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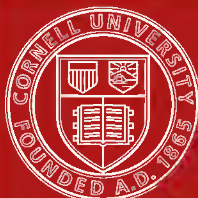

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NOVELLO'S PRIMERS OF MUSICAL BIOGRAPHY.

HECTOR BERLIOZ

BY

JOSEPH BENNETT.

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HECTOR BERLIOZ.

HECTOR BERLIOZ was born, December 11, 1803, in the little town of La Côte Saint André, department of the Isère—a place not unfitted to bring forth a musician and a poet. The master himself says of it:—

La Côte Saint André, as its name indicates, is built upon the side of a hill, overlooking a vast plain, rich, sumptuous, and verdant, the silence of which has I know not what dreamy majesty, heightened by the belt of mountains on the south and east, far behind which range themselves, studded with glaciers, the gigantic peaks of the Alps.

He came of "respectable" parentage, his father being a medical man of some note in the department, and the owner of a comfortable little property. Louis Berlioz seems to have had a far greater share than his wife in moulding the character of their son; and it is, therefore, interesting to know what manner of man he was. On this point, Hector is a sufficient witness:—

He inspired immense confidence, not only in our little town, but also in those near at hand. He worked incessantly, believing the conscience of an honest man pledged when he undertook the practice of an art so difficult and dangerous as medicine, and that, within the limit of his powers, he ought to consecrate all his time to study. . . . He always honoured his functions by discharging them in the most disinterested way, rather as a benefactor of the poor than as one who lived by his exertions.

After observing that, at the moment of writing, his father had retired from practice, Hector goes on:—

He is gifted with a liberal mind—that is to say, he has no social, political, or religious prejudices. He had nevertheless so formally promised my mother never to tempt me away from beliefs which she thought necessary to my welfare that several times, I

remember, he heard me recite my catechism. . . . When I was ten years old, he put me to a little school at La Côte for the study of Latin; but he soon took me away, resolved to undertake my education himself. Poor father, with what indefatigable patience, with what minute and intelligent care he was my master in languages, literature, history, geography, and even music, will soon be seen.

Over the childhood of Berlioz we may pass lightly. The son of the village doctor of La Côte Saint André appears to have been something out of the common from infancy. Highly sensitive to beauty in any form, music began to make a deep impression upon him when, by special favour, he was admitted to his first communion in the chapel of a convent, where singing maidens clothed in white surrounded him: he believed that, like Stephen, he saw the heavens opened, and became so pious that he went to Mass every day, and to confession as frequently as possible. "Father," he would say to his spiritual director, "I have done nothing;" and the priest would answer, "My son, so continue." Berlioz adds that he too often followed the advice. Of course this sensitive nature fell in love—at twelve years—and, naturally, with a damsel much older than himself. Estelle Gautier was the name of the honoured maiden. She was eighteen, grandly beautiful, and disposed to ridicule her little lover. This made the heart of the boy desolate. "I hid myself," he tells us, "like a wounded bird, mute and suffering." But Estelle went her way, married, bore children, and when Berlioz again met her she did not know him. So does a real world settle the affairs of the ideal. Denied the happiness of reciprocated love, the boy sought the consolation of such music as, after a lesson or two in fingering from his father, he could get out of a flageolet. From the flageolet he rose to the flute, then studied harmony from a book by Alembert, and wrote two quintets, which he burnt. His compositions at this period must have been melancholy things. "Nearly all my melodies were in the minor mode. I was conscious of the fault, but could not avoid it. A black veil covered my thoughts. Meanwhile his father would not allow him to study the pianoforte. He intended the boy for his own profession, and feared that the instrument would be too seductive. On this Berlioz characteristically says:—

When I consider the frightful quantity of platitudes which it

(the pianoforte) facilitates day after day, and that their authors could not, for the most part, write at all if, deprived of their musical kaleidoscope, they had nothing but pen and paper, I am bound to thank the chance which obliged me to compose silently and freely, shielded me from the tyranny of finger habits, so dangerous to thought, and from the seductive influence which the sonority of commonplace always exerts upon a composer.

In 1822, he being then nineteen years old, Berlioz went to Paris as a medical student, but, despite parental injunctions, he gave himself up more and more to the charms of music, and eventually offered himself to Lesueur as a pupil, on the strength of a cantata for voices and grand orchestra* which he had written. The old man looked at the work and said: "There is a good deal of fire and dramatic energy there, but you don't know how to write, and your harmony contains so many faults that it is useless to point any of them out." Upon this Berlioz was sent back to elementary studies in the antiquated system to which Lesueur adhered. No two men could have been more unlike in temperament and taste than were master and pupil, but Lesueur took kindly to the young medical student, walked with him in the public gardens, and even permitted him to assail the very system of harmony which the one taught and the other learned. The self-confidence of Berlioz at this period was sublime. He asked M. Andrieux, his professor of literature, to write him an opera libretto; tried to borrow 1,200 francs from M. de Châteaubriand, to meet the expenses of bringing out a Mass; and having composed a *scena* which he thought might be introduced into "Athalie," at the Théâtre Français, he actually started to open negotiations with Talma on the subject. But the great tragedian was spared an interview:—

Approaching his house, I felt a bad augury in the beating of my heart. The very sight of the door made me tremble, and upon the threshold I stopped in frightful perplexity. Should I go farther? Should I give up the idea? Twice I lifted my arm to ring the bell; twice I let it fall to my side; the blood rushed to my face and sounded in my ears; a tumult raged within me. Finally, timidity prevailed; and, sacrificing all my hopes, I went, or rather ran, away as fast as I could.

The story of the Mass to which reference has already been made shows that Berlioz, though afraid to face Talma, could

* "Le Cheval Arabe;" poem by Millevoge.

encounter and struggle victoriously against bitter disappointment. M. Masson, chapelmaster of St. Roch, having suggested that he should write a Mass for Innocents' Day, Berlioz set to work with all the ardour of his nature, and soon finished a composition which imitated the style of Lesueur. Faithfully promised an orchestra one hundred strong, with voices in proportion, he naturally desired to obtain the services of a conductor accustomed to control large numbers of executants. Hereupon, with the audacity peculiarly his own, he brought the influence of Lesueur to bear upon M. Valentino, of the Grand-Opéra, and, what is more, succeeded. But alas for the sanguine and unreflecting confidence of youth!—

The day of general rehearsal arrived, and with it our great mass of voices and instruments, which turned out to be fifteen tenors, five basses, two boys, nine violins, a viola, an oboe, a horn, and a bassoon. Judge of my shame and despair in offering to the renowned chief of one of the first orchestras in the world such a musical phalanx. "Be calm," M. Masson kept saying; "it will be all right at performance." Resigned to circumstances, Valentino gave the signal to commence, but in a few moments every one began to find his copy full of faults. Here they had forgotten to write the sharps or flats of the key, there they had left out rests, in another place they had omitted thirty bars. . . . I suffered the torments of hell, and was eventually obliged to give up, for that time, the attempt at realising my long-cherished dream of a grand orchestral performance.

This defeat, however, did the young man good, and he confesses it with the frankness that makes his autobiography so charming. In the little of the Mass that was heard its composer detected many faults, and bravely resolved to write it nearly all over again. Meanwhile, his parents had learned the failure at St. Roch, and added to his troubles by turning his musical pretensions into ridicule. "But," he tells us, "I swallowed all in silence, and persisted none the less."

Anxious for the rewritten Mass, and failing to borrow 1,200 francs of Châteaubriand, Berlioz had become profoundly discouraged, when chance—if chance there be in men's affairs—threw him in the way of a young man, Augustin de Pons, with whom he had previously formed some acquaintance. Here was the longed-for *Deus ex machinâ.* De Pons found the money; the chorus of the Opéra was engaged, with a full orchestra, Valentino conducted, and the Mass was splendidly

performed. We may add here that the work was given a second time at the church of St. Eustache, on St. Cecilia's Day, 1827. Writing to his friend Humbert, Berlioz expressed the feelings with which his music inspired him in a passionate manner, soon to become familiar :*—

My Mass was performed on St. Cecilia's Day with double the success of the previous occasion. The little corrections I had made sensibly improved it, and the piece "Et iterum venturus," which was wanting before, was executed this time in an astounding manner by six trumpets, four horns, three trombones, and two ophicleides. The choral theme which follows, given to all the voices in octaves—

with a burst of "brass" in the middle, made a terrible impression upon everybody. For my part, I had fairly preserved my coolness up to that point, and it was important that I should not be upset. I conducted the orchestra, but when I saw that picture of the Last Judgment, heard that announcement by six deep basses in unison, that terrible *clangor tubarum*, those cries of fear from the multitude represented by the chorus, all given exactly as I had wished, I was seized with a convulsive trembling that I had the strength to master till the end of the piece, but which then obliged me to sit down, and let the orchestra remain quiet for some minutes. . . . I have succeeded beyond my hopes. . . . I have received felicitations from all parts.

Yet Berlioz was not content with his work :—

After this new trial I could not entertain a doubt as to the little value of my Mass, and taking out the "Resurrexit," with which I was satisfied, I burned the rest, along with the Beverley *scena*, . . . the opera of "Estelle," and a Latin oratorio, "The Passage of the Red Sea," that I had just finished. A cold, inquisitorial eye made me discover its incontestable right to figure in that *auto-da-fé*.

By the way, Berlioz destroyed the "Resurrexit" itself some

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 5.

time after, and a grim fate eventually decided that De Pons should put an end to his life by taking poison.

Lesueur now wished Berlioz to enter his harmony class at the Conservatoire, but did not think it necessary to introduce him just then to Cherubini, the formidable head of that institution. As a matter of fact, Berlioz and the Florentine had met already, under circumstances which the younger man feared his elder would remember. The encounter came about in this way. Responsible for the good order of the Conservatoire, Cherubini had provided separate entrances for the male and female students, of which arrangement Berlioz being ignorant, he, one day, in going to the public library, did so by the door set apart for ladies. A servant tried to stop him, but in vain. Berlioz pushed on, and had soon forgotten the incident in the delight of reading a score of Gluck. A few minutes later Cherubini entered with the servant, who said, pointing to Berlioz, "There he is":—

Cherubini was so angry that he could scarcely articulate. "Ah, ah, ah, ah! it is you," he said at last, with an Italian accent which rage made more droll; "it is you who enter by the forbidden door!" "Monsieur, I did not know your rule; another time I will conform to it." "Another time! What brings you here?" "You see, monsieur, I come to study the scores of Gluck." "How do the scores of Gluck concern you? Who gave you leave to come to the library?" "Monsieur—(I began to lose my coolness)—I consider Gluck's scores the most beautiful in dramatic music, and I want nobody's leave to stay here. From ten to three the library is open to the public, and I have a right to profit by the fact." "The right!" "Yes, monsieur." "I forbid you to come again." "I shall come, all the same." "What do you call yourself?" cried he, trembling with rage. Pale in my turn, I answered, "Monsieur, you will perhaps know my name some day, but to-day—you shall not learn it." "Stop him, Hottin—(Hottin was the servant)—I will put him in prison." Both master and man, to the stupefaction of the lookers-on, then chased me round the table, upsetting forms and desks, without power to catch me, and I escaped, saying, with a peal of laughter, "You shall have neither me nor my name, and I shall come back soon, again to study the scores of Gluck."

In prospect of entering the Conservatoire, Berlioz was a little anxious about the retentiveness of Cherubini's memory. Curiously enough, Hottin afterwards became Berlioz' orchestral attendant, and the most furious partisan of his music.

Still as audacious as ever, Berlioz now presented himself

at the annual competition directed by the Institute, but failed to pass the preliminary test. This led to a final struggle with his parents, who continued bitterly opposed to his choice of music as a profession. Ordered to return home, he duly obeyed, and met with a cold reception. For some time both parties were silent and sulky, but at last the father announced his resolution to permit the son's return to Paris for a course of musical study, on the understanding that it should be abandoned if, in a reasonable time, proofs of exceptional talent were not forthcoming. This, however, was to be kept a secret from Madame Berlioz, whose pious horror of everything connected with the stage made her objections immovable. As it happened, she discovered the arrangement and one day there was a very painful scene between her and her boy:—

"Your father," she said to me, dropping the habitual *tutoiement*, "has had the weakness to consent to your return to Paris; he favours your extravagant and culpable projects. I will incur no such reproach, and I formally object to your going." "Mother!" "Yes, I oppose it; and I implore you, Hector, not to persist in your folly. Hold; I throw myself at your knees—I, your mother—and humbly beg you to give it up." "My God, mother, permit me to raise you; I cannot bear the sight!" "No, I remain." Then, after a moment's silence, "Thou refusest, miserable! Thou canst, without yielding, see thy mother at thy feet! Well, then, go! Go to drag thyself through the filth of Paris, to dishonour thy name, to kill thy father and me with shame and vexation. I shall leave the house till thou art gone. Thou art no longer my son; I curse thee."

Madame Berlioz kept her word. She left the house for another possessed by the family at some distance, and thither, just before starting for Paris, Hector repaired, with his two sisters, in hope of reconciliation. "My mother, who was reading in the garden, no sooner saw us than she rose and fled. We waited long, we followed her, my father called her, my sisters and I wept, but all in vain; and I was compelled to go away without embracing my mother, without a word, a look, and charged with her malediction."

Once more in Paris, Berlioz began to practise habits of strict economy, hoping thus to return the money advanced by De Pons, who was now in want of it. Stopping his dinners at the restaurant, he sat daily at the foot of Henri IV.'s statue on the Pont-Neuf and consumed bread and

dried fruits. Meanwhile he had thoughts of an opera, "Les Francs Juges," words by his friend Humbert. Of the after-fate of this work he says: "The poem was refused at the Opéra, and my score condemned to obscurity, from which it has never emerged. Only the overture has been able to see the light. I have used here and there the best ideas of the work in later compositions; the rest will probably meet with the same fate should occasion arise, or be burnt." Winter came on. He could no longer dine *al fresco* on bread and figs; he needed fuel and warm clothes. But how to get these things? The allowance from home had been stopped; pupils had fallen away through neglect, and no resource was left. Just then the Théâtre des Nouveautés opened for comic opera. "I ran to the *régisseur* and begged the place of flute in the orchestra. All places were filled up. I asked to join the chorus. They needed no more singers. Death and furies!! The *régisseur*, however, took my address, and promised to let me know if they decided to increase the chorus." In a little while this came about, and Berlioz presented himself at the theatre to compete with half-a-dozen "poor devils" for the position of a bass chorister at fifty francs a month. The *régisseur* acted as judge, and a violinist played the accompaniments on his instrument. Following the half-dozen, who did their best with carefully prepared songs, came Berlioz, and him the *régisseur* asked what he had brought:—

"I? nothing!" "How, nothing? What are you going to sing, then?" "Anything you like. Is there not a score here, or some sheet of vocalises?" "We have nothing of the kind. Besides," continued the *régisseur*, in a tone somewhat contemptuous, "you cannot, I suppose, sing at sight?" "Pardon, I will sing at sight anything you like to give me." "Ah, that's different, However, as we have no music, can't you sing some known piece from memory?" "Yes, I know by heart 'Les Danaïdes,' 'Stratonice,' 'La Vestale,' 'Cortez,' 'Œdipe' the two 'Iphigenias,' 'Orphée,' 'Armide'"— "Stop, stop. What a memory! Come, since you know so much, give us the air from Sacchini's 'Œdipe'—'Elle m'a prodigué.'" "Willingly." "Thou canst accompany it, Michel." "But I don't know the key." "E flat." "Shall I give the recitative?" Michel played the chord of E flat, and I began.

In the result, the half-dozen took a sad departure, and Berlioz entered into the enjoyment of fifty francs a month,

on the strength of which he shared two rooms with a young student of chemistry, as poor as himself. The incipient pharmaceutist did the cooking and Berlioz the marketing, carrying his provisions exposed in a basket through the street. "We lived thus like princes—emigrants—for thirty francs a month each, and I had never since my arrival in Paris enjoyed so much ease." He actually bought a piano, though he could not play, and "such a piano!" It cost a hundred and ten francs!

About this time Berlioz composed his overture, "Waverley," and competed for the Grand Prix de Rome, with no other result than to have his piece* declared "inexecutable" by the jury. To make matters worse, he was attacked by illness in the midst of his disappointment.

Antoine (the young chemist) spent his time in running after grisettes, and left me alone all day and part of the night; I had no servant or nurse to wait upon me, and I believe I should have died one evening if, in a paroxysm of anguish, I had not, with a penknife, pierced an abscess in my throat. This unscientific operation was the signal for recovery.

Then other clouds began to break. Berlioz *père*, repenting of having withdrawn his son's allowance, resumed its regular payment, upon which Hector gave up his engagement at the theatre, and devoted himself passionately to study and attendance at the Opéra, where, with borrowed scores of the works performed, he "read up" instrumentation in a thoroughly practical way. Berlioz was now a fanatical admirer of Gluck. He cared little for the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, as performed by a thin band in a large hall; of Beethoven he knew little, and Rossini he detested. The Rossini fever excited in him an anger the more violent because the Italian composer's music was the antithesis of that of Gluck and Spontini:—

Conceiving nothing more magnificently fine and true than the works of those great masters, the melodic cynicism, the contempt of dramatic expression and requirements, the continual reproduction of one form of cadence, the eternal and puerile *crescendo*, and the brutal *grosse-caisse* of Rossini exasperated me to such a point that I could not recognise, even in his "Barbiere," the shining qualities of his genius. I more than once asked myself then why I could not undermine the Théâtre Italien and blow all the Rossinians into the air.

* "Orphée déchiré par les Bacchantes."

As a Gluckist and a critical listener at the Opera Berlioz soon showed himself to be a formidable person. He gathered round him a number of young men whom he strove to make as fanatical as himself. He would procure or purchase tickets for these on Gluck nights, and, entering as soon as the doors were opened, call his disciples together and harangue them on the merits of the work about to be performed. Woe to the direction if it ventured to "improve" the favourite master's scores. The young man in the parterre, with the keen face and long black hair, knew them all by heart, and was swift of exposure. One night they introduced cymbals into the Scythian ballet of "Iphigenia in Tauride":—

Boiling with anger, I nevertheless restrained myself to nearly the end of the dance, when, profiting by a moment of silence, I shouted with all the strength of my lungs, "There should be no cymbals there. Who allows himself to correct Gluck?" The public, who don't see very clearly into these art questions, and concern themselves little whether an author's instrumentation be changed or not, failed to understand the fury of the young fool in the pit. But this was even worse when, in the third act, the trombones that accompany the monologue of Orestes being suppressed, the same voice cried out, "The trombones should not be silent! This is insupportable!" The astonishment of the orchestra and the house could not compare with the anger (very natural, I grant) of Valentino, who conducted that evening. . . . But I know well that subsequently all was put right; the cymbals were silenced, the trombones played, and I muttered between my teeth, "Ah! that's better."

It is to be feared that Berlioz and his well-taught, well-drilled band were somewhat of a nuisance at the Opéra. They drove the *chef de claque* wild by applauding such things as a happy modulation or a good accent in recitative, and thus upsetting all his combinations. But in vain he scowled. The impassioned young fellows in the pit were worthy of their leader, who yielded himself body and soul to the influences of the artistic moment. One day Berlioz took to the Opéra a recruit who was ignorant of music, and, as it soon appeared, insensible to its power:—

The woes of Antigone and her father touched him very little, and seeing I could do nothing with him, I moved to a bench in front so as not to be troubled by his coldness. But, as though to throw his impassibility into relief, chance placed on his other

hand a spectator as impressionable as he was the reverse. . . . I could not help hearing the dialogue that went on behind me between my young man, sucking an orange, and his neighbour, a prey to the most lively emotion. "For Heaven's sake, sir, be calm." "No, it is irresistible—it is frightful; it will kill me." "But, sir, you are wrong to give way like that. You will make yourself ill." "No; let me alone. Oh!" "Come, sir, cheer up; after all, it's only a play. Let me offer you a piece of orange." "Ah! it is sublime!" "It is a Maltese orange." "What heavenly art!" "Don't refuse me." "Ah, sir; what music!" "Yes, it's very fine."

Soon after, Berlioz was himself moved to tears by the drama, seeing which the sensitive stranger embraced him from behind, exclaiming in convulsive tones, "*Sacré Dieu!* monsieur, how fine it is!" while the public laughed at both, and the impassive recruit went on sucking his orange.

At this time Berlioz received his first stimulus to that form of musical romanticism wherein he was destined to find his true orbit and to shine as a star. A mutilated version of "Der Freischütz" having been brought out at the Odéon, under the name of "Robin des Bois," by M. Castil-Blaze, our young musician went to hear it. Let him describe the result in his own words:—

This new style, against which my intolerant and exclusive *cultus* of grand classical works had at first prejudiced me, caused extreme surprise and ravishment, despite the manner in which the opera was presented. Turned upside down as it was, there exhaled from this work a wild aroma, the delicious freshness of which intoxicated me. I had become a little fatigued, I admit, by the solemn manner of the tragic muse, and the rapid movements of the nymph of the woods, at times marked by gracious *brusquerie*, her dreamy attitudes, her naïve and virginal love, her chaste smile, her melancholy, overwhelmed me with a torrent of sensations till then unknown.

Upon this Berlioz neglected the Opéra for the Odéon, and they could mutilate Gluck at the greater house without fear of the terrible young man in the pit.

A propos to "Robin des Bois," Berlioz launches all the thunderbolts of his invective and sarcasm at those who tamper with the works of great masters. After describing the scandalous fashion in which Mozart's "Die Zauberflöte" had been treated by a German, Herr Lachnith, who produced a garbled version of that masterpiece in Paris as "Les Mystères d'Isis," he goes on to exclaim:—

Mozart has been assassinated by Lachnith; Weber by Castil-Blaze, who has also mutilated Gluck, Grétry, Mozart, Rossini, Beethoven, Vogel, and others. Beethoven has seen his symphonies corrected by Fétis, Kreutzer, and Habeneck. Molière and Corneille have been hacked about by unknown people at the Théâtre Français, and Shakespeare is still represented in England as arranged by Cibber. The corrections here are not, it appears to me, made from the high to the low, but from the low to the high, and perpendicularly at that. Let no one say that the arrangers, in their dealing with the masters, have produced some happy results, because no exceptional consequences can justify the introduction into art of a monstrous immorality. No, no, no, ten million times no; musicians, poets, prose writers, actors, pianists, *chefs d'orchestre* of the third, second, or even of the first order, you have no right to touch Beethoven and Shakespeare, to make them almoners of your *science* and your *taste*. No, no, no, a thousand million times no; a man, be he who he may, has no right to force another man, be he who he may, to abandon his personality and take another—to express himself in a fashion which is not his own, to wear a form which he has not chosen, to become a manakin moved by another's will living, and galvanised after death. If the victim be a mediocrity, why not leave him alone in his mediocrity? If he be a great man, let his equals, and even his superiors, respect him, and let his inferiors bow humbly before him. . . . Is not all this ruin, entire destruction, the total end of art? And ought not we, who are impressed by the glory and jealous for the imprescriptible rights of the human spirit, to denounce the guilty, to pursue him, crying with all our might, "Thy crime is ridiculous! Despair!! Thy stupidity is criminal! Die!! Be scouted, be spit upon, be accursed! Despair and die!!"

The seat of such feeling as our worthy "arrangers" possess may not be reached by even the sharpest words; but it is a pleasure to reproduce the French master's anathema, even though he himself scored for orchestra Weber's "Invitation à la Valse."

After the revelation to Berlioz of Weber and his romanticism came that of Shakespeare and his marvellous creations—came also that of irresistible artist-woman in the person of an actress named Henrietta Smithson, one of an English company which ventured to play our national poet in the French capital. Of this new experience Berlioz says:—

I attended the first performance of "Hamlet" at the Odéon, and saw, in the *rôle* of Ophelia, Henrietta Smithson, who five

years later became my wife. The effect of her prodigious talent, or rather of her dramatic genius, upon my imagination and heart is comparable only to the revolution wrought in me by the poet of whom she was the worthy interpreter. I can say no more than this.

Our master now suffered the agony of seemingly hopeless love. The symptoms need not be described, nor need we insist that an attempt to get rid of them by excessive bodily exertion failed. There was some comfort, however, in setting music to Tom Moore's "When he who adores thee," and more self-denial than knowledge of human nature in resolving to keep away from the Odéon. Of course, Berlioz did not keep away, and at every visit his unconscious enslaver riveted closer the chains that bound him. His state of mind at this time is clearly indicated in a letter to Humbert, dated Paris, November 29, 1827:*—

I speak of all this with energy, my dear friend, but you know not how little importance I attach to it. For three months past I have been a prey to chagrin which nothing can relieve, and, with me, disgust with life is pushed as far as possible; even the success I have just obtained lifted only for a moment the sorrowful weight that oppresses me, and it has fallen back heavier than before. I cannot give you the key to this enigma here; it would take up too much space, and, besides, I do not think that I should know how to express myself in speaking to you on the subject. When I next see you, you shall learn all. I finish with the phrase which the Ghost of the King of Denmark addressed to his son, "Farewell, farewell, remember me!"

Poor young man! he was very much in love.

But the tender passion, while it inflicted pain like a spur, stimulated like a spur to renewed effort. How could Berlioz, obscure and unknown, work his way to the side of the distinguished artist and attract her notice? That was the question which found an answer in the lover's resolution to give a concert of his own music so that thereby he might step out from the ranks of the indiscriminate crowd. It being desirable to give the concert at the Conservatoire, permission was asked and obtained from the Department of Fine Arts; but the redoubtable Cherubini proved less complaisant than his official superiors. Perhaps he had not forgotten the chase in the library. Let us see how the two men behaved in presence of each other this time:—

* "Lettres Intimes." p. 9.

C. You want to give a concert?
B. Yes, sir.
C. You must have permission from the Superintendent of Fine Arts.
B. I have obtained it.
C. M. de Larochefoucault consents?
B. Yes, sir.
C. But I don't consent. I am against your having the hall.
B. Why should you refuse? The Conservatoire holiday is now one, and for fifteen days th place will be free.
C. But I will not let you give the concert. Everybody is in the country, and you will get no money by it.
B. I don't expect to do so. The concert is intended to make me known.
C. There is no need for you to be known. Besides, you will want money for expenses. Have you got any?
B. Yes, sir.
C. Ah! and what do you mean to perform?
B. Two overtures, parts of an opera, and my cantata, "La Mort d'Orphée."
C. That was the cantata I rejected. It is bad; it cannot be executed.
B. So you say, sir, but I have my opinions. If a bad pianist was unable to accompany it, that doesn't prove a good orchestra unable to play it.
C. That's an insult to the Académie.
B. It's a simple experience, sir. If the Académie was right in declaring my work impossible, of course it can't be performed. If, on the contrary, the Académie was wrong, people will say that I have profited by its advice and corrected the score.
C. You can only give your concert on a Sunday.
B. I will give it on a Sunday.
C. But the servants of the Conservatoire want that day for rest. You will kill those poor people with fatigue.
B. You are, no doubt, joking, sir. Those poor people you so much pity are delighted to earn a little money, and you will do wrong to prevent them.
C. I won't consent, I won't consent; and I'll write to the Superintendent asking him to withdraw his leave.
B. You are very good, sir, but M. de Larochefoucault will keep his word. I will write to him also, and narrate exactly the conversation I have had the honour to hold with you. He can then appreciate your reasons and mine.

So the two parted; and Berlioz wrote a letter to the Superintendent which made him laugh till the tears ran down

his cheeks. In the result, our young man received a note from the official confirming permission to give the concert, and ending thus: "I charge you to show this letter to M. Cherubini, who has received the necessary *orders* in the matter." Away ran Berlioz to the Conservatoire without losing a moment, and handed the document to the Florentine. "Cherubini took the paper," he tells us, "read it attentively; re-read it, with a pale face; then turned green, and handed it back without a word."

The concert, thus troublous in preliminaries, was a sad experience for its giver. The services of Bloc as *chef d'orchestre*, and of Duprez and Dupont as vocalists, were obtained; but for soprano and bass Berlioz was obliged to be satisfied with two small people from the Opéra, without voice or talent. Then rehearsals and performance were alike indifferent, while the proceeds were no more than sufficient to pay bare expenses. And Miss Smithson all this time! What would poor Berlioz have felt had he known that the fair Irishwoman never heard a word said either of him or his concert?

About this time Berlioz became acquainted with some of the symphonies of Beethoven, and his impressionable nature was once more stirred to the most extravagant demonstrations. He even, by sheer force of enthusiasm, persuaded his pedantic old master, Lesueur, to go and hear the "C minor" of the extraordinary German who had so recently passed away. After the performance, Berlioz met Lesueur in the lobby. He was very red, and taking long strides:—

"Well, dear master?" said I. "Ouf! I am going out; I want air. This is unheard-of—marvellous! It has so moved and upset me that in coming out of the box and essaying to put on my hat, I fancied I could not find my head. Let me alone now. To-morrow"—

On the morrow Lesueur was cooler, and did not care to talk about his experience. However, he said, "One must not make music like that"; to which I answered, "Be easy, dear master, one will not make much like it."

Berlioz now took what he calls the fatal step of becoming a musical critic on the staff of a new journal called *La Quotidienne;* and, in June, 1828, he gained the second prize for composition at the Institute. This was his third attempt, and his third failure, to reach the Grand Prix de Rome. Meanwhile his passion for Miss Smithson grew and over-

mastered him. Having no acquaintance with the young lady, he sent her letters, "which frightened rather than touched her," the result being that her servant was ordered to reject any more such amorous epistles. Then, as she was to perform at the Opéra-Comique for an artist's benefit, he offered to enrich the programme with a new overture, so that he might, at least, address her through his music:—

The director and *chef d'orchestre* consented. When I went to the theatre the English artists were rehearsing two scenes from "Romeo and Juliet." They were at the scene of the tomb. Just as I entered, Romeo, distracted, bore Juliet in his arms. My eyes fell involuntarily upon the Shakespearian group. I uttered a cry, and ran away wringing my hands. Juliet both saw and heard me—I made her afraid. Pointing me out, she asked the actors on the stage to take notice of the gentleman, whose eyes boded no good.

The overture was rehearsed in turn, and Berlioz adds, "The executants applauded me, and I hoped something from the effect of the piece on the public and from the influence of my success upon Miss Smithson. Poor fool!" Poor fool, indeed! On the night of performance Miss Smithson did not even know that such an overture was to be produced, and, in a day or two, she left with her company for Holland. Berlioz, who resided—by chance, he tells us—opposite her lodging, saw her start, and describes his feelings in burning words:—

It is difficult to depict suffering like that which I endured—that rending of the heart, that frightful isolation, that empty world, those thousand torments which circulated in the veins as with freezing blood, that distaste for living and that impossibility of dying. . . . I composed no longer; my intelligence appeared to diminish as much as my sensibility increased. I could do absolutely nothing—but suffer.

And he did suffer. Hear how he complained to Humbert (April 9, 1829):*—

Ah! poor dear friend! I have not written to you because I have been unable. All my hopes were frightful illusions. She has gone and, in going, without pity for anguish of which she had been two days a witness, she left only this answer, brought me by somebody—"There is nothing more impossible."

The months rolled on, and, a fourth time (1829), Berlioz

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 34.

tried for the Prix de Rome, but again without success. His subject was "Cleopatra after the Battle of Actium," and the music, in its author's opinion, was worthy of the prize.* "Consequently it did not succeed." On the morrow of the failure Berlioz met Boïeldieu in the street, and the two had a conversation worth recording:—

Boïeld. Good God, my boy, what have you done? You had the prize in your hand and have thrown it away.

Berl. I did my best, sir, I declare.

Boïeld. That's just what I complain of. You shouldn't do your best; it is the enemy of the good. How could I approve such things?—I, who love above all things music that soothes me.

Berl. It is difficult, sir, to make soothing music when a Queen of Egypt, devoured by remorse, and poisoned by the bite of a serpent, dies in moral and physical anguish.

Boïeld. Oh! you know how to defend yourself, I don't doubt, but that proves nothing. One can always be graceful.

Berl. Yes, the old gladiators knew how to die with grace, but Cleopatra was not so clever; that was not her condition. Besides, she did not die in public.

Boïeld. You exaggerate. We didn't ask you to make her sing a *contredanse*. But what necessity was there to use such extraordinary harmonies in your invocation of the Pharaohs? I myself am not a harmonist, and confess that I didn't understand one of your chords from the other world. And, then, why such an unheard-of rhythm in your accompaniment?

Berl. I did not think, sir, it was necessary to avoid new forms in composition, when one has the happiness to find them, and they are in the right place.

Boïeld. But, my dear fellow, Madame Debadie, who sang your cantata, is an excellent musician, and she had need of all her talent and attention.

Berl. Ma foi! I didn't know, I confess, that music was intended to be performed without talent and attention.

Boïeld. Well, well, you will not be content to stop short. Profit by this lesson next year.

One night at the Opéra, Auber took the young man aside and advised him much to the same purport:†—

You run away from commonplaces, but you should not be always in dread of platitudes. The best council I can give you is to try to write trivially, and when you have produced some-

* A chorus from this work is now the Chorus of Shadows in "Lelio."

† "Lettres Intimes," p. 47.

thing that appears horribly trivial, that will be exactly right. Rest assured that, if you compose music after your own fancy, the public will not understand you and the publishers will not buy you.

Sentiments like these grated upon the ears of our ardent and art-loving master, not increasing, we may be sure, his respect for the men who uttered them. He even declined, at this time, a presentation to Rossini:*—

They have offered to introduce me to Rossini, and I would not consent, as you may well think. I do not like that Figaro, or rather, I hate him more every day. His absurd pleasantries about Weber in the foyer of the German theatre† have exasperated me. I much regret I was not in the conversation, so that I might have given him a broadside.

Before his renewed failure at the Institute, Berlioz had made acquaintance with the "Faust" of Goethe through a French translation, and, setting the lyrics to music, had published them as "Huit Scènes de Faust." Subsequently the master collected and burned all the copies of this work on which he could lay hands. It was, however, under Goethe's influence that he composed, in 1830, his "Symphonie Fantastique"—taking three weeks to complete the *Adagio*, but writing the *Marche au Supplice* in a single night. Arrangements were made for the production of this piece at the Nouveautés, but at rehearsal so many chairs and desks were wanted for the big orchestra that the managers backed out of the affair altogether. "Since then," says Berlioz, "I always look well to the *matériel* of my concerts. I know by experience that the least negligence in that respect may entail disaster." He next produced a dramatic fantasia, with chorus, on Shakespeare's "Tempest,"‡ and actually had it performed at the Opéra. A real tempest, however, ruined the concert. The streets were flooded, and, counting every head in the theatre, not more than 300 persons heard the music. Some amend for these repeated disappointments was made when, in the following June (1830), the longed-for Grand Prix came to his hands. A cantata, having for subject "The Last Night of Sardanapalus," found favour with the judges, was duly performed, and brought to its author 3,000 francs yearly for four years,

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 40.
† "Der Freischütz" was then being performed
‡ A part of this work now figures in "Lelio."

with the obligation to reside the first two years in Rome, and the third in Germany. Of course, the performance did not pass off without a hitch—none ever did when our master's music was in hand. Berlioz had arranged a grand effect for the explosion of the King's palace, and upon this he counted much. In order to guard against mistakes he sat by the conductor's side, and Malibran, who could find no room in the hall, occupied a stool in the orchestra exactly facing him. The cantata went on, the King resolved to die, called his women around him, set fire to the palace, and all waited for the explosion :—

Five hundred thousand maledictions on musicians who don't count their bars! In my score, a horn gave the cue to the drums, the drums to the cymbals, these to the *grosse-caisse*, and the first blow on the *grosse-caisse* brought about the final explosion. My d—d horn missed his note, the drums not hearing it kept quiet; the cymbals and the *grosse-caisse* kept quiet also—nothing moved! nothing!! The violins and basses only continued their feeble *tremolo;* no explosion—a fire that went out without being lighted. . . . A cry of horror escaped from my panting breast; I flung my score across the orchestra; I upset two desks; Madame Malibran jumped back as though a mine had exploded under her feet. All was noise; the orchestra and academicians were scandalised, the audience mystified, and the composer's friends indignant. This was another musical catastrophe, and the worst I had experienced. If it had only been the last!

The explosion was better managed at a second concert, conducted by Habeneck, at which the "Symphonie Fantastique" was also performed—Liszt, who had just then made the acquaintance of Berlioz, being among the most appreciative listeners. The effect of Berlioz' music, and of the discussions to which it gave rise, upon Cherubini was not agreeable to the old master. Said some one to him, as he passed the door of the concert-room while the public were entering, "Well, M. Cherubini, you are not coming to hear Berlioz' new work?" The answer was "I don't want to learn what not to do." Berlioz adds :—

On the success of the concert he seemed like a cat that had swallowed mustard; he spoke no more, but sneezed. A few days later he sent for me and said, "You are going to Italy?" "Yes, sir!" "Your name is to be taken off the books of the Conservatoire. Your studies are finished. But it seems to me that

you ought to pay me a visit. No one leaves here as though he were a groom." I was on the point of saying, "Why not? since he is treated like a horse," but I had the good sense to restrain myself, and even to assure our amiable director that I never thought of leaving Paris without paying a farewell visit and thanking him for his kindness.

Here it becomes necessary to dwell somewhat at length upon the master's love affairs. We know that he composed the "Symphonie Fantastique" under the influence of his passion for Henrietta Smithson. Just before taking his pen in hand he wrote to Humbert:*—

After a period of calm, violently troubled by the composition of the *Elegie en prose*, which completes my melodies,† I am again plunged in all the anguish of an interminable and inextinguishable passion, without motive or subject. She remains in London, yet I feel her always about me; all my recollections awake and join to distract me; I hear my heart beat, and its pulsations shake me like the strokes of the piston of a steam engine. Each muscle of my body trembles with pain. Useless! Frightful! Oh! unhappy one! if she could for an instant imagine all the poetry, all the infinitude of such a love, she would fly to my arms—she would be ready to die in my embrace. I was on the point of beginning my grand symphony (*Episode de la vie d'un artiste*), in which the development of my infernal passion will be painted; I have it all in my head, but I can write nothing. Wait!

Berlioz subsequently forwarded to Humbert a sketch of the "argument" of the Symphony, and this appears to have excited the solicitude of his faithful friend, who wrote warning him against the danger of becoming morbid in the excess of his passion. The master replied (May 13, 1830), and in this letter we read, to our astonishment, the following:‡—

I do not intend to revenge myself. I pity her and despise her. She is an ordinary woman, gifted with an instinctive genius for expressing distractions of the human soul which she has never felt, and incapable of imagining such an immense and noble feeling as that with which I have honoured her.

In another letter he passingly remarks:§—

That unhappy girl Smithson remains here. I have not seen her since her return.

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 63.

† Irlande: recueil de neuf mélodies pour une et deux voix, et chœur, avec accompagnement pour le piano. Op. 2.

‡ "Lettres Intimes," p. 69. § Ibid., p. 78.

How are we to account for this revulsion? Simply by referring to the twenty-eighth chapter of the "Memoirs." There we learn that a young German composer, whom Berlioz thinly disguises under the initial H., had fallen in love with a Mdlle. M. (Mdlle. Mooke, afterwards Madame Pleyel), and, during one of his visits, playfully challenged her to try and win the love of Berlioz, expressing no fear of the result. The lady took poor H. at his word, as might have been expected. Meeting Berlioz soon after, at a school where he was engaged as teacher of the guitar, she then, and subsequently, made such use of her power of fascination that Berlioz forgot his Shakesperian love, and became her devoted slave. The sequel as regards H., who received his dismissal, was rather droll. He shed a few bitter tears, and then, reflecting, perhaps, that the fault was more his own than another's, he shook the hand of his successful rival, wished him joy, and set out for Frankfort. Berlioz naïvely adds: "I have always admired his conduct on that occasion."

Our master's passion for his new love burned as fiercely as once did that for the "unhappy girl." Hear how he speaks of Mdlle. Mooke to Humbert:*—

All that love has of the most tender and delicate is mine. My ravishing sylph, my Ariel, my life, appears to love me more than ever. As for me, her mother unceasingly declares that if she had read in romance of an affection such as mine, she could not have believed it true.

Then, after referring to a temporary attack of illness from which his Camille had suffered, he adds:—

But she will not die. No; those eyes so full of genius, that slender form, all that delicious being rather appears to be ready to take its flight towards the heavens than to fall withered to the humid earth.

Hear him once more, in the same strain. He had taken to Mdlle. Mooke the news that the Grand Prix was his, and then wrote to Humbert: †—

O my friend, what happiness to have a success which enchants an adored being! My idolised Camille was dying of anxiety when I took to her the news so ardently desired. O my delicate Ariel, my beautiful angel, thy wings were drooping: joy reanimated them.

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 73 *et seq.* † Ibid., p. 76.

It may naturally be supposed that, under the influence of this ardour, Berlioz did not care to leave Paris for Rome, and he even thought of petitioning the king to make an exception in his favour. Wiser counsel at last prevailing, he sailed from Marseilles for Italy, and after a stormy voyage and some passport troubles, incidental to a time of political tempest, arrived in Rome, taking up his abode, with the other French students, at Villa Medici, where Horace Vernet reigned as king. The next day he was introduced to the Café Greci, the headquarters of the student class; and on the morrow he made the acquaintance of Mendelssohn. Three weeks passed and no letters came from Paris, where Berlioz felt that some trouble was brewing. This so harassed him that he resolved upon going back to France, despite the friendly warnings of the director, Vernet. Before he could carry his resolution into effect, however, a letter came:—

The packet they gave me contained an epistle of such extraordinary impudence, and so wounding to a man of my then age and experience, that it had a frightful effect upon me.* Tears of rage filled my eyes, and my course was instantly taken. It was to go to Paris and, without mercy, kill two guilty women and one innocent. After this, of course, I was bound to kill myself. The plan of the expedition was settled in a few minutes. In Paris they would fear my return, and recognise me. I resolved, therefore, to take precautions and disguise myself.

It must be confessed that the Mookes were guilty of rank treachery, inasmuch as a formal engagement had taken place between the young people, and even the date of marriage had been fixed. This we learn from Berlioz himself:†—

My marriage is fixed for Eastertide, 1832, on condition that I do not lose my pension and that I remain in Italy for a year. It was my music that extorted the consent of Camille's mother. Oh! my dear symphony, I am indebted to it for her.

Sympathy, therefore, mingles with astonishment as we regard the conduct of the jilted lover, who, without losing a moment, engaged a friend to procure a passport and a vehicle, and ran himself to a shop where he bought the complete dress of a *femme de chambre*, which was to be his disguise. But even in this headlong haste and fury the instinct of the composer asserted itself. He

* The letter announced the approaching marriage of Mdlle. Mooke to Pleyel.
† "Lettres Intimes," p. 85.

had been rewriting the "Scène du Bal" of the "Symphonie Fantastique," and could not go on his journey to murder and suicide without leaving directions for the conclusion of the work. Accordingly he wrote on the manuscript:—

I have no time to finish this. If the Society of Concerts at Paris should care to perform the piece in the *absence* of the author, I beg Habeneck to double on the octave below, with clarinets and horns, the passage for flutes at the last reappearance of the theme, and to write the chords that follow for full orchestra. That will do for a Coda.

Having cared for his work, packed up his feminine dress, and armed himself with a pair of double-barrelled pistols, Berlioz started for Paris. Between Florence and Genoa he lost his disguise, and had some trouble in getting another made within six hours. Moreover the Sardinian police suspected him as a revolutionist, refused to endorse his passport for Turin, and ordered him to enter France by way of Nice. The reply to this was, "By way of Nice! what does that matter to me? I'll go by way of hell, if you like, so that I go somehow." Pursuing his route, Berlioz entertained himself with a mental rehearsal of the tragedy he was going to act:—

I reach the house of my *friends* about nine o'clock in the evening, as they are taking tea. I am shown into the parlour as the *femme de chambre* of Madame la Comtesse M——, charged with an important message. I hand over a letter, and, as they are reading it, I take my two pistols from my bosom; I shoot one through the head, then another; then I seize the third by the hair, make myself known to her, and, despite her cries, I give her my third compliment. After that, before the concert of voices and instruments has attracted the curious, I launch at my right temple the fourth irresistible argument, and if the pistol should miss fire (I have provided for that) have recourse to my poison.

What a bloodthirsty young man, to be sure! Antient Pistol was nothing to this wild-haired musician storming along the fair Mediterranean shore, save that he had a like regard for his own life. Berlioz, as he journeyed on, began to feel some doubts about the expediency of killing himself. He thought the necessity was "shameful"—"Thus to say adieu to the world, to art; to leave no other reputation than that of a brute who did not know how to live; not to have finished my first symphony; to have others grander still in my

head. Ah! 'tis"— Then the spirit of revenge would seize him and urge him on once more. At such a time the young man sprang up in his *voiture* and uttered a convulsive cry, which made the driver jump aside, in the full belief that his passenger was a "a devil obliged to carry about a piece of the true cross." The struggle between Berlioz' good and evil angels thus went on till, at last, the former induced him, in a moment of calmness, to commit his honour to a prudent course. When changing horses at a village, he hastily wrote a note to Horace Vernet, begging the director to keep his name on the list of students, and adding, "I bind myself upon my honour not to pass the frontiers of Italy till your answer comes to me at Nice, where I shall await it." This done, Berlioz returned to his carriage and discovered all at once *that he was hungry*. He had eaten very little since leaving Florence. At Nice he received a friendly reply from Vernet. Nothing would be said about his escapade, and, getting rid of his feminine garments and his pistols, Berlioz breathed naturally again. The storm had blown over, and after it came a great calm. Reaction was complete: "I lived entirely alone. I wrote the overture to 'King Lear.' I sang. I believed in God. Convalescence!" Meanwhile the police kept their eyes upon him and, when they saw him familiar with the officers of the garrison, summoned the suspected before them :—

P. What are you doing here, sir?

B. I am recovering from a cruel malady. I compose, I dream; I thank God for making such a bright sun, such a beautiful sea, and such verdant hills.

P. You are not a painter?

B. No, sir.

P. But you are seen everywhere with an album in your hand, and drawing a good deal. Are you engaged in collecting plans?

P. Yes, I "collect" the plan of an overture to "King Lear." That is to say, I have "collected" it, for the design and instrumentation are finished. I even think that the *entrée* of it will be formidable.

P. What do you mean by the *entrée?* Who is this King Lear?

B. Alas, sir, a good old King of England.

P. Of England?

B. Yes; he flourished, according to Shakespeare, about eighteen hundred years ago, and was weak enough to divide his kingdom between two wicked daughters, who showed him to the door

when he had no more to give. You see there are so few kings—

P. Don't speak of the king! What do you mean by that word instrumentation?

B. It's a musical term.

P. Always that pretext. I know very well, sir, that people do not compose music without a piano, and with an album and a pencil while walking stealthily along the shore. Therefore, if you will tell me where you are going, you shall have your passport. You cannot any longer stop here.

B. Well, then, I will go to Rome, and still compose without a piano, with your permission.

So ended what Berlioz calls his "little comedy."

The master halted at Florence on his way back to Rome, and renewed his observations of a city which gave him occasion for some remarks strongly indicative of his emotional and sensitive nature. Strolling one day into the cathedral, he witnessed the obsequies of a young mother and the infant whose birth had cost her life. Touched by the incident, he followed the procession to a cemetery, where the bodies were deposited in a dead-house till, according to custom, the grave-diggers came, at two a.m., to inter them. For a paola (twelve sous) Berlioz was permitted to enter the morgue and look upon the dead girl and her babe. "If I had been alone I should have embraced her; I thought of Ophelia. For a paola!" The next day he attended the funeral service of Napoleon Bonaparte, brother of the late Emperor Napoleon III., and filled his mind with thoughts of the young man's mother, Queen Hortense:—

My fancy, retracing the course of time, showed her, a joyous Creole child, dancing on the deck of the ship that brought her to the Old World, plain daughter of Madame Beauharnais; later, adopted daughter of the master of Europe, Queen of Holland; at last exiled, forgotten, orphaned, a distracted mother, a fugitive queen without a State.

Thinking of all this, what music would he have poured forth from the solemn organ; but the Italian practitioner at that instrument, instead of rising to the occasion, sank beneath contempt:—

Oh! Beethoven! . . . where was the grand soul, the profound and Homeric spirit which conceived the "Eroica" symphony and the "Funeral March for the death of a Hero," and so many other great and sad musical poems that elevate the spirit

while they oppress the heart? The organist had drawn his flute stop, and sportively whistled little gay airs in the upper octaves, like wrens perched on a garden-wall, basking in the pale rays of a spring sun.

This, and the showing of dead bodies for a paolo, stirred his indignation against Italians all round :—

O Italians, miserables that you are, apes, ourang-outangs, puppets always sneering, who compose operas like those of Bellini, Pacini, Rossini, Vaccàj, and Mercadante; who play trivial airs at the funeral of the nephew of the Great Man, and who, for a paola . . . !

Here wrath seems to choke him, and the uncomplimentary invocation comes to a sudden end. The Italians, let us add, were never successful in pleasing Berlioz with their music. At the famous Eastertide services in the Sistine chapel he almost laughed, and he denounced with all his might the idea that Palestrina possessed any musical genius whatever :—

In his psalms for four parts where melody and rhythm are not used, and where harmony takes the form of perfect chords intermixed with suspensions, one must admit that taste and a certain science have guided the composer; but genius—nonsense, it is a joke.

It was on his way back to Rome that Berlioz conceived the idea of "Lelio, ou le retour à la vie." He thus described the plan of the work, writing from Rome to Humbert (July 3, 1831) :*—

It is a melologue to follow the Symphonie Fantastique. I have, for the first time, written words and music. How much I regret not being able to show it to you! There are six monologues and six pieces of music: 1st, a Ballad, with pianoforte; 2nd, a Meditation, for choir and orchestra; 3rd, a Scene of Brigand Life, for solo, chorus, and orchestra; 4th, the Hymn of Happiness, for solo, accompanied by the orchestra at the beginning and end, and in the middle by one hand on the harp; 5th, the Last Sighs of the Harp, for orchestra alone; and 6th, the overture to the "Tempest"—already performed, as you know, at the Paris Opéra. I have used for the Hymn of Happiness a phrase from "La Mort d'Orphée," which you have with you, and for the Last Sighs of the Harp the little orchestral piece which finishes that scene immediately after the Bacchanale.

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 101.

At this time, moreover, the master sketched the plan of a grand oratorio, to be called "The Last Day of the World." He gave the *scenario* to Humbert, requesting him to write the words, as he had already done those of "Les Francs Juges." The details are extremely curious:*—

A tyrant, all-powerful on the earth; civilisation and corruption at the last stage; an impious court; a few religious people whom the sovereign's contempt allows to exist in freedom; war and victory; combats of slaves in a circus; female slaves who resist the desires of the conqueror; atrocities. The chief of the religious people, a kind of Daniel reprimanding Belshazzar, reproaches the despot with his crimes, announces that prophecy is about to be fulfilled, and that the end of the world is near. The tyrant, irritated at last by the boldness of the prophet, compels him to assist in the palace at a frightful orgy, at the close of which he cries, ironically, that he will show the end of the world. Assisted by his women and eunuchs, he represents the Valley of Jehoshaphat; a band of winged children sound little trumpets; sham dead come out of the tombs; the tyrant represents Jesus Christ, and is about to judge mankind, when the *earth trembles*, real and terrible angels sound thundering trumpets, the true Christ comes, and the real Last Judgment begins.

It was, perhaps, quite as well that Berlioz did not carry out this extraordinary conception.

At Rome, Berlioz was repeatedly in Mendelssohn's company, and, had the German fully reciprocated the feeling of the Frenchman, a warm friendship would have sprung up between them. Writing from Nice before expelled by the authorities, and referring to his previous experience in Rome, he said:—

I have found Mendelssohn. . . . He is an admirable lad; his executive talent is as great as his musical genius, and really that is saying much. All that I have heard of his delights me; I believe firmly that his musical capacity is one of the highest of our epoch. He has been my cicerone; every morning I go to him; he plays me a sonata of Beethoven; we sing Gluck's "Armida," and then he takes me to see the famous ruins, which, I must confess, interest me very little. Mendelssohn is one of those candid souls so rarely met with; he believes firmly in his Lutheran religion, and I greatly scandalise him sometimes by laughing at the Bible. To him I owe the only supportable moments I enjoyed during my stay in Rome.

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 109.

Addressing Ferdinand Hiller, after a second time reaching the Eternal City, Berlioz said :—

Has Mendelssohn reached you? He is a man of enormous, extraordinary, superb, prodigious talent. I shall not be suspected of comradeship in writing thus, for he has told me frankly that he does not understand my music at all. Say to him a thousand things for me. He has a character wholly virginal, and still has beliefs; he is a little cold in his manner, but, although he may doubt it, I greatly love him.

The life of Berlioz in Rome was far from happy. He appears to have suffered from a nervous affection which, stimulated by the melancholy city and its desolate surroundings, made the routine of common life insupportable. The feeling was connected in his mind with the ideas of isolation and absence, and he has thus described it :—

A void surrounds my palpitating breast, and it seems then that my heart, under the constraint of an irresistible force, evaporates and tends to break up by expansion. Then the skin of my whole body becomes painful and burning; I am red from head to foot. I am tempted to cry out; to call my friends, and even indifferent people, to my aid, to console, defend, and prevent me from being destroyed, to retain the life which goes away to all points of the compass. During these crises one has no thought of death; no, the idea of suicide is even insupportable; one would not die: far from that, one would live, willing it absolutely, and desiring a thousand times more of energy. It is a prodigious capacity for happiness, which becomes exasperated by remaining without satisfaction, and can only appease itself by immense, devouring, furious delights, in proportion to an incalculable abundance of sensibility.

Berlioz struggled hard against his disease, for so we may call it. He sought the pleasures of the chase, wandered alone for days together among the Abruzzi mountains, and spent some time in Naples; but each return to Rome brought back, with added force, his strange and painful feeling. To this there could only be one end :—

I had finished my monodrama ("Lelio") and retouched my "Symphonie Fantastique." It was necessary to have them performed. So I obtained from M. Vernet permission to leave Italy before the allotted time; posed for my portrait; made a grand tour of some days to Tivoli, Albano, and Palestrina; sold my gun, broke my guitar, wrote in several albums, gave a grand "punch" to my comrades, caressed M. Vernet's two dogs, my

companions of the chase, and had a moment of profound sorrow in the thought that I was quitting a poetic country, never perhaps to see it again. Friends accompanied me nearly to Ponte Molle, where I ascended a shockingly bad carriole and started.

On May 12, 1832, Berlioz crossed Mont Cenis, and directed his steps towards his ancestral home at La Côte St. André.

It will easily be understood from what has appeared above that the time spent by Berlioz in Rome was not prolific in musical works. He himself tells us exactly what he did:—

First: An overture to "Rob Roy," long and diffuse, performed at Paris a year later, badly received by the public, and burnt the same day on leaving the concert. Second: The "Scène aux Champs" of my "Symphonie Fantastique," which I rewrote almost entirely when wandering in the Villa Borghese. Third: The "Chant de Bonheur" of my monodrame "Lelio,"* which I dreamt, rocked by my intimate enemy, the south wind, in the tall and bushy box-tree of our classic garden. Fourth: The melody called "Le Captive," of which, when composing it, I was far from anticipating the fortune.

In addition, when writing to a friend, Berlioz speaks of some concerted vocal pieces, among them "a chorus to words by Moore, with accompaniment for seven wind instruments, composed at Rome one day when I was dying of spleen, and entitled, 'Psalmody for those who have suffered much, and whose soul is sad nearly unto death.'" *A propos* to the monodrame "Lelio," Berlioz may here tell one of his amusing stories. The work contains a chorus of spirits:—

The text of this chorus was written in an unknown tongue, the language of the dead, incomprehensible to the living. When seeking permission to print from the Papal censor, the meaning of the words sung by the ghosts greatly embarrassed the officials. What was the language, and what did the strange words signify? They called in a German, who declared that he could make nothing of them; an Englishman was not more successful, and Danish, Swedish, Russian, Spanish, Irish, and Bohemian interpreters alike failed. How the office of the censor was embarrassed, to be sure! Meanwhile leave to print could not be given, and the publication remained suspended. At last, one of the censors, after profound reflection, hit upon an idea, the justice of which all his colleagues admitted: "Since the English, Russian, Spanish, Danish, Swedish, Irish, and Bohemian inter-

* The remainder of this work, not taken from compositions of an earlier date, was written while travelling in various parts of Italy.

preters cannot divine this mysterious language, it is likely enough that the Roman people will not understand it either. It appears that we can authorise the impression without danger to morality or religion." The chorus of ghosts was printed forthwith.

In connection with our master's work at Rome we have now only to record the deception he practised on the authorities of the Institute in Paris. Every holder of the Grand Prix is bound by its rules to forward a composition each year, by way of proof that he is labouring and progressing. Berlioz complied with this regulation; in what manner he himself confesses:—

As regards the *Resurrexit* for grand orchestra and chorus, which I sent to the Academicians in Paris, and in which those gentlemen discovered very remarkable progress, a sensible proof of the influence of Rome upon my ideas, and a complete abandonment of my regrettable musical tendencies, it was a fragment of my Messe Solennelle, performed at St. Roch and at St. Eustache several years before I obtained the prize at the Institute.

The boldness of Berlioz in sending a piece which even some of the Academicians might have heard amounted to recklessness. As to the morality of the transaction, nothing need be said.

During the stay of Berlioz at La Côte St. André, his father wished him to marry and "settle down," having, after the manner of French parents, chosen a young lady, pecuniarily fitted for the alliance. Concerning this matter we read, in a note to Madame Vernet:*—

My father has just hit upon a singular method of making me wise. He wishes me to marry. Presuming, right or wrong, upon data known to him, that my overtures would be well received by a very rich person, he pressed me strongly to present myself, for the peremptory reason that a young man who would inherit but a hundred thousand francs or so ought not to neglect the opportunity of marrying three hundred thousand down and more in expectation. I laughed at the idea as a joke for some time, but as my father's suggestions became more pressing, I was obliged to declare categorically that I could never love the lady to whom he referred, and that I was not for sale at any price. The discussion ended there, but I was disagreeably affected by it. I thought my father knew me better. At bottom, madame, do you not think I was right?

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 101.

In November, 1832, Berlioz went to Paris for the purpose of producing his monodrame "Lelio" and the "Symphonie Fantastique." Calling immediately upon Cherubini, he found the master very much enfeebled and looking aged. This was not the only change. So affectionate did Cherubini show himself that Berlioz thought, "Ah, *mon Dieu!* the poor man is going to die." But there was plenty of life in the "grim Florentine" yet, and the younger composer soon discovered the fact.

When seeking lodgings a curious coincidence happened, in which Berlioz saw the hand of fate. His old apartment not being free, a "secret impulse" made him look for one in the opposite house, where Miss Smithson had resided. Successful here, he said to the domestic in charge, "What has become of Miss Smithson? Have you any news of her?" The reply was, "Why, sir, she is in Paris; she even lodged here a few days ago, and, the day before yesterday, left the apartment you now occupy for one in the Rue de Rivoli. She is the directress of an English theatre which opens its doors next week." Berlioz tells us:—

I remained mute and palpitating at the news of this incredible chance, and this concurrence of fatal circumstances. I then saw well that for me no longer struggle was possible. For two years I was without news of the fair Ophelia; I knew not if she were in England, Scotland, or America, and I arrived from Italy at the moment when, returning from the north of Europe, she reappeared in Paris. And we had nearly met in the same house, and I occupied an apartment which she had just quitted.

This, however, was not the only indication that fate had willed the bringing together of the French musician and the Irish actress:—

Two days before that fixed for the concert which, as I thought, was a farewell to art and life, I was in Schlesinger's music-shop, when an Englishman entered, stayed a short time, and left. "Who is that man?" said I to Schlesinger. "That is Mr. Schutter, one of the editors of *Galignani's Messenger*. Ah! I have an idea," he added, striking his forehead. "Give me a box. Schutter knows Miss Smithson; I will ask him to take your tickets to her and engage her to be present at the concert." The proposal thrilled me from head to foot, but I had not the courage to refuse it, and I gave him the box. Schlesinger ran after Mr. Schutter, caught him, explained the interest which the presence of the actress would create at the concert, and obtained his promise to bring her if possible.

At that time Miss Smithson was not in the mood to concede every request, her theatrical enterprise having proved a failure. Nevertheless, to oblige Mr. Schutter she attended the concert, learning only when on the way to the Conservatoire who was the giver of it, and wholly unsuspicious of the fact that she was the heroine of the melodrame to be performed. From her box she saw Berlioz, and recognised him as her adorer of two years before. "That is surely he," she said to herself; "poor young man, he has forgotten me, no doubt. I hope so." During the *entr'acte*, after the "Symphonie Fantastique," some words were dropped in the lady's hearing which renewed her attention to the composer. "If he should love me still!" she murmured. Of this there could be no doubt when the actor Bocage, reciting the words put into the mouth of Lelio, spoke pathetically of the lost Juliet-Ophelia. "*Mon Dieu!* Juliet! Ophelia! I can no longer doubt. He means myself. He loves me still!" The hall seemed to spin round with the excited girl, and she returned home, as she was wont to say herself, with no more consciousness of the waking world than a sleepwalker. The next day Berlioz obtained permission to visit his beloved one, and the letter in which he implored this interview is too characteristic to be passed over:—

A Mademoiselle Henriette Smithson, Rue de Rivoli, Hotel du Congres.—If you do not desire my death, in the name of pity (I dare not say of love) let me know when I can see you. I beg of you mercy—pardon—on my knees, with tears. Oh! unhappy one that I am, I cannot think that I deserve what I suffer; but I bless the strokes which come from your hand. I await your answer as the sentence of my judge. H. BERLIOZ.

Meanwhile, the lady's enterprise went from bad to worse, till at last the theatre closed, leaving Miss Smithson hopelessly in debt. Nor was this all. The poor girl, in stepping from her carriage to the pavement, slipped and broke her leg.

Now might Berlioz have shown himself a heartless man of the world. The star of his artist-love had set with the fickle Parisians; she herself lay on a bed of sickness, and a load of debt pressed her down. Did he leave her in this strait? To his honour, no. He exerted himself to get up a benefit concert, at which Liszt and Chopin played, and then —but let him speak for himself:—

Finally, in the summer of 1833, Henrietta Smithson being ruined and but half-cured, I married her, despite the violent opposition of her family, and after having been myself obliged to resort to extremities with my parents. On the day of our marriage she had nothing in the world but debts and the dread that her accident had disabled her from playing again. On my part, I had only 300 francs, lent me by my friend Gounet, and I was once more out of favour at home.

All this, if not very wise, was very good and honourable on the part of Berlioz. He should not, however, have told it with such an evident desire to pose as a hero in the circumstances. It would seem from a passage in a letter written to Hiller (July, 1833) that the course of Berlioz' love had fulfilled a well-known proverb. We read: *—

You infer, no doubt, from the long and absurd silence I have kept towards you, that the state of *liberty* in which you left me did not last. Two days after you quitted Paris, Henrietta begged me instantly to go to her. I was cold and calm as a statue. She wrote to me two hours later; I went to her, and after a thousand protestations and explanations which, without completely justifying her, exculpated her at least on the principal point, I finished by pardoning her, and since then I have not left her side for a day.

In the same letter he touches upon his by no means roseate circumstances:—

My poor Henrietta begins to walk a little. We have already been several times to the Tuileries together. I watch the progress of her cure with the anxiety of a mother looking on the first steps of her infant. But what a frightful position is ours! My father will give me nothing, hoping by that to prevent my marriage. She has nothing; I can do little or nothing for her. Yesterday evening we passed two hours together drowned in tears. Under no pretext whatever can I make her accept the money I have to give. Happily, I have obtained from the fund for the encouragement of fine arts the sum of 1,000 francs for her, and I am now sending it to her. It was waiting for this money, which I desired to send myself, that delayed my journey. As soon as possible, I start to obtain either from my father, my brother-in-law, my friends, or the money lenders who know my father's fortune, some thousands of francs, which will enable me to extricate her as well as myself from our present terrible position.

That in view of all this Berlioz had very gloomy thoughts

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 109.

he proves by continuing as follows: "As I know not how the matter will end, I beg you to preserve this letter, so that, should the worst happen, you will be able to claim all my manuscript music, which I leave and confide to you."

From other communications we learn that terrible and distracting scenes preceded the marriage, caused by the impetuosity of the lover and the feeble, hesitating character of Miss Smithson, who, influenced by her mother and sister, could not make up her mind to take the final step. In a letter to Humbert (August 30, 1833) Berlioz remarks, after referring to some previous events:*—

Since then the scenes have become more violent. The first step to marriage has been taken—an *acte civil*, which her execrable sister has torn up. There have been despair on her part, and a reproach of not loving her; whereupon, weary of conflict, I responded by taking poison before her eyes. Frightful cries of Henrietta! Sublime despair! Atrocious laughter on my part! Desire to live on hearing her terrible protestations of affection! Emetic! Ipecacuanha! Vomitings for two hours! . . . Henrietta, in despair wishes to repair all the wrong that she has done me. . . . She began well, but she has been hesitating again for three days, influenced by the representations of her mother and sister, and by our situation in point of fortune. She has nothing, and I love her, and she dares not entrust to me her fate. She wants to wait some months. Some months! Damnation! I will not wait; I have suffered too much.

At last Miss Smithson's scruples were overborne, and on September 3, 1833, her lover writes:†—

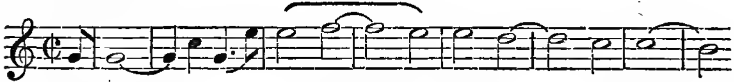
We are announced. In fifteen days all will be over, if human laws are good enough to allow it. I dread only their slowness. At last!!!

In October, shortly after marriage, he confided to the same intimate friend:‡—

Yes, my dear Humbert, I *believed* in spite of all of you, and my faith has saved me. Henrietta is a delicious being. She is Ophelia herself, not Juliet; she has no passionate warmth—she is tender, sweet, and *timid*. Sometimes when we are alone and silent, leaning upon my shoulder, her hand upon my forehead, or in one of those gracious *poses* which no painter has ever dreamed, she weeps amid her smiles. "What is the matter, my poor

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 132. † Ibid., p. 135. ‡ Ibid., p. 138 *et seq.*

love?" "Nothing. My heart is so full! I think that thou hast bought me so dear—that thou hast suffered much for me. Let me weep, or I shall be suffocated!" And I hear her weep tranquilly till she says, "Sing, Hector, sing." I then begin the *Scène du Bal*—



which she so much loves; the *Scène aux Champs* makes her so sad that she cannot hear it. She is a *sensitive.* Truly, I never imagined such an impressionable nature.

Very soon after marriage, Berlioz, having been relieved by the Government from the obligation, as Grand Prix, to spend a year in Germany, began to act what he calls "the painful *rôle* of *bénéficiaire*," and organised a dramatic performance, followed by a concert. In the first, Madame Berlioz played a scene from "Hamlet," her husband noting, with cruel pain, that her freedom of movement had been destroyed by the accident. Moreover, all the applause of the public was reserved for another artist. "Poor Ophelia, thy sun declining!—I was in despair." As for the concert, it was a complete *fiasco.* By the then rules of the Théâtre Italien the orchestra was not obliged to play after midnight, and on this occasion its members kept to the letter of their bond:—

While Weber's chorus was being sung these cowardly clowns, unworthy to be called musicians, slipped away. It was midnight. The other players, whom I paid, remained at their posts, and when I went up to begin the symphony I found myself surrounded by five violins, two violas, four basses, and a trombone. I knew not what to do in my fright. The public showed no inclination to go away; they even began to be impatient and to demand the symphony. . . . At last, in the midst of the tumult, a voice cried from the balcony, "The 'Marche au Supplice!'" I answered, "I cannot play the 'Marche au Supplice' with five violins. It is not my fault; the orchestra has gone away. I hope that the public"— . . . I was flushed with shame and indignation. The audience then went away disappointed, the concert ended, and my enemies did not forget to say that my music put the musicians to flight.

The concert, nevertheless, brought in 7,000 francs, which sum immediately disappeared in the gulf of Madame Berlioz' debts. Hereupon the master resolved to try again, and give

a concert at the Conservatoire with a more trustworthy orchestra. This proved a complete success:—

Finally, to crown good fortune, a man, when the public had gone away—a man with long hair, piercing eyes, strange and ravaged face, a son of genius, a colossus among giants, whom I had never seen, and of whom the first sight troubled me profoundly—waited for me in the hall, stopped me to shake my hand, and crowded upon me burning eulogies which set me on fire both at heart and head. This was Paganini.

A few weeks later Paganini called upon Berlioz and said, "I have a wonderful viola, an admirable Stradivarius, and I wish to play upon it in public. But I have no fitting music, and I am sure that you could provide it." In vain Berlioz protested that such a virtuoso should write for himself. "No, no, I insist," replied the great man. "You will succeed. As for me, I am suffering too much to compose, and could not dream of it." This was the origin of the symphony "Harold en Italie" with viola solo, produced at the Conservatoire, November 23, 1834.

The letters to Humbert make mention of this work in an interesting manner. In one (May 16, 1834) we read:*—

I have finished the first three parts of my new symphony with viola principal, and I am about to conclude the fourth. I believe that it will be good, and, above all, very curiously picturesque. . . . There is a "March of Pilgrims singing the Evening Prayer," which I hope will have a reputation in the month of December.

Subsequently (August 31, 1834) he wrote:†—

I think I have told you that my symphony with viola principal, entitled "Harold" was finished two months ago. Paganini, I believe, will find that the viola is not sufficiently treated *en concerto*. It is a symphony upon a new plan, and not a composition written for the purpose of showing off individual talent like his. I shall always be indebted to him for having made me undertake it. It is being copied at this moment, and will be performed in November at the first concert which I shall give at the Conservatoire.

Men with decided character always make decided enemies, and we have seen against what opposition and intrigue Berlioz had sometimes to contend. Now a fresh example presents itself. In 1836 the Minister of the Interior set

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 148. † Ibid., p. 150.

apart an annual sum of 3,000 francs for the encouragement of sacred compositions, and resolved to begin by asking Berlioz to write a Mass.* The master received unofficial news of this, and, overjoyed, at once sought an interview with M. Gasparin. "I am just leaving the Government," said the Minister, "and this measure will be my musical testament. You have received the order for the Requiem?" "No, sir, and it was only by chance that I heard of your good intentions towards me." "How can that be! I directed the order to be sent to you eight days ago. This is owing to the negligence of the office. I will see to it." But the fact was that the Director of Fine Arts, who did not like the Minister's project and loved Berlioz but little, had purposely kept back the order, hoping that, when M. Gasparin left the Government, the whole matter would drop. His mean trick failed, as it deserved to fail. On the last day of office M. Gasparin sent for the Director, and, in severe terms, commanded him to forward the commission to Berlioz at once. Which was done. In revenge, the master allows us to see how fitted the Director was for his post:—

This arbiter of the destinies of art condescended to recognise no value in any music save Rossini's. One day, however, after having in my presence passed under the saw of his disdainful appreciation all the ancient and modern masters of Europe, with the exception of Beethoven, whom he had forgotten, he bethought himself all at once and said, "However, there is one of them, I think—his name is—what does he call himself?—a German, whose symphonies they play at the Conservatoire." "Beethoven?" "Yes, Beethoven. He is not without talent." I myself heard the Director of Fine Arts say this. He admitted that Beethoven *was not without talent!*

The "Requiem" was composed in a fury of haste, Berlioz even adopting a sort of musical shorthand to catch up his crowding ideas, and, after a good deal of fuss and pother, it was performed at the Invalides in commemoration of the fall of Constantine. Habeneck conducted, and Berlioz deliberately charges him with trying to ruin the work, because at its most critical moment he laid down his *bâton* and took

* From the letters to Humbert ("Lettres Intimes") it would appear that the Requiem was ordered for the anniversary funeral service of the victims of Fieschi, that the price agreed upon was 4,000 francs, and that the performance took place towards the end of 1837.

a pinch of snuff. "I had my eye upon him," says the master, "and in a moment, pivoting upon one foot, I threw myself before him, stretched out my arms, and marked the time of the new movement. The orchestra followed me in due order; I conducted the movement to its end, and the effect I desired was produced. When, at the last words of the chorus, Habeneck saw the 'Tuba Mirum' saved, he said, 'What a cold sweat I was in! Without you we should have been lost.' 'Yes, I know it well,' I replied, looking at him steadily." Berlioz had great difficulty in obtaining the promised 2,000 francs for the expenses of performance, and still more in securing the 3,000 francs which were his by the terms of M. Gasparin's *ordonnance*. At last he would wait no longer:—

One morning I went to the Home Office, blue, pale with rage, resolved to make a row, resolved upon anything. On entering, I said to the Director, "It decidedly appears that you will not pay me!" "My dear Berlioz," he answered, "you know it is not my fault. I have taken all care, and made severe investigations. The money destined for you has disappeared, and gone somewhere else. I don't know in what office it is to be found. Ah! if such things happened in mine!" "What! the funds destined for fine arts go out of your office without your knowing it! Your budget is then at the disposition of the first comer? But no matter. I am not going to trouble myself with such questions. A Requiem was ordered by the Minister of the Interior at the price of 3,000 francs; I must have 3,000 francs." "*Mon Dieu!* have a little patience. The matter shall be considered. Besides, there is talk of the Cross for you." "A fig for your Cross! Give me my money." "But"— "There is no *but*," I replied, upsetting a chair. "I give you till to-morrow noon, and if at twelve o'clock precisely I have not received the amount, I will make a scandal with the Minister such as you have never experienced. You know that I am able to do it." Upon this the Director, quite upset, and forgetting his hat, ran towards the Minister's room, I following and shouting, "Tell him that I should be ashamed to treat my bootmaker as he is treating me, and that his conduct towards me will soon enjoy a rare celebrity." This time I had found a crack in the Minister's armour. Ten minutes later the Director returned with 3,000 francs, taken from the chest of the Fine Arts Department. They had found the money.

Soon after the events just narrated, a professorship of harmony became vacant at the Conservatoire, and Berlioz

applied for it. This brought about another interview with Cherubini, who, we are told, began the conversation in the sweetest voice at his command :—

C. You offer yourself for the harmony class?
B. Yes, sir.
C. Ah!—but, you see—you will have that class!—your reputation, however—your connections—
B. So much the better, sir; I have asked for it in order to have it.
C. Yes, but—this is what troubles me—I have wished to give the place to another.
B. In that case, sir, I withdraw my application.
C. No, no; I don't desire that, because, you see, it will be declared that I was the cause of your action.
B. Well, then, I remain in the ranks.
C. I tell you that you will have the place if you persist, and—I never intended it for you.
B. What is to be done?
C. You know that it is necessary—it is necessary—it is necessary to be a pianist to teach harmony at the Conservatoire; you know it, my dear—
B. It is necessary to be a pianist? Ah! I never suspected that. That is an excellent reason. I will write to you and say that, not being a pianist, I cannot aspire to profess harmony at the Conservatoire, and that I withdraw my candidature.
C. Yes, my dear—but—but—but I do not wish to be the cause of your—
B. No, far from that. Of course I ought to withdraw, having been stupid enough to forget that one must be a pianist to teach harmony.
C. Yes, my dear—come, let us embrace. You know how I love you.
B. Oh! yes, sir, I know.

The exquisite humour of this scene would be spoilt by comment, but we should add that Berlioz, who enjoyed it immensely, went away priding himself on the consideration which kept him from saying to Cherubini, "Since you cannot play the piano, how do you yourself contrive to teach harmony?" He did better to wait, and, as he waited, the opportunity came, after its manner in such cases :—

I had a seat in the parterre of the Opéra when his (Cherubini's) "Ali Baba" was produced. This work, everybody agrees, is one of the palest and most empty from his pen. Towards the end of the first act, tired of listening to nothing in particular, I could

not help saying, loud enough to be heard by my neighbours, "I'll give twenty francs for an idea." In the middle of the second act, irritated by the same musical mirage, I went on bidding, "Forty francs for an idea." The finale began: "Eighty francs for an idea." The finale ended, I rose, threw out these words, "Ah! ma foi, I am not rich enough! I withdraw," and went away. Two or three young men, seated near me on the same bench, looked indignant. They were pupils of the Conservatoire who had been placed there to admire *usefully* their director's work. They did not forget, as I learned afterwards, to go the next day and tell him of my insolent offer, and my more insolent discouragement.

At this time our master was a very busy man, and worked hard, stimulated, perhaps, by the birth of a son. His "Francs Juges" was scarcely completed, yet he undertook the composition of another opera on the subject of "Benvenuto Cellini," libretto by Leon de Wailly—"a young poet of great talent"—and Auguste Barbier. The poem was read to M. Crosnier, the manager of the Opéra-Comique, and by him refused. As to this Berlioz remarks, addressing Humbert:*—

Despite the protestations of Crosnier, we think that I am the cause of the refusal. They look upon me, at the Opéra-Comique as a *sapeur*, an upsetter of the national "form," and will not have me. Wherefore they refuse the words, so as not to have to admit the music of a madman.

There was also talk with De Wailly of a grand opera in three acts on an historical subject, and some portions of this work appear to have been written, since we read in a subsequent letter (November 30, 1834) to Humbert: †—

If you like, I will have copied for you in score the romance which Mdlle. Falcon sang at the last concert. It is the one you know under the name of "Le Paysan Breton," with new words, by Auguste Barbier, set to the music. This little piece is part of an opera which we at one time believed we should see represented at the Opéra this winter; but the intrigues of Habeneck and his fellows, and the stupid obstinacy of Véron, after some hesitations, have adjourned the matter indefinitely.

On December 16, however, Berlioz was able to write that his "Benvenuto Cellini" had been accepted at the Opéra by the new director, Duponchel.

Berlioz was just now almost as busy with the literature of

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 151. † Ibid., p. 155.

music as with music itself. The publisher Coste commenced the issue of a work entitled, "Les Hommes Illustrés de l'Italie," and it seems that Berlioz was applied to for biographies of the Italian musicians. At any rate he speaks more than once to Humbert of Coste's enterprise, and there is a letter extant in which we clearly find him engaged upon a biographical task. That letter now appears in print for the first time :*—

My dear Bottée de Toulmon,—You, who are the pearl of biblical monomaniacs, can you help to relieve me from an embarrassment? I believe in your learning as much as in your readiness to oblige, and I now ask the help of both. Here are the facts. I have been asked to write for a journal some biographies of Italian musicians, and (if I except Marcello) I do not know where to find material for these "illustrations macaroniques." Aid me a little. Have you any Italian articles that I can translate? What can be found in Choron, or in the biography of Micaud? If you have discovered any treasure of this kind, write me a line; I shall take it as an infinite kindness. I am so overwhelmed with work of all kinds, with my articles, with my rehearsals at Notre Dame, which never end, and with the completion of my opera, that I know not how to find the time to come and see you. I will do so, however, when you are good enough to give me a rendezvous at the library† or at your own house on the morning of one of my rehearsal days—for example, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, at your choice.

Adieu! Pardon my new intrusion.

Your entirely devoted,

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

12, Rue St. Denis, Montmartre, November 11.

And after Saturday next, 35, Rue de Londres, Paris.

In addition to all his other labours the master contributed musical articles to no less than four journals—"the *Rénovateur*, which pays badly; the *Monde Dramatique* and the *Gazette Musicale*, which pay little; and the *Débats*, which pays well."

It is singular that the man who used his pen with so much vivacity and distinctiveness hated the employment beyond measure, and professed that the announcement of a first performance requiring his attendance and notice made him ill. On this matter, let us give his own words :—

* Autograph kindly lent for translation by Julian Marshall, Esq.

† M. de Toulmon was librarian at the Conservatoire, a post afterwards filled (1839) by Berlioz himself.

This task, always renewing itself, poisoned my life. However, apart from the pecuniary means it brought me—means I could not afford to sacrifice—it was almost impossible for me to give it up, under pain of being helpless in presence of the furious and nearly countless hatreds it had raised against me. For the press, in a certain connection, is more precious than the lance of Achilles. Not only does it cure, at times, the wounds which it has made, but, again, it acts as a defence to those who serve it. However, to what miserable shifts am I not driven!—what circumlocution in order to avoid telling the truth!—what concessions made to social relations, and even to public opinion!—what rage repressed!—what shame swallowed! And they find me passionate, wicked, contemptible! Ah! cads who treat me thus, if I were to speak my full mind, you would see that the bed of nettles upon which you say I stretch you is a bed of roses compared with the grill whereon you would frizzle.

To this last adjuration every man prominent among critics, as was Berlioz, adds, we doubt not, his fervent "Amen." On the same subject, our master continues:—

I must do myself the justice to say that on no account whatever have I withheld the fullest expression of esteem, admiration, or enthusiasm for works and for men who have inspired me with those feelings. I have warmly praised men who have done me injury, and with whom I had ceased to have personal relations. Indeed, the only compensation that the press has afforded me for much suffering has been the way opened for my sympathy with the grand, the true, and the beautiful wherever I have found them. It appears to me sweet to praise a talented enemy, and, besides, it is a duty which an honest man should be proud to discharge; just the same as a misleading word written in favour of a friend without ability should cause pain. In both cases, however, as all critics know, the man who hates you, furious at the merit you seem to acquire by publicly and warmly praising him, execrates you more; and the man who loves you, always discontented with the credit you have painfully given him, loves you less.

The connection of Berlioz with the *Journal des Débats* brought him, however, a prospect of more than shame and suffering. One day, the editor, M. Bertin, said to his musical critic, "My dear friend, your position is now made. I have spoken about you to the Minister of the Interior, and he has decided to give you, notwithstanding Cherubini's opposition, a composition class at the Conservatoire, with a salary of 1,500 francs, and, more, a pension of 4,500 francs from the funds of his department destined for the encourage-

ment of fine arts. With 6,000 francs a year you will be free from all disquietude, and able to give yourself up freely to composition." M. Bertin's words were repeated to Berlioz by the chief of the division of fine arts, and naturally called forth the warmest gratitude. But "put not your trust in princes" or in their ministers. Berlioz tells us (using large capitals): "This promise, made spontaneously to a man who asked nothing, was no better kept than so many others, and from that time to the present moment I have heard no more about it."

Belonging to this period of the master's career are several letters not unworthy of attention here. One, addressed to Hofmeister, the Leipzig publisher, contains a strong remonstrance against the injustice done to the overture "Les Francs Juges," in an arrangement issued by him for four hands, and actually attributed to the composer. About the particulars we need not trouble ourselves, but the following passages are of interest:*—

Your arranger has cut my score, pared it, trimmed it, and stitched it in such a fashion that I see in many parts only something to laugh at, the honour of which I beg him to keep to himself. If a Beethoven or a Weber had taken a similar liberty in my case, I should have submitted to that which, nevertheless, I could only regard as a cruel humiliation; but neither Weber or Beethoven would ever have made me suffer thus. If the work is bad, they would not trouble to touch it; if it had seemed to them good, they would have respected the form, the thought, the details, and even the faults. Besides, men of that stamp not being more common in Germany than elsewhere, I have reason to believe that my overture has not fallen into the hands of a very extraordinary musician.

After pointing out the particular faults of the arrangement, and indicating the only adaptation of which he approved, Berlioz thus concludes: "As for every other publication of the same kind dealing with this work, whether attributed to me or not, I disown it formally, and upon this I pray God to pardon the arrangers as I pardon them." The petition is perhaps scarcely definite enough to satisfy those whom it directly concerns, but others can sympathise with the righteous indignation of a composer who sees his music maltreated, and the guilt of the maltreatment laid at his own door.

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 113 *et seq.*

Another letter, addressed to Robert Schumann, expresses the gratitude of Berlioz for the production at Leipzig by that master of the overture just named. Schumann, having carefully studied and rehearsed the work, introduced it with success to the German audience, and the result, by comparison with failure elsewhere, gave our composer a text upon which he did not fail to preach. At least one part of the sermon has an interest for English readers:*—

Will you convey my thanks to the artists? Their patience in studying this difficult piece has the greater value in my eyes because I have not had much occasion to praise that of several musical societies who have made the same attempt. Save those of Douai and Dijon, they have become discouraged after a first rehearsal, and the work, after being lacerated in a thousand ways, has perforce returned to the bookshelves as worthy, at most, to figure in a collection of monstrosities. It even appears that a trial of this kind diverted the London Philharmonic Society. . . . Picture to yourself, in effect, movements forced at the double in the adagio; dragged back proportionately in the allegro, so as to produce that flattened out (*aplatissant*) *mezzo termine* insupportable to all who possess the smallest musical sentiment; imagine violins deciphering at first sight passages difficult enough despite the *tempo comfortabile* at which the allegro is taken; the trombones starting ten or twelve bars too soon; the drummer losing his head in the rhythm *à trois temps*—and you will have an idea of the delectable *charivari* resulting. I do not dispute the ability of "MM. les Philharmoniques de l'Argyle Room" (*sic*). Heaven preserve me from doing so! I point out only the strange way in which they conduct their rehearsals. No doubt we here often make bad music at the first trial of a new piece; but as, in our judgment, nobody, not even English artists, possesses inborn science, and there is no shame in studying with attention and courage that which cannot be understood all at once, we begin again three times, four times, ten times, if necessary, and that for several days in succession. In that way we secure a performance nearly always correct; sometimes surprising.

Berlioz then goes on to tell Schumann that he regretted the publication of his overture, that he had declined offers to print his symphonies, and that he held it better for a composer to keep his works for a long while under fatherly care:—

I love them, these poor children, with a paternal love which has nothing Spartan about it, and I a thousand times prefer keeping them in obscurity, but intact, to sending them abroad in search of

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 116 *et seq.*

glory or of frightful wounds and death. At the risk of appearing ridiculous, I must say that I have never understood how rich painters are able, without internal gripings, to separate themselves from their finest works for a certain number of crowns, and to spread them over the four quarters of the world, as is their constant practice. . . . The writers of poetry and prose are alone able to sell their works without running too much risk of seeing them disfigured, like musicians, and without the pain of never seeing them again, like painters. . . . It is an intense joy for the composer to brood over his work, so to speak; to shield it as long as possible from the storms which bad orchestras, bad singers, bad directors, and the traders in *contredanses* call up around it; there is for him an unspeakable happiness in letting it see daylight only at long intervals, when assiduous care has given to its beauty all its distinction, when the air is pure, the weather soft and serene, and the society select. The number of compositions that one is able, without condemning them to absolute obscurity, thus to tear for long out of the teeth of the press, that lion *quærens quem devorat*, is unhappily but few; let us not further limit them.

A third letter is one in which Berlioz gossips to Liszt in his best style, as a mere retailer of Parisian news, "without passion, without blame or praise; in a word, with the calm insipidity of an adept of that famous philosophic school which we founded in Rome in the year of grace 1830, and called 'School of Absolute Indifference to Universal Matter.'" Some of his gossip is worth hearing at this distant time. He meets, on the Boulevard, the violinist, Batta, just arrived from London :—

Berlioz. What are they doing in London?

B. Absolutely nothing; they despise music, poetry, drama, everything there, except the Italian Opera, where the Queen's presence attracts a crowd; all the other musical enterprises are abandoned. . . . I arrived too late, and it is the same with Artot, who, despite his success at the Philharmonic, despite the incontestable beauty of his talent, has a tedious time of it.

Berlioz. And Doehler?

B. Doehler is dull also.

Berlioz. And Thalberg?

B. Thalberg cultivates the provinces.

Berlioz. And Benedict?

B. Encouraged by the vogue of his first work, he is writing an English opera.

Then Batta invites Berlioz to meet him at Charles Hallé's, where they mean to drink beer and make music :—

M. Hallé is a young German pianist, who has long hair, who is tall and thin, who plays the piano magnificently, who understands music before he has read it—that is to say, he is inclined to resemble thee. I found his countryman, Heller, at his house. Serious talent, vast musical intelligence, rapid conception, and executive power—such are the qualities as composer and pianist with which all those credit him who know him well, and I am of the number. Hallé and Batta made us hear a Sonata in B flat of Felix Mendelssohn. The learned texture and firm style of this piece was much admired. "He is a great master," said Heller. We chorused the remark as we drank our beer. Then came the Sonata in A major of Beethoven, the first movement drawing from the auditory exclamations, asseverations, cries of enthusiasm. The menuet and finale only redoubled our intense musical exaltation, the more because champagne was then going round.

We have already referred to "Benvenuto Cellini." That work went slowly on, was accomplished with difficulty, and would not, the master tells us, have been got through at all but for the kindness of Ernest Legouvé :—

A man who writes an opera should be free from all other work —that is to say, his means of living should be assured him for the necessary time. But this was far from being my case; I lived from day to day only on the articles I wrote for the papers, and these took up my time almost exclusively. I did my best to give two months to my score in the first flush of the fever with which it inspired me; the imperative need, however, soon came to drop the pen of the composer, in order to use with all my might that of the critic. This gave me an indescribable heartache. But I could not hesitate. I had a wife and son; could I allow them to want the necessaries of life?

In the midst of this trouble came Legouvé :—

L. Where is your opera?
B. I have not yet finished the first act. I cannot find time to work at it.
L. But if you had the time?
B. *Parbleu!* Then I should write from morning to night.
L. What do you want in order to be free?
B. The two thousand francs which I have not got.
L. And if some one. . . . If some one were to—come, why don't you help me?
B. What! What do you say?
L. Well, if one of your friends were to lend you the money? . . .
B. What friend could I ask for such a sum?
L. There is no need to ask for it. I offer it.

Berlioz adds :—

I leave others to imagine my delight. Legouvé lent me the money the next day, thanks to which I was able to finish "Benvenuto." Excellent heart! Worthy and charming man! Distinguished writer, artist himself, he had divined my suffering, and, in his exquisite delicacy, he feared to give me pain when offering the means to end it!

At length "Benvenuto" was put in rehearsal, but that process turned out to be anything save agreeable to Berlioz. Duponchel, the Director of the Opéra, looked upon the composer as a "sort of madman," whose music was a tissue of extravagances, and he avowedly determined to produce the work "not because of its music, which he well knew to be absurd, but because of the drama, which he found charming." The Director's hostility to Berlioz was soon reflected in the attitude of the company, from Habeneck downwards, the orchestra always excepted. However, the opera was played (September 3, 1838), and Berlioz himself tells us with what result. "They awarded the overture an exaggerated success, and hissed all the rest with admirable unanimity and energy." This judgment, however, the composer did not accept. Fourteen years later, he went through the score in the light of enlarged experience and more cultured taste, and saw in it a "variety of ideas, an impetuous *verve*, and a flood of musical colour" which deserved a better fate. Among the minority of the audience was Paganini, who went away and said, "If I were Director of the Opéra, I would engage that young man this very day to write three other works; I would give him his price in advance, and reap a harvest of gold." It may have been that a sense of injustice done prompted the great violinist to the liberal action presently to be noticed. There only remains to add, as regards the production of "Benvenuto," that the composer, ever grateful to those associated with him in the performance of his works, addressed the subjoined letter to the orchestra of the Opéra :*—

To MM. the Artists of the Opéra.

Gentlemen,—At the moment when my work is about to be represented, I feel I ought to thank all the artists who take part in its execution for the zeal and the patience brought by them to the difficult work of rehearsal. Whatever be the fate of my score,

* Autograph kindly lent for translation by Julian Marshall, Esq.

I shall always preserve a remembrance of the proofs of interest and devotion which I have received from MM. the artists of the Opéra, and I beg them to accept the expression of my gratitude.
HECTOR BERLIOZ.

In the December following, Berlioz gave two concerts at the Conservatoire, of which the first no more than covered its expenses. To do better with the second, the master announced his two symphonies, the "Fantastique" and "Harold," and this had the result of attracting Paganini, who, though its suggester, had never heard the last-named composition. At the close of the performance, Paganini went to Berlioz, accompanied by his son, Achille, and the following scene took place:—

In consequence of an affection of the larynx, which ultimately killed him, he (Paganini) had entirely lost his voice, and only his son, when in a place perfectly silent, could hear or, perhaps, guess at his words. He made a sign to the boy, who, mounting on a chair, placed his ear to his father's mouth and listened attentively. Presently Achille got down and turned towards me. "My father," he said, "desires me to assure you, sir, that in all his life he has never received an impression from any concert as from this; that your music has quite upset him, and that he cannot resist throwing himself at your knees to thank you." At these strange words I made a gesture of incredulity and confusion, but Paganini took me by the arm, and, mustering all his voice, said, "Yes! yes!" drew me into the room where many of my musicians still were, went down on his knee and kissed my hand.

Stopping in the street to tell this story to M. Bertin, editor of the *Débats*, Berlioz caught cold, and was on a sick bed when Achille Paganini came, saying, "My father will be very sorry to learn that you are still unwell, and if he were not himself suffering, he would call upon you. Here is a letter he desired me to bring." As Berlioz was about to unseal it, the boy stopped him: "There is no answer needed; my father told me that you should read it when you were alone." He then hurried away. The letter ran thus:—

My dear Friend,—Beethoven dead, only Berlioz is able to make him live again, and I, who have tasted your divine compositions, worthy of a genius such as you—I believe it my duty to beg your kind acceptance, as homage on my part, of twenty thousand francs, which will be paid on presentation of the inclosed. Believe me always your affectionate NICOLO PAGANINI.

Pale and overwhelmed, Berlioz held the letter in his hand as his wife entered the room :—

She cried, "Allons! what is it now? Some new misfortune? But let us take heart. We have endured the others." "No, no! on the contrary!" "What then?" "Paganini!" "Well?" "He has sent me—twenty thousand francs!" "Louis! Louis!" cried Henriette, distractedly, running to my son, who was playing in the next room, "come, come here to your father! come and thank the good God for what He has done for your father!" Then my wife and child, running together, fell prostrate by the side of my bed, the mother praying, the astonished boy by her side joining his little hands. O Paganini! what a scene! If you had only been able to witness it!

As soon as possible Berlioz wrote to his benefactor in the following terms :—

O worthy and great artist! How can I express my thankfulness? I am not rich, but, believe me, the approbation of a man of genius such as you touches me a thousand times more than the royal generosity of your present. Words fail me; I will run to embrace you the moment I am able to quit my bed, where I am still detained.

Paganini's generous behaviour led to much "envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness" among those who thought Berlioz undeserving, either absolutely or by comparison with themselves. On the other hand, Jules Janin wrote a glowing article in the *Journal des Débats*, and sent a private letter to the master, which is of interest as showing the enthusiasm Berlioz was able to excite in a man like Janin :—

Dear Berlioz,—I am absolutely bound to tell you of all my happiness on reading this morning the good and beautiful *lettre de change et de gloire* you have received from the illustrious Paganini. I do not speak of you; I do not speak only of the fortune which he has given you—three years of leisure, the time to produce masterpieces—I speak of that great name of Beethoven by which he has saluted you. And what more noble contradiction to give to the small people who have chosen not to recognise your "Cellini" as the brother of "Fidelio"? Then let Paganini be praised as his good actions deserve, and let him be henceforth inviolable. He has been great and generous towards you; more generous than a king, than a minister, than any European artists—the veritable kings of men. He has sustained you with his approbation and his fortune; it is therefore more than ever an obligation to praise this great musician, who

has taken you by the hand. Dear Berlioz, I embrace you very tenderly, in all the joy of my heart.

As soon as Berlioz was able to leave his room, he hastened to Paganini's house:—

They tell me that he is walking up and down his billiard-room alone. I enter; we embrace each other without power to say a word. After some minutes, as I faltered out I know not what expressions of gratitude, Paganini, whose words the silence of the room permitted me to hear, stopped me, saying: "Don't speak any more about that. No. Add nothing. It has given me the most profound satisfaction I ever experienced in my life. You will never know what emotions your music excited; for years past I have not felt anything like it."

Berlioz then went home, paid his debts, found a good sum left to live upon yet awhile, and set about writing "Roméo et Juliette." In seven months that great work was completed and introduced to the public by three successive performances under its composer's direction. But the man who had made its creation possible was not present:—

To my great regret Paganini never heard or read it. I hoped always for his return to Paris. I waited, moreover, for the work to be revised and printed to send him a copy, but meanwhile he died at Nice, leaving me, amid so many other poignant sorrows, in ignorance as to whether he would have deemed worthy a work written to please him before all, and with the intention to justify in his own eyes that which he had done for the author. He himself seemed to regret much not knowing "Roméo et Juliette," and said so in a letter from Nice dated January 7, 1840, where also occurs this phrase, "Now all is done, envy can only keep silent."

But if envy closed her mouth, criticism did not:—

Poor dear, great friend! he had never read, happily, the horrible stupidities written in several Parisian journals about the plan of the work, the Introduction, the Adagio, the Queen Mab, the recitative of Friar Laurence. One reproached me for the extravagance of attempting this new form of symphony; another found in the scherzo of Queen Mab only a petty grotesque noise, like that of syringes badly greased. A third, in speaking of the love scene of the Adagio, of the piece which three-fourths of the musicians of Europe who know it put at the head of all I have written, declared that I had not comprehended Shakespeare. Frog puffed up with silliness, when thou canst prove that to me. . . . Never did criticisms more unexpected, more cruelly

wound me; and, as usual, none of the Aristarchs who wrote for or against the work pointed out one of its defects, which I successively corrected later, as I was able to discern them.

Soon after the composition of "Roméo et Juliette" Berlioz had further experience of Government patronage. The year was 1840, and the authorities decided to celebrate in a special manner the tenth anniversary of the Revolution of July. Under these circumstances, and with direct regard to the ceremony of reinterring the remains of the "patriots" beneath the column on the Place de la Bastille, M. Rémusat, Minister of the Interior, commissioned Berlioz to write a symphonic work for the sum of 10,000 francs, out of which he was to pay the cost of copies and performance. No task more congenial could have been set the master, and he addressed himself with avidity to the composition of a "Symphonie funèbre et triomphale" for 200 wind instruments. The work was conceived in three parts: first, a funeral march for the procession; second, an "adieu" addressed to the illustrious dead, as the bodies were lowered into the vault; third, a movement of apotheosis, or Hymn of Glory. In actual performance, this Symphony made no effect. During the procession, little or nothing of the march could be heard, while, as soon as the last movement began, the National Guards, weary of standing in a burning sun, commenced their defile to the noise of fifty drums. For this *fiasco* some compensation was made by the success of the work at a public rehearsal, which led to the engagement of Berlioz and his "200" for four concerts, whereat the symphony figured largely and brought much money. M. Rémusat, unlike his predecessor, paid the sum agreed upon without delay; but out of the 10,000 francs Berlioz received for himself no more than 2,800. The rest went in expenses. The master was satisfied nevertheless, if only because he had made the jealous Habeneck exclaim, "Decidedly that —— has grand ideas."

In the same year Berlioz went on his first artistic journey —as far as Brussels. This led to a domestic crisis, which should be described in his own words:—

Under one pretext or another my wife had always set herself against my travelling projects, and if I had listened to her I should not have quitted Paris to this day. A foolish jealousy, for which during a long while I had given no reason, was at the bottom of her opposition. In order to carry out my purpose

I was obliged, therefore, to keep it secret, to smuggle my music and a portmanteau out of the house, and to start suddenly, leaving a letter explaining my disappearance. But I did not go alone: I had a travelling companion, who, since then, has accompanied me in all my excursions. In consequence of being accused, tortured in a thousand fashions, always unjustly, and finding no longer peace and repose at home, I finished, chance aiding, by taking the benefit of a position of which I had only the evils. Thus my life was completely changed. To cut short the story of this episode in my career, and not to enter further into sad details, I will only say that from the day in question, and after squabbles not less prolonged than painful, a separation by agreement took place between my wife and me. I see her often; my love for her has not changed, and the sad state of her health makes her only the more dear.

So, while the suffering wife remained in Paris with all her bitter recollections, the husband travelled about in company with her rival. Thus ended love's young dream—the romance of Ophelia and her passionate adorer.

In the Belgian capital our master gave two concerts with results not altogether satisfactory. His music was attacked by Fétis with great vigour, and out of this grew a somewhat excited controversy on points of detail, as to which Berlioz complacently shows that the author of the "Universal Biography of Musicians" came off second best. We need not touch the points of dispute here. They belong to the dead past, and not to the living present. Returning to Paris, Berlioz made arrangements for a colossal concert before setting out on a more extended tour; again got into trouble with all about him; had to encounter a formidable conspiracy, and to pull his enterprise through a fire hot enough to have consumed it under a less energetic direction. As it was, he made no money, but was called upon to pay 360 francs out of his own pocket to meet the balance of costs and receipts. This done, he started on his tour, concerning the fortune of which we find a good deal of information in letters to different persons.

Before entering upon the experiences of Berlioz as an artist *en voyage*, notice is deserved by an important letter, dated October 3, 1841, and addressed to Humbert.* From this we find that the composer was at work upon another opera:—

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 191.

I am writing, as perhaps you know, a grand score in four acts upon a book by Scribe, entitled "La Nonne Sanglante." . . . Scribe has taken, as it appears to me, a large part of the famous legend, and has, moreover, finished the drama by a terrible *dénoûment* borrowed from a work by M. de Keratry, and of the greatest scenic effect.

This opera, which was never completed, and the subject of which was subsequently taken by Gounod, appears to have been intended for the next season at the great Paris house, since he refers to himself as "counted on" at that establishment. In the same letter is a characteristic and generous reference to Spontini, who, at the moment, was under a cloud in Prussia:—

Spontini has returned. I had written to him at Berlin a letter* on the last representation of "Cortez," which nearly threw me into nervous spasms. It has crossed him. . . . He has been, so to speak, chased out of Prussia, for which reason I thought it my duty to write. One should not in such a case neglect the smallest protestation adapted to soothe the ulcerated heart of the man of genius, whatever may be the defects of his spirit and even of his egoism. The temple, perhaps, is unworthy of the god who dwells therein, but the god is god.

One passage in the letter addressed to Spontini is too curious to be passed over here:—

If music were not abandoned to charity, there would be in some part of Europe a lyric Pantheon exclusively devoted to the representation of monumental masterpieces, which would be performed at long intervals, with worthy care and pomp, by *artists*, and heard at solemn artistic festivals by sympathetic and intelligent auditors.

When Wagner's theatre at Bayreuth was formally "inaugurated" in 1876, several writers pointed out that a French composer (Grétry) had anticipated all that was peculiar in the design of the building. But here we have another French composer expressing the very idea which animated Wagner in erecting the edifice. The German master, indeed, simply carried out the French master's conception—not the only instance, by the way, in which the one has borrowed from the other.

The letter of October 3, 1841, further shows that Berlioz had

* Published in "Les Soirées de l'Orchestre," p. 189 *et. seq.*

been engaged in setting the dialogue of "Der Freischütz" as recitative:*—

I have written this year, among other things, recitatives for the "Freischütz" of Weber, which I am about to mount at the Opéra without the least mutilation, correction, or *castilblazade* of any sort, in the piece or in the music. It is a wonderful masterpiece.

We have a part, at least, of the conversation between composer and *impresario* (M. Pillet) with reference to this undertaking:—

B. I am not sure that one ought to add to "Freischütz" the recitatives you ask of me, but as that is a condition without which it cannot be represented at the Opéra, and as, if I do not write them, you will confide the task to some one else less familiar, perhaps, with Weber than I am, and certainly less devoted than myself to the glorification of his masterpiece, I accept your offer on one condition: that "Freischütz" shall be played just as it is, with nothing changed either in drama or music.

P. That is precisely my intention. Do you think me capable of renewing the scandals of "Robin des Bois"?

B. Very good: in that case I will see about the work. How do you intend to distribute the parts?

P. I shall give Agatha to Madame Stoltz, Annette to Mdlle. Dobré, and Duprez will take Max.

B. I say "No."

P. Why not?

B. You will know soon.

P. Bouché will make an excellent Caspar.

B. And whom have you for the Hermit?

P. Oh! that's a useless part, which only adds to the length of the work. I intend to take it away altogether.

B. Only that? It is thus that you mean to respect "Freischütz," and not to imitate M. Castil-Blaze! We are far from being agreed. Allow me to retire; I cannot possibly mix myself up with this new *correction.*

P. Mon Dieu! You are thorough in your opinions. Well, we will keep the Hermit—we will keep everything, I give you my word.

Berlioz found his extreme reverence for the original some-

* According to the *Memoirs*, this task was undertaken later—that is to say, after his return from the German tour. The evidence of a letter written at the time must, however, be preferred, especially as the master's memory seems to have served him to indifferent purpose on many occasions when preparing his autobiography.

what inconvenient, since the "uncut" dialogue, put into recitative, stretched out to an enormous length; and, as usual, he had great difficulty in making the leading artists show any respect whatever to the composer. Duprez insisted upon such extraordinary transpositions that the part was taken away from him, and Madame Stoltz injured Agatha's second air by singing it in F instead of A flat. "There is," says Berlioz, "a fourth part of real difficulty, another fourth of ignorance, and a good half of caprice in all this unwillingness of singers to render their parts as they are written." The inevitable ballet was another obstacle in the way of Berlioz at the Grand-Opéra. Powerless to hinder its introduction into "Der Freischütz," the master scored for orchestra "L'Invitation à la Valse," but this did not satisfy the dancers, who thought to gain their end by asking Berlioz, through the manager, to add the Ball scene in his "Symphonie Fantastique" and the Fête music from his "Roméo et Juliette." Of this he would not hear, but ultimately consented to introduce selections from "Preciosa" and "Oberon." We may add that during the subsequent absence of Berlioz from Paris, the manager worked his will upon Weber's opera, and so cut it about that Castil-Blaze and "Robin des Bois" lost their bad pre-eminence in favour of Pillet and the new version. On this the indignant author of the recitatives exclaims:—

And how they perform that which remains! What singers! what a conductor! what lazy sleepiness in the movements! what discordance in the *ensembles!* what a heavy, stupid, and revolting interpretation from beginning to end! Be, then, an inventor, a torch-bearer, an inspired man, a genius, to suffer torture, spitting, and abuse. Unmannerly hucksters! While waiting the whip of a new Messiah able to chase you from the temple, rest assured that every one in Europe who possesses the least artistic sentiment entertains for you the most profound contempt.

It must be owned that in the lowest depths of anguish Berlioz was able to relieve himself by a vigorous expression of opinion.

The tour which now demands attention began badly. At Brussels a promised concert could not be given because a favourite singer had not arrived. The people there professed great annoyance, and their visitor did not soothe them when he said, in his most ironical vein: "Be calm. The concert will not take place, and you will not have the pain of listen-

ing to my music. That is sufficient compensation, I think, for such a misfortune." Going on to Mayence, Berlioz waited upon Schott, the publisher, who said, "I don't think—you cannot—give a concert here. There is no orchestra, there is no public, and we have no money." Away to Frankfort flew our master. Some concerts had been arranged for in the Free City, and there would compensation be found. We see the actual result in the course of a conversation with Guhr, director of the theatre—"a little man with bright, piercing eyes; rapid gestures, brief and incisive words, and a strong habit of swearing." We shall put asterisks in place of Guhr's oaths:—

G. Oh! is it you, my dear fellow? You haven't received my letter, then?

B. What letter?

G. I wrote to you at Brussels to say. * * * Wait. I can't speak well—a misfortune—'tis a great misfortune. Ah! here is our *régisseur*, who will act as interpreter.

Then he went on, still in French:—

G. Tell M. Berlioz how much I am upset; that I wrote asking him not to come; that the little Milanollos fill the theatre every evening; that we have never seen such a *furore* among the public * * * and that we must put aside for the moment grand music and grand concerts.

R. M. Guhr charges me to tell you, sir, that—

B. Don't take the trouble to repeat it. I have understood—too well understood—since he has not spoken in German.

G. Ha! ha! ha! I spoke French * * * without knowing it?

B. You know it very well, and I know that I must either return or boldly go on at the risk of elsewhere finding infant prodigies who will give me checkmate.

G. What am I to do, my dear fellow? These children bring in money. * * * French romances make money; French vaudevilles draw the crowd! What would you? * * * I am director; I cannot refuse money; but at any rate wait till to-morrow. I will let you hear "Fidelio" with Pischek and Mdlle. Capitaine, and * * * you can give me your opinion about our artists.

B. I believe them to be excellent, especially under your direction. But, my dear Guhr, why do you swear so much? Do you think it consoles me?

G. Ha! ha! that is said *en famille*. (He intended to say "familiarly.")

B. Then, since we are *en famille*, come and drink some Rhine wine; I forgive you your little Milanollos, and I will remain to

hear "Fidelio" and Mdlle. Capitaine, of whom you seem to be the lieutenant.

Having renewed at Frankfort his acquaintance with Ferdinand Hiller, Berlioz went on to Stuttgart and saw Lindpainter about giving a concert in the little capital. Lindpainter received him like a brother, but took up Schott's parable at Mayence: "This is a royal residence, it is true; but there is neither money nor a public." However, if Berlioz would proceed, he had only to take the Redoutensalle and pay eighty francs into the musicians' pension fund. The artists would rehearse with and play for him gratis. At the concert the Symphonie Fantastique and the Overture to "Les Francs Juges" were performed with an effect upon some of the leading connoisseurs such as induced them, on Berlioz' showing, to get rid of the composer without delay:—

As for Dr. Schilling, I am sure that he found everything execrable, and that he felt thoroughly ashamed of having taken the first steps to introduce to Stuttgart a brigand of my species, vehemently suspected of having violated music, and who . . . would make the chaste muse a sort of gipsy, less Esmeralda than Helen Macgregor. . . .

So the Stuttgart *cognoscenti* despatched Berlioz with a letter of introduction to the Baron von Billing, counsellor of the Prince of Hohenzollern-Hechingen, who held his little court at Hechingen, in the Black Forest. The Prince was devoted to music, and kept a small and somewhat doubtful orchestra about him. But Berlioz, gratified by a most cordial reception, put up with the orchestra, arranged his works to its capacity; and when the Prince helped the drummer to count his rests, when all difficult passages in the trumpet parts were cut out, and when the trombone player was allowed to sound only the notes of which he was sure, the performance went swimmingly, and everybody was pleased.

After returning to Stuttgart, Berlioz went to Carlsruhe, where it was not convenient to give a concert, the theatre having been taken by an Italian flautist. So, "full of respect for the flute," the master journeyed to Mannheim—a "very calm, cold, flat, and square" town, wherein a passion for music was no hindrance to sleep. Here a concert took place, with the "Harold" Symphony in the programme;

and then, weary of Mannheim, Berlioz made his way to Weimar through Frankfort, again encountering Guhr. "He recommenced swearing; I quitted him." Weimar, with its recollections of Goethe and Schiller, of Herder and Wieland, suited his poetic temperament, and he wrote to Liszt: "I breathe here." He did more—he flourished at Weimar. His concert, with its Symphonie Fantastique and "Francs Juges" overture, was an immense success; the hall was crowded, the applause long, and royalty sent its high officers charged with compliments. In such a town this success seemed doubly precious.

From Weimar to Leipzig was an easy journey, but Berlioz hesitated to make it because Mendelssohn was musical dictator there, and their artistic path had diverged so widely since the days when they met at Rome. At length, however, the French composer wrote to his German brother, and received a reply which set all doubts at rest. Mendelssohn's response is worth quoting for its thorough heartiness:—

My dear Berlioz,—I thank you with all my heart for your nice letter, and because you still preserve a remembrance of our Roman friendship. For myself, I shall never forget it while I live, and I am glad to have the prospect of soon telling you this by word of mouth. It will be my pleasure and duty to do all that I can towards making your stay in Leipzig happy and agreeable. I believe I can assure you that you will be satisfied with the town—I mean with the musicians and the public. Before writing, I have taken care to consult several persons who know Leipzig better than myself, and all confirm my opinion that you will have an excellent concert. The expenses of orchestra, hall, placards, &c., will be 110 crowns; the receipts may range between 600 and 800 crowns. You should be here to settle the programme and do all that is necessary at least ten days in advance. Furthermore, the directors of the Subscription Concerts charge me to ask if you will conduct one of your works at the concert to be given on February 22 for the benefit of the poor of the town. I hope you will accept their proposition after the concert you give yourself. I engage you, then, to come here as soon as you can leave Weimar, and shall be glad to shake you by the hand and say "Welcome" in Germany. Do not laugh at my bad French, as you used to do in Rome, but continue to be my good friend, as you were then, and as I shall be always your devoted,—FELIX MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

Here let us find room for a parenthesis. In 1864 Berlioz read the first volume of Mendelssohn's published letters, and

penned the following note concerning his expressions of friendship:—

I have just seen in the volume of Felix Mendelssohn's letters, published by his brother, in what consisted his "Roman friendship" for me. He said to his mother, clearly meaning myself, "—— is a true caricature, without a spark of talent, &c., &c. I have sometimes a wish to devour him." When he wrote that letter Mendelssohn was twenty-one, and did not know a single score of mine. I had then only penned a sketch of my Symphonie Fantastique, which he had not seen, and it was but a few days before he left Rome that I showed him my just finished overture to "King Lear."

Berlioz, however, forgot that he had often offended Mendelssohn's conceit—a quality which that composer, when young, nursed very tenderly, and could not bear to have touched. But the Frenchman did not thus act without being provoked. At the first interview of the two musicians, for example, Mendelssohn began talking of some parts of Berlioz' cantata, "Sardanapale," and said, when his new acquaintance expressed himself displeased with his own work, "I compliment you—on your taste. I was afraid you would be satisfied with that allegro. Frankly, it is a very miserable thing." This was rude, to say the least; but Mendelssohn was even more offensive the next day, when, hearing Berlioz profess admiration for Gluck, he coolly remarked, "Ah! *you* love Gluck?" as who should say: "How can a musician like you have ideas sufficiently elevated, and a sentiment of grandeur of style and truth of expression lively enough for the love of Gluck?" Berlioz made no answer at the time, but matured a characteristic scheme for revenging himself on his new acquaintance. Knowing that Mendelssohn would visit a common friend at a certain time, he preceded him, and placed on the piano a MS. copy of an air from "Telemaco," one of Gluck's little-known Italian operas:—

Mendelssohn came, looked at the music, took it to be part of some modern Italian opera, and began to play it. At the four last bars, the musical accent of which is truly sublime, I stopped him as he was imitating Rubini in a grotesque fashion, and said, with an air of astonishment, "Ah! you don't like Gluck!" "Gluck! how Gluck?" "Alas! my dear fellow, that piece is by him and not by Bellini, as you thought. You see that I know him better than you do, and that I am of your opinion—more than yourself."

On another occasion, when Berlioz was praising the metronome, Mendelssohn said, "What do we want with the metronome? It is a useless instrument. A musician who cannot, on seeing a piece, at once divine its movement is a booby." The next day Berlioz showed his friend the score of the "King Lear" overture. "Give me the time of it," said Mendelssohn, sitting down to play, and was answered, "Wherefore? Did you not say yesterday that a musician who" —— &c., &c. Retorts like these grievously offended the young German's self-esteem, but Berlioz confesses that, while "touchy" to the last degree about music, he could bear any amount of contradiction as regards other matters. Looking at all this, the very friendly letter we have quoted was a welcome surprise:—

It appeared to show a goodness of soul and an agreeableness of manner which I had not before known in him, and I was not slow to see, on arriving at Leipzig, that these excellent qualities had become his in reality. He had lost nothing at all of the inflexible rigidity of his artistic principles, but he no longer sought violently to impose them. . . . Only he was always a little too fond of the dead.

On reaching Leipzig and driving to the Gewandhaus, Berlioz found Mendelssohn busily rehearsing the "First Walpurgis Night," which was about to be produced. He was deeply impressed with the music, and when all was over hastened in a state of rapture to congratulate the composer. The two men met, with the same sad thought in each mind: "A dozen years have passed since we dreamed together on the plain of Rome!" Presently Berlioz asked his friend to make him a present of the *bâton* he had been using. "Willingly," replied Mendelssohn, "on condition that you send me yours." The exchange was made, and with Berlioz' wooden sceptre went the following letter:—

To the chief Mendelssohn.—Great Chief, we have promised to exchange our tomahawks. Behold mine! It is rough; thine is plain: only squaws and pale-faces love decorated arms. Be my brother, and when the Great Spirit shall send us to hunt in the land of souls, may our warriors hang our united tomahawks on the gate of counsel.

With reference to the style of this epistle, there is reason to believe that Berlioz had been reading Fenimore Cooper.

Mendelssohn behaved, we are told, "like a brother" in

the affair of his friend's concert, and would seem to have had his patience tried, since Berlioz was exigent about the orchestra, and offended some people by what was called his "insolent pretension." He wanted twenty-four violins, not sixteen only, and three instruments—to wit, a cor anglais, ophicleide, and harp—which practically were not to be found in Leipzig! What next, and next? But it was certainly curious that in musical Leipzig, under the reign of Mendelssohn, the only cor anglais was so bad that Berlioz preferred giving the part to a clarinet; the so-called ophicleide was a small instrument; not at all like the proper thing, while Mendelssohn, when he wanted harps, had to obtain them from Berlin. Berlioz could not do without a harp, and his friend Lepinski sent a M. Richter from Dresden. So far, good; but when an instrument had been hunted up in the city and restrung, it was found that Richter, though a capital musician, could only play the arpeggios usually required in theatrical orchestras. The upshot was that the borrowed instrument went back with thanks, and at the performance its music was played on the piano by Mendelssohn himself. In connection with the state of things thus revealed, it should, of course, be borne in mind that harps were not then so freely used in orchestral music as now. The concert went off very well, and the "Symphonie Fantastique," as usual, set the critics by the ears; while, at the succeeding performance for the poor, the Offertoire from Berlioz' "Requiem" stirred even Robert Schumann out of his "habitual mutism," and prompted him to say, "That surpasses all." His Leipzig work done, the master fell ill; recovered, and paid his doctor's account, at the worthy man's request, with an autograph copy of the Offertoire theme. Berlioz was flattered by this incident, but angry with himself for missing a pretty return. He inscribed the manuscript, "A M. le Docteur Clarus." "Carus, not Clarus," said the learned practitioner; on which Berlioz should immediately have written, but did not, "Patientibus *Carus* sed *Clarus* inter doctos."

From Leipzig the master went to Dresden, where he met Richard Wagner, then Sub-Chapelmaster under Reissiger. His observations upon the composer of "Rienzi" and the "Flying Dutchman"—both then achieved—show customary discernment and generosity. Berlioz heard only the second part of "Rienzi," which it was then usual to play in

two parts, and he hesitated to give an opinion about it. But of the "Flying Dutchman" he said :—

The work appears to me remarkable for its sombre colour and certain stormy effects perfectly indicated by the subject; but I am bound to recognise also an abuse of the *tremolo*, the more to be regretted as I had already noticed it in "Rienzi," and saw that it indicated in the author a certain indolence of spirit, against which he cannot too carefully guard. The sustained *tremolo* is of all orchestral effects that which soonest tires; besides, it demands no invention from the composer when accompanied neither above nor below by a salient idea. Still, whatever the fact on this point, honour is due to the royal thought which, in giving [Wagner] complete and active protection, has, so to speak, saved a young artist gifted with precious faculties.

After giving two concerts in Dresden, Berlioz returned to Leipzig for the second of his concerts there, subsequently proceeding to Brunswick, at the suggestion of Meyerbeer, and meeting with a success not far short of triumphant. Hamburg having been next visited, with the strange and unexpected result of discovering both an ophicleide and a harpist, the master descended upon the Prussian capital. Here he assisted at a performance of Bach's great "Passion," and was much struck by the "attention, respect, and piety" with which a German audience listens to such a work:—

Every one followed the words in the book; there was not a movement in the auditory, not a murmur of approval or censure, not a sign of applause; one was at a sermon, hearing the gospel chanted; assisting in silence, not at a concert, but at a Divine service. It is just in this way that such music ought to be heard. Here Bach is adored and believed in without supposing for an instant that his divinity can be called in question. A heretic would excite horror; it is even forbidden to speak of such a thing. Bach is Bach, as God is God.

Two successful concerts were given by the master in Berlin, after which he visited Hanover and Darmstadt, and then returned to Paris, with feelings towards Germany which could not be better expressed than in a letter to Mr. G. A. Osborne :—

Here I am at length, my dear Osborne, at the end of this pilgrimage—the most difficult, perhaps, that a musician has ever undertaken, and the remembrance of which, I feel, ought to pre-

dominate during the rest of my life. I have consulted, like the religious men of ancient Greece, the Delphic oracle. Have I well understood the meaning of its response? Am I to believe that of it which appeared favourable to my desires? Are there not deceptive oracles? The future, the future alone, will decide this. Be the result what it may, I must return to France and address finally my farewells to Germany, that noble second mother of all sons of harmony. But where shall I find words equal to my gratitude, my admiration, and my regrets? What hymn can I sing which shall be worthy of her grandeur and of her glory? I only know that, in leaving, I incline myself with respect, and say to her in heartfelt tones, "Vale Germania, alma parens!"

Having returned to Paris, our master seems to have had no resource but his *feuilletons*. This he bewails most pitifully. We have already seen with how much labour he used the critical pen, but the task of wielding that of a *feuilletonist* was agony. On this matter his remarks are worth quoting at length:—

The critic (I suppose him honest and intelligent) writes only if he has an idea, if he would throw light upon a question, combat a system, or bestow praise and blame. Then he has reasons which he believes sufficient for expressing his views, and awarding censure or eulogium. The unhappy *feuilletonist*, obliged to write upon everything within the domain of his *feuilleton* (sad domain, swamp full of locusts and toads!), desires only to finish the task imposed upon him. He has very often no opinion upon the subjects about which he is compelled to discourse. They excite neither his anger or his admiration; they *are not*. However, needs must that he pretend to believe in their existence, to have a reason for giving them his attention, and taking part for or against. Most of my brethren know how to do this without pain, and even with a charming facility. For myself, when I set about it I do so with efforts not less prolonged than distressing. I was once shut up in my room for three entire days trying to write a *feuilleton* on the Opéra-Comique, and without the power to begin it. I could not remember the work of which I had to speak (a week after the first performance I had forgotten the name of it for ever), but the tortures that I endured during those three days before achieving the first three lines of my article—*certes!* I can recall them well. My head seemed ready to split asunder. I felt as though burning ashes were in my veins. At one time I remained leaning upon my table, holding my head with both hands; at another I marched with long steps up and down the room, like a soldier doing sentry in a cold of fifty-five

degrees. I stood at the window looking at the surrounding gardens, the heights of Montmartre, the setting sun—forthwith reverie carried me a thousand leagues from my accursed Opéra-Comique. And when I returned, and my eyes fell upon the title written at the head of a sheet of paper still white, and obstinately waiting the other words with which I was bound to cover it, I felt overwhelmed with despair. I had a guitar leaning against my table—with a single kick I split it. On the mantelpiece two pistols looked at me with their round eyes—I contemplated them a long time. Then I began to strike my head with my fists. Finally, like a schoolboy who cannot do his lessons, I wept with furious indignation, tearing my hair. The salt water coming from my eyes seemed to solace me a little. I turned the muzzles of my observant pistols to the wall. I felt pity for my innocent guitar and, taking it up, asked of it some chords, which were given without spite. My son, aged six, at that moment knocked at the door—in consequence of my bad temper I had unjustly censured him that morning. As I did not open, he cried, "Father, wilt thou be friends?" and I, running to the door, said, "Yes, my son, let us be friends. Come." I took him on my knees, rested his blonde head upon my breast, and both of us went to sleep. I then gave up all hope of beginning my article: it was the evening of the third day. On the morrow I succeeded, I do not know how, in writing I do not know what upon I do not know whom. . . . That is fifteen years ago, and my torture still endures. Extermination! And to be always thus! Let them give me scores to write, orchestras to conduct, rehearsals to direct. Let them make me remain eight hours, ten hours even, *bâton* in hand, to exercise choristers without accompaniment, myself taking up their points while beating time, till I spit blood and cramp stops my arm. Let them make me carry desks, double-basses, harps, take down platforms, nail planks, like a commissionaire or a carpenter. Let them next oblige me, by way of reposé, to correct engravers' and copyists' faults all night. I have done it; I do it; I will do it; that belongs to my musical life, and I bear all without complaint—without even dreaming of complaint—as the huntsman endures cold, heat, hunger, thirst, the sun, showers, dust, mud, and the thousand fatigues of the chase. But eternally to *feuilletonise* for a living, to write nothings about nothings, to bestow tedious eulogies upon insupportable sillinesses; to speak this evening of a great master and to-morrow of an idiot with the same seriousness in the same language; to employ one's time, intelligence, courage, patience at this work, with the certainity of not being able to serve the art by destroying abuses, removing prejudices, enlightening opinion, purifying public taste, and putting men and things

in their right place—oh! this is the height of humiliation. Better far be—a republican minister of finance.

No quotation could possibly throw more light than the foregoing upon the intense susceptibility of Berlioz' organisation. He was like an Æolian harp, so delicately strung that the faintest breath set him in vibration; while a disturbance that would have barely moved an average man threw him into convulsions. We saw him, some time ago, behaving like a madman under a love disappointment, but that could to some extent be understood. Not so the torture which wrung from him cries of anguish because of inability to get an article fairly under weigh. We must not suppose, however, that the pain was unreal. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness," and of many forms of human suffering it may truly be said "the stranger meddleth not therein."

In 1844 came a diversion from *feuilleton* writing. An industrial exhibition was held that year in Paris, and towards the close of its period Strauss, the dance composer, suggested to Berlioz that the building should be utilised for monster concerts. The idea seemed feasible, and the two musicians proceeded to work it out, after the usual contest with French officialism, in the shape of a Prefect who saw plots against the State in the most innocent of projects. A thousand and twenty-two executants having been engaged, and the programme drawn up, rehearsals began, and our master was again in his element. He tells us that he met every section of the orchestra separately, and went through the Scherzo of Beethoven's C minor Symphony with thirty-six double basses some eighteen or twenty times. The great day came, and with it a crowd which surged over the barriers and filled every available place, delighting the heart of Berlioz with, at all events, an assurance against loss. Then the one thousand and twenty-two began, and we are told that the *ensemble* was miraculous:—

The grandest effects were produced by the overture to "Freischütz," the Andante played by twenty-four horns; by the prayer from "Moïse," which was encored, and in which the twenty-five harpists, instead of arpeggios in simple notes, played arpeggios formed of chords in four parts, thus quadrupling the number of strings in vibration, and giving the effect of a hundred harps; by the "Hymn to France," which was also redemanded, but which I declined to repeat; and finally by the Benediction of the Daggers from "Les Huguenots," which electrified the

audience. I had twenty times doubled the soli of this great piece, so that eighty bass voices were employed for the four parts of the three monks and St. Bris. The impression produced upon the executants and the auditors nearest the orchestra passed all experience. As for myself, I was seized, in conducting, with such a nervous trembling that my teeth chattered as though I had a violent access of fever. Despite the non-sonority of the building, a musical effect comparable with that has not often been heard, and I was sorry that Meyerbeer could not be present to witness it. The terrible piece, which one might describe as written with electric fluid by a gigantic voltaic battery, seemed accompanied by flashes of lightning and sung by tempests.

The nervous excitability of Berlioz may be guessed when he goes on to say:—

I was in such a state after this scene that it was necessary to suspend the concert for some time. They brought me some punch and clothes, and then, forming on the platform a small chamber with a dozen harps in their cases, I could, by stooping a little, undress and change even my shirt before the public without being seen.

The concert, though enormously successful, did not pass off without an untoward incident, which Berlioz may be allowed to describe:—

As for the chorus from "Charles VI.," . . . it made a special effect. It awoke the stupid instinct of opposition always fomenting among the people of Paris, and at the well-known refrain—

Guerre aux tyrans! Jamais en France,
Jamais l'Anglais ne regnera!

three parts of the audience began to sing with the chorus. This was the protest of plebeianism and grotesque nationalism against the policy followed at that time by King Louis-Philippe, and it appeared to justify the attitude of the Prefect of Police towards the festival.

The result was inevitable. Berlioz soon received an invitation to present himself before the authorities, charged with having clandestinely introduced the obnoxious chorus into his programme. Of this he quickly cleared himself; but thenceforth the censorship kept an eye on concert "schemes," and no piece could be performed without its sanction.

Strauss having followed Berlioz with a concert of dance music, the partners reckoned up their gains, and our master

found himself in possession of 800 francs! This little sum he was called upon immediately to spend in search of the health which labour and worry had taken away. A medical friend came to see him, and recoiled at his altered appearance:—

D. Ah! *ça!* What is the matter, Berlioz? You are as yellow as an old parchment! All your features bear the expression of fatigue and extraordinary irritation!

B. You speak of irritation. What should irritate me? You attended the festival. You know how it went off. I have had the pleasure of paying 4,000 francs to MM. les Percepteurs du Droit des Hospices, and I have 800 francs left. What ought I to complain of? Is not this according to rule and order? (*The doctor feels his pulse.*)

D. My dear fellow, you are going to have typhoid fever. You must be bled.

B. Well, don't let us wait till to-morrow. Bleed me. (*The doctor bleeds him.*)

D. Now, do me the pleasure to leave Paris at once. Go to Hyères, Cannes, Nice, where you will, only go to the south to breathe the sea air, and think no longer of matters that inflame your blood and excite your nervous system, already so irritable. Adieu, and don't hesitate.

Berlioz took his friend's advice, went to Nice, spent his 800 francs, recovered health, and, returning to Paris, resumed his labours not only as the Sisyphus of *feuilletonists*, but as the conductor of monster concerts, the director of the Théâtre Franconi instituting a series of performances in his Cirque. Concerning this enterprise the master's autobiography is reticent. Owing to acoustical defects the music made but little impression, the expenses were enormous, and the receipts not in proportion—result, failure. So, once more disappointed, and worn out with excessive labour, Berlioz went south to recruit his health, finding the wherewithal to pay expenses in the receipts of a concert given at Marseilles and another at Lyons.

A hitherto unpublished letter, addressed to M. Ferdinand Lavaine, a well-known professor of the pianoforte at Lille, refers to these Cirque concerts and some other matters of interest. The letter is dated August 1, the year being omitted according to its writer's bad habit; but a reference to the Beethoven fêtes at Bonn (1845) supplies the omission:*—

* Autograph, kindly lent for translation by Julian Marshall, Esq.

Sir,—Accept my sincere thanks for your kind remembrance and the honour you have done me in dedicating to me your fine "De Profundis." Without doubt I should have found an opportunity to produce at least a portion at one of my Cirque concerts, but that institution, which I thought I had established, will have but one season of existence. It is impossible, on account of the difficulty involved in the position of the hall, to expose it anew to chances so unfavourable as those that the last bad season presented; and during the spring the arrangements of the Cirque for the equestrian troupe make concerts impracticable. Moreover, I do not expect to be in France during the next musical season. . . . Next October there will be the means here of organising some grand musical enterprises at Lille, such as I have directed at Marseilles and Lyons. We could then produce some of your compositions. It would be necessary to hear them in the theatre. Will you write to me on this point as soon as possible, as I am about to start for Bonn, where I shall perhaps remain three weeks? Liszt has proposed to me to give a concert with him after the Beethoven fêtes. If we could have at Lille an orchestra of seventy musicians, a chorus of sixty voices, and twenty or twenty-six wind instruments from a military band, one could then hope for a sufficiently good result. The theatre will take 300 francs for ordinary expenses, and divide with me the receipts. This was the arrangement at Marseilles and Lyons and all through Germany. Will you be good enough to ascertain the feeling of the manager on this matter, and as to the chance there may be of getting any receipts? You will much oblige your entirely devoted, HECTOR BERLIOZ.

33, Rue Blanche, Wednesday, August 1.

At the period now under review the published letters of the master addressed to his son Louis begin, and these may on no account be neglected, owing to the light they necessarily throw upon the writer's innermost feeling and character. The first is undated, but is supposed to have been written near the end of 1845, at which time Louis was a pupil of the Lycée National, Rouen:*—

My dear Louis,—Thy mother is a little better, but she is still obliged to keep her bed and refrain from speaking. The least emotion beyond common would be fatal. Wherefore do not write to her such a letter as the last thou didst address to me. Nothing is more distressing than to see thee condemn thyself to inaction and sadness. Thou wilt be eighteen without the power to enter upon any career whatever. I have no fortune; thou wilt have no estate; upon what are we to live? Thou speakest

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 138.

to me always of being a sailor. Thou hast then the desire to leave me, because, once upon the sea, God knows when I shall behold thee again. If I were free, entirely independent, I would set out with thee, and we would go together to tempt fortune in the Indies or anywhere else. But to travel one must be in easy circumstances, and having so little I must remain in France. Besides, my career as a composer fixes me in Europe, and if I left the Old World for the New I should have to abandon it entirely. I speak to thee now as almost a man. Thou wilt reflect and thou wilt comprehend. To sum up, let what will happen I shall be always thy best friend, and the *on'y one* entirely devoted to thee and full of unalterable affection. I know that thou lovest me, and that consoles me for all. Nevertheless, it would be very sad if at twenty thou wert useless to thyself and to the world. I send thee some envelopes to write to thy aunts. My sister Nancy speaks to me of thee. I send thee her letter. There is no lack of black wax. How shall I send thee some? One does not put sticks of wax in the post. Tell me more about thy teeth. Have they carefully cleaned them? Adieu, dear child. I embrace thee with all my soul.

For particulars concerning the second visit of Berlioz to the south of France we must turn to his "Les Grotesques de la Musique," where they appear in a short series of letters to "MM. Académicien libre." The master had hopes of a good concert in Marseilles, the town having been, he declares, the first in France to understand Beethoven. "They played and admired the last quartets of Beethoven in Marseilles, while we in Paris were still treating the sublime author of those extraordinary compositions as a madman." In the end he was not disappointed. Nearly 800 persons attended, and Berlioz was for a time the hero of the town. What the people, as distinct from the connoisseurs, said of him he learned one day through the agency of a garrulous omnibus-driver by whose side he sat. The driver had talked largely about Rachel, Félicien David, and other celebrities who had visited the town; and as Berlioz listened he touched by chance the horn as it swung in its place.

D. Ah! that knows you.

B. What! why do you suppose horns know me?

D. *Farceur!* do you think I am ignorant? It is you who give the grand concerts of which everybody is speaking.

B. Ah! how did you find that out?

D. *Parbleu!* M. le Conducteur, who is an amateur and has been to the theatre, told me.

B. Well, since they speak of my concerts, what do they say of them? Let me know somewhat of these conversations, you who know all.

D. Oh! I heard them well the other evening when the Trotebas gave you a serenade. The Rue de Paradis was so full nearly up to the Bourse that we asked if there was an extraordinary sale of coffee on, or if Monseigneur the archbishop gave his benediction. Not at all; they were doing honour to you. Then I heard what the amateurs said during the serenade. There was one, M. Himturn, who had come from Nismes to hear your music, he kept exclaiming, "And the 'Hymn to France!' and the Pilgrims' March!!" "What pilgrims?" cried another, "I haven't seen any pilgrims." "And the *Cinq Mai!* and the Adagio of the Symphony!!" No doubt he adores you out-and-out. Further on, a lady said to her daughter, "Thou hast no heart, Rose; thou canst comprehend nothing of that; play contredanses." But the most excited were two dealers in log-wood. They made more noise than the Trotebas. "Yes, we must condemn all these vagaries. What! If he had had his way he would have put a cannon in his orchestra." "Go along; a cannon?" "Certainly, a cannon; there is in the programme a piece called *Pièce de campagne*. It was at least a twelve-pounder he wanted to regale us with." "My dear fellow, you don't understand. That which you call a *pièce de campagne* is no doubt the *Scène aux Champs*, the Adagio of the Symphony. You are playing upon the words of the title." "Well, if there isn't a cannon, there is thunder at least, and at the end one must be a fool not to recognise the rolling of the thunder of God." "Quite right, that's what he wished; it is very poetic, and moved me much." "Don't tell me—poetic! If it was a walk in the country that he sought to put in music he succeeded very badly. Is it natural? Why that thunder? Do I go to my country house when it thunders?"

Thus the garrulous coachman, Berlioz listening with eager ears and aching sides to the *vox populi* at second-hand.

When preparing a concert at Lyons, where the late M. Georges Hainl rendered valuable assistance, Berlioz met by chance his old guitar-master, Dorant, who had just arrived from Vienne. A pleasant incident resulted. "I am with you," said Dorant; "what instrument shall I play—violin, bass, clarinet, or ophicleide?" "Ah! dear master, it is easy to see that you don't know me. You will play the violin. Have I ever too many violins? Has any one ever enough?" "Very good; but I shall be a total stranger in the midst of your great orchestra, where I know nobody." "Make yourself easy, I will introduce you." All having

assembled for rehearsal, Berlioz kept his word to the "dear master." "Gentlemen, I have the honour to present to you a very able professor of Vienne, M. Dorant; he has among you a grateful pupil—that pupil is myself. You will very soon conclude, perhaps, that I do him little credit; however, will you receive M. Dorant as though you thought the contrary, and as he deserves?" A round of applause followed, and Berlioz adds that he experienced a singular emotion in conducting the *Marche au Supplice* and *Scène aux Champs* as performed by, amongst the rest, his old guitar-master, whom he had not seen for twenty years. Another singular experience at this concert was the playing of the harp part by M. Hainl, who had never before essayed the classic instrument. M. Hainl succeeded perfectly, but, as the part contained only two notes, and as all the strings near C and G were removed to avoid mistake, the result is scarcely surprising. The Lyons enterprise did not prove remunerative, Berlioz receiving little more than a serenade and two anonymous letters; one full of abuse, the other from a "wounded amateur," who said, "One can be a great artist and also polite. The mouse can sometimes annoy the lion."

On returning home our master was requested by the authorities of Lille to compose music for some words written by Jules Janin to celebrate the completion of the Great Northern Railway. Lille, about to put itself *en fête*, and eat and drink largely, thought, says Berlioz, that a little music would encourage both festivity and digestion. The task was soon accomplished, and in good time the composer went down to the favoured town, rehearsed his piece, and got everything ready for the grand event. At that moment the captain of the artillery of the National Guard requested an interview:—

C. I come, sir, to consult you on the subject of the pieces.

B. Ah! Is there to be a dramatic performance? I did not know it; but it does not concern me.

C. I beg your pardon, sir, the matter in question is the pieces of cannon!

B. Ah! *mon Dieu!* what have I to do with those——?

C. You have to make an astounding effect in your work. Besides, you cannot help yourself; the cannon are in the programme, the public expect their cannon, and we must not refuse them.

B. But how is your *chorus* made up?
C. Our *chorus?*
B. Yes; your park. What are your pieces, and how many have you?
C. We have ten twelve-pounders.
B. Pooh! that's very feeble. Can't you give me some twenty-fours?
C. *Mon Dieu!* we have only six twenty-fours.
B. Well, give me these six principals and the ten choristers. Next we will arrange all the mass of voices on the bank of the great moat near the esplanade, as close as possible to the military orchestra on the platform. Monsieur the captain will be good enough to keep his eye upon us. I will have a firework man at my side, and at the moment the princes arrive a rocket will go up, and then you will blaze off the ten choristers successively. Then we shall begin the performance of the piece, and you will have time to reload. Towards the end another rocket will be fired, you will count four seconds, and at the fifth you will be good enough so to strike a grand chord altogether with your ten chorister twelve-pounders, and the six principals of twenty-four, as that the *ensemble* of your voices shall coincide exactly with the last instrumental chord. Do you understand?
C. Perfectly, sir; that will go of itself. You can count upon it.

As the officer retired he was heard to say, "'Tis magnificent; only musicians can have such ideas."

In due course the time came, the princes (De Montpensier and D'Aumale) arrived; all Lille was assembled, and Berlioz stood *bâton* in hand with a firework man by his side, when up ran the captain, panting for breath: "For heaven's sake, M. Berlioz, don't give the signal yet; our men have forgotten the matches, and one has gone to the arsenal for them. Give me only five minutes." Five minutes passed; then seven, and Berlioz received an intimation that the princes were waiting. "Go on," said he to the pyrotechnist, "and so much the worse for the choristers if they are not ready to light them up." The rocket flew heavenwards, but the cannon held their peace. The captain had not yet found his matches. Still Berlioz hoped for a master-stroke at the final chord. All would be right then, and confidently he gave the signal for the second rocket, which soared into the sky like its predecessor—with no better effect. The cannon, principals and choristers, all remained silent, and the good people of Lille dispersed, says Berlioz, "fully persuaded that the two rockets, of which they had heard the noise and seen

the sparks, were simply a new orchestral effect invented by me, and agreeable enough to the eye."

A few months after the return of Berlioz from the south of France he set out on a more extended tour, proceeding, in the first instance, direct to Vienna. His remarks upon the state of music in the Austrian capital are scarcely within the scope of this work, but we may reproduce a single brief passage as the opinion of an eminent man upon a state of things which unhappily survives to this day. After referring to the great and growing rarity of dramatic sopranos, Berlioz adds:—

Not that soprano voices of great power and compass are, like true tenors, diamonds beyond price. No; good and even well-trained female voices present themselves still; but what can be done with such instruments if expression, intelligence, and inspiration do not animate them? It is of real and complete dramatic talent that I would speak. We find plenty of cantatrices whom the public love because they sing showy nothings brilliantly, and whom the great masters detest because of inability to interpret their works in a proper manner. They have voice, musical knowledge, an agile larynx; they want soul, brains, and heart. Such women are veritable monsters, and as formidable to composers as, often, they are charming. This explains the weakness with which masters have written *rôles* full of false sentiment, which seduce the public by the showiness of their appearance; it explains also the bastard works we see born, the gradual abasement of style, the ruin of true expression, forgetfulness of dramatic propriety, contempt of what is true, grand, and beautiful, and the decrepitude of the art in certain countries.

During his stay in Vienna Berlioz conducted three concerts with marked success. The public applauded him, the press praised him, his friends gave him a supper, together with a *bâton*, and the emperor sent him 1,100 francs and a message—"Tell Berlioz that I have been much amused." This the master styles a "singular compliment." Of course there were quaint episodes in the Viennese experience. One day, in a public garden, a little man accosted Berlioz:—

"Monsieur, you are a Frenchman, I am an Irishman; there is, consequently no national *amour propre* in my sentiments, and (seizing the master's left hand) I ask permission to shake the hand that wrote the 'Romeo' Symphony. You understand Shakespeare."

"In that case, sir, you have mistaken the hand; I write always with this."

Here the Irishman dropped the wrong member, grasped and shook the right one, and went away saying, "O these Frenchmen—these Frenchmen! They must laugh at everything and everybody, even at their admirers!"

By the way, the reputation of Berlioz as a quiz made him somewhat formidable to his Viennese friends, and he tells, with admirable gravity, how Dessauer wished to convert him to some new musical doctrine, but could never get to the point of unfolding it:—

Every time the opportunity offered for us to *causer à fond*, as he said, if I looked him full in the face with my most serious air at the moment of beginning his homily, he fancied that I was laughing at him, and, relapsing into silence, put off my conversion till a better time.

From Vienna the master went to Pesth, taking with him the Hungarian March now conspicuous in "La Damnation de Faust." This he had written at the suggestion of a Viennese amateur, who said, "If you would please the Hungarians, compose a piece upon one of their national themes; they will be charmed with it, and you can give me, on your return, news of their 'Eljen' and their applause." A great sensation attended the announcement of the march, and the editor of one paper was so moved by curiosity as to find out the residence of the copyist and go carefully through the manuscript. The next day he met Berlioz:—

E. I have seen the score of your Rakoczy March.

B. Well!

E. Well! I am afraid.

B. Bah!

E. You have announced your theme *piano*, and we, on the contrary, are used to hearing it played *fortissimo*.

B. Yes, by your gipsies. Be easy; you will have such a *forte* as you never heard in your life. You have not read it well. In any case it is needful to look after the end.

Of the performance, Berlioz says:—

After a trumpet passage based upon the rhythm of the opening bars of the melody, the theme appeared, played *piano* by the flutes and clarinets, and accompanied by the strings *pizzicati*. The public remained calm and silent at this unexpected announcement, but when, on a long *crescendo*, fugal fragments of the theme reappeared interspersed with the heavy boom of the big drum

simulating the report of distant cannon, the hall began to ferment with an indescribable noise, and, at the moment when the orchestra, entering upon a furious *mêlée*, gave out a long-continued *fortissimo*, cries and stampings shook the hall; the concentrated feeling of all those excited souls exploded with accents which gave me a shiver of terror; I seemed to feel my hair stand up, and at the end of that decisive section I was obliged to abandon the peroration of my piece, the tempest of the orchestra being unable to struggle against the blast of a volcano the violence of which nothing could arrest. . . . I was greatly agitated, as may be supposed, after a storm of this nature, and was wiping my face in a little room at the back of the theatre, when . . . I saw enter, unannounced, a man poorly dressed, and with a face lighted up in a strange manner. Seeing me, he threw himself towards me, embraced me with ardour, his eyes full of tears, and exclaimed with difficulty, "Ah, sir! sir! I am a Hungarian—poor devil—cannot speak French—a little Italian. Pardon my ecstasy. Ah! I understand your cannon. Yes, yes—the great battle—dogs of Germans." Then, striking his breast heavily: "In my heart—I bear you— Ah! Frenchman—revolutionary—to know how to make the music of revolutions!" I cannot attempt to paint the terrible exaltation of this man: his tears, the grindings of his teeth! It was almost alarming and quite sublime.

On returning to Vienna after his great success, Berlioz was waited upon by the amateur who had suggested the march. The noise of its frantic reception had reached the capital, and our amateur, frightened rather than pleased, said, "I run to beg you not to say a word about me on this matter. If it were known in Vienna that I had contributed in any way to the composition of the march I should be seriously compromised, and it might do me harm."

Berlioz next visited Prague, where he gave six concerts, and enjoyed the satisfaction of presenting his "Roméo et Juliette" to Liszt, by whom that work had never before been heard. Again success rewarded his efforts. The public were delighted, and the virtuosi arranged a supper, at which Liszt in their name presented the composer with a silver cup. Hereby hangs a tale which Berlioz may be allowed to tell:—

Liszt was unanimously chosen to make the presentation speech instead of the chairman, who had not sufficient acquaintance with the French language. At the first toast he made me, in the name of the assembly, an address at least a quarter of an hour long, with a warmth of spirit, an abundance of ideas, and a choice of expressions which excited the envy of the orators present, and

by which I was profoundly touched. Unhappily, if he spoke well he also drank well; the treacherous cup inaugurated by the *convives* held such floods of champagne that all Liszt's eloquence made shipwreck in it. Belloni and I were still in the streets of Prague at two o'clock in the morning persuading him to wait for daylight before exchanging shots, at two paces, with a Bohemian who had drunk better than himself. When day came we were not without anxiety about Liszt, whose concert was to take place at noon. At half-past eleven he was still sleeping; at last some one awoke him, he jumped into a cab, reached the hall, was received with three rounds of applause, and played as, I believe, he had never played in his life before.

Going on to Breslau, our master was somewhat disquieted by the coldness of the public at certain concerts which he attended before giving his own. On one occasion complete silence followed a capital performance of Beethoven's "C minor," and Berlioz augured from this a fiasco for himself. "You are mistaken," said an enthusiastic lady amateur, who lacked *finesse;* "the public admire the *chef d'œuvre* of the great master as much as possible, and if they do not applaud, it is out of respect." Berlioz was too keen a humorist not to appreciate this explanation. He adds:—

I was much afraid of being respected, but happily without occasion, for at my concert the assembly, to whose respect I doubtless had no adequate claim, thought it a duty to treat me after the vulgar usage adopted all over Europe towards popular artists, and I was applauded in a fashion the most irreverent.

During the whole of this tour our master was busy with his "Damnation de Faust," the libretto of which he had written himself, or rather completed, since portions of a translation of Goethe's lyrics by Gerard de Nerval, set to music by Berlioz twenty years earlier, and two or three scenes by Gandonnière, were incorporated in the work. Berlioz found it easy to be at once poet and composer. He wrote words and music with unexampled facility, taking advantage of every opportunity, in season or out of season, to push on with the task:—

In an inn at Passau, on the frontiers of Bavaria, I wrote the introduction "Le vieil Hiver"; at Vienna I composed the "Scene on the banks of the Elbe," the air of Mephistopheles, "Voici des roses," and the Dance of Sylphs. I have already told on what occasion and how I produced in one night, also at Vienna, the march on the Hungarian theme of Rakoczy. The extraordinary

effect which it produced at Pesth led me to introduce it into the score of "Faust," after taking the liberty to place my hero in Hungary at the beginning of the action, and making him witness the march of a Hungarian army across the plain where he pursues his reveries. A German critic has found it very strange that I made Faust travel to such a place. I do not see why I should have refrained from doing so, and I would not have hesitated to lead him anywhere else, provided it were for the advantage of my work. I was not obliged to follow Goethe's plan, and the most eccentric travels can be attributed to such a personage as Faust without in any degree shocking *vraisemblance*. Other German critics having much later revived this singular thesis, and attacked me with violence because of the differences between my book and the plan and text of Goethe's "Faust" (as though there were not other "Fausts" besides that of Goethe, and as though one could put the whole of such a poem to music without interference with its order), I was silly enough to answer them in the preface to my "Damnation de Faust." I have often asked myself why these same critics did not reproach me for the book of my symphony "Roméo et Juliette," so unlike the immortal tragedy. No doubt they refrained because Shakespeare was not a German. Patriotism! Fetishism! Crétinism! At Pesth, when one evening I lost myself in the streets, I wrote the choral refrain of the "Ronde des Paysans" by the light of the gas in a shop window. At Prague I rose in the middle of the night to set down a melody I was afraid would be forgotten—that of the angelic chorus in the apotheosis of Margaret. At Breslau I penned the words and music of the students' Latin song, "Jam nox stellata"; and on returning to France, having gone to spend some days near Rouen, at the place of the Baron de Montville, I composed the great trio, "Ange adoré." The rest was written in Paris, but always as an improvisation, at my own house, at the *café*, in the garden of the Tuileries, and even on a post of the Boulevard du Temple. I did not seek the ideas; I let them come to me, and they presented themselves in an order the most unforeseen. . . . I look upon the work as one of the best that I have produced, and up till now the public appear to think with me.

But the public of Paris, at all events, did not so think in December, 1846, when "La Damnation de Faust" was twice produced at the Opéra-Comique. Only a few hundreds attended, and the result was catastrophe. Berlioz expected a better fate for his work, and says thereanent:—

Illusion! Since the first performance of my "Roméo et Juliette" years had rolled away, during which the indifference of

the Parisian public for all that concerned art and literature had made incredible progress. . . . The good people of Paris—those who go to concerts, those who are credited with troubling about music—tranquilly remained at home, caring as little about my new piece as though I had been an obscure pupil of the Conservatoire, and more would have gone to the Opéra-Comique on those two occasions had the poorest work in the repertory been represented. Nothing in my artistic career ever more deeply wounded me than this unexpected indifference. The discovery was cruel but useful, and I have profited by it, because I have never since ventured twenty francs upon the Parisian public's love for my music. I sincerely hope I shall never do so in the future [this hope was not realised, by the way], if I live a hundred years. After two days of inexpressible moral suffering, I fancied I saw the means of escape from embarrassment by a tour in Russia.

Berlioz followed up this idea, and having, by the help of friends, raised a little money, he set out for the capital of the Czar on the 14th of February, 1847. Fifteen days later he reached his destination, and was immediately visited by M. de Lenz (of the "Trois Styles"), who acted as his sponsor in Russian society, and befriended him in many ways. Berlioz now found his expectations more than justified. The result of the first concert was a profit of 12,000 francs. "I was saved! I turned mechanically then to the south-west, and could not help murmuring these words, 'Ah! dear Parisians!'" The second concert proved no less successful, while the first given in Moscow yielded 8,000 francs; and again Berlioz, looking to the south-west, murmured "Ah! dear Parisians!" It was at Moscow that an incident took place which led the master to remark upon the curious difficulty experienced by the public in comprehending a man who merely writes music and does not play it. The incident, however, was not new:—

I was nearly insulted at Breslau by a good paterfamilias, who absolutely wished to compel me to give his son some violin lessons. When I strongly protested that it would be by the merest chance if I could play, since I had never handled a bow in my life, he took all my words as so much false money, and saw in them only a kind of stupid mystification.

"Sir, you think you are speaking to the famous violinist De Beriot, whose name somewhat resembles mine."

"Sir, I have read your announcement; you give a concert in the University Hall the day after to-morrow, thus"—

"Yes, sir, I give a concert, but I do not play the violin at it."

"What do you do, then?"

"I cause the violin to be played; I direct the orchestra. Go yourself and you will see."

My man restrained his anger, and it was only on leaving the concert that, by dint of reflection, he could understand a musician presenting himself in public without being an executant.

The kindred experience in Moscow was on this wise: the only available hall being that of the Assembly of Nobles, Berlioz waited on the Grand Marshal of the Palace of which it formed a part. He was a "respectable old fellow of eighty," and listened with patience to the musician's request:—

G. M. What instrument do you play?

B. I don't play any.

G. M. In that case how can you give a concert in the hall?

B. I have my compositions performed, and direct the orchestra.

G. M. Ah! ah! that is curious; I never heard of such concerts. I will willingly lend you the hall; but, as you doubtless know, every artist who is allowed to use it must, in return, play, after the concert, at one of the private *réunions* of the nobility.

B. The Assembly, then, has an orchestra which it puts at my disposal to perform my music?

G. M. Not at all.

B. Then how can it be heard? Surely it is not expected that I shall pay three thousand francs to the performers required for the execution of one of my symphonies at the private concert of the nobles? That would be to rent the hall very dearly.

G. M. Then, sir, I am sorry to refuse you. I cannot do otherwise.

The old official persisted in this course even when Berlioz made a second application, supported by a resident French artist. It occurred to him, however, that possibly his knowledge of the French language was inadequate, and, upon this, he called in the aid of his wife:—

Madame la Maréchale, whose age was nearly as respectable as that of her husband, but whose features were less benevolent, arrived, looked at me, heard me, and cut short the discussion by saying in French, rapidly, clearly, and concisely:—

"We neither can nor will violate the regulations of the Assembly. If we lend you the hall, you must play an instrumental solo at our next *réunion*. If you will not play, we cannot lend."

"*Mon Dieu!* Madame la Maréchale, I could at one time play

very well on the flageolet, flute, and guitar; choose which of these three instruments I shall use. But, as I have not touched one of them for twenty-five years, I must warn you that I shall play very badly But stop; if you will be satisfied with a solo on the drum, I shall probably do better."

At that moment a superior officer entered the room, and, on learning the difficulty, took Berlioz aside, saying: "Do not insist, M. Berlioz, or the discussion will become very disagreeable for our worthy Marshal. Send me your request in writing to-morrow, and everything shall be arranged. I will make it my business." The result was that Russian rule was violated, "for this occasion only," and Berlioz had not to prove his skill on either the flageolet or flute, guitar or drum.

Our master follows up his account of these incidents with some reflections upon the curious ideas that come into the heads of young people with regard to music:—

Without speaking of amateurs who persist in taking useless lessons at an exorbitant price to conquer a barbarous organisation upon which the patience and talent of the best masters are wasted, or of those dreamers who are persuaded that they can learn music as they do mathematics, by the intellect only; and without taking note of the worthy fathers who have an idea to make their sons colonels or composers—one meets with sad examples of monomania among those who appear least liable to an attack.

Berlioz then proceeds to cite two cases. In the first instance, a young man called upon him in Paris:—

B. Be good enough, sir, to take a seat.

V. It's nothing—I am a little—I have—sir, I have come into a fortune.

B. A fortune! Let me congratulate you.

V. Yes; I have come into a fortune, and I want to know if I shall do well to make myself a composer.

B. Be good enough to take a seat. *Mon Dieu!* sir, you credit me with extraordinary perspicacity. Prophecies based on even important works are often wrong. However, if you can show me a score—

V. No, I have no score, but I will work hard. I have so much taste for music, you know.

B. No doubt you have already written something—a symphonic movement, an overture, a cantata—

V. An overture? N-n-no; I have not written a cantata either.

B. Well, have you tried to write a quartet?

V. Ah, sir! a quartet!

B. Well, don't try a quartet. It is, perhaps, the most difficult of all works to treat well, and the masters who have succeeded in it are curiously few. But without going so high, can you show me a simple romance, a waltz—

V. (*offended*). A romance!—no, no, I do not make such a thing as that.

B. Then you have done nothing?

V. No; but I will work so—

B. At any rate you have finished your studies in harmony and counterpoint—you know how to deal with voices and instruments?

V. As to that—as to that—I know neither harmony, counterpoint, nor instrumentation, but you will see—

B. Pardon me, sir, you are eighteen or nineteen, and it is too late to begin such studies with any good. However, I suppose you know how to read music at sight and can write from dictation?

V. Do I know how to sol-fa? Well—no, I don't know the notes even; I know nothing at all, but I have so much taste for music, and I should so like to be a composer. If you will give me lessons, I will come to your house twice a day—I will work at night!

Berlioz, upon this, explained to his visitor the obstacles in his way, and the young man left, like his scriptural prototype, in a sad mood, but evidently with the intention to try another master.

The second case was met with in Moscow, the patient being a Russian of twenty-two:—

V. Sir, I have an immense passion for music. I have studied all its branches, incompletely, as you may suppose. Moscow offers few opportunites, and I am not rich enough to travel. My parents have vainly tried to turn me from my course, but a great person here is willing to aid me, and has declared that if a competent musician testifies to my real ability he will pay the expenses of my education in Germany and France. Try me, and then write frankly the opinion you have formed. In any case I shall owe you eternal gratitude. If your opinion is favourable, it will give me life, for the constraint now put upon me is death!

B. Really, sir, I understand what you suffer, and you have all my sympathies. Dispose of me.

V. A thousand thanks. To-morrow I will bring you the works I wish you to pronounce upon.

Next day, the young man returned, pale and sad:—

V. I have brought you nothing. I passed the night looking at my MSS., and none seemed worthy to show you, and, frankly, none represent of what I am capable. I will begin something that shall be better.

B. Unhappily, I am soon going back to St. Petersburg.

V. No matter; I will send you my new work. Ah, sir, if you knew what fire burns within me! . . . They treat me as a fool here, but, believe me, I am not that, and I will prove it to you.

Berlioz assured the young man of his continued interest.

"*Mon Dieu!*" said I, after he had gone, "are not these the symptoms of an exceptional organism? Here is perhaps a man of genius."

Only once was the young Muscovite heard from, and then to say that he had finished nothing, inspiration having quite deserted him.

During his stay at Moscow Berlioz put "Faust" in rehearsal, and had a passage of arms with the official censor. That worthy seems to have understood "a little Latin," and when he came to the words of the students' chorus, "Nobis subridente lunâ, per urben quærentes puellas eamus, ut cras fortunati Cæsares dicamus: Veni, vidi, vici," he shook his official head and concluded, "This will not do at all." Berlioz replied that the censor at St. Petersburg had raised no objection, but took nothing by the motion. "The St. Petersburg censor did what he thought right," said the stern Muscovite; "but I am not obliged to imitate him. The passage in question is immoral; it must be suppressed." Berlioz adds: "And it was—in the book. . . . The prohibited couplet was sung all the same at the concert, but in such a fashion that nobody understood it." We may observe here that this was not the only occasion on which the words of the students' chorus excited remark. In 1854 a Dresden critic solemnly protested against them, on the ground that German students are nice young men, of good manners and behaviour. This called forth hardly less laughter than a subsequent complaint by the same sapient scribe that Berlioz slandered Mephistopheles when he made him tell a lie in order to bring about the death-ride of Faust.

On the return of Berlioz to St. Petersburg, preparations were made for two grand performances of "Roméo et Juliette." In regard to these the imperial intendent was complaisance itself. "How many rehearsals will you give

me?" asked the master. "How many?" responded the official; "as many as you like. They shall rehearse every day; and when you come to me, saying 'All goes well,' we will announce the concert—not before." Berlioz took him at his word, and the performance was "marvellous."

I recall it as one of the happiest events of my life, the more because I was in such good form that, in conducting, I had the happiness not to make a single mistake—which seldom happens. The great theatre was full. . . . I was recalled I do not know how many times. Let me declare, however, that I paid little attention to the public that day, and the effect of the divine Shakesperian poem, which I sang to myself, was such that after the finale I ran, all quivering, to take refuge in a private room, where Ernst found me, shortly after, in floods of tears. "Ah!" said he, "nerves! I understand that." Coming to me, he held my head, and let me weep like a hysterical girl for a quarter of an hour.

Leaving Russia, Berlioz proceeded to Berlin, the King of Prussia having expressed a desire to hear "Faust" and make the acquaintance of its author. During his stay in that capital, the master was invited to dine at the palace of Sans Souci, and after the repast all adjourned to the gardens for coffee. Then the king called to the musician: "Eh! Berlioz, come and give me news of my sister, and tell me about your Russian trip." Presently Frederic William was seen to be shaking with laughter:—

This hilarity, in which I joined without ceremony, made me all at once an important personage. Several courtiers and officers observed it from the pavilion where they were seated, and saw good reasons for being on terms with a man who could make the king laugh so much, and who laughed with him so familiarly. On returning to the pavilion soon after, I was surrounded by *grands seigneurs* to me perfectly unknown, who made profound salutations while modestly introducing themselves. "Sir, I am the Prince of ——, and feel happy to make your acquaintance." "Sir, I am the Count of ——; allow me to congratulate you upon the great success you have just obtained." "Sir, I am the Baron ——. I had the honour of seeing you six years ago at Brunswick, and am enchanted," &c., &c. I did not understand whence such honour could so suddenly come to me at the Prussian Court, till I at last recalled the scene in the first act of "Les Huguenots," where Raoul, after having received Queen Marguerite's letter, finds himself surrounded by men who sing to him in canon on all degrees of the scale: "You know

whether I am a sure and faithful friend." They took me for a powerful favourite of the king. What a funny world is that of a Court!

On reaching France, Berlioz paid a visit to his relatives, and introduced to them his son Louis; soon, however, returning to Paris, where MM. Roquelain and Duponchel, joint candidates for the direction of the Grand-Opéra, sought to enlist his influence in their cause, by offering him a joint conductorship with M. Girard. The bait took: Berlioz worked for the two applicants, and they, when duly appointed, proceeded to kick down the ladder by which they had climbed. No place could be found for Berlioz, since Girard would reign alone or not at all, and the indignant master at once accepted an offer from Jullien to conduct a season of opera at Drury Lane Theatre. The agreement between manager and composer was drawn up by Berlioz with his own hand, and runs, in English, as follows:*—

Between M. Hector Berlioz, composer of music, living in Paris, 41, Rue de Provence, and Messrs. Jullien and Company, music publishers, resident in London, 210, Regent Street, has been agreed as follows:—

M. H. Berlioz engages himself as orchestral conductor of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, which will henceforth be called the Royal Academy of London, and of which Messrs. Jullien and Co. are the directors. This year the service of M. Berlioz will last for three months only, from the 1st December, 1847, to the 1st March, 1848. The salary allowed to M. H. Berlioz for these three months of service will be four hundred pounds sterling, which Messrs. Jullien and Co. will pay to him in the following manner: one-fourth eight days before the departure of M. Hector Berlioz for London, a fourth at the end of the first month of service, a fourth at the end of the second month, and the last fourth at the end of the third month.

M. H. Berlioz will not be at liberty to conduct any orchestra in London or in the provinces of England without the consent of M. Jullien, during the whole duration of the present agreement, which is made for six years, terminable from year to year at the option of M. Jullien only. The salary of M. Berlioz for the following years will be £133 6s. per month, whatever may be the length of his service; if it be six months, for example, instead of three, the salary of M. Berlioz for those six months will be £800 sterling, and so on.

A connected agreement is made between M. Berlioz and

* Autograph, obligingly lent for translation by Charles Hargitt, Esq.

Messrs. Jullien and Co. for concerts under the following conditions:—

M. Hector Berlioz engages to put his music at the service of M. Jullien, to give, during one month, concerts in London or in the English provinces; these concerts will be conducted by M. Berlioz. Of these concerts there cannot be given less than four or more than eight.

The concert month shall be determined thus, at the option of M. Jullien: a fortnight before the entry upon his duties of M. Berlioz as orchestral conductor and a fortnight after the close of Drury Lane Theatre; or the whole of the month preceding the entry of M. Berlioz upon his duties as orchestral conductor; or yet again, the month of May, 1848.

The salary of M. Berlioz is £400, one quarter of which will be paid to him each week. The travelling expenses from Paris to London and from London to Paris, and the expenses of board and lodging of M. Berlioz in London, will be at the charge of M. Jullien. The present agreement is made for six years, and is terminable only at the will of M. Jullien and Co. During the whole time that this agreement holds good, M. Berlioz will not be at liberty to give any concert in London or in the provinces of England, whether for himself or others, without the consent of M. Jullien.

Finally, a third treaty is made between M. H. Berlioz and Messrs. Jullien and Co. for the composition of an opera in three acts under the following conditions:—

M. H. Berlioz engages to write a score in three acts on a poem written in French by MM. A. Royer and Vaës. This work will be performed at Drury Lane Theatre in the season of 1849. The libretto of MM. Royer and Vaës should be sent in entirety to M. Berlioz between this and the month of March, 1848, at the latest; and M. Berlioz engages to send the complete score to M. Jullien by, at latest, October 1, 1848. M. H. Berlioz engages to prepare his opera for public representation, that is to say, to direct the rehearsals and superintend the studies during the fortnight preceding the first performance. M. Jullien will have the sole right in England and her colonies of performing and publishing the music of the said opera, and for this right engages to pay to M. Berlioz the following sums:—

1. One hundred pounds on receipt of the score.
2. One hundred pounds at the first performance.
3. One hundred pounds at the tenth performance.
4. One hundred pounds at the fifteenth performance.
5. One hundred pounds at the twenty-fifth performance.
6. One hundred pounds at the thirty-fifth performance.
7. One hundred pounds at the fiftieth performance.
8. One hundred pounds at the seventieth performance.

In all the sum of £800. M. Jullien will not have to pay any other fees to M. Berlioz for the performance of this opera in London or in the English provinces; but if he should give up his theatre, his successor will be bound to pay to M. Berlioz five pounds sterling for every performance, by way of author's rights. The same obligation will be imposed on the directors of the theatres in the provinces of England. Whichever of the parties shall contravene the clauses of the three agreements as above shall be liable to the other for damages, to be fixed by competent judges—in London, should it be M. Jullien who does not fulfil his engagements; in Paris, should it be M. Berlioz.

Drawn up in duplicate in Paris, the 19th of August, 1847.

Signed, HECTOR BERLIOZ.

Berlioz entered upon his English career in a very sanguine spirit. He saw everything through rose-coloured spectacles. Writing to a friend in St. Petersburg (November 10, 1847), he said:*—

Behold me in England with an independent position (financially speaking), and such as I had not dared to dream of. I am charged with the direction of the grand English Opera, which will begin at Drury Lane in a month; more, I am engaged for four concerts, composed exclusively of my works, and, in the third place, to write an opera in three acts for the season of 1848. . . . The director is ready for any sacrifice, and counts only upon the second year. The chorus and orchestra are splendid. As for my concerts, we shall not begin them till January; I believe they will turn out well. Jullien (the director) is a man of audacity and intelligence, who knows London and the English better than anybody, be he who he may. He has already made his fortune, and has it in his head to build up mine.

Berlioz, writing in his memoirs, bears witness to the excellence of the means which Jullien, "in his incontestable and uncontested quality as a madman," provided for his venture; but adds that one thing had been forgotten—a repertory. Balfe's "Maid of Honour" was somewhere in prospective, and an English version of "Lucia" had the duty assigned to it of bringing in £400 per night, that mere expenses might be paid pending the arrival of a novelty. For the performance of Donizetti's work, Madame Dorus Gras and Mr. Sims Reeves were engaged. "Reeves has a fine natural voice, and sings as well as the frightful English language will allow." But no merit in performance could save an-

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 148 *et seq.*

enterprise depending upon "Lucia." The receipts were less than £100 per night, Balfe's opera turned out indifferently, and "in a little while Jullien was completely ruined," while his conductor had only received a month's salary. Upon the details of this failure it is unnecessary to dwell, but we may present a few extracts from Berlioz' London letters with advantage. They show us, for example, that the master once dreamed of taking Mendelssohn's place in English public opinion:*—

There is here a good position for me to take—that left vacant by poor Mendelssohn. Every one tells me this from morning till night; while the press and the profession are well-disposed towards me. Already the two rehearsals I have given of "Harold," "Le Carnaval Romain," and two parts of "Faust" have made them open eyes and ears. I am warranted in believing that it is here I ought to make a good position.

On another occasion he writes:†—

My music has worked upon the English public like fire upon a train of powder. . . . Everybody of any musical importance in London was at Drury Lane that evening, and many artists of standing came after the concert to congratulate me. They expected nothing like it, but looked for music diabolical, incomprehensible, hard, without charm. You should see, moreover, how they arraign our Parisian critics. Davison himself wrote an article for the *Times*, half of which was left out through want of space, nevertheless that which appeared made its mark. But I do not know what he thinks at bottom; with opinions like his it is needful to wait developments. Old Hogarth, of the *Daily News*, was in a state of most comical agitation: "All my blood is on fire," he said to me, "never have I been excited in such a way by music."

In a third letter, we read:‡—

"Thou knowest more or less well the brusque and violent success of my Drury Lane concert. It has disconcerted in a few hours all previsions favourable or hostile, and upset the edifice of theories which each built here upon my music as described by the three-horned critics of the Continent. God be thanked! the entire English press has spoken with extraordinary warmth, yet, besides Davison and Gruneisen, I knew none of the writers. It is different now; the chief among them have come to see me, or have written to me, and our relations are frequent and cordial. It

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 158.
† Ibid., p. 164. ‡ Ibid., p. 167.

is long since I experienced such satisfaction as in reading the article in the *Atlas*, which I sent to Brandus, who has not translated it. The writer is Mr. Holmes, author of a "Life of Mozart" extremely admired here.

Finally with regard to the coveted English success, the master says:—

I shall remain here as long as I can, for time is needed to make a place and secure a position. Happily, circumstances are favourable. Sooner or later that position will arrive, and will be, they tell me, solid. For my musical career I have only to think of England and Russia.

All this time, however, Berlioz had his Mordecai in England—none other than the Philharmonic Society, which would not do him honour. Speaking of the opening concert of the season, 1848, he says: *—

Nobody would believe that evening that the Society had, as yet, asked nothing from me for its concerts. It was true, nevertheless. Some say they will be forced to do so by the journals and by their committee. But I shall deliver myself only with great precautions into the velvet paws of the old baldheads who manage this institution. Here we have a repetition of the *manières* of the Paris Conservatoire.

The Philharmonic Society is again referred to in another letter: †—

The journals here occupy themselves a good deal with me, but the opposition of the committee of the Philharmonic Society is something curious. They are all *English composers*, and Costa is at their head. They engage Herr Molique! they play the new symphonies of Herr Hesse and others; but I inspire them, so it appears, with incredible terror. Beale, Davison, Rosenberg, and some others have put their heads together to compel them to engage me. . . . Here is an old wall which I must knock over, and behind which I find the public and the press wholly with me.

Another of Berlioz' English experiences was not quite satisfactory. He stood amazed at the lack of discipline among our orchestral players: ‡—

We have not been able to have the complete orchestra at rehearsal. These gentlemen come when they please and go about their business, some when the work is half, others when it is only a quarter, done. The first day I had no horns at all, the second

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 168.
† Ibid., p. 170. ‡ Ibid., p. 162.

I had three, the third I had two, who vanished after the fourth piece. You see how they understand subordination in this country. The chorus, however, are nearly as devoted to me as were those of St. Petersburg. . . . I have been five days ill in bed with violent bronchitis; rage and disgust gave it to me. However, there is much to be done here, on account of the public, who are attentive, intelligent, and really devoted to serious works.

At the close of the season of 1848 Berlioz returned to Paris, and soon after suffered the loss of his father, to whom he was attached by more than filial bonds. With regard to this event, and also the subsequent death of his favourite sister and his wife, the master has much to say in his memoirs. Otherwise he is very reticent indeed, and appears to have grown tired of discoursing with himself as the theme. Else we should have been told at full length how, in 1849, he was presented by Baron Taylor with a gold medal struck in honour of "La Damnation de Faust"; how he produced what is now the second part of "L'Enfance du Christ," palming it off as the work of Pierre Ducré, an imaginary composer of the sixteenth century; how, in 1851, he was appointed a juror in connection with the Great Exhibition; how, in 1852, he revisited this country to conduct the performances of the New Philharmonic Society; and how "Benvenuto Cellini" failed at Covent Garden in 1853. To some of these matters, however, he makes reference in his letters, and from one addressed to Mr. Ella (published in *Les Grotesques de la Musique*), we learn all that is necessary concerning his whimsical appearance *à la* Chatterton and Horace Walpole:—

My dear Ella, you ask why the mystery, "La Fuite en Egypte," bears this indication: "Attributed to Pierre Ducré, imaginary chapelmaster." It is by consequence of a fault I committed—a grave fault, for which I have been severely punished, and concerning which I always reproach myself. Here are the facts: I found myself one evening at the house of Baron de M., an intelligent and sincere friend of art, with one of my fellow-students of the Academy of Rome, the learned architect Duc. Everybody played at écarté, whist, or brelan, save myself. . . . I was bored in a manner sufficiently evident, when Duc said, turning to me, "Since thou dost nothing, why not write a piece of music for my album?" "Willingly." I took a piece of paper and traced some lines, upon which soon appeared an andantino in four parts *for the organ.* Recognising in it a certain character of naïve

mysticism, the idea struck me to apply words of the same kind. The organ piece disappeared and became the chorus in which the shepherds at Bethlehem take farewell of the infant Jesus, at the moment when the Holy Family set out for Egypt. Whist and brelan were interrupted to hear my holy effusion, and the company were as much amused by the antique turn of the verse as of the music. "Now," said I to Duc, "I shall put thy name at the bottom. I mean to compromise thee." "What an idea! my friends very well know that I am entirely ignorant of composition." "Ah! that is a good reason, truly, for not composing; but, since thy vanity refuses to adopt my piece, I will create a name of which thine shall make part. It shall be Pierre Ducré, whom I institute music-master at the Sainte-Chapelle of Paris in the seventeenth century. That will give to my manuscript all the value of an archæological curiosity." . . . Some days after, I wrote, at home, the piece called "Repose of the Holy Family," beginning this time with the words, and a small overture for a small orchestra in a small innocent style, in F sharp minor without the *note sensible*. . . . A month later, when I thought no more about my retrospective score, a chorus was wanted for the programme of a concert I had to conduct, and it amused me to insert that of the shepherds from my Mystery, leaving it under the name of Pierre Ducré, music-master at the Sainte-Chapelle of Paris (1679). The choristers at rehearsals conceived a lively affection for this ancestral music. "Where did you disinter it?" they said to me. "Disinter is nearly the word," I answered without hesitation; "it was found in an old walled-up chest during the recent restoration of the Sainte-Chapelle." The concert took place; Pierre Ducré's piece was well-rendered and still better received, while the critics praised it the next day and congratulated me on my discovery. Only one expressed doubts concerning its authenticity and age. . . . On the following Sunday, Duc was at the house of a young and beautiful lady who greatly loved ancient music, and professed much contempt for modern productions of known date. "Well, madame, how did you find our last concert?" "Oh! very mixed, as usual." "And the piece of Pierre Ducré?" "Perfect! delicious! there is music! time has removed none of its freshness. It has true melody, of which contemporary composers force us to remark the rarity. It is not your M. Berlioz, in any case, who could even produce its equal." At these words Duc was compelled to laugh, and had the imprudence to answer, "Alas, madame, it was my M. Berlioz, nevertheless, who composed the Shepherds' Adieu, and who did it in my presence, one evening, on the corner of a card-table." The lady bit her lips, the blush of confusion tinged her face, and turning her back on Duc, she

threw out with temper the cruel phrase, "M. Berlioz is an impertinent." Judge of my shame, my dear Ella, when Duc repeated these words to me. I hastened to make atonement by humbly publishing in my own name that poor little work, retaining however under the title, the words "Attributed to Pierre Ducré, imaginary chapelmaster," to recall this my culpable freak.

Concerning the incidents connected with his visit to London in 1852 the master does not speak at such length as of his Ducré joke, but it is clear that he triumphed all along the line at Exeter Hall. Writing, March 25, 1852, to a friend, he says of his first concert in Exeter Hall:*—

I address three lines to thee to let thee know that I obtained last evening an astonishing success, being recalled I know not how many times, and applauded both as composer and conductor. This morning I read in the *Times*, *Morning Post*, *Morning Herald*, *Advertiser*, and others, such dithyrambs as had never before been written about me. . . . There is consternation in the camp of the *Old* Philharmonic Society. Costa and Anderson drink their bile out of full glasses. . . . I have a famous orchestra, and an admirable *entrepreneur* (Beale). . . . Since yesterday he has been half-mad with joy. This success is a great event for musical art here and for me.

On April 30, he writes: †—

The journals continue to belaud me, except the *Daily News*, which is contributed to by Mr. Hogarth, an excellent old man who was, till lately, one of my best friends, but who has for some years acted as secretary to the Philharmonic Society. *Inde iræ*. There is also X——, who plays a kind of small Scudo because he has not been able to extract from Beale the *scudi* he asked for English translations of the new works we produce. But this counts for little; success is general, and my heart is in the place. At this moment I am getting up the Choral Symphony, which till now has only been lost here.

Concerning the performance of Beethoven's great work, he reported as follows to his friends: ‡—

The Choral Symphony, which had never been better given here, produced a miraculous effect, and my success as a conductor was very great; they recalled me after the first part of the concert.

Finally we read: §—

. . . Our last concert took place on Wednesday, with extra-

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 185.
† Ibid., p. 187. ‡ Ibid., p. 194. § Ibid., p. 195.

ordinary success; the crowd was immense, and the receipts large. I was recalled four or five times. . . . After the chorus of sylphs they threw me a laurel crown. . . . I shall much regret my splendid orchestra and chorus. What beautiful female voices! I could have wished thee to hear the Choral Symphony of Beethoven, which we gave for the second time on Wednesday. Truly the *ensemble* in the immense Exeter Hall was grandiose and imposing.

In the letter just quoted reference is made to a certain degree of financial straitness, which accentuates another addressed by the master from London to his son Louis, then an officer in the French navy. The tone of this epistle shows considerable provocation, and is marvellously cold and stern for a man of the writer's temperament:*—

Thou sayest that thou art becoming a fool. Thou art one. Thou must be either a fool or an imbecile to write me such letters, and it only needed this in the midst of the daily and nightly fatigues I have to endure here. In thy last letter from Havannah I read that thou wouldst arrive with a hundred francs, nevertheless thou owest forty!!! Who told thee to pay fifteen francs duty on a box of cigars? Couldst thou not throw them into the sea? . . . I advise thee to measure thy terms when thou writest to me; that style does not suit me. If thou thinkest that life is strewn with roses, it is time to begin learning the contrary. In any case, and in three words, I have no idea of putting thee into any other position than that thou hast chosen. It is too late. At thy age one ought to know enough of the world to take a different line of conduct from that thou appearest to follow. When thou hast sent me a reasonable letter in acknowledging receipt of the half bank-note, thou wilt receive the rest of my instructions. Till then remain at Havre. Adieu.

It was only on rare occasions that Berlioz turned this rough side of his nature towards his son. We shall see, by-and-by, how tender he could be under circumstances of the gravest trial.

The master was not engaged for the second season of the New Philharmonic Society, and in a letter to a friend (December 19, 1852) he gives us a glimpse of the reason:—

Beale, after having advised me, a month ago, that I should receive my engagement for the next season, wrote, eight days back, that he had retired from the committee because one of my *chefs d'orchestre* had contrived to secure that I should be dropped.

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 188 *et seq.*

He had been so annoyed last year by the artists, the public, and the press, that he desired, as he said, to obtain for next year a partner less inconvenient. He wished to engage old Spohr. I could not, however, in order to please that gentleman, conduct in defiance of good sense—that is to say, as he conducts himself. . . . This is fatal, but neither myself nor my friends in London can do anything. They speak, however, of other projects in England—always in England; and these will soon be decided. Here there is nothing—always nothing.

The same letter shows us the master at Weimar, whither he had gone to attend the production of his "Benvenuto Cellini" by Liszt:—

I will only say to you that this little trip to Germany has been the most charming that I have made in any country. . . . All the orchestra—singers, actors, comedians, tragedians, directors, intendants—dined together at the Town Hall on the night of my departure, representing an order of ideas and sentiments which in France they have no notion of. I finished by weeping like two dozen calves, thinking what chagrin the same "Benvenuto" had been worth to me in Paris. That excellent Liszt was everything adorable in the way of goodness, abnegation, zeal, and devotion. The ducal family overwhelmed me with attention in all ways.

It was probably at this dinner that a *pièce d'occasion* was sung to Raff's music by a select choir of Weimar amateurs. The *jeu d'esprit* may be worth quoting:—

Nostrum desiderium
Tandem implevisti:
Venit nobis gaudium
Quia tu venisti.

Sicuti coloribus
Pingit nobis pictor;
Pictor es eximius
Harmoniæ victor.

Vives, crescas, floreas,
Hospes Germanorum
Et amicus maneas
Neo-Wimanorum.

One of the "projects in England" certainly became a reality: "Benvenuto Cellini" was brought out at Covent Garden Theatre under the composer's own direction. It failed, and Berlioz naturally, because there was undoubted provocation, attributed the result to intrigue, but in the midst of bitterness did not lose a sense of discretion. After

remarking that the popular operatic composers hated him because his rise inevitably meant their downfall, he adds:—

I had proof of this fact in London, where a band of Italians made nearly impossible the representation of "Benvenuto Cellini" at Covent Garden. They shouted and hissed from beginning to end, and even sought to prevent the execution of my overture to "Le Carnaval Romain," which prefaced the second act, and had been applauded in London at various concerts, among others at that of the Philharmonic Society a fortnight before. In its anger public opinion, if not mine, placed at the head of this comical cabal Mr. Costa, *chef d'orchestre* at Covent Garden, whom I had several times attacked in my *feuilletons* because of the liberties which he takes with the scores of the great masters, cutting them, lengthening them, instrumenting and mutilating them in all ways. If Mr. Costa be guilty, which is very possible, he has known how to put my suspicions to sleep by his eagerness to serve me and to help me during rehearsal.

The master, nevertheless, was not without consolation in England. The old Philharmonic Society, which looked at him askance in 1852, now came lumbering along in the rear of enlightened opinion, as usual, and devoted half of one of its programmes to his music. Moreover, a committee was formed for the purpose of organising a benefit concert, but unhappily the composer's duties elsewhere called him away before it could take place. The money subscribed by the committee and others was then devoted—in intention, for it does not appear that the matter went beyond—to the publication of "La Damnation de Faust" in English. *A propos*, we have two letters, written by Berlioz, which cannot fail to be of interest. One is addressed to M. Sainton: *—

London, July 8, 1853.

My dear Sainton,—I leave on Saturday next, and have so many things to do to-morrow, that it will be impossible to accept your kind invitation. Excuse me, therefore. I have written to Mr. Costa, begging him to convey my thanks to Messieurs the Artists of the Orchestra at Covent Garden for their gracious offer to assist in the performance at the concert, which cannot now take place. I write also to Beale to thank the members of the committee, of whom you are one, for their generous and charming idea to publish an English edition of my "Faust." It is impossible to be more delicately good and at the same time more artistic.—Your very devoted,

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

* Kindly lent for translation by M. Sainton.

The second appeared in the *Musical World* of July 19, 1853, as a communication to the editor (Mr. J. W. Davison):—

My dear ——,—The concert cannot take place. The gentlemen of the committee organised to get it up have conceived the delicate, charming, and generous idea of devoting the sum realised by the subscription opened for the concert to the acquisition of the score of my "Faust," which will be published, with English text, under the superintendence of Beale and other members of the committee. It would be impossible to be more cordial and artist-like at the same time, and I rejoice at the result of the performance at Covent Garden since it has been the cause of a demonstration so sympathetic, intelligent, and worthily expressed. Give all the publicity in your power to this manifestation: you will render justice to your compatriots, and at the same time confer a very great pleasure on yours, &c.,

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

The third letter was written to Mr. Smythson, chorus-master at Covent Garden:*—

My dear Mr. Smythson,—The concert for which Mesdames and Messieurs the Artists of the Chorus of Covent Garden had so generously accorded me their aid cannot take place. I am none the less profoundly touched by the mark of sympathy which the artists have given me on this occasion. Will you thank them for me, and assure them that I am more happy and more proud of that proof of friendship on their part than though I had given the most splendid concert under ordinary conditions? Allow me to say also how much I appreciate the trouble you have taken with the study of "Benvenuto Cellini," and to beg you to believe in the distinguished sentiments of your entirely devoted

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

London, July 8, 1853.

Defeated at Covent Garden, the master went to Baden, on the invitation of Bénazet the famous *directeur des jeux*, and conducted two concerts, at which portions of "Faust" were given. From Baden he visited Frankfort and gave two others, with a less happy result. Scarcely had he returned to Paris before such engagements were offered at Brunswick and Hanover as induced him once more to cross the Rhine. In the capital of the Grand Duchy his success was very great:†—

Bâton of gold and silver presented by the orchestra; a supper

* Kindly lent for translation by Mr. Smythson.

† "Lettres Intimes," p. 202.

of a hundred covers, whereat all the *capacities* of the town assisted (judge how much they ate), the Duke's ministers, the musicians of the chapel; a benevolent institution founded bearing my name *(sub invocatione sancti, &c.)*; ovation decreed by the people one Sunday, when they performed the "Carnaval Romain" at a garden concert; ladies who kiss my hand on leaving the theatre, in the open street; crowns sent to me anonymously in the evening, &c., &c.

At Hanover the same story:—

On taking my place for the first rehearsal the orchestra received me with fanfares of trumpets and applause, and I found my scores covered with laurels like respectable hams. At the last rehearsal, the King and Queen came at nine a.m. and remained to the end—that is to say, till one p.m. At the concert, immense "hurrahs" and encores, &c. On the the morrow the King sent for me and commanded another concert which takes place the day after tomorrow. "I did not believe," he said, "that any one could find new beauties in music. You have undeceived me. And how you conduct! I do not see you [the King is blind], but I feel it." And, as I expressed my happiness in having such a musician-hearer, "Yes" he added, "I owe much to Providence, which gives me the feeling of music in compensation for that which I have lost."

Returning to Paris, Berlioz fell again a prey to the profound depression which had for some time afflicted him. He longed above all for the recognition and honour of the only city whose favourable verdict is in the esteem of a Frenchman worth having. London and the cities of Germany were very well in their way and not to be despised, but while Paris frowned the whole world was dark. Out of this state of things arose a condition of irresoluteness that led almost to despair. The master worked slowly on at his "Enfance du Christ," the novel style of which seems to have interested him; but he was "tormented" all the time by the idea of a vast opera. "I resist the temptation to realise this project; and I shall resist, I hope, to the end." Nevertheless, out of it came, eventually, that unhappy "Trojens," the failure of which almost broke his heart. Next he was haunted by dreams of a new symphony—literally by dreams, the themes coming to him in his sleep and disturbing the repose for which his mind, then sorely harrassed by the condition of his dying wife, craved as a famished man for food. But he had not the heart to follow up these instinctive

promptings, and his remarks upon himself thereanent are pathetic almost to tears:—

"Coward!" will say some young fanatic, whom I pardon in advance for the injury. "One should dare! one should compose! one should even ruin oneself! Nobody has a right to chase away thoughts thus, and to force back into nothingness a work which desires to come forth, and which begs for life." Ah, young man who calls me coward, . . . I have the conscience to be no more than human, and, while believing myself to be as devoted to the art as thee or any others, I believe also that I honour art in not treating it as a monster hungry for human victims, and in proving that it has left me reason enough to distinguish courage from ferocity.

The wife of Berlioz died, after a long and painful illness, on March 3, 1854. In contemplation of this event, he confesses to a predominant feeling of "immense, frightful, immeasurable, infinite pity." He was confronted by the problem which has remained unsolved since the beginning of the world, and could not "justify the ways of God to man." He thought of her once glory as an artist, of her accident, her failure on reappearing, her inextinguishable jealousy, their separation, the death of all her relatives, her broken heart, her vanished beauty, her destroyed health, her physical sufferings, her loss of movement and of speech, and her long perspective of death and forgetfulness. All these things drove him out of himself, and he exclaims: "Destruction! fire and thunders! blood and tears! my brain curdles in my head as I contemplate these horrors." A few friends attended the "poor Ophelia" to her grave, and Berlioz morbidly contrasted the scanty train with what it would have been had she died twenty-five years before:—

To-day, while she goes thus, nearly alone, to the cemetery, ungrateful and forgetful Paris growls below there under its smoke; he who loved her, and has not the courage to follow her to her tomb, weeps in a corner of a deserted garden; and her young son, struggling afar off against the tempest, is rocking high up on a mast amid the sombre ocean.

A more melancholy and touching letter than that addressed by Berlioz to his son at Calais, on his return from the voyage, has rarely been penned amid the fires that seem always to encompass great souls. It paints a sad picture needing no comment:*—

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 206 *et seq.*

Poor dear Louis, thou hast received my letter of yesterday, and now thou knowest all. I am alone in the great room at Montmartre, writing to thee by the side of her deserted chamber. I have been again to the cemetery, and placed two crowns upon the tomb—one for thee, one for me. I have lost my head, and do not know why I have returned here. The servants remain for some days; they are putting everything in order, and I shall take care that there is as much as possible for thee. I have preserved her hair. Do not lose the little pin that I gave her. Thou wilt never know what we suffered for one another, thy mother and I; and it was just those sufferings which so much attached us to one another. It was as impossible for me to live with her as to leave her. Happily, she saw thee before dying. For myself, I came later, on the morrow of thy departure; and I entered the house ten minutes after she, without pain, had rendered the last sigh. She was then free. I love thee, my dear son. We spoke of thee much yesterday in this sad garden, with Alexis Bertschtold. . . . My cares will endure six months longer at least, for I must pay the doctor, and the sale of the furniture will bring in scarcely anything. . . . Adieu! I embrace thee with all my heart. Love me, as I love thee.

The boyish recklessness of Louis in money matters was always a sore trouble to his father, from whose scanty score he had to be supplied. Some reference to this matter appears in a letter written a few days (March 23, 1854) after the one just quoted:*—

Dear friend, thy letter gave me most unexpected pleasure. Thou hast now seventy francs a month, and if thou knowest how to conduct thyself, and to renounce thy method of using money, thou wilt be able, without doubt, to save a part thereof. Tell me if thou thinkest thou wilt be able to redeem the watch which, I fear, was pledged at Havre in the time of thy folly. It was given thee by my father. If thou canst not recover it, I will buy thee another with the money which I have of thine. I am having made for thee a watchguard with the hair of thy poor mother, and I earnestly desire that thou may'st religiously preserve it. I have also had a bracelet made, which I shall give to my sister; the rest of the hair I keep. . . . No doubt thou hast read the charming things which Jules Janin wrote about thy poor mother in his *feuilleton* of last Monday. With what delicacy he referred to my work on "Romeo and Juliet," in citing the words of the funeral march, "Cast flowers," &c. Yesterday's *Siècle* also contained some words, and many other papers that thou knowest not have spoken of our cruel loss. I start next Sunday evening at eight

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 208.

for Hanover, where I shall be till April 3 or 4. After that date I do not know where I ought to go, but in any case I shall certainly be at Dresden from April 15 to May 1. Write me as often as possible to let me know how thou art getting on. . . . God grant that my German trip may bring something in. The apartment at Montmartre is not let, and it may be that I shall have to pay another year's rent. Adieu, very dear child; my love for thee appears doubled since the loss we have sustained. I embrace thee with all my heart.

A few days later, Louis was ordered to the Baltic with the French fleet, then about to operate against the Russians; and this drew another letter from his father, in which the old money trouble again appears:*—

Take care. It seems to me that thou hast begun again to squander thy money. I have sent thee some twice this last month. Buy a watch, small of cost, but excellent. I have not received a sou since I have been in Germany. They ought to have sent to me here (Dresden) a sum of 400 francs from Hanover, together with the cross that the King has announced for me; but I have got neither cross nor money. I have written on this matter to three persons, no one of whom answered. . . . Adieu, dear child, write to me as often as possible, especially when thou has left France. I embrace thee with all my heart.

A contemplated trip to Munich seems to have been interfered with by the candidature of Berlioz for a chair at the Institute, which he failed to obtain. Paris, it must be said for that fickle city, was consistent in her treatment of our composer. Berlioz, however, took this fresh rebuff with a more philosophic air than usual. Writing to his friend, Auguste Morel, he said (August 28, 1854):†—

They urged me to become a candidate, to make the calls and everthing else usual under such circumstances. I did it all; I saw the academicians one after the other, and, after a thousand brave words, extremely flattering, a warm reception, &c., they elected Clapisson. Here's to the next vacancy, however. I am resolved to persist with as much patience as Eugène Delacroix and M. Abel de Pujol, who presented themselves ten times. Réber has shown me every possible mark of sincere sympathy, and the three other musicians of sincere antipathy. L—— has worked for me with one hand; I don't know what he did with the other.

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 210.
† Ibid., p. 213.

Three days later Berlioz wrote on the same subject to Hans von Bülow :*—

I resigned myself frankly to those terrible visits, to those letters, to all that the Academy inflicts on persons who would *intrare in suo docto corpore* (Molière's Latin); and they have selected M. Clapisson. Another time, however, I am resolute on this matter, and will present myself even to the point of death.

We next find the master taking an unexpected and startling step. Whether given up to one of those vagaries which were the bane of his life, or animated by just and generous sentiments, he married, in the early autumn of 1854, Mdlle. Récio, a lady with whom he had lived for some years. The terms in which he made this known to his son may be quoted :†—

I have to make known to thee a piece of news which will probably not astonish thee, and which I communicated in advance to my sister and uncle on the occasion of my last visit to the Côte. I have remarried. That connection, by its long duration, had become indissoluble, as thou well understandest; I could neither live alone nor abandon the person who had been my companion for fourteen years. On his last visit to Paris, my uncle himself was of this opinion, and the first to advise me. All my friends thought with him. Thy interests, as may be believed, are well safe-guarded. I have devised to my wife after me, if I should die first, only a quarter of my little fortune, and this quarter, I know, it is her intention to leave thee. She brings me, by way of dower, her furniture, the value of which is more than we think, but which ought, of course, to return to her, if I die first. . . . My position, more regular, is more agreeable thus. I do not doubt, if thou hast preserved some painful souvenirs, and some harsh feelings for Mdlle. Récio, that thou, for love of me, wilt hide them in the depths of thy soul. The marriage was accomplished *en petit comité*, without noise as without concealment. If thou writest to me on the subject, write nothing that I cannot show to my wife, because I would not for anything have shadows in my home; however, I leave thy heart to tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

In the same letter he states that he is getting up a concert for the production of "L'Enfance du Christ," some reference to which, as a past event, appears in the Humbert correspondence : ‡—

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 214. † Ibid., p 217.
‡ "Lettres Intimes," p. 205.

I burst with joy to make you hear my new work. It had an enormous success. All the press—French, English, German, Belgian—chants Hosannas in every key, and there are two persons here mortified with rage.

The master's second wedded life began and his autobiography ended almost simultaneously. On October 18, 1854, he closed his memoirs with a paragraph so characteristic of his intense emotionalism that it eminently deserves translation here :—

I finish, thanking holy Germany, where the culture of art is preserved in its purity; and thee, generous England; and thee, Russia, which saved me; and you, my good friends of France; and you, noble hearts and spirits of all nations whom I have met. It was happiness for me to know you; I preserve and shall faithfully cherish the dearest recollections of our intercourse. As for you, maniacs, dogs, and stupid bulls; as for you, my Guildensterns, my Rosencrantzes, my Iagos, my little Osrics, serpents and insects of all species, "farewell, my friends;" I despise you, and I sincerely hope not to die till you are forgotten.

On January 1, 1865, Berlioz added a "postface" to his autobiography. This, however, does not bridge the interval of eleven years, and we must resort to the letters for information as to much that has happened during that time. In one of those addressed to Humbert, the master makes a confession of his political faith :*—

You have quickly reassured me; for myself, I am a thorough Imperialist; I shall never forget that our Emperor delivered us from the dirty and stupid Republic. All civilised men ought to remember that. He has the misfortune to be a barbarian in the matter of art, but of what kind? He is a barbarian-saviour; and Nero was an artist. There are spirits of all colours.

On March 2, 1855, we find him writing from Paris to M. Tajan-Rogé stating that he had just returned from Weimar and Gotha, where the public had embarrassed him with all that which, in Europe, constitutes success. Some particulars of the last concert given in the classic town of Goethe and Schiller are decidedly interesting :—

I had a monster programme ("L'Enfance du Christ"—the Symphonie Fantastique—"Le Retour à la Vie"). This last work, which you do not know, and of which I wrote the words as well as the music, is a lyric melodrama. The sole actor, who

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 266.

plays the *rôle* of the artist, does so before the curtain, which is lowered and conceals behind it an amphitheatre where the band, chorus, and chief singers are placed. The pieces of music are melodies and harmonies, heard by the artist in fancy alone but by the audience in reality, a little dulled by the curtain acting as a kind of "mute." I was recalled four times after this work, which I wrote twenty-two years ago, when vagabondising among the woods of Italy.

The same letter contains an indication of his future movements:—

I must stir myself during the eight days I am passing in Paris, being engaged to give three concerts at Brussels from the 15th to the 25th of this month. Then, on April 6, I must give another here, at the Opéra-Comique, with M. Perrin's united forces; organise the first performance of my "Te Deum," at St. Eustache, on March 1; and then start for London, where I am engaged by the New Philharmonic Society.

References appear in other letters to the "Te Deum" of which mention is here made. Addressing his friend, Morel, Berlioz says:—

Behold me now plunged in the "Te Deum," and it is at such a moment that your absence appears to me strange.

Again, to Richard Wagner:*—

I sincerely wish I were able to send you the scores for which you do me the pleasure to ask; unhappily, my publishers have not given me any for a long time. But there are two, or even three, the "Te Deum," "L'Enfance du Christ," and "Lélio" (lyric monodrama), which will be out in a few weeks, and those, at least, I shall be in a position to send you.

Writing to his son on April 27, 1855, he says:†—

We had the first orchestral rehearsal [of the "Te Deum"] yesterday at St. Eustache, with the six hundred children. To-day I try the *ensemble* of my two hundred artist-choristers. The thing goes well. It is colossal. . . . There is a finale grander than the "Tuba mirum" of my Requiem.

The performance of this work duly took place, and Morel wrote to Berlioz asking for particulars as to its character and effect. The master replied, on June 2:‡—

I will only say that the effect produced upon me was enormous, and the same with my executants. In general, the unmeasured

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 225.
† Ibid., p. 227. ‡ Ibid., p. 228.

grandeur of plan and style has struck them prodigiously, and you may believe that the "Tibi omnes" and the "Judea," in two different manners are Babylonian, Ninevitic pieces, which will be found more powerful still when heard in a place less large and sonorous than the church of St. Eustache.

He adds :—

On Wednesday I start for England. Wagner, who conducts the Old Philharmonic Society in London (a post which I was obliged to refuse through being engaged to the other), is beaten down by the attacks of all the English press. But he remains calm, they say, assured that in fifty years he will be the master of the musical world.

The English campaign proved satisfactory. On July 21 he wrote to Morel :*—

I have made a brilliant excursion to London, where I got on better and better. I shall return there this winter, after a tour I have projected in Bohemia and Austria, if we are not at war with the Austrians.

This same year (1855) witnessed the production of a Cantata, "L'Impériale" written for performance at the distribution of prizes in connection with the Paris Exhibition, and subsequently repeated several times to such good purpose that the master received 8,000 francs as his share of the proceeds. He owed this distinctly to Prince Napoléon, whose gracious treatment of him is handsomely acknowledged in a letter containing the further expression: "The Emperor detests music like ten Turks." Our master's account of the performance of "L'Impériale," as it appears in the "post-face" of his memoirs, possesses a special interest :—

The Prince Napoléon had proposed to me to organise a vast concert in the Exhibition Palace for the day on which the Emperor would make the solemn distribution of prizes. I accepted this rough task, while declining pecuniary responsibility. A bold and intelligent *entrepreneur*, M. Ber, presented himself. He treated me generously, and this time the concerts (there were several after the official ceremony) brought me nearly 8,000 francs. I had placed in a raised gallery, behind the throne, eleven hundred musicians, who, however, were very little heard. On the day of the ceremony the musical effect was of such small importance that in the middle of the first piece (the cantata "L'Impériale," which I had written for the occasion) they obliged me to stop the orchestra at the most interesting moment, because

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 230.

the Prince had his speech to deliver, and the music lasted too long. On the morrow the paying public were admitted, and we received 75,000 francs. . . . That day the performance was not interrupted, and I could light the match of my musical firework. I had brought from Brussels a mechanician known to me, who set up an electric metronome with five branches. By a simple movement of a finger of my left hand, I was thus able to mark the time to five different and widely sundered points in the vast space occupied by the executants. Five sub-conductors received my indications by the electric wires, and communicated them to the sections over which they had control. The *ensemble* was marvellous. Since then most lyric theatres have adopted the electric metronome for the direction of choirs behind the scenes, and when the chorus-masters can neither see the beat nor hear the orchestra.

For several years from this time Berlioz abated the frequency of his public demonstrations, and for the most part remained in Paris quietly engaged upon "Les Troyens," which he hoped would be his crowning work. In 1856 he became a member of the Institute, taking the chair vacated by the death of Adolphe Adam, and thus realising one of the dreams of his life. "He organised, each year," says M. Bertrand, "a festival at Baden, and there brought out his ravishing opera 'Beatrice et Benedict'; the youth of the town of Raab sent him a congratulatory address; the artists of the Paris Conservatoire made him an ovation a little while after the production of 'Tannhäuser'; the theatre at Bordeaux played his 'Roméo et Juliette'—this was all, or nearly all." For the rest, he merely supervised the rehearsals of "Alceste" at the Grand-Opéra. We need not, however, content ourselves with this bare outline of seven years' comparative calm, since the master's letters enable us to make acquaintance with numerous and interesting details.

In 1856 Miss Dolby desired to give an orchestral concert in Paris, and M. Sainton sought the counsel and co-operation of Berlioz to that end. In reply he received the following letter:—

19, Rue de Bourtault, January 16, 1856.

My dear Sainton,—At the end of this month I go to Germany, and do not exactly know how long I shall remain there. Moreover, several propositions have been made to me for Belgium in the month of March, and if the terms I have demanded for the Belgian concerts be met I shall accept the offers. It is therefore very probable that I shall not be in Paris during the month of

March. Save for that, you cannot doubt the pleasure I should have had in putting myself entirely at Miss Dolby's disposal, and in organising and directing her concert. I have received much politeness and many marks of good-fellowship from English artists, wherefore I should rejoice at the opportunity of being useful (but *without any terms* whatever) to a person so distinguished in all respects as Miss Dolby. I shall in any case secure the Salle Herz for the Thursday following March 9. Here is, almost exactly, the cost of a concert such as that Miss Dolby desires to give: The hall, with lights, 300 francs; orchestra of 54 musicians, 800 francs; bills and tickets, 250 francs; *droit des pauvres*, 100 francs; care of instruments, 32 francs; M. Goffier or M. Belloni, organiser of the concert, 100 francs; Tilmant, conductor (the only one that I can advise you to take)—I know not his terms. I doubt whether Prudent will play, and whether the Director of the Opéra will allow Roger to sing. But when Miss Dolby is here to take measures herself she will obtain what she desires more easily. As for you, my dear Sainton, no doubt a great success awaits you, and your name will give much attraction to Miss Dolby's programme. Lefort is well enough liked by the public.

I have given you the figure which the orchestra of my concerts cost me; among others, that which I give on the 25th of this month (for a repetition). I do not know if Tilmant can obtain at that price his Opéra-Comique orchestra. That will be perhaps a little dearer. . . . These, my dear Sainton, are all the details that I can give you upon the sad subject of concerts in Paris. I do not go to London this year. Beale has written to say that we have no chance of success, owing to the Lind fever, which makes all other musical enterprises impossible. I have heard nothing about the Philharmonic in Hanover Square. Whom have they engaged as conductor? Tout à vous.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

His passion for Gluck seems to have survived the lapse of years. Writing to Theodore Ritter (January 12, 1856), he says:*—

As for me, I shall never forget that your artistic instinct has, without hesitation, recognised and adored with transport that, for you, new genius. Yes, yes, depend upon it, whatever the men of half-feeling and half-science, those who have only part of a heart and a single brain lobe, may say, there are two great superior gods in our art, Beethoven and Gluck. The one reigns over the infinitude of thought, the other over the infinitude of passion; and though the first be strong above the second, there

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 233.

is nevertheless so much of the one in the other that these two Jupiters make but a single divinity, in whom our admiration and worship ought to be absorbed.

On May 23, 1856, we find the master writing to his friend Morel, entreating his good offices for Louis Berlioz, who desired to leave the imperial navy and enter the merchant service. This letter contains also a reference to his state of health, in which we may see the beginning of the end:*—

I am greatly occupied and, to tell the truth, very unwell, without being able to discover what is the matter with me. A strange illness—I sleep in the streets, &c.; however, perhaps it is the effect of the spring.

Further references to this malady will appear later; meanwhile let us hear the master as he discourses to various correspondents on more cheerful themes. His aversion from the fugued "Amen," so common in religious composition and so well burlesqued in "La Damnation de Faust," led him to speak very clearly to the Abbé Girod, who had written a work on Church music:†—

No doubt one might write a good fugue of a religious character to express the pious wish "Amen." But it ought to be slow, full of feeling, and very short, because, however well one may convey the sense of a word, that word cannot be, without ridicule, repeated a great number of times. Instead of this reserve and expressive purpose, fugues on the word "Amen" are all rapid, violent, turbulent, and resemble nothing more than a drinking chorus mixed up with peals of laughter, as each part vocalises upon the first syllable, "a . a . a . a . men," which produces a most grotesque and indecent effect. These traditional fugues are merely senseless blasphemies.

A letter to M. Bennet (January 26, 1857) contains anything but a complimentary remark about Handel, whom the writer styles a "barrel of pork and beer," but is chiefly remarkable for a touching paragraph which permits us to see how blank and bare life sometimes appeared to this ardent and disappointed man:‡—

It is well that my letter has reached its end. The pale sunlight that illuminated my window when I began writing to you has gone, and I feel cold at heart and see everything grey, and I

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 235.
† Ibid., p. 238. ‡ Ibid., p. 247.

am about to stretch myself upon my couch, and there close the eyes of spirit and body in order to see nothing, but to rest as senseless as a tree without leaves dripping with rain.

The true spirit of the man blazes out, moreover, in the subjoined extract from a letter to Hans von Bülow (January 20, 1858):*—

Your faith, your ardour, your hatreds even, delight me. Like you, I still have terrible hatreds and volcanic ardours; but, as to faith, I firmly believe that there is nothing true, nothing false, nothing beautiful, nothing ugly. Don't believe a word of this; I libel myself. No, no, I more than ever adore that which I find beautiful, and, to my mind, death involves nothing more cruel than this: no longer to love, no longer to admire. It is true that, when dead, one does not know that one no longer loves. But a truce to philosophy—in other words, a truce to stupidities.

A propos to Dr. Bülow we find in a letter of the master to his son (January 24, 1858) some observations having a general as well as a personal interest, especially at this time when a certain school of amateurs would number Berlioz among its lights:†—

I received some days ago a long letter from M. de Bülow, one of Liszt's sons-in-law, he who married Mdlle. Cosima. He informed me that he had given a concert in Berlin at which were performed with great success my overture to "Cellini" and the little vocal piece "Le Jeune Patre Breton." This young man is one of the most fervent disciples of that senseless school known in Germany as the school of the future. They will take no denial, but absolutely insist that I am their chief and standard-bearer. I say nothing, I write nothing, I simply let them alone: men of sense will know how to discern what is the truth.

In this connection may fitly be cited some remarks upon the production of "Tannhäuser" at the Opéra in 1861, under Wagner's direction. Writing to his son (February 21), Berlioz says:‡—

One cannot get rid of that "Tannhäuser" music; the last general rehearsal was, I am told, atrocious, and lasted till one o'clock in the morning. . . . Liszt is coming to uphold the school of charivari. I shall not write the article on "Tannhäuser," and have begged D'Ortigue to undertake the work. . . . I have never had so many windmills to fight as this year; I am

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 252.
† Ibid., p. 258. ‡ Ibid., p. 277.

surrounded with madmen of all kinds. There are moments when rage suffocates me.

On March 5 he writes:*—

Our musical world is much agitated by the scandal which the representation of "Tannhäuser" will produce. I meet only with men who are furious, and the Minister went away from rehearsal the other day in a state of rage. The Emperor is not satisfied, yet there are some genuine enthusiasts even among Frenchmen. Wagner is evidently insane: he will die, as Jullien died last year, in a transport of madness. Liszt has not come, and will not be at the first performance. He seems to anticipate a catastrophe. As I have already said, I shall not write the article thereupon, but leave it to D'Ortigue. I mean to protest by my silence, free to pronounce later on if they push me to it.

The performance of Wagner's opera was noticed, in a letter to Madame Massart (March 14), as follows:†—

Ah! God of heaven, what a representation! What shouts of laughter! The Parisian showed himself yesterday in a new light. He laughed at a bad musical style, he laughed at the antics of orchestral buffoonery, he laughed at the *naïvetés* of an oboe; and he now understands that there is a style in music. As for the horrors, they were splendidly hissed.

Subsequently Berlioz informed his son:—

The second representation of "Tannhäuser" was worse than the first. . . . The press is unanimous in exterminating him [Wagner]. For myself, I am cruelly avenged.

It is now time to turn from these desultory matters to the last great achievements of our master's life—the composition and production of "Beatrice et Benedict" and "Les Troyens." In the postface of his memoirs Berlioz says, with regard to the first of these works, that it was written "at the request" of M. Bénazet for his theatre at Baden. The letters, however, contain several references to "Beatrice et Benedict" before the subjoined words appear (January 2, 1861):—

Bénazet is here. He has engaged me for Baden. I have promised him my one-act (*sic*) opera for his new theatre now building at Baden.

From this it would seem that the master laboured at the smaller work without the stimulus of a "commission," and, perhaps, as a relief from the ponderous weight of the bigger.

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 278. † Ibid., p. 279.

In July of the same year he mentioned the work to Humbert* as taken from Shakespeare's "Much Ado about Nothing," adding, "It will prudently call itself 'Beatrice and Benedict.' In any case, I answer that there is not 'much ado.'" But there was considerable ado at Baden, where "Beatrice et Benedict" was produced under the composer's direction on August 9, 1862. Of the performance and its attendant circumstances Berlioz wrote to the same intimate friend as follows (August 21, 1862):†—

I have come from Baden, where my opera "Beatrice et Benedict" has just obtained a great success. The French, Belgian, and German press are unanimous in praising it. . . . Unhappily, you were not there; the evening would have recalled to you that of "L'Enfance du Christ." The cabalists, the insulters, remained in Paris. A great number of writers and artists, however, made the journey. The performance, conducted by myself, was excellent. . . . Will you believe it?—I suffered so much from my neuralgia that day that I took no interest in anything; and when I took my place before that public—Russian, German, and French—to direct the first representation of an opera, written, words and music, by myself, I did so without feeling the least emotion! A result of that curious coldness was that I conducted better than usual. I was much more moved on the second occasion. . . You would laugh if you could read the stupid eulogies which criticism gives me. It was found out that I possess melody; that I can be joyous and even comic. The history of the astonishment caused by "L'Enfance du Christ" is repeating itself. *Seeing* that the brutal instruments were not in the orchestra they discovered that I made no *noise*. What patience would be necessary if I were not so indifferent!

The initial success of the opera was followed up. At the instance of the Grand Duchess, a German version was played at Weimar some months later, with an equally gratifying result to Berlioz, who conducted the first two performances, and was overwhelmed with attentions. But all this did not prevent the composer from making very considerable and important changes in his work. As late as June, 1863, we discover, from a remark in one of his letters, that he was still amending it in view of its reproduction at Baden. Upon "Les Troyens," however, he rested all his hopes. The importance he attached to this work cannot be exaggerated. He intended it as his greatest, and seemed to feel

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 228. † Ibid., p. 235.

that it would prove his last, effort for the lyric stage. Hence the continued references to "Les Troyens" in his letters, and the minute details with regard to it in his postface.

Respecting the conception of the work, he says:—

Being in Weimar . . . at the house of the Princess of Wittgenstein . . . I was brought to speak of my admiration for Virgil and my idea of a grand opera on the Shakespeare model, having the second and fourth books of the Æneid as its subject. I added that I knew well what chagrins such a work would necessarily cause me, on account of which I could never attempt it. The Princess replied, "From your passion for Shakespeare and your love of the antique something grand and new should result. Come, you must write this opera, this lyric poem, call it and arrange it as you please. You must begin it and finish it." As I continued to excuse myself, "Listen to me," said the Princess —"if you are frightened at the trouble it will and ought to cause you, if you are feeble enough not to brave all for Dido and Cassandra, never present yourself at my house again; I will see you no more."

On this, Berlioz went back to Paris, and addressed himself to the great task, his whole soul, as well as all his hopes, being in it. For proof of this we need only turn to the letters. He writes to Morel (May 23, 1856):*—

I have undertaken an opera in five acts, the whole of which I write, words and music. I have reached the third act of the poem, having yesterday finished the second. This is between ourselves.

To the same (September 9, 1856):†—

I declare to you that the poem, which I have read to several persons, is a very great success. I believe that you also will find it good.

To M. Bennet (January 26, 1857):‡—

Ill as I am, I push on. My score forms itself as stalactites form themselves in damp grottos, and almost without my knowing it. At this moment I am finishing the instrumentation o the monster finale of the first act, which up till now has, on account of its dimensions, given me serious uneasiness. . . . See how easily you draw me on to talk of my work. Ah! I have no illusions—no; and you make me laugh with that old story about a "mission to fulfil." What a missionary! But there is

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 236.
† Ibid., p. 237. ‡ Ibid., p. 240.

in me an inexplicable mechanism, which works in despite of reasoning, and I let it work because I am not able to hinder it.

To Morel (April 25, 1857):*—

In our little world my poem is at present making a success. I have read it twice before two competent tribunals, one at M. Edouard Bertin's, the other at my own house. They pronounced it good. At one of the Tuileries soirées lately, the Empress spoke to me about it a good deal. Later I will go and read it to their Majesties, if the Emperor has an hour to spare.

To Hans von Bülow (January 20, 1858):†—

You have no true idea, my dear Bülow, of the flux and reflux of contrary feelings which have agitated me since I began this work. At one time it is a passion, a joy, an emotion worthy of an artist of twenty years. Then it is a disgust, a coldness, a repulsion from my task which frightens me. I never doubt. I believe, and I cease to believe; then I rebelieve, and as the upshot I continue to roll my rock. Another great effort, and we shall arrive at the summit of the mountain, the one bearing the other.

These quotations, which might be extended to great length, show how "Les Troyens" possessed our master's mind during the three years and a half occupied in its composition. At last the work was finished, and Berlioz then took the bold step of writing a letter to the Emperor asking permission to read the poem at court. He was dissuaded by M. de Morny from sending it, but on one occasion, when at the palace, he ventured to address Napoleon III., and obtained permission to forward the book for imperial inspection. Berlioz soon learned the wisdom of the counsel "Put not not your trust in princes." The Emperor never read the poem, and, although the Minister of State spoke fair words, nothing was done. In a letter to Humbert (November 19, 1858) Berlioz describes one of his interviews with the Minister (Walewski):‡—

Yesterday I went to the Ministry of State and the huissier of the Minister introduced me without a letter of audience when he saw on my card "Membre de l'Institut." . . . I spoke to him about the "Troyens," and of the hostile part taken by the director of the Opéra against that work, of which he knows not a line or a note. His Excellency said to me a lot of ambiguous things. "Certainly—your great reputation gives you rights, and well justifies pretensions. But a grand opera in five acts!

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 242. † Ibid., p. 255.
‡ "Lettres Intimes," p. 213.

It is a terrible responsibility for a director! I will see; I have already heard your work spoken about." "But, Monsieur le Ministre, it is possible to mount the 'Troyens' neither this year nor next: the theatre of the Opéra is not in a condition to undertake such an enterprise—you have not the necessary material. The actual Opéra is incapable of such an effort." "However, in general, one should write for the means which one has. I will consider what can be done."

Berlioz believed that he had the Emperor on his side, but Napoleon III. always made up his mind with difficulty and "he loved music too little to intervene directly and energetically." At length, by force of accumulated interest, "Les Troyens" was formally accepted for the Opéra, immediately upon which another difficulty arose. Count Walewski, who, as Minister of State, could sanction or decline the expenditure necessary for the *mise en scène*, took offence at the composer's refusal to superintend the preparation of Gluck's "Alceste" on account of the alterations necessary to suit the voice of Madame Viardot. This obstacle was eventually removed by a sort of compromise, and then Berlioz, after being required to make some changes in his work, had to wait his turn with Gounod and Gevaert before him. How severely his patience suffered appears from a reply he made to the Empress, when her Majesty once asked the probable time of producing "Les Troyens"—"I do not know much, madame, but it dawns upon me that one must live a hundred years in order to be played at the Opéra." In February, 1862, we find him writing that Walewski, pleased with the work he had done on "Alceste," had ordered the director, Royer, to put "Les Troyens" on the stage immediately after Gevaert's opera. In March of the following year, therefore, the master hoped to see the great day arrive. Yet in February he wrote to Humbert without explanation:—

I have definitely broken with the Opéra for "Les Troyens," and accepted the propositions of the director of the Lyrique (Carvalho). He is engaged at this moment in making up the company, orchestra and chorus. The rehearsals will begin in May next, so that the work may be performed in December.

Owing to various hindrances, June arrived before Berlioz had "read" his work to the artists, by which time, moreover, he had found it necessary to play the last three acts only ("Les Troyens à Carthage"), dividing them into five

and introducing them by a prologue specially written. At length, on November 4, 1863, the first performance took place, and on the following day the master wrote to Humbert:—

Magnificent success; profound emotion of the public; tears, unceasing applause, and *one hiss* when my name was announced at the end.

But the "magnificent success" of this sanguine and impassioned spirit soon dwindled down till there was hardly anything left for the opera but the interest which sarcasm and ridicule kept alive. As for the critics, many of whom had felt the composer's keen lash, some of them treated "Les Troyens" with more passion than justice. Berlioz, however, had his compensations. Letters poured in upon him; strangers stopped him in the street to shake his hand, and, although Carvalho cut the opera remorselessly after its initial performance, "Les Troyens à Carthage" ran for twenty-one nights. It should be added that for twenty-two days Berlioz was confined to his room by an access of his nervous malady, brought on through the worry of rehearsal. In this condition he wrote to M. Alexis Lwoff, who had spoken to him about another opera:—

I thank you for the offer you have been good enough to make me of a subject for an opera, but I cannot accept it, my intention being decided to write no more. I have still three scores which the Parisians do not know, and I shall never find circumstances favourable enough to make them known. "Les Troyens" was finished four years ago, and only the second part, "Les Troyens à Carthage," has been represented. There remains to produce "La Prise de Troie." I will never write again save for a theatre where I am blindly obeyed without remark—where I am the absolute master. And that will probably never be met with.

The bitterness of the composer's spirit is but slightly shown here. That only a part of his great opera should be performed, and performed indifferently, amid the sneers of enemies and the careless jokes of a public incapable of appreciating a great purpose, was a mortal blow. It struck him to the heart, and we do not wonder that he wrote some time after:—

I am in my sixty-first year; I have no more hopes, or illusions, or vast conceptions; my son is nearly always far from me; I am alone; my contempt for the imbecility and untruth of men, my hatred of their atrocious ferocity, have grown to a head, and hour

by hour I say to Death: "When thou wilt." What, then, is he waiting for?

Although the fate of "Les Troyens à Carthage" profoundly disappointed Berlioz, twenty-one representations put him in a position to snap the chains which bound him to the *Débats* and its hated *feuilletons*. At this the master rejoiced with joy inexpressible. As we have seen, he always detested the journalist's work, for which, indeed, he was in some important respects unfitted, and now he threw away the critical pen with a wild shriek of liberty. Hear him:—

At last! at last! at last! After thirty years of bondage, I am free! I have no more *feuilletons* to write, no more platitudes to justify, no more mediocrities to praise, no more indignation to repress, no more deceptions, no more comedies, no more cowardly complaisance. I am free! I am no longer obliged to enter opera-houses, or to speak of them, or to hear them spoken of. . . . Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terrâ pax hominibus voluntatis!!

Referring to the same subject in a letter, he says: *—

I have left the *Journal des Débats*. Nothing can be more comical than the disappointment and wrath of the men who, for three months, have been paying court to me. They have lost their trouble, they are robbed, &c.

Berlioz thoroughly enjoyed his freedom.

I have not put my foot inside a lyric theatre for two months. I have seen neither "Moïse" nor "La Fiancée du Roi de Garbe," nor the marvels of the Italiens, nor the new ballet, nor anything.

But with leisure came *ennui*, heightened by the lassitude attendant upon disease. In truth Berlioz was at this time an object of pity. His second wife had followed Henrietta Smithson to the grave, dying suddenly of heart-rupture; and perhaps there is not in all literature a more terrible description than that given by the master of the scene at Montmartre, when the remains of the Irish actress were disinterred in order to be placed in a family grave purchased for and presented to Berlioz by his friend, M. Alexandre, the manufacturer of harmoniums. We forbear to reproduce a picture that could only have been drawn at a moment of morbid excess. It would shock the most callous reader. Enough that Berlioz saw his wives laid in the same tomb, and remarked that they rested tranquilly, awaiting the hour when he should join them.

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 306.

In August, 1864, the master, a chevalier of the Legion of Honour since 1839, was created an officer of that order, and shortly after, being unable to bear longer the solitude of a city from which all his friends had temporarily departed, he set out for his native South. The expedition may have been vaguely entered upon, but was soon controlled by a purpose of the most characteristic description—none other than that of seeking out the lady (Estelle Gautier) to whom, as a boy, he had been warmly attached, and who was indeed his first love. Some years earlier he had endeavoured to renew the acquaintance at Meylan; but the lady, now known as Madame F., discouraged his advances, acting throughout with great judgment and feeling. Free once more, and in the neighbourhood of her new residence (Lyons), Berlioz resolved upon another effort. At Lyons, therefore, he wrote, begging an interview, and delivered the letter himself, waiting at the door for an answer. The reply being favourable, our master soon stood in the presence of his early love, who received him with a "sweet dignity," holding the letter, apparently unread, in her hand:—

She. We are old acquaintances, M. Berlioz! . . . (*Silence.*) We were two children! . . . (*Silence.*)

He. Will you read my letter, Madame? It will explain to you my visit.

(*Madame F. reads the letter, and places it on the mantelshelf.*)

She. So you have been again to Meylan; but, no doubt, it was by accident that you were there? You have not travelled expressly?

He. Oh! madame, can you think that? Do I want an accident to see again . . .? No, no, I had long desired to return. (*Silence.*)

She. You have had a very exciting life, M. Berlioz.

He. How do you know that, madame?

She. I have read your biography.

He. Which?

She. A volume by Méro I think. I bought it some years ago.

He. Oh! do not attribute to Méro, one of my friends, an artist, and a man of *esprit*, that collection of fables and absurdities, the true author of which I suspect. I shall have a genuine biography —that which I have written myself.

She. Oh! no doubt. You write so well.

He. It is not the worth of my style to which I made reference, madame, but to the truth and sincerity of my story. As for my sentiments towards you, I have spoken without restraint in that book, but without naming you. (*Silence.*)

She. I have obtained also some particulars respecting you from one of your friends, who married a niece of my husband.

* * * * *

She. As for my life, it has been very simple and very sad. I have lost several of my children; I have brought up others. My husband died when they were still young. I am much touched by, and very thankful for, the sentiments you have preserved towards me.

He. Give me your hand, madame.

Profoundly agitated, Berlioz kissed the hand extended to him and left the house, to walk about the streets of Lyons as feverishly as he had roamed those of Paris when smitten with his Ophelia. Doing so, he met M. Strakosch, the brother-in-law and then manager of Mdlle. Adelina Patti, from whom he received and conditionally accepted an invitation to dine, in the evening, with the *prima donna*. This, however, did not abate the fever raging in his blood. He could neither read, write, nor sit still. His legs took him mechanically to the neighbourhood of Madame F.'s house, and, when there, he bethought him to invite her to share his box at the opera. But the lady was out. He went again, and met her on the stairs, in company with two German friends. She had a letter of polite refusal in her hand, and was on her road to the master's hotel. Again despair for Berlioz, but he carried off the letter, accounting it an "inestimable treasure." Then he went to dine with Patti, and "the ravishing *diva*, according to her custom, ran and offered to my lips her virginal forehead." More, she accompanied him to the railway station, with her brother-in-law, and there flung herself upon his neck and embraced him. But what was all this to the mature lover of a mature woman?

How much would I have given to receive these marks of affection from Madame F., and to be treated with cold politeness by Mdlle. Patti? During all the prattling of that melodious Hebe, it seemed to me that a marvellous bird with diamond eyes fluttered about my head, perching on my shoulder, thrusting its beak in my hair, and, with fluttering wings, singing the most joyous of songs. I was ravished, but not moved. . . . The aged woman, sad and obscure, to whom art was unknown, possessed my soul, as she did formerly, and as she will to my dying day.

Paris, whither he now returned, could not, any more than Patti, charm away the master's agitation. His thoughts remained with Madame F., and to her he wrote (September 26,

1864) a passionate letter, from which the subjoined is an extract:—

Oh! madame, madame, I have only one object in this world—to gain your affection. Let me try to win it. I will be submissive and reserved; our correspondence shall be as infrequent as you desire, and it need never become to you a fatiguing task: a few lines from your hand will suffice. My visits to you can be but rare, but I shall know that our thoughts are no longer separated, and that, after so many sad years, during which I have been nothing to you, I have at last the hope of becoming your friend. And a friend so devoted as I shall be is rare. I will surround you with tenderness so profound and so sweet, and with an affection so perfect, as that the feelings of the man may be mistaken for the naïve emotions of a child. Perhaps you will find in this a charm; perhaps at last you will say to me "I am your friend."

Madame F. promptly replied with, as she expressed it, her hand upon her heart, and in terms that inspire the most profound respect. Her letter was, in fact, a touching appeal to be let alone, such as even Berlioz, with all his strange passion, could not have read unmoved. A short extract will suffice as an indication of its character:—

I am nothing but an old, very old woman (for, monsieur, I am six years your senior), with a heart shattered by days passed in anguish, with physical and moral pains of all kinds, which leave to me, as regards the joys and feelings of this life, no more illusions. I lost my best friend twenty years ago, and since then I have not sought another. . . . Since the fatal hour when I became a widow, I have broken all ties, and said adieu to pleasures and distractions in order to devote myself entirely to my home and my children. This has been my life for twenty years. It is to me a habit the charm of which nothing can destroy; for in that heart-intimacy I find the only peace possible during the days I have yet to pass on earth.

This pitiful entreaty had not the desired effect. Berlioz returned to the charge, professing to be satisfied with the assurance of "affectionate sentiments," but asking for the lady's address in Geneva, whither she was about to remove:—

But your address! Your address! As soon as you know it yourself, send it to me, for mercy's sake. If your silence indicates a pitiless refusal and a formal purpose to interdict the most distant relation between us; if you thus put me rudely

on one side, as one does dangerous or unworthy creatures, you will bring to a climax unhappiness which it would have been so easy for you to assuage. Then, madame, may God and your conscience pardon you! I shall remain in the cold night, where you will have plunged me, suffering and desolate.

The answer was a short note promising the address, and subsequently one or two letters passed, announcing, on Madame F.'s part, the marriage of her son, but containing, on the part of Berlioz, passionate acknowledgments of something lying behind this act of ordinary politeness. Presently the bride and bridegroom called on the master in Paris, and received from him so much attention that the mother's heart was touched, and the correspondence continued: calm friendship on the one side; on the other, passion not always restrained. So it remained; but almost the last words in the master's memoirs are words of hope for more intimate relations:—

Little by little, perhaps, despite her fear of new friendships, she will find her affectionate sentiments growing slowly. Already I am able to appreciate an amelioration of my life. The past has not entirely passed. My heaven is not yet empty. With an expectant eye I contemplate my star that, in the distance, appears to smile upon me.

From the tone of his letters, it appears that Berlioz soon lost the comfort that had come to him thus. We see again the poor nervous, disappointed, broken-down man, shutting himself up in his room in Paris, refusing solace, and railing at the world. To Madame Ernst he writes:*—

I am passing one of those days when I wish that the world were a bomb full of powder, to which I might put a light for amusement.

He had many such days, and, like Job among the ashes, refused to be comforted. From time to time, moreover, his son was a cause of renewed trouble. In 1865 Louis wished to marry without adequate means, and his father wrote:†—

Thou art thirty-two, and at that age a man ought to know the realities of life or he will never know them. Thou needest money, and it is not I who am able to give thee any. I have enough to make both ends meet, and that is all. I was like thee when I married thy mother, but with more to complain of, since I had not the salary thou hast, and my parents, with whom I had

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 311. † Ibid., p. 317.

broken, would give me nothing. I will leave thee that which my father left me, and something more; but I cannot tell thee when I shall die. . . . Believe that if, at this moment, thou wert married and hadst children, thou wouldst be a hundred times more unhappy than thou art. Profit as much as thou canst by my example. It was a series of miracles (Paganini's present, my Russian tour, &c.) which took me out of the most horrible misery. But miracles are rare, or, indeed, they would be miracles no longer. To live alone, money is needed; to live with a wife requires three times more; to live with a wife and family requires eight times more. That is as certain as that two and two make four.

In August, 1865, Berlioz travelled to Geneva, in hope of seeing Madame F., and was kindly received by that lady and her family, who, however, acted with discretion. Hereupon the master wrote to a friend:—

I have not for one instant found myself alone with her: I have only been able to speak of *other things;* and that gives me an agitation of the heart which kills me. What can I do? I have not the shadow of a reason; I am unjust, stupid. . . . I tremble even now in thinking of the moment when I must go away. The country is charming: the lake is very pure, beautiful and profound; but I know something more profound still, more pure, and more beautiful.

All this while the health of Berlioz was in a wretched state, and his letters contain frequent reference to nervous sufferings. His feelings on musical subjects remained, nevertheless, as strong as ever, and he was as ready as ever to express them. *A propos,* a letter addressed (December 1, 1865) to M. Asger Hamerick—a young Norwegian composer, with whom he had been intimate in Paris—deserves quotation:—

Your musical passion touches me deeply, and although I no longer interest myself in art, so much is it insulted by our horrible world, I cannot see without warm sympathy a young artist having noble illusions such as yours. You remind me of what I was forty years ago, especially by your ardent love of music, your belief in the beautiful, your energetic will, and your indomitable perseverance. Live, believe, love, and work. Despise the vulgar, but act as though you despised them not, leaving them to believe that you are of their friends, of their flatterers even. They are so stupid that they will not doubt you. Then, when you have become strong, powerful, a master, and they see themselves subdued, they will applaud you, crying, "I always said so." I am continually tortured by my neuralgia. . . .

Death is very slow, the capricious old fellow! They perform some parts of my symphony "Roméo et Juliette" at the next concert of the Conservatoire. How will the insolent and idiotic public receive them?

In September, 1866, Berlioz was engaged at the Opéra, superintending the studies of Gluck's "Alceste," and in December of the same year we find him in Vienna, whence he writes to M. Reyer:*—

"La Damnation de Faust" was performed yesterday in the vast hall of the Redoute, before an immense audience, and with astonishing success. To tell you of the recalls, encores, tears, flowers, and applause of that *matinée* would be ridiculous on my part. . . . To-morrow I am invited by the Conservatoire, who wish me to hear my "Harold" Symphony, under the direction of Helmesberger. What can I say to you? It is the greatest musical joy of my life, and you must pardon me if I dwell upon it so long.

On returning to Paris, the master formed plans for other tours, ill as he was, and often obliged to keep his bed. He made arrangements with Ferdinand Hiller to conduct a concert at Cologne, observing in his letter:†—

I shall go to the Royal Hotel, where I have several times stayed. I shall thus be more free to rest in bed as long as I please, for I am one of the most bedridden men alive. It is true that I live very little. Despite the musical delights of my stay in Vienna, the journey thither and the numerous rehearsals which I found necessary almost killed me.

In a subsequent letter to Hiller we read:‡—

You speak like the doctors. "'Tis neuralgia In like manner, when Madame Sand spoke to her gardener about a wall that had given way, she was answered. "Oh! that's nothing, madame: the frost has caused it." "Yes, but we must rebuild it." "Oh! it's nothing; it's the frost." "I don't deny that, but the wall is down." "Don't torment yourself, madame; 'tis the frost."

Scarcely had the master returned to Paris before fate struck a hard and cruel blow at what was left to him of happiness and life. On June 30 he wrote to Humbert:§—

A terrible sorrow has fallen upon me. My poor son, the

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 334. † Ibid., p. 336. ‡ Ibid., p. 337.
§ "Lettres Intimes," p. 306.

captain of a large ship at thirty-three years, has died at Havannah.

In July he again addressed his "dear incomparable friend," revealing to us in touching language the keenness of his mental and bodily sufferings :*—

I write to you a few words as you desire, but do wrong to make you sad. I suffer so much from the return of my intestinal neuralgia that it is as much as I am able to keep alive. I have hardly the necessary intelligence to busy myself with the affairs of my poor Louis. . . . One of his friends, happily, assists me in that. Thanks for your letter, which did me good this morning. Sufferings absorb all. You will pardon me; I well know how stupid I am. I care only for sleep.

In September, 1867, Berlioz went to Néris for bathing, He took five baths, and at the fifth the doctor, hearing him speak, felt his pulse, saying, "Go away at once; the waters are not good for you. You are about to have laryngitis. and you must go to a place where care can be taken of your throat. It is no light thing." The master started the same evening for Vienne, and put himself in charge of some relatives there, remaining nearly always in bed. Thence he wrote :—

At last my natural voice has, in part, come back; the throat affection has gone, but my neuralgia has returned more ferocious than ever.

On his return to Paris, the Grand Duchess Helena of Russia, always an admirer of Berlioz' music, invited him to St. Petersburg to conduct six concerts, promising to pay all expenses, lodge him at the Michael Palace, and pay him 15,000 francs. So good an offer was not to be lost, even by a man with one foot in the grave; and on November 15 the master started for the northern capital, previously declining the proposition of an American, who wished to engage him for the United States the next year, at a charge of 100,000 francs. Of his fortune in Russia we gather something from a letter addressed (December 15, 1867) to M. Edouard Alexandre :†—

I am overwhelmed with attentions, from the Grand Duchess to the least member of the orchestra. . . . The public and the press show extreme ardour. At the second concert I was recalled six times after the Symphonie Fantastique, which was executed

* "Lettres Intimes," p. 306. † "Correspondance Inédite," p. 342.

in an astonishing manner, the fourth movement being encored. What an orchestra! What precision! What an ensemble! I do not know if Beethoven ever heard his music performed in such a way. I am bound to tell you that, despite my sufferings, when I reached my desk and saw myself surrounded by so sympathetic a throng, I felt reanimated, and conducted, perhaps, as never before.

Writing later to Madame Massart, he said:*—

They have come from Moscow to seek me, and I shall go there after the fifth concert here, the Grand Duchess having given permission. Those people of the mezzo-Asiatic capital have irresistible arguments.

Berlioz was in Moscow on the last day of the year, and thence wrote to his friend Damcke:†—

I have accepted an engagement to conduct two concerts. Not finding a hall large enough for the first, they resolved to give it in the Riding School, a place as large as the central hall of the Palais d'Industrie in the Champs Elysées. The idea, which seemed to me foolish, has resulted in the most incredible success. There were five hundred executants and, according to the police, twelve thousand five hundred auditors. I will not attempt to describe to you the applause for the Fête in "Roméo et Juliette" and the Offertory of the "Requiem." I experienced mortal anguish when this last piece—which they would have on account of its effect at St. Petersburg—began. In hearing that choir of three hundred voices always repeating its two notes, I pictured to myself the crowd becoming bored, and I feared that they would not allow me to finish. But the audience understood my idea; attention was redoubled; the expression of resigned humility had seized them. At the last bar, immense acclamation burst from all parts, and I was four times recalled. This was the grandest impression that I had produced in my life.

On returning to St. Petersburg, Berlioz appears to have suffered much from the climate, and felt a longing for the day when he should set out for Paris. In a letter to Madame Massart we read:‡—

After having seen you in Paris, I will go to St. Symphorien and thence to Monaco, to bathe myself in the violets and sleep in the sun. I suffer so much, dear madame, and my troubles are so constant that I know not what will happen. I would not die, however; I have wherewith to live.

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 345.
† Ibid., p. 346. ‡ Ibid., p. 349.

Nevertheless, sentence of death was passed upon Berlioz soon after his return to Paris. The reaction from his Russian excitement was terrible, and at last he was persuaded to consult Dr. Nélaton, who, after examining him, said, "Are you a philosopher?" "Yes." "Well, call to your aid the courage of philosophy, for you will never be cured." Accepting this as a decree of fate, Berlioz turned again towards his beloved south—towards the flowers and the sun. Even there, dying as he was, a harsh fate pursued him. For a little while something of youthful animation filled his soul. The glorious scenery, the blue waters of the tideless sea, recollections of former days spent amid the same surroundings, made the mind of the master young again, and he essayed to wander once more amongst the rocks and terraces, regardless of a feeble body. Let the consequences be told in his own words:*—

I went to Monaco to seek the sun, and, three days after my arrival, I walked among the rocks running down to the sea, and was cruelly punished for my temerity. I fell among the stones, head first, upon my face, and lost much blood; so much that I remained alone stretched upon the earth, and was not able to return to the hotel, all bloody, till a long time after. I had taken a place in the omnibus for Nice, and resolved, nevertheless, to go on the morrow. I set out, and, scarcely arrived, wished to behold again the terrace on the border of the sea, of which I had always cherished a lively remembrance. I went there; I could not command a good view of the water; I desired to change my seat for a better one; I rose, and in about three paces fell again on my face and my blood poured out. Two young men who passed raised me with difficulty, and conducted me to the Hôtel des Etrangers, hard by, where I lived. They undressed me, and put me to bed, and there I remained eight days without seeing either a doctor or anybody save the domestics. *Ah! ma foi!* I can write no more. To-morrow—I have no more strength. *Bonsoir.* After eight days' retirement, I felt a little better, and, with my face all knocked about, I took the train for Paris. My mother-in-law and my servant cried out on seeing me. This time I went to a doctor, and he treated me so well that after a month and some days I could walk a little by holding on to the furniture.

A month later (May, 1868) he writes to Morel, excusing himself for not doing so earlier:†—

My *two* falls, one at Monaco, the other at Nice, have taken

* "Correspondance Inédite," p. 351. † Ibid., p. 353.

away all my strength. At present the marks are nearly effaced, but my malady has returned, and I suffer more than ever. I have only cruel things to write to you.

Shortly afterwards Berlioz made his last journey—this time to Grenoble, for the purpose of assisting at an Orphéonic Festival. Thenceforward the sands of his life rapidly ran out, and on the morning of Monday, March 8, 1869, his troubled spirit passed away.

The master's obsequies were celebrated at the Church of the Trinity on the Thursday following, with much solemnity. The Institute sent a deputation; the pall-bearers were Doucet, Guillaume, Ambroise Thomas, Gounod, Saint-Laurens, Perrin, and Baron Taylor; and the band of the National Guard played selections from the Symphony in honour of the victims of July. Upon the coffin were the crowns given by the Cecilian Society, the Hungarian youth, the Russian nobility, and the final laurels of Grenoble. So the body of Hector Berlioz passed to its rest in the tomb of his Ophelia; he himself supplying an epitaph—the words with which he began and ended his memoirs:—

> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more; it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

His friends may have mourned for themselves, but hardly for him. Surely if ever a man needed rest it was this man, tried and torn; always at the mercy of life's tempests. Time after time he had called for death, for of the world his too sensitive soul was a-weary; and, when death came, no doubt he found it—

> A quiet haven, where his shattered bark
> Harbours secure till the rough storm is past.
> Perhaps a passage, overhung with clouds
> But at its entrance; a few leagues beyond
> Opening to kinder skies and milder suns,
> And seas pacific as the souls that seek them.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

CATALOGUE OF HIS WORKS.*

Op. 1. Ouverture de "Waverley."

Op. 2. Irlande. Neuf melodies pour une et deux voix sur des traductions de Thomas Moore.

Op. 3. Ouverture des "Francs Juges."

Op. 4. Ouverture du "Roi Lear."

Op. 5. "Grande Messe des Morts" (Requiem).

Op. 6. "Le 5 Mai." Chant sur la mort de l'Empereur Napoléon pour voix de basse avec chœurs et orchestre.

Op. 7. "Les Nuits d'Été." Six melodies pour une voix avec orchestre ou piano.

Op. 8. "Rêverie et Caprice." Romance pour le violon avec orchestre ou piano.

Op. 9. "Le Carnaval Romain." Ouverture caractéristique.

Op. 10. Grand traité d'instrumentation et d'orchestration modernes, avec supplement, "Le Chef d'Orchestre."

Op. 11. "Sarah la Baigneuse." Ballade à trois chœurs avec orchestre.

Op. 12. "La Captive." Rêverie pour mezzo-soprano avec orchestre.

Op. 13. "Fleurs des Landes." Cinq mélodies pour une voix avec piano.

Op. 14. "Episode de la Vie d'un Artiste." Symphonie fantastique en cinq parties.

Op. 14 bis. "Lelio, ou le Retour à la Vie." Monodrame lyrique, 2e partie de l'episode.

Op. 15. Grande symphonie funèbre et triomphale pour grande harmonie militaire avec un orchestre d'instruments à cordes et un chœur *ad libit.*

Op. 16. "Harold en Italie." Symphonie en quatre parties avec un *alto* principal.

Op. 17. "Roméo et Juliette." Symphonie dramatique avec chœurs, solos de chant, et prologue en récitatif choral.

Op. 18. "Tristia." Trois chœurs avec orchestre. ("Meditation Religieuse," "Ballade sur la Mort d'Ophélie," "Marche Funèbre.")

Op. 19. "Feuillets d'Album." Trois morceaux de chant avec piano.

Op. 20. "Vox populi." Deux grands chœurs avec orchestre. ("La Menace des Francs," "Hymne à la France.")

Op. 21. Ouverture du "Corsaire."

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* From Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians." Article "Berlioz," by Edward Dannreuther.

Op. 22. "Te Deum" à trois chœurs avec orchestre et orgue concertants.

Op. 23. "Benvenuto Cellini." Opéra en trois actes. Paroles de Léon de Wailly et Auguste Barbier. (Partition de piano. Paris, Choudens.)

Op. 24. "La Damnation de Faust." Légende dramatique en quatre parties.

Op. 25. "L'Enfance du Christ." Trilogie Sacrée. 1. "Le Songe d'Hérode." 2. "La Fuite en Egypte." 3. "L'Arrivée à Sais."

Op. 26. "L'Impériale." Cantate à deux chœurs et orchestre.

"Le Temple Universal." Chœur à quatre voix et piano.

"Prière du Matin." Chœur à deux voix et piano.

"La Belle Isabeau." Conte pendant l'orage avec chœur.

"Le Chasseur Danois." Pour voia de basse avec piano.

"L'Invitation à la Valse" de Weber. Orchestration.

"Marche Marocaine" de L. de Meyer. Orchestration.

"Recitatives" pour "Le Freischutz."

"Béatrice et Bénédict." Opéra en deux actes imité de Shakespeare. Paroles de Hector Berlioz. (Partition de piano. Paris, Brandus.)

"Les Troyens." Poème lyrique en deux parties: (1) "La Prise de Troie." (2) "Les Troyens à Carthage." (Partition de piano. Paris, Choudens.)

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