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# THE MUSIC OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, AND ITS CULTURE

ADOLF BERNHARD MARX

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# The Music of the Nineteenth Century, and its Culture

Adolf Bernhard Marx

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# THE MUSIC

OF

# THE NINETEENTH CENTURY,

AND ITS

# CULTURE.

# METHOD OF MUSICAL INSTRUCTION.

BY


## DR. ADOLPH BERNHARD MARX;

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

AUGUST HEINRICH WEHRHAN.


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*The Author has reserved to himself the right of publishing this Work in French and English Translations.*


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Dr. A. B. MARX, Professor.

Berlin, 5th Nov. 1854.

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# EARL OF CARLISLE,

LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND,

THE NOBLE PATRON OF ART AND SCIENCE,

THIS WORK ON MUSICAL ART

IS DEDICATED,

WITH DEEP RESPECT AND GRATITUDE,

BY

THE TRANSLATOR.

# PREFACE.

THIS book—an attempt to disseminate in a wider circle the fruits of many years' experience and observation—was commenced with the pen at a time when Europe, with a few individual exceptions, did not seem to perceive in the Oriental question anything more than a vexatious misunderstanding, or, at most, the outburst of a fire which might, it was thought, be easily and with certainty kept within a circumscribed locality. The work has been concluded, however, under the thunders of cannon, which roll, like the deep voice of prophecy, from Sebastopol even to the extreme verges of Europe.

But what have these prognostics of mighty revolutions to do with a little book on the cultivation of the most timid of all arts?

Even though, in the midst of these mighty events, of which we have as yet seen only the beginning, the art of sound be but as the thoughtless lark that once fluttered timidly in the ashy rain of Vesuvius, which covered the doomed cities with a soil productive of new germs of life; and even though this book be of no greater weight than a stalk of grass or a feather in the nest of the lark; still, reader, whatever be our position and whatever our vocation, we must comprehend that in our persons and with our labours we do not exist for ourselves, but in connexion and living intercourse with the world to which we belong. Nothing exists by and for itself; everything exercises a certain amount of influence upon all things around, and is affected by them in return. The word of the Roman poet, "Homo sum nihil humani alienum a me puto"—I am a human being, therefore all that is human must concern me—will ever prove true, and at no time more so than at the present, since we have stepped into the heritage of the last century—the independent, self-conscious life of the people as nations—or at least have got the knowledge and formed the resolution to do so. But that heritage, in its essence and truth, means universal brotherhood; the fraternization of all mankind in right, in liberty, in light, and in love. He who would stand isolated in his enjoyment, without recognizing the right in others which he claims for himself, cannot exist. He falls and perishes because he resists the tendency and idea of the new period, which idea is no other than that already proclaimed by Christ. We have seen nations lose their liberty and rights, because they could not comprehend the liberty and rights of others, and did not exercise a brotherly feeling in the consolidation of the mutual interests of nations. No single individual, no class of persons, can evade this fate.

A new day in the life of mankind is gradually emerging from a long night. Clouds and mist may for a time conceal its light; may deceive and mortify that over-impetuous desire which dares to measure by its own pigmy step the giant stride of history: but a new day in the history of mankind is a new idea, a new element of

life, a new power, which spread with quickening flow through all the arteries of the human race. As the mythos of ancient Greece made all the gods descend into the night of Tartarus, and in their stead led new gods up to the heights of Olympus, so the history of the world even this day perceives, in the leading ideas of nations, divine powers which determine and limit everything, both in the whole and in detail; until, their gradual decay spreading everywhere voidness, lassitude, and want of satisfaction, a new ruling power starts into existence. The most excited times in this abrupt change from the most unsatisfactory condition to a sudden gleam of hope, are those in which occurs the break between the old and the new state of things. In such a time we, with our art, are now living.

We musicians, also, must learn to comprehend that we do not live with our art for ourselves alone, like the thoughtless lark in her furrow; but with and for the whole, receiving from and being ruled by it, and giving back in turn that which we could not possibly possess or accomplish if standing in an isolated condition.

Thou, who callest thyself an artist, who demandest to be treated as a friend and confident in our temple—wilt thou merely gratify thy own peculiar taste and predilection? Wilt thou lose thyself in the dreamy twilight of undulating sensations, depriving all other feelings of their energy and power? Dost thou seek to gratify and confirm thy self-complacency in the astonishment of the uninitiated? "Let the dead bury their dead!" All this has had its day. Whilst it becomes new, to-morrow it is already gone and past. It is the food of yesterday that savoured pleasantly, but satisfied only for a time.

Wilt thou be an artist in reality? Then become a complete man. Wilt thou have art in its truth and fulness? Then nothing less than the truth and fulness of man's existence can be its contents.

If then, in order to be true artists, we must be men—complete men: how can we be such, except in the full consciousness and full enjoyment of right, freedom, light, and love? How can we be artists, or teachers of art, unless, being filled with these ideas, we work for them with earnest zeal? without belonging entirely, with heart, and thought, and deed, to that bond of brotherhood which holds the "millions in embrace," which unites and purifies and elevates all nations of the earth?

This alone is that which is truly eternal, and of eternal vitality and value, in art as in man, in the individual as in nations. That which concerns ourselves alone, is transient and worthless.

This, also, can be the only worthy and beatifying object of the coming times. The moving circle of the centuries, also hears the call of the Eternal: "Let the dead bury their dead!"

This and nothing less, and only this, is also the highest and last aim of the school of art, however distant and however weak may be its movements. Teachers of art and artists belong to mankind, and to that which is eternal in man; upon this sun they must fix their bold and free and loving gaze, and draw in their draught of immortality from his radiant sea of light.

*Berlin, Nov. 5, 1854.*

ADOLF BERNHARD MARX.

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# THE MUSIC

OF THE

# NINETEENTH CENTURY,

AND ITS

# CULTURE.

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# CHAPTER I.

## THE NATURE AND OBJECT OF THIS WORK.

*The Object for which this Work is intended.—Communion among Teachers. The Music-master.—The Teacher, the Artist, and the People.—The Qualifications of a Teacher.—Extent of the Field of Instruction, and Necessity of a Division of Labour.—The Profession, a Sphere of common Interest and Fellowship.—Sceptics.*

At a time like the present, when all the relations of Europe are disturbed, when all minds are excited, and all interests—whether of a political, religious, social, or industrial nature—are left unsatisfied and anxiously waiting to be appeased: at such a time, the lover and disciple of art cannot refrain from asking questions, like those which are now so common—" What is *our* present position? What have *we* got, and what do *we* wish to obtain? What is needful for us, and whither are we going, or towards what are we drawn by the force of necessity?" In our art, too, as all will be ready to acknowledge, much has been achieved and great things gained. Not only has its number of votaries infinitely increased, but it has also assumed, in two directions, a character too important to be overlooked, and sufficiently complex to require a thorough examination.

One of these directions is that towards the past. The creations of our forefathers are now no longer known only to the learned, nor lie dormant in rare and inaccessible libraries; they have again come to life, like those grains of wheat which, after four thousand years' concealment in the hands of Egyptian mummies, were sown in our soil and brought forth fruit. The works of Bach, Eckard, Schütz, the Gabrielis, Palestrina, and Lattre, have again become accessible to every lover of music, and have been frequently performed and analysed. The past is no longer a hidden treasure, but has become the property of our times, and every one may avail himself of it, according to his capacity and inclination.

The other direction is that which leads towards the future. Since the days of those artists whom we call our " classics"—even since the time of Beethoven, the last of them—men of talent have constantly opened new roads to the player on " the world's instrument," the piano; they have created, or intended to create, new forms of vocal and orchestral composition; " the opera of the future" has been proclaimed, and there are even some to whom the time of promise seems to have arrived. On the other hand, there are not wanting those who cling to the forms and

traditions of the "classical times," who keep aloof from that which they deny to be a "progress," looking upon it rather as an aberration, or even as a sign of the decay and impending ruin of their art.

And literature has taken a lively interest in these matters. Questions regarding the signification and value of musical art and its propagation, the importance of former creations, and that which the future is likely to bring us, have been started with earnestness and warmly discussed. The question about the future, in particular, could not fail to agitate the minds of men, at a time when the existing state of things cannot possibly satisfy, when every one yearns for a better future, and, as far as in him lies, labours for its realization.

These are questions of interest and importance to every one who takes a conscious part in the life of nations; they belong, in fact, to the vital questions of our times. But no one is so deeply concerned in them as the *teacher;* he whose calling it is to spread the culture of art, to make accessible and comprehensible its existing productions, to impart to his pupils the necessary knowledge and skill for their proper performance, and at the same time prepare them for every demand of the future. As the expounder and warder of the treasures of the past, as well as the present, and as the labourer for the future, he cannot evade those questions. He, above all others, must feel it his duty to attempt a solution, not theoretical only, but also practical, a solution which shall lead both to a clear perception and an active exertion.

As a teacher, and for teachers, I take up these questions, hoping to make them fertile, not only for the abstract understanding, but also for the practical preservation and culture of art.

We are accustomed to look upon a book as the exclusive production and property of its writer. In one point of view, this is certainly true. The work was conceived and matured in the mind of the author, it was born through the power of that mind; his was the labour and anxious care, his the first reward—the consciousness of a duty fulfilled—and his the responsibility. From another point of view, however, it is equally undeniable that not only the labours of preceding individuals, but also the often undefinable influence of contemporary art and artists, the current of the times, and the character and position of the nation to whom we belong, may claim a share in the authorship of every work which springs from the life and genius of the nation, and the spirit of the times. This claim applies to all productions of art, though apparently of a purely personal and individual character; even works of science can scarcely repudiate such a co-authorship. We are all borne forward on the waves of time and by the current of life around us; though some of us may be floating beneath the surface, while others raise their heads above the heaving surge, and even cause small eddies in the rolling tide. It is our reward and consolation, nay, it constitutes the very essence of man's nobility, that he is not carried along senselessly like a piece of wood, but that he perceives how the current runs and whither he is carried; that he does not lose sight of his destiny, but floats on, bravely fighting his way, or, if it must be, bravely and cheerfully sinking, rather than submitting to be carried in a direction which he knows to be wrong. Mankind is the tide of which each individual forms a wave, a pulse of life, on which depends the existence and salvation of the whole.

Keeping this in view, I desire, above all, that my book may not be considered as my exclusive work and property. Much as I have thought, studied, tried, and experienced, during my long professional career, I never have had the presumption to set myself up as the teacher of my brother teachers, to whose preceding or contemporary labours, I, on the contrary, must always own myself a debtor, as I gratefully acknowledge their stimulating influence on my thoughts and actions, even where it has been less defined and obvious. I write this book with a different feeling, and for a different object. What all of us, others as well as myself, have perceived and discovered in the course of time and under the impulse of artistic life, that I intend to collect, as the quiet lake collects the streams and rivulets of the surrounding heights. I would wish my book to be considered as the common production and common property of all who are concerned in its contents. And, indeed, what is it, and what can it do, unless my brother teachers take it up as their own, become its willing instruments, and practically complete and perfect its design? This book is to collect the results of real life, reflect the lights that have arisen in the friendly or hostile contacts between life and art; it is intended to establish fundamental principles, to throw out hints that may guide us whilst so much is dark in art, and also in the human breast. All this can only become a living and fertile reality, by its being carried into our schools of art and educational establishments. It is as necessary in art as in every other concern of life, that those who invent, and those who examine, improve and apply, should go hand in hand with brotherly love; that every one should unite his own interests with those of others, and find his gain and reward in the gain of all. Each of us is merely a link of the electric chain through which flashes the spark that is to kindle a light among the people. No one forming a link of this chain is to isolate himself from the rest, no one is to neglect his portion of the work; every one must be ready to receive, that he may be able to give, and freely to dispense whatever he may have gathered or matured.

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But who, among all that are engaged in mental labours, feels the want of brotherly communion so much as the teacher? No teacher depends on, or labours by himself alone, because no one has the power, or the time and opportunity, to complete the education of those entrusted to his care, altogether by himself and without the co-operation of others. But he who is engaged with him in the same work must necessarily operate against him, unless the efforts of both are guided by the same spirit, directed to the same point, and, as far as possible, supported by similar means. Misunderstanding, suspicion, anxiety about personal interests, differences of opinion, as well as position, may, indeed, offer an obstinate resistance, and tend for a time to pervert the mind of single individuals; but, ultimately, the want of hearty co-operation must make itself felt, and real brotherly communion among the members of the same profession will appear an indispensable condition to a perfectly successful *and cheerful* labour in the field of tuition. This necessity once felt and acknowledged, mutual understanding and goodwill may be expected to follow, and the harmonious exertion of all will conduce to the prosperity and happiness of each individual. Nor could he be called a teacher of the right stamp, who would obstruct the common work, or look coldly on its success; for, what is the object for which a true teacher labours, and what the reward he expects? He

wishes to awaken in his pupils an interest in his instruction, and qualify them for the object of it, that they may become rich and prosperous in the life of art, and that art may continue to live through their love and power. Is there in truth any other reward that could compensate a faithful teacher? The artist, with loving ardour and in blissful solitude, completes his work by himself; his own conception and creation are his world, and constitute his highest—often his only, though over-abundant reward. But what is the case of the teacher, who is anxious to share with his pupil the fruits of his studies and labours, to communicate to him that knowledge and experience which may have cost him a life of toil and care? Does he know that his labours will not be vain? That he will be satisfied with his own work when it leaves his hands? Who is sure that he—another Epimetheus—may not be constrained to deny and turn away from the object of his fostering care, when it appears before him in the shape of a lovely Elpore? Is he certain that his love and labours will be recollected when the work is done; even by him in whom he planted and nourished it with the most ardent devotion? In most cases he will be dismissed without honour or reward, unless he has ennobled and rewarded himself beforehand by that feeling of brotherly communion, which is the only certain basis of success and happiness in his profession.

And lastly, who among all classes of teachers stand more in need of mutual understanding, goodwill, and co-operation, than music-masters, dispersed as they are amongst the people, without the bond of common instruction or established institution, and utterly unprovided with public libraries and other means of information, such as have been collected so abundantly for every other teacher? Who and what are these music-masters? Look at the chequered multitude that crowd into the field! By the side of the teacher regularly prepared and trained for his profession, you behold executive and creative artists, who either have already expended their best powers, or are preserving them for a more favourable occasion; little considering that the calling of a teacher is totally different from theirs, and requires powers of a diametrically opposite character; the young composer who with a heart-felt sigh tears himself from his first dreams of success, from his half-finished symphony, or his never-ending studies, that he may help and counsel others, while his own work is still undone, and he himself in doubt or darkness. There is the noble champion returned from the hot campaign of triumphs that were doomed to end in disappointment; there is the *virtuoso*, who yesterday was revelling in the applause of the multitude, and to-day looks aghast at the enigma of empty benches—all feeling at heart a secret longing for a more secure and quiet occupation, and the hope of bringing up others who may carry on the work which they must leave behind. Then, there are those crowds of singers, orchestra players and others, professionally and honestly engaged in the service of art, but whose skill and fitness for their work have proved inadequate for their support; lastly, all those whom fancy, ambition, or absolute want have drawn from other fields of occupation into the arena of the music-teacher. And yet, all these, however different their individual motives or desires, are walking in the same path; the spreading of artistic culture is both their common aim and means of sustenance. They all must feel most deeply interested in every thing that promises to promote that common object of their labours and desires; and though some may for a time be unconscious of the fact, or lose

sight of it, no one can openly deny it without relinquishing that object and undermining the very foundation on which he builds.

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Each of us has an undeniable claim to the exercise of that personal freedom which allows him to choose and follow his own calling. And yet it is not for our own sake that we are called to a work. The object of our labours, as well as the means we employ, are not to be subservient to our individual desires or caprice. We all are bound to acknowledge, and do acknowledge in our innermost conscience, the higher duties we owe to the genius of the people among whom we live, and the art we serve. He in whom this consciousness has been suppressed, who, from indolence or for the sake of personal and transient advantages, denies the higher obligations of his calling, and thus its real nature: that man will find his hands too feeble for the work, and all the gold he thinks to have amassed will at the end—as in the legends of the people—turn into withered leaves, or weigh upon his wearied back, a load of stones and useless rubbish. If all of us had lost that conscience, or if no one were willing to obey its call, then might we know for certain that art had passed through one of its epochs, and that the honour of its resurrection would be reserved for future and better times.

The times in which we live are but too much calculated to raise such a momentous question in our minds. But we, who feel our calling to be independent of the smiles or frowns of fleeting days, will not allow this question to paralyze our hearts and hands, though it should make us sober and circumspect. Whatever answers may be found, a voice within us bids us persevere with faithful love unto the end. It tells us that if our service and voluntary labours are to cease, we need not fear that utter ruin or the degradation of mankind will be the consequence. It will be only a sign that other ways and means are about to be adopted for the purpose of purifying man from selfishness and pharisaical hypocrisy, of imparting to him a clearer knowledge and that universal brotherly love which has been promised to the world, but which those very persons who bear the name of Christ most frequently upon their lips seem least inclined to practise or allow. When we shall be sure that this is coming to pass, that the nations are called to a higher phase of existence, then will we musicians joyfully allow the clear, prophetic word and the active deed to rouse us from our moonlight dreams; then may the harps be buried beneath the dust of mouldering halls, until they shall be wakened from their slumber to sound the jubilant song of victory in higher spheres. But, if such future should not be in Heaven's decree, then let those harps be mute for ever; yea, let them be broken and shattered to pieces, rather than that we should see them degraded and disgraced, like Samson's consecrated powers, to gratify the licentiousness or thoughtlessness of our oppressors and destroyers.

It is for these reasons that I should wish my book not to be considered as exclusively my own. Its subject rises high above the narrow circle of personality, as the motives of its composition reach far beyond the aim of individual intentions It is not mine alone, either as regards its object or contents; but it is the common property of all who are concerned in its subject matter, of all who work with us, or wish to share the fruits of our labour.

What, indeed, is the isolated music-master with his individual power and narrow sphere of action, when compared with the united knowledge and skill of all the teachers collectively and the vast field of their operations? Must not every one feel at the first thought how little he alone is able to contribute, and how greatly he requires the support and co-operation of others to make up for his own deficiency? Is it not at once apparent how much a mutual understanding and a combined action, as far as they can be brought about by literary or any other means, must increase the power and effective operation of every individual member? Every step towards this object must be a source of gain to all and to the common cause; any sacrifice for its attainment is only apparently such, for it carries with it its own reward, and this reward reveals itself immediately.

But is it possible to speak of the teacher without remembering the artist whose works he has to make understood? or the people that gave existence both to the artist and the teacher? These three individualities are quite inseparable. The artist has received his mental tendencies, his education and position, from the people among whom he was born and brought up, while the instruction of the teacher has aided him in the development of his talents, and made him properly fit for his calling. What then the fire of his creative genius brings into being—the ripened fruit of his labour—he offers to the people to whom he owes so much; it swells the treasury of life and culture, while, in the teacher's vineyard, busy hands are training plants, or sowing seeds for future times. The artist and the teacher can do nothing without each other. Without the artist, instruction can have no object; without instruction, the artist would neither acquire the power nor find an opportunity for the exercise of his calling; both artist and teacher together constitute the combined organ of that spirit which moves the people to whom they belong, and by whom, for whom, and through whom, every thing is and must be done, although short-sightedness or self-conceit and arrogance may be inclined to doubt or hide the fact.

But then, and lastly, is that nation to which we belong the sole proprietor and guardian of art? does that art, which with well-meaning partiality we cherish as our own, comprehend the task and powers of the whole human race, or even of this one period of time? How many different powers, inclinations, wants and feelings are united in one single man! and how different is each successive day from all others; how different are its pleasures, wants and duties! How different again the gifts and callings of various individuals, and even in the self-same calling what a diversity of powers and inclinations. But how does this diversity increase when whole nations pass before our mental eye like single individuals, and when centuries of time are comprehended in one fleeting thought! And yet this boundless ocean with its waves and countless drops, this endless host of animated forms, each called into being for a purpose and destiny of its own; they are all one, they make up the life of mankind that heaves its waves through times and nations, and in which nothing exists or can be comprehended by itself. This poor self—rich only in the contemplation of the richness of the whole,—this particular nation, this century, this art, and this particular period of culture; what is each, taken by itself? and how can its value, wants, and powers be estimated, except when taken in connexion with the

whole? In this connexion nothing is little or useless, for every thing has its purpose; nothing that passes away is lost, for it has fulfilled its destiny, and continues to live in the spirit of the whole, from which it emanated, and to which it has returned. It may again appear, though in a different form, like the immortal soul which the Hindoo believes to pass from one body to another.

What has been here expressed in general terms, is practically exemplified at every single moment of artistic life. You hear a little ballad: how many things have been required to co-operate in its production! There is first the language: how many centuries and generations have passed away, what storms of passion, what tides of emotion, what mental labour, what diversity of social and physical influences have contributed to make it what it is. Then the poet had to be born, had to perfect himself, had to wait for the hour of inspiration and the proper state of mind to produce this poem—and no other but this. Music had to be advanced so far, and the composer had to acquire such knowledge and skill as to enable him to clothe the poet's thoughts and ideas with the ethereal body of sounds; singer and accompanist had to be trained; and lastly, the hearer himself had to be prepared for the reception and due appreciation of this work. Thus the whole development of language and art, the education, culture, mental condition and feeling, not only of the poet and composer, but also of the performers and hearers, enter into the creation and effective reproduction of that little song.

In this manner our inquiries into the wants and duties of a music-master, as a single individual, expand and take a higher flight as we proceed. From the contemplation of an individual case we are led to that of the whole class, thence to the higher union of artists and teachers, afterwards to the claims of the people, until our view at last takes in the different times and nations, and all the manifold directions in which the human mind has been, and is, and may be, active in the field of art. It is only from this last and highest point of contemplation that the whole—the confluence and connexion of all particulars—fully reveals itself; and it is only in this whole that each individual may clearly perceive the extent and limits of his calling, his wants and hopes. Once in his life, at least, the music-master also should have climbed up to this highest point of eminence to gain a perfect view of his field of action, to perceive fully and distinctly the nature of his calling, its duties, means and last reward, and thus to get a certain basis for his life and labours. How can I hope to teach successfully, unless I know the powers and means that are required both in the teacher and the learner to make success secure? How can I point out to my pupils the true end and object, if I myself see neither of them clearly? How dare I venture—if selfishness, that most deceitful of all inducements, be not my only motive—to teach an art of which I have not fully ascertained what it will yield—not in appearance only, but in reality—to him who takes it up, how it will work, what it will do for him, and he for art? And, lastly, how is it possible that I should exercise my calling with ardent zeal and persevering love, if, aided by a knowlege of the past and present, I cannot look some distance into, or form a faint idea of, the future; that future to which the efforts of a teacher are chiefly directed, as it is to bring to maturity what he has planted in the youthful mind, and to reap what he has sown.

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Many and most important, indeed, are the things a music-teacher is called upon to consider, and great the demands he has to satisfy. He must comprehend art in its nature and past developments;—he must have clearly perceived its present importance, and its relation to his own times and the nation to which he belongs;—he requires the power of looking into the future when those he teaches shall act for themselves;—he must have studied human nature, must know how to treat mankind properly, and how to make them fond of his art; how to find what they desire and what is good for them, what they are able to accomplish, and where they are likely to fail;—with the knowledge of art he must combine skill of execution; with that of man, experience, tact, readiness of means, and that sympathy and love without which all labour is barren and cheerless;—his scientific knowledge must be assisted by pedagogical skill, and that kind of instinctive discernment which enables him to find the right way and method where rules and precepts can no longer guide him:—lastly, his position must be a sufficiently independent one; he must neither be overwhelmed with work, nor be in want of pupils; he must not be altogether absorbed in his profession, neither must he be drawn away too much from his calling;—to sum up all, a music-master, in order to be able to fulfil all the duties of his calling, must be not only an artist, but also a teacher, an experienced trainer, a thinker, a man of action, and a man of the world.

Who is there that can boast of all these qualifications?—No one.—There is not a single individual who will pretend that he knows and possesses every thing comprehended in the above fugitive enumeration.

Should not this be a powerful inducement for all of us to draw near and assist each other, and thus mutually supply the wants and short-comings of which no one can pretend to be free?

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But there is one thing more which involves the necessity that all should unite in the performance of our common task. Every music-teacher may consider himself, if he pleases, as perfect and superior to all others in his particular branch of the profession; but it is quite certain he cannot be such in every department. Composition in all its branches, vocal art, performance upon every instrument—not to mention the purely scientific doctrines of philosophy, history, &c. &c.—are all included in the universal culture of art, and necessary for its existence; among all of them, also, are divided the inclinations, talents, and requirements of our pupils. Nay, if I may be permitted to allude, in anticipation, to one of the most important objects of musical education—the development of those different powers which we are accustomed to comprehend under the term of "musical talent"—it will be found that, although those powers are more or less required by every musician, there are some branches of musical culture more favourable to the development of one or other of them than others. Thus, e. g. the sense of tone (what we call "ear") is more exercised in singing and in playing on stringed instruments than in the practice of the pianoforte, on which the tonal relations are indicated by the external arrangement; while, in the former cases, they have to be determined or discovered by him who sings or plays. Rhythmical feeling, on the contrary, is more easily developed on the pianoforte than in singing or on wind instruments, where time and accentuation do not depend upon the sense of rhythm alone, but also upon the perfection of

the organs of voice and respiration. Here, then, we may already perceive what an advantage it is, even to the individual music-master, to be acquainted with more than one branch of musical culture. The advancement of art as a whole, however, requires a knowledge of all its branches, and this, as we said before, no single individual will pretend to possess.

Every one, therefore, must acknowledge the necessity of a division of the common task between different classes of teachers. It is difficult—and generally attended with injurious consequences—to conceal this necessity either from ourselves or from others; and this may, perhaps, be seen nowhere so plainly as in the department of vocal instruction. A singer requires both a well-cultivated voice and an extensive knowledge of art; but how rarely do we meet with a teacher capable of fully supplying both desiderata. Most professional singing-masters look upon the training of the voice as the all-important, if not the only object of instruction, while their competitors and rivals—composers, conductors, pianoforte-players, &c.—conscious of their superior scientific knowledge, direct their efforts chiefly towards the intellectual side of art, but have neither the means, nor the time, or patience, properly to cultivate the vocal organ of their pupils. The consequence is, that, while we have very few singers whose schooling has been in every respect perfect, we meet with many possessed of considerable knowledge of art, but with an imperfectly cultivated organ, and many others whose vocalizing is faultless, but who are deficient in knowledge and artistic comprehension. This is one of the many obstacles to the true advancement of art, and has especially prevented our more profound German music from being as highly and universally appreciated as it deserves.

Thus every thing declares to us musicians "division of labour" as a prime necessity,—combination and co-operation as a second. In proportion as a field of operation widens and expands, the necessity of that division becomes more imperative; this we experience in trade, in commerce, in natural history, in chemistry, and in every thing else. On the other hand, the more steadfastly we keep in view, in every branch of undertaking or speculation, the nature and object of the whole, and the more diligently we seek for and apply that which is common to different branches, the more rapid and sure will be the growth of the whole, and with it the advancement in every single branch, and the success of each individual member.

This communion of means and purpose, this fraternizing between those who walk in the same path, is emphatically the question and problem of our time. Still, however, it is no new idea. We trace it already in the mysteries of the ancients, in the hetæriæ of the Greeks, in the planting of the Christian church, in the town-leagues and the freemasonry of the middle ages, in the most glorious moments of the great French revolution, as well as in the great work of Germany's liberation; in short, wherever a nation has risen to take a step in advance. It was the prevalent idea of that last memorable year, so full of errors, and yet so full of hope for the nations*; it is always the spring and object of hope in music no less than in science and in her sister arts. Great is the power of this idea, and great the happiness and confidence which it creates. It reaches beyond the fears and doubts that weigh upon the timid mind; it outlives the schemes and trickeries of the factions,

* The author alludes to the year 1848.—Tr.

who, under the semblance of union, commence with division and seek for points of dissent, instead of strengthening the bonds of harmony and love.

Nor let it affect us, if wiseacres sneeringly point to the proverbial strife and jealousy among musicians. There is, indeed, but too much of it! In former times, in Italy, it has even led to the use of the dagger and poison; in our days, it causes slander and backbiting; it makes us decry every thing that is new and great, so long as it has not been generally acknowledged, and slavishly adore it when it can be no longer denied or treated with contemptuous silence. Nay, this internal discord arises from the very nature of our art. Music is so intimately connected with our own individuality, it belongs so entirely to the mysterious world of our own personal feelings and inclinations, as to force every one of us to commence with and stand by himself; and it is by no means an easy work—but whose reward, artistic and human perfection, cannot be otherwise obtained—to conquer and go beyond ourselves, to expand our views and open our heart to the riches of the outer world! But if it be true that the peace and happiness of all, as well as the perfection of art, cannot be attained, except by self-denial on our own part, by freeing ourselves from the trammels of conceit and jealousy, and extending our hand willingly and joyfully to every member of the brotherhood: then it is also our duty not to despair, nor to shrink from the task. I myself bore for the period of seven years (until other duties imperatively called me away) the burthen of a Musical Gazette whose columns I opened, not for the sake of advocating my own views, but in order to afford every musician an opportunity of expressing his opinion, even if his views were opposed to my own. It was my wish to encourage my brothers and colleagues in the profession to speak for themselves, to stand up in their own right, and no longer silently to submit to those who had no business in the matter, and yet usurped all the talk. What I then only partly succeeded in effecting, has since been further carried out, and received due acknowledgment.

Schumann, Wagner, Berlioz, Liszt, and Hauptmann have proved that literary occupation and art may be united in one and the same person, and that it was only idleness or diffidence which tried to screen itself behind the notion of their incompatability. We must have patience in every thing affecting a community. The progress of the masses resembles the flowing tide; every wave that dashes forward against the shore seems to be rolling back as far as it advanced. So, when a new idea has exerted its impelling force upon a mass of people, doubt, the spirit of contradiction, and the fancied endangerment of private interests, endeavour to reverse the movement. But fortunately mankind are not fixed to an immoveable point of suspension, like the lifeless pendulum that sways to and fro until its motions cease. Progress—and not inertia—is an irresistible power, for it is linked with the eternal destiny of man. But that this progress should take place slowly, in the form of action and reaction, is necessary for the sake of freedom, and in order that the weak and timid may join the movement from their own free will.

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And now arises the question: what can and ought to be done in the first place to promote such a communion among teachers?

The first thing necessary, is, that we should come to an understanding about the object we have in view, and the means by which it is to be attained. We shall then

find what we have in common, on what points all of us are agreed, or may be made to agree. This field of common interests and unanimity of opinion, and not those points on which we disagree, must be made the basis of our operations; for, otherwise, we shall only have more quarrels instead of peace, more division instead of union, more mutual obstruction instead of friendly aid, and final ruin instead of final success.

And it is the field of musical instruction which must become this arena of peace —not an ostentatious *Campo Santo* for dead corpses, dressed up in order to be exhibited and then put away with unfeeling indifference as things that have had their day—but a field full of delights for those that labour in it, and full of promising germs for future harvests. The field of musical instruction must be this field of peace. In the artist and in his works the creative fire burns without restraint, and the right of complete and independent individuality overrules every other consideration. The artist, as we have said before, finds his world in himself and in the creation of his mind; he gives himself up to the inspirations of his genius, follows his own inclination, and is cut off from all communion with the rest of mankind, until he has completed his task of love. The teacher, on the other hand, cannot commence and carry out his work by himself and independently of others; it is from the beginning to the end connected with the people around him; for it is only in and through his intercourse with them that it can exist or be imagined. In his sphere, therefore, mutual understanding and communion of feeling is not only indispensable, but also attainable; and when once attained in this field, it must and will spread over the whole realm of art.

The nature of art and its general relation to man; what it is, what it offers to him at present, and what it may promise to be and demand from him for the future; —what is the object and aim of artistic culture, both to the people in general and the artist in particular, and how far it should be carried in either case;—what is the extent and what are the different objects of artistic instruction;—what its auxiliary means and accessory studies;—who and of what description are our teachers, and what are their means;—what powers exist and have to be developed in the pupil; —which modes and forms of teaching may be recommended for musical instruction in general, and which for particular branches or purposes: all these questions will have to be considered before we can come to a perfect understanding.

Such is the task I have proposed to myself in the present work. It is not a work called forth by the pressure or the superabundant leisure of the day; but it is the matured result of many years' practical experience in teaching, and the further development of those ideas and plans which I have sketched out in my "Art of Singing" (*Kunst des Gesanges*), and latterly in the newest edition of my "Universal School of Music*". More than ten years ago its publication was decided upon, according to an agreement with its present publishers; and nothing but the wish to make it as complete and perfect as lay in my power has delayed its appearance. Nor does it pretend to be final either in its conclusions or intent. It is rather a beginning, comprising in its sphere of speculation the plans for the reorganization of music and musical affairs in Prussia, which were drawn up by command

* Robert Cocks and Co. London, 1853.

of our government, as well as those views and intentions which led to the foundation of the Berlin Conservatoire of Music, as the first step towards a general musical college. Other and more important things will follow, if I succeed in gaining the approbation and assistance of my fellow labourers in the field of art; so that there shall be no proof wanting that the idea of brotherly communion is the pervading and stimulating spirit of this work, and that I do not use a mere figure of speech in saying, that it is not exclusively my own.

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There is, however, one class of opponents with whom it is absolutely necessary to come to an understanding before we proceed. I mean those of whose honest intentions and noble powers no one can doubt, and who yet deny the necessity of musical instruction altogether. These are partly young men whose hearts are filled with glowing enthusiasm for art, its creative power, and inexpressible depth; partly men of riper experience, who, after years of careful observation, have come to the conclusion that the influence and effect of artistic instruction is, after all, doubtful and unsatisfactory, and by no means worthy of the earnest devotion of thinking and talented beings.

"How is it possible," say the former, "to teach an art whose first condition is the possession of genius or talent; the second, a perception and enthusiastic reception of ideas, which originally belong to the artist alone?—all these being powers and conditions that reveal themselves in their effects, but whose nature and origin are scarcely comprehensible, and which we cannot even produce at will in ourselves, far less in others. Who could teach a Beethoven to compose, or a Liszt to play, when no such things as Beethoven's compositions or Liszt's performance had ever existed or been heard of before; when the former himself, during the first half of his career, could not possibly imagine what different revelations would be granted to him in the second; and when the playing of the latter, during the ten years subsequent to his triumphal tour, has assumed quite a different character from that which it had before?—And who are these people that offer themselves as teachers? Individuals whose own education is still unfinished, or who have broken down in their artistic career, and are now forced to seek another occupation by which they may support themselves; while their own failure is but too palpable a proof that they do not possess, and therefore cannot give, that which makes the artist and ensures success! They teach that which, in their own case, has proved itself powerless or insufficient!"

Indeed, the present time is especially calculated to give weight, or lend the appearance of truth, to such assertions. It must be conceded that many of our most favourite composers owe little or nothing to instruction or artistic training. These songs, out of which, at last, even an opera is patched up; these transcriptions which finally turn into fantasias and "songs without words," or, under the name of chamber-pieces, avail themselves of fashion's passport to elude all artistic criticism; even these overtures and symphonies put together according to pattern;—all these exploits and offsprings of untutored genius grow up and thrive like mushrooms, like the flowers in the field, which no one has sown, and no one knows how they come.

But even a deeper impulse (as I know both from my own experience and that of others) may carry us away in this question. When powerful emotions seize the heart of the young artist, when a new or great idea dawns upon his mind before he

has been sufficiently prepared for its realization; in such moments, every proffered instruction, and every attempt to interfere between himself and his conception, may, and indeed must, appear to him uncalled for and undesirable—not from any vanity on his part, but from the consciousness of that mysterious power within, whose call he must obey. A new world has revealed itself to him; what does he care for the old? A new spirit has been awakened in his breast—a spirit possessing him, instead of being possessed—which works in him he knows not how, and draws him onward he knows not whither. He has neither the power nor the will to resist; like Byron's Cain, he is carried to those unexplored regions of the universe where new orbs repose in darkness and silence, waiting for their future animation.

But suppose it were true (it is not!) that instruction could do nothing for genius, that the genuine artist is an autoctonic creature, like Deucalion's men growing out of the stones of the earth—well, where are these original beings who came from Jupiter's brain all armed and grown up? where are they to get the necessary assistance for the performance of their works? How are our churches and schools, and how is social life with its thousandfold wants and wishes, to be provided with music and musicians? Where are the teachers to come from for those hundreds of thousands who wish to find innocent enjoyment in art, to refresh their minds and enable them, as it were, to live within themselves, and so forget the hardness and sterility of the world without? And if all this is only of secondary importance, when compared with the high and eternal ideal of art, how is the bulk of the people to become capable of comprehending and susceptible of those mysterious revelations which the artist, to whom they are given, deposits in the heart of the public as the child deposits its present of flowers in its mother's lap, freely as he received them, and not for the sake of reward, or the gratification of vain and egotistic desires?

Is it that the bulk of the people can by nature sufficiently discriminate and appreciate every thing that is beautiful? If so, how has it happened that every step made by genius in the advancement of art has been understood and acknowledged so slowly by the world?

I will not here repeat what I have said so recently on this point, in the introduction to the selection from the works of Seb. Bach*. Goethe expressed a similar opinion, when he said to Eckermann: "My dear child, I am too profound to be popular;" and Beethoven experienced its truth in the dulness and coldness of those who form the great bulk of well-meaning mediocrity, and who entertain a secret fear of genius. Indeed it cannot be otherwise. Man, at all times and places, is only susceptible of that which he comprehends and has learnt to appreciate. This every one may observe in his own case, by comparing his present views and opinions on this or that matter with those he held formerly on the same subject. And herein is contained the proof of a gradual progress in every branch of culture, in art as well as in science. People can have no feeling for art, unless they have been sufficiently instructed and trained; and where there is no feeling, there art can neither exert its powers, nor take root and thrive.

If we take the case of the artist himself, we may easily perceive that he, too,

* "A Selection from Seb. Bach's Works for the Pianoforte; with an introductory Essay," translated by Augustus H. Wehrhan. London. Robert Cocks and Co.

requires to be instructed and trained. and this necessity increases in proportion as his mind aspires to higher things. Who, amongst all our great masters, has not made the school his stepping stone? Who of them has not been punished for any defect in his musical education, by the consciousness of corresponding defects in his works? Not one of all the artists that have preceded us has created art for himself, and out of himself; every one of them was the heir of his predecessors, and only continued what they had commenced; without the old Italian school, there would have been no Handel or Gluck; without Haydn and Mozart, we should have had no Beethoven. Nay, the want of refreshing and (consciously or unconsciously) improving ourselves by the works of our predecessors and contemporaries, and of enriching our mind with the treasures of others and expanding it by their discoveries, is so deeply founded in the longing and sympathizing soul, that no genuine artist can resist its force. Read, in Father Rochlitz, how Mozart, when in the zenith of his career, became for the first time acquainted with Bach's Motetts, in the St. Thomas School in Leipzig; how he spread the eight crabbed parts (there was no score) upon his knees and the nearest chairs, and with flaming eyes devoured the wondrous contents of the mystic sheets*.

Now, it is one of the chief objects of musical instruction to facilitate this acquaintance with the works of others, and to enable us to enjoy and profit by their contents, at the least expense of time and labour. Another equally important object is, to develop and strengthen the natural powers of the learner; and a third, to purify his feelings and inclinations without depriving them of their originality and individuality. If artistic instruction and culture do not attain these ends, if we renounce or are obliged to do without them; then the question only remains, whether it is possible to acquire that development and expansion of our powers (which all desire and feel to be indispensable) by circuitous or mistaken roads, and early enough to be of use; or whether it is not more probable that, seized with doubts and fears, or irritated into stubbornness (as so often happens to the untaught), we shall come to a standstill, and relinquish the ideal to which we once aspired.

But the advantages of instruction are in reality denied by none of our opponents,

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* "Shortly before his death," says Rochlitz *(Für Freunde der Tonkunst)*, "Mozart spent a few happy days with the late Mr. Doles, director of the St. Thomas School in Leipzig. One morning, the choir surprised him with the performance of a motett *(Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied)*. "Sing to the Lord a new made Song," for a double chorus by Seb. Bach. Mozart knew more about this old master from hearsay, than from his works, which had become rare. But scarcely had the pupils in the choir sung a few bars, when Mozart expressed his surprise by his astonished looks; a few more bars, and he cried out: What is this! and now his whole being seemed to be concentrated in his ear. When the piece had been finished, he exclaimed, joyfully: Ah, that is indeed something from which we may learn! They told him that this school possessed a complete collection of Bach's Motetts, which were preserved with religious care as a kind of relic. 'That is right, that is praiseworthy,' cried Mozart, 'quick, let me see them.' As they had no score of these compositions, they handed him the separate parts. And now was it delightful to observe how eagerly Mozart seized the closely covered sheets, spread them before and beside him, and, forgetting all around, did not rise from his seat until he had looked over every thing they could show him of Bach. He then requested to have a copy, which he received, and always held in the highest estimation."—TR.

not even by those who have been unable to profit by them. Their doubts, if rightly understood, merely refer to the mode of instruction; viz. whether we should learn by ourselves, or under the guidance of others? how far the influence of teachers should extend? whether that instruction should be more of a scientific or of an empiric nature? · what method of teaching and which teachers should be preferred? &c. &c. All these questions will subsequently have to be considered.

And if the more experienced among us, if we teachers ourselves, should at times become doubtful of the efficacy of our instruction, how then? Why, let it spur us on to make it more efficient, let it cause us to keep more steadfastly in view that fundamental idea of brothely communion and co-operation which I have pointed out as the first condition and only security of success and peace of mind. The teacher does not make art, he does not even make the single artist whom he instructs. Such power and responsibility have been conferred upon no man. Every one only assists in the common task. The teacher works together with other teachers; his labours are influenced by those around him, by the people among whom he dwells, and the society in which he moves, by the character and tendencies of his time, and, above all, by the natural endowments and inclinations, as well as the previous habits and training, of his pupils. Among all this diversity of influences and powers, the teacher takes his place. Then let every one contribute to the work, as much as in him lies, and at the same time endeavour to act in harmony with all around, that our united efforts and combined powers may bring about the end which all of us, our pupils as well as ourselves (who are both teachers and learners), desire to attain.

## CHAPTER II.

### ART; MUSICAL ART AND ITS COMPONENTS.

*Uncertainties in Art and artistic Instruction. The Necessity of a surer Understanding —Man and his Capabilities. The Senses. Relation between the inner Man and the World without.—Activity and Action.—Consciousness. Mind.—Man's Consciousness and Spirit directed towards the Whole. Oneness in Universality. Art. Its Origin. Creative Love.— Works of Art. Artistic Material. The Contents of a Work of Art.—Universal Art. Its Subdivisions. Individual Arts. Music and its Elements. Sound, Musical Sound, Tone, Rhythm. Connexion with other Spheres of Life and Art.*

MUSIC! daughter of the Muses! how shall we penetrate thy nature deeply enough to arrive at a clear perception of the purpose and duties of our calling, and to lead with certainty those that are confided to our guidance?

Or are we already fully acquainted with the powers and destiny that dwell in this heavenly child? Do we know all that it can offer and give, all that it will demand and take from us? Is it sufficient that music has been made and heard centuries before we were born, and that all of us have heard and made music from our earliest childhood?

If this ordinary external observation is sufficient to lead us to a clear and full understanding, whence all the doubts and uncertainties of which we are witness? whence that narrowness of plan and idea which we cannot even conceal from ourselves? Whence all this contradiction, these bitter quarrels, about the most simple and most pressing questions that relate to our calling? Whence the internal uncertainty of so many honest teachers and artists; this disinclination to acknowledge the merits of others, this exclusiveness and secret enmity of which we see such frequent examples in the musical world? Where we see clearly what we have or require, there it is possible for us to come to a mutual understanding, to convince one another, or bear with our neighbour's weakness; there we may at least remain true to ourselves, and some fixed principles at least must gradually become established as the basis of our judgment and our actions. Why then is the reverse the case among us musicians? Are we agreed about the beginning of our art and its principal directions, even so far only as our practical interest demands? Tell me: shall we go back to Bach, or to the old Dutch and Italian composers; to Gluck or to Reinhard Keyser's *Singspiele?* Is "music in its

purity" really to be found only among the old Italians and Spaniards? and has the "genuine" music of the church disappeared in Haydn and Mozart, if not already in Bach? Has Handel, indeed, preserved the true ecclesiastical style in his oratorios, even in those passages which he borrowed from his operas? Is Gluck still the creator of the musical drama, or is it Wagner? Is Beethoven, or Berlioz, or Schumann, the founder of the romantic school? or was music, from the beginning, of a romantic nature? How can there be peace by the side of so many "open questions?" As long as matters remain in this state, a Handel is naturally shy of Bach, and depreciates Gluck: Haydn does not expect "too much" of Beethoven, and Karl Maria von Weber satirizes his Eroica: Italian, French, and German musical productions do not stand by the side of each other as sisters in lovely and significant diversity of character; but must needs be enemies, or lose all distinctness of character. And all these opinions are started, and change not in consequence of a deeper investigation, but by caprice, and without furnishing a decided result for the future. It is an old complaint of German composers, that the singers of the Italian school will not or cannot sing German music, and therefore try to run it down; and yet they themselves send their German singers to Italian schools, or train them after the most approved Italian fashion! Equally old are the investigations about the relation between music and words. All appeared to have agreed long ago, that certain subjects and forms of poetry do not admit of a musical treatment. Andreas Romberg was blamed because he set Schiller's "Lay of the Bell" to music; all critics once laughed at the idea of making *Frederigo Secondo* the hero of an Italian opera—and now that selfsame "old Fritz" of Prussia is everywhere exhibited on the stage*; and by the side of his camp are revived Greek tragedies, every line of which is a protest against our music, as irreconcileable both with the language and spirit of Greek poetry. We can speak fluently about truth and beauty, about music for the understanding and music for the heart, about style and nature, about classic schools and romantic ones of ancient and modern dates (not forgetting the most modern of France and that of the middle ages). Some praise or decry solid music, others chamber-music; one recommends popularity and nationality in art, another would have it of a transcendental or cosmopolitan character! Who has ever undertaken to reduce all this diversity of tastes and opinions to something intelligible and definite?

In doctrine and instruction the same uncertainty and confusion prevail. Who is to learn music? What kind of music, and how much of it? Who is to study and practise music as a profession? Who has talent? What is this talent, or how are we to discover it? How far is it to be developed and strengthened, and how far can we do without it? Shall we train our pupils for "classical and solid" music, or shall we direct their attention to that which is modern and popular, or to both?—and to which of them first? What is popular, and how long will it remain so? Is our instruction to confine itself merely to the technical and intellectual branches of music, or is it also to enter into its real artistic element? Are we to proceed scientifically and systematically, or shall we adopt an empirical mode of teaching?—Has any one come to a definite conclusion, or laid down a fixed principle on any of

* Meyerbeer's Vielka, or the Camp of Silesia (?)—Tr.

these preliminary points of inquiry, not to speak of so many others relating to particulars?

Everywhere, it is evident, a thousand questions start up whenever that mysterious thing, which we call music, becomes the subject of our examination. It is equally clear that we can only hope to answer these questions when we penetrate to the very foundation of the original mystery. Granted that an artist may sometimes tread his path like a somnambulist, whom a wonderful power enables to see from within; is that a reason or an excuse for us teachers, that we, who are to lead others, should ourselves also walk in the dark? Assuredly not. We, of all others, are called upon to try whether we cannot reach the source of the mystery, in order that we may be able at least to answer those questions which most intimately concern us;—even if we should be obliged to content ourselves with a look from afar, as there is no other way of arriving at a clear and certain decision. But before we start on this expedition, I would bespeak a little patience, particularly from my brother artists, who sometimes appear too much inclined to look upon every thing as foreign and useless—as "philosophy"—that cannot at once be played off or sung. I would also, and first of all, ask for a little faith and confidence, begging them not to be afraid that any thing will be said in the following pages which is not necessary for the attainment of the end we have in view.

The first thing, then, to be sought for, is, a proper understanding of the nature of art, and of musical art in particular. This understanding is the only sure foundation for all subsequent proceedings. By what road shall we arrive at it?

Let us, in order to avoid "dreaded philosophy," start with an historical fact. The Greek, at one time, comprehended under the term music not only the art of sound, but every other liberal (*muse-born*) art. This idea of totality he endeavoured to realize, with clear perception and resolute will, in the whole education of youth, as well as in every sphere of art. His highest artistic production, tragedy, was from the very beginning a joint act of celebration, a combined national and religious festival, in which the poet himself exercised sacerdotal functions. This tragedy, as it were, entwined the choicest blossoms of all arts into one beautiful wreath of flowers, belonging to another nature and a higher world. In it, all arts worked together, blending into one glorious flame of higher life, in whose dazzling splendour all points of separation and division were lost to the eye. All we have ever endeavoured and been able to realize in our operas, is but the feeblest echo of those ancient times; it is a baseless and meaningless imitation, and could be nothing else in comparison with that celebration to which religion and national enthusiasm, the most stirring and eventful present, and the recollection of the glorious deeds of an heroic and deified ancestry, served as the basis and living element; it may be likened to the distorted image of the moon that flits and floats about on the surface of the restless brook.

That old Greek name tells us, and that national form of celebration shows, in what signification and aspect the world of art first opened itself to man. Let us, however, in the first place confine ourselves to the fact, that art as a whole did not spring from any isolated interest, and that to no isolated power was confined its service; but that it took both its origin and power from the whole. All the interests of the Hellenic nation—or at least the highest of them—and all the forms and powers of art, were here blended into one.

Wherever a matter of high concern is at stake, there man enters into it with his whole being; there his thoughts, desires, and actions are those of his entire entity; there he is man in his completeness.

Man enters on the stage of life endowed with all his senses and powers. Those senses by means of which he perceives and takes cognizance of the outer world, those powers which enable him to act from within upon that world, and the consciousness both of the impressions he receives from without and the powers that dwell within—these in their totality constitute the being we call man: that being, which, in the consciousness of its existence *in* the world, feels itself at the same time distinct *from* the world.

His senses are the messengers whom the world around—that ocean full of light and colour and sound—full of contacts and influences—entices to come out; who, on their return, report to him what they have seen and heard and felt, and thus awaken in him the first conception of his individual existence, as distinct from the world around. This consciousness of individual existence and its manifold relations and points of contact with the outer world constitute the first enjoyment of life in every animated creature. In whatever way we may try to explain the mystery of our existence, either as a duality, or as a unity of soul and body, it is the senses that enable us to hold communion with the outer world. It is through them that we become conscious of ourselves, and, having become so, are enabled to take in, collect, and unite what they gather. On the other hand, it is this consciousness alone by which we exist as beings *in* the world; by which alone the world without is assimilated into a world within, and thus becomes our own. That the senses are dead and powerless without this consciousness, we may observe in ourselves as well as in others, in such moments when deep reflection, or some other powerful cause, has drawn our attention from the surrounding world. We then sometimes are not even aware of things which act directly upon our senses. Some one speaks—perhaps to ourselves—our ears are open, and we, although near enough, yet hear nothing; something appears, or takes place before our eyes, and we see it not; we may be touched, but we feel it not, only because our mind is absent, and our consciousness directed to something else.

In order that it may be possible for us to become conscious of the outer world, and that we may not always remain strangers in it, it is necessary that there should be points of relation and means of communication between ourselves and the world around us. These have been given to us in our senses. Thus, the element of light answers to the eye, that of sound to the ear. The oscillations of luminous particles and the waves of sound not merely touch, but actually penetrate us; and they are enabled to do so because they meet with corresponding elements within ourselves—we, as well as all things around us, being filled with light and sound. Man, in fact, is a luminous and sonorous being; and in the luminous and sonorous elements of the world, he meets with that which is not only related to, but actually part of, his own being. The same is the case with respect to all objects of sensual perception. Every sense is the organ of a special relation between man and the universe; but, for this reason also, every conception derived from one organ alone is imperfect and incomplete; and it requires all the sluices of perception to be open, in order that the world in its fulness may flow into us and become our own. It is the natural ten-

dency and inclination of man to open his entire being to this influx from without—to communicate through all his senses with the external world. This we may observe in ourselves whenever we are powerfully excited. We do not merely look at the object of our affection, but we listen to her voice and to her softest breathing; we are intoxicated with the fragrance of her presence, and our whole being is drawn towards her. Any one who has only listened to a Catalani, a Paganini, or a Liszt, without having watched their whole appearance and actions, cannot have enjoyed the fulness of their artistic powers.

But as our senses convey to us nothing that does not already exist in ourselves, every impression from without has its corresponding mode of expression from within.

I hear a sound. What is this sound? It is the elastic vibration of a body, which, being transmitted through the surrounding medium, reaches my ear and is thence conveyed to my inner mind, or consciousness, through the nerves of hearing. The sounding body was thrown into vibration; this was the first act of the whole process; the last was, that I became aware of its having been put in motion, from the vibrations that reached my ear.

Exactly the same process takes place within myself. My mind or spiritual existence is excited and moved by pain, joy, or anger; my nerves tremble, the muscles of my body contract, the eye rolls and flashes, the blood is propelled through the arteries with increased speed, my bosom heaves, my breath, by reason of the internal consuming heat of passion or excitement, requires frequent renovation, and with convulsive efforts, bursts through the contracted organs that would prevent its exit: the cry of anguish, the exulting shout of delight, the whole scale of passion's tones is awakened, it sounds into the world and tells to those around what passes in my breast. The sound which enters my ear from without, and the outburst of my own excited mind in words and tones, are of the same nature; they are twins, or, rather, things identical occurring in different spheres of existence. He who is born deaf remains dumb, even if his organs of voice and speech are perfect, because his voice wants its sister sense, the ear, at whose call it awakes to consciousness and activity. On the contrary, a powerful sound entering through our ears and trembling in our nerves also calls forth from us—if not restrained by other causes—a shout of joy or indignant defiance. Thus, voice and hearing sympathize with each other, and cannot admit of separation; the one receives what the other imparts.

And so it is with all other relations between the inner man and the outer world. A sombre mind longs for external darkness; the sorrowful man wishes to hide himself, and shuns both the object and the witnesses of his sorrow; the organ of light itself—his eye—grows dim and closes. But see how that eye lights up in joy, and how it sparkles and flashes in withering anger! As inertness and torpitude everywhere indicate the want of an inducement to progress, or that of a moving force, so our own limbs are paralyzed when the mind is seized with fright; our arms hang down in utter helplessness, and the pulse grows sluggish or even ceases altogether. On the other hand, the will or desire to exert ourselves not only brings the muscles of our body into play, but every action or motion corresponds with the nature of the feeling from which it derived its impulse. Longing desire—even for that which is distant or only exists in our imagination—makes us extend our arms and point our opened hands with their organs of touch towards the place where the object of our desire is,

or is fancied to be. In the ecstacy of prayer, we lift our hands and eyes to heaven, as if we could feel and lay hold of that Being which we believe to be dwelling there. Fright and disgust, each in its kind, makes us turn away with a sudden gesture of defence or abhorrence, as if we would really guard ourselves or thrust away from us a tangible object of danger or dislike. The man absorbed in thought rests his head upon his hand, as if he had to support the seat and weight of mental labour. The listener moves his fore-finger towards his ear; and he that wishes to settle in his mind a knotty point—to scent out, as it were, the truth—with equally remarkable consistency of impulse and motive, puts that finger to the inquisitive organ of smell. All this is done unintentionally and without premeditation, and thus proves to be the effect of a universal law of nature.

Here we have before us the whole sensual man. All our sensuous powers, and all the forms in which they come into operation, whether directed from without or called into activity from within, constitute a *unity of powers*, which may indeed divide themselves according to special objects and desires, but nevertheless always retain their natural unity.

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In the same aspect man appears before us when engaged in the *conscious* and *intentional* exertion of his powers.

Internal necessities, or attractions from without, cause us to direct our efforts towards the attainment of a thousand different objects. Every one of these objects is only a single point in the circle of our relations; and every effort we make is confined to the exercise of that power, or combination of powers, which the object of our desire has called into activity. Whether I seize and appropriate to myself the food that lies within my immediate reach, or whether I have to acquire a certain amount of knowledge and skill in order to obtain it;—whether I feel an internal impulse to devote myself to the study of an important subject, or whether that subject requires the study of a whole circle of sciences (even such as appear to be quite foreign to the subject, as, e. g. anatomy to the art of painting, which latter has nothing to do with the dissection of animal bodies): in all these cases, only one portion of my powers is called into activity, and my efforts are directed towards one special object.

Now this one-sidedness, or speciality of aim and effort, is certainly justified by, and a necessary consequence of, the manifold relations and conditions of human life; nay, the energy with which we press onward towards a special object may be a proof and consequence of the most devoted faithfulness to our calling, and genuine enthusiasm for that object. It may constitute in itself the highest reward for all our labours and exertions, as it is, certainly, the indispensable condition of complete success. But we must nevertheless acknowledge here also, that the entire man, as an active being, is no more comprised in this one-sidedness of purpose and exertion, than the whole sensuous man is comprised in a single sense. Every action is merely a special exercise of that universal power which enables us to exert an influence upon the world; to place ourselves in opposition to it, and force from it what we require and are entitled to obtain. It is this feeling, in particular, which stimulates to exertion and constitutes its first reward. With my senses I explore the world and discover its different relations to myself; my intellectual powers enable me to form a conception both of the world and myself; action sustains my independency in opposition to

the world, and secures to me my share of dominion. Faust justly felt dissatisfied with the mere possession of sense ("*Sinn*") and power ("*Kraft*"), and resolutely exclaims: "Action was the commencement of every thing" ("*Im Anfang war die That*"). The senses, and the mind to which they report their observations, tell me what is, what might be, or what should be; power is conscious of the will to act, and is supported by it; but action alone confirms and realizes that will. But every act is something complete and finished, whilst man's senses, powers, and desires continue beyond it, ripening towards infinity. For this reason, he cannot feel satisfied after the accomplishment of any individual deed; it is impossible for him to pronounce that word—"rest!"—which Faust would have given over to the annihilating powers. It is not the deed itself, but the power of doing, and the consciousness of that power, which constitute man's happiness; hence, no artist is permanently satisfied with any of his works.

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The very same tendency towards universality appears in the conception and intellectual powers of man. The human mind is furnished, by means of the senses, with a multitude of facts and phenomena. Of these it retains and assimilates a greater or smaller number according to its necessity and power; it distinguishes those that are dissimilar, recognizes and compares those that are alike, or have some features in common, and draws conclusions from all these observations. Thus it gradually expands, becomes more active, and acquires what we call *consciousness*, both of itself and of the world around. It is, however, to be observed, that no individual thing or isolated fact can, by itself, become the object of mental contemplation; inasmuch as every thing that exists, or every fact that takes place, is not only itself a compound of many things or facts, but also stands in close relation with a number of other objects and phenomena. Thus, e. g. man appears to be an individual being; and yet how many different things are to be distinguished in this being! His body with all its powers and organs, his mental endowments, intellectual developments, character, inclinations and manners! And then, how manifold are his relations to the outer world, to his family, his friends, or his enemies, to his nation, and the different ranks and classes of people, to his times, and to a thousand minor things and conditions! The mind cannot possibly be satisfied with the contemplation of individual objects or acts, or even with a number of isolated things or phenomena. I can form no conception of man as an isolated being, just for this reason: that he no more exists by himself, than any other being or thing that has existence. Taken by himself alone, he remains to me a riddle, a being which, if it be not actually hostile to my own existence or desires, must certainly disturb my peace. And can it be satisfactory to me to be surrounded by a multitude of enigmatical and peace-disturbing individualities? No; it is only in the union of, and with, all or a number of individuals, that I can find real satisfaction. The idea of universality in being and action is a necessary requisite of man's own nature. Those manifold relations between himself and the outer world, and the endless variety of modes and forms in which both his bodily and mental powers appear active, awaken at an early time the idea of a unity in infinity, of an intimate connection between every thing that exists and happens, whether we call it the harmony of the universe or the soul of the world; whether it be represented as an actual deification of the

whole universe (pantheism), or in the form of an original creator and supreme governor, or as a combination of different powers (gods), who either stand under the control of a higher and incomprehensible power (fate), or are destined finally to return to, and disappear in, the essence of the eternal author of the universe. It is important to observe how early this tendency towards union and unity in everything has revealed itself in the different nations of the earth; how it has led them to the highest ideal conceptions, to the belief in a Universal Spirit and the institution of different religions; and how every great moment of national life invariably leads the mind back to that idea, the basis and source of all spiritual existence. When the battle of Leuthen had been fought, and the victors, fatigued almost to death, were sinking down in the chilling rain among the slain that lay scattered on the bloody field; then, in the darkness of the night, a single voice broke forth with the old chorale: "*Nun danket alle Gott!*" (Now let us all praise God): soon a second voice joined, then a third, and so more and more, until the whole army took up the hymn; and thus the simple song—in which the feelings of patriotism and military glory, united with the consciousness of having accomplished the great deed, and pious gratitude towards the mighty ruler of battles—inspired the hearts of these men with new life, and strengthened them to follow up the victory they had so nobly won.

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And now we are at length prepared to approach our first question.

All the foregoing investigations tend to prove that man, as a part of the universe, is not and cannot be satisfied with individualities, but is irresistibly drawn towards the conception and realization of existence *in its totality.*

A single observation by means of the senses is merely an atom among the innumerable relations of the universe; each separate sense constitutes but one side of man's sensual existence, and the whole combined activity of all his senses, together with the consciousness of their activity, only serves to introduce him into the world.

So every single act is merely a passing impulse, a thing that vanishes while it is still being completed, an isolated demonstration of all those powers of action which are waiting to be brought into activity by the impulse derived through the senses, and under the guidance of that discriminating consciousness which gives the will to act and chooses the object of our exertions.

The mind, or intellect, is present in the sensual functions as well as in the exercise of the will. Retired into itself, it cannot give fulness of life; it is not ourself in the totality of our existence. For this reason, intellect alone has never founded religions, but tends to deprive them of all substance and power; it has not created nations and empires, but dissolves them into the undefined element of cosmopolitanism, that dream which stifles all feelings of nationality and independence, under the cloak of the *juste milieu*—that dishonourable indifference which Solon chastized in his time, and which has so frequently proved the transparent mask of moral cowardice. Abstract intelligence does not contribute towards the happiness of mankind; it merely acts the part of a resigned observer.

Man, then, is only perfect in the totality of his existence, in the union of all his senses, and moral as well as intellectual powers. It is only in this completeness of

feeling and activity that he can fully develop his powers, feel what he really is, and find complete satisfaction both with himself and with the world.

The first form in which this totality reveals itself is art.

Art is the power of doing, the concentration of all our bodily and mental faculties in one focus of activity.

This union of all faculties and powers constitutes the basis and essence of art. It does not exclusively belong to the dominion of the senses, although it could not exist without them. Only an unfortunate misconception or a limping simile could ever have made "taste"—or, in the case of music, "the ear"—the sole standard and arbiter. Nor does it belong to the abstract intellect alone. Reflection in general has an inclination to withdraw itself from the sensual and material world. Its utmost efforts cannot raise it beyond the height of *allegory;* that spurious corpse of which every one knows that it never was alive, in which nobody believes, and which is looked at without sympathy or sorrow, like the "hatred with her serpent-hair," in Gluck's Armide, or those stereotyped women, "faith, hope, and charity," who carry about their cross, their heart and anchor, for the benefit of lukewarm Christianity. Not such a mere external association, but the real amalgamation of the spiritual and sensual world in the moment of active exertion, constitutes the basis of art.

But what is the power that can thus amalgamate and move all our intellectual and sensual faculties?

It is not an external impulse or attraction, nor any object of a finite nature, that can do it; for either of them only presents relations and awakens powers of a specific kind, and in a specific direction. Only the first impulse, and nothing more, may sometimes be given by some external inducement, such as a desire for gain, ambition, a feeling of duty, a desire to find some employment, &c. &c. But, in order that all the faculties of man may be concentrated in the focus of active exertion, it is necessary that the whole man should be roused.

No power can achieve this, except love; that love which seizes and embraces the object of its affection and desires in its entirety, and draws our whole being towards it. But, again, it is not that love which, being itself of a finite nature, attaches itself with blind illusion to that which is finite, material, and full of spots and blemishes. It is that love which in finite things perceives the image of the infinite and eternal, as it dwells in our innermost soul; which, recognizing in it a perfect ideal, would fain free it from everything that is imperfect or inconsistent. It is that love which, in its fierce and fiery power, is both love and hatred at the same time; which with "demoniac strength" penetrates into the world of existing things, and which may truly say of itself, that it "came not to destroy, but to fulfil,"—*i. e.* to raise us to the fulness of our existence. This is the love which creates; it is the love of the artist, of "genius." Raphael was not made an artist through his love for Fornarina, the maiden whose roses were so soon to fade; but that he perceived in her the reflex of that beauty which perisheth not, and in her mild and lovely vigour saw the image of the Holy Virgin; this made him the creator of his Madonna. The maiden whom Raphael loved had been beheld by many; the ideal of the holy mother of Jesus was constantly before the mind of a multitude of pious believers. In the love-warm and enthusiastic painter, the sensual perception and the spiritual

idea assimilated; his love for the beautiful maiden and his adoration of the merciful mediatrix were two flames that mingled into one. Thus was awakened the whole man in his sensual and spiritual, earthly and heavenly, final and eternal existence, and it burst out into one mighty flame of life.

But how does this love for the ideal become a creative love? What is it that imparts to it the impulse and power to realize that ideal?

A love which attaches itself to a finite object is satisfied with the possession of that object, and rests in the happiness of its possession. But that love which is not confined to the finite as it really exists, but longs for the eternal and spiritual ideal which it perceives in it, must—as a necessary consequence of the mutual relation between the world and man, between taking from without and giving from within—feel the want of continually contemplating, and therefore of reproducing, that ideal. And this reproduction must necessarily, and by virtue of the power and indivisibility of love, be as full and complete as the original contemplation of the ideal which raised the flame itself. A lover does not merely love this or that feature or peculiarity in the object of his attachment, but her whole being; bodily attractions and the mind which "shines through beauty" are one and the same to him, and in his eyes cannot be separated. It was not the sight of the beautiful girl alone, nor was it the dogma of the "Mother of God" which produced those paintings of Raphael. It was, that his eye had early imbibed the beauty of that maiden, had felt in it the tender warmth of love, and that now the idea of the virgin-mother electrically united itself with the remembrance of what he had seen and felt, and flashed up in brilliant light. As she thus appeared to him, and as he desired so to behold her again, did he represent to us the virgin-mother and heavenly queen.

This creative breath of love animates even the most insignificant efforts of the genuine artist. Even in a portrait, the artist does not merely copy the features of his object as they represent themselves to the material and coldly measuring eye, or fall upon the lens of the daguerrotype. He looks at them with a spiritual eye; the original image of the person, freed from all those accidental imperfections and blemishes which reality has forced upon it, rises before him and is born again under his hands, a work of his creative love. With a genial perception of this ideal element in art, the ancient Greeks required that their olympic statues should represent the victor rather than the person; they would have no personal resemblance at the expense of the spiritual ideal.

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The production of this creative love is termed a work of art. In it our sensual perception has been spiritualized, and our spiritual ideas have assumed a sensual form. It is our own work, and yet so entirely has our whole being been engaged in its production, that we are scarcely conscious of it as an individual act. We cannot tell to which particular power or faculty it owes its origin; we are inclined to look upon it rather as an event than an accomplished deed, and to ascribe to an inspiration from without—to a mind different from ours—what is really and wholly our own, and has been brought forth by ourselves; not during a state of mental absence, but in a moment when all our mental powers were aroused to full activity.

As to the objects that may kindle the flame of this creative love, we are as little

able to define them as we can point out all the charms that may inflame a love-sick youth. We should have to enumerate all conditions and experiences of human life: all relations, and every point of interest that the world presents to man. Such calculation, moreover, would be little to our purpose: only two points are certain and worthy of notice. The one is, that the nature and character of the object to which man feels himself attracted, must be congenial to, and therefore is a criterion of, his own intellectual and moral standing-point. When Raphael paints Madonnas, and Teniers, Dutch Peasants; when Gluck is inspired with enthusiasm for his heroes; while Meyerbeer cannot make use of a religious fanatic before he has brought him down to the level of a deceived deceiver; we have at once an indication of the character and predilections of these artists.

The second point is, that the subject of the artist's inspiration, in the manner of true love, becomes to him the point in which the world is concentrated. When Goethe, in his song, "*Ich denke Dein,*" offers his heart to a beloved maiden, the most sublime and touching pictures of natural life crowd before his vision; she, to whom he here dedicates his life, becomes the centre of every thing in nature that ever touched his soul; he gathers all around her as a votive offering to that love which unites and blesses the world. And so does Beethoven, in his Pastoral Symphony, dive deeply into the warm and humid bosom of nature, where the exhaustless fountain of life ascends through thousands of stalks and blossoms, and, in his waking dream, forgets his own existence.

The external subject or material of a work of art receives its soul and importance through the all-powerful love of the artist alone. Yet this soul is not imparted by the artist, so that every thing might be made of the subject that has absorbed his fancy; on the contrary, it existed already in that subject, and only waited to be awakened by the love-warm breath of the artist, to whom it was given, to perceive and make it visible to all. Thus, the singer only gives vent to feelings that had been pent up in his breast; thus the sculptor only embodies his secret longings and aspirations in visible and tangible forms. From scanty and falsified records, a Shakespeare has drawn the most truthful delineations of man's history and nature, and the true German character reveals itself to Goethe in our fabulous nursery tales.

The nature of the subject by which an artist feels himself attracted is indicative of his own character and inclinations; the idea which he develops out of it shows the power of his mind and his intellectual standing-point: both admit of a wide circle of artistic creation. For example, we may admire in a woman her healthy appearance; Rubens generally looks upon his females with an eye to this point, and, quite unconcernedly, places a strong and healthy looking woman in the clouds as heavenly queen. We may be sure that in this representation he has unconsciously omitted whatever might have tended to mar the carnal glory of his ideal, and added so much of ruddy warmth and Dutch self-sufficiency as may have been wanting in the original. What a gallery of paintings might be placed between this Flemish Madonna (who is enthroned in Antwerp) and that "*una certa idea*" which raised Raphael to the conception of his Sixtina, with her deep spiritual eye, and the infant Saviour with his looks of unconscious majesty! What a countless series of human characters would be required to fill up the gap between those stuffed images which

Berlin's Melpomene, Charlotte Birchpfeifer, has dressed up for us, and those typical forms in which Shakespeare, the incomparable, reveals to us all the depths and the heights, the curses and the blessings of human existence.

The character and contents of a work of art, then, are dependent upon the character and power of the artist. But as no person exists by or for himself alone, as every individual takes his share of the ideas, tendencies, experiences, and convictions of his time, his nation, and the whole human race; therefore, every work of art, however distinctly the individuality of the artist may be stamped upon it, bears an impression of a more general nature than that individuality. This is the impression of those ideas, opinions, and tendencies which form the distinguishing feature of a whole nation or period of time. In relation to these higher characteristics of a work of art, the artist only appears as an exponent, or medium, of the spirit of his time or nation, which through him reveals itself to the world. The artist here only gives form and expression to that which lived in every breast; or proclaims tidings of which every one had a foreboding. It was thus that the poets of India, Egypt, Greece, and Germany created their gods; for, in the dawn of existence (our Bible shows it), religion and poetry, and with them all the powers and relations of man, were fused into one stream of life. From the traditions of the tribes, and the fights and loves of their heroes, arose the epos like a far-shading tree, in which a whole nation perceives the ideal of its existence—God assuming the form of man, and man becoming God—and which it raises up to eternity as one of the momuments of changing time. Homer—it is an old saying—has given the Greeks their gods; but he has also cast the image of this nation in ever-shining metal, and raised it in the temple of mankind.

At a more advanced period of time—like the present—when so many different ideas, opinions, degrees of cultivation, &c. divide the people, an artist can no longer represent a nation, but becomes the exponent of particular tendencies or interests. Nay, the uncertainty and impotence of his times may cause him to return to a previous period in art—as Overbeck was led back to the pre-Raphaelitic adoration of saints, and Mendelssohn, in his Paul, to the forms and style of Bach: and it is quite possible that this resuscitation of ancient types may prove far more acceptable and successful than the efforts of that ill-starred genius, to whom it is given to behold and reveal visions which are incomprehensible, or too lofty and dazzling to the weak eye of a fallen race.

So much respecting the powers which combine in the production of a work of art, and the impulses which occasion artistic activity in man.

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When man thus concentrates his whole being in the realization of the fulness of his existence, when he raises himself to the region of creative art; then it is equally impossible that any particular form or expression of his artistic powers can satisfy the cravings of his mind: but the spirit of art longs to reveal itself in every possible form and mode of expression. It is not this or that art, it is not poetry, nor plastic art, nor music—each of which has been extolled in turns as the highest or first in order of time—but it is *art in its universality*, the aggregate of all special arts, in which man finds a satisfactory exponent of his feelings.

The idea of universal art is of importance in more respects than one. In the

first place, it leads us to the perception of that which all the different arts have in common; whence we may proceed to define their mutual relations, and point out those features in which they differ. As the term "man" does not convey the idea of the distinct individual who is in possession of artistic powers—an "artist," in the restricted sense of the word—but refers to mankind in general, of whom every individual may be gifted with the power of art; so the expression "universal art" is intended to convey the notion of an aggregate of all those forms of artistic activity to which we apply the names of special arts (music, painting, &c.). This is the theoretical point of view.

The practical and still more important point of view arises out of the examination of the offices of the several senses.

It is the office of every sense to convey to the mind the impressions it receives from the outer world; but there is as great a difference in their respective powers of instruction as there is in the direction in which each of them is employed. The chemical and electric senses (taste and smell) occupy themselves merely with the material elements that enter into the composition of those objects of which they receive and convey an impression; and of these they only detect a certain portion. The sense of touch is confined to the examination of the surface of its object; it perceives and tells us—and that only to a certain extent—whether it is comparatively smooth or uneven, whether it is elastic or brittle, warm or cold, &c. without being able to convey to us any information about that which may exist or take place beneath that surface.

The senses of sight and hearing are the only ones that are not confined to mere matter or superficial peculiarities. The eye takes in the appearance of an object in its totality, and is capable of conveying to our mind a complete image of the thing it contemplates. The ear communicates to us a complete series of emotions, indicating a particular condition of mind. Both senses (they are termed emphatically "spiritual senses") communicate to us all the information that our mind requires to form a complete and vivid conception of persons and things. And now the creative spirit of art urges us visibly to represent what our eye has seen, and to make audible to others what our ear has heard. But in this spiritual reproduction the deficiencies of each one of these senses are supplied by the assistance of the others. The picture is not only seen, but it "speaks to us;" on listening to a song, we seem to behold the person that is supposed to give expression to his feelings; and through its self-created organ, the articulate word, the genius of the poet conjures up in our minds visions and sounds, without requiring the aid of sensual representation. Thus we see how every effort of the mind is directed towards the total realization of that which our senses convey only in part. It is this striving after completeness in conception as well as representation which we designate by the term "universal art." Man, following only the dictates of nature (as we may observe in the savage), does not merely compose the words of his pœan, but sings his song of triumph in words and musical sounds, accompanied by such instruments as he may possess, or the clang of warlike implements. And, whilst he sings, he further illustrates the subject of his song in dance and pantomimic representation; his body is painted in the terrible colours of war, and in his hand he brandishes the spear that slew the enemy! Poetry, music, dance, mimicry, and dress—every thing is pressed into his service,

in order to make the representation complete. If in this we perceive the sign of a general excitement of the whole man, it is no less attributable to a feeling of the utter inadequacy of any single form of expression for the infinite conceptions of the mind. Primitive languages are powerful in expression, but poor in words; therefore they call to their aid both accent and gesture, to supply the deficiencies of their vocabularies. For the same purpose the ancient painters added symbols and passages from the Bible to their mute delineations.

All the senses combined constitute the sensitive being that reveals its existence in universal art. But each sense has its own peculiar relations, and imparts its own information. The ear alone takes in the world of sound, and gives us intimation of the feelings and emotions that are working in the human breast. The eye alone beholds the phases of external life, and reveals to us the existence of all things as it becomes visible. Neither the ear nor the eye can give us a full conception of any thing that exists; each apprehends and communicates to us only one side of existence; but the information it conveys enables us to obtain a knowledge of the other side also, and thus to form a conception of the whole. Our mind nowhere comes into direct contact with the material world; but what is conveyed to it through the senses, and what it adds thereto out of its own reflective and creative power, that it reproduces in the half-spiritual and half-bodily form of articulate sounds—the living word.

Herein lies the origin of the different arts, or those special forms of universal art to which we apply distinct names. As it is the mind which imparts significance to the whole sensual perception of man, and appropriates to itself whatever it chooses, it is evident that one sense alone may suffice for its purpose, provided it conveys the knowledge that the mind requires. Nay, by retiring into itself and drawing upon its store of previous observations, the mind may even dispense with the services of the senses altogether. Do we, indeed, see every thing with our bodily eye? Is not the word of language able of itself to conjure up before our spiritual vision what our bodily eye never has seen, and, perhaps, never will be permitted to see? And, on the other hand, does not our eye penetrate from the external to the internal? Does it not in man's features behold his soul as through a glass? and is not the ear of itself capable of perceiving, in the trembling nerve, the pulse of life that causes it to vibrate; in the shrill cry, the passion that burns within; and in the different scales of sounds, the successive emotions that rise and fall in the human breast? Everywhere the same spirit is active and reveals itself, now in this direction, now in another; now through this organ, and now through that, or even through several combined.

It is thus that the different forms of universal art become separated; and we distinguish music—which is the art of motion, flowing from heart to heart—from sculpture and painting—which are the arts of visible representation—and from poetry, the art, which, by means of its own special organ—language—causes our mental eye to see and our mental ear to hear what in reality is neither heard nor seen. It is only by this division that each organ is enabled fully to develop its powers, and the genius of art to penetrate to the innermost recesses and explore the depths of existence.

All this division, however, does not destroy the universality of art. The mind is not satisfied with the mere act of hearing musical sounds or looking at a picture; but, through the listening ear and the scrutinizing eye, it tries to arrive at a full

knowledge of that entity which would reveal itself in sound or colour. This tendency even causes us to draw upon the resources of our imagination, where our sensual observations are inadequate to the realization of our spiritual ideal. Thus, the ancients in the East, as well as in Greece, ascribed to their tonal system characters and effects which they could not possibly possess, but which could only exist in the fancy of the hearer. Thus, also, the object of the creating artist is not to engage the eye and the ear for their own sakes; but he employs them merely as the means of bringing the object of his artistic inspiration before the mind in a visible or audible shape, and in all that fulness of life in which it rises before his own mental vision.

This desire for completeness of representation, also, shows itself in the fact that every art avails itself of the resources of her sister arts. The painter, for instance, in order to indicate certain conditions of mind, introduces lights and tints which are by no means essential to his figures. Correggio's Madonnas and infant Christs did not necessarily require that warm and velvety half-light with which he surrounds them; but in that play between glowing light and darkness he found the true expression of the peculiar tone of mind in which he beheld the ideals of his inspiration. Homer and the writer of the Book of Job, Shakespeare, Goethe, and all genuine poets, have employed sound, accent, and every possible form of word-painting, for the purpose of a more complete and graphic delineation of characters and events. The last-named writer, for instance, in the passage in Faust: "Tremendous noise proclaims the approach of the sun," is thoroughly musical in his conception, and his idea is exactly the same as that which inspired Haydn's celebrated "And there was light" —the joyous burst of the new-born light awakens all the sounds and echoes of the world to greet the coming sun! From that Hellenic Nomos, in which the clanging trumpet of brass imitated the gnashing of Python's teeth*, down to Bach, Haydn and Beethoven, musical composers have never ceased to paint with sounds, in spite of all the outcries of our æsthetical critics, who will not permit such things in music, but insist that the "art of the soul" should only "touch the heart," or by its "play of forms" amuse the ear. It is likely to remain so (as I have already predicted in my essay on painting in music†), as both the natural inclination of the artist and the purpose of his calling are diametrically opposed to the tendency of abstraction, and comprehend both the sensual and the spiritual existence of man.

The same may be said of the artist's internal conception during the time that his work ripens into existence. Painters of mind and feeling are fond of hearing music whilst at work; it puts them into "the proper key," as they say. On the other hand, there is documentary evidence to prove that Gluck and Mozart, no less than Bach—whose choruses in the Passion Music and other of his works are full of dramatic life—and all genuine composers, have beheld in their mind, and endeavoured to

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* The term *νομος* was applied by the Greeks to their instrumental composition. The one here alluded to was composed for the flute (*αυλος*), and intended to represent the fight between Apollo and the serpent Python, for which reason it was termed the Pythian Nomos. To the principal flute, as the solo instrument, was added an accompaniment of other flutes and citheræ; and, at a certain stage of the representation, a trumpet, as stated above, imitated the monster's gnashing of his teeth. The part of Apollo was acted by a distinguished dancer, assisted by a chorus of Delphians. (See Thiersch's Introduction to Pindar.)—Tr.

† *Ueber Malerei in der Tonkunst, ein Maigruss an die Kunst-philosophen.*—Berlin. Finke.

reveal, not only the internal emotions and mental conditions of their characters, but also the accompanying external circumstances, actions, and events. This was the case with Spontini, as I know from his own lips; and I might testify the same of myself (if my testimony should be considered of any weight); and the general truth of the fact would be corroborated by Wagner, as well as by every other composer whose productions are based upon real artistic conceptions.

In proportion as artistic culture advances, the tendency of the different arts to reunite becomes more apparent and irresistible. Poetry and music have always been linked together: in the Greek drama, in the musical plays of the Chinese and Indians, and in our own operas, both have not only called into aid dance and mimicry, but also availed themselves of the assistance of the painter, the sculptor, and the architect.

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I have now, at last, arrived at the point where I can take up the question with which we started: "What is music?"

Music, in the first place, is a component part of that universal art in which man as an artistic being beholds and endeavours to reveal the ideal of his existence in the undivided fulness of his powers.

Music, from another point of view, is that special art which deals with the audible element of our existence, and employs sound as the medium of its representation.

It is absolutely necessary to keep both points of view separate, in order to form a correct idea of the nature and purpose of our art, and the proper means and method of its cultivation.

We shall take up the last point of view first, and consider what are the distinctive features and what is the spiritual signification of music as a special art.

Existence becomes audible through the medium of sound. Sound, to the sense of hearing, is the manifestation of that elastic excitement of matter, by which its consistency is shaken but not destroyed, and its particles (atoms or molecules) are moved towards and from each other, but without being actually separated, and with the tendency of returning to their original state of rest. The first thing which becomes a matter of observation in this phenomenon, is the greater or less degree of force with which the sounding body is put into motion (excited), and which manifests itself in the greater or less intensity of the sound. Inanimate bodies are disturbed by some external force or agent; animated beings are excited from within. The sound that strikes my ear from without, affects, in proportion to its force, my nervous system, and through it my mind, often to such a degree as actually to produce pain, and injuriously affect my system. Internal excitement, on the contrary, seeks utterance in audible sounds; I breathe aloud, I sigh, a cry of passion, anguish, or despair bursts from my heaving breast, according to the impulse that agitates my mind.

The second thing which we distinguish in a sound is its peculiar character and colouring (Germ. "*Klang*," Fr. "*Timbre*"), resulting from the peculiar composition and structure of the sounding body. Thus, the nature of the sound indicates whether the sounding body is composed of wood or metal, whether it is of a light or substantial form, whether a wind instrument or a stringed one, whether the

sound is produced by the voice of man or that of an animal, and so forth. Even the bodily condition of a person is to some extent indicated by the character of his voice; and as the bodily and spiritual elements in man's organization are inseparable, his mental condition necessarily finds its echo in the same tones which proclaim the state of his body. Thus the nature and character of the human voice not only enable us to determine whether the singer be male or female, but also whether young or old, healthy or sickly, of an enlarged or contracted mind, of a cheerful or gloomy temper, whether more inclined to hatred or to love. It matters not how this happens, how far our perceptive powers may extend, and how much or little we know of the nature of sound; the fact remains, that the peculiar character and colouring of a sound is indicative of the nature and condition of the sounding body.

The third thing which we observe in the phenomenon of sound is the degree of rapidity with which the vibrations of the sounding body succeed each other. This, as we know, depends upon the tension of the fibres and particles of the sounding body itself; and sound measured by the velocity of the vibrations is called "tone," or "musical sound." In the sound emanating from inanimate bodies, the pitch indicates the tension of the material particles; in that of animated and intellectual beings, it shows the tension of the mental fibres. Firmness and laxity of character, energy and langour, excitement and depression, the increase and decrease of emotions, create the same contrast and change of high and low sounds as is produced by the greater or less degree of tension which we apply to the strings of a musical instrument. "The spirit reveals itself in tones."

Sound, then, with its differences in loudness, colouring, and pitch, constitutes the material of musical art. All that reveals itself in these differences belongs to the realm of music; while they, on the other hand, provide the artist with the means of revealing to others the mysteries of his inner world. At his creative call, sounds of different character, force, and pitch, group themselves together to give expression to his visions.

With this last proposition we enter upon a new domain, and one which does not belong exclusively to music.

A succession of similar or dissimilar sounds implies a succession of moments of time, which may be either of definite duration, and regulated by a certain law, or of indefinite length and irregular occurrence. In this succession, the several momenta may be of equal force and energy, or they may differ; and, if the latter, the change may again be regular and measured by some standard, or irregular and undefined. In nature, we observe such a periodical succession of equal or unequal moments of time and force in the beating of the pulse, in the rise and fall of the tide, in the motion of the waves, &c. &c. In the doings of man, this succession reveals itself in the form of "rhythm," with its two elements, time and ictus (emphasis, accent). Every single moment is measured by these two elements. I dwell upon a moment so long as it engages my interest and attention, or until I am drawn away by another of greater force of attraction; I hurry from moment to moment when a lively sensation impels me onward, and I expend a greater amount of force and energy upon those moments which are to me the most important. In this, we leave it out of consideration, for the present, whether in dwelling a longer time and with greater

emphasis upon certain moments, we are guided by the intrinsic importance and objective contents of those moments (as in prose declamation and in recitatives), or whether we do it merely for the sake of variety or with a view to order and symmetry. In either case, rhythm is the expression of the will and pleasure of him who formed it; and we recognize in it either the determined purpose of the artist, or his sensible delight in a well-arranged and pleasing or significant succession of tonal quantities. Rhythm in both forms is indispensable to music. It is already indicated, and, as it were, foreshadowed in the vibration of the sounding body. But it also assists and guides us in the combination and concatenation of musical sounds, in the disposition and conduct of different voices and parts, as well as through the whole labyrinth of musical art; often helping us and showing us the way where everything else would leave us helpless and in the dark. Nor has music ever been without rhythm. Neither in the Gregorian *cantus planus,* nor during the period of mensural music, neither in the nomos of the Greeks, nor in our modern recitative, nor in the Ragneys of the Hindoo, has this element of life ever been wanting.

But rhythm by no means belongs to music alone; it is present in every art which uses motion as a mode of expression. It is active in poetry, in the ballet, and pantomime, as well as in the art of sound, although not so fully developed as in the latter. For this reason, we have described it as the domain in which the boundaries of music meet with those of kindred arts. Proceeding from this point, we find, upon closer inquiry, that none of the elements of musical art can with strictness be considered as its exclusive property. Sound in general is the fundamental material of language as well as of music. The characteristic colouring (timbre) of sound may be observed in the speaking as well as in the singing voice; and the different vowel sounds, in particular, may be considered purely tonal, being the results of certain alterations in the shape of the vocal instrument—the voice. The changes between high and low sounds, too, impart variety and expression to language as well as to music; although it was neither possible nor requisite that they should be as manifold and decided in the former as in the latter.

Thus we are led from the inner domain of musical art to other circles of life and art; and first, to speech and poetry. In its relations to these adjoining circles, music again appears as a branch of that universal art which includes the whole of man's artistic activity. This, it will be recollected, was the point from which we started.

If the mere dead material of musical art—sound, with its differences in force, colouring, and pitch—cannot be confined within definite boundaries, how much less is it possible to circumscribe the sphere of the free creative genius of man?—As far as thought can penetrate, as high as loving ardour can soar, so far extends the domain of the spirit in musical art. The artist finds the suitable material ready for him, he quickens it by the power of his creative love; he calls into aid the sister arts, and boldly ventures to the outermost boundaries of his domain—into those regions where seeing merges into dim forebodings.

Our first investigation here terminates. It has only given us some fugitive outlines, showing us the constituents of art in general, and musical art in particular; viz. (1) the spiritual idea; (2) the external material and medium of expression; and (3) that energy and creative love on the part of the artist which unites both in the

form of a work of art. In these three constituents we see the cause and origin of musical art: its nature—into which we proposed to inquire—cannot be fully comprehended unless we have first examined how art arose and how it exists. This leads us to the next subject: the life of musical art.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE LIFE OF MUSICAL ART.

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*The Mystery of Art.—The sensual Origin of Music. Different Systems of Sounds. Harmony. Counterpoint.—Music of the Soul. Sympathy. Spiritual Circles. Influence of Time. Emanuel Bach. Hiller. Haydn. Mozart and his Successors. Italy. France.—The Music of the Mind. Psychologic Progresses. Oriental System of Sounds. Church Modes. Characteristics of different Styles of Composition. Palestrina. J. Gabrieli. Handel. Bach. Gluck. Language and Music.—Pure Orchestral Music. Haydn. Beethoven.—The Boundaries of Musical Art.*

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IT was the mystery of art which we endeavoured to fathom in our last investigation. Those amongst my fellow labourers who do not live "from hand to mouth," who are not satisfied with merely trotting over the ground of their daily work, but look about and before them, will not require to be told that an investigation of such a nature cannot be successfully carried out, unless we enter as deeply into the matter as our powers permit.

The mystery of art consists in that perfect blending of the spiritual and material elements,—of the inner life with the outer world—in that embodiment of the spirit, and spiritualization of sensual things which calls forth the energy of will and power which we have designated by the term of "creative love." It is impossible to contemplate this mystery of art without being forcibly reminded of that of the Hindoos and other nations of antiquity respecting the incarnation of divinity,—the appearance of the Supreme Spirit in human or animal shape, and the assumption of the divine nature by beings born mortal and finite. Both mysteries refer to the commencement of all things; they touch upon the insoluble enigma of man's existence. Is man a twofold being, consisting of an immortal, creative, and governing spirit, and a perishable body serving as its temporal abode and obedient organ? Or is that which we call spirit merely the "living power" of the body itself, a power belonging to and dying with matter? Both assumptions lead to mysteries and contradictions which generations after generations have vainly endeavoured to solve and reconcile.

Having apparently lost ourselves in the foreign domain of speculative philosophy, we find, on turning round, that the same enigma presents itself to us in the sphere of our own art. Is a work of art the result of a leading idea in the artist? has it been born out of his own mind, and merely assumed a material form after it had

been conceived, and in order to be perceptible to the senses? Or did it arise from the spirit of the artist diving, as it were, into the material element of his art, and moving and working in it according to his will and pleasure? Did this moving and working constitute in itself what we term a work of art; or did it accidentally—or miraculously—lead to the conception of the work? Or, lastly, is there really an inherent idea in any work of art; and is it not rather the hearer's own idea which he fancies he traces in the work of the artist, and of which the latter himself was utterly unconscious? Wherever there is a subject of controversy—as, for example; whether a certain work of art is the result of "reflexion" or "natural talent;" whether it should contain "ideas"—food for the mind—or whether an artist should eschew all such notions as "spoiling the imagination" and "interfering with nature;" whether melody or declamation should predominate in a vocal composition; whether the preference should be given to German or Italian music, &c. &c.—there we shall find that primary question at the bottom of it, and the matter for dispute is inexhaustible as long as that question remains unsettled.

But how shall we arrive at the solution of that enigma of enigmas?

The mode of proceeding which the speculative philosopher adopts in his deductions from "every thing and nothing"—or from whatever assumption he may choose—is not such as suits us practical musicians and teachers. We are accustomed first to observe, and then to enquire into the nature of the things and facts that have come under our notice. To us, with our light-hearted enjoyment of the pleasures of existence, the question which is to be solved—however great its importance—must appear like the dispute of two lovers as to which of them loved the other first. It does not matter much who was the first, or whether both fell in love at the same time, so that they are assured of the one essential thing: that they really love each other.

In this spirit let us proceed.

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Following step by step the course of nature, we find that the sensual observation is the first act of man in every sphere of existence. It is the same in music. I hear—that is the first germ of music. Even the cry which joy or suffering involuntarily draws from my breast, even that sound does not exist to me before I actually hear it. The hearing of a sound implies that I am conscious of the act, or that *I know that something sounds.* This consciousness, which may be accompanied by a sensation of pleasure, excitement, or pain, establishes at once a connexion between myself and the outer world. It may create desires in my breast: if the sound pleased me, I may wish to hear it again; and I try to reproduce it myself.

This is the beginning of music. Like every other first beginning, it is purely sensual in its nature. I make a sound merely because I desire to hear some sound, or a particular sound, or different sounds. The understanding has nothing to do with this; its activity only begins with the introduction of the rhythmical element, when I repeat the same or different sounds in a certain order of time, and with a regular change of emphasis, both for the purpose of external symmetry and internal perspicuity.

Music up to this point is a mere play with material objects (sounds of different force, duration, and quality), without regard to their deeper-spiritual contents and meaning. But, although a mere play with sensual forms, it affords ample scope for

the exercise of man's ingenuity and inventive powers; and its result is the enlargement of the domain of art and a constant increase of its means, its power and dominion. Thus man's delight in listening to, and producing, a variety of pleasing sounds, soon leads him to the invention of all kinds of musical instruments. Most of the instruments now in use are of great antiquity; hand-drums were in use amongst the patriarchs of Israel, the ancient Egyptians had their sistrum, the Greeks and Hindoos played upon flutes, trumpets (σάλπιγγες), and different kinds of stringed instruments. To the same cause is to be attributed the enlargement and development of our tonal systems. In order to afford scope for rhythmical and melodical play, the Greeks continually increased and expanded their systems of sounds; so, at the present time, our pianos and orchestras continually add new octaves to their compass, above and below.

In the consciousness of the height to which our art has advanced, we may be induced to ask: "Does this playing with sounds really deserve the name of art?" Considered from our present and higher point of standing, it is not what we would call art. And yet there have been men of note, even in our time, who looked upon music as a mere "sensual diversion" (Kant), or a "play with forms" (Herbart), whilst Leibnitz calls it an unconscious calculation*, and our acousticians (Chladni, Bindseil) attribute all musical effects to the mathematical and physical differences of tonal relations. And how many professional musicians might be named that have either openly avowed themselves adherents of the same opinions, or proved by their works that they are ignorant of or despise all that is deep and spiritual in art. Instead of quarrelling with these men, let us acknowledge that art is active even in the development of these external and sensual elements; only it is not *our* art, as we understand it, and wish it to be practised.

But these efforts towards the expansion and cultivation of the external domain of musical art are not only justifiable, but highly beneficial, and indispensable to the full development of that art. They have not only put us in possession of an endless variety of tonal resources, but it is to them, also, that we owe the invention of harmony.

When we find harmonic auxiliary sounds occurring, now and then, even in the music of the Greeks and ancient oriental nations; when we, afterwards, see the musicians of the middle ages accompanying their melodies with a series of consecutive fourths, fifths, and octaves, and thus laying the foundation of our modern harmony; we can attribute this to no other cause, than the desire for greater fulness and breadth of sound, which certainly could be attained, more effectually, even by these rude harmonies, than by the employment of the same number of voices in unisons or octaves. The motive was the same as that which led to the introduction of the mixed stops (mixtures) in our organs, and which still retains them there as indispensable to the fulness and power of the organ-sound. The whole doctrine of harmony—as appears from its fundamental theory of consonances and dissonances, and from all its other laws and prohibitions—was entirely based upon the purely sensual, but scien-

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* "*Musica est exercitium arithmeticæ occultum nescientis se numerare animi; multa enim facit in perceptionibus confusis seu insensibilibus, quæ distinctâ apperceptione notare nequit.*"—(Leibnitz. *Epist. ad diversos*, tom. i, ep. 134.)—Tr.

tifically developed, conception of a positive contrast between combinations that were considered as "pleasing," and others that were looked upon as "displeasing." Out of this conception arose a number of usages which gradually acquired the force of settled laws (as, *e.g.* the preparation and resolution of the so-called dissonances), and which, being based upon the purely sensual nature of sound, must often come into hostile contact with the spiritual conceptions of the artist. Geniuses of a higher order succeeded in reconciling the spirit of art with that which dwells in the tones themselves; whilst others, before and after them, continued to revel in the enticing play with harmonies, utterly unconscious or regardless of their deeper psychological signification. This was the case with the chromaticists at the end of the middle ages; it is still the case with thousands of our modern romanticists, who seem to fancy that to dive into strange keys and harmonies is to fathom the depths of art.

The same sensual play with sounds has become the mother of contrapuntal science, which, in turn, has brought the whole doctrine of harmony under its dominion. To no deeper cause than this, can we ascribe the origin of the *discantus* of the middle ages, in which the parts began to separate—or, as it were, to stray away from each other—in order, finally, to reunite in unisons. Nor had the attempts of the old Dutch contrapuntists (and their followers in Germany, England, and Italy) any deeper foundation, than the desire to avoid monotony on the one hand, and confusion on the other, when they began to carry some short melodic motivo through different parts, repeating it now upon the same degrees of the scale and now upon different degrees, either in strict imitation, or reversed, or otherwise modified. The same leading principle pervades the whole music of the church down to Palestrina, and even beyond his time. That there was no deeper meaning in those melodic-polyphonic interweavings of sounds, will be acknowledged by every candid observer, when he finds that the very same forms and formulæ were applied to the most opposite situations and the most contradictory verbal texts, and that an expressive accentuation or a truthful and characteristic delineation only occurs, here and there, not as the result of premeditation, but of accident. And is not the same to be said, even to this day, of nearly all French and a great portion of our own national melodies, of nearly all Italian and French opera music, of most of our instrumental music, and, particularly, of our "drawing-room compositions," which are as shallow and devoid of character as that "society" under whose patronage they luxuriate and multiply.

And yet, notwithstanding all this, it cannot be denied that the harmless play with tonal forms is an original and inexhaustible source of art. It proceeds from within, and is one of the very first acts and signs of life. With our breath, we inhale refreshing and vivifying air; the air in our lungs, which is deprived of its animating power, becomes oppressive, and must be got rid of to make room for a fresh influx of the renovating element. Every expiration is a deliverance, a renewed hope of existence; and the energy of this hope manifests itself in its audible form—the voice. All higher life is possessed of voice; voice is the flower of respiration, the blazing forth of the internal flame of life. In the voice, both poles of life, joy and sorrow, appear most prominent; and in the richness of that voice, the richness and energy of the life within reveals itself. Utterance affords relief and satisfaction, even in the cry of deepest anguish; for where there is sound, there is still hope; utter despair and abandonment alone is mute as death, because it is itself spiritual death.

In the same sense, singing may be called the flower of speech. It is the richest and most unrestrained play with the organic sounds of life. As the tree opens its blossoms to the light of the sun, so the breath of life blooms in the voice, and fills the world with fragrance and delight.

This organic necessity of giving vent to our feelings in audible sounds, and the sensuous charm of these sounds which creates sympathy in the breast of others, constitute the prime source of musical art. This source must be inexhaustible, inasmuch as it is re-born with every new-born man. It is as old as the human races and will last as long as mankind shall exist. The babe at its mother's breast sings in its way; so does the man that has grown old and hoary. We sing (or whistle) in moments of danger and anguish; and as the oriental nations had their mourning women, so we chant our funeral strains even over the grave of the departed.

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But herein is already contained the germ of progress towards a higher sphere of art.

In that innocent play with tonal forms of which we have been speaking, man is present and active only in the general character of one of the millions of human beings that people and have peopled this globe. But every man lives his own individual life; he has his own particular wants, inclinations, and desires, and these again may change with every fleeting moment of his existence. Hence it follows that art, the outward manifestation of the inner life, must also have its individual character, depending on the individuality of the man and the times and circumstances by which his inner life may be affected. I do not merely wish to hear something, but I want to hear such sounds as shall accord with the feelings that move in my own breast. Again, I do not sing aloud merely because I am in being, and wish to show that I exist; but all that is within me, every vibrating fibre of the soul, requires to sound its tones of joy or sorrow, that it may stir an echo in some sympathizing heart, or fall back on my own ear, a softened and beautified reverberation of the pulse of my own life.

This is the second phase of art, the revelation of the inner life, which finds its sympathetic medium of expression in the trembling wave of sound. Here music is "the art of the soul;" here everything is sympathy. The commencement of this sympathetic phase of art is always hidden in darkness. We know that, even in inanimate nature, a sounding body has the power of making other bodies near it vibrate and produce the same sound with itself. When a sound of a certain pitch is sung or otherwise intonated with sufficient force, the strings of the same pitch on a piano whose dampers are raised will begin to tremble and repeat the sound. Nay, it affects not only the strings that are in unison with it, but also those which have near-related sounds; or, if $C$ be struck, we shall hear the sounds $c$, $g$, $\bar{c}$, $\bar{e}$, $\bar{g}$, $\bar{b}\flat$, and sometimes $\bar{\bar{c}}$ and $\underline{\bar{\bar{d}}}$. Here we see an apparent sign of sympathy and communication of impulse even in lifeless nature.

In man, we find the first trace of this sympathy, which precedes all intellectual development, in his capability of repeating notes of different height, and imitating the sound of other people's voices, or of musical instruments. How do I contrive to sound that same note $C$ which I hear sung by some other person? and how does a

child of two or three years manage to do it? Who taught the infant Mozart to find thirds to every note on the pianoforte, and strike them again and again with rapturous delight? In all this there is already revealed a power of distinction, and consequently of perception and understanding; or we should not always sing the same sound which we hear sung or played by others, and Mozart would now and then have struck seconds instead of thirds. But this power of conception and discrimination is still concealed from ourselves; it is rather an instinctive grasping of the truth, than a conscious exercise of our mental faculties.*

This is the standing point from which musicians generally estimate and acknowledge each other's talents, and which they consider as the proper domain of their art. They are again in the right, although the apex and limits of musical art are as little to be found here as in the first and purely sensuous sphere. The attunement of the material organs of music—of voice and instruments—is the expression of the attunement of the soul, of all those fluctuating sensations and inclinations which have not yet assumed the definite form of thought and firm resolve. These undefined sensations and desires, this "joyful and sorrowful," this "longing and dreading," this "jubilant shout and deathlike calm" of the poet*, these upheavings and depressions, this sorrow so full of sweet consolation, and this burst of sunny delight so soon obscured by clouds of woe; this mysterious but enchanting *chiaroscuro* of the soul: these are conditions and elements in which the art of music loves to move. It reigns with undisputed sway in this mysterious region, of which the painter can only give us a transient and distant glimpse, and the poet strives in vain to lift the veil.

On looking back to the first phase of artistic development, we find that the progress from this to the second is a decided step in advance. Music no longer reflects man's nature in general as it reveals itself in sound, but has become the art of an individual being, whose inner life with all its peculiar inclinations and desires finds its exponent, and seeks for sympathy, in strains adapted and *intended* for the purpose. This higher sphere does not exclude the first, but extends beyond it, as the tree spreads out its leafy branches on all sides of the trunk from which they spring. The greater portion of our German national melodies, as well as those of Switzerland, Holland, Scandinavia, Scotland, Ireland, and England, many of the South-Russian, Polish, and ancient French airs, and likewise a number of those national songs which were composed during the stirring times of the first French revolution, bear the characteristic marks of this second phase of art. The same is to be said of the greater portion of German opera and church music, as well as of many French operettas and the operas of Paisiello, Cimarosa, and other Italian composers of the same school; and also of our instrumental music, as developed by Haydn, Mozart, and most of their successors. The earlier works of Beethoven also belong to the same class, as do likewise many of Sebastian Bach's; whilst others either date back to the first epoch, or soar high above the fluctuating feelings of the heart into the region of clear perception or inspired foreboding.

We should, however, always bear in mind that it is impossible to circumscribe any sphere of life and spiritual activity with an absolute line of demarcation. Traces of psychologic individuality, such as characterize the second phase of artistic

* Goethe's celebrated song, "*Freudvoll und leidvoll, gedankenvoll sein.*"—Tr.

development, are to be met with, here and there, even in the music of the middle ages; but they represent themselves almost invariably as purely accidental and unconscious results of the contrapuntal style of that period. In the period of Bach, the counterpoint of the ancients still maintains its sway, but it assumes an entirely different character; the lifeless stone warms under the fervent gaze of the new Pygmalion, and begins to smile in the rosy hues of life. In Haydn and Mozart, the idea of the future, which had already begun to dawn upon the mind of Bach, the musical evangelist, becomes more and more vivid. Beethoven, during the first half of his life, remains upon the standing point of these two pioneers; he moulds his works according to their forms; and yet those works are different from their prototypes, and ripening into higher life.

Who can calculate how many varied conditions of mind have found a voice and died away in this sphere of musical art? How many noble feelings have here been raised, how many painful ones subdued; how many miseries of life and mental sufferings alleviated; how much coarseness and hardness of heart have been softened down in this healing region of universal sympathy! Here every age has sounded out its joys and sorrows; here every artist has confided, and still confides, to us, what he has caught up of the spirit of his time, and felt reverberating in his heart. For this very reason, the strains of former times can never fully satisfy the wants and wishes of the present; for every new life has its new sorrows and joys, its own desires and longings. Hiller considered himself justified and in duty bound to *re-compose* many of Handel's arias, though it was by him that his great predecessor had been reintroduced into his native country. Hiller's own ballads and ballad operas, though once so popular and celebrated, would scarcely be endured by any modern audience. Thus, these fond and faithful interpreters of the human heart and its most hidden secrets, rise like constellations in the starry heavens, pass the zenith of the nations on whom they shed their rays of light, and solace, and disappear in deeper darkness, remembered only by him who counts the changing hours of human life. Each of them is but a fleeting moment in the existence of human race; but the longing for the solace of our tuneful art is ever dwelling in the heart of man, and every pulse of life sends forth its sound of joy or woe, and finds an echo in the sympathizing souls of others.

If it was the task of the first epoch of musical art to raise itself from the crude attempts at harmony to the gothic structures or the scholastic subtleties of the most ingenious counterpoints; these strict and over-learned architectonic forms were no longer fit for the second epoch. Even Emanuel Bach, Sebastian's most gifted son, found himself already compelled by necessity to abandon the high and severe style of his father. The time of prophetic inspiration and holy zeal had gone by; mankind began to make life upon earth more easy and materially comfortable; people could no longer bear the heavy yoke of Jeremiah; or, with the winged faith of St. John, soar up to the throne of the Eternal. Art, therefore, assumed a more personal, mild, and accommodating character; and so tame did she become, that old Sebastian Bach had scarcely closed his eyes, when people already began to find fault with his "harsh discords;" to call his deeply dialectic mode of interpretation "cold reflection" and "calculation;" and to pronounce his church-music "unsuited to the church." But here, also, there is a brighter side of the picture. What art was losing in one direction, it

was gaining in another. A new spirit of youthful enthusiasm and innocent joyousness supplanted the stern severity of the preceding period. Whatever there is of bliss and tenderness in this sublunar world—that found its echo in the strains of Haydn and Mozart—that grew and bloomed in flowers of sound, and decked our art with ineffable loveliness. The melodies became more smooth and singable, the accompanying parts accommodated themselves more readily to the leading cantilena, the harmonies blended in graceful flow. The rondo and sonata forms expanded themselves with playful freedom. Mozart, with his diversity of light and flowing arias, duets, terzets, and finales, broke through the fetters of the monotonous Italian opera, and made it adapt itself to his own fine perception of truth and beauty. The power and freedom with which he moved in this new sphere, becomes only apparent, when we compare his works with those of his successors, which, whilst they have increased in length and heaviness, have only become more monotonous and poor, without supplying anything that could be designated as really new in the *spiritual* life of art. From Winter, Paer, Righini, and Boieldieu, down to Spohr, Rossini, and other modern opera composers, there is scarcely one to whom this observation does not apply.

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But in the development of this phase of art is already contained the necessity of progress towards a higher sphere.

Our soul, when in a state of excitement, is certainly conscious of the direction in which it is moved; but this consciousness is of an obscure and dubious nature. Thirty years ago, Nägeli—in his too-early-forgotten lectures on music—asserted that "music does not create and give form to our feelings, but rather tends to dissolve them into indefinite sensations." He was right as regards the "music of the soul," which was the only one he knew. For although it is true that music possesses the power of awakening certain definite emotions and conceptions; still its impulses constantly vary in force and direction, and the ultimate result is again that *clair-obscur* which places everything in a doubtful light. With equal truth, Hegel asserts that "There is certainly some relation between the art of sound and the soul of man, and the movements of the one accord with those of the other; but all this amounts to nothing more than a kind of obscure and indefinite sympathy." He, too, had no idea of any other music but that of fluctuating emotions.

A little reflection must lead every attentive observer beyond this standing point, had not art itself already made the necessary step in advance.

It is quite plain that the human mind could not possibly find ultimate satisfaction in a condition of doubt and twilight; man would turn away from an art which could only accompany him thus far. For the development of consciousness is a continual progress from darkness and uncertainty, to light and certainty. The suckling babe, at first, only distinguishes light from darkness; he then observes the forms that move around him: at first, he stretches out his longing arms for everything that is held up to him; but after a time he finds some things desirable, and turns away from others with dislike. So the first dawn of mental consciousness only conveys to us an indefinite impression of the general condition of our inner life: we, then, gradually become aware of the different kinds and degrees of emotion that fill our heart with joy or pain; the feeling of an indefinite longing assumes the form of definite desires;

fondness and dislike grow in intensity until they become passions; and the frequent recurrence of the same state of mind becomes a settled trait of character. If you give to a person, who has a knowledge of mankind, a faithful and circumstantial account of a series of changes which you experience in your heart, he will be able to form a correct opinion of your character and disposition—he will unriddle you. And in this process of investigation, which leads him to the hidden springs of all your actions and desires, many a passing and isolated sensation which you could not previously define, and for which you could not account, will assume a more decided form, and, perhaps, fully reveal itself as a significant psychological phenomenon.

We pause, at this point, in order to trace the appearance of such a definite and lasting condition of mind in the historical development of our own art. Indications of it occur at a very early period.

When we observe how long and pertinaciously the Eastern nations adhered to their scales of five intervals (*f*—*g*—*a*—*c*—*d*), although they knew the intermediate sounds, and actually employed them in other forms of connexion (e. g. *g*—*a*—*b* (C♭) —*d*—*e*); when we find the ancient church modes (see my *School of Composition**) restrict themselves to certain forms of melody and modulation; we are naturally led to inquire—what was the cause of such a remarkable abstinence, not necessitated by a want of means? It was not owing to the whim of a few single individuals; for those peculiarities characterize the music of entire nations and epochs of time. We are, therefore, led to attribute it to a clear and universal perception of the agreement of those peculiar forms with the general tendency of the nation or age; they were the faithful expression of a lasting trait of the national character. And this perception was so true and correct, that the inherent power of those forms of expression is felt by us, even at this day, when the whole realm of art is open to us without restraint or hindrance. The chorales of those times still preserve their intended original character. Beethoven found in the Lydian mode the peculiar form of expression which he required for his prayer of thanksgiving (Op. 132)†: I, too, was led to the Mixolydian and Phrygian Church tones in my Hymns for six male voices; and in the first aria of the oratorio Mose, the original scale of the Orient unconsciously presented itself to me. So the mystic harmonies of the middle ages, with their changing character of strangeness and familiarity, seem to have been hovering around Liszt in many of his "*harmonies réligieuses.*"

If all this should be looked upon as a mere lingering echo of former times, then the first decided signs of progress appear in the works of Beethoven,—even in those in which he seems still to have followed in the path of his predecessors, Mozart and Haydn. These indications of a new phase in the life of art are at first of a purely external nature; but, for this very reason, the more perspicuous and unmistakable. On comparing such works as the symphonies in *C*, *D*, *B*♭, and *F* major, or the sonatas, Op. 10, 53, and 106, with similar works of the above-named masters, even the superficial observer cannot fail to discover two external differences. The first is this—that Beethoven's melodies are not only longer, but also more continuous,

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* Enlarged edition, translated by A. Wehrhan; published only by Robert Cocks & Co.

† See the author's "School of Musical Composition," vol. i, p. 364. Robert Cocks & Co.

both as regards direction and contents. The consequence is, that they are fewer in number, especially when compared with Mozart—whose subjects (see, e. g. the overture to Figaro, the first movements of his symphony in *C*, and his sonata in *F*) frequently consist of two or three distinct phrases. In the second place, we find that the exposition of the subjects, and the developments of the different motivos, are both more rich and continuous in the works of Beethoven, than they are either in those of Mozart or Haydn; and, in connexion with this, it even appears to us that Beethoven, in his finales, frequently tarries too long before he arrives at the close. Whether this last observation be correct or not, one thing remains certain: viz. that as Beethoven's phrases are longer and more fully developed, they must have engaged his attention and kept alive his interest a longer time. He, therefore, remained longer in the same frame of mind; and those passing emotions which, in Mozart, are continually changing in character and form of expression, assume in Beethoven the nature of a definite and lasting condition of mind. In this respect Haydn approaches more closely to Beethoven than even Mozart; only his works (especially his symphonies) are far more uniform in character than Beethoven's; the pervading sentiment of all of them being a feeling of childlike joyousness, which even in sombre moments does not interrupt its graceful play, but continually sings its song of happy contentment and thanksgiving.

Here we may again take up the thread of our examination.

With the transition from the sphere of changing emotions to that of a decided and lasting condition of mind, begins, for art and the artist, the day of a higher truth and a higher existence—the day of real artistic creation. For, a truthful delineation of character is only possible where that character has assumed a definite form, and where the existence of the individual man separates itself from, and rises distinctly above, that of mankind in general. Creation implies the production of something definite in form and contents; and this, again, is impossible where nothing definite and decided is known. This is the reason why the music of the middle ages, from Lattre, Palestrina, and Allegri, down to Alessandro Scarlatti and the old Italian opera, did not, on the whole, attain to a higher standing point than that of formal productions. Its counterpoints developed themselves according to established rules; its harmonies ranged themselves together like rows of crystal vessels, in which the consecrated service of the Church was preserved and held up to the congregation as a tabernacle of silver sounds. A distinct and continuous delineation of character is scarcely ever met with in music of this epoch; and where it occurs—as, e. g. in J. Gabrieli's "*Benedictus*," mentioned in the third volume of my "School of Musical Composition"—it soon relapses into an undefined effusion of momentary sensations. Beyond the description of such momentary sensations, neither the old Italian opera and its twin-sister, the oratorio, with their imitations in England (Purcell), and Germany (Hasse, Graun, Naumann), nor the German *Singspiel* of Reinhardt Keysser, nor the French opera, has ever been able to raise itself. Handel is the first who gives us decided delineations of character; and even he frequently enough returns to the region of undefined sensations, where harmonies are strung together and motivos spun out, not for the purpose of developing any deeper idea, but merely to continue the thread of the composition, and keep up the play of sounds.

The moment the ideas of the composer assume a definite and characteristic form,

the psychological nature of the different tonic combinations also reveals itself to him. That every tonal relation has its own inherent character, is a truth of which no musician requires to be convinced; but, in the preceding period of art, these differences of character were neither clearly perceived, nor made available for artistic purposes. We do, indeed, meet with some striking instances of a characteristic employment of tonal intervals in the popular songs of ancient Germany and Scandinavia, and more especially in those Gaelic strains of hoary antiquity, for the acquaintance with which we are so deeply indebted to the researches of English musicians; but they occur mostly in isolated cases, and appear to be the result of intuition, rather than of clear perception. Much more frequently and advisedly do we find Handel make use of characteristic tonal progressions: the arias in Semele and in Saul, and many passages in his mighty choruses, are evidences of his deep insight into the psychological signification of the different intervals and combinations of sounds; although the great master, in the storm of his eventful life, and the hurry in which he had to compose his oratorios, was frequently compelled to accommodate his phraseology to the prevailing style of his age, and to neglect the details for the sake of the whole. But no one has ever equalled Sebastian Bach in depth of perception and truthfulness of delineation, as far as regards the characteristic employment of tonal progressions. It may be safely asserted of almost all his recitatives in the "Passion Music," and of many of his airs and choruses, that they do not admit of a single note being altered without injury to the truthfulness and decision of the expression; and the same feature even characterizes many of his pianoforte and organ works.

It was under the influence of this deep insight into the spiritual life of the world of sound that the doctrine of harmony developed itself so fully, consistently, and significantly—as it has been my aim to unfold it in the School of Musical Composition. All the discoveries and further developments of later times—except the wild fancies and transient whims of our pseudo-geniuses—may be traced back to that epoch in which it was given to father Bach to reveal the truthfulness and deep spiritual significancy of his art in connexion with the word of God.

Music having thus acquired the power of characteristic delineation, the artist was now enabled to place different characters (individuals) in juxta-position, and to elucidate the one by the contrast with the other. The musicians of the middle ages made use of the polyphonic *forms* of counterpoint, because they could not help it. Palestrina was obliged to resort to the employment of double choruses in the dialogue of the "Song of Songs;" on the stage, also, choruses sang behind the scene instead of the individual actors; and Heinrich Schütz had to adopt the same means in order to distinguish individual characters (e. g. where he introduces Christ as speaking to St. Paul*). These contrapuntal forms, which, in the middle ages, were the necessary result of the imperfect development of our art, could now be converted into true polyphony, in which each part had its distinct character and peculiar contents.

We are ready to grant that our art does not possess the means of delineating a

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* H. Schütz, also known under the Latin name of *Sagittarius*, was born in the year 1585. He was a pupil of Gabrieli, and has been justly styled the "father of German music." Besides the "Passion Music," to which the author above refers, he wrote the first German opera (Daphne), and a great number of excellent compositions for the church.—Tr.

character—or any object whatever—as distinctly and fully as poetry or sculpture. But then it has the advantage over the latter in its power of representing a progressive development; and over the former, in the facility of making distinct and opposite characters act and speak simultaneously. Music cannot define in precise terms who and what you are; but she causes all the successive emotions of your heart to pass in review before you; and these enable you to unriddle the enigma of your existence. It is both a monologue and a dialogue, full of dramatic truth and life.

Here the art of sound begins to unfold its true nature and power. Those two giants, Handel and Bach, take the lead. In Handel's choruses, each part derives its distinctive character from the manner in which it is conducted, and the region of sound in which it is employed. In those of Bach, the different parts become living individuals, so truthfully delineated that none could be mistaken for the other. It is necessary that we should have vividly before our mind his "Passion Music," his "*Komm Jesu, komm,*" his "*Fürchte dich nicht,*" the *Incarnatus*, *Crucifixus*, and *Resurrexit* of his High Mass, and other productions of the same character, in order fully to comprehend, in our times of simulated Christianity, that power of genuine religious enthusiasm which here sounds forth its Bible truths into a world of unbelief and demoralization, such as that in which Bach re-awakened the voices of the apostles and prophets against the Voltarianism and corrupt Autocratism of his century.

Traces of this dramatic life may be discovered even in many of Bach's accompaniments to vocal compositions—e. g. in the aria, "*Verachtest du so*" (in the Kirchenmusik, "*Herr deine Augen*"), the first movements of the Kirchenmusik, "*Bleib bei uns,*" "*Christ unser Herr,*" and "*Liebster Gott wann werd' ich sterben,*" the *Crucifixus* of the High Mass, &c. &c.—they also appear in several of his instrumental works, such as the fugue in *D* minor, and others alluded to in my introduction to the Selection* from his Pianoforte Compositions. The same dramatic spirit characterizes a number of Handel's vocal compositions; but particularly, yet in quite a different way, those of their next compeer, Gluck.

There is no sign of contrapuntal skill and power to be found in the works of the last-named remarkable man, whose greatness was rather of an intellectual than purely musical nature. Comparing him with his great predecessors and followers, we might safely assert that he could not, or rather would not (for a man like him can accomplish any thing he sets his mind upon), write a duet or a terzet. He had another aim in view, and that he realized. Out of the meaningless play with sounds and forms into which the old Italian opera had degenerated, the genius of the true drama rose before his eyes. Gluck cast aside the useless rubbish that had so long encumbered him, and determined that truth of expression and dramatic life should henceforth be his aim, and that every other thing should be subordinate to this. If we turn to the work in which this idea has been most rigorously and powerfully carried out—his *Iphigenie en Aulide*—we find, in the first place, that every progression and skip of the melody is faithfully and ingeniously adapted to the sense of the words. We next discover, that this truthfulness and precision of melodic progression is combined

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* See Dr. Marx's Selection from Sebastian Bach's compositions; prefaced with an Essay on their proper Study and Execution, translated from the MS. by A. H. Wehrhan. Robert Cocks & Co.

with a rhythm as rich, elastic, and powerful as none but Æschylus had ever at his command. How readily his war-like anapæsts range themselves in battle array, or join in military dance at his desire! How carefully does he allot to every syllable its proper time and accent! How truthful is his declamation, even in his airs and choruses. You may sit down and play with entire satisfaction such songs as Agamemnon's "*Brillant auteur,*" Clytemnestra's "*Que j'aime*" and "*Armez vous,*" Iphigenia's "*Les vœux,*" and the choruses "*C'est trop faire,*" "*Non jamais,*" &c. &c. as purely musical compositions; you may then sing them with increased pleasure, before you even perceive that every single syllable and every significant sound of the language has received its appropriate musical expression. The language and the music cling to each other like wedded lovers, or like the spirit and the word in Goethe's well-known lines:

> "Now let the word be called the bride,
> The spirit be her spouse."

Gluck's great predecessors had already succeeded in blending words and tones, to the great advantage both of language and music; but it was reserved for him to bring about the closest and most powerful alliance between the art of sound and the poetical forms of speech. And this he effected in a language, of all others the most unrhythmical and most unfavourable to music.

There have been amongst us those who would reproach this great man with "reflexion" and "cold declamation." Such assertions might be allowed to pass for what they are worth, were it not that so few of us Germans have had an opportunity of making ourselves acquainted with our own countryman. For his operas are only brought before us in a translated form; and our teachers—if they occasionally pay him a ceremonial visit—make their pupils sing in German what can only be expressive and true in reference to the original text. This is the more strange, as we Germans take more pride in gibbering *un peu Français* than in speaking our own deep and beautiful language well; and would hardly dare to sing a Donizetti or Ricci in any but the Italian tongue.

The picture of this great man, and all that our art has gained through him, would be too imperfect, if we were to leave unmentioned what he has done for the delineation of character and situation. We must, however, remember that he looked upon his Greek heroes and heroines from the standing point of his age, and therefore not blame him for treating his characters as they were represented to him by Racine and Corneille. His Achilles is a chivalrous French prince, his Iphigenie a *princesse*, perhaps after the idealized model of Marie Antoinette, his patroness. Taking these things into consideration, we shall find that all his characters have been delineated with wonderful distinctness. It is impossible to mistake any of Iphigenia's airs for those of Clytemnestra, or any of the chorus leaders; and, what is still more remarkable, the different characters do not stand still, but actually progress, as may be seen in Agamemnon's two first airs, as well as Clytemnestra's four solos, in which a gradual development is apparent to every attentive observer.—In conclusion, let us mention that the orchestra, also, is often employed by Gluck, with the most striking effect, to make the sketch of a character more perfect and complete.

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This last observation regarding the employment of the orchestra for the purpose of characteristic delineation, brings to our mind another progressive step, which, having been commenced by Bach and Handel, was completed by Beethoven. The characters of the drama either represent human individuals, or beings personified as such; as, *e. g.* the genius of hatred in Gluck's *Armide*, or the ghost in Mozart's *Don Juan*. But, in the imagination of the composer, there are hovering other beings besides these; shapeless and untangible voices of nature, sounds from a higher sphere. These are the voices of the orchestra. To the mere routine musician, the orchestra is an assemblage of sound-producing instruments,—a collection of tools which he employs for different purposes. But to the genuine artist, each of these instruments reveals itself as a living being, as one of those mysterious children of the wide world of sound, whose voices are dear and familiar to us, although we cannot define their forms and characters. They entice us away into the region of dreamy vision; they allow themselves to be conjured up at our command; they understand us and are obedient to our will. If treated with kindness, they serve us willingly, as they did father Haydn; but if harshly dealt with, or forced to do what they cannot or are not inclined to perform, they turn round upon their tormentors with avenging fury, or fade and perish under the work imposed upon them. They constitute a world of their own, born out of our spirit, but governed by its own unalterable laws.

The road to this region of boundless fantasy had been marked out by an unerring hand. As soon as our play with sounds assumes a definite spiritual meaning, it ceases to be a matter of indifference which voices are to speak and which to be silent. As surely as every class of human voices—the youthful soprano and the grave bass, the mild alto and the fiery tenor—has its own distinct character, so surely must a difference of character present itself to the observer in the tones of the violins, flutes, horns, and trumpets. An artistic mind could not fail to perceive in them as many differently organized beings, and to make his choice according to the nature and capabilities of each.

Signs of this spiritualization of the orchestra appear at an early period of our art; but the first great lord and master of all the spirits that dwell in the instrumental world was father Haydn. He had practised the instruments, and had served them from his childhood, until his existence and theirs had, as it were, become one, in long wedlock; and they, now, in turn, served him and did what he desired; for he never required any thing but what they could and were inclined to perform. It must always remain a significant fact, that his first great attempt at sound-painting was the "Chaos;" that formation without form, that anxious waiting for the creative command which should give light and shape to the universe. To Haydn, also, this was a day of creation, on which the world of instrumental voices received the breath of life. And it continued to breathe; it grew, in lyric-epic fulness, in Beethoven's symphonies, in his quartets, and pianoforte compositions. If the Pastoral Symphony, the Eroica, the fifth, the seventh, and the ninth, the trio in *D* major, the romantic andante in the grand quartet in *C* major, the sonatas in *C*♯ minor and *F* minor, and the one entitled "*Les Adieux*"—if these and others do not at once convince the hearer that more was felt and meant by Beethoven than a play with lifeless "instruments of music," he has only to read the composer's own superscriptions and annota-

tions in order to learn that it was a world of living and spiritual beings which spoke to him out of the strings, the wood, and the reeds. The works of many of his successors bear the marks of a similar conception. It is this life of the instrumental world that Karl Maria von Weber, and, after him, Wagner and Meyerbeer, have found the means of giving such a truthful colouring to many of their dramatic characters and incidents.

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In the above fugitive sketch of the successive phases in the development of our art, I have confined myself to general outlines, not deeming it either necessary or advisable to aim at completeness or enter into minute details. The object of the preceding chapters is attained, if the epochs, names, and works, which have been pointed out, have served to give the reader a general idea of the progress of musical art; and it matters not that many other celebrated names and works have not been mentioned. Still less should any one demand historical completeness and consecutive arrangement in these sketches, the only object of which was to indicate those traces in which the life of art reveals itself; to show how rich it is, how diversified are its relations.

On the one side, this life was so entirely of a sensuous character as to make us inclined to doubt whether the spirit of art could really be said to dwell in it; on the other, we saw the art of sound and language blend into one; music became essentially dramatic, and acquired the power of expressing, not only momentary sensations, but entire trains of thought and conception. On this side also, doubts have been raised as to the legitimate boundaries of our art. It has been asked (and not without reason): "Is music, with all its means of expression, capable of portraying an external object or a situation? Can it even clearly and fully describe our internal feelings and desires? If I feel its tender influence, how am I to know whether it is love, sisterly affection, or friendship that speaks to me? When Beethoven, in his Pastoral Symphony, undertakes to paint a 'scene by the brook-side,' what do we see there? Who are they that are supposed to take leave in '*Les Adieux?*' under what circumstances do they part? and what are they saying, or feeling? Again, if every one must agree that something more than a mere play with sounds is intended in the last sonata in *A*♭ (Op. 110), and in the symphony in *A* major, who will undertake to state precisely what Beethoven intended to convey? Is not the utter want of agreement amongst the interpreters of works like these a sufficient proof that music steps out of its legitimate sphere when it undertakes to delineate definite conceptions, instead of confining itself to the expression of vague sensations?"

We might reply, in the first place, that we are by no means called upon to answer these questions. Our professed object has been to give a general delineation of the progressive development of musical art; and, in doing this, we must take art as it is and has been. It would, therefore, be quite sufficient for us to state that there exists documentary evidence that innumerable attempts have actually been made to bring the description of definite ideas within the sphere of musical art, and that it is our greatest masters who have attempted it most assiduously.

But were we inclined to enter into the discussion, we might reply, in the second place, that the disputed point is, in reality, only a question of degree; i. e. how far music may go, and where it should stop. We do not believe that any person—at least, not a musician—would deny to music all power of definite expression. Every

individual must, assuredly, have found some musical compositions cheerful, and some others grave or gloomy. Even the humblest composer would startle in confusion, if we were to praise his dead march for being so merry, or pronounce his drinking and love songs suitable for a funeral procession. But the smallest concession of this kind leads the opposing parties into the same path; and the only question that remains is, how far each of them is able or willing to go. On the other hand, it has already been acknowledged that music is incapable of delineating an object, or expressing an idea, as distinctly and precisely as the plastic arts or poetry. Our art commences with sympathies; it dwells in the more obscure region of the inner life, and brings before us its subject of representation in the form of a psychologic enigma. It shows us what we are, by telling us how we have become so; whilst sculpture places before us the finished ideal, that we may guess how it arose.

Apart from this, it may be questioned whether any one is justified in making distinctness and minuteness of delineation the test of the merit or demerit of every production of art. If that be the most essential qualification, why do we not colour our statues and put moveable eyes into their heads? Why has not Beethoven, in his Pastoral Symphony, made use of the ordinary stage contrivances for the purpose of a more drastic imitation of the thunder and lightning, the murmuring of the brook, and the rustling of the leaves? Why does Bach, in his cantata, "O, Lord, when I am dying," make the mystic flute do the duty of a real funeral bell in a manner which is by no means "clear" and "natural?" The reason is, firstly, because faint indications, similes, and dubious twilight, are more natural to the artist (whether he paints in sounds or forms); for that which he represents does not really stand before him, but gradually develops itself out of his own mind. The reason is, secondly, that those faint indications and similes answer the purpose of the artist far better than the most drastic and palpable imitation of reality: for they draw the recipient into the artist's own sphere of thought and feeling; they cause him to take a lively interest in the work, which, as it were, is born and grows up under his own eyes; whilst perfect reality and certainty only interest us for a moment, and then cause us to turn away, listless and satiated. You must dream with the artist, you must share his doubts, his fears, and hopes, if you wish to enter into the spirit and enjoy the fulness of his work.

It is, however, quite immaterial for our purpose to know how far our art may go in its representation; so that the fact remains undisputed that music in its progressive development endeavours to raise itself from the region of sensuality to that higher sphere where the spirit predominates over matter. This progress is founded in man's own nature, and therefore every art follows the same road of development, and ultimately arrives at a point where it may possibly reach and overstep its limits. Even poetry, the clearest and most definite of all arts, must sometimes reach this doubtful point, as may be seen in Dante's *Divina Commedia*, and the second part of Goethe's *Faust*. It is here, also, where every art has the right to make pre-suppositions and demand concessions. The greatest artistic connoisseur of Greece would not have been able to comprehend Raphael's Transfiguration, or Michael Angelo's Last Judgment; for this reason, that he was unacquainted with the records of our religion. Even the habitual reader of the Bible would hardly understand Raphael's picture of the Judgment of Ananias and Sapphira without some reflexion; because the painter here had to accomplish a task for which the means of his art were inadequate.

When we find that Raphael nevertheless undertook his task, when we see him elsewhere attempt to depict how God "set two great lights in the firmament of heaven," and remember that these and similar undertakings have met with the warmest approbation and admiration of the world, we should be slow in circumscribing the limits of art, and rather leave it to the judgment of each artist how far his own powers and the resources of his art enable him to proceed. Beethoven and others have sometimes endeavoured to facilitate the understanding of their works by means of superscriptions and annotations, as did the painters of the mediæval ages. Still, with all this, it is true that "every work of art, without exception, makes innumerable demands upon the reflexion and imagination of the beholder or hearer; and its effect upon the latter is not so much an act of transmission from without, as a reflex from within*."

We think it necessary, before closing this chapter, to mention that one of the most eminent musicians of our age appears to have differed from us in his opinion on the question of artistic progress and development. A correspondent, writing to the editor of the *Fliegende Blätter für Musik* (p. 286), states, that in a conversation with Mendelssohn, the latter thus expressed himself on the meaning of a phrase which many of our younger artists are but too ready to apply to the works of their favourite master.

"This composer has opened a new road?—Well, I ask, what do they mean by such an assertion? Do they merely intend to say that he has proceeded upon a road which no one else had traversed before him, or does the assertion not rather imply that the composer has opened a track which leads to a new and more charming region of art? For, every one capable of wielding a shovel and moving his legs can open a path for himself; but if they employ the expression in the higher sense, I deny its applicability altogether. *There is no such thing as a new road,* simply because there is no new region of art to which it could lead. They have all been explored long since.—New roads! That artist is sure to be led astray who gives himself up to this cursed demon! No artist has ever opened a new road. At the most, he only did his work a little better than his immediate predecessors. Who is to strike out a new path in art? A genius. Well, has Beethoven shown us a new road entirely different from that in which Mozart walked? Are his symphonies altogether new in form and conception? I say, no. I cannot perceive any extraordinary difference between Beethoven's first Symphony and Mozart's last, either as regards artistic excellence or effect. The one pleases me and so does the other. To-day, I listen with delight to Beethoven's Symphony in *D* major; to-morrow, I feel equally happy in listening to that of Mozart in *C* major, with the Fugue at the end. But the idea of a new road never enters my head. Then, again, take Beethoven's "Fidelio." I do not mean to say that I find every passage in it fully to my mind; but I should like an opera named which can produce a deeper effect, or yield a more delightful artistic enjoyment. Will you point out to me a single piece in it in which Beethoven has struck out a new path? I do not find one. On looking into the score, as well as on listening to the performance, I everywhere perceive Cherubini's dramatic style of composition. It is true that Beethoven did not ape that style; but it was before his mind as his most cherished pattern."

* Herbart, *Encyclopädia der Philosophie.*

"And what about Beethoven's last period?" enquired the writer. "What about his last Quartetts, his ninth Symphony, his Mass (Op. 123)?"—Surely no work of any of his predecessors or contemporaries can be likened to them."

"That may be true in a certain sense," continued Mendelssohn, with great animation. "Beethoven's *forms* are *wider* and *broader;* his style is more polyphonic and artistic; his ideas are more gloomy and melancholy, even where they endeavour to assume a cheerful tone; his instrumentation is fuller;—*he has gone a little farther on the road of his predecessors, but by no means struck out into a new path.* And, to be candid, where has he led us to? Has he opened to us a region of art more *beautiful* than those previously known? Does his ninth Symphony really afford to us, as *artists*, a higher enjoyment than most of his other symphonies? As far as I am concerned, I confess openly that I do not feel it. It is a feast to me to listen to that symphony; but the same, if not a purer, feast is prepared for me in the Symphony in *C* minor."

If it were not that so many find it convenient, and are accustomed to adopt the assertions of distinguished men without further inquiry, we might let the above sentences pass for what they are worth. And if it were the sole aim of our art to "please," to "prepare a treat," to make us "feel happy," and to "lead us into more beautiful and charming regions;" we might even allow Mendelssohn to be right. In the regions of undefined pleasure, taste, happiness, &c. &c. there is no real progress; but a mere change of enjoyment, a roaming from pleasure to pleasure. Here everything depends upon habit, inclination, and accidental circumstances, which cause us now to find this more "beautiful" and "charming," and now that. Nay, in this region, a really deep or novel idea, presented in an unaccustomed form, may often afford a less pure and unalloyed enjoyment than a series of unmeaning phrases moving smoothly along the beaten track. No one can shut his eyes to the fact, that great violence has been done to the vocal parts, both of the ninth Symphony and the Mass, or explain away many other questionable specialities. But, above all, these specialities rises the new and grand idea which thus compelled the composer to wage war with the elements of his art, which he had treated more gently and considerately on so many other occasions. It is not the success or failure in details, but the idea of the whole, which decides the point whether a new road has been opened or not. "Enjoyment" and "a feeling of happiness" are no criterions of progress; in art, as in every other concern of the spirit, a higher perception is the only proof of advance.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PRESENT.

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*The Heritage of the Past.—Church Music and National Song. The Opera. The Possession of the Present. The Church and the Oratorio. Academy of Singing. —Gluck and Wagner. Mozart. Spontini and Weber; Meyerbeer.—Attempted Restoration of the Greek Drama.—The Symphony. Berlioz. The Modern Orchestra. Military Music.—The People. Vocal Societies. Concerts and open-air Performances. Domestic Music.—Art made mechanical. The Profession of Teaching. Mechanical Treatment of Art. The Expectation of the Future.*

IF I have succeeded in conveying to my readers a general idea of the nature and development of our art, there remains only one thing to be done, in order to enable us to come to a clear understanding respecting the end and means of musical culture. We have to examine the present state of our art, and endeavour to discover its future course of development. Once more—and for the last time—I must bespeak the patience of the more lively amongst my brother artists, who are inclined to look upon every thing as useless which does not promise to lead to an immediate practical result; the more so, as I shall have to direct their attention to many well-known matters. Let them remember how many hours they have been obliged to spend over their "finger exercises" and "schools of agility!"

There is scarcely any sphere of science or art in which so much has been done, and so many labourers been at work as in music. In Germany, particularly, treasures and stores of all kinds, gathered from all times and all countries, have been accumulated to an almost inconceivable extent. To what purpose shall we apply these treasures, and what shall we do afterwards?

The sources whence all these riches have sprung, supply us with an answer to these questions.

Amongst the sources of musical art, there are two—the national song and church music—which have, at all times, been the most prolific. In Germany, the Reformation under the influence of Luther—who loved music so ardently, and knew so well its influence on the people—gave such an impulse to the spread of the sacred popular song, and thus of music in general, that no other country can show any thing to be compared to it. Up to the middle of the seventeenth century, more than 8000 hymns with from 1900 to 2000 melodies had been collected. A century later,

a catalogue of upwards of 50,000 printed German hymns and spiritual songs was made out by Moser; whilst Nathorp and Kessler secured the possession of more than 3000 sacred melodies. Every town and every church had its trained choirs (those of St. Thomas in Leipzig and of the *Kreuz Kirche* in Dresden have acquired renown), and bands of ambulant singers paraded the streets. The secular national song (as may be seen from the collections of Erk—Irmer, and others) was fostered with the same fondness; and dance and other popular music grew and spread in proportion. The guilds of town-musicians, the numberless bands of strolling players, like migratory birds, carried the seed into all the corners of the earth.

To all these causes must be added the unparalleled industry and faithful and self-denying love of art which characterized our organists and cantors. For two hundred years, these men, accustomed to privation and unknown to fame, continued to work with enthusiastic zeal in the service of their church and their art. Of Seb. Bach we know, that, whilst engaged in numerous official duties and overburdened with the labours of teaching, he yet contrived to produce not only numerous volumes of instrumental compositions and a number of Masses, Oratorios, and other large works; but, besides these, five complete series of Services (*Kirchenmusiken*), for solo, chorus, and orchestra, for every Sunday and festival in the year. Tag, the obscure cantor of Hohenstein for fifty-three years, composed—in addition to twelve daily lessons and his duty at church—every week his cantata (besides other things), wrote out the parts himself, practised and performed it with his choir, and was but too happy to supply every one who asked for it with a copy—gratis, of course, and written with his own hand.—How many other names, more or less known to the world, might not be mentioned in proof of this faithful and mostly ill-rewarded zeal!

If, in addition to these means and causes of musical culture, we remember the operas and chapels of our wonderfully numerous courts, our town-theatres and town-orchestras of the free-cities and other opulent places, continually engaged in the performance of operas, secular cantatas, symphonies, and every description of concert music, we may form some idea of the vast amount of music which has been collected and performed in our native country during the last three centuries. Even the riches of the Netherlands and Italy, at the time when their music was most flourishing, bore no comparison to ours; for those countries wanted, when art was most flourishing amongst them, that inexhaustible and universal source of musical culture, the religious national song (chorale) of Germany.

Another circumstance (and one of a more painful nature) conspired to the same result; viz. the extinction of the real life of the people, the exclusion of the masses from all conscious and independent participation in public affairs, the stifling of freedom of thought and action, the closing of the seas, from the time when autocracy and the manners of the court of Louis XIV found such favour and excited so much imitation in Germany—from the time when the dissevering of the national unity with all its consequences, the thirty years' war and other calamities, overwhelmed almost to annihilation the freedom, rights, and national spirit of the German people.

Thus deprived of the power of accomplishing great national deeds, and compelled to suppress every sign of individual energy and independence, the unquenchable spirit of our nation took refuge in the mystic region of imagination and religious

contemplation. And here it found the art of music ready to afford that consolation and field for activity which was denied in the outer world. At the time when Great Britan gained her glorious constitution, established her maritime dominion, and expanded her commerce over the whole world; when France completed her national unity, and surrounded herself with a triple belt of fortresses; when Russia collected her strength to acquire influence in the affairs of the world, and to effect a movement towards the west: at that time, when, hemmed in as we were, the energies of our minds were poured forth in floods of music; whilst others acted, we raised our songs of religious exaltation to the throne of the Almighty, poured forth our suppressed feelings in tones of anguish, or endeavoured to forget them in strains of mirth. Without doubt, those were the truest, holiest, and sublimest songs that ever have been sung; and as no other time or nation has produced another Bach or Handel, we must not grudge the price we had to pay for what they left us.

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And this time of great preparation, to what has it led? Where are we now, and what is the present state of musical art? Let us take a rapid glance at its subsequent development.

The spiritual, social, and political progress of mankind has necessarily been attended with a decline of the music of the church and the institutions connected with it on the one hand, and the flourish and influence of the old musical guilds and establishments on the other. In the Catholic church, the priests themselves frequently expressed a desire that the masses and other liturgic forms might be shortened and simplified. In the Protestant places of worship, grand orchestral and choral performances became every day more rare. As regards, in particular, the liturgy of the united Evangelical church of Prussia, it is impossible, if considered from a musical point of view, to look upon it otherwise than as a most meagre and, in fact, unartistic and artistically inefficient substitute for that which the music of the Lutheran church once was. The only new institution of any importance in this sphere of art is the Berlin cathedral choir, founded, principally, for the object of assisting at the service in the cathedral and the royal chapel. This choir, which owes its origin, *not* to an impulse from within the church or the congregation, but to an act of regal munificence, has been instrumental in the production of a series of compositions specially written for it, as well as in the revival of works of a more ancient date, particularly those of the middle ages, by Palestrina and others. On the whole, it must therefore be acknowledged that church music—as a matter of course—is both less in extent and intrinsic power than it was in the preceding period. Even in Haydn's and Mozart's masses and anthems, we feel the presence of ideas not exclusively belonging to the church, and of conceptions and feelings of a purely personal nature; they are obviously pervaded more by a naturalistic (theistical) spirit of devotion, than by the fervent and firm belief of the church. Beethoven, in his last mass, has reared up, in starlit night and mystic extacy, his own temple by the side of the venerable spire of St. Stephen's. The manner in which he asserts his "*Credo!*" with the determination of conquering or dying in bold defiance of the powers of unbelief around, and in himself—how he awakens the song of the spheres to bear witness on his behalf; how he pours forth his bitter and tearful "*Crucifixus*," or gives expression and imparts new fervour to the in-

conceivable idea of the "*Incarnatus est*:"—such has never been the spirit of the ancient church, with her faith, like ancient Petra, resting upon and hewn out of the solid rock.

It is the resurrection of the old confession (which doubt and infidelity had crucified) in the free empire of sound; it is a "mystery" instead of the ancient plain dogma, whilst the undeniable consciousness that "faith is wanting" gnaws secretly at the heart.

Is it necessary to speak of the elegant Hummel, of Cherubini's Restoration and Coronation Masses, and similar productions? Mendelssohn approaches nearest to the writers of the ancient school; but only externally. He was enabled to accommodate himself more easily to the *forms* of the church, because he was *spiritually* less intimately connected with that church than either Haydn or Mozart; the former of whom clung to it with child-like attachment, whilst the latter went so far as even to deny a genuine ecclesiastical spirit to Protestants. Here, as everywhere else, Mendelssohn has proved himself a most ingenious and skilful imitator—or rather eclectic—of Bach, Handel, and others. Apart from the vigour and freshness which his eminent talents and surpassing practical skill enabled him to impart to those forms which others had invented before him, the peculiar and fundamental character of his church compositions is feminine tenderness. It is a craving after prayer and devotion, quite different from that enthusiastic and energetic piety which rests upon the rock of our own immoveable belief, no less than the consciousness that this conviction is shared by the numberless congregations, and taught and practised in the church.

Of his, and most other modern compositions, it is to be said that the sacred contents of the text and the forms of the church merely serve to afford an opportunity for artistic exercise. It is not religious enthusiasm, or the church, which has called those works into existence; but it is to the artistic love of creation, or some extraneous purpose (e. g. to furnish compositions for particular singing academies), that most of them owe their origin. The climax in this direction appears to have been reached by H. Dorn, in an eccentric work of his, which has been performed in Berlin and elsewhere, and in which the composer has ingeniously employed the text of the *Requiem* for a series of dramatic and symphonistic scenes. But our first observation applies with equal force to productions of a more serious character. To show this, at least in one instance, I mention Mendelssohn's "*Lobgesang.*" This composition, set to scriptural words, is, both as regards contents and form, an ecclesiastical cantata. But it is preceded by a complete symphony, which, according to its matter and form, should obviously be a first essential part of the cantata that follows. Here, then, the composer has clearly departed from the established form of construction, in order to obtain an enlarged field for musical display. The creative longing of the artist was strong enough to make him overlook the strange pleonasm which he committed by intoning the same hymn of praise, first instrumentally, and then vocally. How did Mendelssohn attain this point? From the example of Beethoven's ninth symphony, which, however, only acted upon him formally, as a grand and extensive structure. But that which in the younger artist is a mere loquacious repetition, was in Beethoven an individual and deep-felt idea. It was the idea that man can only find rest and perfect happiness in the sympathetic

love of man, which reaches farther than the boldest flights of thought and fantasy. He felt that here the mystic instrumental world could no longer suffice, that it required the voice of man to intone the song of universal brotherhood, in which the "millions" of loving and beloved fellow beings raise their united strain of joyful adoration to the "starry skies."

All this, however, is not to be laid to the special charge of individual artists. It is the effect of the advancing pressure of the times, even upon those who lack the honesty or courage either to resist or cheerfully to follow its tide. But this does not make the consequences the less serious, as those should take to heart who have allowed themselves to be misled by the assertion of our æstheticians that the choice of the subject is of no importance, whilst its treatment is everything. If the subject be such that the artist cannot fully and honestly devote himself to it, then the representation also will be hollow and only half true. By separating the word and form of the church from the church itself, and making them subservient to extraneous purposes, or the mere desire of artistic creation, we accustom ourselves to stray away from that which is definite, truthful, and characteristic, into the indefinite region of generalities. We estrange ourselves from every thing that is energetic and characteristic, until at last we actually dislike and shun the truth, and begin, in general and meaningless phrases, to court the favour of the numberless hosts of those who are themselves void of character. For a general phrase, it is true, cannot satisfy any one; but neither does it repel any one—except the small minority of those who maintain a character of their own, and pay attention to what is going on around them.

The same observations apply to the Oratorio—a form of art which, for a long time, and with more pertinacity than justice, has been asserted to belong exclusively to the church. There was one branch of this form which might be strictly classed under the head of church music. It consisted in the solemn recitation (chanting) of the Gospel on Good Fridays and other great festivals, the choir and congregation alternately taking a part in the performance. Bach's Passion Music is the perfection of the ecclesiastical oratorio, and pertains to Divine worship. The other branch of this form of art was that which Handel brought over to England from Italy, and by the power of his genius raised to the height of importance which it has attained. This oratorio never belonged to the church; it merely employed biblical incidents—as was the tendency of those times—either for purely artistic purposes, or partly with a view to religious edification. I say partly; for although the text was in some cases exclusively of a religious nature (as, e. g. in Handel's Messiah), there were others (e. g. Judas, Samson, Saul, &c.) in which feelings of a different nature—the spirit of freedom, heroism, love, &c.—entered, as in the Bible, so largely into the conception and representation of the work, as to make it a matter of difficulty to decide whether the religious and divine, or the profane and purely human element predominates. For this question is not affected by the circumstance that, according to the spirit of those times, human affairs and human energies were invariably referred to Divine Providence; else we should also have to class amongst religious works Alexander's Feast, with its unexpected address to the holy Cecilia.

In Haydn, the secular tendency of the oratorio becomes most decided. He first depicts to us the creation; and although the text of the Bible forme the leading

subject of his work, and the hymns of the angels constitute its culminating point, still we everywhere feel that we are upon our own earth, and children of nature in the blooming world of nature. In the Seasons, this tendency is consummated. The poet, with the most felicitous self-abandonment, represents to us the life of nature in the form of an idyl; the labours of the field, the delights of the chase, of wine and love, the stillness and the terrors of nature. Even devotion finds its expression in the shape of a natural, but by no means exclusively directing and ruling, principle in man's breast. And if we distinguish this and similar works (e. g. amongst the more modern ones, Schumann's *Peri*) from the proper oratorio by the term of cantata, it remains incontestable that they are no longer within the pale of the church. The same assertion holds good in respect to those modern oratorios which (as, e. g. Schneider's *Weltgericht* and *Sündflut*) are founded upon or have reference to biblical texts; as, for instance, Spohr's *Babylon*, and Hiller's *Jerusalem*. Their character and object are not ecclesiastical, but artistic. Mendelssohn alone forms an exception. He has imitated Bach's ecclesiastical oratorio in his "Paul;" and in his Elijah he has treated a scriptural episode in the manner of Handel and his times, which the literal contents will sufficiently prove. The great imitative talent of this composer, and his artistic eminence, in general, have in this instance also concealed from the eyes of the multitude how far every imitation must necessarily fall short of original truthfulness. It is reserved for a time of greater decision of character and more unbiased judgment to find out how greatly truth has been sacrificed in these works, at present so highly extolled, and how deeply their example and tendency have affected the whole state of modern art.

The changes that have appeared in the province of the creative art, have been followed by corresponding changes in executive art. In the place or by the side of the ancient church choirs, vocal societies have sprung up and gained ascendency everywhere. In Germany, the first of these was founded in Berlin by Fasch. Now —after a lapse of half a century—there is scarcely a village without its singing association (*Singverein*), and—thanks to our German individualism and fondness for division—almost every little town has two or three of them. In Berlin, there are some ten or twenty, and every organist or cantor tries, if possible, to get up one for himself. Church music, oratorios, cantatas of all descriptions and ages, occasionally also opera music, afford to these societies material for practice. Their tendencies and merits depend not only upon the qualification and views of their conductors, but also upon the fitness, perseverance, and energy of the members—a consideration which is unavoidable, and which is of still greater importance in respect to the aggregate meetings of the societies of different towns—those "musical festivals" which, originating in Thuringia*, have spread over the whole of Germany.

The strict and uniform schooling, and discipline of professional and salaried choristers, cannot be expected from these free associations; still less are they able to acquire that fixedness of purpose and character which the ancient church and cathedral choirs derived from the very nature of their calling. This, however, must not prevent us from recognizing, in their increasing number and prosperity, a mighty

* The founder of these musical festivals in Germany was G. F. Bishoff, under whose direction the "Creation" was performed at Frankenhausen in the year 1804.—Tr.

progress. Through them, music has become the property of the whole nation; they have drawn the people into the active sphere of art; and every one knows that nothing is so dear to, and operates so powerfully upon, man as that in which he, from his own free choice, takes himself an active part. That which I hear, enters into my existence from without, awakens and enriches my mind; but that which I sing, is the effluence of my own life, the exertion of my own power to refresh and elevate myself as well as others. Of this we have an illustration and proof in the case of the composer, who involuntarily sings even when engaged in the creation of instrumental works (Beethoven was still heard to sing aloud even when he had become quite deaf). It is this which gives to the frequently unskilled societies of amateurs the perseverance to continue for months the practice of the same work, whilst, on the other hand, such continued practice must make them much more familiar with that particular work, and with art in general, than would a transitory performance by others.

This is the beneficial side of our vocal unions. It is enhanced by the circumstance that their members, generally speaking, are better educated than those of our church choirs and similar institutions. The latter are, and must be, technically and musically more advanced; but the former surpass them in general cultivation and susceptibility of mind. These societies have, however, also their weak side, which in some instances must prove injurious to the progress of musical art. Deficiency in technical skill makes people timid and unwilling to face difficulties, of whatever nature they may be; but, in the province of art, every new step in advance is doubly difficult, inasmuch as every new idea necessarily requires a new form of expression. Hence Handel's violin parts were at one time considered too difficult; Haydn's quartetts were said to be "heathenishly" hard*. Mozart's quartetts were pronounced to be full of misprints; his Don Giovanni and Figaro overladen with unnecessary difficulties. Hence our singing societies also are inclined to confine themselves to music which is more easy of execution, or more familiar to them; thus depriving both themselves and the circle of their hearers of much that might prove refreshing, invigorating, and conducive to the advancement of musical art. The composer, in order to gain a position, is to a certain extent compelled to accommodate himself to the wishes and habits of the weak. This obligation is altogether incompatible with real progress, truthfulness, and individuality, which are the indispensable conditions of a genuine artistic career: and the occupation of an artist becomes either a mere means of living, or, at best, the stronghold of mannerism and one-sidedness. Thus, some ten years ago, a wide circle of admirers gathered around Fried. Schneider, as lately around Mendelssohn. Nothing but an expansion of knowledge and increased skill will break through these trammels and one-sidedness; and then only we may expect to reap all the benefits which the present popularization of musical art is calculated to confer.

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Next to the music of the church, the opera is the richest branch of musical art, both as regards its resources and its effects.

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* Here the author's point is lost in the translation. Haydn's name is pronounced by Germans in the same way as the word *Heiden* (heathens); hence *Haydnish* (in the manner of Haydn) sounds like *heidnish* (heathenish).—Tr.

The opera is intended to be, and must be, a real drama, a piece for the stage; for its characters appear before us in the form of living and acting persons. None require more to be reminded of this first requisite than those who are musically most advanced. They are, indeed, fully convinced of the dramatic nature of all superior musical development. In the characteristic exposition of the parts of a duett, in every good sonata and quartett, they recognize a truly dramatic language; the different parts are to them so many ideal persons, speaking and acting, now in union with, and now in opposition to, each other. In this sense, every one of Haydn's quartetts and Beethoven's symphonies is a drama, and Mozart's and Beethoven's operas are pre-eminently dramatic. But all this, however excellent and precious in itself, does not fulfil the chief requirement. In the opera, the persons themselves that appear before us upon the stage, in their characters, sufferings, and actions, must be living, acting, and characteristically faithful representations of man. The drama itself, in all its presuppositions, movements, and developments, must be truth and reality, such as we require, and have always required it from the poet. The language only is changed and has become musical. Such was the original intention of the opera; in it was to be resuscitated the ancient Greek tragedy. Not only Galilei, Peri, and Caccini, aimed at this, but also Gluck, who, in word and deed, acknowledged the dramatical element—action, character, and most faithful truthfulness of language—as the chief object of his task. Disdaining to be any longer a mere music-maker, he boldly and cheerfully cast aside all that luxuriance of melody, those rapid embellishments and displays of bravura, which had become wide-spread and standing forms of the old Italian opera, but which were intended and calculated for none but purely musical effects. The idea which he endeavoured to realize was founded upon the perception of a truth which holds good for all time and every nation. Wherever man is brought before us, there he absorbs our chief attention; he becomes the principal object to us, rising high above all others in spiritual and bodily power and importance, and insisting upon every thing being sacrificed rather than that he should be neglected.

Let us candidly confess that not one of all our German composers, however great and surpassing some of them have proved in other respects, has had the resolution and firmness of character to follow in the path of Gluck, and, like this illustrious pioneer, devote himself unconditionally to the paramount object of the drama—with the single exception of the banished Richard Wagner. Whatever special objections may be made against his musical forms and the language of his text, or even against the intellectual standing point upon which he endeavoured to place the drama, this praise will always be due to him—that he has faithfully kept to the task he proposed to himself, viz. to produce a real drama, and to aim at no other effects but those legitimately belonging to the drama. And this honour is not a small one in a time when we have to witness so many instances of thoughtlessness, weakness of character, faithlessness and venality in Art, as well as in other spheres of life.

In the German opera, the purely dramatic element has never been able to attain full ascendency; the musical element, or the expression of individual sensations, has always been predominant. It is not difficult to point out the cause of this. The two requisites of dramatic life and truthfulness—national freedom and unrestrained energy of action, or, in place of it, that piquante *petite guerre* of intrigue which

keeps our western neighbours active and alive, even in times of political depression —were not to be found in our nation, either at the time when our opera commenced its existence, or afterwards. And the more fully the genius of musical art revealed itself to the German, and its mysteries filled his soul, the more he was drawn away from the external sphere of active life into the internal region of dreaming and brooding contemplation. Mozart, the most felicitous composer in this field of art, where he chiefly earned the admiration and affection that followed him to his early grave, has certainly given us numberless delineations, not only of deep-felt internal sensations, but also of the most truthful external traits of character. What lover of art requires to be informed of this, or has not felt it with delight and gratitude? Is it necessary to enlarge in terms of praise upon the grandeur and tragic power of so many of his choruses and arias in *Idomeneus*, or to point to the characters of Osmin, of the love-warm Belmonte, of Leporello between Don Juan and Masetto, as a treasury of truthful musical expression?—And yet we have no hesitation in asserting that the idea of producing a drama, and nothing else—a drama which should be truthful as a whole, as well as in the expression of every single word—never acquired in him the force of a firm resolve. That he had a correct insight into the nature and requirements of the drama, is abundantly evident from the letters he wrote about the scenic arrangement of *Idomeneus*, as well as from many other observations. But those documentary evidences prove with equal force (as may be seen from Nissen's biography) that, in general, all he required of a dramatic text was to provide him with a "*libretto*." He even accepted Don Juan as a "*drama giocoso*," capable of "rewarding a musician;" whilst he was at all times ready and willing to accommodate himself to the powers and wishes of particular singers. Not only, the bravoura arias in Idomeneus, Belmonte, the Magic Flute, &c. but all his operas afford abundant proof that the enticing charms of his art, the lyric character of his own life, and the voluptuous craving for purely musical creation, which filled his whole being and carried him away so irresistibly, could never be sufficiently subdued to become completely subservient to the rigorous demands of the drama. The guiding idea and supreme law of all his highest efforts was that music and drama should blend together in perfect equality, that neither the one nor the other should predominate. But this is an impossibility. The undulating tide of emotions and self-absorbing contemplation are diametrically opposed to that sharpness of characteristic delineation and energy of action which the drama requires. Promptness of action, well-defined character, and living scenic progress, inevitably melt away in the dissolving play of the waves of sound.

No historical fact proves, perhaps, so clearly how far the Germans of Mozart's time had strayed from the true idea of the drama as the manner in which their poets and musicians treated the play of *Figaro*. In Beaumarchais's trilogy (the "Barber of Seville," afterwards painted with so much cheerfulness and sensual intoxication by Rossini, "*Le Mariage de Figaro*" and "*La Mère Coupable*") there breathes the spirit of implacable hatred and mortal combat against the unjust and demoralizing prerogatives and infectious corruption of the ancient noblesse of France, which existed previously to the Revolution, the advent of which it hastened. Marie Antoinette, foreseeing the effect of these satirical productions, is even said to have exclaimed, in speaking of Beaumarchais, "*Cet homme nous perd.*" And this same drama, under

the hands of the German poet and musician, is metamorphosed into a harmless vaudeville, a mixture of tenderness, sensual desire, and roguery, in which no serious thought, far less a political one, can arise, and which the most prudish mother might listen to and sing with her fair-haired daughters, without fear or hesitation. The words lose their clearness of meaning, the diction becomes pointless, the vivacity and elasticity of action, with which the Frenchman presses forwards towards victory, grows tame or dissolves itself into a flood of charming melody. Beaumarchais's laughing and sparkling hatred melts into a sweetly purling champagne-froth, as exhilarating and evanescent as ever was offered to a Du Barry by the gallant Louis XV, or sipped at the *Rennweg** by the lips of dainty diplomatists.

In this spirit Mozart composed; in this spirit also composed the whole host of German, Italian, and French writers, before and after him. The contemporaneous Italian composers with Paesiello and Cimaroso, Cherubini of dubious nationality, the French under Gretry (himself a Belgian), Paer, Winter, Rhigini, Weigl, Spohr, and all other direct successors and imitators of Mozart; the modern Italian composers, under the leadership of Rossini, who, fairly tired of victory, at the latter period of his life prefers angling to opera writing: all these have had the same object in view and employed similar means. A treasure of music is stored up in their countless works. Some of them are light and serene, others more gloomy. Here we find versatility and diversity, there monotony and mannerism; one is rich in melody, another more scientific and laboured; whilst Mozart shows greater freedom and lightness of fancy, Beethoven dives more deeply into the mysteries of his art, losing himself now and then in the dialogue of his orchestra, which not only entwines itself around the dialogue upon the stage, but often threatens completely to overgrow it. In one of our German composers—Dittersdorf—there is a decided inclination for drastic painting; but his field of vision, embracing only the narrow and povetry-stricken existence of the inhabitants of small towns, is too confined, and his artistic resources are inadequate.

In this ocean of music, whose waves have brought to light and buried so much that is charming, deeply touching, and rich in spirit, two individuals have appeared prominent above all others. They appear to me indicative of the point in question.

The first who attracts our attention is Spontini, the composer of *La Vestale*, *Cortez*, and *Olympia*. We will leave it to the small critics to descant upon his inferiority to Mozart, and his want of German science and depth (of which we are, perhaps, too much inclined to boast), or to count up all his other shortcomings. That he was a man of character and energy, he has proved in his operas, which, in spite of all their defects and errors, undeniably aim at a genuine dramatic form and dramatic effect. How did he, who, in Italy, had been a Rossinian before Rossini, become what he was? He not only found in Paris texts of dramatic merit, and favorable for scenic arrangement, but he also imbibed much of the active and energetic spirit of the French nation. Civil freedom, it is true, had almost disappeared after Napoleon's usurpation of the throne, and the minds of the people had been put in fetters under the sway of his imperial despotism; but this usurper was a hero, and this despotism concealed its nakedness, as Cæsar concealed his bald head under

* A street in Vienna, where most of the foreign ambassadors have their *hôtels*.—Tr.

a wreath of laurels. The military camp, with its glitter and clang of arms, the thundering "*gloire de la grand armée*," had intoxicated the nation with the proud idea of universal dominion. This feverish excitement and this Imperial splendour personified in the character of the hero, the sworn and faithless rival, the imposing figure of the high priest and the noble-minded lover; these form the subjects of Spontini's operas. The thoughtful word of the free poet was irreconcilable with the suspicion and egotism of the most autocratical of all autocrats: poetry and eloquence became mute under the reign of a Napoleon. Music alone grew louder and louder; it accompanied its idol with harmless pomp wherever he went; and, even after his fall, continued its victorious march over the countries that had thrown off his yoke. It is true, we quiet Germans at first found Spontini's trumpets and clanging brass—so natural and necessary to all Napoleonists—oppressive; but only this noise, and nothing else, has been preserved by us, and grown from year to year.

The second remarkable personage is Karl Maria von Weber. Körner's war songs made him the bard of our nation. During the days of oppression and foreign dominion, the thoughts and imaginations of the German people had fled back from the humiliating present to the "romantic" times of national freedom and heroism, to the traditional sphere of the middle ages. In this circle of romance and legendary lore, into which the Germans had been introduced by their latest poets, Weber appeared with his *Freischütz*. His music gave a popular representation of the dashing huntsman and the jealous peasant; it painted, to the life, the simplicity and boisterous hilarity of the country people, the humour of the villagers, the "romantic" enthusiasm of la Motte Fouqué's virgins; it rushed past in a storm of fury and anguish, in the spectral hunt. This was the highest point which the musical drama of Germany was at that time able to attain. Euryanthe was the next opera. In none of his works has Weber proved himself so fertile as in this; no where else has he, or any of his predecessors or contemporaries, adapted so ingeniously and happily the tone of expression to the time and place to which the drama refers. But by this time the thoughts and ideas of the people had already taken another direction. The middle age, with its spectral apparitions and mysterious voices, its mingled idolization and degradation of women, the whole circle of its ideas and characters had become strange to the people. Neither Weber nor his librettist* had been able to distinguish between that which is transient and perishable, and that which lives for ever: Euryanthe was and remains a failure. But, though this opera met with no success upon the stage, it will for ever hold a prominent position in the development of our art, as one of the most energetic and praiseworthy attempts at truthful delineation.

Spontini's and Weber's dramatic efforts were the offspring of stirring times, and could not last beyond them. As no man can give what he has not, so no time can produce anything but that which is its own. Art is always and everywhere the secret confession as well as the undying monuments of its time.

Thus, the characterless and frivolous period of the Restoration gave to the French their Auber, who, having at first been the close imitator of Boieldieu, afterwards borrowed from Rossini, and, aided by the dramatic tendency of his nation and Scribe's stage experience, at last succeeded in producing some striking scenic effects. To him

* Madame de Chezy.—Tr.

who has a deeper insight into the matter, these works are mere collateral farces to the "comedy of the fifteen years," which the French were then playing with the Bourbons, and continued to play afterwards.

For a period like this, the earnest muse of the drama was no fit companion; but all its wants and desires have since been fully provided for by Meyerbeer. Brought up in the German school, this world-renowned composer first adopted Rossini's style, and adhered to it as long as that style held sway; he then made himself master of Scribe's and Auber's scenic contrivances, and finally initiated himself into Weber's mode of sound-painting, not only in the delineation of local scenes and characters, but even in the adoption of the popular German tone. All these different styles and resources he employs with absolute command and unparalleled skill and refinement. His wonderful penetration enables him to find the right tone for the most intense passion with the same certainty as for the humorous sayings and doings of that strange band of heroes who, in their coarse freize coats, and without either much thanks or reward, fought Frederick's victorious battles against the united armies of the continent. For the fanaticism of the consecrated murderers in St. Bartholomew night, he finds the proper specific colouring with as much facility as for the zealotry of the Anabaptists and the antiquated psalmody of pious pilgrims; he even has caught up, with happy instinct, the tones of innocent tenderness. It is probable that, even if he had not been so much favored by external circumstances, which secured to him the advantage of a chosen staff of performers, the most costly and brilliant *mise en scène*, and the services of an obliging press, he would nevertheless have taken the lead in the operatic world, such as it is now, or may be. There is another thing which would always have turned the balance in his favour: he was and is altogether the man of his times.

For, with all his astonishing talents and tact, he lacks one thing—honesty, the honesty of an artist, which makes him elevate himself to his subject, with all sincerity and faithfulness. The honest artist chooses his subject for its own sake, and has no other end in view but to realize his ideal, just as he sees and feels it, without any secondary motives or reservation. It is only from such honest love that a genuine work of art can arise; whilst none but a genuine work of art (whatever may be its contents or tendency) can exercise a spiritual and moral influence upon man, and become both a monument and auxiliary of that progress which is promised to, and demanded of, mankind. This honesty Meyerbeer, fortunately for himself in times like these, has never shown. He nowhere devotes himself exclusively and entirely to his subject; he is neither fond of it for its own sake, nor does he place full confidence in it: on the contrary—he surrounds it with every imaginable defence, and employs it merely as a means of serving his own personal end, which is to produce striking effects. This hunting after effect has become a characteristic trait in Meyerbeer. No one has ever pursued this aim so steadily and successfully as he; it is his sole object, and pervades every one of his works from the moment of its first conception to the last and minutest finishing touch. How many things entirely foreign to the subject have been dragged into his "Huguenots" or his "Prophet;" things which neither advance the action, nor elucidate or develop the different characters! Every possible scene or contrivance that might strike the eye or the ear—the rising of the sun, skating on the ice, *ranz de vaches*, fireworks, dances, high

masses, explosions, gipsies, processions, vesper bells, illumination of the Louvre—who can enumerate all the things that are brought before us during these four or five long hours?—has been pressed into service. Every musical resource, too, has been exhausted. Now he paints to us the good old times in highly characteristic tones; the next moment there is noise and clang, without reason or restraint; then follows, perhaps, a solfeggio upon the chords of the major and minor ninth, rising and falling with the fluctuations of modern sentimentality—that insatiable longing for a state of longing *(Sehnsucht nach Sehnsucht)*; next a brilliant bravura passage, or a *mésalliance* of piccolo flute and double bass: no stationer ever laid out such a multitude of fancy articles on his broad counter. Here everything is offered to everybody. The only pity is that one thing crowds upon and stifles another; and that the work of art, as a whole, is lost amidst the multitude of details. It is a lumber shop, which you leave with your mind distracted and wearied.

But how well has this man studied the existing period in the "high school" of Europe! Is there any force of character or energy of action to be found in these times? Are they times of a deep, internal and resolute purpose? Has this fashionable "society," which pays and rules the stage, preserved in its bosom any decided element of activity, of honest hatred or honest love? Does it feel any want so pressing as that of relaxation from the fatiguing chase after worldly profits or honors? Meyerbeer will remain to future historians a monument of the present day; for "he who satisfies his time will live for all succeeding ages." But, alas, that such glorious gifts should be thus squandered away!

Such is the opera of the present day. It is as characteristic of, as it is indispensable to, our times. It fills every stage; and, whilst it consumes their very marrow, compels their managers to run into the most extravagant expenditure. In order to meet these outlays, not only are princes and governments solicited for aid, but every means is employed to pander to the changing desires of the multitude. The purveyors for the stage are compelled continually to hunt after novelties and attractions; long-forgotten things are brought to light again; old popular ballads are dressed up with spangles and faded ribbons; the ear is filled with endless noise and confusion; and all times, all nations and styles, truth and falsehood, poesy and vulgarity, the most shallow and the most profound, are indiscriminately jumbled together. It is difficult, if not quite impossible, for a composer to assert his independence in opposition to the demands which the operatic public have been accustomed to make on the musical drama, even if he cherish nobler ideas in his own bosom. The violent employment of the orchestra, the massive choruses, the exaggerated diction, the pomp of the *mise en scène* (Ausstattung), the sickly craving after external novelty—all these, as matters now stand, have become conditions of success. And success—upon the stage more so than anywhere else—is the condition of activity; whilst failure, whether deserved or undeserved, may easily prove fatal for life.

Hence it is not difficult to conceive why some musicians should have shown a desire to enter upon a field of art which promised a more chaste employment of artistic means. It was at Berlin, as every one knows, that the first attempts were made to restore the tragedy of ancient Greece with the aid of music. The first trial was made with Antigone, Mendelssohn being the composer. It is equally well known

that this production created great sensation both in Germany and elsewhere, and that it was hailed by many with admiration, as a step towards a higher and brighter future. And, indeed, if it were desirable that our music should be applied to the ancient tragedy, it could not, on the whole, have been done better than by Mendelssohn, to whom the spirit of repose and gentleness in the poetry of Sophocles was naturally more congenial than the storm of passion and the energy of action which characterise the drama of Æschylus. For the higher power of the dramatic faculty had not been given to him, but was rather repugnant to his delicate and retiring, more feeling than creative, cast of mind. This is evident from the very nature of the dramatic tasks which he proposed to himself: the Lorelei, which he intended to compose with Geibel; the "*Sturm*," which he had previously desired to write with Immermann; his Midsummer-night's Dream, and the Wedding of Gamacho.

But, leaving out of consideration the character and genius of the composer, we must pronounce the attempted restoration of the Greek tragedy—and of Antigone in particular—an undertaking unsuitable for our time, and void of living interest, however highly it may have been extolled by zealous philologists, or by the members of that "highly refined" society, which is continually on the look out for something new and classic, and running after a kind of spiritual aristocracy. We may read the Ancients for ourselves (and who would willingly deny himself this treat?); our imagination may carry us back to their times, and more or less vividly portray their actions, thoughts, and leading maxims; or, if this should not succeed, we may employ our knowledge and understanding to assist us over those portions that are foreign and perplexing to our mode of conception, and thus secure to ourselves the enjoyment of all that has remained available for us. In the same manner we do not object to, but are well pleased with, the charming sports of the fairies "hiding their heads in acorn cups," as we read of them in the quiet book of the poet; our dreaming fancy is drawn into their whirling dances "more swiftly than the rolling moons," although they do not even possess the reality of the living popular legend.

But the matter assumes a different aspect when such things are brought before us in tangible reality upon the stage. Here our imagination no longer acts the part of a kind mediatrix; our bodily eye beholds bodily things, and our understanding perceives and imperatively demands reality where it is represented in a bodily form, allowing our interest to be absorbed only so far as we perceive, in the representation of that reality, the reality of our own existence. Further we are not even able to follow the ancient poet. The power of morality and law is everlasting; but the forms in which it reveals itself in Antigone are strange to us. That the interment of a royal prince should have been forbidden under penalty of death, and that this interdict should have become an acknowledged law; that it should be at the same time an indispensable condition of the ultimate salvation of his soul that the slain son of the king should be buried; that his sister, impelled by the power of blood-relationship and a sense of duty, should be driven to a transgression of the law, and thus to death: these are ideas so utterly at variance with our own mode of conception, that it is not the unbelieving heart, but merely the understanding, which can take an interest in the representation. How, then, can they give rise to music, we mean to

that *genuine* music which emanates from a soul completely filled with its subject, and moved in its innermost recesses? And how could such music take root and thrive in the diction of the Greek, directed as it is, almost exclusively, to external perceptions or cold reflections? Music had to relinquish the fulness of its power; it had to deny the nature of its being, as it has developed itself in the course of centuries out of, and for, our own existence. It was compelled to assume a declamatory form, and, strictly speaking, should have become a pure recitativo (as it was in the days of the ancient Greeks), which would have made it unbearable to modern ears. Mendelssohn, with his fine discrimination, avoided this error, as well as the opposite one; viz. the full employment of all the resources of modern art, which would have completely torn to pieces and overwhelmed the work of the poet. His prudence and circumspection led him to take the style of Gluck for his model, as we are justified in asserting, if we consider how much Antigone differs from his ordinary style of writing, and how closely it approaches to that of Gluck. That the depth and truthfulness of Gluck's drama could not be reached by his imitator, was by no means attributable to the superior endowment of the former alone, but also and chiefly to the different nature of their tasks. The texts selected by Gluck rest almost entirely upon a musical basis, and, even in their minutest detail, not only admit of, but are favourable to, musical treatment. With the ancient tragedy, it is exactly the reverse. Here even the connexion of the words—the first law of declamation—had occasionally to be sacrificed on account of the rhythm, which, being an indispensable condition of Greek prosody, frequently breaks off the verse without completing the sense of the words. All that could be attained under these circumstances, declamation, or rather scansion—adapted, as far as it was possible, to a melody—expression of the sense of the words, the nature of the scene, and the feeling of the moment, has been accomplished by Mendelssohn, with intelligence, tact, and great talent. But he has as little succeeded in doing justice to the ancient poet as our musical art can succeed; and he has degraded this, our art, by employing it for purposes which not only limit its powers and resources, but actually ensnare it into a want of truthfulness.

What right have we Germans to charge the voluptuous Rossini, or any other light-hearted singer (as we are so ready to do—and justified in doing), with untruth and unfaithfulness towards the poet, if we treat Sophocles, or allow him to be treated, with equal unfairness, just because it tickles our fancy that he too should be dragged over the much-worn boards and into our Cimmerian darkness, in order to fill up vacant hours and empty hearts? How much more vigorous and honest was that first attempt, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, to reproduce the ancient tragedy *in imitations*. The object itself could not possibly be attained; but the intention arose out of the real artistic requirements of those times and a love-warm affection for the ancients; it was a natural and innocent desire to do the best that could be done, and left the great and unapproachable Greeks untouched. If it was impossible to carry out this intention, the attempt led at least to the creation of the opera, to Gluck's sublime productions, and became the basis for everything noble and truthful that may still make its appearance in this field of art. We might apply to this attempt the strange though truthful saying of the poet:

*Auch dieses Wort hat nicht gelogen:*
*Wen Gott betrügt, der ist wohl betrogen**.

Any effort made with an honest intention in the direction of the truth, will somewhere, or at some time, meet with the deserved success, although the first aim should be a mistaken one.

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The third expansive field of art is that of pure instrumental composition; in connexion with which, we shall also consider vocal music for the concert and private family.

The introductory observations at the commencement of this section make it unnecessary to enter into a deep discussion on the nature and merits of all those compositions for orchestra, solo instruments, organ, and piano, which have accumulated since Bach, Haydn, and Beethoven. Neither is it necessary to enlarge upon those vocal compositions which are not comprised under the head of Church or Opera music. This vocal music, which appears mostly in the form of songs, is, generally, the reverberation of those more fleeting lyric moments when nature, continually re-born in and around us, assumes a pleasing expression in the mouth of the poet and singer. Every sensitive mind carries about this universal element of song, this yearning for love, these forest delights and pleasures of spring, and whatever else moves in every one's breast; it understands at once the words and the tune, even if the sentiment be not quite true to nature and the expression be indefinite. Hence it is that we are so easily led to coincide and be satisfied with our lyric writers. We almost forget that even here, in the smallest space and the simplest form, the greatest depth may be attained and demanded; that here, also, it is possible to give the most truthful expression; and that it is this truthfulness alone which constitutes real poetry, whilst everything else is mere play, or vain aspiration after the ideal of man's existence. Amongst the thousands of our poets that have sung of spring and gazed on flowers, Goethe alone has truly painted the "glorious light of nature;" to him alone it was given to depict the "tender-hearted" violet, "humbly stooping and unknown," and with the very sound and dance of the syllables to rock us into the deep repose and peace of innocence, to introduce us into that ever-open paradise on earth of which no jealous angel with flaming sword—except the evil genius of our own pride and haughtiness—defends the entrance. How many are there who only take a peep into this paradise, and then falteringly utter what they have seen and heard in words and tones, half truth and half distortion! How few of those who stand outside listening have the remotest idea of all that might be heard within, of all the depths that would have been disclosed to their view.

Let us ascend from this humble sphere to more ambitious tasks; and first to the symphony. What our great masters have created in this field, has everywhere become known and appreciated, whilst it has produced a charming after-growth in Schumann, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Gade, and many other earlier or later composers. It is the same with our quartett and pianoforte music. Amongst the composers for

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* This saying, too, is true, though hard to be believed:
He whom the gods deceive, is well deceived.

the last-named instrument, Chopin and Liszt have to be added to those already mentioned.

Amongst the symphonists that have followed after Beethoven, there is one, Hector Berlioz, whose name deserves to be specially recorded. The spiritual tendency of his symphonistic works, which is in many respects most remarkable for his time, will form the subject of a subsequent examination. Here our attention is drawn, first of all, to the composition of his orchestra. It is necessary to read his "*Cours d'Instrumentation*" (distinguished by its display of a vast amount of technical knowledge and poetical perception), and other writings of his, in order to learn how he purposes to constitute his orchestra. These hosts of instruments, these choruses of large and small flutes and all kinds of wind-instruments, these graduated bands of bow-instruments, these harps and pianos, and these masses of brass and pulsatile instruments: these may produce an overpowering volume of sound; they may afford a variety of mixed tones, of new tints and shades, and effects never heard before—such as Berlioz has actually discovered, in great variety, and most ingeniously employed in many of his works. But the spiritual life of the orchestra, that poetic and dramatic truthfulness which depends upon the individualization of the different parts, upon their characteristic distinction and its perspicuous development, must necessarily be impeded, if not entirely stifled in such masses of instrumental sound.

This consideration is of greater importance for the music of the present day than the works themselves of the ingenious Frenchman, however highly they may be valued. For this new organization of the orchestra has penetrated everywhere, exercising an influence and producing results absolutely of a most alarming nature. It has developed itself gradually and without any preconcerted plan. Berlioz cannot be called its founder, but has merely brought it to its consummation; he represents the intelligence of the movement which has been followed up most energetically, and —if we accept the principle—most ingeniously, by Meyerbeer and Wagner.

The first thing that attracts the notice of the observer in this new orchestration, is the vast increase that has taken place in the number and diversity of the different kinds of instruments, and of the wind-instruments in particular. This has, again, made it necessary to strengthen the stringed band, and thus a mass of sound is opposed to the singing (in the opera and cantata), which at one time forces the voices into an exaggerated accentuation, driving them up to the utmost height of their compass, and at another time stifles them under its weight. Even the choruses are driven to violent outbursts; and, in order that a solo may be able to penetrate, the composer is often induced to resort to unusual and questionable combinations of instruments. Thus Meyerbeer has applied the trumpet to the soft cantilena of a dirge or love song in G minor (I believe in *Robert le Diable*); and similar anomalies might be pointed out in the works of Auber and others.

The second noticeable feature of the new orchestra is the *emasculation* of the trumpet and French horn (even the trombone has been thus maltreated) by means of valves and pistons. When we cease to aim at truth, we also cease to discern and appreciate that which is characteristic; for every character is satisfied with, and true to, itself; it tries to be, and to appear, nothing else but what it really is. Now there are in the entire series of tonal personification (*Tonpersonificationen*) no characters of a more decided cast than the heroic trumpet and the enthusiastic horn, as they

appear in their natural condition. Even the incompleteness and limited extent of their scales (as I have shown in my School of Composition) is necessary to their being and character. Achilles, with the cunning and persuasive powers of Ulysses, would be no longer Achilles; the unsophisticated Alpine shepherd cannot possess the versatility of a polished and narrow-chested citizen. Neither would the clarionet's multitude of notes be of use to the trumpet, or the pliable serviceableness of the bassoon befit the sylvan horn. The peculiar character of these instruments, and even the very defectiveness of their compass, has never failed to lead the penetrating composer to more or less characteristic turns and combinations, and often rewarded his faithful adherence to nature with deeply interesting results. It was sufficient to drag these children of nature out of their original sphere of sound, and convert them into cosmopolitan creatures by depriving them of all their innocent peculiarities, in order to entangle the perpetrators in a maze of half truth and half falsehood. The introduction of valves has, undoubtedly, completed and expanded the scale; but the new notes are mostly impure, the natural notes have lost their characteristic clearness and peculiar colouring, and the sonorous power of the instruments is broken.

The third point is the introduction of what is termed the "mellow brass chorus" (cornets, Sax-horns, tubas, and other instruments of multifarious names) into the orchestra.

It is not here our intention to declare war against all newly-invented or resuscitated ancient instruments, nor would it befit the author to do so, inasmuch as he himself has found at least one of them (the chromatic tenor horn, employed in the oratorio Mose) indispensable. If our masters, until Beethoven, have been able to achieve great things without them, it does not therefore follow that we should reject means of which they could not avail themselves, because they were unknown to them; just as little as they contented themselves with the still more limited means of Bach and Handel. Several of these new instruments have already proved serviceable for genuine artistic purposes (as, e. g. the bass clarionet in Wagner's "*Lohengrin*," for which it would be absolutely impossible to find a substitute); others may prove—who knows how soon, and where?—equally important; and it is even possible that whole choruses of them will be required. There is no means of effect that may not possibly be serviceable, or even indispensable for some artistic purpose; and then it is right and proper that we should avail ourselves of it. Nevertheless, the employment of the new choruses of brass-instruments, in the manner in which they are used at present, must appear not only suggestive of serious considerations, but, indeed, generally pernicious.

For the introduction of these instruments, together with the valve trumpets and horns, has the effect of obliterating almost every trace of character, and causing the most effective orchestral contrasts to disappear. And this general result is of far greater moment than the advantages gained for special purposes.

In the old orchestra, the stringed quartett and the chorus of wind-instruments formed the most decided contrasts; whilst an equally characteristic distinction prevailed amongst the latter between the brass (horns, trombones, trumpets, and kettle drums) and the chorus of the wood instruments (bassoons, clarionets, flutes, &c.). Splendour, power, warlike fire, and festive grandeur sounded out of the trumpets and trombones; every chorus of instruments and every single instrument had its

distinct character. If any of these contrasts had to be softened down or effaced, the horns (Waldhörner) naturally stepped in between the severe brass and the wood; and the concealment of the more noisy instruments under a mass of softer ones, the employment of covering secondary parts in a hundred different turns and forms, always offered to the composer an inexhaustible store of means, and these means of a spiritual nature, whose effect upon his own mind and the minds of his hearers must necessarily be more vivifying than a mere material addition to the orchestra.

But now the chorus of cornets and tubas steps in. The very appearance which these instruments present to the eye, the conical tube, widening like a speaking trumpet, with its intestine-like windings and the heavy valves of cast metal which break the resonance, conveys at once an idea of the nature of the sound proceeding from such a body, a sound which, being first hemmed in and then bursting forth abruptly, is at the same time dull and full of violence—just as the shapes of the trumpet, trombone, and horn also at once indicate the character of their tones.

The first effect of this chorus of instruments is that the ambiguous character of its sound weakens the contrast between the brass and the wood. The cornets, which are neither horn nor clarionet, and yet resemble both (as if a painter were to mingle blue, green, and yellow, rubbing the several colours into one), the larger tubas, half horns and half trombones, besides the asthmatical and impure valve trumpets and valve horns: all these contribute to destroy the sharpness of character; they cause the most important and significant orchestral differences to fuse into one chaotic mass, and, instead of really increasing the power of sound, they only add to its bulk. The sword is a powerful weapon when drawn; in the scabbard, though it is thicker and heavier, the victorious power of its edge is lost.

Such an addition to the orchestral mass having, however, once taken place, all previously existing relations are changed. We artists are "dependent upon creatures of our own making." When instruments have once been placed in the orchestra, they urge their claim to be employed with the rest; and after they have been allowed to raise their voice, they are not easily put down. The masses and their swelling and decreasing (from a few instruments to many or all, and *vice versâ*) grow continually broader; the more delicate treatment of the animated dialogue of the instruments is suppressed, the spiritual element gives way to the material, the orchestra relinquishes its intense dramatic life (that most precious heritage left us by Haydn and Beethoven), in order to assume the character of a gigantic, many-voiced organ. Even in the choice of the instruments for the principal parts, these considerations have to be taken into account; hence the more sonorous, though less suitable, instruments are selected in preference to those that used to take the lead; or Meyerbeer's barocque change from a full-mouthed tutti of the entire mass to one or two solo instruments (even if it should be a piccolo flute and a double bass) is resorted to as a welcome means of contrast. With this the banishment of most important instruments goes hand in hand. Thus the characteristic basset horn (*corno di bassetto*) has been supplanted by the poorer alto clarinet; thus also the less powerful, but deeply significant contra (double) bassoon has been obliged to give way to the bellowing bass tuba.

If any one desire to observe the consequences of this modern composition of

the orchestra as they appear in a more simply constructed body, he has only to examine the present organization of the regimental bands, as far as it is known to us from the Prussian, Austrian, and Russian armies. Leaving out of consideration the superiority of the conductors, as well as the performers, over those of former days; which appears indeed great, we ask: what is, in general, to be demanded of military music in an artistic point of view? In the first place (so it appears to me), a martial spirit; in the next, that its character shall be in keeping with that class of arms to which each band belongs. In order to comply with the last requirement, the forces of the old orchestra would have to be distributed in a manner something like the following:—the mailed squadrons of the heavy cavalry would receive a band composed of trumpets (high and deep toned), trombones and kettle drums; for the light horse there would be trumpets (principally of a higher pitch, low ones only for the bass); for the rifle corps, horns (perhaps those ancient signal horns, which in 1813 howled so wildly into the ears of the French; or, perhaps, the small trumpet-shaped horns of the French and Belgian *voltigeurs*); for the chequered and long-drawn lines of infantry, we would have, besides the drums, the full regimental band, headed by the jubilant clarionet, and supported by the higher colouring of the brass instruments. The music of the cavalry regiments would be comparatively simple and of limited compass; but it would possess all those natural notes and harmonies, in which (as we see from the example of the untaught singer as well as the accomplished master) simplicity, innocent mirth, straightforward honesty and bravery have always found their natural and most truthful expression. The very paucity of the natural scale, on the other hand, would force the composer to seek assistance in the power and elasticity of rhythm; and here he would not fail, if any excitable chord remained in his breast, to find the genuine expression of courage and resolution, of dashing gallantry and obstinate endurance.

I retire from this field, in which I am not quite at home. Let him whom it concerns inquire for himself how matters stand in our military bands, since the host of valve instruments have placed themselves at the head of the bands of all arms, and the martial brass been softened down to the performance of every kind of operatic airs, and all the chromatic sighing of modern sentimentality. *The brightest sword grows rusty in long-continued times of peace, and our valve instruments, brutal and tame, are the proper exponents of our mode of warfare**.

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And now let us turn from the lofty region of creative art to contemplate its working in the outer world. For we should but form a one-sided idea of our art, if we examined it only as it appears in the artist and his works, without tracing its course and operation in the existence of mankind in general (or at least of one's own nation), of which it is only a part. Art is not the property of the artist exclusively, but it belongs to the whole human race; the artist is more closely connected with it, but every man has a share in art, and art in man.

All that has been produced and reproduced in musical art, both old and new, flows like the hundred arms of some mighty stream into the life of the people. By

* The force and boldness of this passage will be fully appreciated, when it is remembered that the author is a German and a Prussian subject.—Tr.

the side of musical festivals and singing academies, all kinds of lesser vocal associations (especially those numberless male choruses and quartets, which by the way have proved so destructive to our tenor voices) range themselves, willing to receive and disseminate musical knowledge for instruction and entertainment*. To these voluntary associations have to be added the singing classes that are to be found in every school, the different university institutions, and the paid choruses of our churches and theatres. The performances in the concert room are followed up by open-air concerts, entertainments provided by harmonic societies and those private speculators and music manufacturers whose bill of fare consists of a chequered medley of symphonies, overtures, dances, marches, and scenes from operas (without inquiring whether they are intelligible or effective in the absence of words and voice), and who, as if to idealize the odd mixture, crown it with one or two of those *potpourris* with pompous titles in which bits of four or eight bars taken from a hundred different pieces—the more incongruous and contradictory, the better—are patched together in a most bewildering confusion.

Lastly, look at our domestic music! It is scarcely necessary to ask: who is musical? but, rather, who is *not?* In the so-called higher or more refined circles of society, music has long been looked upon as an indispensable branch of education. In every family it is cultivated, if possible, by all the members, without particular regard to talent or inclination; in many of them it constitutes the whole liberal education (at least of the young ladies), and the entire stock of social entertainment; in addition, perhaps, to a couple of modern languages and a most confined and carefully restricted literature. For it is assumed that "*Robert, Robert!*" and other gems of the lyric stage, are less dangerous to modesty and morality than Goethe and Byron, to whom Halm and Geibel† are, at all events, considered preferable.

And this beginning amongst the "higher" and more favourably circumstanced ranks of society is followed up intrepidly and without much forethought by those below, even down to the small shopkeeper and tradesman. Carried away by the force of example, by ignorance and false pride, they grudge not the time that is stolen from pressing labour, and the money that is squeezed out of the hard-earned pittance, so that at least the daughters may get a piano, teachers and music, and thereby—as they hope—acquire a position in society. And all that has thus everywhere been learnt and practised flows in over-abundance into the domestic circle, attempts to make a display at evening parties, and in the semi-publicity of musical societies, and draws new food (like the orchideæ, which have their roots in air) from all those concerts and operatic performances, without which the youngest girl is now no longer able to breathe, and no innkeeper can continue to exist. It is a moving in a circle without beginning or end; every one learns music because music is heard everywhere, and music is heard everywhere because every one has learnt it—and but too often nothing else.

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The time has indeed arrived when it is advisable for us to endeavour to form at

* In Berlin, provisions have even been made in the city jail for the practice of vocal music by the younger prisoners (between the age of 18 and 22).

† Two minor poets of Germany.—Tr.

least a general estimate of the economical condition of our art, in order that we may learn how much it costs us in time and money, and what it affords us in return. For this purpose, we must first calculate the number of lessons that are required (two or three a week for five or six years by each learner, in each particular branch of art); then the time taken up by practice (from two to four hours daily), and by the concerts, operas and parties, at which the pupils attend for the sake of encouragement, information, reward or pleasure. And then we have to take into account that these lessons and hours of practice have to be wedged in between the hours of continuous school and study; and that this press of occupation does not even leave the necessary leisure for the full inward apprehension of art itself; leaving out of the question the harmonic development of the entire man.

As to the money calculation, every one may make it for himself. Only this has to be remembered, that no teacher is paid so highly as the music-master, and that no instruction is so expensive as musical instruction. The immediate consequence of this has been, as might be expected, that the musical profession, like every other lucrative business, has attracted a host of competitors, every one of whom again exerts himself in recruiting and sending out fresh legions of amateurs. He who knows of no suitable calling or means of living for his son—who cannot give dowries to, and find husbands for, his daughters, and thinks them "too good" for manual industry, trains them up as music-teachers. But where necessity or love of gain, and not a natural inclination and pure delight in art, has been the moving spring, there industry and conscientiousness, being called forth, not by a love for the thing itself, but by a feeling of duty and necessity, can at best be but of an external nature; there may be found diligent study, but no deep interest—much practice, but all mechanical and abstract. Every hour of the day, if possible, is occupied in giving lessons: and, in the few spare moments, the over-taxed powers of body and mind are still further exhausted, in the practice of all the new and fashionable things which every day brings forth. Art is made mechanical, and as a mechanism transmitted to the people; *not* through the fault of the harassed teacher, but in consequence of his false position. This has also given rise to the formation of two distinct classes; the one of which consists of the so-called "*connaisseurs*" or "learned musicians;" and the other, of those "fast and furious" amateurs who are constantly running from one concert to another; who are members of two or three different societies; who devour at one sitting two or three symphonies, from three to six quartetts, and a couple of overtures to Fidelio or Iphigenia; who in the course of an evening hear every description and style of music; and, as a natural consequence, carry away from these hasty and mixed meals nothing but such flighty observations as: that "it went off right well," that such a performer played thus, and such a singer sang thus; that a certain composition "was very beautiful," or "did not please," that it was a "well-written piece—classical, barocque, original, tasteful, not altogether original"—and similar profound criticisms. But herein shows itself the higher and nobler nature of art, that it eludes the grasp of unclean hands, and escapes every attempt to employ it for impure or foreign purposes. The work of the handicraftsman or the business of the merchant has for its primary object the acquisition of worldly gain, and is neither contaminated nor made less efficient thereby; although, in these undertakings also, no one need expect to be

eminently successful unless he takes a pleasure in them. The artist, too, should be able to support himself by his labour; this is right and proper. But worldly gain must be to him the unsought and collateral result of his calling, and not its leading motive and final aim; or else he is no genuine artist—else will he lose what nature had given him of artistic power, and all he does and brings forth will remain inanimate, instead of kindling into life. Even to the mere recipient, art denies itself, if he be not drawn towards it by a presentiment of its living power, and by the fervent desire to derive from it a new and higher inspiration. If fashion, love of amusement, or the notion that a person must know music in order to pass for an educated man, be his only inducement, then musical art will never be more to him than a fashionable plaything and a sonorous ennui.

It must, then, be acknowledged that music is, in our days, spread more widely than it ever was before; that our whole existence is immersed in the playful waves of sound, and completely overwhelmed and stunned by this noisiest, and therefore most intrusive of all arts, which drives our neighbours to despair, puts a stop to conversation and sociality, annoys and importunes us in the streets, rushes upon us in places of public resort, with the united strength of rival orchestras, and, through excess and over zeal, destroys its own efficacy.

And if, in conclusion, you wish to know what forms the chief contents of this storm of music, ask the music publishers and their catalogues what sells best. Compare the endless mass of solfeggios, and the number of years spent in forming the voice, with the fruits produced: some three or four "*sanglottant*" airs and scenes from operas brought into fashion by some celebrated cantatrice and bunglingly enough imitated; a few songs and ballads that spring up with fertile growth like blades of grass, as pleasant to behold, and equally devoid of character—as welcome as the early crocus in the spring when first appearing, and just as soon forgotten.

Compare the never-ending exercises of our myriads of amateurs, virtuosi and would-be virtuosi on the piano, with the number of real works of art with which the learner is made acquainted, putting artistic comprehension and performance altogether out of the question. And, finally, inquire how few are rewarded with adequate success for all their toils and sacrifices; and how many, on the other hand, after years of laborious study, either give up music altogether, or never advance a step beyond their last lesson. After such an examination, every one will concede that unless these far-extended studies and exercises can be made to yield greater and nobler results, or the labour and time of preparation reduced to a fair proportion, with the attainable success, the practice of music, instead of benefitting mankind, is only a means of culpably squandering away our time and money, and our nervous energy.

So far, however, are most people from seeing this, that they absolutely mistake the means for the end. One might show this in every sphere of musical practice, but no where so plainly as in the wide-spreading branch of pianoforte-playing. It is particularly in this branch that we have to acknowledge a progress in the mode of performing on the instrument, as compared with that which prevailed in the time of Beethoven and his predecessors; or at least an industrious and successful prosecution of the idea which he (and, in their own way, Dussek, Louis Ferdinand, and A. E, Müller before him) had endeavoured to realize in his later works. I

allude to that mode of treatment which Liszt has most acutely termed the "orchestration of the piano." Internally (as regards sonorous power, colouring of sound, and the blending and succession of tones) the piano is the poorest of all instruments; externally (for massive harmony and the simultaneous conduct of numerous parts) it has no equal but the organ. Bach, and all composers down to Beethoven, had already found it necessary to compensate for the meagreness of its single notes by its combined fulness and variety of play (*Spielfülle*), whilst Beethoven (as may be seen in his great sonata in B♭ major, op. 106, and many other compositions) availed himself of the undue means of effect derived from wide-spread chords and succulent (*saftige*) reduplications. But the fulness of spiritual life, which always and unavoidably led this musical poet to a dramatic (polyphonic) form of composition, was to him of more importance than mere sensuous satiety, which could never become his predominant object, although in this respect also he went beyond his predecessors.

But the sphere of man's existence is so vast and varied as to afford full scope for every idea to develop itself in all its consequences. In the province of art, it is the charm of sensuous fulness (*sinnliche Erfülltheit*) which has given birth to the "modern style" of pianoforte-playing. The arpeggio in all its manifold forms, from the monotone to full chords, from the softest murmur to the loudest thunder-tones of the instrument—this arpeggio (either by itself or in connection with a melody which it supports or surrounds as with a flowing and transparent drapery) has become the fundamental element of the new school; which is further distinguished by the introduction of hazardous reduplications of the melody, and fuller and more artistic and effective passages of every possible description. It cannot be denied that the efforts of this school have been in so far successful as to increase the power and variety of colouring of the pianoforte to an extent which no one would have formerly believed possible. It was Liszt who, in his transcriptions of the works of Schubert and others, as well as in original compositions (*e. g.* his *Harmonies poetiques et religieuses*), first opened this new path, so identified with himself, has followed it up most successfully, and obtained from it the most novel characteristic and powerful effects.

Two things, however, can hardly be avoided in this modern style of pianoforte-playing. The arpeggio, in whatever form it may be employed, and however ingéniously its sounds, may be grouped together, doubled, or dispersed through different octaves, remains nevertheless eternally the same thing; it is eternally this cold and abstract chord which penetrates through all its coverings and artificial disguises. It is impossible for the most eminent talent, or the combined ingenuity of ever so many gifted composers, to overcome or conceal an obstacle which lies in the nature of the thing itself. And thus the modern school, from internal necessity, has heaped up mountains of *études*, fantasias, songs, and pieces of every description, of which the eternal and monotonous arpeggio constitutes the unavoidable material. Other figures and passages only occur in the form of episodes, whilst all melodies have to be chosen and arranged with a view to the arpeggio, which, in order to have room for display, requires a broad and quiet cantilena. This is the first disadvantage. The second consists in the impossibility of uniting the modern mode of pianoforte-playing with the dramatic element of polyphone composition. By the side of the

arpeggio, only *one* independent part—although it may be shifted from treble to tenor or bass—can maintain itself at a time, and consequently that individuality and richness of our art which depends upon its polyphonism must be lost. Music retires from the dramatic fulness of life into the subjective sphere of the individual artist, who, having absorbed everything into himself, with succulent plasticity practises that *virtus*—that valour of the present time which raises nothing on its shield but its own dear, glorious *self*, in which it recognizes the beginning and end of all things that live and move and have their being.

But it is this material and purely personal *self* which, being as nothing to the higher man, proves most intelligible and attractive to the great majority of our contemporaries, who never get beyond their own self—to them the centre and sole object of existence; whilst the genuine artist is filled with the idea of the universe, and surrounded by images or ideals of the eternal and transcendental. The artist's personal individuality is only the furnace in which those ideas acquire a living form, under the action of the quickening fire of inspiration; just as, according to the ancient myth, none but a virgin, humble and without selfish desires, could give birth to a Divine being.

How different is it at the piano! There the sensuous virtuosi-like Self becomes seized with a fervour, or with desperate greediness, which only labours for self-gratification. What Liszt and a few of his followers ingeniously employed as means for new and striking effects, has become the end and final object of our performers. And now every pianoforte is groaning under the furious storm of the arpeggio; now the sacrifice of time and the suffering of the nerves is counted as nothing by the player, so that he "also" may be able to ride on this hurricane. This has in several places proved detrimental to the success of professional *virtuosi;* for where everybody is able to perform miracles, there people cease to be amazed, and no longer crowd the concert-rooms in the expectation of witnessing wonders. But this vain desire itself of display did not by any means recede to make room for better things: it has already impregnated the whole atmosphere of the world of connaisseurs, and contributed much towards the extinction of the spiritual and spirit-quickening life of art. For the prominent development of the technical and sensuous elements must necessarily diminish the susceptibility, understanding, and *courage* for the higher spiritual culture of art, in all those who had given themselves up to the influence of the modern school. This inevitable consequence has, perhaps, never been more strikingly illustrated than in the case of a most eminent modern teacher of the pianoforte, who, having requested a new pupil to play some of Bach's and Beethoven's works, said to her—"You take those things too seriously and weightily; people now treat them in a lighter and more off-hand manner." Strange as it may sound, the teacher was right; for, when we are no longer able to raise ourselves to elevated objects, we try to draw them down to our own level.

This is the grand and total aspect of our art in the present day: it exhibits to us an unparalleled expansion—universal co-operation of the mass of the people—the spiritually characteristic and truthful giving way to sensuality, hollowness, and hypocrisy—a great accumulation of material means, and self-sacrificing devotion in the pursuit of external and vain objects; by the side of irresolution and cowardice, in

the prosecution of the genuine ideal progress of art—vast possessions and indefatigable exertion, without the courage to apply both to a higher and clearly perceived object.

On the whole, however, the present time is not much worse than the past. Many there are who study and work more laboriously and conscientiously than formerly; great—eminent talents have risen in every branch of art, and new roads have been boldly attempted and followed up. Nor are the errors and faults, for which we have now to blush, new in the history of art. As regards, in particular, the technical and sensuous tendency, instead of being a characteristic sign of our time exclusively, it has frequently appeared before, and occurs as naturally and certainly in the life of art as the ebb and flow of the ocean tide. After every period of creative genius there must follow a time of dissemination, that the new idea may overcome and fill the mind. During this time the imitative talents appear foremost in the ranks of art, and not unfrequently reap greater and more rapid success than those creative geniuses of the new period who awakened their powers and opened the understanding of the people. Simultaneously with and after them, appear those whose particular calling it is to spread the knowledge of that which has been produced by their superior performance. To those, the means of representation —technical skill—must necessarily appear of superlative importance; and thus commences what we may term the period of the *virtuosi,* in which technical zeal oversteps its original goal. But herein is contained a certain sign that the new idea which puts all these talents and powers in motion has already outlived itself; and we stand expectantly before the question— whether the end of all things has arrived, or whether we may prepare for a new revelation of the eternal creative spirit. Such an intervening period reigned after Handel, Bach, and Gluck; in such a period we now live, after Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

Whilst, on the one hand, we must not conceal from ourselves the defects and errors of the present time—we have, on the other hand, to take into consideration that the same defects and errors have repeatedly appeared before; and that now, as then, they are accompanied by much that is excellent and hope-inspiring.

Why, then, should we not rest satisfied with the long-established balance between the good and the bad, as those before us have been able and obliged to do?

The very question implies that, with all the superficial similarity, there exists great and essential differences between the times. For such a question as that which in our days occupies the mind of every thinking man, has never been openly asked at any previous period. Only once before, it was raised by a few feeble voices: this was at the commencement of the seventeenth century, when it became apparent that music, as it had hitherto existed (the counterpoint of the middle ages), was incapable of satisfying the newly awakened desire for truthfulness of expression, positiveness of meaning, and dramatic representation.

There are three things which in our days make this question an imperative and momentous one. First, the high state of maturity at which musical art and science have arrived, and which not only facilitates the survey of all that has hitherto been accomplished, and is still to be accomplished, but makes such an examination compulsory upon every one actively engaged in the pursuit of art. The second is the unprecedented extent to which music is now cultivated by all ranks and conditions of

society; which makes it more imperative for us than ever to inquire into its possible consequences, both as regards the art itself and the people. The third is the present condition of the nations, and more particularly of our German nation, in which, since the year 1848—whatever party spirit may say against it, or however strive to bury it in oblivion—a new spirit of higher self-consciousness, of greater independence, of brotherly union and energetic moral activity, has been awakened and continued to gain strength; a spirit which may indeed be stunned, restrained, misled, calumniated, or denied, but cannot be annihilated.

Thus we musicians are brought to face the question of the future of our art. Has it reached the boundary of progress—the end? or will creative genius reveal itself in a new form? The more powerfully the condition of the nations is affected by the eventful march of our times, the greater is the weight with which this question forces itself upon the anxious consideration of those who are called to work for the future of our art whilst engaged in the present.

## CHAPTER V.

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### THE FUTURE.

*The Question of the Future; its pressing Nature and Solubility. Necessity of Progress. The End of the Arts. The Faithful at the Grave.—Conservation and Progress.—The Question of the Future more distinctly defined.—Completion of the essential Phases of Musical Art.—Instrumental Music. Beethoven. The romantic School. Berlioz. The true Signification of Form and Freedom.—The Opera. The pure Opera and mixed Opera. Its Nature and Destiny. Gluck. Mozart. Wagner and the Middle Ages.—The Progress of the People a Condition of the Progress of Art. The Life of Nations and its Phases. The Future of the German Nation.—Incomplete Development of the Opera. The Drama of the German Future. The Opera of the Future.—The Oratorio. Its artistic Form. Its Significance for the Future. The real Catholic Element in Religion.—The materialistic View.*

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WHERE do we stand? Whither are we going in our art? May we expect of it new revelations, a new circle of ideas, and a new phase of development; or what destiny awaits it in the further existence of nations?

To these questions we have been led by the contemplation of the present state of music.

But it may be asked: Are we, short-sighted mortals, able to penetrate the future? May not those apparitions which we persuade ourselves to be signs of the future turn out mere idle dreams, possibly to be convicted of their fallacy by the very next day, and laughed to scorn, with all their cares and hopes and preparations, by the bright splendour of to-morrow's rising sun?

I ask, in reply: Can we evade this question of the future? Is it possible for us, even if we had the wish, to confine our thoughts to that moment of time which we term the present; and which, whilst we are naming it, disappears already in the stream of the past; leaving us to the next moment of time, which just now belonged to the future, but has become present, until it shall have passed away as swiftly as the former? To him who labours, the future is an inseparable continuation of the present: his work of yesterday was intended for to-day, and continues to live, together with him and the work which this day has brought forth. To the contemplating mind also, the present and future appear as an uninterrupted current of

causes and consequences, and the knowledge of the past and present serves it as a light into the future. In this point of view it is, that the history of the different arts, as well as of the nations, is a truly divine revelation of the eternal guide, Reason: inasmuch as it discloses to us that unalterable law of causes and consequences, that inexorable decree of necessity, according to which all that has come into being and all that has happened, continue to operate upon the times and acts that follow. This alone constitutes the spiritual connexion, the significancy and value of our existence. The life of every individual being, as well as that of the nations, the life of the human mind, in all its forms of belief, of art and of science, is subject to and obeys the eternal call "onwards!" Imbecility and hypocrisy alone are reactionary; these alone dare to command "stillstand" (which would be living death), or preach "retrogression," or hope for and try to bring about the restoration of that which has passed away. Yesterday never returns, for it is the preceding condition of to-day; and whether you blame or acquiesce in to-day, it will be followed in unalterable sequence by to-morrow, in which it will continue to live and operate in all its plenitude. It is thus with the life of individuals and nations, it is the same in the state, in the family, and in the arts.

In order to convince every one of the necessity of progress in art, it is sufficient to refer to a simple practical observation, which proves the utter impossibility of remaining stationary, or successfully imitating the productions of a previous period of art, even if they should have remained ever so interesting and dear to us. What musician or amateur is not, even to this day, enchanted with Haydn's symphonies, so full of youthful freshness and unsurpassed in their charming innocence and playful sprightliness? In vain have teachers and critics from time to time urged that other composers should attempt the same style of music. The thing is simply impossible. To original and honest minds the request itself is objectionable, whilst those willing to imitate or repeat—these Pleyels, Wanhalls, and others of the same stamp—have served up nothing but coarse and tasteless fare. We observe and are delighted at the careless ease and playfulness with which 'father' Haydn makes his bassoon and flute dance along, or perform what else he wishes them to do; and yet not one of our instrumentalists has attempted the same thing without becoming vulgar or baroque. So also has Mozart been imitated by hundreds of opera composers (his Magic Flute has led to "magic bells," "magic fiddles," and "magic bassoons;" his Papageno to *Larifaris*), but by no one more faithfully than by the burgomaster Wolfram, of Teplitz, who, some thirty years ago, was even greeted as a "second" Mozart. Who knows anything about Wolfram nowadays? We must go forwards, because we cannot recede.

To go forwards is a matter of necessity; how, and whither, are questions which could be solved with equal certainty, if we were fully acquainted with all the preceding circumstances, causes, and connexions. Proportionate to the knowledge and circumspection with which we approach the boundary between the present and the future, will be the clearness of our view beyond it, unless narrow prejudices or paltry timidity obscure our sight. But we never can close our eyes to that enigma. The onward pressure of life itself constrains us to put that question, and to answer it as well as we are able. Those ardent disciples of our art who prophecy of a "music of the future" may err, more or less, in certain things; but they cannot be mistaken in

the presentiment that the mind must move onwards. They burn with the thirst of life, and they feel the impulse and courage to obey the true command of life—"march on!" They see before them a hopeful future, full of new enjoyments and new revelations, not knowing whether much or little of it shall fall within the circle of their life. The future beyond, is their own by faith; as it was to those champions of liberty, who, with the ever true and glorious shout, "*L'avenir est à nous*," marched on to victory—or death.

For there is another alternative, also, which we must look boldly in the face. Immortality does not belong to any individual being: neither does immortality belong to any individual art, but only to the spirit which calls it forth out of itself, now in this form of manifestation, and now in another, as its necessary expression and the characteristic element of its life. This we observe everywhere. Nations have gone down, together with their arts and sciences; so ancient Egypt, India, Assyria, all Asia, once so crowded with nations and highly adorned with works of art. Perished is that unparalleled national drama of Æschylus, and every attempt to restore it to life (like those made formerly by Caccini and his associates, and of late by Mendelssohn) has proved a mockery, a caricature devoid of all those elements—the cosmology, religion, traditions, and manners of the Greek nation, and even the sublime site of representation by the side of the steep cliff of the Acropolis, and under the serene and luminous sky of Hellas—which imparted life and reality to the original. The epos has died away with the ancient traditions; the plastic art of Greece has disappeared with the gods that peopled Olympus and the youthful, joyous, and beautiful race of the Hellenes. It was not the want of creative power that made the Buonarottis and Thorwaldsens inferior to the Ancients; but it was the difference of soil and clime; the want of that serenity and mildness of the atmosphere which makes existence a pleasure; of that youthful innocence and freshness, and that pure sensuous susceptibility which roused the Greeks to delight in the mutual contemplation of the beauty of their well-formed limbs; of that perfection of bodily form exhibited in their martial games, their dances and religious processions; of that fulness of existence which had not yet ascetically divided itself into an abstract mind and a contaminated and shame-deserving body, but which in godlike images idealized itself, and, thus idealized, became its own admirer.

And yet we do not look back with sorrow or childish regret. That rich existence had lived its time; and terminated after it had fully satisfied the youthful spirit of mankind, filling even to overflow the temples and market places, the streets and groves, until the "marble population" left living beings scarcely room to walk. To that people, existing so entirely in and for the sunny outer world, music was merely a means of making language more sonorous, just as the acoustic vases in their theatres served to increase the resonance of sound. But when the spirit retired from the outer to the mystic inner world of the soul, then musical art became its place of abode and its proper organ.

And should we tremble, if, having groped its way and lived through this region of twilight and deeply hidden mysteries, our satiated spirit—now or at some future time—should seek for new gratification and a new existence in some other sphere? What those Hellenes created still exists and will exist for ever in the spirit of

mankind; it does not cease to elevate and adorn also our existence, as long as we find sense and room for it. More it cannot be to us, for we have lived and grown beyond the deification of the bodily man, beyond the legends and traditions of little Hellas, and the fated *future* of the ancients, veiled in awe and mystery. And so, also, all that the sweet strains of sound have ever whispered and sung to us will live and move for ever in the soul of mankind, even though the human spirit should find another form of revelation than that which we call music. And if, now or hereafter, the spirit should in fresh youth proceed to reveal itself in new forms, even then those flattering strains will still remain the echoes of the soft confessions of the heart, a balm and comfort after the heat and toil of the day; they will adorn, as now, our public festivals, and wing the foot for dance or battle. No more will be required of them, if such a time arrive, nor any more accepted.

And here my sympathizing heart—for I feel with them—turns to the faithful band of those who, even in the face of this momentous "if," are drawn with irresistible force towards the altar of our art, and feel constrained to cling to it, although it be deserted by the people—not from choice, but of necessity, and in obedience to the spirit's call that draws them onwards to some other sphere. It was not love of gain, or thirst for fame—the spurious artist's idols—which brought you to the altar; nor is it indolence, or ostentatious pride in what you have acquired and learnt, or a stubborn refusal to open your eyes to the dawning light of the new day, which keeps you there. It was the disposition of your mind—you do not know who tuned its strings—which led you there; and there creative love has kindled in your bosom, there is the focus of your thoughts and visions, and there one of those eternal melodies has vibrated through your heart. You could not and cannot help prophesying those visions which grew up flaming in your spirit; and having once begun, you must persist, although the wave of time is rolling past your sanctuary. You cannot "limp after strange gods," in whom you have no faith, and whom you do not love; neither can you make "concessions," and fancy that by falsely putting Yes and No together, and sacrificing at two different altars, you will be able surreptitiously to serve the cause of truth. You must proclaim what dwells within your soul, *or* cease to speak. To the world you are "foolishness and an offence;" but the poet has sung of you:

> "*Sagt es Niemand, nur den Weisen,*
> *Weil die Menge gleich verhöhnet,*
> *Das Lebend'ge, will ich preisen,*
> *Das nach Flammentod sich sehnet.*"*

Your love and faithfulness alone remain your consolation and reward. The chattering multitude passes by, heedless of you; except, perhaps, that here and there a contemplative wanderer will look with transitory emotion upon that fidelity which will not leave even the grave of its devotion and affection; as, in the times of youthful and victorious Christianity, the last small bands of unbelievers, though chased from place

* Tell it no one but the wise;
For the multitude would sneer—
The Living Being will I prize
That yearns for death in flames.

to place, clung to the broken altars of their gods. You are the witnesses of sunken glory; your works remain to testify of your sincerity and of the immortality of that idea by which you were inspired. Then dedicate those works, as Æschylus did of old, to "time," to a discerning future; convinced that, if you sink into the grave to be forgotten for a period, like Sebastian Bach, that last evangelist, the following century will recognise you in your real being and truthfulness. But still your faithful service must not and cannot stop the Dionysian march of the spirit through the mountain passes and deep gorges of existence. "Onwards!" the call resounds, and resounds without intermission.

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Does it sound for our art also? And, if so, does it point to the present time or to the nearest future? Or shall a longer period elapse before our art shall be awakened to new achievements, and to a new phase of existence?

Let us, first of all, endeavour to determine more precisely the real significance of this question, and the moment when it will certainly press more imperatively for solution.

The art of sound will certainly never cease to delight sensuous man, and to call forth emotions in the feeling heart. For it is inborn to man, and constitutes a part of his nature; the man without music is an incomplete being. We may also rest assured that this art will always continue to find talents and followers in the repetition of favorite forms, and the application of such forms to subjects of a kindred nature. But this does not touch the real question as to the future of our art. The essence of art is CREATION, the realization of the ideal, and a consequent progress from that which already exists to that which remains still to be accomplished. It counts its epochs of existence by the successive revelation of these ideals: those who raise such heavenly forms from the undulating and life-breathing motion of general art have been inspired with creative power; to them alone pertains the epithet Divine—the name of Genius, so often lavished in vain. It is they alone in whom and through whom all progress is effected, in whom the future becomes reality, whilst it is the mission of *talent* to spread those creations of genius over the breadth of life, to refresh and fructify every thing around them, and prepare it for the next creative epoch. So the waters of Egypt's one living stream are conducted over the whole country by means of canals, ditches, trenches, and water-wheels. A similar distribution is to be observed in the life of art.

The question of the future, therefore, relates to *new creations* produced by the power of genius. It starts from the last that have been revealed.

The last unquestionable progress in musical art is associated with the name of Beethoven; it is the spiritualization of instrumental music, by raising it to the sphere of definite conceptions and ideas. The question, taken strictly, is, whether another real progress has been effected since his time, or whether any further progress is still to be expected. To undertake to answer such a question must appear an act of great temerity, and yet an answer to it can be no longer refused. Every thinking man puts this question to himself, although he may not have the courage or feel called upon to answer it aloud.

One leading idea, which will assist us in the execution of this task, has already

been established by the foregoing inquiries. It is this—that the different epochs of progress in art effected by the power of genius do not occur accidentally and irregularly, but appear to be regulated according to the strictest laws of reason and consistency. Art, like every other organism, develops itself according to the conditions and exigencies of its existence, and its creations are always in keeping with the actual condition and the wants of the human mind. It was impossible for Bach to treat his parts as individual and characteristic exponents, both of word and sentiment, until those parts had been made pliant and singable by the contrapuntists of the middle ages. Haydn had first to finish his childlike blissful play with the orchestra, before Beethoven was enabled to unlock the spiritual depths of this region of fairy life. Nowhere but in the sacerdotal service of the Catholic Church could Palestrina find his place, for therein lived his people and his Lord. Nothing, on the other hand, but the people's own song (Volkslied) could sound in opposition to it in our dear, liberated Germany, so long as the Reformation continued to be the work of the people, and formed an element of its existence; until that people turned away from its haughty rulers imbued with French manners, and clung for support and consolation to the "Word of God" alone, which Bach was sent to expound in its true power and fulness. The artist only gives form and expression to that which, although still void of shape and form, is already in existence amongst the people.

There is another point which must be kept well in sight, in order that the lines of demarcation between the past and future may not be obliterated. This is the remarkable phenomenon, that art—like life itself—appears periodically to return to certain ideas and forms; and yet progresses with these forms until they appear satisfactory and perfect, when it proceeds to others of a decidedly different nature. This phenomenon may be observed in individual artists, as well as in different nations and times. Thus, e. g. the simplest form of vocal music, the song, has been repeated by singers of all times and nations. Thus, also, the form of the musical drama may be traced far beyond the Greeks to the most ancient nations of Eastern Asia; it makes its appearance again in the 13th century (if not sooner), and once more in the 16th century, when its further cultivation is taken up by France, Italy, and Germany. Thus, also—to mention a special case—Bach's Chromatic Fantasia, and Beethoven's Fantasia with Orchestra and Chorus, as also his Ninth Symphony, are based upon the same idea. But in these cases there is only an apparent repetition, easily and clearly distinguishable, to a more searching eye, from the non-progressive or even retrogressive reproduction of previous forms. For, in the latter, we perceive as clearly the naked "repeat" (*Noch-Einmal*) of something that had before been, and has seen its day, and therefore is now void of life and truth, as we behold, in the former mode of revival, that unconscious dialectic power of the artistic mind which turns and works the same idea until it has brought it to full maturity and truth.

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If we examine the past development of musical art from this point of view, we obtain at once a distinct perception of the different stages through which it has passed, and the tasks which remain still to be accomplished.

Looking at this development as a whole, and not in its details, it appears that

music has completed all its essential tasks. After all that has been said in the preceding chapters, we can now pronounce the essential and ultimate object of every art to be this: that it shall reveal in its productions the spirit of man, and the essence of his life; and that all its forms shall be filled with this spirit. Thus the life of musical art must first manifest itself in a sensuous form, as a delightful sensuous exercise. This consciousness of sensuous delight must next raise itself to the higher, but still dim and uncertain, sphere of emotion. After this, the spoken word, the definite expression of the mind, had not only to be joined externally to the tune, but so entirely incorporated with it as to become music itself; whilst music, on the other hand, acquired a definite expression by the help of language. This new tongue of word and tone united was the condition and commencement of the musical drama, the opera. Finally, music had to endeavour, by itself alone, to seize and reveal so much of man's spiritual life as comes within its sphere. Further it cannot go; the near approach to the ultimate boundary is everywhere perceptible; music is no longer an isolated art, and people already begin to inquire and dispute about its power and right to receive and interpret, by itself alone, those revelations of the spirit.

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For the present, it will suffice to point out the direction in which music is led towards its ultimate point of destiny along an inevitable track. This direction or tendency is already apparent in several works of Bach (as, e. g. in the preludes "*Das alte Jahr*," and "*Wer nur den lieben Gott*," in B minor,* which cannot be expressed by any organ playing—his chromatic fantasia, &c. &c.); in Handel's fugue in *B* minor; and other compositions "in which"—to use the beautiful expression of a younger writer on Berlioz's instrumentation, which I repeat with fond delight—"the sounds yearn for the word as for deliverance from their bondage." This aim and tendency is fully carried out by Beethoven, who, at the piano, in the quartet, and in the orchestra, delineates and psychologically develops entire episodes and conditions of life.

Beethoven's compositions and other works of a similar tendency have given rise to a dispute, as mentioned on a former occasion (p. 49), about the question, whether, and to what extent, music is capable of and justified in attempting such tasks. Towering above all criticism, Beethoven himself has decided this point in his ninth symphony. He who had devoted his life's purest and fullest power to the world of instrumental sounds, and who by elevating it to the sphere of definite spiritual meaning had accomplished the special task of his mission—he once more summons all the forces of his particular domain for the boldest and most gigantic effort. But behold!—the mystic and mythic life of these unreal voices no longer satisfies his aspirations, but draws him irresistibly towards the human voice and to the word of man. All these dreamy imaginings vanish, when the muffled basses laboriously, and, so to speak, painfully work themselves into the semblance of human speech; when they begin to hum timidly the song of man—the simple national air—and

* See the author's "Selection from J. S. Bach's Compositions for the Pianoforte; prefaced with an Essay on the proper Study and Execution of these and similar works." Robert Cocks & Co. London.—Tr.

then hand it over to the sympathizing and jubilant orchestra. But even this cannot suffice; man's voice and word alone are able fully to express what those orchestral voices are vainly striving to reveal. The wants of man reach beyond the mysteries of the enchanted world of instruments; he finds no perfect satisfaction except in man himself—in the universal brotherhood of a pious people; and language is the most natural, the most powerful, and, in the climax of life, the indispensable organ of the human mind. This is the artistic and philosophic origin of Beethoven's work, a document both of the power and limits of instrumental art.

We shall not revert to the unjustifiable repetition of this form in Mendelssohn's '*Lobgesang*.' Let us rather enjoy with pleasure his overture to the Midsummer Night's Dream, and many charming and ingenious works, which he and others, following in Beethoven's path, have succeeded in producing. Much is still left for talented individuals to accomplish in this sphere of art, in order that the fulness of man's existence may be revealed in the echo and reflection of art. But any further progress must be impossible, where the highest mental aspirations have been realized. Even the external form of this monument of art could only once be justifiable.

There are two directions in which some have fancied they perceive a progress.

First, in the *form* of the compositions. How could this be possible; or, if possible, what would it signify? He who preserves a proper conception of the word form (which implies a rational representation or expression of the spiritual contents), knows that, in art as well as in language, the fundamental forms have long since been unalterably fixed. Long series of compound forms have also been frequently employed in great variety; and new combinations may be successfully attempted by every one, and will always be justifiable and successful, if in accordance with the contents and idea of the composition; whilst they are meaningless or false in the opposite case. In the form itself, therefore, no real progress can take place. When Spohr applied the form of a vocal scene to a concerto for the violin, remembering how feelingly and expressively this instrument can sing, this adaptation of a vocal form to a concert piece was both novel and ingenious; but the form itself was not new, and it was only its suitableness for the contents of the composition which deserved praise. When Mendelssohn published his "Songs without Words," as a species of music intended to "speak" to us even without the assistance of language, and not merely to sound into our ears, he invented no new form, but only gave a new name to a lesser class of compositions, which at one time were called "*Divertissements*," and which Tomaschek published as "*Eclogues*," C. M. v. Weber as "*Petites Pièces*," and Beethoven as "*Bagatelles*." So also, when Mendelssohn joined together the three movements of his symphony in *G* minor, by connecting trumpets, as R. Schubert has done in his fifth symphony, there was nothing new in the form of the composition; it was merely a more or less justifiable means of bringing the different well-known movements more closely together, in the same manner as Beethoven had found it necessary to connect the scherzo of his symphony in *C* minor with the following finale.

Only then can a form, even constituted as it may be of previously existing parts, be called new, when in it a new idea is revealed. This was the case in the application of the form of a scena to a violin concerto, and still more decidedly

in Beethoven's fantasia for the pianoforte, with orchestra and chorus. The youthful artist, whilst revelling in his dreams at the pianoforte, hears other voices; for what in reality is the piano to him but a shadow of the true living orchestra? The fantastic masques of the orchestra begin to move, they approach him, touching him at first quite softly, then pressing forward more and more impetuously; they play around him and entice him, each according to its nature, with enchanting loveliness; they dance around him with boisterous frenzy; and he rushes amongst them on the wings of his instrument, with daring (*kühn*) delight. Now the whole kingdom of sound begins to stir, one chorus awakens the other, the voices join "with caressing loveliness," and the pianoforte which had aroused everything, pours its floods of sounds into the jubilant concert of instruments and voices. Thus the dreamy visions, internally conceived and matured, rush as two-fold beings with redoubled delight into reality.

We have, therefore, to look to the other side where a progress is said to have taken place, and where alone it can take place; viz. to the *contents* of the compositions. A new idea, a newly opened sphere of conceptions would be, indeed, a progress, or, at least, an important enlargement of the empire of art, no matter whether the form in which they appear be quite new or not. Such a progress people have frequently imagined they perceive in what is termed the "romantic school."

What is the idea attached to these words?

If the term romantic is to be understood in the same sense as when applied to a style of literature, represented half a century ago in Germany by the names of Tieck and Schlegel, which preceded the far more comprehensive epoch of Goethe and Schiller, and which in France produced a partly burlesque after-growth; then we ask, in the first place, is this anything new? Is it deserving the name of progress, and worthy to be made the foundation of our hopes for a brighter future?

Secondly: Is not music essentially "romantic" in its nature? and has not this romantic tendency revealed itself, ever since music was raised to the rank of a free art, in many special productions or portions of larger works; as, e. g. in the Passion Music ("*Am Abend da es kühle war*") in Semele, Saul, and numerous other compositions of Bach and Handel? Only it never assumed the character of a monotonous mannerism, which the ancient masters rather tried to overcome as a defect, and thus finally succeeded in effecting that progress by which the indefinite and intangible in music was made definite and comprehensible.

Let this be as it may, there are some composers who appear to think that this desired *clair-obscur* of the romantic school is to be found in the extravagant and fantastic style of writing. They are fond of employing chords without connexion, of roaming without restraint or definite purpose through every province of the tonal system, of disavowing their allegiance to all and every key, like the fantastic Gipsies, who neither confess to nor know a home. They delight in those melodies which, boundless and undefined like the aerial cirri, stretch over the horizon until they gather into a cloud and send down the rain—the "tears of the universe." They will not suffer the second movement to be in keeping with the first; they are opposed to anything like a gradual, consistent, and natural development of feelings and ideas. To indulge in all the wild and unconnected fancies of a feverish brain,

to search for and snatch at dreamy apparitions; this is what they consider as the task for the artist: or, may be, it is only a pretence set up with a view to guard their own deficiency and want of principle against attacks from without and within. "We are original," says Goethe, "only because we know nothing."

Another definition of the "contents of the romantic school," and—I am reluctantly compelled to write it down—"the prevailing sentiment of the present day," has been given by a distinguished lover of art. "It is," says he, "an undefined longing for a fancied ideal; a desire to flee from reality, in the hopes of finding in the world of imagination that harmony and satisfaction which reality is unable to afford; great intensity of feeling; a dislike to everything that is harsh or vulgar and material; and a decided predisposition for an elegiac state of mind." This really characterises the contents of a great portion of modern music No one will refuse to acknowledge that such a tendency of feeling has its claims and charms as well as any other; but we must remember that it is by no means new. It has found its deepest expression in Beethoven's sonata, Op. 10, which (together with the canonic recitativo in Bach's mass in A major and the finale of Beethoven's Op. 90) has served as the type, even in its details, for Mendelssohn's sonata, Op. 7. But that which in Beethoven was only a transient episode of life, became in Mendelssohn a ruling and lasting disposition of mind. And this tendency was and must necessarily be attractive to the vast number of his contemporaries, who fled from everything indicative of strength of character and decision, and who found here expression given to their undecided and effeminate aspirations. Nor could it fail, either by the force of example or by its own attractive powers, to call into existence many unconscious or conscious imitators. This tendency, as we said before, is not new, but it has never been so universal and predominant. Only it must not be called progress, or considered as a promise of a hopeful future for our art. It is the dissolution of that power which creates definite and tangible forms: it is indeed a flight from reality, but not a rise to definite ideals clearly perceived and boldly and faithfully pursued; not an elevation to a higher, purifying, and invigorating sphere of life, where we find in a spiritual reality the original type of our mundane existence. It is not that soaring of the spirit which characterizes the works of all genuine artists, of Beethoven as well as Goethe, of Bach as well as Raphael; but it is merely an escape from a hated reality which appears coarse and vulgar to those who lack the power and courage to comprehend its true spirit and contents. There is no hope for the future in this romantic affectation, which has already been judged and condemned by the Magus of the North, when he says, "O thou dead and barren wealth, thou art the hypocritical Pharisee of our century! Thy moral and social prejudices and thy high appreciation or affectation of their worth are nothing but the caviare of that leviathan which rules high in the atmospheric ocean!—and the maidenly blushes of your refined minds are Gallic paint, chalk, and dirt of insects; but not the noble inborn purple of healthy flesh and blood, as given from Heaven!"

In direct opposition to the view of these composers and their adherents, others have declared that the characteristic feature of the romantic school consists in its efforts to penetrate further into the sphere of definite forms. Here no one steps forward so boldly as Hector Berlioz, the only Frenchman to whom power and inclination have been given for greater undertakings in the province of pure instrumental

music. His nation consists of a vivacious people, which even transforms the night into day, a people always of great observation and of untiring activity. Herein it feels and contents itself, with a self-satisfaction incomprehensible to a German. It runs, it labours, it creates, it fails, it commences anew, it is deceived, is trampled down, and rises laughingly to make a new beginning. It vents its restlessness in a thousand witty *chansons;* it has created the *Drame-lyrique* and the *Vaudeville;* it appreciated, showed hospitality, and clung with deep-felt devotion to Lully, Gluck, Spontini, and even Beethoven, as far as it was able to comprehend him. But here it met a barrier which it could not surmount. The quiet, pensive retreat of the soul within itself, this darkness of wonderful dreams, this mystic German night, could not suit the merry champions for national liberty and creative energy. Berlioz, after twenty years' unceasing and truly heroic labour, has not been able to awaken the sympathy of his people for his undertakings. As he himself has had no other pattern to raise himself by than that of the German composer, so he can only expect to be understood and meet with heart-warm sympathy amongst the Germans.

And yet, although he has fought hard in grappling with the German mastermind, as Jacob wrestled with the angel for the long-refused blessing, Berlioz could not divest himself of his national character. The idea of Beethoven fills and inspires his mind. To him also the mere play with sounds and undefined sensations cannot give satisfaction. "*Pensez-vous,*" exclaimed he to a mere pleasure-seeker, when listening to Beethoven's music, "*Pensez-vous que j'entende de la musique pour mon plaisir?*" The truth of this is verified by all and every one of his works; by his "*Symphonie fantastique*" (*Episode de la vie d'un artiste*), with the *Marche au supplice* and the *Songe d'une nuit de Sabbat,* which he finds necessary to explain in a programme (or by adding—prefixing—words to the musical composition); his "*Childe Harold en Italie,*" in the finale of which (*Orgie des Brigands*) we meet with echos from preceding scenes, just as we do at the culminating point of Beethoven's ninth symphony; his "*Retour à la vie,*" in which music is joined to the spoken words (he terms this combination *mélologue*); and in the finale to which, the recitation is intermixed with and interrupted by the orchestra as well as solo and chorus singing; his "Dramatic Fantasia" on Shakespeare's "Storm," for vocal chorus and pianoforte *à quatre mains;* his "*Romeo et Juliette,*" in which instrumental and vocal passages are likewise intermixed. There was more truth in Paganini's observation than he, perhaps, himself perceived, when he said to Berlioz, on his first appearance: "*Vous commencez par où les autres ont fini.*" Berlioz had had the courage and spirit to climb up to Beethoven's highest pinnacle, and it was his obligation and his fate, here to commence and here to rest; for it was here alone—where music touches its boundaries and has recourse to foreign aid, in order to penetrate farther into the empire of the unshackled spirit—that the gifted Frenchman found in the foreign auxiliary a guide to lead him back into the proper realm of music. Music, in order to be accessible to him, must have a signification beyond that belonging to itself; whilst in the case of his German predecessor (as his works testify) it had first to fill him both sensuously and sentimentally (*seelisch*) before his whole spiritual existence could reveal itself in it and find expression. For this, too, is remarkable, that Beethoven, as observed on a former occasion, was predestined to and impelled towards his ultimate goal, even by his bodily constitu-

tion. His deafness slowly but unrelentingly separated him from the community of man, and banished him, who felt himself alone in the midst of gay Vienna, into the dream-world of instruments; until he had completely explored and exhausted it, and now, with undiminished longing, desired to hear once more the "word of man," and be again restored to the loving brotherhood of his fellow beings. This was the last and crowning task of his life: the tenth symphony never appeared; it could not and should not appear.

Neither has Berlioz been able to advance farther. No one can do it; for the boundary line does not depend upon the measure of power possessed by this or that individual, but is definitely fixed by the nature of the thing itself. It could not be the special calling of Berlioz "to extend the development of instrumental music in the direction of the poetic idea" (as has been asserted of him, with an enthusiasm which, although we may not join in it, we cannot but think amiable, because it springs from a desire for progress and from a genuine love of art); for this had already been effected by Beethoven, of whose labours the efforts of any succeeding artist can only be a continuation. This is clear to every one who is acquainted with his above-mentioned works, the very titles of which testify the fact; and it is useless to endeavour to mystify the matter by asserting that Beethoven "made it the task of his whole life to free instrumental music from the shackles of form," and that he finally accomplished this task in the ninth symphony, to which might be applied the words of the master bell-founder.:

> "Now the fabric breaks to pieces,
> For its object is fulfilled."*

Formal restraint exists only for him who is not master of the form; to the initiated, every form is only the rational and necessary expression of a series of spiritual manifestations. But each form is only rational and necessary for its own spiritual contents; hence its applicability is limited, and any form becomes contradictory and a restraint when applied to foreign purposes. A mastery only over all of them imparts the power to create new ones, or real artistic freedom; which is by no means a licence to tear asunder or disregard all form, but rather the result of a perfect agreement between the idea or sensation and its external mode of expression. Art knows neither compulsion nor arbitrariness; its essence is that liberty which arises from a perfect harmony between will and action and the laws of reason; and this was also Beethoven's leading principle. To trace this principle, step by step, through all artistic forms, and in the existing master-pieces of art, has been one of my chief aims in the "School of Musical Composition." Formerly it was common to reproach Beethoven with a total disregard of form, as he is now praised for having shivered form to pieces; but I have shown, in my School of Composition, that, after Bach, and next to him, Beethoven has been the greatest master of form; and that he was, in particular, the perfecter of the different forms of instrumental

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* "*Nun zerbrecht mir das Gebäude*
"*Seine Absicht hats erfüllt!*"
Schiller's "Lay of the Bell."—Tr

music, which are far more completely developed and sharply delineated in his works than in the compositions of Haydn and Mozart. Internal necessity at the same time called upon him, and he had the power, to create new forms. The last of these (foreshadowed in his Fantasia with Orchestra and Chorus, and its imitations by Fränzl and others) was that of the Ninth Symphony, which has served as the type for F. David and Mendelssohn's Symphony-cantatas*. How then can Berlioz be called the inventor of the vocal symphony.

If this were merely a question of honour, we should not be justified in entering upon its discussion; for our object is not to adjudge a prize to the victor, or first inventor, but to discover the truth as regards progress in art. That form of the Ninth Symphony (whether it be called Symphony-cantata or Vocal Symphony) was a necessary result both of Beethoven's individual constitution and the general course of artistic development, and therefore it was artistically justified; but it is not so in the case of his successors. Is it proper or right that the chorus of the instruments, this "new world" of musical art, should be dragged into the adventures of a Harold or a dissolute disciple of art? Episodes of this nature, but much more deeply felt and conceived, are confided by Beethoven (as in the sonatas in *F* minor, Op. 110, and *C*♯ minor, Op. 111) to the subjective solo-piano; to the chorus and the symphony are appropriated, in strict accordance with the grand idea of ancient tragedy, all general circumstances and interests. Still less justifiable, in the case of Beethoven's successors, is that preponderance and independency of the instruments in choral movements which, in the Ninth Symphony, was unavoidable and a matter of necessity. Wherever the clear and definite word of human speech makes its appearance, there it asserts at once its supremacy over the twilight of instrumental music, which then becomes a mere accessory, or serves as a background; and vain are all the efforts of the orchestra to regain its independency. It may, indeed, obtrude itself; it may overspread, and with continued pressure weigh down the word of language; but the power of an awakened and clearer consciousness can be as little subdued, as a man fully awake can force himself back at will into the dream-land of his interrupted slumber. All those temerarious productions of Berlioz only testify that he has undertaken to give expression to things that are unutterable; and that he has sought for aid beyond the sphere to which he has devoted himself—nay, beyond the boundaries of his art. Those "vocal symphonies" are nothing but cantatas with overgrown instrumentation. The voices do not join from an internal necessity, but because the artist needed their assistance to make intelligible the impotent striving and stammering of the orchestra, of which he arbitrarily demands impossibilities. The resumption of independency by the orchestra is merely a new commencement of the circular course of an undertaking doomed, from internal necessity, to constant failure.

Who could be so heartless as to look with any other feeling but that of sympathy and veneration upon the Sisyphean labour of a mind so rich and full of energy—a mind which, at the risk of death and everlasting misappreciation, remained faithful to itself? Verily, Berlioz also is impelled onwards by that irresistible power which

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* As I have shown more fully in the *Leipziger allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* of the year 1847.

makes the spirit long "for death in flames," and which raises him high above all those feeble minds who are unable or afraid to leave the beaten track which they fancy to be the only safe one, although it is in reality a path through the land of the dead.

But we must learn from him, and acknowledge that art is subject to unalterable laws of reason, which imperatively direct its every step, from the first to the last; that even the richest intelligence, such as Berlioz possesses in a higher degree than many of his fellow artists, does not avail us, unless we have deeply studied those laws, and indelibly engraven them in our hearts; and that the very nature of art marks out for it a certain course of life, which no adept can change, and no physician has the power to prolong.

Or can it be that that warm friend of Berlioz (Hoplit) is in the right when he attributes all those labours of the artist to the circumstance that he was unable to obtain access to his most suitable sphere, the opera. But why should he have found impossible what so many others, in Paris and everywhere else, have attempted with success, if his nature had not impelled him towards a different point of distinction? Can the artist do what he likes? Does he obey the law of internal necessity, or is he guided by extraneous circumstances? None but a false artist, i. e. an artist who is faithless to himself and the law within his heart, is led by external circumstances and considerations. But nature has made Berlioz of firmer stuff.

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And what would he have found upon the lyric stage?

Has it a future?

This question is, undoubtedly, one of the most important in the inquiry about the future development of our art. To us who live in the present, it is as inseparably connected with the name of Richard Wagner as the previous question was connected with that of Berlioz. Wagner, with a decidedness of opinion which arises not from vanity, but from firm conviction, has ascribed to his operas (especially his "*Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*) the characteristics of a real step in advance. His writings prove him to be a man of great mental power, who, being thoroughly convinced of the necessity of progress, labours in his particular calling with indomitable energy and perseverance. His operas, like Berlioz's compositions, have created in many places the liveliest sensation; in many an ardent and noble mind they have awakened real enthusiasm, and a conviction that in them is realized the promised future and perfection of the opera.

Is this the case? And is there any reason at all to expect from the future the realization of that idea which has developed itself out of the opera?

We must, above all, keep in view that the opera is a drama in which real persons are represented as living, acting, and mutually influencing each other, as human beings engaged in active life. The character, thoughts, intentions, feelings, and emotions of the different individuals represented in the opera are exhibited under certain presupposed influences and circumstances, in their speech and their actions, in concert with, or in opposition to, others; so that here the entire man appears in the fulness of life. This, we know, is the object of every drama; only that the mu-

sical drama employs throughout, or partly, the language of song instead of ordinary speech. Singing, as a peculiar, higher, or more impressive—"heartfelt"—kind of language, is intended to supersede the "speech of common life," and to raise the subject of the drama to a higher or more imaginative region.

Let us, first of all, dismiss in a few words that mixed opera in which spoken language alternates with song. If music be the accepted language of those beings which live before us on the stage, then let no spoken word awaken us from the fantastic dream, else all our faith must vanish. Real man always speaks real language; to him, song is quite a different and peculiar medium of expression, which he never mistakes for or employs instead of speech, except in jest or playful mirth. It is vain to attempt, as some have done, to reconcile or excuse this contradiction by a comparison with that alternation of verse and prose which occurs in the plays of Shakespeare and many German poets. Verse and prose are only different forms of one and the same substance, the spoken language; the verse merely regulates the play of the accents, the retardations, accelerations, and similarities of sounds, without either altering or veiling the meaning and effect of the words. In singing, on the contrary, the word is wedded to another element, which, although it already exists in language, only now emerges from its obscurity and subordination to the absolute meanings of the words; and assumes not only co-regency with the spoken language, but often and easily—with the assistance of the accompanying orchestra, the multiplicity of parts and voices, and the musical rhythm—acquires complete supremacy. Song and speech, although related in their origin, are different idioms, of which the one excludes the other. The drama either moves in the sphere of real life and speaks its language, or it quits this sphere with its proper language, and becomes an opera. The mixed opera is neither the one thing nor the other—it is a baseless chimera; the idiom of the genuine opera is music.

At this point commences the rule of that fatality which, often reviled and often combated, but always returning, has from the beginning pursued the opera.

These singing beings, are they to be men? These melodies, enveloped in the clang and roar of the instruments, which often drown the word or make it unintelligible, are these to be their language? The bodily appearance of the singers, in the action of the drama, is of itself sufficient to make their singing speech a myth and an unreal sport of fantasy. What no one ever believed—what no one ever would have dared to persuade us of, or attempted to demonstrate—all that is fabulous, every impossible adventure, every storm of unjustifiable or exaggerated feelings, every description of licentiousness and voluptuous intoxication of the senses, is here unhesitatingly put forward as a representation of reality.

And then again: this language of song, this music, the enigmatical language of the internal twilight, is it clear and pointed and rapid enough for the stern and hasty progress of excited action, in which even the swift word of the poet so often appears a drag? The drama will suffer no delay in its advance; but music requires time to make a definite impression, and cause our heartstrings to respond in sympathetic unison. How is this contradiction to be reconciled? Obviously, only at the cost of dramatic life. The action, instead of steadily developing itself—the highest object of all dramatists—must be simplified and retarded; it must be concentrated in a few monumental episodes, in which the music may find scope for

expansion, and our attention be absorbed. And, in order to make all this possible, the poet is obliged to retreat from the expansive theatre of life to that limited number of occurrences and characters, in which the inner life of the mind is sufficiently significant and otherwise calculated to make us forget the riches both of that sphere of the spirit which is inaccessible to music, and of the more energetic outward life.

Does not this first glance explain the whole history of the opera? The opera was to be the resurrection of ancient tragedy; it became the plaything of idling aristocracy and voluptuous courts, as soon as it had secured its existence and gained a footing upon the stage; it became an arena for pomp and show, for sensual pleasure and dissipation; and thus an apparently most serious undertaking was converted into a farce. Who were these "Alexanders in India," these Zenobias and Armidas, these Cæsars and Catos of the grand Italian opera, who, in their days, filled the world with their fame? Eunuchs were they and warbling courtezans, who, covered with gold, and arbiters of success or failure, became the capricious masters of the composer, powerful enough twice even to ruin our mighty Handel, and drive him to madness, until he washed his hands of them. And can we even now do anything without these celebrities of the solfeggio? Have not Mozart and Winter, Spontini and Meyerbeer, Weber and Spohr, Fioravanti and Flotow, been obliged to do homage and pay tribute to these bravura singers? Or shall we look at that chief attraction of the modern opera, the splendour of its *mise en scène*, as it was exhibited some centuries ago? Old Freschi, amongst others, knew it full well; as is proved by the manner in which he got up his "Berenice," in 1680, when he introduced choruses consisting of 100 girls, 100 soldiers on foot, and 100 horsemen clad in iron, besides 40 horn-players and 6 trumpeters on horseback, 6 drummers, 6 standard bearers, 6 trombones, 6 large flutes, 6 "master singers" with Turkish instruments, 6 others with fifes, 6 pages, 6 sergeants, 6 cymbalists, 12 huntsmen; to which were added, in the triumphal procession, 12 outriders, 12 charioteers, 2 Turks leading a lion, and 2 elephants; the triumphal chariot drawn by 4 horses, 12 other carriages and 12 horses laden with prisoners and booty, and 6 state carriages lent for the occasion by noblemen.

Enough of these childish follies. Gluck alone rises pure and mighty above all this nothingness and corruption. Resting upon the solid and rational basis of the old French-Aristotelian tragedy, he aimed at the production of a real drama, and not merely at musical diversion, under the pretence of the drama. This intention he has not only carried out in his operas, but he has also left on record a short, but clear and precise statement of his ideas on the subject. The action, characters, and diction of the poet are to him sacred; they constitute, indeed, his only task. Music is, with him, only the manifestation—the "reverberation"—of those spiritual forces.

This has been Gluck's sacred mission. A progress in the *idea* of the opera beyond his conception is impossible. Even Wagner has been unable to conceive and reveal a higher idea. His principle—the most perfect union between the music, as the medium of expression, and the poetry and action—is that of Gluck.

There are, however, two other roads differing from Gluck's.

The one of these aims at the fullest possible development of the musical part of the opera; whilst at the same time remaining, as much as possible, faithful to the action. This is the road of Mozart and his successors, which we have pointed out

and characterized on a former occasion. It cannot be denied that music—especially as regards polyphony, its own peculiar dramatic element—has here developed itself much more richly than as it was known to Gluck; and it certainly offers resources for dramatic tasks, such as were not at the command of that pioneer.

The other road is that which Wagner has taken in his "Lohengrin" (especially in the first act). Whilst Gluck, as his words and compositions testify, would not allow the progress of the drama to be obstructed by the accepted "forms" of the opera music of his time, Wagner boldly ventures to break through all and every form of music. Every dramatic incident and every word fills its foaming cup out of the waving ocean of sound, just as it lists or needs, and utterly regardless of that which preceded or that which follows. There is no surety that any newly awakened germ will bring forth leaves and flowers—that any motivo will be developed, or any thought come to perfection. Everything is kept in uncertainty; so much so, that it is often quite impossible even to distinguish the key: the moment rules and seizes anything which the particular situation or contents of the text may seem to require.

But music, nevertheless, carries within itself its own eternal law, which no one can destroy or disregard without entailing destruction upon art itself. Every tonal progression, every chord and every region of sound, has a meaning of its own, and is effective only when employed in its original sense. It cannot unite itself perfectly, except with words that have the same import; nor can it truthfully delineate any character, or accompany any action, in which the same sentiment is not prevailing; or else the internal disagreement will instantly create obstruction or crying contradiction. And if every human communication must be based upon a logical development; if language, provided with such an effective instrument as the quickly comprehended word, must nevertheless complete and connect its sentences, in order to be intelligible; how much more indispensable is that secret logic and syntax to the far more obscure and indefinite language of music. To deny or deprive it of form—of all and every kind of form—is to fling it back into chaos.

I have here used the word form in its general meaning. I must once more vindicate the right and necessity of each particular form, for the special contents to which it is applied; whilst it may not only be dispensed with, but is even inadmissible where the contents are foreign to its meaning. Gluck has broken through the old established form of the aria; Mozart moves with greater freedom and lightness in the opera than any of his predecessors or followers; Bach, in some choruses of his Passion Music, has exhausted important subjects in four single bars; Beethoven, in his second mass, hurries, with bold impetuosity, from one emphatic point to another, where others would have unrolled broad forms and stifled the spirit. But the fundamental law of form which requires that every idea should be fully expressed, and that one should depend on another, has never been given up.

Neither has Wagner himself been able to prevail so far over himself and his cherished art. Where, for the sake of maintaining the predominancy of word and action, he thinks it proper to leave unfinished or prevent the development of this or that form (as, e. g. in the artistic dialectic treatment of a subject, the expansion or transformation of a motivo, &c.), there the neglected part creeps—or forces itself—into the composition in the shape of a *naked* repetition; and it cannot be otherwise, because the art of sound requires to make repeated appeals in order to be understood

and to create sympathy in our soul. No artist has had more frequent recourse to the repetition of a motivo which is to be of importance for the action than Wagner has done: for instance, with that little melody in which Lohengrin pronounces the ominous decree on which the whole development of the drama depends. But it is evident that a repetition can only be a proper form of expression where the same idea reappears under the same condition of mind. In any other case, it can only be an external reminiscence acting mnemonically, but not psychologically; it then becomes effective, not through itself, but through the internal connection of the past with the present moment; as, e. g. when a person, who has been warned in vain, sorrowfully recalls to his memory the words of his kind monitor in the hour of ruin. Such reminiscences may, in the proper place, be most profound truth; and then they are also introduced by Wagner with justice and with proper effect; but they are more liable to become wearisome than any other form of musical dialectics, and cannot be a substitute for a connected development of the ideas and their forms.

It would become no one less than myself to involve a man, so gifted and energetic as Wagner, in a scholastic process on the question, whether, or no, his motivos and other forms are sufficiently and properly "worked out." I am fully aware that the management of a motivo and other manipulations of form may be learned and applied by any attentive scholar of ordinary capacity. This knowledge and practical skill is the pride of all those self-sufficient individuals who make a trade of musical art; "with little wit and much conceit, each one of them turns in his narrow circle." But though the most skilful elaboration is vain and worthless, unless it be the result of and assisted by creative energy, still that elaboration is at the same time the test of the master's power—of that power without which no one can become a master, or produce a perfect master-piece; i. e. a work of art. When practised with the spirit and from the spirit, it is a real gymnasium for the exercise of the student's creative power; as logic and mathematics are to the metaphysician. The master finds in it the organic development of those incomplete and dormant germs of life which his creative love is destined to present to the world in godlike fulness and perfection. A man of Wagner's mental power has long since acquired this practical skill, or might acquire it whenever he liked. But he cannot do without it; nor can it at any time be dispensed with—even for the sake of dramatic effect—without depriving music of its nature and power. If any one wishes to feel and observe this in Wagner's own opera, let him study the first scene of the second act, where the wicked pair, writhing under pain and self-accusation, cowed, but full of rage, are concocting new plans. Observe how pertinaciously the musical thought works itself deeper and deeper into the soul! how painfully that strangely oppressive bass clarionet (which here for the first time has been artistically employed) twists and turns under the bitter, sarcastic speech of the malicious pair, like the tempting serpent, when it, for the first time, felt the crushing heel upon its head! Nor does Wagner refuse to allow the language of sound that expansion in breadth which belongs to it by nature and without which it cannot be effective, wherever the action (as at the close of the first and in the third act) admits of delay.

But whether he has or has not on many occasions misunderstood or disregarded the nature and requirements of musical language, is not the question which has here to be decided. This latter is a question for critics, and its deeper considera-

tion belongs to the province of the science of music. Our present object was merely to indicate the difference of direction between Gluck's path and that of his most independent successor. It is this independency of thought which will not allow itself to be cramped by ancient rules and customs; this persevering energy of will concentrated upon the one point aimed at—scenic life and truth: it is this which characterizes and honours Wagner. I have endeavoured to lay hold of his character and deeds at that point which is decisive for the opera; I mean the union between music and the drama, and the reacting influence of this union upon the opera. This is the point where the question of the future must be decided; although not every one may be able or feel inclined, without much more extensive explanations, to follow up to firm conviction, that which here could only be pointed out in fugitive outlines. As regards the point to which we have referred, it must be acknowledged that Wagner has kept steadily in view, and, as far as it was given to him, endeavoured to fulfil, one of the vital conditions of the drama, which consists in an inviolable faithfulness and devotion to the dramatic contents; but it is equally certain that he was by no means the first who put this principle into operation; for it had already been carried out by Gluck, and practically acknowledged by more than one of his successors.

How, indeed, could it have been possible for any one altogether to lose sight of the obligation to devote himself in the drama to the chief dramatic task? From the inventors of the opera, from Jacopo Peri and Caccini, from the elder Italians and our Handel, down to the most *spirituel* of all *bon-vivants*, Rossini, that vital principal of the drama may be traced through all the imperfections and corruptions of the opera. And who can forget how much that is precious and immortal has been presented to us by Mozart, by Beethoven, and by so many others on this and the other side of the Rhine and the Alps? Amongst Wagner's immediate predecessors must be mentioned especially Spontini, with his profound scenic knowledge; C. M. von Weber, to whose musical diction that of Wagner approaches more closely than the latter is, perhaps, himself aware; and Meyerbeer, in those moments in which his eminent talent remains faithful to the scene.

But whilst Wagner—and every one labouring in the same sphere—is greatly indebted to them, he has not been able to repudiate that ominous heritage which Spontini and Meyerbeer were obliged to accept from the hand of fate, and enlarge to exuberance; we mean that broad and pompous scenic display which originated in the insufficiency of the opera for a rapid progress of the action, and greater richness of the spiritual contents, and which reacts upon both with greatly increased effect. Spontini, under the influence of nationality and of the scene of his labours (Paris), and of the rhythm of Napoleon's triumphant march, becomes a Roman full of lapidary pomp. Military glory, adventurous expeditions, ostentatious hierarchic pride; all these demand a broad scene and a total cessasion of all other interests, in order that the eye may be dazzled and the ear overwhelmed with all that flaming metallic lustre, with all that threatening splendour of antique and masked processions, all that servile jubilation of those hosts of dancers and those ever ready at the bidding of the master to worship every idol. Herein is concealed the worm which corrodes Spontini's otherwise so highly adorned throne. In vain do his adherents attempt to prove that this Roman pomp is in keeping with the times of

the Diadochs and Hohenstaufs. What made him devote himself to such subjects? And why did the time for them cease with the end of Napoleon's glorious career? The restoration had arrived, and, yawning, looked about from under the canopy of the throne for invigorating powers. What was not then dragged forward and laboriously gathered together? Even revolution (" *La Muette de Portici* "); the massacre of the Huguenots; and William Tell, the liberator, who had to pass in half Germany for the honest Andreas Hofer*. But a real living principle—a positive one, like the Napoleonic *gloire*—could not be found; therefore the whole breadth of existence was traversed and everything dragged upon the stage that gave the least promise to appear attractive, strange or new. Such a " curiosity shop " is Meyerbeer's scene; and hundreds of representations prove everywhere that it is as much in keeping with the spirit of his age, as was, before him, Spontini's more solid but more monotonous pomp. In extenuation, it can only be said that those incidents which constitute the fable of the drama may possibly have at one time or other occurred in reality. The sun certainly rose in the days of the Anabaptists; there was skating then as now; the Louvre was undoubtedly occasionally illuminated in the times of the Huguenots; there were religious processions; and gipsies and students danced and made merry. In many things here brought before us there is also great truthfulness of representation; but the pith of the substance is lost, the point of the action blunted, under the mass of secondary accessories, and man is hidden under the load of costume. And now let any one attempt, in opposition to our directors and our most modern operatic fanatics—who undoubtedly stand upon the same ground as Freschi's contemporaries,—to get on without this apparatus!

Wagner himself has not been able to avert the fate of the opera. With greater depth of conception than the writer of the Prophète and Huguenots, he only endeavours to make the splendour of the scene an indispensable adjunct, or momentum, of the action. For this purpose the middle age presents the most favourable opportunity. When the holy *Graal* sends forth its renowned warriors, it is quite natural that kings and princes, knights and people, should hurry to the shore, in ingeniously arranged waving lines, to meet the skiff, with the knight clad in shining armour, as it approaches, drawn by a swan. There the pompous appearance of the four counts, amidst the mingled clangour of as many bands of trumpeters, there the echoes of the hunters' horns, sounding in choruses through the forest far and near, are in their place; there the mountain of Venus begins to glow and reveals its voluptuous secrets to the confused eye; there the *Niebelungen Hort* (rock) shines in the reflection of the sun, to sink again beneath the waters of the Rhine. This is a piece of real poetry! Where is the man that has not dreamt it in some form or other? Here we enjoy with delight the enchanting splendour of the scene, and need not feel ashamed; for it is essential to the subject—it is the drama itself.

It is the Drama.

But this drama—is it the drama of the future? Is this middle age a picture

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* The reader will recollect that several governments of Germany would not allow " William Tell " to be performed, until another libretto—" Andreas Hofer "—had been substituted for the original text.—Tr.

of our own future? Is that which has had its day, and has for ever died away, the child of our hopes? Impossible!

We listen to those legends and fables of the enchantress, Venus, and the holy *Graal*, with all the armorial clang of the trusty champions and their judicial contests, as to the echo of times long gone by and quite estranged to us. Our fancy occasionally sports with them; we now and then revive them in the ballad and other lighter forms, half serious, half comic; but the more earnest the attempt to bring them before us in the form of a tangible reality, the more estranged we feel, and draw coldly back. It is not that the spirit-world is sealed to poetry—even to dramatic poetry; at least, not amongst us Germans. In spite of all the teachings of philosophy, in spite of all the explanations of our scholars and the negations of our materialists, there is, lurking from our childhood in some obscure corner of our mind, that dream—half sorrowful, half yearning—of another world connected with this; that dream, which sends a shudder through our heart when Hamlet's ghost appears; and makes us listen, with breathless apprehension, to the legend of the Erlkönig. Only let us not be compelled (as in Weber's Freischütz and Wagner's Flying Dutchman) to gaze at these things until we have counted the very buttons on the dress of the ghost. We may, indeed, live once more through the life of sunken centuries; but only so far as we are able—that is to say, so far as we find in it human nature and a reflex of our own feelings and views. Those times of the middle ages may awaken our sympathy; but only in those things which are intelligible to our understanding and congenial to our mind; not by their steel-clad warriors and the amassed plunder and clatter of an overbearing, but hollow, feudal world; nor by that strange love which—as negroes do with their gods—now idolizes the object of its choice, and now whips* and degrades it to the level of a creature without will or rights. We cannot enter into the feelings of Lohengrin, when he punishes his mistress with eternal separation, because she asked his name, although she knew not why that question was forbidden. We may conceive it possible for a diabolical Venus to entice young men; but we can take no liking to that Tannhäuser who tears himself, before our eyes, out of the arms of voluptuousness, and resolves upon a pilgrimage to Rome merely because some pilgrims happen to pass by; who desists from the journey and returns to his former and pure love—of whom we now hear for the first time—at the Wartburg, because her name is incidentally mentioned at a competition of minstrels†; who praises sensual indulgence in the face of the pure mistress, and who, rejected and condemned to pilgrimage, after all wanders to Rome, and, not having obtained absolution, longs to return to the mountain of Venus, and is hardly rescued, at last, by a well-timed death. All this we may and do accept, half heedlessly and half in sportive play of fancy; we also accept it with objective coolness upon ancient rolls of parchment as a representation of remote and foreign times. But when it appears before us upon the stage, in a lasting bodily form, and provided with all appendages of reality, it sinks down from

* Chriemhilde boasts that Siegfried had "covered her body with stripes."—Tr.

† We may observe, in passing, that there can be no special vocal performance in the opera; for song no longer exists when singing has become the ordinary form of language.—Tr.

the privileged asylum of the myth, to which we willingly lend an ear, to the sphere of all other phantasmagoriæ intended to deceive the senses. Even those more truthful and deep-felt touches (as that scene in the second act of Lohengrin) lose their power, because the sympathizing mind can scarcely trace any connection between them and the strange circumstances by which they are accompanied.

No. This is not the opera of the future. It is merely an escape from that reality which offered no great and general interests to the German artist, into a past where we, when young, and tired of the eternal Romanizing and Hellenizing, could at least dream of our German fatherland, and feel proud in the idea of treading upon our native soil. And, strange to say, this flight has led our Wagner, as it did, in hopeless times, the chivalrous La Motte Fouqué, into the land of knights, of tinselled love courts, and a *clerus* "by the grace of God," with all its pagan legends. It has led him, who, in Dresden, fought for interests of quite a different nature, into the arena of all those historical rights, privileges, honors, and immunities, which had their origin neither in the people, nor in Christianity, nor even in the universal law of human nature; for at that time the nation to which we belong, and which is both our past and our future, was still lying prostrate and half buried in its mother earth, unconscious of itself, unprotected and despised. And yet it is the people alone which constitutes the inexhaustible source of all genuine art, and therefore of the drama also; viz. that spirit of universal mankind which at all times appeals to and fills our hearts, and which alone is able and entitled to be awakened by the poet to a life of eternal youth. The rest may amuse in times of national depression or indifference; but Wagner's mind could never reconcile itself to this, else would he not now be eating the bread of an exile in foreign countries.

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And here it appears to me necessary to define, as clearly as possible, the conditions under which art may at all expect a future. The word future, when applied in relation to the spiritual realm, does not, as we have seen, signify a mere continuation of existence and enjoyment, but implies a progress to new and higher phases in the life of nations and of mankind generally. Life and living form constitute the object of all art (taken in the widest sense), as we have already defined it on a former occasion. But art can only reveal this life out of the spirit and to the spirit, when the artist is himself filled with the breath of this life, and carries within himself the idea and power of creation. But every artist, be he ever so gifted, be he a Homer, a Shakespeare, or a Goethe, is the child of his time and his people. He is their property, and can have no other ideas and powers but such as could be conceived in the womb of his time and people. This can be proved of every art and every artist; even the foregoing investigations have brought to light a great amount of evidence to this effect.

If therefore art is to experience a progress, it cannot take place unless there is a progress in the life of times and nations. The question of the present and future condition of art is identical with that concerning the present and future condition of the people and times.

But this progress of the people and the time, what does it mean? It is impos-

sible that a word of such weighty import should merely indicate a step in advance in some or several particular sciences, branches of industry, or any other individual occupation. This cannot exhaust its meaning, although each separate progress tends to the advancement of the whole.

In the long-breathing life of nations there is perceptible the same ebb and flow of onward motion as that which we observed (p. 41) in the life of the arts. Some life-giving idea—the genius of a new time, just like the genius that creates a new phase of life in art—steps into active existence, animating it with a new fire to a new significance and new exertions. This is the commencement of a new phase of life for people and time, which, in gradually expanding circles, spreads in every direction and over every sphere of activity, until it again subsides into the calmness and rest of existence. But rest would be death; life knows and permits of no rest. Wherever a vestige of vital power remains in a people, where it is not utterly extinguished by tyranny or artful deceit—and even there the hope of regeneration remains alive and justifiable—there a new spark of life, no matter where and whence, falls into the heart of the people, and a new phase of life begins. It commences before the previous one has quite passed away, and however confusedly the circles may at first intersect one another, all are at last compelled to move in a new direction. The enemy of the new idea of life is not that which, through doubt or incapacity, resists its progress; that it has to overcome and conciliate for its own advantage. Its only enemy is that will which aims at the reverse of progress, as the abolition of the laws of existence and the forcible return to previous stages of life; it is the Restoration. Its object is an unnatural one, because not a single day of life passes that does not leave its consequences behind, or, in some way or other, affect the future. In order to attain this object, coercion and deceit must be brought into play, and friend as well as foe be ruined. There is a progress even in the slowest and most retarded advance; but a forced retrogression is destruction of life: it is the withered, barren, and cadaverous old hag of the ancient Hebrew legend, who, with leaden weight, and hatred keen as steel, sits down upon and closes the labouring womb.

Nations progress through the impulse of a new idea which flows through all the nerves and arteries of life. This progress is the more rapid and decided the more freshly the new stream of animating power sets in; it is retarded and disturbed by the attempts of reaction to turn back that stream. It is an error to suppose that the effects of a progressive or compulsory retrogressive movement are confined to particular spheres of life; as, e. g. to politics or religion. The restoration of Charles II corrupted morals as well as politics. Luther's reformation not only animated the faith of his followers, but it also operated incitingly upon the opposite party, and infused a new life into the hearts of the people, even without the pale of the church. The idea of a spiritual and moral deliverance out of the bonds of authoritative statutes and privileges that violated both nature and reason, having been conceived and matured in the quiet chamber of the thinker, became the cause of the most violent commotions amongst the people, and produced the most important political results; whilst it, at the same time, led to the revival of German literature and art, and also imparted new life to the language and poetry of France, which was impossible as long as the political and spiritual monopoly established by Louis XIV continued to

ex st. In our own art, the idea of the Reformation resting upon the Bible was proclaimed by Bach and Handel; whilst the humanistic efforts of Rousseau, Goethe, and Schiller, found exponents in Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. The idea of a free and united Germany, which twice—in 1813 and 1848—rose powerfully into life, is neither exhausted nor ever to be forgotten or relinquished; whilst the French restoration, on the other hand, has introduced into our country, also, Rossini's sensuality and the insipidness of his imitators, Auber's affected airs and graces *(minauderies)*, Cherubini's courtly *sacres*, and lastly—in a spiritual sense—Meyerbeer. What we Germans, beaten by our neighbours in this field, have done in the way of a pietistical imitation of our godly and earnest champions of the church, and as collectors from ancient Greece and Palestrinean Italy, is likewise known to all. They are Dante's faces turned backwards.

The question of the present state and future progress of our art, therefore, is identical with the question of the present condition of our people and its capability of advance. Nay, if the task of our art had been completely accomplished, even then a progress beyond it would depend upon the standing point and vital power of our people.

Is this vital power existing in our nation? Is this nation destined to progress?

It is—as all those know and take to heart who have heard the eternal call of history to "move onward;" who feel within themselves the inherent power of our depressed, but not corrupted and degraded, nation; and, in great days, such as we have witnessed, have seen it flash with youthful fire from every eye. Here no proof is required. Every one's feeling and consciousness of the present testifies of the future, and of its near approach.

When the renovating idea shall assume the reality of a providential event in the life of the people, then art also will celebrate its entrance into a new phase of life. But not sooner, and not otherwise.

But will the present forms of art be retained in that new phase of life?—Every form, and art itself, will only be preserved as long as both are in accordance with the progressive life of the national mind; but no longer.

And now I am in a position to take up again that part of the question about the future of art: is there a future for the opera?

The idea of the opera has as yet been by no means completely realized; not even by Gluck. The *drame lyrique*, with its traditions, offered to Gluck, at his time, the most favorable basis; but we who have had an opportunity to elevate our minds and expand our views, by the study of the works of Æschylus, Shakespeare, and our own poets; who are not confined, like the French of the old school, in the selection of the tasks, nor tied to any inviolable schematism of characters and situations; we cannot even be content with those tasks themselves, although they were the highest that could then be attempted. Then, as regards the music over which Gluck had command, it certainly, in one respect, viz. for the requirements of the monologue, shows itself to be possessed of ample power of expression. It gives a truthful utterance to the word of the poet, and describes the character of the scene with all the depth and power which had been given to Gluck himself; it even delineates, where Gluck has found it necessary (e. g. in Rinald's slumber aria; in the scene where Orestes faints away; in the prayer, in *C* minor, in "Alceste"), the essential surrounding circumstances. But each character, whether standing alone

or changing places with others, presents itself before us, like a Greek statue, as an isolated being. The real dialogue, the contrast of voices and characters which now oppose one another, and now act together in concert, and yet preserve the distinctive features of their nature—in one word, the polyphonic power of music (taken in a spiritual, and not a merely technical, sense), the power in which we see united the simultaneous representation (grouping) of sculpture and the successive development of poetry, was almost entirely denied to Gluck's music.

Lastly, it is to be considered—and this is by no means an unimportant point—that this Gluck, the most conscientious and high-minded of all dramatists in the province of the opera, had to devote himself to a foreign people and a foreign language, as Mozart likewise composed his music mostly to foreign (Italian) texts. But the more conscientiously and deeply a composer enters into the words of the text, the less satisfactory must prove every translation. Gluck, translated into any other language, is truth in the mouth of a liar. But our nation (which has had to give up a Handel to England, a Gluck to France, and a Mozart to the Italian tongue) and our language (whose dramatic power, especially as regards freedom, precision, and truthfulness of expression, is so vastly superior to most others)—they both may expect that no efforts will ever be wanting to attain, in and for them, the highest perfection.

We must not, however, forget that the opera is, above all, a drama. If we Germans are to perfect our opera, our drama in general—the drama of the poet—must also have a future, in the sense in which alone it is worth while to speak of a future.

The drama, this most perfect echo of life, must necessarily assume a different character amongst different nations. And not only each nation, but each phase in the life of the people, creates its own drama according to the intellectual standing-point of the nation. Ancient France created its drama in Corneille, Racine, and Molière; France, renovated by the revolution, has produced a drama of its own in Victor Hugo—now living in exile—and those who worked with him for the same object.

However much this modern school may owe to Shakespeare and the Germans—and its protest against the exclusive vanity of ancient France and all its dramatic tradition is in itself a most significant symptom—and whatever else we may miss in it or disapprove of, it is the reflection of modern France awakened to new activity; it is the indicator of a new phase in the life of her art. The German nation also had experienced its first dramatic elevation (not to mention prior movements) in Schiller and Goethe; but, unprepared for a life of healthy energy, it sank back into the sickliness and one-sidedness of Kleist, whose heart, so full of poetic power and poetic devotion, pined away and finally broke at the fall of his fatherland—until, in a still more languishing and hopeless time, even Grabbe, that Titan, crippled by adverse circumstances, had to give up the task in despair. But the new phase of life which shall bring liberty and unity to this highly gifted nation, great even in its fallen heroes, will also provide a basis—the power is there—for a new life of active deeds, and in this active life will also flourish the drama, the art of cheerful energy.

But it may be asked: when that time shall have arrived, will a bold, energetic, and accomplished nation feel any longer attracted by such a dubious and

flitting apparition as the opera, this "daughter of the air?"—will it find the slowly undulating and half-transparent wave of sound sufficient for the impetuous, onward pressure of the new idea that shall conquer all hearts?—will that tender being, which loves to linger on its way, be able to keep pace with the rhythmic march of a time awakened to the consciousness of how much that was neglected it has to fetch up; how much that has been lost or frittered away it has to restore? It is, after all, a strange feature in the history of art, that the opera has acquired a lasting and predominant influence only amongst people who—like the Germans and Italians—being deprived of national independency or active participation in the affairs of state, have taken refuge either in the giddiness of sensual diversion and the pursuit of subjective interests, or in that internal brooding and dreaming which is peculiar to the German. The ancients could have no opera; the Romans had no national art whatever; the English and their free-born sons on the other side of the ocean have no national opera; the native talent of France (Lully, Gluck, Grétry, Cherubini, Spontini, Rossini, Meyerbeer, were, or are, foreigners) has not been able to produce anything in the province of the opera that can stand a comparison, either as regards power or earnestness of intention, with the national drama and other productions of art; the whole French opera is either a joke, or an amusement, or imitation.

It certainly is to be hoped and expected that there will be an end of that inundation of the lyric stage which overspreads our theatres and leisure hours, as rankling fungi cover the damp and crumbling wall. It certainly is a sign of the emptiness and the moral and intellectual confusion of our time, that the theatre has ceased to be the mirror of national life (and where, in Europe, is now real national life?); that the drama is no longer the focus and summit of the highest mental development in an artistic form; and that that suspicious form of the opera now occupies the throne, which, in Italy, was once supported and guarded by eunuchs, and which now is everywhere glorified with dazzling splendour. It is also certain that the all-o'ershadowing and all-power-absorbing overgrowth of the opera is, in itself, a sign of its hollowness. Externally, anything may be made out of everything. That the Maid of Orleans and Kate of Heilbronn, that Romeo and Juliet, Othello—without concern about the Vandalic rape committed upon the original—and, lastly, even Lear, have been dragged forward to satisfy the cravings of the opera-goers; that an opera (Halevy's "Nabob") has actually made its debût with a coughing air, a sneezing and sobbing duet, a tobacco-pipe trio, and a chorus of barking dogs and bagpipes, with all the natural imitations and comicalities in which cockneyism delights: all this cannot surprise, when nothing is required and desired but to find new spoils for a thoughtless and pleasure-hunting multitude; for musicians, caring for nothing but momentary success. Such things will not happen in more exalted times.

But, in the life and mind of man, so infinitely rich, tasks will present themselves of which now a few only dare to think with silent resignation, and which can only be realized in the form and with the means of the lyric drama. Of what nature these tasks will be, it is not here the place to show; but that the idea of the necessity and possibility of new roads is gaining ground, may be seen from the numerous attempts that have been made to find them out. The experiment of a play with choruses was tried long ago; it has been repeated of late by Mendelssohn, in the twice-

attempted and twice-forgotten Athalie. An ingenious amateur (Radziwill) has ventured to apply the same form to the first part of Goethe's "Faust;" and it is even intended to treat the second part of this gigantic work in the same manner, no one appearing willing to perceive how far its extent and contents exceed the space and capabilities of the stage, and how it must be mutilated even to get it upon the boards. Those attempts to revive the ancient Greek tragedy, of which we spoke on a former occasion, belong to the same category. All this, however, is no progress. These attempts are "faces turned backwards;" but they originate in the presentiment of that progress which has become a necessity, and must take place sooner or later. Every form of art has its immutable rights, but they are confined to those tasks and those circumstances of which the form is the necessary and characteristic expression.

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The same applies to the form of the oratorio, which is so closely related, both historically and metaphysically, to the stage drama.

The church no longer knows anything of the oratorio as a part of Divine service. Frederick the Great spoke more correctly and candidly than thousands after him, when he said of Graun's well-intended "Death of Jesus," that it was "half church, half opera." This work, like its author, took its rise from the people whose sphere of life was at that time much more closely connected with the church than it is now. It has been, half a century long, a comfort and blessing to thousands, whose devotional feelings it satisfied, because the deeper and purer source for such a train of emotions was hidden and unknown to them. But to repeat the form of this church-oratorio outside the church, where all feelings and relations are different, is no progress, as I have already been obliged to assert, in respect to Mendelssohn's "Paul;" it can only meet with success in a time which, not yet ripe for progress, finds satisfaction or amusement in recollections of the past, in external connexions and experimental essays.

Neither can that other form of the oratorio, which is associated with the name of Handel, suffice any longer. That form again rested upon the attachment of the people to the contents of the Bible, to every portion of which they attributed a religious character—and therefore importance, because it belonged to the Holy Scriptures. In whatever form these contents were presented, they were certain to find open minds. We have already observed how Haydn was drawn beyond this circle; and how he testified, quite innocently and unintentionally, that the whole creation and every relation of human life claim the interest of man and his art. When later composers, as F. Schneider in his "*Weltgericht*," and others, down to Hiller's "*Zerstörung von Jerusalem*," and Mendelssohn's "*Elijah*," have once more returned to the specific biblical standing point, they may have found scope for the exercise of their talents, and the charm or the force of some or a number of individual passages may merit all the praise bestowed upon them; but a progress there could be neither in the nature of the task, nor in the form in which this task was carried out.

To us, and the time for which we hope, no subject can, only because it is transmitted through the Bible, be therefore of superlative interest. Biblical or not,

it must be connected with the feelings and aspirations of mankind; it must be suitable for, and within the reach of, artistic representation, and be capable of assuming an ideal form, if it is to be accepted as a genuine and worthy task of art. And it must, furthermore, be accessible to the particular form of art, and present sufficient material, if its representation is to result in a real work of art. Paul, as teacher and witness of the faith, is to the Christian, the thinker, and the historian, an exalted object of contemplation. The sculptor may delineate and immortalize his appearance; the poet and orator may try their strength in his praise; but his calling was to teach, which belongs to the province of science, and not of art. His course of life does not present the rounded and clearly defined outlines of distinct individuality; for, essentially, it was not a course of action, but it was thought (in belief) and spreading of thought. Even the miracle of his calling bears the same indeterminable and, if not unartistic, at least unmusical character. In the narrative, the words "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"—have their full weight; but they cannot be musically treated as the words of the Divine Monitor, because they neither express a state of mind, nor delineate a character. Old Henry Schütz caused them to be intoned by a chorus of voices, rising one above the other, as if to represent a chorus of spirits in the air. Mendelssohn has employed a chorus of female voices. In the one and the other representation, "the Lord was not there." He who has become man, even when he returns as a spirit, can only appear in human form, and, as a man, speak with a single voice. This idea Beethoven has ventured to realize in his "Christ on the Mount of Olives;" and Bach has succeeded in carrying it out in the Passion Music; but no one could do it with those words in "Paul." The same may be proved—and far more circumstantially than here—of all such undertakings.

A deeper and more artistic conception of the task must necessarily lead to the genuine form of the oratorio. Music cannot narrate without becoming untrue in itself, or descending to its loosest and, in itself, least satisfactory form—the recitative. It can only reveal the inner life of man, either of a single individual, or of several acting in concert or in opposition to one another. Too long have composers clung timorously to the Bible, and looked upon the oratorio as an epos interspersed with dramatic and lyric episodes. Bach, as servant of the church, was perfectly right in his conception, not in respect to art, but to his office; but, to the independent composer, the oratorio can never be anything else but a drama. All music is, in its higher development, of a dramatic nature. Every work of magnitude must assume a dramatic form, if it is to be a complete work of art, and not merely a row of pearls—of isolated momenta—held together by a thin thread; if it is to be everywhere open to the power of our art, and not to break it or shut it out. Instead of entering more minutely into this subject, I can here only refer to my oratorio *Mose*, in which the dramatic form was intended to appear in its purity and fulness, as far as it was given to me to behold and represent it. No matter in how many points I may have been successful, or in how many I may have failed, the oratorio can only develop itself in a dramatic form; and the future will not retrace this first step in the right direction.

But is this not making the oratorio a mere opera, without the scenic representation? And is not a drama, disclaiming scenic representation, something in-

complete from the beginning?—After Goethe's "Faust" and Byron's "Cain," this objection will hardly be listened to. Numerous subjects present themselves, for which, on account of their internal animation, the necessity of a dialectic development, and on account of their whole nature, the dramatic form would be most desirable, and which, nevertheless, far exceed the space and resources of any stage. Is this a reason why those grandest and boldest poems of modern times should not have been written? And is not also that hero, who "carried his people upon his hands into the land of promise," and with whom, according to the wonderful mythic tradition of our race, God himself conversed with divinely-human mercy and humanly-divine wrath; is not that ancient covenant, with its prophecy of the new that was to fulfil it, but not to make it void; this morning of our existence, this day full of trials and hopes, of deeds and wonders, when nations make war against nations, and super-terrestrial powers fulfil the decrees of fate; is all this unworthy of the vision of the poet, or concealed from his view? And is there any other poetical power more commensurate to these visions than the wondrous realm of sound which opposes choruses to choruses, and the mysterious world of the instruments to the voice of man?

But can this free dramatic form of composition continue to bear the name of oratorio, with the meaning we have so long been accustomed to attach to it, without confusing our ideas as to its aim and nature? This was the question put to me, at one of the last performances, by a clear-sighted and observant brother artist, who had taken a liking to the work, in spite of its new direction. I have myself had to experience the weight of this doubt by the side of many a cheering success. And yet it cannot be otherwise; the answer reaches beyond that work, to the works of the future.

It is not here the place to inquire what changes the rites of revealed religions will have to undergo. In all of them, in every religion, there is the same fundamental principle; it is the conception which man forms of the absolute or Divine, and in which he acknowledges the origin of his own being. This fundamental principle extends beyond the boundaries of every particular religion and every particular rite; it is neither confined to place nor time; it unites, according to the words of Christ, all "who worship in spirit and in truth;" it consecrates as its chosen heroes all those who lead the nations into its fold, and glorifies what they achieve as the revelation of the deepest mysteries given to man. For this celebration the "oratorio" is the only proper form, after having, moreover, long since ceased to be a constituent part of the special rite of the Protestant Christian church. This is, for our times and for the future, the true meaning of the oratorio, in which the original idea shall not be destroyed, but fulfilled, and which may and must retain—but in a higher sense—that name which, moreover, originated apart from ritual service. It implies something more than the employment of biblical texts, intermixed, perhaps, with legendary tales and narrations of events that have lost their interest, or interspersed with familiar and popular ritual forms (e. g. chorales and intonations); it signifies the revelation of eternal truth and eternal life, the idea of the Divine. A time, internally and externally more free than ours, will comprehend more clearly and completely what has begun in uncertain twilight.

Thus much respecting the future. We have contemplated it here (I repeat once again

what I enunciated at the commencement) in connection with the nature of art and the whole spiritual life, as a progress—a progress in the Idea: i. e. either the perfection of such ideas as have been dimly perceived and aimed at, but not fully realized; or the entrance of new ideas into life—a progress of the spirit.

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There are, however, others who form a different conception of the nature and life of musical art.

Some find comfort in the idea that, as music has been, "from eternity downwards," a characteristic and indispensable property of mankind, therefore it will continue with mankind "to all eternity," as a source of relaxation and pleasure. The "means," say they, may change and increase; the different "forms" may develop themselves or be replaced by others; "knowledge and skill" may increase or diminish; but the chief thing—the wants and desires of man—will always remain the same. Proceeding on this supposition, Mendelssohn, in the observations quoted (p 51), appears to have been willing only to concede this much, that a composer may do a thing "a little better" than his predecessor. He thinks that "the forms are larger and broader" in Beethoven's last works, than in those of his earlier period, or in the works of Mozart; that the "style" is more "polyphonic" and "artistic" (then it must have been previously less artistic, less in accordance with the nature of art); that "the instrumentation is fuller;" that Beethoven only proceeded "a little farther" on the road which already existed;—nay, that the ninth symphony "affords, after all, perhaps not so pure and serene a feast" as the symphony in C minor.

Mendelssohn is by no means the originator of this idea; it has been entertained and expressed, before and besides him, by many others, whom we here only wish to represent under the name of a distinguished artist.

If this point of view be tenable, then the question of the future loses all importance, and progress all definite meaning. Then the whole matter comes only to this; namely, that people should "enjoy art," that they prepare in it "a feast" for themselves, and be "enchanted" and made "happy." But if this be all that is required, then the spiritual contents of art become a matter of utter indifference; for enjoyment, delight, the feeling of happiness, charm, beauty, and all such things depend ultimately upon the taste and condition of each individual; and there is no object, of whatever nature it may be, which does not give pleasure to one, whilst it is disagreeable to another, and leaves a third indifferent. But then there is also no material difference between a Gluck or Mozart, and a Rossini or Ricci, or between Beethoven and Strauss; they all have delighted and enchanted; and indeed the Rossinis and Strausses (I fear) more people than the others. The caterer for pleasure-hunters is then the wiser man.

In this sense, immortality may be promised to every art and every direction of art; but a meaningless and worthless immortality is this characterless swaying to and fro which never leads to anything but what we have had already; the enjoyment of it is what Hegel has termed a "bad immortality." Even the most desperate attempts to get out of this eternal sameness must be found comprehensible and excusable.

It is at this point where the idea of a decided progress (not a merely perceptible improvement) is repudiated as pregnant with danger; after and in concurrence with others, by Mendelssohn also. In one respect he certainly is right, when he calls the striving after new roads a "mischievous demon" of the artist. The artist has to devote himself entirely to his idea and conception; he should be wholly absorbed in his task; the moment any other purpose but this is allowed to influence his labours, he breaks that faith and loses that innocence and simplicity of heart which are indispensable conditions of genuine artistic creation; and as soon as he leaves, through vanity, thoughtlessness, or a secret consciousness of his own deficiency, the natural, tried, and approved path, he will feel the consequences of his rashness or insincerity. But it is, on the other hand, his duty to raise himself, in knowledge, consciousness, and sentiment, to the elevation of his time, and to expand his view in every possible direction. And, as he rises in mental power, higher or new tasks and ideas will open before him. What he and others had seen before appears to him in a new light, and acquires new significance; he does not seek for a new path, because he has already been led into it through an internal impulse; it is natural and unavoidable to him, because the sphere of his vision from his actual standing point and the nature of his task have marked it out from within. And though he may for a time wander about in loneliness—as Beethoven in his last days; though his best productions may lie a century long neglected in the dust—like Bach's Passion Music; though he may be misunderstood, and even fall into error; still his is a noble struggle, for it requires and proves a courageous devotion to that which he has perceived to be true; it is an artistic struggle, and will assuredly not be lost either to himself or to his art.

This is the genuine spirit of progress towards a new path which should be well and clearly distinguished from the errors of vanity or inexperience. Diametrically opposed to these errors, are, on the one hand, that timidity which shrinks from abandoning what has become familiar and dear to all; and, on the other hand, that wilful ignorance of characters spoiled by fortune and chained to 'success at any price, which persists in refusing to learn what is right and true, that it may not be called upon to try a new, and of course more hazardous, path. This intentional or instinctive resistance to the truth, from the fear that it should draw us away from our enjoyment and security of success to deeds whose success may be doubtful, is a sign of enervation in many thousands of our contemporaries, even in many that are highly gifted and highly favoured; it increases the burden and danger of the faithful votaries of art; it is the gain and help of the backsliders. A Beethoven never knew this weakness, neither did Bach or any other artist possessed of genius—i. e. of that power of real creation which has been called divine.

If, therefore, we need not look with fear upon the desire to progress towards a new path—providing it be genuine and conscientious—as a mischievous demon, let us consider more clearly what is conceded by the other side.

If the "means" change or increase, what, we ask, is the cause of it, and what are the consequences? The means of the orchestra have consisted alternately of richer and poorer instruments; so, e. g. the harmonica and cornets have been invented, laid aside, and taken up again. Has that happened accidentally? Was it without meaning or internal reason? The instruments were heaped together in masses

when the theatre and the church required power and variety of sound, in order to conceal its spiritual emptiness under sensual splendour and deafening noise; their number was diminished even to poverty, when solo singing, and the bravura of castrati and prime donne, had absorbed the entire interest of the opera. The orchestra increased again in fulness and variety, when—especially under Mozart's *régime*—musical composition acquired a more artistic and significant character; when the dialogue became more varied and lively; and when the necessity of a more animated change of situation, and a more truthful delineation of the different characters, and the progress of action, began to be felt.

But here I break off, especially as we have seen (pp. 31, 38, et seqq.) that all means and forms are meaningless, if they do not originate in, and convey, a spiritual idea. The whole history of art, as far as it fulfils its mission, contradicts point for point the view which is taken by the opposite party; and which, if rigorously considered, is as much opposed to art as it is to history. The human mind knows no standing still — throughout, only motion, only progress, or temporary retrogression. Even the apparent recurrences of the same phenomena and phases reveal distinctive features to the more deeply searching eye; they are the synonymes of history. The massive effects of a Spontini, Meyerbeer, and Wagner, have quite a different meaning from those accumulations of sound to which we alluded above; and they are as distinct from one another as the characters of the artists by whom they have been put in motion. It is, moreover, irreconcilable with the nature of musical art to sever the contents from the form, or the spirit from the matter or means, to let the one advance or remain stationary without the other. The essential character of art is an embodied spirituality; a duality of mind and matter; and he who admits a change of forms or means, must also admit a change in the life of the spirit.

To others, again, it appears strange and incomprehensible that the condition and progress of art should be attributed to, and made dependent upon, a general idea; that, in Beethoven's ninth symphony, the advance of pure instrumental music to the sphere of definite contents, where the word of human language is indispensable; that, in Spontini, Weber, and others, the prevailing sentiment of the people; and that, in all composers, nationality and the spirit of the times should have been the first leading principle, which not only marked out the direction and different tasks, but also determined the solution, and even the details, of the execution.

They believe that mere sound is the commencement of art; and that a work of art grows, as it were, together out of its details as they happened to meet together in the mind of the artist. They look upon the idea of the whole as the mere accidental cause of a rendezvous of artistic specialities (melodies, arias, &c.)—as the canvas upon which are to be worked or patched together the many-coloured flowers of sound, seeing that they cannot float in the air. Whether this or that fable, out of the Arabian Nights, or a fool's fair, or the noblest images, at the turning point of the deepest interests of mankind, have been the inciting cause, is quite the same to them, provided they were sufficient to put the flood of sounds in motion. This, of course, makes the decision depend upon details; the work of art falls asunder into disjointed members, and its value is determined by the aggregate value of the airs and choruses which are contained in it. This is a late

revival of that ancient French critique, which, in literature, has long since disappeared, and which measured the value of a tragedy by the number of phrases and figures that had been consumed in it. To this mode of criticizing applies Goethe's satirical maxim: "When you are giving a piece, give it at once in pieces."

But if these details, these motivos and melodies, airs and duets, constitute the essence of a work of art, how is it that they cannot be arbitrarily joined together? Let any one only try to connect, even according to the strictest rules of composition, the principal subject of the allegro of one sonata with the accessory subject of another; even the uneducated ear will feel that they do not belong to each other, or agree together. Those reeling potpourris, in which the great crowd of our garden concerts delights to catch, recognize, and watch the escape of the rags and tatters therein patched together, are the realization of this anatomic principle.

> "In order rightly to comprehend and describe
> A living being, you seek first to deprive
> It of its soul; then you hold in your hand
> All the parts: but the spiritual bond they want;
> *Encheiresin naturæ*, thus Chemistry
> Calls it, in unconscious self-mockery*."

This is the receipt of Mephistopheles, the lord of rats and mice.

But do we not acknowledge the principle of separation in the case of songs and dances and single melodies, if not in larger compositions? What has this or that melody to do with the question of time and the future; with the discussion about idea and progress? The melody is there; it matters not what sort of melody it is, so that it pleases. And here art is eternal. There always have been melodies, and there always can and will be. We know, by calculation, that four sounds admit of twenty-four changes of position, eight of 40,320, and twelve of nearly 500 millions; independently of the innumerable varieties of rhythm and many other means of combination: who will here find an end?

Unfortunately, however, not even this calculation is quite correct. The majority of those millions of motivos are so similar that one can hardly detect any difference in them. Then again, there are, as every one knows, certain natural laws of attraction or repulsion which must be observed in the combination of sounds (hence the different rules of melody, harmony, &c. &c.); whilst musical logic and grammar (closes, consistency of development, perspicuity, &c. &c.) also require to be attended to; so that those millions grow less and less, the more we look at them. What else could account for the monotony of those millions of songs and quartets for male voices, dances, and stringed quartets, which year after year boldly venture

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* "Wer will was Lebendig's erkennen und beschreiben
Sucht erst den Geist heraus zu treiben
Dann hat er die Theile in seiner Hand,
Fehlt, leider! nur das geistige Band;
*Encheiresin naturæ* nennt's die Chemie,
Spottet ihrer selbst und weiss nicht wie."
Goethe's "Faust."

into the world, like swarms of balm-crickets or humming-bees? We cannot, even in these most confined fields of art, escape the judgment of history. The most insignificant song is subject to the influence of time and nationality (else would not so many songs, once justly favorite and popular, grow antiquated and disappear), although it is not always worth our while to refer to special cases by way of proof.

Nay, furthermore, if any one should earnestly follow up this atomistic principle, he would sooner find reason to despair than the most far-sighted idealist. There is no longer a new motivo, or one that can be recognized as such; there are no new forms of rhythm (even Hiller's rhythmical studies are not new); harmony has not been enlarged since Bach, although new mixed chords have been invented; nor is it possible essentially to enrich the variegated palette of our instrumentation. This is the despair and the rankling thorn of all those who do not draw from the well of the spirit, in its power and truth, and yet are anxious to escape the repetition of what has existed from eternity; it is this which drives us, who call ourselves the modern and young composers, to those distortions of melodies, to those exaggerations of expression, and to that arbitrary play with harmonies, and keys, and motivos, and sounds, every one of which is only effective in its own particular sense; whilst, in the whirlwind of caprice, it only tends to confuse and stun the ear, and ultimately causes it to grow dull, even in the perception of that which is pure and true.

When will people learn to keep their eyes fixed upon the truth which lies so near at hand? Art does not live in the outer world, but in the inner world of the mind, manifesting itself outwardly; and it is in its inner life only, that it can be rightly comprehended. When a Berlioz succeeds in discovering new varieties of tones; when another stumbles upon a new harmonic combination, or hazards a new melodic progression; it signifies no more than a new mixture of colours in painting, or a new word or combination in language. It is not this that makes the composer, the painter, or the poet; but each of these invents or applies whatever he requires, and wherever he requires it. Expressions do not constitute life; they are not the revelation of the spirit or its source; but, on the contrary, the spirit is the real life, and creates its own language for the purpose of revealing itself, without inquiring whether its expressions have been used a thousand times before, or are new to the world. All our motivos, considered by themselves, are meaningless matter. And all this matter and dust of motivos is dead in itself. It has a thousand times been made to serve the purposes of life; has been thrown aside and again become dust; and will once again be taken up and inspired with life. In the finale of the symphony in C minor there is no motivo—no chord which had not been employed innumerable times before; and yet this movement is powerful, original, and new, from the beginning to the end, for it is filled with the consecrated spirit of art. And where this spirit is wanting, then, as Mozart says,—"there is nothing in it."

The spirit of the poet identifies itself in words, or sounds, or colours, with its subject; penetrates it, or, where the subject presents itself in an outward form, models it into an ideal form "after its own image." It fills it completely, and penetrates into its minutest details of representation, just as the soul of man fills the body and penetrates to the most distant nerves. The spirit is the creator of art; therefore, the future of art dwells in that future which the spirit shall create for itself.