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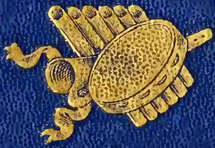

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HECTOR BERLIOZ

SELECTIONS

FROM HIS LETTERS, AND ÆSTHETIC, HUMOROUS,
AND SATIRICAL WRITINGS

TRANSLATED, AND PRECEDED BY

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

BY

WILLIAM F. APTHORP

NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
1879

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IN making the following selections from the prose writings of Hector Berlioz, my main object has been to give to the English-reading public such passages as are most strikingly characteristic of the man.

In the three volumes, entitled respectively "*Les Soirées d'Orchestre,*" "*Les Grotesques de la Musique,*" and "*A Travers Chants,*" there might have been found several chapters of more serious value to the art of Music than many that I have selected; but they only cover ground that has been gone over often before, and do not throw so much light upon Berlioz's own intrinsic nature as do some of the apparently more trivial selections I have preferred to make.

The "Lamentations of Jeremiah," for instance, may be called the most futile imaginable bit of rambling penny-a-lining, but it admirably reflects the state of mind of a man of Berlioz's sensitive temperament, who is forced to get bread and butter by irksome critical hack-work.

The ten letters from Germany form part of Berlioz's *Autobiography*, although they were published in France long before that work appeared in print. It seems to me that they give a more vivid picture of certain phases of a composer's professional life than any letters of the sort that have ever been published. They are open letters, written for publication, and although extremely familiar in their form, it is only in the one to Franz Liszt that we find the writer using the brotherly "*tu.*"

The chapter on the production of *Der Freischütz* in Paris is also taken from the *Autobiography*, but I have thought best to put it under the head "*A Travers Chants,*" as it is too short to form a separate division of this volume. My especial reason for putting it in at all was that it forms a very good companion piece to the chapter on the same subject in my friend Mr. Edward L. Burlingame's *Art Life and Theories of Richard Wagner*, and gives the reader an authentic view, from within, of a much discussed transaction.

A few words about the spirit in which I have made these translations may not be out of place here. Berlioz's style is peculiarly colloquial, often slangy, for a

Frenchman. His writing seems singularly careless, notably in the matter of a proper connection of tenses; he flies from present to aorist with the most sublime nonchalance. In this I have followed him closely. I have also been more anxious to preserve what I could of the characteristic cut of French phraseology, than to make a translation which could lay claim to distinct literary merit from a purely English point of view.

In writing the *Biographical Sketch* I have, as before, dwelt more especially upon incidents in Berlioz's life which show his individual personality in the strongest light, than upon those which are of merely historical value. I have tried to show what the man was, rather than what he did. The intrinsic value to the world of his artistic doings is, as yet, problematical, although we see to-day ever-increasing signs of his having won an enduring place in the temple of Fame. But if all his compositions were to sink into total oblivion, his personality, and the influence he exerted upon his surroundings, and the art of Music in general, would still be interesting and worthy of serious note.

Take him for all in all, he was a man; one so genuine, through and through, that it may be doubted whether he could even form a conception of what a sham really was. And surely History can show us few figures in which utter veracity of character exhibits itself in so explosive and drastic a shape.

I have depended for facts almost exclusively upon the *Autobiography;* but, as no man can be reasonably expected to report authentically upon his own death, I have taken some facts from a very excellent notice of Berlioz, written after his death, by his intimate friend Ernest Reyer.

The catalogue of Berlioz's published works, which forms the second Appendix to this volume, is as complete and exact as I could make it by correcting the composer's own catalogue by Hofmeister's more recent one of music published in Europe. The various numbers of the latter work were put at my disposal through the courtesy of Mr. Arthur P. Schmidt, and Mr. Carl Prüfer, of Boston, whom I herewith thank.

W. F. A.

BOSTON, *June* 19, 1879.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

THE remarkable man whose name stands at the head of these pages, and whose "grand profile of a wounded eagle" figured for half a century or more in French and European musical life, was born on the 11th of December, 1803, in the little town of La Côte-Saint-André in the Department of the Isère in France, a small county-town lying between Vienne, Grenoble, and Lyons.

"During the months preceding my birth," he writes, "my mother did not dream, like Virgil's, that she would bring forth a laurel-bough. However painful this avowal may be to my self-love, I must add that she did not even believe, like Olympias, the mother of Alexander, that she bore a flaming brand in her breast. Passing strange, I admit, but nevertheless true. I simply saw the light without any of the precursory signs, usual in poetic ages, announcing the advent of those predestined to glory. Is it because our times are wanting in poetry?" Born, then, after the simple fashion of common mortals, and, we will suppose, ushered into the world with the usual amount of midwifery, parental admiration, and wailing; destined in after life to reap what he sowed and no more, in quite the common way. But he was not in the least a common mortal; in fact, one of the strangest shapes this earth has yet witnessed, sowing in the most remarkable manner, and reaping no less remarkable crops, very often to his own astonishment and confusion; whizzing and whirring through existence by such fitful, eccentric, *ignis-fatuus* paths that men were often, and to some extent still are, at a loss to discover what meaning and virtue lay in him. The virtue that we discern in him is Faith; an unshaken belief that Truth is the proper life-element of men of all degrees; that from Truth all good must come, and that Untruth either in thought or deed can breed nothing but evil. It is this faith alone, which was a very living faith with him, and did not exist on paper merely, to be worn round the neck as a label or price-ticket for the inspection of mankind, but was of a much deeper and more efficient nature, that makes his life a lovely spectacle to us. It is the one pure, sterling element in a character in which all else was more or less distorted. A character in which much was awry and which an exceptionally hard experience of life did not tend to straighten; but which has come to the not too discerning vision of men in such a topsy-turvied shape, refracted through the distorting media of the man's own personal vanity, and the utter, at times wanton, misapprehension of his contemporaries, that it seems at first sight very chaotic indeed.

In his relation to art we must as yet be content to take Berlioz to a great extent at his own valuation. All that he did was so original, both in essence and outward form, that the world has not yet had time to thoroughly digest it—has indeed found it indigestible to quite an unprecedented degree. Here is his own account (much abridged) of his musical doings and sufferings:

"The principal cause of the long war that has been waged against me lies in the antagonism that exists between my musical sense and that of the great *(gros)* Paris public. A host of people must have looked upon me as a madman, since I looked upon them as children and simpletons. All music that steps out of the narrow path in which the makers of comic operas amble along was necessarily mad music for these people for a quarter of a century. Beethoven's masterpiece (the Ninth Symphony) and his colossal piano-forte *sonatas* are still mad music in their eyes.

"Then I had the professors of the Conservatoire against me, stirred up by Cherubini and Fétis, whose self-love had been severely ruffled and whose faith had been revolted by my heterodoxy in matters of theory in harmony and rhythm. I am a skeptic in music, or rather I am of the religion of Beethoven, Weber, Gluck, and Spontini, who believe, profess, and prove by their works that *everything is good* or that *everything is bad;* the effect alone that certain combinations produce being able to condemn or absolve them.

"Now even those professors who are the most obstinate in upholding the old rules, overstep them more or less in their works.

"Among my adversaries must also be counted the partisans of the sensualistic Italian school, whose doctrines I have often attacked and whose gods I have blasphemed.

"I am more prudent to-day. I still abhor, as I used to abhor, those operas which the crowd proclaims to be masterpieces of dramatic music, but which are in my eyes infamous caricatures of sentiment and passion; only I have the strength not to speak of them any more.

"Nevertheless, my position as critic still makes me many enemies. And the most ardent in their hatred are not so much those whose works I have blamed, as those whom I have either never mentioned, or else *praised ill.*

"I have, since a few years, some new enemies from the superiority people have seen fit to allow me in the art of conducting orchestras. The musicians have made almost all the conductors of orchestras in Germany hostile to me, by the exceptional talent they exhibit under my direction, by their warm demonstrations and the hints they occasionally let drop. The same thing has been true for a long time in Paris. You will see in my *Mémoires* the strange effects of the displeasure of Habeneck and M. Girard. The same is true in London, where M. Costa attacks me covertly wherever he has a footing.

"You will admit that I have had a fine phalanx to combat. Let us not forget the singers and players, whom I call to order quite roughly enough whenever they allow themselves to take irreverent liberties in interpreting masterpieces; nor envious persons, who are always prompt to anger whenever anything presents itself with a certain degree of brilliancy.

"But this life of fighting has a certain charm when the opposing party has been reduced to moderate proportions, as it has to-day. I like to make a fence crack now and then, breaking through instead of clearing it. It is the natural effect of my passion for music, a passion which is ever incandescent and is never satisfied but for a moment. The love of money has never allied itself in a single instance with this love of art; I have always, on the contrary, been ready to make all sorts of sacrifices to go in search of the beautiful, and insure myself against contact with those paltry platitudes which are crowned by popularity. You might offer me a hundred thousand francs to indorse certain works which have had an immense success, and I would refuse them with wrath. I am so constituted. You can easily imagine the consequences of such an organization being placed in the midst of the musical world of Paris, such as it was twenty years ago.

"If I were now to draw the opposite side of the picture, I might once for all be wanting in modesty. The sympathy I have met with in France, Germany, and Russia has consoled me for many troubles. I could even cite some very singular manifestations of enthusiasm. Need I call attention to Paganini's royal present and the so cordially artist-like letter that accompanied it? . . .

"I will only mention a pretty speech of Lipinski, the *Conzertmeister* at the theatre in Dresden. I was in that capital of Saxony three years ago. After a splendid concert, at which my legend of *La Damnation de Faust* had been given, Lipinski introduced to me a musician who, he said, wished to compliment me, but who did not speak a word of French. So, as I do not speak German, Lipinski offered to act as interpreter, when the artist steps forward, takes me by the hand, stammers out a few words and bursts into sobs that he could no longer restrain. Then Lipinski, turning to me and pointing to his friend's tears, says: 'You understand!'

"Still another, an antique speech. Several movements of my choral symphony of *Roméo et Juliette* were to be given lately in Brunswick. On the morning before the concert a stranger to me who sat next me at the *table d'hôte* told me that he had made a long journey to hear this score in Brunswick.

"'You ought to write an opera on that theme,' said he; 'by the way you have treated it as a symphony, and the way you understand Shakspere, you would do something unheard of—something marvelous.'

"'Alas, sir,' I answered, 'where are the artists to sing and act the two leading parts? They do not exist; and even if they did, thanks to the musical manners and morals and the customs of our lyric theatres, if I were to put such an opera in rehearsal, I should be sure to die before the first performance.'

"In the evening my amateur goes to the concert, and, talking between the parts with one of his neighbors, repeats to him the answer I gave him in the morning about an opera of *Roméo et Juliette*. His neighbor says nothing for a moment, then strikes a great blow upon the railing of his box, and cries out: 'Well, let him die! but let him do it!'

"I see that I have said nothing technical about my manner of writing.

"My style is in general very daring, but it has not the slightest tendency to destroy any of the constructive elements of art. On the contrary, I seek to increase the number of those elements. I have never dreamed, as has been foolishly imagined in France, of writing music *without melody*. That school exists to-day in Germany, and I have a horror of it. It is easy for any one to convince himself that, without confining myself to taking a very short melody for a theme, as the greatest masters have often done, I have always taken care to invest my compositions with a real wealth of melody. The value of these melodies, their distinction, their novelty and charm can be very well contested; it is not for me to appraise them; but to deny their existence is either bad faith or stupidity. Only as these melodies are often of very large dimensions, infantile and short-sighted minds do not clearly distinguish their form; or else they are wedded to other secondary melodies which veil their outlines from those same infantile minds; or, upon the whole, these melodies are so dissimilar to the little waggeries that the musical plebs call melodies, that they cannot make up their minds to give the same name to both.

"The dominant qualities of my music are passionate expression, internal fire, rhythmic animation and unexpected changes. When I say passionate expression, I mean an expression that eagerly strives to reproduce the most inward meaning of the subject, even when the subject itself is foreign to passion, and sweet and tender sentiments, or the most profound calm are to be expressed. It is the sort of expression that people have thought to find in the *Enfance du Christ*, and especially in the scene in *Heaven* of the *Damnation de Faust*, and in the *Sanctus* of the *Requiem*.

"The mention of this last work suggests to me that it would be well to notice a class of ideas which I am almost the only modern composer to have entertained, and the extent of which the ancients did not even suspect. I am speaking of those enormous compositions to which certain critics have given the name of architectural, or monumental, music, and which have led the German poet Henri Heine to call me a *colossal nightingale, a lark of eagle's size, such as they tell us existed in the primeval world.* '*Yes*,' the poet goes on to say, '*Berlioz's music in general has in it something primeval, if not antediluvian, to my mind; it makes me think of gigantic species of extinct animals, of fabulous empires full of fabulous sins, of heaped-up impossibilities; his magical accents call up to our minds Babylon, the hanging gardens, the wonders of Nineveh, the daring edifices of Mizraim, as we see them in the pictures of the Englishman, Martin.*'

"In the same paragraph of his book *(Lutèce)*, H. Heine, still comparing me to the eccentric Englishman, affirms that I have *little melody*, and that I have *no naïveté at all.* The first performance of the *Enfance du Christ* took place three weeks after the publication of *Lutèce;* the next day I received a letter from Heine in which he broke out into overwhelming expressions of regret at having thus misjudged me. '*I hear on all* *sides,*' he wrote from his bed of suffering, '*that you have just plucked a nosegay of the sweetest melodious flowers, and that your oratorio is throughout a masterpiece of naïveté. I shall never forgive myself for having been so unjust to a friend.*' I went to see him, and he broke out afresh into self-recriminations. 'But,' said I to him, 'why did you let yourself go, like a vulgar critic, and express a dogmatic opinion of an artist whose whole work you are far from being acquainted with? You keep thinking of the *Witches' Sabbath*, the *March to the Scaffold*, the *Dies iræ* and *Lachrymosa* of my *Requiem*. Yet I think that I have done, and can do things of a wholly different character.' . . .

"Those musical problems which I have tried to solve, and which gave rise to Heine's mistake, are exceptional from the employment of extraordinary means. In my *Requiem*, for instance, there are four orchestras of brass instruments separated from, and answering one another from a distance, grouped around the grand orchestra and mass of voices. In the *Te Deum* it is the organ that converses from one end of the church with the orchestra and two choirs placed at the other end, and with a very large chorus of voices in unison, representing the assemblage of the people which takes part from time to time in this vast religious concert. But it is above all the breadth of style and the formidable prolongation of certain progressions of which the final goal is not divined, that give these works their strangely gigantic physiognomy and colossal aspect. It is also this immensity of form that either makes you comprehend nothing, or else crushes you with a terrible emotion. How often at the performances of my *Requiem* has there not stood by the side of a trembling listener, convulsed to the very depths of his soul, another who opened his ears wide without hearing anything. That man was in the position of the inquisitive people who go up into the statue of St. Charles Borromeo at Como, and who are greatly surprised on being told that the *room* in which they have just sat down is inside the *head* of the saint.

"Those of my works which critics have called architectural music are: my *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale* for two orchestras and chorus; the *Te Deum*, of which the finale *(Judex crederis)* is beyond all doubt the grandest thing I have produced; my *cantata* for two choruses, *L'Impériale*, performed at the concerts in the palais de l'Industrie in 1855, and above all my *Requiem*. As for those of my compositions which are conceived within ordinary proportions, and in which I have had recourse to no exceptional means, it is precisely their internal fire, their expression and rhythmical originality that have most injured them in the eyes of the world, on account of the qualities of execution they demand. To render them well the performers, and especially the conductor, must *feel* as I do. I must have extreme precision wedded to irresistible verve, a well-tempered enthusiasm, a dreamy sensibility, an almost morbid melancholy, without which the prime outlines of my figures are changed, or completely wiped out. It is consequently excessively painful for me to hear the greater part of my compositions played under any direction other than my own. I almost had a fit while listening to my overture to *King Lear* in Prag, conducted by a *Kapellmeister* whose talent is yet undoubted. It is conceivable what I suffered from even the involuntary blunders of Habeneck during the long assassination of my opera *Benvenuto Cellini* at rehearsals.

"If you ask me now which one of my compositions I prefer, I will answer, I am of the same opinion as most artists. I prefer the *adagio* (love scene) in *Roméo et Juliette*. One day in Hanover, at the close of this movement, I felt myself pulled backwards, without knowing by whom; on turning round I saw that it was the musicians near me kissing the skirts of my coat. But I should take good care not to have this *adagio* played in certain halls and before certain audiences.

"I could also quote, illustrating some French prejudices against me, the story of the chorus of shepherds in the *Enfance du Christ*, which was performed at two concerts under the name Pierre Ducré, an imaginary chapel-master of the eighteenth century.[1] What praises were heaped upon that *simple melody!* How many said: 'Berlioz is not the man to do a thing like that!'

"One evening in a drawing-room a song was sung, on the title-page of which was written the name of Schubert. An amateur who was penetrated with a holy horror of my music cried out: 'There! there is melody, there is sentiment, clearness and good sense! No Berlioz would have hit upon that!' It was *Cellini's* song in the second act of the opera of that name.

"A *dilettante* complained at a party of having been most improperly mystified, as follows:

"'One morning,' said he, 'I dropped in to hear one of the rehearsals for the concert of the Sainte-Cécile, conducted by M. Seghers. I heard a brilliant movement for orchestra, extremely spirited, but essentially different in style and instrumentation from any symphony I knew of. I stepped up to M. Seghers and asked:

"'What is that overture you have just been playing? It quite carried me away.'

"'It is the overture to the *Carnaval romain* by Berlioz.'

"'You will agree . . .'

"'Oh yes!' said one of my friends, interrupting him, 'we must agree that it is indecent to surprise the religion of respectable people in such a way.'

---

[1] *Vide* page 345.

"I am allowed, both in France and elsewhere, the *maestria* in the art of instrumentation, especially since I have published a text-book on the subject. But I am reproached with an excessive use of the *Sax instruments* (no doubt because I have often praised the talent of that skillful maker). Now, up to the present time, I have only used them in one scene of the *Prise de Troie*, an opera of which no living soul as yet knows a single page. I am reproached with an excess of noise, a predilection for the big-drum, which I have used only in a small number of my compositions, where its use is perfectly natural, and I alone among all critics have for twenty years obstinately protested against the revolting abuse of noise, against the insensate use of the big-drum, trombones, etc., in small theatres, in small orchestras, in small operas, in little songs, where they now even use the snare-drum.

"Rossini was the real introducer of banging instrumentation into France, in the *Siége de Corinthe*, and not a French critic has spoken of him in this matter, or reproached Auber, Halévy, Adam and twenty others with their odious exaggeration of his system, but they reproach me, nay, much more, they reproach Weber with it! (see the *Life of Weber* in Michaut's *Biographie universelle*) Weber, who *only used the big-drum once* in his orchestra, and who used all instruments with incomparable reserve and talent!

"As far as it concerns myself, I fancy that this comical mistake has arisen from the festivals at which I have been seen conducting immense orchestras. Indeed, Prince Metternich said to me one day in Vienna:

"'Are not you the man, monsieur, who composes music for five hundred performers?'

"To which I replied:

"'Not always, monseigneur; I sometimes write for four hundred and fifty.'

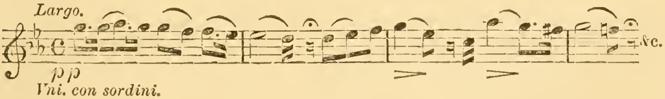
"But what matters it? . . . my scores are published now; the exactness of my assertions can be easily verified. And even if they are never verified, what matters it still!" . . .

Berlioz's passion for music began to develop at a very early age. When quite a little boy he found an old flageolet one day while rummaging among some chests of drawers, and began to try to play *Malbrook* upon it, much to the discomfort of his father's nerves. His father at last taught him the mechanism of the instrument in self-defense, and he was soon able to regale the whole family with that "heroic" air. He afterwards acquired quite a respectable proficiency on the flute and guitar, and wrote two or three pieces of concerted music, which he used to play together with some musical friends. "You see," says he, "that I was a master of these majestic and incomparable instruments, the flageolet, the flute and the guitar! Who would dare not to recognize in this judicious choice my natural impulse toward the most immense orchestral effects and music in the *Michelagnolo* vein!! . . . The flute, the guitar, and the flageolet!!! . . . I never had any other executive talent; but these strike me as quite respectable enough. No, I wrong myself, I also played the *drum*."

He also evinced a taste for voyages and adventures, and passed much of his time reading books of travel and looking over maps. "He knows the names of all the Sandwich Islands," his father used to say, "of the Moluccas and Philippines; he knows the Straits of Torres, Timor, Java, and Borneo, and could not tell you the number of departments in France if you asked him." He was brought up at home under his father's tutorship. His favorite poets were La Fontaine and Virgil, though his taste for the classic authors did not show itself at first. He was also much impressed by Florian's pastoral of *Estelle et Némorin*, which he used to read and reread in secret, having abstracted the book from his father's library.

At the age of twelve he fell violently in love with a young lady of eighteen, niece of a Madame Gautier, who had a villa in Meylan, near Grenoble and the Savoy frontier. Her name was Estelle. "She who bore it," he writes, "was eighteen years old; she was tall and graceful of figure, had great, piercing eyes, though gay and laughing withal, a head of hair worthy to adorn the helmet of Achilles, and . . . pink boots! . . . I had never seen any before. . . . You laugh!! . . . Well, I have forgotten the color of her hair (which, however, I think was black), but I never can think of her without seeing her great eyes and little pink boots sparkling together."

Of this Estelle we shall hear more by and by. Suffice it to say that his passion took entire possession of him, as is not unusual with calf-love of that sort, and he set many of the songs of his favorite pastoral to music in his beloved's honor. The theme of one of these appeared afterwards in the opening *largo* of his Fantastic Symphony:



He was brought up, as he says, "in the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman faith. This charming religion (since it has left off burning people) made my happiness for seven whole years; and although we have long since quarreled, I have always kept a very tender remembrance of it."

His father, who was a physician, wished him to follow the same profession, but he had no inclination that way. He was, however, persuaded to enter upon a course of studies in osteology, by the bribe of a new flute furnished with all the new keys; which his father sent for to Lyons.

At the age of nineteen (1822) he was sent to Paris to study medicine under Amussat. His disgust for the science grew stronger day by day, in spite of his conscientious studies. The dissecting-room was his special horror. He seems to have felt more interest in some lectures on chemistry by Thénard and Gay-Lussac, and especially in a course on literature by Andrieux. But every moment he could snatch from his studies he spent in the library of the Conservatoire, reading the scores of Gluck's operas, music being irrepressibly his ruling passion. At last he hears Madame Branchu and Dérivis at the Opéra in Salieri's *Danaïdes*, to which Spontini had added considerable ballet-music, also Méhul's *Stratonice* and a ballet called *Nina*, the music arranged by Persuis, in which Mademoiselle Bigottini's dancing and pantomime strike him as much to be admired. But in spite of these distractions he keeps his promise to his father, and works away manfully at medicine. Yet Gluck's scores gain more and more influence over him, and one night, coming out from the Opéra and his first hearing of *Iphigénie en Tauride*, he takes a vow that he must and will be a musician in spite of father, mother, uncles, aunts, grand-parents, and friends. The dissecting-room never saw him more. He writes this, his inflexible determination, home to his father, conjuring him to no longer thwart him in following his evident vocation. His father answers affectionately but firmly, being indeed a man of much heart and high integrity of character. "Be either great and highest in the arts, or leave them alone." That is the paternal dictum. "Nothing is so loathsome as a bad artist!" And a bad physician? thinks Hector; but keeps this repartee to himself. Yet he will not take No for an answer, and writes back more and more urgently, at last even explosively, but to no purpose. So he takes the bit in his teeth, and applies to Lesueur for a place among his pupils. He had met at the Conservatoire library a young man, Gerono by name, who was then studying under Lesueur, and who introduced him to his master. Berlioz had found time during his flaming correspondence with his father to write some music, and he presented himself before Lesueur armed with a *cantata* for voices and orchestra on Millevoye's poem, *Le Cheval arabe*, and a three-part canon. Lesueur examined the *cantata* and said: "There is much fire and dramatic movement in the thing, but you do not yet know how to write, and your harmony is so full of mistakes that it would be useless to point them out. Gerono will have the kindness to teach you our principles of harmony, and as soon as you know them well enough to be able to understand me, I shall be happy to receive you among my pupils." So Berlioz sets to work under Gerono's supervison, and is soon admitted as private pupil of Lesueur. He takes it into his head after a while to write an opera, so, remembering the delight Andrieux's lectures on literature had given him, he applies to him for a libretto. By no means wanting in audacity is our young man! This is the answer he receives:

"*Sir:*

"Your letter has interested me deeply; the enthusiasm you show for the beautiful art you are cultivating is a guaranty of your success; I wish you may win it with all my heart, and that I could contribute my share towards it. But the task you propose to me is one no longer fitted to my age; my thoughts and studies are turned in other directions; you would think me a barbarian were I to tell you how many years have passed by since I have set foot inside the Opéra or the Feydeau.

I am sixty-four, and it would ill suit me to set to turning love verses; and as for music, I must hardly think of any, save the *Requiem*-mass. I regret that you did not come thirty or forty years sooner, or I later. We might have worked together. Accept my excuses, which are only too good, and my sincere and affectionate greeting.

"*June 17, 1823.* ANDRIEUX."

Disappointed in this quarter, Berlioz turns to Gerono, who seems to have had some supposed aptitude for verse-making, and asks him to dramatize Florian's *Estelle* for him. The two concoct a sort of musical drama between them; most futile, rose-tinted bit of musical gossamer that perhaps ever spotted music paper. Too evidently worthless to be done anything with. He next writes a scene for bass voice and orchestra, the text borrowed from Saurin's *Béverley ou le Joueur*, a very gloomy, blood-thirsty composition, which he had some thoughts of offering to Dérivis, but did not.

M. Masson, chapel-master at the church of Saint-Roch, proposed to him to write a mass, to be performed in that church on Childermas Day. When the work was completed it was put into the hands of the choir-boys to copy the parts. Valentino, who was then conductor of the Opéra orchestra and had his eye upon the leadership of that of the Royal Chapel, agreed to conduct the performance, but when the day for rehearsal came the promised "grand vocal and instrumental masses" were found to consist of only thirty-two singers, nine violins, one viola, an oboe, a horn and a bassoon. The parts were moreover so full of clerical errors that all idea of performance had to be given up, Berlioz retiring from the scene in an exceedingly volcanic condition. Valentino comforted him to the best of his ability, promising to stand by him whenever the work should really come to a performance. So he set to work to entirely rewrite the mass, having recognized many blemishes in it, and spent three months in copying the parts himself, being unable to pay professional copyists. But as he had no money to organize a performance himself, he applied to M. de Chateaubriand, by the advice of his friend Humbert Ferrand, for a loan of twelve hundred francs. This is the reply he received:

"PARIS, *December 31, 1824.*

"You ask me, sir, for twelve hundred francs; I have not got them; I would send them to you if I had. I have no means of serving you with the ministers. I take, sir, a deep interest in your troubles. I love the arts and honor artists; but the trials to which talent is subjected sometimes make it triumph at last, and the hour of success amply repays for all sufferings.

"Accept, sir, all my regrets; they are very sincere.

"CHATEAUBRIAND."

So that bid did not come to much. At last a young enthusiastic friend of his, A. de Pons by name, lends him the twelve hundred francs, and the mass comes to a performance at Saint-Roch, Valentino conducting. This was the first public performance of a work by Berlioz, date not given, but supposably in the early part of 1825. The work was repeated in the church of Saint-Eustache in 1827 on the day of the great riot in the rue Saint-Denis. Berlioz conducted in person for the first time. After the performance, becoming convinced of the worthlessness of the work, he burned it, together with the scene from *Béverley*, the opera of *Estelle* and a Latin oratorio, *The Passage through the Red Sea*, which he had just finished.

What success the mass had (at Saint-Roch in 1825) brought about a temporary cessation of hostilities between Berlioz and his family, the stern father being sensibly pleased in spite of himself; but the truce was of short duration, and wholly ended on Berlioz's failing to gain a prize, or even to be admitted as a competitor, at the Conservatoire. As matters seemed well-nigh desperate, he bethought himself of returning to the Côte-Saint-André, and trying to alter his father's determination. This succeeded to a certain extent, the father allowing him to return to Paris and continue his musical studies on condition that if he found out after a certain time that he was not likely to succeed as a musician, he should be content to resume his studies in medicine. But his mother viewed the project in a different light. She, good woman, being much inclined to look upon all artists and poets as born children of the Evil One, and thus predestined to eternal damnation, could not be brought to consent to her son's enlisting, even for a time, in the army of Satan, and finding the young man impervious either to argument or entreaty, especially after his father's consent, could find nothing better to do than to give him her formal curse and throw him off forever. With which he very sorrowfully, for he loved his parents much, returned to Paris. His first care was to pay off his debt to de Pons. He hired a little room up five flights at the corner of the rue de Harley and the quai des Orfèvres in the Cité. His meals cost him from seven to eight sous per diem, and consisted mostly of bread, raisins, prunes and dates. These he ate usually while sitting at the foot of the great bronze Henri IV on the pont Neuf. He managed to get some pupils on the guitar, the flute, and in *solfeggio*. At this time he wrote an opera, *Les Francs-Juges*, to a libretto by Humbert Ferrand. But it was refused by the committee of the Académie Royale de Musique, and only the overture ever saw the light. This overture was the first of his works that gained any lasting reputation. By the severest thrift he had managed to pay back six hundred francs to de Pons; but he, being much pressed for money and of a rather dissolute turn, wrote secretly to Berlioz's father, telling him of the debt. The father immediately paid off the debt and wrote to Hector definitely that if he did not drop all connection with music at once his allowance would be stopped, and that he would henceforth have only himself to look to for support. Berlioz, having just entered Reicha's class in counterpoint at the Conservatoire, could not make up his mind to give up his chosen career, and his intercourse with his family was entirely suspended for some time. His funds were at a very low ebb, and he tried to get a position as first or second flute in several orchestras, but in vain. At last he applied for the position of chorus-singer at the Théâtre des Nouveautés. Here is his account of his luck with the examiners:

"The examination of candidates was to take place in the Free Mason's Hall in the rue de Grenelle-Sainte-Honoré. I went there. Five or six poor devils like myself were already awaiting their judges in anxious silence. I found among them a weaver, a blacksmith, an actor who had been turned away from a small theatre on the boulevard, and a singer from the church of Saint-Eustache. The examination was to be for basses; my voice could only pass for a fair baritone; but I thought that our examiner might perhaps not be too particular.

"It was the stage-manager himself. He appeared, followed by a musician of the name of Michel, who now[1] plays in the orchestra of the Vaudeville. They had neither piano-forte nor pianist. Michel's violin was to accompany us.

"The trial begins. My rivals sing in turn after their own fashion several airs which they had carefully studied. When my turn comes, our enormous stage-manager, whose name was, oddly enough, Saint-Léger, asks me what I have brought.

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[1] 1850.

"'I? Nothing.'

"'How nothing? What will you sing then?'

"'Faith, what you like. Isn't there some score here, some *solfeggi*, or a book of *vocalises?*' . . .

"'We haven't got anything of the sort. Besides,' continues the manager in sufficiently contemptuous tone, 'you don't sing at sight I suppose?' . . .

"'I beg your pardon, I will sing at sight anything you show me.'

"'Ah! that alters the case. But as we haven't any music, don't you know some familiar piece by heart?'

"'Yes, I know by heart *Les Danaïdes*, *Stratonice*, *La Vestale*, *Cortez*, *Œdipe*, both the *Iphigénies*, *Orphée*, *Armide* . . .'

"'Stop! stop! The devil! what a memory! Let us see, since you are so learned, sing us the air from Sacchini's *Œdipe: Elle m'a prodigué*.'

"'Certainly.'

"'Can you accompany it, Michel?'

"'Of course I can; only I have forgotten what key it is in.'

"'In E-flat. Shall I sing the recitative?'

"'Yes, let's have the recitative.'

"The accompanyist gives me the chord of E-flat, and I begin:

"'Antigone me reste, Antigone est ma fille,' etc.

"The other candidates looked piteously at each other as I sang the noble melody, and saw well that compared with me, who am yet neither a Pischek nor a Lablache, they had sung, not like shepherds but like sheep. And in fact, I saw by a little look of the manager that they were, in stage language, knocked into the third row underground. Next day I received my official nomination; I had beaten the weaver, the blacksmith, the actor, and even the singer from Saint-Eustache. My service began immediately, and I had fifty francs a month.

"So here you see me, while waiting for the time when I can become an accursed dramatic composer, a chorus-singer in a second-rate theatre, outcast and excommunicated to the very marrow of my bones. How I admire the success of my parents' efforts to snatch me from the abyss!"

From this point his fortunes seem to mend a little. He gets some fresh pupils, and, above all, meets an old friend from his native town, one Antoine Charbonnel, who had come to Paris to study pharmacy. The pair of friends hire two little rooms in the rue de la Harpe, where they live for some time in comparative comfort, Berlioz going to the length of buying a piano-forte. "It cost me a hundred and ten francs. I could not play upon it; yet I always like to have one to strike chords upon now and then. Besides, I am fond of the companionship of musical instruments, and if I were rich enough I should always have around me, while I work, a grand piano, two or three Erard harps, some Sax trumpets, and a collection of Stradivarius violins and basses."

In spite of their modest way of living, the friends still had their little vanities. Charbonnel would always walk on the other side of the street when Berlioz was carrying home provisions from market, and Berlioz, for his part, never confessed to his chum what his business was every evening at the theatre. In fact, what he used to call his "dramatic career" remained a dead secret for years, until it by some chance got into the newspapers.

When the time came round again for a competition for prizes in composition at the Conservatoire, he passed the preliminary examination and set himself to work on a lyric scene with grand orchestra. The subject given out by the board of examiners was *Orpheus torn to Pieces by Bacchants.* The piece was not wholly devoid of merit, but the very second-rate pianist whose business it was to sketch out the orchestral part on the piano-forte found the *Bacchanale* too much for his clumsy fingers, and the board of examiners, composed of Cherubini, Paër, Lesueur, Berton, Boïeldieu and Catel condemned the work as *impossible to be played.* There were many similar nonsensicalities in the then regulations of the Conservatoire. Berlioz had obtained a leave of absence from the Théâtre des Nouveautés to finish this work. After this, his second failure, he set to work again with redoubled vigor, but his health failed him, and he was at last forced to give up almost all work, being kept to his room by a severe attack of quinsy, of which he all but died. He saved himself by one night operating upon his own throat with a penknife. His family only heard of his danger when it was over; but his father, touched by his industry and perseverance, made friendly overtures and again made him an allowance of money, which rendered a return to the stage unnecessary.

From this time Berlioz's musical work went on without interruption up to the year 1830, when he went to Rome. He worked at everything that came to his hand with the enthusiasm that was such a notable part of his character. This enthusiasm was gradually worked up almost to the pitch of delirium by the works of Weber and Beethoven, which were at that time getting their first hearings in France. It has been a matter of much doubt how much real appreciation there was in Berlioz's frantic admiration for Gluck, Weber and Beethoven. Berlioz had certainly one of the clearest heads going; his power of insight was sharp, if not deep. It can be well doubted whether his was upon the whole a very profound nature. A wholly true and veracious nature it surely was, but his capacity for diving below the surface of things was small. His aptitude for the intense is perhaps unparalleled in the history of art, and it often seems as if his highest ideal in art were a sort of delirium tremens set to music, an æsthetic typhomania and chaos regained. He was totally devoid of reticence, the most loud-shrieking mortal alive. But we should think twice before calling him merely theatrical. His slightest joys and sorrows had to be shrieked over until the whole world rang with them, there was not an innermost recess of his heart that he did not lay bare for public sympathy to peer into, he made the universe his confidant; but though his shriekings and howlings often failed to reach the hearts of his hearers or to lay bare the heart of the subject that affected him, as such violent, inarticulate methods usually do fail, they yet came from the very bottom of his own heart; they might seem theatrical to the rest of the world, but they were very real to him. A man most grimly in earnest in all he did, not of deep insight, but of clear, and withal of such a frank and open generosity, ever wishful to sympathize and admire, as he himself yearned for sympathy; so tenacious of the good repute of all he did admire! Hear this that he says of Castilblaze and Lachnith who took such notorious liberties with Mozart's and Weber's scores:

"These corrections, meseems, do not come from above downward; but from below upward, and vertically at that!

"Let no one tell me that these arrangers, in working over the masters, have sometimes made happy hits; for such exceptional consequences cannot justify introducing this monstrous immorality into art.

"No, no, no, ten million times no, musicians, poets, prose-writers, actors, pianists, orchestra conductors of the third and second rank, and even of the first, you have no right to lay hands upon the Beethovens and Shaksperes, to throw your *science* and your *taste* as alms to them.

"No, no, no, a thousand million times no, no man, whoever he may be, has the right to force another man, whatsoever he may be, to change his own physiognomy for another's, to express himself in a fashion that is not his own, to assume a form he has not himself chosen, to become a manikin set agoing by another's will while alive, or to be galvanized when dead. If the man is mediocre, let him lie buried in mediocrity! If on the other hand he is one of God's own elect, let his equals, or even his superiors, respect him, and his inferiors humbly bow down before him.

"After Kreutzer, in the late sacred concerts at the Opéra, had made divers cuts in one of Beethoven's symphonies, have we not seen Habeneck leave out certain instruments from another by the same master? Do we not hear in London parts for the big-drum, trombones and ophicleide added by M. Costa to the scores of *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro* and the *Barber?* . . . And if orchestra conductors dare, according to their whim, to strike out or introduce certain parts in works of this sort, who will prevent the violins or horns, or the last and least of the players, from doing as much? . . . And then will not translators, editors, and even copyists, engravers and printers have a good pretext for following in their wake? . . .

"Is not this the ruin, the entire destruction, the final end of art? . . . And ought not we, we who are all filled with the glory, and jealous of the indefeasible rights of the human mind, to denounce the culprit, whenever we see them wronged, and pursue him and cry out with the whole strength of our wrath: 'Your crime is ridiculous;

Despair!! Your stupidity is criminal; *Die!!* Be baffled, be spit upon, be accursed! *Despair and die!!*'"

It was at this period of his life that, goaded to madness by the attacks which the Rossinist papers were continually making upon Gluck and Spontini, he wrote a flaming reply to the "rambling discourses of one of those idiots" and offered it to M. Michaud, the editor of the *Quotidienne.* He admits that the article was "very disordered and badly written, and overstepped all bounds of polemic writing." Michaud, scared at its audacity, would not print it, saying: "All that is true, but you break windows."

He afterwards wrote several admiring articles on Gluck, Spontini and Beethoven, which appeared in the *Revue européenne*, but he did not take up critical writing as a fixed calling for several years. He says of his writing: "My laziness has always been great in writing prose. I have spent many nights in composing my scores; even the rather fatiguing work of instrumentation keeps me sometimes eight consecutive hours at my desk without moving, and I do not even feel a desire to change my posture; but it is not without effort that I can make up my mind to begin a page of prose, and I get up after writing ten lines (with very rare exceptions) and walk about my room; I look out of the window; I open the first book I happen to lay hands on; in a word, I try all means to combat the *ennui* and fatigue that I so soon begin to feel. I have to make eight or ten bites of it before I can finish an article for the *Journal des Débats.* It usually takes me two days to write one, even when the subject I am writing on pleases me, amuses me, or even greatly excites me. And what erasures! what blots! you should just see my first copy."

It was about this time also that his Shaksperean enthusiasm began. He writes:

"I come here to the greatest drama of my life. I shall not give all the painful catastrophes of it. I will only say this: An English company came to Paris to give some plays of Shakspere, at that time wholly unknown to the French public. I went to the first performance of *Hamlet* at the Odéon. I saw in the part of *Ophelia* Henriette Smithson, who became my wife five years afterwards. The effect of her prodigious talent, or rather her dramatic genius, upon my heart and imagination is only comparable to the complete overturning the poet, whose worthy interpreter she was, caused in me.

"Shakspere, coming upon me thus suddenly, struck me as with a thunder-bolt. His lightning opened the heaven of art to me with a sublime crash, and lighted up its furthest depths. I recognized true dramatic grandeur, beauty, and truth. I measured at the same time the boundless inanity of the notions of Shakspere that had been spread abroad in France by Voltaire, . . .

> "'Ce singe de génie,
> Chez l'homme, en mission, par le diable envoyé,'[1]

"(That ape of genius, an emissary from the devil to man), and the pitiful poverty of our old poetry of pedagogues and ragged-school teachers. I saw . . . I understood . . . I felt . . . that I was alive and must arise and walk.

"The next day *Romeo and Juliet* was advertised. . . . I had my passes to the orchestra of the Odéon; well, fearing that the door-keeper of the theatre might have orders not to let me pass as usual, I ran to the booking-office as soon as I saw the redoubtable drama advertised, so as to make assurance doubly sure. It was more than enough to finish me.

"Exposing myself to the burning sun and balmy nights of Italy, seeing this love, quick and sudden as thought, burning like lava, imperious, irresistible, boundless, and pure and beautiful as the smile of angels, those furious scenes of vengeance, those distracted embraces, those struggles between Love and Death, was too much, after the melancholy, the gnawing anguish, the tearful love, the cruel irony, the sombre meditations, the heart-rackings, the madness, tears, mourning, the calamities and dark chances of *Hamlet*, after the gray clouds and icy wind of Denmark. After the third act, hardly breathing, in pain as if a hand of iron were squeezing at my heart, I said to myself, with the fullest conviction: 'Ah! I am lost.' I must add that I did not at that time know a single word of English, that I only caught glimpses of Shakspere through the fog of Letourneur's translation, and that I consequently could not perceive the poetic web that surrounds his marvelous creations like a net of gold. I have the misfortune to be very nearly in the same ill case to-day. It is much harder for a Frenchman to sound the depths of Shakspere's style, than for an Englishman to feel the delicacy and originality of La Fontaine or Molière. Our two poets are rich continents; Shakspere is a world. But the play of the actors, above all of the actress, the succession of the scenes, the pantomime and the accent of the voices meant more to me, and filled me a thousand times more with Shaksperean ideas and passions, than the text of my colorless and unfaithful translation. An English critic said last winter in the *Illustrated London News* that, after seeing Miss Smithson in *Juliet*, I had cried out: 'I will marry that woman, and write my grandest symphony on this play!' I did both things, but I never said anything of the sort."

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[1] Victor Hugo in the *Chants du Crépuscule*.

Soon after this Berlioz gave a concert at the Conservatoire, the program being composed entirely of his own works. The preparations for the concert led to the following characteristic dialogue with Cherubini:

"'You want to give a concert?' said Cherubini with his accustomed politeness of manner.

"'Yes, sir.'

"'You must have the permission of the Superintendent of Fine Arts to do that.'

"'I have already got it.'

"'And M. de Larochefoucault consents?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'But . . . but *I* don't consent; and . . . and . . . and I don't want them to lend you the hall.'

"'But you have no reason for refusing it, sir, as the Conservatoire is not using it at present, and it will be vacant for a fortnight.'

"'But I tell you that I don't wish you to give this concert. Everybody is out of town, and you will not make a sou.'

"'I don't count on making anything by it. My only object in giving the concert is to make myself known.'

"'There is no need of people's knowing you! Besides you must have money to meet the expenses; have you got any?' . . .

"'Yes, sir.'

"A . . . a . . . ah! . . . And what are you going to have played at this concert?'

"'Two overtures, some selections from an opera, my *cantata*, *La Mort d'Orphée* . . .'

"'That *cantata* for the competition! I don't wish it to be given! It's bad, it . . . it . . . it's impossible to play.'

"'So you judged it, sir, but I should like very much to judge it myself. . . . If a poor pianist could not accompany it, that does not prove that a good orchestra can't do so.'

"'Then you mean to . . . to . . . to insult the Académie?'

"'I only wish to make a simple experiment, sir. If, as is probable, the Académie was right in declaring my score to be impossible, it stands to reason that it will not be performed. If, on the other hand, the Académie was wrong, people will say that I have profited by its advice, and corrected my *cantata* since the competition.'

"'You can only give your concert on a Sunday!'

"'I will give it on a Sunday then.'

"'But the people employed in the hall, the box-office-keepers, the box-openers, who are all in the employ of the Conservatoire, only have that day to rest on; so you want to work all those poor people to death, to . . . to . . . kill them?' . . .

"'You are joking, sir; those poor people, who inspire you with such pity, are only too glad, on the contrary, of a chance to make some money, and you would hurt *them* by taking it away.'

"'I don't want it, I don't want you to give the concert. I will write to the Superintendent to take back his authorization.'

"'You are very kind, sir, but M. de Larochefoucault will not break his word. Besides, I will write to him, too, and send him an exact report of the conversation that I have just had the honor of having with you. He will then be able to appreciate both your reasons and my own.'"

The concert was given. The *Bacchanale* of the *cantata*, just the movement that the Académie had pronounced impossible *(inexécutable)*, was superbly played at the rehearsal; but Dupont, who was to sing the solo part, had a sudden attack of hoarseness before the concert, and the *cantata* had to be taken off from the program after all. Some of the newspapers praised the concert in warm terms.

In June, 1828, Berlioz at last got the second prize in composition at the Conservatoire. This distinction consists in wreaths publicly given to the laureate, a gold medal of not much value, and free admission to all the lyric theatres in Paris. It also gives a good chance of getting the first prize at the next competition.

The first prize entails much more important privileges. The lucky competitor is assured an annuity of three thousand francs for five years, on the condition that he passes the first two years at the Académie de France in Rome, and travels in Germany for the third year. The rest of the pension is paid him in Paris, where he is at liberty to do what he can to make a mark in the world, and to keep himself from starving in future.

The next year Berlioz tried again, with a *cantata* on *Cleopatra after the Battle of Actium*, but failed to get the prize. In the mean time he reads Goethe's *Faust* with much enthusiasm, and writes a work entitled *Eight Scenes from Faust*, which he is foolish enough to have engraved at his own cost, before hearing even the first note of his score. The edition was destroyed some years after, but Berlioz used some of its themes in his *Damnation de Faust*. After the "Eight Scenes" he wrote his first great Symphony, the *Symphonie fantastique*, and his Fantasy on Shakspere's *Tempest*. The latter work was given at the Opéra, but a torrent of rain kept almost the whole audience at home. About this time Berlioz's fiery nature led him into an intrigue with a certain Mademoiselle M***, a beautiful young woman with an aptitude for frailty, not yet wedded to her Potiphar. This little episode had an odd termination, of which later.

At last on the 15th of July, 1830, he gets the first prize for his *cantata* of *Sardanapale*. An orchestral movement, describing the burning of the Babylonian king's palace, which he added to the *cantata* after the prize had been awarded, came to grief at the public performance of the compositions which had obtained prizes that year.

"Five hundred thousand curses," cries he, "on musicians who don't count their rests!!! A horn-part in my score gave the cue to the drums, the drums gave the cue to the cymbals, and they to the big-drum; the first stroke on the big-drum ushered in the final explosion! My confounded horn does not play his note, the drums, not hearing it, don't go off either, and the cymbals and big-drum are equally mute; nothing goes off! nothing!!! . . . only the violins and basses keep up their impotent tremolo; no explosion! a conflagration which goes out without having burst into flame, a ridiculous effect instead of the much-expected crash; *ridiculus mus!*"

The *cantata* as well as the Fantastic Symphony were both given, however, at the Conservatoire a few weeks later. Liszt was present at the concert and was conspicuous by his vehement applauding. Cherubini, when asked if he intended to go to the concert, said: "I don't need to go to find out *how things should not be done.*" A few days later he sent for Berlioz, and said:

"So you are going to Italy?"

"Yes, sir."

"Your name will be taken off the Conservatoire books, your studies are over. But it seems to me tha . . . tha . . . that you ought to call on me. Pe . . . pe . . . people don't leave here as they leave a stable."

Berlioz did not reply: "Why not? since we are treated like horses!" but contented himself with thinking it.

Of Berlioz's stay in Italy little is to be said. His own account of his musical experience there differs from the accounts of Spohr, Mendelssohn and other musicians, only by its greater explosiveness of style, and greater pungency of satire. Only the insane spirit of routine which at that time possessed the Paris Academy of Fine Arts, and which subjected all its alumni, whether painters, architects, sculptors, musicians, or engravers, to the same course of treatment, could ever have hit upon the notion of a man's receiving valuable musical impressions in Italy, where music had long been in a wholly putrescent condition. One little episode in Berlioz's Italian life is valuable to us as an indication of the man's character, as giving us a brief but clear glimpse at the violent and fantastic side of his nature. We will give his own account of the whole affair:

"It took me some time to accustom myself to a life so new to me (*i.e.*, in Rome at the Académie de France). But a lively anxiety, which took possession of my mind the very day after my arrival, left me no power to notice either my surroundings, or the social circle into which I had been so suddenly thrust. I had not found in Rome some letters from Paris that should have arrived several days before me. I waited three weeks with ever-growing anxiety; then, no longer able to combat my desire to learn the cause of this mysterious silence, and in spite of the friendly remonstrances of M. Horace Vernet, who tried to prevent any recklessness on my part, assuring me that he should be forced to strike my name off from the books of the Académie if I left Italy, I obstinately persisted in going back to France.

"In passing through Florence a rather violent attack of quinsy kept me in bed for a week. It was then that I made the acquaintance of the Danish architect, Schlick, a good fellow and an artist whose talent was rated very high by connoisseurs. During my week of illness I employed myself with rescoring the Ball-scene in my Fantastic Symphony and adding the *Coda* that now ends the movement. I had not finished my work when, the first day I could go out, I went to the post office to ask for letters. The package I got contained an epistle of such extraordinary impudence and so insulting withal to a man of my age and disposition, that it gave me a frightful shock. Two tears of rage started from my eyes, and my mind was made up on the spot. I meant to fly to Paris, where I had two guilty women and one innocent man to kill without mercy.[1] As for killing myself afterwards, you can well believe that that was indispensable. The plan for the expedition was conceived in a few minutes. They would fear my return to Paris; I was known there. . . . I resolved to present myself there with great caution, and under a disguise. I ran to see Schlick, who was not ignorant of the subject of the drama in which I played the leading part. Seeing me so pale:

“‘Good God! what's the matter?’

“‘Look there,’ said I, holding out the letter; ‘read!’

“‘Oh! it's monstrous!’ said he, after reading it. ‘What are you going to do?’

“I determined not to tell him, so that I might act freely.

“‘What am I going to do? I still insist upon returning to France, but I shall go to my father's house instead of to Paris.’

“‘Yes, my friend, you are right; go home; there you can forget your troubles in good time, and get over the fearful state of mind you are in now. Come, have courage.’

“‘I have courage enough; but I must go at once; I can't answer for myself to-morrow.’

“‘We can easily get you off this evening; I know lots of people here connected with the police and the post-office; you can have your passport in two hours, and your place in the courier's carriage in five; I will see to all that; go back to your hotel and pack, I will see you again there.’

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[1] The reader will easily guess that this refers to his “amiable consoler,” Mademoiselle M***. Her worthy mother, who knew perfectly well what cards she held in her hand, accused him of bringing trouble into the family bosom, and announced her daughter's marriage with a M. P***.

"Instead of going back to my hotel, I walk on towards the quay of the Arno, where a French *modiste* lived. I go into her shop, and pulling out my watch, I say:

"'Madam, it is now twelve o'clock; I shall leave the city by this evening's courier; can you make me a complete chamber-maid's toilet, dress, bonnet, green veil, etc., in five hours? I will pay you what you please; money is no consideration.'

"The *modiste* thinks it over a minute and assures me that all will be ready before the hour named. I give her some money as a security, and go back by the other bank of the Arno to the Hotel of the Four Nations, where I was stopping. I call the first waiter:

"'Antoine, I leave here for France at six; I shall not be able to take my trunk with me, the courier has no room for it; I leave it in your care. Send it to my father the first safe chance you find; here is the address.'

"Then, taking the score of the Ball-scene, the *coda* of which was not wholly instrumented, I write on it: *I have not time to finish this; if the Société des Concerts in Paris should ever take it into its head to perform this movement in the composer's* ABSENCE, *I beg Habeneck to double the flute part at the last return of the theme, in the lower octave, with the clarinets and horns, and to write out the chords that follow for full orchestra; that will do to end with.*

"Then I put the score of my Fantastic Symphony, addressed to Habeneck, and some clothes into a carpet-bag; I had a pair of double-barreled pistols, so I load them; I examine and put in my pocket two vials of refreshments, such as laudanum and strychnine; and having set my conscience at rest as to my arsenal, I go out to await the hour of my departure, walking through the streets with that sick, restless and disquieting look that you see in mad dogs.

"At five I go back to my *modiste's;* my costume is tried on and fits very well. In paying the sum agreed upon I give twenty francs too much; a young seamstress who is sitting behind the counter notices it, and tries to call my attention to the fact; but the mistress of the establishment, throwing my gold-pieces into the till with a quick turn of the hand, pushes her aside with:

"'Come, you little fool, leave the gentleman alone! do you suppose he has time to listen to your talk?' Then, answering my ironical smile with a curious, but withal graceful inclination: 'A thousand thanks, sir; I am sure of your success; you will certainly look ravishing in your theatricals.'

"At last it strikes six; after saying good-bye to the virtuous Schlick, who saw in me a wounded stray lamb returning to the fold, and carefully packing my feminine attire in one of the pockets of the carriage, I bid farewell, with a look, to Benvenuto's Perseus, with its famous inscription: *Si quis te laeserit, ego tuus ultor ero*, and we are off.

"Mile after mile goes by, and a profound silence is maintained between myself and the courier. My throat was glued together and my teeth set; I ate nothing and did not speak. We exchanged a few words only at midnight about my pistols; the prudent driver took off the caps and hid them under the cushions of the carriage. He was afraid that we might be attacked, and in such cases, he said, no one must ever show the slightest signs of standing on the defensive, unless he wishes to be murdered outright.

"'Let your mind be easy on that head,' replied I, 'I should be very sorry to get us into trouble, and I have no grudge against the banditti!'

"Arriving at Genoa, without having swallowed anything but the juice of an orange, to the huge astonishment of my traveling companion, who could not quite make out whether I belonged to this world or the other, I became aware of a new mishap: my woman's dress was lost. We had changed carriages at a village called Pietra Santa, and I had forgotten all my attire on leaving the one that brought us from Florence. 'Fire and damnation!' cried I, 'it seems as if some accursed good angel were trying to interfere with the execution of my project! We'll see about that!'

"I immediately call a *valet de place* speaking both French and Genoese. He takes me to a *modiste*. It was nearly noon; the courier was to start at six. I ask for a new dress; they refuse to undertake to finish it in so short a time. We go to another, to two others, to three other *modistes*, and receive the same answer. At last one says that she will get several seamstresses together, and try to fit me out before the time of departure.

"She is as good as her word, and I am again supplied with a costume. But while I was running about among the *grisettes*, what should happen but that the Sardinian police, after inspecting my passport, must take me for an emissary of the Revolution of July, for a *co-carbonaro*, for a conspirator, for a liberator, and refuse to put a *visa* to said passport for Turin, and tell me to go by the way of Nice!

"'Well, good God, put the *visa* for Nice, then, I don't care. I'll go by the way of hell if you wish, so that I only go!' . . .

"Which of us two was the most superbly idiotic? The police, who saw a missionary of the revolution in every Frenchman, or I, who thought it necessary to disguise myself as a woman before setting foot on the Paris pavement, as if everybody in recognizing me must read on my forehead what purpose had brought me there; or as if, hiding in a hotel, I could not have found fifty dress-makers, instead of one, to dress me up to my heart's content!

"People in love are really a charming spectacle; they imagine that the whole world is thinking about their passion, whatever it may be, and they act on that notion with the most edifying good faith.

"So I took the road for Nice in undiminished wrath. I even thought over with great care the little *comedy* I was to enact on arriving in Paris. I was to present myself at the house of my *friends* at nine o'clock P.M., at the moment the family came together to take tea; I should be announced as the chamber-maid of the Countess M***, charged with an important and pressing message; they would show me into the parlor, I would present the letter and while they were engrossed in reading it, drawing my two double-barreled pistols from my bosom, I would blow out the brains of No. 1, then of No. 2, then take No. 3 by the hair, make known to her who I was, and, in spite of her shrieks, address my third compliment to her; after which, before this vocal and instrumental concert had attracted the curiosity of interlopers, I would let fly my fourth irresistible argument at my own right temple, and if the pistol missed fire (which has been known to happen), have recourse to my little vials. Oh, what a pretty scene! It is really a pity that it was suppressed!

"Yet, in spite of my condensed rage, I said to myself at times during the trip: 'Yes, it will be a most agreeable moment! But the necessity of killing myself afterward is rather . . . troublesome. To thus say farewell to the world, to art; to leave no name behind me but that of a boor who did not know how to live; not to have finished my first symphony; to have other . . . greater . . . scores in my head . . . Ah! . . . it is . . .' Then returning to my blood-thirsty scheme: 'No, no, no, no, no, they must all die, I must exterminate them, I must smash their skulls . . . it must be, and it shall be done!' . . . And the horses trotted on, bringing me nearer and nearer to France. Night came, we were following the Cornici road, cut in the solid rock, over a hundred fathoms above the sea that bathes the foot of the Alps at that place. The love of life and the love of art had been whispering sweet promises to me for an hour, and I let them speak on; I found even a certain charm in listening to them, when, all at once as the postilion stopped his horses to put the shoe under the wheel of the carriage, an instant of silence let me hear the dull death-rattle of the sea breaking furiously against the rocks at the bottom of the precipice. This noise awoke a terrible echo and made a fresh storm burst forth in my breast. The rattle in my throat was like that of the sea, and, resting my hands upon the seat, I gave a convulsive start as if to rush forward, uttering a *Ha!* so hoarse and wild that the unlucky conductor, jumping aside, thought that his traveling companion was assuredly some demon constrained to carry a piece of the true cross.

"Nevertheless, there had been an intermittance, I had to admit it; there had been a tussle between life and death. As soon as I was conscious of it I reasoned thus, and, as it seems to me, not too foolishly: 'If I should profit by the good moment (the good moment was when life began to coquet with me; you see, I was giving in), if I should profit by the good moment, and grapple hold of something, get some purchase to resist a return of the bad one, perhaps I should succeed in taking a resolution in the direction of . . . life; let me see.' We were then passing through a little Sardinian village (Vintimiglia, I believe), on a beach level with the sea, which did not roar too loudly. We stop to change horses, and I beg the conductor to let me have time enough to write a letter; I go in to a little *café*, take a scrap of paper and write to the director of the Academy of Rome, M. Horace Vernet, *to be kind enough to keep* *my name on the Academy's books, if he had not already struck it out; that I had not yet broken the regulations, and that I* GAVE MY WORD OF HONOR *not to cross the Italian frontier until I received his answer in Nice, where I would await it.*

"Bound thus by my word, and sure of being able to return to my ferocious scheme at any time, if expelled from the Academy, my pension taken away, I should find myself without hearth, home, penny or rag, I got into the carriage again more quietly; I found all of a sudden that . . . *I was hungry*, having eaten nothing since I left Florence. O good, commonplace Human Nature! Decidedly, I was reclaimed!

"I arrived at that most happy town of Nice, still growling a little. I waited some days; then came M. Vernet's answer; a friendly, kind, fatherly answer, that touched me deeply. That great artist, without knowing the cause of my distress, gave me advice that fitted the occasion exactly; he pointed out to me that work and the love of art were the two best antidotes to mental torments; he told me that my name still remained on the books of the Academy, that the minister should never learn of my escapade, and that I could come back to Rome, where I should be received with open arms.

"'Come now, they are saved,' said I with a deep sigh. 'And supposing I were to live now quietly, happily, musically? What a good joke! . . . Let us try.'

"And there I am, breathing in the balmy Nice air to the full extent of my lungs; there are life and joy flying toward me, music kissing me, and the future smiling upon me; and I stop in Nice a whole month, wandering through the orange-groves, diving in the sea, sleeping on the mountain heaths of Villafranca, looking from those radiant heights at the ships coming, passing by and silently vanishing in the distance. I live wholly alone, and write the overture to *King Lear*. I sing. I believe in God. Convalescence has set in.

"It is thus that I passed in Nice the twenty happiest days of my life, O Nizza!

"But the police of the king of Sardinia came again to disturb my peaceful happiness and to force me to put an end to it.

"I had at last exchanged a few words with two officers of the Piedmontese garrison at the *café;* I even played a game of billiards with them one day; that was enough to inspire the chief of police with grave suspicions on my account.

"'Evidently this young French musician has not come to Nice to be present at the performances of *Matilda di Sabran* (the only work that was to be heard there then), for he never goes to the theatre. He spends whole days on the rocks of Villafranca . . . he is expecting a signal from some revolutionary vessel . . . he does not dine, at least, not at the *table d'hôte* . . . so as to avoid insidious conversations with secret agents. We see him secretly leaguing himself with the heads of our regiments . . . he is going to enter upon negotiations with them in the name of *Young Italy;* it is clear as day, a most flagrant case of conspiracy!'

"O great man! profound politician! Go to, thou art raving mad!

"I am summoned to the police office and put through a formal investigation:

"'What are you doing here, sir?'

"'I am getting over the effects of a cruel illness; I compose, dream, thank God for having made so beautiful a sun, such a sightly sea, such green mountains.'

"'You are not a painter?'

"'No, sir.'

"'But you are to be seen everywhere with an album in your hand, drawing a great deal; perhaps you are making plans?'

"'Yes, I am *making plans* for an overture to *King*

Lear ; that is to say, I have already drawn the plan, for the design and instrumentation are finished; I even think that the opening will be formidable.'

"'How the opening? Who is this King Lear?'

"'Alas, sir! He is a good old fellow who was king of England.'

"'England!'

"'Who lived, according to Shakspere, some eighteen hundred years ago, and was weak enough to divide his kingdom between two rascally daughters, who turned him out of doors when he had no more left to give them. You see, there are few kings who . . .'

"'We are not talking of kings! . . . What do you understand by the word instrumentation?'

"'It's a musical term.'

"'Always the same pretext! I know very well, sir, that people don't go about composing music so, without a piano-forte, only with an album and a pencil, walking up and down the beach! So please to tell me where you intend going, and your passport will be delivered to you; you must not stay in Nice any longer.'

"'Then I will go back to Rome, and continue composing without a piano-forte, with your permission.'

"So it was done. I left Nice the next day, very much against my will it is true, but with a light heart and full of *allegria*, thoroughly alive, and thoroughly cured. And thus it happened that for one time more the world has seen *pistols loaded without going off.*

"But I think that my *little comedy* had a certain interest all the same, and that it is really a pity that it never came to a performance."

During his "exile" in Rome, Berlioz wrote an overture to *Rob Roy*, which was played a year later in Paris, and very badly received by the public;[1] the *Scene in*

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[1] Berlioz burned the score immediately after the concert.

the Fields of his Fantastic Symphony; the *Song of Happiness* in *Lelio*, and his melody, *La Captive*.

The first thing he did on returning to Paris was to call on Cherubini, whom he found very much aged since he last saw him. He took a room in the house No. 1 rue neuve Saint-Marc, the very room Miss Smithson had formerly occupied. The actress herself was then in Paris with an English company; Berlioz got up a concert at which his Fantastic Symphony and the monodrama of *Lelio* were given entire; M. Schutter, one of the editors of *Galignani's Messenger*, and a friend of Berlioz, took Miss Smithson to the concert. Her theatrical enterprise had turned out a complete and disastrous failure, and she was then deeply in debt. At the concert she saw Berlioz for the second time. The first time was in 1829 when she was at the zenith of her Parisian fame. Berlioz had written her several letters "which rather frightened than touched her," and she had told her chamber-maid to receive no more communications from him. Their meeting was at the rehearsal of a performance at the Opéra-Comique for the benefit of Huet, the actor. Miss Smithson was to act in two acts from *Romeo and Juliet*, and Berlioz was to conduct an overture of his own. Berlioz came into the theatre just as the English company were finishing their rehearsal.

"*Romeo* was carrying *Juliet* away in his arms. My glance fell involuntarily upon that Shaksperean group. I gave a shriek and ran away wringing my hands. *Juliet* had seen and heard me. . . . I frightened her. She pointed me out to the people on the stage, asking them to look after that gentleman *whose eyes boded no good*."

But now, in 1832, Miss Smithson found herself neglected by the fickle Paris public, and even on the verge of bankruptcy. The story of *Lelio* is no other than the story of Berlioz's own love. When Bocage, who recited the part of *Lelio*, came to the passage: "*Oh that I could find her, the* Juliet, *the* Ophelia *that my heart calls to. That I could drink in the intoxication of that mingled joy and sadness that only true love knows! Could I but rest in her arms one autumn evening, rocked by the north wind on some wild heath, and sleep my last, sad sleep!*" Miss Smithson began to suspect that she herself was the heroine of the drama. Next day Berlioz was introduced to her. Soon afterwards she met with a sad accident. She slipped on the pavement in getting out of her carriage, and broke a leg. The news of this accident was not believed in England, where it was thought to be a ruse to soften the hearts of her creditors; but her fellow-artists in Paris showed much sympathy, Mademoiselle Mars coming forward in the most generous way, and putting her purse at the invalid's disposal. Berlioz took upon himself the management of a benefit performance, which brought her a few hundred francs. This sum was applied to paying her most pressing debts. At last, in the summer of 1833, he married her, in spite of the most violent opposition from her family and his own.

"On the day of our wedding she had nothing in the world but debts, and the fear of never again being able to appear to advantage on the stage because of her accident; I, for my part, had three hundred francs that my friend Gounet had lent me, and had quarreled again with my parents. . . .

"But she was mine, I bade defiance to everything."

But all hope was not quite lost. Berlioz still had a year of his laureate's pension to look to; besides, he was beginning to find admirers in Paris. At a benefit entertainment which he got up at the Théâtre-Italien (the program consisting of Dumas's play of *Antony*, acted by Firmin and Madame Dorval, the fourth act of *Hamlet* with his wife as *Ophelia*, his own *Fantastic*

Symphony, *Sardanapale* and overture to the *Francs-Juges*, a chorus of Weber, and the *Conzert-stück* played by Liszt), it was found that his wife, whose leg had so far recovered that she could walk with ease, had yet lost that absolute command over her movements which is indispensable to acting. She never appeared on the stage again. The entertainment was otherwise unfortunate. According to the regulations of the Théâtre-Italien, the musicians in the orchestra were only required to stay until midnight. As the program was very long, midnight struck before the Symphony could begin, so the greater part of the orchestra, a bit of private spite prompting, left Berlioz in the lurch, and the concert had to end there. Berlioz's enemies were not slow in turning the affair to ridicule, saying that his music *put musicians to flight!*

But he soon organized another concert, paying the orchestra from his own pocket, and getting Girard to conduct, as his own inexperience as an orchestral conductor had caused some unlucky mistakes on the previous occasion. It was a complete success, the musicians and public were equally delighted, and "to cap the climax of my happiness, a man, after the audience had left the hall, a long-haired man with piercing eye and passion-furrowed face, one possessed by genius, a colossus among giants whom I had never seen and whose appearance moved me profoundly, was waiting for me, and stopped me on my way out to take me by the hand; he overwhelmed me with burning praise that set my head and heart on fire; *it was Paganini!!*" (December 22, 1833.)

Some weeks later Paganini wrote to Berlioz, asking him to compose a *concerto* for viola, as he had a very fine instrument which he was desirous of playing on, but knew no viola music in that form. This request of the great violinist led Berlioz to write his symphony of

Harold en Italie, in which there is a leading part for viola *obbligata*. But even before the work was completed, Paganini found that it did not suit his purpose, as the orchestra was not sufficiently subordinated to the solo part, and he never played it. The symphony was brought out, however, at the Conservatoire, under the direction of Girard, November 23, 1834.

In 1836 M. de Gasparin, Minister of the Interior, ordered a Requiem of Berlioz. After much trouble in securing his pay from the ministry, Berlioz brought out the Requiem in the Church of the Invalides at the funeral ceremony in honor of General Danrémont and the French soldiers killed at the siege of Constantina. Habeneck conducted, much against the composer's wish, but he had conducted the orchestra at all great musical solemnities in Paris, and Berlioz was prevailed upon to cede the *bâton* to him. The following narrow escape from absolute musical anarchy was the result.

"My performers," says Berlioz, "were divided into several groups, quite a distance apart, this being necessary for the four groups of brass instruments which I have employed in the *Tuba mirum*, the groups occupying the four corners of the great central body of voices and instruments. At the moment of their entry at the beginning of the *Tuba mirum*, which follows the *Dies iræ* without a pause, the *tempo* suddenly becomes twice as slow as before; all the brass instruments burst forth at once in the new *tempo*, then call to and answer each other from a distance, each successive call being a third higher than the previous one. It is accordingly of the highest importance that the four beats to a measure of the slower *tempo* should be plainly indicated at the outset. . . . From my habitual distrustfulness I had placed myself behind Habeneck, with my back to him, where I could oversee the group of kettledrums, which he could not see, as the time was approaching for them to take part in the general *mêlée*. There are, perhaps, a thousand measures in my *Requiem.* Exactly at the bar I have mentioned, the bar where the *tempo* is changed, where all the brass launches forth its terrible *fanfare*, at the *only* bar, in a word, where the conductor's activity is absolutely indispensable, Habeneck *drops his bâton, quietly pulls out his snuff-box, and begins to take a pinch of snuff.* I had kept my eye on him; I immediately turn on my heel, rush in front of him, stretch out my arm, and give the four slow beats of the new *tempo.* The orchestras follow me, all goes on in order, I conduct the movement to its close, and the effect I had dreamed of is produced. When, at the last words of the chorus, Habeneck saw the *Tuba mirum* saved: 'What a cold sweat came over me,' said he to me; 'we should have been lost but for you!' 'Yes, I know it,' said I, looking him fixedly in the eye. I did not add another word . . . Did he do it on purpose? . . . Can it be possible that the man, in league with M. ***, who abhorred me, and the friends of Cherubini, should have dared to imagine and try to carry out such a piece of low rascality? . . . I don't wish to think it. . . . But I don't doubt it. God forgive me if I do him wrong."

After the performance Berlioz had renewed difficulty in getting some arrears of pay from the Ministry of War (the ceremony being a military one, it now came within the province of that department). M. *** tried every way to put him off, offering him the Cross of the Legion of Honor, to which proposal he characteristically answered: "Your cross be d——d![1] Give me my money!" At last M. *** rushed out to find the Minister, Berlioz shouting after him: "Tell him that I should be ashamed to treat my boot-maker as he treats me, and that his conduct to me will soon acquire a rare notoriety." Upon which the Minister, not having a taste for scandal when it took a personal shape, paid the money (3000 francs). Whereupon some of the newspapers that were unfriendly to Berlioz made quite a noise about his being a favorite of power, a silk-worm living upon the leaves of the budget, and, adding a gratuitous zero, indulged in much righteous indignation at his receiving *thirty* thousand francs for the *Requiem.*

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[1] Je me f . . . de votre croix!

Soon after this Berlioz tried to get the position of Professor of Harmony at the Conservatoire. Cherubini opposed him with all his might, ostensibly on the ground that "he could not play the piano-forte," and persuaded him to withdraw his application. But one day M. Armand Bertin met Berlioz and assured him that he had spoken to the Minister of the Interior, and that there was no doubt of his getting the place, together with forty-five hundred francs per annum. The next day M. ****, head of the division of Fine Arts, met him behind the scenes at the Opéra, and gave him the same assurance. Of this Berlioz writes (a phrase that continually recurs in his Autobiography): "THIS PROMISE, MADE SPONTANEOUSLY TO A MAN WHO HAD ASKED FOR NOTHING, WAS NO BETTER KEPT THAN SO MANY OTHERS, AND FROM THAT MOMENT I HEARD NO MORE ABOUT IT." He soon, however, got the position of librarian to the Conservatoire.

In 1836 his first opera, *Benvenuto Cellini*, was brought out at the Opéra, though without much success. It was by no means well given. Paganini said, after hearing a performance of it: "If I were manager of the Opéra, I would engage that young man to-day to write me three more scores; I would pay him in advance, and make a golden bargain at that."

In 1838 Paganini was present at a concert given by Berlioz at which both the *Fantastic* and *Harold* symphonies were played. After the concert the great *virtuoso* presented himself at the door of the orchestra greenroom, gesticulating violently after the Italian fashion. The affection of the larynx, which was fatal to him a few years later, had already become so serious that he could not speak above a scarcely audible whisper. His little boy, Achille Paganini, was the only person able to understand him in the noisy green-room; so, whispering in his ear, Paganini told the boy to tell Berlioz that "he had never experienced such an impression at a concert: that the music had so overwhelmed him that he could hardly refrain from thanking the composer on his knees." Berlioz expressing some astonishment, Paganini dragged him back upon the stage, fell upon his knees in the midst of all the musicians and kissed his hand. Berlioz, who was already suffering from a severe attack of bronchitis, caught cold after the concert, and was confined to his bed. The next day the little Achille came into his sick-room and handed him a letter, saying: "My father will be very sorry to hear that you are ill; if he were not very unwell himself, he would have come to see you in person. Here is a note which he gave me to give to you. There is no answer; my father said you were to read it when you were alone." The boy then left the room. Supposing it to be a mere letter of congratulation, Berlioz opened it and read:

"*Mio caro amico:*

"*Beethoven spento, no c'era che Berlioz che potesse farlo rivivere; ed io che ho gustato le vostre divine composizioni, degne d'un genio qual siete, credo mio dovere di pregarvi a voler accettare, in segno del mio omaggio, venti mila franchi, i quali vi saranno rimessi dal signor baron de Rothschild doppo che gli avrete presentato l'acclusa. Credetemi sempre*

"*il vostro affezionatissimo amico,*

"NICOLO PAGANINI.

"*Parigi, 18 dicembre, 1838.*"[1]

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[1] "*My Dear Friend:*

"Now that Beethoven is dead, Berlioz is the only man to bring him to life again; and I, who have listened to your godlike compositions, The inclosed note, addressed to Baron Rothschild, ran:

"*Monsieur le baron:*

"*Je vous prie de vouloir bien remettre à M. Berlioz les vingt mille francs que j'ai déposés chez vous hier.*

"*Recevez, etc.,*

"PAGANINI."[1]

This sum more than sufficed to pay off his debts. Finding himself in a position of comparative ease, Berlioz gave up for the time his place as critic, and devoted himself entirely to musical composition. The result of seven months' labor was his great dramatic choral symphony, *Roméo et Juliette.* He never saw Paganini again, his ever-failing health keeping him in Nice, but he sent him the score, and in one of the violinist's letters about it we find the phrase: "*Now all is done, envy has nothing left but silence.*" Berlioz was extremely careful about this score (according to some authorities his greatest), and it was only after several years that he finally left it in the form in which it now stands.

In 1840 he wrote his great *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale*, which was performed on the place de la Bastille at the inaugural ceremonies of the Column of July. He took good care that Habeneck, whom he calls "the incomparable snuff-taker," should not have his finger in the pie this time, but conducted in person. The cir-

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worthy of a genius like yourself, think it my duty to beg you to accept, as a mark of my homage, twenty thousand francs, which will be paid you by M. le Baron de Rothschild, on presentation of the inclosed. Believe me ever
Your most loving friend,
"PARIS, *December 18, 1838.* NICOLO PAGANINI."

[1] "*Monsieur le Baron:*

"I beg you to be so kind as to pay to M. Berlioz the twenty thousand francs which I deposited with you yesterday.

"Accept, etc., PAGANINI."

cumstance of the work being performed in the open air, added to the noise of the National Guard filing off from the ground during the *Apothéose*, greatly marred the effect; but the work was heard in its full splendor at some subsequent concerts in the Salle Vivienne, even Habeneck growling out: "*Décidément ce b—— là a de grandes idées*" (That—unprintable individual—certainly has some great ideas). The symphony was originally written for wind instruments, but Berlioz afterwards added parts for chorus and string orchestra *ad libitum.*

The next year Berlioz set out on his first concert tour through Germany, which we will not describe here, his letters being sufficiently graphic. The trip was a notable success in every way. In 1846 he made a second, no less successful, tour through Austria, Hungary, Bohemia and Silesia, giving concerts in Vienna, Pesth, Prag and Breslau. The night before leaving Vienna for Pesth, he wrote his famous version of the *Rákóczy March.* The appearance of this piece on the program of his first concert in Pesth gave rise to the following conversation between him and M. Horwath, the editor of a Hungarian newspaper.

"I have seen your score of the *Rákóczy-induló.*"

"Well?"

"Well! I am afraid."

"How so?"

"You have begun our theme *piano*, and we are accustomed to hear it played *fortissimo.*"

"Yes, by your Zingari. But is that all? Be reassured; you will have a *forte*, the like of which you have never heard in your life. You did not read it carefully. You must look to the *end* in all things."

Of the effect of this piece at the concert he writes in a letter to Humbert Ferrand:

"The day of the concert a certain anxiety brought my heart up into my mouth, notwithstanding, as the time drew nigh for bringing out this devil of a piece. After a *fanfare* of trumpets in the rhythm of the first measures of the air, the theme appears, as you will remember, played *piano* by the flutes and clarinets, accompanied by a *pizzicato* on the strings. The audience remained calm and silent at this unexpected opening; but when, in a long *crescendo,* fugued fragments of the theme kept re-appearing, interrupted by dull beats on the big-drum, like distant cannon-shots, the hall began to ferment with an indescribable noise; and when the orchestra, let loose at last, launched forth its long-restrained *fortissimo* midst a furious *mêlée,* shouts and unheard-of stampings shook the hall; the concentrated fury of all those boiling souls exploded in accents that caused a shudder of terror in me; I seemed to feel my hair bristling on my head, and from that fatal measure I had to bid farewell to the peroration of my piece, the tempest in the orchestra not being able to vie with the eruption of that volcano whose violence nothing could check. You can imagine that we had to begin over again; even the second time the audience was hard put to it to contain itself for two or three seconds longer than at first, to hear a few measures of the *coda.* M. Horwath raved in his box like one possessed; I could not help laughing as I threw him a glance, which meant: 'Well! are you afraid now? Are you satisfied with your *forte?*' It was well that I had placed the *Rákóczy-induló* (that is the title of the piece in the Hungarian tongue) at the end of the program, for all that I should have tried to make people listen to after it would have been lost.

"I was violently agitated, as may be believed, after such a thunder-storm, and was mopping my face with my handkerchief in a little parlor behind the stage, when I received a singular rebound from the emotion in the hall. It was in this wise: I see a wretchedly dressed man, his face glowing with a strange fire, rush suddenly into my retreat. Seeing me, he throws himself upon me, kissing me furiously, his eyes brimming over with tears, and sobs out, hardly able to speak:

"'Ah, sir! Me Hungarian . . . poor devil . . . not speak French . . . *un poco l'italiano* . . . Pardon . . . my ecstasy . . . Ah! understood your cannon . . . Yes, yes . . . the great battle . . . Germans, dogs!' Then striking great blows with his fist upon his breast: 'In my heart I . . . I carry you . . . Ah! Frenchman . . . revolutionist . . . know how to write music for revolutions.'

"I will not try to depict the terrible exaltation of the man, his tears, and the way he gnashed his teeth; it was almost terrific; it was sublime."

This trip among the impetuous Czechs and Magyars, with their hot Tatar blood, was even more exciting to Berlioz than his previous visit to North Germany. It would take too long to describe it in detail; how the artists and amateurs of Vienna gave him a superb supper, at which he was presented with a conductor's *bâton*, brilliant with vermilion and gold laurel leaves; how the music-lovers of Prag followed suit with a silver cup and another supper, at which Liszt made an inimitable speech and got so gloriously be-champagned that Belloni (his business agent) and Berlioz had all they could do in the street at two in the morning to prevent his coming to pistols with a Bohemian who had had the insolence to drink more than he, and then played at a concert at twelve o'clock the next day "assuredly as he had never played before."

During this trip Berlioz wrote his *Damnation de Faust*, which was brought out on his return to Paris.

In February, 1847, he set out for Russia, and made the most lucrative tour of his life, giving concerts in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Riga, and, on his way home, in

Berlin, where he produced his *Faust* among other things. In Moscow the following amusing incident happened as he was trying to engage the hall for his concerts:

"Wishing to have the hall put at my disposal, I go to the house of the Grand Marshal of the Palace of the Assembly, a respectable octogenarian, and announce to him the object of my visit.

"'What instrument do you play?' said he at once.

"'I don't play on any instrument.'

"'Then how are you going to give a concert?'

"'I have my compositions played, and conduct the orchestra.'

"'Ah! hah! that's a new idea; I never heard of that sort of a concert. I shall be happy to lend you our great hall; but you, no doubt, know that every artist whom we allow to use it, must let himself be heard after his concert at one of the private parties of the nobility.'

"'I suppose then that the nobility have an orchestra at their parties which they will put at my disposal?'

"'Not a bit of it.'

"'But how shall I make music for them? They will, doubtless, not ask me to spend three thousand francs to pay the musicians necessary for a performance of one of my symphonies at the private *soirée* of the assembly? That would be rather a heavy rent for the hall.'

"'Then I am very sorry, sir, to refuse you; I cannot do otherwise.'

"So I am obliged to return with this strange answer. . . . At a second visit, I get a second refusal; the explanations of a fellow-countryman of mine are futile; the Grand Marshal wags his white pate, and remains inexorable. But, fearing that his French may not be up to the mark, and that some terms of my proposal may have escaped him, he calls in his wife. *Madame la maréchale*, whose age is nearly as venerable as her husband's, but whose features express much less benevolence, comes into the room, looks at me, listens to me, and cuts the discussion short by telling me in very fluent, very clear, and very exact French, that:

"'We neither can, nor will do anything contrary to the regulation. If we lend you the hall, you will play an instrumental solo at our next party. If you don't wish to play, you won't get the hall.'

"'Good Lord, *madame la maréchale*, I once had quite a pretty talent for the flageolet, the flute and the guitar; choose which of these three instruments I shall play upon. But, as I have touched none of them for about twenty-five years, I must forewarn you that I shall play very badly. But look you, if you will graciously content yourself with a solo on the snare-drum, I shall probably do better.'

"Luckily a superior officer had come into the room during this scene; he was soon informed of the difficulty, and took me aside to say:

"'Do not persist, Monsieur Berlioz; the discussion might become a little unpleasant for our worthy Marshal. Just be good enough to send me your application in writing to-morrow, and everything shall be arranged. I will answer for it.'"

So the affair was carried through without any contingent flute or drum playing.

On his return to France, Berlioz went to the Côte-Saint-André to pass a fortnight with his family, with whom his success as a composer had had a reconciling influence, and to present to them his son, Louis. His relations with his wife had long been unhappy. God knows whose the fault was; perhaps of both. Perhaps a man of his character could never have walked through life smoothly with any one; and it is easily conceivable to what unsociable vinegar the strong wine of an artist's nature like Henriette Smithson's may have turned, when she found herself inexorably debarred from the exercise of her art. Long before his first journey to Germany she had tormented him with a jealousy for which he had never given her cause. How long he remained innocent we cannot tell; in the preface to his posthumous Autobiography he says:

". . . Neither have I the least desire to *present myself before God with my book in my hand, declaring that I am the best of men*, nor to write *confessions.* I shall only tell what I please; and if the reader refuses me absolution, his severity will be most unorthodox, for I shall only confess venial sins."

He made all his journeys accompanied by a "traveling companion" (sex merely hinted at, presumably feminine), and he himself admits that "by dint of being accused, tortured in a thousand ways, and always unjustly, finding neither peace nor quiet at my own fireside, chance assisting me, I at last decided to enjoy the privileges of a position, the burdens of which I had long borne, and my life was completely altered. In fine, to cut short the recital of this part of my life, and not to enter upon very sad details, I will only say that from that day forward, and after an anguish as terrible as it was protracted, a friendly separation *(séparation à l'amiable)* took place between my wife and myself. I often see her, my affection for her is in nowise changed, and the sad state of her health only endears her to me the more."

O Love! Through what dark labyrinths wilt thou not glide, what twistings out of shape and torturings wilt thou not endure in French hearts, and yet painfully struggle on to preserve thy identity, that the world may still know thee by name!

Henriette Constance Berlioz-Smithson died at Montmartre on the 3d of March, 1854, after being paralyzed for four years.

"I had left her for two hours; . . . one of the women who waited on her runs to fetch me, and brings me back. . . . All was over . . . her last sigh had died away. She was already covered with the fatal cloth, which I had to draw aside to kiss her pale brow for the last time. Her portrait, which I had given her the year before, that portrait, painted in the time of her glory, showed her to me dazzling with beauty and genius, beside that death-bed where she lay disfigured by disease.

"I will not try to give an idea of the agony I suffered at having her thus torn from my heart. It was combined with a feeling which, although it had never before attained such a pitch of violence, has always been the most difficult for me to bear—the *feeling of pity*." And was it only *pity*, Hector? "In the midst of my sorrow over this extinguished love, I felt like to melt away in the immense, horrible, incommensurable, infinite pity with which the remembrance of my poor Henriette's misfortunes overwhelmed me; her ruin before our marriage; her accident; the deception brought about by her last dramatic attempt in Paris; her voluntary, but always regretted, renouncement of an art she warmly loved; her eclipsed glory; the poor imitators, whose fortune and fame she had seen increase; our quarrels; her unquenchable jealousy, at last too well founded; our separation; the death of all her relations; the forced separation from her son; my frequent long journeys; her proud grief at being dependent upon me, and at being the cause of expenses on my part under which she well knew I almost succumbed; the mistaken notion she had that her love for France had alienated her from the affection of the English public; her broken heart; her vanished beauty; her ruined health; her ever growing physical sufferings; the loss of motion and speech; the impossibility of making herself understood in any way; the distant prospect of death and oblivion. . . .

"Destruction, hell-fire and all the cataclysms of natture, blood and tears, my brain congeals in my skull at the thought of these horrors! . . .

"Shakspere! Shakspere! Where is he? Where art thou? It seems to me that he alone among intelligent beings can understand me, and must have understood us both; he alone can have pity upon us, poor artists, loving and lacerating one another. Shakspere! Shakspere! If thou dost still exist, it must be that thou dost bid all the wretched welcome! Thou art our father, thou who art in heaven, if there be a heaven.

"God is stupid and cruel in his infinite indifference; thou alone art the God who is kind to artist's souls; fold us to thy bosom, father, kiss us! *De profundis ad te clamo.* Death, annihilation—what is that? The immortality of genius! . . . *What? . . . O fool! fool! fool!* . . . .

. . . .

"I had to take the sorrowful duties all on myself. . . . The Protestant clergyman necessary for the ceremony, and whose parish comprised the *banlieue* of Paris, lived at the opposite end of the town in the rue de M. le Prince. I went to notify him at eight in the evening. One of the streets being blocked up by the paviors, the cabriolet that took me there had to go by a roundabout way, and pass in front of the Odéon. It was lighted up, a piece in vogue was playing there. It was there that I first saw *Hamlet* twenty-six years ago; it was there that the poor departed suddenly burst forth in her glory, one evening, like a shining meteor; it was there that I saw the crowd weep with anguish at the sight of *Ophelia's* grief, her poetic and heart-rending madness; there she was recalled after the last act of *Hamlet* by a chosen public, and all the kings of thought then reigning in France; there I saw Henriette Smithson come before the curtain, almost terrified at the immensity of her success, and bow down all trembling before her admirers. There I saw *Juliet* for the first and last time. How often have I tried to walk off my feverish anxiety under those arcades on winter nights! Here is the door by which I once saw her go in to a rehearsal of *Othello*. She did not know of my existence then; and if they had then pointed out to her that pale and haggard young stranger, who, leaning against one of the pillars of the Odéon, followed her with his wild gaze, and had said to her: 'There is your future husband,' she would have assuredly called that prophet of ill luck an insolent idiot.

"And yet . . . it is he who now makes ready thy last journey, poor *Ophelia!* It is he who, like *Laertes*, will say to a priest, '*What ceremonies else?*' . . . he who has so tortured thee; he who has endured so much from thee, after enduring so much for thee; he who, despite his wrongs, can say like *Hamlet:*

> "'Forty thousand brothers
> Could not, with all their quantity of love
> Make up my sum.'

"Shakspere! Shakspere! I feel the deluge returning, I am wrecked in sorrow, and I seek thee still. . . .

"*Father! father! where are you?*"

Ah Berlioz! If the story of thy life is, as some one has said, a "tragedy, written in tears of blood," was the blood entirely thine own?

Berlioz married again—whom, he does not tell us—and lived most unhappily with his second wife for eight years, when she died suddenly of heart-disease. She was buried in the great cemetery of Montmartre in a small lot, the best Berlioz could afford. Some time after the burial, Edouard Alexandre, the noted organ-builder, bought the freehold of a large lot, which he presented to Berlioz, and the remains of his wife were transferred to this new tomb. Berlioz was officially notified a little later of the intended demolition of the little cemetery of Montmartre, where his first wife was buried, so that her remains also had to be exhumed and carried to the tomb in the larger cemetery.

"I gave the necessary orders at both cemeteries, and one dull, cloudy morning I walked alone to the funereal spot. A municipal officer who had to be present at the disinterment awaited me there. A workman had already opened the grave. As I came up he leaped into it. The coffin, buried for ten years, was still whole, only the cover was damaged by moisture. Then the workman, instead of lifting it out of the earth, tore away the rotten planks, which cracked with a hideous noise, showing the contents of the coffin. The grave-digger bent down, took in both his hands the head, already separated from the trunk, the head all uncrowned, hairless and, alas! fleshless, of the *poor Ophelia*, and placed it in a new coffin, which stood beside the grave, prepared *ad hoc*. Then, bending down a second time, he with great difficulty lifted up the trunk without arms or limbs, holding it in his arms; it was but a blackened mass to which the shroud clung tightly, more like a block of pitch enclosed in a wet bag than a human body . . . with a dull sound . . . and a smell. . . . The municipal officer looked on at this gloomy picture a few steps off. . . . Seeing me leaning against the trunk of a cypress tree, he cried out: 'Don't stay there, Monsieur Berlioz; come here, come here.' And, as if the grotesque must also have its share in this horrible scene, he added, getting a word wrong: 'Ah! poor *inhumanity!*' . . . A few minutes later, following the car that bore the sad remains, we came down the hill and arrived at the great Montmartre cemetery where the new tomb already gaped to receive our burden. The remains of Henriette were placed in it. The two departed rest there in peace to this hour, awaiting the time when I shall bring my own portion of rottenness to that charnel-house.

"I am now in my sixty-first year; I have neither hopes nor illusions nor great thoughts; my son is almost always away; I am alone; my contempt for the imbecility and improbity of men, my hatred of their cruel ferocity are at their height; at all times I cry to death: 'When thou wilt!' Why does he delay?"

O Berlioz, Berlioz! Meseems thy loudly shrieking soul has at last found wherewith to glut its greed of anguish. If paroxysmal grief and æsthetic typhomania do verily exhaust the capacity for sorrow God has implanted in the human breast, then hast thou indeed sounded all the depths of woe. Or is there still a deeper deep, the entrance whereunto was denied thy sorrow-seeking heart? A very poignant, bitter grief, not to be loudly shrieked over, that the horror-struck world may expend its superfluous sympathy upon it, but to be very sacredly kept in the innermost sanctuary of thine own heart, and most jealously guarded against the peering eyes of mankind; a holy, chastening sorrow, which, when kind Time has at last dulled its keen edge, still abides with thee as a very tender memory, more dear to thy heart than all loud-trumpeting, world-astonishing joys whatever; a sorrow thou canst really call *thine own.* Such a sorrow, it would seem, thou couldst in no wise taste; but of shriek-compelling torments thou hast surely had thy fill, and hast made the eternal welkin ring with the most heart-rending echoes.

Berlioz's old age was indeed of the saddest. Despite his upright love and veneration for art for its own sake, he of all mortals most depended upon the sympathy of his fellow-men. The intense and almost frantic admiration of his friends could not compensate him for the cold misappreciation or active hatred of his by far more numerous enemies. He could not live without violent emotions, and absolute triumph being refused him, he often preferred despair to stoical indifference. The popular failure of his great opera, *Les Troyens à Carthage*, made a wound in his sensitive heart which the worthy appreciation of the select few could not heal. His physical sufferings were frightful. He had long been a martyr to acute neuralgia, and toward the end of his life a local disease in the abdomen tortured him almost without intermission. His fiery spirit was broken. The cynical invulnerability he tried hard to assume could deceive no one but himself, and the sharp bursts of sarcasm and ironical fire that his surroundings occasionally drew from him, only served to make the melancholy gloom in his soul more visible. His Autobiography ends thus:

"I have done. . . . I thank from the bottom of my heart holy Germany, where the Religion of Art is kept unsullied; and thee, generous England, and thee, Russia, who saved me; and you, my good friends in France; and you, noble hearts and spirits of all countries whom I have known. To know you has been my joy; I will keep faithfully the dear remembrance of our friendship. As for you, maniacs, stupid bull-dogs and bulls, as for you, my *Guildensterns*, my *Rosencranzes*, my *Iagos*, my little *Osrics*, serpents and insects of all kinds, *farewell my . . . friends;* I despise you, and hope not to die before forgetting you."

The most marked circumstance of his old age was the return of his love for Estelle—the *Stella montis* of his boyhood—the girl with the black eyes and pink boots. The revival of this old, dead love was the one bright point in the long, gloomy years before his death. He had never seen Estelle since he first left the Côte-Saint-André to go to Paris and begin his studies. In

1848 he had visited Meylan, and found out that she was married to a M. F***. In 1864 he went to Meylan again, and found that she was living in Lyons. He writes:

"I arrived in Lyons that very evening. It was a singular night I passed without sleep, thinking of the visit I was to make on the morrow. I was to go and see Madame F***. I determined to call upon her at noon. While waiting for the hour to come, and thinking it highly possible she would not receive me at first, I wrote the following letter, that she might read it before knowing the name of her visitor:

"'*Madam:*

"'I have come again from Meylan. This second pilgrimage to the spot inhabited by the dreams of my childhood has been more painful than the former one, which I made sixteen years ago, and after which I had the hardihood to write to you in Vif, where you then lived. I dare more to-day, I ask you to receive me. I shall be able to restrain myself; do not fear the ungoverned impulses of a heart restrained against its will by a pitiless reality. Grant me a few moments, let me see you again, I conjure you.

"'HECTOR BERLIOZ.

"'*September 23, 1864.*'

"I could not wait until noon. At half-past eleven I rang at her door, and gave her chamber-maid the letter with my card. She was at home. I ought to have merely delivered the letter, but I did not know what I was doing. Nevertheless, seeing my name, Madame F*** gave immediate orders to have me shown in, and rose to meet me at the threshold. I recognized her walk, and her goddess-like carriage . . . God! how changed her face was! her color was a little bronzed and her hair tinged with gray. Yet, on seeing her, my heart had not a moment's indecision, and my whole soul flew to meet its idol, as if she had been still dazzling in her beauty. She led me into the parlor, holding my letter in her hand. My breath stopped; I could not speak. She, with a sweet dignity of manner, said:

"'We are quite old acquaintances, Monsieur Berlioz!' . . . (Silence.) 'We were both children!' . . . (Silence.)

"The dying man finds a little voice.

"'Be good enough to read my note, madam, it will . . . explain my visit.'

"She opens it, reads it and then lays it down on the mantel-piece.

"'You have just come from Meylan! But you doubtless went there on business? You did not make the journey purposely to see me?'

"'Oh! madam, can you think so? Did I need business to call me to . . . ? No, no, I have for a long time wished to return there.' (Silence.)

"'You have led a very troubled life, Monsieur Berlioz.'

"'How do you know it, madam?'

"'I have read your biography.'

"'Which one?'

"'A volume by Méry, I think. I bought it some years ago.'

"'Oh! Do not attribute to Méry, who is my friend, and a man of sense, that compilation, that hodge-podge of fables and absurdities, the author of which I can now guess. I shall one day have a true biography, which I have written myself.'

"'Oh, no doubt, you write so well.'

"'I do not mean the worth of my style, but the exactness and sincerity of my recital. As for my sentiments towards yourself, I have told all without restriction, but without giving your name.' (Silence.)

"'I have also heard much about you from a friend of yours, who married a niece of my husband's.'

"'I indeed begged him to find out the fate of the letter I took the liberty of writing to you sixteen years ago. I wished to know at least whether you got it or not. But I never saw him again, he is dead now, and I learned nothing.' (Silence.)

"Madame F***.—'As for my own life, it has been very simple and sad; I have lost several of my children, I have brought up others, my husband died when they were quite young . . . I have done my best to perform my duty as a mother.' (Silence.) 'I am much touched, and very grateful, Monsieur Berlioz, for the feelings toward myself you have kept alive so long.'

"At these kind words I began to tremble more violently. I looked at her with greedy eyes, reconstructing in my imagination her beauty and her eclipsed youth; at last I said to her:

"'Give me your hand, madam.'

"She held it out to me. I raised it to my lips and seemed to feel my heart melt away, and all my bones shudder. . . .

"'May I hope,' added I, after a fresh silence, 'that you will permit me to write to you sometimes, and to pay you a visit from time to time?'

"'Oh, certainly; but I am to stop only for a short time in Lyons. One of my sons is to be married shortly, and soon after his wedding I shall go to live in Geneva with him.'

"Not daring to prolong my visit further, I rose. She accompanied me to the door, where she said to me again:

"'Good-bye, Monsieur Berlioz, good-bye. I am profoundly grateful for the sentiments you have preserved for me.'"

But the poor man cannot make up his mind to leave her so. After leaving her house he chances to meet M. Strakosch, Adelina Patti's brother-in-law, who offers him a box at the theatre to hear the *diva* in the *Barber* on the following evening. Struck by a happy thought, Berlioz accepts the box, and runs back to Madame F***'s house on the avenue de Noailles. He finds her out, but tells the chamber-maid to ask her from him to accept a box at the opera for the next evening. But before long his lover's feet bring him mechanically back to her door. Going up the staircase he meets her with two German ladies.

"'Good heavens, Monsieur Berlioz, you have come for your answer?'

"'Yes, madam.'

"'I had written to you, and I was just going with these ladies to take the letter to the Grand Hotel. I cannot, unfortunately, accept your kind invitation for to-morrow. I am expected in the country rather far from here, and I leave town at noon. A thousand pardons for letting you know so late, but I came home and heard of your offer only a few minutes ago.'

"As she made a motion to put the letter in her pocket:

"'Please give it to me,' cried I.

"'Oh! it is not worth while . . .'

"'I beg you; you intended it for me.'

"'Well, take it.'

"She gave me the letter, and I saw her handwriting for the first time.

"'So I shall not see you again,' I said, in the street.

"'You leave Lyons this evening?'

"'Yes, madam; good-bye.'

"'Good-bye; I wish you a pleasant journey.'

"I press her hand, and see her turn the corner with the two German ladies. Then, can it be believed, I became almost joyful; I had seen her a second time; I had spoken to her again; I had pressed her hand once more; I had a letter from her, a letter which ends with assuring me of her *affectionate sentiments.* It was an unhoped-for treasure; and I walked back to the Grand Hotel, hoping to dine almost quietly with Mademoiselle Patti."

How much reality there was in this newly-revived love of Berlioz may, perhaps, be questioned; but that it was very real and inspiring to him is unquestionable.

That the world must know of it was a matter of course, and in the "Postface" to his posthumous Autobiography he prints the correspondence that ensued between himself and Estelle (did he keep press-copies of his own letters, then?). His letters are full of violent love, tempered by a deep respect for the unavoidably distant relations that must exist between them, ever trying to outargue common sense on that head, but humbly and lovingly submitting to her every wish. Her answers are full of gentle, womanly dignity and kind feeling, always hesitating to impose an irksome restraint upon her lover, but still quietly insisting upon the impossibility of anything more than ordinary friendship existing between persons of their age, whose lives had been so widely apart, and all whose associations had been so unlike. She appears eminently a superior woman, of large sympathies and a warm heart; a woman of sterling character. If they had but met earlier in life, how different might the story of both have been! Berlioz might have found the true complement to his own wild, passionate nature, and, walking through life by the side of such a helpmate, might have become a very different and more complete man. But it was not to be. Even their limited intercourse in old age had a refining, chastening influence upon Berlioz; she always succeeded in calling the better, purer, really exalted part of his nature to the surface, and it is pleasant to notice how much deeper was the love expressed in his calm, uncomplaining resignation to the inevitable, than the more frantic, loudly-vocal passions of his younger days.

As one of his letters throws some light upon his doings at that period of his life, I will copy it. It is also a fair example of the spirit in which all of them are written:

"PARIS, *Monday, December 19, 1864.*

"*Madam:*

"In passing through Grenoble last September, I went to pay a visit to one of my cousins who was then at Saint-Georges, a hamlet almost lost amid the craggy mountains on the left bank of the Drac, inhabited by a most wretched population. My cousin's sister-in-law has devoted herself to alleviating so much distress, she is the gracious providence of the country. On the day of my arrival in Saint-Georges, she heard that a little hut at some distance from her house had been without bread for three weeks. She immediately went there, and, addressing the mother of the family, said:

"'How is this, Jeanne? you are in want and don't send for me. You must know that we have the goodwill to help you to the best of our means.'

"'Oh, mademoiselle, we are not in want. We still have some potatoes and a few cabbages. It is the children who are not satisfied. They cry and howl and ask for bread. You know children are unreasonable.'

"Well, madam! Dear madam, you also have done a good deed in writing to me. I had imposed the most absolute reserve upon myself, not to annoy you with my letters, and kept waiting for your daughter-in-law's return to hear some news of you. She did not come, and I was stifling like a man whose head is under water, and who is yet unwilling to draw it out. . . . You know, beings like myself *are unreasonable.*

"And yet, I know the truth only too well; believe me, I reason only too much, and I had no need of the lessons that have just been taught me with sharp knife-strokes into my heart. . . . No, I wish above all things not to trouble you, not to give you the slightest annoyance; I will write as seldom as possible; you will answer me, or you will not. I shall come to see you once a year, but only as one comes to pay an agreeable visit. You are not ignorant of what I feel, and you will thank me for all that I shall be able to conceal from you. . . .

"It seems to me that you are sad, and this causes a redoubled . . .

"But I will to-day begin by forbidding myself a certain language. I will talk of indifferent matters.

"You perhaps know that the performance of an act of my *Troyens* at the Conservatoire did not take place. The committee, by plaguing me in various ways, asking, first that one number, and then that another should be cut out, drove me nearly mad, as well as the singers, whose chance of shining was thus diminished, and I withdrew the whole.

"I thank you very much for your kindness in being with me in thought in the concert-hall at half-past two o'clock, and for your good wishes to the *Troyens*.[1]

"At the very moment I was being thus tormented in Paris, my birthday (December 11) was celebrating in Vienna, where a portion of my work, *La Damnation de Faust* was given; and two hours afterwards the *Kapellmeister* sent me the following telegram: *A thousand good wishes for your birthday. Chorus of soldiers and students given at the concert of the Männergesangverein. Immense applause. Repeated.*

"The cordiality of those German artists touched me much more than the success of the thing. And I am sure you will comprehend this. Kindness is a cardinal virtue!

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[1] This refers to a previous letter, in which he asks her to think of him at that hour.

"Two days later, a perfect stranger to me in Paris wrote me a very beautiful letter about my score of the *Troyens*, which he spoke of in a way I dare not repeat to you.

"My son has just arrived in Saint-Nazaire after a troublesome voyage to Brazil, on which he had a chance of distinguishing himself. He is now first mate on board the great ship *La Louisiane*. He tells me that he is soon to sail again, which will make it impossible for him to come to Paris. So I shall go to kiss him in Saint-Nazaire. He is a good boy, and has the misfortune to resemble me in all points; he cannot make up his mind to take his share of the platitudes and horrors of this world. We love each other like twins.

"This is all the present news of my *exterior*. My old mother-in-law (whom I have promised never to abandon)[1] takes the very best care of me, and never questions me about the cause of my fits of melancholy. I read, or rather, reread Shakspere, Virgil, Homer, *Paul and Virginia*, books of travel; I am much bored, I suffer horrible tortures from neuralgia, which has held me in its grip for nine years, and in fighting against which all the doctors have come out at the small end of the horn. In the evening, when the distress of heart, body and mind is unbearable, I take three drops of laudanum and fall asleep as well as may be. If I am not so ill, and the society of a few friends is all I need, I make a call at a household in the neighborhood, that of M. Damcke, a German composer of unusual merit, a learned professor, whose wife is good as an angel; two hearts of gold. According to the humor they see me in, we have some music, or talk; or else they roll a big sofa up to the fire, and I spend the whole evening lying on it, thinking my own bitter thoughts in silence. . . . That is all, madam. I no longer write, as I believe I have told you, and no longer compose. The musical world of Paris has far other haunts, the manner in which the arts are cultivated, artists are patronized, masterpieces are honored, makes me either sick or wild with fury. This would seem to prove that I am not yet dead. . . .

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[1] A friend of Berlioz's once said: "The poor man was riddled with mothers-in-law *(criblé de belle-mères),*" mostly, we fear, of the left-handed sort.

"I hope day after to-morrow to have the honor of taking Madame Charles F*** (charming as she is . . . in spite of her knife-strokes) and a Russian lady of her acquaintance to the Théâtre-Italien. We are to hear, to the end, if possible, the second performance of Donizetti's *Poliuto*. Madame Charton (Paolina), is to let me have a box.

"Good-bye, madam; may you only have sweet thoughts, repose of mind, and enjoy the happiness that the certainty of being loved by your sons must give you. But also think sometimes of the poor *unreasonable children*.

"Your devoted,
"HECTOR BERLIOZ.

"P.S. It was very generous of you to ask the newly-married couple to come and see me. I was struck with the likeness of Monsieur Charles F*** to Mademoiselle Estelle, and forgot myself so far as to tell him so, though it is hardly within the bounds of propriety to pay such compliments to a man."

Madame F***'s answer to this letter contains the following passage:

"Believe me, I am not devoid of pity for *unreasonable children*. I have always found that the best way to bring them back to quiet and reason was to amuse them, and show them pictures. I take the liberty of sending you one, which will remind you of the reality in the present, and dispel the illusions of the past."

She had inclosed her portrait.

The "Postface" to the Autobiography ends thus:

"I stop here. I believe that I can now live on more calmly. I shall write to her sometimes; she will answer me; I shall go to see her; I know where she is; I shall never be left in ignorance of any changes that may occur in her life; her son has given me his word and agreed to inform me of them. Little by little, in spite of her dread of new friendships, she will, perhaps, find her sentiments of affection for me increasing. I can already realize the improvement in my existence. My heaven is no longer empty. I gaze with loving eyes upon my *star*, which seems to smile sweetly upon me. She does not love me, it is true, but she might never have known me, and she now knows that I worship her.

"I must be consoled for having been known by her too late, as I am consoled for not having known Virgil, whom I should have loved so well, or Gluck, or Beethoven . . . or Shakspere . . . who, perhaps, might have loved me. (It is true that I am not consoled).

"Which of the two powers can raise man to the most sublime heights: Love or Music? . . . It is a great problem. Yet, meseems, we should say this: Love can give no idea of Music; Music can give an idea of Love. . . . Why separate the two? They are the two wings of the soul.

"In seeing the way certain persons understand Love, and what they look for in the creations of Art, I always involuntarily think of the swine, who grub up the ground, with their ignoble snouts, amidst the fairest flowers, and at the foot of mighty oaks, in hopes of finding the truffles they delight in.

"But let us try to think no more of Art. . . . Stella! Stella! I can now die without bitterness, and without anger.

"January 1, 1865."

The few years of Berlioz's life succeeding this date were uneventful in their sadness. One more great sorrow (perhaps the most frightful shock of his life) he was still to undergo. As he was leaving his house one evening to go to a musical party, given by M. le marquis Arconati-Visconti, a great admirer of his, the news was brought him of the sudden death of his beloved son, Louis. The result of this shock was an almost lethargic state of melancholy, out of which only the greatest excitement could at times arouse him, and which lasted until his death. He went once more to St. Petersburg, on the urgent invitation of the Grand Duchess Hélène, but even that most brilliant artistic success of his life, and all the flattering adoration of the Russian Court, made but little impression upon the broken-hearted old man, and he returned to Paris sad as he had left it. His shattered remnant of health was fast declining, and at times his mental forces seemed wholly torpid, not even to be aroused by the hearing of his most adored compositions; the very names of Beethoven, Gluck or Shakspere—those gods of his artistic religion—failed at such periods to awaken any responsive echo in his trouble-worn soul. He went to Monaco to bathe his wearied spirit in the pleasant sunlight, and gaze upon the bright Mediterranean (the sea always came back to him like an old friend), but, one day, while standing on the rocks enjoying the entrancing sea-view with what feeble power of enjoyment was still left him, he was seized with giddiness and had a severe fall. He was shortly afterwards taken to Nice, where he had a second, severer attack of vertigo, brought on by a sudden determination of blood to the brain, and was found by two young men, lying senseless among the boulders on the beach. They carried him back to his hotel, where he was with difficulty restored to consciousness. Some time later, although he only partially recovered from the accident, he returned to Paris. In August, 1868, he was invited to attend a musical solemnity at Grenoble, which he looked upon almost as his native place, and was made honorary president of the occasion. But it was too late for this mark of esteem to affect him. His habitual lethargy increased month by month until on the 8th of March, 1869, he breathed his last, quietly and without pain, at his rooms, No. 4 rue de Calais, in the presence of his friend, Ernest Reyer, the composer, and an old servant who had lovingly tended him during his long last illness. He was in his sixty-sixth year.

What intercourse he had with Madame F*** during the last four years of his life I do not know, but we will hope that this one consolation was not denied him. Of the two great loves of his life, this was indubitably the deeper, and built upon the more durable foundation.

I copy from the *Journal des Débats* of March 12, 1869, the following account of his funeral:

"The obsequies of Berlioz were celebrated to-day[1] at eleven o'clock, at the church of the Trinity, where the many friends and admirers of the great composer met together.

"The pall-bearers from the house of the deceased to the church were MM. Guillaume, President of the Academy of Fine Arts; Camille Doucet, member of the French Academy; le baron Taylor; Emile Perrin, director of the Opéra.

"From the church to the cemetery of Montmartre, MM. Gounod, Ambroise Thomas, members of the Academy of Fine Arts, Nogent Saint-Laurens, member of the Legislative Body, and Perrin.

[1] March 11.

"The Institute sent a deputation composed of MM. Ambroise Thomas, Dumont, Pils, Martinet, Guillaume, Beulé.

"It would be impossible to give the names of all the notable persons who crowded the church of the Trinity. We noticed MM. Auber, Vieuxtemps, Bazin, Félicien David, Victor Massé, Reyer, Gevaert, Stephen Heller, Carvalho, Th. Ritter, Elwart, Litolff, Vivier, Baroilhet, Tamburini, Pasdeloup, Arban, Léonard, Jacquard, Massenet, Georges Bizet, Duvivier, Mocker, Battaille, etc.; Madame Charton-Demeur, who played the part of *Dido* in Berlioz's *Les Troyens;* MM. Choudens, Brandus and Richault, publishers of Berlioz's works. MM. Legouvé, Cuvillier-Fleury, members of the French Academy; Paul de Saint-Victor, Louis Ratisbonne, Edmond Villetard, Xavier Raymond, Louis Ulbach, Emmanuel Gonzalès, Oscar Commettant, M. Domergue, counsellor of the Prefecture of the Seine; MM. Damcke and Edouard Alexandre, the executors of the will.

"During the funeral services several pieces were performed by the orchestra and chorus of the Opéra, conducted by M. Georges Hainl, and the children of the order of the Trinity, under the direction of M. Grisi. M. Chauvet was at the organ.

"Here is the list of pieces:

"The *Introit* from Cherubini's *Requiem;* Mozart's *Lachrymosa*, the *Hostias* and *Preces* from Berlioz's *Requiem*, sung by a double quartet of artists from the Opéra; the March from Gluck's *Alceste;* Litolff's funeral march with Sax instruments.

"The ceremony closed with the march from Berlioz's *Harold*, played on the organ by M. Chauvet.

"The procession then went to the cemetery of Montmartre, accompanied by a considerable crowd. A band of the National Guard played funeral music during the march.

"The body of Berlioz was placed in the family vault.

"MM. Guillaume, in the name of the Academy of Fine Arts; Frédéric Thomas, in the name of the Society of Men of Letters; Elevart and Gounod pronounced discourses at the grave."

FIRST JOURNEY TO GERMANY
1841-1842

TEN LETTERS

FIRST JOURNEY TO GERMANY.

1841–1842.

TO MONSIEUR A. MOREL.

FIRST LETTER.

BRUSSELS, MAYENCE, FRANKFORT.

YES, my dear Morel, here I am again, back from my long trip through Germany, during which I have given fifteen concerts, and superintended about fifty rehearsals. You can imagine how much I must need leisure and rest after such fatigues, and you are right there; but you can hardly imagine how strange this leisure and rest seem to me! Often in the morning I spring up half awake, dress in a hurry, under the impression that I am behind time and keeping the orchestra waiting; . . . then, after a moment's reflection, coming to a sense of my real situation, I say to myself: What orchestra? I am in Paris where the orchestra on the contrary usually keeps *you* waiting! Besides, I am not giving a concert, I have no choruses to drill, no symphony to conduct; I am to see this morning neither Meyerbeer, nor Mendelssohn, nor Lipinski, nor Marschner, nor A. Bohrer, nor Schlosser, nor Mangold, nor the brothers Müller, nor any of those excellent German artists who gave me such a gracious reception, and showed me such marks of deference and devotion! . . . We do not hear much music in France at present, and you, my friends, whom I am rejoiced to see again, have one and all such a downcast, discouraged air, when I ask you what has been done in Paris during my absence, that I feel a chill at my heart and a strong desire to go back to Germany, where there is still left some enthusiasm. And yet what immense resources we have here in this vortex of Paris, after which all the ambition of Europe is restlessly grasping! What fine results might be obtained by uniting all the means at the disposal of the Conservatoire, the Gymnase musical, our three lyric theatres, the churches and the singing-schools! With intelligent winnowing of these dispersed elements there might be formed, if not an irreproachable chorus (the voices are not drilled enough), at least a matchless orchestra! Only two things are wanting to let Parisians hear such a superb union of eight or nine hundred musicians: a place to put them in, and a little love of art to collect them there. We have not a single large concert-room! The Grand Opéra might take the place of one, if the daily working of the machinery and scenes and all the business necessitated by the requirements of the *répertoire* did not make the necessary preparations for such a solemnity well nigh impossible, by taking up the stage almost every day.

Then, could we find the collective sympathies, the unity of feeling and action, the devotion and patience without which nothing grand nor beautiful of this sort can ever be done? We must hope so, but we can only hope it. The exceptional order established at the rehearsals of the Société du Conservatoire, the enthusiasm of the members of that famous society are universally admired. But we only esteem great rarities; . . . almost everywhere in Germany, on the contrary, I found order and attention together with true respect for the master or masters.

For there are several in fact; first the composer, who almost always conducts the rehearsals and performance of his work himself, at which the self-love of the regular conductor is never in the least hurt; the *Kapellmeister*, who is generally a clever composer and conducts the operas of the grand *répertoire*, and all musical productions of which the authors are either dead or absent; then the *Conzertmeister* who, besides conducting smaller operas and ballets, plays the first violin part when he is not conducting, in which case he conveys the *Kapellmeister's* orders and remarks to the extreme points of the orchestra, superintends the technical details and exercises, sees that nothing is amiss in the instruments or music, and sometimes indicates the bowing and phrasing of melodies and phrases, an impossible task for the *Kapellmeister*, for he always conducts with a *bâton*.

There must undoubtedly exist in all these agglomerations of musicians of unequal merit in Germany many obscure vanities, unsubjected and ill restrained; but (with a single exception) I do not remember seeing them appear on the surface in open speech; perhaps because I do not understand German.

As for the conductors of choruses, I have found very few skillful ones; they are for the most part poor pianists; I have even met with one who did not play the pianoforte at all, and who gave the pitch by striking the keys with only two fingers of the right hand. Besides, they have kept up the custom in Germany, as with us, of bringing together all the parts of a chorus in the same room and under the same conductor, instead of having three rooms for practice and three leaders for preliminary rehearsals, and separating for some days the *so-*

prani and *contralti*, the basses and tenors; a proceeding which economizes time and brings about excellent results in teaching the various parts of a chorus. German chorus singers in general, especially the tenors, have fresher voices, and of a more distinguished quality than those which we hear at our theatres; but I should hesitate in allowing them to be superior to ours, and you will soon see, if you will follow me to the different cities I have visited, that all the theatre choruses, with the possible exception of those at Berlin, Frankfort, and Dresden, are bad or of very mediocre excellence. The singing academies, on the contrary, must be regarded as one of the musical glories of Germany; we will try further on to find out the reason of this difference.

My journey began under annoying auspices; mishaps and mischances of every sort succeeded each other in a perplexing manner, and I assure you, my dear friend, that it required an almost insane perseverance to pursue it and bring it to a happy end. I had left Paris thinking that three concerts were assured to me at the outset: the first was to have been given in Brussels, where I was engaged by the Société de la Grande Harmonie; the other two were already announced in Frankfort by the director of the theatre, who seemed to attach much importance to the matter, and to be extremely zealous in insuring its being put into execution. And what was the result of all these fine promises, of all this ardor? Absolutely nothing! It happened in this wise: Madame Nathan-Treillet had had the kindness to promise to come from Paris expressly to sing at the Brussels concert. At the moment of beginning the rehearsals, and after the pompous announcements of this *soirée-musicale*, we learn that the cantatrice has just fallen quite seriously ill, and that her leaving Paris is consequently impossible. Madame Nathan-Treillet had left behind her in Brussels such recollections of the time when she was *prima-donna* at the theatre there, that it may be said without exaggeration that she is worshiped; she is fanatically adored, and all the symphonies in the world would not counterbalance in the eyes of the Belgians a song of Loïsa Puget sung by Madame Treillet. At the announcement of this catastrophe the entire Grande Harmonie fell into syncope, the tap-room connected with the concert-hall was deserted, all the pipes went out as if their supply of air had been suddenly cut off, the Grand Harmonists dispersed amid groans. It was of no use my telling them as a consolation: "But the concert will not take place; be calm, you will not have the vexation of hearing my music; that is a sufficient compensation for such a misfortune, it seems to me!" Nothing would do.

Their eyes distilled tears of beer, et nolebant consolari, because Madame Treillet was not coming. So there is the concert gone to all the devils; the conductor of the orchestra of this so grandly harmonic society, a man of true merit, full of devotion to art in his quality of eminent artist, although little disposed to become a prey to despair, even when Mademoiselle Puget's songs failed him, Snel, who had invited me to come to Brussels, ashamed and confused,

> "Jurait, mais un peu tard, qu'on ne l'y prendrait plus."[1]

What was to be done? Apply to the rival society, La Philharmonie, conducted by Bender, the leader of the admirable band of the Guides; make up a brilliant orchestra, by joining that of the theatre to the pupils of the Conservatoire? The thing would have been easy, thanks to the good will of MM. Henssens, Mertz, Wéry, who had all hastened to exert in my favor their influence with their pupils and friends on a previous occasion!

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[1] Swore, but a little late, that he would not be caught again.

But I should have had to begin all over again, with fresh expenses, and I was pressed for time, supposing myself to be expected in Frankfort for the two concerts I have mentioned. There was nothing for it but to go, to go full of anxiety about the results that the frightful disappointment of the Belgian *dilettanti* might have, reproaching myself with being the innocent and humiliated cause. Luckily that remorse is not of the kind that is liable to last, any more than a cloud of steam, and I had hardly been an hour on the Rhine boat, when I thought no more of it. The Rhine! ah! it is beautiful! it is very beautiful! You think, perhaps, my dear Morel, that I am going to seize the opportunity to make some poetic amplifications on that head? God preserve me from it! I know too well that my amplifications would only be prosaic diminutions, and besides, I hope for your honor that you have read and reread Victor Hugo's delightful book.

As soon as I arrived at Mayence I inquired about the Austrian military band which was stationed there the year before, and which, Strauss said (the Paris Strauss), had performed several of my overtures with prodigious verve, power and effect. The regiment was gone; no possibility of any music for wind instruments (this would have been really a Grand Harmony[1]), or any concert whatever! (I had thought it possible to play this practical joke upon the inhabitants of Mayence in passing through). The thing must be tried however! I go and see Schott, the patriarch of music publishers. This worthy man has the appearance of having been asleep for a hundred years, like the Sleeping Beauty in the wood, and he answers all my questions slowly, interlarding his words with long rests: "I do not think . . . you can not . . . give a concert . . . here . . . there is no . . .

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[1] The pun is untranslatable. *Harmonie* means in French both Harmony, and Music for wind instruments.—Trans.

orchestra . . . there is no . . . public . . . we have no money! . . ."

As I have no enormous amount of . . . patience, I rush as quickly as may be to the railway and start for Frankfort. Just as if anything were wanting to complete my irritation! . . . This railway, it too, is all asleep; it bestirs itself slowly, it does not go ahead, it loafs, and, that day especially, it made interminable holds at every station. But every *adagio* must have an end at last, and I arrived at Frankfort before night-fall. There is a charming and wide-awake city! Everything has the appearance of activity and opulence; the city is also well built, white and glistening like a new five-franc piece, and the boulevards, planted with shrubbery and flowers in the English garden style, form a green and fragrant girdle around it. Although it was in the month of December, and the green leaves and flowers had long since disappeared, the sun played in pretty good humor between the arms of the saddened vegetation; and, either from the contrast between these avenues so full of air and light with the dark Mayence streets, or from the hope I had of at last beginning my concerts in Frankfort, or from some other cause which analysis cannot reach, all the voices of joy and happiness chanted in chorus within me, and I took a walk for two delicious hours. Let business wait for to-morrow! I said to myself as I went to my hotel.

The next day I accordingly went in good spirits to the theatre, thinking to find everything ready for my rehearsals. While crossing the square on which it is built, seeing some young men carrying wind instruments, I begged them, since they no doubt belonged to the orchestra, to give my card to the *Kapellmeister* and director, Guhr. After reading my name these good artists changed at once from indifference to a respectful attention that pleased me very much. One of them, who spoke French, was spokesman for the rest.

"We are very happy to see you at last. M. Guhr has for some time told us of your expected arrival. We have played your overture to *King Lear* twice. You will not find your orchestra of the Conservatoire here; but you will perhaps not be dissatisfied, nevertheless!"

Then comes Guhr. He is a little man with a rather malicious face and bright, piercing eyes; his gestures are rapid, his speech curt and incisive; one sees that he does not sin on the side of over-indulgence when at the head of his orchestra; everything about him bespeaks musical intelligence and good will; he is a leader. He speaks French, but not rapidly enough to keep pace with his impatience, and he mixes up every sentence with great oaths, pronounced with a German accent, with the drollest effect. I will only indicate them by initials. On seeing me:

"Oh! S. N. T. T.[1] . . . is it you, my dear sir? You did not get my letter then?"

"What letter?"

"I wrote to you in Brussels to tell you . . . S. N. T. T. . . . wait a bit . . . I can't speak well . . . a misfortune . . . it is a great misfortune! . . . Ah! here is our manager to interpret for me."

And still speaking in French:

"Tell M. Berlioz how much I am vexed; that I wrote him not to come yet; that the little Milanollo sisters fill the theatre every evening; that we have never seen such a furore in the public, S. N. T. T., and that we must take some other time for great music and grand concerts."

The Manager.—"M. Guhr wishes me to say, sir, that . . ."

I.—"Don't take the trouble to repeat it; I understood it very well, only too well, as he did not say it in German."

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[1] The Teutonic pronunciation of *S— n— d— D—*!—TRANS.

Guhr.—"Ah! ah! ah! I spoke French, S. N. T. T., without knowing it!"

I.—"You know very well, and I know too, that I must either go back again, or else pursue my journey in all recklessness at the risk of finding elsewhere some other infant prodigies to checkmate me again."

Guhr.—"What is to be done, my dear sir? the children make money, S. N. T. T., French songs make money, French *vaudevilles* draw the crowd; ask yourself, S. N. T. T., I am director, I can't refuse money; but stop at least till to-morrow and I will take you to hear *Fidelio* with Pischek and Mademoiselle Capitaine, and, S. N. T. T., you shall give me your opinion of our artists."

I.—"I believe them to be excellent, especially under your leadership; but, my dear Guhr, what is the use of swearing so much, do you think it consoles me?"

"Ah! ah! S. N. T. T., that's allowed *en famille*" (meaning familiarly).

Thereupon I fall into an insane fit of laughing, my ill humor vanishes, and taking him by the hand:

"Come on then, since we are *en famille*, come and drink some Rhine wine. I forgive your little Milanollos, and will stop to hear *Fidelio* and Mademoiselle Capitaine, whose lieutenant you have every appearance of wishing to be."

We agreed that I should set out for Stuttgard in two days, to try my luck with Lindpaintner and the King of Würtemberg, although I was not expected there. It was also well to give the Frankforters time to regain their coolness and to forget the delirious emotions caused by the violin of the two charming sisters, whom I had been the first to applaud in Paris, but who were just then strangely in my way in Frankfort.

I heard *Fidelio* the next day. This performance was one of the finest that I heard in Germany; Guhr was right in proposing it as a compensation for my disappointment; I have rarely had a more complete musical enjoyment.

Mademoiselle Capitaine, in the part of *Fidelio (Leonore)* seemed to me to possess all the musical and dramatic ability required by Beethoven's beautiful creation. Her quality of voice is of a peculiar character which makes it wholly fit to express sentiments, which, although deep and contained, are always on the verge of an explosion, like those which fill the heart of *Florestan's* heroic wife. She sings simply, very true, and her acting never lacks naturalness. In the famous pistol scene she does not move the audience violently, as Madame Schroeder-Devrient used to with her convulsive, nervous laugh, when we saw her in Paris seventeen years ago; she fetters the attention, and knows how to move by other means. Mademoiselle Capitaine is not a great singer in the brilliant sense of the term; but of all the women I have heard in Germany, she is certainly the one I prefer in *genre* opera; and I had never heard of her before. I had heard some others mentioned beforehand as superior talents, but I found them thoroughly detestable.

I do not remember, unfortunately, the name of the tenor who filled the part of *Florestan*. He has certainly great excellences, although his voice is by no means very remarkable. He sang the difficult air in the prison, not, indeed, so as to make one forget Haitzinger, who soars to a prodigious height in it, but well enough to merit the applause of a public less cold than that of Frankfort. As for Pischek, whom I could better appreciate some months afterward in Spohr's *Faust*, he really showed me the full importance of the part of the *Governor*, which we never could understand in Paris; I owe him genuine gratitude for that alone. Pischek is an artist; he has no doubt studied hard, but nature has favored him much. He has a magnificent baritone voice, incisive, supple, true, and of sufficient range; his face is noble, his stature tall, he is young and full of fire! What a pity that he only speaks German! The chorus singers of the Frankfort theatre seemed good, their execution is careful, their voices fresh, they rarely sing false; I only wish there were a few more of them. There is always a certain tartness in these choruses of forty voices, that is not found in large choral masses. Not having seen them studying a new work, I cannot say whether the Frankfort chorus singers are good readers and musicians or not; but I must acknowledge that they rendered very satisfactorily the first prisoners' chorus, a piece which must be absolutely *sung*, and even better the great *finale* where enthusiasm and energy gain the upper hand. As for the orchestra, I declare it to be excellent; considering it as a simple theatre orchestra, admirable at every point; no bit of delicate shading escapes it, the various qualities of tone blend in a harmonious whole entirely free from all harshness; it never wavers, every note strikes with certainty; it sounds like a single instrument. Guhr's great skill as a conductor and his severity at rehearsals contribute much, no doubt, to this precious result. Here is its composition: 8 first violins—8 second—4 violas—5 violoncelli—4 basses—2 flutes—2 oboes—2 clarinets—2 bassoons—4 horns—2 trumpets—3 trombones—1 drummer. This force of forty-seven musicians is to be found, with some very slight variations, in almost every German city of the second rank; the same is true of its arrangement, which is this: The violins, violas and celli occupy the right side of the orchestra; the basses are placed in a straight line in the middle close to the rail; the flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns and trumpets are drawn up on the left side; this group faces the strings; the drums and trombones are placed alone at the extreme right. As I had no opportunity of putting this orchestra to the severe test of symphonic studies, I can say nothing of their rapidity of conception, their aptitude in the capricious or humoristic style, their rhythmic security, etc., etc., but Guhr assured me that they were equally good in the concert-room and the theatre. I must believe him, Guhr not being one of those fathers who are too prone to admire their own children. The violins belong to an excellent school; the basses have a great deal of tone; I don't know how good the violas are, their part being very unprominent in the operas I heard performed in Frankfort. The wind instruments are exquisite in their *ensemble;* I would only mention a fault the horns have of often giving out a too brassy tone, especially in forcing the high notes, a fault very common in Germany. This mode of producing the tone disfigures the quality of the horn; it may, to be sure, have a good effect at certain times, but it ought not to be admitted into the school of the instrument, to my thinking.

At the close of this excellent performance of *Fidelio* ten or twelve of the audience condescended to applaud a little in going away . . . and that was all. I was indignant at such coldness, and as some one was trying to persuade me that, if the audience did not applaud, they none the less admired and felt the beauties of the work:

"No," said Guhr, "they understand nothing; nothing whatever, S. N. T. T." He was right; it is a public of *bourgeois!*

I had seen in a box that evening my old friend Ferdinand Hiller, who lived for a long time in Paris, where connoisseurs still often mention his high musical capacity. We quickly renewed our acquaintance and took up our old tone of good-fellowship. Hiller is at work on an opera for the Frankfort theatre. He wrote an *oratorio* two years ago, *The Fall of Jerusalem*, which was given several times with great success. He frequently gives concerts at which are performed, besides fragments of this noteworthy work, various instrumental compositions which he has written lately, and which are very highly spoken of. Unfortunately, whenever I have been in Frankfort, it has invariably happened that Hiller's concerts came the day after I had to go, so that I can only quote the opinions of other people about him, which will wholly clear me of the charge of too enthusiastic friendship. At his last concert he gave as novelties an overture, which was warmly received, and several pieces for four male voices and one *soprano*, the effect of which is said to be sparklingly original.

Frankfort has one musical institution which has been frequently spoken of to me in terms of the highest praise; it is the Singing Academy of St. Cecilia. It passes for being as well composed as it is large; nevertheless, as I was not admitted to examine it, I must maintain an absolute reserve on the subject.

Although the *bourgeois* element is predominant among the mass of the public in Frankfort, yet it seems to me impossible, considering the large number of persons of the higher classes who attend seriously to music, that an intelligent audience, capable of appreciating great works of art cannot be brought together. At any rate, I did not have the time to make the experiment.

I must now, my dear Morel, scrape together my recollections of Lindpaintner and the Stuttgard orchestra. I shall find in them a subject for a second letter, but it will not be addressed to you; ought not I to answer also those of our friends who have shown themselves so eager to know the details of my German exploration?

Good-bye.

P.S. Have you published any new songs? I hear nothing talked about but the success of your last melodies. I heard yesterday the *parlando rondeau*, *Page et mari*, which you wrote to words by the son of Alexandre Dumas. I declare that it is fine, coquettish, piquant and charming. You have never written anything so good in this style. This *rondeau* will have an unbearable popularity, you will be put into the pillory of all the hand-organs, and will have richly deserved it.

TO M. GIRARD

SECOND LETTER.

STUTTGARD, HECHINGEN.

THE first thing I did before quitting Frankfort to seek adventures in the kingdom of Würtemberg was to get information about the means of execution to be found in Stuttgard, to draw up a program in accordance with them, and to take with me only such music as was absolutely indispensable to carry it out. You must know, my dear Girard, that one of the greatest difficulties of my journey through Germany, and one which was the least easy to foresee, was the enormous expense of carrying about my music. You will easily understand it, when I tell you that this mass of orchestral and choral parts, either in manuscript or lithographed or engraved, was enormously heavy, and that I was forced to have it follow me almost everywhere in the post-vans.[1] Only this time, uncertain whether to go to Munich after my visit to Stuttgard, or to come back to Frankfort, and go thence northward, I took with me two symphonies, an overture and some vocal pieces, leaving all the rest with the unhappy Guhr, who, it seems, was fated to be troubled with my music in one way or another.

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[1] The multitude of railways which furrow up Germany in every direction nowadays, did not exist then.

The road from Frankfort to Stuttgard offers no point of interest, neither did the trip leave any impression upon me worth telling you; not a single romantic site to describe, not a dark forest, not a convent, not a solitary chapel, not a water-fall, no great nocturnal noise, not even that of Don Quixote's wind-mills; neither hunters, nor milk-maids, nor weeping young maiden, nor lost heifer, nor abandoned child, nor distracted mother, nor shepherd, nor thief, nor beggar, nor brigand; upon the whole, only moonlight, the noise of the horses and the snoring of our conductor fast asleep. Now and then some ugly peasants, with wide, three-cornered hats, and dressed in immense frocks of ex-white cloth, of which the skirts, of inordinate length, kept getting entangled between their muddy legs; a costume which made them look like village *curés* in intense *négligé*. That was all! The first person I had to see on arriving in Stuttgard, the only one, indeed, whom distant business relations, carried on through the mediation of a common friend, gave me any reason to suppose well disposed toward me, was Dr. Schilling, author of a great number of theoretical and critical works on the art of music. This title of Doctor, which almost everybody bears in Germany, had led me to augur not particularly well of him. I had imagined some old pedant, with spectacles and a red wig, an immense snuff-box, always astride of his hobby of fugue and counterpoint, speaking of nobody but Bach and Marpurg, externally polite perhaps, but at bottom full of hatred of modern music in general, and horror of mine in particular; a sort of musical skinflint in fact. But see how we can mistake; M. Schilling is not old, he does not wear spectacles, he has very handsome black hair, he is full of vivacity, speaks quickly and loud, like pistol-shots; he smokes and does not take snuff; he received me very well, showed me, to start with, what I must do to give a concert, never spoke a word about fugue or canon, manifested no contempt either for *Les Huguenots* or *Guillaume Tell*, and did not show any aversion to my music before hearing it.

Moreover, our conversation was anything but easy when we had no interpreter, M. Schilling speaking French about as well as I speak German. Impatient at not making himself understood:

"Do you speak English?" he asked me one day.

"I know a few words; and you?"

"I . . . no! But Italian, do you speak Italian?"

"*Si, un poco. Come si chiama il direttore del teatro?*"

"Ah! the devil! me no speak Italian either! . . ."

I believe, God forgive me, that if I had declared that I understood neither English nor Italian, the ebullient doctor had an idea of playing with me in those languages the scene in the *Médecin malgré lui: Arcithuram, catalamus, nominativo, singulariter; est ne oratio latinas?*

We got to trying Latin, in which we understood each other quite decently, not without some *arcithuram, catalamus.* But it is conceivable that our conversation was rather lame and did not run precisely on Herder's *Ideas* nor Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason.* At last M. Schilling made out to tell me that I could give my concert either in the theatre or in a hall intended for musical solemnities of that nature, called the hall of the Redoute. In the former case, beside the advantage of the presence of the king and court, which he thought I would surely obtain, an enormous advantage in a city like Stuttgard, I should get my executants gratis, without the trouble of attending to tickets, advertisements, or any other material details of the evening. In the latter I should have to pay my orchestra, take all the burden upon my own shoulders, and the king would not come;

he never went to the concert-room. I followed, accordingly, the doctor's advice, and rushed to present my petition to M. le baron Topenheim, grand marshal of the court and *intendant* of the theatre. He received me with charming politeness, assuring me that he would speak to the king that very evening about my petition, and that he thought it would be granted.

"But I beg you to observe that the hall of the Redoute is the only good one, and the only one well adapted for concerts; that the theatre, on the contrary, has such bad acoustic properties, that the idea of giving any instrumental composition of importance there has been given up long ago."

I hardly knew what to answer, nor what to decide upon. Let us go and see Lindpaintner, I said to myself; he is, and ought to be, the sovereign judge. I can hardly tell you, my dear Girard, how much good my first interview with that excellent artist did me. After ten minutes we seemed to have been friends for ten years. Lindpaintner soon explained my position to me.

"To begin with," said he, "you must undeceive yourself as to the musical importance of our city; it is a royal residence, to be sure, but has neither money nor a musical public." (Wa! Wa! I thought of Mayence and father Schott). "Nevertheless, since you are here, it shall not be said that we have let you go without performing some of your compositions, which we are very curious to become acquainted with. Here is what is to be done. The theatre is worthless, absolutely worthless for musical purposes. The question of the king's presence is of no importance; as he never goes to a concert, he will not come to yours wherever you give it. Therefore take the hall of the Redoute, of which the acoustics are excellent, and where the orchestra can have its full effect. As for the musicians, you will only have to pay the small sum of 80 francs to their pension fund, and they all will consider it a duty and an honor, not only to perform, but to rehearse your works several times under your direction. Come this evening and hear the *Freyschütz ;* I will present you to the orchestra in one of the *entr'actes*, and you will see whether I am wrong in answering for their good will."

I took good care not to miss the appointment. Lindpaintner presented me to the artists, and after he had translated a little speech I thought myself called upon to make them, my doubts and anxieties disappeared; I had an orchestra.

I had an orchestra composed very much like that in Frankfort, young and full of fire and vigor. I saw this by the way in which all the instrumental part of Weber's masterpiece was executed. The chorus seemed to me ordinary enough, neither numerous nor very careful in rendering the well-known effects of light and shade in that admirable score. They sang always *mezzo-forte* and seemed quite sufficiently bored by their task. The actors were all of decent mediocrity. I do not remember the names of any of them. The *prima-donna* (*Agathe*) has a sonorous voice, but hard and wanting flexibility: the *seconda* (*Aennchen*) vocalizes more easily, but often sings false; the baritone (*Caspar*) is, to my thinking, the Stuttgard theatre's best card. I afterward heard this troupe sing *La Muette de Portici* without changing my opinion of them.

Lindpaintner astonished me in conducting these two operas by the rapid *tempo* he took in certain numbers. I have since then seen many German *Kapellmeisters* who have the same way of thinking on this point; such are, among others, Mendelssohn, Krebs and Guhr. As to the *tempi* in the *Freyschütz*, I have nothing to say, for they have undoubtedly the true traditions much better than I; but as for *La Muette*, *La Vestale*, *Moïse* and the *Huguenots*, which have been put upon the stage in

Paris under the very eyes of the composers, and in which the *tempi* have been preserved as they were given at the first performances, I affirm that the rapidity with which I have heard certain parts of those scores performed in Stuttgard, Leipzig, Hamburg and Frankfort is an unfaithfulness of execution; an involuntary unfaithfulness, no doubt, but real and very hurtful to the effect. Yet we think in France that the Germans drag all our *tempi*.

The Stuttgard orchestra comprises 16 violins—4 violas—4 violoncelli—4 basses, and the necessary wind instruments and instruments of percussion for the performance of most modern operas. But there is besides an excellent harp, M. Krüger, and this is truly a rarity in Germany. The study of this beautiful instrument is neglected there in a ridiculous and even barbarous manner, without any discoverable cause. I incline to think that it has always been so, considering that none of the masters of the German school have made use of it. We find no harp in Mozart's works; neither in *Don Giovanni*, nor in *Figaro*, nor in the *Magic Flute*, nor in the *Seraglio*, nor in *Idomeneo*, nor in *Così fan tutte*, nor in his masses nor his symphonies; Weber has kept equally aloof from it everywhere; the same is true of Haydn and Beethoven[1]; Gluck alone has written a very easy harp part for *one hand* in *Orpheus*, and this opera was written and performed in Italy. There is something in this which astonishes and at the same time irritates me! . . . It is a disgrace to German orchestras, which ought to have at least two harps, especially now that they give operas coming from France and Italy, in which they are so often used.

The Stuttgard violins are excellent; one sees that they are for the most part pupils of the *Conzertmeister*,

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[1] Berlioz is not quite right here; there is an important harp *obbligata* in the *Prometheus* music.—TRANS.

Molique, whose vigorous playing, broad and severe style, somewhat wanting in light and shade though it be, and whose learned compositions we admired some years ago at the Conservatoire. Molique, occupying the first desk of the violins at the theatre and concerts, has for the most part to direct only his own pupils, who profess a very proper respect and admiration for him. Hence a precious precision of execution, a precision due as much to the unity of sentiment and method as to the attention of the players.

I must especially mention among them the second *Conzertmeister*, Habenheim, a distinguished artist in every respect, a *cantata* of whose I heard, in an expressive melodic style, of pure harmony and very well scored.

The other strings, if not equal to the violins, are at least of sufficient excellence to be counted as good. I will say as much for the wind instruments: the first clarinet and the first oboe are capital. The artist who plays first flute, M. Krüger Sr., uses, unfortunately, an old instrument which leaves much to be desired in point of purity of tone in general, and in facility of emission of the high notes. M. Krüger ought also to be on his guard against a tendency which at times leads him to make trills and *gruppetti* where the composer has not written any.

The first bassoon, M. Neukirchner, is a *virtuoso* of the first order, who is perhaps too fond of making a display of great difficulties; he plays, moreover, on so bad a bassoon that doubtful intonations wound the ear at every instant and mar the effect of even those phrases which the player gives in the best manner. Among the horns is to be distinguished M. Schuncke; he, like his brother horn-players in Frankfort, rather forces the tone of his high notes. The horns with cylinders (chromatic horns) are used exclusively in Stuttgard. The able maker, Adolphe Sax, now established in Paris, has abundantly proved the superiority of this system over that of pistons, which is now as good as abandoned throughout Germany, whereas horns, trumpets, bombardons, bass-tubas with cylinders, are coming into general use. The Germans call instruments to which this system is applied, valve instruments *(ventil-horn, ventil-trompete).* I was surprised not to see it adopted in the trumpets of the military band, which is good enough in other respects, at Stuttgard; they still use the trumpets with two pistons, very imperfect instruments, and far behind the trumpets with cylinders, which are used almost everywhere else, in sonority and quality of tone. I do not speak of Paris; we shall come to that in ten years or so.

The trombones are fine: the first (M. Schrade), who belonged to the orchestra of the Concert Vivienne four years ago in Paris, has genuine talent. He has a complete mastery over his instrument, makes light of the greatest difficulties and brings out a magnificent tone from the tenor trombone; I might even say tones, for he can produce three or four notes at a time, by a process not yet explained, like that young horn-player[1] who recently took up the attention of the Parisian musical press. Schrade, in a *cadenza* in a *Fantaisie* which he performed in public in Stuttgard, produced simultaneously, and to everybody's astonishment, the four notes of the chord of the dominant seventh in the key of B*b*, in this position:

*E*b
A
C
F

Acousticians ought to explain this new phenomenon in the resonance of sonorous tubes; we musicians ought to study it thoroughly and turn it to account when the opportunity presents itself.

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[1] Vivier, the clever mystifier; an eccentric artist, but one of real merit and very rare musical gifts.

Another merit of the Stuttgard orchestra is, that it is composed of intrepid readers, who are disturbed and disconcerted by nothing, who read at once the note and the shading, who at first sight let neither a *P* nor an *F*, nor a *mezzo-forte* nor a *smorzando* escape them. They are also well broken in to all caprices of rhythm and measure, do not always cling hold of the strong beats, but know how to accentuate weak beats without hesitation, and pass unembarrassed from one syncopation to another without seeming to perform a laborious feat. In a word, their musical education is complete in every respect. I could recognize these precious qualities in them from the time of the first rehearsal for my concert. I had chosen the *Symphonie fantastique* and the overture to the *Francs-Juges.* You know how full both these works are of rhythmical difficulties, of syncopated phrases, crossed syncopations, groups of four notes against groups of three, etc., etc.; things we to-day at the Conservatoire hurl vigorously at the head of the public, but which we have had to work at much and long. I had, then, to fear a host of mistakes in various passages in the overture and in the *finale* of the symphony; I could not detect a single one, all was seen, read and conquered at the first dash. My astonishment was extreme. Yours will not be less, when I tell you that we played this devilish symphony and the rest of the program after two rehearsals. The effect would even have been very satisfactory if either real or pretended cases of illness had not carried off half my violins on the day of the concert. Can you see me with four first violins and four second, to cope with all those wind instruments and instruments of percussion? For the epidemic had spared the rest of the orchestra, and nothing was wanting, nothing but half the violins! Oh!

in a case like that I would do like *Max* in the *Freyschütz*, and to get violins I would sign a compact with all the devils of hell. It was all the more heart-breaking and irritating that, in spite of Lindpaintner's predictions, the king and court came to the concert. Notwithstanding the desertion of a few desks, the execution was, if not powerful (that was impossible), at least intelligent, precise and fiery. The movements of the *Fantastic Symphony* which made the most effect were the *adagio* (the scene in the fields), and the *finale* (the Walpurgis-night's dream). The overture was warmly received; as for the *March of the Pilgrims* from *Harold*, which was also on the program, it passed by almost unnoticed. The same thing happened on another occasion, when I had the imprudence to have it played alone; whereas, everywhere that I have given *Harold* entire, the march has been received as it is in Paris, and often encored. A new proof of the necessity of not dismembering certain compositions, and of producing them in their proper light, and from the point of view which belongs to them.

Must I now tell you that I received all sorts of congratulations after the concert from the king, from M. le comte Neiperg and Prince Jerome Bonaparte? Why not? It is well enough known that princes are in general exceedingly gracious to foreign artists, but I should really be wanting in modesty if I were to repeat to you what some of the musicians said to me on that evening and the following days. But after all, why not be wanting in modesty? So as not to make some chained bull-dogs growl, who would like to bite every one who passes unchained before their kennel? That would indeed make it worth my while to go and mumble some old formulas and act a farce that nobody is deceived by! True modesty consists then, not only in not talking about one's self, but in not making one's self talked about, in not drawing public attention to one's self, in saying nothing, writing nothing, doing nothing, in hiding one's self, in not existing. Is not that an absurdity? . . . And, besides, I have determined upon avowing everything, good and bad; I have already begun in my preceding letter, and I am ready to go on in this one. Thus I greatly fear that Lindpaintner, who is a master, and whose good opinion I was very ambitious of obtaining, profoundly abhorred my symphony, only approving the overture; I would bet that Molique approved nothing. As for Dr. Schilling, I am sure that he found the whole execrable, and that he was deeply ashamed of having taken the first steps towards exhibiting in Stuttgard a brigand of my sort, strongly suspected of having violated Music, and who, if he could succeed in inspiring her with his own passion for the open air and vagabond life, would make a sort of bohemian of the chaste muse, not so much an *Esmeralda* as a *Helen MacGregor*, an armed virago with hair floating on the breeze and a dark tunic sparkling with brilliant gew-gaws, bounding barefoot over wild crags, dreaming to the noise of the winds and the thunder, whose black glance scares women and troubles men without inspiring them with love.

Schilling, in his character of counsellor to the Prince of Hohenzollern-Hechingen, did not fail to write to his Highness and propose to him as an amusement the curious savage, more suited to the Black Forest than to a civilized city. And the savage, curious to know everything, received an invitation couched in language as obliging as it was choice, from M. le baron de Billing, another intimate counsellor of the prince, and set out over snow and through the great pine woods for the little town of Hechingen, without troubling himself too much about what he could do there. This excursion in the Black Forest has left in me a confused mixture of joyful, sad, sweet and painful remembrances, which I could not now recall without almost inexpressible mental anguish. The cold, the double mourning of black and white spread over the mountains, the wind howling through the shuddering pines, that silent gnawing at the heart which is so active in solitude, a sad episode of a melancholy novel read during the trip. . . Then the arrival at Hechingen, the gay faces, the prince's kindness, the festival of new year's day, the ball, the concert, the mad laughter, the projects of meeting again in Paris, and . . . the farewell . . . and the departure . . . oh! I suffer! . . . What devil prompted me to tell you all this story, which does not indeed contain, as you will see, any moving or romantic incident? . . . But I am so made that I suffer at times without any apparent cause, as, in certain electric conditions of the atmosphere, the leaves on the trees move when there is no wind blowing.

. . . Luckily, my dear Girard, you have known me a long time, and you will not think this exposition without a catastrophe too ridiculous; this introduction without an *allegro*, this theme without a fugue! Ah! Egad! a theme without a fugue is rare good luck, you must allow. And we who have both read over a thousand fugues which had no theme, without counting those which had bad ones. Come! there is my melancholy taking wings, thanks to the intervention of the fugue (old dotard who has so often brought boredom), I am regaining my good spirits, and . . . will tell you about Hechingen.

When I said just now that it is a little town, I exaggerated its geographical importance. Hechingen is only a large village, a market-town at the very most, built on quite a steep hill-side, about like the part of Montmartre which crowns the *butte*, or, still better, like the village of Subiaco in the Roman States. Above the town, and situated so as to command it completely, stands the Villa Eugenia, occupied by the prince. On the right of this little palace is a deep valley, and, a little farther on, a sharp, bare peak crowned by the old castle of Hohenzollern, which is now nothing more than a hunting rendezvous, after having long been the feudal homestead of the prince's ancestors.

The present sovereign of this romantic landscape is an intelligent young man, lively and good, and who seems to have but two constant preoccupations in this world; the desire to make the inhabitants of his little states as happy as possible, and the love of music. Can you conceive of a more pleasant existence than his? He sees every one contented around him; his subjects adore him; music loves him; he understands it as a poet and musician; he composes charming *Lieder*, of which two, *der Fischerknabe* and *des Schiffers Abendlied*, really touched me by the expression of their melody. He sings them with the voice of a composer, but with an infectious fire and in accents of the soul and heart; he has, if not a theatre, at least a chapel (an orchestra), conducted by a master of pre-eminent merit, Techlisbeck, whose symphonies the Conservatoire in Paris has often performed with honor, and who conducts the simpler masterpieces of instrumental music without ostentation, but prepared with care. Such is the amiable prince whose invitation was so agreeable to me and from whom I received the most cordial welcome.

On arriving at Hechingen I renewed my acquaintance with Techlisbeck. I had known him in Paris five years before; he overpowered me with attentions at his house, and with those proofs of genuine kindness which one never forgets. He soon acquainted me with the musical forces that were at our disposal. There were eight violins in all, of which three were very weak, three violas, two violoncelli, two basses. The first violin, Stern, is a *virtuoso* of talent. The first cello, Oswald, deserves the same distinction. The recording pastor of Hechingen plays the double-bass to the satisfaction of the most particular composers. The first flute, the first oboe and the first clarinet are excellent; only the first flute is sometimes stung with that desire for *fioriture* that I have mentioned in the one at Stuttgard. The second wind instruments are good enough. The two bassoons and the two horns leave somewhat to be desired. As for the trumpets and the trombone (there is but one), they make you wish that you had asked them to be silent whenever they play. They know nothing.

I see you laughing, my dear Girard, and asking me what I could have performed by so small an orchestra? Well! by patience and good will, by arranging and modifying certain parts, and by having five rehearsals in three days, we got up the overture to *King Lear*, the *March of the Pilgrims*, the *Ball-scene* of the Fantastic Symphony, and divers other fragments proportionate in size to the frame destined to receive them.

I had written in pencil on the viola part the essential notes of the third and fourth horns (since we could have only the first and second); Techlisbeck played the first harp part of the *Ball-scene* on the piano-forte; he was also good enough to take upon himself the viola solo in the march from *Harold*. The Prince of Hechingen stood beside the drummer to count his rests for him and to set him agoing at the right time; I had cut out of the trumpet parts such passages as we found inaccessible to the two performers. Only the trombone was left to his own devices; but by giving only those notes with which he was very familiar, B*b*, D and F, and carefully avoiding all others, he shone almost everywhere by his silence. You should have seen how vitally and rapidly musical impressions circulated in that pretty concert-room where his Highness had called together a numerous audience! Nevertheless, you will no doubt imagine that I only felt a pleasure mingled with impatience at all these manifestations; and when the prince came to shake me by the hand I could not help saying to him:

"Ah! monseigneur, I swear I would give two of the years I have yet to live to have my orchestra of the Conservatoire here now, to have it try conclusions before you with these scores which you judge with so much indulgence!"

"Yes, yes, I know," he answered, "you have an imperial orchestra which calls you: Sire! and I am only a Highness; but I shall come to Paris to hear it, I shall come, I shall come!"

May he keep his word! His applause, which still weighs upon my heart, seems an ill-gotten gain.

After the concert there was a supper at Villa Eugenia. The charming gayety of the prince communicated itself to all his guests; he wished me to hear one of his compositions for tenor, piano-forte and violoncello; Techlisbeck sat down at the piano-forte, the composer took the voice part upon himself, and I was detailed to sing the cello part by general acclamation. The piece was much applauded, and they laughed almost as much at the singular quality of tone of my first string. The ladies especially could not get over my A.

The next day but one, after many farewells, I had to return to Stuttgard. The snow was thawing on the great weeping pines, the white mantle of the mountains was becoming mottled with black spots; . . . it was profoundly sad, . . . the heart-gnawing could set to work again. . . .

The rest is silence. . . .
Farewell.

TO LISZT.

THIRD LETTER.

MANHEIM, WEIMAR.

ON returning from Hechingen, I stopped a few days in Stuttgard, a prey to new perplexities. I might have answered all questions addressed to me about my projects, and the future course of the journey I had just begun, as that character in Molière did:

> "Non, je ne reviens point, car je n'ai point été;
> Je ne vais pas non plus, car je suis arrêté,
> Et ne demeure point, car tout de ce pas même
> Je prétends m'en aller." . . .[1]

Go . . . where? I did not know. I had written to Weimar, to be sure, but the answer persisted in not coming, and I had absolutely to wait before deciding upon anything.

You do not know these uncertainties, my dear Liszt; you little care about knowing whether the orchestra in the city you intend passing through is well composed, whether the theatre is open, whether the *intendant* is willing to place it at your disposal, etc. After all, of what use is such information to you? You can say with confidence, changing the saying of Louis XIV:

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[1] No, I have not come back, for I have not been; neither am I going, for I have been stopped, and I am not going to stay, for at this very moment I am trying to go.

"*L'orchestre, c'est moi! le chœur, c'est moi! le chef, c'est encore moi!* (The orchestra; I am the orchestra! the chorus; I am the chorus! the conductor; I am the conductor too!)." My piano-forte sings, dreams, explodes, resounds; it defies the flight of the most skillful bows; it has, like the orchestra, its brazen harmonies; like it, and without the least preparation, it can give to the evening breeze its cloud of fairy chords and vague melodies; I need neither theatre, nor box-scene, nor much staging; I have not to tire myself out at long rehearsals; I want neither a hundred, nor fifty, nor twenty players; I do not even want any at all; I do not even need any music. A grand hall, a grand piano-forte, and I am master of a grand audience. I show myself and am applauded; my memory awakens, dazzling fantasies grow beneath my fingers, enthusiastic acclamations answer them; I sing Schubert's *Ave Maria* or Beethoven's *Adélaïde*, and all hearts tend towards me, all breasts hold their breath. . . . Then come luminous bombs, the bouquet of this grand firework, and the cries of the public, and the flowers and crowns that rain around the priest of harmony shuddering on his tripod; and the young beauties who, all in tears in their divine confusion, kiss the hem of his cloak; and the sincere homage drawn from serious minds, and the feverish applause torn from envy; the lofty brows that bow down and the narrow hearts marveling to find themselves expanding. . . . And the next day, when the young inspired one has spread abroad what of his inexhaustible passion he wishes to spread abroad, he goes away, he vanishes, leaving behind him a dazzling twilight of enthusiasm and glory. . . . It is a dream! . . . One of those golden dreams one has when one is called Liszt or Paganini.

But the composer who would try, as I did, to travel about bringing out his own works; what fatigues what ungrateful and ever-renewed toil must he not expect! . . . Do people realize what a torment rehearsals may be to him? . . . To begin with, he has to meet the cold looks of all the musicians who are only half pleased at being unexpectedly disturbed on his account and being subjected to unaccustomed tasks. — "What does this Frenchman want? Why does he not stop at home?" They take their places at their desks nevertheless, but at the first glance the composer is aware of annoying gaps in the orchestra. He asks the *Kapellmeister* the reason: "The first clarinet is ill, the oboe has a wife at an interesting crisis, the first violin's child has the croup, the trombones are on parade; they forgot to ask for exemption from military duty for that day; the drummer has sprained his wrist, the harp will not come to the rehearsal because he must have time to practice his part, etc., etc." They begin, though, and the notes are read as well as may be, in a *tempo* more than twice as slow as that of the composer; nothing is so horrible as this dragging out of the rhythm! Little by little his instinct gets the upper hand, his heated blood forces him on, he hurries the measure and comes in spite of himself to the proper *tempo;* then confusion declares itself, a formidable hodge-podge of sounds tears his ears and his heart; he must stop and take the *tempo* slower, and practice piecemeal those long periods whose free and rapid course he has so often guided before with other orchestras. Even that will not do; in spite of the slow *tempo*, strange dissonances are audible in certain parts of the wind instruments; he tries to find out the cause: "Let us try the trumpets alone! . . . What are you doing there? I ought to hear a third, and you are giving me a chord of the second. The second trumpet in C has a D, give me your D! . . . Very good! The first has a C which sounds F, give me your C! Oh! . . . horrors! you are giving me an E$\flat$!"

"No, sir, I am playing what is written!"

"But I tell you you are not, you are a *whole tone* out!"

"But I am sure that I played C!"

"What key is the trumpet in you are playing on?"

"In E$\flat$!"

"There! What are you talking about? You ought to take the trumpet in F!"

"Ah! I did not read the direction right; you are right, excuse me."

"Come! What devil of a row are you making over there, you, the drummer?"

"I have a *fortissimo*, sir."

"Not a bit of it, it is a *mezzo-forte*, there are not two *F*s, but an *M* and an *F*. Besides you are playing with wooden drum-sticks, and you ought to take sponge-headed sticks at that place; it makes all the difference between black and white."

"We don't know what you mean," says the *Kapellmeister;* "what do you mean by sponge-headed sticks? we have never seen more than one kind of sticks."

"I thought as much; I have brought some from Paris. Take a pair that I have put on that table. Now, are we ready? . . . Good God! that is twenty times too loud! And you have not put on any mutes! . . ."

"No, we have not got any; the orchestra boy forgot to put them on the desks; we will get some to-morrow, etc., etc."

After three or four hours of exchanging shots in this anti-harmonic fashion, not a single piece has been made intelligible. Everything is broken, disjointed, false, cold, flat, noisy, discordant, hideous! And that is the impression which must be left on the minds of sixty or eighty musicians who go away tired out and discontent-ed, to tell everybody that they do not know what it all means, that that music is a pandemonium, a chaos, that they never fell foul of the like of it before. The next day scarcely perceptible progress is made; it hardly becomes clearly manifest on the third day. Then only does the poor composer begin to breathe; well-poised harmonies become clear, rhythms bound along, melodies weep and smile; the compact, united mass rushes on boldly; after all this groping and stuttering, the orchestra expands, it walks, it speaks, it becomes human! Understanding brings back courage to the astonished players; the composer asks for a fourth trial; his interpreters, who are, upon the whole, the best sort of people in the world, grant it readily. This time, *fiat lux!* "Attend to the light and shade? You are not afraid?"—"No! give us the real *tempo!*"—"*Via!*" And there is light, the art appears, the thought glistens, the work is understood! And the orchestra rises, applauding and saluting the composer; the *Kapellmeister* comes to congratulate him; curious persons, who have kept aloof in the shade of dark corners, climb up on to the stage, and exchange exclamations of pleasure and astonishment with the musicians, looking all the while with surprised faces at the stranger whom they had at first taken for a madman or a barbarian. Now is the time that you would think he needed rest. Let the unhappy man take anything but that! Now is the time for him to redouble his pains and attention. He must come back before the concert to oversee the placing of the music stands, to inspect the orchestral parts and be sure that they have not got mixed. He must pass through the ranks, red pencil in hand, and mark down on the music of the wind instruments the names of the keys as they are understood in Germany, instead of those used in France; put everywhere *in C*, *in D*, *in Des*, *in Fis*, instead of *en ut*, *en ré*, *en ré bémol*, *en fa dièse*. He has to transpose an

English-horn solo for the oboe, because the English-horn is not found in the orchestra he is to conduct, and the player often hesitates to transpose himself. He must go and make the chorus and singers rehearse by themselves if they have not shown enough assurance. But the public arrives, the hour strikes; tired out, broken with fatigue of mind and body, the composer presents himself at the conductor's desk, hardly able to stand on his feet, uncertain, disgusted, up to the moment when the applause of the audience, the verve of the players, his love for his own work, suddenly transform him into an electric machine, whence dart fulminating irradiations, invisible, but real. And his compensation begins. Ah! it is then, I admit, that the conductor-composer lives a life unknown to the *virtuoso.* With what furious joy he gives himself up to the happiness of *playing upon the orchestra!* How he presses in his arms, how he embraces, how he hugs the immense and impetuous instrument! He has acquired a thousandfold power of attention; his eye is everywhere; he indicates with a glance the points of entry of the voices and instruments, above, below, on the right hand and the left; he hurls with his right arm terrible chords that seem to burst afar off like harmonious projectiles; then at the holds he stops all this movement that he has communicated; he enchains the attention of all; he suspends the motion of every arm, of every breath, listens an instant in silence . . . and again gives more passionate impetus to the fiery whirlwind he has subdued.

"Luctantes ventos tempestatesque sonoras
Imperio premit, ac vinclis et carcere frenat."

And in the great *adagios*, how happy he is to rock gently on his beauteous lake of harmony! listening to the hundred intertwined voices singing his hymns of love, or seeming to confide his complaints of the present and his regrets of the past to solitude and to night. Then, often, but only then, does the conductor-composer wholly forget his audience; he listens to and judges himself; and if the emotion seizes upon him, shared by the artists who surround him, he no longer considers the impression upon the public, too far removed from him. If his heart has quivered at the contact of the poetic melody, if he has felt that inward glow that shows his soul to be on fire, the goal is reached, the heaven of art is opened to him, what matters the earth! . . .

Then at the end of the evening, when the grand success has been won! His joy is increased an hundredfold, shared as it is by all the satisfied self-loves of his army. Thus you, great *virtuosos*, you are princes and kings by the grace of God, you are born on the steps of the throne; composers must fight, subdue, and conquer, to reign. But even the fatigues and dangers of the tussle add to the lustre and the intoxication of their victories, and they would perhaps be happier than you . . . had they but always soldiers.

My dear Liszt, this is a long digression, and I was on the point of forgetting, in my chit-chat with you, to continue the story of my journey. I will return to it.

During the few days that I passed in Stuttgard waiting for letters from Weimar, the Society of the Redoute, under the conductorship of Lindpaintner, gave a brilliant concert, where I had a second opportunity for observing the coldness with which the great German public in general receives the most colossal conceptions of the immense Beethoven. The overture to *Leonore*, a truly monumental work, played with rare verve and precision, was hardly applauded, and I heard in the evening, at the *table d'hôte*, a gentleman complaining that they did not give Haydn's symphonies instead of this *violent music, where there is no melody!!!* . . .

Frankly, we no longer have any such *bourgeois* in Paris! . . .

A favorable answer from Weimar having reached me, I started for Carlsruhe. I could have wished to give a concert in passing through; the *Kapellmeister*, Strauss, informed me that I should have to wait eight or ten days for that, on account of an engagement made by the theatre with a Piedmontese flute-player. I consequently hurried on to Manheim, full of respect for the great flute. Manheim is very calm, very cold, very flat, and very square. I do not believe the passion for music keeps the inhabitants from their sleep. Yet there is a numerous singing academy, a pretty good theatre, and a very intelligent little orchestra. The direction of the singing academy and of the orchestra is confided to the younger Lachner, brother of the famous composer. He is a mild and timid artist, modest and talented. He organized a concert for me very quickly. I do not remember the program; I only know I wished to have in it my second symphony *(Harold)* entire, and that I had to cut out the *finale* (the *Orgy*) at the first rehearsal, on account of the manifest incapacity of the trombones to fill the part allotted them in that movement. Lachner was evidently much vexed, being anxious, as he said, to hear my picture in its entirety. I was obliged to persist, assuring him that, independently of the weakness of the trombones, it would be folly to hope for the effect of the *finale* from an orchestra so scantily furnished with violins. The first three parts of the symphony were well given, and made a vivid impression upon the public. They told me that the Grand Duchess Amelia, who was at the concert, remarked the coloring of the *March of the Pilgrims*, and especially of the *Serenade in the Abruzzi*, which brought up before her mind the happy calm of the fine Italian nights. The solo for the viola was played with talent by one of the violas of the orchestra, who yet makes no pretensions to virtuosity.

I found quite a good harp in Manheim, an excellent oboe, who plays the English-hórn decently, a skillful violoncello (Heinefetter, cousin of the singers of that name), and valiant trumpets. There is no ophicleide; Lachner has found himself obliged to have a trombone with cylinders made, descending to low C and B, to take the place of that instrument, which figures in all full modern scores. It would have been simpler, it seems to me, to have imported an ophicleide, and, musically speaking, it would have been much better, as the two instruments have little resemblance. I could only hear one rehearsal of the singing academy; the amateurs who compose it have in general quite fine voices, but they are far from being all musicians and readers.

Mademoiselle Sabine Heinefetter sang *Norma* during my stay in Manheim. I had not heard her since she left the Théâtre des Italiens in Paris; her voice still has strength, and a certain agility; she forces it a little at times, and her high notes become often hard to bear; yet, such as she is, Mademoiselle Heinefetter has few rivals among German singers; she knows how to sing.

I was much bored in Manheim, in spite of the kind attentions of a Frenchman, M. Désiré Lemire, whom I had met sometimes in Paris eight or ten years ago. It is easy to see from the manners of the inhabitants, even from the aspect of the city, that they are wholly unprogressive in art, and that music is considered a pleasant enough amusement, in which they willingly indulge in the leisure hours left by their business. Besides, it rained incessantly; I lived next to a clock, the bell of which had the harmonic resonance of a minor third, and to a tower inhabited by a villainous sparrow-hawk, whose piercing and discordant shrieks drilled into my ears from morning till night. I was impatient also to see the city of poets, whither I was hurried by the pressing letters of the *Kapellmeister*, my countryman, Chélard, and of Lobe, that type of the genuine German musician, whose merit and warmth of feeling I know you appreciate.

Here I am again on the Rhine!—I meet Guhr.—He begins to swear again.—I leave him.—I see our friend Hiller again for a moment at Frankfort.—He tells me that he is going to have his oratorio of *The Fall of Jerusalem* performed. . . .—I leave the city, provided with a very fine sore throat.—I fall asleep on the way.—A frightful dream . . . which I shall not tell you.—Here is Weimar.—I am very ill.—Lobe and Chélard make futile attempts to wind me up.—The concert is preparing.—The first rehearsal is announced.—Joy returns to me.—I am cured.

Ha! I can breathe here! I feel something in the air which bespeaks a literary city, an artistic city! Its aspect perfectly answers to the idea I had formed of it, it is calm, luminous, airy, full of peace and reverie; charming surroundings, beautiful waters, shady hills and laughing valleys. How my heart beats as I walk through it! What! That is Goethe's summer house! There is where the late grand duke used to like to come and take part in the learned conversations of Schiller, Herder, and Wieland! This Latin inscription was traced upon this rock by the author of *Faust!* Is it possible? Those two little windows admit the air to the poor attic where Schiller lived! It is in this humble retreat that the great poet of all noble enthusiasms wrote *Don Carlos, Mary Stuart, the Robbers, Wallenstein!* There he lived like a simple student! Ah! I do not like Goethe's having allowed that! He, who was rich, a minister of state, . . . could he not have changed the fate of his friend the poet? . . . or was this illustrious friendship void of all reality! . . . I fear that it was genuine only on Schiller's side! Goethe loved himself too much; he also cherished his devilish son, Mephisto, too much; he lived to be too old; he was in too great fear of death.

Schiller! Schiller! you deserved a less human friend! My eyes cannot leave those narrow windows, that obscure house, that wretched black roof; it is one o'clock in the morning, the moon gleams, the cold is intense. All is silent; they are all dead. . . . Little by little my breast swells; I tremble; crushed with veneration, with regrets and with those endless affections that genius sometimes inflicts from beyond the tomb upon obscure survivors, I kneel down beside the humble threshold, and sufferingly, admiringly, lovingly, adoringly repeat: Schiller! . . . Schiller! . . . Schiller! . . .

What can I tell you now, my dear fellow, about the real subject of my letter? I have strayed far. Wait a bit; to come back to prose and calm myself a little, I will remember another inhabitant of Weimar, a man of great talent, who wrote masses and beautiful septets, and played the piano-forte severely, Hummel. . . . It is done, I am rational again!

Chélard, first in his character of artist, and then of Frenchman and old friend, did everything to enable me to gain my ends. The *intendant*, M. le baron Spiegel, entering into his kind views, put at my disposal the theatre and the orchestra; I do not say the chorus, for he would probably not have dared to mention it to me. I had heard them in Marschner's *Vampyr* on my arrival; such a collection of unhappy individuals braying out of tune and measure are not to be imagined. I had never heard anything of the kind before. And the female singers! oh! the poor women! Let us not talk of them, for the sake of gallantry. But there is a bass there who filled the part of the *Vampyr;* you have guessed that I mean Genast! Is not he an artist in the full force of the term ? . . . He is above all a tragedian ; I regretted deeply that I could not stop longer in Weimar to see him play *Lear*, in Shakspere's tragedy, which was in rehearsal when I left.

The orchestra is well composed; but, to do me honor, Chélard and Lobe went in search of stringed instruments to add to those they already had, and they presented me with a force of 22 violins, 7 violas, 7 violoncelli, and 7 basses. The wind instruments were complete; I remarked among them an excellent first clarinet, and an extraordinarily strong trumpet with cylinders (Sachse). There was no English-horn. I had to transpose the part for a clarinet; no harp: a very amiable young man, M. Montag, a pianist of merit and a perfect musician, was good enough to arrange the two harp parts for a single piano-forte and play them himself; no ophicleide: it was replaced by quite a strong bombardon. Nothing was wanting, then, and we began the rehearsals. I must tell you that I had found in the musicians in Weimar a very well-developed passion for my overture to the *Francs-Juges*, which they had already played several times. They were thus as well disposed as possible; I was also really happy, contrary to my usual experience, during the rehearsals of the Fantastic Symphony that I had again chosen after their own heart. It is a great pleasure, though a very rare one, to be comprehended at once. I remember the impression that the first movement *(Reveries—Passions)*, and the third *(Scene in the Fields)*, made upon the orchestra and some amateurs who were present at the rehearsal. The latter movement seemed in its peroration to have oppressed all breasts, and after the last rolling of thunder, at the end of the solo of the abandoned shepherd, when the orchestra, coming in, seems to breathe a profound sigh and die away, I heard my neighbors also sighing in sympathy, crying out, etc.,

etc. Chélard declared himself a partizan of the *March to the Scaffold* above all. As for the public, it seemed to prefer the *Ball* and the *Scene in the Fields*. The overture to the *Francs-Juges* was received like an old acquaintance that one is glad to see again. Good, here I am again on the point of being wanting in modesty; and if I speak of the full house, the prolonged applause, the recalls, the chamberlains coming to compliment the composer on the part of their Highnesses, of the new friends waiting for him at the theatre door to kiss him and keep him willy-nilly up till three in the morning; if I were to describe, in fine, a success, I should be found very indecorous, very ridiculous, very . . . see here, in spite of my philosophy, this frightens me, and I stop short. Good-bye.

TO STEPHEN HELLER.

FOURTH LETTER.

LEIPZIG.

YOU have laughed, no doubt, my dear Heller, at the mistake I made in my last letter, about the Grand Duchess Stephanie whom I called Amelia? Well! I must admit that I am not in too great despair about the reproaches of ignorance and light-headedness that my mistake will call down upon me. It would be all very well if I had called the Emperor Napoleon Francis or George! but at the worst, it may be permissible to change the name of the sovereign of Manheim, all gracious though it be. Besides, Shakspere has said it:

> "What's in a name? that we call a rose
> By any other name would smell as sweet!"

At any rate, I humbly beg her Highness's pardon; and if she grants it, as I hope she will, I shall make out to laugh at your joking.

After leaving Weimar, the musical city that I could visit most easily was Leipzig. Yet I hesitated about showing myself there in spite of the dictatorship with which Felix Mendelssohn was invested, and the musical relations which united us in Rome in 1831. We had since then followed such divergent paths in art, that I admit I feared that I should not meet with very lively sympathy from him. Chélard, who knows him, made me blush at my doubts, and I wrote to him. His answer did not keep me waiting; here it is:

"My dear Berlioz, I thank you from my heart for your kind letter, and for having kept up the memory of our *Roman* friendship! I shall never forget it as long as I live, and I rejoice to be soon able to tell you so *vivâ voce*. I will do, as a pleasure and a duty, all I can to make your stay in Leipzig happy and pleasant. I think I can assure you that you will be satisfied with our city, that is, with the musicians and the public. I did not want to write to you without consulting several people who know Leipzig better than I, and they all confirm my opinion that you will have an excellent concert. The expenses for orchestra, hall, advertisements, etc., amount to 110 crowns; the receipts may amount to from 600 to 800 crowns. You ought to be here to draw up the program, and do everything needful, at least ten days before hand. Besides, the directors of the society of subscription concerts beg me to ask you whether you will have one of your works performed at the concert to be given, February 22, for the benefit of the poor of the city. I hope that you will accept their proposal after the concert you give yourself. Thus I beg you to come here as soon as you can leave Weimar. I shall be rejoiced to shake you by the hand, and bid you: *Willkommen* to Germany. Do not laugh at my vile French as you used to in Rome, but continue my good friend,[1] as you were then, and as I shall always be, your devoted

"FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY."

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[1] (May 25, 1864) I have just seen in a volume of Felix Mendelssohn's letters, recently published by his brother, in what his *Roman friendship* for me consisted. He says to his mother, clearly describing me: "***

Could I resist an invitation couched in such language? . . . I started for Leipzig, not without regretting Weimar and the new friends I left there.

My intimacy with Mendelssohn had begun in Rome in an odd enough way. At our first interview he spoke about my *cantata* of *Sardanapalus*, crowned by the Institute of Paris, parts of which my co-laureate, Montfort, had played to him. Having myself evinced a thorough aversion for the first *allegro* of that *cantata*:

"Well and good," cried he, full of joy, "I compliment you . . . on your taste! I had feared that you were satisfied with that *allegro*; frankly, it is wretched enough!"

We nearly came to a quarrel the next day, because I spoke enthusiastically of Gluck, and he answered me in a surprised, rallying tone:

"Ah! you like Gluck!"

Which seemed as much as to say: "How has a musician like you enough elevation of ideas, a sufficiently vivid sense of grandeur of style and truth of expression to like Gluck?" I soon had an opportunity to revenge myself for this little bit of sauciness. I had brought from Paris the air of *Asteria* from the Italian opera of *Telemaco*; an admirable piece, but little known. I placed a manuscript copy, without the author's name, on Montfort's piano-forte one day when we expected a call from Mendelssohn. He came. Seeing the music, he took it for a bit from some modern Italian opera, and set himself to performing it, and, in the last four measures, at the words: "*O giorno! o dolce sguardi! o rimembranza! o amor!*" of which the musical accent

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is a real caricature, without a spark of talent, etc., etc., . . . *I have at times a desire to devour him.*" When he wrote that letter he was twenty-one, and did not know a *single* score of mine; I had then only written the first sketch of my Fantastic Symphony which he had not read; it was only a few days before his departure from Rome that I showed him the overture to *King Lear* which I had just finished.

is truly sublime, seeing that he was burlesquing them in a grotesque way in imitation of Rubini, I stopped him, saying, with an air of confounded astonishment:

"Ah! you don't like Gluck?"

"How Gluck?"

"Alas, yes, my dear fellow, this is by him and not by Bellini as you supposed. You see that I know him better than you do, and that I am of your opinion . . . more than yourself!"

One day I happened to say something about the metronome and its usefulness.

"What is the metronome good for?" cried out Mendelssohn; "it is a very useless instrument. A musician who does not divine the *tempo* of a piece at first sight is a blockhead."

I might have answered that there were a good many blockheads; but I kept that to myself. I had hardly written anything then. Mendelssohn only knew my Irish Melodies with piano-forte accompaniment. Having asked one day to see the score of the overture to *King Lear* which I had just written at Nice, he read it first attentively and slowly, then just as he was about to touch the piano to play it (which he did with incomparable talent):

"Now give me your *tempo*," said he.

"What is the use? Did not you tell me yesterday that every musician who did not divine the *tempo* of a piece at first sight was a blockhead?"

He tried not to show it, but these unexpected return thrusts, or rather cudgel strokes, displeased him greatly.[1]

He never would pronounce the name of Sebastian Bach without adding ironically: "*Your little pupil!*" In fact he was a perfect porcupine as soon as music was on the tapis; you could not tell where to touch him so as not to wound him. Of an excellent disposition and a charming sweetness of temper, he would easily brook contradiction on any other subject, and I in turn took unfair advantage of his tolerance in the philosophical and religious discussions that used to come up between us at times.

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[1] And perhaps that is what gave him such a desire to devour me. (1864.)

One evening we were exploring the baths of Caracalla together, debating the question of the merit or demerit of human actions and their reward in this life. As I was answering his wholly religious and orthodox expression of opinion by I forget what enormity, his foot slipped and down he rolled, with many bruises and scratches, down the ruins of a very steep staircase.

"Admire the divine justice," said I, while helping him up, "I blaspheme, and you fall."

This impiety, accompanied with great shouts of laughter, appears to have struck him as too much of a good thing, and from that time religious discussions were tabooed. It was in Rome that I first appreciated that fine and delicate musical tissue which bears the name of Overture to *Fingal's Cave*. Mendelssohn had just finished it, and gave me a pretty accurate idea of it; such is his prodigious skill in playing the most complex scores on the piano-forte. Often, on oppressive sirocco days, I used to go and interrupt him at his work (for he is an indefatigable producer); he would then quit his pen with a very good grace, and, seeing me almost bursting with spleen, he would try to alleviate it by playing for me whatever I asked for from the works of the masters we both were fond of. How often have I sung the air from *Iphigénie en Tauride: "D'une image, hélas! trop chérie,"* lying peevishly on his lounge, while he played the accompaniment, seated decorously at the piano-forte. And he used to cry out: "That is beautiful! It is very beautiful! I could hear it from morning till night without tiring, forever, forever!" And we would begin afresh. He used to like to make me hum over, with my bored voice and in that horizontal posture, two or three melodies I had written to some of Moore's verses, and which pleased him. Mendelssohn has always had a certain esteem for my . . . little songs. After a month of this relationship, which became at last so full of interest to me, Mendelssohn disappeared without saying good-bye, and I never saw him again. His letter, which I have just quoted, was calculated to be, and really was, a very pleasant surprise. It seemed to show a kindness of disposition, an amenity of manners that I had not known in him; I was not long in recognizing, on coming to Leipzig, that these excellent qualities had really become his own. He has at the same time lost nothing of the inflexible firmness of his principles of art, but he does not try to force them upon you by violence, and confines himself, in the exercise of his functions as *Kapellmeister*, to giving prominence to what he judges fine, and leaving what he considers bad, or of a pernicious example, in the shade. Only he is still rather too fond of the dead.

The society of subscription concerts, which he had spoken of as very numerous, is as well composed as possible; it possesses a superb singing academy, an excellent orchestra, and a hall, that of the Gewandhaus, of perfect acoustic properties. It was in this large and beautiful hall that I was to give my concert. I went to see it as soon as I left my carriage, and came right in the middle of the general rehearsal of a new work of Mendelssohn (*Walpurgisnacht*). I was really astonished from the very first at the fine quality of the voices, the intelligence of the singers, the precision and verve of the orchestra, and, above all, at the splendor of the composition.

I am strongly inclined to regard this sort of *oratorio* (the *Walpurgisnacht*) as the most complete thing that

Mendelssohn has produced up to this time.[1] The poem is by Goethe, and has nothing in common with the Walpurgis-night scene in *Faust*. It treats of the nocturnal assemblies that were held in the mountains in the early days of Christianity by a religious sect who were faithful to the old customs, even after sacrifices on high places had been forbidden. They were accustomed, on nights appointed for the holy rite, to place armed sentinels, clothed in strange disguises, in large numbers at all paths leading to the mountain. At an agreed signal, when the priest, walking up to the altar, intoned the sacred hymn, this troupe, of diabolic aspect, brandishing their pitchforks and torches in a terrific manner, made all sorts of frightful noises and shrieks, to drown the voices of the religious chorus and terrify all profane persons who might be tempted to interrupt the ceremony. From this comes undoubtedly the use of the word *sabbat* in French as a synonym for any great nocturnal noise. One must hear Mendelssohn's music to form an idea of the varied resources that this poem offered to a skillful composer. He has turned it to admirable account. His score is perfectly clear in spite of its complexity; vocal and instrumental effects cross each other in every direction, thwarting and jostling each other in an apparent disorder, which is the height of art. I will quote especially, as superb things in two opposite styles, the mysterious number where the sentinels are stationed, and the final chorus, where the priest's voice rises at intervals, calm and pious, above the infernal din of the pretended demons and sorcerers. One knows not which to praise most in this *finale*, whether the orchestra, or the chorus, or the whirling movement of both together!

At the moment when Mendelssohn, full of joy at having written it, stepped down from his desk, I advanced all in ecstasy at having heard it. The time for such a meeting could not have been better chosen; and yet after we had exchanged the first words of greeting, the same sad thought struck us both:

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[1] When I wrote these lines, I did not yet know the fascinating score of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

"What! it is twelve years! twelve years since we used to dream together on the Campagna!"

"Yes, in the baths of Caracalla!"

"Oh! Still cynical! still always ready to laugh at me!"

"No, no, I hardly jeer much nowadays; it was to test your memory, and to see if you had forgiven my impieties. I am so far from joking that now, at our first meeting, I am going to ask you very seriously to make me a present to which I attach the greatest value."

"What is it?"

"Give me the *bâton* with which you have just conducted the rehearsal of your new work."

"Oh! very willingly, on condition that you will send me yours."

"In that case I should be giving brass for gold; but never mind, I agree to it."

And the musical sceptre of Mendelssohn was brought me forthwith. The next day I sent him my heavy bit of oak with the following letter, which, I hope, *the last of the Mohicans* would not have disowned:

"*To the chief Mendelssohn!*

"Great chief! We have promised to exchange tomahawks; here is mine! It is coarse, yours is simple; only squaws and pale-faces like ornamented weapons. Be my brother! and when the Great Spirit shall have sent us to the land of souls, may our warriors hang our united tomahawks over the door of the council chamber."

There is in all its simplicity a fact which a very *innocent* malice has tried to make ridiculously dramatic.

When it came, some days afterwards, to organizing my concert, Mendelssohn behaved truly like a brother to me. The first artist he introduced to me as his *fidus Achates*, was the *Conzertmeister*, David, an eminent musician, a composer of merit and a distinguished violinist. M. David, who spoke French to perfection, was a great help to me.

The Leipzig orchestra is no larger than the orchestras in Frankfort and Stuttgard; but as the city does not want for instrumental resources, I wished to increase it a little, and the number of violins was consequently brought up to twenty-four; an innovation which, I found out afterwards, raised the indignation of two or three critics *whose mind was already made up*. Twenty-four violins instead of sixteen, which had till then sufficed to perform the symphonies of Mozart and Beethoven! What insolent pretension! . . . We tried in vain to procure three other instruments which were set down and quite prominent in several of my movements (another heinous offense); it was impossible to find an English-horn, an ophicleide and a harp. The English-horn (the instrument) was so bad, so dilapidated, and consequently so extraordinarily false, that, in spite of the skill of the artist who played it, we had to give up the idea of using it, and give its solo to the first clarinet.

The ophicleide, or at least the thin brass instrument they presented under that name, bore no resemblance to the French ophicleides; it had hardly any tone. It was consequently considered as null and void; we replaced it as well as might be by a fourth trombone. As for the harp, we could not dream of such a thing; for six months before, when Mendelssohn wanted to have parts of his *Antigone* performed in Leipzig, he was obliged to have some harps come from Berlin. As they assured me that he had been very moderately satisfied with them, I wrote to Dresden, and Lipinski, a great and worthy artist, of whom I shall soon have occasion to speak, sent me the harpist of the theatre. We had nothing further to do but to find the instrument. After running about in vain to various makers and music-sellers, Mendelssohn found out at last that an amateur owned a harp, and got him to lend it to us for a few days. But, admire my ill luck, when the harp was brought and restrung, it turned out that M. Richter (the harpist from Dresden, who had so obligingly come to Leipzig at Lipinski's request) was a very clever pianist and played the violin very well, but hardly played the harp at all. He had studied the *technique* of the instrument only eighteen months, so as to be able to play the simplest *arpeggi* which commonly serve to accompany the songs in Italian operas. So that when he looked at the diatonic runs and *cantabile* figures that are often to be met with in my symphony, his courage wholly failed him, and Mendelssohn had to seat himself at the pianoforte on the evening of the concert to represent the harp solo and be sure of coming in at the right time. What a fuss about so little!

Be it as it might, my resolution about those inconveniences once taken, the rehearsals began. The disposition of the orchestra in this fine hall is so excellent, the means of communication between each player and the conductor are so easy, and the artists, who are thorough musicians, have been accustomed by Mendelssohn and David to bring such strict attention to bear upon protracted studies, that two rehearsals were enough to prepare a long program, on which figured, among other difficult compositions, the overtures to *King Lear* and the *Francs-Juges*, and the *Symphonie fantastique*. David had in addition to this consented to play the *solo* for violin *(Rêverie et Caprice)* which I had written two years before for Artôt, and of which the orchestration is pretty complicated. He played it in a superior manner with great applause from the assemblage.

As for the orchestra, to say that it was irreproachable in the execution of the pieces I have just mentioned, after two rehearsals, is to give it high praise. All the musicians in Paris and many others beside will be of my opinion, I am thinking.

Already this concert troubled the musical conscience of the inhabitants of Leipzig, and, as far as I am able to judge by the polemics in the newspapers, at least as violent discussions resulted from it as the same works called out in Paris some ten years ago. While they were thus debating on the morality of my harmonic deeds and actions, and some were calling them good, while others accounted them crimes with malice prepense, I took a trip to Dresden, of which I shall have something to say by and by. But not to cut short the story of my experiences in Leipzig, I will tell you, my dear Heller, what happened about the concert for the benefit of the poor, which Mendelssohn mentioned in his letter, and in which I had promised to take part.

This concert having been organized by the entire society of concerts, I had at my disposal the rich and powerful singing academy to which I have just given such well-deserved praise. I took good care, as you may imagine, to turn these fine choral masses to account, and I proposed to the directors of the society the *finale* for three choruses to *Roméo et Juliette*, the German translation of which had been made in Paris by Professor Düsberg. This translation had only to be made to agree with the notes of the vocal parts. It was a long and tedious task; and when done, as the German rules of prosody had not been well observed by the copyists in their distribution of long and short syllables, there resulted such difficulties for the singers that Mendelssohn was forced to waste his time in revising the text and correcting the most shocking of the mistakes. He had, besides, to drill the chorus for nearly eight days. (Eight rehearsals with a chorus of that size would cost 4,800 francs in Paris. And I am sometimes asked why I do not give *Roméo et Juliette* at my concerts!) This academy, to which belong some artists from the theatre, it is true, and the pupils of the St. Thomas school, is composed for the most part of amateurs belonging to the upper classes of Leipzig society. That is the reason why a large number of rehearsals can more easily be had, whenever a serious work is to be studied. When I got back from Dresden the rehearsals were still far from being at an end; the male chorus especially left much room for improvement. It pained me to see a great master and *virtuoso* like Mendelssohn filling this subaltern office of chorus leader, which he did, I must say, with unflinching patience. All his remarks were made with perfect sweetness and politeness, which would be all the better appreciated, if people only knew how rare those qualities are in such cases. As for myself, I have been often charged with impoliteness by our ladies of the Opéra; my reputation in this point is perfect. I admit that I deserve it; when it comes to drilling a large chorus, and even before beginning, a sort of anticipated wrath compresses my throat, my ill humor comes to the surface, and I make all the chorus-singers understand from my very looks the idea of that Gascon who, after kicking a little boy who was passing by quite harmlessly, answered the latter's observation: *That he had not done anything to him*, by: "Just think what you would have caught if you had!"

But after two more rehearsals, the three choruses were learned, and the *finale* with the support of the orchestra would undoubtedly have gone to perfection, had not a singer from the theatre, who had been crying out for some days against the difficulties of the part of *Friar Lawrence*, which he had undertaken, come and demolished our whole harmonic edifice, which we had built up at such great pains.

I had already noticed in the rehearsals at the pianoforte that this gentleman (I have forgotten his name) belonged to the numerous class of musicians who know nothing about music; he counted his rests badly, he did not come in at the right time, he made mistakes of intonation, etc.; but I said to myself: "Perhaps he has not had time to study his part; he learns very difficult parts for the theatre, and why should he not conquer this one?" I often thought of Alizard, who has always sung this scene so well, with many regrets that he was in Brussels and did not speak German. But at the general rehearsal, on the eve of the concert, as the gentleman had not made any progress, and what is more, kept growling between his teeth I don't know what Teutonic imprecations, whenever the orchestra had to be stopped on his account, or when either Mendelssohn or I sang over his phrases for him, my patience at last gave out, and I thanked the chorus and orchestra, begging them to take no further trouble about my work, which this bass part evidently made impossible to perform. While going home I made this sorrowful reflection: Two composers, who have brought to bear what of intelligence and imagination nature has allotted them upon the study of art during many long years, two hundred musicians, attentive and capable instrumentalists and singers, have all been uselessly tiring themselves out for eight days, and must give up performing the work they had chosen on account of the incapacity of a single man! O singers who cannot sing, so ye also are of the gods! . . . The society was thrown into great perplexity to find anything to replace this *finale*, which lasts half an hour; by means of a supplementary rehearsal, which the orchestra and chorus agreed to have on the very morning before the concert, we succeeded. The overture to *King Lear*, which the orchestra knew already, and the *Offertoire* from my *Requiem*, in which the chorus has only a few notes to sing, were substituted for the fragment from *Roméo,* and performed most satisfactorily in the evening. I must even add that the movement from the *Requiem* produced an effect that I did not expect, and gained for me an inestimable mark of approval from Robert Schumann, one of the most justly renowned composers and critics in Germany.[1]

Some days afterwards this same *Offertoire* was the subject of an encomium that I had still less reason to expect; it happened in this wise: I had fallen ill in Leipzig, and when, on the point of going away, I asked the physician under whose care I had been, what I owed him, he answered:

"Write the theme of your *Offertoire* with your signature for me on this bit of paper, and I shall still be in your debt; never did a piece of music strike me so much!"

I hesitated a little before paying the doctor for his care in such a way, but he insisted, and chance having offered me an opportunity to respond to his compliment by another, better deserved, will you believe that I had the simplicity not to seize upon it. I wrote at the top of the page: "*To the Doctor Clarus.*"

"*Carus,*" said he; "you have put an *l* too many."

I thought immediately: *Patientibus* Carus, *sed* Clarus *inter doctos*, and did not dare to write it.[2] . . .

There are moments when I am gifted with rare stupidity.

A composer and *virtuoso* like you, my dear Heller, feels a lively interest in everything connected with his art; I find it accordingly very natural that you have asked me so many questions about the musical riches of Leipzig; I will answer some of them laconically. You ask if the great pianist, Madame Clara Schumann, has any rival in Germany who can be decently compared with her?

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[1] At the rehearsal, Schumann, breaking his usual silence, said to me: "*That Offertorium surpasses all.*" Mendelssohn himself complimented me on *an entry of the double basses* in the accompaniment of my song, *L'Absence*, which was also sung at the concert.

[2] *Dear* to his patients, but *illustrious* among the learned.

I don't think so.

You ask me to tell you if the musical sentiment of the great heads in Leipzig is good, or, at the very least, aspiring toward what you and I call the beautiful?

I don't want to.

If it is true that the creed of everybody who pretends to love high and serious art is this: "There is no other God but Bach, and Mendelssohn is his Prophet?"

I must not.

If the theatre is well constituted, and if the public is far wrong in being amused by the little operas of Lorzing which are often given there?

I cannot.

If I have heard any of those old five-part masses, with continued bass, that are so much esteemed in Leipzig?

I don't know.

Good-bye; keep on writing fine caprices like your last two, and may God preserve you from fugues with four themes on a choral.

TO ERNST.

FIFTH LETTER.

DRESDEN.

YOU often advised me, my dear Ernst, not to stop at the small towns in traveling through Germany, assuring me that only the capitals would offer the means of execution necessary for my concerts.

Others beside you and several German critics spoke to the same purpose, and have since reproached me with not having followed their advice and not having gone to Berlin or Vienna at the outset. But you know that it is always easier to give advice than to follow it; and if I did not follow the plan that everybody deemed most rational, it was because I could not. In the first place, I could not so command circumstances as to choose the time for my trip. After having made a futile visit to Frankfort, as I have said, I could not come back to Paris looking like a fool. I could have wished to go to Munich, but a letter from Baermann informed me that my concerts could not take place in that city within a month, and Meyerbeer, on the other hand, wrote me that the revival of several important works would take up the Berlin theatre long enough to make my presence in Prussia useless at that time. But I could not remain idle; consequently, being extremely desirous to know what musical institutions your harmonious country can boast, I formed the project of seeing and hearing everything, and of greatly reducing my orchestral and choral designs, so that I might also be heard almost everywhere. I knew very well that musical means were not to be found in cities of the second rank in the profusion required by the form and style of many of my scores; but I kept those for the end of the trip, they were to form the *forte* of the *crescendo;* and I thought that, all things considered, this slowly progressive plan would neither lack prudence nor a certain degree of interest. At all events I have no reason to repent having followed it.

Now, let us speak of Dresden.

I was engaged for two concerts there, and was to find a chorus, orchestra, band of wind instruments, and a famous tenor; since my arrival in Germany I had not seen such musical riches united in one place. I was besides to meet in Dresden a warm, devoted, energetic, and enthusiastic friend, Charles Lipinski, whom I used to know in Paris. I cannot tell you, my dear Ernst, with what ardor this admirable and excellent man seconded me. His position of first *Conzertmeister*, and the universal esteem he enjoys, gives him great authority over the artists of the orchestra; and he certainly did not shrink from exerting it. As had been promised me by the *intendant*, Baron von Lüttichau, the entire theatre was at my disposal for two evenings, and I had nothing to do but to attend to the quality of the performance. We obtained a splendid one, and yet the program was formidable; it comprised the overture to *King Lear*, the *Symphonie fantastique*, the *Offertoire*, *Sanctus* and *Quaerens me* from my *Requiem*, the last two movements of my *Symphonie funèbre*, written, as you know, for two orchestras and chorus, and some vocal pieces. I had no translation of the chorus in the

Symphony, but the manager of the theatre, M. Winkler, who is both clever and learned, had the great kindness to improvise, so to speak, the German verses that we stood in need of, and the rehearsals of the *finale* could be entered upon. As for the vocal solos, they were in Latin, German and French. Tichatschek, the tenor I have just mentioned, has a pure and touching voice, which, when animated by dramatic action on the stage, acquires a rare degree of energy. His style of singing is simple and in good taste; he is a consummate musician and reader. He took the tenor solo in the *Sanctus* upon himself at my first request, without even asking to see it, unreservedly, without making faces, without playing the god; he might have accepted the *Sanctus* and stipulated for some *cavatina* of his own choice for the sake of his personal success, as so many others have done in similar cases; he did not do so; that is what I call thoroughly as it should be!

But the *cavatina* from *Benvenuto*, which I took into my head to add to the program, gave me more trouble than all the rest of the concert put together. It could not be given to the *prima-donna*, Madame Devrient, as the *tessitura* of the piece was too high and the vocalization too rapid for her; Mademoiselle Wiest, the *seconda-donna*, to whom Lipinski offered it, found the German translation bad, the *andante* too high and too long, the *allegro* too low and too short, she asked for cuts and changes, she had a cold, etc., etc.; you know by heart the little farce of a singer who neither can nor will.

At last Madam Schubert, wife of the excellent *Conzertmeister* and clever violinist whom you know, put an end to my troubles by accepting, not without terror, this unfortunate *cavatina*, the difficulties of which her modesty had exaggerated. She was much applauded in it. In truth, it seems as if it were at times more difficult to have *Fleuve du Tage* sung, than to get up the C-minor symphony.

Lipinski had so worked upon the self-love of the players, that their wish to do well, and especially their ambition to do better than those in Leipzig (there is a covert musical rivalry between the two cities), made us work prodigiously. Four long rehearsals seemed hardly sufficient, and the orchestra would have willingly asked for a fifth of their own accord, if there had been time. The effect was noticeable at the performance, which was capital. The chorus alone frightened me at the last rehearsal; but two additional lessons before the concert gave them the assurance they lacked, and the selections from the *Requiem* were as well given as the rest. The *Symphonie funèbre* had the same effect as in Paris. Next morning the musicians of the military band, who had played in it, came full of joy to give me a serenade, which dragged me out of bed, though I had great need of sleep, and forced me in spite of neuralgia in the head and my eternal sore throat, to go and drain a little bowl of punch with them.

It was at this concert in Dresden that I first saw the German public manifest a predilection for my *Requiem;* yet we did not dare (the chorus not being large enough) to attack the great numbers, such as the *Dies iræ*, the *Lachrymosa*, etc. The *Symphonie fantastique* pleased one part of my judges much less. The elegant part of the audience, the King of Saxony and the court at their head, were very moderately charmed, as was told me, with the violence of those *passions*, the sadness of those *reveries*, and all the monstrous hallucinations of the *finale.* Only the *Ball-scene* and the *Scene in the Fields* found favor in their eyes, I fancy. As for the public properly so called, it let itself be carried away in the musical current, and applauded the *March to the Scaffold* and the *Walpurgis-night's Dream* more warmly than the three other movements. Still it was easy to see that this composition as a whole, so well received in

Stuttgard, so perfectly comprehended in Weimar, so much discussed in Leipzig, was not much in accordance with the musical and poetic habits of the Dresdeners, that it confused them by its want of resemblance to the symphonies they were acquainted with, and that they were more surprised than enchanted; less moved than stunned.

The Dresden orchestra, for a long time under the command of the Italian, Morlachi, and the illustrious composer of the *Freyschütz*, is conducted now by Messrs. Reissiger and Richard Wagner. We in Paris hardly know anything of Reissiger beyond the sweet, melancholy waltz published under the title of *Weber's Last Thought;* during my stay in Dresden one of his sacred compositions was given, which was greatly praised in my hearing. I could not add my praises; the day of the ceremony at which it was performed I was kept to my bed by cruel sufferings, and I was thus unhappily prevented hearing it. As for the young *Kapellmeister*, Richard Wagner, who lived for a long while in Paris without succeeding in making himself known otherwise than as the author of some articles published in the *Gazette musicale*, he exercised his authority for the first time in helping me in my rehearsals, which he did with zeal and a very good will. The ceremony of his presentation to the orchestra and taking the oath took place the day after my arrival, and I found him in all the intoxication of a very natural joy. After having undergone in France a thousand privations and all the trials to which obscurity is exposed, Richard Wagner, on coming back to Saxony, his native country, had the daring to undertake and the happiness to achieve the composition of the text and music of an opera in five acts *(Rienzi)*. This work had a brilliant success in Dresden. It was soon followed by the *Flying Dutchman*, an opera in three acts, of which also he wrote both text and music. Whatever opinion one may hold of those works, it must be acknowledged that men capable of accomplishing this double literary and musical task twice with success are not common, and that M. Wagner has given enough proof of his capacity to excite interest, and rivet the attention of the world upon himself. This was very well understood by the King of Saxony; and the day that he gave his first *Kapellmeister* Richard Wagner for a colleague, thus assuring the latter's subsistence, all friends of art must have said to His Majesty what Jean Bart answered to Louis XIV, when he made him commander of a squadron: "Sire, you have done well!"

The opera of *Rienzi*, exceeding by a good deal the length ordinarily assigned to operas in Germany, is now no longer given entire; the first two acts are given one evening, and the three last the next. I only saw the second part; I could not become thoroughly enough acquainted with it, hearing it only once, to be in condition to give a final opinion; I only remember a beautiful prayer in the last act sung by *Rienzi* (Tichatschek), and a triumphal march, well modeled upon the magnificent march in *Olympie* but without servile imitation. The score of the *Flying Dutchman* seemed to me remarkable for its sombre coloring and certain stormy effects perfectly in keeping with the subject; but I could not help noticing also an abuse of the *tremolo*, which was the more regrettable that I had already been struck by it in *Rienzi*, and that it announced a certain lazy habit of mind in the author against which he is not sufficiently on his guard. The sustained *tremolo* is, of all orchestral effects, the one that one grows tired of soonest; besides, it makes no demands upon the composer's invention when it is accompanied, either above or below, by no salient idea.

Be it as it may, I repeat that we must honor the royal thought which has, so to speak, saved a young artist of precious gifts, by granting him a complete and active protection.

The administration of the Dresden theatre has neglected nothing that could add all possible brilliancy to the performance of Wagner's two works; the scenery, costumes and *mise-en-scène* approach the best things of the kind in Paris. Madame Devrient, of whom I shall take occasion to speak at greater length *apropos* of her performances in Berlin, plays the part of a young boy in *Rienzi;* this dress hardly suits the rather maternal outline of her figure. She struck me as much more fittingly placed in the *Flying Dutchman*, in spite of some affected poses and *spoken* interjections that she feels called upon to introduce everywhere. But a true, pure and complete talent, which had a most vivid effect upon me, was that of Wechter, who filled the part of the cursed Dutchman. His baritone voice is one of the finest I have heard, and he uses it like a consummate singer; his voice has that unctuous, vibrating quality which has such great expressive power, whatever amount of heart and sensibility the artist throws into his singing; and Wechter possesses both these qualities to a very high degree. Tichatschek is graceful, passionate, brilliant, heroic and captivating in the part of *Rienzi*, where his fine voice and large eyes full of fire stand him in good stead. Mademoiselle Wiest played *Rienzi's* sister; she has hardly anything to say. The author, in writing this part, adapted it perfectly to the singer's ability.

I would like now, my dear Ernst, to speak in detail about Lipinski; but it is not you, the so much admired violinist, applauded from one end of Europe to the other, you, the attentive and studious artist, that I can tell anything new of the talent of that great *virtuoso* who preceded you in the path of art. You know as well and better than I how he sings, how touching and pathetic he is in the grand style, and you have long since lodged in your imperturbable memory many of the beauties of his *concertos*. Besides, Lipinski was so good, so warmly devoted to me during my stay in Dresden, that my praises might appear wanting in impartiality in the eyes of many people; they would be attributed (and very wrongly, I can assure you,) rather to gratitude than to genuine admiration. He was enormously applauded at my concert, in my *romanza* for the violin, which David had played some days before in Leipzig, and in the viola solo of my second symphony *(Harold)*.

The success of this second concert was greater than that of the first; the melancholy and religious scenes of *Harold* seemed to unite all sympathies from the very first, and the same good luck fell to the movements from *Roméo et Juliette* (the *adagio* and *Festival at the house of Capulet*). But what touched the Dresden public and the artists most vividly, was the *cantata* of the *Fifth of May*, admirably sung by Wechter and the chorus, in a German translation which the indefatigable M. Winkler again had the goodness to prepare for the occasion. The memory of Napoleon is to-day almost as dear to the German people as it is to France, which is, without doubt, the cause of the profound impression invariably produced by this piece in all cities where I had it performed subsequently. The end especially has often given rise to singular manifestations;

> "Loin de ce roc nous fuyons en silence,
> L'astre du jour abandonne les cieux, . . ."[1]

I made acquaintance in Dresden with the prodigious English harpist, Parish-Alvars, whose name has not yet all the popularity it deserves. He had just come from

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[1] "Far from that rock we fly in silence, the star of day leaves the skies."

Vienna. He is the Liszt of the harp! One cannot imagine all the graceful and energetic effects, original figures, unheard of sonorities he has succeeded in drawing from his instrument, which is so limited in resources in certain respects. His *fantasia* on *Moïse*, the form of which has been imitated and so happily applied to the piano-forte by Thalberg, his variations in harmonics on the chorus of Naiads in *Oberon*, and twenty other pieces of the same sort, gave me a delight I shall not try to describe. The advantage the new harps have of tuning two strings in unison by means of a double movement of the pedals, has given him the idea of combinations which, when we see them written, seem absolutely unplayable.

Yet all their difficulty consists in an ingenious use of the pedals, producing those double notes called *synonymes.* Thus he plays with lightning rapidity passages in four parts moving by skips of minor thirds, because by means of *synonymes*, the strings of his harp, instead of giving, as is usual, the diatonic scale of C-flat, gives the descending series: $\underbrace{\textit{C-natural C-natural,}}$ A-natural, $\underbrace{\textit{G-flat, G-flat,}}$ $\underbrace{\textit{E-flat, E-flat.}}$ Parish-Alvars has formed some good pupils during his stay in Vienna. He has just been playing in Dresden, Leipzig, Berlin, and many other cities, where his extraordinary talent invariably excited enthusiasm. What is he waiting for to come to Paris? . . .

In the Dresden orchestra is to be found, beside the eminent artists I have named, the excellent Professor Dotzauer; he is at the head of the violoncelli, and has to take upon himself the whole responsibility of the entry of the first desk of the basses, for the double-bass player who reads with him is too old to play some notes of his part, and has just strength enough to bear the weight of his instrument. I have often met in Germany with examples of this mistaken respect for old men, which leads orchestra conductors to retain them in office long after the performance of its duties has become beyond their physical strength, and unfortunately to leave them in it until death takes them away. I have more than once had to arm myself with all my insensibility, and ask for substitutes for these poor invalids with cruel persistency. There is a very good English-horn in Dresden. The first oboe has a fine tone, but an old style, and a mania for *trills* and *mordants* which, I admit, deeply outraged me. He indulged in especially frightful ones in the solo at the beginning of the *Scene in the Fields*. I gave very lively expression, at the second rehearsal, to my horror of these melodic amenities; he maliciously abstained at the succeeding rehearsals; but it was only a trap, and on the day of the concert, the perfidious oboe, well aware that I could not stop the orchestra and call him up in person before the court and public, began his little scurvy tricks again, giving me a bantering look which all but upset me with indignation and fury.

Among the horns is to be remarked M. Levy, a *virtuoso* who has a fine reputation in Saxony. He, as well as the other players in the orchestra, plays on the horn with cylinders, which the Leipzig orchestra, almost alone in this respect in North Germany, has not yet admitted. The trumpets in Dresden are also with cylinders, and can advantageously take the place of our *cornets-à-pistons*, which are unknown there.

The military band is very good, even the drummers are musicians; but the reed instruments that I heard did not strike me as irreproachable; they are not quite true, and the band-master of these regiments ought to get some clarinets from our incomparable maker, Adolphe Sax.

There are no ophicleides; the bass part is taken by Russian-bassoons, serpents and tubas.

I often thought of Weber while conducting that orchestra in Dresden, which he led for some years, and which was larger then than now.

Weber had so drilled it that sometimes in the *allegro* of the overture to the *Freyschütz* he only gave the *tempo* of the first four measures, leaving the orchestra to go on by itself as far as the holds near the end. Musicians must be proud who see their leader thus fold his arms at such a time.

Will you believe me, my dear Ernst, that in the weeks I passed in this musical city, nobody took the trouble to speak to me of Weber's family, nor to tell me that they were in Dresden? I should have been so happy to make their acquaintance and to express in some degree my respectful admiration for the great composer who made the name illustrious! . . . I learned too late that I had let this precious opportunity slip, and I must at least here beg Madame Weber and her children not to doubt the regrets I felt.

They showed me in Dresden some scores of the celebrated Hasse, called *il Sassone*, who was once for a long time arbiter of the destinies of this orchestra. I admit that I found nothing very remarkable in them; only a *Te Deum*, composed expressly for a glorious commemoration of the Court of Saxony, struck me as pompous and brilliant, like a ringing of great bells, pealing out with all their might. This *Te Deum* must seem fine to those who are content with great sonority in such cases; as for me, this quality does not strike me as sufficient of itself. What I should most like to know, but know through a good performance, are some of the numerous operas Hasse wrote for the theatres of Italy, Germany, and England, and to which he owed his immense reputation. Why do they not try to revive at least one in Dresden? It would be a curious experiment to make;

it might perhaps be a resurrection. Hasse's life must have been full of incident; I have tried in vain to find an account of it. I have only found vulgar biographies which repeated what I already knew, and did not tell me a word of what I wished to learn. He traveled so much, lived so much in the torrid zone and at the poles, that is to say, in Italy and England! There must have been a curious romance in his relations with the Venetian, Marcello, in his love-passages with La Faustina, whom he married, and who sang the leading parts of his operas; in their conjugal quarrels, battles of composer with singer, where the master is the slave, where the right is ever in the wrong. Perhaps there was really nothing of all this; who knows? Faustina may have lived a very human *diva*, a modest singer, a virtuous wife, a good musician, faithful to her husband, faithful to her parts, telling her beads and knitting socks when she had nothing to do. Hasse wrote, Faustina sang; they both made a good deal of money which they did not spend. That sort of thing has been seen before, and is still seen at times; if you get married, I wish as much for you.

When I left Dresden to return to Leipzig, Lipinski, learning that Mendelssohn was getting up my *finale* to *Roméo et Juliette* for the concert for the benefit of the poor, announced his intention of coming to hear it, if the *intendant* would give him two or three days' leave of absence. I took this promise for a very amiable compliment; but judge of my dismay when, on the day of the concert, the *finale* could not be given owing to the incident I related in my last letter. I saw Lipinski arrive. . . . He had come thirty-five leagues to hear that movement! . . . There is a musician who loves music! . . . But you, my dear Ernst, will not be astonished at that trait; you would do as much, I am sure; you are an *artist!*

Good-bye, good-bye.

TO HENRI HEINE.

SIXTH LETTER.

BRUNSWICK, HAMBURG.

I HAD every sort of good luck in this excellent city of Brunswick; in fact I had an idea at first of regaling one of my intimate enemies with this account of it; it would have pleased him! . . . whereas the picture of all this harmonic festival may give you pain, my dear Heine. Immoralists pretend *that in whatever good fortune we enjoy, there is something disagreeable to our best friends;* but I do not believe a bit of it! It is an infamous calumny, and I can swear that unexpected good luck has come in the most brilliant guise to some of my friends, without having any effect upon me whatever!

Enough! let us not enter upon the thorny field of irony, where bloom the absinthe and the euphorbia in the shade of branching nettles, where vipers and toads hiss and croak, where the water bubbles up in the ponds, where the earth quakes, where the evening breeze burns, where the western clouds dart forth silent lightnings! For what is the good of biting our lip, hiding greenish pupils under ill-closed eyelids, softly grinding our teeth, handing our companion a chair armed with a hidden barb or covered with a coating of glue, when far from having anything bitter in our souls, laughing remembrances crowd the mind, when we feel the heart full of gratitude and artless joy, when we would call on a hundred Fames with immense trumpets to proclaim to all that is dear to us: I have been happy for a day. It was a little movement of vanity that made me begin in this way; I was unconsciously trying to imitate you, you, the inimitable master of irony. It will not happen again. I have too often regretted, in our conversations, not being able to compel you to seriousness, nor to stop the convulsive movement of your claws, even at times when you thought you were showing your best velvet paw, tiger-cat that you are, *leo quaerens quem devoret.* And yet what sensibility, what an imagination without gall show themselves throughout your works! How you sing, when you please, in the major mode! How your enthusiasm rushes and flows with full banks when admiration seizes upon you suddenly, and you forget yourself! What infinite tenderness breathes in one of the secret folds of your heart for that country you have so railed at, for that soil, fertile in poets, for the great fatherland of dreamy geniuses, for that Germany you call your old grandam, and which loves you so much in spite of all!

I saw it well in the sadly tender tone in which she spoke of you to me during my journey; yes, she loves you! She has centred all her affections in you. Her elder sons are dead, her great sons, her great men; you are all that is left to her, you, whom she smilingly calls her naughty child. It was she, it was those low, romantic songs with which she rocked your first years, that inspired you with a pure and elevated sentiment for music; and when you left her, it was by running about in the world, it was after having suffered, that you grew pitiless and began to rail.

It would be easy for you, I know, to make an enormous caricature of the recital I am about to undertake of my stay in Brunswick, and yet, see what confidence I have in your friendship, or perhaps how my fear of irony is diminishing, for it is precisely to you that I address it.

. . . Just as I was leaving Leipzig I got a letter from Meyerbeer, telling me that they could not do anything about my concerts for a month. The great master advised me earnestly to turn this delay to account by going to Brunswick, where I should find, as he said, an orchestra of *honor*. I followed this advice, but without suspecting that I should be so glad of having done so. I knew nobody in Brunswick; I was in total darkness as to the disposition of the artists toward me, and the state of the public taste. But the thought that the brothers Müller were at the head of the orchestra would have been enough to inspire me with all confidence, independently of Meyerbeer's very encouraging opinion. I had heard them during their last trip to Paris, and I looked upon the playing of Beethoven's quartets by these four *virtuosi* as one of the most extraordinary prodigies of modern art.

In fact the Müller family gives us the ideal of the Beethoven quartet, as the Bohrer family does of the trio. Never in any place in the world have perfection of *ensemble*, unity of sentiment, depth of expression, purity of style, grandeur, power, verve and passion been carried to such a pitch of perfection. Such a rendering of those sublime works gives us, I fancy, the most exact idea of what Beethoven thought and felt while writing them. It is the echo of the creative inspiration! It is the recoil of genius!

This musical family of the Müllers is more numerous than I had supposed; I counted seven artists of the name, brothers, sons and nephews, in the Brunswick orchestra. George Müller is *Kapellmeister;* his elder brother, Charles, is only first *Conzertmeister*, but one can see by the deference with which every one listens to all his remarks, that he is respected as the leader of the famous quartet. The second *Conzertmeister* is M. Freudenthal, a violinist and composer of merit. I had notified Charles Müller of my arrival; on getting out of my carriage at Brunswick I was met by a very kind young man, M. Zinkeisen, one of the first violins of the orchestra, who spoke French like you and me, and who had waited at the post station to conduct me to the *Kapellmeister* forthwith.

This attention and politeness seemed a good omen. M. Zinkeisen had seen me sometimes in Paris, and recognized me in spite of the piteous state I was in from the cold; for I had passed the night in a *coupé*, pretty well open to the wind so as to avoid the smell and smoke of six horrible pipes which were untiringly at work in its interior. I admire the police regulations established in Germany: smoking is forbidden under penalty of a fine in the streets and on the public squares, where that amiable exercise can inconvenience nobody; but if you go into a *café*, they smoke there; to a *table d'hôte*, they smoke there; in a post conveyance, they smoke there; the infernal pipe pursues you everywhere. —You are a German, my dear Heine, and you do not smoke! That is not the least of your virtues, believe me, and posterity will not reward you for it, but many of your contemporaries, especially all the women, will thank you.

Charles Müller received me with that serious, calm manner that has frightened me at times in Germany, thinking it an indication of indifference and coldness; but it is not so much to be mistrusted as our French demonstrations, so full of smiles and fine words, with which we greet a stranger, who slips from our memory five minutes after. Far from that: the *Conzertmeister*, after asking me how I wished to compose my orchestra, went immediately to agree with his brother upon the means of collecting the mass of stringed instruments I had thought necessary, and to make an appeal to such amateurs and artists as, not belonging to the Ducal orchestra, were worthy of being joined with it. The next day they had formed a fine orchestra for me, a little larger than that of the Opéra in Paris, and composed of musicians who were not only very clever, but also animated by an incomparable zeal and ardor. The question of the harp, ophicleide and English-horn came up afresh, as it had come up in Weimar, Leipzig, and Dresden. (I mention these details to get up a reputation for you as a musician). One of the orchestra, M. Leibrock, an excellent artist, well versed in musical literature, had applied himself to the study of the harp for about a year, and very much dreaded in consequence the test my second symphony was to put him to. Besides he only had an old harp, of which the pedals with single action did not admit of executing all that is written for the instrument nowadays. Luckily the harp part in *Harold* is extremely easy, and M. Leibrock worked at it so for five or six days, that he came, to his honor, to . . . the last rehearsal. But on the evening of the concert, a panic terror seizing him at the important moment, he stopped short in the introduction and left Charles Müller, who played the leading viola part, playing alone.

This was the only accident we had to regret, an accident, by the way, that the public did not perceive, and on the strength of which M. Leibrock loaded himself with bitter reproaches some days afterwards, in spite of my efforts to make him forget it. As for the ophicleide, there was no sort of one in Brunswick: I was successively presented in its stead with a bass-tuba (a superb brass instrument of which I shall have something to say in speaking of the military bands in Berlin); but the young man who played it did not seem to have much command over its mechanism, he was even ignorant of its true compass; then with a Russian-bassoon, which the player called a double-bassoon *(contra-fagotto)*. I had much trouble in setting right his idea of the nature and name of his instrument, which gives out the notes as they are written, and is played with a mouth-piece like the ophicleide; while the double-bassoon, a transposing reed instrument, is nothing more than a large bassoon which gives almost the entire scale of the bassoon an octave lower. Be it as it might, the Russian-bassoon was adopted to take the place of the ophicleide as well as might be. There was no English-horn, so we arranged the solos for an oboe, and began the orchestra rehearsals, while the chorus was at work in another hall. I must say here that never up to this day, neither in France, Belgium nor Germany, have I seen a collection of eminent artists so passionately devoted and attentive to the task they had undertaken. After the first rehearsal, at which they were able to form an idea of the principal difficulties of my symphonies, the word of command was given for the succeeding rehearsals; they agreed to deceive me about the hour at which they were supposed to begin, and every morning (I only learned it afterwards) the orchestra came together an hour before I came, for the sake of studying the most dangerous passages and rhythms. As for myself, I went from one astonishment to another in seeing what rapid transformations the execution underwent every day, and the impetuous assurance with which the entire body rushed upon difficulties which my Paris orchestra, that young guard of the Grand Army, had approached for a long time only with certain precautions. Only one piece troubled Charles Müller very much; it was the *scherzo* of *Roméo et Juliette (Queen Mab)*. Giving way to the solicitations of M. Zinkeisen, who had heard this *scherzo* in Paris, I had dared, fór the first time since my arrival in Germany, to place it on a concert program.

"We shall work so," said he, "that we shall succeed!" He did not presume too much upon the strength of the orchestra, as it turned out, and *Queen Mab*, in her microscopic chariot, drawn by the buzzing insect of summer nights, rushing along at the full speed of her atomic horses, could show her lively frolics and the thousand caprices of her flight to the Brunswick public. But you understand my anxiety about it, you, the poet of all fairies and elves, you, the natural brother of those graceful and impish little creatures; you know too well of what delicate thread the gauze of their veil is woven, and how calm the sky must be for their many-hued hosts to play at will in the pale rays of the moon. Well! In spite of our fears, the orchestra identified itself completely with Shakspere's ravishing fancy, and grew so little, so agile, so cunning and soft, that never, I think, did the invisible *Queen* flit more gaily through more silent harmonies.

In the *finale* of *Harold*, on the other hand, that ferocious orgy, in which the intoxications of wine, blood, joy, and rage vie with each other, where the rhythm seems now to reel, now to run all in fury, where brazen mouths seem to belch forth imprecations and answer suppliant voices with blasphemy, where there is laughter, drinking, blows, destruction, murder, rape, in a word, a jolly time; in this scene of brigands, the orchestra became a very pandemonium; there was something supernatural and terrific in the frenzy of its excitement; everything sang, leaped, roared in diabolical order and harmony, violins, basses, trombones, drums, and cymbals; while the viola solo, *Harold*, the dreamer, flying in terror, sounded in the distance some few, trembling notes of his evening hymn. Ah! what a drum-roll in the heart! what wild shudders I felt in leading that astounding orchestra, in which I thought to recognize all my young Paris lions, more fiery than ever!!! You know of nothing like it, you poets, you are never whirled along on such tornadoes of life! I could have kissed the whole orchestra at once, and could not help crying out, in French, it is true, but my intonation must have made me understood: "Sublime! prodigious! I thank you, gentlemen, and I admire you! You are perfect brigands!"

The same violent qualities were noticeable in their playing of the overture to *Benvenuto*, and yet, in the opposite style, the introduction to *Harold*, the *March of the Pilgrims*, and the *Serenade*, were never rendered with more calm grandeur and religious serenity. As for the movement from *Roméo* (the *Festival at the house of Capulet*), its character tends rather towards the turbulent; it also was accordingly, to use a Parisian expression, really *run away with*.

You should have seen, in the pauses at rehearsals, the inflamed look of all those faces. . . . One of the players, Schmidt (the thundering double-bass), had torn off a bit of skin from the forefinger of his right hand at the beginning of the *pizzicato* passage in the orgy; but without thinking of stopping for such a trifle, and in spite of the blood that flowed, he kept on, just changing his finger. That is what is called standing fire, in military language.

While we were giving ourselves up to these *amusements*, the chorus, for its part, was studying, and with great pains too, but with different results, the numbers from my *Requiem*. The *Offertory* and the *Quaerens me* went well enough at last; but an insurmountable obstacle stood in the way of the *Sanctus*, in which the solo was to have been sung by Schmetzer, the first tenor of the theatre, and an excellent musician. The *andante* of this piece, written for three female voices, presents some enharmonic modulations which the Dresden chorus had understood very well, but which, it seems, were beyond the musical intelligence of those in Brunswick. Consequently, after trying in vain for three days to catch the meaning and intonation, the poor people, in despair, sent a deputation to conjure me not to expose them to public insult, and get the terrible *Sanctus* taken off the posters. I had to consent, but unwillingly, especially on Schmetzer's account, whose very high tenor suits the seraphic hymn to perfection, and who also took great pleasure in singing it.

Now all is in readiness, and despite the terrors of Ch. Müller about the *scherzo*, which he wanted to rehearse again, we go to the concert to study the impressions this music is to call up. I must first tell you that, by advice of the *Kapellmeister*, I had invited some twenty persons who stood at the head of the legion of amateurs in Brunswick to come to the rehearsals. Thus I had every day a living advertisement, which, spreading over the city, wrought up the public curiosity to the highest pitch; hence the singular interest the general public took in the preparations for the concert, and the questions they addressed to the players and privileged listeners: "What happened at the rehearsal this morning? . . . Is he satisfied? . . . He is a Frenchman, then? . . . But the French only write comic operas! . . . The chorus find him awfully wicked! . . . He said that the women sang like dancers! . . . He knew, then, that the *soprani* belong to the *corps de ballet?* . . . Is it true that he bowed to the trombones in the middle of a piece? . . . The orchestra boy vows that at yesterday's rehearsal he drank two decanters of water, a bottle of white wine and three glasses of brandy! . . . What does he keep saying: César! César! *(c'est ça, c'est ça!* that's it, that's it!) to the *Conzertmeister* for?" etc.

So much so, that long before the fixed time the theatre was filled to the roof with an impatient crowd, already prejudiced in my favor. Now, my dear Heine, draw in your claws completely, for here is where you might feel tempted to make me feel them. When the time comes, the orchestra being seated, I step upon the stage; and passing through the ranks of violins, I come to the conductor's desk. Imagine my horror at seeing it wound round from top to bottom with a great garland of leaves. "It is the musicians," said I to myself, "who have probably compromised me. What imprudence! Counting one's eggs in this way before they are hatched! and if the public does not agree with them, here I am in a pretty fix! This manifestation would be enough to ruin an artist in Paris twenty times over." Yet grand acclamations greet the overture; the *March of the Pilgrims* has to be repeated; the *Orgy* throws the whole house into a fever; the *Offertory*, with its chorus on two notes, and the *Quaerens me* seem to touch many religious souls; Ch. Müller gets applauded in the *Romanza* for violin; *Queen Mab* causes extreme surprise; a *Lied* with orchestra is encored, and the *Festival at the house of Capulet* winds up the evening in the most glowing manner. Hardly had the last chord been struck, when a terrific noise shook the whole theatre; the audience rose like one man and yelled, in the pit, in the boxes, everywhere; the trumpets, horns and trombones of the orchestra sounded discordant calls, one in one key and another in another, accompanied by all the din the violins and basses could make by being struck on the back with the back of the bow, and all the instruments of percussion.

There is a word in the German language to designate this singular fashion of applauding. Hearing it unexpectedly, my first impression was one of rage and horror; the musical effects I had just been experiencing were thus spoiled, and I had half a grudge against the artists for testifying their satisfaction by such a row. But how could I help being deeply moved by their homage, when the *Kapellmeister*, George Müller, came up loaded with flowers, and said to me in French:

"Allow me, sir, to offer you these wreaths in the name of the Ducal orchestra, and suffer me to place them upon your scores!"

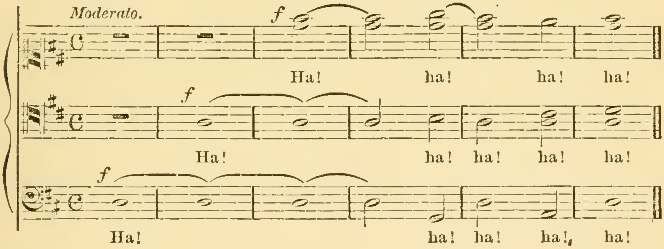
At these words the audience redoubled its yells, the orchestra set off again with its noise . . . the *bâton* fell from my hands, and I no longer knew what I was about.

Laugh away, come, don't be bashful. It will do you good, and cannot hurt me; besides I have not done yet, and it would cost you too much self-denial to hear my dithyramb to the end without scratching me. . . . Well, you are not too cross to-day; I will go on.

On coming out of the theatre, perspiring and steaming as if I had been dipped in the Styx, dazed and enchanted, not knowing whom to listen to in the midst of all those congratulators, I am notified that a supper of a hundred and fifty covers, ordered at my hotel, is offered me by a society of amateurs and artists. Of course I had to go. New applause, new acclamations at my arrival; toasts and speeches in French and German succeed each other; I make the best reply I can to those I can understand, and at each health given, hundred and fifty voices answer with a hurrah in chorus with the most superb effect. The basses begin on D, the tenors on A, and then the ladies sing F-sharp, giving the chord of D-major, soon followed by four chords, of the sub-dominant, tonic, dominant and tonic, which succession gives a plagal cadence followed by an authentic cadence. This salvo of harmony, in its broad movement, bursts out with pomp and majesty; it is very fine; this at least is truly worthy of a musical people.

What shall I say, my dear Heine? Even if you were to find me innocent and primitive to a superlative degree, I must own that these manifestations of good will made me extremely happy. Such happiness undoubtedly does not approach, in the composer's mind, that of conducting a superb orchestra playing with inspiration his beloved works; but the two go well together, and after such a concert, such a night spoils nothing. I owe much, as you see, to the artists and amateurs of Brunswick; I also owe much to her first musical critic, M. Robert Griepenkerl, who launched out into a vehement discussion with a Leipzig paper, in a learned pamphlet that he wrote about me, and gave, I think, a good idea of the strength and direction of the musical current which carries me along.

Give me your hand, then, and let us sing a grand hurrah for Brunswick, on her favorite chords:



Long live artistic cities!

I am sorry for it, my dear poet, but here you are, compromised as a musician.

Now for the trip to your native city, Hamburg, that desolate city like unto old Pompeii, but who rises strong again from her ashes, and bravely binds up her wounds! . . . Surely, I can only be glad of that, too. Hamburg has great musical resources; singing societies, philharmonic societies, military bands, etc. The theatre orchestra has been reduced, for the sake of economy, to ultra-niggardly proportions, it is true; but I had made my arrangements beforehand with the director of the theatre, and they presented me with an orchestra, thoroughly fine both as to numbers and the talent of the players, thanks to a rich supplement of stringed instruments and the leave of absence I obtained for two or three almost centenarian invalids to whom the theatre is attached. Strange to say, there is an excellent harpist in Hamburg, armed with a very good instrument! I had begun to despair of seeing either the one or the other in Germany. I also found a vigorous ophicleide, but I had to do without the English-horn.

The first flute (Cantal), and the first violin (Lindenau), are both *virtuosi* of the first rank. The *Kapellmeister* (Krebs) fills his place with talent, and a severity that I like to see in orchestra conductors. He helped me very kindly in my long rehearsals. The singing troop at the theatre was well enough composed at the time of my trip; it comprised three artists of merit; a tenor gifted, if not with an exceptional voice, at least with taste and method; an agile soprano, Mademoiselle . . . Mademoiselle . . . faith, I have forgotten her name, (this young divinity would have done me the honor to sing at my concert if I had been better known.—Hosanna in excelsis!) and finally Reichel, the formidable bass, who, with a voice of enormous volume and superb quality, has a compass of two octaves and a half! Reichel is, over and above, a superb fellow; he plays such parts as *Sarastro*, *Moses* and *Bertram* wonderfully well. Madame Cornet, wife of the director, a finished musician, and whose *soprano* of great range must have had no common brilliancy, was not engaged; she only figured in some performances where her presence was necessary. I applauded her in the *Queen of the Night* in the *Magic Flute*, a difficult part, written in a very high register, which very few singers possess.

The chorus, though small and rather weak, got through what they had to sing well enough.

The Hamburg opera-house is very large; I felt nervous about its dimensions, having found it empty three times running at the performances of the *Magic Flute*, *Moïse* and *Linda di Chamounix*. I was very agreeably surprised to see it filled the day I presented myself before the Hamburg public.

An excellent performance, and a large, intelligent and very warm audience made the concert one of the best that I had given in Germany. *Harold* and the *cantata* of the *Fifth of May*, sung with profound sentiment by Reichel, carried off the honors. After this piece two musicians near my desk, spoke to me in a low voice, in French, in these simple words which touched me deeply:

"Ah! sir! our respect! our respect! . . ." They did not know how to say any more. Upon the whole, the Hamburg orchestra has remained very good friends with me, of which I am not moderately proud, I swear it to you. Only Krebs gave his suffrage with peculiar reticence: "My dear sir," said he, "in a few years your music will get all over Germany; it will become popular, and that will be a great misfortune! What imitations it will give rise to! What a style! What madnesses! It were better for art that you had never been born!"

Let us hope, however, that those poor symphonies are not as *contagious* as he has the kindness to say, and that neither yellow fever, nor cholera-morbus will ever come from them.

Now, Heine, Henri Heine, famous banker of Ideas, nephew of M. Solomon Heine, author of so many precious poems in bullion, I have nothing more to tell you, and I . . . salute you.

TO MADEMOISELLE LOUISE BERTIN.

SEVENTH LETTER.

BERLIN.

I MUST first implore your indulgence, mademoiselle, for the letter I am about to write; I have too much reason to distrust the state of mind that I am in. An attack of black philosophy has seized hold of me for some days, and God knows to what sombre ideas, to what absurd judgments, to what strange fancies it will infallibly lead . . . if it holds on. Perhaps you do not yet quite know what black philosophy is? . . . It is the opposite of white magic, no more nor less.

By white magic we are able to divine that Victor Hugo is a great poet; that Beethoven was a great musician; that you are at once a musician and a poet; that Janin is a clever man; that, if a fine opera, well performed, fails, the public has understood nothing of it; that if it succeeds, the public has understood it no better; that the beautiful is rare; that the rare is not always beautiful; that the strongest reason is the best; that Abd-el-Kader is wrong, O'Connell too; that Arabs are decidedly not Frenchmen; that pacific agitation is all tomfoolery; and other propositions just as complicated.

By black philosophy we come to doubt, to be astonished at everything; to see graceful images upside down, and hideous objects in their true light; we grumble incessantly, blaspheme life, and curse death; we are indignant, like *Hamlet*, that *Imperious Caesar, dead, and turn'd to clay, might stop a hole to keep the wind away;* we should be much more indignant if the ashes of poor wretches were the only ones fit for that ignoble use; we pity poor *Yorick's* not being even able to laugh that stupid grin he did after passing fifteen years underground, and we throw away his skull with horror and disgust; or perhaps we carry it away with us, saw it open, make a cup of it, and poor *Yorick,* who can drink no longer, serves to quench the thirst of mocking lovers of Rhine wine.

Thus, in your rocky solitude, where you give yourself up in peace to the current of your thoughts, I should only feel mortal discontent and *ennui* in this hour of black philosophy.[1] If you should try to make me admire a beautiful sunset, I should, very likely, prefer the gaslight in the avenue des Champs-Elysées; if you were to show me one of your swans on the pond, and point out its elegant shape, I should tell you that the swan is a silly animal, that only thinks of paddling about and eating, and whose song is nothing but a stupid and frightful squawk; if you were to seat yourself at the piano-forte and play me some pages of your favorite composers, Mozart and Cimarosa,[2] I should perhaps interrupt you in a huff, opining that it was high time to come to the end of all this admiration for Mozart, whose operas are all alike, and whose fine composure is tiresome and exasperating! . . . As for Cimarosa, I should send him to all the devils with his eternal and only *Matrimonio segreto*, which is almost as tiresome as the *Nozze di Figaro*, without being nearly so musical; I should prove to you that the comic element in that work lies solely in the pasquinades of the actors; that its melodic invention is quite limited; that the perfect cadence alone, returning every instant, forms nearly two-thirds of the score; in a word, that it is an opera fit for the carnival and market days. If you should choose an example of the opposite style, and fall back upon some work of Sebastian Bach, I should probably betake myself to flight from before his fugues, and leave you alone with his *Passion*.

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[1] Yesterday, mademoiselle, suffering from an attack of this philosophy, I happened to be in a house where the mania for autographs rages. The queen of the drawing-room did not fail to ask me to write something in her album. "But, I beg you," added she, "no flippancies." This advice irritated me, and I wrote at once:

"*Capital punishment is a very bad thing, for, if it did not exist, I should probably have killed a good many people by this time, and we should not have now so many of those blackguardly idiots, the scourge of art and artists.*"

My aphorism was a good deal laughed at, as they thought that I did not believe a word of it.

[2] Mademoiselle Bertin has lately assured me that I slandered her in counting Cimarosa among her favorite composers. So I must acknowl-

See the consequences of this terrible disease! . . . When the fit is upon us, we have neither politeness, nor tact, nor prudence, nor policy, nor worldly wisdom, nor common sense; we propound all sorts of enormities; and, what is worse, we mean what we say, we compromise ourselves, we lose head.

A fig for black philosophy! the fit is over; I am cool-headed enough now to talk reasonably; and here, mademoiselle, is what I heard in Berlin: I will tell further on, what I gave them to hear there.

I begin with the lyric theatre; all honor to whom honor is due!

The late German opera-house, so quickly destroyed hardly three months ago by fire, was dark and dirty enough, but very sonorous and well calculated for musical effect. The orchestra did not occupy a position so far advanced into the rows of stalls as in Paris; it was

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edge my mistake, regretting having made it. At all events it is not a very grave calumny, I fancy, nor one for which consolation is impossible.

spread out much more to the right and left, and the violent instruments, such as the trombones, trumpets, drums and big-drum, being under the eaves of the first boxes, lost something of their excessive resonance. The body of instruments, one of the best that I have heard, is composed as follows, on the days of grand performances: 14 first, and 14 second violins—8 violas—10 violoncelli—8 double basses—4 flutes—4 oboes—4 clarinets—4 bassoons—4 horns—4 trumpets—4 trombones—1 drummer—1 big-drum—1 pair of cymbals, and 2 harps.

The strings are almost all excellent; at their head are to be mentioned especially the brothers Ganz (first violin and first violoncello of great merit), and the clever violinist Ries. The wooden wind instruments are, as you see, twice as many as we have at the Opéra in Paris. This combination has great advantages; it allows two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, and two bassoons to come in *ripieni* in the *fortissimo*, and singularly softens the harshness of the brass, which is otherwise always too prominent. The horns are capital, and are all with cylinders, to the great sorrow of Meyerbeer, who still holds the opinion I used to but a little while ago about the new mechanism. Several composers are hostile to the horn with cylinders, because they think that its quality of tone is no longer the same as that of the plain horn. I made the experiment several times, listening alternately to the open notes of a plain horn and a chromatic horn (with cylinders); I confess that it was impossible for me to detect the slightest difference of tone between them, either in quality or quantity. Another objection to the new horn has been advanced, apparently well founded, but which is easily met. Since the introduction into orchestras of this (as I think, perfected) instrument, certain horn-players, using the cylinders to play parts written for the common horn, find it more convenient to produce in *open tones* by means of this mechanism, the *stopped* tones intentionally written by the composer. This is in fact a very grave abuse, but it must be imputed to the players, and not to the instrument. Far from this, the horn with cylinders, in the hands of a clever artist, can give not only all the stopped notes of the common horn, but can give the entire scale without a single open note. We must only conclude from all this that horn-players ought to know how to use their hand in the bell, as if the mechanism of cylinders did not exist, and that composers must in future indicate in their scores, by some sign, what notes of the horn-parts are to be *stopped*, the player only playing *open* notes when no indication to the contrary is given.

The same prejudice has for some time fought against the trumpets with cylinders, in general use in Germany to-day, though with less strength than it brought to bear upon opposing the new horns. The question of stopped notes, which no composer has used with the trumpet, was naturally laid aside. They confined themselves to saying that the trumpet lost much of its brilliancy through the mechanism of cylinders, which is not so; at least as far as my ear can tell. So, if it takes a more delicate ear than mine to detect a difference between the two instruments, you will admit, I hope, that the disadvantage the trumpet with cylinders suffers from this difference bears no proportion to the advantage this mechanism gives it of being able to pass through, without difficulty or the slightest inequality of tone, a chromatic scale of two octaves and a half. I can only applaud the Germans for having almost completely abandoned the plain trumpet, as they have. We have hardly any chromatic trumpets (with cylinders) in France as yet; the inconceivable popularity of the *cornet-à-pistons* competes victoriously with them as yet, and wrongly as I think; the tone of the cornet being far from having the nobility and brilliancy of that of the trumpet. In any case the instruments are not wanting; Adolphe Sax makes now trumpets with cylinders, both large and small, in every possible key, common or not, of which the excellent sonority and perfection are incontestable. Will you believe it that this young and ingenious artist has a thousand troubles in getting an opening and making a living in Paris? Persecutions worthy of the Middle Ages are renewed against him, exactly resembling the machinations of the enemies of Benvenuto, the Florentine carver. His workmen are enticed away, his plans stolen, he is accused of insanity, beset with lawsuits; only a little more daring is wanting to have him assassinated. Such is the hatred inventors always excite among those of their rivals who invent nothing. Luckily the protection and friendship with which General de Rumigny has constantly honored the clever maker have helped him so far to sustain this wretched struggle; but will they suffice long? . . . It is for the Minister of War to place a man so useful, and with so rare a specialty, in a position of which he is worthy, by his talent, his perseverance and his efforts. Our military bands have as yet neither trumpets with cylinders nor bass-tubas (the most powerful of bass instruments). The manufacture of these instruments will become inevitable, if the French military bands are to be on a level with those in Prussia and Austria; an order for three hundred trumpets and a hundred bass-tubas, given to Adolphe Sax by the Minister, would save him.

Berlin is the only German city (that I have visited) where the great bass-trombone (in E-flat) is to be found. We have not got any as yet in Paris, the players refusing to practice an instrument which is so hard upon the chest. It seems that Prussian lungs are more robust than ours. The orchestra of the Berlin opera has two of these instruments, of which the sonority is such as to overwhelm, and completely cause to vanish, the tone of the two other trombones, the alto and tenor, which play the upper parts. The rough and prominent tone of one bass-trombone would be enough to upset the equilibrium and destroy the harmony of the three trombone parts which composers write everywhere to-day. There is no ophicleide at the Berlin opera, and instead of replacing it by a bass-tuba in operas that come from France, and which almost invariably contain a part for the ophicleide, they have hit upon the plan of having the part played by a second bass-trombone. The result is that the ophicleide part, often written so as to double that of the third trombone in the lower octave, being played in this fashion, the union of these two terrible instruments produces a disastrous effect. Only the low notes of the brass instruments are heard; it is as much as ever that the voice of the trumpets can come to the surface. In my concerts, even where I only used (for my symphonies) one bass-trombone, I was obliged, seeing that it was the only one I could hear, to make the player sit down so that the bell of his instrument was turned against his desk, which acted to some extent as a mute, while the alto and tenor trombones played standing, their bells thus passing over the desk. It was only then that the three parts were audible. These repeated experiments, made in Berlin, have led me to think that the best way of grouping the trombones in theatres is, after all, that which is adopted at the Opéra in Paris, and which consists in employing three tenor trombones. The tone of the small trombone (the alto) is shrill, and its high notes are of little value. I should vote also for its exclusion from theatres, and should only desire the presence of a *bass-trombone* when *four* parts are written, and with *three tenors* capable of resisting it.

If I do not speak of *gold*, I have at least said a good deal about brass; yet I am sure, mademoiselle, that these details of instrumentation will interest you much more than my misanthropic tirades, or my stories of death's-heads. You are a melodist and a harmonist, and very little versed, as far as I know, in osteology. So I will go on with my examination of the musical forces of the Berlin opera.

The kettle-drummer is a good musician, but has not much agility in his wrists; his rolls are not close enough. Besides, his drums are too small. They have not much tone, and he only knows of one kind of sticks, of a mediocre effect, about half-way between our leather-headed sticks and those with sponge heads. In this respect they are far behind France, throughout Germany. As for the execution itself, with the exception of Wiprecht, the head of the military bands in Berlin, who plays the drums like a *Jupiter tonans*, I have not found an artist who can compare with Poussard, the excellent drummer of the Opéra, for precision, closeness of rolling and delicacy of shading. Must I speak of the cymbals? Yes, and only to tell you that a pair of intact cymbals, that is to say, such as are neither cracked nor notched, such as are whole in short, are a great rarity, that I have found neither in Weimar, nor Leipzig, nor Dresden, nor Hamburg, nor Berlin. It was always a source of great wrath to me, and I have sometimes kept the orchestra waiting half an hour, being unwilling to begin a rehearsal before they brought me a pair of really new cymbals, really quivering, really Turkish, as I wished them to be, to show the *Kapellmeister* whether I was wrong or not in finding the bits of broken dishes presented to me under that name ridiculous and detestable. In general, we must acknowledge the shocking inferiority of certain parts of the orchestra in Germany up to the present day. They do not seem to suspect the effects that can be drawn from them, and which really are drawn from them elsewhere. The instruments are worthless, and the players are far from knowing all their resources. Such are the kettle-drums, the cymbals, even the big-drum; still more so the English-horn, the ophicleide and the harp. But this fault is evidently to be laid to the charge of the composers' way of writing, as they, not having ever demanded anything important from these instruments, are the cause of their successors', who write in another manner, not being able to obtain anything from them.

But, on the other hand, how far the Germans are our superiors in brass instruments in general, and the trumpets in particular! We have no idea of it. Their clarinets too are better than ours; such is not the case with the oboes; I think that in this point the two schools are of equal merit; as for the flutes, we surpass them; the flute is played nowhere as it is in Paris. Their double-basses are stronger than the French; their violoncelli, violas and violins have great excellences; yet they cannot be, without injustice, placed on an equality with our young school of stringed instruments. The violins, violas and violoncelli of the orchestra of the Conservatoire in Paris have no rivals. I have given more than abundant proof, I think, of the scarcity of good harps in Germany; those in Berlin are no exceptions to the general rule, and they have great need in that capital of some pupils of Parish-Alvars. This superb orchestra, whose excellent precision, *ensemble*, strength and delicacy are pre-eminent, is placed under the direction of Meyerbeer, general director of music to the King of Prussia. It is . . . Meyerbeer (I think you know him!!! . . .); of Henning (first *Kapellmeister)*, a clever man, whose talent is greatly esteemed by the artists; and of Taubert (second *Kapellmeister)*, a brilliant pianist and composer. I heard (played by himself and the brothers

Ganz) a piano-forte trio of his composition, of excellent workmanship, in a new style, and full of vigor. Taubert has just written and had successfully performed, choruses to the Greek tragedy of *Medea*, recently put upon the stage in Berlin.

MM. Ganz and Ries divide between them the title and duties of *Conzertmeister*.

Let us now go upon the stage.

The chorus, on days of ordinary performances, is composed of only sixty voices; but when grand operas are given in presence of the king, the choral force is doubled, and sixty other singers from outside are added to those of the theatre. All these voices are excellent, fresh, and vibrating. The greater part of the chorus-singers, men, women, and children, are musicians, less skillful readers, it is true, than those of the Opéra in Paris, but much more trained than they in the art of singing, more attentive and careful, and better paid. It is the finest theatre chorus that I have yet met with. Their director is Elssler, brother of the famous dancer. This intelligent and patient artist might spare himself much trouble, and advance the choral studies more rapidly, if, instead of drilling the hundred and eighty voices all at the same time and in the same hall, he would at first divide them into three groups (the *soprani* and *contralti*, the tenors, and the basses), studying separately, in three separate rooms, under the direction of three sub-leaders, chosen and superintended by himself. This analytic method, which has been steadfastly refused admission to theatres, from wretched reasons of economy and mere routine, is still the only one that can allow of each choral part being thoroughly studied, and obtain a careful and well-shaded rendering of it; I have said this elsewhere, and shall not get tired of repeating it.

The acting singers of the Berlin theatre do not occupy so exalted a rank in the hierarchy of *virtuosi* as that which the chorus and orchestra have attained, each in its own specialty, among the musical bodies of Europe. Yet this troupe comprises some notable talents, among whom I must mention:

Mademoiselle Marx, an expressive and very sympathetic *soprano*, whose extreme chords, in the upper and lower registers, unluckily begin to show signs of wear;

Mademoiselle Tutchek, flexible *soprano*, of quite pure quality and fair agility;

Mademoiselle Hähnel, *contralto*, of good character;

Boeticher, excellent bass, of great compass and fine quality; skillful singer, fine actor, musician, and consummate reader;

Zische, *basso-cantante*, of real talent, whose voice and method seem to shine more in concert than on the stage;

Mantius, first tenor; his voice is a little wanting in flexibility, and has not much range.

Madame Schröder-Devrient, engaged only a few months ago; a *soprano* worn out in the upper part, not very flexible, but explosive and dramatic. Madame Devrient sings flat now whenever she cannot force a note. Her ornaments are in bad taste, and she interlards her singing with spoken phrases and interjections, with execrable effect, after the manner of our *vaudeville* actors in their songs. This school of singing is the most antimusical and the most trivial that can be pointed out to beginners to avoid imitating.

Pischek, the excellent baritone of whom I have spoken in Frankfort, has just been engaged, so they tell me, by M. Meyerbeer. He is a precious acquisition that the direction of the Berlin theatre is to be congratulated upon.

There, mademoiselle, is all that I know about the resources dramatic music can look to in the capital of Prussia. I did not hear a single performance at the Italian theatre, so I shall not speak about it.

In another letter I shall have to scrape together my recollections of a performance of the *Huguenots* and of *Armide* at which I was present, of the Singing Academy and the military bands, two institutions of essentially opposite character, but of immense value, and whose splendor, compared with anything we have of the same sort, must profoundly humiliate our national pride.

TO MONSIEUR HABENECK.[1]

EIGHTH LETTER.

BERLIN.

I LATELY made an enumeration of the vocal and instrumental riches of the Grand Opera of Berlin for Mademoiselle Louise Bertin, whose musical knowledge and serious love for art you know. I shall now have to speak of the Singing Academy and the corps of military bands; but as you wish to know above all things what I think of the performances at which I was present, I will invert the order of my account, to tell you how I saw the Prussian artists conduct themselves in the operas of Meyerbeer, Gluck, Mozart and Weber.

There are, unfortunately, in Berlin, as in Paris, as everywhere, certain days on which it seems as if, by tacit agreement between the artists and the public, the performances were more or less neglected. Many empty seats are visible in the house, and many unoccupied desks in the orchestra. The leaders dine out, and give balls on those evenings; they are off hunting, etc. The musicians doze while playing the *notes* of their parts; some do not even play at all; they take naps, they read, they draw caricatures, they play tricks on their neighbors, they chatter quite loudly; I need not tell you all that goes on in the orchestra in such cases. . . .

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[1] Conductor of the orchestra at the Paris Opéra.—TRANS.

As for the actors, they are in too prominent a position to take such liberties (which, however, sometimes happens), but the chorus give themselves up to them to their hearts' content. They come upon the stage one after the other, in incomplete groups; several of them, coming late to the theatre, are not yet dressed; some, having sung in a fatiguing service at church during the day, come all tired out, with the fixed intent of not singing a note. Every one is at his ease; high notes are transposed an octave lower, or else they are given as well as may be in a timid *mezza voce;* there is no longer any light and shade; the *mezzo forte* is adopted for the whole evening, nobody looks at the conductor's *bâton*, and three or four wrong entries and as many dislocated phrases are the result; but what matter! Does any one suppose that the public notices all that? The director does not know anything about it, and if the composer complains, they laugh in his face and call him a mischief-maker. The opera girls especially have charming amusements. There is no end to their smiles and telegraphic communications either with the musicians or the *habitués* of the balcony. They have been in the morning to the christening of Mademoiselle ***'s, one of their comrade's, baby; they have brought away sugar-plums which they eat on the stage, laughing at the queer face of the godfather, the coquetry of the godmother, the well-fed countenance of the *curé*. While keeping up this chit-chat, they distribute a few slaps among the chorus boys who begin to be unruly:

"Come, stop that, you little rascal, or I'll call the leader of the chorus."

"Just look, my dear, see what a lovely rose M. *** has got in his button-hole! Florence gave it him."

"So she is as spooney as ever on her exchange broker?"[1]

"Yes, but it's a secret; everybody can't have a lawyer."

"Oh! get out! By the way, are you going to the court-concert?"

"No, I've something to do that day."

"What's that?"

"Get married."

"My! what an idea!"

"Look out, here's the curtain."

So the act comes to an end, the public is mystified and the work spoiled. But, what! People must have some time to rest a bit; one cannot be always sublime, and these performances in shirt-sleeves only serve to give prominence to those that are gotten up with care, zeal, attention and talent. I agree to it; but yet you will admit that there is something sad in seeing masterworks treated with this extreme familiarity. I can understand not wishing to burn incense night and day before the statues of great men; but would you not be angry to see the bust of Gluck or of Beethoven used as a wig-block in a hair-dresser's window? . . .

Do not clothe yourself in philosophy; I am sure it would make you indignant.

I do not mean to conclude from all this that they give themselves up to having a good time to this extent at certain performances in the Berlin opera-house; no, they go at it with more moderation; on this head, as on some others, the superiority remains with us. If by chance we happen to see in Paris a masterpiece given *in its shirt-sleeves*, as I have just said, they never allow themselves in Prussia to give it in more than *half undress*. I have seen *Figaro* and the *Freyschütz* given so. It was not bad, without being wholly good. There was a certain rather relaxed *ensemble*, a little undecided precision, a moderate verve, a tepid warmth; one could only desire the color and animation which are the true symptoms of life, and that luxury, which for good music is really a necessary; and then something else that is rather essential . . . inspiration.

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[1] There is a pun in the original on *argent* (money) and *agent* (broker) which baffles attempt at translation.—TRANS.

But when *Armide* or the *Huguenots* come upon the boards, you can see a complete transformation. I thought myself at one of those first performances in Paris where you come early, to have time to look over your people a bit and give your last advice, where every one is at his post before his time, where every one's mind is on the stretch, where serious faces express a fixed and intelligent attention, where one sees, in fact, that an important musical event is to take place.

The grand orchestra with its twenty-eight violins and its doubled wind instruments, the great chorus with its hundred and twenty voices were present, and Meyerbeer ruled at the conductor's desk. I had a lively desire to see him conduct, especially conduct his own work. He performs this task as if he had been at it for twenty years; the orchestra is in his hand, he does with it what he wishes. As for the *tempi* he takes in the *Huguenots*, they are the same as your own, with the exception of the entry of the monks in the fourth act, and the march which closes the third; these are a little slower. This difference made the former number seem a little cold to me; I should have preferred a little less breadth, while I found it wholly to the advantage of the latter, played upon the stage by the military band; it gains by it in every respect.

I cannot analyze, scene by scene, the playing of the orchestra in Meyerbeer's masterpiece; I will only say that it struck me as magnificently fine from the beginning to the end of the performance, perfectly shaded, incomparably precise and clear, even in the most intricate passages. Thus the *finale* of the second act, with its phrases rolling upon series of chords of the diminished seventh and its enharmonic modulations, was given, even in the most obscure parts, with irreproachable nicety and purity of intonation. I must say as much of the chorus. The running passages, the contrasted double choruses, the entries in imitation, the sudden changes from *forte* to *piano*, the intermediate shades, were all given clearly and vigorously, with rare warmth and a still more rare sentiment for true expression. The *stretta* of the benediction of poniards struck me like a thunder-bolt, and I was a long time in getting over the incredible confusion it threw me into. The great *ensemble* piece in the *Pré aux clercs*, the quarrel of the women, the litanies to the Virgin, the song of the Huguenot soldiers presented to the ear a musical tissue of astounding richness, but of which the listener could easily follow the web, without the complex thought of the composer being for an instant veiled. This marvel of dramatized counterpoint has also remained in my mind as the marvel of choral execution. Meyerbeer, I think, can hope for nothing better in any part of Europe. I must add that the *mise-en-scène* is arranged in an eminently ingenious manner. In the singing of the *rataplan*, the chorus imitate a sort of drummer's march, with certain movements forward and back, which animate the scene and assimilate very well with the musical effect.

The military band, instead of being placed, as in Paris, at the back of the stage, from whence, separated from the orchestra by the crowd which encumbers the stage, it cannot see the movements of the conductor, and can consequently not follow the measure exactly, here begins playing behind the side-scenes at the right of the spectator; it then marches across the stage near the footlights, passing across the groups of the chorus. In this way the players are very near the conductor until almost the end of their piece ; they keep strictly the same time as the orchestra below, and there is never the slightest rhythmical discordance between the two bodies.

Boeticher makes an excellent *Saint-Bris ;* Zsische fills the part of *Marcel* with talent, yet without the qualities of dramatic *humor* that make our own Levasseur such an originally true *Marcel.* Mademoiselle Marx shows sensibility and a certain modest dignity, essential qualities in the character of *Valentine.* Yet I must reproach her with two or three spoken monosyllables which she was wrong in borrowing from the school of Madame Devrient. I saw this latter actress in the same part a few days afterwards, and if, by pronouncing myself openly against her rendering of it, I astonished and even shocked several persons of excellent understanding, who admire the famous artist without restriction, no doubt from habit, I must say here why I differ so widely from their opinion. I had no fixed opinion, no prepossession either for or against Madame Devrient. I only remembered that she struck me as admirable in Paris many years ago in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, and that quite recently in Dresden, on the other hand, I had noticed very bad habits in her singing, and a scenic action often blemished by exaggeration and affectation. These faults struck me afterwards in the *Huguenots* all the more forcibly that the situations of the drama are more enchaining, and the music bears a plainer stamp of grandeur and truth. Thus I severely blamed the singer and actress, and here is the reason : In the scene of the conspirators where *Saint-Bris* lays his plan for massacring the Huguenots before *Nevers* and his friends, *Valentine* listens shuddering to her father's bloody scheme, but she has a care not to show the horror with which it inspires her ; *Saint-Bris*, indeed, is not the man to endure such opinions in his daughter. *Valentine's* involuntary start towards her husband at the moment when he breaks his sword and refuses to join in the plot is the more beautiful, that the timid woman has suffered so long in silence, and that her agitation has been so painfully contained. Well! instead of hiding her agitation and remaining almost passive, as most tragedians of good sense do in this scene, Madame Devrient goes and takes hold of *Nevers*, forces him to follow her to the back of the stage, and there, striding along by his side, she seems to be tracing out his plan of conduct for him, and dictating his answer to *Saint-Bris*. Whence it comes that when *Valentine's* husband cries out:

"Parmi mes illustres aïeux,
Je compte des soldats, mais pas un assassin!"

(Among my illustrious ancestors I count soldiers, but not one assassin!) he loses all the merit of his opposition; his movement has no longer any spontaneity, and he seems simply a submissive husband who is repeating the lesson his wife has taught him. When *Saint-Bris* begins the famous theme: *A cette cause sainte*, Madame Devrient forgets herself so far as, willy-nilly, to throw herself into the arms of her father, who is yet supposed to be ignorant of *Valentine's* sentiments; she implores him, she supplicates him, she pesters him, in a word, with such vehement pantomime, that Boeticher, who was not prepared the first time for these tempestuous demonstrations, did not know what to do to preserve his freedom of action and respiration, and seemed to say by the shaking of his head and right arm, "For God's sake, madam, let me alone, and allow me to sing my part to the end!" Madame Devrient shows by this to what a degree she is possessed by the demon of personality. She would think herself lost if in every scene, whether right or wrong, and by no matter what scenic manœuvres, she did not draw the attention of the audience upon herself. She plainly considers herself as the pivot of the drama, as the only person worthy of interesting the spectators. "You are listening to that actor! you are admiring the composer! this chorus interests you! Fools that you are! only look this way, look at me; for I am the poem, I am poetry, I am the music, I am all in all; there is no other interesting object beside me, and you must have come to the theatre for my sake alone!" In the prodigious duet which follows this immortal scene, while *Raoul* is giving himself up to all the storm of his despair, Madame Devrient, with her hand resting upon a lounge, bends her head gracefully so as to let the lovely curls of her blonde hair hang down disheveled at her left side; she says a few words, and, during *Raoul's* cue, throwing herself into another pose, she offers the soft reflections in her hair for admiration on her right side. I do not think, however, that these minute details of a puerile coquetry are precisely those which ought to fill the soul of *Valentine* at such a moment.

As for Madame Devrient's singing, I have already said that it is often wanting in trueness and taste. The *cadenzas* and the numerous changes she now introduces into her parts are in bad style, and clumsily brought in. But I know of nothing that can be compared to her spoken ejaculations. Madame Devrient never *sings* the words: God! O God! yes! no! is it true! can it be! etc. All this is spoken and shrieked at the top of her voice. I cannot tell the aversion I feel for this sort of antimusical declamation. To my mind it is a hundred times worse to speak in opera than to sing in tragedy.

The notes designated in certain scores by the words: *Canto parlato*, are not intended to be thrown out in that way; in the serious style, the quality of voice they demand ought always to adhere to the tonality; this does not overstep the bounds of music. Who does not remember how Mademoiselle Falcon used to know how to give, in *canto parlato*, the words at the end of this duo: "*Raoul! ils te tueront!*" (Raoul! they will kill thee!) Surely that was at once natural and musical, and made an immense effect.

Far from that, when answering to the supplications of *Raoul*, Madame Devrient cries out three times with a *crescendo* of strength, *nein! nein! nein!* I fancy that I am hearing Madame Dorval or Mademoiselle Georges in a melodrama, and ask of myself why the orchestra keeps on playing, since the opera is over. I did not hear the fifth act, so furious was I at seeing the masterpiece of the fourth disfigured in this fashion. Would it be calumniating you to say that you would have done as much, my dear Habeneck? I hardly think so. I know your way of thinking in music; when the performance of a fine work is wholly bad, you bravely make up your mind to it; and then, the more detestable it is, the more courageous you are! But on the other hand, when all goes satisfactorily with a single exception, oh! then that exception irritates you, grates on your nerves, exasperates you; you get into one of those passions of indignation that would make you look upon the extermination of the discordant individual with composure, and even with joy, and while the good *bourgeois* are amazed at your wrath, all true artists share it with you, and you and I gnash all our teeth in unison.

Madame Devrient certainly has eminent good qualities; such as warmth and power over her audience; but even if these qualtities were sufficient in themselves, they did not seem to me to be always kept within the bounds of nature or the character of certain parts. *Valentine*, for instance, even putting aside what I have said above, *Valentine*, the young bride of a day, with a heart strong but timid, the noble wife of *Nevers*, the chaste and reserved lover, who only avows her love for *Raoul* to snatch him from the jaws of death, lends herself more readily to modest passion, decent action and expressive song than to all the three-decker broadsides of Madame Devrient with her devilish personalism.

Some days after the *Huguenots* I saw *Armide*. The revival of this celebrated work was conducted with all the care and respect due to it; the *mise-en-scène* was magnificent, dazzling, and the public showed itself worthy of the favor granted it. Of all the old composers, Gluck is the one who seems to me to have the least to fear from the incessant revolutions in art. He never sacrificed anything either to the caprices of singers, nor to the requirements of fashion, nor to the inveterate habits he had to combat with on coming to France, still tired out by the struggle he had kept up against those of the Italian theatres. No doubt this war with the *dilettanti* of Milan, Naples and Parma, instead of weakening him, had redoubled his strength by revealing its extent; for in spite of the fanaticism which then pervaded all our French customs in art matters, it was almost in making light of them that he crushed and trampled under foot the wretched schemes that opposed him. The shrill shrieking of critics succeeded once in betraying him into a movement of impatience; but this fit of wrath, which led him to commit the imprudence of answering them, was the only one with which he had to reproach himself; and after that, as before, he walked on in silence, straight to his goal. You know what the goal was he wished to attain, and whether or not it was ever granted to a man to reach it more surely than he. With less conviction, or less firmness of purpose, it is probable that, in spite of the genius with which nature had gifted him, his corrupted works would not have long outlived those of his mediocre rivals, so completely forgotten to-day. But truth of expression, which brings with itself purity of style and grandeur of forms, is of every age; the beautiful pages of Gluck will remain always beautiful. Victor Hugo is right: *Le cœur n'a pas de rides* (The heart has no wrinkles).

Mademoiselle Marx, as *Armide*, struck me as noble and impassioned, although a thought crushed by her epic burden. In fact it is not enough to possess a real talent to represent Gluck's women; as with Shakspere's women, there must be such high qualities of soul, heart, voice, physiognomy and bearing, that it is no exaggeration to say that these *rôles* also demand beauty and . . . genius.

What a happy evening I passed at this performance of *Armide*, conducted by Meyerbeer! The orchestra and chorus, inspired at once by two illustrious masters, the composer and the conductor, showed themselves worthy of both. The famous *finale: Poursuivons jusqu'au trépas* (Let us pursue unto death), produced a veritable explosion. The act of Hatred, with the admirable pantomimes composed, if I mistake not, by Paul Taglioni, master of the ballet at the Grand Theatre in Berlin, struck me as no less remarkable in its apparently disordered verve, of which every outbreak was yet full of an infernal harmony. They cut the dance air in $\frac{6}{8}$ time in *A-major*, which we give here, and gave instead the great *chaconne* in *B-flat*, which we never hear in Paris. This very fully developed number is full of fire and brilliancy. What a conception this act of Hatred is! I had never so fully comprehended and admired it. I shuddered at the passage in the evocation:

> "Sauvez moi de l'amour,
> Rien n'est si redoutable!"

(Save me from love, nothing is so terrible).

At the first hemistich, the two oboes give out a cruel dissonance of a major seventh, a woman's cry which shows us terror and the most acute anguish. But at the following line:

"Contre un ennemi trop aimable"

(Against too lovable an enemy), how these same two voices sigh tenderly, uniting in thirds! What regrets lie in these few notes! and how we feel that love so regretted will conquer in the end! In fact, Hatred, coming with her frightful army, has hardly begun her work, when *Armide* interrupts her and refuses her aid. Hence the chorus:

"Suis l'amour, puisque tu le veux,
Infortunée Armide;
Suis l'amour qui te guide
Dans un abîme affreux!"

(Follow love, since you so wish it, unhappy Armida; follow love, which leads you to a frightful chasm!)

In Quinault's text the act ends there; *Armide* went out with the chorus without saying anything. This catastrophe seeming vulgar and unnatural to Gluck, he wished to have the sorceress remain alone for an instant, and then go out, thinking of what she has just heard, and one day, after a rehearsal, he improvised at the opera-house the words and music of this scene, of which the following are the verses:

"O ciel! quelle horrible menace!
Je frémis! tout mon sang se glace!
Amour, puissant amour, viens calmer mon effroi,
Et prends pitié d'un cœur qui s'abandonne à toi!"

(Oh heavens! What a fearful threat! I tremble! all my blood curdles! Love, powerful love, come and calm my terror, and take pity on a heart which gives itself up to thee!)

The music of it is beautiful in melody, harmony, vague anxiety, tender languor, and all that can be finest in dramatic and musical inspiration. Between each of the exclamations of the first verse, under a sort of intermittent *tremolo* of the second violins, the basses unfold a long chromatic phrase that growls and threatens up to the first word of the third verse: "*Amour*" (Love), when the sweetest melody, expanding as in a dream, dissipates by its soft light the half obscurity of the foregoing measures. Then all is extinguished. . . *Armide* retires with downcast eyes, while the second violins, abandoned by the rest of the orchestra, still murmur their solitary *tremolo*. Immense, immense is the genius that can create such a scene! ! ! . . .

Egad! I am really Arcadian in my admiring analysis! Do not I look like a man to initiate you, you Habeneck, into the beauties of Gluck's score? But you know it is involuntary! I talk to you here as we sometimes do on the Boulevards, coming out of a Conservatoire concert, when our enthusiasm must positively air itself a little.

I will make an observation upon the *mise-en-scène* of this piece in Berlin:

The machinist lets the curtain fall too soon; he ought to wait until the last measure of the closing *ritournelle* has been heard; otherwise *Armide* cannot be seen leaving the back of the stage with slow steps, during the ever feebler and feebler palpitations and sighs of the orchestra. This effect was very beautiful at the Opéra in Paris, where, at the time of the performances of *Armide*, the curtain never fell. To make up for it, although I am not, as you know, an advocate of any modifications made by the conductor of an orchestra in a score which is not his own, and of which he ought only to seek a good execution, I will compliment Meyerbeer upon a happy idea he has had concerning the intermittent *tremolo* I have just mentioned. This passage for the second violins being on low *D*, Meyerbeer, to give it more prominence, had it played upon two strings in unison (the open *D* and the *D* on the fourth string). It naturally sounds as if the number of second violins were suddenly doubled, and a peculiar resonance results from these two strings which produces the happiest effect. So long as only corrections like this are made in Gluck, we may be allowed to applaud them.[1] It is like your idea of playing the famous continued *tremolo* of the oracle in *Alceste* near the bridge and scraping the string. Gluck did not indicate it, to be sure, but he *ought* to have.

In respect to exquisite sentiment and expression I found the execution of the scenes in the *Garden of Pleasures* even superior to all the rest. It was a sort of voluptuous languor, of morbid fascination, which transported me to that palace of love, dreamed of by two poets (Gluck and Tasso), and seemed to give it to me for my enchanted dwelling place. I shut my eyes, and while hearing that divine *gavotte* with its caressing melody, and the sweetly monotonous murmur of its harmony, and that chorus: *Jamais dans ces beaux lieux* (Never in this beautiful place), whence happiness overflows with so much grace, I saw charming arms entwined about me, adorable feet cross each other, perfumed locks of hair roll down, diamond eyes sparkle, and a thousand intoxicating smiles glisten. The flower of pleasure opened, softly shaken by the melodious breeze, and from its ravishing corolla escaped a concert of sounds, colors and perfumes. And it is Gluck, the terrible musician, who has sung all woes, who has made Tartarus roar, who has painted the desolate shores of Tauris and the savage customs of its people; it is he who knew how thus to reproduce in music this strange ideal of dreamy voluptuousness, and peace in love! . . . Why not? Had he not already opened the Elysian Fields before? . . . Is it not he who found that immortal chorus of happy shades:

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[1] No, it shall not be allowed. I was in the wrong to write that. Gluck knew the effect of two strings in unison as well as Meyerbeer, and if he did not wish to employ it, no one has the mission to introduce it into his work. Besides, Meyerbeer has added other effects to *Armide*, such as trombones in the duet "*Esprits de haine et de rage*" (Spirits of Hatred and Rage), which cannot be enough censured. Spontini once quoted them to me and reproached me with not having called attention to them. And yet he too added wind instruments to the orchestra in *Iphigénie en Tauride*. . . . Forgetting that he had had this weakness, he cried out another time: "It is frightful! So I suppose I too shall be instrumented when I am dead? . . ."

> "Torna, o bella, al tuo consorte
> Che non vuol che più diviso
> Sia di te pietoso il ciel!"

And is it not commonly, as our great modern poet has said, the strong who are the gentlest?

But I see that the pleasure of talking to you about all these beautiful things leads me on too far, and that I cannot talk to-day about the non-dramatic musical institutions which flourish in Berlin. So they must be the subject of another letter, and will give me an excuse for plaguing somebody else with my indefatigable verbiage.

You are not too cross at this one, are you?

At any rate, good-bye!

TO M. DESMAREST.[1]

NINTH LETTER.

BERLIN.

I SHOULD never get through with this royal city of Berlin, were I to study all its musical riches in detail. There are few capitals, if any, that can pride themselves upon treasures of harmony comparable to hers. Music is in the air, you breathe it, it penetrates you. You find it at the theatre, at church, in the concert-room, in the street, in the public gardens, everywhere; ever grand and proud, strong and agile, radiant in youth and splendid trappings, of noble and serious mien, a beautiful-armed angel who sometimes deigns to walk, but whose quivering wings are ever ready to carry her again on her heavenward flight.

It is because music in Berlin is honored by all. Rich and poor, clergy and army, artists and amateurs, people and king have an equal veneration for it. The king especially brings the same real fervor to bear upon this adoration that he does upon the cultivation of the sciences and the other arts, which is saying much. He follows with a curious eye the progressive movements, I might even say the summersaults, of new art, without neglecting the preservation of masterpieces of the old school. He has a prodigious memory, embarrassing even to his librarians and *Kapellmeisters*, when he asks them all at once for the performance of certain selections from some old masters whom nobody any longer knows. Nothing escapes him, neither in the domain of the present nor of the past; he wishes to hear and examine everything. Hence the lively attraction great artists feel towards Berlin; hence the extraordinary popularity of musical sentiment in Prussia; hence the instrumental and choral institutions its capital possesses, and which seemed to me so worthy of admiration.

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[1] First violoncello of the Conservatoire orchestra.—TRANS.

The Singing Academy is one of these. Like that in Leipzig, like all other similar academies in Germany, it is almost wholly composed of amateurs; but several artists, male and female, attached to the theatres, also belong to it; and ladies of the upper ten-thousand do not think it beneath them to sing an *oratorio* of Bach by the side of Boeticher or Mantius or Mademoiselle Hähnel.—The greater part of the singers of the Berlin Academy are musicians, and they almost all have fresh and sonorous voices; the *soprani* and basses struck me as especially excellent. The rehearsals are made diligently and at great length under the skillful direction of M. Rugenhagen; and the results obtained, when a great work is submitted to the public, are magnificent and beyond all comparison with anything of the sort that we can hear in Paris.

The day on which I went to the Singing Academy, by the director's invitation, they performed Sebastian Bach's *Passion*. This famous score, which you have, no doubt, read, is written for two choruses and two orchestras. The singers, to the number of at least three hundred, were seated on the steps of a large amphitheatre, exactly like the one we have in the chemistry lecture-room in the Jardin des Plantes; a space of only three or four feet separates the two choruses. The two orchestras, rather small ones, accompanied the voices from the upper steps, behind the choruses, and were thus pretty far from the *Kapellmeister*, who stood down in front beside the piano-forte. I should not have said piano-forte, but harpsichord ; for it had almost the tone of the wretched instruments of that name which were in use in Bach's time. I do not know whether they made such a choice designedly, but I noticed in the singing schools, in the green-rooms of the theatres, everywhere where voices were to be accompanied, that the piano-forte intended for that purpose was invariably the most detestable that could be found. The one Mendelssohn used in Leipzig in the hall of the Gewand-Haus forms the sole exception.

You will ask me what the harpsichord-piano can have to do *during the performance* of a work in which the composer has not used this instrument![1] It accompanies, together with the flutes, oboes, violins and basses, and probably serves to keep the first rows of the chorus up to pitch, as they *are supposed* not to hear, in the *tutti*, the orchestra, which is too far off. At any rate it is the custom. The continual tinkling of chords struck on this bad piano produces the most tiresome effect, and spreads over the *ensemble* a superfluous coating of monotony ; but that is, no doubt, another reason for not giving it up. An old custom is so sacred, when it is a bad one !

The singers all remain seated during the pauses, and rise at the moment of singing. There is, I think, a real advantage in respect to a good emission of the voice in singing standing ; it is only unfortunate that the chorus, giving up too easily to the fatigue of this posture, sit down as soon as their phrase is over ; for in a work like Bach's, where the two answering choruses are often interrupted by solo recitative, it happens that there is always some group getting up or some other sitting down, and in the long run this succession of movements up and down gets to be rather laughable; besides it takes away all the surprise from certain entries of the chorus, the eye notifying the ear beforehand from what part of the vocal body the sound is to come. I should rather have the chorus keep seated unless they can keep standing. But this impossibility is one of those that disappear immediately if the director knows how to say: *I wish it* or *I do not wish it.*

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[1] Berlioz shows here, as elsewhere, his utter ignorance of Bach's scores.—TRANS.

Be it as it may, the execution of those vocal masses was something imposing to me; the first *tutti* of the two choruses took away my breath; I was far from suspecting the power of that great harmonic blast. Yet we must recognize the fact that one gets tired of this beautiful sonority more quickly than of that of the orchestra, the qualities of the voices being less varied than those of the instruments. This is conceivable; there are hardly four voices of different natures, while the number of instruments of different kinds amounts to over thirty.

You do not expect of me, I fancy, my dear Desmarest, an analysis of Bach's great work; that would be wholly overstepping the limits I have had to impose upon myself. Besides, the selection they played at the Conservatoire three years ago may be considered as the type of the composer's style and manner in this work. The Germans profess an unlimited admiration for his recitatives, and their pre-eminent quality is precisely the one to have escaped me, as I do not understand the language in which they are written, and could not consequently appreciate the merit of their expression.

When one comes from Paris and knows our musical customs, one must witness the respect, the attention, the piety with which a German audience listens to such a composition, to believe it. Every one follows the words of the text with his eyes; not a movement in the house, not a murmur of approbation or blame, not the least applause; they are listening to a sermon, hearing the Gospel sung; they are attending in silence, not a concert, but divine service. And it is really thus that this music ought to be listened to. They adore Bach, and believe in him, without supposing for an instant that his divinity can ever be questioned; a heretic would horrify them; it is even forbidden to speak on the subject. Bach is Bach, as God is God.

Some days after the performance of this masterpiece of Bach, the Singing Academy announced Graun's *Death of Jesus*. There is another consecrated score, a sacred book, but one whose adorers are specially in Berlin, while the religion of S. Bach is professed throughout North Germany. You can imagine the interest this second evening offered me, especially after the impression I had received from the first, and the eagerness with which I should have listened to the favorite work of the great Frederick's *Kapellmeister!* See my misfortune! I fall ill precisely on that day; the physician (great lover of music as he was, the learned and amiable Doctor Gaspard) forbids me to leave my room; they again invite me in vain to hear a famous organist; the the doctor is inflexible; and it is only after holy week, when there are neither *oratorios*, nor fugues, nor chorals to be heard, that the good God gives me back my health. That is why I am forced to keep silence about the musical service in the Berlin churches, which is said to be so remarkable. If ever I return to Prussia, ill or not, I must hear Graun's music, and I will hear it, be calm on that head, though I die of it. But in that case, I should not be able to tell you about it. . . . Thus, it is evident that you will never know anything of it *from me;* so, make the journey, and then you can tell me about it.

As for the military bands, one must take great pains to the contrary, if one does not hear at least some of them, as they go through the streets of Berlin, on foot or on horseback, at all hours of the day. These little troops, however, can give no idea of the majesty of the great combinations which the director and instructor of the military bands of Berlin and Potsdam (Wiprecht) can form when he pleases. Imagine him with a force of six hundred musicians and more under his orders, all good readers, well up in the mechanism of their instruments, playing true, and favored by nature with indefatigable lungs and lips of leather. Hence the extreme ease with which the trumpets, horns and cornets give out the high notes which our players cannot reach. They are regiments of musicians, and not musicians of regiments. The Prince of Prussia, anticipating my desire to hear and study at leisure his musical troops, had the gracious kindness to invite me to a *matinée* got up for my benefit at his house, and to give the necessary orders to Wiprecht.

The audience was very small; we were twelve or fifteen at the most. I was astonished to see no orchestra, not a sound betrayed its presence, when a slow phrase in *F-minor*, well known to you and me, made me turn my head towards the largest hall in the palace, which was concealed from view by a large curtain. H. R. H. had had the courtesy to let them begin the concert with the overture to the *Francs-juges*, which I had never heard thus arranged for wind instruments. Three hundred men were there, conducted by Wiprecht, and they played this difficult piece with marvelous precision and that furious verve that you show for it, you of the Conservatoire, on great days of enthusiasm and vim.

The solo for brass instruments, in the introduction, was especially startling, played by fifteen great bass-trombones, eighteen or twenty alto and tenor trombones, twelve bass-tubas and a perfect ant-hill of trumpets.

The bass-tuba, which I have already mentioned several times in my former letters, has completely dethroned the ophicleide in Prussia, if, indeed, it ever reigned there, which I doubt, It is a brass instrument, derived from the bombardon, and provided with a mechanism of five cylinders, which gives it an immensely low range.

The extreme low notes of its scale are a little vague, it is true; but when doubled in the upper octave by another bass-tuba part, they acquire an incredible roundness and force of vibration. The tone of the medium and upper registers of the instrument is very noble, it it is not dead like that of the ophicleide, but vibrating and very sympathetic to that of the trombones and trumpets, of which it is the real double-bass, and with which it combines as well as possible. Wiprecht introduced it in Prussia. A. Sax makes admirable ones now in Paris.

The clarinets struck me as as good as the brass instruments; they especially showed their prowess in a grand battle-symphony composed for two orchestras by the English Ambassador, the Earl of Westmoreland.

Next came a brilliant and chivalric piece for brass instruments only, written for the court *fêtes* by Meyerbeer, under the title of *Fackeltanz* (Torchlight dance), in which there is a long trill on *D*, which eighteen trumpets sustained, trilling as rapidly as any clarinet, for sixteen bars.

The concert ended with a funeral-march, very well written and of fine character, composed by Wiprecht. There had been only one rehearsal ! ! !

In the intervals left between the pieces by this terrible orchestra, I had the honor to talk a few moments with the Princess of Prussia, whose exquisite taste and knowledge of composition render her good opinion so precious. Besides, H. R. H. speaks our language with a purity and elegance that much intimidated the individual she was talking with. 'I wish I could draw a Shaksperian portrait of the Princess, or at least give a glimpse at a veiled sketch of her soft beauty; I should, perhaps, dare to . . . were I a great poet.

I was present at one of the court concerts. Meyerbeer was at the piano-forte; there was no orchestra, and the singers were no others than those of the theatre, whom I have already mentioned. Towards the end of the evening, Meyerbeer, great pianist though he be, perhaps on that very account, found himself fatigued by his duties as accompanyist, and gave up his place; to whom? I leave you to guess . . . to the first chamberlain of the king, M. le comte de Roedern, who accompanied Madame Devrient in Schubert's *Erl-König* like a pianist and a musician! What do you say to that? There is something to give you a proof of an astonishing diffusion of musical knowledge. M. de Roedern also possesses a talent of another nature, of which he gave brilliant proofs in organizing the famous masked ball, which threw all Berlin into agitation last winter, under the name of *A fête at the Court of Ferrara*, and for which Meyerbeer wrote a host of pieces.

These etiquette concerts always seem cold; but they are found agreeable when they are over, because they usually bring together some listeners with whom one is proud and happy to have a moment's conversation. Thus I met M. Alexander v. Humboldt at the Prince's, that shining hero of literary science, that great anatomist of the terrestrial globe.

Several times during the evening, the King, Queen and Princess of Prussia came to talk with me about the concert I had just given at the Grand Theatre, to ask my opinion of the principal Prussian artists, to ask me questions about my manner of orchestration, etc., etc. The king said that I had played the devil with the musicians in his orchestra. After supper His Majesty was getting ready to retire to his apartments, but coming up to me of a sudden, and, as if altering his mind:

"By the way, Monsieur Berlioz, what are you going to give us at your next concert?"

"Sire, I shall repeat half of the last program, and add to it five movements of my *Roméo et Juliette* symphony."

"Of *Roméo et Juliette!* and I shall be out of town! But we must hear that! I will come back."

In fact, the evening of my second concert, five minutes before the advertised time, the king stepped from his carriage and entered his box.

Now shall I tell you about these two concerts? They gave me a good deal of trouble I assure you. And yet the artists are clever, they were most kindly disposed, and Meyerbeer seemed to multiply himself to come to my aid. But the daily service of a great theatre like the Berlin opera has requirements that are always very awkward, and incompatible with the preparations for a concert; and, to turn aside and conquer the difficulties that arose every instant, Meyerbeer had to use more strength and skill, I am sure, than he did when the *Huguenots* was first put upon the stage. I had wished to give in Berlin the great numbers of the *Requiem*, those of the *Prose (Dies irae*, *Lacrymosa*, etc.*)*, which I had not yet attempted in the other cities of Germany; and you know what a vocal and instrumental apparatus they require. I had luckily notified Meyerbeer of my intention, and he had already been hunting up the means of execution I needed before my arrival. As for the four small orchestras of brass instruments, they were easily found; we might have had thirty if we had needed them; but the kettle-drums and the drummers gave us much trouble. At last, with the assistance of the excellent Wiprecht, we contrived to get them together.

They put us for the first rehearsals in a splendid concert-hall belonging to the second theatre, of which the sonority is unfortunately so great that on coming into it I immediately saw that we should have trouble. The sound being unduly prolonged, caused an insupportable confusion, and made our orchestral studies excessively difficult. There was even one piece (the *scherzo* of *Roméo et Juliette*) that we had to give up, not having succeeded, after an hour's work, in getting through more than half of it. Yet the orchestra, I repeat, was as well composed as possible. We had not time enough, and were forced to postpone the *scherzo* to the second concert. At last I began to get accustomed to the row we made, and to detect in that chaos of sounds what was well or ill done by the players; we pursued our studies without taking into account the, very luckily, quite different effect we obtained afterwards in the opera-house. The overture to *Benvenuto*, *Harold*, Weber's *Invitation à la valse*, and the numbers from the *Requiem* were thus learned by the orchestra alone, the chorus working separately in another hall. At the special rehearsal I had asked for, for the four orchestras of brass instruments in the *Dies Iræ* and *Lacrymosa*, I observed for the third time a fact which I am not yet able to explain, and which is this:

In the middle of the *Tuba mirum* there is a call for the four groups of trombones on the four notes of the chord of *G-major* successively. The *tempo* is very broad; the first group ought to give *G* on the first beat; the second, *B* on the second; the third, *D* on the third, and the fourth, octave *G* on the fourth. Well! when this *Requiem* was performed for the first time in the church of the Invalides in Paris, it was impossible to obtain an execution of this passage. When I afterwards gave selections from it at the Opéra, after having rehearsed this solitary measure to no purpose for a quarter of an hour, I had to give it up; there were always one or two groups that did not strike in; it was invariably that on *B*, or that on *D*, or both. In casting my eyes upon this place in the score in Berlin, I immediately thought of the restive trombones in Paris:

"Ah, let us see," said I to myself, "whether the Prussian artists will succeed in forcing this open door!"

Alas no! vain efforts! Nor rage, nor patience do any good! impossible to obtain the entry either of the second or the third groups; even the fourth, not hearing its cue, which ought to have been given by the others, does not go off any better. I take them separately, I ask No. 2 to give me its *B*.

It does it very well.

Turning to No. 3, I ask for its *D*.

It gives it without difficulty.

Now let us have the four notes one after the other, in the order in which they are written! . . . Impossible! wholly impossible! and we must give it up! . . . Can you understand that? and is it not enough to make a man butt his head against the wall? . . .

And when I asked the trombone-players in Paris and Berlin why they did not play in that fatal measure, they could only answer that they did not know why themselves; those two notes fascinated them.[1]

I must write to H. Romberg, who brought out this work in St. Petersburg, to know whether the Russian trombones were able to break the spell.

For the rest of the program the orchestra understood and rendered my intentions in a superior manner. Soon we were able to have a general rehearsal in the opera-house, on an amphitheatre of seats built on the stage, as for the concert. Symphony, overture, *cantata*, all went satisfactorily; but when the turn came for the numbers from the *Requiem*, general panic; the choruses, which I had not been able to drill myself, had rehearsed in *tempi* different from mine, and when they suddenly found themselves mixed up with the orchestra with the true *tempi*, they no longer knew what they were about; they came in wrong or without assurance; and in the *Lacrymosa* the tenors did not sing at all. I did not know what saint to call upon. Meyerbeer, who was not at all well that day, had not been able to leave his bed; the director of the chorus, Elssler, was also ill; the orchestra was becoming demoralized at the sight of the chorus all topsy-turvey. . . I sat down for an instant, broken down, annihilated, asking myself whether I had not better throw up everything and leave Berlin that very evening. And I thought of you in that evil moment, saying to myself:

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[1] At the last two performances of the *Requiem* in the Church of Saint-Eustache in Paris, this passage was at last given without a mistake.

"To persist is madness! Oh! if Desmarest were here, he who is never satisfied with our rehearsals at the Conservatoire, and if he saw me decided to have the concert announced for to-morrow, I know what he would do; he would lock me up in my room, put the key in his pocket, and bravely go and announce to the *intendant* of the theatre that the concert cannot come off."

You would not have failed to do so, would you? Well! you would have been in the wrong. Here is the proof. After the first shock was over, the first cold sweat wiped away, I took my decision, and said:

"This must go."

Ries and Ganz, the two *Conzertmeisters*, were beside me, not quite knowing what to say to wind me up again; I say to them sharply:

"Are you sure of the orchestra?"

"Yes! you have nothing to fear on that score, we are very tired; but we have understood your music, and you will be satisfied to-morrow."

"Then there is only one thing to be done: the chorus must be called together for to-morrow morning; I must have a good accompanyist, as Elssler is ill, and you, Ganz, or else you, Ries, will come with your violin, and we will rehearse the singing for three hours, if need be."

"That is it; we will be there, the orders shall be given."

So next morning there we are at our work. Ries, the accompanyist and I; we take in turn the boys, the women, the first *soprani*, the second *soprani*, the first tenors, the second tenors, the first and second basses; we have them sing by groups of ten, then by twenties, after which we combine two parts, three, four, and at last all the voices. And like Phæton in the fable I at last cry out:

Qu'est-ce ceci? Mon char marche à souhait! (What is this? My chariot goes as I wish!)

I make a little speech to the chorus, which Ries translates for them, sentence by sentence, into German; and there are all my people revived, full of courage, and delighted not to have lost this great battle, where their self-love and mine were at stake. It is needless to say that, in the evening, the overture, the symphony and the *cantata* of the *Fifth of May* were royally performed. With such an orchestra, and a singer like Boeticher, it could not have been otherwise. But when the *Requiem* came, every one being very attentive, very devoted and desirous of seconding me, the orchestras and the chorus being in perfect order, every one at his post, nothing wanting, we began the *Dies iræ*. Not a mistake, no wavering; the chorus sustained the instrumental assault without winking; the four-fold fanfare burst from the four corners of the stage, which trembled under the rolls of the ten drummers, under the *tremolo* of fifty unchained bows; the hundred and twenty voices, in the midst of this cataclysm of sinister harmonies, of noises from the other world, launched forth their terrible prediction:

"Judex ergo cum sedebit
Quidquid latet apparebit!"

The audience covered the entry of the *Liber scriptus* for a moment with their applause, and we reached the last chords *sotto voce* of the *Mors stupebit*, trembling, but victorious. And what joy among the performers, what glances exchanged from one end of the stage to the other! As for me, I had the beating of a bell in my breast, a mill-wheel in my head, my knees knocked together, I dug my nails into the wood of my desk, and if, at the last measure, I had not forced myself to laugh, and talk very loud and very fast to Ries, who held me up, I am sure that, for the first time in my life, I should have, as the soldiers say, *shown the whites of my eyes* in a very ridiculous way. Having once stood fire, the rest was but child's-play, and the *Lacrymosa* ended, entirely to the satisfaction of the composer, this apocalyptic evening.

At the end of the concert many people spoke to me, congratulated me, and shook me by the hand; but I stood there without understanding . . . without feeling anything . . . the brain and nervous system had made too great an effort; I *idiotized* myself, so as to rest. It was only Wiprecht, with his cuirassier's squeeze, who had the talent to bring me to myself. He really made my ribs crack, the worthy man, mixing up his ejaculations with Teutonic oaths, by the side of which those of Guhr were but as many *Ave Marias.*

He who had then thrown a sounding line into my throbbing joy, would surely not have touched bottom. So you will admit that it is sometimes wise to do a piece of folly; for without my extravagant daring the concert would not have taken place, the work at the theatre being laid out for a long time so as to prevent my recommencing the study of the *Requiem.*

For the second concert I announced, as I have already said, five movements from *Roméo et Juliette*, the *Queen Mab* being of the number. During the fifteen days which separated the second concert from the first, Ganz and Taubert had studied attentively the score of this *scherzo*, and when they saw me bent upon giving it, it was their turn to be afraid:

"We shall not succeed," said they to me; "you know that we can only have two rehearsals, and we ought to have five or six; nothing is more difficult nor more dangerous; it is a musical spider's web, and without extraordinary delicacy of touch, we shall tear it to shreds."

"Bah! I bet that we shall come out with it yet; we have only two rehearsals, it is true, but there are only five new pieces to be learned, of which four do not present any great difficulties. Besides, the orchestra already has some idea of this *scherzo* from the first partial trial that we made, and Meyerbeer has spoken about it to the king who wishes to hear it, and I also wish the artists to know what it is, and it will go."

And it did go almost as well as in Brunswick. Much can be dared with such musicians, with musicians indeed who, before being conducted by Meyerbeer, had for a long time been under the sceptre of Spontini.

This second concert had the same result as the first. The selections from *Roméo* were very well done. The *Queen Mab* puzzled the audience not a little, even some listeners who were learned in music, as the Princess of Prussia, who positively wished to know how I had produced the effect in the accompaniment of the *allegretto*, and did not suspect that it was done by harmonics on the violins and harps in several parts. The king preferred the *Festival at the House of Capulet*, and sent to ask me for a copy; but I think the sympathies of the orchestra were rather for the *love scene* (the *adagio*). The musicians of Berlin have, in that case, the same way of feeling as those in Paris. Mademoiselle Hähnel had sung the verses for contralto in the prologue very simply at the rehearsals; but at the concert she thought that she must embellish the hold at the end of these two lines:

"Où se consume
Le rossignol en longs soupirs!"

(Where the nightingale pines away in long-drawn sighs!) with a long trill to imitate the nightingale. Oh! mademoiselle! ! ! what treason! and you look so good and innocent!

Well! to the *Dies iræ*, the *Tuba mirum*, the *Lacrymosa*, the *Offertory* of the *Requiem*, to the overtures to *Benvenuto* and *King Lear*, to *Harold*, his *Serenade*, his *Pilgrims* and his *Brigands*, to *Roméo et Juliette*, to *Capulet's* concert and ball, to the witcheries of *Queen Mab*, to every thing that was given in Berlin, there are some people who simply prefer the *Fifth of May!* . . . Impressions are as various as physiognomies, I know; but when they told me that, I must have made a singular face. Happily I quote here wholly exceptional opinions.

Good-bye, my dear Desmarest; you know that we have an anthem to sing to the public in a few days at the Conservatoire; bring me back your sixteen violoncelli; the great singers, I shall be very happy to hear them again, and to see you at their head. It is so long since we have sung together! And, to give them a warm reception, tell them that I will conduct them with Mendelssohn's *bâton*.

Ever yours.

TO M. G. OSBORNE.

TENTH LETTER.

HANOVER, DARMSTADT.

ALAS! alas! my dear Osborne, here my journey draws to a close! I am leaving Prussia, full of gratitude for the welcome it has given me, for the warm sympathy of its artists, for the indulgence of critics and public; but tired, used up, broken down by the fatigue of this life of exorbitant activity, by these continual rehearsals with new orchestras. So much so that I have given up going to Breslau, Vienna and Munich. I am returning to France; and already, from a certain vague agitation, from a sort of fever that disturbs my blood, from an anxiety without an object, of which my head and heart are full, I feel that I am in communication with the electric current of Paris. Paris! Paris! as our great modern poet, A. Barbier, has too faithfully painted it:

> " . . . . . . Cette infernale cuve.
> Cette fosse de pierre aux immenses contours,
> Qu'une eau jaune et terreuse enferme à triples tours;
> C'est un volcan fumeux et toujours en haleine
> Qui remue à long flot de la matière humaine.
> . . . .
> . . . .
> Là personne ne dort, là toujours le cerveau
> Travaille, et, comme l'arc, tend son rude cordeau."

(That infernal caldron. That stone ditch of immense outlines, which a yellow and earthy water shuts in with a thrice-turned key; a smoky volcano always in full blast, which stirs up human lava in long waves. . . . . . There no one sleeps, there the brain works without stopping, and, like the bow, stretches its tough string.)

It is there that our art now dully sleeps and now boils up; it is there that it is at once sublime and mediocre, proud and crawling, beggar and king; it is there that it is exalted and despised, adored and insulted; it is in Paris that it has faithful, enthusiastic, intelligent and devoted followers, it is in Paris that it too often speaks to the deaf, to idiots and savages. Here it walks onward and moves in liberty; there its sinewy limbs, imprisoned in the clinging bands of routine, that toothless old hag, hardly allow it a slow and ungraceful crawl. It is in Paris that it is crowned and worshiped like a god, provided that only lean victims are to be sacrificed on its altars. It is in Paris also that its temples are flooded with splendid gifts, on condition that the god shall become a man, and at times a merry-andrew. In Paris the scrofulous and adulterine brother of *art*, *trade*, covered with tinsel, parades its plebeian insolence before all eyes, and *art* itself, the Pythian Apollo, in his divine nudity, hardly deigns, it is true, to interrupt his lofty contemplations, and let fall on *trade* a disdainful glance and smile. But sometimes, oh shame! the bastard importunes his brother to the point of obtaining from him incredible favors; it is then that we see him glide into the car of light, grasp the reins and try to make the immortal quadriga back; until, astounded at so much stupid audacity, the true driver tears him from his seat, hurls him headlong, and forgets him. . .

It is money, then, that brings about this transitory and horrible alliance; it is the love of sudden and immediate lucre that sometimes thus poisons chosen souls:

"L'argent, l'argent fatal, dernier dieu des humains,
Les prend par les cheveux, les secoue à deux mains,
Les pousse dans le mal, et pour un vil salaire
Leur mettrait les deux pieds sur le corps de leur père."

(Money, fatal money, last god of the human race, takes them by the hair, shakes them in both hands, thrusts them into evil, and for a vile wages, would put both their feet upon the body of their father.)

And those noble souls usually fall only from having misunderstood these sad but incontestable truths: that with our present morals, and our form of government, the more of an artist an artist is, the more he must suffer; the newer and greater his productions are, the more severely must he be punished by the consequences his work brings with it; the more lofty and swift the flight of his thought, the farther will it be beyond the reach of the weak eyes of the crowd.

The Medicis are dead. Our deputies are not the men to take their place. You know the profound saying of that provincial Lycurgus, who, when he heard one of our great poets read some verses, the one who wrote *la Chûte d'un Ange*, said, while opening his snuff-box with a paternal air: "Yes, I've got a nephew who writes little *c . . . . nades*[1] like that!" Now go and ask encouragement for art from that *colleague of the poet.*

You *virtuosi* who do not sway musical masses, who only write for the orchestra of your own two hands, who do without large halls and numerous choruses, you have less to fear from the contact with *bourgeois* customs; and yet, you too feel their effects. Scribble some brilliant futility, publishers will cover it with gold and fight over it among themselves; but if you have the misfortune to develop a serious idea in a large form, then you are sure of your bargain, your work remains on your hands, or at the very least, if it is published, nobody buys it.

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[1] In Italian *coglionerie.*

It is true, and be it said for the justification of Paris and constitutionalism, that it is the same thing everywhere. In Vienna, as here, they pay 1000 francs for a song or waltz by a fashionable maker, and Beethoven was forced to let them have his Symphony in *C-minor* for less than 100 crowns.

You have published in London trios and divers compositions for the piano-forte of a very broad make, in a style full of elevation; and even without going to your grand repertory, your songs for a single voice, such as: *The beating of my own heart*, *My lonely home*, or yet *Such things were*, which your sister, Mrs. Hampton, sings so poetically, are charming things. Nothing excites the imagination more vividily, I own, in making it fly to the green hills of Ireland, than these virginal melodies of so *naïf* and original a cut that they seem to have been wafted by the evening breeze over the rippling waves of the lakes of Killarney, than these hymns of resigned love, to which we listen, touched we know not why, dreaming of solitude, of great nature, of beloved beings who are no more, of heroes of by-gone ages, of our suffering country, of death even, death, *dreamy and calm as night*, in the words of your national poet, Th. Moore. Well! place all these inspirations, all this poetry with a melancholy smile, in the scales with some turbulent *caprice* without wit or heart, such as music dealers often order of you on more or less vulgar themes from new operas, in which notes skip about, pursue each other, roll over each other like a handful of bells shaken up in a bag, and you will see on which side the pecuniary success will be.

No, we must make up our minds to it; except in certain circumstances brought about by chance, except in certain associations with the inferior arts which always lower it, our art is not productive in the commercial sense of the term; it appeals too exclusively to exceptional individuals in intelligent communities, it requires too many preparations, too many means for its external manifestation. So there must be a sort of honorable ostracism for the minds that cultivate it without being preoccupied with interests that are foreign to it. Even the greatest peoples are, in their relation to pure artists, like the deputy I spoke of just now: they always number, by the side of the colossuses of human genius, *some nephews who also write*, etc.

We find in the archives of one of the theatres in London a letter addressed to Queen Elizabeth by a troupe of actors, and signed by twenty obscure names, among which is found that of William Shakspere, with this collective designation: *Your poor players.* Shakspere was one of those *poor players.* . . . Yet dramatic art was more appreciable by the masses in Shakspere's day than musical art is in our own time in countries where they pretend to have some sentiment for it. Music is essentially aristocratic; it is a daughter of the blood, whom only princes can endow to-day, and who should live poor and a virgin rather than make a *mésalliance.* You have, no doubt, often made these very reflections yourself, and will thank me, I fancy, to stop them, and come to the account of the last two concerts that I gave in Germany after leaving Berlin.

This account will have, I fear, little interest for you, as far as it concerns myself; I shall still have to mention works of which I have already, perhaps, said too much in my former letters; always the eternal *Fifth of May*, *Harold*, the selections from *Roméo et Juliette*, etc. Always the same difficulty in finding certain instruments, the same excellence in the other parts of the orchestra, which constitute what I shall call the old orchestra, the orchestra of Mozart; and always the same faults invariably coming up again and again at the first trial, at the same places, in the same pieces, to disappear afterwards after some attentive studies.

I did not stop at Magdeburg, where, however, a rather original success awaited me: I was nearly insulted for having the audacity to call myself by my own name; and that too by one of the *employés* of the post, who, while registering my luggage and examining the inscription the various pieces bore, asked me with a suspicious look:

"Berlioz? Componist?"

"Ja!"

Thereupon, immense rage of the worthy fellow, caused by my impudence in trying to pass myself off as Berlioz the composer. He had, without doubt, imagined that that amazing musician only traveled on a hippogryph, in the midst of fiery flames, or surrounded by sumptuous paraphernalia and a respectable retinue of servants. So that when he saw a man come, made and unmade like any other man who has been at once frozen and smoked in a railway carriage, a man who had his own trunk weighed, who walked himself, who spoke French himself, and who only knew how to say *Ja* in German, he at once concluded that I was an imposter. As you can well imagine, his grumblings and shoulder-shruggings enchanted me; the more disdainful his pantomime and his accents became, the higher I carried my head; if he had beaten me, I should have kissed him without a shadow of a doubt. Another *employé*, who spoke my language very well, showed himself more disposed to allow me the right to be myself; but the polite things he said to me flattered me infinitely less than the incredulity of his simple comrade and his good bad humor. Yet see, a half a million would have deprived me of that success! I shall take good care in the future not to carry one about with me, but to always travel in the same way. This is not, after all, the opinion of our witty and jovial dramatic critic, Perpignan, who, on hearing of the man whose life was saved in a duel by a five-franc piece in his waistcoat-pocket stopping his adversary's ball, cried out: "Those rich folk are the only lucky ones! Now I should have been killed on the spot!"

I arrive in Hanover; A. Bohrer expected me there. The *intendant*, M. de Meding, had had the kindness to place the orchestra and theatre at my disposal, and I was going to begin my rehearsals, when the death of the Duke of Sussex, a relation of the King, threw the Court into mourning, so that the concert had to be put off for a week. So I had a little more time to make the acquaintance of the principal artists, who were soon to suffer from the bad character of my compositions.

I could not get much acquainted with the *Kapellmeister*, Marschner; the difficulty he experienced in expressing himself in French made our conversations rather laborious; besides, he is very busy. He is at present one of the first composers in Germany, and you appreciate, as we all do, the eminent merit of his scores of the *Vampyr* and the *Templer*. As for A. Bohrer, I knew him already; Beethoven's trios and quartettes had drawn us together in Paris, and the enthusiasm with which we then burned had not grown cold since then. A. Bohrer is one of the men who seem to me to have best understood and felt those of Beethoven's works which are reputed unintelligible and eccentric. I still see him at the quartette rehearsals, in which his brother Max (the famous violoncellist, now in America), Claudel, the second violin, and Urhan, the viola, seconded him so well. In listening to and studying this transcendent music, Max used to smile with pride and joy; he seemed to be in his native atmosphere and breathe it with ecstasy. Urhan adored in silence, and cast down his eyes, as before the sun; he seemed to say: "God has willed that there should be a man as great as Beethoven, and that we should be allowed to contemplate him; God has willed it!!!" Claudel admired above all else these profound admirations. As for Anton Bohrer, the first violin, he was passion at its apogee, he was ecstatic love. One evening, in one of these superhuman *adagios*, in which Beethoven's genius soars immense and solitary, like the colossal bird of the snowy peaks of Chimborazo, Bohrer's violin, singing the sublime melody, seemed animated by the epic afflatus; its voice redoubled its expressive power, burst forth in accents unknown to itself; inspiration radiated from the countenance of the *virtuoso;* we held our breath, our hearts swelled, when A. Bohrer, stopping all of a sudden, put down his burning bow and fled into the next room. Madame Bohrer anxiously followed him, and Max, still smiling, said:

"It is nothing; he could not contain himself; let him calm himself a little and we will begin again. You must pardon him!"

Pardon him . . . . dear artist!

Anton Bohrer fills the place of *Conzertmeister* in Hanover; he composes but little now; his favorite occupation consists in directing the musical education of his daughter, a charming child of twelve, whose prodigious organization inspires all about her with alarms that are easily conceivable. Her talent as a pianist is very extraordinary, to begin with; then her memory is such that at the concerts which she gave last year in Vienna, her father, instead of a program, presented the audience with a list of seventy-two pieces, *sonatas*, *concertos*, *fantasias*, fugues, variations, studies, by Beethoven, Weber, Cramer, Bach, Händel, Liszt, Thalberg, Chopin, Döhler, etc., which the little Sophie knows by heart; and which she could, without hesitation, play from memory as the audience asked for them. It is enough for her to play a piece, of no matter what length or complicated structure, three or four times to retain it and not forget it again. That so many different combinations should be engraved on that young brain! Is it not something monstrous, calculated as much to inspire fright as admiration?

It is to be hoped that the little Sophie, when she becomes Mademoiselle Bohrer, will come back to us in a few years, and that the Parisian public can then acquaint itself with that phenomenal talent, of which it has as yet a very feeble idea.

The Hanover orchestra is good, but too poor in stringed instruments. It has in all only seven first violions, seven second, three violas, four violoncelli, and three double-basses. There are some infirm violins; the violoncelli are skillful; the violas and basses good. Only praises are to be given to the wind instruments, especially to the first flute and first oboe (Edouard Rose), who plays a superb *pianissimo*, and the first clarinet, whose tone is exquisite. The two bassoons (there are but two) play true, which is cruelly rare. The horns are not first-rate, but they will do; the trombones are firm, the plain trumpets good enough; there is a superlatively excellent trumpet with cylinders; the name of the artist who plays this instrument is, like that of his rival in Weimar, Sachse; I do not know to which of them to give the palm. The first oboe plays the English-horn, but his instrument is very false. There is no ophicleide; the bass-tubas of the military band can be turned to good account. The kettle-drummer is middling; the *musician* who plays the big drum *is no musician;* the man who plays the cymbals is not sure, and the cymbals themselves are so broken that there is not more than a third of either of them left.

There is a harp, pretty well played by one of the ladies of the chorus. She is no *virtuoso*, but has a good command over her instrument, and forms, with the harpists of Stuttgard, Berlin, and Hamburg, the only exceptions that I met with in Germany, where the harpists as a general rule do not know how to play on the harp. Unfortunately she is very timid and not much of a musician; but when you give her some days to study her part, you can trust her exactness. She forms the harmonics very well; her harp is with double-action, and a very good one.

The chorus is small; it is a little group of forty voices, but which has some value nevertheless; they all sing true; the tenors are also precious from their quality of voice. The singing troupe is mediocre; with the exception of the bass, Steinmüller, an excellent musician with a fine voice, which he uses skillfully, forcing it a little at times, I heard nothing that struck me as worthy of mention.

We could only have two rehearsals; even that was found extraordinary, and some of the members of the orchestra grumbled aloud. It was the only time that this sort of thing happened to me in Germany, where the artists constantly welcomed me like a brother, without ever complaining of the time or the trouble that the rehearsals for my concerts required of them. A. Bohrer was in despair; he wished to have four rehearsals, or at least three; but it could not be brought about. The performance was passable, however, but cold and without power. Just imagine, three double-basses! and on each side six violins and a half!!! The public was polite, that was all; I fancy that it is still asking itself what that devil of a concert meant.

Doctor Griepenkerl had come from Brunswick on purpose to be present at it; he must have found a notable difference in the artistic spirit of the two cities. We amused ourselves, he, some military Brunswickers and I, by tormenting poor Bohrer, telling him about the musical *fête* they had given me in Brunswick three months before; these details cut him to the heart. Then M. Griepenkerl made me a present of the work he had written about me and asked in return for the *bâton* with which I had just conducted the performance of the *Fifth of May*.

Let us hope that these *bâtons*, thus planted in France and Germany, will take root and grow to be trees, which will some day give me a little shade. . . . .

The Prince Royal of Hanover was present at the concert. I had the honor to talk with him a few moments before my departure, and I think myself fortunate to have known his gracious affability of manner, and distinction of mind, of which a frightful misfortune (loss of sight) has not disturbed the serenity.

Let us now be off for Darmstadt. I pass through Cassel at seven in the morning.

Spohr is asleep,[1] it will not do to wake him.

Let us go on. I come to Frankfort for the fourth time. I find Parish-Alvars there, who magnetizes me by playing his *fantasia* in harmonics on the *Chorus of Naiads* in *Oberon*. Decidedly that man is a magician; his harp is a siren with beautiful arched neck, long disheveled hair, who exhales fascinating sounds of another world, in the passionate embrace of his strong arms. Here is Guhr, much disturbed by the workmen who are restoring his theatre. Ah! faith, pardon me for leaving you, Osborne, to say a few words to that redoubtable *Kapellmeister*, whose name comes again under my pen; I shall be back again in a moment.

"MY DEAR GUHR:

"Do you know that several persons have made me fear that you had taken in ill part the fun I allowed myself about you, in telling of our first interview? I doubted it strongly, knowing your wit, and yet the doubt troubled me. Bravo! I learn that, far from being angry at the dissonances I lent to the harmony of your conversation, you were the first to laugh at them, and that you had printed in one of the Frankfort papers the German translation of the letter which contained them. That is right! you can take a joke, and besides, a man is not lost for swearing a little. *Vivat! terque quaterque vivat!* S. N. T. T. Count me really and truly among your best friends; and accept a thousand new compliments upon your orchestra in Frankfort; it is worthy of being conducted by an artist like yourself.

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[1] Spohr is *Kapellmeister* in Cassel.

"Good-bye, good-bye, S. N. T. T."

Here I am again!

Ah! but come now! let me see; we were talking about Darmstadt. We shall find some friends there, among others L. Schlosser, the *Conzertmeister*, who once studied with me under Lesueur during his stay in Paris. I had brought, moreover, letters from M. de Rothschild, of Frankfort, to the Prince Emile, who gave me the most charming welcome, and obtained from the Grand-Duke for my concert more than I had dared to hope for. In most of the German cities that I had given concerts in up to that time, my arrangements with the *intendants* of theatres had been almost always the same: the administration payed almost all the expenses, and I received half of the gross receipts. (The theatre in Weimar, alone, had the courtesy to leave me the whole receipts. I have already said that Weimar is an artistic city, and that the ducal family know how to honor the arts).

Well! in Darmstadt the Grand-Duke not only granted me the same favor, but wished to exempt me from every sort of expense. One may be sure that this generous sovereign has no *nephews who also write little*, etc., etc.

The concert was promptly organized, and the orchestra, far from having to be asked to rehearse, would have liked to give another week to study. We had five rehearsals. All went well, with the exception, however, of the double chorus of *Young Capulet's coming out from the Festival* in the beginning of the love-scene in *Roméo et Juliette*. The execution of this piece was a veritable vocal rout; the tenors of the second chorus flatted nearly half a tone, and those of the first chorus missed their entry at the return of the theme. The chorus-leader was in a state of fury, which was all the more conceivable that he had taken infinite pains to teach the chorus during eight days.

The Darmstadt orchestra is a little larger than that in Hanover; it has an excellent ophicleide, which is an exception. The harp part is given to a *painter*, who, in spite of the most well-meant efforts, is never sure of giving much *color* to his execution. The rest of the instrumental body is well composed and spirited. There is one remarkable *virtuoso* in it. His name is Müller, but he does not belong to the celebrated Müller family of Brunswick. His stature is almost colossal, which allows him to play the true double-bass with four strings with extraordinary ease. Without trying, as he might do, to execute scales and *arpeggi* of useless difficulty and grotesque effect, he sings gravely and nobly on the enormous instrument, and can draw from it sounds of great beauty, which he shades with a great deal of art and sentiment. I heard him *sing* a very beautiful *adagio*, composed by the younger Mangold, brother of the *Kapellmeister*, in a way to profoundly move a severe audience. It was at an evening party given by Doctor Huth, the first music lover in Darmstadt, who, in his sphere, does for art what M. Alsager does in London in his, and whose influence upon the public musical spirit is consequently great. Müller is a conquest to tempt many composers and orchestra conductors; but the Grand-Duke will very certainly keep him with all his might.

The *Kapellmeister*, Mangold, clever and excellent man, got a great part of his musical education in Paris, where he was accounted one of the best pupils of Reicha. So he was a school-mate of mine, and he treated me like one. As for Schlosser, the *Conzertmeister* already mentioned, he showed himself to be such a capital fellow, he seconded me with such ardor, that it is really impossible for me to speak as I ought of such of his compositions as he allowed me to read; I should seem to be acknowledging his hospitality, when I should only be doing him justice. A new proof of the truth of the anti-proverb: A good deed is always lost!

There is a military band in Darmstadt of thirty musicians; I really envied the Grand-Duke. They all play true, have style, and a feeling for rhythm that makes even the drum-parts interesting.

Reichel (the immense bass voice that was of such use to me in Hamburg) had been for some time in Darmstadt when I arrived, and had had a positive triumph in the part of *Marcel* in the *Huguenots*. He again had the kindness to sing in the *Fifth of May*, but with a talent and sensibility far beyond the qualities he had shown in singing it the first time. He was especially admirable in the last verse, the most difficult of all to give with the proper light and shade:

"Wie? Sterben er? o Ruhm, wie verwaist bist Du!"
"Quoi? lui mourir? ô gloire, quel veuvage!"

(What? He die? Oh glory, what a widowhood!

Then the air from Mozart's *Figaro*, "*Non più andrai*," which we had added to the program, showed the versatility of his talent, and made it shine in another phase. It got him an encore from the whole house, and a very advantageous engagement at the Darmstadt theatre next day. I shall dispense with telling you . . . . the rest. If you go to those parts they will only tell you that I had the artless vanity to find both public and artists very intelligent.

So here we are, my dear Osborne, at the end of this pilgrimage, perhaps the most difficult a musician ever undertook, and the recollection of which, I feel, will hover over the rest of my life. Like the religious men of ancient Greece, I have just consulted the Oracle of Delphi. Have I understood the meaning of its answer aright? May I believe what there is in it favorable to my wishes? . . . Are there not deceptive oracles? . . . The future, the future alone can decide. Be it as it may, I must return to France and at last bid farewell to Germany, that noble second mother to all sons of harmony. But where shall I find expressions to equal my gratitude, my admiration and my regrets? . . . What hymn can I sing that shall be worthy of the greatness of her glory? . . . I can only bow down with respect, on leaving her, and say to her in a voice full of emotion:

Vale, Germania, alma parens!

SELECTIONS FROM

EVENINGS IN THE ORCHESTRA

TO

MY GOOD FRIENDS

THE ARTISTS OF THE ORCHESTRA

IN X*****

A CIVILIZED CITY

EVENINGS IN THE ORCHESTRA.

PROLOGUE.

THERE is a lyric theatre in the north of Europe in which it is the custom for the musicians of the orchestra, of whom many are men of wit, to indulge in reading and even in chit-chat of more or less musical nature during the performance of mediocre operas. That is to say, that a good deal of reading and talking goes on. A book of some sort or another is consequently to be found on the desks by the side of the sheets of music; so that the musician who seems the most absorbed in the contemplation of his part, the most taken up with counting his rests, or in following his cue, is often deep in the marvelous scenes of Balzac, the charming pictures of life of Dickens, or even the study of some science. I know one who, during the first fifteen performances of a famous opera, read, reread, meditated upon and understood the three volumes of Humboldt's *Cosmos;* another who, during the protracted success of a silly work, very obscure to-day, succeeded in learning English; and still another who, gifted with an exceptional memory, repeated to his neighbors over ten volumes of tales, stories, anecdotes and jokes.

One solitary individual in this orchestra does not allow himself to indulge in any amusement. Engrossed in his business, active, indefatigable, his eyes riveted upon the notes, his arm always in motion, he would think himself dishonored if he omitted a single crotchet, or earned a reproach for his quality of tone. At the end of each act, red, perspiring, tired out, he hardly breathes; and yet he dare not profit by the few minutes the cessation of musical hostilities allows him, to go and drink a glass of beer at the neighboring *café*. The fear of missing the first measures of the next act by being late is enough to nail him to his post. Touched by his zeal, the director of the theatre at which he is engaged sent him one day six bottles of wine *as an encouragement*. The artist, strong in the consciousness of his worth, far from accepting this present gratefully, sent it proudly back to the director, with these words: "I have no need of encouragement!" You have guessed that I mean the man who performs on the big-drum.

His comrades, on the contrary, hardly ever pause in their reading, story-telling, discussions or chit-chat, except in favor of great masterpieces, or when, in common operas, the composer has given them a leading and prominent part, in which case their voluntary distraction would be too easily noticed and would compromise them. But even then, as the whole orchestra is never put in a prominent position at once, it results that, if the conversation and literary studies languish in one part, they revive in another, and that the good talkers take the floor on the left when the others take up their instruments on the right.

My assiduity in frequenting this club as an amateur, during my yearly stay in the town in which it is formed, allowed me to hear quite a number of anecdotes and short stories; I even admit that I have often returned the politeness of the story-tellers by telling or reading aloud something in my turn. The orchestra player is a gossip by nature, and when he has interested his hearers, or made them laugh by some pun or story, were it even on the 25th of December, you may be very sure that he will not wait for the end of the year before trying for new success by the same means. So that by dint of listening to these pretty things, I found at last that they bored me almost as much as the flat scores to which they were made to serve as an accompaniment; and I made up my mind to write them down, and even to publish them, diversified by the episodic dialogue of the hearers and narrators, so as to give a copy to each of them, and have done with it.

It is agreed that the performer on the big-drum alone will come in for no part of my bibliographic bounty: so laborious and strong a man disdains the exercise of wit.

SEVENTH EVENING.

AN HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY

De viris illustribus urbis Romæ.—A Roman Woman.—Vocabulary of the Language of the Romans.

A VERY flat modern Italian opera is played.

An *habitué* of the parquet-stalls, who seemed deeply interested in the readings and stories of the musicians on previous evenings, leans over into the orchestra and addresses me: "Sir, you commonly live in Paris, do you not?" "Yes, sir, I even live there uncommonly, and often more than I could wish." "In that case you must be familiar with the singular dialect spoken there, and which your papers also use sometimes. Will you please explain to me what they mean when, in describing certain occurrences that seem to be pretty frequent at dramatic performances, they talk about the Romans?" "Yes," say several musicians at once, "what is meant by that word in France?" "Why, gentlemen, you ask me for no less than a course of Roman history." "Well, why not?" "I fear that I have not the talent of being brief." "Oh, if that is all, the opera is in four acts, and we are with you up to eleven o'clock."

So, to bring myself at once into relations with the great men of this history, I will not go back to the sons of Mars, nor to Numa Pompilius; I will jump with my feet well under me over the kings, the dictators, and the consuls; and yet I must entitle the first chapter of my history:

DE VIRIS ILLUSTRIBUS URBIS ROMÆ.

"Nero—(you see that I pass without transition to the time of the emperors), Nero having formed a corporation of men whose duty it was to applaud him when he sang in public, the name of *Romans* is given in France to-day to professional applauders, vulgarly called *claqueurs*, or bouquet-throwers, and in general to all undertakers of success and enthusiasm. There are several kinds.

"The mother who courageously calls everybody's attention to the wit and beauty of her daughter, who is moderately beautiful and very silly; that mother who, in spite of her extreme love for her child, will make up her mind at the soonest possible moment to a cruel separation and place her in the arms of a husband, is a Roman.

"The author who, foreseeing the need he will be in next year of the praise of a critic whom he detests, vehemently sings the praises of that same critic on every occasion, is a Roman.

"The critic who is little enough of a Spartan to be caught in that clumsy trap becomes a Roman in his turn.

"The husband of the cantatrice who . . ." "We understand." "But the vulgar Romans, the crowd, the Roman people, in a word, is especially composed of those men whom Nero was the first to enlist. They go in the evening to the theatres, and even elsewhere, to applaud, under the direction of a leader and his lieutenants, the artists and works that that leader has pledged himself to uphold.

"There are many ways of applauding.

"The first, as you all know, consists in making as much noise as possible by striking one hand against the other. And in this first way there are varieties and different shades: the tip of the right hand struck against the palm of the left produces a sharp, reverberating sound that most artists prefer; both hands struck together, on the contrary, have a dull and vulgar sonority; it is only pupil *claqueurs* in their first year, or barbers' apprentices that applaud so.

"The gloved *claqueur*, dressed like a dandy, stretches his arms affectedly out of his box and claps slowly, almost without noise, and for the eye merely; he thus says to the whole house: 'See! I condescend to applaud.'

"The enthusiastic *claqueur* (for there are such) claps quick, loud, and long; his head turns to the right and left during this applause; then, these demonstrations not being enough, he stamps, he cries: '*Bravô! bravô!*' (note well the circumflex accent over the *o*) or: '*Bravà!*' (that one is learned, he has frequented the Italiens, he knows the difference between masculine and feminine) and redoubles his clamor in the ratio that the cloud of dust raised by his stamping increases in density.

"The *claqueur* disguised as an old gentleman of property, or as a colonel, strikes the floor with the end of his cane with a paternal air, and in moderation.

"The violinist-*claqueur*, for we have many artists in the Paris orchestras, who, either to pay their court to the director of the theatre, or their conductor, or to some beloved and powerful cantatrice, enlist for the time being in the Roman army; the violinist-*claqueur*, I say, taps the body of his violin with the back of his bow. This applause, rarer than the other kinds, is consequently more sought after. Unfortunately, cruel disenchantments have taught the gods and goddesses that they can hardly ever tell when the applause of the violins is ironical or serious. Hence the anxious smile of the divinities when they receive this homage.

"The kettle-drummer applauds by beating his drums; which does not happen once in fifteen years.

"The Roman ladies applaud sometimes with their gloved hands, but their influence has its full effect only when they cast their bouquets at the feet of the artist they uphold. As this sort of applause is rather expensive, it is commonly the nearest relation, the most intimate friend of the artist, or the artist himself who bears the expense. So much is given to the flower-throwers for their flowers, and so much for their enthusiasm; besides, a man or a nimble boy must be paid to go behind the scenes after the first shower of flowers, pick them up and bring them back to the Roman ladies in the stage-boxes, who use them a second and often a third time.

"We have also the sensitive Roman, who weeps, has nervous attacks, faints away. A very rare species, nearly extinct, closely related to the family of giraffes.

"But to confine ourselves to the study of the Roman people, properly so called, here is how and under what conditions they work:

"Given a man who, either from the impulse of a natural vocation, or by long and arduous studies, has succeeded in acquiring a real talent as a Roman: he goes to the director of a theatre and says to him pretty much as follows: 'Sir, you are at the head of a dramatic enterprise, the strong and weak points of which are known to me; you have as yet nobody to direct the *success;* intrust me with that; I offer you 20,000 francs down, and 10,000 francs per annum.' 'I want 30,000 francs down,' the director usually answers. 'Ten thousand francs ought not to stand in the way of our bargain; I will bring them to-morrow.' 'You have my word. I shall require a hundred men for ordinary occasions, and at least five hundred for first performances and important first appearances.' 'You shall have them, and more too.'" "What!" said one of the musicians, interrupting me, "is it the director that is payed! . . . I always thought it was the other party!" "Yes, sir, those offices are bought, like the business of an exchange-broker, or the practice of a lawyer or notary.

"When he once holds his *commission*, the head of the bureau of success, the emperor of the Romans, easily recruits his army among hair-dressers' apprentices, commercial travelers, cab-drivers *on foot*,[1] poor students, aspirants to the supernumerariat etc., etc., who have a passion for the theatre. He chooses a place of meeting for them, which is usually some obscure *café*, or a drinking-shop near to the centre of operations. There he counts them, gives them his instructions and tickets to the pit, or the third gallery, for which the poor devils pay thirty or forty sous, or less, according to the round of the theatrical ladder their establishment is on. The lieutenants alone always have free tickets. On great days they are paid by their chief. It even happens that, when a new work is to be *made to foam up from the bottom*, it costs the direction of the theatre a great deal of money, and that the chief not only does not find enough paying Romans, but cannot even find any devoted soldiers ready to give battle for the love of art. He is then obliged to pay the complement of his troupe, and to give each man as much as three francs and a glass of brandy.

"But in that case the emperor, on his part, does not only receive pit-tickets; it is bank-notes that fall into his pocket, and in almost incredible numbers. One of the artists who is to appear in the new piece wishes to be *supported* in an exceptional manner; he offers a few bills to the emperor. The latter puts on his coldest look, and pulling a handful of square bits of paper from his pocket: 'You see,' says he, 'that I do not want for them. What I want this evening is men, and to get them I must pay for them.' The artist takes the hint, and slips a scrap of five hundred francs into Cæsar's hand. The superior of the actor who has thus looked out for himself is not long in hearing of this piece of generosity; then the fear of not being *cared for* in proportion to his merit, considering the extraordinary *care* that is to be taken of his second, makes him offer the undertaker of successes a real note of 1,000 francs, and sometimes more. And so on from the head to the foot of the *dramatis personæ*. You understand now why and how the director of the theatre is paid by the director of the *claque*, and how easy it is for the latter to make money.

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[1] When a cab-driver has incurred the displeasure of the Prefect of Police, the latter forbids him to work at his trade of coachman for two or three weeks, in which case the unlucky fellow does not make anything, and does not, certainly, drive in a carriage. He is on foot. At such times he often enlists in the Roman infantry.

"The first great Roman that I knew at the Opéra in Paris was called Auguste: the name is a lucky one for a Cæsar. I have rarely seen more imposing majesty than his. He was cool and dignified, speaking little, wholly wrapped up in his meditations, his combinations and calculations of deep strategy. He was a good prince, nevertheless; and an *habitué* of the pit, as I was then, I was often the object of his benevolence. Besides, my fervor in applauding spontaneously Gluck and Spontini, Madame Branchu and Dérivis, gained for me his particular esteem. Having brought out at that time my first score (a high-mass) at the church of Saint-Roch, the old *dévotes*, the leaser of chairs, the man who passes around the holy water, the beadle and all the loungers of the quarter showed themselves very well satisfied, and I had the simplicity to think I had had a success. But, alas! it was but the quarter of a success at the very most; I was not long in finding it out. Seeing me again two days after that performance: 'Well!' said the emperor Auguste to me, 'so you came out at Saint-Roch day before yesterday? Why in the devil didn't you let me know of it beforehand? We should have all been there.' 'Ah! are you so fond of sacred music as that?' 'Why no, what an idea! but we would have *warmed you up well.*' 'How so? but you cannot applaud in church.' 'You cannot applaud, no; but you can cough, and blow your nose, and hitch your chair, and scrape with your feet, and say: "Hm! Hm!" and raise your eyes to heaven; all that sort of thing, hey! we would have made you *foam up* a bit; an *entire success*, just like a fashionable preacher.'

"Two years later I again forgot to notify him when I gave my first concert at the Conservatoire, but Auguste came, notwithstanding, with two of his aids-de-camp; and in the evening when I re-appeared in the pit at the Opéra, he gave me his mighty hand, saying in paternal accents that carried conviction with them (in French of course): '*Tu Marcellus eris!*'"

(At this point Bacon, the viola, nudges his neighbor with his elbow and asks him softly what those three words mean. "I don't know," answers the other. "It is from Virgil," says Corsino, the first violin, who has heard the question and answer. "It means: 'You shall be Marcellus!'" "Well .... what is the good of being Marcellus?" "Not being a fool, be quiet!")

"But the masters of the *claque* are not very fond, in general, of such ebullient amateurs as I was; they profess a distrust that amounts to antipathy for such adventurers, *condottieri*, lost children of enthusiasm, who come, in all giddiness and *without rehearsals*, to applaud in their ranks. One day of a first performance at which there was to be, to use the Roman phrase, a *famous pull*, that is to say, great difficulty for Auguste's soldiers in conquering the public, I had happened to sit down on a bench in the pit that the emperor had marked on his plan of operations as belonging by rights exclusively to himself. I had been there a good half hour under the hostile glances of all my neighbors, who seemed to be asking themselves how to get rid of me, and I was asking myself with a certain anxiety, in spite of the purity of my conscience, what I could have done to those officers, when the emperor Auguste, rushing into the midst of his staff, came to tell me, speaking with a certain sharpness but without violence (I have already said that he was my patron): 'My dear sir, I am obliged to disturb you; you cannot stay there.' 'Why not?' 'Well because! . . . it is impossible; you are in the middle of my first line, and you *cut me in two*.' I hastened, you may believe, to leave the field free for this great tactician.

"Any other stranger, mistaking the urgencies of the position, would have resisted the emperor, and thus compromised the success of his combinations. Hence the opinion, founded on a long series of learned observations, an opinion openly professed by Auguste and his whole army: *The public is of no use in a theatre; it is not only of no use, but it spoils everything. As long as the public comes to the Opéra, the Opéra will not get on.* The directors in those days called him a madman when he uttered these proud words. Great Auguste! He did not dream that, a few years after his death, such brilliant justice would be done to his doctrines! His lot was that of all men of genius, to be misunderstood by their contemporaries, and taken at an advantage by their successors.

"No, never did a more intelligent and worthy dispenser of glory sit enthroned under the chandelier of a theatre.

"In comparison with Auguste, he who now reigns at the Opéra is but a Vespasian or a Claudius. His name is David. And who would give him the title of emperor? Nobody. His flatterers dare to call him king at the very most, on account of his name solely.

"The illustrious chief of the Romans at the Opéra-Comique is Albert; but in speaking of him, as of his old namesake, they call him Albert the Great.

"He was the first to put Auguste's daring theory in practice, by pitilessly excluding the public from first performances. On those days, if we except critics, who also for the most part belong in one way or another *viris illustribus urbis Romæ*, the house is now filled from top to bottom with *claqueurs*.

"It is to Albert the Great that we owe the touching custom of recalling all the actors at the end of a new piece. King David was quick to imitate him in this; and, emboldened by the success of this first improvement, he added that of recalling the tenor as many as three times in an evening. A god who should be recalled like a simple mortal only once at the end of a state performance, would *get into an oven*. Hence it followed that if David, in spite of all his efforts, could not obtain more than this slim result for a generous tenor, his rivals of the Théâtre-Français and the Opéra-Comique would laugh at him the next day, saying: 'David *warmed up the oven* yesterday.' I will give an explanation of these Roman technicalities by and by. Unfortunately, Albert the Great, tired of power, no doubt, saw fit to lay down his sceptre. In giving it into the hands of his obscure successor, he would willingly have said, like *Sulla* in M. de Jouy's tragedy:

'J'ai gouverné sans peur et j'abdique sans crainte'

(I have ruled without fear, and I abdicate without dread), if the verse had only been better. But Albert is a man of wit, he execrates mediocre literature; which might in the end explain his anxiety to leave the Opéra-Comique.

"Another great man whom I did not know, but whose reputation in Paris is immense, ruled, and I believe still rules, at the Gymnase-Dramatique. His name is Sauton. He has furthered the progress of art on a broad and new path. He has established friendly relations of equality and fraternity between the Romans and authors; a system which David too, that plagiarist, was quick to adopt. You now find the chief of the *claque* seated familiarly at the table, not only of Melpomene, or Thalia, or Terpsichore, but even of Apollo and Orpheus. He pledges his signature for them, he helps them from his own purse in their secret embarassments, he protects them, he loves them from his heart.

"The following admirable speech of the emperor Sauton to one of our cleverest authors, and one of the least inclined to save up money, is quoted:

"At the end of a cordial breakfast, at which the cordials had not been spared, Sauton, red with emotion, twisting up his napkin, at last found enough courage to say, without too much stuttering, to his amphytrion: 'My dear D***, I have a great favor to ask of you . . .' 'What is that? speak out!' 'Allow me to . . . *tutoyer* you . . . let us *tutoyer* each other!' 'Willingly. Sauton, lend me (*prête*-moi) a thousand crowns.' 'Ah! my dear friend, you (*tu*) enchant me!' And, pulling out his pocket-book: 'Here they are!'

"I cannot draw for you, gentlemen, the portrait of all the illustrious men of the city of Rome; I have neither the time nor the biographical knowledge. I will only add to what I have said of the three heroes I have just had the honor to entertain you with, that Auguste, Albert, and Sauton, though rivals, were always united. They did not imitate, during their triumvirate, the wars and perfidy that dishonor that of Anthony, Octavius and Lepidus. Far from it; whenever there was at the opera one of those terrible performances at which a shining, formidable, epic victory must positively be won, a victory that Pindar and Homer would be powerless to sing, Auguste, disdaining raw recruits, would make an appeal to his triumvirs. They, proud to rush into hand to hand conflict by the side of so great a man, would consent to acknowledge him as leader, and bring him, Albert his indomitable phalanx, Sauton his light troops, all filled with that ardor that nothing can resist, and which begets prodigies. These three select bodies were united in a single army, on the eve of the performance, in the pit of the Opéra. Auguste, with his plan, libretto and notes in his hand, would put his troops through a laborious rehearsal, profiting at times by the remarks of Anthony and Lepidus, who had but few to make; so rapid and sure was the glance of Auguste, such penetration had he to divine the enemy's intentions, such genius to thwart them, such judgment not to attempt the impossible. And then, what a triumph on the morrow! what acclamations, what *spolia opima!* which indeed were not offered to Jupiter Stator, but came from him, on the contrary, and from twenty other gods.

"Such are the priceless services rendered to art and artists by the Roman Nation.

"Would you believe, gentlemen, that there has been some talk of dismissing them from the opera? Several newspapers announce this reform, which we shall not believe in, even if we are ourselves witnesses to it. The *claque* in fact has become a necessity of the times; it has introduced itself everywhere, under all forms, under all masks, under every pretext. It reigns and governs at the theatres, in the concert-room, in the National Assembly, at the clubs, in church, in industrial societies, in the press, even in the drawing-room. As soon as twenty assembled individuals are called to decide upon the deeds, actions or ideas of any one individual who attitudinizes before them, you may be sure that at least one-quarter of the areopagus is put by the side of the remaining three-quarters to *set fire* to them, if they are inflammable, and to show its ardor alone if they are not. In the latter very frequent case, this isolated and already determined upon enthusiasm is still enough to flatter most self-loves. Some succeed in deceiving themselves about the real value of a suffrage so obtained; others do not in the least, and desire it notwithstanding. These have got to the point that, if they had no live men at command to applaud them, would yet be happy at the applause of a troupe of manikins, even at the sight of a clapping machine; they would turn the crank themselves.

"The *claqueurs* at our theatres have become learned practitioners; their trade has raised itself to an art.

"People have often admired, but never enough, as I think, the marvelous talent with which Auguste used to *direct* the great works of the modern *répertoire*, and the excellence of the advice he often gave their authors. Hidden in his parquet-box, he was present at every rehearsal of the artists, before having his own with his army. Then, when the *maestro* said to him: 'Here you will give three rounds, there you will call out encore,' he would answer with imperturbable assurance, as the case might be: 'Sir, *it is dangerous*,' or else: 'It shall *be done*,' or: 'I will think about it, my mind is not yet quite made up on that point. Have some *amateurs to attack with*, and I will follow them if it *takes*.' It even happened sometimes that Auguste would nobly resist an author who tried to get *dangerous* applause from him, and answer him with: 'Sir, I cannot do it. You would compromise me in the eyes of the public, in the eyes of the artists, and those of my people, who know very well that that *ought not to be done*. I have my reputation to guard; I, too, have some self-love. Your work is very difficult to *direct;* I will take all possible pains, but I do not want to *get* hissed.'

"By the side of the *claqueurs* by profession, well-taught, sagacious, prudent, inspired, in a word, artists, we also have the occasional *claqueur*, the *claqueur* from friendship or interest; and these will not be banished from the opera. They are: simple friends, who admire in good faith all that is to be done on the stage *before the lamps are lighted* (it is true that this species of friend is daily becoming more rare; those, on the other hand, who disparage everything beforehand, at the time and afterwards, multiply enormously); relations, those *claqueurs given by nature;* editors, ferocious *claqueurs;* and especially lovers and husbands. That is why women, besides the host of other advantages they have over men, have still one more chance of success than they. For a woman can hardly applaud her husband or lover to any purpose in a theatre or a concert-room; besides, she always has something else to do; while the husband or lover, provided he has the least natural capacity or some elementary notions of the art, can often, by a clever stroke, bring about a *success of renewal* at the theatre, that is to say, a decided success capable of forcing the director to renew an engagement. Husbands are better than lovers for this sort of operation. The latter usually stand in fear of ridicule; they also fear *in petto* that a too brilliant success may make too many rivals; they no longer have any pecuniary interest in the triumphs of their mistresses; but the husband, who holds the purse-strings, who knows what can be done by a well-thrown bouquet, a well taken-up salvo, a well-communicated emotion, a well-carried recall, he alone dares to turn to account what faculties he has. He has the gift of ventriloquism and of ubiquity. He applauds for an instant from the amphitheatre, crying out: *Brava!* in a tenor voice, in chest tones; thence he flies to the lobby of the first boxes, and sticking his head through the opening cut in the door, he throws out an *Admirable!* in a voice of *basso profundo* while passing by, and then bounds breathless up to the third tier, from whence he makes the house resound with exclamations: 'Delicious! ravishing! Heavens! what talent! it is too much!' in a *soprano* voice, in shrill feminine tones stifled with emotion. There is a model husband for you, and a hard-working and intelligent father of a family. As for the husband who is a man of taste, reserved, staying in his seat through a whole act, not daring to applaud even the most superb efforts of his better-half, it may be said without fear of mistake that he is a . . . lost husband, or that his wife is an angel.

"Was it not a husband who invented the *hiss of success;* the hiss of enthusiasm, the hiss at high pressure? which is done in the following manner:

"If the public, having become too familiar with the talent of a woman who appears before them every day, seems to fall into the apathetic indifference that is brought on by satiety, a devoted and little-known man is stationed in the house to wake them up. At the precise moment when the *diva* has just given manifest proof of her talent, and when the artistic *claqueurs* are doing their best together in the centre of the pit, a shrill and insulting noise starts out from some obscure corner. Then the audience rises like one man, a prey to indignation, and the avenging plaudits burst forth with indescribable frenzy. 'What infamy!' is shrieked on every hand. 'What a shameful cabal! *Brava! bravissima!* charming! intoxicating! etc., etc.' But this daring feat has to be skillfully performed; there are, moreover, very few women who consent to submit to the fictitious affront of a hiss, however productive it may be afterwards.

"Such is the impression that approving or disapproving noises make upon almost all artists, even when these noises express neither admiration nor blame.

Habit, their imagination and a little weakness of mind make them feel joy or pain, according as the air in a theatre is set in vibration in one or the other way. The physical phenomenon is enough, independently of any idea of glory or shame. I am certain that there are actors who are childish enough to suffer when they travel on the railway, on account of the locomotive-whistle.

"The art of the *claque* even reacts upon musical composition. It is the numerous varieties of Italian *claqueurs*, either amateurs or artists, that have brought composers to finish all their pieces by that redundant, trivial, ridiculous period that is called *cabaletta*, little cabal, which provokes applause, and is always the same. When the *cabaletta* was no longer enough for them, they introduced the big-drum, the big cabal, which at the present day destroys both music and singers. When they got *blasés* with the big-drum and found themselves powerless to *carry* the success by the old means, they at last demanded of the poor *maestri* duets, trios and choruses in unison. In some passages they even had to put both voices and orchestra in unison, thus producing an *ensemble* piece in *one* single part, but in which the enormous sonority seems preferable to all harmony, to all instrumentation, to every musical idea, in a word, for *carrying away* the public, and making it believe itself electrified.

"Analogous examples abound in the manufacture of literary works.

"As for the dancers, their business is perfectly simple; it is agreed upon with the *impressario*: 'You will give me so many thousand francs per month, so many *passes*[1] per performance, and the *claque* will give me a *reception* and *exit*, and two rounds at each of my *echos*.'[2]

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[1] Tickets to which the actor has a right on the days of his performances.

[2] Echos are the solos of a dancer during an *ensemble* piece of the ballet.

"By means of the *claque*, directors make or unmake at will what is still called a success. A single word to the chief of the parterre is enough to undo an artist who has not a talent out of the common run. I remember hearing Auguste say, one evening at the Opéra, passing through the ranks of his army before the curtain rose: 'Nothing for M. Dérivis! nothing for M. Dérivis!' The order went round, and during the whole evening Dérivis did not get a single bit of applause. When the director wishes to get rid of a member of his company for some reason or other, he employs this ingenious method, and, after two or three performances at which *there has been nothing* for M. **** or Madame ****: 'You see,' says he to the artist, 'I cannot keep you; your talent is not sympathetic to the public.' It happens, on the other hand, that these tactics miscarry sometimes in the case of an artist of the first rank. 'Nothing for him!' has been said at the official centre. But the public, astonished at first at the silence of the Romans, soon begins to see where the shoe pinches, and sets itself to work most officiously, and with all the more warmth that it has a hostile cabal to thwart. The artist then has an exceptional success, a *circular* success, the centre of the pit having no hand in it. But I should not dare to say whether he is more proud of this spontaneous enthusiasm of the public, or angry at the inaction of the *claque*.

"To dream of suddenly destroying such an institution in the largest of our theatres, seems to me to be as impossible and insane, as to try to annihilate a religion between this evening and to-morrow.

"Can people imagine the disarray of the Opéra? the discouragement, the melancholy, the atrophy, the spleen into which the whole dancing, singing, walking, running, painting and composing people would fall? the disgust of life that would seize hold upon the gods and demigods, if a frightful silence should follow every *cabaletta* that was not irreproachably sung or danced? Do people think of the rage of all mediocrity at the sight of true talent getting some applause, while it, that always used to be applauded, cannot now get a hand? It would be as much as recognizing the principle of inequality, and giving a palpable proof of it; and we are a Republic; the word *Equality* is written upon the pediment of the Opéra! Besides, who would recall the leading artist after the third and the fifth acts? Who would cry out: *All! all!* at the end of a performance? Who would laugh when some character said something silly? Who would cover up the bad note of a bass or tenor with obliging applause, and thus prevent the public from hearing it? It is fit to make a man shudder. Besides, the manœuvres of the *claque* add interest to the spectacle; people enjoy seeing them at work. This is so true that, if the *claqueurs* were expelled at certain performances, not a person would remain in the house.

"No, the suppression of the Romans in France is fortunately a mad dream. The heavens and the earth shall pass away, but Rome is immortal, and the *claque* shall not pass away.

"Just listen! . . . . our *prima-donna* has taken it into her head to sing with soul, simplicity and good taste the only distinguished melody that is to be found in this poor opera. You will see, she will not get any applause. . . . Ah! I was wrong; yes, they are applauding her; but how? How badly it is done! What an abortion of a salvo, badly attacked, and badly taken up! There is good will enough in the audience, but no science, no *ensemble*, and consequently no effect. If Auguste had had that woman to *care for*, he would have carried the whole house in a trice, and you yourselves, who have no notion of applauding, would have been drawn into his enthusiasm willy-nilly.

"I have not yet drawn for you the portrait of a Roman woman; I will do that during the last act of our opera, which will begin soon. Let us have a short *entr'acte;* I am tired."

(The musicians go off a few steps, talking over their reflections in a low voice, while the curtain falls. But three raps of the conductor's *bâton* upon his desk announcing the continuation of the performance, my audience groups itself attentively about me).

MADAME ROSENHAIN.

Another Fragment of Roman History.

"An opera in five acts was *ordered* some years ago of a French composer, whom you do not know, by M. Duponchel.[1] While the last rehearsals were going on, I was reflecting, at my fireside, upon the anguish the unfortunate composer of this opera was then *occupied* in experiencing. I thought of the ever-renewed torments of every description that no one escapes in Paris in such cases, neither the great nor the small, the patient nor the irritable, the humble nor the proud, neither German, Frenchman, nor even Italian. I pictured to myself the atrociously slow rehearsals at which everybody takes up the time with nonsense, when every hour lost may lead to the failure of the work; the puns of the tenor and the *prima-donna*, at which the sad composer thinks himself bound to laugh heartily while death is in his soul, ridiculous sallies which he bestirs himself to answer with the heaviest and dullest stupidities he can think of, that those of the singers may have more point and so seem something akin to wit. I heard the director's voice reprimanding him, treating him like a child, reminding him of the extreme honor they did his work in troubling themselves about it so long; threatening him with its utter and complete abandonment if all were not ready on the fixed day; I saw the slave paralyzed with fear, and blushing at the eccentric reflections of his master (the director) upon music and musicians, at his nonsensical theories of melody, rhythm, instrumentation and style; theories in the exposition of which the director, as usual, treated the great masters like idiots, and idiots like great masters, and mistook the Piræus for a man. Then the *mezzo-soprano's* leave of absence, and the illness of the bass were announced; they proposed a new beginner to take the part of the artist, and to have a chorus-singer rehearse the leading rôle. And the composer felt himself choking, but took care not to complain. Oh! the hail, the rain, the icy wind, the woods stripped of their foliage by the winter's breeze, the dark squalls, the muddy sloughs, the ditches covered over by a treacherous crust, the gnawings of hunger, the frights of solitude and night, how sweet it is to think of them in some lodging-place, were it even as poor as that of the hare in the fable, in the repose of luke-warm inaction; to feel one's sense of comfort *redouble at the far-off noise of the tempest*, and to repeat, while stroking one's beard and luxuriously closing one's eyes like a priest's cat, that prayer of the German poet, Henri Heine, a prayer, alas! that is so seldom heard: 'O Lord! thou knowest that I have an excellent heart, that I am full of pity and sympathy for the woes of others; grant then, if it please thee, that my neighbor may have my ills to endure; I will surround him with such care, such delicate attentions; my pity will be so active, so ingenious, that he will bless thy right hand, Lord, while receiving such relief, such sweet consolation. But to load me with the weight of my own sufferings! to make me suffer myself! Oh! it would be frightful! take away from my lips, great God, this cup of bitterness!'

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[1] Director of the Opéra.—Trans.

"I was thus plunged in pious meditations, when somebody rapped lightly at the door of my oratory. My *valet-de-chambre* being on a mission to a foreign court, I asked myself if I were at home, and, on my reply in the affirmative, I opened the door. A lady appeared, very well dressed and, faith, not too young; she was in all the bloom of her forty-fifth year. I saw at once that she was an artist; there are infallible signs by which these unhappy victims of inspiration are to be known. 'Sir, you have lately conducted a grand concert at Versailles, and, up to the last day, I hoped to take part in it . . .; but what is done is done.' 'Madam, the program was drawn up by the committee of the Association of Musicians; I am not to blame for it. Besides, Madame Dorus-Gras and Madame Widemann . . .' 'Oh! those ladies, no doubt, said nothing; but it is no less true that they were probably very much displeased.' 'With what, if you please?' 'That I was not engaged.' 'You think so?' 'I am sure of it. But let us not recriminate on that head. I came, sir, to beg you to be kind enough to recommend me to MM. Roqueplan and Duponchel; my intention is to get an engagement at the Opéra. I was attached to the Théâtre-Italien until last season, and, certainly, I can only be proud of the excellent behavior of M. Vatel; but since the revolution of February . . ., you understand that such a theatre cannot do for me.' 'Madam has, no doubt, good reasons for being severe in her choice of partners; but if I might express an opinion . . .' 'Useless, sir, my mind is made up, irrevocably made up; it is impossible for me to remain at the Théâtre-Italien under any conditions whatever. Everything there is profoundly antipathetic to me—the public that comes there, and the public that does not come there; and, although the present condition of the Opéra is hardly brilliant, as my son and both my daughters were engaged there last year by the new direction, I should be very glad to be admitted there, and shall not haggle about the appointments.' 'You forget, I see, that as the directors of the Opéra have an excessively superficial knowledge, and a very vague sentiment for music, they naturally have fixed ideas concerning our art, and consequently attach very little value to recommendations, to mine especially. But still, be so good as to tell me what your voice is.' 'I do not sing.' 'Then I shall have still less credit, since it concerns the ballet.' 'I do not dance.' 'Then it is only among the walking ladies that you wish to gain admittance?' 'I do not walk, sir; you strangely misunderstand me' *(smiling with a touch of irony).* 'I am Madame Rosenhain.' 'Any relation to the pianist?' 'No, but Mesdames Persiani, Grisi, Alboni, MM. Mario and Tamburini must have spoken to you about me, seeing that I have, for six years, played a prominent part in their triumphs. I had thought for an instant of going to London to give lessons, as they tell me that they are very moderately advanced over there; but, I repeat, as my children are at the Opéra . . . , and then the size of the theatre thrown open to my ambition . . . ' 'Excuse my want of sagacity, madam, and be so good as to tell me at last what your special talent is.' 'Sir, I am an artist who has made M. Vatel make more money than Rubini himself, and I flatter myself that I can bring about the most favorable reaction in the receipts of the Opéra, if my two daughters, who have already attracted attention there, profit by my example. I am, sir, a *flower-thrower.*' 'Ah! very well! you are in the Enthusiasm?' 'Precisely. This branch of musical art has hardly begun to flourish. Formerly it was the ladies of the upper circles who practiced it, and that nearly gratuitously. You may remember the concerts of M. Liszt and the first appearances of M. Duprez. What volleys of bouquets! What applause! You saw young girls, and even married women, become enthusiastic without regard for modesty; several among them gravely compromised themselves more than once. But what a tumult! what disorder! what quantities of beautiful flowers lost! it was a fearful pity! To-day, as the public no longer put their finger into the pie at all, thanks to heaven and the artists, we have regulated all ovations according to my system, and it is quite another thing. Under the last direction of the Opéra our art came near being lost, or, at the very least, going backward. They intrusted the part of Enthusiasm to four young, inexperienced dancers, who were personally known to all the *habitués* into the bargain; these children, new to the business, as girls are at that age, took their stations in the house always in the same places, and always threw the same bouquets at the same moment to the same cantatrice; so that at last people began to turn the eloquence of their flowers to derision. My daughters, profiting by my lessons, have reformed that, and I think that now the administration has reason to be entirely satisfied.' 'Is your son also in the flower business?' 'Oh! as for my son, he excites enthusiasm in another way: he has a superb voice.' 'Then why is his name not known to me?' 'He is never down on the posters.' 'But he sings?' 'No, sir, he screams.' 'That is what I meant.' 'Yes, he screams, and in difficult cases his voice has often sufficed to carry away the most recalcitrant masses; my son, sir, is for the *recalls.*' 'What! can he be a countryman of O'Connell?' 'I do not know that actor. My son is for the recall of the leading artists when the audience remains cold and does not recall anybody. You see that he has no sinecure, and that he earns his money well. He had the good fortune, when he made his first appearances at the Théâtre-Français, to find a tragedian there whose name begins with an excellent syllable, the syllable *Ra!*[1] God knows all the account this *Ra* can be turned to! I should have been very anxious about his success at the Opéra when I heard of the retirement of the famous cantatrice whose single *o*[1] resounded so well, in spite of the five Teutonic consonants that surround it, if there had not come another *prima-donna*, whose still more advantageous syllable, the syllable *Ma*,[2] placed my son upon the very pinnacle of success at the first dash. Now you know all.' 'Completely. I will tell you, madam, that your talent is the best of all recommendations; that the direction of the Opéra will know how to appreciate it, but that you must present yourself as soon as possible, for they are on the lookout for artists like yourself, and for eight days they have been engaged in the composition of a grand enthusiasm for a third act, in which they take a lively interest.' 'Thank you, sir, thank you; I fly to the Opéra.' And the young artist vanished. I have not heard of her since, but I got a proof of the entire success of her application, and the certainty of her making an excellent engagement with the direction of the Opéra. At the first performance of the new work which M. Duponchel had ordered, a perfect avalanche of flowers fell after the third act, and it was easily to be seen by all that they fell from a practiced hand. Unfortunately this gracious ovation did not prevent both piece and music from doing as much." "From doing . . . what?" said Bacon, the simple asker of questions. "From falling flat, you idiot," answered Corsino, roughly. "Come now! your wit is enormously more obtuse than usual this evening! Go to bed, Basilio."

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[1] Rachel.

"I have now, gentlemen, to explain to you the technical terms most frequently used in the Roman language, terms which only Parisians understand:

"TO GET INTO AN OVEN *(faire four)* means to produce no effect, to fall flat on the indifference of the audience.

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[1] Stoltz.

[2] Malibran.

"TO HEAT AN OVEN *(chauffer un four)* is to applaud to no purpose an artist whose talent is powerless to move an audience; this expression is the pendant to that of: *Beating the air.*

"TO BE COMFORTABLE *(avoir de l'agrément)* is to be applauded both by the *claque* and by part of the public. Duprez was extraordinarily *comfortable* the day of his first appearance in *Guillaume Tell.*

"TO CHEER UP *(égayer)* anybody is to hiss him. This irony is cruel, but it has a hidden meaning that gives it still more edge. No doubt the unlucky artist who gets hissed only experiences a very questionable cheerfulness from the fact, but his rival in the business is cheered up by hearing him hissed, and many other people laugh *in petto* at the accident. So that, taken all in all, when any one is hissed, there is always some one cheered up too.

"A PULL *(tirage)* means, in the Roman language, difficulty, work, trouble. Thus the Roman says: 'It is a fine work, but we shall have a *pull* to make it go. Which means that, in spite of all its merit, the work is tiresome, and that it will be only by great efforts that the *claque* can give it the semblance of a success.

"TO GIVE A RECEPTION *(faire une entrée)* is to applaud an actor as soon as he comes upon the stage, before he has opened his mouth.

"TO GIVE AN EXIT *(faire une sortie)* is to pursue him with plaudits and bravos when he leaves the stage, no matter what his last gesture, his last word or scream may have been.

"TO SHELTER (*mettre à couvert*) a singer is to applaud him with violent acclamations at the exact moment when he is about to give out a false or cracked note, that the bad note may be thus covered up by the noise of the *claque* and that the public may not hear it.

"To SHOW CONSIDERATION (*avoir des égards*) for an artist is to applaud him moderately, even when he has not been able to give any money to the *claque*. It means to encourage him *from friendship*, or *for love* (*à l'œil*). These last two expressions are equivalent to *gratis*.

"To MAKE FOAM UP WELL, or FROM THE BOTTOM (*faire mousser solidement ou à fond*) is to applaud with frenzy, with hands, feet, voice and speech. During the *entr'actes*, in such cases, the work or artist must be extolled in the lobbies, in the refreshment rooms, at the neighboring *café*, at the cigar-shop, everywhere. One must say: 'It is a masterpiece; he has an unique talent, perfectly bewildering! an unrivaled voice! nothing like it has ever been heard!' There is a well-known professor whom the directors of the Paris Opéra always have come from abroad on solemn occasions, to make great works *foam up from the bottom*, by *kindling* the lobbies in a masterly manner. The talent of this Roman master is serious; his seriousness is admirable.

"Both these last operations combined are expressed by the words CARE, to CARE FOR (*soins, soigner*).

"To GET . . . . LAID HOLD OF (*faire empoigner*) is to applaud a weak thing or artist at the wrong time, which provokes the anger of the public. It sometimes happens that a mediocre cantatrice, but one who has power over the director's heart, sings most deplorably. Seated in the centre of the pit, with a sad, overpowered air, the emperor bows his head, thus indicating to his prætorians that they must keep silence, give no sign of satisfaction, unite, in a word, in his sorrowful reflections! But the *diva* does not at all appreciate this prudent reserve; she leaves the stage in a fury, and runs to complain to the director of the stupidity or treason of the chief of the *claque*. The director then gives the order that the Roman army shall work vigorously in the next act. To his great regret Cæsar sees himself forced to obey. The second act begins, the angry goddess sings more false than before; three hundred pairs of devoted hands applaud her all the same; the public, in a fury, answer these manifestations by a symphony of hisses and Kentish fire, instrumented in the modern style, and of the most ear-splitting sonority.

"I think that the use of this expression only goes back to the reign of Charles X, and the memorable *séance* of the Chamber of Deputies, at which a parliamentary thunder-storm broke out, when Manuel allowed himself to say that France had seen the return of the Bourbons with *repugnance,* and M. de Foucault called his *gendarmes* and said to them, pointing out Manuel: 'Lay hold of that man there! (*Empoignez-moi cet homme-là !*)

"They also say, to denote this disastrous calling forth of hisses, GET AZOR CALLED (*faire appeler Azor*); from the custom of old ladies whistling when they call their dog, who always bears the name of *Azor.*

"I have seen Auguste, in despair after one of these catastrophes, ready to kill himself, like Brutus at Philippi. . . . One consideration alone restrained him: he was necessary to his art and country; he must live for them.

"TO CONDUCT (*conduire*) a work, is to direct the operations of the Roman army during the performances of such work.

"BRRRRRR!! This noise, which the emperor makes with his mouth in directing certain movements of his troops, and which all his lieutenants can hear, is a signal for them to give extraordinary rapidity to their clapping and to accompany it with stamping. It is the command to *make foam up well.*

"The motion from right to left and from left to right of the imperial head, illumined with a smile, is the signal for moderate laughter.

"Cæsar's two hands clapped together vigorously and raised for a moment in the air, command a sudden burst of laughter.

"If the hands stay in the air longer than usual, the laugh must be prolonged and followed by a round of applause.

"HM! thrown out in a certain way, provokes emotion in Cæsar's soldiers; they must at such times put on a mollified look, and let fall, with some tears, a murmur of approbation.

"There, gentlemen, is all that I can tell you about the illustrious men and women of the city of Rome. I have not lived long enough among them to know more. Excuse the short-comings of the historian."

The amateur in the stalls thanks me most overwhelmingly; he has not lost a word of my story, and I have noticed him furtively taking notes. The gas is put out, and we go away. In coming down stairs: "You do not know who the inquisitive old boy is who asked you about the Romans?" said Dimsky, the first double-bass, with an air of mystery. "No." "He is the director of the theatre in ****; you may be sure that he will profit by all he has heard this evening, and will found an institution in his own town similar to that in Paris." "All right! in that case I am sorry that I did not call his attention to rather an important fact. The directors of the Opéra, those of the Opéra-Comique and of the Théâtre-Français, have gone into partnership to found a Conservatoire of Claque, and our curious friend might engage the student who has just got the first prize at that Conservatoire, so as to have an experienced man, a real Cæsar, or, at the very least, a young Octavius at the head of his institution." "I will write him that; I know him." "You had better, my dear Dimsky." "Let us *care for* our art, and watch over the safety of the empire. Good-night!"

EIGHTH EVENING.

ROMANS OF THE NEW WORLD.—MR. BARNUM.—JENNY LIND'S TRIP TO AMERICA.

A VERY, etc., modern Italian opera is played.

The amateur in the stalls, whom Dimsky pointed out as the director of the theatre in ****, does not appear. He must have really gone away to turn to account his newly-acquired knowledge of Roman history.

"With the ingenious system, the operation of which you explained to us yesterday," says Corsino to me, "and the absence of the public from first performances, every theatrical work must succeed in Paris." "The fact is that they all do succeed. Old works, modern works, moderately good, detestable or even excellent pieces and scores obtain in these days an equal success. Unfortunately, as was easy to foresee, these obstinate plaudits detract somewhat from the importance of the incessant productiveness of our theatres. The directors make some money, they let the authors gain a livelihood; but the latter, very moderately flattered by succeeding there where nobody fails, work accordingly, and the literary and musical life of Paris receives no impulse either forwards or backwards, from the fact of there being so many *workers*. On the other hand, there is no longer any real success possible for singers and actors. By dint of being *all* recalled, this ovation has lost *all* its value, by becoming so common; one might even say that it begins to excite the contemptuous laughter of the public. The one-eyed men, those kings in the land of the blind, cannot reign in a country where every one is king. . . . Seeing the results of this continuous flow of enthusiasm, people begin to doubt the truth of the new proverb: *Excess in everything is a virtue.* It might indeed be a fault, on the contrary, and even one of the most repulsive of vices. While in doubt, they will not give it up; so much the better. It is the means of sooner or later obtaining some strange results, and the experiment is well worth pushing to the end. But do what we may in Europe, we shall yet be distanced by the enthusiasts in the New World, who are to ours as the Mississippi is to the Seine." "How is that?" says Winter, the American, who belongs to this orchestra, nobody knows exactly how, and plays second bassoon; "can my countrymen have become *dilettanti?*" "Certainly they are, and most mad *dilettanti* too, if we may believe what the papers said of Mr. Barnum, Jenny Lind's undertaker of success. See what they said, two years ago, about the arrival of the great cantatrice upon the new continent: 'At her landing in New York, the crowd threw itself in her way in such a transport of excitement, that immense numbers of people were crushed. There were, however, enough survivors left to prevent her horses from advancing; it was then that, seeing her coachman lift his arm to make way among these indiscreet enthusiasts with his whip, Jenny Lind pronounced those sublime words, which are now repeated from the farthest borders of Canada to Mexico, and which bring tears into the eyes of all who hear them quoted: *Do not strike, do not strike! They are my friends, they have come to see me!* One does not know which to admire more in this memorable sentence—the outburst from the heart that suggested the thought, or the genius that clothed this thought with so beautiful and poetic a form. It was greeted with frantic hurrahs. The director of the Transatlantic Line, M. Colini, waited to receive Jenny on the wharf, armed with an immense bouquet. A triumphal arch made of evergreens rose up in the middle of the quay, surmounted by a *stuffed eagle*, who seemed waiting to bid her welcome. At midnight the orchestra of the Philharmonic Society gave Mademoiselle Lind a serenade, and for two hours the illustrious cantatrice was obliged to stay at her window, in spite of the coolness of the night. The next day, Mr. Barnum, the clever bird-catcher who had succeeded in caging the Swedish nightingale for a few months, took her to the Museum, where he showed her all the curiosities, without omitting a cockatoo or an orang-outang; at last, placing a mirror before the eyes of the goddess: *Here, madam*, said he, with exquisite gallantry, *is the most rare and ravishing thing that we have to show you at present.* On coming out of the Museum, a chorus of young and beautiful girls, dressed in white, walked before the immortal one as a virginal escort, singing hymns and strewing her path with flowers. Not far off a striking scene of an entirely novel character touched the heart of the famous being: dolphins and whales, which for eight hundred leagues (others say nine hundred) had taken part in the triumph of this new Galatea, and had followed her vessel spouting jets of scented water from their blow-holes, tossed about convulsively in the harbor, a prey to despair at not being able to accompany her ashore; sea-calves, shedding great tears, gave themselves up to the most lamentable sobbing. Then were seen (a spectacle sweeter to her heart) sea-gulls, frigate-birds and loons, wild birds that inhabit the vast solitudes of the ocean, flying more happily and without fear about the adorable one, perching upon her white shoulders, soaring aloft above her

Olympian head, holding in their bills pearls of monstrous size, which they offered her in the most graceful fashion and with soft cooings. The cannons thundered, the bells sang *Hosanna!* and magnificent claps of thunder made the *cloudless* heavens resound at intervals in all their radiant immensity.' All this, as incontestably true as the prodigies once performed by Amphion and Orpheus, is only doubted by us old Europeans, used up, *blasés*, without a flame, or love for art.

"But Mr. Barnum, not thinking this spontaneous outbreak of the creatures of the sky, the earth and the waters sufficient for his purpose, and wishing to give it still more energy by means of a little innocent charlatanism, tried, they tell us, to make use of a new means of *excitement*, which might be called, were it not for the vulgarity of the expression, the *death-claque.* This great agitator, informed of the profound destitution in which several families in New York were plunged, conceived the idea of generously coming to their assistance, being desirous of associating with the date of Jenny Lind's arrival the recollection of benefactions worthy of mention. So he took aside the heads of those unfortunate families, and said to them: 'When a man has lost all, and there is no hope left, life becomes a burden, and you know what remains to be done. Well, I will give you an opportunity to do it in a way that shall be useful to your poor children and your unfortunate wives, who will owe you eternal gratitude. *She* has come!!!' '*She???*' 'Yes, *she*, herself! So I will insure to your heirs two thousand dollars, which will be religiously paid out to them on the day on which the deed you now meditate is performed, but performed in the way I now tell you. This is a delicate homage that is to be paid to *her*. We shall easily succeed if you second me. Listen: Some of you will only have to go up to the top stories of houses in the neighborhood of the concert-hall, to throw yourselves down upon the pavement when *she* passes by, crying out: *Long live Lind!* Others will throw themselves, but without disorderly movements, without cries, with gravity, with grace if possible, under the feet of her horses or the wheels of her carriage; the rest will be admitted *gratis* to the hall itself; these must hear part of the concert.' 'They will hear *her???*' 'They will hear *her*. At the end of the second *cavatina*, sung by her, they will declare aloud that their prosaic existence is no longer endurable after such delights; then they will stab themselves to the heart with the daggers I have here. No pistols; the pistol is an instrument in which there is nothing noble, and besides, its noise might be disagreeable to *her*.' The bargain was struck, and these conditions would, no doubt, have been honestly fulfilled by the parties, if the American police, a mischief-making and unintelligent police, if the truth must be told, had not interfered to prevent it. Which goes to prove that, even in artistic nations, there are always a certain number of narrow minds, cold hearts, coarse and, to use the right word, envious men. So the system of the *death-claque* could not be put in practice, and a number of poor people were deprived of a new means of earning a living.

"This is not all; it was generally believed in New York (indeed, could it be doubted?) that, on the day of *her* landing, a *Te deam laudamus* would be sung in the Catholic churches of the city. But after long consultation, the officiating clergy of the various parishes came to the conclusion that such a demonstration was incompatible with the dignity of religion, even qualifying the little variation introduced into the sacred text with the epithets of blasphemous and impious. So that not a single *Te deam* was intoned in the churches in the Union. I give you this fact without comment, in all its brutal simplicity.

"Here is another grave error of which, an amateur has told me, the board of public works in that strange country was guilty: The papers have often told us of the immense railway which was undertaken in order to establish a direct communication between the Atlantic Ocean and California, across the American continent. We simple Europeans supposed it was only for the purpose of facilitating by these means the journey of the explorers of the new Eldorado. A mistake. The object was, on the contrary, more artistic than philanthropic and commercial. These hundreds of leagues of rail were voted by the States, so as to allow the pioneers wandering among the Rocky Mountains and along the banks of the Sacramento, to come and hear Jenny Lind, without giving up too much of their time to this indispensable pilgrimage. But in consequence of an odious cabal, the works, far from being completed, were hardly begun when *she* arrived. The carelessness of the American government is beyond the power of language, and it is conceivable that *she*, so humane and kind, must have complained bitterly. The result was that these poor gold-seekers of every age and sex, already worn out by their hard work, had to make this long and dangerous continental journey on foot, or on mule-back, amid unheard-of sufferings. The surveys were abandoned, the diggings were left gaping open, the buildings in San Francisco unfinished, and God knows when those works can have been taken up again. This may bring about the most terrible perturbations in the commerce of the whole world." "Oh! come now!" says Bacon, "you mean to make us believe . . . ?" "No, I stop here; you would have a right to think that I am now giving Mr. Barnum a retroactive puff, when, in the simplicity of my heart, I am only translating into vile prose the poetic rumors that have come from too happy America." "Why do you say *retroactive puff?* Is not Mr. Barnum still going?" "I cannot positively assert it, although the inaction of such a man is hardly probable; but he does not make Jenny Lind *foam up* any more. Do you not know that the admirable artist (I am speaking seriously this time), tired, no doubt, of being compulsorily mixed up with the eccentric exploits of the Romans who made money out of her, suddenly retired from the world to get married, and now lives happily out of the reach of puffing! She has just been married in Boston to M. Goldschmidt, a young pianist and composer from Hamburg, whom we applauded in Paris some years ago. An artistic marriage which got the *diva* the beautiful encomium of a French grammarian in Philadelphia: 'She saw at her feet princes and archbishops, and *did not want to be one.*' It is a catastrophe for the directors of lyric theatres in both worlds. It explains the promptness with which the London *impressarii* have just sent out confidential agents *on business* to Italy and Germany, to capture there all the *soprani* and *contralti* they can lay hands on. Unfortunately, the quantity of these prizes can never be made to compensate for the quality. Besides, even if the contrary were true, there are not enough mediocre cantatrices in the world to make change for Jenny Lind." "So it is all over!" says Winter to me, with a piteous face, squeezing his bassoon, which has not uttered a single note the whole evening; "we shall not hear her any more! . . ." "I fear so. It will be the emperor Barnum's fault, and a decisive proof of the sense of the proverb:

"*Excess in everything is a vice.*"

NINTH EVENING.

THE OPÉRA IN PARIS.—THE LYRIC THEATRES IN LONDON.

A STUDY OF MORALS.

A VERY, etc., French comic opera is played; followed by a ballet equally, etc.

The musicians are still preoccupied with the course of Roman history we have been through together. They are making the most singular comments on the subject. But Dimsky, more eager than his comrades to know all that pertains to the musical customs of Paris, draws me out again: "Now," says he, "that you have described the customs of the Romans, do tell us something about the principal theatre of their operations. You must have some curious revelations to make on that head." "Revelations? the word may perhaps apply to you, but to you alone; for I assure you the mysteries of the Paris *Opéra* have been revealed long since." "We are not up with the times here, and do not know what you say is known to everybody. So tell us."

The other musicians: "Yes, tell us about the Opéra."

"*Si tantus amor casus cognoscere nostros* . . . ."

"What does he say?" asks Bacon, while the circle is forming about me. "He says," answers Corsino, "that if we have such a desire to know the misfortunes of the Parisians, . . . we must be quiet, and beg our big-drummer not to hit so hard." "Is that from Virgil too?"

"Exactly." "What makes him talk Greek so every now and then?" "Because it has a learned look that impresses people. It is a little nonsense that we must excuse in him." "He is beginning, sh-sh!"

"Gentlemen, do you know the fable of our la Fontaine that begins with these two lines?

'Un jour sur ses longs pied allait je ne sais où
Le héron au long bec emmanché d'un long cou!

(One day—no matter when or where—
A long-legged heron chanced to fare).'"

"Yes, yes! who doesn't know that? Do you take us for Botocudoes!" "Well, the Opéra, that great theatre with its great orchestra, its great chorus, its great subvention from the government, its great company, its immense scenery, imitates the little bird of the fable in more than one point. Now you see it motionless, *asleep on one leg;* then it goes its way with an anxious air and gets nobody knows where, looking for prey in the narrowest brooks, not turning up its nose at the gudgeon it usually despises, and the very name of which is enough to irritate its gastronomic pride.

"But the poor bird is wounded in the wing, it has to walk and cannot fly, and its strides, however hurried they may be, will take it all the less to its journey's goal, that it does not know itself to what point in the horizon to direct its steps.

"The Opéra would like, as all theatres would, money and honors; it would like glory and fortune. Great successes bring the one and the other; great works sometimes obtain great successes; great composers and clever authors alone create great works. These works, radiant with intelligence and genius, only seem alive and beautiful through the agency of as lifelike and beautiful renderings, through warm, delicate, faithful, grand, brilliant and animated performances. The excellence of the performance depends not only upon the choice of executants, but upon the spirit that animates them. Thus this spirit might be good, if they all had not long ago made a discovery which discouraged them, brought indifference in among them, to be followed by *ennui* and disgust. They discovered that a deeply-rooted passion ruled all the predilections, chained all the ambitions and absorbed all the thoughts of the Opéra; that the Opéra, in a word, was madly in love with mediocrity. In order to possess, establish within its walls, nurse, honor and glorify mediocrity, there is nothing it will not do, no sacrifice it will recoil from, no labor it will not undertake with transport. With the best intentions, with the best faith in the world, it is animated even to enthusiasm for platitude, it blushes with admiration for paleness, it burns and boils for tepidity; it would turn poet to sing the praises of prose. As it has noticed, moreover, that the public, falling from *ennui* into indifference, has long since become resigned to anything that is offered it, without approving or blaming anything, the Opéra has rightly concluded that it is master in its own house, and that it can give itself up without fear to all the ecstasies of its impetuous passion, and adore mediocrity on the pedestal at which it burns incense.

"To obtain so beautiful a result, aided by those of its ministers whose happy disposition only asks to be left to itself to work in the same direction, it has so wearied, sickened, shackled, and cramped all its artists, that many of them have hung their harps upon the willows of its banks, and have stopped and wept. 'What could we do,' they now say, '*illic stetimus et flevimus!*'

"Others were indignant, and took a disgust to their task; many fell asleep; the philosophers took their pay, and laughingly parodied Mazarin's saying: 'The Opéra does not sing, but it pays.' The orchestra alone gave the Opéra great trouble to break its spirit. Most of its members, being *virtuosi* of the first rank, belong to the famous orchestra of the Conservatoire; they thus find themselves in contact with the purest art, and a choice public; hence the ideas they have held by, and the resistance they make to all efforts to subdue them. But with time and bad works you can succeed in breaking the spirit, quenching the fire, destroying the vigor and curbing the proud carriage of any musical organization that ever existed. 'Ah! you laugh at my singers,' the Opéra often says to them, 'you make fun of my new scores, my clever gentlemen! I will find a way to bring you to reason; here is a work in no end of acts, and you shall taste its beauties. Three general rehearsals would be enough to get it up, it is in the true servants'-hall style, you will have twelve or fifteen; I like my people to hurry slowly. You will play it a dozen times, that is to say, until it does not draw any longer, and then we shall pass on to another of the same sort and of equal merit. Ah! you find it dull, vulgar, cold and flat! I have the honor to present to you an opera full of galops made at post-haste, which you will have the goodness to study with the same love that you did the preceding one, and by and by you will have another by a composer who has never composed anything at all, and which will displease you, I hope, still more. You complain that the singers get out of time and tune; they complain too of the stiffness of your accompaniments; you must in future dawdle a bit in your rhythm, and wait on no matter what note, until they have done swelling their favorite tone, and then allow them some supplementary beats for breathing-time. Now, here is a ballet that is to last from nine o'clock till midnight. I must have the big-drum going all through; I mean that you shall wrestle against that, and make yourselves heard all the same. By heavens, gentlemen, there is no talk of accompaniments here, and I do not pay you to count your rests.' And so on, and so on, until the poor, noble orchestra will, I much fear, end by falling into surliness, then into morbid somnolence, then into atrophy and languor, and at last into mediocrity, that chasm into which the Opéra casts all that comes within its gates.

"The chorus is brought up in another fashion; not to have to apply to it the troublesome system employed with the orchestra, and with so little success as yet, the Opéra seeks to replace the old chorus by ready-formed singers, that is to say, by wholly mediocre ones. But here it overshoots its mark, for, after a very little while, they grow worse, and so abandon the specialty for which they were engaged. Hence the miraculous hodgepodge of sounds we frequently hear, especially in Meyerbeer's scores, and which are alone able to awaken the public out of its lethargy, and call forth cries of reprobation and those gestures of horror which do not make a mediocre effect, and must, in this respect at least, greatly displease the Opéra.

"And yet the poor public has by this time been completely subdued and humbled, as I have said; it is submissive, timid and gentle as a charming child. Formerly they gave it whole masterpieces, operas in which every number was fine, in which the recitatives were true and admirable, the ballets ravishing; in which nothing brutalized the ear, in which even language was treated with respect, and it was bored by them. . . . . Then stronger means of shaking up its drowsiness were tried; they gave it chest *C*s of every description, big-drums, snare-drums, organs, military bands, antique trumpets, tubas as big as locomotive funnels, bells, cannons, horses, cardinals under a canopy, emperors covered with gold, queens bearing their diadems, weddings, feasts, funeral processions, and still again the canopy, and always the famous canopy, the magnificent canopy, the beplumed canopy, covered with feathers and borne, like Malbrook, by four-r-r-r-officers,[1] jugglers, skaters, choir-boys, censers, monstrances, crosses, banners, processions, orgies of priests and naked women, the bull Apis, a host of calves, owls, bats, the five hundred devils of hell,—would you like some? here they are, the universal earthquake, the end of the world . . . . intermingled here and there with some flat *cavatinas* and no end of *claqueurs.* And the poor public, dumfoundered in the midst of such a cataclysm, at last opened a pair of staring eyes, and a mouth of immense gape, and kept awake; but it was dumb, looked upon itself as conquered, without hope of revenge, and submissively threw up the sponge.

"And at present, worn out, broken down, crushed after such a scrimmage, like Sancho after the siege of Barataria, it expands with joy as soon as the Opéra seems willing to give it the least bit of quiet pleasure. It drinks in a piece of refreshing music with rapture, it delights in it, it inhales it. Yes, it has been humbled so far, that it does not even dream of complaining of the terrible diet it has been put on. You might serve up to it at a feast soap-soup, live prawns, roast crow, ginger ice-cream, and if among so many atrocious ragouts it found but a poor little stick of barley-candy to suck, it would delight in it, and say while licking its chaps: 'Our host is magnificent, bravo! I am more than contented!' Now, here is the good side of the matter: the submission of the public being evident, as it is, its errors of judgment being no longer to be feared, since it no longer judges at all, they say that the authors and composers have all decided to run the risk of no longer producing anything but masterpieces." "Good idea!" cries out Corsino; "we have long since called that *coup d'état* the . . ." "Summit of all our desires! Nevertheless it would be a pity to give too many masterpieces at the Opéra; we must hope that the authors and composers will be reasonable, and will fix equitable limits tc their inspired fecundity. Enough fine scores have been spoiled already at that theatre. After the first four or five performances, when the composer's influence has ceased to act directly upon his interpreters, the execution often goes from mediocre to worse, especially in the case of well *cared for* works. It is not that time is often spared in learning them; for here is how they have gone to work up to the present time, and how they in all probability still go to work upon the study of a new composition.

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[1] *Quatre-z-officiers.*

"To start with, they do not think about it at all; then, when they have begun to think that it might not perhaps be irrelevant to reflect on it a little, they rest themselves; and they are right. The deuce! man must not expose himself, by an excess of work, to premature exhaustion of the intellect! By a series of pretty wisely calculated efforts, they get as far as announcing a rehearsal. On that day the director gets up early, shaves very close, bullies several of his servants for their laziness, drinks a cup of coffee in a hurry, and . . . sets out for the country. Several actors have the kindness to come to this rehearsal; little by little as many as five get together. The announced time being half-past twelve, they very calmly talk politics, industry, railways, fashions, the stock-exchange, dancing, philosophy till two o'clock. Then the accompanyist makes bold to call the attention of the gentlemen and ladies to the fact that he has been waiting for some time, and begs them to have the goodness to open their parts and look them over. Upon this observation each one makes up his or her mind to ask for his or her part, turns over the leaves a minute, shakes off the sand with a few execrations for the benefit of the copyist, and begins to . . . talk rather less. 'But what shall we do about singing?

The first number is a sextet, and we are only five! That is, we were only five just now, for L*** has just gone away; his lawyer sent for him on important business. Now we can't rehearse a sextet with only four. Suppose we put it off for another time?' And they all go away slowly, as they came. There can be no rehearsal on the next day, because it is Sunday; nor on the day after, because it is Monday and a day of performance. There is usually nothing done at the Opéra on such days; even the actors who are not in the piece that is to be given in the evening rest with all their might, thinking of the trouble their comrades will have. Tuesday then! One o'clock strikes; enter two actors who missed the first rehearsal; but not one of the others appears. It is too fair; they were kept waiting the first day; the absentees made them *lose their time*, their dignity requires them to give tit for tat. At a quarter before three every one is there, with the exception of the second tenor and the first bass. The ladies are charming, in the best of humor, and one of them proposes to try the sextet without any bass. 'Never mind! we shall at least see what each part has to do.' 'One moment more, gentlemen,' says the accompanyist, 'I am trying to understand . . . this . . . chord; I can hardly make out the notes. Good heavens! you cannot accompany a score of twenty staves at first sight.' 'Ah! you don't know what is in the score, and you come here to teach us our parts,' says Madame S***, who has a way of speaking her mind. 'My dear sir, if you would take the trouble to study it a bit at home before coming.' 'As you did not do as much for your own numbers, although you are no reader, I can give you the same advice, madam.' 'Come, no personalities!' 'Let us begin, for goodness' sake,' cries out D***, impatiently. '*Ritornello*, recitative for D***, vocal *ensemble* on the chord of *F-major*.' 'Wa! wa! an *A-flat!*

It is you, M***, you are the culprit!' 'I! how should I sing *A-flat*, when I did not open my lips? I am ill; I can't go on. I must go to bed.' 'Good! our four-part sextet is reduced to a trio now, but a real trio this time, a trio for three voices. That is still something. Let us go on: *La Grèce doit enfin .... La Grèce doit* (Greece must at last)...' 'Ha! ha! ha! *La graisse d'oie* (goose-fat)! You stole that from Odry! Famous! Ha! ha! ha!' 'Gracious! what a laughing body that Madame S*** is,' says Madame G***, breaking her needle in the handkerchief she is embroidering. 'Oh! we witty folks, let us not beget melancholy. You seem *piquée*, madam![1] You must not be piqued at a pun! Ha! ha! ha! the old boy is at it again!' '*Bona sera a tutti!*' says D***, rising. 'My little lambs, you are deliciously witty, but too studious! And it is quarter past three; we must never rehearse after three o'clock. To-day is Tuesday; it is just possible that I may sing in *les Huguenots* next Friday; so I must take care of myself. Besides, I am hoarse, and it was only from an excess of zeal that I appeared at the rehearsal to-day. Hm! hm!' Everybody goes away. The eight or ten other trials more or less resemble the first two. A month is thus taken up, after which they begin to rehearse in earnest for about an hour three times a week; that makes strictly twelve hours of study a month. The director always takes the greatest care to stimulate the artists by his absence; and if a little opera in one act, announced for the first of May, can at last be performed by the end of August, he will not be far wrong to say, holding his head high: 'Pooh! good Lord! it is a trifle; we got that up in forty-eight hours!'

"Give me the London managers for turning time to account; the English have brought the art of hurried musical studies to *a pitch* of splendor unknown among other nations. I can give the method they pursue no more pompous praise than to say that it is the inverse of that adopted in Paris. On one side of the channel they need *ten months* to learn an opera in five acts, and put it upon the stage; on the other they need *ten days*. The important point for the manager of a lyric theatre in London is the posters. If he has only covered them with famous names, if he has announced famous works, or declared famous the obscure works of famous composers, bringing the whole strength of the press to bear upon that epithet . . . , the trick is done. But, as the public has an insatiable appetite for novelties, and as it is principally guided by curiosity, the player who wishes to win must shuffle his cards very often. Consequently the work must be done quickly, rather than well, extraordinarily quickly, even if rapidity is carried to absurdity. The manager knows that the audience will not notice mistakes in the execution, if they are adroitly covered up; that it will never take it into its head to detect the ravages made in a new score by a want of *ensemble* and a wavering in the masses, by their coldness, by missed effects of light and shade, by wrong *tempi*, by slurred passages or by ideas comprehended upside down. He counts sufficiently upon the self-love of his singers, to whom the parts are assigned, to be sure that they at least, in their prominent position, will make superhuman efforts to make an honorable appearance before the public, in spite of the short time that has been allowed them to prepare themselves in. That is, in fact, just how it turns out, and that is enough. Nevertheless, there are occasions on which the most zealous actors cannot succeed, with all their good will. The first performance of the *Prophète* at Covent-Garden will be long remembered, in which Mario stopped short more than once, from not having had the time to learn his part. But people might cry out as much as they pleased about the first performance of a new work: 'It is not learned, nothing goes well, we must have three more weeks' study!' 'Three weeks!' the manager would say, 'you will not have three days; you will play it day after to-morrow.' 'But, sir, there is a grand *ensemble* piece, the most considerable one in the opera, of which the chorus have not seen a note yet; they cannot guess at it, and improvise it on the stage!' 'Then cut the *ensemble* piece, there will still be enough music left.' 'Sir, there is a small part that has been forgotten, and we have nobody to take it.' 'Give it to Madame X*** and let her learn it this evening.' 'Madame X*** is already cast for another part.' 'Well, she can change dress and play both. Do you suppose that I am going to stop my theatre for such reasons?' 'Sir, the orchestra has not been able to rehearse the ballet-music yet.' 'Let them play it without rehearsal! Come, let me alone. The new opera is advertised for day after to-morrow; the house is let, and it is all right.'

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[1] *Piqué* means piqued, pricked, and larded.—TRANS.

"It is the fear of being distanced by their rivals, added to the daily necessity of covering an immense outlay, that brings on this fever among managers, this *delirium furens*, from which art and artists have so much to suffer. The manager of a lyric theatre in London is a man who carries about with him a keg of powder, without being able to get rid of it, and is pursued with burning torches. The unhappy man runs as fast as his legs can carry him, tumbles down, gets up again, clears ravines, fences, brooks and bogs, overturns all that he meets, and would walk over the bodies of his father and children if they were in his way.

"Such I recognize to be the sad necessities of the position; but what is most to be deplored, is that this brutal precipitation in all preparations for musical performances has become a habit in English theatres, and has been transformed by some people into a special talent, worthy of admiration. 'We got up this opera in fifteen days,' is said on one side. 'And we in ten!' is answered from the other. 'And you have made a pretty piece of work of it!' the composer would say, if he were present. The examples that are quoted of certain *successes* of this nature, show, moreover, that managers stick at nothing, and that contempt for those qualities in a performance which can alone constitute a good one, that contempt even for the *necessities* of art is steadily increasing. During the brief existence of the Grand English Opera at Drury Lane, in 1848, the manager, whose repertory had given out, not knowing what saint to call upon, said one day in perfect seriousness to the conductor of the orchestra: 'Only one thing is to be done, that is to give *Robert le Diable* next Wednesday. So we must get it up in six days!' 'All right,' answered the conductor, 'and we will rest on the seventh. You have got the English translation of the opera?' 'No, but it will be done in a twinkling.' 'The copy?' 'No, but . . .' 'The dresses?' 'No.' 'Do the actors know the music of their parts? do the chorus know theirs?' 'No! no! no! nobody knows anything, I have not got anything, but it must be done!' And the conductor kept his countenance; he saw that the poor man was losing his mind, or rather, that he had lost it already; at least, if he had only lost that! Another time, this same manager having conceived the idea of putting Donizetti's *Linda di Chamounix* upon the stage, although he had not thought of getting the translation made, the actors and chorus having, as an extraordinary exception, had the time necessary to learn their parts, a general rehearsal was announced. The orchestra was assembled, the chorus in their places, but they still waited for something. 'Well, why don't you begin?' said the manager. 'I ask no better than to begin,' answered the conductor of the orchestra, 'but there is no music on the desks.' 'What! I cannot believe it! I will go and fetch it.' He calls the head of the copying department: 'Ah! but look here! hand round the music!' 'What music? . . .' 'Oh! good God! the music of *Linda di Chamounix*.' 'But I have not got it. Nobody ever ordered me to copy the orchestra parts of that work.' Thereupon the musicians got up with great shouts of laughter, and asked leave to go, as the only thing that had been neglected for that opera was the *music*, which had not been got. . . . . Excuse me, gentlemen, let me interrupt myself a minute. This story oppresses me, humiliates me, and calls up sad memories. . . . . Besides, hear this delicious air which has lost its way and got amongst the balderdash of your Italian ballet." . . . "Oh! oh! yes," cry all the violins, seizing their instruments, "we must play that like masters; it is masterly!" And the whole orchestra plays with irreproachable unanimity of expression, and delicacy of light and shade, this admirable *andante* which breathes forth all the voluptuous poetry of Eastern fairyland. It is hardly concluded, when most of the musicians hasten to leave their desks, leaving two violins, a bass, the trombones and the big-drum to go on with the remainder of the ballet. "We had noticed that bit before," says Winter, "and we counted on playing it *con amore*, only you nearly made us miss it." "But where does it come from, who wrote it, where have you heard it?" asks Corsino. "It comes from Paris; I heard it in the ballet of *la Péri*, the music of which was written by a German artist, whose merit is equaled by his modesty, and whose name is Burgmüller." "It is very beautiful! There is a divine languor about it!" "It makes you dream of Mahomet's houris! This music comes at the entry of the Peri. If you could hear it with the *mise-en-scène* for which it is written, you would admire it still more. It is simply a masterpiece." The musicians go to their desks, without any previous agreement, and write the name of Burgmüller in pencil on that page of the orchestral parts on which the *andante* is.

I take up my sad tale:

"The directors of our Paris Opéra, among whose number have been men of intelligence and wit, have at all times been chosen from among those who loved music least and knew least about it. We have even had some who execrated it thoroughly. One of them said to me, to my face, that every score *twenty years old* was fit to burn; that Beethoven was an *old fool*, whose works a handful of *madmen* affect to admire, but who, in reality *never wrote anything that was endurable.*"

The musicians, explosively: ". . . . ! . . . . ! . . . . !" (and other unprintable exclamations). "'Well-written music,' said another, 'is that which does not *spoil anything* in an opera.' So it is not astonishing that such directors do not know how to set to work to make their immense musical machine go, and that they take every opportunity to treat those composers so cavalierly whom they think they do not need, or need no longer. Spontini, whose two masterpieces, *la Vestale* and *Cortez*, sufficed to keep up the *répertoire* for twenty-five years, was, at the end of his life, actually laid upon the shelf in that theatre, and could not succeed in obtaining *an audience* from the director. Rossini would have the pleasure, if he were to come back to France, of seeing his score of *Guillaume Tell* completely topsy-turvied, and reduced by a third. For a long time they played *a half of the fourth act* of *Moïse* to his very face, as a prelude before a ballet. Hence came the charming bit of repartee that is attributed to him. Meeting the director of the Opéra one day, the latter addressed him in these words: 'Well, my dear *maestro*, we are to play the fourth act of your *Moïse* to-morrow.' 'What! the whole of it?' replied Rossini.

"The performances and the mutilations inflicted from time to time upon the *Freyschütz* at the Opéra have caused a veritable scandal, if not in Paris, where nobody is indignant at anything, at least in the rest of Europe, where Weber's masterpiece is admired.

"It is known with what insolent contempt Mozart was treated, towards the end of the last century, by the great men who then ruled over the *Académie royale de musique.* After showing the little harpsichord-player, who had the audacity to propose writing something for their theatre, out of the room in a jiffy, they yet promised him, as an indemnification and a special favor, to admit a *short instrumental piece* of his composition on the program of one of the sacred concerts at the Opéra, and asked him to write it. Mozart soon finished his work and made haste to bring it to the director.

"Some days afterwards, when the concert at which he was to have been heard was advertised, Mozart, not seeing his name on the program, comes back anxiously to the administration; they make him wait a long while, as they always do, in the anteroom, where, fumbling about idly among a lot of old papers which were heaped up on the table, he finds . . . what? his manuscript, which the director had thrown down there. When he sees his Mecaenas, Mozart demands an explanation. 'Your little symphony?' answers the director; 'yes, that is it. There is no longer any time to give it to the copyist; *I had forgotten it.*'

"Ten or twelve years after, when Mozart had died immortal, the Paris Opéra felt itself called upon to give *Don Juan* and the *Magic Flute,* but mutilated, begrimed, disfigured, travestied into infamous *pasticcios,* by wretches whose name it ought to be forbidden to pronounce. Such is our Opéra, such it has been, and such it will be."

SELECTIONS FROM

MUSICAL GROTESQUES.

MUSICAL GROTESQUES.

PROLOGUE.

LETTER TO THE AUTHOR FROM THE CHORUS OF THE OPÉRA.

DEAR MASTER: You have dedicated a book *(Evenings in the Orchestra) to your good friends the artists of X***, a civilized city.* That city (in Germany, as we know,) is very probably no more civilized than many others, nothwithstanding the malicious intention with which you gave it that epithet. We may be allowed to doubt that its artists are superior to those in Paris, and as for their affection for you, it cannot surely be either so lively or so old as ours. The Parisian chorus-singers in general, and those of the Opéra in particular, are devoted to you, body and soul; they have given you proof of it many times in every way. Have they murmured at the length of the rehearsals, at the severity of your musical requirements, at your violent speeches, or even at your fits of fury, during the rehearsals of the *Requiem*, the *Te Deum*, of *Roméo et Juliette*, of the *Damnation de Faust*, of the *Enfance du Christ*, etc.? . . . Never, never. They have, on the contrary, always done their task with unshaken zeal and patience. And you are not flattering to the men, nor gallant to the ladies, in those terrible rehearsals.

When the time to begin draws near, if the chorus is not in full force, if any one is missing, you walk round the piano-forte like the lion in the Jardin des Plantes in his cage, you scold under your breath, biting your under lip, your eyes dart fierce lightning; you turn away your head when any one bows to you; you bang out from time to time on the keyboard dissonant chords that show your internal wrath, and tell us very clearly that you would like to tear the late comers, or the absentees in pieces . . . if they were present.

Then you always reproach us with not singing *piano* enough in the soft passages, and with not attacking the *fortes* together; you want to have us pronounce both the *ss* in *angoisse* (anguish), and the *r* in the second syllable of *traitre* (traitor). And if one unfortunate illiterate mortal, only a single one, lost in our ranks, forgets your grammatical observation, and takes it into his head to still say *angoise* or *traite*, you scold everybody, you overwhelm us all with cruel jokes, calling us porters, box-openers, etc.!! Well, we endure all that notwithstanding, and we love you all the same, because you love us, as any one can see, and you adore music, as any one can feel.

Only the French custom of giving precedence to foreigners, even when there is flagrant injustice in doing so, can have led you to dedicate your *Evenings in the Orchestra* to German musicians.

It is done, let us say no more about it.

But why could you not write now, for our benefit, a book of the same sort, less philosophical perhaps, but more lively, to drive away the *ennui* that gnaws us at the Opéra?

You know that during the acts or parts of acts that do not contain choruses, we are prisoners in the greenrooms. It is as dark there as it is between decks on board ship, it smells of lamp-oil, and there is no good place to sit down; we hear musty old stories told there in bad language, and rank words spoken; or else silence and inaction crush our spirits, until the call-boy comes to send us upon the stage. . . . Ah! you may believe that the trade is no sweet one. To go through rehearsals by the fifty to drive the almost unsingable chorus-parts of new compositions into our heads! to learn operas by heart that last from seven o'clock till midnight! to change dress as many as six times in an evening! to stand penned up like sheep when there is nothing to be sung, and not have five minutes comfort during those interminable performances!! . . . For we do not imitate your artists in Germany, who play works they do not care about with half an orchestra. We sing everything in everything. We are sure that if we took the liberty of only giving voice in the scores that pleased us, cases of quinsy would be rare among the chorus-singers at the Opéra. What is more, we sing standing, we are always on our feet, whereas the musicians in the orchestra play sitting down in their music cellar. It is fit to make one wish to be an oyster!

Come, be good, write us a volume of true stories, of fabulous tales, even of nonsense, like those you often write when you are in bad humor; we will read it in our places between decks, by the light of our lamps; we shall owe to you the forgetfulness of some dreary hours, and you will have a right to all the gratitude of our hearts.

YOUR FAITHFUL SOPRANI, CONTRALTI, TENORS AND BASSES OF THE OPERA.

Paris, December 22, 1858.

THE AUTHOR'S REPLY TO THE CHORUS OF THE OPERA.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: You call me: dear master! I was on the point of answering: dear slaves! for I know how you are deprived of leisure and liberty. Was I not once a chorus-singer myself? and then in what a theatre! God preserve you from ever entering it!

I well know the hard work you do, the number of dreary hours you count upon your fingers, and the still sadder rate of your appointments. Alas! I am no more master, nor happier, nor freer than you. You work, I work, we work to live; and you live, I live, we live to work. The Saint-Simonians have pretended to know of an attractive sort of work; they have kept the secret well; I can assure you that that work is as unknown to me as it is to you. I no longer count my dreary hours; they fall, one upon the other, cold and monotonous as the drops of frozen snow that add dullness to the winter nights in Paris.

As for my appointments, let us say nothing. . . .

I recognize the justice of your reproach about the dedication of *Evenings in the Orchestra;* I ought to have inscribed it to my friends the artists of Paris, since it was a book on musical matters and musicians. But I had just come from Germany when I took the fancy to write that volume; the memory of the warm and cordial welcome that the orchestra in the *civilized city* had given me was still fresh, and I had so little expectation of finding the least sympathy for my *Evenings* among the public, that dedicating them to any one would have been, as I thought, putting them under a patronage and not paying a homage by which any one could have felt flattered. Your regrets on that head seem to show that you think otherwise. If I may believe you, there are some readers of my prose! . . . Can I have been mistaken! . . . Can it be that I am a fool! It fills me with joy.

You joke me on my observations on grammar. Yet I hardly flatter myself that I know French; no, I know very well that every one knows that I do not know it. But a fair number of words, very much used, are, as I am well aware, barbarous terms, and I have a horror of hearing them. The word *angoise* is one of these; it is often used by the most richly *appointed* singers and cantatrices of our lyric theatres. A crowned pupil of the Conservatoire once persisted in saying: "*Mortelle angoise!*" in spite of all I could say. I at last succeeded in correcting him, by telling him that there were three *ss* in that word, in the hope that he would pronounce at least two of them. So he sang at last: "*Mortelle angoisse*" (mortal anguish).

You seem to envy the instrumental musicians, who play sitting down in their *music cellar*, instead of standing, for long hours. But be just. They are seated, I admit, in that cellar in which they can hardly earn drinking-water, but they play all the time, without respite, without truce or mercy, and do not imitate the carelessness of my friends in the *civilized city* any more than you do. The directors only allow them to count their rests, when by any chance the composer gives them some to count. They play in the overtures, in the airs, duets, trios, quartets, *ensemble* pieces, they accompany your choruses; an administrator of the Opéra even wished to make them play in the choruses *without accompaniment*, saying that they were not paid to fold their arms.

And you know how they are paid!! . . .

They do not change dress every half hour, that is true too; but they have been recently required to present themselves in the orchestra in white cravats, which is ruinous to them. Some of our poor musical brethren of the Opéra earn, they tell me, about 66fr. 65c. per month. At fourteen performances a month, that does not make 5fr. per performance of five hours length; it is rather less than twenty sous per hour, less than an hour's cab fare. And now they are encumbered with toilet expenses. They need at least seven white cravats a month, supposing that they can carefully turn some and wear them several times. And these washing bills will amount in time to quite a round sum. How much, indeed, do the washing and ironing of a starched white cravat cost (without reckoning the price of the cravat)? Fifteen centimes. We will suppose that the artist goes without having it starched, from economy, and only has it ironed for state occasions. His expenses will be thus reduced from fifteen centimes to two sous. Well, see, at the end of the month he must write down in his book of expenses, the following account:

Cravat	for *les Huguenots*, . . .	3	sous.
“	for *le Prophète*, . . .	3	“
“	for *Robert le Diable*, . . .	3	“
“	for *le Cheval de Bronze*, . .	3	“
“	for *Guillaume Tell*, . . .	3	“
“	for *la Favorite*, when Mme. Borghi-Mamo does not sing, . .	2	“
“	for *la Juive*, ...	3	“
“	for *la Sylphide*, ...	3	“

Cravat for *le Violon du Diable*, . .	2 sous.
" for the first two acts of *Lucia* when Roger does not sing, . .	2 "
" for *François Villon*, . . .	2 "
" for *la Xacarilla*, ...	2 "
" for *le Rossignol* (cravat worn three times), ...	0 "
" for *la Rose de Florence* (worn four times), ...	0 "
Total for fourteen performances and seven cravats, ...	1fr. 55c.
For one year,.	18fr. 60c.
For ten years, ...	186fr.

Which 186fr. drawn from the budget of an unfortunate violinist, father of a family, may reduce him to the atrocious necessity of having recourse to his last cravat to hang himself with.

The existence of the orchestral musicians is accordingly strewn with about as many roses as that of the artists of the chorus; they can both shake hands over it.

Be it as it may, I swear I should be happy (to use Oronte's words, in Molière) to *rock your ennui awhile;* but the gayety of my anecdotes is highly problematical, and I should not dare to give way to your friendly urging, if the saddest things had not often their comical side. You know how the man who was condemned to death, said in a hoarse voice to his weeping wife who had come to bid him a last farewell, and follow him to the place of punishment: "So you did not bring the young one with you?" "Oh! my God! what an idea! could I show him his father on the scaffold?" "You ought to have brought him, it would have amused the child."

So, here is a little work, the character of which I cannot very well designate; I will call it at random: "Musical Grotesques," although there are here and there some grotesques that are foreign to musical art. According to the disposition of the reader, it may strike him as laughable or lamentable. Try to find some pleasure in reading it; as for myself, I was amused by writing it, very much as the condemned man's child would have been by his father's execution.

Good-bye, ladies and gentlemen; I kiss the fair hands, and cordially squeeze the others, and I beg you to believe in the sincere, lively and constant affection of your very devoted comrade.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

Paris, January 21, 1859.

TO
MY GOOD FRIENDS
THE
ARTISTS OF THE CHORUS OF THE OPERA
IN PARIS
A BARBAROUS CITY.

THE art of music is undeniably the one of all others which gives rise to the strangest passions, the absurdest ambitions, I will even say, to the most peculiar monomanias. Of the people who are shut up in insane asylums, those who think themselves Neptune or Jupiter are easily recognized as monomaniacs; but there are many others who enjoy entire freedom, whose relations have never dreamed of having recourse to the science of phrenology on their account, but whose madness is evident. Music has unsettled their brain. I will not speak of those men of letters who write, either in verse or prose, upon questions of musical theory, of which they have not the most elementary knowledge; who use words, the meaning of which they do not understand; who rave in cold blood about old masters, of whom they have never heard a note; who generously ascribe to them expressive and melodic ideas which those masters never had, since melody and expression did not exist at the time in which they lived; who admire by the wholesale, and with the same heartfelt enthusiasm, two pieces signed by the same name, of which one is indeed beautiful, and the other absurd; who say and write those astonishing buffooneries which no musician can hear quoted without laughing. It is agreed that everybody has the right to speak and write about music; it is a trivial art, *made for everybody;* the phrase is consecrated. Yet, between ourselves, this aphorism might very well be the expression of a prejudice. If the art of music is at once an art and a science; if one must go through complex and quite long studies to be a thorough master of it; if one must have a cultivated mind and practiced ear to feel the emotions it calls forth; if, to judge of the value of musical works, one must have a well-furnished memory, in order to be able to make comparisons, and must know many things one is necessarily ignorant of before learning them; it is very evident that those people who ascribe to themselves the right of ramblingly discoursing on music without knowing anything about it, and who would yet be very careful not to give an opinion on architecture or sculpture, or any other art that is unfamiliar to them, are cases of monomania. They think themselves musicians, just as the other monomaniacs I have just mentioned think themselves Neptune or Jupiter. There is not the slightest difference.

When Balzac wrote his *Gambara* and attempted a technical analysis of Rossini's *Moïse*, when Gustave Planche had the audacity to print his strange criticism on Beethoven's *Heroic Symphony*, they were both of them mad. Only Balzac's madness was touching; he admired without understanding or feeling, he believed himself enthusiastic. The insanity of Planche, on the contrary, was irritating and impudent; without either comprehension, or feeling, or knowledge, he traduced Beethoven, and had the pretension to teach him how a symphony should be written.

I could name a host of other writers who, for the misfortune of art and the torment of artists, publish their ideas upon music, constantly mistaking the Piræus for a man, like the monkey in the fable. But I will confine myself to quoting divers examples of inoffensive, and consequently essentially ludicrous, monomania, which modern history furnishes.

THE RIGHT OF PLAYING IN *F* IN A SYMPHONY IN *D*.

AT the time when, after eight or ten years of study, I began to catch a glimpse of the power of our great, profaned art, a student of my acquaintance was sent to me by the members of an amateur philharmonic society, recently formed in the hall of the Prado, to beg me to be their conductor. I had as yet only conducted a single musical performance, that of my first mass in the church of Saint-Eustache. I had great misgivings about those amateurs; their orchestra must be, and indeed was, execrable. The idea however of getting practice in the direction of instrumental masses by thus experimenting *in anima vili*, decided me, and I accepted.

When the day for rehearsal comes, I go to the Prado; I find there some sixty players, tuning with that irritating noise that is peculiar to amateur orchestras. We were to perform what? . . . A symphony in *D*, by Gyrowetz. I do not believe that ever tinker, rabbit-skin vendor, Roman grocer or Neapolitan barber dreamed of such platitudes. I resign myself, and we begin. I hear a frightful discord, made by the clarinets. I interrupt the orchestra, and turning to the clarinet players: "You have no doubt mistaken one piece for another, gentlemen; we are playing in *D*, and you have just played in *F*!" "No, sir, it is the symphony you mentioned!" "Let us begin again." New discord, new stoppage. "But it is impossible; send me your part." The clarinet parts are passed to me. "Oh! now the cacophony is explained. Your part is written in *F*, it is true, but for clarinets in *A*, in which case your *F* is in unison with our *D*. You have taken the wrong instruments." "We have only got clarinets in *C*, sir." "Well then, transpose a third lower." "We do not know how to transpose." "Then in heaven's name, stop playing." "Ah! we like that! we are members of the society, and have a right to play as well as the rest."

At these incredible words I drop my *bâton* and run away as if the devil were after me, and I have never heard of those *philharmonics* since.

A CROWNED VIRTUOSO.

A king of Spain, imagining himself very fond of music, used to like to play his part in Boccherini quartets; but he could never follow the movement of a piece. One day, when he had stayed further behind the other players than usual, they were on the point of stopping, frightened at the disorder made by the royal bow, which was three or four measures behind time: "Go on," cried the enthusiastic monarch, "I will catch up with you!" . . . .

A NEW MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

A musician, whom all Paris knew fifteen or twenty years ago, came to see me one morning with something carefully wrapped up in paper under his arm: "I have found it! I have found it!" cried he, like Archimedes, coming into my room. "I have been a long while on the scent of this invention, which cannot fail to create an immense revolution in art. See this instrument, a simple tin box, pierced with holes, and fastened to the end of a string; I will swing it round rapidly, like a sling, and you will hear something marvelous. See, just listen: Hooh! hooh! hooh! Such an imitation of the wind *knocks in awfully* the famous chromatic scales in Beethoven's *Pastoral.* It is nature caught in the act! It is fine, it is new! It would be in bad taste to play the modest fool here. Beethoven was wrong, we must admit it, and I am right. Oh! my dear fellow, what an invention! and what an article you will write about it for me in the *Journal des Débats!* It will do you extraordinary honor; you will be translated into all languages. How glad I am; go it, old boy! And, believe me, it is as much for you as for me. Yet, I confess that I should like to be the first to employ my instrument; I have reserved it for an overture I have begun, and of which the title will be: *The Island of Æolus;* you will hear about it. After which you are free to make use of my invention for your symphonies. I am not one of those people who would sacrifice the present and future of music to their own personal interests, no; *everything for art* is my motto."

. . . .

THE REGIMENT OF COLONELS.

A gentleman, who is a rich land-owner, deigns to present his son, twenty-two years old, and not as yet able to read music, to me.

"I have come, sir," says he, "to beg you to have the kindness to give lessons in *high composition* to this young man, who will, I hope, soon do you credit. He thought at first of being a colonel, but notwithstanding the brilliancy of military glory, the arts have proved decisively seductive to him; he prefers to be a great composer."

"Oh! sir, what a mistake! If you only knew the vexations of that career! The great composers mutually devour each other; there are so many of them! . . . Besides, I cannot undertake to lead him to the goal of his noble ambition. To my mind he had better follow his first impulse, and enlist in the regiment you have just mentioned."

"What regiment?"

"Why, the regiment of colonels, of course."

"Sir, your pleasantry is vastly out of place; I will importune you no longer. Fortunately you are not the only master in the world, and my son can be a great composer without you. We have the honor to bid you good-morning." . . . .

A CANTATA.

A little while after the ashes of the Emperor Napoleon I were brought to Paris, funeral marches were ordered of MM. Auber, Adam and Halévy, for the procession that was to escort the immortal dead to the church of the Invalides.

I had been engaged in 1840 to compose a symphony for the transfer of the remains of the victims of the revolution of July, and the inauguration of the Bastille column; so that several papers, persuaded that that style of music was my specialty, announced me as the composer who was honored a second time with the minister's confidence on this solemn occasion.

A Belgian amateur, misled like many others, then sent me a package containing a letter, some verses and music.

The letter was couched in the following terms:

"SIR:

"I learn through the papers that you are engaged to compose a symphony for the ceremony of the transfer of the imperial ashes to the Pantheon. I send you a cantata, which, woven into your work, and sung by seven or eight hundred voices, must have a certain effect.

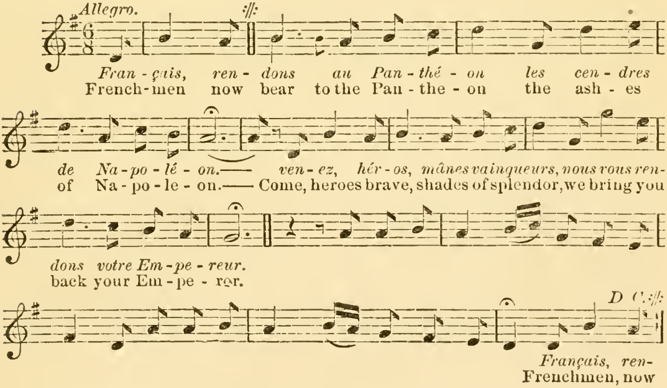
"You will notice a gap in the poetry after the line:

"*Nous vous rendons votre Empereur.*
"(We bring you back your Emperor).

"I have only been able to completely finish the music, for I am not much of a poet. But you can easily procure what is wanting; Hugo or Lamartine will do that for you. I am married and have three *kids* (three children); if this should bring in a few crowns, you will be good enough to send them on to me; I leave the glory to you."

. . . .

Here is the cantata:


Allegro.
Fran - çais, ren - dons au Pan - thé - on les cen - dres
French-men now bear to the Pan - the - on the ash - es
de Na - po - lé - on.—— ven - ez, hér - os, mânes vainqueurs, nous vous ren-
of Na - po - le - on.—— Come, heroes brave, shades of splendor, we bring you
dons votre Em - pe - reur.
back your Em - pe - ror.
D. C.
Français, ren-
Frenchmen, now

He left the glory to me!!!

THE EVANGELIST OF THE DRUM.

I have often asked myself: Is it because certain persons are mad, that they interest themselves in music, or is it that music has driven them mad? . . . The most impartial observation has led me to this conclusion: Music is a violent passion, like love; it can, without doubt, apparently deprive individuals who are possessed by it of their reason. But this derangement of the brain is only accidental, the reason of those persons soon regains its seat; it remains yet to be proved that this pretended derangement is not a sublime exaltation, an exceptional development of the intellect and sensibility.

As for the others, the real grotesques, music has evidently not contributed to the disorder of their mental faculties, and if they have taken it into their heads to devote themselves to the practice of the art, it is because they are wanting in common sense. Music is innocent of their monomania.

Yet God knows what harm they would do, if it depended upon themselves, and if people possessed with the desire of demonstrating to every comer, in every country and in every way, that they are Jupiter, were not at once recognized by public common sense as monomaniacs.

Besides, there are individuals who are much honored by being classed as deranged intellects; they never had any mind; their skulls are hollow, or at least empty on one side; the right or left lobe of their brain is wanting, when both lobes are not wanting at the same time. The reader will have no trouble in classifying the examples we are about to cite, and will know how to distinguish the madmen from those that are simply simple.

. . . .

There was once an honest musician who played the drum extremely well. Persuaded of the superiority of the *snare-drum* over all other organs of music, he wrote *a method* for that instrument, ten or twelve years ago, and dedicated his work to Rossini. As I was invited to pronounce upon the merit and importance of this method, I addressed a letter to the author, in which I took occasion to compliment him highly upon his talent as an executant.

"You are the king of drummers," said I, "and will in time become the drummer of kings. Never did any one in any French, Italian, English, German or Swedish regiment have a *quality of tone* comparable to yours. The mechanism, properly so called, the *handling of the drum-sticks*, makes those who do not know you take you for a magician. Your *rub* is so mellow, so seductive, so sweet! it is like honey! Your *dub* is cutting, like a sabre. And as for your *roll*, it is the voice of the Eternal, it is the thunder, it is the lightning that falls upon a poplar, eighty feet high, and cleaves it from top to bottom."

This letter intoxicated our *virtuoso* with joy; he would have lost his mind, had that been possible. He ran about to all the orchestras in Paris and the *banlieue*, showing his letter of glory to all his comrades.

But one day he comes to my lodgings in a state of indescribable fury: "Sir! they had the insolence yesterday, at the head-quarters of the National Guard, to insinuate that your letter was a joke, and that you had been making (if I may so express myself) a . . . fool of me. I am not ugly, no, everybody knows that. But the first man that dares to tell me that positively to my face, devil burn me if I don't run my sabre through his body! . . ."

Poor man! he was the evangelist of the drum; his name was *St. John.*

THE APOSTLE OF THE FLAGEOLET.

Another, the apostle of the flageolet, was full of zeal; you could not prevent him from playing in the orchestra, of which he was the fairest ornament, even when there was nothing for the flageolet to do.

At such times he would double either the flute, or the oboe, or the clarinet; he would have doubled the double-bass part rather than stay idle. One of his fellow-players, taking it into his head to find it strange that he allowed himself to play in one of Beethoven's symphonies: "You lower my instrument to a *machine*, and seem to despise it! Fools! If Beethoven had had me, his works would be full of flageolet solos, and he would have made his fortune.

"But he did not know me; *he died in the hospital*."

THE PROPHET OF THE TROMBONE.

A third passionately admired the trombone. The trombone, according to him, would sooner or later dethrone and replace all other instruments. He is its prophet Isaiah. St. John would have played it in the desert; our friend, to prove the immense superiority of the trombone, boasts of having played it in stage-coaches, in the railway, on steamboats, and even *while swimming in a pond twenty mètres deep*. His method contains, beside such exercises as are proper to teach the use of the trombone while swimming in ponds, several jovial songs for parties and *fêtes*. At the bottom of one of these masterpieces is a note in the following terms: "When this piece is sung at a party, a pile of plates must be let fall at the measure marked X; it produces an excellent effect." . . . . .

ORCHESTRA CONDUCTORS.

A famous conductor, rehearsing a new overture, answered the composer, who asked for a shade of *piano* in an important passage: "*Piano*, sir? a mere *chimæra of the chamber!*"

. . . .

I once saw another, who fancied he was conducting eighty performers, *whose backs were all turned towards him.*

. . . .

A third, who conducted with his head bowed down, and his nose among the notes of the score, no more knew what the players were doing than if he had conducted the orchestra of the Paris Opéra from London.

Once, when a rehearsal of Beethoven's Symphony in *A* was going on under his *direction*, the whole orchestra got out; when the *ensemble* was once destroyed, a terrible cacophony was quick to follow, and the musicians soon stopped playing. He did not stop waving the *bâton*, with which he imagined he was beating time, over his head, until repeated cries of: "Eh! dear master, stop, stop a bit! we have lost our place!" suspended at last the motions of his untiring arm. He then raises his head, and says with an astonished look: "What is the matter? What do you want?"

"The matter is that we don't know where we are, and that everything has been in confusion for some time."

"Ah! ah!"

He had not noticed it.

This worthy man was, like the preceeding one, honored with the special confidence of a king, who loaded him with honors, and he still passes in his country for one of the illustrious in art. When that is said in the presence of musicians, some of them, the flatterers, keep their countenance.

APPRECIATORS OF BEETHOVEN.

A famous critic, theorist, talker, decomposer, corrector of the great masters, had made an opera out of the text of two dramatic authors, and the music of four composers. He finds me one day in the library of the Conservatoire, reading the storm in Beethoven's pastoral symphony.

"Ah! ah!" says he, recognizing the music, "I have introduced that into my opera *la Forêt de Sénart*, and I have put in some trombones, which make the devil of an effect!"

"What was the use of *putting any in*, seeing that there are some there already?"

"No, there are not!"

"You don't say so! and this" (showing him two staves of trombones), "what do you call this?"

"Ah! by Jove! *I did not see them.*"

. . . .

A great theorist, learned, etc., printed somewhere that Beethoven *knew little about music.*

. . . .

A director of the fine arts (which deplore his loss) once admitted in my presence that this same Beethoven *was not without talent.*

SONTAG'S VERSION.

An admirable cantatrice, the much-lamented Sontag, had invented a phrase, and substituted it for the original one at the end of the trio of maskers in *Don Giovanni.* Her example was soon followed; it was too fine not to be, and all cantatrices in Europe adopted Madame Sontag's *invention* for the part of *Donna Anna.*

One day at a general rehearsal in London, an orchestra conductor of my acquaintance, hearing this audacious change at the end of the trio, stopped the orchestra, and turning to the prima-donna:

"Well, what is the matter? have you forgotten your part, madam?"

"No, sir, I *am singing Sontag's version.*"

"Ah! very well; but might I take the liberty to ask you why you prefer Sontag's version to Mozart's, which is yet the only one we have to do with here?"

"Because hers is better."

! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! . . . . .

NOT TO BE DANCED IN *E.*

A dancer, who had raised himself to the clouds in Italy, comes to make his first appearance in Paris; he wishes a step, which brought him avalanches of flowers in Milan and Naples, to be introduced in the ballet in which he is to appear. He is obeyed. The general rehearsal takes place; but this dance air, for some reason or other, has been copied a tone higher than in the original score.

They begin; the dancer starts for the empyrean, flutters about for a moment, and then, coming down to earth: "In what key are you playing, gentlemen?" says he, suspending his flight. "It seems as if *my piece* fatigued me more than usual."

"We are playing in *E.*"

"I am no longer astonished. Please to transpose this *allegro* and lower it a tone. *I can only dance it in* D."

A KISS FROM ROSSINI.

An amateur violoncello had the honor to play before Rossini.

"The great master," said our man, ten years afterwards, "was so enchanted with my playing that he interrupted me in the middle of a *cantabile*, and came and gave me a kiss on the forehead. Since then, to preserve the illustrious imprint, *I have never washed my face.*"

A CLARINET-CONCERTO.

Döhler had just announced a concert in one of the large cities of Germany, when a stranger presented himself at his room.

"Sir," said he to Döhler, "my name is W***, *I am a great clarinet*, and I have come to H*** with the intention of making my talent appreciated. But I am little known here, and you would render me an eminent service if you would permit me to play a solo at the concert you are getting up. The effect that I hope to make there will draw the attention and favor of the public to me, and I shall thus owe the success of my own first concert to you."

"What would you like to play at my concert?" answers the obliging Döhler.

"A grand clarinet-*concerto*."

"Well sir, I accept your offer; I will put you on my program; come to the rehearsal this evening; I am enchanted to be of service to you."

When the evening came, our man presents himself, and they begin to rehearse his *concerto*. After the fashionable manner of some *virtuosos*, he does not play his own part, but confines himself to rehearsing the orchestra, and giving the *tempi*. The principal *tutti*, rather like the *Peasants' March* in the *Freyschütz*, struck all present as very grotesque, and made Döhler rather anxious. "But," said he in going out, "the solo part will make up for it; this gentleman is probably a clever *virtuoso*; we cannot expect a *great clarinet* to be a great composer at the same time."

The next day, at the concert, the clarinetist comes upon the stage in his turn, rather intimidated by Döhler's brilliant triumph.

The orchestra plays the *tutti*, which ended with a hold on the chord of the dominant, after which the first solo began. "Tram, pam, pam, tire-lire-la-re-la," as in the march in the *Freyschütz*. On coming to the chord of the dominant, the orchestra stops, the *virtuoso* stands with his left hip well out, advances his right leg, puts his instrument to his lips, stretches out both elbows horizontally, and seems about to begin. His cheeks swell, he blows, puffs, grows red in the face; vain efforts, nothing comes out from the rebellious instrument. He then places the bell opposite his right eye, and looks into it as if it were a telescope; discovering nothing there, he tries again, he blows with fury; not a sound. In despair, he orders the musicians to begin the *tutti* over again: "Tram, pam, pam, tire-lire-la-re-la," and, while the orchestra is fencing away, the *virtuoso* places his clarinet with the bell against his stomach and the reed sticking out in front, and begins to hurriedly unscrew the mouthpiece and pass the swab through the tube. . . .

All this took a certain time, and the pitiless orchestra, having finished its *tutti*, had come again to its hold on the chord of the dominant.

"Again! again! begin over again! begin over again!" cries the palpitating artist to the musicians. The musicians obey: "Tram, pam, pam, tire-lire-la-re-la." And for the third time here they are again, after a few moments, at the inexorable measure which announces the entry of the solo. But the clarinet is not ready: "*Da capo!* again! again!" And the orchestra goes off gayly again: "Tram, pam, pam, tire-lire-la-re-la."

During this last repetition, the *virtuoso* having rearticulated the various pieces of the unlucky instrument, and placing it under his left arm, draws a knife from his pocket and begins to hurriedly scrape the reed of the clarinet.

Laughter and giggling is heard all over the hall; exclamations and little stifled screams come from every part of the house, and the desperate *virtuoso* keeps on scraping his reed.

At last he thinks it in condition; the orchestra has come for the fourth time to the stopping place of the *tutti*, the soloist again puts his instrument to his lips, spreads out and raises his elbows, blows, sweats, grows red in the face, fidgets, and nothing comes out! When at last a supreme effort shoots forth, like a flash of sonorous lightning, the most piercing, ear-splitting *quack* that ever was heard. It was like a hundred pieces of satin torn at the same time; the scream of a flight of vampyres, of a ghoul in labor, cannot approach the violence of that frightful quack!

The hall rings with an exclamation of joyful horror, applause bursts forth, and the dismayed *virtuoso*, coming forward to the edge of the platform, stammers out: "Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know . . . an ac . . cident . . . to my cla . . rinet . . . but I will have it re . . -paired . . . and I beg you to have the condscen . . sion to come to my con . . cert, next Monday, to he . . he . . hear *the end of my concerto.*" . . . . .

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AT THE UNIVERSAL EXPOSITION.

I shall certainly not write here a preamble on industry and universal expositions. Arguing on certain questions exposes the logician to rather serious dangers; it is sometimes even real condescension to discuss them. I am so conscious of being far from possessing the Olympian coolness necessary in such cases, that instead of combating systems that shock me, I often, in furious despair for which sufficient causes are not wanting, go so far as to seem to accept them, even to approve them with my head if not with my pen. . . . And this reminds me of a question I once asked an amateur in chemistry. . . . (Perhaps my amateur, like amateurs in music, in philosophy, like many other amateurs in short, believed in the absurd. This belief is very widely spread. Perhaps, also, the absurd is true after all; for if the absurd were not true, why should God have been so cruel as to have placed so great a love for the absurd in the heart of man? But here is what I asked my chemist, and his reply):

"If we could place," said I, "a certain number of kilogrammes, say a hundred or a thousand kilogrammes of gunpowder at the central point of one of the most enormous mountains on the face of the globe, of one of the Himalayas, or Chimborazo, for instance, and then, by some of the processes we have at command to-day, set fire to them, what would happen? Do you think that an explosion could take place, and that its force would be sufficient to blast and blow up a mass that offers so extraordinary a resistance, by its density, its cohesion and its weight?" The amateur in chemistry, embarrassed, reflected a moment, a thing that amateurs in music or philosophy rarely do, and answered, hesitatingly: "It is probable that the force of the powder would be insufficient; that its ignition would take place, nevertheless, and produce gases of which the expansion would be checked by the resistance of the mountain; these gases would be condensed to a liquid condition, but would always tend to retake a gaseous form, and make a terriffic explosion as soon as the superior force stopped compressing them." I do not know how far the opinion of my chemical *dilettante* is founded upon fact, but I have perhaps quoted the proposition I submitted to him pertinently.

There are people, I know some, who, being forced to wrestle with a mountain of absurdities, experience an incalculable wrath at the centre of their hearts, which is yet insufficient to explode the mountain, but first take fire, and, almost simultaneously submitting without noise, even with smiles, to the law of unreason, see the lightnings of their volcanoes liquefy until further orders.

These liquids, thus formed, are usually black and extremely bitter; yet there are some which are insipid, colorless, even sweet to the eye and taste, such is their diversity. These are the most dangerous. Be it as it may, many mines have been fired, many kilogrammes of powder *liquefied*, during the laborious session of the various juries, called to give, or rather to offer their opinions on the products of industry.

. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .

The special jury, called together to examine musical instruments at the last Universal Exposition, was composed of seven members, composers, *virtuosos*, acousticians, *savants*, amateurs and makers. Persuaded that they were consulted about musical instruments to find out the musical value of those instruments, they soon agreed upon the means to be employed to appreciate as well as possible their excellences of sonority and make, so as to do justice to ingenious and useful inventions, and put intelligent makers in their proper rank. Consequently, not to be interrupted in this arduous work, which is more difficult than people imagine, and extremely tedious and even painful, they had carried to the concert-room of the Conservatoire these thousands of instruments of all sorts, harmonious, cacophonous, sonorous, noisy, magnificent, admirable, useless, grotesque, ridiculous, harsh, frightful, fit to charm angels, to make demons gnash their teeth, to make birds sing, and dogs bark.

They began by examining the piano-fortes. The piano-forte! At the bare thought of this terrible instrument I feel a shudder run through my scalp; my feet burn; in writing its name, I come upon volcanic ground. You see, you do not know what pianos are, or piano-dealers, piano-makers, piano-players, the protectors and protectresses of piano-makers. God preserve you from ever knowing it! Dealers and makers of other instruments are much less to be feared. You can say to them about what you please, without their complaining too bitterly. You can give the first place to the most meritorious, without the others having, all at once, the idea of assassinating you. You can even go so far as to put the worst one in the last rank, without any opposition from the good ones. You can even say to the friend of a pretended inventor: "Your friend has invented nothing, this is nothing new, the Chinese have used his invention for centuries!" and see the disappointed friend of the inventor retire almost in silence, as the illustrious Columbus would no doubt have done, if he had been told that Scandinavian navigators had discovered the American continent long before him.

But the piano! Ah! the piano! "My pianos, sir! you do not dream of such a thing. The second rank to me! A silver medal to me! To me, who invented the use of the screw to fasten the peg near the mortice of the quadruple escapement! I have not fallen off, sir! I employ six hundred workmen, sir; my house is still my house; I still send my goods not only to Batavia, to Victoria, to Melbourne, to San Francisco, but to New Caledonia, to the Island of Mounin-Sima, sir, to Manilla, to Tinian, to the Island of Ascension, to Hawaï; my pianos are the only pianos used at the court of King Kamehameha III, the mandarins of Pekin only esteem my pianos, sir . . . and to Saint-Germain-en-Laye; yes, sir. And you come and talk to me about a silver medal, when the gold medal would be a very moderate distinction for me! and you have not even proposed me for the grand cordon of the Legion of Honor! This is a pretty go! But we shall see, sir, this shall not go on so, I protest, I will protest; I will go and get the Emperor, I will appeal to all the courts of Europe, to all the Presidencies of the New World, I will publish a pamphlet! Ah! yes! a silver medal to the inventor of the escapement of the peg that fastens the screw of the quadruple mortice!!!"

This sets fire, as you may imagine, to the thousand kilogrammes of powder in the mountain. But as it is absolutely impossible to answer such exclamations as one would like to, and so blow up . . . the mountain, the condensation of gas goes on, and there remains at the bottom of the mine only a little *insipid water*.

Or else: "Alas! sir, so I have not got the first medal? . . . So it is true? can such iniquity have been accomplished? . . . But you will reconsider it, and I make bold to ask for your vote, for your energetic intervention! . . . You refuse it? . . . Oh! it is incredible! My pianos, however, have not fallen off; I still make excellent pianos, which can keep up the contest with any other pianos. A musician like you, sir, cannot deceive himself on that head. . . . I am ruined, sir. . . . Sir, I beg you, give me your vote. . . . Oh! but this is frightful! Sir, I conjure you . . . see my tears. . . . I have no refuge left but . . . the Seine . . . I fly thither. . . . Ah! this is sheer ferocity! I should never have thought it of you. . . . My poor children! . . ."

You cannot blow up anything yet.

Lavender-water!

Or else: "I have just come from Germany, where they laugh at your jury. What! the first piano-maker does not stand first? So he has got to be the second? So he has fallen off? Is that common sense? So the second one has got to be first? Was ever anything like it seen? You are going to do this all over again, I hope, for your sake, at least. I am sure I don't know the marvelous piano you have crowned; I have neither seen nor heard it; but it is all the same, such a decision covers you all with ridicule."

Cologne-water!

Or else: "I have come, sir, on a little business . . . on business. It is, no doubt, by mistake that the pianos of my house have been set down; for everybody knows that my house has not fallen off. Public opinion has already done justice to this . . . mistake, and you will begin the examination of pianos over again. So, that no new blunder shall be made, I take the liberty of enlightening the members of the jury upon the strength of my house. I do a large and important business . . . and neither my partners nor I will stick at . . . sacrifices . . . necessary in certain . . . circumstances. . . . . It is only necessary to understand . . ." From a certain knitting of the eyebrows of the jury, the business man sees that they do not . . . understand, and withdraws.

Camphorated spirits!

Or else: "I have come, sir . . ."

"You have come about your pianos?"

"Undoubtedly, sir."

"Your house has not fallen off, is it not so? We are to begin the examination over again; you want the first medal?"

"Certainly, sir!"

"Fire and thunder! . . ."

The jury leaves the room, slams the door behind its back, and bursts the lock off.

Aquafortis! Hydrocyanic acid!

Such were the scenes the makers, players, and protectors of makers of piano-fortes used to inflict upon poor juries; according to the account of some old liberated juryman, a rubbishing old fellow no doubt, with an evil tongue in his head, for we see nothing of the sort now-a-days.

I continue my story.

The jurors, at the time of the last Exposition, were seven in number. A mysterious, cabalistic and prophetic number! . . . The seven sages of Greece, the seven branches of the holy candlestick, the seven primary colors, the seven notes of the scale, the seven capital sins, the seven canonical virtues . . . ah! I beg pardon, there are only three of those, at least there only used to be three, for I do not know whether Hope still exists.

But I will swear that we were seven jurymen: a Scotchman, an Austrian, a Belgian, and four Frenchmen; which would seem to prove that France is more rich in jurymen than Scotland, Belgium and Austria put together.

This areopagus constituted what is called a *class.* The class, after a detailed and attentive examination of all questions that came within its province, had to take part afterwards in an assembly of five or six other classes, which were united to form a *group.* And this group had to pronounce, by a majority of votes, upon the validity of the decisions made by each class separately. Thus the class whose business it was to examine silk or woolen tissues, or the one which had to study the merit of the goldsmiths, carvers, cabinet-makers, and several other classes, had the goodness to ask us musicians whether the prizes had been justly awarded to such and such manufacturers of tissues, to such and such dealers in bronzes, etc., questions which my colleagues in the class of music seemed rather at a loss how to answer, in the first few days. These judgments *ex abrupto* struck them as singular; they were not accustomed to it, none of them having been called upon to vote in the same way four years before at the Universal Exposition in London, where this custom had already been admitted, and where I served my apprenticeship.

I had, it is true, a moment of rather distressing anguish, in 1851, the day of the first meeting of our group, when the English jurymen, seeing that I kept aloof, appealed to me to vote upon the prizes proposed for manufacturers of surgical instruments. I thought at once of all the arms and legs those terrible instruments would have to cut off, of the skulls they would have to trepan, of the polypi they would have to extract, of the arteries and nervous filaments they would have to seize hold of!!! And I, who know neither A nor B about surgery, and still less about mechanics and cutlery, and who have, moreover, never examined a single one of the dangerous implements in question, were I even an Amussat and a Charrière in one, I am about to say decisively and officially, that those instruments are far better than these, and that such and such a man and no other deserves the first prize. I had sweat upon my brow, and icicles down my back at the very thought. God forgive me, if by my vote I have been the cause of the death of some hundreds of English, French, Piedmontese, or even Russian wounded, badly operated upon in the Crimea, in consequence of the prize having been given to bad surgical instruments! . . .

Little by little, however, these twinges of conscience grew calmer; the mine caught fire, but the mountain was not blown up, as always happens, and the mine only contains at present a small quantity of *pure water*. I have lately given in Paris a prize to an invention of Garengeot's for extracting teeth without feeling any pain whatever. Besides, the system of groups having been adopted in England and France, and nobody having complained of it, it must be that it is good, useful, and moral, and I have only to confess with shame to the weakness of intellect which makes it impossible for me to understand its why and wherefore. "There is a little irony in your humility," you will say; "no doubt the group, of which you were a part, annoyed the class of musicians by invalidating some of its decisions, and you owe it a grudge." Ah! surely not. The group hardly tried twice or thrice to say that we were wrong, and on all other occasions our unmusical colleagues raised their right hands for the affirmative vote, with an unanimity that showed them to be worthy of being so. No, these are simple, unphilosophical reflections on human institutions, that I give you for what they are worth, that is to say, for nothing.

So there were seven of us in the official box in the hall of the Conservatoire, and every day a batch of at least ninety piano-fortes made the planking of the stage groan under their weight, opposite us. Three skillful professors played, each one a different piece, on the same instrument, each one always repeating the same piece; we thus heard these three airs ninety times a day, or, adding up, two hundred and seventy airs on the piano-forte from seven o'clock in the morning till four o'clock in the afternoon. There were intermittences in our condition. At certain moments a sort of drowsiness took the place of pain, and as, after all, two of the three pieces were very beautiful, one by Pergolese, and the other by Rossini, we listened to them at such times with pleasure; they plunged us into a sweet reverie. Soon afterwards the tribute had to be paid to human weakness; we felt ourselves seized with spasms in the stomach and positive nausea. But this is not the place to examine into this physiological phenomenon.

So as to be influenced in no way by the names of the makers of those terrible pianos, we decided to study the instruments, without knowing whose they were, nor by whom they were made. The maker's name was consequently covered up by a broad sheet of card-board bearing a number. The pianists who tried them called out from the stage: No. 37, or No. 20, etc., before beginning operations. Each of the jurymen took his notes after this designation. When the two hundred and seventy airs had been played, the jury, not content with this trial, went down to the stage, examined the mechanism of each instrument near to, touched the keyboard themselves, and thus modified their opinion, if necessary. The first day we heard a considerable number of grands. The seven jurymen picked out six from the very first, and in the following order:

No. 9 got an unanimous vote for the first rank;
No. 19 got also an unanimous vote for the second;
No. 5 had 6 votes out of 7 for the third;
No. 11, 4 votes out of 7 for the fourth;
No. 17, 6 votes for the fifth;
No. 22, 5 votes for the sixth.

The jury, thinking that the position of the pianos on the stage, a position more or less near to certain reflectors of sound, might make the conditions of sonority unequal, decided to hear these six instruments a second time in another order, and after having changed the position of all. In addition to this, so as not to be influenced by their first impression, they turned their backs to the stage during this re-arrangement of the instruments, wishing not to know where they were to be stationed, as they knew their color, shape and position. They heard them so, without turning round, without knowing which was played first, second, etc.; and then, on consulting their notes, and the numbers being made to agree with the new number of the order in which they were just played, it turned out at the end of the calculation that the votes were distributed in the same way, and on the same instruments as at the first trial, so distinct were the qualities of each one. The fact is one of the most curious of its kind that can be cited; it proves, moreover, the minute care with which the jury performed its task.

After each meeting, the result of the voting was set down in an official report; a member of the jury went and ascertained the names which were hidden under the sheets of card-board, wrote down these names with the corresponding numbers, and his declaration, together with the report, was put into a sealed envelope, stamped with the seal of the Conservatory.

That is the reason why, during the long weeks given up to examining the piano-fortes, nobody, not even the members of the jury (with one exception) knew the names of the classified makers, and none of the latter could object, nor complain, nor come and tell you: "Sir, I have not fallen off, etc."

The same process was gone through with for parlor-grands, for square pianos and for uprights. We have the satisfaction to announce that not a single juror succumbed in consequence of this trial, and that most of them are convalescent at present.

A RIVAL OF ERARD.

Certain amateur mechanics indulge at times in the manufacture of musical instruments with the greatest success. They even make astounding discoveries in that art. . . . These men, as ingenious as they are modest, disdain, however, to send their works to universal expositions, and do not claim for them either patent, or gold medal, or the least cordon of the Legion of Honor.

One of them came one day, in Provence, to make a visit at the house of his country neighbor, M. d'O***, a celebrated critic and distinguished musician. Coming into his drawing-room: "Ah! you have a piano?" said he to him.

"Yes, a capital Erard."

"I have got one too."

"An Erard piano?"

"What are you thinking of! my own, if you please. I made it myself, upon an entirely new system. If you would like to see it, I will have it put on my cart to-morrow, and will bring it here."

"I should like to see it above all things."

The next day, the rustic amateur comes with his cart; the piano-forte is brought in, opened, and M. d'O*** is much astonished at seeing the key-board composed exclusively of white keys. "Well! but the black keys?" said he.

"The black keys? Ah! yes, for the sharps and flats; an absurdity of the *old piano-forte.* I don't use any."

PRUDENCE AND SAGACITY OF A PROVINCIAL.—ALEXANDRE'S MELODIUM-ORGAN.

An amateur, who had often heard Alexandre's melodium-organs praised, wished to present one to the church in the village in which he lived. "They say," said he to himself, "that these instruments have a delicious tone, the dreamy and mysterious character of which adapts them especially to the expression of religious emotions; they are also very moderate in price; any one who can play the piano-forte can play them without difficulty. That will suit me exactly. But as we must never buy a pig in a poke, let us go to Paris and judge for ourselves how much the praises lavished upon Alexandre's instruments by the whole European and American press are worth. Let us see, hear, and try them, and then buy, if we see fit."

The prudent amateur comes to Paris, has Alexandre's shop pointed out to him, and goes there forthwith.

To understand the ludicrous part of his attempting to examine the organs, you must know that in Alexandre's instruments, in addition to the bellows which set the brass reeds in vibration by a current of air, there is a system of hammers which strike the reeds, and give them a shock at the moment when they begin to feel the current of air. The shock caused by the stroke of the hammer renders the action of the bellows upon the reed more prompt, and thus prevents the little hesitation that would otherwise exist in the emission of the tone. The striking of the hammers upon the brass reeds also makes a little ticking noise, which is imperceptible when the bellows are in action, but which can be distinctly enough heard when one only moves the keys of the key-board.

Having explained this, let us follow our amateur into Alexandre's great room, in the midst of the harmonious population of instruments that are on show there.

"Sir, I want to buy an organ."

"We will let you hear several, and then you can choose."

"No, no, I do not want to have them played to me. The brilliant execution of your *virtuosos* can and must deceive the listener about the faults of the instruments, and sometimes even make those faults pass for excellences. I wish to try them myself, without being influenced by any observations. Permit me to be alone in your shop for a moment."

"If that is all, sir, we will withdraw; all the melodiums are open; examine them."

Whereupon, M. Alexandre goes away; the amateur goes up to an organ, and, without suspecting that it must be set agoing by the feet pressing upon the bellows, which are under the case, he runs his hands up and down the key-board, as if he were trying a pianoforte.

He is astonished at not hearing anything at first, but almost immediately his attention is drawn to the little ticking noise of the mechanism of percussion I have just mentioned: "Click, clack, pick, pack, tong, ting;" nothing more. He strikes the keys with redoubled vigor; still: "Click, clack, pick, pack, tong, ting." "It is not to be believed," says he, "it is ridiculous! how would you make this wretched instrument heard in a church, no matter how small you suppose it to be? And such machines as these are praised on all hands, and M. Alexandre has made a fortune out of them! There we see how far the audacity of puffs and the dishonesty of newspaper editors can go."

Yet the indignant amateur goes up to another organ, to two others, to three others, to go through with the business conscientiously; but, as he each time employs the same means of *trying* them, he still gets the same result. Still: "Click, clack, pick, pack, tong, ting." At last he gets up, thoroughly edified, takes his hat, and stalks towards the door, when M. Alexandre, who had seen all from another part of the shop, runs up to him:

"Well, sir, have you made your choice?"

"My choice! Gad, your advertisements and puffs, and medals and prizes play a pretty game with us provincials! you must think us very green, to dare to offer us such ridiculous instruments! The first law of being of music is to be able to make itself heard! So your pretended organs, which I have, very luckily, *tried* myself, are inferior to the most nimminy-pimminy little spinet of the last century, and have literally no tone, no, sir, no tone at all. I am neither deaf, nor a fool."

"Good-morning!"

PRUDENT MATCHES.

In the last act of one of M. Scribe's operas *(Jenny Bell)*, we see an enchanting young girl submit to the paternal will, and marry a fat old fool of a goldsmith, virtuously passing herself off as a flirt, to send away a young man she loves, and who tenderly loves her. This catastrophe struck me as frightful; it put me in a passion. Yes, when I see this stupid devotion, these insolent requirements of parents, these infamous cruelties, this crushing out of beautiful passions, these brutal tearings of the heart, I should like to put all prudent people, all heroines of virtue, all enlightened fathers, in a bag, with a hundred thousand kilos of wisdom at the bottom, and throw them into the sea, accompanied by my bitterest curses. . . . .

You think I am joking! well, you are wrong. I was furious just now; I am filled with such hatred for the old Capulets and Countys Paris who want Juliets, that the least dramatic spark sets fire to me and provokes an explosion. *Jenny Bell's* grotesque virtue really exasperated me. There are, moreover, so many kinds of old Capulets and Countys Paris, and so few Juliets! Great love and great art are so much alike! The beautiful is so beautiful! Epic passions are so rare! Every day's sun is so pale! . Life is so short, and death so sure! . . . Hundredfold idiots, inventors of self-immolation, of the combat against sublime instincts, of prudent matches between women and apes, between art and base industry, between poetry and trade, be ye accursed, be ye damned! May you argue among yourself, and only hear your own rattling voices, and see your own wan faces through the coldest eternity! . . .

GREAT NEWS.

It has just been discovered that the English national anthem, "*God save the King*," attributed to Lulli, who was supposed to have composed it on a French text for the Demoiselles de Saint-Cyr, is not by Lulli. British pride spurns this origin. "*God save the King*" is now by Händel; he wrote it for the English, on the consecrated English text.

There are patent discoverers of these musical mares' nests.

They have proved long ago that: *Orpheus* is not by Gluck, *le Devin du Village* is not by Rousseau, *la Vestale* is not by Spontini, *la Marseillaise* is not by Rouget de l'Isle, in fact certain folk go so far as to hint that the *Freyschütz* is not by M. Castil-Blaze!!!

BARLEY-CANDY.—SEVERE MUSIC.

The elegant world imagines that the theatres which have been recently opened, and in which buffoonery is taken in earnest, are unwholesome places, ill-furnished, ill-lighted, ill-haunted, and consequently ill-famed; and people are generally right in thinking so. Yet there are all kinds. Some are indeed ill-haunted, but others are not haunted at all. This one is ill-famed, that other one is famished. This one, at last I am speaking of the theatre of the Folies-Nouvelles, is a coquettish little resort, clean, charming, lighted up *a giorno*, and always peopled by an audience, both well dressed and of urbane manners. The custom has been established there (and it is, no doubt, this custom that the sweetness of manners of its *habitués* is owing to) of consuming a great many sticks of barley-candy between the acts. As soon as the curtain falls, the young lions in the pit rise, make an amicable sign to the gazelles in the gallery, and stick long objects of various colors into their mouths, which they suck and resuck with the most remarkable gravity. When I say that these sweet objects are of various colors, I am wrong; there is one color adopted for each *entr'acte*, and it is only changed after the next act. After the first act, they suck yellow; when the action begins to develop itself, pink is on all lips, and when the catastrophe comes, green is triumphant, and the whole house sucks green. Why this sweet custom exists at the Folies-Nouvelles, how it was established there, what keeps it up there . . .—threefold question, which the true *savants* are reduced to answering, as they answer so many other simple questions:

Nobody knows.

And see how ignorant people are in Paris, even about the most essential things; I did not know, fifteen days ago, where the theatre of the Folies-Nouvelles was, and it was only by saying, all along the boulevard, to persons whose physiognomy promised some good will on their part: "Sir, may I beg you to be so good as to have the kindness to show me where the theatre of the Folies-Nouvelles is?" that I succeeded. And this charming theatre, I repeat, makes music. It has a pretty little orchestra, well conducted by a clever *virtuoso*, M. Bernardin, and several singers who are not bad. I went that evening, on the strength of one of my colleagues telling me that there was to be *an attempt at serious music* in the new opera, entitled *le Calfat*. Serious music at the Folies-Nouvelles! said I to myself, all along the boulevard, that is rather strange! After all, it is, no doubt, a means of justifying the name of the pretty little theatre. We shall see. We did see, and our terrors were quickly dissipated. The directors of the Folies are men of too much wit and good sense to fall into so grave an error, and one so prejudicial to their interests. What could my colleague have been thinking of, when he talked seriously about the serious music of the *Calfat!* But if the composer had taken it into his head to play such a prank, all the sticks of barley-candy, yellow, red, and green, would have vanished, to make way for ignoble black sticks of licorice, the young lions of the pit would have roared in fury, and the gazelles in the balcony would have veiled their noses.

Ah! serious music! without being forced to it! that would have been a good joke! These words: serious music, or severe music, which mean exactly the same thing, in the sense certain people attribute to them, give me a chill in the spine. They recall to me the hard, cruel and severe trials I have been forced to undergo on my travels! . . . Only the last one had no evil consequences for me; it ended very well, having never begun. It was in a large city in the North, of which the inhabitants have a passion for *ennui* that amounts to frenzy. There is an immense hall there, where the public rushes, piles itself up, crushes itself, without being paid, paying money itself, whenever it is sure of being severely treated. They have forgotten to inscribe on the wall of this temple the famous motto which glistens in letters of gold in the concert room of another large city in the North:

"*Res severa est verum gaudium*,"

and which a bad joker of my acquaintance translated by:

"*Ennui is the only true delight.*"

So I thought it my duty to go one day and hear the most severe and celebrated things in the musical *répertoire* of that great city. Every place was taken, so I went in search of those merchants who sell tickets at an exorbitant price at the door of the hall. I was negotiating with one of these merchants, when one of the artists of the orchestra that was going to perform *rem severam*, saw me, and said: "What are you about there?"

"I am bargaining for a ticket, having never heard the masterpiece announced for to-day."

"And what is the need of your hearing it?"

"There is more than one: for propriety's sake . . . the wish to experimentalize . . ."

"What! did I not see you a fortnight ago in our hall staying through the performance of our young masterpiece from beginning to end?"

"Yes; well?"

"Well, you can appreciate the old masterpiece we are going to sing by comparing it with the other. It is exactly the same thing; only the old masterpiece is as long again as the modern one, and seven times as tiresome."

"Seven times?"

"At least."

"That will do."

And I put my purse back into my pocket and went away, much edified.

That is why the severities of musical art inspire me me sometimes with so lively a fear. But my terror was panic this time, very panic indeed; and nothing but my colleague's letter could justify it. *Le Calfat* is a thoroughly jovial little opera, that sings good, big, jolly waltzes, nice, bright, wide-awake, sprightly little airs, and the composer of this amiable score, M. Cahen, would not for the world have shown himself severe upon the good people who came to applaud it. And what a success too! how his work was received! At the catastrophe the young lions and gazelles showed positive enthusiasm, and the little green sticks went in and out of every mouth like the pistons of a steam-engine.

THE DILETTANTI IN BLOUSES AND SERIOUS MUSIC.

There was noticed, some time since, in the faubourg du Temple, on the banks of the canal de l'Ourcq, in the neighborhood of the rue Charlot, and even on the place de la Bastille, a strange sadness among the inhabitants of those parts, both young and old, good people commonly so jovial.

> " L'oeil morne chaque jour et la tête baissée,
> Ils s'en allaient plongés dans leur triste pensée."

(With gloomy eye and bowed head, they went away each day, plunged in their sad thoughts).

No more corks flying, no more pipes steaming away. The ends of cigars lay upon the asphalt, and not a single lover of tobacco deigned to pick them up. At midnight not a soul at the cake-vendor's, whose wares were drying up, his knife rusting and his oven-fire extinguished. Neither *cocottes* nor *claqueurs* sought their easy and alluring prey. No more love, and so no more joy. The flower-girls were shunned. The notables of the rue Saint-Louis, assembled in council with those of the faubourg du Temple and the quartier Saint-Antoine, had decreed that a circumstantial report of the progress of the disease should be drawn up, and sent by a nimble *estafette* to the commissary of police, who did not receive the news, as may be imagined, without heart-burning. The hearts of the mayors whom he immediately notified were still more cruelly smitten. There was, it must be admitted, a little precipitancy in the manner in which this sad news was told them. The hearts of mayors must be treated considerately. Nevertheless the anxiety was conquered by the serious affection that the mayors of all the districts of Paris have always felt for these unhappy children of the faubourg du Temple, and they met hurriedly in council in their turn. The sitting was hardly opened, when other *estafettes* arrived with incomparably more consternation in their looks than the first, announcing quite numerous gatherings at various points in the capital, gatherings which bore the appearance of profound melancholy and unfathomable discouragement. These gatherings, absolutely inoffensive by the way, were presided over by young men in caps, lean, pale and hollow-cheeked. One was stationed on the boulevard du Temple, opposite the house No. 35, where live the beloved actors of the Théâtre Lyrique, M. and Mme. Meillet; a second filled the rue Blanche from the rue Saint-Lazare up to No. 11, where breathes the *diva adorata*, Mme. Cabel; a third gathering, fourteen times as large as both the others together, surrounded the palace of M. Perrin, the director of the Opéra-Comique and the Théâtre-Lyrique.[1]

The assembled crowds stood there, with their eyes upon the windows of the monuments I have just mentioned; their looks expressed a mournful reproach, and the crowd, surrounding the young leader whom they had chosen, imitated his silence. This news capped the climax of the mayors' agitation, and greatly increased the anxiety of their president. Several voices arose almost simultaneously from the bosom of the council, asking for the floor. The floor was given to all the speakers, who all, as by common consent, immediately held their tongues: *vox faucibus haesit.* Such was the emotion of each one. But the president, who had still kept sufficiently cool, had the bearers of this new news shown in, and questioned them, one after the other:

"What is the cause," said he, quickly, "of this sadness, this melancholy, this dumb despair, these sorrowful looks, of these gatherings, of this inert agitation? Have fresh symptoms of cholera broken out in the faubourg du Temple?"

"No, Monsieur le Président."

"Can the dealers in alcoholic drinks have put less wine than usual into their water?"

"No, sir, all colicky drinks are the same as ever."

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[1] One can see see that I am not writing contemporary history. Everything is completely changed in the direction of this theatre, and the customs of its *habitués* at present.

"Has some false report been circulated about the siege of Sebastopol?"

"No."

"Then what is it? . . . and why have you chosen precisely these three monuments for rallying-points, and places of meeting? This frightens me enormously."

"Monsieur le Président, we could not find out . . . at first, but at last we did find it out. It would seem, saving the respect due to you, that these people are *habitués* of the Théâtre-Lyrique."

"Well!"

"Well, sir, they are passionate lovers of music, but only of one kind of music, of light music, of gentle music, even as their manners and customs are gentle. They had heard, and were persuaded that the Théâtre-Lyrique was created and had come into the world for their benefit, to satisfy the need of æsthetic emotions that has tormented them for so long a time. They had even kept up this hope until the last opening of the Théâtre-Lyrique; an opening after which this hope suddenly left them. They assure us that they have been deceived."

"We see the whole matter clearly, now," they say; "it is not a theatre for sweet music, a theatre for simple melody, a theatre fit for the most *naïf* people in the world. Far from that, only complicated works, called learned, have been given there up to this time, works that we cannot understand in the least. And we see clearly, by the obstinate revival of the whole of last year's *répertoire*, that the intention of the artists and director is to persist in this path, by only putting upon the stage severe operas, beyond our comprehension, and consequently without any real charm for us. We might as well, were it not for the price of seats, go to the Grand Opéra at once."

The result was, that the president sent for M. Perrin, and soon came to an understanding with that skillful administrator about the means of warding off, if not of conquering, the difficulty. It was agreed that, in view of the averred impossibility of forcing composers to abandon the lofty style, and leave the poetic regions of art to put themselves within reach of the artless minds of the largest and poorest class, they should have recourse to lively librettists, and order of them such gay, piquant and droll pieces, that the popular sadness must, in the course of nature, melt before them, like ice in the sun, in spite of the severities of learned music. And they began with the opera *Schahabaham II.* And its success exceeded all expectation. And the people laughed like mad; its glance sparkles with gayety at the present hour; its gatherings have become rarer and rarer, the palace of M. Perrin has become accessible, the people has reconceived the hope of having its Théâtre-Lyrique; and, we can say, at last, it is there!

LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

Too wretched critics! for them winter has no fire, and summer no ice. Benumbed and burning forever. Ever listening, ever enduring. Ceaselessly to dance on egg-shells, trembling lest they break some, either with the foot of blame, or with the foot of praise, while they would like to stamp with both feet upon that heap of screech-owls' and turkeys' eggs, without any great danger to those of nightingales, so rare are they to-day. . . . And not to be able at last to hang their weary pen upon the willows by the waters of Babylon, and sit down upon the banks, and weep at leisure! . . .

There is a lithograph of most sad aspect which I cannot keep myself from contemplating a while, every time I pass by the shop-window in which it is displayed. It represents a troop of poor, hapless devils, covered with damp and muddy rags, with *Macaire* hats upon their heads, walking in filthy boot-legs, tied to the soles of their feet with wisps of straw; most of them have a swollen cheek, all have a hollow belly; they suffer from toothache, and are dying of hunger; no cold in the head, no affliction has spared them; their scanty hair hangs glued to their thin temples; they carry shovels and brooms, or rather, pieces of shovels and mere broomsticks, fit tools for such ragged laborers. It rains cats and dogs, they wade with doleful step in the black cess-pool of Paris; and before them stalks a sort of convict-keeper, armed with a formidable stick, which he stretches out like Napoleon showing his soldiers the sun of Austerlitz, and screams out to them, with eyes a-squint and mouth all awry: "Come, gentlemen, sprightly now, sprightly!" They are street-sweepers. . .

Poor devils! . . . where do these unhappy beings come from? . . . at what Montfaucon will they die? . . . What does municipal munificence allow them for thus cleaning (or soiling) the streets of Paris? . . . at what age are they sent to the shambles? . . . What is done with their bones? (their skin is good for nothing). Where does that sort of animal find pasturage in the day-time? . . . and what is its pasture? . . . has it got a female, and young? . . . what does it think about? . . . what can it discourse about, while performing, with the required *sprightliness*, the functions that have been allotted to it by the prefect of the Seine? . . . are these *gentlemen* advocates of a representative government, or of overflowing democracy, or of military rule? . . . They are all philosophers; but how many of them are men of letters? How many of them write *vaudevilles?* . . . how many of them have handled the brush before being reduced to the broom? . . . How many were pupils of Vernet before they were models for Charlet? . . . How many of them have got the Grand prix de

Rome at the Academy of Fine Arts? . . . I should never have done, were I to ask all the questions this lithograph suggests. Questions of humanity, questions of health, questions of equality, liberty and fraternity, questions of philosophy and anatomy, questions of literature and painting, questions of subsistence and comfort, questions of taste and drainage, questions of art and strangulation! . . .

Oh! but come now! What sense, I ask myself, has this tirade about street-sweepers? What have I in common with them? I have got the Prix de Rome, it is true; I sometimes have colds in the head; afflictions are not wanting; I am a great philosopher; but the prefect of the Seine would take good care not to intrust me with the smallest municipal functions; but I never touched a brush in my life; it is much as ever that I know how to handle a pen; I never wrote a *vaudeville*, I should not even be able to manufacture a comic opera

It was the *brick in my hat* (the imagination, caprice; that is what you say when you do not want to use the right word) that dictated this elegy. Yet I am far from having the time to indulge in such literary amusements; comic operas rain in torrents, on the boulevard des Italiens, on the boulevard du Temple, in drawing-rooms, everywhere. And we are critics, we are at once judges and witnesses, although we have not been made to swear on the Koran to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. What lamentable neglect, for if I had taken such an oath, I would keep it. It is true that you can always speak the truth without having sworn to do so. So, since it rains comic operas, and we are armed with the stump of a pen, and we live in Paris to be registrars at the lyric tribunal, let us do our duty, let us march on to the noble goal offered to our ambition, and not wait to be told twice: "Come, gentlemen, sprightly now, sprightly!"

Too wretched critics! for them winter has no fire, and summer no ice. Benumbed and burning forever. Ever listening, ever enduring. Ceaselessly to dance on egg-shells, trembling lest they break some, either with the foot of blame or with the foot of praise, while they would like to stamp with both feet upon that heap of screech-owls' and turkeys' eggs, without any great danger to those of nightingales, so rare are they to-day. . . . And not to be able at last to hang their weary pen upon the willows by the waters of Babylon, and sit down upon the banks, and weep at leisure! . . .

Still more articles to write! more operas! more albums! more singers! more gods! more men! The earth has made a trip of some sixty million leagues about the sun since last year. She started, and she has come back again, (so they tell us at the Academy of Sciences). And why did she take so much trouble? Why take so long a trip? with what object? . . . I should very much like to know what she thinks, this great ball, this great head of which we are the inhabitants; yes (for as for doubting that she thinks, I shall not allow myself to do that. My Pyrrhonism does not go so far as that; it would be as ridiculous as for one of the inhabitants of M. XXX, the great mathematician, to allow itself to cast a doubt upon the thinking faculty of its master). Yes, I am curious to know what this great head thinks of our little evolutions, of our great revolutions, of our new religions, of our war in the East, of our peace in the West, of our Chinese upturning, of our Japanese pride, of our mines in Australia and California, of our English industry and French gayety, of our German philosophy and Flemish beer, of our Italian music, of our Austrian diplomacy, of our great Mogul and our Spanish bulls, and above all of our Paris theatres, of which we must speak at all hazards. That is to say, let us understand one another, that I only care to know the earth's opinion of those of our theatres in which it is said that singing is done; and even (although we have at present five of them, all told,) that I am directly interested in knowing her opinion of only three. Of these three, one is called Académie impériale de Musique, the second bears the name of Opéra-Comique, and the third is entitled Théâtre-Lyrique. Whence it follows that the Théâtre-Lyrique is not comic, that the theatre of the Opéra-Comique is not academic, and that the academic theatre is not lyric. Just see where lyricism builds its nest! . . .

So I might, like so many others, consult the earth's opinion on these important questions; and the earth would surely answer me, just as she has answered those who have had the audacity to question her in these latter days. But I am really ashamed to add myself to the number of those importunate persons, and put her to any more trouble. The more so that she might very well give me wrong answers, in the humor she is now in. She might even try to make me believe that the academic theatre is comic, that the comic one is lyric, and the lyric one academic. Imagine the confusion such oracles would produce in the ideas of the public (of the public that has any)!

Be this as it may, we count, none the less, three theatres in Paris, of which, I repeat, I must speak at all hazards.

Too wretched critics! for them winter has no fire, and summer no ice. Benumbed and burning forever. Ever listening, ever enduring. Ceaselessly to dance on egg-shells, trembling lest they break some, either with the foot of blame, or with the foot of praise, while they would like to stamp with both feet upon that heap of screech-owls' and turkeys' eggs, without any great danger to those of nightingales, so rare are they to-day. . . . And not to be able at last to hang their weary pen upon the willows by the waters of Babylon, and sit down upon the banks and weep at leisure! . . .

When I think that to-day, the 3d of June, the commander Page is perhaps sailing up the bay of Papute! that his ships' guns are saluting the Tahitan shore, which sends back, laden with a thousand perfumes, the joyful cries of the fair islanders assembled on the beach! I see him from here, with his tall figure and his noble face bronzed by the heat of the Indian sun; he looks through his telescope in the direction of Cocoa-point, and the house of the pilot Henry, built at the entrance of the Mataveï road. . . . He is astonished that his salute is not returned. . . . But there are the gunners running up to the right and left of M. Moerenhout's house; they go into the two separate forts. Fire on all sides! Hurrah! it is France! it is the new chief of the protectorate! Another volley! Hurrah! hurrah!—And there are the barracks with all the soldiers streaming out, the French officers hurrying out of the *café*, and M. Giraud appearing at the door of his house, all running down the rue Louis-Philippe towards the house of the captain of the port. And those two ravishing creatures coming out of a lemon grove, whither are they going, hurriedly weaving wreaths of leaves and hibiscus blossoms? They are two maids of honor to Queen Pomaré; at the sound of the guns, they have quickly stopped the game of cards they had begun in a corner of the royal hut during Her Majesty's nap. They cast furtive glances in the direction of the Protestant Church. Not a reverend father! not a Pritchard! Nobody will know! They complete their toilet by letting their *maros* slip down to the ground, vain tunic that anglican apostles have imposed upon their modesty. Their radiant brows are crowned, their luxuriant hair decked out with flowers, they stand there in all their oceanic charms; they are a pair of Venuses, plunging in to the sea. "*O Pagé! o Pagé!*" (it is Page! it is Page!) they shout, cleaving the calm waters of the bay like two sirens. They come up to the French vessel, and swimming with their left hand, raise their right as a sign of friendly salutation; their soft voices send many *iorcanas* (good-morning! good morning!) to the ship's company. One of the midshipmen gives a cry of . . . admiration at this sight, and rushes to the side of the vessel. A look from the commander nails him to his post, silent, motionless, but trembling. M. Page, who speaks the Kanack language like a native, calls out to the two natives from the deck: "*Taboo! taboo!*" (it is forbidden). They stop advancing, and raising their busts of antique statues above the surface of the water, they clasp their hands, smiling fit to damn St. Anthony. But the unmoved commander repeats his cruel *taboo!* They throw him a flower together with one last, regretful *ioreana*, and swim back to shore. The crew will not land for two hours yet. And M. Page, seated at the starboard rail, surveys this marvelous earthly paradise over which he is to rule, in which he is to live for many years, inhales with delight the mild breeze that blows to him from it, drinks a fresh cocoanut and says: "When I think that there are now people in Paris, with the thermometer at 95°, going in to the Opéra-Comique, to stay packed in there till one o'clock in the morning, just to know whether Pierrot will marry Pierrette, to hear those two little ninnies scream out their loves to the accompaniment of a big drum, and to be able to inform the readers of a newspaper next day of the difficulties Pierrette has overcome in order to marry Pierrot! What possessed antiabolitionists these newspaper editors are!"

Yes, when I think that a man can make these judicious reflections four thousand leagues from here, at the antipodes! in a country that is far enough advanced in civilization to do without theatres and critical articles; where it is so cool; where the young beauties wear such elegant costumes on their heads; where a queen can take a nap! I feel myself blushing with shame at living in the midst of one of those infant nations, which the wise men of Polynesia do not even deign to visit. . . .

Too wretched critics! for them winter has no fire, and summer no ice. Benumbed and burning forever. Ever listening, ever enduring. Ceaselessly to dance on egg-shells, trembling lest they break some, either with the foot of blame, or with the foot of praise, while they would like to stamp with both feet upon that heap of screech-owls' and turkeys' eggs, without any great danger to those of nightingales, so rare are they to-day. . . . And not to be able at last to hang their weary pen upon the willows by the waters of Babylon, and sit down upon the banks and weep at leisure! . . .

These poor wretches, especially in Paris, undergo torments which nobody gives them credit for, and which would be enough, were they only known, to move the hardest hearts to pity. But not desiring pity, they are silent; they even smile at times; they are seen coming and going, calm enough, to all appearance, especially at certain times of the year, when their liberty is given them on parol. Then, when the hour for girding up their loins strikes, they walk to the theatres of their torture with a stoicism like that of Regulus returning to Carthage.

And no one notices the really grand side of this. Nay, when some of them, of feebler constitution than the rest, are so tormented by thirst after the beautiful, or at least after the reasonable, that their suffering attitude, their bowed head, their wan looks attract the attention of passers-by, then insult is added to injury, a sponge dipped in gall and vinegar is held out to them on the end of a pike, while the crowd laughs. And they submit. There are, however, some violent ones, and I am surprised that the exasperation of these has never brought about any catastrophe.

Many, it is true, seek safety in flight. This old means still succeeds. I must even confess to having had the cowardice to put it in practice lately myself. I forget what performance was announced; the Paris headsmen and their aids were called together. I receive a letter notifying me of the day and hour. There was not a moment for hesitation. I run to the Rouen railway, and set out for Motteville. When I get there, I take a carriage and am driven over to a little unknown port on the sea-coast, where a man may be pretty sure of not being found out. Exact information had led me to hope to find peace there; peace, that heavenly gift, which Paris refuses to men of good will. Saint-Valery-en-Caux is really a charming place, hidden in a valley near the coast; *est in secessu locus.* There one is exposed neither to hand-organs, nor to piano-forte competitions. Not a single lyric theatre has been opened there; and if it had, it would have been shut already.

The bathing establishment is on a modest footing, and does not give concerts; the bathers do not indulge in music; one of the two churches has no organist, and the other has no organ; the school-master, who might be tempted to demoralize the people by teaching what is called in Paris *singing*, has no pupils; the fishermen who might allow themselves to be thus demoralized, have not the wherewithal to pay the master. The only songs one hears here and there between seven and eight o'clock in the morning, are those of the young girls netting seines and sweep-nets, and these innocent children have but the merest thread of a voice. There is no National Guard going off, no lottery band; the blows of the calkers' mallets repairing the old hulks of vessels are heard on all sides. There is a reading-room, in the windows of which are displayed neither songs nor polkas with portraits and lithographs. You are in danger of no amateur quartets, of no subscriptions to snatch a *virtuoso* from the misfortune of serving his country usefully. The men in that country have all passed the age of conscription, and the children have not yet reached it.

It is an Eldorado for critics, in a word, an island of Tahiti on *terra firma*, surrounded by water on one side only; less the ravishing Tahitians, it is true, but also less the protestant ministers, the nasal chants, the big Queen Pomaré swelling up in her hut, and the French newspaper; for a paper is printed in the French language in Tahiti, a thing they take good care not to do in Saint-Valery. Thus informed and re-assured, I get down from the omnibus (I must also say that the driver of this omnibus, which brings the good people from Motteville to Saint-Valery, neither plays on the trumpet, like his brother drivers in Marseilles, nor on that frightful little horn which the Belgians use on their railways, for the assassination of travelers). So I get down from my vehicle unharmed and almost joyfully, and hasten to climb one of the cliffs that rise up vertically on each side of the town. Then, from the top of this radiant observatory, I cry out to the sea, ruminating its eternal hymn three hundred feet below me: "Good-morning, big one!" I bow before the setting sun executing its evening *decrescendo* in a sublime palace of pink and gold clouds, "All hail, your majesty!" And the delicious sea-breeze running up to bid me welcome, I greet it with a sigh of gladness, saying: "Good-evening merry one!" and the soft mountain grass inviting me, I roll upon the ground and give myself up to an orgy of pure air, harmony and light.

I might tell many things about this trip to Normandy. I will confine myself to telling about the wreck of a little lugger, which went ashore two leagues from the port of Saint-Valery, commanded by a clarinet-player from Rouen. A most astonishing thing! for who could be more fit for steering a vessel than a clarinet-player? Formerly people obstinately persisted in intrusting this duty to sailors; but they have at last recognized all the dangers of this old custom. That is conceivable; a sailor, a man of the trade, naturally has ideas of his own, a system; he does what his system shows him to be proper; nothing would make him consent to a manœuvre which he judged wrong or improper. Every one on board must obey him, without reasoning or hesitation; he subjects all who surround him to a military despotism. It is intolerable. Then sailors are jealous of each other; it is enough that one has said white in a given case, to make the other say black if the same case happens again. Besides, have their pretended special knowledge and nautical experience prevented innumerable and frightful mishaps? They are still looking after Sir John Franklin, lost in the polar seas. Yet he was a thorough sailor. And the unlucky La Peyrouse who came to grief on the reefs of Vanicoro, had not he studied mathematics, physics, hydrography, geography, anthropology, botany, and all the stuff that sailors, properly so-called, persist in filling their heads with? Did all that prevent his leading two vessels to their ruin? He had a system; he would have it that the height of the coral rocks with which the sea is obstructed in the archipelago of the New Hebrides, near Vanicoro, was to be studied; that their position was to be determined, passages sought out and soundings made, and he came to grief. What good did all his science do him? Ah! people are very right in mistrusting specialists, men with systems, and in giving them a wide birth!

Then look at Columbus! Was it not a happy idea of Ferdinand and Isabella and their learned counselors to so obstinately refuse to give him two caravels, and would they not have done wisely to persist in their refusal? For after all, he found the New World, it is true; but if he had not followed his westward course with the obstinacy of a maniac, he would not have met with some pieces of wood, worked by the hand of man, twenty-four hours before the discovery of San Salvador, this ridiculous circumstance would not have given courage to his crew, and he would have had to swallow his shame, return to Europe and think himself only too happy to get there. So it is chance that brought about that so famous discovery; and any other man than Columbus, without being either sailor or geologist, who had taken it into his head to keep on sailing due west, would have come to the Bahamas and thence to the American continent just as well as he.

And Cook, the famous, the astounding Captain Cook! Did not he go and get himself killed like a fool by a savage in Hawaï? He discovered New Caledonia, took possession of it in the name of England, and France occupies it now. The fine service he rendered his country!

No, no, these men with systems are the scourges of all human institutions, nothing is more evident to-day. The little mishap of Saint-Valery goes to prove nothing. As the clarinet-player who commanded the lugger had some eight or ten ladies aboard, he had, from vanity, made as much sail as possible, and as the breeze was good, he was making I don't know how many knots an hour, and all the people on the pier was shouting out: "But just see how well that little lugger is sailing!" When, coming opposite Veule, and trying to put about and come back, he struck bottom, and the poor lugger was thrown on her beam ends. Very luckily the people of Veule did not hesitate to take to the water up to their waists and carry the trembling passengers ashore.

The clarinet-player, no doubt, did not know that you must be careful not to come too near Veule beach at low tide, or that his lugger drew so much water. That is all; and the most skillful sailors who, ignorant of these facts as he was, had come at that hour, to the same point of the coast with that lugger, would have had the same accident.

The day after this mishap, which, I repeat, proves nothing against the fitness of clarinet-players to command vessels, a letter from Paris found me out at Saint-Valery, and informed me that a new (new!) piece had just been brought out at the Opéra-Comique. My correspondent added that, as the work was inoffensive, I could expose myself to it without much danger. So I returned (I had to!), did not see it, and am convinced that the public will thank me for not mentioning it. At my return the work had already returned to chaos. I asked several usually very well informed persons about it, and they did not know what I was talking about. There! go and have successes, write masterpieces, cover yourselves with glory! that at the end of five or six days . . . O Paris! city of indifference to comic operas! What a chasm is thy oblivion!

But I returned, nevertheless, and left the lofty cliffs, and the great sea, and the splendid horizons, and the sweet leisure, and sweet peace, for the flat, muddy, and busy city; for the barbarous city! and I have taken up the trowel of praise again; I praise now as formerly! more than formerly!

Too wretched critics! for them winter has no fire, and summer no ice. Benumbed and burning forever. Ever listening, ever enduring. Ceaselessly to dance on egg-shells, trembling lest they break some, either with the foot of blame, or with the foot of praise, while they would like to stamp with both feet upon that heap of screech-owls' and turkeys' eggs, without any great danger to those of nightingales, so rare are they to-day. . . . And not to be able at last to hang their weary pen upon the willows by the waters of Babylon, and sit down upon the banks and weep at leisure! . . .

The Germans give the name of *recensors* to journalists whose business it is to give a periodical account of what goes on in the theatres and even to analyze recently published literary works. If our expression *critics* applies better to those persons who are engaged in the second part of this task than the German term does, we must acknowledge that the modest title of *recensors* is much more exact to designate many good people who are condemned to the cold, thankless, and very often humiliating work that constitutes the first part. Who, but these unhappy wretches themselves, can know what racking pains, vast and profound disgust, shuddering repugnance, concentrated wrath that cannot explode, the performance of their task often causes? . . . What strength is thus lost! what time squandered! what thoughts stifled! what steam-engines, strong enough to pierce through the Alps, set to work to turn a mill-wheel!

Sad recensors, useless recensors, so often censured! when will they . . .

(A man of sense interrupting Jeremiah:)

"Raca! Raca! Raca! are you going to begin your refrain over again, and give us the fiftieth verse of *hanging your pen upon the willows by the waters of Babylon and sitting down upon the banks and weeping?* . . .

"Do you know that your recriminations and lamentations are perfectly unendurable? . . . Who the devil has thrown you into such a state of desolation? If you are in such a fume, go and take a douche-bath; if you feel this gigantic power of mountain-splitting, for God's sake, give it vent as you please, pierce through the

Alps, pierce through the Apennines, pierce through Mount Ararat, pierce through the butte Montmartre even, if such is your need of piercing and coming to the surface, and don't come and split our tympanum with your screams like a caged eagle! There are enough others, more competent than you, whose liveliest desire would be to turn at the wheel of your mill."

(Jeremiah.) Whoever says unto his brother: Raca! deserves eternal damnation. But you are right, thrice right, seven times right, O man wholly right; the eyes of my mind were a-squint, you are the accident that brings me to myself again, and here I am now, good-natured as before.

SUCCESS OF A MISERERE.

They write from Naples; "On the 27th of March, a *Miserere* by Mercadante was given at the church of St. Peter, in the presence of His Eminence the cardinal-archbishop and suite, and several of the professors of the Conservatory. The performance was very fine, and His Eminence deigned to express his satisfaction repeatedly. The composition comprises beauties of the highest order. The attendance *wished to hear twice* the *Redde mihi* and the *Benigne fac, Domine.*"

So the attendance cried *bis*, asked for a *da Capo*, like the *claqueurs* at our first theatrical performances? . . . The fact is curious. And now go and complain of our May concerts, and the *first appearances* of our young cantatrices in the Paris churches! . . . Eh! unhappy catholic critics, your antipatriotism blinds you; you do not see that we are little saints!

LITTLE MISERIES OF BIG CONCERTS.

It is at the annual festival in Baden-Baden that these little miseries make themselves cruelly felt. And yet everything is disposed in favor of the organizing conductor of the orchestra; no niggardly economy is forced upon him, no shackle of any sort. M. Bénazet, persuaded that the best way is to let him act freely, does not do anything about it, except . . . paying. "Do things royally," says he, "and I give you *carte-blanche.*" That is right! It is only thus that anything great and beautiful can be done in music. You laugh, I suppose, and think of the answer Jean Bart gave to Louis XIV:

"Jean Bart, I make you commander of a squadron."

"Sire, you have done well!"

Laugh, laugh by all means! Jean Bart was right, nevertheless, and it is a consummation devoutly to be wished, that only sailors were chosen to command squadrons. It would be extremely desirable that when the Jean Bart was once chosen, the Louis XIV should never try to control his manœuvres, and suggest his own ideas, distract him with his fears and play the first scene in Shakspere's *Tempest:*

> "ALONZO, KING OF NAPLES.—Good boatswain, have care. Where's the master? Play the men.
>
> "BOATSWAIN.—I pray now, keep below.
>
> "ANTONIO.—Where is the master, boatswain?
>
> "BOATSWAIN.—Do you not hear him? You mar our labor! Keep your cabins: you do assist the storm.
>
> "GONZALO.—Remember whom thou hast aboard.
>
> "BOATSWAIN.—None that I love more than myself. You are a counselor; if you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more; use your authority. If you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour, if it so hap.—Cheerily, good hearts.—Out of our way, I say."

In spite of so many means placed at his disposal, and of the precious liberty to use them at will, it is still a hard task for the orchestra-conductor to carry a festival like that at Baden-Baden well through to the end, so great is the number of small obstacles, and so subversive may the influence of the slightest of them be to the whole in any enterprise of this sort. The first torment he has to undergo comes almost always from the singers, and especially from the cantatrices, in the drawing up of his program. As this difficulty is known to him, he begins two months beforehand to ward it off: "What are you going to sing, madam?" "I don't know . . . I will think about it . . . will write to you." A month passes by, the cantatrice has not thought about it, and has not written. A fortnight more is uselessly taken up with trying to get a decision from her. Then they leave Paris; a provisory program is drawn up, on which a blank is left for the title of the *diva's* piece. It is an air by Mozart. Well. But the *diva* has not got the music of that air, and there is no longer time to have the orchestral parts copied, and she neither wishes nor ought to sing it with piano-forte accompaniment. An obliging theatre has the kindness to lend the orchestral parts. Everything is in order; the program is published. This program comes under the eyes of the cantatrice, who is immediately frightened at the choice she has made. "It is an immense concert," she writes to the conductor; "the various grand numbers of the rich program will make my *poor* Mozart piece seem very small, very thin. Decidedly, I will sing another air, *Bel raggio* from *Semiramide*. You will easily find the orchestral parts of that air *in Germany*, and, if you do not, just have the goodness to write to the director of the Théâtre-Italien in Paris; he will, no doubt, send them on to you without delay." As soon as this letter is received, the programs are printed afresh, a strip is pasted on the posters to announce the *scena* from *Semiramide*. But the orchestral parts have not been found *in Germany*, and it has not been deemed expedient to beg the director of the Théâtre-Italien to send the whole opera of *Semiramide* across the Rhine, the air which is to be accompanied being inseparable from the work. The cantatrice arrives; all parties meet at the general rehearsal.

"Well, we have not got the music to the *Semiramide;* you must sing with piano-forte accompaniment."

"Oh, good heavens! but that will be icy."

"No doubt."

"What shall I do?"

"I don't know."

"Suppose that I come back to my Mozart air?"

"That will be the best thing you can do."

"In that case, let us rehearse it."

"With what? We have not kept the music; we returned it to the theatre in Carlsruhe as you ordered. You must have music for your orchestra when you want your orchestra to play. Inspired singers always forget these vulgar details. It is very material, very prosaic, I admit; but so it is."

At the next rehearsal the orchestral parts of the Mozart opera have been brought back; all is in order again. The programs have been reprinted, the posters recorrected. The conductor announces to the musicians that the Mozart air is to be rehearsed, and all is ready. The cantatrice then comes up with that irresistible grace we all know so well:

"I have an idea; I will sing the air in the *Domino noir.*"

"Oh! ah! ha! haee! krrrr! . . . Here *Kapellmeister,* have you got the air madam mentions in your theatre?"

"No sir."

"Well, then?"

"Then I must make up my mind to the Mozart air?"

"Make up your mind to it, believe me."

At last they begin; the cantatrice has made up her mind to the masterpiece. She covers it with embroidery, as might have been foreseen. The conductor hears that eloquent exclamation: "Krrrr!" sounding within him louder than before, and leaning over to the *diva,* he says to her in his sweetest voice, and with a smile that tries not to look constrained:

"If you sing this air so, you will have enemies in the house, I warn you beforehand."

"You think so?"

"I am sure of it."

"Oh great heavens! but . . . I ask your advice . . . I must perhaps sing Mozart simply, as it stands. It is true we are in Germany; I did not think of that . . . I am ready for anything, sir."

"Yes, yes, take courage; risk this little experiment; sing Mozart simply. You see, there used to be airs intended to be embroidered and embellished by singers; but they were usually written by cantatrices' valets, and Mozart is a master; he even passes for a great master who was not wanting in taste."

They begin the air over again. The cantatrice, having made up her mind to drain the bitter cup to the dregs, sings that miracle of expression, sentiment, passion and style simply, only changing two measures for the honor of the corps. She has hardly done, when five or six people, who had come into the hall just as she was beginning the air over again, come up to the cantatrice full of enthusiasm, crying out:

"A thousand compliments, madam; how purely and simply you sing! That is the way the great masters should be interpreted; it is delicious, admirable! Ah! you understand Mozart!"

The conductor, aside: "Krrrrr!!!"

DEATH TO FLATS.

A lady, passionately fond of music, comes one day into the shop of our famous publisher, Brandus, and asks to see the newest and most beautiful songs, adding that she cares especially about their not being too heavily laden with flats. The shop-boy shows her a song.

"This piece is delicious," says he; "unfortunately there are four flats to the signature."

"Oh! that does not matter," answers the young lady, "when there are more than two, I scratch them out."

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

"Some judge of authors' names, not works, and then
Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men."

MY DEAR ELLA:[1]

You ask me why the Mystery of *The Flight into Egypt*[2] has this note on its title-page: *Attributed to Pierre Ducré, an imaginary chapel-master.*

It was in consequence of a fault I was guilty of, a grave fault, for which I have been condignly punished, and with which I shall always reproach myself. Here is how it was.

I was one evening at the house of M. le baron de M***, an intelligent and sincere friend of the arts, with one of my old fellow-students at the Academy in Rome, the learned architect, Duc. The whole company were playing either écarté, or whist, or brelan, except myself. I abhor cards. By patience, and after thirty years of effort, I have succeeded in knowing not a single game of this sort, so as never to be liable to apprehension by *habeas corpus* when any players are in want of a partner.

So I was rather evidently boring myself, when Duc turned to me, and said:

"As you are not doing anything, you ought to write a piece of music for my album!"

"Willingly."

I take a scrap of paper, draw some staves upon it, on which I soon jot down an *andantino* in four parts

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[1] Director of the London Musical Union.

[2] Now a part of my sacred trilogy: *The Childhood of Christ.*

for the organ. I think that I find a certain character of artless, rustic mysticism about it, and the fancy takes me to write some words of the same sort to it. The organ-piece disappears, and becomes the chorus of the Shepherds of Bethlehem, bidding the infant Jesus farewell, at the departure of the Holy Family for Egypt. The games of whist and brelan are interrupted to hear my sacred *fabliau.* The mediæval cut of my verses is as much commented upon as that of my music.

"Now," I say to Duc, "I am going to put your name to it, I want to compromise you."

"What an idea! my friends know well enough that I don't know the first thing about composition."

"That is a pretty reason, truly, for not composing! But as your vanity refuses to adopt my piece, just wait a bit, I will make up a name, of which yours shall be a part. It shall be Pierre Ducré, whom I make music-master in the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, in the seventeenth century. That will give my manuscript all the value of an archæological curiosity."

So it was done. But I was in the vein for playing the Chatterton. Some days afterwards I wrote the *Rest of the Holy Family* at home, beginning this time with the words, and a little fugued overture, for a little orchestra, in a little, innocent style, in *F-sharp minor without any leading note;* a mode which is no longer in fashion, which resembles the plain chant and which the learned will tell you is derived from some Phrygian, or Dorian, or Lydian mode of ancient Greece, as if that had anything to do with it, but which evidently has the melancholy and rather simple character of the old popular religious songs.

A month later, when I no longer thought of my score, a chorus happened to be wanting in the program of a concert that I was to conduct. It struck me as a good joke to put that of the *Shepherds* in my Mystery in its place, leaving it under the name of Pierre Ducré, music-master of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris (1679). At the rehearsals, the chorus-singers took a lively fancy to this ancestral music.

"But where did you unearth that?" they asked me.

"Unearth is very nearly the right word for it," I answered without hesitation; "it was found in a walled up closet during the recent restoration of the Sainte-Chapelle. It was written on parchment in old notation, which I had great trouble in deciphering."

The concert takes place, Pierre Ducré's piece is very well given and still better received. The critics give it all praise next day, and congratulate me upon my discovery. Only one hints at some doubts about its authenticity and age. Which proves, whatever you may say to the contrary, Gaul-hater that you are, that there are men of wit everywhere. Another critic goes into tears over the misfortune of that poor old master, whose musical inspiration is only revealed to Parisians after a hundred and seventy-three years of obscurity. "For," he says, "none of us had ever heard of him, and M. Fétis's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, which yet contains very extraordinary things, does not mention him!"

Next Sunday, Duc being at the house of a young and beautiful lady who is extremely fond of old music, and professes great disdain for all modern productions when she knows their date, he thus addresses the queen of the drawing-room:

"Well, madam, what did you think of our last concert?"

"Oh! I thought it very much of a medley, as usual."

"And the piece by Pierre Ducré?"

"Perfect, delicious! There is music! Time has rubbed off nothing of its freshness. It is true melody, the scarcity of which our contemporary composers make us feel quite deeply enough. It is not your friend M. Berlioz, at all events, who will ever write anything like that."

At these words Duc could not help bursting out laughing, and had the imprudence to reply:

"Alas, madam, but it is my friend M. Berlioz who wrote the *Farewell of the Shepherds*, and wrote it in my presence too, one evening, at the corner of an écarté-table."

The fair lady bites her lips, the roses of vexation flush her paleness, and turning her back upon Duc, she flings him this cruel phrase:

"M. Berlioz is an impertinent fellow!"

You can imagine, my dear Ella, my shame, when Duc repeated the apostrophe to me. I hastened to make amends by humbly publishing the poor little work under my own name, still keeping the words: "*Attributed to Pierre Ducré, an imaginary chapel-master*," in its title, to remind me of my culpable fraud.

Now let people say what they please, my conscience is clear. I am no longer in danger of seeing the sensibility of mild and kindly men shed tears over fictitious misfortunes through my fault, of making pale ladies blush, of casting doubts into the minds of certain critics who usually entertain doubts on nothing. I will sin no more. Good-bye, my dear Ella, may my baleful example be a lesson to you. Do not ever take it into your head to thus set traps for the musical religion of your subscribers. Fear the epithet that was applied to me. You do not know what it is to be called an impertinent fellow, especially by a beautiful, pale lady.

Your contrite friend,
HECTOR BERLIOZ.

A FIRST APPEARANCE.—DESPOTISM OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE OPÉRA.

It is no easy matter to come out at the Opéra, even for a young cantatrice with a fine voice, whose talent is admitted on all hands, who has been engaged and dearly payed in advance by the administration of that theatre, and who has consequently every right to count upon the good will of the director, and his desire to bring her before the public as soon as possible. First of all, the part in which she is to appear is to be chosen, and the importance of this choice may be imagined. As soon as this question comes up, various voices are heard more or less authoritatively and loudly crying out to the artist as follows:

"Take my bear!"[1]

"Do not take his bear!"

"You will have a success, I guarantee it."

"You will be checkmated, I swear it to you."

"All my *press* and all my *claque* shall be for you."

"All the public will be against you. While if you take my bear you will have the public on your side."

"Yes, but you will have all my *press* and all my *claque* and myself into the bargain for your enemies."

The frightened *débutante* then turns to her director to direct her. Alas! asking direction from a director, what innocence! The poor man does not know himself what devil to call upon. He is not ignorant that the bear-dealers are right, when they speak of the weight of their influence, and of what importance it is, especially for a *débutante*, to conciliate them. Yet, as he cannot, after all, satisfy both the bear with the white head, and the bear with the black head at the same time, he at last decides in favor of the bear that growls the loudest, and the piece for the first appearance is announced. The *débutante* knows her part, but, as she has never yet sung it òn the stage, at least one rehearsal is necessary, for which the orchestra, chorus and principal *dramatis personæ* must be called together. Here begins a series of intrigues, ill-will, stupidity, treachery and laziness fit to make a saint swear. On such a day the orchestra cannot come together; on such another one the chorus cannot be had; to-morrow the theatre will not be free, a ballet is to be rehearsed; day after to-morrow the tenor goes hunting, two days later he will be back again, and will be tired out; next week the baritone has a lawsuit in Rouen, which obliges him to leave Paris; he will not be back for eight or ten days; when he gets back his wife is confined, he cannot leave her, but, wishing to be agreeable to the *débutante*, he sends her some sugar-plums the day of the child's christening; a meeting is agreed upon to rehearse at least with the *soprano* in the singer's greenroom, and the *débutante* comes at the appointed hour; the *soprano*, who is not too enchanted to see a new star rising above the horizon, keeps her waiting a little, but comes at last; only the accompanyist does not appear. They go away again without doing anything. The *débutante* tries to complain to the director. The director is out, they do not know when he will be back again. She writes to him; the letter is given him in twenty-four hours. The accompanyist is reprimanded and a new rehearsal is appointed; he is punctual this time; the *soprano* does not appear now in her turn. No rehearsal possible; the baritone could not be summoned as his wife is still ill; nor the tenor, as he is still tired out. Suppose then that the *débutante* should turn this leisure to account, and go to call upon the influential critics. . . . (She has been made to believe that there are influential critics, that is to say, that there are critics who exercise a certain influence upon public opinion).

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[1] See Scribe's *L'Ours et le Pacha*, Scene VII. *et seq.*—[TRANS.]

"Have you been," they ask her, "to call on M***, the savage critic under whose paw you have the ill luck to fall? Ah! you must take care of him. He is a capricious, headstrong fellow, with terrible musical manias and ideas of his own; he is a perfect hedge-hog; you never know where to have him. If you try to be civil to him, he gets angry. If you are uncivil, he gets angry all the same. If you go to see him, you bore him; if you do not go, he thinks you are proud; if you invite him to dine the evening before your *début*, he will answer you that 'he too has a *business dinner* to give on that day.' If you propose to him to sing one of his songs (for he does write songs), and that is an ingenious and delicate thing to do, that is, and a charming seduction, essentially artistic and musical, he will laugh in your face, and offer to sing some of yours himself when you compose any. Ah! look out for that dangerous man, and some others beside, or you are lost." And the poor *débutante* for a hundred thousand francs begins to feel a hundred thousand terrors.

She runs to the house of the calumniated individual.

That gentleman receives her coolly enough.

"It is only two months since your *début* was first announced, mademoiselle, so you have at least six weeks more of trials to undergo before you make your first appearance."

"Six weeks, sir!"

"Or seven or eight. But these trials must end sometime. In what work do you appear?"

When the *débutante* has mentioned the title of the opera she has chosen, the critic becomes still colder and graver.

"Do you think that I have made a mistake in choosing that part?"

"I don't know whether the choice is a good one for you or not, but it is fatal to me; the performance of that opera always gives me violent intestinal pains. I had sworn never to expose myself to it again, and you are going to make me break my vow. Nevertheless I forgive you my colics, but I cannot forgive you for making me break my word and so lose my self-respect. For I shall be there, mademoiselle, I shall be there to hear you in spite of all; I will speak to my physician about it."

The *débutante* feels a shudder run through her veins at these menacing words; not knowing what to say next, she takes leave of the gentleman, begging his indulgence, and goes out with an aching heart. But another *influential* critic re-assures her. "Be calm, mademoiselle, we will support you, we are not men without bowels like our colleague, and the opera you have chosen, albeit a little hard to digest, does not frighten us." At last the director begins to hope that it will not be impossible to bring the artists together soon for a general rehearsal. The baritone has gained his lawsuit, his wife is convalescent, his child has cut its milk-teeth; the tenor has got over his fatigue, he has even grown very fat; the *soprano* is re-assured, she has been promised that the *débutante* shall not succeed; as the chorus and orchestra have not rehearsed for two months, the director may venture to make an appeal to their devotion. He even arms himself with all his courage one evening, and addresses the actors and heads of all the departments in the despotic way the old captain of the National Guard used to give his orders: "Monsieur Durand, for the third and last time, I shall not repeat it again, might I take the liberty of asking you to be good enough to have the kindness to take the trouble to do me the favor to *shoulder arms?*"

The day for the rehearsal is fixed, bravely posted up in the greenrooms of the theatre, and, wonderful to relate, hardly any body grumbles at this abuse of power on the director's part. Nay more, when the day comes, everybody is present hardly an hour and a half after the appointed time. The director of successes is in the pit, surrounded by his guard, a score in his hand; for that director, who is an original, has felt the necessity of learning something about music so as to follow the melodic cues and not make his people strike in at the wrong time.

The conductor gives the signal, they begin . . . "Well! well! and the *débutante*, where the deuce is she? Call her." They look for her, but cannot find her; only a boy of the theatre hands the director a letter, which was brought *the day before*, as he says, announcing that the *débutante* has had a severe attack of influenza, and cannot possibly leave her bed, and consequently cannot rehearse. Fury of the assembly; the director of successes slams his score to; the other director leaves the stage in a hurry; M. Durand, who had begun to *shoulder arms*, puts his musket back under his arm and goes home growling. And it is all to be begun over again; and the poor influenza patient, when she does get well, must think herself lucky that the baritone can only have lawsuits and children every ten or eleven months, that the tenor has not got himself ripped up by a wild boar, and that M. Durand, not having mounted guard for some time, is good enough to have the kindness to take the trouble to shoulder arms again. For we must do him this justice, he always ends by doing it.

In that case, the *débutante* also ends by making a first appearance, unless some new obstacle arises. Oh! then, the director gets exasperated and knows himself no longer; he then says up and down to his subjects without any oratorical precautions: "Ladies and gentlemen, I announce to you that to-morrow at twelve o'clock, there will be no rehearsal!"

A SAYING OF M. AUBER'S.

A tenor, whose voice was neither pure nor sonorous, sang a *romanza* from *Joseph* in a drawing-room; when he came to the words:

> "Dans un humide et froid abîme,
> Ils me plongent, dans leur fureur"

(They cast me in their fury, into a damp and cold abyss), M. Auber, turning to his neighbor, said: "Joseph staid decidedly too long in the pit."

SENSIBILITY AND LACONICISM.—A FUNERAL ORATION IN THREE SYLLABLES.

Cherubini was walking in the greenroom of the concert-hall of the Conservatoire, one day, between the parts of a concert. The musicians about him seemed sad; they had just heard of the death of their colleague, Brod, a remarkable *virtuoso*, first oboe at the Opéra. One of them comes up to the old master and says: "Well, M. Cherubini, so we have lost poor Brod! . . ." "Eh! . . . what?" (The musician raises his voice): "Brod! our comrade Brod . . ." "Well?" "He is dead!" "Hm! thin tone!"

SELECTIONS FROM

"A TRAVERS CHANTS"

[A punning title which defies translation.

A travers champs=Across country.
A travers chants=Across singing.

—TRANS.]

I.

MUSIC.

MUSIC, the art of moving intelligent men, gifted with special and practiced organs, by combinations of tones. To thus define music, is to admit that we do not believe it to be, as people say, *made for everybody*. Whatever may be the conditions of its existence, whatever may have been its means of action at any time, whether simple or complex, mild or energetic, it has always been evident to the impartial observer that, as a great number of persons cannot either feel or comprehend its power, those persons *were not made for it*, and consequently, *it was not made for them.*

Music is at once a sentiment and a science; it demands of him who cultivates it, be he executant or composer, natural inspiration and a knowledge which is only to be acquired by protracted studies and profound meditations. The union of knowledge and inspiration constitutes art. Outside of these conditions, the musician will be nothing more than an incomplete artist, if indeed he deserve the name of artist at all. The great question of the pre-eminence of organization without study, or of study without organization, which Horace did not dare to solve in the case of poets, seems to us to be equally difficult to answer in the case of musicians. Men have been seen who were entire strangers to the science, and who yet produced by instinct graceful and even sublime airs, witness Rouget de l'Isle and his immortal *Marseillaise ;* but as these rare flashes of inspiration only illumine one part of the art, while other no less important parts remain in darkness, it follows that these men cannot be definitely classed in the ranks of musicians, considering the complex nature of our music: THEY DO NOT KNOW.

We still more frequently meet with methodical, calm and cold minds, who, after having patiently studied the theory, made repeated observations, trained their mind at length, and turned their incomplete faculties to what best account they could, succeed in writing things that answer to all appearances to the ideas vulgarly entertained about music, but which satisfy the ear without charming it, without speaking to the heart or the imagination. And the mere satisfaction of the ear is very far removed from the delicious sensations that organ can experience; neither are the delights of the heart and imagination to be held cheap; and as they are joined to a sensual pleasure of the liveliest sort in the true musical works of all schools, these impotent producers are also, in our opinion, to be struck from the list of musicians: THEY DO NOT FEEL.

What we call *music* is a new art, in the sense that it very probably bears little resemblance to what the civilized peoples of antiquity called by that name. Besides, we must say at once, that word had such an extended acceptation with them, that far from signifying simply the art of tones, as it does to-day, it applied equally to dancing, pantomime, poetry, eloquence, and even to all the sciences together. Supposing that the etymology of the word *music* is contained in *muse*, the widely extended meaning the ancients gave it is naturally explained; it meant and must have meant, *that over which the Muses preside.* Hence the errors into which many commentators have fallen in their interpretations. Yet there is in the language of the present day a consecrated expression of which the meaning is almost as general. We say: *Art*, in speaking of the combined works of the intellect, either alone, or aided by certain organs, and of those bodily exercises which the intellect has rendered poetic. So that the reader of two thousand years hence, who finds in our books that phrase which has become the trivial title of many rambling essays: "The state of art in Europe in the nineteenth century," must interpret it thus: "The state of poetry, eloquence, music, painting, engraving, sculpture, architecture, dramatic action, pantomime, and dancing in Europe in the nineteenth century." So we see that, with the exception of the exact sciences, to which it does not apply, our modern word *art* corresponds very well to the word *music* of the ancients.

We have only a very imperfect knowledge of what the art of tones, properly so called, was with them. Some few isolated facts, related perhaps with an amount of exaggeration of which we see every day analogous examples, the inflated or wholly absurd ideas of certain philosophers, perhaps also the false interpretation of some of their writings would tend to attribute an immense power to it, and such an influence upon morals that legislators had to determine its course and regulate its employment in the interest of their people. Without regarding the causes that may have modified the truth on this head, and admitting that the music of the Greeks really did produce extraordinary impressions upon some individuals; impressions that were due neither to the ideas expressed by poetry, nor to the expression of countenance and pantomime of the singer, but to music itself, and only to it, the fact would by no means prove that the art had attained a high degree of perfection among them. Who does not know the violent action of musical sounds, combined in a most ordinary way, upon nervous temperaments under certain circumstances? After a splendid feast, for instance, excited by the intoxicating acclamations of a host of adorers, by the recollection of a recent victory, by the hopes of new triumphs, by the sight of his arms and the beautiful female slaves who surrounded him, by thoughts of voluptuous pleasures, love, glory, power and immortality, seconded by the energetic action of wine and good cheer, Alexander, a man, by the way, of a very impressionable organization, fell into a delirium at the accents of Timotheus. But we can very well conceive that it did not require any great efforts of genius on the part of the singer to act thus violently upon a sensibility that had been wrought up to an almost morbid pitch.

Rousseau, citing the more modern example of Eric, King of Denmark, whom certain songs made so furious that he killed some of his best servants, calls our attention, it is true, to the fact that these unhappy wretches must have been much less amenable to musical influences than their master; else he might have run half the risk. But the philosopher's paradoxical instinct is still perceptible in this witty irony. Eh! no doubt the Danish King's servants were less affected by music than their sovereign! What is there astonishing in that? Do we not know that the musical sense is developed by exercise? that certain affections of the mind, although very active in some individuals, are very little so in many others? that nervous sensibility is in a manner the lot of the upper classes of society, while the lower classes, either because of the manual labor they perform, or from some other reason, are pretty nearly wanting in it? is it not because this inequality in organizations is incontestable and uncontested, that we so greatly restricted the number of men upon whom music acts when we gave our definition?

Yet Rousseau, even while thus ridiculing the accounts of the wonders worked by ancient music, seems in other places to give them enough credence to place that ancient art, which we hardly know at all, and which he himself knew no better than the rest of us, far above the art of our own day. He ought, surely, to be the last man to depreciate the effects of our modern music, for the enthusiasm with which he speaks of it elsewhere proves that they were of no common intensity in his own case. Be it as it may, and only looking about us, it will be easy to cite attested facts in favor of the power of our music, of at least equal value with the doubtful anecdotes of ancient historians. How often have we not seen hearers agitated by terrible spasms, weep and laugh at once, and manifest all the symptoms of delirium and fever while listening to the masterpieces of our great masters! A young Provençal musician, under the influence of the passionate sentiments which Spontini's *Vestale* had called up in him, could not endure the idea of returning to our prosaic world, coming out of the heaven of poetry that had just opened before him; he informed his friends of his intention by letter, and after hearing once more the masterpiece, the object of his ecstatic admiration, thinking with reason that he had attained the maximum and sum of all human happiness on earth, he blew his brains out one evening at the door of the Opéra.

The famous cantatrice, Madame Malibran, hearing Beethoven's *Symphony in C-minor* for the first time at the Conservatoire, was seized with such convulsions that she had to be carried out of the hall. We have, in such cases, seen time and again serious men obliged to leave the room to hide the violence of their emotions from the public gaze. As for those which the author of these lines owes personally to music, he affirms that nothing in the world can give an exact idea of them to those who have not experienced them. Not to mention the moral affections that the art has developed in him, and only to cite the impressions received and the effects experienced at the very moment of the performance of works that he admires, here is what he can say in all truthfulness: While hearing certain pieces of music, my vital forces seem at first to be doubled; I feel a delicious pleasure, in which reason has no part; the habit of analysis itself then gives rise to admiration; the emotion, growing in the direct ratio of the energy and grandeur of the composer's ideas, soon produces a strange agitation in the circulation of the blood; my arteries pulsate violently; tears, which usually announce the end of the paroxysm, often only indicate a progressive stage which is to become much more intense. In this case there follow spasmodic contractions of the muscles, trembling in all the limbs, a *total numbness in the feet and hands*, partial paralysis of the optic and auditory nerves. I can no longer see, I can hardly hear; vertigo . . . almost swooning. . . . It is easily to be imagined that sensations carried to this pitch of violence are quite rare, and that there is besides a vigorous contrast to them, namely that of *bad musical effect*. No music acts more strongly in this direction than that of which the principal fault is platitude added to false expression. Then I blush as with shame, a veritable indignation seizes hold of me; you would think, to see me, that I had just received one of those outrages that cannot be forgiven; to efface the impression received, a general upturning takes place, an effort to discharge it throughout the whole organism, analogous to the efforts of vomiting, when the stomach tries to eject some nauseous liquor. Disgust and hatred are raised to their highest power; such music exasperates me, and I discharge it with violence from every pore.

No doubt the habit of disguising or mastering my emotions, rarely permits this one to show itself in its full force; and if it has happened to me sometimes since my earliest youth to give it full career, it was that I had no time for reflection, and was taken by surprise.

So modern music has no reason to be jealous of the supposed superior power of that of the ancients. Now what are the modes of action of our art of music? Here are all that we know of, and although they are many, it has not been proved that still others are not to be discovered in future. They are:

MELODY.

A musical effect produced by different tones heard *successively*, and formulated in more or less symmetrical phrases. The art of linking together those series of tones in an agreeable manner, or of giving them an expressive meaning, is not to be learned, it is a gift of nature, which the observation of pre-existing melodies and the peculiar character of individuals and nations modify in a thousand ways.

HARMONY.

A musical effect produced by different tones heard *simultaneously*. Natural gifts alone can make the great harmonist; yet a knowledge of those groups of tones which form *chords* (generally recognized as agreeable and beautiful), and the art of regularly connecting them together is taught everywhere with success.

RHYTHM.

A symmetrical division of time by means of tones. The musician cannot be taught to find out beautiful rhythmical forms; the peculiar faculty of discovering them is one of the rarest. Rhythm, of all parts of music, seems to us to be the least advanced at the present day.

EXPRESSION.

A quality by which music stands in direct relations to the character of the sentiments it wishes to express, and the passions it wishes to excite. The perception of this quality is excessively uncommon; we frequently see the whole audience in an opera house, whom a doubtful intonation would immediately disgust, listening without displeasure, and even with delight, to pieces the expression of which is completely false.

MODULATION.

We now designate by this word the passage or transition from one mode or key to a new mode or key. Study may do much towards teaching the musician the art of thus changing the tonality to advantage, and pertinently modifying its constitution. Popular songs generally modulate but little.

INSTRUMENTATION

Consists in letting each instrument play what best suits its peculiar nature, and the effect it is intended to produce. It is also the art of grouping together instruments so as to modify the tone of some by that of others, resulting in a peculiar quality of tone which no instrument would produce separately, nor united with other instruments of its own kind. This phrase of instrumentation is in music exactly what coloring is in painting. Powerful, resplendent and often exaggerated as it is to-day, it was hardly known before the end of the last century. We think that, as in rhythm, melody and expression, the study of models may put the student in the path of mastering it, but that he will not succeed without special natural gifts.

THE POINT OF DEPARTURE OF SOUNDS.

By placing the listener at a greater or less distance from the performers, and separating sonorous instruments from each other on certain occasions, modifications of musical effects are obtained which have not as yet been sufficiently studied.

THE DEGREE OF INTENSITY OF SOUNDS.

Some phrases and inflections produce absolutely no effect when given out softly and with moderation, though they may become very beautiful when given out with the force of emission they need. The inverse proposition brings about even more striking results; by doing violence to a delicate idea, we reach the ridiculous and monstrous.

THE MULTIPLICITY OF SOUNDS

Is one of the most powerful principles of musical emotion. When instruments and voices are in large numbers and occupy a large surface, the mass of air set in vibration becomes enormous, and its undulations acquire a character of which they ordinarily are destitute. So much so that if a single voice is heard in a church which is filled by a large number of singers, no matter what may be its intrinsic beauty, or the art with which it enunciates a simple, slow theme, of little interest in itself, it will only produce a very moderate effect; whereas the same theme, taken up without much art by all the voices in unison, will at once acquire an incredible degree of majesty.

Almost all of the various constituent parts of music that we have mentioned seem to have been employed by the ancients. Only their knowledge of harmony is generally contested. A learned composer, our contemporary, M. Lesueur, stood up forty years ago as an intrepid antagonist to this opinion. Here is the reasoning of his opponents:

"*Harmony was not known to the ancients,*" say they; "*various passages in their historians and a host of doc-*

uments go to prove it. They only employed the unison and the octave. It is also known that harmony is an invention that does not date farther back than the eighth century. As the scale and tonal constitution of the ancients were not the same as ours, which were invented by the Italian, Guido d'Arezzo, but were very similar to those of the plain chant, which is itself but a remnant of Grecian music, it is evident to any one who is versed in the science of chords that that sort of chant only allows of the unison and octave, being as it is unsuited to harmonic accompaniment."

To this might be answered, that the fact that harmony was invented in the Middle Ages does not prove that it was unknown in previous ages. Many items of human knowledge have been lost and found again; and one of the most important discoveries that Europe ascribes to herself, that of gunpowder, had been made in China long before. Besides, it is anything but certain that the inventions attributed to Guido d'Arezzo were really his, for he himself cites several of them in his writings as things universally admitted before his time. As for the difficulty of adapting our harmony to the plain chant, without denying that it unites itself more naturally to our modern melodic forms, the fact that the plain chant is performed in counterpoint in several parts, and even accompanied by chords on the organ in all churches, is a sufficient answer. Let us now see upon what the opinion of M. Lesueur is based:

"*Harmony was known to the ancients*," said he; "*the works of their poets, philosophers and historians prove it in many places in a peremptory manner.* These historical fragments, very clear in themselves, have been wrongly translated. Thanks to the understanding we now have of the Greek notation, whole pieces of their music in several voices and accompanied by various instruments are at hand to bear witness to the truth of this statement. Duets, trios and choruses by Sappho, Olympus, Terpander, Aristoxenus, etc., faithfully reproduced in our musical notation, will be published later. Their harmony will be found to be simple and clear, the smoothest chords being alone employed, the style absolutely the same as that of certain portions of the sacred music of our own day. Their scale and tonal system were perfectly identical with ours. It is one of the gravest errors to see a remnant of Grecian music in the plain chant, which is a monstrous tradition of the barbarous hymns the Druids used to howl round the statue of Odin while offering up their horrible sacrifices. Some canticles in use in the ritual of the Catholic Church are Greek, it is true, and we find them founded upon the same system as modern music! Moreover, even if circumstantial proofs were wanting, is not the internal evidence we have sufficient to demonstrate the falsity of the opinion that refuses all knowledge and use of harmony to the ancients? What! can the Greeks, those ingenious and polished sons of the earth who saw the birth of Homer, Socrates, Pindar, Praxiteles, Phidias, Apelles, Zeuxis, that artistic people that raised up marvelous temples which time has not yet destroyed, whose chisel cut out of marble human forms worthy of representing the very gods; that people whose monumental works still serve as models to the poets, sculptors, architects and painters of our own day, can they have had only a coarse and incomplete music like that of the barbarian? . . . What! those thousands of singers of both sexes who were maintained at great expense in the temples, those myriads of instruments of various kinds that were called: *Lyra*, *Psalterium*, *Trigonium*, *Sambuca*, *Cithara*, *Pectis*, *Maga*, *Barbiton*, *Testudo*, *Epigonium*, *Simmicium*, *Epandoron*, *etc.*, for stringed instruments; *Tuba*, *Fistula*, *Tibia*, *Cornu*, *Lituus*, *etc.*, for wind instruments;

Tympanum, *Cymbalum*, *Crepitaculum*, *Tintinnabulum*, *Crotalum*, *etc.*, for instruments of percussion, can they have only been employed to produce cold and sterile unisons and poor octaves? Could the harp and the trumpet have been thus made to walk with the same gait; could two instruments of such different aspect and character have been forcibly bound down to a grotesque unison? It is doing unmerited insult to the intelligence and musical sense of a great people, it is taxing all Greece with barbarism."

Such were M. Lesueur's reasons for his opinion. As for the facts cited by him in proof of it, nothing can contravene them; if the illustrious master had only published his great work on ancient music, with the fragments he has mentioned, if he had indicated the sources from whence he got them, the manuscripts that he has examined; if the incredulous could have convinced themselves by their own eyes, that those *harmonies* attributed to the Greeks have been really handed down to us from them, then M. Lesueur would undoubtedly have won his case at which he has worked so long and with such unshaken perseverance and conviction. Unfortunately he has not done so, and as it is still very permissible to entertain a doubt on this head, we will discuss the internal evidence M. Lesueur has advanced with the same impartiality and attention we have brought to bear upon the ideas of his antagonists. So we shall reply to him:

The plain chants that you call barbarous are not all so severely judged by the generality of musicians of our time; there are many of them, on the contrary, which strike them as bearing the stamp of a rare character of severity and grandeur. The tonal system in which these hymns are written, and which you condemn, is often susceptible of the most admirable application. Many popular songs, full of artless expression, are without any *leading note*, and are consequently written in the tonal system of the plain chant. Others, like the Scotch airs, belong to a still stranger musical scale, since they have neither the fourth nor the seventh degrees of our scale. Yet what is fresher and at times more vigorous than these mountain melodies? To declare forms that are contrary to our customs as barbarous, is not to prove that a different education from ours cannot singularly modify our opinions about them. Moreover, without taxing Greece with barbarism, let us only admit that her music was yet in its infancy compared with ours; the contrast of this imperfect state of a special art with the splendor of other arts, with which it has no point of contact, no manner of relationship, is not by any means inadmissible. The reasoning that would tend to make this anomaly seem impossible is far from being new, and we all know that it has in many cases led to conclusions which facts have afterwards disproved with discouraging brutality.

The argument drawn from the musical unreason of making instruments of such dissimilar natures as the lyre, the trumpet and drums, progress in unison or in octaves, is without real force; for is this disposition of instruments practicable, after all? Yes, undoubtedly, and musicians of our own day can employ it whenever they wish. So it is not extraordinary that it should have been admitted among nations, the very constitution of whose art admitted of no other.

Now, as to the superiority of our music over that of the ancients, it seems more than probable. Be it that harmony was known to the ancients, or that they were ignorant of it, evidence enough to verify this conclusion will result from sifting the testimony that the partisans of two contrary opinions about the nature and means of their art have furnished us.

Our music contains that of the ancients, but theirs did not contain ours; that is to say, that we can easily reproduce the effects of antique music, and an infinite number of others beside which they never knew, and which were impossible for them to produce.

We have said nothing of the art of tones in the East; from the reason that all that travelers have taught us about it up to the present time is confined to formless puerilities that bear no relation whatever to the ideas we attach to the word *music.* Until new notions have been given us, wholly opposed to those we now entertain, we must look upon music among the Orientals as a grotesque noise, analogous to that which children make when at play.

II.

BEETHOVEN IN SATURN'S RING.—THE MEDIUMS.

THE musical world is greatly disturbed at present; the whole philosophy of art seems to have been turned topsy-turvy. It was generally believed, hardly a few days ago, that the beautiful in music, like the mediocre, like the ugly, was absolute; that is to say, that a piece of music that was beautiful, mediocre, or ugly for people of taste, connoisseurs, was equally beautiful, mediocre, or ugly for everybody, and consequently for people without taste or knowledge. The upshot of this consoling opinion was, that the masterpiece capable of bringing tears into the eyes of a man living at No. 58 rue de la Chaussée-d'Antin, or of boring him, or disgusting him, must necessarily produce the same effect upon a Cochin-Chinese, a Laplander, a pirate of Timur, a Turk, or a hod-carrier of the rue des Mauvaises-Paroles. When I say *it was believed*, I mean by the learned, the doctors, the simple in heart; for in these questions great minds meet, and those who do not resemble one another, at least assemble together. As for myself, who am neither learned, nor a doctor, nor simple, I never quite knew what to think about these grave subjects of controversy; I believe, however, that I believed nothing, but now I am sure of it, my mind is fixed, and I believe in the absolutely beautiful much less than I do in the horn of the unicorn. For why, I pray, should I not believe in the horn of the unicorn? It is now proved as proved can be, that there are unicorns in various parts of the Himalayas. We all know the adventure of Mr. Kingsdoom. The famous English traveler, astonished at meeting one of these animals, which he believed to be fabulous (there you see what it is to believe!), and looking at it with an attention that hurt the feelings of the elegant quadruped, the infuriated unicorn rushed upon him, nailed him to a tree, and left a long piece of horn in his chest as a proof of its existence. The unhappy Englishman could never get over it.

Now I must tell you why I am sure of believing for a day or two that I do not believe in the absolutely beautiful. A revolution must have taken place, and really has taken place in philosophy since the marvelous discovery of tipping tables (of pine-wood), and then of mediums, and then of the invocation of spirits, and then of *spiritual* conversations. Music could not remain outside of the influence of such a considerable fact, and keep itself isolated from the world of spirits, it, the science of the impalpable, of the imponderable, of the indiscernible. So, many musicians have put themselves in relations with the world of spirits (they ought to have done so long ago). By means of a pine table of very moderate cost, upon which you place your hands, and which, after a few minutes of reflection (reflection of the table), sets to work to lift up one or two of its legs, in a way, unfortunately, to shock the modesty of English ladies, you can succeed not only in invoking the spirit of a great composer, but in entering into regular conversation with him, and forcing him to answer all sorts of questions. Nay more, if you set to work rightly, you can make the spirit of the great master dictate a new work, an entire composition coming all burning from his brain. As in the case of the letters of the alphabet, so it has been agreed that the table, raising its legs and letting them fall again upon the floor, shall give so many raps for a *C*, so many for a *D*, so many for an *F*, so many for an eighth-note, so many for a sixteenth-note, so many for a quarter-rest, so many for an eighth-rest, etc., etc. I know that you will answer me: "It has been agreed," you will say; "agreed with whom?" evidently with the spirits. "Now, before this agreement was made, how did the first medium go to work to find out that the spirits agreed to it?" I cannot tell; what is certain is, that it is certain; and then, in these great questions, you must positively allow yourself to be guided by your interior sense, and above all things not hunt for fleas.

So then, now, already (as the Russians say) they lately invoked the spirit of Beethoven who lives in Saturn. As Mozart lives in Jupiter, all the world knows that, it does seem as if the composer of *Fidelio* ought to have chosen the same planet for his new abode; but Beethoven, as we all know, is rather wild and capricious, perhaps also he has some unconfessed antipathy to Mozart. At any rate he lives in Saturn, or at least in his ring. And here we see, last Monday, a medium who is very familiar with the great man, without any fear of putting him out of temper by making him take such a long journey for nothing, place his hands upon a pine table to send Beethoven, in Saturn's ring, an order to come down and talk with him a minute. So the table immediately makes indecent movements, lifts up its legs and shows . . . that the spirit is near. These poor spirits are very obedient, you will admit. During his terrestrial existence Beethoven would not have put himself out to go only from the Carinthian gate to the imperial palace, if the Emperor of Austria had begged him to come and see him, and he now leaves Saturn's ring and interrupts his lofty contemplations to obey the *order* (mark that), the order of the first man that happens to come along with a pine table.

That is what death is! how it changes your disposition! How right Marmontel was when he said in his opera of *Zémire et Azor:*

> "Les esprits, dont on nous fait peur,
> Sont les meilleures gens du monde."

(The spirits people frighten us about are the best sort of folk in the world.)

So it is. I have already told you that in these questions you must not hunt for fleas.

Beethoven arrives, and says through the legs of the table: "Here I am!" The delighted medium hits him a tap on the stomach. . . . "Come now," you will say, "here you are again at your absurdities!" How is that? "Why yes! you spoke of a brain just now in connection with spirits; spirits are not bodies." No . . . no, but you know very well that they are. . . semi-bodies. That has been thoroughly explained. Do not interrupt me any more by such futile observations. I continue my sad tale. As I was saying, the medium, who is himself a semi-spirit, hits Beethoven a semi-tap on the semi-stomach, and without further ado, begs the semi-god to dictate him a new *sonata*. Beethoven does not wait to be told twice, and the table immediately begins to stride about. . . . They write under its dictation. When the *sonata* is written, Beethoven sets out again for Saturn; the medium, surrounded by a dozen stupefied spectators, goes to the piano-forte, performs the *sonata*, and the stupefied spectators become confounded listeners as they recognize that the *sonata* is by no means a semi-platitude but a full-grown platitude, sheer nonsensical stupidity.

How shall we believe in the absolutely beautiful now?

Surely Beethoven, going to live in a higher sphere, cannot but have perfected himself, his genius must have become grander and more elevated, and in dictating a new *sonata* he must have wished to give the dwellers upon earth an idea of the new style he has adopted in his new abode, an idea of his *fourth manner*, an idea of the music that is played upon the Erards of Saturn's ring. And here we find that this new style is precisely what we base musicians of a base and subsaturnian world call flat, silly and unendurable, and far from ravishing us up to the fifty-eighth heaven, it irritates us and makes us sick at the stomach. . . .Oh! it is fit to make us lose our reason, if that were possible.

So we must believe that, as the beautiful and the ugly are not absolute and universal, many productions of the human intellect that are admired on earth will be despised in the world of spirits, and I think that I am authorized to conclude (for the matter of that, I have suspected it for some time) that some operas, given and applauded daily, even at theatres which modesty forbids me to name, would be hissed in Saturn, in Jupiter, in Mars, in Venus, in Pallas, in Sirius, in Neptune, in the Great and Little Bear, in the constellation of Biga, and are after all but infinite platitudes for an infinite universe.

This conviction is not calculated to encourage great producers. Many among them, overcome by the baleful discovery, have fallen ill, and may, so they tell us, pass away into the state of spirits. Luckily that will take some time.

III.

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE ART OF SINGING IN THE LYRIC THEATRES OF FRANCE AND ITALY, AND THE CAUSES THAT HAVE BROUGHT IT ABOUT.

LARGE HALLS.—CLAQUEURS, INSTRUMENTS OF PERCUSSION.

IT seems to vulgar common sense as if we ought to have singers for operas in our so-called lyric establishments; but just the contrary is the fact: we have operas for singers. We must always adjust, cut up, piece out, lengthen, shorten a score more or less to put it into a condition (and what a condition!) to be sung by the artists to whom it is confided. One finds his part too high, another finds his too low; this one has too many pieces, that one has not enough; the tenor wants *i*'s at every point, the baritone wants *a*'s; here one finds an accompaniment that embarrasses him, there his rival complains of a chord that he does not like; this is too slow for the *prima-donna*, that is too lively for the tenor. In a word, the hapless composer who should take it into his head to write a scale in *C* in the medium register, and in a slow *tempo*, and without accompaniment, could not be sure of finding singers to sing it well and *without changes;* most of them would even say that the scale *was not in their voice*, because it was not written *for them.*

At the present day, in Europe, with the system of singing that is in vigor (that is the right word for it), in every ten individuals who call themselves singers it would be possible to find two, or three at the very most, capable of singing a simple song well, I mean thoroughly well, correctly, true, with expression, in a good style and with a pure and sympathetic voice. Suppose that you take one of them at random, and say to him: "Here is a very simple old air, very touching, the sweet melody of which does not modulate and keeps within the the compass of one octave; sing it now;" it is very possible that your singer, who is perhaps an illustrious personage, will exterminate the poor little musical blossom, and that in listening to him you will regret some good village girl you used to hear hum the old air.

No musical thought, no melodic form, no expressive accent can hold its own against the frightful mode of interpretation that is becoming more and more widely spread every day. If that were only all! but we have to-day numerous varieties of antimelodic singing. First there is the *innocently silly* style, then the *pretentiously silly* style, the style ornamented with all the stupidities the singer takes it into his head to introduce; this one is already very *culpable.* Next comes the *vicious* style, which corrupts the public and drags it into bad musical paths, by the attractiveness of a certain capricious, brilliant execution, but false expression which is alike revolting to good taste and good sense; at last we have the *criminal* style, the *rascally* style, which adds to rascality an inexhaustible wealth of silliness, and only proceeds by great yells, and delights

"Aux bruyantes mêlées,
Aux longs roulements des tambours,"

(In noisy mellys, and long rolls of the drum), in sombre dramas, in stranglings, in poisonings, in maledictions, in anathemas, in all dramatic horrors, in a word, which furnish most opportunities for *giving voice.* It is this last style that reigns despotically in Italy at the present day, so they tell us. But the cause, the cause? you will ask. The cause, or causes, I answer, are easily found out; the remedy is what is harder to find, or rather the remedy will never be applied, to speak frankly, even when it is found, and its efficacy has been thoroughly demonstrated. The causes are at once moral and physical, all depending upon one another; and if theatrical enterprises had not always and almost everywhere been given into the hands of people who are covetous of money above all things, and ignorant of the requirements of art, these causes would not exist.

They are: the disproportionate size of most lyric theatres;

The system of applause, either salaried or otherwise;

The preponderance that has grown up of the execution over the composition, of the larynx over the brain, of matter over mind, and, at last, too often the cowardly submission of genius to nonsense.

Lyric theatres are too large. It has been proved and is certain that sound, to act *musically* upon the human organism, must not proceed from a point too far distant from the listener. People are always ready to answer, when we speak of the sonority of an opera-house or a concert-room: *Everything can be very well heard there.* But I also hear the cannon very well from my study when it is fired from the esplanade of the Invalides, and yet that noise, which, by the way, is outside of all musical conditions, does not strike me, does not move me, does not in any way make my nervous system vibrate. Well, it is just this blow, this emotion, this shock that sound positively must give the organ of hearing to move it musically, and which we do not receive from even the most powerful groups of voices and instruments when we listen to them from too great a distance. Some scientists think that the electric fluid cannot traverse a space greater than a certain number of millions of leagues; I do not know that this is so, but I am sure that the musical fluid (I beg leave to thus designate the unknown cause of musical emotion) is without force, warmth or vitality at a certain distance from its point of departure. We *hear*, but we do not *vibrate*. Now, we *must vibrate* ourselves with the instruments and voices, and be made to vibrate by them in order to have true musical sensations. Nothing is easier to demonstrate. Place a few persons, well organized and with some knowledge of music, in a room of moderate size, unfurnished and uncarpeted; play well before them some real masterpiece, by a real composer, really inspired, a work free from those unendurable conventional beauties which pedagogues and ready-made enthusiasts admire, a simple trio for pianoforte, violin and 'cello, Beethoven's trio in *B-flat*, for instance; what will happen? The listeners will feel themselves seized little by little with an unwonted agitation, they will experience an intense and profound sense of enjoyment, which will now move them keenly, now plunge them into a delicious calm, into a true ecstasy. In the midst of the *andante*, at the third or fourth return of that sublime and so passionately religious theme, it may happen that one of them cannot restrain his tears, and if he lets them run for a moment, he will perhaps end (I have witnessed this phenomenon) by weeping violently, furiously, explosively. Now there is a musical effect! there is a listener thoroughly under the influence of, and intoxicated by, the art of tones, a being raised to a height immeasurably above the common regions of life! That man adores music, he cannot express what he feels, his admiration is ineffable, and his gratitude to the great poet-composer who has thus enchanted him equals his admiration.

Now suppose that in the middle of the same piece, played by the same artists, the room in which it is played should gradually grow larger, and that the audience should be carried little by little to a greater distance from the players in consequence of this progressive increase in size. Well, here we have our room as large as an ordinary theatre; our listener, who but a moment ago felt his emotions rising, begins to regain his composure; he still *hears*, but he no longer *vibrates;* he admires the work, but by a process of reasoning, and no longer from sentiment or in response to an irresistible impulse. The room grows still larger, and the listener is farther and farther removed from the musical focus. He is as far off as he would be if the three players were grouped together on the stage of the Opéra, and he were sitting in the balcony in one of the first row of boxes directly opposite. He still *hears*, not a sound escapes him, but he is no longer under the influence of the *musical fluid*, which cannot reach him; his agitation ceases, and he becomes cold again, he even feels a sort of disagreeable anxiety which is all the more distressing that he makes greater efforts to attend and not lose the thread of the musical discourse. But his efforts are in vain, insensibility paralyzes them, he begins to be bored, the great master tires him, importunes him, the masterpiece is no longer anything more than a little ridiculous noise, the giant is a dwarf, art a deception; he grows impatient and stops listening. Another test!

Follow a military band playing a brilliant march, in the rue Royale, we will suppose; you listen to it with pleasure, you walk briskly after it, its rhythm carries you away, its warlike trumpet-calls animate you, and you already think of glory and battles. The band comes to the place de la Concorde, you still hear it, but as the reflectors of sound are no longer there, you stop vibrating, and you leave it to go its way, thinking no more of it than of the music made by a company of jugglers.

Now to come back to the heart of our subject, how often has it not happened, in the times when they still had the grace to give Gluck's works at the Opéra, and not too badly either, how often has it not happened, I say, that I remained cold, but angry at my own coldness, while hearing the first act of *Orphée!* Yet I knew, I was sure that it was a marvel of expression and poetic melody; the performance was wanting in no essential good quality. But the stage represented a *sacred grove*, and was open on all sides, the sound was lost at the back, at the right and left of the stage, there were no reflectors, and consequently no effect; *Orpheus* really seemed to be singing on a plain in Thrace: Gluck was wrong. When this same part of *Orpheus* was sung again by A. Nourrit, some days later, the same choruses sung by the same singers, and the same pantomime music played by the same orchestra, but in the hall of the Conservatoire, they regained all their magical influence; we were all in ecstasies, we were impregnated with antique poetry: Gluck was right.

Beethoven's symphonies, which are overwhelming in the hall of the Conservatoire, have been played several times at the Opéra, where they had no effect whatever: Beethoven was wrong. Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, ardent, impassioned and passion-inspiring as it is at the Théâtre-Italien, when the performance is good, is perfectly icy at the Opéra, as every one admits. The *Nozze di Figaro* would seem still colder there. So at the Opéra Mozart is wrong! . . .

The masterpieces of Rossini's first manner, the *Barber*, and the *Cenerentola*, and many others lose their piquant and witty physiognomy at the Opéra; we still enjoy them, but coldly and from a distance, as we should enjoy a garden looking at it through a telescope. So that Rossini is wrong! . . .

And see how the *Freyschütz*, that so lively musical drama, so full of wild energy, drags out its weary length at the Opéra! Can Weber be wrong? . . .

I could easily multiply examples. What is a theatre in which Gluck, Mozart, Weber, Beethoven and Rossini are wrong, but a theatre built upon bad musical principles? Yet it is not wanting in sonority. No, but like all other theatres of the same dimensions, the Opéra is too large. *Sound* fills it easily, but not so the *musical fluid* that is liberated by the ordinary means of execution. People will, no doubt, object to this, that several fine works produce some effect there notwithstanding, and that a skillful singer, who has the power of enchaining the attention of an audience, and concentrating it upon himself, can successfully attempt the *softer effects of singing* there. But I reply that the precious singer would impress his audience far more keenly in a smaller hall, and that the same would be true of those fine works that are specially written for the Opéra; nay, more, that of twenty beautiful ideas contained in exceptional scores (scores written in our own times for the Opéra), there are hardly four or five that come to the surface; the rest are lost. And even those beauties only appear veiled and lessened by distance, never under all their aspects, never in all their vividness and brilliancy.

Hence the so much laughed-at, but yet very real, necessity of hearing a fine opera very often to appreciate it and discover its merits. At its first performance all seems confused, vague, colorless, without form, nerveless; it is but a half-effaced picture, the drawing of which we must follow line by line. Hear the judgments of the lobby between the acts of first performances: the new work, according to the critics, is *invariably tiresome* or *detestable*. Here are twenty-five years that I have listened to them in such cases, without ever, even in a single instance, hearing a more favorable opinion expressed. It is much worse at dress-rehearsals, when the house is half empty; then nothing comes to the surface, everything vanishes; neither melodic grace, nor harmonic science, nor instrumental coloring, nor love, nor hate, can have any effect; it is a vague and more or less fatiguing noise that irritates and plagues you to death, and you leave the house cursing both work and composer.

I shall never forget the dress-rehearsal of the *Huguenots.* Meeting Meyerbeer on the stage after the fourth act, all that I could say to him was this: "There is a chorus in the last scene but one which, *it seems to me*, must produce some effect." I meant the chorus of monks in the scene of the benediction of poniards, one of the most overwhelming inspirations of art in all ages. It *seemed to me* that it must produce some effect. I had not been otherwise impressed by it.

. . . .

Dramatic musical composition is a double art; it results from the association and intimate union of poetry and music. Melodic accents can, no doubt, have a special interest, a charm that is peculiar to themselves, and which results from music alone; but their force is doubled when we see them combine to express a noble passion, or a beautiful sentiment suggested by a poem worthy of the name; each art is re-inforced by the other. Now this union is in a great measure destroyed by too large halls, where the listener, in spite of all his attention, hardly understands one line in twenty, where he does not distinctly see the actor's features, and where it is consequently impossible for him to catch the more delicate shades of melody, harmony, or instrumentation, the reason for these shades, or their relation to the dramatic element determined by the words, since it is just the words that he cannot hear.

Music, I repeat, must be heard near to; its principal charm disappears with distance; it is, at the very least, singularly *modified* and weakened. What pleasure could we take in the conversation of the wittiest people in the world, if we were obliged to carry it on at a distance of thirty paces? Sound beyond a certain distance, although we may still hear it, is like a flame that we see, but the warmth of which we do not feel.

This advantage of small halls over large ones is evident, and it was because he had noticed it, that a director of the opera said one day with humorous artlessness and a touch of irritation: "Oh! in your hall at the Conservatoire everything makes an effect." Yes? Well, just try, and play there the vulgarities, the brutal platitudes, the nonsense, the absurdities, the discordances, the cacophonies that are endured as well as may be in your opera, and you will see what sort of effect they will make. . .

Now let us examine another side of the question, that which affects the art of singing and the art of the composer; we shall very soon find the proof of what I began by saying, and see that if the art of singing has become the art of screaming, as it is to-day, the too great size of theatres is the cause of it; we shall also find that other excesses which dishonor music to-day proceed from the same cause.

The theatre of la Scala, in Milan, is immense; that of la Cannobiana is also very large; the theatre of San-Carlo in Naples, and many others that I could name, are of equally enormous dimensions. Now where did the school of singing that is so openly and justly condemned to-day come from? From the great musical centres of Italy. As the Italian public has also the habit of talking during performances as loudly as we talk at the Bourse, the singers have been led little by little, as well as the composers, to seek after every means of concentrating upon themselves the attention of that public which pretends to like *its* music. They consequently aim at sonority above everything; to obtain it, they have suppressed the use of *delicate shades*, of the *voix mixte*, of the *head voice*, of the *lower notes* of the scale in all voices; they no longer admit any but the high notes, called *chest* tones, for the tenors; as the basses no longer sing except on the high degrees of their scale, they have been transformed into baritones; the male voices, not really gaining in the upper register what they have lost in the lower, have been deprived of a third of their compass; composers, writing for these singers, have had to shut themselves up within the limits of an octave, and confining themselves to the use of eight notes at the very most, they only produce monotonous and desperately vulgar melodies; the highest and most piercing female voices have obtained a marked preference over all others. Those *soprani*, those tenors, those baritones that shout out at random are the only ones that are applauded; composers have seconded them to the best of their ability by writing in the same direction as their stentorian exertions; duets, trios, quartets and choruses in unison have sprung up; as this style of composition is moreover easier and more expeditious for the *maestri* and more convenient for the executants, it has prevailed; and when the big-drum came to its aid, the system of dramatic music that we now enjoy found itself established in a great part of Europe.

I make this restriction, for it does not really exist in Germany. There are no cavernous halls there. Even the Grand Opera in Berlin is not disproportionately large. They say that the Germans sing badly; that may seem true in general. I will not broach the question here, whether or not their language is the reason of it, and whether Madam Sontag, Pischek, Tichatschek, Mademoiselle Lind, who is almost a German, and many others do not form magnificent exceptions; but upon the whole, German vocalists sing, and do not howl, the screaming school is not theirs; they make music. Whence does this come? It is, no doubt, because they have a finer musical sense than many of their rivals in other countries, but also because the German lyric theatres are all of moderate dimensions, and the *musical fluid* can reach every part of them; because the public is always silent and attentive, and all ungraceful efforts of voices and instrumentation are consequently useless, and would seem still more odious than with us.

So here, you will say, is a libel brought against large theatres; we can no longer make eleven thousand francs of receipts, nor bring together eighteen hundred people in the Paris Opéra, at Covent Garden in London, in la Scala, in the San-Carlo, nor elsewhere, without incurring the criticisms of musicians. We unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative. You have let the cat out of the bag: *receipts!* You are speculators, we are artists; we do not speak of the art of coining money, which is the only one that interests you.

True art has its own conditions of power and beauty; speculation, which I take good care not to confound with industry, has its own more or less moral conditions of success, and in the final analysis, art and speculation mutually execrate each other. Their antagonism is of all places and all times, and will be eternal; it lies in the very heart of the questions themselves. Talk to the director of a theatrical entertainment, ask him which is the best opera-house; he will answer, or at least, he will think without daring to say so, that it is the one in which you can make *the largest receipts.* Talk to a cultivated musician, or a learned architect, who is fond of music, and he will tell you: "If you wish the essential qualities of the art of tones to be appreciable in an opera-house, it must be *a musical instrument;* and it is not one unless certain physical laws, the nature of which is perfectly well understood, are not taken into account in its construction. All other considerations are without strength or authority in comparison with that. Stretch metallic strings upon a packing case, and fit a key-board to it, and you will not have a piano-forte for all that. Stretch strings of gut and silk upon a clog, and you will not get a violin by it. The skill of pianists and violinists will be impotent to transform those ridiculous machines into musical instruments, even if your packing-case were of rose-wood, and your clog of sandal-wood. You can let hurricanes blow through a stove-pipe, the sound that comes out of it may be extremely energetic, but it will not make your stove-pipe an organ-pipe, nor a trombone, nor a tuba, nor a horn. All imaginable considerations, either of perspective, or of splendor, or of money, will fall to the ground before the laws of acoustics and those of the transmission of the musical fluid, for these laws do exist. This is a fact, and the obstinacy of facts is proverbial." This is what those . . . artists will tell you. But they want to make music, and you want to make money.

As for the effect of the orchestra in too large halls, it is defective, incomplete and false, in as much as it is other than that the composer intended while writing his score, even if his score was written expressly for the large hall in which it is heard.

As the range of the musical fluid of various projectors of sound is unequal, it necessarily follows that instruments of long range will often have a degree of power disproportionate to the importance the composer has given them, while those of short range will disappear, or will forfeit the importance that has been assigned them to gain the ends of composition. For the *musical action* of voices and instruments to be complete, all the tones must reach the listener simultaneously, and with the same vitality of vibration. In a word, sounds written in score (musicians will understand me) must reach the ear *in score*.

Another consequence of the extreme size of lyric theatres, and one which I have hinted at just now, in recalling the use made to-day of the big-drum, has been the introduction of all the violent auxiliaries of instrumentation into common orchestras. And this abuse, which is carried to-day to its utmost limits, not only ruins the power of the orchestra itself, but has contributed not a little to bring about the system of singing of which we deplore the existence, by exciting singers to wrestle violently with the orchestra in the emission of tone.

Here is how the reign of instruments of percussion has been established.

Will readers who love music forgive me for entering upon such long developments? I hope so. As for the others, I have little fear of boring them; they will not read me.

It was in Gluck's *Iphigénie en Aulide*, if I mistake not, that the big-drum was first heard at the Paris Opéra, but alone, without cymbals, or any other instrument of percussion. It figures in the last chorus of the Greeks (a chorus in unison, let us note this by the way), of which the first words are: *Partons, volons à la victoire!* (Let us go, let us fly to victory!) This chorus is in march time with repeats. It accompanies the filing off of the Thessalian army. The big-drum strikes the strong beats of each bar, as in common marches. As this chorus was struck out when the catastrophe of the opera was changed, the big-drum was not heard again until the beginning of the following century.

Gluck also introduced the cymbals (and we know with what admirable effect) in the chorus of Scythians in *Iphigénie en Tauride*, the *cymbals alone*, without the big-drum, though routine writers of all countries think the two inseparable. In a ballet of the same opera he made the happiest use of the *triangle alone.* And that was all.

In 1808 Spontini used the big-drum and cymbals in the triumphal march and the dance air of the gladiators in the *Vestale.* Later he used them again in the procession-music in *Fernand Cortez.* So far there had been, if not a very ingenious, at least a proper and very reserved use of those instruments. But Rossini came and gave his *Siége de Corinthe* at the Opéra. He had noticed, not without grief, the somnolence of the public in our great theatre during the performance of the finest works, a somnolence brought on much more by the physical causes, contrary to musical effect, which I have just mentioned, than by the style of the masterly works of that period; and Rossini swore that he would not submit to such an affront. "I will find a way to keep you awake," said he. And he put the big-drum in everywhere, and the cymbals and triangle, and the trombones and ophicleide by bundles of chords, and by banging with all his might in the hurried rhythms, he made such lightnings of sonority flash from the orchestra, such thunderbolts, that the public rubbed its eyes, and took a liking to this new sort of emotions, which were more lively if not more musical than any it had experienced before. Encouraged by success, he pushed this abuse still farther in *Moïse,* where, in the famous *finale* of the third act, the big-drum, cymbals and triangle strike in on all four beats of the measure in the *fortes,* and give out consequently *as many notes as the voices,* which latter accommodate themselves as can be imagined to such an accompaniment. Nevertheless, the orchestra and chorus of this number are so constructed, the sonority of the voices and instruments thus disposed is so overwhelming, that *the music* still comes to the surface in the midst of all this din, and the *musical fluid* projected in great waves to all points of the house, in spite of its vast dimensions, seizes upon the audience, shakes it, *makes it vibrate,* and one of the greatest effects that are to be signalized at the Opéra since its existence, is thus produced. But do the instruments of percussion contribute to it? Yes, if we consider them as a furious stimulant to the other instruments and to the voices; not so, if we only take into account the real part they play in the musical action, for they crush the orchestra and voices, and substitute an insanely violent noise for a finely energetic sonority.

Be it as it may, from the time that Rossini came upon the stage at the Opéra, the instrumental revolution in theatre orchestras was accomplished. The great noises were used on every occasion, and in all works, no matter what style the subject demanded. Soon the drums, big-drum, cymbals and triangle were no longer sufficient, a snare-drum was added, then two cornets came to aid the trumpets, trombones and ophicleide; the organ stationed itself behind the scenes next the bells, and military bands were seen upon the stage, and at last the great Sax instruments, which are to the other voices of the orchestra as a columbiad to a musket. Finally Halévy added the tam-tam to all these violent means of instrumentation in his *Magicienne*. The new composers, irritated at the obstacle the immense size of the house put in their path, thought that it must be overthrown at all hazards, to save their works from having sentence of death passed on them. Now have we generally remained within the conditions of worthy and elevated art, by employing these extreme means to ward off the obstacle by trying to destroy it? Surely not! exceptions are rare.

The judicious use of the most vulgar, and even the coarsest instruments, may be acknowledged by art, and may really serve to increase its riches and power. Not one of the means we have in our power to-day is to be despised; but the instrumental horrors that we witness only become all the more odious, and I think that I have shown that they have, for their part, contributed greatly to bringing about the vocal excesses which have led me to make these too long, and, I fear, too useless reflections.

Add that these same excesses, gradually introduced through the spirit of imitation upon the stage of the Opéra-Comique, are incomparably more revolting there, when we take into consideration the peculiar conditions of that theatre, its orchestra, its singers, and the general tone of its *répertoire*.

I have thought proper to meet this question face to face, for the first time, as the life of theatrical music evidently depends upon it; these truths may displease some great artists, and some excellent and powerful minds; but I think that in their conscience they will recognize that they are truths.

I mentioned, in the beginning, the moral causes of the immense disorder, the physical causes of which I have just studied. The influence of applause, and of what dramatic artists especially still have the astounding simplicity to call *success*, must be considered the foremost of them. The ridiculous importance given to executants, who are, or are thought to be, indispensable, and the authority they have usurped, are not to be forgotten either. But this is not the place to examine these questions; we should have to write a whole volume on the subject.

IV.

THE BAD SINGERS, THE GOOD SINGERS.—THE PUBLIC.—THE CLAQUEURS.

I HAVE said already that a singer or a cantatrice able to sing only sixteen measures of good music in a natural, well-poised, and sympathetic voice, and sing them without effort, without drawing and quartering the phrase, without platitudes, without exaggerating the accents to turgidity, without affectation, without tricks, without mistakes in French, without dangerous *liaisons,* without hiatuses, without insolent modifications of the text, without transposition, without hiccoughing, without barking, without baa-ing, without false intonations, without making the rhythm limp, without ridiculous ornaments, without nauseous *appoggiaturas,* in a word, so that the period written by the composer may be comprehensible, and remain simply *as he wrote it,* is a rare, very rare, excessively rare bird.

And it will become much rarer if the aberrations of public taste continue to manifest themselves as they do now, with explosiveness, passion and hatred for common sense.

If a man has a strong voice, without knowing how to use it the least bit in the world, without having the most elementary notions of the art of singing; if he only forces a note violently, he is violently applauded for the *sonority* of that note.

If a woman has for her only possession an exceptional compass of voice; if she can give, pertinently or not, a low *G* or *F* more like a death-rattle than a musical tone, or else a high *F* that is quite as pleasant to the ear as the squeal of a little dog when you step on his tail, that is enough to make the whole house resound with acclamations.

Take this woman, who cannot sing the smallest melody without putting you into a fidget, whose warmth of soul equals that of a block of Canadian ice; if she only has the gift of instrumental agility, no sooner does she shoot forth her squibs and sky-rockets at the rate of sixteen sixteenth-notes per bar, no sooner does her infernal trill drill into your tympanum with ferocious persistency for a whole minute without stopping to take breath, than you are sure to see

> "Les claqueurs monstrueux au parterre accroupis,"

(The monstrous *claqueurs* cowering in the pit) *bound up and yell with delight.*

If a declaimer has got it through his skull that true or false accentuation is all in all in dramatic music as long as it is only outrageously exaggerated, and that it can take the place of sonority, measure and rhythm, that it is enough to compensate for the loss of singing, form, melody, *tempo* and tonality; that he has a right to take the strangest liberties with the most admirable productions, to satisfy the demands of a style which is inflated, bombastic, bloated and bursting with emphasis; when he puts this system in practice before a certain public, the most lively and sincere enthusiasm rewards him for having throttled a great master, spoiled a masterpiece, shivered a beautiful melody to atoms, and torn a sublime passion to tatters.

These people have one good quality, which would not at any rate suffice to make singers of them, but which they have so exaggerated as to change it to a fault and a repulsive vice. It is no longer a beauty-spot, it is a wart, a polypus, a wen spreading itself over a face which is thoroughly insignificant if not absolutely ugly. Such practitioners are the scourge of music; they demoralize the public, and it is a sin to encourage them. As for the singers who have a voice, a human voice and sing, who know how to vocalize and sing, who have some knowledge of music and sing, who know how to accentuate discerningly and sing, and who in singing respect the work and the composer, whose faithful, attentive and intelligent interpreters they are, the public has too often nothing better than proud disdain or lukewarm encouragements for them. Their regular and smooth countenance has no beauty-spot, no wen, not the faintest wart. They wear no spangles, and do not dance upon the phrase. But they are none the less the really useful and charming singers, who, keeping within the conditions of art, have earned the suffrages of people of taste in general, and the gratitude of composers in particular. It is through their efforts that art exists, and by the others that it dies. But, you will say, do you dare to insinuate that the public does not applaud, and very warmly too, the great artists who are masters of all the true resources of musical dramatic singing, who are endowed with sensibility, intelligence, virtuosity and that rare faculty that is called inspiration? No, undoubtedly, the public sometimes applauds them *also*. At such times the public is like those sharks that follow ships and get caught with a line; it swallows all, the bit of salt-pork with the hook.

V.

THE FREYSCHÜTZ AT THE OPÉRA.[1]

I HAD just got back from my long peregrinations in Germany, when M. Pillet, the director of the Opéra, formed the project of putting the *Freyschütz* upon the stage. But the musical numbers of this work are preceded and followed by prose dialogue, as in our comic operas, and as the customs of the Opéra require that everything in the lyric dramas and tragedies of its *répertoire* should be sung, the spoken text had to be written out in recitative form. M. Pillet proposed this task to me.

"I do not think," I answered him, "that the recitatives you ask for ought to be added to the *Freyschütz ;* nevertheless, as it is the only condition under which it can be given at the Opéra, and as, if I did not write them, you would intrust the composition to somebody else less familiar with Weber, perhaps, than I, and certainly less devoted to the glorification of his masterpiece, I accept your offer, on one condition: the *Freyschütz* shall be played absolutely as it is, without changing anything either in the libretto or the music."

"That is exactly my intention," replied M. Pillet; "do you think I am the man to renew the scandals of *Robin des Bois ?* "

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[1] See "Art life and Theories of Richard Wagner," *(Amateur Series)* page 92.—TRANS.

"Very well. In that case I will go to work. How do you intend to cast the parts?"

"I shall give the part of *Agathe* to Madame Stoltz, that of *Aennchen* to Mademoiselle Dobré, Duprez will sing *Max*."

"I bet he will not," said I, interrupting him.

"What makes you think he will not?"

"You will find out soon enough."

"Bouché will make an excellent *Caspar*."

"And who have you got for the *Hermit?*"

"Oh! . . . " answered M. Pillet, embarrassed, "that is a useless part that only drags the affair out; I intend to cut all of the business in which he has anything to do."

"Oh! that is all? And this is the way you respect the *Freyschütz*, and do not imitate M. Castilblaze! . . . We are very far from agreeing; allow me to retire, I cannot have anything to do with this new *correction*."

"Oh Lord! what a whole loaf man you are! Well! We will keep the *Hermit*, and preserve everything, I give you my word."

Emilien Paccini, who was to translate the German libretto, having also given me this assurance, I consented, not without some misgivings, to take the composition of the recitatives upon myself. The feeling which led me to exact the preservation of the *Freyschütz* in its integrity, a feeling that many people called sheer fetichism, thus took away every pretext for remodeling or altering the work, and for the suppressions and corrections that would otherwise have been ardently indulged in. But a serious inconvenience also resulted from my inflexibility: the spoken dialogue seemed too long when set to music, in spite of the precaution I had taken to make it as rapid as possible. I could never make the actors abandon their slow, heavy and emphatic way of singing recitative; and especially in the scenes between

Max and *Caspar*, the musical rendering of their essentially simple and familiar conversation had all the pomp and solemnity of a scene in lyric tragedy. This hurt the general effect of the *Freyschütz* somewhat, though it obtained a brilliant success. I did not wish to be mentioned as the author of the recitatives, in which both artists and critics still found some dramatic qualities and one special merit, *that of the style*, which, they said, harmonized perfectly with that of Weber, and a reserve in instrumentation that even my enemies were forced to acknowledge.

As I had foreseen, Duprez, who had sung *Max* (Tony) in the *pasticcio* of *Robin des Bois* ten years before, with his little *light tenor* voice, could not adapt his big voice of leading tenor to the same part, which is written rather low in general, it is true. He proposed the most singular transpositions, necessarily intermingled with the most insane modulations and the most grotesque transitions . . . I cut short all this folly, declaring to M. Pillet that Duprez could not sing the part, by his own admission, without disfiguring it completely. So it was given to Marié, the second tenor, whose voice is not without character in the lower part, a good musician, but a heavy and uninteresting singer.

Neither could Madame Stoltz sing *Agathe* without transposing her two principal airs; I had to transpose the first one in *E* to *D*, and lower the prayer in *A-flat* in the third act a minor third, which made it lose three-quarters of its ravishing coloring. But, on the other hand, she was able to keep the final sextet in *B*, and sang the *soprano* part in it with an amount of verve and enthusiasm that made the whole house burst into applause every evening.

It is one-quarter real difficulty, one-quarter ignorance, and a good half caprice, that causes all this unwillingness in singers to render their parts as they are written.

They did not fail to try to introduce a ballet, all my efforts to prevent it being in vain. I proposed to compose a choregraphic scene, indicated by Weber himself in his rondo for piano-forte, the *Invitation à la valse*, and I instrumented that charming piece. But the ballet-master, instead of following the plan traced out in the music, could only find the usual ballet commonplaces, and trivial combinations, which must have charmed the public very moderately. So to make up for quality by quantity, they asked for the addition of three more figures. And now come some dancers who have got it into their heads that I had some movements in my symphonies that were very suitable for dancing, and would complete the ballet to perfection. They go and speak to M. Pillet; he jumps at the idea, and comes to ask me to introduce into Weber's score the ball-scene from my *Symphonie fantastique* and the festival from *Roméo et Juliette*.

The German composer, Dessauer, was in Paris at that time, and used to frequently come behind the scenes at the Opéra. I only answered the director's proposal by saying:

"I cannot consent to introduce into the *Freyschütz* anything that is not by Weber, but to prove to you that this is not from any exaggerated and unreasonable respect for the great master, there is Dessauer walking about at the back of the stage, let us go and submit your idea to him; if he approves, I will conform to your wishes; if not, I beg you not to mention it again."

At the very first words of the director, Dessauer turned quickly to me and said:

"Oh! Berlioz, don't do that."

"You hear him," said I to M. Pillet.

So there was no more question of that. We took dance airs from *Oberon* and *Preciosa*, and the ballet was thus complete with only compositions by Weber. But after a few performances the airs from *Oberon* and *Preciosa* disappeared; then they cut and slashed away at the *Invitation à la valse,* which had yet made a great hit in its orchestral dress. When M. Pillet had left the directorship of the Opéra while I was in Russia, they took up the *Freyschütz* again, and cut a part of the *finale* of the third act; at last they dared to cut the whole first scene of this same third act, in which are the sublime prayer of *Agathe*, the scene of the young girls, and *Aennchen's* romantic air with viola solo.

And it is thus that the *Freyschütz* is given at the Opéra to-day. That masterpiece of poetry, originality and passion serves as a make-weight for the most miserable ballets, and must consequently be deformed to make room for them. If some new choregraphic work comes up more fully developed than its predecessors, they will again prune away the *Freyschütz* without the slightest hesitation. And how they give what is left of it! What singers! What a conductor! What cowardly drowsiness in the *tempi!* What discordance in the *ensembles!* What a flat, stupid and revolting interpretation of and by all! . . . Go now and be an inventor, a torch-bearer, an inspired man, a genius, to be thus tortured, besoiled and vilified! Unmannerly buyers and sellers! While waiting for the whip of a new Christ to hunt you out of the temple, be assured that what of Europe has the least feeling for art holds you in the profoundest contempt.

VI.

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE.—PARAPHRASE.

"TO be, or not to be, that is the question:—Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the bad operas, ridiculous concerts, second-rate *virtuosos*, mad composers, or to take arms against a sea of troubles, and, by opposing, end them?—To die,—to sleep,—no more:—and by a sleep, to say we end the ear-ache, the sufferings of heart and reason, and the thousand unnatural shocks our critical faculty is heir to,—'tis a consummation devoutly to be wished. To die;—to sleep;—to sleep! perchance to have the nightmare;—ay, there's the rub; for in that sleep of death what racking dreams may come, when we have shuffled off this mortal coil, what madcap theories we shall have to examine, hear what discordant scores, praise what fools, see what outrages perpetrated upon masterworks, what vagaries extolled, what windmills taken for giants, must give us pause. There's the respect that makes newspaper articles so many, and makes the wretches who write them of so long life; for who would bear the society of a rattle-brained world, the spectacle of its madness, the scorn and blunders of its ignorance, the injustice of its justice, the icy indifference of its governors? Who would whirl in the gale of ignoble passions, of paltry interest calling itself love of art, stoop to discussing the absurd, be a soldier and teach his general how to drill him, be a traveler and lead his guide who yet loses his way, when he himself might his quietus make with a flask of chloroform, or a steel-pointed slug? Who would be content to see despair born from hope, weariness from inaction, rage from patience; but that the dread of something after death,—the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no critic returns,—puzzles the will. . .—What, I cannot even find a few moments for meditation; Soft you, now! The fair *cantatrice*, Ophelia, armed with a score and grimacing with a smile. What would you of me? Flatteries is it not, always and forever." "No, my lord; I have a score of yours, that I have longed long to redeliver; I pray you, now receive it." "No, not I; I never gave you aught." "My honored lord, you know right well, you did; and, with it, words of so sweet breath composed, as made the thing more rich. Their perfume lost, take this again; for to the noble mind rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind. There, my lord." "Ha, ha! have you a heart?" "My lord?" "Are you a singer?" "What means your lordship?" "That if you have a heart and be a singer, your heart should admit of no discourse to your singing." "Could singing, my lord, have better commerce than with heart?" "Ay, truly; for the power of a talent like yours will sooner transform heart from what it is to a bawd, than the force of heart can translate singing into its likeness; this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did admire you once." "Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so." "You should not have believed me; I admired you not." "I was the more deceived." "Get thee to a nunnery. What is your ambition? A great name, much money, the applause of fools, a titled husband, the name of duchess. Ay, ay, they all dream of marrying a prince. Why wouldst thou be a breeder of idiots?" "O, help him, you sweet heavens!" "If thou dost marry, I will give thee this sad truth for thy dowry: let an artistic woman be as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, she shall not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what torments you have in store for them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell." "Heavenly powers, restore him!" "I have heard of your vocal coquetries too, well enough. God hath given you one voice, and you make yourselves another. They confide to you a masterwork, you change its very essence, you debase it, you crowd it with wretched ornaments, you make insolent cuts, you introduce grotesque scales, laughable *arpeggios*, facetious trills; you insult the master, people of taste, art and sense. Go to; I'll no more of't; to a nunnery, go!" (*Exit.*)

The young Ophelia is not wholly in the wrong, Hamlet has rather lost his head. But it will not be noticed in our musical world, where at present every one is completely mad. Besides, he has lucid moments, this poor prince of Denmark; he is but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly, he knows a hawk from a hand-saw well enough.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

FUNERAL DISCOURSE OVER THE BODY OF HECTOR BERLIOZ, DELIVERED BY M. GUILLAUME, PRESIDENT OF THE ACADÉMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS.

GENTLEMEN:—To-day is the first beginning of peace for the famous and ever-militant artist, for whom the Academy of Fine Arts now wears mourning, for he was truly of the men who are predestined to find rest in the grave only. His life, passed amidst contradictions and struggles, ended amidst sufferings, which sorrow had, perhaps, caused, but which it assuredly aggravated without stint. The circumstances of that life of torment have been often told. Here, where we are met together to look back upon it, I must confine myself to retracing the prime facts of a noble career, and cast, with you, a sorrowful glance at the rare merits which made it illustrious.

An irresistible call drew Berlioz early toward music, and from his first attempts his vigorous nature led him to repudiate all false conventionality and frivolity in the art. He was only at the opening of his career, when the originality of his genius flashed out upon the world; his first work, the *Fantastic Symphony*, made him famous. His stay in Italy, where he spent two years as an inmate of the Academy of France, strongly fixed his irrevocable convictions, and, as his individuality expanded, he found new and lasting strength in communion with classic masterpieces. His symphony of *Harold*, and above all, his *Romeo and Juliet* won him fresh laurels. In all he produced in after years profound science has ever been manifest, acting as handmaiden to a grandeur of sentiment and a pathos that knew how to bring under one sceptre the realms of the Lyric Drama and of the Symphony. Fond of strong emotions, he knew how to draw the most striking *(saisissantes)* effects from vast combinations. Power and strength were congenital with him, and sublimity, which suggests struggle, attracted his soul more than serene beauty.

Who of us, gentlemen, can forget the *Funeral and Triumphal Symphony?* Who does not remember the *Requiem-Mass*, in which the poignant vigor of expression engenders a sort of momentary terror? But Berlioz's genius was not confined within narrow limits; he could enter upon the most diverse planes of feeling, as he has proved in his magnificent oratorio, the *Childhood of Christ;* and he went on, ever progressing, up to that noble opera, *The Trojans*, a work full of dramatic fire, and of a pathos worthy of antiquity; a composition broadly melodious, whose triumph its commanding beauties should have assured.

But whatever the success of his works may have been, Berlioz always seemed to think less of applause than of the triumph of his convictions. Of a valiant nature and firm convictions, he could not rest content with publishing his beliefs through music alone; he always felt the need of defending with his pen the principles he thought necessary to life and art. In all his critical labors, in the midst of unexpected vivacities of form and the sometimes excessive polemic spirit of the day, we find a solid basis of healthy and strengthening doctrines. It is there that we can appreciate his whole mind, in which a restive spirit of independence was yet allied to the largest classic sentiment; it is there that his artist's conscience stands wholly unveiled. His hatred for easy frivolity, his respect for grand traditions are expressed in vigorous and passionate terms. Gluck and Beethoven are his favorite masters; a sincere love for their masterpieces animates him to the enthusiastic pitch, moves him to very tears. Noble intoxication, just pride of a mind that comprehends the beautiful, and keeps itself proudly aloof, in the midst of a debased public taste.

It was for the Academy of Fine Arts to welcome an artist rendered noteworthy by the originality of his works and the decision of his opinions; it consecrated by a brilliant election a career so well filled and crowned by great fame and legitimate popularity. This mark of high esteem was addressed to the musician, but the man was no less worthy of it by his inviolable sincerity. Who can contest it? Berlioz, in all the vehemence of his criticism, only attacked ideas, ideas alone were the object of his generous wrath. He never knew envy; he always was ready to applaud the success of his rivals, to lavish enthusiasm upon works really worthy of admiration, and in which he recognized the principle of progress.

Gentlemen, the genius of Berlioz will remain one of the expressions of our century; few artists are destined to bear like him the marks of the time in which he lived. By the independent loftiness of his inspirations, by his love for the free and pure sources of art, by his religious cherishing of a grand ideal, founded upon truth, he was one of the most energetic representatives of the spirit of our time. He was modern both from his conception of the artist and his personal originality. His sensibility took delight in his own sufferings, and was ever ingenious in re-opening his own wounds.

The pleasure that some souls take in the misfortunes that are inseparable from life is dangerous. The strongest succumb to it. Berlioz's proud sarcasm seemed for a long while to place him above the reach of unjust attacks. At last he fell a victim to that morbid sensibility that thinks to raise itself above all ills by sounding their depths. Melancholy took possession of him. Then when the most cruel griefs were added to this incurable affliction of his mind, when his wife and son were torn from him by a premature death, he bent entirely. His body was not strong enough to endure the deep lacerations of his soul; and after pitiless sufferings he fell. Gentlemen, let us bow down before this long agony. Berlioz, our dear and regretted colleague, deserves, beyond all other men, the profound peace to which he has gone. May he rest in the bosom of that peace, the dawning of a glory that shall ever grow greater, and with which the Society of Fine Arts associates itself, after honoring itself by supporting him in his trials; it has come here to-day to bid him a last farewell.

APPENDIX B.

A COMPLETE CATALOGUE OF THE WORKS OF HECTOR BERLIOZ.

Opus 1.

OUVERTURE DE WAVERLEY, *en Ré*. (Overture to Waverley, in D).

—Full score and parts.
Paris: Richault.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.

—For piano-forte à 4m.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.
Brunswick: Leibrock.

(First given at the Conservatoire, May 26th, 1828, Habeneck conducting).

Opus 2.

IRLANDE: *recueil de morceaux de chant avec accompagnement de piano sur des paroles traduites de Thomas Moore*. (Ireland: a collection of songs with piano-forte accompaniment, to words translated from Thomas Moore).

Paris: Richault.

Two of these songs have also the original English text; the *Élégie* and *Adieu, Bessy*.

La Belle Voyageuse and the *Chant sacré* are also published in full score, instrumented by the composer.

Opus 3.

OUVERTURE DES FRANCS-JUGES. (Overture to the Vehmic-Judges).

—Full score and parts.
Paris: Richault.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.
—In parts for military band, arranged by Wieprecht.
Paris: Richault.
—For piano-forte à 4m.
Paris: Richault.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.
—The same arranged by Karl Czerny.
Brunswick: Meyer.
—For piano-forte à 2m. arranged by F. Liszt.
Mainz: B. Schott's Söhnen.

(First given at the Conservatoire, May 26th, 1828, Habeneck conducting).

Opus 4.

OUVERTURE DU ROI LÉAR, *en Ut*. (Overture to King Lear, in C).

—Full score and parts.
Paris: Richault.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.
—For piano-forte à 4m. arranged by J. A. Leibrock.
Paris: Richault.
Brunswick: Litolff.
—For piano-forte à 2m. arranged by J. A. Leibrock.
Brunswick: Litolff.

(First given at the Conservatoire, December 9th, 1832, Habeneck conducting).

Opus 5.

MESSE DES MORTS, *Requiem*. (Mass for the dead, Requiem).

—Full score.
Paris: Schlesinger (out of print).
Milan: Ricordi.
—Full score and parts.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.

Berlioz says in his catalogue that Ricordi's edition is the only correct one, as it differs in several essential points from Schlesinger's. He makes no mention of Hofmeister's edition, which is probably a later one.

(Written in 1836 for the annual funeral service performed in honor of the victims of the Revolution of July, 1830, but first given in the church of the Invalides, December 5th, 1837, at the funeral service of General Danrémont and the French soldiers killed at the siege of Constantina, October 12th, 1837. Habeneck conducted the performance).

Opus 6.

LE CINQ MAI: *Cantate pour voix de Basse et Chœur.* (The Fifth of May: Cantata for a bass voice and chorus).
—Full score and parts.
—Piano-forte score.
[With French and German text].
Paris: Richault.

Opus 7.

LES NUITS D'ÉTÉ: *recueil de six morceaux de chant avec petit orchestre.* (Summer nights: a collection of six songs with small orchestra).
—Piano-forte score.
Paris: Richault.

There is a Swiss edition of this opus under the following title:

DIE SOMMERNÄCHTE, *eine Sammlung von sechs Gesangstücken mit kleinem Orchester.*

1. *Ländliches Lied.* (Country Song).
2. *Der Geist der Rose.* (The Rose's Ghost).
3. *Auf den Lagunen.* (On the Lagoons).
4. *Trennung.* (Parting).
5. *Auf dem Friedhofe.* [*Mondschein*]. (In the Church-yard).
6. *Das unbekannte Land.* (The Unknown Country).

—Full score.
—Piano-forte score.
[With German and French text].
Winterthur: Rieter-Biedermann.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.

No. 2 differs slightly from the Paris edition.

Opus 8.

RÊVERIE ET CAPRICE, *Romance pour violon.* (Revery and Caprice, Romanza for violin).

—Full score and parts.
—Piano-forte score.
Paris: Richault.

Opus 9.

LE CARNAVAL ROMAIN, *Ouverture caractéristique; deuxième ouverture de Benvenuto Cellini, destinée à être exécutée avant le second acte de cet opéra.* (The Roman Carnival, a characteristic overture; second overture to Benvenuto Cellini, to be played before the second act of the opera).

—Full score and parts.
—In parts.
Berlin: Schlesinger.
—For two piano-fortes à 8m. arranged by J. P. Pixis.
Paris: Brandus.
—For piano-forte à 4m. arranged by J. P. Pixis.
Paris: Brandus.
Berlin: Schlesinger.

Opus 10.

TRAITÉ D'INSTRUMENTATION, *suivi de la Théorie du Chef d'Orchestre.* (A Treatise on Instrumentation, followed by the Theory of the Orchestral Conductor).

—In French. Paris: Schönenberger.
—In English. London: Ewer and Novello.
—In German. Berlin: Schlesinger.
—In Italian. Milan: Ricordi.

The second [English and French] edition is the only correct one; it contains several new chapters, and others have been remodeled. The Milan edition does not contain the Theory of the Orchestral Conductor, which the German publisher has published separately.

Opus 11.

SARA LA BAIGNEUSE: *Ballade à trois chœurs.* (Sara at the Bath: Ballad for three choruses.)

—Full score and parts.
—Arranged for two voices with piano-forte accompaniment.
Paris: Richault.

Opus 12.

LA CAPTIVE, *Rêverie de Victor Hugo, pour contralto.* (The Captive, Revery by Victor Hugo, for a contralto voice).

—Full score.
—Piano-forte score.
Paris: Richault.
—Piano-forte score with French and German text.
Berlin: Schlesinger.
Leipzig: Kahnt.

Opus 13.

FLEURS DES LANDES: *Recueil de cinq morceaux de chant avec piano.* (Moorland Flowers: a collection of five songs with piano-forte accompaniment).

—Paris: Richault.

The following are published separately with French and German text.

Le Matin. (Morning).
Le Trébuchet. (The Trap).
Vienna: Mechetti.
Le Pâtre breton. (The Breton Shepherd), in full score.
Paris: Richault.

Opus 14 a.

SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE, *première partie de l'Épisode de la vie d'un artiste.* (Fantastic Symphony, first part of the Episode in the Life of an Artist).
—Full score and parts.
Paris: Brandus.
—For piano-forte à 2m. arranged by F. Liszt.
Paris: Brandus.
Vienna: Witzendorf.
—4th movement (*Marche au Supplice*) arranged for piano-forte à 4m. from Liszt's transcription, by F. Mockwitz.
Berlin: Schlesinger.

Opus 14 b.

LELIO, OU LE RETOUR À LA VIE: *Monodrame lyrique, deuxième partie de l'Épisode de la vie d'un artiste.* (Lelio, or the Return to Life: Lyric monodrama, second part of the Episode in the Life of an Artist).
—Full score and parts.
Paris: Richault.
—Piano-forte score with French and German text.
Paris: Richault.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.

The Dramatic Fantasy on Shakspere's *Tempest*, with which the work closes, can be performed separately.

(The Fantasy on the *Tempest* was first given at the Opéra in 1829. The *Fantastic Symphony* was first given at the Conservatoire in 1830. The work was first given entire at the Conservatoire, December 9th, 1832. Habeneck conducted, and Bocage, the actor, recited the part of *Lelio*).

Opus 15.

GRANDE SYMPHONIE FUNÈBRE ET TRIOMPHALE, *pour grande harmonie militaire, avec un orchestre d'instruments à cordes, et un chœur ad libitum.* (Grand Funeral and Triumphal Symphony, for full military band, with string-orchestra and chorus ad libitum).

—Full score and parts.
—The *Apothéose* in parts for Sax instruments.
Paris: Brandus.

(Written for and performed at the ceremony of the transfer of the remains of the victims of the Revolution of July to the Bastille Column, July 28th, 1840).

Opus 16.

HAROLD EN ITALIE: *Symphonie en quatre parties avec un alto principal.* (Harold in Italy: symphony in four movements, with viola obbligata).

—Full score and parts.
Paris: Brandus.

(First given at the Conservatoire, November 23d, 1834. Urhan played the leading viola part, and Girard conducted).

Opus 17.

ROMÉO ET JULIETTE: *Symphonie Dramatique avec chœurs, solos de chant et Prologue en récitatif choral, d'après la Tragédie de Shakspere.* (Romeo and Juliet: Dramatic Symphony with chorus, solos and Prologue in choral recitative, after Shakspere's Tragedy).

—Full score and parts.
Paris: Brandus.
—Piano-forte score arranged by Theodor Ritter. [With French and German text].
Winterthur: Rieter-Biedermann.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.
—Second movement, *Fête chez Capulet*, for two pianos-fortes à 8m. arranged by R. Pohl.
Leipzig: Klemm.
—Adagio, *Scène d'amour*, for piano-forte à 2m. ar- —ranged by Theodor Ritter.
Berlin: Schlesinger.

The piano-forte score is indispensable for choral rehearsals of the symphony.

(First given in Paris, November 24th, 1839, under Berlioz's own direction).

Opus 18.

TRISTIA, *recueil de deux chœurs, et d'une marche funèbre avec chœurs.* (Tristia, a collection of two choruses, and a funeral march with chorus).
—Full score and parts.
Paris: Richault.

No, 1. *Méditation religieuse*, and No. 2, *Ballade sur la mort d'Ophélie*, are also published in piano-forte score

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Opus 19.

FEUILLETS D'ALBUM, *recueil de trois morceaux de chant, dont un avec chœur.* (Album Leaves, a collection of three songs, of which one is with chorus).
Paris: Richault.
No. 1. *Zaïde* [With French and German text].
Vienna: Haslinger.
No. 1. *Zaïde* and No. 2 *Les Champs.*
Vienna: Pietro Mechetti.

The following may also be considered as belonging to the *Feuillets d'Album:*

LA PRIÈRE DU MATIN, *chœur à deux voix.* (The Morning Prayer, two-part chorus).
—Piano-forte score.
Paris: Escudier.

LA BELLE ISABEAU, *conte pendant l'orage, avec chœur* (The Fair Isabeau, a tale during the storm, with chorus).
—Piano-forte score.
Paris: Edmont Mayaud.

LE CHASSEUR DANOIS, *chant pour voix de basse.* (The Danish Hunter, song for a bass voice).
—Piano-forte score.
Paris: Edmont Mayaud.
Berlin: Stern und Cie.

Opus 20.

VOX POPULI, *deux grands chœurs avec orchestre: La Menace des Francs, et l'Hymne à la France.* (Vox Populi, two grand choruses with orchestra: The Franks' Threat, and the Hymn to France).
—Full score.
Paris: Richault.

Opus 21.

OUVERTURE DU CORSAIRE. (Overture to the Corsair).
—Full score and parts.
Paris: Richault.
—For piano-forte à 4m. arranged by Hans v. Bülow.
—For piano-forte à 2m. arranged by Hans v. Bülow.
Winterthur: Rieter-Biedermann.

Opus 22.

TE DEUM, *à trois chœurs, avec orchestre et orgue obligé.* (Te Deum for three choruses, with orchestra and obbligato organ).

—Full score.

Paris: Brandus.

(Brought out April 30th, 1854, in the church of Saint-Eustache, at the Thanksgiving Service for the safety of the Emperor's life after the attempt at his assassination on the 28th).

Opus 23.

BENVENUTO CELLINI, *Opera semiseria en trois actes.* (Benvenuto Cellini, Opera semiseria in three acts).

—Piano-forte score with French and German text.

Brunswick: Meyer und Litolff.

—Overture in full score and parts.

—Overture à 4m. arranged by Hans von Bülow.

—Overture à 2m. arranged by A. Fumagalli.

Berlin: Schlesinger.

Several numbers have been published separately in piano-forte score by Brandus in Paris.

The full score is not published. The MS. copy at the Opéra in Paris is in the most complete disorder, and does not contain the alterations made by the composer before bringing out the work in Weimar. There is a correct MS. copy at the Opera House in Weimar.

(*Benvenuto Cellini*, was brought out at the Opéra in Paris, September 3d, 1836, Habeneck conducting. The principal features of the cast were: *Benvenuto*, Duprez; *Térésa*, Madame Gras-Dorus; *Ascanio*, Madame Stoltz).

Opus 24.

LA DAMNATION DE FAUST, *Légende en quatre actes.* (The Damnation of Faust, Legend in four acts).

—Full score and parts.

—Piano-forte score.
[With French and German text].
Paris: Richault.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.

Marche Hongroise,
—For piano-forte à 4m. arranged by J. Benedict.
—For piano-forte à 2m. arranged by Ed. Wolff.
Berlin: Bote und Bock.

Hymne de la Fête de Pâques.
—For piano-forte à 2m. arranged by Camille Saint-Saëns.
Paris: Richault.

(Brought out at the Opéra-Comique, December 6, 1846, under Berlioz's own direction. The principal features of the cast were: *Faust*, Roger; *Méphistophélès*, Herman Léon; *Marguerite*, Madame Duflot-Maillard).

Opus 25.

L'ENFANCE DU CHRIST, *Trilogie Sacrée.* (*Le Songe d'Hérode, La Fuite en Égypte, L'Arrivée à Saïs*). (The Childhood of Christ, a sacred Trilogy. [Herod's Dream, The Flight into Egypt, The Arrival in Saïs]).
—Full score and parts with French and German text.
Paris: Richault.
Leipzig: Hofmeister.
—Piano-forte score.
With French and German text, Paris: Richault.
With French and German text, Leipzig: Hofmeister.
With French and English text London: Beale.

La Fuite en Égypte.
—Full score.
—Piano-forte score.
[With French and German text].
Leipzig: Kistner.

(The *Enfance du Christ* was brought out in Paris at the Salle Herz, Sunday, December 10th, 1854, under Berlioz's own direction. The cast was: *Marie*, Madame Meillet; *Joseph*, Meillet; *Hérode*, Depassio; *Père de famille*, Battaille; *Polydorus*, Noir. The recitatives were sung by Jourdan).

Opus 26.

L'IMPÉRIALE, *Cantate à deux chœurs, et à grand orchestre.* (The Emperor's Cantata, for two choruses and grand orchestra).
—Full score.
Paris: Brandus.

(Brought out in the Palais de l'Industrie in the Champs-Élysées in 1855. Berlioz conducted the performance).

The following works have no opus number.

BÉATRICE ET BÉNÉDICT, *Opéra-comique en deux actes.* (Beatrice and Benedick, Comic opera in two acts).
—Piano-forte score with French and German text.
Berlin: Bote und Bock.

(Brought out at the new Opera-House in Baden-Baden, August 9th, 1862, under Berlioz's own direction. The principal features of the cast were: *Bénédict*, Montaubry; *Béatrice*, Madame Charton-Demeur; *Héro*, Mademoiselle Monrose).

LES TROYENS.

I. LA PRISE DE TROIE, *Opéra en trois actes.* (The Fall of Troy, Opera in three acts).
—Piano-forte score.
Berlin: Bote und Bock.
Paris: Choudens.

(Never performed).

II. LES TROYENS À CARTHAGE, *Opéra en cinq actes.* (The Trojans in Carthage, Opera in five acts).
—Piano-forte score.
Berlin: Bote und Bock.
Paris: Choudens.[1]

(Brought out at the Théâtre-Lyrique, November 4th, 1863, Carvalho conducting. The principal features of the cast were: *Énée*, Monjauze; *Didon*, Madame Charton-Demeur; *Hylas*, Cabel).

The following orchestral transcriptions by Berlioz are published.

Rouget de l'Isle's LA MARSEILLAISE, arranged for chorus and grand orchestra.
—Full score.
Paris: Brandus.

Léopold de Meyer's MARCHE MAROCAINE, arranged for grand orchestra.
—Full score.
Paris: Escudier.

Karl Maria von Weber's INVITATION À LA VALSE, arranged for grand orchestra.
—Full score.
Paris: Brandus.

A piano-forte score of von Weber's *Der Freyschütz* with recitatives by Berlioz is published by Schlesinger in Paris. A collection of airs selected from Berlioz's works, is published by Choudens in Paris.

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[1] Very incomplete and otherwise faulty.

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