BELL'S MINIATURE SERIES OF MUSICIANS

BACH

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Xmas 1908.

BACH

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH.
(*From an oil painting.*)

Bell's Miniature Series of Musicians

BACH

BY

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LIFE OF BACH

EARLY YEARS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH was born at Eisenach on or about March 21, 1685, O.S., (March 31, N.S.,). Certain it is that he was baptized on March 23, O.S. He came of a long line of musicians, some of them distinguished, who had kept the art alive in the places where they dwelt (mostly in Thuringia) during the troublous times of the Thirty Years' War. Many of them had been organists and composers of celebrity, and so identified with music had the name of Bach become, that the town players were called the Bachs when there were no longer any Bachs among them.

The family seems early to have imbibed the principles of the Reformation, and to have been distinguished for piety as well as music, all which contributed to the building up of our John Sebastian.

His father, Ambrosius Bach, settled first at Erfurt as a viola player, and became a town

councillor. He married Elisabeth Lämmerhirt, by whom he had issue six children, John Sebastian being the youngest. Soon after his marriage he removed to Eisenach, where he was organist as well as viola player.

The Bachs had no need to go out of their own family for instruction in music; the art had been handed down from father to son, and, accordingly, John Sebastian's first instructor was his own father, who seems to have initiated him early into the mysteries of violin playing.

At the age of nine he lost his mother, and within a year his father also. The care of John Sebastian then devolved on an elder brother, Johann Christoph (born 1671), who had settled at Ohrdruf as organist of the principal church, in which town other members of the Bach family had resided.

This brother had been sent early in life to Erfurt, where he had received instruction in music from Pachelbel, one of the most distinguished organists of the day, and a friend of the Bach family. A story of this time is told which is characteristic of John Sebastian, who was always eager to know the works of the most distinguished composers. His brother had made a collection of the most famous compositions for the organ, which he kept jealously guarded from John Sebastian. One night the latter stole downstairs, and succeeded in extracting the roll of music through the wires of the bookcase. Having no light, he had to copy it by moonlight. When the copy was finished, his brother was

THE HOUSE AT EISENACH IN WHICH J. S. BACH WAS BORN.

hard-hearted enough to take it from him. Probably by means of this copying John Sebastian became acquainted with the works of Pachelbel, Buxtehude, and others.

For general education he entered the Lyceum, where also he sang in the choir, and is said to have possessed a fine soprano voice, which, at fifteen years of age, obtained him an appointment in the convent school and choir of St. Michael, Lüneburg. Although his voice broke soon after, he remained at Lüneburg, supporting himself by violin playing and accompanying at rehearsals. Here he acquired a wider knowledge of what had been done in the way of church music, and became acquainted with the organ works and organ playing of Böhm. From hence he made excursions on foot to Hamburg to hear Reinken play, and also to Celle, where the Court band played French orchestral music, and where also French clavier music found favour.

In 1703 he was invited to join the band of Johann Ernst, younger brother of the reigning Duke of Weimar, as violinist, receiving the title of Court Musician. Visiting Arnstadt soon after, he played on the organ in the New Church with so much success that he was forthwith offered the post of organist, with a greatly increased salary.

BACH AS ORGANIST.

This appointment he entered on August 14, 1703. The organ had only two manuals. Here is the specification:

Oberwerk.

	Ft.		Ft.
1. Principal ..	.. 8	7. Mixture, 4 ranks.	
2. Viol da Gamba	.. 8	8. Gemshorn ..	.. 8
3. Quintatön ..	.. 16	9. Cymbal, 2 ranks.	
4. Gedackt ..	.. 8	10. Trumpet ..	.. 8
5. Quint ..	.. 6	11. Tremulant.	
6. Octava ..	.. 4	12. Glockenaccord.*	

Brust. positiv.

	Ft.		Ft.
1. Principal† ..	.. 4	6. Nachthorn ..	.. 4
2. Lieblich gedackt	.. 8	7. Mixture, 2 ranks.	
3. Spitz flute ..	.. 4	8. Octava‡ ..	.. 2
4. Quint ..	.. 3	9. Glockenaccord.*	
5. Sesquialtera.			

Pedal.

	Ft.		Ft.
1. Principal ..	.. 8	4. Violon bass	.. 16
2. Sub-bass ..	.. 16	5. Octava ..	.. 2
3. Posaune ..	.. 16		

In addition to his duties as organist, he had also to teach a small school choir, which seems to have given him some trouble, as we shall see later.

* Called in Spitta "cymbelstern."

† Spitta gives 4 feet, but 8 feet seems more probable, as otherwise there would be too little foundation tone.

‡ Spitta gives flute 4 feet, and calls the octava "cornet."

In 1705 he obtained leave of absence for one month, in order that he might go to Lübeck and hear Buxtehude, who had attained a great reputation as organist, and gave "Abendmusiken" (musical evenings) in the Marien-Kirche, consisting of sacred music, both vocal and instrumental, with organ solos. The fascinations of Lübeck must have been great, for Bach extended his absence to four months, and on his return was cited before the Consistory to explain "where he had been for so long of late, and from whom he received leave of absence."

Bach replied that he had been to Lübeck in order to learn things connected with his art, but had previously asked permission from the Herr Superintendent. Spitta reports the proceedings of the Consistory as follows:

Superintendent. "Had only asked leave for four weeks, but had remained abroad quite four times as long."

Bach. "Hoped that the organ meantime would have been played by his substitute* in such a manner that no complaint would be made on that score."

The Consistory. "Charge him with having been in the habit of making surprising variations in the chorales (hymn tunes) and intermixing many strange sounds, so that thereby the congregation were confounded. If in future he wishes to introduce some *tonus peregrinus*, he must keep to it, and not go off directly to something else,

* Probably his cousin, Ernst Bach.

or, as he had hitherto done, play quite a *tonum contrarium*. And then, it is strange that up to this time he has had no rehearsals by reason of his not being able to agree with the scholars. Therefore he is to declare whether he will play both part-music and chorales with the scholars, since another kapellmeister cannot be kept; and if he will not do this, let him say so categorically of his own accord, that a change may be made, and someone who will undertake it be appointed."

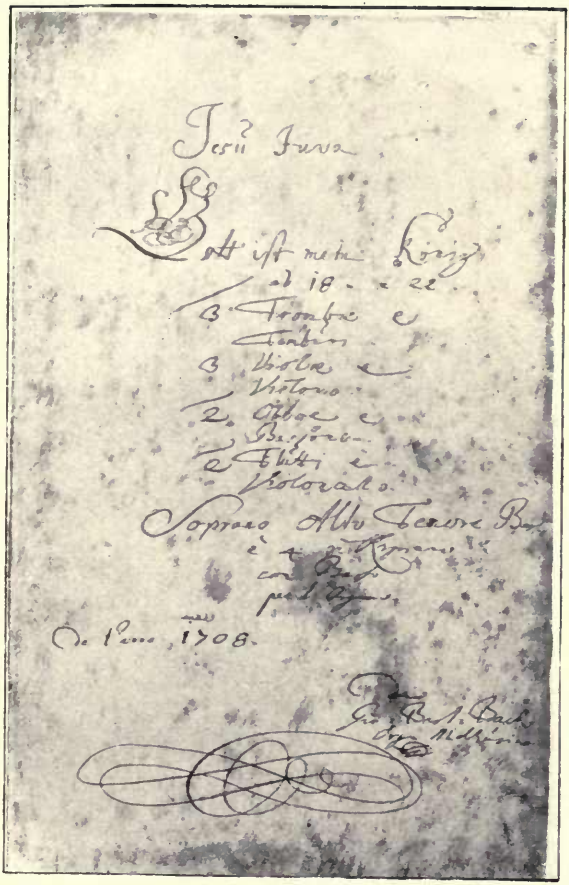
Bach. "If a proper director be appointed he will play again."

Resolved: "That he shall explain his conduct within eight days. Also that scholar Rambach (choir prefect) appear, and be reproved for the disorders that up to this time have taken place between the scholars and the organist in the new church."

Rambach. "The organist, Bach, used to play too long preludes, but after this was notified to him by the Herr Superintendent, he went at once to the opposite extreme, and has made them too short."

Rambach was also accused of going to a wine-shop during the sermon. It was enjoined that he be punished, "and if he has anything to remember against the organist, he must bring it forward at the proper place, and not take the matter into his own hands."

The Consistory dealt very patiently with the young organist (he was only eighteen when he received the appointment), and waited eight months without receiving the explanation they



FACSIMILE OF MS. TITLE PAGE OF THE CHURCH CANTATA, "GOD IS MY KING" (1708).

had ordered him to render within eight days. The unruly scholars, and perhaps his wounded pride, led him to look out for another place, which he obtained in 1707 at Mühlhausen, as organist of the Church of St. Blasius. In October of the same year he married his cousin, Maria Barbara Bach, daughter of Johann Michael Bach, organist at Gehren. The marriage took place at Arnstadt, and the Consistory remitted the usual fees, thus showing that they had forgiven him for "confounding them in the chorales."

At St. Blasius he had to compose a cantata for the yearly election of the Town Council, and in 1708 produced his *God is my King* (No. 71 of the Bachgesellschaft edition), said to be the only one printed in his lifetime.

The organ of St. Blasius being in bad condition, Bach had to superintend the repairs, for which he was eminently fitted, having a thoroughly practical knowledge of organ-building, and, in fact, of musical instruments in general, for he is said to have invented new instruments.

At Mühlhausen troubles arose between the Pietists (who seem to have corresponded to our Puritans in their austere views as to life and art) and the Orthodox Lutherans, into which troubles Bach seems to have been drawn, and to have taken the opposite side to his own superintendent, Frohne, Dean of Mühlhausen, who was a Pietist.

The champion of the Orthodox Lutherans was Eilmar, who, in 1710, stood godfather to Bach's first son. These dissensions led Bach to seek peace elsewhere. This he found at Weimar,

where Duke Wilhelm Ernst made him Court Organist and Chamber Musician. The Duke was a man of piety, a zealous churchman, and a patron of science and art. Spitta says: "The Court of Weimar stands forth among those of the Princes of the period as Bach himself does among composers for the Church; they seem made for each other." And Hilgenfeld: "Here Bach devoted himself to acquiring that overwhelming mastery of the organ for which his fame is assured for all time; and also laid the foundation for his future greatness as a composer."

The organ at the castle was not large, but had a powerful pedal-organ. Its specification was as follows:

Upper Manual.

	Ft.		Ft.
1. Principal ..	.. 8	6. Octave ..	.. 4
2. Quintatön ..	.. 16	7. Mixture.	
3. Gemshorn ..	.. 8	8. Cymbal.	
4. Gedackt ..	.. 8	9. Glockenspiel.	
5. Quintatön ..	.. 4		

Lower Manual.

	Ft.		Ft.
1. Principal ..	.. 8	5. Small gedackt	.. 4
2. Viol da gamba	.. 8	6. Octave ..	.. 4
3. Gedackt ..	.. 8	7. Waldflöte ..	.. 2
4. Trumpet ..	.. 8	8. Sesquialtera.	

Pedal Organ.

	Ft.		Ft.
1. Great untersatz	.. 32	5. Principal ..	.. 8
2. Sub-bass ..	.. 16	6. Trumpet ..	.. 8
3. Posaune ..	.. 16	7. Cornet.	
4. Violon bass ..	.. 16		

As Chamber Musician, Bach had to perform both on the violin and clavier. He subsequently became concertmeister—*i.e.*, leader of the band. This numbered twenty-two, including singers, who also played instruments.

While at Weimar Bach had to superintend the repairs of his former organ at Mühlhausen, according to his promise given when he left there. It is supposed that the remarkable registration indicated in the choral prelude, *Eine feste Burg—i.e.*, L. H. bassoon, R. H. sesquialtera —was for the renovated Mühlhausen organ, inasmuch as the Weimar organ possessed no bassoon stop. It is a curious fact that Bach never in any of his appointments had an organ worthy of his powers. Notwithstanding the smallness of the castle organ, Mizler says of Bach's work during his nine years' residence in Weimar: "The benevolence of his gracious Sovereign inspired him to attempt all that was possible in the art of hand ling the organ, and here it was that he composed most of his organ pieces." Here, too, he became acquainted with Italian chamber music, and arranged sixteen of Vivaldi's violin concertos for clavier, four for organ, and another for four pianos with string accompaniment.

In 1713 Bach visited Halle, where a large new organ of sixty-three stops was being erected, on which he performed with great success. The organist's post being vacant, Bach, probably tempted by the large organ, applied for it, but ultimately withdrew, the salary offered being less than that he received at Weimar. Ever anxious to

learn, Bach went in 1714 to Cassel, where was a flourishing opera with Italian performers. Here he performed on the organ before the Crown Prince Friedrich, afterwards King of Sweden, "and so filled him with astonishment and admiration by his marvellous execution of a pedal solo that the Prince drew from his finger a ring set with precious stones, and presented it to the master" (Spitta).

On the first Sunday in Advent of the same year Bach was in Leipsic conducting his cantata *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* ("Now come, Saviour of the Gentiles"), where he made the acquaintance of Kuhnau, Cantor of the Thomas Schule, an office afterwards held by Bach himself.

Athough he had refused the post of organist at Halle, this did not prevent his being called in, in conjunction with Kuhnau and Rolle of Quedlinburg, to report on the new organ on its completion in 1716.

The year 1717 is noted for a challenge to the French organist and clavier player, Marchand, who had made a great sensation in Dresden, to a friendly competition with Bach. Marchand accepted, but, "thinking discretion the better part of valour," left Dresden by express post on the morning of the day on which the competition was to take place.

Returning to Weimar, Bach had to prepare and compose for a jubilee in celebration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. This occasion is supposed to have

brought forth the magnificent church cantata based on Martin Luther's hymn and tune *Eine feste Burg*, although he seems to have rearranged it in 1730.

About 1715 Bach repaid his obligations to his elder brother by taking his second son to live with him as his pupil.

In November, 1717, we find him in Cöthen as Kapellmeister to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen, a disappointment in not succeeding Drese as Kapellmeister at Weimar probably being the cause of his leaving that place. At Cöthen he held no organ appointment, nor does he seem ever to have done so after leaving Weimar.

The Prince was a man of culture and a patron of the arts, especially of music, in which he showed great taste, playing upon two or three instruments. His appreciation of Bach was such that they were much together, Bach having to accompany him on his journeys. In 1718 and 1720 the Prince took him and six members of the orchestra to Carlsbad. At the baptism of Bach's seventh child in 1718 the Prince and his brother and sister stood sponsors.

In the same year Bach was called to Leipsic to report on the new organ in St. Paul's Church. On his return from Carlsbad in July, 1720, he received the heartbreaking news that his wife, whom he had left in good health, had died and was buried.

In November, 1720, he was in Hamburg, performing a new cantata, *He that exalteth*

himself. Reinken was still living, and playing the organ at St. Catherine's, though now ninety-seven years of age. The post of organist at St. James's Church being vacant, Bach was tempted by the large organ of sixty stops and four manuals to apply for it. His official duties recalling him to Cöthen, he was excused the competition on account of his great reputation, and had to notify his acceptance of the office by letter. The committee, however, elected an unknown man who had paid 4,000 marks to the treasury of the church.

SECOND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

In December, 1721, Bach took to himself a second wife, in the person of Anna Magdalena Wülken, a Court singer at Cöthen, aged twenty-one. Writing to his friend Erdmann in 1730, he says of her and his children: "They are one and all born musicians, and I can assure you that I can already form a concert, both vocal and instrumental, of my own family, particularly as my present wife sings a very clear soprano, and my eldest daughter joins in bravely." Anna Magdalena seems to have been "a help meet for him," for she assisted in copying out his music. By her he had thirteen children—six sons and seven daughters—making, with the seven by his first wife, twenty in all. Of the twenty only nine survived him.

In 1723 Bach removed to Leipsic as Cantor of

H. Bibby pinxit.] [*Payne sculpsit.*

BACH IN HIS OLD AGE, WITH VIEWS OF ST. THOMAS' CHURCH AND THE OBSERVATORY, LEIPZIG.

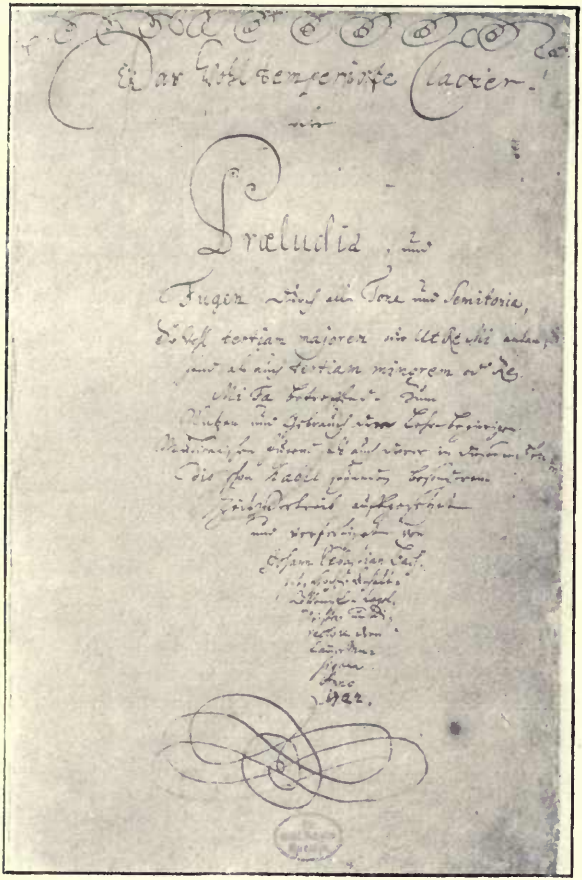
the Thomas Schule. The reason of his leaving Cöthen is given in the letter to Erdmann quoted above. "From my youth up my fate has been known to you until the last change, which took me to Cöthen. There lives a gracious Prince, who both loves and understands music, and with him I purposed to spend the closing term of my life. However, as it fell out, the above-mentioned serenissimus married a Princess of Berenburg, and as then it began to appear as though the said Prince's musical inclination was growing somewhat lukewarm, and at the same time the new Princess seemed to despise my art, it was the will of God that I should be called to be Cantor in the Thomas Schule. Still, at first it did not perfectly suit me to become Cantor from having been Kapellmeister, for which reason my resolution was delayed for a quarter of a year. However, this position was described to me as so favourable that at last, particularly as my sons seemed inclined to study here, I ventured in the name of the Highest, and betook myself to Leipsic." He, however, retained the post of honorary Kapellmeister to the Prince of Cöthen, and composed a birthday cantata for one of the Princesses, and a Trauer Ode on the death of his beloved patron.

At Cöthen, where he had no church duties, Bach seems to have devoted himself chiefly to chamber compositions. The first book of the "Well-tempered Clavichord" bears the date of 1722. The title given by Bach is as follows: "The Well-tempered Clavichord; or, Preludes

and Fugues in all the Tones and Semi-tones, both with the Major Third, or, ut, re, mi, and with the Minor Third, or, re, mi, fa. For the Use and Practice of Young Musicians who desire to learn, as well as for Those who are already Skilled in the Study, by Way of Amusement. Made and Composed by John Sebastian Bach, Kapellmeister to the Grand-Duke of Anhalt-Cöthen, and Director of His Chamber Music, in the Year 1722."

In explanation of the title "Well-tempered Clavichord," it may be observed that it advocates the equal temperament in tuning, afterwards strenuously advocated by Crotch in England. The old system of unequal temperament made the keys of C, F, G, and D well in tune at the expense of the others. As long as composers were contented with one or two keys, and did not modulate much, the unequal temperament served; but with bolder modulation came the necessity for another system of tuning. If twelve fifths from C are tuned perfectly, the last note of the twelve, B-sharp, will be too sharp to do duty as C, as it has to do on keyed instruments. Hence the excess has to be distributed amongst the twelve fifths, making each a little flat. In the "Well-tempered Clavichord," Bach moves through all the twenty-four major and minor keys, taking them in chromatic order, thus insisting on equal temperament. The same plan obtains also in Book II., dated 1744.

The Cantor's duties at the Thomas Schule were: the taking of some classes in Latin; the



FACSIMILE OF BACH'S MS. TITLE PAGE OF THE "WELL-TEMPERED CLAVICHORD" (1722).

teaching of music, both vocal and instrumental; and the superintendence of the music in the churches of St. Thomas and St. Nicholas. The Thomas Schule had also to supply choirs for one or two other churches, for weddings, funerals, and occasionally for University functions. Although a good Latin scholar, Bach after a time engaged a deputy for his Latin classes. As Cantor he ranked third amongst the four head-masters, the rector being the head. In the churches he was subject to the superintendent and to the Consistory; in the Thomas Schule to the Consistory and to the Town Council. The discipline of the school when Bach entered it was lax, the rector, Ernesti, being an old man, and, although learned, unable to control either masters or boys. The insubordination of the boys seems to have been a continual trouble to Bach, for after his death it was remarked in the Town Council that "Herr Bach had been a great musician, but not a schoolmaster," and that "the school needed a Cantor, and not a Kapellmeister." Bach, as befitted so great and universal a genius, had always insisted on being something more than a Cantor.

He had troubles with the University authorities as to his fees, on which he petitioned the Elector of Saxony, who was also King of Poland, in these words:

"May your Royal Majesty and most Serene Highness graciously permit me to represent, with the humblest submission, with regard to the directorship of the music for the old and new service of the church in the wor-

shipful University of Leipsic, that, together with the salary and usual fees, they had always been associated and joined with the place of Cantor at St. Thomas's, even during the lifetime of my predecessor; that after his death, and while the post was vacant, they were given to the organist of St. Nicholas, Görner; and that on my assuming my office the direction of the so-called old service was restored to me again, but the payment was withheld, and assigned, with the direction of the new service, to the above-mentioned organist of St. Nicholas; and although I have sued duly to the Worshipful University, and made application that the former regulations may be restored, I have not been able to obtain anything more than that I should have half of the salary, which formerly amounted to twelve gülden. Nevertheless and notwithstanding, most Gracious King and Elector, the Worshipful University expressly required and assumed that I should appoint and direct the music for the old services, and I have hitherto fulfilled this function; and the salary which has been given to the director of the new service did not formerly belong to it, but properly to the old service, and at the same time the new were connected with the old; and if I were not to dispute the right of directing the new service with the organist of St. Nicholas, still, the retention of the salary which formerly and at all times—nay, even before the new cultus was instituted—belonged to the Cantor is extremely painful and prejudicial to me; and church patrons are not wont to dispose otherwise of what is assigned and fixed as the regular payment of a church servant, either withholding it altogether or reducing it, while I have already for more than two years been forced to fulfil my duties concerning the above-mentioned old services for nothing. Now, if my humble suit and petition may find favour with your Royal Majesty and Most Serene Highness, you will graciously communicate it to the Worshipful University, to the end that they may restore the former state of things, and assign to me with the direction of the old service that also of the new, and more particularly the full salary of the old service and the enjoyment of the

fees accruing from both. And for such royal and gracious favour,

"I shall ever remain,
"Your Royal Majesty's and Serene Highness's
"Most humble and obedient
"JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH.

"LEIPSIC,
"*September 14th*, 1725."

It is to the credit of the German Courts with which Bach had to do that they appreciated his genius, and accordingly the above petition was answered within three days by a requisition from Dresden to the University to relieve the petitioner or show cause to the contrary.

Another trouble was with the subdean of St. Nicholas, Gaudlitz, about the choosing of the hymns, which had formerly been in the hands of the Cantor. After submitting to this interference for a year, Bach could endure it no longer, and made the choir sing the hymns he himself appointed, whereupon Gaudlitz reported him to the Consistory, who sided with the subdean. Bach, with his usual shrewdness, appealed to the Council against the Consistory, but how the matter ended is not known.

Although the *St. Matthew Passion* had been produced in 1729, we find a member of the Town Council, on the occasion of selecting a successor to Ernesti as rector in 1730, expressing a hope "that they might fare better in this appointment than in that of the Cantor." Bach was accused of doing nothing, but they themselves were to blame for not seconding his endeavour to have the foundation boys, who supplied the

material of his choirs, chosen for their musical qualifications. In an election of nine boys, only five of ten tried and reported on by Bach were elected, the other four selected not having offered themselves as musicians.

Writing to Erdmann at this time, Bach says :

"I find that this appointment is by no means so advantageous as it was described to me. Many fees incidental to it are stopped; the town is very dear to live in; the authorities are very strange folks, with small love for music, so that I live under almost constant vexation, jealousy, and persecution, and I feel compelled to seek, with God's assistance, my fortune elsewhere. If your Excellency * should know of, or be able to find, a suitable appointment in your town for your old and faithful servant, I humbly crave you to give me the benefit of your favourable recommendation. Nothing shall be wanting on my part to give satisfaction and justify your favourable recommendation and intercession. My present position secures me about 700 thalers, and when there are rather more deaths than usual the fees increase in proportion; but it is a healthy air, so it happens, on the contrary, as in the past year, that I lost above 100 thalers of the usual funeral fees. In Thuringia I can do more with 400 thalers than here with twice as many hundred, by reason of the excessive cost of living."

However, the appointment of Gesner, whom Bach had known in Weimar, to the rectorship of the Thomas Schule gave a brighter turn to things. Under him, says Spitta,

"dawned a new period on the fallen fortunes of the school. Together with a vast store of practical learn-

* Erdmann was Hofrath to the Russian Empire, and resident at Dantsic.

ing, he possessed in an eminent degree the power of governing; resolute firmness was combined in his character with humanity and gentleness; in his conduct to the Council he was uniformly polite, but decided. It was inevitable that he should soon win their high esteem and complete confidence; indeed, he was from the first treated by the authorities with a distinction which proves that they were not so absolutely devoid of all sense of intellectual superiority as we might perhaps infer from Bach's experience."

Understanding and appreciating to the full Bach's stupendous genius, he supported him in his effort to improve musical matters, and endeavoured to establish better relations between him and the Council. Unfortunately for Bach, he only remained till 1734, when he was called to the University of Göttingen.

COMPOSES HIS MASS IN B MINOR.

In 1733 Bach presented the two first movements of his great *B-minor Mass* to the King and Elector at Dresden, with a petition that he would grant him a Court title, which might insure him against being further troubled by the Leipsic Council. This, however, he did not obtain till 1736, when he was appointed composer to the Court.

On Gesner's call to Göttingen, he was succeeded as rector by another Ernesti, who, since 1732, had been conrector. Bach, at first, got on very well with him. He had already asked him to be

godfather to one of his sons, and in 1735 invited him to act as sponsor to his last son, Johann Christian. After a time, however, trouble arose through the interference of Ernesti in the appointment of the choir prefects, whose office it was to be the Cantor's deputy, both in training the boys and conducting the music in church. Here is Bach's account of the trouble in his appeal to the Council:

"May it please your Worships graciously to allow me to represent to you that, according to your Worships' ordering of the school of St. Thomas, it pertains to the Cantor to choose from among the scholars those whom he considers fit and able to be prefects, and in electing them to have regard, not only to the voice, that it be good and clear, but also to see that the prefects, and especially the one who leads the first choir, shall be able to undertake the direction of the choir in the absence or illness of the Cantor; and whereas this rule has been hitherto observed by the Cantors without the concurrence of the Rectors, yet, and notwithstanding, the present rector has lately endeavoured, without my knowledge and approval, to assume the appointment of the prefect in the first choir, so that he recently appointed Krause, the prefect of the second choir, to be the prefect of the first choir, and refuses to withdraw in spite of all my civil remonstrances. Since I cannot suffer this to pass, being against the aforesaid order and traditional usage of the school, and to the prejudice of my successors and to the injury of the choir, I now present to your Worships my most dutiful petition graciously to decide this difference between the rector and myself in my office; and because this presumption on the part of the rector to the appointing of the prefects might lead to strife and to the prejudice of the scholars, I pray that in your great benevolence and care for the school of St. Thomas you will direct the rector to leave for the future, as hitherto, and according to the order and usage

of the school, the appointment of prefects to myself alone, and thus graciously protect me in my office."

The dispute dragged on until October, 1737, when Bach appealed to the King Elector, who called on the Consistory to settle the matter. After this, except for an attack on his compositions by one Scheibe (a disappointed candidate for the organist's post at St. Thomas's Church), in which he says, "Bach's church pieces are constantly more artificial and tedious, and by no means so full of impressive conviction or of such intellectual reflection as the works of Telemann and Graun," Bach seems to have been allowed to live in peace.

On being appointed Composer to the Court in 1736, he paid a visit to Dresden, and performed on a new organ by Silbermann. Amongst his audience was the Russian Ambassador, Baron Hermann Carl von Kayserling, for whom he wrote the thirty variations known as the "Goldberg" variations, and who, in return, gave Bach a snuff-box containing 100 louis d'or. Goldberg, who was a protégé of the Baron and a pupil of Bach, had to play the variations to his patron, hence the name by which they are known. That he was able to do this bespeaks him an artist of rare attainments.

In 1747 took place the memorable visit to Berlin, when Bach played before Frederick the Great, and was asked to extemporize a fugue in six parts, also a fugue on a theme given him by the King. This theme he afterwards worked up into *The Musical Offering* (*Musikalisches Opfer*),

which he sent the King with the following dedication:

"MOST GRACIOUS KING,

"I herewith dedicate to your Majesty, with the deepest submission, a musical offering, of which the noblest portion is the work of your Majesty's illustrious hand. It is with reverential satisfaction that I now remember your Majesty's very special royal favour when, some time since, during my stay in Potsdam, your Majesty condescended to play the theme for a fugue to me on the pianoforte, and at the same time graciously commanded me to work it out then and there in the royal presence. It was my humble duty to obey your Majesty's command. But I immediately perceived that, for lack of due preparation, the performance was not so successful as so excellent a theme required. I accordingly determined, and at once set to work, to treat this really royal theme more perfectly, and then to make it known to the world. This undertaking I have now carried out to the best of my ability, and it has no end in view but this very blameless one—to exalt, though in only a trifling matter, the fame of a monarch whose greatness and power must be admired and respected by all, and particularly in music, as in all the other sciences of war and peace. I make so bold, therefore, as to add this most humble petition, that your gracious Majesty will condescend to grant this present little work a gracious reception, and to continue to vouchsafe your gracious favours to

"Your Majesty's

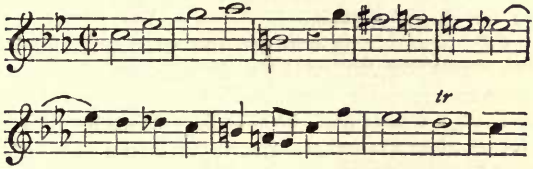
"Most obedient humble servant,

"THE AUTHOR.

"LEIPSIC,
"*July* 7, 1747."

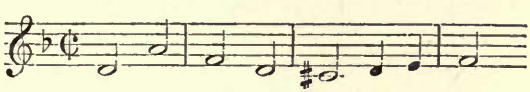
This "little work" consists of a "ricercare" (fugue) in three parts, nine canons of extraordinary ingenuity, a ricercare in six parts, and a trio in four movements for flute, violin, and continuo.

As is well known, Frederick the Great was a flute-player and composer. Here is the theme on which the whole work is based, and it speaks well for the royal musicianship.



LATER WORKS AND LAST DAYS.

In 1749 and 1750 he was engaged on *The Art of Fugue*, a work of similar character to *The Musical Offering*, based on the following theme:

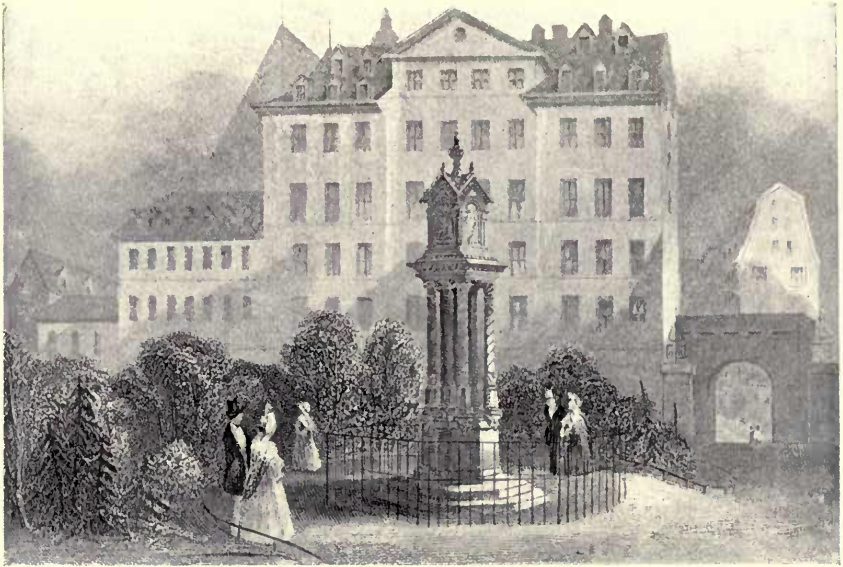


This is his last great work. While composing it his eyesight began to fail. He was operated on by an English oculist, John Taylor, then in Leipsic, but without success. The same oculist operated afterwards on Handel, likewise without success.

Bach died of apoplexy on Tuesday, July 28, 1750, and was buried in the churchyard of St. John's, Leipsic. On the occasion of rebuilding St. John's Church in 1894 his remains were exhumed. They were found at the spot which

tradition had assigned to them, and which was pointed out to the writer by Mr. Algernon Ashton in 1880. On his deathbed Bach dictated to his son-in-law and pupil, Altnikol, the choral prelude *Before Thy throne I come*, known also as *When in our deepest trouble*.

Of his surviving children the most noted were the eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann, said to have been the greatest organist of his time; the third son, Philip Emanuel, who, saying "that he could not emulate his father," struck out into a new line and became the connecting-link between Scarlatti and Haydn; and Johann Christian, eleventh son, known as the Milanese or English Bach, he having been at one time organist of Milan Cathedral and afterwards concert director in London, where he died in 1782, and was buried in the old St. Pancras Churchyard.



H. Bibby pinxit.] [*Payne sculpsit.*

ST. THOMAS' SCHOOL AND BACH'S MONUMENT, LEIPZIG.

CHURCH WORKS BY BACH

IN the first rank of these stands the colossal *B-minor Mass*—the *Protestant Mass*, as it has been called. It seems that the Communion Service of the Lutheran Church was still called the "Mass," and was occasionally said or sung in Latin, or at least those portions of the Roman ritual which were retained in the Lutheran service—*i.e.*, the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, and occasionally the Sanctus. In the Latin, Bach adheres to the Lutheran version, and movements from this Mass are said to have been performed in the Leipsic churches with which Bach had to do.

No words can describe the stupendous grandeur of this work. It must be heard to be appreciated. But, being too long for ritual purposes, it unfortunately cannot be heard in its true home, the church. It has been several times performed by the Bach choir in London, and was produced at a Leeds festival, with great success, under Sir Arthur Sullivan. But concert conditions do not suit the work. With a choir of 300 voices the balance between instruments and voices is lost, so that when the trumpets and drums are silent there is too little accompaniment. The same

want of balance may be observed at the Handel festival in the Crystal Palace, the accompaniment being scarcely audible when organ and brass are silent. Brahms' Requiem is another work that is spoilt by a large chorus, the delicate orchestration being quite swamped by it. The organ has a much more important place in Bach's church works than it is allowed to assume in our concert-rooms. Although scarcely credible, it is said that his choir numbered only three voices to a part, while his complete orchestra, including three trumpets and drums, numbered only eighteen performers. And here may be remarked the extraordinary effect of the entries of trumpets and drums in Bach's works. Limited as the brass instruments were to their natural notes, they have much more effect in Bach than our modern instruments with their chromatic scales have in modern works. The very reticence which their primitive state necessitated gives their entries much greater force.

As a subsequent chapter is devoted to an analysis of the *Mass*, we proceed to speak of the *Passions*.

THE PASSIONS

Of these Bach is said to have written five, but two only remain—the *St. John* and the *St. Matthew*—which we can accept with absolute certainty as Bach's, the smaller passion according to St. Luke being of doubtful authenticity. The *St. Matthew*

is generally held to be the greater work, but two things excel in the *St. John—i.e.*, the recitative and the chorales, or hymn-tunes. Between 1724, the date of the first performance of the *St. John Passion*, and 1729, when the *St. Matthew* was produced, Bach seems to have been influenced by the secular recitative which he frequently heard in the opera at Dresden, and accordingly the *St. Matthew* recitative is more in our modern conventional style. The grand chorus, with choral "O man, thy heavy sin lament," in the *St. Matthew* formed originally the first chorus of the *St. John Passion.*

The *St. Matthew* was revived by Mendelssohn at Berlin in 1829—exactly 100 years after its first performance at Leipsic. In England it was first given by the Bach Society under Sterndale Bennett in the Hanover Square Rooms in 1854, and was repeated by them in St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, in 1858, when the writer was present, and well remembers how excellently the loving piety of the work was brought out by Bennett. Later conductors have laid more stress on its dramatic character. Dramatic it is, but loving piety is its salient feature, as it is also of the *St. John Passion*, and, in fact, of all Bach's church works.

Sir Joseph Barnby gave performances of the *St. Matthew* in Exeter Hall, Westminster Abbey, and the Royal Albert Hall, and instituted performances of the *St. John* in St. Anne's Church, Soho, which have been continued ever since, the work being given there every Friday in Lent.

The *St. Matthew* is performed annually at St. Paul's Cathedral in Holy Week.

The *Christmas Oratorio* consists of six separate church cantatas combined into one whole, each cantata beginning and ending in the same key, and the whole work likewise. The separate cantatas are designed (1) for the first Christmas festival; (2) for the second Christmas festival; (3) for the third Christmas festival; (4) for the Feast of the Circumcision; (5) for the Sunday after the Feast of the Circumcision; (6) for the Feast of the Epiphany.

They contain eleven movements taken from his secular cantatas, but these are so solidly written that they bear the transference without any violation of the fitness of things. Exception might be taken to one of them, an echo song, in which the words, "Yea, yea" and "Nay, nay" are echoed; but Bach, with all his reverence and piety, was not at all straitlaced in his notions of what was admissible in church.

This oratorio presents Bach in his greatest versatility, for in it we have strains of exuberant joy contrasted with lowly adoration of the mystery of humility in the God-made man; of pastoral simplicity in the scene of the "shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night"; of loving tenderness in the cradle song and other passages; of thankfulness in the New Year's Day portion; of indignation and defiance in the soprano recitative and air addressed to Herod, concluding with a triumph song of victory. Only once occurs the sombre hue of the passions,

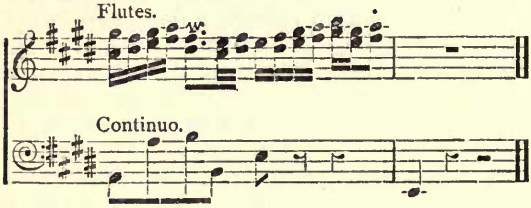
and that in a very remarkable situation. Zion is called upon to prepare herself to receive the Bridegroom, and in reply asks, "Oh, how shall I receive Thee?" this being set as a choral, and that choral no other than the one known as *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* ("O Head full of Blood and Wounds"), and which occurs no less than five times in the *St. Matthew Passion*, thus rather ironically indicating that Zion's reception of the Bridegroom will be to crucify Him. To enhance the solemnity of the allusion, the choral is harmonized in the Phrygian mode. The same choral is used as a song of victory to conclude the oratorio, but is there set in modern tonality, and in a march-like movement in which trumpets and drums figure largely. By repeating this choral as the song of victory he links the victory with the Cross.

The *Christmas Oratorio* was performed once in 1866 by the Bach Society under Sterndale Bennett, and during the last three years has been performed weekly during Advent and Christmastide at St. Anne's, Soho.

A kindred work is the Latin *Magnificat*, also written for the Christmas festival, and produced by Bach at St. Thomas's Church, Leipsic, with hymns in German interpolated between the movements. The trio *Suscepit Israel* is accompanied by oboes playing the ancient Magnificat chant—a version of the *Tonus Peregrinus*—which he has used also as the basis of his German *Magnificat* or *Church Cantata* for the Annunciation, and as the subject of one of

his organ fugues. Mozart has used the same chant in his Requiem at the words "Te decet hymnus."

In the ending of the symphony, after the words "et divites dimisit inanes" ("and the rich He hath sent empty away"), Bach indulges in a bit of realistic humour, thus :



Franz, in his arrangement of the *Magnificat* for a modern orchestra, has spoilt this passage (which was a second thought of Bach's, the first version being different) by the insertion of a chord on the last bass note, as he has similarly spoilt a most impressive silence in Handel's "He was despised."

Other examples of Bach's humour are the cock-crowing passages in the *Passions*, the *Peasant's Cantata*, and in the cantata *The Strife between Phœbus and Pan*, when Midas alludes to his ears he anticipates Mendelssohn in the "Midsummer Night's Dream."

Bach is said to have composed five years' courses of church cantatas. Of these 210 remain, including the six comprised in the *Christmas*

Oratorio. Many of them are based on the choral, and in most the choral appears; some few are for single voices, and one or two are dialogues.

Messrs. Novello and Co. have issued English versions of some of the cantatas, and Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel are also issuing English versions, in which the German text is closely followed, even to the retention of the three I's (Ich) at the commencement of "I had great heaviness of heart," which in Novello's edition are altered to "Lord, Lord, Lord." There is so deep a religious motive, and sometimes so poetical a design in what Bach does that nothing, however startling it may at first sight appear, ought to be wantonly altered. He is not only a great composer, but also a profound religious teacher, as these church cantatas plainly show. The lesson he seeks to inculcate in the three emphatic I's, each echoed by the orchestra, may be that the heaviness of heart was caused by too much "I" and too little of God. The words of the choral, which occurs later on, seem to indicate this.

The cantata *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself*, is accompanied by the instruments playing the choral *These be the holy Ten Commandments.* To the deep significance of the first choral in the *Christmas Oratorio* we have already alluded.

The words of the cantatas are sometimes very homely, but forcible and real. One speaks of sin with its "capital and interest," another has something like a pun on the words "Weinen" and "Wein"—"O water of weeping (Weinen), now

turn into wine" (Wein). Of the echo song in the *Christmas Oratorio* we have already spoken.

The cantata *Schlage doch, gewünschte Stunde* ("Strike now, long wished-for hour") has an accompaniment of two bells.

In view of the fact that they require only a small orchestra (Bach's complete orchestra with three trumpets and drums seems to have numbered only eighteen instrumentalists), these compositions are much more desirable for orchestral services than excerpts from oratorios, usually performed with an incomplete orchestra. Moreover, they are written for the church, and, therefore, for devotional purposes.

There are also Motets without orchestra, most of them for double choir. To one of them, however—*The Spirit helpeth our infirmities*—Bach has left orchestral and organ accompaniments. The one best known in England, *I wrestle and pray*, is of doubtful authenticity, as is also *Blessing and glory*.

The so-called *Easter and Ascension Day Oratorios* have only the dimensions of a church cantata.

BACH'S ORGAN WORKS

AS a composer for the organ, Bach occupies a similar position to Beethoven in the orchestra. He reigns supreme, and his works are to this day the most exacting in technical requirements.

They comprise six sonatas for two manuals and pedal, a passacaglia, a pastorale, toccatas, fantasias, a large number of choral preludes, and a host of preludes and fugues. The latter are well known, but the choral preludes are not so much studied as they ought to be, for in them we get some insight into Bach's treatment of the organ, indications of which in the preludes and fugues are exceedingly rare. Moreover, those for double pedal are excellent studies in legato pedal-playing. To the use of stops in the choral preludes Best's edition (Messrs. Augener and Co.) may be some guide, the pedal being frequently used to play the choral on an 8 or 4 foot stop. Beyond indicating this and the number of manuals, Bach left scarcely any directions as to registering, so that it is open to the player to consult his own taste and the composition of his organ in this matter.

The tendency of modern organ-playing is to run riot, changing stops for the mere sake of change; but, just as in architecture ornament should grow out of construction, so in organ-playing registration should grow out of construction. A logically developed fugue demands continuity, and cannot well be split up into fragments; at the same time gradations of force need not be sacrificed. The episodes can have a slightly reduced tone by either closing the swell-box or putting in a stop in the great organ (see Mendelssohn's fugue in C minor, where the entries of the theme are marked *f*, and the episodes *mf*), but the same tone colour must be maintained.

Fugues like the St. Anne's, the C minor on a theme by Legrenzi, and the great E minor, have clearly marked breaks where a change of manual will be appropriate; the toccata in C major, and the toccata and fugue in D minor demand frequent changes of manuals, while the passacaglia requires some slight modification of tone at each variation, but, as before said, the continuous, logically-developed fugues do not lend themselves to such treatment.

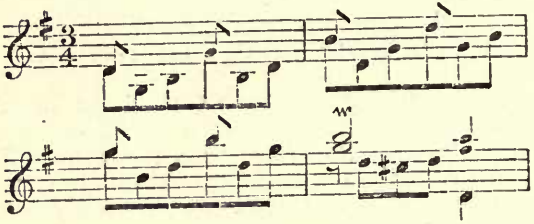
BACH'S WORKS FOR CLAVICHORD

IN the front rank of these stand the thirty *Goldberg Variations*, written for a clavichord with two manuals. They form the fourth and last book of the *Clavierübung*, published in 1731. Every fourth variation is a canon; the first canon in the unison, the second in the second, the interval being extended one degree in each succeeding canon. The work with repeats takes more than an hour in performance, but so diversified are the variations that the interest, whether of player or listener, never flags. Some of the brilliant variations tax to the utmost the powers of a modern player, while the passage writing anticipates the technic of a later age. Although some are written for two manuals, it is possible to play them on one, and Messrs. Peters have published an edition arranged and fingered for that purpose. The last variation is a quodlibet, or pot-pourri of different melodies worked together. An analysis of the work by Mr. Tovey is published by Mr. Joseph Williams.

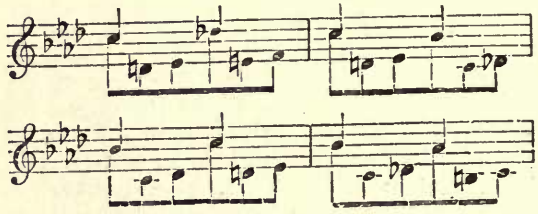
Part I. of the *Clavierübung* consists of the six partitas, also amongst his finest works. Although it is not possible in these pages to describe them

in detail, the writer cannot forbear quoting the minuet of the fifth partita, which, with its duple time melody in a triple time movement, anticipates Chopin's "Grand Valse" in A flat, Op. 42.

BACH.

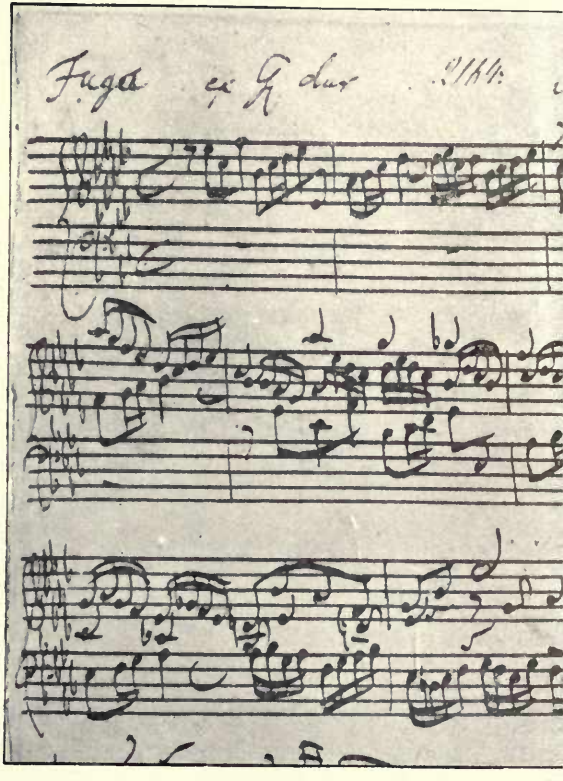


CHOPIN.



Part II. contains the well-known Italian Concerto.

Part III. consists of choral preludes and duets, the former evidently written for the organ, the latter for the clavichord. Strangely enough, the prelude in E flat is placed at the commencement of the part, and the corresponding fugue (St. Anne's) at the end. That they belong to each



FACSIMILE OF BACH'S MS. OF THE FUGUE IN A♭ M
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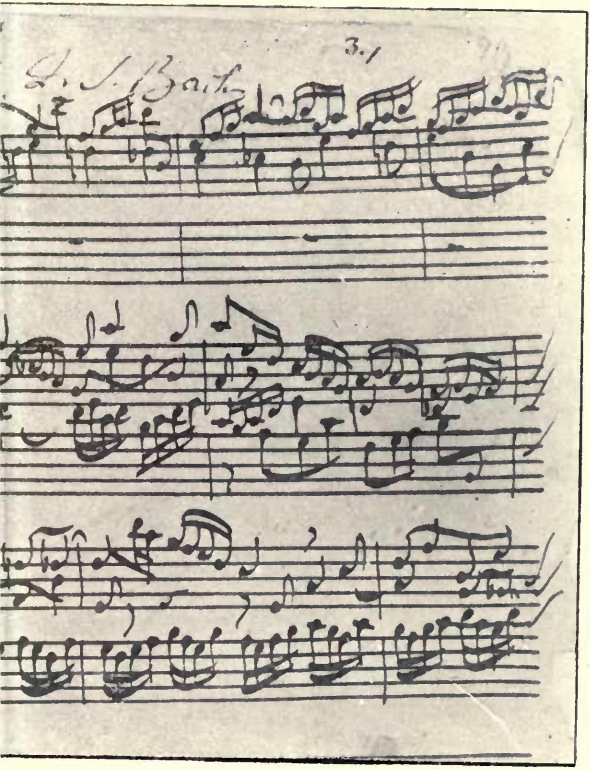


R, NO. 17 OF THE "WELL-TEMPERED CLAVICHORD,"
1744).

other is evident from their relationship in character.

Part IV. consists, as we have already said, of the *Goldberg Variations*.

Of the *Well-tempered Clavichord* we spoke when writing of the Cöthen period.

The English suites are very fine works, having preludes developed at great length. The French suites are of smaller dimensions.

Another great work is the Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue, the former remarkable for its recitative passages, anticipating Beethoven and Mendelssohn. Bülow's edition will be a guide as to the playing of the arpeggioed chords, which ought to proceed downwards as well as upwards, but he has perhaps indulged with too great freedom in alterations of the text.

For smaller players Bach wrote inventions in two parts, sinfonias in three parts, and six small preludes.

Besides the above-mentioned he has left us a host of toccatas, preludes, and fugues.

A few words on the performance of Bach's clavier works may not be out of place, seeing that they are sometimes grievously maltreated when played in public.

It must be premised that, like all old music, these bear no marks of expression. An indication of movement, or of modification of tone, is of very rare occurrence, so that the performer has to give his own reading of the work. Now some pianists, knowing that Bach is sometimes stupendous on the organ, think he must also be

stupendous on the piano, and accordingly adopt what has been aptly termed the "hammer and tongs" style of performance. Apart from the fact that in the clavier works there are no passages at all corresponding to the mighty outbursts on the organ, it has to be remembered that the clavichord (which instrument Bach preferred to the newly invented pianoforte) had a most delicate and ethereal tone, and therefore did not lend itself to anything heroic, still less stupendous. Moreover, an artist who can play both instruments will not seek to assimilate them, but will delight in their difference. Also, let it be added, there is as much refinement, and that of the noblest, in Bach as in any modern composer. The writer once heard Sterndale Bennett play the fugue in A minor at the end of volume 3 of the Bach Gesellschaft edition (then just issued), the theme of which so closely resembles in outline that of the great A minor organ fugue, and although the work affords many opportunities for vigorous crescendos, Bennett did none of the heroic, but played it with a quiet cantabile touch, varied by undulations of crescendo and diminuendo.

BACH'S ORCHESTRAL WORKS

THESE consist of (1) the six Brandenburg concertos, so called because they were dedicated to the Margraf of Brandenburg; (2) the four overtures, or, rather, suites—the name of the first and most important movement being made to cover a series of movements, mostly in dance form, such as courantes, gavottes, minuets, bourrées, passepieds, gigues, etc. One has a movement called badinerie, and another a so-called réjouissance; (3) concertos for clavier and orchestra; (4) concertos for violin and other solo instruments and orchestra. The concerto for two violins with its exquisitely graceful slow movement is well known. As these works may prove useful to small orchestras, we give a list of them and the requisite orchestra:

Brandenburg Concertos.

1. Strings, three oboes, bassoon, and two horns.
2. Soli trumpet, flute, oboe, and violin, accompanied by two violins, viola, and continuo.
3. Three violins, three violas, three violoncellos, double bass, and cembalo.

4. Solo violin, accompanied by strings and continuo.
5. Soli flute, violin, and cembalo, accompanied by strings.
6. Two violas, two viols da gamba, violoncello, double bass, and continuo.

The Overtures.

1. Strings, two oboes, bassoon, and cembalo.
2. Strings, one flute, and cembalo.
3. Strings, two oboes, three trumpets and drums.
4. Strings, three oboes, one bassoon, three trumpets, and drums.

The sinfonia in F is for strings, three oboes, one bassoon, and two horns. The passions, the church cantatas, and the secular cantatas, all have accompaniments for orchestra, the latter having much greater importance than in the works of his contemporary, Handel, and demanding much greater skill in execution. His orchestration differs as much from Handel's as it does from our modern methods, inasmuch as his instruments have all real parts, and, excepting brass and drums, are kept constantly employed.

BACH AND HANDEL

BOTH were born in the same year, and both wrote for the Church, sometimes even setting the same words, as in the *Christmas Oratorio* and the "Messiah." Both were organ players, and wrote for the organ as well as for orchestra and clavier. Comparison, therefore, seems inevitable, but it need not be to the disparagement of either. Both were giants, alike in spirit, but diverse in its manifestation. Both are sublime, though in totally different ways. Handel's is the sublimity of simplicity, Bach's of complexity. Handel's harmonic material is usually of the simplest, although he could on occasion hurl a harmonic thunderbolt. Bach's harmony is of the richest, and sometimes of the most modern kind. It speaks of all the ages—past, present, and to come. Handel's simplicity and directness, combined with his great power, procured him ready acceptance, while Bach's complexity has had to wait 150 years for general acceptance, and can hardly yet be said to have fully attained it. Their paths in life were different. Handel went to Italy and came to

England; Bach, like Beethoven and Brahms, stayed at home.

Although Bach was very desirous of making the acquaintance of Handel, going over to Halle for the purpose, these two great men never met.

BACH AS CONTRAPUNTIST

BACH is universally allowed to be the greatest of all contrapuntists, and second to him is generally placed Mozart. His greatest predecessors as contrapuntists were probably our own Purcell, who excelled in the art of concealing art; and Byrd, who may be called the Bach, and his D minor mass the Bach mass, of the sixteenth century. That the works of the former were not unknown in Germany is proved by the fact that Purcell's toccata in A major is included in the Bach Gesellschaft edition (forty-second year's issue) among the doubtful compositions. The works of Byrd were well known on the Continent in his own day, and are still known and performed there.

To Bach no theme seemed to come amiss, whether for inversion, augmentation, or diminution, be it his own or dictated by somebody else, as witness his treatment of countless chorals in the church cantatas and in the choral preludes, his art of fugue, the musical offering, and his innumerable fugues for organ and clavier. In this respect he differs from Handel, whose canti

fermi usually consist of the first four notes of the scale ascending and descending.

An eminent musician has stated, and probably truly, that if John Sebastian Bach were a candidate for a musical degree at either of our Universities, he would undoubtedly be plucked. If this be so, we can only congratulate ourselves and Bach that he was free to cultivate his genius in his own way, unimpeded by the trammels of the schoolmen.

It should be mentioned that the system of musical education in vogue in Germany in those days was, as in England, by apprenticeship, there being no academies. Spitta, in his monumental "Life of Bach," gives the laws of the "College or Union of Instrumental Musicians of the district of Upper and Lower Saxony and other interested places," wherein it is prescribed that the term of apprenticeship shall be for five years, and "to the end that the apprentice, when his time is out, and he is thenceforth free, may be all the more perfect, he shall, for the next three years before he settles himself, serve as assistant to other famous masters."

It cannot be denied that Germany was more prolific in genius under the old system, nor that the genius she has had since in Wagner and Brahms did not emanate from academies. Hazlitt, in one of his essays, points out that all the great schools of painting existed before the establishment of academies, and his words seem to hold true of the sister art of music.

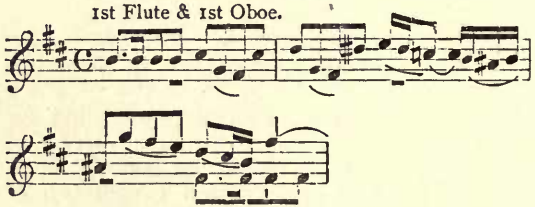
Having spoken of Bach's marvellous contra-

puntal skill, we must say a few words about his melody. In the polyphonic works, the melody is divided between all the parts—that is to say, each part is a melody, and to understand the work it is necessary that the listener should be able to follow all the concurrent melodies. The six sonatas or trios for organ, although polyphonic, abound in delightful melody. The exquisite grace of the slow movement in the D minor concerto for two violins is appreciated by all who have heard it. The wailing plaintiveness of the adagio in the toccata in C major, and of the fantasia in G minor (both for organ) must appeal to everybody, even on a first hearing, but more frequently the charm is not on the surface, and does not reveal itself until after many hearings.

It only remains to mention the sonatas for violin and clavier, flute and clavier, viol da gamba and clavier, sonatas for violin, in one of which occurs the renowned chaconne, and suites for violoncello. The whole of the known works of John Sebastian Bach, and a few doubtful ones, have been issued by the Bach Gesellschaft of Leipsic, and are now being reprinted by Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel in a cheaper form.

THE "MASS IN B MINOR"

HERE is a short analysis of this colossal work: After an introductory adagio of four bars, in which both voices and orchestra take part, the theme of the Kyrie is announced by flute and oboe in unison, accompanied by strings, organ, and bassoon.

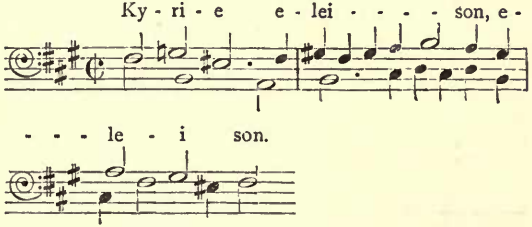


This is worked fugally, but chiefly episodically, for twenty-five bars, when the tenor voices enter with the same theme, followed by the altos, then by first trebles, second trebles, and lastly by basses. Everyone will remark the fine effect of the theme when it occurs in the bass part. The voices develop the theme for forty-three bars,

and then give place to an instrumental episode of eight bars, after which they resume, the basses starting the theme, followed by tenors, altos, first trebles, and, lastly, second trebles, this section occupying forty-six bars, making in all 126 bars, or, with the introductory adagio, 130 bars.

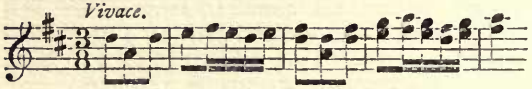
The Christe Eleison is set as a duet for two soprani, with accompaniment of first and second violins in unison, organ and string bass. The entry of the voices in thirds, repeated afterwards in sixths, is in the Italian manner, but the imitations which follow the theme bring us back to Bach's own church style.

The third Kyrie is for chorus of four parts, accompanied by strings, flutes, oboes, bassoons, and organ, flutes and oboes doubling the violin parts, and the bassoons reinforcing the bass vocal part, which is frequently independent of the real bass or continuo. The theme of this movement is as follows,

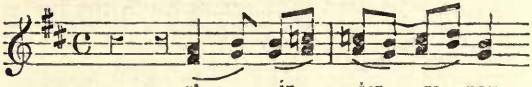


(the lower notes being the continuo or string and organ bass), and is developed for fifty-nine bars. The theme of the Gloria is announced

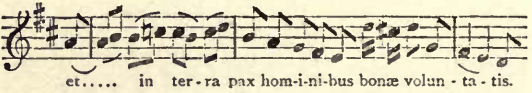
by trumpets, accompanied by the whole orchestra :



After a symphony of twenty-four bars, the altos enter with the theme, followed by tenors, and then by the whole choir. The words "et in terra pax" have the following theme :



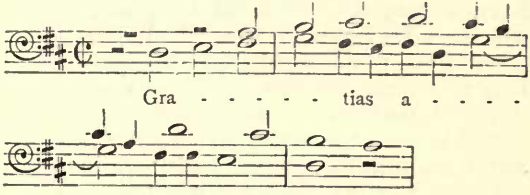
given out by voices, accompanied only by organ and continuo, answered first by strings, and then by the wood wind, the same being afterwards enlarged into the following fugal theme, announced by trebles :



Some holding notes in the first and second trumpets which accompany iterations of the "et in terra" theme are a striking feature of this brilliant movement. Then follows an aria for soprano 2 to the words "Laudamus te," accompanied by strings, organ, and solo violin.

The four-part chorus to the words "Gratias agimus tibi," which also appears at the end of the Mass as the "Dona nobis pacem" is taken

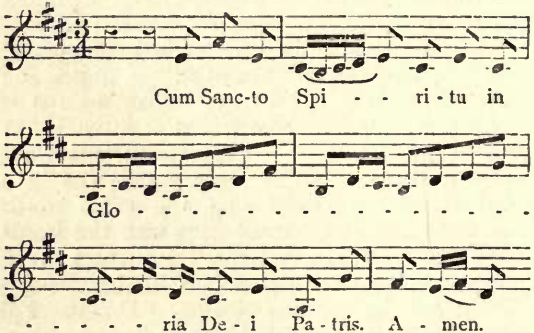
from the cantata "We thank Thee, O God," written for the election of councillors in 1731. Its theme is the old canto fermo so frequently used by Handel, also by Byrd in his canon "Non nobis."



As will be seen by our quotation, the movement starts in canon, and there is a good deal of canonical imitation throughout. This chorus, like the Gloria and all the triumphant movements, is for full orchestra of three trumpets, drums, flutes, oboes, bassoons (in unison), strings, and organ.

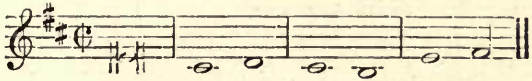
The next movement is a duet for soprano and tenor, with accompaniment of strings, organ, and solo flute, in which again the Italian manner is in evidence in passages of tenths and sixths. A striking peculiarity of the movement is that not until the words "Domine Deus, Agnus Dei" are reached do the voices sing the same words together, the tenor, commencing with the words "Domine Deus, rex cœlestis, Deus Pater omnipotens," is, after the interval of half a bar, accompanied by the soprano singing, "Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christi altissime," and interchangeably this is maintained throughout the

first part of the movement. We have already spoken of Bach as a religious teacher. Here he seems to insist on the divinity of Christ. At the words "Qui tollis peccata mundi" the movement merges into chorus with accompaniment of strings, flutes, and organ, the commencement of which is in canon. The following alto aria "Qui sedes" is accompanied by strings, organ, and solo oboe d'amore. The bass air to the words "Quoniam tu solus sanctus" has the remarkable accompaniment of horn, two bassoons, organ, and continuo, and the effect of this combination is extraordinarily rich. Then follows a brilliant chorus to the words "Cum sancto spiritu," in which the whole orchestra is employed. After thirty-six bars, in which chorus and orchestra are constantly engaged, the following fugal subject is announced by the tenors:

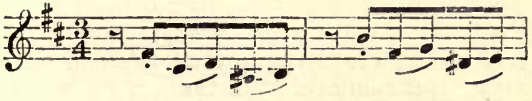


The beginning of this theme resembles that to

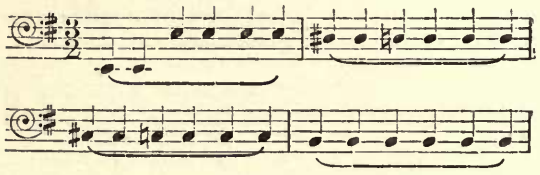
the words "Let Zion's children" in the motet for double chorus, *Sing to the Lord*. The first movement of the Credo, forty-five bars long, is devoted solely to the words "Credo in unum Deum," thus insisting on the unity before speaking of the Trinity. It is based on the old plain chant canto fermo,



given out by the tenors, and worked fugally, the last entry of the basses being in augmentation—*i.e.*, in notes of double length. The accompaniment of this chorus is chiefly for organ and continuo, the violins, first and second, entering occasionally with iterations of the theme. Then follows another chorus to the same words, with the addition of "Patrem omnipotentum, factorem cœli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium." To this succeeds a duet for soprano and alto to the words "Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum," accompanied by strings, oboes, and organ. It is interesting to know that Bach originally included the words "et incarnatus est" in this movement, but afterwards gave them greater importance by treating them in a separate chorus. The violins accompany this chorus with the following caressing figure:



We now come to the Crucifixus, one of the most striking movements of the Mass. It has the following ground bass, twelve times repeated:

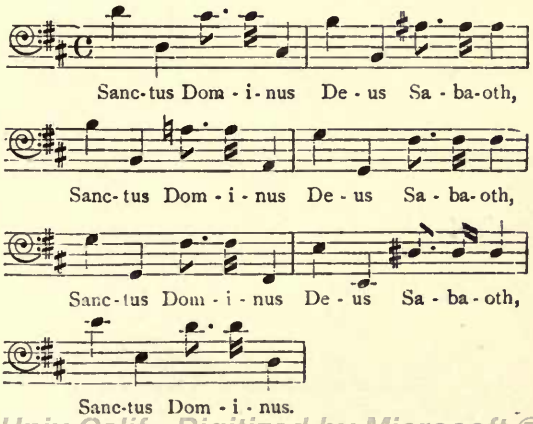


the same that Purcell used as a ground to Dido's superb death-song in his "Dido and Eneas," written in 1675, ten years before the birth of Bach. We have already seen that Purcell's works were early known in Germany, and, comparing the Crucifixus with this song, it is difficult to avoid the conviction that it was known to Bach. The Crucifixus movement forms a portion of the first chorus of the cantata *Weeping, wailing!* and the same ground bass is used in the cantata, *Jesu, der du meine Freude.* The Et Resurrexit is another of the brilliant movements, and commences with a triumphant outburst of the whole choir and orchestra, every voice and instrument participating.

"Et in Spiritum Sanctum" is a bass solo with accompaniment of oboes, organ, and continuo, and is followed by a chorus in five parts to the words "Confiteor in unum baptisma" in the true ecclesiastical style, with accompaniment of organ and continuo. At bar 73 the basses

sing the old plain chant associated with the words, and are answered by the tenors singing the same in augmentation. Soon after this the movement is suddenly arrested by an adagio to the words "Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum," in which occur some bold and solemn modulations, the same words being afterwards repeated in a triumphant strain accompanied by full orchestra.

The following Sanctus is perhaps the culminating point of the work. It commences with another triumphant outburst of the whole choir and orchestra, the nobility of the movement being indescribable. Note the majesty of the following passage sung by the basses, while the other voices sustain chords to the word "Sanctus":



This colossal movement (colossal in grandeur, not in length) merges into the "Pleni sunt cœli et terra," another brilliant fugue. The Osamna is an excerpt from a patriotic cantata composed to celebrate the election of the Elector of Saxony as King of Poland, but as in that work it is a song of thanksgiving, there is no incongruity in its transference to the more religious work. The Benedictus is a tenor solo with accompaniment of organ, continuo, and violin solo, and the Agnus Dei a rearrangement of the alto air "Bleibe doch" in the Ascension Day Oratorio, and is accompanied by violins 1 and 2 in unison, continuo, and organ. The Dona Nobis, as already said, is a repetition of the Gratias.

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