and confidence he entered upon a sea of difficulty and trouble.

[Illustration: '*The carriage which was to convey the travellers drew up at the door.*']

At Munich, where they first halted, Wolfgang endeavoured to secure an engagement at the Elector's Court; but there was no vacancy, and although his playing brought forth many promises of future help in addition to applause, the prospect of obtaining immediate engagements fell empty to the ground. 'Fine words and bravissimos pay neither the postboy nor the host,' wrote the practical Leopold Mozart, when Wolfgang applied to him for advice, and so mother and son went on to Mannheim. Here, indeed, the prospects seemed to be much brighter. Mannheim was a thoroughly musical town, and Mozart soon won both esteem and admiration at the hands of the musicians. The Elector, Karl Theodor, maintained an excellent orchestra, and with Cannabich, the conductor, Wolfgang soon became great friends, giving music-lessons to his daughter Rose. Nevertheless, albeit so gifted, and capable of winning applause wherever he played, Mozart was constantly looking for work that would bring in sufficient ready-money to maintain himself and his mother, until something of a permanent nature could be found for him. But here again disappointment followed disappointment. He was desirous of staying the winter in Mannheim, in order to join some friends who were leaving for Paris in the spring, but he must first find something to do. He seized upon the opportunity of playing before the Elector and the Electress as a possible means of securing their children as pupils, and for some time success in this direction seemed imminent. But his application was put off from day to day; weeks passed over, and nothing was settled.

Amidst these hopes and delays Leopold Mozart was writing from Salzburg urging Wolfgang to decide upon a course of action. He reminded him that he had put his time to but little use up to the present, and that it was becoming increasingly difficult for him to supply the money for their maintenance. Wolfgang must give him longer notice of their change of plans, as 'otherwise all will go wrong'; and he warns his son to be careful lest he be stranded without money--and 'no money meant no friends.'

There was justice in these urgings and warnings, for it was a fact that to Wolfgang life in Mannheim had become so pleasant and easy-going that it was time that he should be reminded of the call of duty. In the midst

of intercourse with friends, who were only too willing to second his wishes to remain in Mannheim, Mozart was in danger of forgetting the sacrifices which were being made for him at home. Both father and daughter were indeed denying themselves and working hard to keep up the supplies of money. In addition to being heavily in debt on Wolfgang's account, Leopold had increased his labours by giving music-lessons at a small fee, whilst Marianne was practising all manner of shifts to make ends meet. Each fresh disappointment which her brother's letters conveyed caused 'Nannerl's' tears to flow with sympathy and vexation, and added to her father's anxieties.

The latest letter had brought the depressing intelligence that, after tedious delays, the Elector had decided that he could not see his way to offering Mozart the engagement which he sought. Nothing remained to be done, therefore, but to relinquish the idea of wintering in Mannheim. But coupled with this announcement of failure, Wolfgang had let drop some complaints on the subject of lesson-giving which aroused his father to the pitch of administering a severe rebuke. Wolfgang's protest was to the effect that so long as he was called upon to seek work in the shape of music-lessons at small fees, the time which he felt ought to be given to composition must suffer serious curtailment, with the result that his progress would inevitably be hindered, if it were not brought to an actual standstill. There was doubtless sound sense behind this protest, for who could deny that Wolfgang's aims were high, or that he possessed the power to accomplish great things with his art? It is, however, easy to understand that his expressed disinclination to give music-lessons touched his father on a tender point. 'And so,' Leopold writes, with more bitterness than he has ever shown before in his letters--'and so you will throw away chances of earning money, whilst your old father has to run from house to house for a wretched pittance in order to support himself and his daughter, and to send the little that remains to you, instead of paying his debts!' He begs Wolfgang to reflect whether he was not treating him as hardly as the Archbishop himself. Then follows a remark which refers to Mozart's proneness to place undue reliance on promises, instead of using his own judgment. 'You have judgment,' says Leopold, 'but a trifle too much of conceit and self-love, and you are inclined to be over-confiding, and to open your heart to every one you meet.'

However, Wolfgang's stay in Mannheim was, after all, prolonged over the winter, through the efforts which his friends made to procure him work; but when the spring came round, and the three musicians whom he had promised to accompany to Paris were ready to start upon their journey, he found an excuse for letting them go without him. Leopold Mozart was a deeply religious man, and when he learnt from Wolfgang that his reason for breaking off his intended journey was that his three companions had not a particle of religion in them, he approved his son's judgment without expressing any surprise at the tardiness of his discovery.

But Mozart had a deeper reason, which he was not so anxious to disclose, and which perhaps he could not, without knowing his mind exactly at the time, have explained. Be this as it may, however, Mozart could never have been surer of anything than that his father would have disapproved in the strongest manner of the feelings which were swaying him at that moment. Yet if Leopold had but read between the lines of his son's letters he must have seen why it was that Wolfgang was seemingly so blind to his own interests, and so forgetful of his duty to those who loved him at home. The fact is Wolfgang was in love. And if the vigilant eye of the kindest and tenderest father that ever watched with unremitting care over the welfare of a gifted son could have pierced the space that separated him from Wolfgang at the moment when he was perusing that letter of excuse, it might have lighted upon the following little scene which was being enacted in the parlour of a small house in Mannheim.

A young man is seated at the harpsichord playing the accompaniment of a song from the manuscript before him. Every now and then he lifts his eyes from the music-sheet to let them rest upon the fair young face of the maiden standing beside him, and that oft-repeated glance reveals more than admiration for the singer's notes, pure and melodious as her singing is--more than a recognition of the singer's charms, sweet beyond question as those charms are; it reveals, in a word, the love which is burning within the player's breast, a love as yet unspoken, but beside which even art herself must for the time sink her supremacy.

Aloysia Weber, the fifteen-year-old maiden for whom Mozart had conceived this attachment, was the second daughter of Fridolin Weber, a member of the Elector's band. The young composer had been attracted first by her voice, and later by her personal beauty, and both of these gifts had gained in power through the sympathy he felt for the family who were in poor circumstances. He longed to be able to help them; Aloysia's singing was of a high order, and only needed to be heard in public to secure the approval of the connoisseurs; he had already written a song specially for her, and she sang it as well as he could wish. Thus he wrote to his father, in the hope of enlisting the latter's interest in his protégé, adding that he only wished his father could hear her sing. But he gave no indication in the letter of those deeper feelings which animated his desire to be of use to the family.

The father, however, was soon to receive a communication which startled him into a knowledge of the true state of affairs. Wolfgang had formed a project for helping the Webers by undertaking a journey to Italy in company with Aloysia and her father, with the object of writing an opera in which Aloysia should appear as prima donna. Their plans would embrace, with Leopold's sanction, a visit to Salzburg by the way, when Wolfgang would have the pleasure of introducing the fair singer to his parent and 'Nannerl,' by whom he was sure she would be welcomed and beloved. Leopold was distracted by the proposal. 'What!' he writes, in reply to Wolfgang's letter, 'are you so mad as to prefer a vagabond life to Mannheim and fame! Away with you to Paris, and that immediately. Take up your position among those who are really great--*aut Cæsar aut nihil*. From Paris the name and fame of a man of talent spreads throughout the world.' The father wisely refrained from making any direct allusion to the subject of Mozart's attachment, trusting to the latter's sense of what was due to one who had made such sacrifices on his behalf. His trust was not misplaced; duty and affection prevailed, and with a heavy heart Mozart yielded to his father's wishes, and his love-dream came to an end. His ready compliance brought a most affectionate letter from Leopold, in which he assures his dear Wolfgang that he does not entertain the least mistrust of him; on the contrary, he has perfect confidence and hope in his filial love. His good judgment, if he will only listen to it, will direct him how to act. As for himself, he is resigned to separation, and he adjures Wolfgang to live the life of a good Catholic Christian. 'Love God and fear Him,' he continues; 'pray to Him sincerely and devoutly, and let your conduct be such that, should I never see you again, my death-bed may be free from anxiety. From my heart I bless you.'

The departure for Paris was now fixed, but the leave-taking with the Webers was not accomplished without tears, for the family insisted on regarding Wolfgang as their 'greatest benefactor.' Aloysia was encouraged to hope for better things, for she had already been heard in public on several occasions through Mozart's influence, and now she was to be placed under the care of a celebrated singer named Raaff, who had undertaken to carry on the training of her beautiful voice, and to assist in bringing her out.

The hopes which Leopold Mozart had built upon Wolfgang's prospects of success in Paris were not destined to be fulfilled. The enthusiasm which he had evoked as a marvellous prodigy was not to be elicited by his matured powers as a young man, and the influence necessary to enforce his claims to be recognised as a composer of standing was lacking. Three months passed away in more or less unsuccessful endeavour, and then the mother, who had been his companion and comforter throughout this long period of trial and travel, was struck down by serious illness, and on July 3, 1778, she breathed her last in her son's arms. Wolfgang's first thought in the hour of sorrow was for his father, and he wrote to an old friend at Salzburg, begging him to break the sad news as gently as possible. When he knew that this had been done he himself wrote a letter to his father, full of sympathy and affection.

Mozart now determined to leave Paris at once, and his father was the more willing to acquiesce in this step because an offer had been made by Archbishop Hieronymus to instal Wolfgang in the place of the Court organist, who had just died, and to give him a salary of five hundred florins, with permission to absent himself whenever he might be called upon to conduct one of his own operas. The offer had also attached to it the near prospect of being made full Capellmeister at the Archbishop's Court. Leopold urged Wolfgang's acceptance, pointing out that their joint income would in such case amount to one thousand florins a year--a sum that would enable them to discharge their debts and live in comparative comfort.

Mozart, it must be owned, viewed the prospect of a return to Salzburg under the implied conditions with positive dismay, but he could not withstand his father's appeal. He set out from Paris immediately, promising himself only one indulgence before entering upon the bondage which lay before him--and that was to take Mannheim on his homeward journey. Arrived at Mannheim, however, he found that the Webers had migrated to Munich, whither the Elector had already gone to take up his new residence. After exchanging greetings with a few old friends, therefore, he bent his steps to Munich, hoping to find consolation in a brief renewal of the happy hours which had left so strong an impression on his memory. But, alas! his disappointments found their crown within the Webers' dwelling. The family, it is true, received him as warmly as of old; but she to whom his glance was first directed showed in her eyes nothing more than a friendly welcome, and Mozart was quick to perceive that his hopes had here no abiding-place. Aloysia was fickle, and her affection had so far waned as to be unable to withstand even the test afforded by Mozart's change of dress. When he appeared before her with black buttons sewn upon his red coat, after the French fashion, to indicate that he was in mourning, she resented the innovation; and, after a brief intercourse, in which she plainly showed that she had forgotten him for whom her tears had flowed some months before, they parted.

It was with a mind stored with invaluable experience, but with a heart saddened and sore by disappointed love and ambition, that Mozart once more entered the portal of his Salzburg home. If anything could have cheered him at that moment and served to dispel the clouds which seemed to obscure his future, it would have been the warmth of the welcome bestowed upon him by the inmates of that home which he had left nearly two years before filled with the brightest anticipations. And, indeed, it was little short of triumphant, this greeting and homage which poured in upon him from father, sister, and friends. In *their* eyes, at least, his successes were unshadowed by his failures; to them he was still the Mozart, the genius amongst musicians, who was yet to leave his mark upon the roll of fame. But, grateful as he felt for these proofs of sincere affection and esteem, his aversion to Salzburg and his duties at the Court remained in full force, and it was with a new-kindled joy that he set forth once more for Munich, in November, 1780, to complete and produce the opera which he had been commissioned to write for the carnival of the following year.

To the realisation of these the first-fruits of his previous sojourn at Munich Mozart was to owe the establishment of his fame as a dramatic composer of the first rank. 'Idomeneo,' as the new opera was called, fulfilled the high expectations which his Munich friends had formed from the composer's powers. Its reception at the rehearsals rendered success a certainty, and the Elector, who was present, joined with the performers in expressing his unqualified approval. At home the progress of the work was watched with the deepest interest. 'The universal subject of conversation here,' writes Leopold to his son, 'is your opera.' The first performance took place on January 29, and as the Archbishop was then staying in Vienna, Leopold and Marianne journeyed to Munich to witness Wolfgang's triumph. It was a proud and happy moment for all three, and the enthusiastic applause which shook the theatre at the close of the performance must have seemed to the old father, who stood gazing with swimming eyes at the sea of waving hands around him, to set the seal of greatness upon his son's career.

Mozart was soon, however, to taste the bitterness of his bondage by receiving orders from the Archbishop to attend him in Vienna. From the moment of his arrival the arrogant ecclesiastic gave him to understand that, except when his services were required for his master's glorification, he would be expected to take his place amongst the servants of the household, to dine at their table, and to receive the like treatment and consideration. The indignities to which he was subjected beneath the Archbishop's roof, however, did not for a time prevent Mozart from feeling happy, for the aristocracy as a body welcomed him with enthusiasm, and invited him to their houses to dine. To Hieronymus, on the other hand, who was cordially detested by the nobility, and especially by the Emperor Joseph, the fact that one of his musicians--a mere domestic of his establishment--was made the object of all this attention on the part of the great people of Vienna, was in itself sufficient to rekindle the hatred which he had always felt towards Mozart. It was a purely selfish feeling which had induced the Archbishop to reattach Mozart to his Court; and now, when he found that requests were flowing in from the nobility to be allowed to hear the composer play at their own houses, where Hieronymus himself was far from being a welcome guest, he gave full rein to his spite, with the result that

Mozart's life speedily became unbearable.

The culminating point was reached when the Emperor purposely left the Archbishop out of the list of guests invited to his summer residence at Laxenburg. Enraged at the slight thus offered to him, Hieronymus before leaving Vienna sought to gratify a portion of his revenge by turning Mozart from his doors. Mozart had just before made up his mind to quit the Archbishop's service, for his treatment had of late become unendurable, and there was every prospect of his being able to make a living in Vienna. He now requested an audience for the purpose of ascertaining his position. Hieronymus seized the occasion for showering upon the head of his Concertmeister all the abuse which he could summon to his aid. Calling him 'villain,' 'low wretch,' 'low fellow of the streets,' the Archbishop declared that none of his servants treated him so badly. 'Your Grace is dissatisfied with me, then?' said Mozart. 'What! you dare to employ threats! Fex! there is the door! I will have nothing more to do with such a vile wretch!' 'Nor I with, you,' was Mozart's retort, as he quitted the room.

Mozart was now virtually free from the intolerable burden under which he had suffered, but his actual discharge was not obtained without further indignity and insult. Leopold Mozart received the news of the rupture with alarm, and endeavoured to induce Wolfgang to reconsider his decision not to return to Salzburg. But even though an official acceptance of his resignation was not then forthcoming, Mozart made a stand for his independence. 'Do not ask it,' he wrote to his father in reply. 'Demand of me anything but that. The very thought of it makes me tremble with rage. I hate the Archbishop almost to frenzy!'

We must pass over the time of struggle which followed the severance of Mozart's connection with the Archbishop, when he found himself with only a single pupil as a visible means of support, but, fortunately, not without friends, and come to the point when, for the second time, he fell in love. He was lodging with his old friends the Webers. Fridolin Weber was dead; Aloysia had married, and was well known as a professional singer; and Madame Weber, with her two unmarried daughters, was living, in reduced circumstances, in Vienna. Mozart's prospects had greatly improved, for his latest opera, 'Entführung aus dem Serail,' had brought him increased fame, both in Vienna and in Prague, and he had secured the patronage of many distinguished personages, in addition to that of the Emperor Joseph. Bachelorhood to him now seemed insupportable. 'To my mind,' he says in a letter to his father, 'a bachelor lives only half a life,' and so he had determined to marry. The object of his choice was Constanze Weber, the third daughter, and, despite Leopold's remonstrances, Mozart made her his bride on August 16, 1782.

[Illustration: "*There is the door!*"]

His marriage marked the beginning of a new era of struggle, for Constanze, though a devoted wife, was incapable of managing a home, and as their means were uncertain to start with, they were soon involved in a sea of monetary troubles, from which there seemed to be no prospect of their extricating themselves. An unpropitious note had been struck on the very day of the wedding, when it must have appeared to Mozart that he had committed a crime in robbing the family of one of its members. 'As soon as we were married,' he wrote to his father, 'my wife and I both began to weep. All present, even the priest, were touched at seeing us so moved, and wept too.'

With the friends and influence which Mozart's genius had ranged upon his side it was hoped that a post of importance would by this time have been found for him in Vienna. The bestowal of a Court appointment would have relieved him of much of the drudgery of teaching and the anxiety of tiding over periods when pupils and engagements were scarce, but the Emperor, despite his sincere interest in all that concerned the composer, showed a seeming disinclination to make a proposal. Yet there could be no doubt of the appreciation in which Mozart was held at the Court, for in a letter to his father at this time he quotes a remark made by Prince Kaunitz to the Archduke Maximilian on the subject of the Emperor's inaction with regard to retaining Mozart's services: 'That men of that stamp only came into the world once in a hundred years, and that they ought not to be driven out of Germany, especially when, as good luck would have it, they were already in the capital.'

Mozart was, indeed, seriously contemplating a journey to London and Paris, and had even begun to make his preparations, but his father's urgent appeals for patience and further effort had the effect of postponing for the time the carrying out of his schemes. In the meantime Mozart seized the opportunity for which he had been longing of paying a visit to Salzburg to present Constanze to his father, and at the same time of fulfilling a vow which he had made that, if Constanze became his wife, he would have a Mass composed by him for the occasion performed in her honour. It was, on the whole, a very happy visit, and later on, when Mozart and his wife had once more settled down in Vienna, they had the pleasure of welcoming the father on a return visit. Leopold found his son immersed in work, and it gladdened his heart to witness the appreciation in which his playing and compositions were held. One never-to-be-forgotten evening they spent together in the company of Haydn, when, after hearing several of Mozart's quartets performed, Leopold was made the happy recipient of a testimony to his son's greatness, which he treasured above all else that had been spoken or written in his favour, and which came as a fitting reward for the unremitting care and solicitude which he had bestowed upon Mozart's welfare and training. Haydn took the old man aside at the close of the evening, and said: 'I declare to you before God as a man of honour that your son is the greatest composer that I know, either personally or by reputation. He has taste, and, beyond that, the most consummate knowledge of the art of composition.'

This pleasant time was rendered the happier by the fact that Leopold found Wolfgang and his wife in somewhat better circumstances, and their home brightened by the presence of a little grandson, Karl, who clambered upon his grandfather's knee, and filled the old man's mind with tender recollections of a little son whom he had lost before Wolfgang's birth. But it was destined to be the last meeting between Mozart and his father, for shortly after Leopold's return he was seized with illness, on hearing of which Wolfgang wrote to him a letter, in which he expressed his own views on death. 'As death, strictly speaking, is the true end and aim of our lives, I have accustomed myself during the last two years to so close a contemplation of this, our best and truest friend, that he possesses no more terrors for me--nothing but peace and consolation. And I thank God for enabling me to discern in death the *key* to our true blessedness. I never lie down in bed without remembering that, perhaps, young as I am, I may never see another day, and yet no one who knows me can say that I am melancholy or fanciful. For this blessing I thank God daily, and desire nothing more than to share it with my fellow-men.'

The news of his father's death, which occurred on May 28, 1787, reached Mozart shortly after he had accomplished one of the greatest successes of his life. The name of his latest opera, 'Le Nozze di Figaro,' was on every one's lips; its performances in Vienna and Prague had been hailed with enthusiastic delight by crowded audiences; its songs were to be heard in every street, and wandering minstrels in the country, as they halted at the village alehouses, were compelled to satisfy their groups of listeners with selections from its entrancing airs. Michael Kelly, the singer and friend of Mozart, who took part in the opera, has thus described its reception by the orchestra and performers: 'Never was anything more complete than the triumph of Mozart, and his "Nozze di Figaro," to which numerous overflowing audiences bore witness. Even at the first full-band rehearsal all present were roused to enthusiasm, and when Benucci came to the fine passage, "Cherubino, alla vittoria, alla gloria militar," which he gave with stentorian lungs, the effect was electric, for the whole of the performers on the stage, and those in the orchestra, as if actuated by one feeling of delight, vociferated, "Bravo! bravo! Maestro! Viva, viva, grande Mozart!" Those in the orchestra I thought would never have ceased applauding by beating the bows of their violins against the music-desks.' As for Mozart himself: 'I never shall forget his little animated countenance when lighted up with the glowing rays of genius; it is as impossible to describe it as it would be to paint sunbeams.'

Despite the success of 'Figaro' Mozart still remained a poor man--still was he compelled to earn a living by the hated drudgery of teaching. 'You happy man,' he said to a young musician who was leaving for a tour in Italy; 'as for me, I am off now to give a lesson to earn my bread.' The desire to visit England was once more uppermost in his mind, and when the Emperor, with a view to retaining him in Germany, appointed him Kammer-compositor at a salary of eight hundred gulden (about eighty pounds sterling), it must have occurred to many besides Mozart himself that such a 'beggarly dole' but poorly represented the value which his Majesty

professed to set upon the composer's services to art. This feeling was accentuated in Mozart when he discovered how trivial were the requirements of his royal master in connection with the position. 'Too much for what I produce, too little for what I could produce,' were the bitter words which he penned on the official return stating the amount of his salary.

The 'beggarly dole,' indeed, brought small relief to the domestic anxieties which now more than ever oppressed Mozart and his wife. The latter's ill-health necessitated frequent change of air, and in this way tended to increase their embarrassments. Applications to friends for assistance became more and more numerous. 'I am still most unfortunate,' he writes in one of these appeals. 'Always hovering between hope and anxiety.' Repeated attempts were made at reform. Mozart even commenced to keep strict accounts of their expenditure, but they came to nothing, for the want of management was always apparent in every detail of his domestic life. Yet, despite all, the merry side of Mozart's nature refused to succumb to the stress of adversity; amidst his difficulties he retained the sunshine of his boyish days, being as merry-hearted, and full of jokes, and as open as a child. One winter day an old friend found him and his wife dancing madly about the room; knowing Mozart's fondness for this pastime--his favourite of all forms of amusement--the friend expressed his pleasure at finding them so light-hearted, when Mozart, pointing to the empty stove, explained that they were dancing in order to keep themselves warm, as they had no money to purchase fuel. Horror-struck, the caller darted from the house, and returned in a few minutes with his arms laden with logs.

To some extent a natural leaning to extravagance may be held accountable for Mozart's embarrassments, for he was extremely fond of dress, and had a great weakness for lace and watch-chains. But if he indulged his tastes overmuch in this particular, he was no less lavish in regard to giving where he thought help was needed. He could never turn a deaf ear to the appeal of a beggar, and his kindness was frequently imposed upon; even when monetary help was not forthcoming to meet the request of a brother-musician, he would contrive to find time amidst the pressure of his own work to compose a concerto for the latter's benefit. To the animal world, also, his affectionate nature went forth in no small degree, and he became deeply attached to a starling, which had learnt to pipe the subject of the Rondo of his 'Pianoforte Concerto in G Major.'

And if his distresses failed to diminish his joy in the very fact of living, even less did they affect his powers of work. His father had declared that 'procrastination was his besetting sin,' and Mozart was certainly given to putting off the evil day as far as possible; but no one knew better than Leopold Mozart himself how tireless was Mozart's industry, or how boundless his powers of coping with a gigantic task which he had set his mind to accomplish. When, in September, 1787, he was at Prague, writing the score of 'Don Giovanni,' his favourite resort was the vineyard belonging to his friend Duschek, situated close to the city; here he would be seated at his work[13] whilst conversation or skittle-playing went on around him, often quitting his task to join in one or the other. The time was short, for the opera was to be produced on October 29, and when the evening of the 28th arrived it found the overture still unwritten. Nothing daunted, however, Mozart bade his wife brew him some punch, and bring her book of fairy-stories, and then, for hour after hour, he wrote on, whilst Constanze read aloud to keep him awake. When sleep could no longer be resisted he lay down for an hour or two, but when the copyist came for the score at seven o'clock in the morning it was ready for him. His musical memory was so marvellous that the merest scraps of notes, jotted down whilst driving, conversing, or soothing his wife in her pain, were sufficient to recall to mind without the slightest effort the exact ideas which he desired to reproduce. An entire work would thus be completed in his brain before he began to write a single note on paper, and it was no unusual thing for him to be thinking out a second part whilst writing down the first. 'He never composed at the clavier,' says his wife, in speaking of his manner of work, 'but wrote music like letters, and never tried a movement until it was finished.'

The limits of our story forbid even a mention of the compositions which made up the life-work of Mozart; the few to which we have found space to refer are those connected with the chief episodes of his career. Much less can we convey an idea of his powers of improvisation. Hours snatched from sleep would be spent at the piano, and into the silence of the night drifted many a divine melody which no ear but his own was destined to hear. One who lived to be eighty, speaking of those wonderful improvisations, says: 'I still, in my old age,

seem to hear the echo of those heavenly harmonies, and I go to my grave with the full conviction that there can never be another Mozart.'

It was at such times that the inspiration of true genius shone forth in his expression. Ordinarily there was nothing distinguished about his appearance; the head, with its profusion of fine hair, was somewhat too large for the body, which was short and slim; the face was pale, and the nose a rather too prominent feature; the eyes were large, well-shaped, and shaded by long lashes and bushy eyebrows, but the expression was absent and restless. When seated at the piano, however, the whole countenance changed; the eye became calm and fixed, and every movement of his muscles spoke the emotion which his playing expressed.

Even the success of 'Don Giovanni'--at the performance of which the Prague audience greeted Mozart's appearance in the orchestra with thunders of applause and a triple flourish of trumpets--failed to remedy the desperate condition into which his affairs had fallen; and when his pupil and patron, Prince Karl Lichnowsky, proposed that he should accompany him to Berlin, Mozart gladly accepted the invitation. The visit, however, was productive of much honour, but very little money, and at its conclusion he wrote to his wife: 'On my return you must be glad to have *me*, and not think about money.' The King of Prussia received Mozart with every mark of kindness and respect, and being himself very musical, and desirous of having the best musicians about him, he sought Mozart's advice regarding the proficiency of his band. 'It contains some great players,' replied Mozart; 'but if the gentlemen would *play together* they would make a better effect.' The King was evidently much impressed by this remark, for before Mozart left he offered him the post of Capellmeister, with a salary of three thousand thalers (equal to about six hundred pounds sterling). Mozart was deeply affected by the munificent offer, and for the moment he hardly knew how to reply; then, reflecting how much he owed to the Emperor Joseph for the latter's friendship and interest, he said: 'How could I abandon my good Emperor?'

Though his loyalty had thus withstood the temptation of an offer which, if accepted, would have ensured his liberation from the 'net of embarrassments' in which he was so hopelessly entangled, the feeling of resistance weakened later on, when his return to Vienna revealed no improvement in the situation of affairs. Yielding therefore to the advice of others, he told the Emperor of the King of Prussia's offer, and at the same time tendered his resignation. Dismayed by this unlooked-for resolution, the Emperor exclaimed: 'What, Mozart, do you mean to forsake me?' The tone in which this remonstrance was uttered, and the expression which accompanied it had their effect upon the tender-hearted, grateful Mozart, and with emotion he answered: 'Your Majesty, I throw myself upon your kindness--I remain.'

Thus perished the only chance which was destined to fall within Mozart's grasp of freeing himself from his troubles, for soon afterwards the Emperor fell ill and died, and no renewal of the Berlin offer was forthcoming.

The coronation of the Emperor Joseph's successor, the Emperor Leopold, took place at Frankfort, on October 9, 1790, and Mozart journeyed thither for the occasion, having first pawned all his valuables in order to raise the necessary funds. Whatever hopes Mozart may have built upon the results of this tour were doomed to disappointment, for though he visited and played at several towns on his return journey, and was the recipient of numerous honours, his efforts produced no permanent fruit, and the horizon remained as dark as ever. His arrival in Vienna was timed with the departure of Haydn, whom Salomon, the impressario, had come to carry off to London, and it was with a heart heavy with gloomy forebodings that Mozart said good-bye to his truest friend.

The month of July, 1791, found Mozart hard at work writing a magic opera to help a friend who had taken a little theatre in the suburb of Wieden. Whilst thus engaged he was visited by a stranger, 'a tall, thin grave-looking man, dressed from head to foot in grey,' who refused to divulge his name, but stated that his business was to commission Mozart to compose a Requiem for a personage whose identity must likewise remain concealed.[14] After a brief colloquy the terms were arranged, and the mysterious stranger rose to take

his leave. As he did so he looked fixedly at Mozart, and said warningly: 'Make no effort to discover the identity either of myself or your patron; it will be in vain.'

Though somewhat disconcerted by the stranger's mysterious injunction, Mozart felt all his love for Church music reawakened by the new commission, and he set to work upon the Requiem without delay. His labours on this composition, as well as on the magic opera, however, were interrupted by a pressing request from the Estates of Bohemia that he would compose an opera for the coronation of Leopold II. at Prague. As the ceremony was fixed for September 6 no time was to be lost, and, banishing every other thought from his mind, Mozart prepared to set out at once for Prague. The travelling carriage was at the door, and he was about to step into it when the mysterious stranger suddenly appeared, and inquired after the Requiem. Startled by the suddenness of the man's appearance, and at a loss to explain his remissness, Mozart could only promise to fulfil the commission on his return, and, hastily entering his carriage, he drove away.

The strain involved by his arduous labours at Prague was increased by the indifference with which his opera, 'La Clemenza di Tito,' was received, and Mozart returned to Vienna with spirits depressed, and mind and body exhausted by overwork. Nevertheless, he braced himself anew, and on September 30 the new opera, 'Die Zauberflöte' (the Magic Flute) was produced. Though somewhat coldly received at first, the work increased in popularity at each subsequent representation, until its success was everything that could be desired. A friend who had a place in the orchestra on the first performance relates that he was so enchanted with the overture that he crept up to the chair in which Mozart sat conducting, and, seizing the composer's hand, pressed it to his lips. Mozart glanced kindly at him, and, extending his right hand, gently stroked his cheek.

The Requiem was still far from finished, and to this work Mozart now turned his attention. But it was too late; the strain and excitement which he had undergone during the past few months had done their work, a succession of fainting fits followed, and it was evident that the marvellous powers which he had controlled in the past were no longer under his command. With fast-fleeting strength came the oppressive thought, haunting him from day to day, that he would not live to complete the work. 'It is for myself that I am writing this Requiem,' he said one day to Constanze, whilst his eyes filled with tears. Vainly she endeavoured to comfort him; he declared that he felt his end approaching, and, indeed, death--the 'best and truest friend'--was very near him now, far nearer than they who gathered about his bed, and sought to cheer him with the news that his freedom from anxiety was at last to be assured by the combined action of the nobility in securing to him an annuity--far nearer than they, or other well-wishers, whose tardy recognition of his claims had come too late, imagined. He who had 'always hovered between hope and anxiety' was now hovering between life and death, soon to be released from all earthly travail.

On the evening of December 4 they brought the score of the Requiem to him at his request, and, propped up by pillows, he began to sing one of the passages, in company with three of his friends. They had not proceeded far, however, before Mozart laid the manuscript aside, and, bursting into tears, declared that it would never be finished. A few hours later, at one o'clock in the morning of December 5, 1791, he passed away in sleep.

The body was removed from the house on the following day,[15] and taken to St. Stephen's Church, where it received benediction. The hearse, with the few mourners, then proceeded to St. Mark's Churchyard, but before the burial-place was reached a terrific storm of snow and rain burst overhead, and with one accord the followers turned back, and left the hearse to proceed alone. And thus the master of whom it was prophesied that he would cause all others to be forgotten--he whose triumphs had caused him to be acclaimed by thousands as 'grande Mozart'--was left to be buried by the hands of strangers in a pauper's grave, without even a stone to mark the spot where he was laid.

And to this day no one knows exactly which is the resting-place of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

FOOTNOTES:

[11] This manuscript book is preserved in the Mozart Museum at Salzburg, and beneath several of the pieces may be seen the notes made by the father at the time. For example, 'Wolfgang learnt this Minuet and Trio in half an hour, when he was five.' or 'Wolfgang learnt this Minuet when he was four.'

[12] 'Have mercy'--a psalm of supplication.

[13] The room and the stone table at which he worked are still shown to visitors at the Villa Bertramka, Koschirz.

[14] It was ascertained after Mozart's death that this personage was a certain Count Walsegg, who desired a Requiem to be performed in memory of his wife. The messenger was his steward. The reason for secrecy was that the Count intended to pass off the Requiem as his own composition, and in this he actually succeeded.

[15] Mozart died of malignant typhus fever.

MOZART'S PRINCIPAL COMPOSITIONS

OPERAS, ETC.: Bastien und Bastienne. 1768. La finta Semplice. 1768. Mitridate, Ré di Ponto. 1770. Ascanio in Alba. 1771. La finta Giardiniera. 1774. Il Ré Pastore. 1775. Zaida. 1780. King Thamos. 1780. [The three motets, 'Splendente Te Deus,' 'Ne pulvis et cinis,' and 'Deus Tibi laus et honor,' are adaptations from this work.] Idomeneo, Ré di Creta. 1781. Die Entführung aus dem Serail. 1782. Der Schauspieldirector. 1786. Le Nozze di Figaro. 1786. Il Don Giovanni. 1787. Cosi fan tutte. 1790. Die Zauberflöte. 1791. La Clemenza di Tito. 1791. 15 Masses (1768-1783) and 1 Requiem (1791). [The masses published by Novello as No. 7 (B-flat), No. 8 (C), No. 9 (G), No. 12 (G), Nos. 13 and 16 (E-flat--one Mass), and No. 17 (C), are not considered authentic. The same may be said of the Requiem in D minor (No. 18). The celebrated Requiem (also in D minor, Novello, No. 15) was completed by Süssmayer after Mozart's death. The well-known Novello No. 1 (in C) and No. 2 (also in C) were composed in 1779 and 1776.] 4 Litanies. 2 Vespers. 1779 and 1780. [The 'Laudate Dominum' (in A) of the earlier setting is well known.] Te Deum in C. 1772. Motet, Ave verum. 1791. Cantata, Davidde Penitente. 1785. 41 Arias for different voices. 6 Vocal Trios and 1 Quartet. 41 Symphonies. [The earliest symphony was in E-flat (1764). Mention may also be made of three in the key of D--the Parisian (1778), the Haffner (1782), and the Prague (1786)--and of his three last and greatest--in E-flat, G minor, and C, the Jupiter--all composed in 1788.] 31 Divertimenti, Serenades, etc. Masonic Dirge in C minor. 1785. 8 Quintets for strings. 1 Quintet for clarinet and strings. 1789. 26 Quartets for strings. 1770-1790. [The six quartets dedicated to Haydn were composed in 1782-85.] 6 Concertos for violin. 4 Concertos for horn. 1 Concerto for clarinet. 1791. 25 Concertos for pianoforte. [We may mention the Concerto in D (1773), in D minor (1784), that in G (1784), two in C (1784 and 1786), and one in C minor (1786).] Concerto for two pianofortes in E-flat. 1780. Concerto for three pianofortes in F. 1776. 2 Quartets for pianoforte and strings. 7 Trios for pianoforte and strings. 42 Sonatas for pianoforte and violin. [The sonata in B-flat, dedicated to Mlle. Strinasacchi, was composed in 1784.] 17 Sonatas for pianoforte solo. 5 Sonatas for pianoforte, four hands. Rondo in A minor for pianoforte. 1787. 17 Sonatas for organ, with accompaniment.

BEETHOVEN

BEETHOVEN

It was a beautiful spring morning; the sun shone in a cloudless sky, and the birds were singing blithely on the branches of the trees just outside the window, as if inviting the child who stood within to come out into the sunshine and be as free and happy as themselves. But he could not respond to their call, for he was not yet half-way through his long task. A pitiful little figure he made, mounted on a footstool in front of the pianoforte, with his head resting wearily on his hand, and his absent, dreamy gaze fixed upon the window. Scarcely five years old, and yet condemned to practise endless finger-exercises until his eyes grew dim with straining over the notes; kept a prisoner indoors, apart from his playmates, when the sun was shining and the

birds were singing--and all because he happened to possess a great gift for music, and because his father, realising this fact, had determined to use the child's talents for the support of the family.

Suddenly the door of the sitting-room opened, and a stern face was thrust inside.

'Ludwig!'--the tone was harsh and severe, and at the well-known sound the boy awoke from his reverie--'Ludwig! what are you doing? Go on with your exercise at once, and remember there will be no soup for you until it is finished.'

Then the door closed again, and Ludwig turned with a sigh to his monotonous task. Why should his life be made so much harder than that of other children? he might have asked himself bitterly. It was not that he disliked music--no, he loved it--but he yearned for the brightness and sympathy which seemed to be given freely to others, and yet were denied to him. And as he strove to master his long exercise his eyes wandered from the music to a portrait which hung over the piano. It represented an elderly gentleman with a kindly face, bushy dark hair, and large dark eyes. It was a humorous face, not handsome, yet frank and pleasant, and decidedly clever. How clearly Ludwig could recall the bright blue coat, with its large gilt buttons, which the artist had faithfully portrayed! As the boy's glance rested upon the portrait the recollection of the merry times he had spent with his grandfather was presented to his mind. Once more he heard the old man's genial laugh, and felt the gentle pressure of his hand upon his curls. And then his playing! How little Ludwig had listened enrapt whilst Grandfather Ludwig charmed forth those mysterious melodies which seemed to be locked up at other times in the silent, prim little clavier! Those were delicious day-dreams that Grandfather Ludwig had the power to conjure up in his grandson's mind. But two years had passed since the kindly old musician had gone to his rest, and during those years the surroundings of Ludwig's childhood had changed for the worse.

The parents of Ludwig van Beethoven, as the boy was named, were extremely poor. Johann Beethoven, the father, was a member of the Court band of the Elector of Cologne, at Bonn, in which town Ludwig was born on December 16, 1770. The German Princes of those days maintained companies of musicians for the performance of Divine service in their chapels, as well as for their private entertainment, and such companies frequently comprised musicians of considerable ability. Johann's position as tenor singer was but a humble one, bringing in not more than £25 a year. The grandfather, who also belonged to the band, first as bass singer, and later as music director, had, on the other hand, achieved a considerable reputation, both as performer and composer, and during his latter years his earnings had gone far to support Johann's family, with whom he lived. With the old man's death, however, this help ceased, and the family means became greatly reduced.

It was, no doubt, in consequence of the privation felt at this time that the father was induced to keep Ludwig so hard at work. Mozart as a boy had exhibited marvellous powers, and his performances in public at an early age were attended by success. Johann, therefore, seemed to think that his little son would have a chance of earning money by his forced capacities for music. That a child of such tender years should have been regarded in the light of a bread-winner for the family appears unreasonable and hard; and it is not to be wondered at that Ludwig failed to understand the necessity which led to such pressure being put upon him. In his mother, Marie Magdalena, however, he could always find a ready sympathy and a tenderness which must have served to counteract, to some degree, the unhappiness occasioned by the father's severity. But not even a mother's love could make up for the loss the child had sustained by his grandfather's death, for the excellent qualities of head and heart which the old man had exhibited were just those which the boy missed in his father. To Ludwig music meant everything--or, rather, it would have meant everything, even at that early time, had its development only been continued under the same kindly influence.

Despite his severity and unreasonableness, however, Johann must be credited with the determination that his boy's knowledge of music should be as thorough as it was possible to make it with the means at his command, and to this end he spared no pains. Moreover, in order that Ludwig should not grow up in complete ignorance of subjects which lay outside his art, he was sent to the public school of Bonn to pick up what learning he

could, though this chiefly comprised reading and writing. With his schoolfellows Ludwig had little in common. They thought him shy, because he kept to himself, and showed no desire to join in their games. The truth was his mind was almost wholly absorbed by music, and the consciousness that this great love had taken possession of his soul, and was growing stronger day by day may have made him inapt for games or boyish society, and thus may have led to his taking refuge in his own thoughts. In the companionship of music he could never have felt lonely, and in his walks between school hours he found plenty to interest him. He never tired of sounding Nature for her harmonies, and as he pursued his way through the fields and lanes he listened to the peasants singing at their work, and then, catching up the simple tunes, he fitted his own notes to them, so as to produce beautiful and subtle effects of harmony. Many of those old folk-tunes were closely connected with the history of the country to which they belonged; they were often the musical expression of the feelings, struggles, and passions of the people, and to Beethoven's sensitive ear they conveyed a deeper meaning than they did to the simple peasants who hummed or carolled them to the whirr of the spinning-wheel, the blows of the forge-hammer, or the speeding of the plough.

Thus, with the drudgery of unremitting toil and constant reproof, the years passed away until Ludwig was nearly nine. Hard as the lessons of those years had been, there could be no doubt as to the progress which he had made. Not even the severity and harshness of his father could lessen or abate his yearning for musical knowledge; and so it came about that one day Johann, regarding him with an expression more akin to pride and satisfaction than that which Ludwig was accustomed to read in his father's face, said, 'I can teach you no more; we must see about finding you another master.'

But how this was to be accomplished it is as difficult for us as it must have been to Johann himself to imagine; for, so far from the family circumstances having improved, the poverty was even more acute than before, and such further efforts as the father may have been induced to make to increase their comforts were negatived by his growing addiction to drink--a fact which must of itself have caused a further reduction in their resources. Fortunately, at this critical period help was forthcoming in the shape of a musician boarder, who agreed to give instruction to Ludwig in part return for his accommodation.

The coming of Tobias Pfeiffer, as the new boarder was named, must have been regarded by Ludwig with some curiosity. Would he turn out an even harder task-master than his own father had been? This question was soon settled by the glimpse which Tobias early gave to his pupil of his peculiar method of imparting instruction. Johann's evenings were now chiefly spent at some tavern resort, whither it became the custom for Tobias to repair at a very late hour, in order that he might give his drunken landlord a safe convoy home. By this friendly help the erring Johann escaped falling into the hands of the police--an eventuality which would have resulted in his losing his employment. Having fulfilled his friendly mission, Pfeiffer would betake himself to Ludwig's bedside, and, with a shake which soon became familiar, would arouse the boy with, 'Now then, Ludwig, time for practice!' At this gentle admonition the sleepy child would rise obediently, rubbing his eyes, and master and pupil descended to the sitting-room, where they would play together till the early hours of the morning--Pfeiffer giving out a theme, and Beethoven extemporising upon it, and then Ludwig in his turn giving the lead to Pfeiffer. Extemporisation would be followed by duets, until the approach of day gave warning that it was time to retire to bed. Such music as these two players made in the still hours of the night was, no doubt, but rarely heard in the district in which they lived, and on the other side of the open window, in the early dawn of the summer morning, a small knot of listeners frequently gathered, attracted by the unusual performance proceeding within.

[Illustration: '"*Now then, Ludwig, time for practice!*"']

For about a year this curious mode of instruction continued, and during this time Ludwig's education received a stimulus in the shape of lessons in Latin, French, Italian, and Logic, given by a man named Zambona. This Zambona was an eccentric personage, whose peculiarities would appear to have been well adapted to the condition of things prevailing in the Beethoven home. He apparently considered himself qualified to fill a variety of posts, as he had acted as innkeeper, chamber-porter at the Court, and book-keeper, in addition to

being a teacher of languages; but his worth was proved by the fact that Beethoven made good progress under his tuition. Hitherto Ludwig's playing had been confined to the pianoforte and violin, but at this point a friendly hand was held out to him by an old friend of his grandfather, named Van den Eeden, who for many years had held the post of organist at the Court. 'Come to me, and I will teach you the organ,' the kindly old musician said to Ludwig, and the boy's heart leapt with pleasure at the generous offer. No doubt Van den Eeden saw in the young player the signs of genius such as his old friend had exhibited in no small degree in past years, and felt drawn towards him in consequence. A new field was thus opened to Beethoven, and when, at the end of a year, Van den Eeden resigned on account of ill-health, and the post was given to Christian Neefe, Ludwig was happy in the discovery of a new friend, who not only expressed his willingness to carry on the instruction, but was quick to recognise the boy's extraordinary talent. At this point of our story we get our first glimpse of the fruits of Beethoven's work at composition. The death of a friend who had assisted the family with money gifts inspired him to write a cantata in his honour; but though it was performed at the funeral, no trace exists for us of this little outcome of gratitude on Beethoven's part.

Ludwig was now ten years old, and in the winter of 1781 he made his first essay at bread-winning for the family. The state of things at home was wretched in the extreme, and the hopelessness of looking to the father to retrieve the condition into which they had fallen decided Ludwig's mother upon undertaking a tour through Holland with the boy, in the hope that his playing at the houses of the rich might bring in money. We may well believe that sheer necessity alone impelled the gentle, ailing woman to such a step. Her faith in her son's powers was evidently of a higher order than that of Johann, and she must have seen that this exhibition of his talents at so early an age not only implied an interruption to his studies, but also, to some extent, a debasing of the art which she felt that he loved for its own sake. The tour produced money--that chiefest need of the moment--and, so far, it was a success; but Ludwig himself did not carry away any pleasing recollections of his visit. 'The Dutch are very stingy, and I shall take care not to trouble them again,' he afterwards remarked to a friend; and there was no repetition of the experiment.

In the following year a notice appeared in *Cramer's Magazine*, calling the attention of music-lovers to a young player who, though not more than eleven years old, could play with force and finish, read well at sight, and--most remarkable of all--play the greater part of Bach's 'Wohltemperirte Klavier' (Well-tempered Clavier), 'a feat,' declared the writer, 'which will be understood by the initiated.' 'This young genius,' the article went on to say, 'deserves some assistance that he may travel. If he goes on as he has begun, he will certainly become a second Mozart.'

The writer of this notice was Christian Neefe, and the subject of his praise was none other than his pupil, Ludwig Beethoven. That the boy should have mastered a work of such extraordinary difficulty as Bach's collection of preludes and fugues may well have excited the astonishment of his friend and teacher, whose praise was thus deservedly given. But Neefe's confidence in his pupil's abilities was shown in a more substantial manner during this same year. Van den Eeden's death took place in June, and when the Court band had played the old organist to his last resting-place Neefe received orders to proceed with the rest of the performers to Münster, whither the Elector had already gone. Two days before the band left Bonn Neefe called Beethoven to his side, and told him that he was going away for a time. 'I must have a deputy to take my place at the organ here,' continued the organist, looking keenly into his pupil's face as he spoke. 'Now, tell me, who do you think I ought to appoint to the post?'

Ludwig's face was crossed by a shade of trouble. If his kind tutor was going away, how did he know whether he would find his deputy equally willing to teach him? But Christian Neefe was waiting for his answer, and his eyes were shining with a kindly, half-amused light. 'I do not know,' Ludwig began hesitatingly. But Neefe's eyes had grown serious, and he now spoke with earnestness.

'I have thought of a deputy, Ludwig, and I think I can trust him--yes, I am sure I may trust him. The deputy shall be yourself!'

Beethoven's surprise and delight may be imagined. But Neefe knew what he was about, and in this preferment we may mark the first step in the recognition of Beethoven's genius. The honour was great. To be entrusted with the conduct of Divine service at the chapel, and to receive the deference due to the position of organist--it must have seemed incredible to Ludwig at first; and he was only eleven and a half! To his mother he must first have carried the good news, and if the father's expression had in it less of joy and thankfulness than hers it must be attributed to the fact that no pay was attached to the exalted position which Ludwig had obtained.

Beethoven had now practically the choice of three instruments to select from; but his heart did not waver for long, ere it became fixed upon the pianoforte as the fittest interpreter of his genius, and he was true to his first love to the end. His 'Three Sonatas for the Pianoforte,' written about this time, gives us the first record of his published works. Evidently those terrible finger exercises were beginning to bear fruit, for the young musician had acquired considerable command over the instrument of his choice--indeed, his musical life was now beginning to open itself before him, and the longing to do great things had taken possession of his soul. There were no more tears at being forced to work, for the greatest incentives to work--love and ambition--were now swaying him and impelling him onwards at a speed which nothing could check. Neefe's confidence and praise were more than justified, and before he had completed his thirteenth year Beethoven received his first official appointment at the hands of the Elector. He could now sign himself 'Ludwig van Beethoven, Cembalist im Orchester,' and his duties comprised not only the playing of the pianoforte in the orchestra, but the conducting of the band at rehearsals. With this accession, however, there was still the fact staring him in the face of no money coming in. Just at this time, too, the Elector Max Friedrich died; and it was not until a year later, when Beethoven was appointed second organist to the Court, under the new Elector Max Franz, that he began to receive a small salary in return for his services. Thirteen pounds a year sounds very little for so much work and responsibility, but Ludwig was overjoyed to think that he could back up his announcement to his parents with so substantial a fact as the receipt of an income. For the poverty at home was keener than ever; Johann's earnings did not exceed £25 a year, and as his voice was steadily declining, the outlook for the family had become exceedingly black.

The time would not appear to have been propitious for joking; nevertheless, Beethoven sat in the organ-loft one day planning a joke. He had just had a conversation with one of the chief singers of the band--a tenor named Heller--and the latter had been boasting that his knowledge of singing was so great that he could easily surmount any difficulty as it presented itself. Beethoven inherited from his grandfather a love of joking, and the temptation to lower the singer's vanity was too great to be resisted. Accordingly, on the following Sunday, whilst Heller was singing a solo to Ludwig's accompaniment, the latter adroitly introduced a modulation of his own. Heller unsuspectingly followed his lead, and fell into the trap devised for him, with the result that, after attempting to keep up with the organist, he lost himself entirely and, to the astonishment of the congregation, came to a dead stop; and it was only when Beethoven returned to the original key that the disconcerted singer could proceed. Heller was naturally furious at the trick played upon him, and lodged a complaint with the Elector. The latter, however, was too good a musician himself to be angry at this exhibition of skill on the part of his youngest performer, and he contented himself with admonishing Beethoven not to attempt any more clever tricks.

There was a dream which had taken possession of young Beethoven's mind at this time. It was constantly recurring during the hours of work, and when he lay down to sleep in his poorly-furnished attic it was with the hope that the dawning of a new day might bring him nearer to its realisation. Yet for some time the dream remained only a shadowy companion to his working thoughts, ever present, it is true, and sometimes glowing in brighter colours that seemed to give to it the semblance of reality--but still, only a dream. But the vision seen afar off was to be realised at length--Beethoven was to visit Vienna! It was the city of his dreams, the centre of his longings, this Vienna, just as it was the centre of the musical world of Germany at that time. A kind friend had come forward with the offer to pay his expenses for the journey, and Ludwig knew that his dream had come true.

As we have seen, the dire straits into which the family had fallen had not hindered Beethoven's pursuit of

musical knowledge. His genius had steadily asserted itself under the most adverse conditions; and now we are to picture the young musician, at the age of seventeen, full of fire and energy, setting out on a journey which must have been fraught with the brightest anticipations. He was to meet in Vienna the greatest composer of the day. Mozart--the divine Mozart--was staying in the city, planning the production of his opera, 'Don Giovanni,' and it had been arranged that he should receive Beethoven and put his powers to the test.

On reaching Vienna, Ludwig made his way to Mozart's house, and with a heart beating high with expectancy, and a face aglow with excitement, he was ushered into the presence of the maestro. Mozart received him kindly, but it was evident that his thoughts were preoccupied, for, after desiring Beethoven to play, he began to turn over his papers in a listless fashion. 'Ah!' thought Beethoven; 'he imagines that I have merely come to play him something which I have practised for the occasion.' Dismayed by this reflection, he took his hands from the keyboard and, turning to Mozart, said, 'Will you give me a theme on which to extemporise?' Aroused by his appeal, and the earnest look which accompanied it, Mozart sat down and played a simple theme; and then Beethoven, taking up the slender thread, improvised so finely--allowing his feelings to flow into the music as he went on--that a bystander could not fail to have been struck by the change which came over Mozart's face as he listened. The abstracted look gave place to one of pure astonishment. Then he arose from his seat, and, stepping softly into an adjoining room, where a number of his friends were waiting to see him, he exclaimed, 'Pay attention to this young man, for he will make a noise in the world some day.' Beethoven, meanwhile, played on and on, lost in the intricate melodies which he was weaving out of the single thread, until the touch of Mozart's hand upon his shoulder recalled him to earth to hear the master's praises sounding in his ear.

Vanished in a moment were the memories of the trials and hardships which he had undergone in order to perfect himself for this day of trial, for Beethoven realised that he possessed the power of impressing so great a judge as Mozart; and praise and encouragement were needed at that time, when he was trying to do his best, rather than later on, when his powers were assured. Nor was this the only recognition which his talents received on his visit. The fame of the young player had reached the ears of royalty itself, and he was granted an audience of the Emperor Joseph, whose love of music had made him desirous of hearing for himself what the Bonn performer could do.

[Illustration: "*Pay attention to this young man, for he will make a noise in the world some day.*"]

Beethoven's happiness, however, was soon to be clouded by sorrow, for shortly after his return to Bonn his mother died--the mother to whom he owed so much gentleness and sympathy in his childhood; she who was always ready to forgive his outbursts of temper and impatience, and to cheer and encourage him to further effort. How deeply he felt her loss may be gathered from the letter which he wrote to a friend at the time. 'She was, indeed, a kind, loving mother to me, and my best friend. Ah! who was happier than I, when I could still utter the sweet name of mother, and it was heard? But to whom can I now say it? Only to the silent form resembling her, evoked by the power of imagination.' That her death inspired some of his most beautiful compositions we may suppose, for it is natural that his grief should have found its best expression in music. A few months later his little sister Margaretha died, and the sense of loneliness deepened.

And then something bright came into his life. He made the acquaintance of a family named Breuning, comprising a widow lady and her four children--three boys and a girl--all of about his own age. The youngest boy and the daughter became his pupils, and a close friendship sprang up between them. He stayed at the house for several days at a time, joined in their excursions, and in every way was treated as one of the family. As the Breunings were intellectual people, their friendship was a great help to Beethoven; his whole nature expanded in the sunshine of their society, and very soon he found himself taking a deep interest in the literature of his country--a subject of which he had previously been ignorant. An affection for English authors likewise grew from this intimacy with a family of wide tastes and acquirements--indeed, new interests and fresh paths of pleasant intercourse were opening to him every day, whilst the separation from the miserable surroundings of his own home invigorated him for work. Every hour that could be spared from his official

duties or his teaching was devoted to study and composition. Most of his composing was done in the open air; and for this purpose he provided himself with rough sketch-books, one of which he always carried with him, so that he might jot down in it such musical ideas as occurred to him during his rambles through the lanes and fields.

[Illustration: '*Seated before an old, worn-out piano.*']

It was during this happy intercourse with the Breuning family that Beethoven made the acquaintance of a generous young nobleman, with whom he not only became on the most friendly terms, but who both helped him and encouraged his talents. Count von Waldstein, as the nobleman was named, called one day on Beethoven in his poor room, and found the composer, whose works he so much admired, seated before an old, worn-out piano, on which he was elaborating one of his compositions. The Count said nothing at the time, but shortly afterwards Beethoven was astonished and delighted at receiving a fine new instrument, accompanied by a message from his friend praying his acceptance of the gift. It went to the Count's heart to observe the poverty-stricken conditions under which the composer worked. That he himself should be surrounded by every luxury, whilst the gifted musician who laboured for his enjoyment was driven to practise all manner of shifts to maintain himself in food and clothing, seemed intolerably unjust. Yet Waldstein knew and respected Beethoven too well to offend his pride by offering presents of money where no service was required in return; and so he hit upon the harmless device of helping his poor friend under the pretence that the Elector was making him an allowance. But though he opened his purse in another's name, he took care to let Beethoven see into his own heart, in order that he might there read the sympathy and affection for which, happily, no cloak was needed.

How deeply Beethoven was moved by this friendship we may understand when we listen to the grand sonata which, though it was not composed until some years later, he dedicated to the Count. We want no better title for this exquisitely beautiful work than that by which it is known to the world--the 'Waldstein Sonata.' As the grand chords which follow the opening bars strike the ear it seems as if Beethoven were speaking to his friend--speaking to him out of the fullness of his heart, out of his poverty and mean surroundings--and rising by the strengthening influence of love to a height of eloquence and grandeur which no spoken words could have attained.

The conditions at home, meanwhile, were growing worse. Carl and Johann, Beethoven's two younger brothers, of whom no previous mention has been made, were engaged, the one in studying music, and the other as apprentice to the Court apothecary, but neither was bringing grist to the mill. The father had sunk still deeper under the degrading influence of drink, and his voice was almost ruined by his excesses, so that it had become increasingly difficult to maintain for the family even the appearance of respectability. On more than one occasion Beethoven, in returning home at night, had encountered his drunken father in the hands of the police, from whose custody he had succeeded in rescuing him only after much persuasion, and it seemed as if his discharge from the band must be merely a question of time. The state of affairs, in fact, could no longer be concealed from the Elector, who, knowing the circumstances with which Beethoven had to contend, finally ordered that a portion of the father's salary should be paid over to Ludwig, in order that the money might be properly expended for the support of the family.

Meanwhile, at the Court itself great changes had been effected in regard to the band. With a view to encouraging the growth of operatic art, the Elector had established a national theatre, and Beethoven was appointed viola player in the orchestra, in addition to retaining the post of second organist to the chapel. The numerous performances of operatic works by the company must have given Beethoven an insight into what was to him a new branch of his art, from which he did not fail to profit later on. His work in the band was not increased by the changes which had been made, and as the Elector was frequently absent from Bonn, he found ample leisure to pursue his studies in composition, and to enjoy the intellectual society of his friends. Four years thus slipped away, until the month of July, 1792, saw the Bonn musicians preparing to receive a distinguished visitor. Haydn was to pass through Bonn on his way to Vienna from London, where his

compositions and playing had created a sensation, and the band had arranged a grand reception in his honour. Beethoven, of course, was amongst the invited guests on the occasion, and he seized the opportunity of submitting to the master a cantata which he had lately composed. Haydn praised the composition highly, and warmly encouraged Beethoven to go on with his studies--words which sent the young composer back to his work with glowing cheeks and a determination to accomplish greater things.

[Illustration: '*Haydn praised the composition highly.*']

The commendation of so renowned a master as Haydn must have gone far towards convincing the Elector that by keeping Beethoven at Bonn he was burying talent and cramping powers that only required a wider scope in order to produce great works, and that, therefore, some step should now be taken to develop his genius. It was with a heart overflowing with joy and gratitude that Ludwig learnt that the kindly Max Franz had decided to send him to Vienna, at his own expense, to take lessons in strict counterpoint from Haydn. Surely this could mean nothing less than that the days of adversity and struggling with poverty had closed behind him for ever, and that a future bright with hope had opened, upon which, though he might not forecast its results, he could enter with courage and determination. He was now twenty-two, and his compositions--published and in manuscript--had brought him such fame and appreciation as the small German town could give to one born and reared within its narrow sphere. Now, however, the bonds which hitherto had fettered his genius were to be broken, and, freed from the restraint of Court duties, he would be able to give full vent to the powers which he was burning to express.

In November of this year he bade farewell to Bonn and his friends, and set forth on his journey, though not, we may be sure, without regrets at parting with such true helpers and sympathisers as Count Waldstein, the Breunings, and the man to whom he owed so much--Christian Neefe. With the last named he left these words of thanks: 'Thank you for the counsel you have so often given me on my progress in my divine art. Should I ever become a great man you will certainly have assisted in it.' In an album provided for the purpose his musical brethren inscribed their farewells, and Waldstein's message ran as follows:

'DEAR BEETHOVEN,

'You are travelling to Vienna in fulfilment of your long-cherished wish. The genius of Mozart is still weeping and bewailing the death of her favourite.[16] With the inexhaustible Haydn she found a refuge, but no occupation, and is now waiting to leave him and join herself to some one else. Labour assiduously, and receive Mozart's spirit from the hands of Haydn.

'Your old friend, 'WALDSTEIN.

'BONN, '*October 29, 1792.*

Little did either Beethoven or his friends imagine that he would never set foot in Bonn again, but so it was to be. Two years later war had broken out with France, Bonn was captured by the French Republican army, and the Elector and his retinue were forced to fly the town. Those two years had witnessed great strides in the march of Beethoven's career. He had arrived in Vienna as a comparatively unknown musician--though not, it is true, without recommendations from Count Waldstein--but his marvellous command of the pianoforte, and, more especially, his powers of extemporisation, had electrified his hearers to such a degree as to secure for him a place in the front rank of performers of the day. He was a constant visitor at the houses of the aristocracy, with several members of whom he had become on terms of intimacy. In the Prince and Princess Karl Lichnowsky he had found true friends and sincere admirers, who not only welcomed him as one of the family, but provided apartments for him in their house, and bestowed upon him an annuity of £60. Many who had heard him play forthwith engaged him as teacher, and on every hand his genius and powers were the theme of the hour.

It is hardly to be wondered at that with all this praise and patronage on the part of the wealthy aristocracy (and it is necessary to bear in mind that in Vienna at that time the musical profession was entirely dependent upon the patronage of the nobility), Beethoven should have encountered considerable hostility from other members of his profession. For a good deal of the enmity which his success aroused he himself was no doubt to blame; he took no pains to please or conciliate, and he showed even more independence towards the rich and great than towards those of his own rank. The result was that only those who could afford to overlook his faults for the sake of his genius--and for the sake of something else which lay beneath his crust of obstinate pride and openly expressed disregard for rank and wealth--remained constant to him. Of his obstinacy and self-will several instances will be given in the course of our story; but it is necessary at this point to draw attention to the early period at which this determined force of character began to assert itself. It is an astonishing fact, and one that demonstrates the extraordinary power of Beethoven's genius, that in spite of everything that could be urged against him--his origin, rudeness of manner and speech, refusal to pay homage to the great--even his youth and the comparative shortness of the time during which he had been before the public--Beethoven should have not only won a front place as a performer, but also retained the sincere regard and respect of men and women belonging to the worthiest as well as the highest ranks of society.

In the midst of the whirl of work and entertainment into which the musical life of Vienna had plunged him, Beethoven was constant to those whom he had left behind him at Bonn. He had not been absent more than a month before he received news of his father's death. There had been very little affection in his heart for the parent whose severity had called forth his childish tears, and whose selfish indulgence had increased the burden of his mother's existence, nor was Beethoven the man to pretend what he did not feel. But with the father's death the allowance which had been paid through Ludwig for the support of the two sons, Carl and Johann, ceased, and this fact awoke Beethoven to instant action. He wrote to the Elector begging that the grant might be continued for his sake, and the request was granted. Later on we shall see to what extent he carried his affection for at least one of these brothers.

With the Prince and Princess Lichnowsky Beethoven shortly became, as we have said, on terms of the greatest intimacy. All Vienna looked to the house of Lichnowsky for patronage and help wherever art or science was concerned, and none looked in vain. To Beethoven--young, rough, and almost untutored in the usages of society, but with his commanding genius and his equally remarkable personality--the Lichnowskys were kindness itself. The Princess saw to his comforts, and arranged his engagements in the same motherly fashion as Madame Breuning had done after his mother's death, whilst the Prince even went so far in his consideration for Beethoven's sensitiveness as to direct his servants to attend to the musician's bell before answering his own. Extreme sensibility to what he deemed indifference or neglect on the part of his friends was undoubtedly one of Ludwig's chief weaknesses; but he resented angrily the Prince's discovery of the fact, and to mark his displeasure he immediately engaged a servant of his own to wait upon him. The regularity of the household arrangements at the palace was another matter which grated against Beethoven's love of Bohemianism; to be forced to dress for dinner, especially at a set hour of the day, was to him an abomination not to be suffered. The workings of his genius were not to be regulated by the clockwork contrivances of civilised life, and hence he first took to dining out at some tavern, where he could be at his ease, and finally went altogether into lodgings. But the Prince and Princess, like the good, sensible people they were, only smiled at the vagaries of their favourite, and if his seat at their table was henceforth but too frequently vacant, they kept for him a warm corner in their hearts; whilst, as for Beethoven himself, his affection for his kind friends remained as strong as ever.

Careless as he was with regard both to dress and manners, there was no trace of either carelessness or haste in his compositions, and he was most insistent in having the latter performed in exact accordance with his plans. One night, when his great work 'Leonore' was to be rehearsed, the third bassoon failed to put in an appearance, and Beethoven stamped about in a fury, heaping execrations upon the head of the absent player. Prince Lobkowitz, who was present, and who was one of Beethoven's chief patrons, laughed heartily at the composer's outburst, and then tried to calm him by saying: 'Well, well, what does it matter? You have the first and second bassoons safely here, surely the third man doesn't count for much.' The rehearsal was at length

allowed to proceed, but Beethoven could not forget that his judgment had been questioned by the Prince's mocking laughter, and as soon as the performance had ended and the company had dispersed, he rushed across the Platz to the gates of the Lobkowitz Palace, and shouted at the top of his voice: 'Lobkowitzscher Esel! Lobkowitzscher Esel!' ('Ass of a Lobkowitz! Ass of a Lobkowitz!')

Beethoven's temper was of the passionate order that is apt to explode at the slightest provocation, and when once aroused he seemed to lose all power of self-control. As one of his greatest friends[17] has remarked, he needed at his elbow some one who possessed the ability to give a humorous turn to what was spoken in the heat of the moment, so as to put them all on good terms with one another again. As it was, he would say the unkindest things even to his greatest friends, and afterwards bitterly regret having said them. His manners were rude and abrupt, but his great genius, combined with the absolute simplicity and straightforwardness of his character, won him his way everywhere. A personality so rare as Beethoven's had a charm for those who worshipped genius, and thus he was forgiven speeches which no one else in his position would have dared to utter. He manifested complete indifference with regard to what people said of him or of his works--only when his honour was in any way impeached did he blaze forth in his own defence. He hated deception of any kind; in both heart and action he was as open as the day, and he was quick to resent a suspicion of deception on the part of others. On one occasion a hitch occurred with regard to a performance of his works, and he suddenly suspected three of his friends of having created the obstacle for their own ends, although they had in reality been working hard to overcome the difficulty. He accordingly sat down and wrote to each as follows:

'*To Count Lichnowsky.*

'Falsehoods I despise. Visit me no more. There will be no concert.

'BEETHOVEN.'

'*To Herr Schindler.*

'Visit me no more until I send for you. No concert.

'BEETHOVEN.'

'*To Herr Schuppanzigh.*

'Visit me no more. I give no concert.

'BEETHOVEN.'

Haydn and Beethoven did not get on well together; there seems to have been something antagonistic in their natures which prevented anything approaching to reciprocal feeling between them. Beethoven from the first considered that he had a grievance against his master in the fact that he did not make sufficient progress, owing to Haydn's being so much occupied with his own work. This dissatisfaction led to his seeking guidance in other quarters; but for about a year after his arrival in Vienna he refrained from doing this openly, until Haydn's departure for England gave him the opportunity of changing masters. Thereafter he took lessons every day of the week from several of the best musicians in the city both in playing and composition. Albrechtsberger was the famous contrapuntist of his day, and Beethoven derived much from his teaching; he does not appear to have impressed his master, however, with a high opinion of his powers, for the old man advised one of his pupils to have nothing to do with the young man from Bonn. 'He has learnt nothing,' Albrechtsberger added, 'and will never do anything in decent style.' This was in allusion to Beethoven's wilfulness in persistently transgressing certain established rules of composition. The old teacher failed to see that Beethoven's refusal to be bound by hard-and-fast rules arose, not from mere caprice, but from the force of a genius which would not submit to be trammelled by any kind of artificial limitations. The wisdom of

Beethoven is, however, shown by the fact that he wrote out his exercises with the most scrupulous care, and in exact accordance with what were regarded as the laws of composition, for his genius, great and original as it was, would not presume upon ignorance.

But who could resist the young player when he seated himself at the pianoforte and began one of those wonderful improvisations about which so much has been written, but of the effect of which we can only faintly judge by the fact that the hearers were held spellbound until the finish? Who amongst that audience, gathered from the best and most critical followers and lovers of the art that Vienna contained, gave a thought to how many rules had been broken, or were likely to be broken, by the player, or, indeed, had room for any other thought but one of admiration for the music which was filling their ears and charming their senses? 'His improvisation was most brilliant and striking,' wrote Karl Czerny, the player and composer, and pupil of Beethoven; 'in whatever company he might chance to be he knew how to produce such an effect upon every hearer that frequently not an eye remained dry, while many would break out into loud sobs; for there was something wonderful in his expression, in addition to the beauty and originality of his ideas, and his spirited style of rendering them.' Ferdinand Ries, another of his pupils, has declared that no other artist that he ever heard could approach Beethoven in extemporisation. 'The wealth of ideas which forced themselves on him, the caprices to which he surrendered himself, the variety of treatment, the difficulties, were inexhaustible,' And it must be borne in mind that in respect to this art Beethoven was brought into competition with several older and undoubtedly brilliant performers of the day, who, until he came amongst them, had swayed their respective circles of admirers.

Yet, strangely enough, the emotion aroused in his hearers seemed to find no response in Beethoven himself. Frequently when he discovered how deeply he had moved his audience he would burst into roars of laughter; at other times the sight of their emotion stirred him up to angry resentment, and he would shout, 'We artists don't want tears, we want applause!' That a player should open his soul in his music and then abuse his audience for their inability to suppress the feelings which he had aroused appears strange indeed. But the caprice and wilfulness which marked his public playing are shown equally in his relations with people in everyday life. What may have been his true feelings is concealed--it is only the mask which is seen; and the mask was so constantly worn that it no doubt deceived many. Every now and again, however, we get a glimpse of his true nature in his intercourse with those who knew him best. Irritable to a degree, and occasionally outrageous as his conduct appears to have been, it needed but the touch of another's grief to draw from him the golden thread of sympathy. On one occasion he offended the susceptibilities of the company assembled in one of the most fashionable drawing-rooms of Vienna by using his hostess's snuffers as a toothpick! Yet, later on, when that household was plunged into mourning by the loss of a beloved child, and visitors were denied, it was Beethoven to whom the bereaved mother opened her doors, and to whom she turned for sympathy.

It is much to be regretted that the nobility of nature which was really and truly Beethoven's attribute should have been so constantly overshadowed and dominated by something else which, without being a superior force, seemed by a strange perversity to be always to the fore. Whilst, however, we would wish to give to every instance of his goodness of heart its fullest weight, it would be useless, as well as wrong, to endeavour to hide the fact that his conduct, even towards those who desired to be his friends, and to whom he owed obligations for acts of sympathy and kindness, frequently admitted of no excuse. His anger, though sharp, was short, and left no sting behind; but his unjust suspicions and scornful treatment of men whose confidence he had won by his genius and force of character, were the cause of sorrow and suffering to those whom he attacked, as well as of remorse to himself, whereby his whole life was embittered, and his better nature warped to ignoble ends.

The good people of Vienna must, indeed, have been somewhat at a loss how to take the genius who had thus burst into their midst and laid them under captivity. Attempts at conciliation were more often than not frustrated by his variable temperament; for though none was apter than Beethoven to take offence, there was no one quicker to resent any effort at mediation by a third party, on whose unfortunate head it was only too

likely that the irate composer would empty the vials of his wrath. Nevertheless, his erratic behaviour did not sensibly lessen the circle of his admirers or diminish the popularity which his fame had brought him. Many of the fashionable ladies of Vienna came to him for lessons instead of requiring his attendance at their houses; but such condescension made no difference to the man who held that mind and character alone were the qualifications by which men and women were to be weighed in the social balance. If, therefore, the young ladies talked or showed inattention during their lessons, he became furious, and would tear up the music and scatter it over the floor. His rage, indeed, seems to have been quite ungovernable at times. On one occasion he was playing a duet with his pupil Ries when his ear caught some fragments of a conversation which a young nobleman was carrying on with a lady at the further end of the room. Instantly he jumped up from the piano in a rage, and, taking Ries's hands off the keyboard, he bellowed, 'I play no longer for such hogs!' nor could either apologies or entreaties induce him to resume the performance.

It was often a matter of some difficulty to get him to play, especially when he was not in the humour. On such occasions he would preface the performance by striking the keys with the palm of his hand, or draw his finger along the keyboard from end to end, roaring with laughter, and in other ways behave like a spoiled child. He would not bear being pressed beyond a certain point. Once, it is related, he was asked to play before strangers at the country-house of one of his rich patrons, and flatly refused to comply; whereupon the host jokingly threatened that, if he would not play, he should be confined as a prisoner in the house. Beethoven on this jumped up and ran out of the mansion, and though it was night, he walked three miles to the next town, and thence posted to Vienna. The next day a bust of this patron which stood on Beethoven's bookcase fell to the ground, and was shattered to pieces![18]

His views as to the superiority of mind and character over everything else were certainly borne out by his actions. One day, when he was walking with the poet Goethe near Uplitz, the Imperial family were observed to be approaching. Goethe at once stood aside and removed his hat, at the same time plucking his friend by the sleeve, to remind him that they were in the presence of royalty. Beethoven, however, seemed to regard this as a fitting opportunity for illustrating his views on the independence of art, for, shaking off the hand that detained him, he buttoned up his coat in a determined manner, planted his hat firmly on his head, and, folding his arms behind him, marched straight into the ranks of the Imperial party! If Goethe felt dismayed at his friend's lack of respect, he must have been astonished to note the result; for the Archduke Rodolph not only made way for Beethoven to pass, but removed his hat, whilst the Empress was the first to bow to him.

In appearance Beethoven was short, broad, and strong-looking. His face was not prepossessing. 'He was meanly dressed, and very ugly to look at,' wrote a lady who knew and admired him, 'but full of nobility and fine feeling, and highly cultivated.' It must have been difficult to describe a face which was subject to such frequent changes of expression, but its forcefulness must have been apparent to every beholder. The eyes were black and bright, and they had a way of dilating when the composer was buried in thought so as to impart to his face an expression of being inspired. Gloomily abstracted as he would be at times, when possessed by some absorbing train of ideas, nothing could have been more cordial or more winning than the smile which lighted up his face at the sight of a friend. With a mass of dark hair surmounting a high and broad forehead, and the quick, penetrative glance which shot from beneath the large overhanging eyebrows, Beethoven's face must have struck the observer with a sense of its strong individuality. Nevertheless, only a few of the portraits have succeeded in conveying a true likeness of the man who was so unlike every one else. His hands were hairy, and the fingers 'strong and short, and pressed out with long practising.' He was very particular about the position of his hands when playing, and as a rule he kept his body quite still. When conducting, however, his movements were constant and curious. At a *pianissimo* passage 'he would crouch down so as to be hidden by the desk, and then, as the *crescendo* increased, would gradually rise, beating all the time, until at the *fortissimo* he would spring into the air with his arms extended, as if wishing to float on the clouds.'[19]

It was one of the most striking of Beethoven's characteristics that he dearly loved a joke. Ever since the time when he played off the rather unkind joke on the singer Heller the passion for joking had grown upon him to such an extent that evidence of its ruling force appears in every chapter of his life. He occasionally introduced

a joke into his compositions. Thus, in the 'Pastoral Symphony,' we come across a trio between a nightingale, a quail, and a cuckoo. Again, in other works, such as the No. 8 Symphony, the bassoons are brought in unexpectedly, in such a manner as to produce a humorous effect. He never missed an opportunity of playing off a joke upon any of his friends, both in season and out of season, and he always showed his appreciation of the victim's discomfiture by roars of laughter. His letters are full of puns, and he bestows uncomplimentary nicknames upon his intimates. One day his brother Johann, who had acquired a small property in the neighbourhood of Vienna, called upon him in his absence, and left his card, bearing the inscription, 'Johann van Beethoven, Gutsbesitzer' (Land proprietor). Beethoven was so tickled with the conceit of this designation that he could not resist returning the card to his brother with the following inscription scrawled upon the back: 'L. van Beethoven, Hirnbesitzer' (Brain proprietor). Some of his jokes, however, were in extremely bad taste. On one occasion a lady admirer preferred a request for a lock of his hair as a keepsake, and he sent her instead a wisp cut from the beard of a goat! With his inordinate love of joking, however, he was a poor hand at bearing a joke that told against himself. It is related that, having once been rude enough to interrupt a player named Himmel in the midst of the latter's improvisation by asking when he was going to begin, Himmel afterwards wrote to him that 'the latest invention in Berlin was a lantern for the blind'--a joke which Beethoven not only failed to see, but 'when it was pointed out to him he was furious, and would have nothing more to do with his correspondent.'

His carelessness in matters of dress was very noticeable. Czerny, his pupil, has described how he found him at home on his first visit, with his shock of black hair and his unshaven chin, and his ears stuffed with cotton-wool, whilst his clothes seemed to be made of so rough a material, and were so ill-fitting that he resembled nothing so much as a Robinson Crusoe. It is related that once, when he was engaging a servant, the man stated as a reason for leaving his last situation that he failed to dress his master's hair to the latter's satisfaction. 'It is no object to me to have my hair dressed,' remarked Beethoven, as he signified his approval of the engagement. He always described himself as 'a disorderly creature,' and he certainly merited the designation. He was clumsy and awkward in his movements; he could not shave without cutting himself, or handle delicate things without breaking them; and whilst composing he invariably spilt the ink over the pianoforte. His handwriting was so illegible as to call forth objurgations from himself whenever he was called upon to decipher it. 'Yesterday,' he writes to a friend, 'I took a letter myself to the post office, and was asked where it was meant to go to; from which I see that my writing is as often misunderstood as I am myself,' Nevertheless, he was very fond of letter-writing, as the collections which have been preserved abundantly testify.

The letters of great men are often valued for the opinions they contain on persons and subjects of the day, as well as for the insight they afford into the private thoughts and feelings of the writers. Beethoven's letters contain no word-pictures of scenery or events; nor do they express his views on questions or matters in which the world at large might be supposed to take an interest. But they are none the less valuable on that account; for they reflect the openness and simplicity of his character, and lay bare his wishes, his hopes and his disappointments, his joys and his sorrows--and especially his love of fun--just as one or another of these feelings or aspirations was uppermost at the moment.

As a teacher Beethoven exhibited none of the carelessness or impatience that characterised his personal habits. If the rendering of a passage was not in accordance with his own ideas of what it should be, he insisted upon the pupil playing it over and over again until he was satisfied. He was comparatively indifferent to the playing of wrong notes, but failure on the part of a pupil to give the right shade of expression, or to grasp the true character of a piece, never failed to arouse his anger. The one, he would say, might be an accident, but the other showed a want of knowledge, or feeling, or attention.

Beethoven was by nature exceedingly unpunctual, and frequently kept his pupils waiting for their lessons. Even Madame von Breuning, for whom he had a strong affection, and who was one of the few people who could be said to have managed him, often failed in persuading him to be in time. 'Ah! I may not disturb him--he is in his *raptus*,' she would exclaim despairingly, in allusion to his habit of relapsing into gloomy

reverie. And not even his dearest friend dared to intrude upon him at such moments. His absent-mindedness was the subject of many a joke. He often forgot to come home to dinner--a fact which, seeing that he was a man, deserves to be recorded; and it is even said that, on one occasion, he insisted on tendering money for a meal which he had not ordered, under the belief that he had dined. At another time he composed a set of variations on a Russian dance for the wife of an officer in the Russian service--a compliment which was acknowledged by the gift of a horse. Straightway Beethoven forgot all about the horse until he was reminded of its existence by a long bill presented for its keep. He persisted in shaving himself at his bedroom window, without a blind, and exposed to the view of passers-by; and when he discovered that this habit caused a crowd of jeering idlers to collect in front of the house, he flew into a rage, and exchanged his lodgings for others situated in a more retired spot, rather than discontinue the practice. His explosive temper has furnished many amusing anecdotes. One day his cook, who, in consideration of her master's incurable unpunctuality, must be regarded as an aggrieved personage, served up some eggs which were not to his taste, and he emphasised his displeasure by throwing the entire batch at the head of the unfortunate domestic. On another occasion a waiter who mistook his order was rewarded by having the contents of a dish of stew poured over his head. Even where his temper was not concerned his manners were directly opposed to those prevailing in polite society--though, in a large measure, this may have been due to his perfect simplicity and his ignorance of what was expected of him. Thus, it is told that, returning from one of his long walks in the pouring rain, he would make straight for the sitting-room of the house in which he happened to be staying and calmly proceed to shake the water from his hat over the carpet and chairs, after the fashion of a retriever just emerged from a pond, humming to himself the while some theme which had been occupying his thoughts during his walk. One of his pleasanter habits, to which he was greatly attached, was washing. He would pour the water backwards and forwards over his hands with childish delight, and if, as frequently happened, a musical idea suggested itself to him during the operation, he became oblivious to everything else, and would continue to send the water to and fro, spilling it in huge quantities, until the floor resembled a miniature lake.

Beethoven would never allow that his disorderliness was anything more than personal, always contending that he had a love of order and neatness with regard to his surroundings and arrangements. Yet here is a sketch of the condition of his living-room, as seen by one of his friends: 'The most exquisite confusion reigned in his house. Books and music were scattered in all directions; here the residue of a cold luncheon, there some full, some half-emptied, bottles. On the desk the hasty sketch of a new quartet; in another corner the remains of a breakfast. On the pianoforte the scribbled hints for a noble symphony, yet little more than in embryo; hard by a proof-sheet, waiting to be returned; letters from friends, and on business, spread all over the floor. Between the windows a goodly Stracchino cheese, and on one side of it ample vestiges of a genuine Verona Salami....' If an article were missing Beethoven would declare that he knew just where to put his hand upon it; and then, when two or three days' search failed to discover its whereabouts, he would storm at the servants, asseverating that they hid his things away on purpose to annoy him. But the storm would clear as quickly as it had gathered, and peace reign once more, until the next occasion called it forth; and the servants knew their master's heart too well to be angered by his reproaches.

The mention of his rambles in the rain recalls his fondness for the open air. It was a passion which clung to him through life. As each summer came round, during these years of unremitting toil, he would hail with delight the moment when he could close the door of his lodgings in the hot, stuffy city, and betake himself to some retired spot where he could ramble about and hold communion with Nature, secure from interruption. 'No man,' he wrote to one of his friends, 'loves the country more. Woods, trees, and rocks give the response which man requires.... Every tree seems to say, "Holy, holy."' A forest was to him a paradise. He would penetrate its cool depths, and, selecting a tree which offered a seat in a forking branch close to the ground, he would climb into it and sit there for hours, buried in thought. It was amidst the trees of Schönbrunn that he made the first rough notes for several of his great works. With his back planted against the trunk of a favourite lime-tree, his legs stretched along the big branch, and his gaze fixed upon the network of branchlets and quivering leaves above him, he sketched the framework of the oratorio 'The Mount of Olives,' the opera 'Fidelio' (or 'Leonore,' as it was first called), and that glorious symphony which is known by the title of the 'Eroica.'

When not resting amidst the trees Beethoven would set off on long walks through the fields, sketch-book[20] in hand, and humming or roaring to himself as he went along. The rough jottings in the sketch-books were later on developed with the utmost care, being written out again and again, with fresh alterations and additions each time, until every trace of crudeness had disappeared, and the finished work stood out with such clearness and precision as to suggest that it had been but that moment created. Nothing, indeed, has struck those who have followed the gradual development of his work from the first sketches which have been preserved more than the number of attempts which mark the growth of the idea in the composer's mind, until it assumed its final form. Yet there was no trace in the finished work of the process of refining and elaboration through which it had passed.

Very curious was the origin of some of the suggestions which found their way into the sketch-books. It was Beethoven's practice to keep one of these books by his bedside, in case an idea occurred to him during the night, and it is told that he was once aroused by the knocking of a neighbour who had been accidentally locked out of his house in the small hours of the morning. The irate neighbour knocked four raps at a time, with a pause at the end of every fourth rap, and the rhythmic regularity of the sounds not only startled Beethoven out of his sleep, but suggested a musical idea to his mind. Up jumped the composer, and down went the idea in his sketch-book, and the next morning the jotting was included in one of his most striking compositions--the 'Violin Concerto in D,' where the passage, given to the drums, is many times repeated.

A village which formed one of his favourite resorts was Heiligenstadt, situated about seven miles from Vienna. Here he went in the summer of 1802, after a severe illness. For some time past he had been suffering from increasing deafness, and the malady seemed now to have reached an acute stage, so that his country surroundings failed to exercise their accustomed charm, and he fell into a deep melancholy. Indeed, he appeared to have become impressed with the idea that his life-work was ended, and that he had nothing to look forward to but the companionship of an affliction which must sever him from the social intercourse in which he delighted, and render his remaining years solitary and miserable. It would be difficult to imagine a more terrible calamity than that which had befallen Beethoven, or to exaggerate its effects upon an over-sensitive nature such as he possessed. As his deafness increased, his efforts to conceal the results of the malady from those outside his own immediate circle became more and more painfully evident. No one failed to observe how he was affected, yet none dared to commiserate with him; and when he discovered that his mistakes were drawing public attention to what he was so anxious to hide, his mortification was intensified to a degree that for the time destroyed his peace of mind and left him a prey to melancholy. It was whilst in this state of mental and physical depression that he penned from his village retreat the touchingly eloquent letter which has since been called his 'will.' In this epistle, which is addressed to 'My brothers Carl and Johann Beethoven,' and which they are admonished to 'read and execute after my demise,' Beethoven pleads for consideration both on account of his irritability and his apparent lack of affection. To his misfortunes, not to his faults, must be attributed the obstinacy, the hostility, or the misanthropic attitude which he has shown towards those whom he loves, and by whom he is loved in return. 'My heart and my mind,' he says, as if in extenuation of this fancied ill-feeling, 'were from childhood prone to the tender feelings of affection.' It is a pathetic appeal to natures which, unfortunately for the writer, were the least likely to echo its tenderness in their own hearts; for neither of the brothers had ever shown him true affection. They had followed him to Vienna to found a livelihood for themselves, and thenceforward, with selfish zeal for their own interests, they had simply served to clog his progress. Blinded by the nobility of his own character, however, Beethoven now takes upon himself the entire blame for what he imagines to be a lessening of the affection between them, and, sunk in health, and viewing his future through the darkest of glasses, he reproaches himself for what he could never have helped. Though his brothers are the only persons who are actually named in this remarkable letter, no one who reads it can doubt that Beethoven is addressing the world at large, who will judge both himself and his works.

Towards the end of this year his health had improved, but the deafness remained constant, and he was at length compelled to desist from conducting his works. Shortly after this an incident occurred which must have served to convince him of the sympathy which the public felt for him in his affliction. His great work, the

'Choral Symphony,' was being performed, and the composer was standing on the platform with his back to the audience, intently following the music. As the concluding chords died away the whole house broke out into enthusiastic applause. Again and again the shouts rent the air, but Beethoven stood motionless, unmoved--a pathetic figure amidst the storm. Possibly at this moment those whose ears he had charmed by his music realised to the full the ineffable sadness of his condition, for a reverential hush fell suddenly on the gathering. The next moment, however, the storm of cheers broke out afresh, for a young singer, named Caroline Unger, who had been taking part in the symphony, went up to the unconscious composer, and, taking his hand, turned him round to the audience. As the glance of the deaf man lighted upon the sea of upturned faces, and he witnessed the emotion which his work had aroused, he was deeply moved.

[Illustration: '*Taking his hand, turned him round to the audience.*']

The 'Choral Symphony' ranks amongst the greatest of Beethoven's works, but we should like to mention one of his smaller, though not less famous, compositions--that which is known by the title of the 'Kreutzer Sonata for Pianoforte and Violin'--because no fitter illustration could be found of the rapidity with which the composer worked under pressure than is afforded by the beautiful work which he dedicated to his friend Rodolphe Kreutzer, a violinist attached to Count Bernadotte's suite of performers. He had undertaken the writing of the sonata at the instance of a violinist, a mulatto named Bridgetower, who was staying in Vienna, and it was to be jointly performed by Bridgetower and himself. The concert was announced to begin at 8 a.m., but when the public were hastening to the theatre in the Augarten at that early hour of the spring morning, the music for the pianoforte part was practically unwritten, with the exception of a few scattered suggestions, whilst the variations, which are justly renowned for their grace and beauty, were hurriedly written in at the last moment, and had to be played by the violinist at sight from the rough manuscript. The *andante* is of unsurpassable beauty, and it was rendered by the composer in such a manner as to excite the audience to enthusiasm. Beethoven's powers of playing were never shown to greater advantage than in his *andante* movements. His execution of the quicker parts was apt to be confused by his frequent use of the pedal, but nothing occurred to mar or obscure the clearness and depth of expression with which he rendered the slower movements, and it was in these that his playing was most truly inspired.

The year 1804 is a memorable one in the life of Beethoven, for it witnessed the completion of his grand symphony, the 'Eroica,' the rough idea of which had been sketched amidst the woods of Schönbrunn two years before. The suggestion of the work is said to have come from Count Bernadotte, the French Ambassador at Vienna, with whom Beethoven was on terms of intimacy; but the man whom it was intended to honour by its dedication was the General whose exploits had shaken the whole of Europe--Napoleon Buonaparte. Beethoven had been greatly attracted by Napoleon's character. He believed in him as the one man who was capable of making his adopted country a pattern for the world, by establishing a Republic on the principles laid down by Plato. But his confidence in the unselfishness of Napoleon's aims was soon to receive a rude shock. The fair copy of the symphony, with its dedicatory inscription, had been completed, and was on the point of being dispatched to Paris, when suddenly the news reached Vienna that the hero's glorious entry into the French capital had culminated in his allowing himself to be proclaimed Emperor. In a moment Beethoven's worship was turned into hatred and contempt. He seized the manuscript, tore the title-page to shreds, and flung the work itself to the other end of the room. 'He designs to become a tyrant, like the rest,' he exclaimed, with scornful bitterness; and it was a long time before he could even be induced to look at the music again, or to consider the question of its publication. Eventually, however, he consented to its appearing under a new title, the 'Sinfonia Eroica,' by which it has since been known to the world.

It is impossible within the limits of a short story-life to give even a brief description of the composer's chief works, or to convey more than an idea of how much work, despite his irregular habits, Beethoven accomplished. His untiring industry in developing the rough jottings which formed the foundations of his compositions has been mentioned; but without following his life from year to year we can have only a very imperfect conception of the actual amount of labour which was involved in bringing to perfection the long list of works that we see appended to the biographies of the composer. When we follow the story of his life in

detail, we are struck by the fact of his unceasing toil. Nothing seems to have checked the constant flow of composition; yet many causes were at work to hinder it, such as ill-health, poverty, an ill-balanced temperament, and an oversensitiveness with regard to the petty troubles arising out of his injudicious mode of life. 'I live only in my music,' he writes, 'and no sooner is one thing done than the next is begun. As I am now writing, I often work at three or four things at once.' And think what such work meant! It has been said that it is difficult to find in Beethoven's life anything corresponding to the extraordinary beauty and grandeur of his creations--in other words, there seems to exist no parallel in his life, as he lived it, to the outpourings of his musical soul. There is, indeed, little doubt that Beethoven had but one channel through which to express his deepest thoughts and feelings--the language of music. Through his music he reaches our hearts; by his music we are brought into contact with his innermost soul; and by his music alone can we know the man Beethoven as he really was.

Yet his life was by no means devoid of noble qualities. It was in every sense a great life, full of energy, full of power, full of a determination which carried him through every obstacle, and enabled him to hold his own against the attacks of his enemies. Apart, however, from the genius that ennobled it, it was not a life which could altogether compel admiration. The down-right simplicity and directness of purpose which shone forth as Beethoven's chief characteristics, and in themselves were undoubted virtues, were, unhappily, overshadowed by faults and shortcomings of such magnitude as to shut out much of the friendship and sympathy that he might otherwise have enjoyed; and no one reading his life can doubt that he stood greatly in need of such assistance.

Nevertheless, Beethoven's faults were of the head, not of the heart. At heart he was a man capable of loving and worthy to be loved. His simple nature was easily touched by distress, and just as easily imposed upon by those who designed to use him for their own ends. Many of his quarrels and dislikes were either brought about or fomented by persons in whom he had placed a mistaken faith. This was notably the case with regard to the quarrel with Stephen Breuning, his best and truest friend, to whom, after a separation of years, he turned with an appeal for pardon that did honour to his heart. The letter accompanied a miniature of the composer, and ran as follows:

'Beneath this portrait, dear Stephen, may all that has for so long gone on between us be for ever hidden. I know how I have torn your heart. For this the emotion that you must certainly have noticed in me has been sufficient punishment. My feeling towards you was not malice. No--I should no longer be worthy of your friendship; it was passionate love for you and myself; but I doubted you dreadfully, for people came between us who were unworthy of us both. My portrait has long been intended for you. I need not tell you that I never meant it for anyone else. Who could I give it to with my warmest love so well as to you, true, good, noble Stephen? Forgive me for distressing you. I have suffered myself as much as you have. It was only when I had you no longer with me that I first really felt how dear you are, and always will be, to my heart. Come to my arms once more, as you used to do.'

Carl, the brother in whose unworthy behalf Beethoven had taken up the cudgels against his best friend, was dead when this touching appeal was written, but he had bequeathed to Beethoven a solemn charge which was destined to bring to him who undertook it in the goodness of his heart a burden of sorrow and bitterness. Carl had died penniless, and his boy, who bore the father's name, thenceforth became to his Uncle Ludwig as his own son. How good, how generous and self-sacrificing Beethoven was to his nephew is testified by all who have written of his life. He supplied him freely with money when money was by no means too plentiful; he strove to satisfy his every need, either fancied or real; and he lavished upon him a great love and solicitude to the last day of his life. But Carl showed himself to be utterly unworthy of this affection. He treated his uncle shamefully, and instead of endeavouring to repay his kindness by steady perseverance, he was a disgrace to the family whose name he bore. There is, unfortunately, only too much reason for believing that Carl's want of affection, coupled with his dissolute habits, embittered his uncle's existence, estranged him from his friends, and hurried on his death.

Of Beethoven's tenderness of heart numerous instances are recorded. He devoted much of his time to arranging concerts for the benefit of the poor and suffering, and in the midst of his popularity and the heavy demands upon his time and strength he always found a means of helping others. When he first came to Vienna to reside, he made the acquaintance of a musician named Förster, from whom he received instruction in the art of quartet writing. Beethoven never forgot this kindly help, and long afterwards, when Förster was living in the upper part of his house, he gave music-lessons to his friend's little six-year-old boy. The lessons could only be given before breakfast, and as Beethoven was an early riser, the boy had to get up in the dark on those winter mornings and go down to the practice-room. May we not picture for ourselves the little child seated beside the grave composer in the dimly-lighted room, striving with chilly fingers to find the right notes, whilst the master, bending over him, sets him right with a tenderness which no one else is near to witness?

'I feel as if I had written scarcely more than a few notes,' were the words used by Beethoven in writing to a friend in 1824, when he was near the close of his full and eventful life; and they serve to show how exhaustless was that energy which neither sorrow nor disease had the power to repress. Still, he yearns to 'bring a few great works into the world, and then,' he adds, 'like an old child, to end my earthly course somewhere amongst good people.' These latter years had, indeed, been very full ones, both of work and anxieties, and the inroads of disease had been steadily undermining his strength. Yet the picture which is given to us of the composer when within a few months of his death is a vivid portrayal of the triumph of mind-force over physical weakness. He was staying in the country, at the house of his brother Johann, and the picture of his daily life there is drawn by the hand of his serving-man. 'At half-past five he was up and at his table, beating time with hands and feet, singing, humming, and writing. At half-past seven was the family breakfast, and directly after it he hurried out of doors, and would saunter about the fields, calling out, waving his hands, going now very slowly, then very fast, and then suddenly standing still and writing in a kind of pocket-book. At half-past twelve he came into the house to dinner, and after dinner he went to his own room till three or so; then again in the fields till about sunset, for later than that he might not go out. At half-past seven was supper, and then he went to his room, wrote till ten, and so to bed.'

One more picture, and our story ends. Beethoven was lying on his death-bed when the news was brought to him that Hummel, the musician, with whom he had been intimate in the old Vienna days, had just arrived in the city. Many years had elapsed since Beethoven had severed his friendship with Hummel in a sudden fit of pique, and there had been no attempt at reconciliation. But now, wasted by disease, and fast sinking into his grave, there was no room in his heart for aught but joy at the knowledge that one whom he had formerly liked was so near him. 'Oh,' he cried, raising himself in bed when he heard the news--'oh, if he would but call to see me!' No one seems to have carried the message from the dying man, but it was answered. A few days later Hummel came, and the old friends were at once in each other's arms. Hummel, struck by the terrible signs of suffering in Beethoven's face, broke into bitter weeping. Beethoven tried to calm him, and, pulling from beneath his pillow a sketch of Haydn's birthplace which he had that morning received, he cried, 'Look, my dear Hummel, here is Haydn's birthplace! So great a man born in so mean a cottage!'

Beethoven died on March 26, 1827, having recently completed his fifty-sixth year. Two days before his death he received the last Sacraments of the Church. 'As the evening closed in, at a quarter to six, there came a sudden storm of hail and snow, covering the ground and roofs of the Schwarzspanierplatz, and followed by a flash of lightning and an instant clap of thunder. So great was the crash as to rouse even the dying man. He opened his eyes, clenched his fist, and shook it in the air above him. This lasted a few seconds, while the hail rushed down outside, and then the hand fell, and the great composer was no more.'[21]

On March 29, at three o'clock in the afternoon, Beethoven was laid to rest in the Währinger Cemetery, Vienna. The funeral was a very grand one. Twenty thousand people followed him to his grave, and soldiers were needed to force a way for the coffin through the densely packed mass awaiting its arrival at the cemetery gates. Amongst the mourners was Schubert, the composer, who had visited him on his death-bed, and who acted as one of the torch-bearers. A choir of men singers and trombones performed and sang several of the master's compositions, as the great procession wended its way to the graveside, and Hummel laid three

wreaths of laurel upon the coffin before it was lowered to its resting-place.

FOOTNOTES:

[16] Mozart had died in December of the previous year.

[17] Schindler, 'Life of Beethoven.'

[18] Moscheles, in Schindler's 'Life of Beethoven.'

[19] Sir G. Grove, 'Dictionary of Music and Musicians.'

[20] One of these sketch-books, filled with his notes, is to be seen in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum.

[21] Sir G. Grove, 'Dictionary of Music and Musicians.'

BEETHOVEN'S PRINCIPAL COMPOSITIONS

OPERA: Fidelio. [Produced in its original form in 1805, revised in 1806, and again in 1814. There are four different overtures: 'Leonore,' Nos. 1, 2, and 3, in C; No. 4, 'Fidelio,' in E. Published in 1810 as 'Leonore,' and in 1814 as 'Fidelio.'] Mass in C, Op. 86 (performed in 1807). 1812. Missa Solennis in D, Op. 123. 1827. Cantata: The Mount of Olives, Op. 85 (performed in 1803). 1811. Ballet: The Men of Prometheus, Op. 43. 1801. Overture and Incidental Music to Goethe's 'Egmont,' Op. 84. 1810. Overture and Incidental Music to 'The Ruins of Athens,' Op. 113. 1812. Overture and Incidental Music to 'King Stephen,' Op. 117. 1812. 9 SYMPHONIES: No. 1 in C, Op. 21. 1800. No. 2 in D, Op. 36. 1803. No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55. The Eroica. 1805. No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60. 1807. No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. 1808. No. 6 in F, Op. 68. The Pastoral. 1808. No. 7 in A, Op. 92. 1813. No. 8 in F, Op. 93. 1814. No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125. The Choral. 1824. Wellington's Victory (Battle of Vittoria), Op. 91 (performed in 1813). 1816. Overture to Coriolan, Op. 62 (performed in 1807). 1808. Overture in C (Namensfeier), Op. 115 (performed in 1815). 1825. Overture in C (Die Weihe des Hauses), Op. 124 (performed in 1822). 1825. Septet in E-flat for strings and wind, Op. 20. 1802. Sextet in E-flat for wind instruments, Op. 71. 1810. Sextet in E-flat for strings and two horns, Op. 81*b*. 1810. 2 String Quintets: Op. 4 in E-flat. 1797. Op. 29 in C. 1801. 17 String Quartets: Op. 18, Nos. 1 to 6 (F, G, D, C minor, A, B-flat). 1801. Op. 59, Nos. 1 to 3 (F, E minor, C). The Rasonmoffsky. 1808. Op. 74, in E-flat. The Harfen-quartet. 1810. Op. 95, in F minor. 1816. Op. 127, in E-flat. 1826. Op. 130, in B-flat. } Op. 131, in C-sharp minor. } The Posthumous Quartets. Op. 132, in A minor. } 1827. Op. 135, in F. } Op. 133, Great Fugue in B-flat. 1827. 5 String Trios: Op. 3, in E-flat. 1797. Op. 9, Nos. 1 to 3 (G, D, C minor). 1798. Op. 8, in D. The Serenade Trio. 1797. Serenade in D, for flute, violin, and viola, Op. 25. 1802. Concerto in D, for violin and orchestra, Op. 61. 1806. 2 Romances for violin and orchestra: Op. 40, in G. 1803. Op. 50, in F. 1805. 5 Concertos for pianoforte and orchestra: No. 1 in C, Op. 15. 1801. No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 19. 1801. No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37. 1804. No. 4 in G, Op. 58. 1808. No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 73. The Emperor. 1811. Choral Fantasia in C minor, Op. 80. 1811. Quintet in E-flat, for pianoforte and wind, Op. 16. 1801. 6 Trios for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello: Op. 1, Nos. 1 to 3 (E-flat, G, C minor). 1795 Op. 70, Nos. 1 and 2 (D, E-flat). 1809. Op. 97, Grand Trio in B-flat. 1816. 10 Sonatas for pianoforte and violin. [We must mention the Kreutzer Sonata in A, Op. 47. 1805.] 5 Sonatas for pianoforte and violoncello. 32 Sonatas for pianoforte alone. [We have only space to mention the Pathetic (in C minor, Op. 13, 1799), the Moonlight (in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2, 1802), the Waldstein (in C, Op. 53, 1805), and the Farewell (in E-flat, Op. 81*a*, 1811).] Andante Favori in F. 1806. 23 sets of Variations. Scena and Aria, Ah! perfido, Op. 65. 1805. Adelaide, Op. 46. 1797. Mignon's Song, 'Kennst du das Land?' Op. 75, No. 1. 1810. Liederkreis (six Songs), Op. 98. 1816. 60 other Songs.

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For a fuller account of Beethoven's life the reader is advised to consult--

SCHINDLER'S Life of Beethoven (translated by Moscheles). 2 vols. Colburn. 1841.

Beethoven's LETTERS (1790-1826) have been translated by Lady Wallace. 2 vols. Longmans. 1866.

SCHUBERT

SCHUBERT

If you are ever in the city of Vienna, and bend your steps to the district called the Lichtenthal, you will there find a thoroughfare, running north and south, called the Nussdorfer Strasse. This is its present name, but in former times it was known as 'Auf dem Himmelpfortgrund'--meaning 'Off the Gate of Heaven'--the 'Himmelpfortgrund' itself being a small street branching off to the west towards the fortifications. On the right-hand side of the Nussdorfer Strasse, as you face the outskirts of the city, you will come upon a house bearing the number 54 (it was formerly numbered 72), and the curious sign of 'Zum rothen Krebsen' (the Red Crab). But your attention will at once be drawn to another feature of the house--a grey marble tablet fixed above the door, with the inscription 'Franz Schubert's Geburthaus' (the house in which Franz Schubert was born), in the centre, and on the right a lyre crowned with a star, and on the left a laurel wreath encircling the date '31 January, 1797.'

Nothing more than this inscribed tablet will be needed to bring home to your mind the fact that you are actually face to face with the house in which Schubert, the composer of those beautiful songs, 'The Erl King,' 'Hark, hark, the Lark,' and 'Sylvia,' first saw the light. And as you stand before the home of the great song-writer your thoughts will revert in fancy to the time when, a century ago, there issued from that doorway the figure of a boy of eleven years of age, clad in a suit of grey so light as to be almost white, with chubby face, bright dark eyes, with a sparkle in them that the spectacles which he wore could not hide, and a head of thick, curly, black hair. That boy was Franz Schubert, setting out for his examination to be admitted as a scholar at the Imperial Convict, as the school for educating the choristers of the Chapel Royal in Vienna was called.

The son of Franz Schubert, a schoolmaster in the Lichtenthal district, whose character for uprightness and honesty, in addition to his abilities, had won him the respect and esteem of all who knew him, little Franz had from the first shown a remarkable fondness for music. The family were in poor circumstances, the father having sprung from a peasant stock, and by his own industry and a natural gift for teaching succeeded in raising himself to his present position, whilst his wife Elizabeth, in every way a perfect helpmeet for a poor man, was likewise of humble origin. Franz Schubert had nothing to depend upon but his schoolmaster's pay, and the family included, besides little Franz, three boys and a girl. Nevertheless, such encouragement as could be given to Franz in his love for music was given heartily and sympathetically, for there could not have been a more devoted family than his. At the first, however, Franz showed his independence by making friends with a joiner's apprentice, who used to take him to a certain pianoforte warehouse in the town, where, to his joy, he was permitted to play little tunes on one of the instruments. At home there was only an old, worn-out piano to practise upon, but with the aid of this and frequent visits to the warehouse the boy managed to acquire unaided a certain groundwork in music, so that when, at the age of seven, his father began to give him lessons on the violin he found that Franz had already made some headway. His elder brothers, Ignaz and Ferdinand, had been taken in hand by the father at the same age, and Ignaz, who was twelve years older than Franz, gave his little brother lessons on the pianoforte.

[Illustration: SCHUBERT. From photo RISCHGITZ.]

It was soon clear, however, that neither Ignaz nor his father could keep pace with Franz's abilities--the boy had himself told Ignaz that he had no further need of his help, and could go on alone--and it was decided to

send him to the choirmaster of the parish, Michael Holzer, to learn the violin and piano, as well as singing, the organ, and thorough-bass. Holzer, in turn, was astonished at the boy's powers, and assured the father that he had never had such a pupil before. 'If I wish to teach him anything now,' he declared, 'I find that he knows it already! I can only listen to him in amazement!'

Franz, with all his devotion to music, was a merry-hearted boy, never so happy as when, in the play-hour, he found himself surrounded by his schoolfellows, with whom he was first favourite. By the time he had reached his eleventh year his voice had acquired such power and beauty of expression as to procure him the chief soprano's place in the choir of the parish church, where he also played the violin solos as they occurred in the service. At home he was even then writing little songs and pieces for the pianoforte--an early promise of what was to follow. The family, as we have seen, were poor and hardworking, Ignaz and Ferdinand were helping their father in the school, and it was evident, therefore, that the talent which Franz undoubtedly possessed must be turned to good account as soon as possible. The necessary step to this end was to obtain his admittance to the Convict, in order that he might be trained for the Imperial Chapel, and in the meanwhile receive his education free in return for his services.

Accordingly, one morning in the month of October 1808, Franz, attired in his suit of grey, presented himself for examination by the Court Capellmeisters and singing-master. A number of boys were to be examined at the same time, and whilst they were waiting they indulged themselves in mirth and jokes at the expense of the short, chubby-faced, spectacled boy clad in grey, 'Hullo, my friend,' cried one, who towered a good foot above poor Franz's head, 'how did you leave your father the miller?'--an allusion to Franz's appearance which was greeted with a burst of laughter from the other boys. A second preferred a sarcastic inquiry as to the price of flour, whilst a third desired to know whether Franz expected to get through in such a garb--sallies which the victim bore with open good humour, the more so as he felt conscious of his own powers. And, indeed, the laugh was soon turned against his mockers; for, when he came to be examined, his singing of the trial-pieces, in addition to his skill in solving the problems set him, so astonished his examiners that they passed him through at once, and he was ordered to don the uniform of the imperial choristers forthwith. With a glow of pride Franz arrayed himself in his new dress, which, with its edgings of gold lace, he thought dazzlingly beautiful after his despised suit of grey.

[Illustration: '*They indulged in jokes at the expense of the spectacled boy.*']

Franz's entry into the Convict implied a long separation from home, but he soon found plenty to occupy his mind and claim his interest. The school orchestra was a great feature of the new life, in which our hero, from his home studies, was enabled at once to take a prominent place. Practice was held daily, and the musicians bent their energies to mastering the overtures and symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, with the works of many of the minor masters. Even Beethoven's works were not considered to be beyond the scope of their powers as time went on. The work of all others which made the deepest impression on Schubert's mind at this stage, however, was Mozart's 'G minor Symphony.' 'One can hear the angels singing in it,' he used to say. But he revelled also in the overtures to 'Figaro' and the 'Zauberflöte,' and, indeed, the orchestral music to which he was now introduced opened up to his mind a vista of never-ending delight.

On the very first day that he took his seat in the orchestra his clever playing attracted the attention of the leader, a big fellow named Spaun, who sat immediately in front of him. On turning round to ascertain who it was that was bringing forth such excellent tone from his fiddle, and, moreover, playing with such precision, Spaun discovered it to be 'a small boy in spectacles, named Franz Schubert.' From that moment big Spaun became little Franz's intimate friend and counsellor. To him one day Franz, who was characteristically shy of speaking about himself and his longings, made a blushing admission that he had already composed a good deal. 'Indeed,' he added, as if in extenuation, 'indeed, I cannot help it, and I should do it every day, only I cannot afford to get music-paper.' Spaun grasped the situation at once, and thenceforth Franz was kept supplied with all the music-paper he required, a kindness for which he showed his gratitude by devoting his spare time to composition. In his playing, too, he made such rapid progress that before long he was taking the

first violin, and on occasions when Ruzicka, the conductor, was not present he was appointed to lead the orchestra. It was observed by others besides Ruzicka and Spaun how greatly Schubert's gifts and earnestness influenced the rest of the players, and tended to increase and strengthen their taste for good music. His deep sentiment for what was greatest and best in his art had from the first separated him from his schoolfellows, and now the magnetism of his genius and earnestness was drawing them one after another to his side. Franz Schubert had already become a power in the school.

Visits to the home were only to be made on Sundays and holidays, and they were events to which he looked forward with the keenest delight. Performances in which each member could take a share formed the chief occupation of the family on these occasions. Perhaps Franz had brought home a quartet of his own writing, and then the father would bring forth his 'cello, and Ignaz and Ferdinand take first and second violins, while Franz chose the viola, in order that he might be better able to judge of the effect, and the work would be played through, with criticism or approval of its merits at the conclusion. The father would sometimes play a wrong note; at first Franz would take no notice, but if the error were repeated he would look up with a smile, and say gently, 'Herr Vater, something must be wrong there,' and it is a proof of the rapid progress which he had made in music since the days of his father's teaching that his judgment in such matters was never questioned.

[Illustration: '*His clever playing attracted the attention of the leader.*']

By degrees a reverence for Beethoven's genius was making itself felt in regard to Franz's musical studies. Not long before he joined the school the orchestra had been invited to give a performance at Schönbrunn, when Beethoven was present, and Franz had listened with the deepest interest to his schoolfellows' account of their reception by the great master. One day, when some of his songs had been sung at a school performance, Franz turned to his friend Spaun with the inquiry whether the latter thought it possible that he (Franz) would ever be able to accomplish anything in the shape of composition. To which Spaun, in surprise, answered that there could be no doubt in the matter, since he had already done a great deal. 'Perhaps,' replied Franz thoughtfully; 'I sometimes have dreams of that sort, but who can do anything after Beethoven?'

With his passionate love for music dominating his thoughts and energies, it is not surprising that Schubert should have fallen behind in his ordinary studies. From the point of view of the authorities the Convict represented a complete school with a strongly-developed musical side; but for Schubert it existed merely as a means to an end, and that end music. This fact was apparent in about a year after he entered the school, nevertheless his popularity suffered no decrease thereby, for his backwardness in most of the subjects in which other boys excelled was overshadowed by his extraordinary progress in the art which was absorbing him so entirely. And as time went on his desire for composition increased to such an extent that his kind friend Spaun must often have been taxed to keep pace with his demand for music-paper. Franz had already begun with methodical care to place the date of composition upon every piece which he wrote, and thus we are enabled to ascertain precisely when he composed his first pianoforte work of importance; it is a fantasia for four hands, comprising more than twelve movements, and filling thirty-two closely-written pages of music-paper, and it bears the date, 'April 8--May 1, 1810.' Following this came his first attempt at song-writing, in the shape of a long piece for voice and pianoforte, called 'Hagars Klage' (Hagar's Lament over her dying Son), which also contains twelve movements, and is remarkable for its frequent unconnected changes of key. Melancholy ideas were evidently uppermost in Schubert's mind at this time in connection with music, for the 'Hagar' was followed by another piece of even more lugubrious character, called 'Leichenfantasie' (Corpse-fantasia), a musical setting of Schiller's grim poem beginning:

'With a deathlike glimmer Stands the moon above the dying trees; Sighing wails the Spirit through the night; Mists are creeping; Stars are peeping Pale aloft like torches in a cave.'

He was now fairly launched upon composition, and during the two succeeding years his pen was not allowed to rest, songs and instrumental pieces being produced in rapid succession.

Despite the many acts of kindness which he received at the hands of his friends Franz was made to feel in many ways the want of a little pocket-money such as fell to the lot of his more fortunate schoolfellows. He had to contend with numerous discomforts, more especially in the winter months, when the supplies both of firing and food were inadequate, and one dark November day we find him sitting down, chilled and hungry, to pen the following appeal to his brother Ferdinand:

'You know from experience that one can often enjoy a roll and an apple or two, especially when one must wait eight hours and a half after a poor dinner for a meagre supper. The few groschen which my father gives me are all spent the first day, and what is one to do the rest of the time? "Those who hope will not be confounded," says the Bible, and I firmly believe it. Suppose, for instance, you send me a few kreutzers monthly. You would never miss them, whilst I should shut myself up in my cell and be quite happy. St. Matthew also says: "Let him that hath two coats give one to the poor," In the meantime I trust you will lend your ear to the voice crying to you incessantly to remember your poor brother Franz, who loves and confides in you.'

But these long waits between dinner and supper, together with the hardship of being compelled to sit for hours in a fireless practice-room, were not destined to endure much longer for Franz. The termination of his career at the Convict was decided upon in consequence of his resolution to devote himself wholly to music. He had a little circle of faithful friends in the school, every one of whom regarded him as a genius, and who loved him also for his own sake; they only waited for him to compose in order to perform under his direction, and they would fain have kept him amongst them; but they knew his longings, and they realised the impossibility of retaining so gifted a composer within the compass of their ranks. Schubert loved them too, and though he went out from their midst to seek a wider field for his genius, he never forgot that he was one of them, and as composition after composition flowed from his pen it was brought to the Convict orchestra to be tried and approved by his kindest and best of critics.

Apart from this determination to give himself up to music there was no pressing reason for his leaving the school, for it was reported that the Emperor himself, having observed Schubert's beautiful voice and wonderful power of expression, had evinced so much interest in his progress as to offer him a foundation scholarship in the school, on condition that he should qualify himself for examination during the holidays. Schubert, however, had made up his mind, and towards the end of the year 1813 he quitted the Convict, his farewell being signalised by the composing of his first Symphony[22] in honour of the birthday of Dr. Lang, the musical director. A year before this event took place, the mother, who had worked unceasingly to keep the home together on the slender means which her husband's calling provided, had died. Her loss was keenly felt by the family, but by none more than by Franz himself, who realised how much he owed to the love and care bestowed upon him in his childhood by this excellent, hard-working mother.

Schubert was now entering upon his seventeenth year, and stood at the entrance of a career in music which, judging from his compositions at the Convict school, must have seemed to his friends to be full of promise. He himself was full of fire and energy, and longing to follow in the footsteps of the great masters whose works had inspired his earliest efforts. But, though as yet perhaps he failed to realise it, his genius, whatever may have been the source of its inspiration, was surely leading him towards the path wherein his strength chiefly lay--a path almost untrodden, and which he alone was destined to adorn with the choicest flowers of his imagination, in order that others might enjoy their perfume for evermore--the pathway of song. Already those early songs to which the school musicians had accorded a sympathetic hearing as they flowed fresh from his pen evinced to those capable of judging far more power and individuality than did any of his more ambitious instrumental compositions.

But, as we have said, Schubert himself probably had not realised this great truth as yet. He stood at the threshold of a future which gave him no insight into its possibilities, which for him at that moment conveyed no more than a hope of fulfilment of his one burning desire--to write, write, write. It was the pure longing of the true musician to make mankind at large partakers of his heavenly gift. Let us remember this of Franz

Schubert, because it is absolutely true of him, and because it helps us to understand his true nature.

Schubert's determination was put to a severe test on leaving the Convict, for he had hardly returned home ere the dread summons for enlistment was placed in his hands. The Continental law of conscription admits of no distinction such as that which Nature confers upon an individual by the gift of genius; and to escape the danger which now threatened him, and which, by depriving him of his liberty for several years to come, appeared to be wholly insupportable, Schubert seized upon the only remedy which offered itself. He at once qualified himself for becoming an assistant to his father in the latter's school. The choice lay between two evils, and Schubert chose the lesser; for though he cordially detested the drudgery of teaching, it at least prevented his being called upon to serve in the ranks, and at the same time secured to him a certain amount of leisure for composition. Moreover, there was opportunity for maintaining relations with his little circle of intimates at the Convict--a privilege which Schubert could not have forgone without a severe pang--as well as for making new friends.

It is easy to imagine the reluctance with which Schubert went about his daily task of teaching the infant class in his father's school. Every minute thus spent must have seemed to him an hour, and probably the little ones, no less than their impatient teacher himself, breathed a deep sigh of relief when the play-hour arrived. To Schubert it meant freedom for work--real work--when he could fly to his desk, and write down the musical thoughts which he had been burning to express the whole morning. Impatient as he felt under the constraint put upon him he never complained; probably the dread of the conscription was constantly haunting him, for no fewer than three summonses to serve reached him at this time. There were, moreover, bright intervals in the round of scholastic work, when he could forget that he was a schoolmaster, and throw himself heart and soul into his art. He had lately made the acquaintance of a musical family named Grob, residing in the Lichtenthal, comprising a mother and her son and daughter, in whose house he was received on terms of friendship, quite as much for himself as for his music. Therese Grob possessed a fine soprano voice, with which she did full justice to the songs which Schubert brought to her to sing, whilst Heinrich Grob played both the pianoforte and the 'cello, with the result that many evenings were passed in musical enjoyment. His circle of admirers at the Convict, too, were always eager to welcome every new piece that he found time to compose. Nor had he forgotten his old friend and master Holzer, the organist and choir-master at the Lichtenthal Church, who had been the first to acknowledge his talents. Schubert regularly attended the church, and this fact, combined with his affection for the old organist, led to his writing his first Mass for performance by the church choir. The performance, on October 16, 1814, excited so much interest that it was repeated on the 26th of the same month at the Augustine Church. The latter occasion was one not likely to be soon forgotten by those who were present. Franz conducted, the choir being led by Holzer, whilst Ferdinand presided at the organ, and Therese Grob sang the part for first solo voices. Amongst the audience was Antonio Salieri, Court Capellmeister at Vienna, whom Beethoven had acknowledged as his master, and who now, having praised Schubert warmly for his work, declared that the latter should henceforth be his pupil. Every one was delighted, and the father felt so proud and happy that he signalised the event by presenting Franz with a five-octave piano. To be able to rank himself with Beethoven as 'scholar of Salieri' was indeed a high reward for Schubert, and the old man was as good as his word, for he gave his new pupil daily lessons for a considerable time.

[Illustration: '*Many evenings were passed in musical enjoyment.*']

The year 1814 did not close without witnessing a striking addition to the pile of manuscript by which the young schoolmaster-composer was surrounded. How variously his mind was swayed during this period we may understand from the fact that he had hardly finished the third act of a comic opera[23] ('Des Teufels Lustschloss'--The Devil's Pleasure-Castle) before setting to work on his 'Mass in F' which we have just mentioned. The compositions of this year also include seventeen songs, and one at least of these, the beautiful 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' (Gretchen at her Spinning-wheel), we may regard as a forerunner of the immortal songs that were to follow. And now, too, the special circumstance which was destined to influence Schubert in choosing the path wherein his genius found its most fitting expression was near at hand. One afternoon in

December of this year a friend took him to call upon a poet named Johann Mayrhofer, the words of a poem by whom Schubert had set to music a few days before. They found the poet at his lodgings, situated in one of the darkest and gloomiest streets of the city. The apartment contained little furniture beyond a worn-out piano and a worm-eaten bookcase filled with well-used books, and the general air of neglect and dilapidation was heightened by the fact that the window was overshadowed by a huge building on the opposite side of the narrow street. Gloomy and cheerless as it was in appearance, the room was in keeping with the character of the man who occupied it. Johann Mayrhofer was regarded by his acquaintance as an hypochondriac, whose general depression of spirits entered largely into his poetical writings. But those who knew him intimately were aware of a gentle and tender side to his ordinarily stern nature. He was, in fact, a 'lonely, self-contained, self-taught man'--one whose gifts conveyed to him the ability to discern and appreciate beauty, but at the same time left him powerless to banish from his mind the thought of evil working its destructive influence both upon himself and his surroundings. Upon the impressionable mind of Schubert--already attuned to sadness--the personality of Mayrhofer exercised a special charm, and the two at once became fast friends. The attraction, however, was perfectly mutual, for Schubert's friendship helped to mature Mayrhofer's powers, with the result that the one wrote in order that the other might set to music that which was written, and to this alliance we are indebted for some of Schubert's finest songs.

Every moment that could be snatched from the drudgery of the schoolroom was now devoted to composition, and the year following that in which the acquaintance with Mayrhofer began furnishes the most remarkable testimony to Schubert's powers. In this year (1815) he composed no fewer than a hundred and thirty-seven songs, and six operas and melodramas, in addition to a great deal of Church and chamber music and pieces for the pianoforte. Of the songs, twenty-nine were written in August alone, eight of this number bearing one date, August 15, and seven more being produced on the 19th of the same month. A wonderful year, indeed, and our astonishment is increased when we reflect that many of these songs, written as they were under conditions which would seem to have precluded the possibility of their having been matured and developed in his mind before being written down, are deservedly placed amongst the most immortal of Schubert's works. When, too, the extraordinary length of some of the songs is taken into account--fifty-five pages of closely-written manuscript in one case, twenty-two pages of print in another--one marvels how the time could have been found for the mere mechanical process of writing them down.

To enumerate the songs included in this long list would take up too much space, but the story of how one great song came to be written must be told here. Mayrhofer could claim friendship with Goethe, and it was doubtless through Mayrhofer that Schubert's attention was first drawn to the writings of the great German poet. One afternoon in the winter of this year 1815, the 'old Convicter' Spaun called upon Schubert, and found him in his room intently writing music, with a book of poems by his side. On inquiring what it was that absorbed his attention, Schubert looked up with a face aglow with inspiration. 'Oh, I have come across *such* a poem!' he exclaimed. 'Have you ever read it? It is Goethe's "Erl King."' Without giving his friend time to reply he turned once more to his paper, and recommenced jotting down the notes with astonishing rapidity. Spaun sat by, wondering, but not daring to disturb him. At length Schubert threw down his pen with a sigh. 'It is finished,' said he, 'and now let us look it through.' It was the first sketch of the famous song of the 'Erl King,' and when the accompaniment had been filled in, the two friends conveyed the manuscript to the Convict. His old friends and admirers soon formed a group around the piano, and Schubert, sitting down, sang the song through, and then one of the school singers sang it after him. To Schubert's surprise--and the fact comes to us with something like a shock--the first hearing of the 'Erl King' was received by the Convict orchestra with some coldness. The truth is the dramatic force embodied in the music was too strong for them--it fairly took their breath away; it was so unlike anything that Schubert had hitherto produced, or that they had ever heard. And when he came to the passage, 'Mein Vater, mein Vater, jetzt fasst er mich an!' in which an apparent disharmony discovered itself, one or two of the listeners ventured to express their dissent, and it was necessary for Herr Ruzicka, the professor of harmony who was present, to explain to his pupils that the conjunction was permissible. Of the 'Erl King' our story will have more to relate later on; in the meantime we may remark that the rapidity of its composition leaves no room for doubt that it was in itself as pure a piece of inspiration as any other of Schubert's works that could be named, and, furthermore, that it affords a striking

instance of the power which he possessed of grasping, almost at a single glance, the musical significance of a poem which appealed strongly to the emotions.

Unquestionably, however, the monotony of his school work weighed heavily upon his mind, and, in his own opinion, was cramping his powers of production. The longing to be free to devote himself wholly to his art was intensified day by day, and when, in the following year, he learnt that a director was about to be appointed at a newly-created Government school of music at Laibach, near Trieste, he hastened to apply for the post. True, the salary was only £21 a year, but the gaining of the position would mean instant freedom from his present bondage, and to Schubert that implied almost everything. It is evident, however, that those who recommended him for the post were by no means convinced of his fitness for governing, for their letters were but half-hearted, and the selection fell upon another man who, it turned out, was also recommended by one of Schubert's supporters.

The depression resulting from his disappointment was soon to be relieved by the agency of a new friend. A young man, named Franz von Schober, of good family and some private means, came to Vienna with the object of entering the University. Some time before taking this step Franz Schober had met with several of Schubert's songs, which at that date were being circulated in manuscript, and, lover of music as he was, the young student had revelled in the beauties of the unknown composer, and longed to make his acquaintance. When, therefore, he reached Vienna he lost no time in finding his way to the Schubert home in the Himmelpfortgrund. He found Schubert seated at his desk busily writing, for Schober had happened upon a favourable moment when school was over for the day. Little did the composer dream, as he heard his visitor announced, that his deliverance from the bondage which had become wellnigh insupportable, was so close at hand. A few minutes' intercourse sufficed to show the two young men that their sympathies and interests lay on a common plane. Schubert, quick to detect the sympathy which Schober was not loath to express, felt drawn towards his new friend, whilst Schober, for his part, as he glanced at the piles of manuscript which occupied every available space in the small room, evinced so deep an astonishment at the evidence of such untiring industry that Schubert was fain to tell him in a few words how he was placed, and of his longings for freedom. Then Schober saw his opportunity for rendering a service which he hoped might prove as acceptable to Schubert as it would be congenial to himself--would not Schubert consent to live with him, at any rate, for a time? Schober had a claim on which to found this proffer--namely, that he was already well known to Spaun, to whose medium, indeed, was due the fact that Schubert's songs had been first brought under his notice. Franz's heart leapt within him at the prospect of being able to give his whole time to his beloved music; he could not refuse a request so modestly and tactfully conveyed, and obviously so kindly meant, and the tears started to the eyes of both as the young men grasped each other by the hand. It was not difficult for Schubert to obtain his father's consent to the arrangement, for there was more than a suspicion that the latter was not altogether satisfied with the manner in which Franz had of late fulfilled his scholastic duties--a fact which need occasion no surprise when his strong musical temperament is taken into consideration.

Thus it came about that Schubert gained his release, and the two friends took up residence together at Schober's lodgings. Schubert, however, was not inclined to live entirely at his friend's expense, and so, unwillingly enough, he gave a few music-lessons. But not for long--the same unconquerable dislike to teaching in any shape or form asserted itself, and the pupils vanished. He might easily have secured more pupils had he so desired, for there were many friends, moving in higher circles than his own, who were ready to assist him; but it is just here that we get a glimpse of Schubert's true character. He had no aspiration to mingle with those whom, in his modest, unaffected way, he considered to be above him. He valued friendship, from whomsoever it came, but his whole nature was opposed to turning the advances of the rich or great to his own advantage. Unlike Beethoven, he had no faculty for 'imposing' on the aristocracy (to borrow Beethoven's favourite phrase for describing his own relations with those of superior rank to himself); on the contrary, Schubert courted no society beyond that of his own class--in which, indeed, his affections wholly centred themselves, and in which alone his true nature allowed itself to be revealed. It is a strong instance of this feeling that he loved best of all the praise that came from the members of his own family, and next that which emanated from his own circle of friends. Nevertheless, whatever of class distinction may have influenced

Schubert in the distribution of his affections and in the revelation of himself, no such barrier existed in the minds of those who were drawn to his side; in a word, he was loved by all who knew him without regard to rank, wealth, or age.

The year 1821 found Schubert, at the age of twenty-four, a composer of more than seven years' standing, and yet almost unknown outside the circle of his friends and acquaintance. Since the date when he went to reside with Schober he had continued to pour forth his compositions without intermission, and yet so far not a single work had been printed. True, many of his songs had been sung from manuscript before large and appreciative audiences at the musical meetings organised by the father of Leopold Sonnleithner, one of Schubert's old schoolfellows, and the most faithful of friends; but when the leading Vienna publishers were asked to undertake the publication of the song which had evoked the greatest enthusiasm when rendered by the well-known amateur Gymnich, they shook their heads. The composer was unknown, and with so difficult an accompaniment as that of the 'Erl King' the sale of the song could not be great. Such was the opinion of the publishers; but, to their honour let it be recorded, Sonnleithner and Gymnich refused to be influenced by this adverse verdict. They instantly resolved to print the song at their own risk, and when the next concert took place at the Sonnleithner mansion the resolution was announced. One hundred copies were subscribed for on the spot, and with this substantial encouragement the engraving of the 'Erl King' and a second song, 'Gretchen am Spinnrade,' was at once proceeded with, the sale of these songs being undertaken by the music publishers on commission. The enterprise was attended by so much success that its promoters were enabled to proceed with the publication of further songs, until, when the seventh had been reached, the publishers deemed themselves perfectly safe in assuming the entire risk of publication, and the eighth work appeared on May 9, 1822, as 'the property of the publishers.'

A great step towards the establishment of Schubert's fame was thus assured; but we must pause in our story to recount the means by which, apart from the initiative taken in the matter by his faithful friends, Schubert's recognition at the hands of the public was brought about. On March 7, 1821, the 'Erl King' was sung by Johann Vogl, a famous opera singer in Vienna at that time, at a public concert held under royal patronage. The song was received with storms of applause, and from this point the public demand for Schubert's writings commenced. The attention of Vogl, whose intellectual gifts are said to have outshone even his vocal attainments, had been drawn to Schubert's songs some five years before the event just mentioned. Franz Schober, who knew him well as a visitor at his father's house, had pressed the singer to accompany him to his lodgings in order to be introduced to Schubert, and Vogl had smilingly acquiesced. Schober's praises of his newfound friend had sounded so often in Vogl's ears that the request could not be refused. Schober was certain that the great man would be enchanted with Schubert's writings, at which the actor-singer had only smiled once more; he deemed it to be merely youthful enthusiasm influenced by personal affection. On reaching the lodgings in the Landkrongasse they had found Schubert hard at work as usual, and the floor as well as the table strewn with sheets of music-paper. Vogl, whose society was courted by all ranks, at once made himself at home, and did his best by a few gay sallies to put the composer at his ease. In this, however, he was quite unsuccessful. The fact that there was a difference of twenty years between their respective ages, when added to the singer's popularity, may have partly accounted for the failure; at any rate, Schubert was overwhelmed by confusion, and had nothing to say in his own behalf. Vogl thereupon took up several of the songs, humming them to himself as he went along, and Schober, watching him intently, saw his interest deepen, until at length, despite his great experience as a singer, he was evidently impressed by what he read. When he left he shook Schubert's hand warmly, and said: 'There is stuff in you, but you squander your fine thoughts instead of making the most of them.'

[Illustration: '*They found Schubert hard at work.*']

Nevertheless, Schober was right; Vogl had been deeply impressed, and the visit marked the beginning of a close friendship. Schubert soon learned to appreciate Vogl's sincerity and advice, and as time went on the latter's visits became more and more frequent, until the picture might often have been seen of Vogl singing Schubert's latest songs to the latter's accompaniment. To the completeness of this union Schubert himself

testifies in a letter to his brother Ferdinand: 'When Vogl sings and I accompany him we seem for the moment to be one.' Vogl, for his part, afterwards wrote of Schubert's songs that they were 'truly Divine inspirations, utterances of a musical *clairvoyance!*' and he emphasised the fact, which had not hitherto been appreciated, that 'the finest poems of our greatest poets may be enhanced and even transcended when translated into musical language'--an important testimony to the great service which Schubert was rendering to vocal music.

The five years which had elapsed since the friendship with Vogl began had been passed in the production, as we have seen, of an immense mass of compositions covering almost every branch of the art; but as none of these works had so far produced any money it is obvious that, for the first two years after leaving his father's house, Schubert must have been dependent upon the hospitality of his friends. His residence with Schober lasted only six months, at the end of which time Schober's brother came to reside with him, and Schubert had to give up his room. Teaching was entirely distasteful to him, as we know; yet we can well understand that the pressure of circumstances alone may have compelled him to accept, in the summer of 1818, an engagement as music-teacher in the family of Count Johann Esterhazy. The terms of this engagement were that he should spend the summer months with the family at their seat at Zelész, in Hungary, returning with them to Vienna for the winter. How difficult it must have been for Schubert to sever himself, even for a time, from the circle of which he was the life and centre, in order to enter a family belonging to those ranks with which he avowedly had nothing in common, may be imagined. Within his own circle he was adored--nay, worshipped--by one and all. The life, too, was so entirely free and unrestrained; the members addressed each other by nicknames. Schubert had several pet names, amongst them the 'Tyrant,' from his affectionate persecution of young Hüttenbrenner, who in return lavished upon him the affection of a slave for his idol. They were all boisterous, merry, life-loving spirits, venting their feelings in howls, repartees, sham-fights, and mock-concerts--there is even a story of their 'performing' the 'Erl King,' with Schubert himself accompanying them on a tooth-comb! The change from this unconventional life to the aristocratic surroundings of Zelész was therefore immense; yet Schubert was not unhappy. The family were musical, the comforts were undeniable, and the duties not so heavy as to preclude his enjoying a considerable amount of leisure for composition.

At Zelész he heard for the first time many of the national Hungarian melodies sung or played by the gypsies, or by the servants at the castle, and their beauty seems to have been impressed upon his memory by the beautiful country in which he took his rambles. Later on he was to give these airs an artistic setting in the shape of his 'First Waltzes.' Of one of his pieces--the 'Divertissement à la hongroise'--it is told that returning late one afternoon from a walk, he lingered beside the open window of the kitchen, in order to listen to the air which was being sung by the kitchen-maid within as she leaned against the fireplace. He wrote frequent letters to his friends--his home circle--whom he addresses as his 'dearest, fondest friends, Spaun, Schober, Mayrhofer, and Senn--you who are everything to me.' He entreats them to write soon: 'Every syllable of yours is dear to me.' Nobody is overlooked or forgotten, for his messages include 'all possible acquaintances.' As for himself, he speaks of his happiness and good health, and tells them that he 'is composing like a god.' As regards his duties, he describes himself as 'composer, manager, audience, everything in one.' 'No one here,' he says in another letter, 'cares for true art, unless it be now and then the Countess, so I am left alone with my beloved, and have to hide her in my room, or my piano, or my own breast. If this often makes me sad, on the other hand it often elevates me all the more. Several songs have lately come into existence, and I hope very successful ones.' Of his relations with the family he says: 'The Count is a little rough; the Countess proud, but not without heart; the young ladies good children. I need not tell you, who know me so well, that with my natural frankness I am good friends with everybody.'

A letter[24] of this time, written to his brother Ferdinand, affords a pleasing insight into his frank, loving nature, as well as an instance of his fondness for his old home. Ferdinand had sent him a Requiem of his own composing to look over.

August 24, 1818. 'DEAR BROTHER FERDINAND,

'It is half-past eleven at night, and your Requiem is ready. It has made me sorrowful, as you may believe, for I sang it with all my heart. What is wanting you can fill in, and put the words under the music and the signs above. And if you want much rehearsal you must do it yourself, without asking me in Zelész. Things are not going well with you; I wish you could change with me, so that for once you might be happy. You should find all your heavy burdens gone, dear brother; I heartily wish it could be so. My foot is asleep, and I am mad with it. If the fool could only write it wouldn't go to sleep!

'Good morning, my boy, I have been asleep with my foot, and now go on with my letter at eight o'clock on the 25th. I have one request to make in answer to yours. Give my love to my dear parents, brothers, sisters, friends, and acquaintances, especially not forgetting Carl.[25] Didn't he mention me in his letter? As for my friends in the town, bully them, or get some one to bully them well, till they write to me. Tell my mother[26] that my linen is well looked after, and that I am well off, thanks to her motherly care. [After asking for some articles of clothing, for which he will send the money very soon, he proceeds.] For July, with the journey-money, I got 200 florins [about £8].... Though I am so well and happy, and every one so good to me, yet I shall be immensely glad when the moment arrives for going to Vienna. Beloved Vienna, all that is dear and valuable to me is there, and nothing but the actual sight of it will stop my longing! Again entreating you to attend to all my requests, I remain, with much love to all, your true and sincere.

'FRANZ MPIA.'

The story of Schubert's life, from the time when by the powerful aid of his friend Vogl the musical public of Vienna were awakened to the fact that a composer of rare quality was working in their midst unknown, unfolds itself to us as a record of continuous struggle, relieved by occasional success. It is true that as he became better known the appreciation of his works spread far beyond the confines of his native city; at the same time it must be remembered that his poverty was extreme. As yet his works had brought him little or nothing; add to this his native bashfulness, together with the fact that his marvellous productive powers were animated by no desire to push himself where, as a composer, he had every right to be; that he was always retiring, and always modestly undervaluing everything he produced; that even when he had finished a fine composition it was often put aside in some receptacle and forgotten; that, in a word, he wrote, not for the public eye, not for praise, but simply and solely because he was impelled by the spirit within him. When we consider all this it need not surprise us to learn that Schubert's progress in a worldly sense was slow and halting. Again, his physical strength was by no means adapted to bear the immense strain which this continuous labour involved; and when we learn that his mode of living was most irregular (when he was not staying with friends he would be living from hand to mouth in poor lodgings by himself), and that his sensitive overstrung nature was denied the nourishment which it so sorely needed--a result due in part to his distresses, but partly also to his improvidence--we can form a tolerably clear picture of the manner in which his days were passed.

Yet if his distresses and anxieties were so many dense clouds shutting out, for months together, the sunshine and warmth from his life, that life itself, taken as a whole, was by no means destitute of happiness. The musical temperament is one which cannot be cast down for long; let the cloud-rift be ever so small, it suffices to let in a flood of sunshine to such a nature as that which Schubert possessed. But how much happier might his life have been if, in the absence of the ability to manage his own affairs to better advantage, some one had been at hand to take this responsibility off his shoulders. Alas! not one of his friends seems to have assumed this important part, notwithstanding the affection they professed for him. Left to himself, no sooner had his songs attained a marketable value than, pressed by hunger and the other necessaries of life, he consented to part with the copyright of the first twelve of his published songs--including in this number the 'Erl King' and the 'Wanderer'--for the sum of eight hundred silver gulden (equal to eighty pounds sterling), and this in face of the fact that more than eight hundred copies of the 'Erl King' had already been sold![27]

Of his improvidence there is much that could be told; his inherent good nature was never proof against imposition, and he gave away as freely as he earned. Moreover, he was regarded by a certain set of his friends

as a Croesus, or, rather, as a never-failing coiner of money, and two of these so-called friends were not ashamed to live openly upon his easy-going, careless ways, under the pretence of sharing the expenses of a joint lodging. The partnership, if such it could be called where one was called upon to find the money, extended even to articles of clothing--boots, hats, coats, cravats, etc., being regarded as common property--whilst if one of the trio found himself unable to pay his reckoning, it fell to the lot of the 'man of wealth' to discharge his obligation. Needless to say, this friendly office was cheerfully filled by Schubert for either or both of his companions. Great was the jubilation when the composer brought back the news that he had sold a piece of music. For the time being he was regarded by the others as literally swimming in money, and expected to spend right and left so long as it lasted, and then they would all go short until the next piece of luck came along. One day, when the trio were in very low water, Schubert and one of the others met at a small coffee-house and surprised each other in the act of ordering coffee and biscuits, because neither could summon from his pockets the requisite amount--namely, eightpence halfpenny--wherewith to pay for a dinner!

But no amount of distress could check his capacity for work. Save during the hours of sleep, his pen would seem never to have been idle; even whilst talking to a friend who was waiting to take him for a walk, he was jotting down at great speed one of his most beautiful dramatic ballads, the 'Zwerg.' Another friend, Carl Umlauff, has related how he used to go to Schubert's lodgings in the mornings, and find him lying in bed jotting down musical ideas; at other times he would be out of bed, clad in his dressing-gown, composing at his standing-desk. Writing would go on till two o'clock. 'When I have done one piece I begin the next,' was his own way of describing the continuity of his work, and it is known that a single morning produced no fewer than six songs. The afternoon would be devoted to music-making at the house of a friend, or to a walk in the suburbs, whilst the evening would be divided between a pipe at the Gasthaus with his companions, and a visit to the theatre or the house of a musical friend. The hours reserved for sleep were constantly being curtailed by the encroachments of nightly pleasures, and yet he was always ready to seize his pen and begin work directly he was awake. The story even goes that he slept in his spectacles in order to save the trouble and time of putting them on in the morning!

His omnivorous appetite for setting to music every poem which struck his fancy--whether it were suited for the purpose of a song, or, what is far more important, in any way worthy of the setting which he proposed to give to it--was one of Schubert's most marked characteristics. Another was the rapidity with which, having once grasped the sense of the words, he translated them into music, and such music, let it be remembered, as was destined in many cases to live for ever. Like the 'Erl King,' the beautiful song the 'Wanderer' was composed in the space of a few hours; again, with respect to the strikingly beautiful collection of songs known as the 'Schöne Müllerin,' the poems were lighted upon quite by accident. Schubert was visiting a friend, and when the latter was called away he picked up a volume of Müller's poems which was lying upon the table; he grew interested in them, the friend delayed his return, and finally Schubert put the book in his pocket and went home. The next morning, when the friend called to apologise for his detention and to inquire for the missing volume, he found that Schubert had already set several of the poems to music. What Schumann the composer wrote of Schubert was true: 'Everything that he touched he turned into music.' One day in the month of July, 1826, he was returning with his friends from a Sunday walk through the village of Währing, and, passing by a beer-garden, he espied an acquaintance seated at one of the tables. On joining him Schubert found he was reading a volume of Shakespeare; he seized the book, and began turning over the pages, and then, drawing his friends' attention to the line, 'Hark, hark, the lark,' he exclaimed: 'Such a lovely melody has come into my head, if I had but some music-paper!' One of his companions seized a bill-of-fare, and on the back of it scribbled a few staves, and then, upon the spot, 'amid the hubbub of the beer-garden, that beautiful song, so perfectly fitting the words, so skilful and so happy in its accompaniment, came into perfect existence.' Later on in the evening of the same day he added to this creation two more songs from Shakespeare--the drinking-song from 'Antony and Cleopatra,' and the well-known 'Who is Sylvia?' In the instances just given Schubert's choice could not have been more happily made; but this does not render it less difficult for us to understand why in so many cases he should have elected to immortalise by his music poems devoid of merit both in feeling and expression.

We have seen something of Schubert's veneration for Beethoven as a grand personality, even before the latter's music had begun to take hold of him. At first there is no doubt that the music of Mozart had the greatest fascination for him; there is evidence of this in Schubert's early instrumental works, and in the following passage from his diary, penned after he had heard one of Mozart's quintets played in 1816: 'Gently, as if out of the distance, did the magic tones of Mozart's music strike my ears. With what inconceivable, alternate force and tenderness did Schlesinger's masterly playing impress it deep, deep into my heart! Such lovely impressions remain on the soul, there to work for good, past all power of time or circumstance. In the darkness of this life they reveal a clear, bright, beautiful prospect, inspiring confidence and hope. O Mozart, immortal Mozart! what countless consolatory images of a bright better world hast thou stamped on our souls,' Beethoven was a great personality then, but as time went on the influence of his music grew ever stronger. So far, however, Schubert had been content to worship his hero at a distance, for which purpose he would haunt the restaurant at which Beethoven usually dined. But in 1822 he published a set of Variations on a French Air, which he dedicated to Beethoven 'as his admirer and worshipper,' and his longing to present these in person to the composer was so great as to overcome his natural timidity. Accordingly, accompanied by the publisher, Diabelli, he called at Beethoven's house; they found the composer at home, and a courteous but somewhat formal welcome was accorded them. This in itself was bad enough for poor Schubert, whose courage straightway forsook him; but when Beethoven proceeded to hand to him the bundle of paper and the carpenter's pencil which, owing to his deafness, he kept in readiness for his visitors, Schubert's shyness prevented him writing a single word. The production of the Variations afforded a welcome relief to his confusion, and as Beethoven was in an uncommonly good humour the dedication pleased him very much. The effect of the diversion, however, was only momentary, for Beethoven, looking through the composition, lighted upon something to which he took exception, and forthwith proceeded to point it out to his visitor. This was the last straw, and Schubert, losing his presence of mind altogether, fled from the room. On reaching the street his courage returned, and too late he thought of all that he might have said. Let us complete the anecdote by relating that Schubert derived some consolation from the knowledge that Beethoven not only retained the Variations, but was very pleased with them, and often played them over with his nephew.

[Illustration: '*Schubert fled from the room.*']

It was not until five years after this event that Beethoven realised how great a singer had been uttering his sweet notes within the span of the city in which he lived, and then the master lay upon his death-bed. Into his hands had been placed a collection of Schubert's songs, some sixty in all, and as he turned them over his attention was arrested by their beauty, and he uttered frequent expressions of surprise and delight. But even greater was his astonishment when he learned that there were more than five hundred of such songs extant. 'How can he have found time,' he asked, 'for the setting of such long poems, many of them containing ten others?' (by which he meant to convey that they were as long as ten ordinary poems). For several days the collection occupied his attention. 'Ah, if I had had this poem I would have set it myself!' he would exclaim. 'Truly, Schubert has the Divine fire in him!' He made frequent references to Schubert, expressing his regret that he had not sooner known him for the composer he was, and prophesying a great future for him in the world of music. Schubert himself longed to pay his respects to the master he revered so highly, and one day, in company with his friends Anselm Hüttenbrenner and Schindler (both of whom were well known to Beethoven), he presented himself at the door of the sick man's chamber. Schindler informed Beethoven of their arrival, and asked who he would like to see first. 'Schubert may come in first,' was the reply. Before they left, Beethoven, regarding them with a smile, said: 'You, Anselm, have my mind, but Franz has my soul.' When for the second time Schubert found his way to the bedside of the master death was very near, and though as they stood around the bed he made signs to them with his hand to show that he recognised their presence, he could not speak, and, overcome with emotion, Schubert quitted the room.

A little more than three weeks after the second visit Schubert was walking as one of the torch-bearers beside the coffin of his loved master, as the latter was borne to his last resting-place in the Währinger cemetery. On the way back Schubert and his friends passed through the Himmelpfortgrund, close to the old home, and, entering a tavern, called for wine. Schubert, having filled his glass, raised it aloft: 'I drink,' said he, 'to the

memory of Beethoven.' Then once more filling the glass, he drained it to the first of the three friends then present, who was destined to follow the master to his grave.

Little did Schubert dream that he was emptying his glass to his own memory! Nor in the eyes of his friends would there seem to have been anything in his appearance at that moment which could be taken as foreshadowing the early closing of that eager, active life. Gazing at him then, as he sat drinking his grim toast, the picture presented to his companions was that of a short, stout, thick-set man of about thirty, with a head of thick, black hair, disposed in crisp curls, bushy eyebrows, and a pair of bright black eyes which beamed through his spectacles. The face was round with full cheeks, the complexion pasty, the nose short and insignificant, the lips full and protruding, the jaw broad and strong; the hands, like the rest of the body, were plump, and the fingers thick and short. There was nothing striking about his general expression; but when the conversation turned upon music, and especially if Beethoven were the topic of discussion, his eyes would brighten at once, and the whole face light up with animation.

As he sat in the dingy parlour of the little tavern, beaming upon his friends, whilst the minds of all three were rapt by the solemn event which they had just witnessed, the proximity of death within that circle was not contemplated. Yet the story of his life shows us that the period which had elapsed between the date of his presenting his Variations to Beethoven and that of his first visit to the composer on his death-bed had been full of anxieties and bitter disappointments; and there is no doubt that the continuous struggle for existence, coupled with the strain of unceasing work, had only too surely undermined a constitution which could never have been robust.

One of Schubert's greatest longings was to write for the stage. The longing was evident almost at the first, and it grew with his strength and the consciousness of his powers as a composer. As the finger of fame beckoned him forward it had directed his steps to the theatre as the goal of his aspirations, and it was upon the attainment of this object that he lavished all the later powers of his genius--only, alas! to reap the bitter fruit of disappointment. One after another of his operas was rejected, even, as in the case of 'Fierabras,' when at the very point of production--the reasons assigned in each case being either the unsuitableness of the libretto or the difficulties presented by the music, and the door which he hoped to enter was closed against him during his lifetime. The score of 'Fierabras' comprised no fewer than one thousand pages, and the mournful state into which he was thrown by its rejection may be gathered by an extract from a letter penned just after the fate of the opera had been sealed. He refers to himself as 'the most unfortunate, most miserable being on earth,' and proceeds: 'Think of a man whose health can never be restored, and who from sheer despair makes matters worse instead of better. Think, I say, of a man whose brightest hopes have come to nothing, to whom love and friendship are but torture, and whose enthusiasm for the beautiful is fast vanishing, and ask yourself if such a man is not truly unhappy.

'My peace is gone, my heart is sore, Gone for ever and evermore.

This is my daily cry; for every night I go to sleep hoping never again to wake, and every morning only brings back the torment of the day before.... I have composed two operas for nothing.'

Thus sadly he wrote in the hour of bitterness, but happily for Schubert, and still more fortunately for us, there were brighter days yet in store for him, and the enthusiasm for the beautiful, which he speaks of as 'fast vanishing,' returned in all its accustomed force. No disappointment, however great, seemed to have the power to check the flow of production--that is the one great point which we notice about Schubert's life; we find him at one moment despairing, but at the next his troubles appear to be forgotten, and he is immersed in the writing of another song, another symphony, or another sonata, as the case may be; but it is always work, work in the face of every obstacle that fortune can throw in his way. 'His life is all summed up in his music.' 'Music and music alone was to him all in all. It was not his *principal* mode of expression, it was his *only* one; it swallowed up every other. His afternoon walks, his evening amusements, were all so many preparations for the creations of the following morning.'[28] And so it continued until the end. The very last year of his busy

life, far from exhibiting any diminution of his powers, is marked by the production of some of his very finest works.

It was not until the end of October, 1828, that the signs of serious illness made themselves apparent in attacks of giddiness, accompanied by a marked loss of strength. Schubert was at this time living with his brother Ferdinand at the latter's house in the Neue Wieden suburb--the house is now known as No. 6, Kettenbrücken Gasse--having removed thither on the advice of his doctor for the sake of the fresh air and the adjacent country. Although he rallied somewhat during the first week of November, and was able to resume his walks and discuss his plans for the future, the weakness increased, and on the 11th he wrote to his friend Schober what was destined to be his last letter:

'DEAR SCHOBER,

'I am ill. I have eaten and drunk nothing for eleven days, and I am so tired and shaky that I can only get from the bed to the chair, and back. Rinna is attending me.... In this distressing condition be so kind as to help me to some reading. Of Cooper's I have read the "Last of the Mohicans," the "Spy," the "Pilot," and the "Pioneers." If you have anything else of his I entreat you to leave it with Frau von Bogner at the Coffee-house. My brother, who is conscientiousness itself, will bring it to me in the most conscientious way. Or anything else. Your friend,

'SCHUBERT.'

On the 14th he took to his bed, but for two days more he was able to sit up and correct the proofs of some of the songs in the 'Winterreise.' He grew rapidly weaker, however, and by the 17th he was quite delirious. On the evening of the next day he called Ferdinand to his side, and, bidding him put his ear close to his mouth, he whispered: 'Brother, what are they doing with me?' 'Dear Franz,' was the reply, 'they are doing all they can to get you well again, and the doctor assures us you will soon be all right, only you must do your best to stay in bed.' For a space the sick man lay quiet, then, as the delirium increased, his mind reverted to the same idea: 'I implore you to put me in my own room, and not to leave me in this corner under the earth. Don't I deserve a place above ground?' 'Dear Franz,' cried his brother, 'be calm--trust your brother Ferdinand, whom you have always trusted, and who loves you so dearly. You are in the room which you always had, and lying on your own bed.' 'Ah, no,' replied the dying composer, 'that cannot be true, for Beethoven is not here!' Thus in his last moments his poor, wandering mind was dwelling upon the master whom he reverenced; to be near him, even in death, was the last wish, the last hope to which he clung!

When, later on, the doctor came, he tried to reassure the sufferer with hopes of recovery; but Schubert gazed at him with earnestness without speaking, and then, turning himself away, he beat the wall with his hands, saying in slow, earnest tone: 'Here, here is my end,' At three o'clock in the afternoon of the following day, November 19, 1828, he breathed his last. Thus passed away, in comparative youth, a composer of whom it has been written: 'There never has been one like him, and there never will be another.'

The funeral took place on November 21, and a large number of friends gathered to pay their last respects to the dead composer as he lay in his coffin, dressed in accordance with the prevailing custom, like a hermit, with a crown of laurel about his brows. The poor old father, still drudging as schoolmaster in the Rossau district, where he had been labouring ever since he had left the old home in the Himmelpfortgrund, would have buried his dear son in the cemetery near at hand; but Ferdinand told him of Franz's last wish, and, like the noble brother that he was, gave a sum out of his own scanty earnings in order to defray the extra cost of removing the body to the Währinger burial-place. Thither, accordingly, it was taken, and committed to the ground in a grave close to that occupied by the master he loved so well. The monument which was erected over the grave in the following year, by the efforts of his friends and admirers, bears the following inscription:

MUSIC HAS HERE ENTOMBED A RICH TREASURE, BUT MUCH FAIRER HOPES.

FRANZ SCHUBERT LIES HERE.

BORN JAN. 31, 1797; DIED NOV. 19, 1828, 31 YEARS OLD.

FOOTNOTES:

[22] The Symphony in D, performed from manuscript at the Crystal Palace, on February 5, 1881.

[23] The opera was never performed, and in 1848 the manuscript of the second act was accidentally destroyed by a servant who used it for lighting the fires.

[24] For the following extract from this letter the author expresses his acknowledgments to Sir G. Grove's 'Dictionary of Music and Musicians' (article 'Schubert'), in which the letter was for the first time published.

[25] His brother Carl, the landscape painter.

[26] His stepmother; the father had married again soon after the first wife's death.

[27] Of the 'Wanderer'--second only in popularity to the 'Erl King'--the publishers are said to have realised, since the time of its appearance up to the year 1861, the sum of 27,000 florins, or more than £1,100.

[28] Sir G. Grove, 'Dictionary of Music and Musicians.'

SCHUBERT'S PRINCIPAL COMPOSITIONS

OPERAS AND DRAMATIC WORKS: Des Teufels Lustschloss. Comp. 1813-1814, pub. 1888. Die Zwillingsbrüder. Comp. 1818-1819, pub. 1872. Alfonso und Estrella. Op. 69. Comp. 1821-1822, pub. 1827. Die Verschworenen, oder Der Häusliche Krieg. Comp. 1823, pub. 1862. Fierabras. Op. 76. Comp. 1823, pub. 1827. Rosamunde (Overture and Incidental Music). Op. 26. Comp. 1823, pub. 1824. 6 MASSES: No. 1, in F, Comp. 1814, pub. 1856. No. 2, in G, Comp. 1815, pub. 1846. No. 3, in B-flat, Op. 141. Comp. 1815, pub. 1838. No. 4, in C, Op. 48. Comp. 1818, pub. 1826. No. 5, in E-flat, Comp. 1828, pub. 1865. No. 6, in A-flat, Comp. 1819-1822, pub. 1876. Deutsche Messe in F. Comp. 1826, pub. 1870. Lazarus (cantata--unfinished). Comp. 1820, pub. 1866. Psalm XXIII., for female voices, Op. 132. Comp. 1820, pub. 1831. The Song of Miriam, Op. 136. Comp. 1828, pub. 1838. 8 SYMPHONIES: No. 1, in D, Comp. 1813. No. 2, in B-flat, Comp. 1814-1815. No. 3, in D, Comp. 1815. No. 4, in C minor, The Tragic. Comp. 1816, pub. 1870. No. 5, in B-flat, Comp. 1816, pub. 1870. No. 6, in C, Comp. 1818. No. 8, in B minor, The Unfinished. Comp. 1822, pub. 1867. No. 9, in C, Comp. 1828, pub. 1840. Overture in the Italian Style in D. Comp. 1817, pub. 1872. Overture in the Italian Style in C, Op. 170. Comp. 1817, pub. 1872. Octet for strings and wind in F, Op. 166. Comp. 1824, pub. 1854. Quintet for strings in C, Op. 163. Comp. 1828, pub. 1854. Quintet for pianoforte and strings in A, Op. 114. Comp. 1819, pub. 1829. 8 Quartets for strings: In D. Comp. 1814, pub. 1871. In B-flat, Op. 168. Comp. 1814, pub. 1865. In G minor, Comp. 1815, pub. 1871. In E-flat, Op. 125, No. 1. Comp. 1824, pub. 1830. In E, Op. 125, No. 2. Comp. 1824, pub. 1830. In A minor, Op. 29. Comp. 1824, pub. 1825. In D minor, Comp. 1826, pub. 1831. In G, Op. 161. Comp. 1826, pub. 1852. 2 Trios for pianoforte and strings: Op. 99, in B-flat, Comp. 1827, pub. 1828. Op. 100, in E-flat, Comp. 1827, pub. 1828. 4 Sonatas. } For Fantasia in C, Op. 159. Comp. 1827. } pianoforte Rondeau Brilliant in B minor, Op. 70. Comp. 1826. } and violin. 2 Sonatas (in C minor and B-flat), Comp. 1814 and 1824. } Fantasia in F minor, Op. 103 } Marche Héroïque in A minor, Op. 66. Comp. 1826. } Marche Funèbre in C minor, Op. 55. Comp. 1825. } For 25 Marches. } pianoforte 2 Divertissements. } duet. Variations on a French Air in E minor, Op. 10. } Comp. 1821, pub. 1822. } 2 Rondos. } 10 Polonaises. } Grand Duo in C, Op. 140. Comp. 1824. } Overture in F, Op. 34. Comp. 1824. } 10 Sonatas for pianoforte solo. [We must mention the Sonata in A minor, Op. 42, and that in A major, Op. 120, both composed in 1825.] Fantasia in C, Op. 15. Comp. 1820. } Fantasia Sonata in G, Op. 78. Comp. 1826. } 4 Impromptus, Op. 90. Comp. 1828. } For 4 Impromptus, Op. 142. Comp. 1827. } pianoforte 6

Moments Musicals, Op. 94. } solo. 2 sets of Variations. } 44 Part Songs for male voices. 6 Part Songs for female voices. 21 Part Songs for mixed voices. 457 Songs have been published. We may mention: Die Schöne Müllerin (20 songs), Op. 25. Comp. 1823. Die Winterreise (24 songs), Op. 89. Comp. 1827. Der Schwanengesang (14 songs). Comp. 1828. And the following single Songs: An Sylvia, Op. 106, No. 4. Comp. 1826. Ave Maria (Scott's words), Op. 52, No. 6. Comp. 1825 Der Tod und das Mädchen, Op. 7, No. 3. Der Wanderer, Op. 4, No. 1. Comp. 1816. Der Zwerg, Op. 22, No. 1. Comp. 1823. Die Forelle, Op. 32. Comp. 1818. Geheimes, Op. 14, No. 2. Comp. 1821. Gretchen am Spinnrade, Op. 2. Comp. 1814. Ständchen (Hark, hark! the Lark!). Comp. 1826. Erlkönig, Op. 1. Comp. 1815.

For a fuller account of Schubert's life the reader is advised to consult:

COLERIDGE (A.D.): Life of Schubert (translation of Kreissle von Hellborn's *Franz Schubert*). 2 vols. Longmans, 1869.

MENDELSSOHN

MENDELSSOHN

The short winter afternoon was drawing to a close, and a grey mist had already begun to blot out the canal and the trees which were studded along its banks, accentuating the prevailing cheerlessness and silence, and throwing into yet stronger relief the animated scene presented within the comfortable, well-warmed dining-room of a house standing on the further side of the broad street which ran parallel with the canal. A large company was gathered in this room for the enjoyment of music and conversation, and it was evident from the whispered remarks which passed between the guests that something out of the common was expected at the hands of the youthful player who, in obedience to his father's request, now advanced to take his place at the pianoforte.

Peculiarly winning, both in manner and appearance, was the boy who modestly seated himself at the instrument. He was about thirteen years of age, of slight build, with a handsome face, in which strong traces of Jewish descent were apparent. His black hair clustered thickly above a high forehead, while the dark, lustrous eyes, with their continuous play of expression, imparted to the face an indescribable charm such as no degree of beauty in itself could have exercised. It was, in a word, the sensitive face of an artist, reflecting the varying imagery of a mind attuned to lofty and beautiful thoughts; and as such its power and charm could be felt even by those to whom as yet his thoughts were a sealed book. The temperament which we designate by the term 'artistic' resembles the ocean in its varying moods, and in the surprising swiftness with which one mood or aspect gives place to another. Just before he was called upon to play, the boy's eyes had been sparkling with merriment, and his spirits had so infected the rest of the company as to cause the intervals separating the performances to be filled with laughter and merry chatter. Yet no one watching his face now, as his fingers swept over the keys, could have failed to be struck by the change in its expression. Every trace of fun had vanished, and to the sparkle of the eyes had succeeded an expression of deep earnestness that showed how readily the mind had adapted itself to the character of the music he was playing, and as the performance progressed one could have read in his face every shade of feeling which the music was intended to express. No self-consciousness marred the spontaneity of the player's interpretation. Everything seemed to come direct from his soul, as if that soul had found the voice by which alone it could be heard and understood, and revelled in its freedom. And as he played on, weaving fresh melodies out of the original theme, ever and anon breaking through the web of harmony to recall the simple, plaintive air with which he had begun--his face at one moment lighted up with radiant happiness and at the next shaded with quiet sadness--his listeners almost held their breath, fearful of losing any portion of the music which was passing away from them, perhaps for ever. And as he played, the shadows of the December afternoon crept into the room, enveloping the slight figure seated at the instrument, until his outline became lost to view, and the melody pouring forth from beneath his fingers seemed to come from heaven itself.

[Illustration: MENDELSSOHN. From photo RISCHGITZ.]

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To those who visited the home of Abraham Mendelssohn, the wealthy Berlin banker, the fact that his son Felix had a remarkable genius for music did not admit of a doubt. The capacity for learning music had begun very early, but his wonderful gift of extemporisation, which gave his genius wings as well as voice, had only lately revealed itself at the time at which our story opens. Nevertheless, it had made great strides, and opened up all sorts of possibilities with regard to the future. And withal there was such an unaffected modesty and simplicity about the boy, so complete an absence of anything like a desire to show off his talents, as sufficed to disarm any tendency towards captiousness on the part of his hearers. Felix's whole wish was to satisfy himself as to his progress in music, and, young as he was, he had the sense and determination to pursue his bent without regard to the plaudits of his father's friends. Abraham Mendelssohn, notwithstanding his business capacities, was himself a great lover of the arts, and especially of music, in regard to which, indeed, he showed considerable judgment. That his children should exhibit similar tastes to his own was, therefore, to him a matter of delightful satisfaction, for he shared with his wife Leah a deep interest in all that affected his children's education. He watched Felix with peculiar care, for it seemed to him that he inherited many of the traits as well as the capacity for learning which had distinguished the grandfather and philosopher, Moses Mendelssohn. Felix undoubtedly possessed the bright dark eyes and the humorous temperament of his grandfather, for he was one of the brightest and merriest of children. The family was not a large one. Jakob Ludwig Felix (to give the subject of our story his full names), who was born February 3, 1809, ranked second in age, the eldest child being Fanny Cäcilie; after Felix came Rebekka, and, lastly, little Paul. The three elder children were born in Hamburg, where the family continued to reside until the occupation of the town by the French soldiers in 1811 made life there so miserable for the German inhabitants that as many families as could contrive to do so escaped to other towns of Germany which were free from the presence of the invading army. Amongst those who successfully eluded the watchfulness of the French guards by resorting to disguise was the family of Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, the head of which had followed the example of his wife's brother in adopting the latter name as a means of distinguishing his own from other branches of the Mendelssohn family. With his wife and children Abraham fled to Berlin to make his home in the house of the grandmother, situated beside the canal in the north-east quarter of the town, to which we have been already introduced.

No happier surroundings could have been imagined than those amidst which Felix Mendelssohn's childhood was passed. The residence was in the Neue Promenade, a broad, open street, bounded on one side only by houses, and extending on the other side to the banks of the canal. Here a wide stretch of grass-land, with a plentiful dotting of trees, imparted a pleasant suggestion of the country, whilst the waters of the canal reflected the blueness of the sky, or, when rippled by the breeze, lapped the grassy banks with a murmuring sound that was half sigh, half song. To this spot daily resorted the Mendelssohn children in company with the occupants of other nurseries in the promenade, and here amongst the rest might often have been seen little Felix, his eyes sparkling with merriment, and his black curls tossed by the wind, as, with surprising quickness of movement and ringing peals of laughter, he joined with his sister Fanny in the excitement of the game.

Every encouragement was given to the development of Felix's musical talent as soon as his fondness for the art made itself apparent. In company with Fanny he began to receive little lessons on the pianoforte from his mother when he was about four years old. Then came a visit to Paris, when Abraham Mendelssohn, taking the two children with him, placed them under the care of a teacher named Madame Bigot. Their progress was so satisfactory--for the lady was an excellent musician and quick to recognise the abilities of her pupils--that on their return to Berlin it was decided to engage the services of professional musicians to carry on the instruction in the pianoforte, violin, and composition as a regular part of the children's education. There was a continual round of lessons in the Mendelssohn home at this time, for in addition to music the children were taught Greek, Latin, drawing, and other subjects; and with so much to get through it was necessary to begin the day's work at five o'clock. As a consequence of this close application to study, the children used to long for Sunday to come round, in order that they might indulge themselves a little longer in bed. No amount of

lessons, however, could detract from the happiness of a home wherein love was the dominant note, and in which each strove for the good of all; whilst as for Felix himself, no name could have been more symbolical of his true nature than that by which he was called. Nothing served to check the flow of his spirits. Both in work and play he was thoroughly in earnest--indeed, he regarded both in the same enjoyable light. He and Fanny were inseparables, and very soon after he began to compose they were often to be found laughing heartily together over Felix's attempts at improvisation upon some incident of a comical nature which had occurred during their play-hours.

Such beginnings, though small in themselves, soon led to more ambitious attempts being made to set to music short humorous dialogues, so as to make little operas. To write an opera, however, was not enough--it must be performed, in order to ascertain how it would go. This was a serious matter, and one calling for the services of several performers--a miniature orchestra, in fact--with singers to undertake the various parts. But Felix, as we have seen, was thoroughly in earnest about all that he undertook, and his earnestness enabled him to surmount even so great a difficulty as was here presented. The appearance in his character of this love of completeness must be noted, as, later on, it became one of his most strongly-marked characteristics. 'If a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well,' was the saying which, even as a child, controlled all his actions; and so Felix would have his orchestra.

Love and money combined can accomplish the apparently impossible, and hence the orchestra was duly selected and engaged by the indulgent father from the members of the Court Band. To his delight--yet nowise to his embarrassment--Felix found himself in command of a company of sedate and experienced musicians, ready to follow the lead of his baton when it pleased him to take his place at the music-desk. Everything was now furnished for the performance, but the sense of completeness was not yet satisfied. There must be a better judge than the composer himself present to pass judgment on the merits of the piece, and so no less a person than Carl Zelter, the director of the Berlin Singakademie, and Felix's professor for thorough-bass and composition, was induced to undertake this delicate office, whilst a large number of friends of the family were invited for the occasion.

This was the beginning of a long and regular series of musical parties at the Mendelssohn house--parties to which, as time went on, it became a privilege to be invited, at which, indeed, hardly a musician of any note who happened to be passing through Berlin failed to put in an appearance. The picture is before us as we write--and as it must often have been recalled by those who frequented the house beside the canal--of the child-musician standing on a footstool before his music-desk, baton in hand, gravely conducting his orchestra. 'A wonder-child indeed,' as one has described him, 'in his boy's suit, shaking back his long curls, and looking over the heads of the musicians like a little general; then stoutly waving his baton, and firmly and quietly conducting his piece to the end, meanwhile noting and listening to every little detail as it passed.'

The performance of these operettas was not accompanied by action, the rule being for some one to read the dialogue at the piano, whilst the chorus were seated round the dining-table. It must not be supposed that Felix's compositions monopolised the entire time of the orchestra; though it rarely happened that the weekly concert failed to include one or more of his productions. At some of the performances all four children took part--Fanny taking the pianoforte when Felix conducted at the desk, Rebekka singing, and Paul playing the 'cello. Zelter, who was generally averse to praising any of his pupils, and, indeed, was regarded as a very grumpy personage, was a regular attendant at these performances, and never failed at the finish to speak a few words of praise or criticism. The old musician was secretly very proud of his pupil, and despite his habitual roughness of manner, Felix had a sincere affection for his master, as well as a deep respect for his judgment.

Felix was by this time composing a great deal, and, though little more than twelve years old, work of a more serious kind than the writing of operettas had been claiming his attention. To such a degree, in fact, had the flow of ideas and the facility of giving them expression developed, that within the space of a twelve-month from the completion of his twelfth year he had composed between fifty and sixty pieces, including a trio for pianoforte and strings, containing three movements (an ambitious work for a child!), several sonatas for the

pianoforte, some little songs, and a comedy piece in three scenes for pianoforte and voices. Now, too, he began to collect his writings into volumes, each piece being written out with the greatest care and in the neatest of hands, with the date at which it was written, and any other note which might serve to identify the work or to show how it came to be written. Nor was this care and neatness confined to his compositions. It soon showed itself in regard to everything which he undertook--his letters, memoranda, sketches, and so forth--and the strangest part of it all is that the more he wrote and the harder he worked, the more clearly this habit of orderliness and accuracy exhibited itself. It would seem, indeed, as if for Felix Mendelssohn time was as truly elastic as some other busy folk would fain have it to be.

Hand in hand with this thoroughness in regard to work went, as we have intimated, a love of frolic and games and every species of fun that the mind of a healthy and spirited boy could devise; and with all, permeating all, was a lovability that won its way to every heart. Rarely has such a perfect combination of light-heartedness and seriousness--capacity for the hardest work and the keenest enjoyment of life--been seen as that which burst upon the world in the person of Felix Mendelssohn. The quickness with which he made friends, the firmness with which he bound those friends to himself, the constancy and affection which he lavished upon those nearest and dearest to him, were alike extraordinary.

One day a famous composer, named Carl von Weber, was walking in Berlin in company with his young friend and pupil, Jules Benedict, when the pair observed a slightly-built youth of about twelve years of age, with long, dark curls and bright, dark eyes, advancing towards them. Suddenly the boy's keen eyes sparkled with the joy of recognition, for Carl Weber had lately visited his father's house, and he had taken a great liking to him at first sight; and now, without giving the composer time to realise the fact that they had met before, Mendelssohn, with a run and a spring, had thrown his arms about Weber's neck, and was entreating him to accompany him home. As soon as the astonished musician could speak he turned to his friend, and with a comical air, half apologetic and half proud, said, 'This is Felix Mendelssohn.' The friend held out his hand with a smile. Felix gave him a quick glance, then seized the hand in both of his own. The glance and the action that followed it settled the matter--Jules Benedict and he must be friends henceforth. Weber stood by, laughing at his young friend's enthusiasm, and Felix turned to him sharply and once more begged that he and Benedict would favour him with their company. But Weber shook his head. He had to attend a rehearsal--he had come to Berlin for that purpose. 'A rehearsal!' exclaimed Felix disappointedly, and then the next moment his eyes flashed. 'Is it the new opera?' he asked excitedly. Weber nodded. 'Oh,' said Felix thoughtfully; then, indicating Mr. Benedict, 'Does *he* know all about it?' he inquired. 'To be sure he does,' assented the composer laughingly--'at least, if he doesn't he ought to, for he has been bored enough with it already.' Felix passed unnoticed the last part of Weber's speech. It was enough for him that young Benedict was familiar with what he himself was dying to know. He therefore seized Benedict by the arm, exclaiming, 'You will come to my father's house with me, will you not?' There was no refusing the appeal in those eyes, and the young man acquiesced willingly. Then Felix dragged Weber down for a parting embrace, and, taking his new friend by the hand, as if fearful that he might change his mind, he pulled him away.

The distance to the house was short, but Mendelssohn's impatience could only be met by his companion's consenting to race him to the door. On entering he retained Benedict's hand tightly in his grasp, conducted him at once upstairs, and, bursting into the drawing-room, where his mother was seated at her knitting, he exclaimed, 'Mamma, mamma! Here is a gentleman, a pupil of Carl Weber's, who knows all about the new opera, "Der Freischütz!"'

If Benedict had expected a more formal introduction to Madame Mendelssohn he had reckoned without a knowledge of Felix's enthusiasm. But the mother knew and understood, and the young musician not only received a warm welcome, but found it impossible to take his leave until he had complied with his new friend's request that he would seat himself at the piano and play as many airs from the great opera as he could remember at such short notice, Felix listening, meanwhile, with rapt enjoyment.

[Illustration: '"*Here is a gentleman who knows all about the new opera.*"']

The acquaintance thus begun awakened a mutual regard in Mendelssohn and Benedict, for the latter shortly afterwards paid a second visit to the house. On this occasion he found Felix engaged in writing out some music, and inquired what it was. 'I am finishing my new quartet for piano and stringed instruments,' was the reply, gravely spoken, and without the least self-consciousness. Benedict glanced at the work in surprise. He did not know Mendelssohn yet. It was the 'First Quartet in C Minor,' which, later on, was published as 'Opus I.' 'And now,' said Felix, laying aside his pen, 'I will play to you to convince you how grateful I am for your kindness in playing to us last time.' He thereupon sat down and played with precision several of the airs from 'Der Freischütz' which Benedict had played on his previous visit. 'You see, I have not forgotten the pleasure you gave me,' he said, with a smile, as he rose from the piano. 'But now,' he added, as a new thought entered his mind, 'I want you to see the garden, please.' Down they went, and in a moment Mendelssohn had thrown off the musician's cloak, and was a boy again. With a bound he leapt over a high hedge, turned, and cleared it a second time, and then challenged his companion to a race. Another moment he burst out with a song, as if the open air had incited him to imitate the birds, and then, pointing to a favourite tree, he ran to it and climbed it like a squirrel.

These meetings took place in the summer of 1821, a year which brought much happiness to Felix, for ere it had drawn to a close he had found a new friend. When the autumn came round, Zelter announced that he was going to pay a visit of respect to his old friend and master, Goethe, the aged poet of Weimar, and he was willing to take Felix with him. Needless to say, Felix and his parents were equally delighted with the proposal. The boy had so often heard Zelter speak of Goethe, whose works, moreover, he was always quoting, that he felt he already loved the master almost as much as Zelter did himself. Goethe's house at Weimar was regarded as a shrine at which his countless admirers were wont to pay homage, even though their devotion often met with no further gratification than was to be derived from gazing at its walls or peeping into the grounds, which were sacred to the poet's footsteps. Hence the promise of an introduction to one who was the object of so much hero-worship stirred the heart of Felix to its depths, and filled his mind with reverential emotions such as few events could have had the power to awaken in one so sensible of what was due to a great and lofty intellect.

It was a bright November day when Zelter and his pupil set forth upon their journey. Both were looking forward to the meeting, though with somewhat different feelings. What Mendelssohn's feelings were we have tried to imagine, but Zelter was nursing within himself a certain pride and confidence in the prospect of introducing his favourite pupil to so keen a judge as Goethe, which he would not have revealed to that pupil for worlds. Felix's spirits, however, were so high on this occasion that Zelter had enough to do to satisfy all his questions without allowing his usually taciturn nature to relax under the sunshine of the boy's enthusiasm.

On arriving at Goethe's home they found the poet walking in his grounds. The meeting was simple and affectionate. Goethe greeted Felix with every show of kindness, and sent the boy to bed with an overflowing heart and a mind resolved upon cherishing the minutest details of this happy encounter. The next day he was to play to Goethe, and at an early hour of the morning he was sauntering in the grounds, awaiting the poet's arrival, and feasting his eyes upon the scenes which were the accustomed haunts of the author of 'Faust'; and then, selecting a sunny spot, he sat down to write a long letter home, full of description of the events of the previous day.

Nothing short of the severest of tests would satisfy Goethe of the truth of what Zelter had privately conveyed to him regarding his pupil's talents. Accordingly, sheet after sheet of manuscript music was selected by the poet from his store and placed upon the music-desk to be played by Felix at sight. The manner in which he performed his task, the ease with which he overcame the difficulties presented by penwork of various styles, and often far from clear, astonished and delighted the assembled company. But their manifestations of delight were far more pronounced when Felix, taking one of the airs which he had just played as a theme for extemporisation, exhibited in a most charming fashion, and with true musicianly feeling, the capacities of the subject for varied treatment. Still Goethe withheld his praise, and, interrupting the applause, declared that he had a final test to propose which, he jokingly warned Felix, would infallibly cause him to break down. Thus

speaking, the poet placed on the desk a sheet of manuscript which at first sight was enough to strike terror and dismay into the stoutest heart, for it seemed to consist of nothing else than scratches and splotches of ink, interspersed with smudges. Mendelssohn glanced at it, and then, bursting into a laugh, exclaimed: 'What writing! How can it be possible to read such manuscript?' Suddenly he became serious, and bent to examine the writing more closely, Goethe looked triumphantly round at the company. 'Now, guess *who* wrote that!' he said. Zelter rose from his place beside the pianoforte, and, looking over Felix's shoulder, cried out: 'Why, it is Beethoven's writing! One can see that a mile off! He always writes as if he used a broomstick for a pen, and then wiped his sleeve over the wet ink!'

Mendelssohn could decipher the manuscript only by degrees, having to search the sheet to find the successive notes; but when he reached the end he exclaimed, 'Now I will play it to you,' and this time he played it through without a mistake. Upon this Goethe let him off, and rewarded him with some kind words of praise. Thenceforth, until the visit came to an end, Felix was called upon to play to the poet every day, and the two became fast friends. The old man treated the boy as if he were a son, laughed and joked with him, and was never so happy as when he was near. It was altogether a delightful visit, and Goethe would only part with Felix on the understanding that they should meet again very soon.

The following summer brought a new happiness to Felix, for it had been decided that the entire family should make a tour through Switzerland. In those days a journey of such length was an undertaking of much consequence, more especially when, as in this case, the family were accompanied by the children's tutor and the doctor, in addition to several servants. It was an essential part of the father's scheme of education that his children's minds should be widened by travel, and more particularly that they should make personal acquaintance with the classic ground of history--advantages which wealth enabled him to place at their command. It was with light spirits that the party set out on their journey, Felix keenly alive to every fresh scene or incident as it presented itself, and there were few of either that failed to leave their stamp upon his impressionable mind. To his insatiable curiosity must be attributed the adventure which befell him on the very first day of their travel. They had to change carriages at Potsdam, and when the horses had traversed three German miles of road from that town Felix was suddenly missed, and a brief colloquy elicited the melancholy fact that the boy had been left behind at Potsdam. The tutor thereupon turned back in one of the carriages, whilst the rest proceeded to the next stopping-place. In the course of an hour he returned with the truant seated by his side, dusty and footsore, but otherwise as fresh as when he had started. He had, it appeared, strayed from the party at Potsdam, and returned to the starting-place in time to see the carriages disappearing in the distance enveloped in a cloud of dust. He began to run, but seeing that he could not overtake them, he abated his speed, and determined to perform the journey to Brandenburg on foot. A little peasant-girl joined him. They broke stout walking-sticks from the trees at the road-side, and together marched on cheerfully, conversing as they went, until the tutor's carriage met them about a mile from the next halting-place.

[Illustration: '*The tutor's carriage met them.*']

It was a most delightful tour, enjoyed by all concerned, and long to be treasured by the young musician, to whom Interlaken, Vevey, and Chamounix, with their mountains, lakes, glaciers, torrents, and valleys, their sunrises and sunsets, presented a panorama of endless enchantment. Amidst the constant demands upon the senses there was little time for actual composition, but two songs and the beginning of a pianoforte quartet were inspired by the sight of the Lake of Geneva and its beautiful surroundings. Nor was the journey without the pleasures afforded by meetings with many eminent people in the musical world, such as the composer Spohr at Cassel, and Schelble, the conductor of the famous Cäcilien-Verein concerts, at Frankfort. To the latter Felix exhibited his powers by an extemporisation on Bach's motets, which called forth the musician's astonished praise.

On the return journey a call was made at Weimar, in order that Abraham Mendelssohn might pay his respects to the poet, and personally acknowledge the old man's kindness to Felix. Goethe received them most kindly, and talked much with the father on the subject of the boy's future. Of Felix's playing he never seemed to get

tired. There was a charm about the boy's bright presence, and a soothing restfulness in his playing which appealed to the old poet's kindlier nature in a way that few things had the power to do. 'I am Saul, and you are my David,' he said to Felix one day, when his temper had been ruffled by something that had occurred. 'When I am sad and dreary, come to me and cheer me with your music.' How much sunshine had been infused into the old man's declining days by these brief visits Felix himself could never have guessed, but he knew that he loved Goethe, and that his love was returned.

Felix's progress, not only in music, but in his other studies as well, was by leaps and bounds. Knowledge to him seemed a food for which his appetite was insatiable, difficulties to him were but spurs to increased effort, and the effort itself appeared to be inappreciable. It was impossible to regard any longer as a boy one who possessed knowledge and powers that entitled him to take rank with performers and composers of the day. Too soon for some of those who loved him had Mendelssohn passed from his childhood stage, landing almost at a single bound into that of advanced youth, if not, indeed, into manhood itself. The Swiss tour had in a measure bridged over the interval; for when he returned it was with a taller and robuster frame, more strongly marked features, and a new and indefinable expression that was the result of widened experience, and, last of all, without the beautiful curls which had helped to make the child's face what it had been. With these changes, however, his happy boyish nature remained as strong and as irrepressible as ever. And so we pass on to the date when the transformation of which we have spoken found a fitting opportunity for recognition by his friends.

It was the night of February 3, 1824, Felix's fifteenth birthday, and the family and guests were gathered around the supper-table. Earlier in the evening there had been a full rehearsal of his first full-grown opera in three acts--'Die beiden Neffen, oder der Onkel aus Boston' (The Two Nephews, or the Uncle from Boston), which had gone most successfully, and now Zelter held up his hand as a signal that he had something important to say. All eyes were turned to him, and the clatter of tongues ceased in a moment. The old musician's face was lighted up by a most unusual expression. His grumpiness had cleared away, and a look of benevolence beamed from his eyes, in which there was even a suspicion of moisture, as, lifting his glass on high, he said:

'I have a toast to propose which I make no doubt you will acquiesce in most readily. I raise my glass to the health and happiness of my *late* pupil (no one failed to note the emphasis on the word 'late'), 'Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy!'

The toast was honoured with enthusiasm, and then Zelter, rising from his seat, took Felix by the hand and addressed him in these words:

'From this day, dear boy, thou art no longer an apprentice, but an independent member of the brotherhood of musicians. I proclaim you "assistant" in the names of Mozart, Haydn, and old Father Bach!'

He then embraced Felix with much tenderness, imprinting a hearty kiss on both his cheeks; and, the little ceremony ended, the company toasted the proclamation of independence with great merriment, following it up with the singing of songs by Zelter and others.

Notwithstanding that Mendelssohn had thus received his initiation into the 'brotherhood,' and that Zelter had plainly shown that he had nothing more to teach him, Abraham Mendelssohn still had some lingering doubts as to the advisability of his son's choosing music as a profession. This attitude arose quite as much from Felix's all-round knowledge and attainments as from any particular misgivings regarding the steadfastness of his love for music, or the continued development of his genius in that direction. Abraham clearly perceived that Felix had in him the makings of a man of business; he was methodical, quick, and shrewd, and possessed that infinite capacity for taking pains which is the accompaniment of true genius. These were qualities pre-eminently fitting him for a successful business career, and hence the doubtings as to whether such a rare combination of qualifications ought to be expended in following up a branch of art that might in the end prove

fruitless of solid results. The father must be forgiven for entertaining such doubts, unreasonable as they may seem, when regard is paid to the absolute honesty of purpose by which his own life was governed, and the sincerity of his affection for the members of his family.

There was one man who might be trusted to give an impartial opinion on this pressing question. Cherubini, the eminent composer and musical judge, was living in Paris, and to Cherubini it was decided to apply forthwith for advice. Accordingly, Felix and his father journeyed to Paris with this object, the former being fully as anxious as his father to have the opportunity of making the acquaintance of so famous a musician, as well as of receiving at his hands the support and encouragement which would put an end, once and for all, to his father's doubts. Cherubini was hardly ever known to praise, but perhaps for this very reason his opinion was eagerly sought by young performers and composers. Of those who went to him for advice, however, by far the greater number were sent away with burning cheeks and downcast eyes. This dismal fate was not reserved for Felix, for no sooner had the great man listened to his playing of one of his own compositions than he recognised Mendelssohn's power and genius, and, turning to the father, he said with a smile; 'Sir, the boy is rich; he will do well.' After some further tests Cherubini expressed himself as perfectly satisfied with regard to Felix's future, and when father and son returned to Berlin it was with the settled conviction on the part of the former that thenceforward the boy's life must be devoted to music.

And now a great change came into the daily life of the family. The house in the Neue Promenade was exchanged for a statelier and more commodious mansion, No. 3, Leipziger Strasse, situated on the outskirts of the city near the Potsdam Gate. The grounds of the new house adjoined the old deer-park of Frederick the Great, and in themselves were almost large enough to be styled a park. Stretches of green turf, shaded by fine forest-trees, winding walks amidst sweet-scented flowering shrubs, and arbours nestling in retired corners, inviting retreats for study and meditation, comprised an ideal spot for one who loved the surroundings of Nature. Nor was the house itself behindhand in offering special attractions for the purposes of study and recreation, in addition to the more solid requirements of comfort and accommodation. The rooms were spacious and elegant, and comprised one large apartment perfectly adapted for musical or theatrical entertainments. But, just as there are not a few of us who, in choosing a residence, are drawn towards the garden before proceeding to investigate the dwelling itself, so Felix's delight was first of all expressed with regard to the beautiful surroundings of the new home. And there was one feature of the garden which opened up to his mind splendid possibilities in connection with his beloved pursuit. This was a garden-house, containing a central hall capable of accommodating several hundred people, and furnished with windows and glass doors opening and looking upon the lawns and trees. The garden-house was as essentially a part of the garden as any large summer-house could be, and yet comprised sufficient rooms to fit it for occupation as a separate dwelling if such were necessary.

No sooner had the family established itself in the new home than the musical and artistic gatherings were resumed on an even larger scale than heretofore. The Sunday concerts were held in the 'Gartenhaus,' which, on most of the other evenings of the week, was the resort of friends, both old and young, who came to listen to the music, or to play or act, or in other ways amuse themselves. So famous did these gatherings become, and so completely were the mansion and its surroundings identified with the family which occupied it, and dispensed its open-handed hospitality, that it was impossible to mention the Leipziger Strasse without connecting it with information respecting the Mendelssohns. The two things, indeed, were inseparable in everybody's mind. Thither, amongst others, came Ferdinand Hiller, the eminent performer, who had visited Beethoven while the latter lay on his death-bed, and whose friendship with Felix had begun at Frankfort a short time before. Moscheles, who had worked under Beethoven, also became a regular visitor at the house, and one of Felix's closest friends. Moscheles had already acquired fame as a player, and during his stay in Berlin he was induced, though not without reluctance, to give some lessons to Mendelssohn. 'He has no need of lessons,' he remarked, with reference to Felix's ability. 'If he wishes to take a hint from me as to anything new to him, he can easily do so.' Felix, however, frankly acknowledged afterwards how much he owed to these lessons at the hands of him whose graceful, elegant touch could not be excelled. Speaking of Moscheles' playing on one occasion, Mendelssohn said that 'the runs dropped from his fingers like magic.'

We must now speak of two works which were composed very soon after Zelter's declaration of his pupil's independence. The first of these was an Octet for stringed instruments, designed as a birthday present for Edward Ritz, the young violinist, for whom Mendelssohn entertained a deep affection, and whose premature death caused him much sorrow. Felix had not completed his seventeenth year when the Octet was written. He had already composed a great deal, but he had done nothing so entirely fresh and original as this. Indeed, one might place one's finger on the Octet, and, forgetting everything which he had written before, say with emphasis and truth: 'This is Mendelssohn himself; this is his very own.' No longer an 'apprentice,' swayed or, at least, influenced by the masters who had gone before him, he has here given us the first-fruits of his 'assistantship' in a work which expresses his own musicianly feelings, and in which we get our first glimpse of his true genius. The whole piece was intended to be played *staccato* and *pianissimo*. It has a fleeting, spiritual, and fairy-like effect, with 'tremolos and trills passing away with the quickness of lightning.' The Scherzo is especially beautiful, and Mendelssohn admitted to his sister Fanny that he had taken as his motto for this movement a stanza from Goethe's Walpurgis-night Dream in 'Faust':

'Floating cloud and trailing mist Bright'ning o'er us hover; Airs stir the brake, the rushes shake-- And all their pomp is over.'

We are reminded of this in the last part, where 'the first violin takes a flight with a feather-like lightness, and all has vanished.'

But if the Octet serves to mark a distinct stage in the development of Mendelssohn's genius, what are we to say of the work which followed it? Several things had paved the way for this new composition. To begin with, Felix and Fanny made their first acquaintance with Shakespeare in this year through the medium of a German translation, and they fell completely under the spell of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.' Then the summer proved to be an exceptionally fine one, and led to many hours being spent in the beautiful garden--in fact, there is no doubt that the garden began it. It is not difficult to imagine how the romantic mind of Felix was stirred by reading this delightful fairy play amidst such charming surroundings. To read thus was to picture in music, to give a musical setting to both scene and action, at first indefinite, shadowy, suggestive, but as reading and thinking progressed, growing ever stronger and more clearly defined. Thus, stretched upon the turf, book in hand, the silence broken only by the singing of the birds and the humming of the bees, the music of the Overture to 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' gradually shaped itself in Mendelssohn's mind, until what at the beginning had in itself been little more than a dream, became a tangible creation.

When the Overture had been written down, it was frequently played by Felix and Fanny as a duet. In this simple form Moscheles heard it for the first time, and he was struck by the force of its beauty. The work was elaborated and perfected by degrees, until the day arrived when it was performed by the garden-house orchestra before a crowded audience. So great was the reception accorded to the overture on this occasion that in the February following Felix journeyed to Stettin to conduct the first public performance.

When we listen to this beautiful work, we are constrained to admit that no happier introduction to the play could have been devised; for just as the play itself seems to demand for its environment some lovely garden or woodland glade, so Mendelssohn's music conjures up visions of the fairy scenes of enchantment with which the play abounds. It is a work instinct with musicianly feeling, and its strength is borne out by the soundness and skill displayed in its construction. As a great musical judge[29] has said of it: 'No one piece of music contains so many points of harmony and orchestration that had never been written before, and yet none of them have the air of experiment, but seem all to have been written with certainty of their success.'

But we must not linger over this portion of our story, though we are tempted to do so; for there can be no doubt that these years spent in the Leipziger Strasse house, when the members of the family were all together, each contributing his or her share to the intellectual intercourse that went on beneath its hospitable roof, afford the happiest pictures of Mendelssohn's young life. It was so full and many-sided a life, hard work alternating with gymnastics, dancing, swimming, riding, and, of course, music, each occupation pursued with such zest

and heartiness as to convey the impression at the moment of its being the most absorbing of all.

Amidst these pleasures, however, a new project had taken hold of his mind, one which, like many another great undertaking fraught with far-reaching results, owed its inception to the feeling aroused by the indifference and lack of sympathy shown by others towards what he himself believed to be deserving of the highest praise. Two years before, Felix's grandmother had presented him with a manuscript score of Bach's 'Passion according to St. Matthew,' which Zelter had permitted to be copied from the manuscript in the Singakademie. A more devoted lover of Bach's music than Zelter could not have been found, and the old man had infused some of this love into his pupil; consequently, when the score of the 'Passion' was placed in Mendelssohn's hands, he set to work to master it, and with such earnestness had he applied himself to the study that at this point of our story he knew the whole of it by heart.

The more he studied this great work, the more was he impressed by its beauty and the grandeur of its conception. Could it possibly be true, he asked himself, that throughout the length and breadth of Germany so stupendous a work as this remained unheard, unknown? that a creation so deathless in itself could be permitted to sleep without even the hope of an awakening? 'Alas!' replied Zelter, when the question was put to him--'alas! it is nearly a hundred years since old Father Bach died, and though his name lives, as all great names must live, the majority of those who speak of him as a master are ignorant of the works which made him great; they have forgotten, if, indeed, they ever heard, the sound of the master's voice!'

Here, then, in the apathy manifested in regard to Bach's greatest works, Mendelssohn found the stimulus that was needed. If only this state of things could be changed, if only he might be permitted to show the way to an understanding and appreciation of these priceless treasures! Towards this great end something, at least, might be accomplished by the force of example. As we have seen, he knew the 'Passion' music by heart, and he now proceeded to enlist others in a study of the work. In a short time he had got together sixteen carefully selected voices, and had arranged for his little choir to meet once a week at his house for practice. It was a small beginning, but his own enthusiasm soon infected the rest, and they all grew deeply earnest in their work--so earnest, indeed, that ere long the yearning had seized them for a public performance. The Singakademie maintained a splendid choir of between three hundred and four hundred voices. If only the director could be induced to allow a trial performance to be given under Mendelssohn's conducting! Much as he personally desired such a consummation of their labours, however, Felix felt convinced that he knew Zelter only too well to indulge any hopes that he would sanction so great an undertaking. Zelter had no faith in the idea that public support would be given to a revival of the 'Passion,' and Felix well knew that nothing would shake him in this opinion. But this conclusion was strongly opposed by a prominent member of the Garden-house choir, a young actor-singer named Devrient, who insisted that Zelter ought to be approached on the subject; and as he himself had been a pupil of Zelter, and possessed the gift of eloquence in no small degree, he succeeded in persuading Mendelssohn to accompany him on a visit to the director's house.

Accordingly, the pair set forth early one morning to brave the old giant in his den, Mendelssohn haunted by a dread of the manner in which their proposals would be received, and Devrient, who was to be spokesman, keeping up a bold front, and assuring his friend that they would ultimately succeed.

They found Zelter seated at his instrument, with a sheet of music-paper before him, a long pipe in his mouth, and enveloped in a cloud of tobacco-smoke. In response to his gruff inquiry, what had brought them at so early an hour, Devrient unfolded his plan by degrees, beginning by enlarging upon their admiration for Bach's music, with a gentle reminder to Zelter that this taste had been acquired under his own guidance, and proceeding to dwell upon the progress of their studies and the yearning which they all felt for a public trial of the work, and concluding with an eloquent appeal for assistance from the Academy itself.

Zelter listened with an outward show of patience that was as extraordinary as it had been unlooked for, but his eyes gleamed through the clouds of smoke with a light that foreboded a speedy outburst of his slumbering fires. Nevertheless, when he began to speak, it was not to condemn the young men for their presumption, but

to point out that the difficulties in performing such a work at that time were inconceivably greater than they had supposed. In Bach's time it was different, the Thomas School could supply what was necessary--the double orchestra, double chorus, and so forth; but now such things were insuperable difficulties; nothing could overcome them.

As he spoke he laid aside his pipe, and rising from his chair, paced excitedly to and fro, repeating again and again: 'No, no; it is not to be thought of; it is mad, mad, mad!' To Felix he looked the picture of a shaggy old lion stirred up by his keeper. Still Devrient persevered. He even ventured to say that they had considered those difficulties; that they did not believe them to be insuperable; that they had implicit faith in their own enthusiasm having the power to kindle the like in others; and, finally, that with the Academy's co-operation success must ensue.

Zelter grew more and more irritated as Devrient proceeded, and Felix, observing the growing anger in his eye, plucked his companion by the sleeve, and edged nearer to the door. At length the explosion came. 'That one should have the patience to listen to all this! I can tell you that very different people have had to give up attempting this very thing, and yet you imagine that a couple of young donkeys like yourselves will be able to accomplish it!'

Felix by this time was at the door, feverishly beckoning to Devrient to come away, but his friend refused to budge; he even began afresh. He pleaded in his most telling tones that, inasmuch as it was Zelter himself who had awakened their love for the master, the honour would be to him quite as much as to themselves if his pupils succeeded in bringing about this grand result, and how well-deserved and fitting a crown this would be to his long career, this honour and testimony to the greatness of Father Bach.

Felix opened his eyes wider in astonishment; but there could be no mistake--the crisis had passed, and Zelter was visibly weakening; the lion died out of his eyes, the pipe once more found its way to his lips, and after many demurs, many arguments, much pacing up and down, Zelter with a sigh of relief gave in. It was a noble surrender, for it included a promise of all the help that he could give, and the young enthusiasts quitted the lion's den triumphant.

'You are a regular rascal, an arch-Jesuit!' said Felix to his friend as they descended the stairs.

'Anything you like for the honour of Sebastian Bach!' retorted the other as they stepped out into the keen, wintry air.

How Mendelssohn grappled with this great work; how he threw into it all the energy he possessed; how he mastered its every detail, and gave it life; how, with infinite tact and patience, he made it a living, dramatic masterpiece in the eyes of those who were to perform it; how the rehearsals at the Academy were thronged by professionals and amateurs desirous of realising its true nature and power; how at length the first public performance of the 'Passion according to St. Matthew' since the composer's death took place at the Singakademie, with Mendelssohn conducting, on March 11, 1829, and how every ticket was sold, and fully a thousand disappointed ones were turned away from the doors--all this must be read elsewhere. Suffice it here to say that this performance marked the beginning of a great revival--the awakening throughout Germany and England of a love and appreciation of Bach which has never since faded or diminished.

It was in connection with this work that Mendelssohn made the first and only allusion to his Jewish descent. 'To think,' he remarked to Devrient, with a look of triumph in his eyes as they were walking together to the final rehearsal--'to think that it should have been reserved for an actor and a Jew to restore this great Christian work to the people!'

The excitement attending the performance, with its repetition on March 21, the anniversary of Bach's birth, had not subsided ere Mendelssohn was engaged in taking leave of his dear ones prior to embarking at

Hamburg on his first visit to England. Several circumstances had combined to render the present a favourable moment for undertaking the journey. The Moscheleses, and another friend named Klingemann, who had been a constant visitor at the Berlin house until called away to occupy a London post, had assured him of a warm welcome; it was his father's wish, shared by Zelter also, that he should travel, and he for his own part was desirous of showing that he could support himself by music. Abraham Mendelssohn had, indeed, designed this visit as the first portion of a lengthened tour which would enable Felix to see more of various countries, and assist him in choosing that which offered the best opportunities for his life-work.

The London musical season was at its height when he arrived, but his first letters home were chiefly occupied with descriptions of the city itself, and how it had affected him. 'It is fearful! it is maddening!' he writes to Fanny three days after he had settled into his Great Portland Street lodgings.[30] 'London is the grandest and most complicated monster on the face of the earth.... Things roll and carry me along as in a vortex. Not in the last six months at Berlin have I seen so many contrasts and such variety as in these three days.... Could you see me at the exquisite grand-piano which Clementi has sent me for the whole of my stay here, by the cheerful fireside' (the open grate fire was a novelty to one who had come from the land of closed stoves), 'in my own four walls ... and could you see the immense four-post bed in the next room in which I might go to sleep in the most literal sense of the word, the many-coloured curtains and quaint furniture, my breakfast-tea with dry toast still before me, the servant-girl in curl-papers, who has just brought me my newly-hemmed black necktie, and asks what further orders I have ... and could you but see the highly respectable, fog-enveloped street, and hear the pitiable voice with which a beggar down there pours forth his ditty (he will soon be outscreamed by the street-sellers), and could you picture to yourselves that from here to the City is three-quarters of an hour's drive, and that in all the cross streets of which one has glimpses the noise, clamour, and bustle are the same, if not greater, and that after that one has only traversed about a quarter of London, then you might understand how it is that I am half distracted!'

One needs to be something of an artist as well as of a poet to appreciate London at her true worth, and Mendelssohn possessed both qualities in no small degree; hence it is only natural that the artistic and poetical aspects of our city should have appealed most strongly to his sensitive nature. A few days later he writes: 'I think the town and the streets are quite beautiful. Again I was struck with awe when yesterday I drove in an open carriage to the City along a different road and everywhere found the same flow of life ... everywhere noise and smoke, everywhere the end of the streets lost in fog. Every few moments I passed a church, or a market-place, or a green square, or a theatre, or caught a glimpse of the Thames.... Last, not least, to see the masts from the West India Docks stretching their heads over the housetops, and to see a harbour as big as the Hamburg one treated like a mere pond, with sluices, and the ships arranged not singly, but in rows, like regiments--to see all that makes one's heart rejoice at the greatness of the world.'

The magnificence of a ball at Devonshire House reminds him of the 'Arabian Nights.' The Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel were present, and he describes the beauty of the girls dancing, the lights, the music, the flowers, etc. 'To move among these beautiful pictures and lovely living forms, and to wander about in all that flow of life and universal excitement, perfectly quiet and unknown, and unnoticed and unseen, to notice and to see--it was one of the most charming nights I remember.' Again, of a fête held at the Marquis of Lansdowne's, he says: 'That such magnificence could really exist in our time I had not believed. These are not parties--they are festivals and celebrations.'

In the mind of Mendelssohn, therefore, London struck a sympathetic chord, and the pleasure which he felt on entering the city was heightened by the warmth of the welcome which he received at the hands of the musical public. His first appearance was at the Argyll Rooms, in Regent Street, at a concert of the Philharmonic Society on May 25, when his 'Symphony in C minor' was performed. He gives a full description of the rehearsal and performance in his letter to Fanny:

'When I entered the Argyll Rooms for the rehearsal of my Symphony, and found the whole orchestra assembled, and about two hundred listeners, chiefly ladies, strangers to me, and when, first, Mozart's

"Symphony in E flat major" was rehearsed, after which my own was to follow, I felt not exactly afraid, but nervous and excited. During the Mozart pieces I took a little walk in Regent Street, and looked at the people; when I returned, everything was ready and waiting for me. I mounted the orchestra, and pulled out my white stick which I have had made on purpose (the maker took me for an alderman, and would insist on decorating it with a crown). The first violin, François Cramer, showed me how the orchestra was placed--the furthest row had to get up so that I could see them--and introduced me to them all, and we bowed to each other; some, perhaps, laughed a little that this small fellow with the stick should now take the place of their regular powdered and bewigged conductor. Then it began. For the first time it went very well and powerfully, and pleased the people much, even at rehearsal. After each movement the whole audience and the whole orchestra applauded (the musicians showing their approval by striking their instruments with their bows and stamping their feet). After the finale they made a great noise, and as I had to make them repeat it, because it was badly played, they set up the same noise once more; the directors came to me in the orchestra, and I had to go down and make a great many bows. Cramer was overjoyed, and loaded me with praise and compliments. I walked about in the orchestra, and had to shake at least two hundred different hands. It was one of the happiest moments within my recollection, for one half hour had transformed all those strangers into friends and acquaintances. But the success at the concert last night was beyond what I could ever have dreamed. It began with the Symphony; old François Cramer led me to the piano like a young lady, and I was received with immense applause. The Adagio was encored; I preferred to bow my thanks and go on, for fear of tiring the audience, but the Scherzo was so vigorously encored that I felt obliged to repeat it, and after the finale they continued applauding, while I was thanking the orchestra and shaking hands, and until I had left the room.'

[Illustration: '*The success was beyond what I could have dreamed.*']

On another occasion, when he was to perform at a concert, he describes how he went to the room early in order to try the piano, which was a new one. He found the instrument locked, and dispatched a messenger for the key. In the meantime he seated himself at another piano of ancient aspect, and beginning to extemporise soon became lost in reverie. The empty room, the 'old grey instrument which the fingers of several generations may have played,' and the silence affected him so deeply that he forgot the passing time, until he was reminded of the approach of the concert hour by the people coming in to take their seats. When, having first put himself into *grande toilette*--very long, white trousers, brown silk waistcoat, black necktie, and blue dress coat--he mounted the orchestra he felt nervous; a panic seized him, for the hall was crowded, ladies even sitting in the orchestra who could not get places in the room. 'But as the gay bonnets gave me a nice reception, and applauded when I came ... and as I found the instrument very excellent and of a light touch, I lost all my timidity, became quite comfortable, and was highly amused to see the bonnets agitated at every little cadenza, which to me and many critics brought to mind the simile of the wind and the tulip-bed.'

A dinner-party followed the concert, and then he went to visit some friends living out of town with whom he was to spend the night. Finding no carriage to convey him, he set out to walk through the fields in the cool of the evening. Can we not picture him crossing the still meadows by a lonely path, meeting no one, the air redolent of spring flowers, musical ideas floating through his mind--ideas which there was nobody to hear, which nobody, perhaps, was ever destined to hear, as he sang them aloud in the fading light, 'the whole sky grey, with a purple streak on the horizon, and the thick cloud of smoke behind him.'

Amidst the round of work and the pressure of invitations which made up the sum of his daily life in London, the love of boyish fun, which formed a wholesome counteraction to his serious moods, broke out every now and then with its old accustomed force, eclipsing for the moment the memories of stately dinner-parties and receptions. One night when in company with two friends he was returning from what he terms 'a highly diplomatic dinner-party' at the Prussian Ambassador's, where they had taken their 'fill of fashionable dishes, sayings, and doings,' they passed a very enticing sausage-shop in which some German sausages were exposed in the window. A wave of patriotism overcame them; they entered, and each bought a long sausage, and then the trio turned into a quiet street to devour them, accompanying the meal with a three-part song and shouts of laughter.

Mendelssohn's heart was easily touched by the distresses of others, and when he learnt of the sufferings of those who had lost their all in the floods in Silesia at this time, he set to work at once to arrange a concert in their behalf. The 'Midsummer Night's Dream Overture' formed one of the items of the programme--this being the second occasion of its performance since his arrival. It was most enthusiastically received, and, indeed, the whole concert was a great success. The room was so besieged that no fewer than one hundred persons were turned from the doors. Ladies who could not find seats in the body of the hall crowded upon the orchestra, and Mendelssohn was delighted at receiving a message from two elderly ladies, who had strayed between the bassoons and the French horns, anxiously inquiring 'whether they were likely to hear well!' Another enthusiastic lady esconsced herself contentedly upon a kettledrum. There could be little doubt that the overture had secured a firm hold upon English hearts at its first hearing. Jules Benedict, who was present on the occasion, describes the effect upon the audience as electrical. At the end of the first performance a friend who had taken charge of the precious manuscript was so careless as to leave it in a hackney-coach on his way home, and it was never recovered. 'Never mind,' said Mendelssohn, when the loss was reported to him, 'I will write another.' And he sat down at once and rewrote the score entirely from memory, and when the copy was afterwards compared with the parts it was found that he had not made a single variation.

From London, when the season came to an end, he went in company with his friend Klingemann to Scotland, his keen sense of perception drinking in all the variety and charm which the tour presented, and his genius supplying a musical setting to whatever struck him as specially beautiful. The ruined chapel attached to the old Palace of Holyrood, seen in the twilight, with its broken altar at which Mary received the Scottish crown, overgrown with grass and ivy, and its mouldering, roofless pillars, with patches of bright sky between, gave him the first inspiration for his Scotch Symphony. But it was the Hebrides which, in their lonely grandeur and bleakness, affected him most of all. Of Iona, with its ruins of a once magnificent cathedral, and its graves of ancient Scottish Kings, he writes that he shall think when in the midst of crowded assemblies of music and dancing. Of Staffa, again, with its strange, basaltic pillars and caverns, he says: 'A greener roar of waves surely never rushed into a stranger cavern--its many pillars making it look like the inside of an immense organ, black and resounding, and absolutely without purpose, and quite alone, the wide, grey sea within and without.' How deeply the Hebrides impressed him he shows by a few lines of music added to his letter, which he says were suggested to him by the sight of these lonely sister isles. Later on this very piece of music formed the opening to his 'Overture to Fingal's Cave.'

How thoroughly music entered into his daily life and permeated his thoughts, we may know from his habit of seating himself at the piano in the evening, and improvising music to express what he had both *seen* and *felt* throughout the day. To Mendelssohn music was a natural language by which he could express, in the most perfect manner, the emotions which had been aroused by reading or by the contemplation of Nature. Thus, when he went from Scotland to North Wales to stay with some friends named Taylor, he wrote for Susan Taylor a piece called 'The Rivulet,' which was a representation of an actual rivulet visited by them in their rambles. Again, Honora Taylor had in her garden a creeping plant (the *Eccremocarpus*), bearing little trumpet-shaped flowers, and Mendelssohn was taken with a fancy for inventing the music which the fairies might have been supposed to play on those tiny trumpets. The piece was called 'A Capriccio in E minor,' and when he wrote it out he drew a branch of the plant all up the margin of the paper. For another member of the family he wrote a piece which was suggested by a bunch of carnations (his favourite flower) and roses arranged in a bowl, and he put in some arpeggio passages to remind the player of the sweet scent rising up from the flowers.

Felix had just returned to London, and was contemplating an early departure for Berlin, when an injury to his knee, the result of a carriage accident, compelled him to lie up for several weeks, and hence to forego a pleasure to which he had been looking forward with feelings of eager affection. Shortly before he left home Fanny's engagement to William Hensel, a young painter of promise, had received her parent's sanction, and it had been confidently expected that Felix would return in time for the marriage. The disappointment caused by the accident was therefore keenly felt both by himself and those at home. Hensel was clever, and by no means a stranger to the gatherings at the Gartenhaus; but his entry into the select and innermost circle of the

brotherhood, armed with the kind of right which his engagement to Fanny had conferred upon him, caused him to be regarded in a new light, and it was not until a little time had elapsed that he found his way to their hearts by his gentle ways, assisted in no small degree by his pencil. At first the exclusiveness of a set which had received the title of 'The Wheel,' and which prided itself on the freemasonry which obtained amongst its members, was somewhat chilling; but Hensel was not easily discouraged; he took to drawing the members' portraits as his contribution to the bonhomie of the circle, and with such success that 'The Wheel' soon came to regard him as an indispensable spoke, whilst the portraits multiplied until they formed a huge collection. Fanny's marriage, moreover, did not imply any break in the family circle, for when her brother returned to Berlin he found that Hensel and his bride had taken up their residence in the Gartenhaus.

The grand tour had practically only begun, and was now to be resumed, but the visit to England was exercising over Mendelssohn's mind a strong influence which, though not unconnected with the success and fame it had brought to him, might with more justice be ascribed to the sympathetic appreciation and kindness which he had received at the hands of the English. 'A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country,' and Berlin had so far held back the encouragement that strangers were so willing to accord him. Moreover, for one of his artistically sensitive temperament London possessed a magnetic charm that was lacking in Berlin. At home his very youth seemed to count against him, but in London it was, if anything, in his favour. The fame of his visit, however, had preceded him to Berlin, and shortly after his return he was offered the Professorship of Music at the University, an honour which he at once declined, feeling that its acceptance would not only interfere with his freedom in composition, but bind him down to an occupation which he confessed was not his forte. This Chair had been specially created in the hope that he would fill it, and it marks the first, though by no means the last, attempt on the part of the Berliners to secure his services for their city.

In the May following he set forth once more on his travels, bound for Venice, Florence, and Rome. He could not pass through Weimar, however, without paying a visit to Goethe; it proved to be the last meeting, and it was filled with incidents that left a deep impression on his mind. Never had the sympathy and friendship between the two been closer or more confidential than on this occasion. 'There is much in my spirit that you must light up for me,' said Goethe to Felix one day when they had been conversing together. Goethe called upon him continually for music, but showed an indifference towards Beethoven's works; Felix, however, insisted that he must endure some of the master, and played to him the first movement of the 'C minor Symphony.' Goethe listened for a few moments, and then said: 'That does not touch one at all; it only astonishes one.' But Felix played on, and presently, after some murmuring to himself, the poet burst out with: 'It is very great, it is wild! It seems as though the house were falling! What must it be with the whole orchestra!'

The tour was a long one, for several cities had to be visited before he could cross the Swiss frontier. Each day brought its full measure of incident and delightful sight-seeing. It was in Switzerland, however, that Mendelssohn's passionate love for Nature was stirred to its depths. His Alpine walks were a revelation of Nature in her most decided moods, and one particular walk over the Wengern Alp was destined to be long remembered. The mountain summits were glittering in the morning air, every undulation and the face of every hill clear and distinct. Formerly it was their height alone that had impressed him, 'now it was their boundless extent that he particularly felt--their huge, broad masses; the close connection of all those enormous fortresses, which seemed to be crowding together and stretching out their hands to each other.'

He loved all beautiful things, but he loved the sea best of all; it seemed to him to express in its varying moods every feeling which he himself possessed. 'When there is a storm at Chiatamene,' he wrote to Fanny when she was visiting Italy, 'and the grey sea is foaming, think of me.' And now as he approached Naples, and saw the sea sparkling in the sunlit bay, he exclaims: 'To me it is the finest object in Nature! I love it almost more than the sky. I always feel happy when I see before me the wide expanse of waters.' Again, the ancientness of Nature herself conveyed far more to him than any legend of antiquity connected with the works of man; he could not feel in 'crumbling mason work' the interest and fascination that existed for him in the unchanged

outlines of the hills, or in the fact that the waves lapped the island which formed the refuge of Brutus, and the lichen-covered rocks bent over them then just as they did now. These were monuments on which no names were scribbled, no inscriptions carved, and to such he clung.

Yet in Rome itself he found a centre of unending interest and fascination. 'All its measureless delights lay as a free gift before him; every day he picked out afresh some great historic object: one day a ramble about the ruins of the ancient city, another day the Borghese Gallery or the Capitol, or else St. Peter's or the Vatican. So each day was one never to be forgotten, and this sort of dallying left each impression firmer and stronger. If Venice seemed like the gravestone of its own past, its ruinous, modern palaces and the enduring remembrance of a bygone supremacy giving it a disquieting, mournful impression, the past of Rome struck him as history itself; its monuments ennobled, and made one at the same moment serious and joyful, for there was joy in feeling how human creations may survive a thousand years and yet possess their quickening restoring, influence. Each day some new image of that past imprinted itself on his mind, and then came the twilight, and the day was at an end.'

The tour was not completed until the spring of the following year (1832), and during that interval two sad notes had been struck--the first being the death of Edward Ritz, the young violinist, Felix's closest friend, from whom he admitted that he had taken the model of his delicate, musical handwriting; and the second that of Goethe. In connection with the latter loss Felix felt deeply for Zelter, for he knew how the old man had worshipped and leant upon the master-poet. 'Mark my words,' said Mendelssohn, when he received the sad intelligence, 'it will not be long now before Zelter dies!' The words were but too prophetic, for in less than two months from the day on which they were spoken Zelter had followed the master he loved so well.

Before the latter event happened, however, Mendelssohn had returned to London. His affection for the City had now become a settled part of his nature. Even amidst the sunshine of Naples, with the glittering sea before his eyes, he had longed for London. 'That smoky nest is fated to be now and ever my favourite residence,' he writes; 'my heart swells when I think of it.' Even with the love he felt for those who were awaiting his return to the Berlin home it must have been hard for him to tear himself away from London, where his genius and his attractive personality found recognition at every turn. Consequently it is not surprising that he should have found his way back to his 'smoky nest' before very long--this time accompanied by his father. It was Abraham Mendelssohn's first visit, and it served to bring out more clearly than ever the closeness of the bond which united them. Felix nursed his father through an illness of three weeks' duration with a tenderness and solicitude that called forth a touching tribute from the patient. 'I cannot express,' writes Abraham to Leah, 'what he has been to me, what a treasure of love, patience, endurance, thoughtfulness, and tender care he has lavished on me; and much as I owe him indirectly for a thousand kindnesses and attentions from others, I owe him far more for what he has done for me himself.'

Two years later Mendelssohn was mourning the loss of this parent, whose sudden death had cast a deep gloom over a time when everything seemed to promise happily for the young composer. Only a month before the sad event Felix had joined the home-party at Berlin, and the house had once more assumed the full and complete life of its earlier days. The merriment, the joyous laughter were as hearty and resounding as they had been of yore, and there the father and mother had sat watching the fun--Abraham by this time quite blind, but keenly interested in all that was going on. Now the first definite break in that happy circle had come, shutting out the past for ever!

The extraordinary fullness which characterised Mendelssohn's life--'he lived years whilst others would have lived only weeks,' was the true remark of one who knew him well--reminds us of the impracticability of giving anything like a complete description of even its chief incidents. The stage at which our story has arrived does not, it is true, show him at the pinnacle of his fame as a composer, but if we entertained any doubts as to his greatness or his popularity at this time, we have only to imagine ourselves present at the scene which was being enacted on a certain afternoon in May, 1836, in the music-hall at Düsseldorf to be assured on both of these points. The long, low-pitched room is filled with an excited and enthusiastic audience

applauding with all their might and main, for the first performance of Mendelssohn's oratorio 'St. Paul' has just come to an end. Amidst the roars of applause the ladies of the chorus have risen from their seats, and, advancing to the spot where Mendelssohn stands bowing his acknowledgments to the audience and orchestra, they shower garlands upon him, and then to complete the display they place a crown of flowers upon the score itself.

Some time before this event the town of Düsseldorf had claimed his services as director of music, and a little later Leipzig had followed suit--the latter event marking the beginning of a connection fraught with results of the highest importance to the musical world, and of much happiness to Mendelssohn himself. It was at this period that he composed many of those charming part-songs, intended for performance in the open air, that have since become such recognised favourites; of these we need only recall 'The Hunter's Farewell' and 'The Lark' as examples. But the time is marked for us in even clearer notes than these, for to this era belong several of his 'Songs without Words'--those melodies which have grown into our hearts never, we may well believe, to be uprooted. Mendelssohn not only invented the title 'Lieder ohne Worte,' but also the style of composition itself. Sir Julius Benedict remarks that 'at this period mechanical dexterity, musical claptraps, skips from one part of the piano to another, endless shakes and arpeggios, were the order of the day.' Mendelssohn, however, would never sacrifice to the prevailing taste; his desire was to 'restore dignity and rank to the instrument,' and he accordingly wrote what Sir Julius aptly describes as these 'exquisite little musical poems.'

The year of which we are speaking was productive of the deepest happiness to Mendelssohn, for it was that of his engagement to Cécile Jeanrenaud, the beautiful daughter of a French Protestant clergyman, whose acquaintance he had formed whilst on a visit to Frankfort. In the following spring they were married, and thus began for both a new life replete with happiness. In Cécile Felix found one who, out of her loving, gentle nature, could give him the sympathy and support that he needed, whilst she in turn received from her husband the fullest return that a grateful and sensitive heart, obedient to the promptings of a love that never wavered in its steadfastness and devotion, could bestow. No home life could have been happier, none more simple in its give and take of affection, than that of Mendelssohn and his wife; nothing transpired to destroy or even to obscure for a moment the halo of romance which surrounded it from the beginning, and which rendered it from first to last a marriage of love.

A picture of Mendelssohn at this period of his life shows us a short, slightly-built figure, with the dark, Jewish type of face, high forehead surmounted by thick, black, wavy hair, and dark brown eyes full of fire and animation, which we have already described as marking his appearance as a boy. The mouth was delicate and sensitive, the corners frequently curved into a smile. The change of expression in the eyes when playing, or stirred by any deep emotion, was most striking; 'they would dilate and become nearly twice their ordinary size, the brown pupil changing to a vivid black.' His lithe, muscular frame showed expression in all its movements corresponding with the actions of the mind; when he thoroughly agreed with a speaker he nodded so vigorously as to bring the black curls down over his face; his laughter was ringing and hearty, and merriment found added expression in the doubling up of his body and the shaking of his hand. His hands were small, with sensitive, tapering fingers, and when playing the fingers acted as if endowed with separate life and intelligence. There was no effeminacy connected with his lovable nature; he was quick to resent meanness or deceit, or wrong-doing of any kind. His anger was exceedingly sharp, and his manner of expressing contempt an astonishing revelation to those who had failed to grasp his character as a whole.

Despite his love of hard work no one more thoroughly enjoyed being lazy when there was nothing to do. Sleep was his never-failing resource when overtaxed--the power of compelling sound, refreshing sleep at the moment when it was most needed was one of the most remarkable traits of a temperament distinguished by its astonishing activity. Yet it may be taken perhaps as a part of his orderly nature, which in everything was governed by method. The completeness with which he carried out every detail connected with his work or his amusements excites our wonderment; the sense of neatness pervades the whole--nothing is wanting. He wrote numberless letters, many of them containing descriptions of scenery and incident such as entitle them to rank as literary productions--yet there is not the slightest evidence of haste or carelessness; even the writing itself is

artistic in its delicacy and finish. He received countless letters, and he preserved them all by pasting them into scrapbooks kept for the purpose. The same scrupulous care is observable in the writing of his musical manuscripts, and no fewer than forty-four volumes of these works, constructed by his own hands, are preserved in the Imperial Library at Berlin. His talent for drawing was considerable, and his love for the pursuit enabled him to accumulate a large collection of finished works, in every one of which is exhibited the same painstaking care and accuracy with regard to detail. Finally, we must mention his devotion to his family. No more loving father could have been found than Mendelssohn was to his children; he entered into their games and lessons with the same eager desire to add to their enjoyment, or to ease their labours, as he displayed towards the greater world outside his home.

We must now hasten to record an event which was destined to stamp Mendelssohn's career with undying fame--the completion of his oratorio 'Elijah.' This, his greatest work, owed its inspiration to a short passage in the book he reverenced most of all. One day his friend Hiller found him deep in the Bible. 'Listen,' he said, and then he read in a gentle, agitated voice the passage from the First Book of Kings, beginning with the words, 'And behold, the Lord passed by.' 'Would not that be splendid for an oratorio!' he exclaimed; and from that moment the idea began to grow in his mind. And as it grew he saw it in a clearer, brighter light, until, when the spring of 1846 arrived, the work was all but completed. In a letter to Jenny Lind, the famous singer and his intimate friend, he writes: 'I am jumping about my room for joy! If it only turns out half as good as I fancy it is how pleased I shall be!'

[Illustration: '"*Would not that be splendid for an oratorio!*"']

The years intervening between the inception of this great work and its completion had brought no little anxiety and strain connected with his arduous labours, and they had brought one deep sorrow, the loss of his mother, whose death had been as sudden and unexpected as that of the father. Honours had been bestowed upon him by royal hands--the King of Prussia had personally conveyed to him his wishes that he should assume the directorship of music in Berlin, and when Mendelssohn found himself unable to retain the position he had begged him to reconsider his decision; the King of Saxony had made him Capellmeister to his Court; and last, but not least, he had received at the hands of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert such marks of personal regard and esteem as must have served to endear him more than ever to the country which had been foremost in recognising the greatness of his genius.

Those years, too, had witnessed the fruits of his unceasing labours for the advancement of his art in those centres over which his personal influence extended. Leipzig under him had become a musical centre to which young students and composers flocked, in order to obtain his opinion and guidance in respect to their work, or even, in many cases, to place themselves for a time where his methods could be studied and his personality enjoyed at the same time. Amongst others came William Sterndale Bennett, filled with enthusiasm, to profit by his advice, and to find in the master a kind and generous friend. Nor should we omit to mention, amongst the numerous offshoots of his labours, the foundation of the Conservatorium of Music at Leipzig, a scheme entirely due to his initiative, and which under his fostering care developed into one of the first academies of the day. Lastly, amidst the whirl of work he found time to carry out a project which he had for long cherished--the erection, at the threshold of the Thomas School at Leipzig, of a monument to the memory of Sebastian Bach.

On the morning of Wednesday, August 26, 1846, the Town Hall of Birmingham presented a scene of unusual animation. A huge crowd was entering its doors and taking possession of the phalanx of chairs occupying the floor of the building. In the gallery every seat had been taken an hour earlier, and very soon every eye was directed towards the conductor's desk in expectation of Mendelssohn's appearance. Eager anticipation was in the air, for this day was to witness the first performance of 'Elijah' under the baton of the composer, who had thus elected to submit his greatest work to the judgment of an English audience.

'At half-past eleven o'clock,' wrote one who was present on the occasion, 'a deafening shout from the band and

chorus announced the approach of the great composer. The reception he met with on stepping into his place from the assembled thousands was absolutely overwhelming, whilst the sun, emerging at that moment, seemed to illumine the vast edifice in honour of the bright and pure being who stood there, the idol of all beholders.' The applause which broke forth at the end of the first part gave a sufficient indication of the impression which the audience had formed of the work, and at the conclusion the enthusiasm was such that the entire assembly rose to their feet, and shouted and waved for several minutes.

It was over, and Mendelssohn's gratification at his reception was expressed in the letter which he wrote to his brother Paul the same evening: 'No work of mine ever went so admirably at the first performance, or was received with such enthusiasm both by musicians and the public as this.... I almost doubt if I can ever hear one like it again.'

In April of the following year four performances of the 'Elijah' took place at Exeter Hall under his conductorship, the Queen and Prince Albert gracing the second performance with their presence. This was destined to be his last visit to these shores, and when he departed, after fulfilling a round of engagements which tried his strength to its uttermost limits, it was with the haunting shadow of coming illness. Scarcely had he rejoined his family at Frankfort than a messenger brought the sad intelligence that his sister Fanny had died suddenly at Berlin; the news was broken to him all too suddenly, and with a loud shriek he fell to the ground in a swoon.

From that moment his spirits failed him; there was no rebound from the deep depression into which he had fallen--only occasional flickerings of his former self showed that the struggle to assert his will-power over an ever-increasing loss of physical strength was still going on. There were moments, indeed, when it seemed to himself, if not to those who watched him with growing anxiety, that he was regaining his old buoyancy--the old craving for work which nothing seemed to have the power to destroy. But though compositions still came from his pen, though he had not yet given up hope in himself--'You shall have plenty of music from me; I will give you no cause to complain,' he had remarked to an English publisher shortly before this time--it was plain to those nearest to him that the inexorable finger of death was pointing the way to the Valley of Shadows.

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The streets of Leipzig were flooded with sunshine, though November had just entered upon its course, and though the approach of winter was apparent in the crispness of the air. Yet a cloud overhung the town which no degree of atmospheric brightness could dispel--a cloud of sorrow which took its birth from the placards affixed to the street corners, and spread its shadow over street after street, from one knot of inquirers to another, until the brief announcement which those placards conveyed became the common news, the common sorrow, of all. Mendelssohn was dead. On the evening of the previous day (November 4, 1847) the master whose bright, genial spirit had endeared him to so many hearts beyond the confines of his own circle, had passed to his rest. The blow had fallen with terrible swiftness, and we who love his music can only faintly realise how keenly those who knew and loved him, and who had come within the influence of his happy nature, must have felt the sudden break in that continuous flow of harmony which his life presented. Sweet as summer wind across the garden, wafting scents of choicest flowers, his life had passed over like a breath of heaven.

Without doubt his was a beautiful life--one of which, as it has been truly said, 'there is nothing to tell that is not honourable to his memory, and profitable to all men.' We cannot separate--we can have no wish to separate--such a life from the genius which enriched it, because the noble ideals which governed it throughout were embodied and expressed in the creations of that genius, as well as in his private conduct; rather should we be content to accept his life as it stands--in actions, deeds, and works--as a priceless gift, an indivisible whole.

Mendelssohn's funeral was a very imposing one. The first portion of the ceremonies was performed at

Leipzig, and was attended by crowds of musicians and students--one of the latter bearing on a cushion the silver crown presented to the composer by his pupils, side by side with the Order 'Pour le Mérite' conferred upon him by the King of Prussia. As the long procession went on its way to the Pauliner Church the band played the 'Song without Words' in E minor, and at the close of the service the final chorus from Bach's 'Passion' was sung by the choir. At night the body was conveyed to Berlin for interment in the family burial-place in the Alte Dreifaltigkeits Kirch-hof. His resting-place, marked by a cross, is beside that of his sister Fanny, whilst on the other side of him rests his boy Felix, who died four years later.

FOOTNOTES:

[29] Sir G. Macfarren.

[30] No. 103, but since renumbered 79.

MENDELSSOHN'S PRINCIPAL COMPOSITIONS

OPERAS, ETC.: Die beiden Neffen. 1822. The Wedding of Camacho, Op. 10. 1825. The First Walpurgis Night, Op. 60. 1831-32. Son and Stranger (Heimkehr), Op. 89. 1829. Antigone, Op. 55. 1841. Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 61. 1843. Athalie, Op. 74. 1843-45. Oedipus in Colonos, Op. 93. 1845. Loreley (unfinished), Op. 98. 1847. ORATORIOS, ETC.: St. Paul, Op. 36. 1836. Hymn of Praise (Lobgesang), Op. 52. 1840. Elijah, Op. 70. 1846. Lauda Sion, Op. 73. 1846. Christus (unfinished), Op. 97. 1847. PSALMS, with orchestral accompaniment: Ps. 115, Not unto us, Op. 31. 1830 Ps. 42, As the Hart pants, Op. 42. 1837. Ps. 95, O come, let us sing, Op. 46. 1839. Ps. 114, When Israel out of Egypt came, Op. 51. 1839. Ps. 13, Lord, how long? Op. 96. 1840-43. Ps. 98, Sing to the Lord, Op. 91. 1843. Hear my Prayer. 1844. Hymns of Praise (Festgesang). 1840. Festgesang: To the Sons of Art, Op. 68. 1846. Te Deum in A. 1846. Jubilate, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis, Op. 69. 1847. 3 Motets for female voices and organ, Op. 39. 1830. 3 Psalms, unaccompanied, Op. 78 (Pss. 2, 43, and 22), 1844. 6 short Anthems for 8-part chorus, Op. 79. 18 Part-songs for male voices. 28 Part-songs for mixed voices. 4 SYMPHONIES: C minor, Op. 11. 1824. D minor, The Reformation, Op. 107. 1830. A, The Italian, Op. 90. 1833. A minor, The Scotch, Op. 56. 1842. 7 OVERTURES: Midsummer Night's Dream, in E, Op. 21. 1826. Military Band (Harmonie-musik) in C, Op. 24. 1824. Fingal's Cave, or Hebrides, in B minor, Op. 26. 1830 Meerestille, in D, Op. 27. 1828. Melusine, in F, Op. 32. 1833. Ruy Blas, in C minor, Op. 95. 1839. The Trumpet, in C, Op. 101. 1825. 2 MARCHES FOR ORCHESTRA: Funeral March, in A minor, Op. 103. 1836. Cornelius, in D, Op. 108. 1841. Octet in E-flat, Op. 20. 1825. 2 QUINTETS FOR STRINGS: Op. 18, in A. 1831. Op. 87, in B-flat. 1845. 6 QUARTETS FOR STRINGS: Op. 12, in E-flat. 1829. Op. 13, in A. 1827. Op. 44, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, in D, E minor, and E-flat 1837-38. Op. 80, in F minor. 1847. Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. 1844. 2 PIANOFORTE CONCERTOS: Op. 25, in G minor. 1832. Op. 40, in D minor. 1837. Sextet for pianoforte and strings, in D, Op. 110. 1824. 3 QUARTETS FOR PIANOFORTE AND STRINGS: Op. 1, in C minor. 1822. Op. 2, in F minor. 1823. Op. 3, in B minor. 1824-25. 2 TRIOS FOR PIANOFORTE AND STRINGS: Op. 49, in D minor, 1839. Op. 66, in C minor, 1845. Sonata for pianoforte and violin, in F minor, Op. 4. 1823. 2 SONATAS FOR PIANOFORTE AND VIOLONCELLO: Op. 45, in B-flat. 1838. Op. 58, in D. 1843. 3 SONATAS FOR PIANOFORTE SOLO: Op. 6, in E. 1826. Op. 105, in G minor. 1820-21. Op. 106, in B-flat. 1827. 8 BOOKS OF SONGS WITHOUT WORDS (Lieder ohne Worte), (each book containing 6 pieces): Op. 19b. Pub. 1832. Op. 30. " 1835. Op. 38. " 1837. Op. 53. " 1841. Op. 62. " 1844. Op. 67. " 1845. Op. 85. " 1850. Op. 102. " 1868. 3 Fantasias for pianoforte (Andante and Allegro, Capriccio, and Rivulet), Op, 16. 1829. 17 Variations Sérieuses, Op. 54. 1841. 3 Preludes and Fugues for organ, Op. 37. 1837. 6 Sonatas for organ, Op. 65. 1844-45. Soprano Aria, Infelice, Op. 94. 1834. 76 Songs.

THE END

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+----------+ | Typographical errors corrected in text: | | | Page 75: Handell replaced with Handel | | Page 80: grandenr replaced with grandeur | | Page 138: Buckinghad replaced with Buckingham | | Page 263: roof sof replaced with roofs of | | Page 299: 'Die Schone Müllerin' replaced with | | 'Die Schöne Müllerin' | | +----------+

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