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# The Master Musicians

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# The Master Musicians

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FREDERICK J. CROWEST

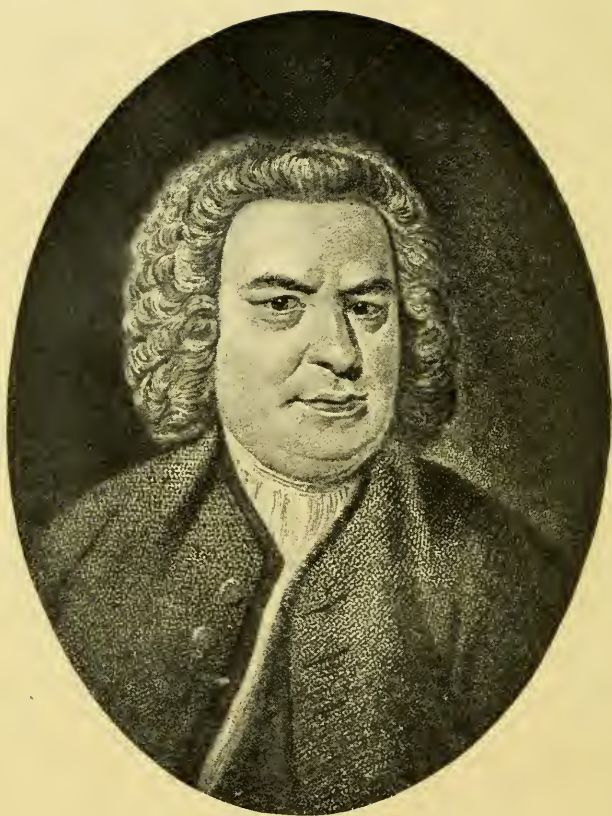
## LIST OF VOLUMES.

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*Joh. Seb. Bach*

# Bach

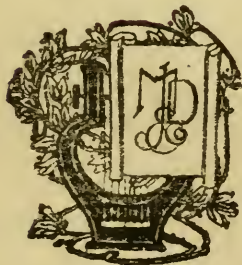
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C. F. Abdy Williams

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With

Illustrations and Portraits



London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

1921

47

3675 17

FIRST PUBLISHED . . . 1900  
REPRINTED . . . 1903, 1906, 1921  
1 0 3 0 7 8

ML  
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B1  
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## Preface

THE position of Johann Sebastian Bach as one of a numerous family of musicians is unique. Of no other composer can it be said that his forefathers, contemporary relations, and descendants were all musicians, and not only musicians, but holders of very important offices as such. All his biographers have therefore given some account of his family antecedents before proceeding to the history of his life; and I have found myself obliged to follow the same course. In other respects I have adopted the plan made use of by the older biographers, of keeping the account of his life distinct from that of his compositions.

Every biography is necessarily based on that written by his two sons, four years after his death, published by Mizler, and the one published in 1802 by Forkel, who was intimate with the sons. Hilgenfeldt's account follows these, and in later years further information has been acquired from the searches into archives, and other ancient documents, by C. H. Bitter and Philipp Spitta. Any details concerning the life and works of this remarkable man are interesting; and it is probable that researches will be continued for some time to come. Thus, last year (1898) a "celebration" took place at Ohrdruf in memory of Bach's school career there; and

# Preface

Dr Friedrich Thomas took the opportunity of publishing some details of the Bach family which had escaped Spitta.

The name of Bach is revered by Thuringian organists, and I this year had interesting conversations with his successors at Arnstadt and Mühlhausen, Herr Kellermann and Herr Möller. But the chief music-seller at Arnstadt told me that "Bach's music is out of date; no one has now any interest in such old-fashioned compositions."

The two recent important accounts of Bach's life are those of C. H. Bitter, 1865, 2 vols.; second edition 1880, 4 vols.; and Philipp Spitta, 2 vols, a translation of which by Mrs Clara Bell and Mr Fuller-Maitland was published by Messrs Novello in 1884. With regard to the last, I have to thank Messrs Novello for kindly allowing me the use of the book at a time when it was out of print. I understand that a second edition has since been published.

References to Spitta apply to the first edition of the translation; all others to the original German.

C. F. ABDY WILLIAMS.

BRADFIELD,  
*December 1899.*

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## Chapter I

The Bachs of Thuringia—Veit Bach, the ancestor of John Sebastian—His sons and descendants—A breach of promise of marriage—J. Christoph Bach of Arnstadt—His cantata "Es erhob sich ein Streit"—John Michael Bach of Gehren—His character—His compositions—Joh. Christoph Bach of Ohrdruf, and his descendants—The sons of Joh. Sebastian Bach—The clan feeling—A sixteenth century *quodlibet*.

JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH came of a large family of Thuringian musicians, whose members have been traced back to the first decade of the sixteenth century. The name frequently occurs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries among the inhabitants of Arnstadt, Erfurt, Gräfenrode, Molsdorf, Rockhausen and other villages; and that it has not yet disappeared is shown by the fact that the Erfurt Directory for 1899 contains the addresses of no less than thirteen Bachs.

The subject of this biography considered that the founder of his family was Veit Bach, who had settled at Presburg in Hungary as a baker and miller. Owing to religious persecution, however, he sold what he could of his property, returned to Thuringia with the proceeds, and settled at the village of Wechmar near Gotha. Here he recommenced his trade, and occupied his leisure with

*The  
Founder of  
the Family*

# Bach

the cithara, or cither, even taking it to the mill, where he played it to the rhythmical tapping of the wheels. "He must," says John Sebastian, "at any rate have learned time in this way." The date of his birth is unknown. He died 1619 and left two sons, Hans and Johannes. All his descendants, to the number of sixty, were, with only two or three exceptions, musicians. Hans Bach, the great-grandfather of John Sebastian, was a weaver by trade as well as a musician. His father, Veit, sent him to Gotha to study music under a relative, Caspar Bach, the "town piper." In his capacity of "Spielmann" or "Player" Hans travelled about to different towns in Thuringia to take part in the "town music" with his violin, and as he was also very humorous he became popular, and twice had his portrait painted. He died of the plague in 1626. He seems to have left several children, of whom three were musicians—

JOHANN, 1604-1673.

CHRISTOPH, 1613-1661.

HEINRICH, 1615-1692.

The following genealogy will enable the reader to distinguish the various members of this remarkable family. The names of sons only are given, as the daughters do not appear to have distinguished themselves. The list of nearly sixty names is not, however, by any means exhaustive. Spitta gives many more, and there were of course a great number whose names are entirely lost, for a peasant and artisan family is not usually careful to keep its genealogical tables in order.

# Genealogy

## THE BACH FAMILY.

(From Hilgenfeldt.)

1. VEIT BACH, 155- -161-, the Founder.

*Sons of Veit.*

2. HANS d. 1626. 3. JOHANNES . . .

*Sons of Hans.*

4. JOHANN, 1604-1673. 5. CHRISTOPH, 1613-1661. 6. HEINRICH, 1615-1692.

*Sons of Johann (No. 4).*

7. JOHANN CHRISTIAN, 1640-1682. 8. JOHANN ÆGIDIUS, 1645-1717. 9. JOHANN NICOLAUS, 1653-1682.

*Sons of Christoph (No. 5).*

10. GEORG CHRISTOPH, 1642-1697. 11. JOH. AMBROSIUS, 1645-1695. 12. JOH. CHRISTOPH, 1645-1694.

*Sons of Heinrich (No. 6).*

13. JOH. CHRISTOPH, 1643-1703. 14. JOH. MICHAEL . . . 15. JOH. GÜNTHER . . .

*Sons of Joh. Christian (No. 7).*

16. JOH. JACOB, 1668-1692. 17. JOH. CHRISTOPH, 1673-1727.

*Sons of Joh. Ægidius (No. 8).*

18. JOH. BERNHARD, 1676-1749. 19. JOH. CHRISTOPH, 1685-174-

*Son of Joh. Nicolaus (No. 9).*

20. JOH. NICOLAUS, 1682-174-.

*Sons of Georg Christoph (No. 10).*

21. JOH. VALENTIN, 1669-1720. 22. JOH. CHRISTIAN, 1679-1707. 23. JOH. GEORG, 16--17--.

*Sons of Joh. Ambrosius (No. 11).*

24. JOH. CHRISTOPH, 1671-1721. 25. JOH. JACOB, 1682-171-. 26. JOHANN SEBASTIAN, 1685-1750.

*Sons of Joh. Christoph (No. 12).*

27. JOH. ERNST, 1683-173-. 28. JOH. CHRISTOPH, 1689-1736.

*Sons of Joh. Christoph (No. 13).*

29. JOH. NICOLAUS, 1669-1740. 30. JOH. CHRISTOPH . . . 31. JOH. FRIEDRICH . . . 32. JOH. MICHAEL . . .

# Bach

*Children of Joh. Michael (No. 14).*

33. JOH. LUDWIG 1677-1730. MARIA BARBARA (first wife of Joh. Sebastian).

*Sons of Joh. Christoph (No. 17).*

34. JOH. SAMUEL, 1694 . . . 35. JOH. CHRISTIAN, 1696 . . .  
36. JOH. GÜNTHER . . .

*Son of Joh. Bernhard (No. 18).*

37. JOH. ERNST, 1722-1781.

*Sons of Joh. Christoph (No. 19).*

38. JOH. FRIEDRICH, 1703 . . . 39. JOH. AUGUST, 17 . . .  
40. WILHELM HIERONYMUS, 17 . . .

*Sons of Joh. Valentin (No. 21).*

41. JOH. LORENZ, 1695 . . . 42. JOH. ELIAS, 1705-1755.  
43. JOH. HEINRICH . . .

*Sons of Joh. Christoph (No. 24).*

44. JOH. FRIEDRICH, 1695 . . . 45. JOH. BERNHARD, 1700-1742 (?)  
46. JOH. CHRISTOPH, 1702-1756. 47. JOH. HEINRICH,  
1707 . . . 48. JOH. ANDREAS, 1713-175-.

*Sons of Joh. Sebastian (No. 26).*

49. WILHELM FRIEDEMANN, 1710-1784. 50. JOH. CHRISTOPH and  
a twin brother, 1713+same year. 51. CARL PHILIPP  
EMANUEL, 1714-1788. 52. JOH. GOTTFRIED BERNHARD,  
1715-1739. 53. LEOPOLD AUGUST, 1718-1719. 54.  
GOTTFRIED HEINRICH, 1724-1736 (?). 55. CHRISTIAN  
GOTTLIEB, 1725-1728. 56. ERNST ANDREAS, 1727+  
same year. 57. JOH. CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH, 1732-1795.  
58. JOH. AUG. ABRAHAM, 1733-1734. 59. JOH.  
CHRISTIAN, 1735-1782. 60. (8 daughters).

Johann (No. 4) was born at Wechmar. He was apprenticed to the town piper of Suhl and became organist at Schweinfurt. In 1635 he married the daughter of his former master, and became director of the town musicians at Erfurt. During the time he was there the city was suffering terribly from the effects of pillage and quartering of soldiers, poverty and disorder; yet Johann Bach



# Music and War

managed to found a family which multiplied rapidly, and soon filled all the town musicians' places, so that for some century and a half, and long after no more of the family lived in the place, the town musicians were known as "The Bachs."

He married twice, his second wife being Hedwig Lämmerhirt.

He was organist of the Prediger Kirche at Erfurt, and was called by his contemporaries an "illustrious musician," and he in a kind of way forestalled John Sebastian in being skilful in both sacred and secular, vocal and instrumental music.

The three towns of Erfurt, Arnstadt and Eisenach, now became the chief centres of the Bach family.

Christoph Bach (No. 5), the grandfather of Sebastian, born at Wechmar, entered the service of the Grand Duke of Weimar as lackey and musician. In 1642 he was a member of the Guild of Musicians at Erfurt, and in 1654 was Court and Town musician at Arnstadt, where his younger brother Heinrich was living. He does not seem ever to have been an organist, but a "Kunstpfeifer."

During the Thirty Years' War the town pipers and musicians had sunk very low in public estimation, and about the middle of the seventeenth century a strong effort was made by their various guilds to raise themselves to a more dignified position, in keeping with the worthiness of their calling. To this end they combined in drawing up a code of statutes, which was ratified by the Emperor Ferdinand III.;<sup>1</sup> the Bach family seem, however, to have kept aloof from this combination, and there is no doubt that

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary, "College of Instrumental Musicians."

# Bach

they were better educated than the majority of town musicians.

Heinrich (No. 6) was appointed organist of the Franciscan Church at Arnstadt in 1641, which office he filled for fifty years. He suffered severely from the war, which disorganised everything, and his salary, like that of every one else, got into arrears. Moreover there were war taxes to be paid, and the soldiery seem to have robbed and plundered at their will. He petitioned the Count of Schwarzburg for his salary as he "knew not where to find bread for himself and his young family." The Count ordered his salary to be paid, but the keeper of the funds immediately resigned. It is supposed that Bach managed to eke out his existence by cultivating a small plot of land which it was usual to give to organists in Thuringia as part of their salary. He kept to his pious and simple life all through the horrors of the times, (which reduced the mass of the people to a state of coarseness and immorality), and brought up six children, three of whom became famous musicians in their day. In the funeral sermon preached by Olearius, he is mentioned as the composer of chorales, motets, concertos, fugues and preludes, but few of his compositions have been preserved.

Johann Christian Bach (No. 7), a viola player and music director, belonged to Erfurt, whence he went to Eisenach, being the first of his family to settle there.

Johann Ægidius Bach (No. 8) became director of the town musicians and alto-violin player at Erfurt in succession to his brother Joh. Christian (No. 7) and his cousin Ambrosius (No. 11) when they moved to Eisenach. Like several others of his clan he married the sister of his elder brother's wife, and soon after became organist of

# J. Ambrosius Bach

St Michael's Church, which post he held to an advanced age.

John Nicolaus Bach (No. 9) was a town musician and good performer on the viola-da-gamba. He died of the plague in 1682.

Georg Christoph Bach (No. 10), born at Erfurt, was an usher in a school at Heinrichs near Suhl, but became cantor, first at Themar, near Meiningen, and afterwards at Schweinfurt, where he died. He was a composer, but his works are all lost.

Johann Ambrosius Bach (No. 11), the father of John Sebastian, was twin brother to Johann Christoph (No. 12). The two brothers had a most remarkable likeness, not only externally but in character and temperament. They were both violinists and played in exactly the same style; they thought and spoke alike, and their appearance was so similar that it is said their own wives could not distinguish them apart. They suffered from the same illnesses, and died within a few months of one another.

Ambrosius first settled at Erfurt as an alto-viol<sup>1</sup> player, and was elected a member of the Town Council. Here he married Elizabeth Lämmerhirt, the daughter of a furrier, and a relation of Hedwig the wife of Johann (No. 4). He now moved to Eisenach, and was succeeded at Erfurt by his cousin Ægidius (No. 8). He undertook the care of an idiot sister who died shortly afterwards, and for whom a funeral sermon was preached, in which the Bach brothers are referred to as being "gifted with good understanding, with art and skill, which make

<sup>1</sup> The violas were divided into alto, tenor and bass, as the trombones are now. The leading stringed instrument was called discant-viol<sup>a</sup> or discant-violin.

# Bach

them respected and listened to in the churches, schools, and all the township, so that through them the Master's work is praised." Little is known of the life of Ambrosius beyond the fact that he is mentioned in the church register at Dornheim as "the celebrated town organist and musician of Eisenach." Six children were born, the youngest being Johann Sebastian.

Johann Christoph Bach (No. 12) was Court musician to Count Ludwig Günther at Arnstadt. The first thing we hear of him relates to a kind of action for breach of promise of marriage brought before the Consistory at Arnstadt by Anna Cunigunda Wiener, with whom he had "kept company" and exchanged rings. The Consistory (a spiritual court) decided that Bach must marry her, but, with the independence of character which was peculiar to his family, he refused and defied them—an unheard-of thing for a musician to do in those days—declaring that he "hated the Wienerin so that he could not bear the sight of her."<sup>1</sup> The case lingered for two and a half years, and ended in his favour. He remained single for many years afterwards, marrying eventually a daughter of the churchwarden of Ohrdruf.

Quarrels between Gräser, the town musician, and Johann Christoph Bach led to the dismissal of all the Court musicians on account of the disunion which made it impossible for music to prosper. For a time, therefore, he had to make a meagre living by "piping before the doors," but after the death of the Count his successor reappointed Bach "Court musician and town piper." At this time Adam Drese was Capellmeister at Arnstadt, and there exist catalogues of the Court musicians which are

<sup>1</sup> Spitta, vol. i. p. 162.

# J. Christoph Bach

of interest as showing the kind of musical establishment that prevailed at the petty courts in Germany. One of these catalogues gives the names of seven singers, four violinists, three viola players, a contrabassist, and the organist Heinrich Bach (No. 6).

There were trumpeters, and extra singers from the school, who could also play stringed instruments, so that on occasion a very respectable string orchestra was available, consisting of twelve violins, three alto violas, three tenor violas, two bass viols, and a contrabasso. The violoncello does not seem to have been represented. Christoph Bach's income in later life was sufficient not only to raise him above want, but to enable him to leave something to his family, on his death, in 1694, at the age of forty-eight.

*The  
orchestra  
at  
Arnstadt*

Johann Christoph Bach (No. 13) was born at Arnstadt, and studied under his father Heinrich (No. 6). He was appointed organist at Eisenach in 1665, which post he held till his death sixty years later. He and his brother Michael (No. 14) were born during the worst time of the disturbance produced by the war, yet such was the vigour of their race that, uninfluenced by the general degeneracy and misery, they both became celebrated composers, Michael leaning towards instrumental, and Christoph to vocal music. An important church work, describing the strife between Michael and the Devil, "Es erhob sich ein Streit," is fully described with musical quotations by Spitta (vol. i. p. 45, &c.). For its performance it required two five part choirs, two violins, four violas, one bassoon, four trumpets, drums, double bass, and organ. The cantata is preceded by a "sonata" for the

*A Church  
Cantata*

# Bach

instruments, without trumpets and drums, something in the form of the French overture. The work itself is modelled on those of Hammerschmidt, who, with Schütz, created a form which culminated in the Handel oratorio. Spitta says that it shows "power of invention and genius," and that "it was impossible that so important a composition should fail to make an impression on many sincere artistic natures, in spite of the small amount of intelligent sympathy which was shown for Johann Christoph Bach, alike by his contemporaries and by posterity." Sebastian Bach thought very highly of his uncle's work, and performed it at Leipsic.

Johann Christoph composed many chorale-vorspiele for the organ, of which forty-eight are preserved in a MS. formerly belonging to Spitta. The themes are worked out on the same lines as those of John Sebastian, but in a more elementary form. His vocal compositions are, however, much in advance of his instrumental works, and he seems certainly to have been the most important member of his family before his great nephew appeared.

Johann Michael Bach (No. 14) was an accomplished organist. His character may be imagined from the account of his appointment to the organistship of Gehren near Arnstadt, when we are told that after his examination, the authorities thanked the Count for having sent them a peaceable, retiring, and skilful performer. He was also made parish clerk, and his income from the two posts amounted to 74 gülden, 18 cords of wood, 5 measures of corn, 9 measures of barley,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  barrels of beer, some land, and a house free of rent. Besides being a composer he made clavichords and violins. His

*An  
organist's  
income*

## Other Bachs

youngest daughter became Sebastian Bach's first wife. A cantata on "Ach! bleib bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ" by him is preserved in the Bach archives in the Royal Library at Berlin, "full of interesting details and ingenious ideas."<sup>1</sup> It is scored for four voices, two violins, three violas, bassoon, and organ, and is preceded by a "sonata." Twelve of his motets are preserved, but they are incoherent in structure, being composed in a time of transition. Some of them are to be accompanied by strings which double the various voice parts, and ten of them are interwoven with chorales. In "Das Blut Jesu Christi" for five voices "the deep feeling of the compositions overcomes us with irresistible power, and one forgets the imperfection of the body in the beauty of the soul which shines through."<sup>2</sup> Four of the motets are for double chorus and in some one can feel "the romantic spirit of Sebastian Bach."

Johann Günther Bach (No. 15) was a good organist, and deputised for his father when absent from Arnstadt. Little is known of his life, but Hilgenfeldt says he is mentioned as a capable instrument maker as well as organist.

Johann Jacob Bach (No. 16) did not follow the musical profession.

Johann Christoph Bach (No. 17), also born at Erfurt, was cantor and organist of Unterzimmern near Erfurt. In 1698 he succeeded Michael Bach in the Cantorship at Gehren. He was threatened with removal by the Arnstadt authorities on account of his temper, though the threat was never carried out. He died in 1727.

Johann Bernhard Bach (No. 18), born at Erfurt, was at first organist in his native town, then at Magdeburg

<sup>1</sup> Spitta, vol. i. p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Spitta.

# Bach

and afterwards succeeded Johann Christoph (No. 13) in 1703, as Court and town organist at Eisenach, and was also made Chamber Musician to the Duke of Sax-Eisenach, Of his compositions there remain four suites for orchestra, some small pieces for cembalo and some chorale arrangements. According to Spitta he was one of the most able composers of his time, following the lines of Pachelbel. His orchestral works were so esteemed by John Sebastian that he copied them, and the copies still exist.

Johann Christoph Bach (No. 19) was "Raths-Musik-director" (Town Council Musical-director) at Erfurt, in succession to Ægidius.

Johann Nicolaus Bach (No. 20), a surgeon, settled in East Prussia, where he brought up a numerous family.

Johann Valentin Bach (No. 21) was town musician and head watchman at Schweinfurt.

Of Johann Christian Bach (No. 22), and Johann Georg (No. 23), nothing is known.

Johann Christoph Bach (No. 24), the elder brother of Sebastian, organist and schoolmaster at Ohrdruf, was a pupil of Pachelbel, and appears to have made some reputation as a musician, since he refused an invitation to go to Gotha as organist, on account of an increase of salary being given him at Ohrdruf.<sup>1</sup>

Johann Jacob Bach (No. 25) entered the Swedish

<sup>1</sup> During a visit to Ohrdruf in August 1899, Herr Landrathamts-Secretär Kellner kindly gave me the following information. The descendants of J. S. Bach's eldest brother continued to live in Ohrdruf until 1863, as cantors, clergymen, schoolmasters, lawyers, etc. There are at present living in direct descent Herr Herrmann Julius Bach, Merchant, of Budapest, Herr Alfred Wilhelm Bach, Apothecary, of Witten, and two young sons of the latter.



## More of the Family

guard as oboe-player. He followed Charles II. of Sweden, and took part in the battle of Pultawa, and, after a stay at Bender in Turkey, retired to Stockholm as Court musician.

Johann Sebastian Bach (No. 26).

Johann Ernst Bach (No. 27) was organist at Arnstadt, while Johann Christoph Bach (No. 28) went into the grocery trade.

Johann Nicolaus Bach (No. 29) was University and Town organist at Jena, and after having travelled to Italy for study, returned to Jena, where he remained till his death at the age of eighty-four. He was an able composer, of whose works, however, only a mass remains, which is much praised by Spitta.

Johann Christoph Bach (No. 30) taught music in Hamburg, Rotterdam, and finally in England.

Johann Friedrich Bach (No. 31) succeeded J. Sebastian as organist at Mühlhausen, the only member of his family who is mentioned as unsatisfactory in character, he being given to drink. Gerber calls him by mistake Johann Christoph.

Johann Michael Bach (No. 32) was an organ-builder. He went to Sweden, and all traces of him were lost.

Johann Ludwig Bach (No. 33) held the post of capellmeister to the Duke of Sax-Meiningen. His compositions were highly valued by Johann Sebastian, who copied many of them. Hilgenfeldt distinguishes him as a fine church-composer.

Johann Samuel Bach (No. 34), and Johann Christian Bach (No. 35), settled at Sondershausen as musicians.

Johann Günther Bach (No. 36) was tenor singer and schoolmaster at Erfurt.

Johann Ernst Bach (No. 37) studied law and became

# Bach

a barrister, but was also an organist and composer. He died in 1781 as Capellmeister to the Count of Weimar.

Johann Friedrich Bach (No. 38) became a schoolmaster, as did also his brother Johann Ægidius (No. 39). Of Wilhelm Hieronymus (No. 40), nothing is known.

Johann Lorenz Bach (No. 41) was organist at Lahm in Franconia.

Johann Elias Bach (No. 42) studied theology, and became cantor and school-inspector at Schweinfurt, his native town.

Of Johann Heinrich Bach (No. 43) nothing is known.

Tobias Friedrich Bach (No. 44) was cantor of Ude-stadt, near Erfurt.

Johann Bernhard Bach (No. 45), according to Adlung, was a capable composer and organist.

Johann Christoph Bach (No. 46) filled the double *rôle* of cantor and schoolmaster at Ohrdruf.

Johann Heinrich Bach (No. 47) was cantor at Oehringen, in Würtemberg, and musician to Count Höhenlohe; while Johann Andreas Bach (No. 48) was oboist at Gotha, and afterwards organist at Ohrdruf.

We now come to the sons of Johann Sebastian. An account of their services to art will be found in C. H. Bitter's "Die Söhne Sebastian Bachs," published by Breitkopf and Härtel, 1883. We must be here content with a bare outline of their biographies.

Wilhelm Friedemann Bach (No. 49), born at Weimar, was a pupil of his father and of Graun, concert-meister of Merseburg. He went to the University of Leipsic, where he distinguished himself in law and mathematics. In 1732 he became organist of St Sophia at Dresden, but

# Sons of J. S. Bach

giving this up, he accompanied his father on his various journeys. In 1747 he became music-director of a church in Halle, and is sometimes called the "Halle Bach." Quitting this post he lived without employment at various places, and died at Berlin in 1784 in great poverty and misery, having been given to drink.

Fétis and Bitter say he was the greatest organist in Germany after his father, and Forkel states that his "clavier-playing was light, brilliant, and charming," and his "organ style was elevated, solemn, and full of religious feeling." He extemporised much but composed little, though some sonatas for clavecin, both solo and with violin, some polonaises, organ-pieces, concertos, fugues, symphonies and cantatas have come down to us.

*W. F. Bach  
as an  
organist*

Johann Christoph (No. 50) died in infancy.

Carl Philipp Emanuel (No. 51) the most celebrated of Sebastian's sons is called the "Berlin Bach," having lived in that city for twenty-nine years. He studied at St Thomas' School at Leipsic under his father, and afterwards joined the University of Leipsic as a student of law, but completed this course of study at Frankfort on the Oder. In 1738 he entered the service of Frederick the Great at Berlin as cembalist. In 1767 he went to Hamburg in succession to Telemann as director of music, after having with great difficulty obtained leave from the Court at Berlin to depart. Here he remained till his death in 1788. He was a prolific composer in all styles. A catalogue of his works is given by Fétis, among the most important of which are those for clavier, and his "Attempt to explain the

*The Berlin  
Bach*

# Bach

true art of Clavier-playing," the first treatise on the subject if we except Couperin's "L'art de toucher le clavecin." It describes the method of John Sebastian, from which the present style of piano-playing is developed, and the rules for the execution of the "Manieren"; while in the second part, thorough bass and accompaniment of voices are treated of. He became the greatest theorist of his time, and in his autobiography he says, "In composition and clavier-playing I have never had any teacher but my father." Hilgenfeldt remarks that he was intended for a learned profession and only studied music as an amateur; but Bitter shows that he was an artist, and was brought up as a practical musician, his scientific studies being secondary to music.

Emanuel occupies a very important position in the history of music. His period was one of transition.

*Emanuel's position in musical history* Polyphony had reached its highest point. Oratorio had been developed to its greatest splendour, and organ and clavier-playing had reached their highest development on the old lines. His services to art were that he

opened new paths in clavier-music, which made possible the creations of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. Bitter considers him the father of that particular kind of form which has been found suitable to the modern piano: viz. the sonata form. His smaller sonata forms were based on those of the preludes in the *Wohltemperirte Clavier* which are in two sections, and this form was developed by Haydn and his successors. The form is found in the six sonatas of 1742, but it had been used by Krebs in his "Preambles" two years earlier.

Johann Gottfried Bernhard Bach (No. 52) was given

# J. Christian Bach

the post of organist at Mühlhausen in response to an earnest letter from his father to the authorities. He, however, shortly afterwards went to Jena to study law, and died there in 1739 of a fever.

Leopold August (No. 53) died young.

Gottfried Heinrich Bach (No. 54) is only known as having lived in Leipsic in the year 1754.

Christian Gottlich Bach (No. 55) lived only three years.

Ernst Andreas Bach (No. 56) died the year he was born.

Johann Christoph Friedrich (No. 57), was called the "Bückerburger Bach" from his holding a post as Chamber musician to Count von Lippe at Bückerburg. He composed oratorios, Passion music, and many other things. He was remarkable for a deep insight into the essence of harmony, and a very good style of clavier-playing, which approached that of his brother Emanuel. He is also mentioned as a man of amiable and upright character.

Johann August Abraham Bach (No. 58) died young.

Johann Christian (No. 59), called the "Milanese" and afterwards the "English" Bach, was born at Leipsic, and at the age of fourteen (on the death of his father), he went to his brother Emanuel *The English Bach* at Berlin. When his education was completed he went to Milan, where he worked hard at the composition of songs. His wealth of melody, and the facility with which he produced it, led him to attach himself to the Neapolitan school of composition, the result being shown in a number of works which the greatest singers of his day took as their favourite concert songs. His clavier works were chiefly written for

# Bach

amateur lady pupils, and it has been said that the great increase of clavier dilettanti towards the end of the eighteenth century is to be attributed directly to the influence of Christian Bach.

He composed concertos, operas, oratorios, besides every kind of clavier and other instrumental music in the fashion of the day; "but," says Schubart, "in the midst of his frivolity the gigantic spirit of his father always shines." He was organist of Milan Cathedral, and from there went to London, where he remained till his death in 1782. Although he made a large income from his pupils and compositions, he died deeply in debt, and his widow (an Italian prima donna) received a pension from the Queen.

The eight daughters of Sebastian showed none of the musical talent of their brothers, and, with the exception of three, they all died young. One of them married Bach's pupil Altnikol, of whom we shall hear later. The family gradually died out, and after the sons of Sebastian, none showed exceptional musical ability.

The clan feeling was very strong. It was a family custom to meet together at Erfurt, Eisenach or Arnstadt once a year, and to spend a day in friendly *Family meetings* intercourse. The day was begun with the singing of a chorale, after which jokes and all manner of pleasant pastimes were indulged in. One of their favourite pursuits on these occasions was the singing of "quodlibets" consisting of the endeavour to make three or four popular or well-known songs harmonise together, these extempore efforts being intended more as a joke than as serious music.

# A Quodlibet

Hilgenfeldt quotes a quodlibet of the sixteenth century of which we give a few bars :

## THE LORD'S PRAYER.

*Sop.*

Va - ter un - ser im Him - mel-reich.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the Soprano part of 'THE LORD'S PRAYER'. It features a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of seven measures: a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note G4. The lyrics 'Va - ter un - ser im Him - mel-reich.' are written below the staff, with hyphens under 'un - ser' and 'Him - mel-reich.' indicating syllable placement.

## THE CREED.

*Alto*

Wir glau - ben all'an ei - nigen Gott.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the Alto part of 'THE CREED'. It features a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of seven measures: a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note G4. The lyrics 'Wir glau - ben all'an ei - nigen Gott.' are written below the staff, with hyphens under 'glau - ben' and 'ei - nigen' indicating syllable placement.

## EASTER SONG.

*Ten.*

Je - sus Christus unser Hei - - - land.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the Tenor part of 'EASTER SONG'. It features a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of seven measures: a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note G4. The lyrics 'Je - sus Christus unser Hei - - - land.' are written below the staff, with hyphens under 'Hei - - - land.' indicating syllable placement.

## BAPTISM SONG.

*Ten.*

Christ unser Herr, zum Jor-dan kam.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the Tenor part of 'BAPTISM SONG'. It features a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of seven measures: a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note G4. The lyrics 'Christ unser Herr, zum Jor-dan kam.' are written below the staff, with hyphens under 'Jor-dan' indicating syllable placement.

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

*Bass*

Mensch willt du le - ben se - lig - lich.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the Bass part of 'THE TEN COMMANDMENTS'. It features a single staff with a bass clef and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of seven measures: a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, a quarter note C3, a quarter note B2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note G2. The lyrics 'Mensch willt du le - ben se - lig - lich.' are written below the staff, with hyphens under 'le - ben' and 'se - lig - lich.' indicating syllable placement.

## Chapter II

Bach's attitude towards art—His birth—Death of his father—Removal to Ohrdruf—Performances in the Ohrdruf choir—Removal to Lüneburg—His industry as a boy—Expeditions to Hamburg and Celle—Joins the Court Orchestra at Weimar—Is appointed organist at Arnstadt—Troubles with the church authorities—Successfully competes for a new post.

THE life and character of John Sebastian Bach have a peculiar interest, not only for musicians and amateurs of music, but for every one who can appreciate sterling worth, combined with genius of the highest rank, and a modesty as great as it is rare. "Anyone," *Bach's attitude towards Art* said Bach, "could do as much as I have done if he worked as hard." And this capacity for hard work is perhaps not the least among the many remarkable characteristics of the man. We find in him little of that desire for applause, for recognition, which is usually one of the strongest motives in an artist. He was content to labour as few men have laboured, in a remote corner of Germany, simply for art, and art alone. His greatest works never saw the light of publication during his life-time: he seemed to compose just because he obeyed the inward spirit of genius which drove him onward, and though his chamber works became fairly well known, his larger compositions were rarely performed outside the church or place for which they were composed. "The sole object







The House at Eisenach in which J. S. Bach was born

# Boyhood Promise

of all music," said he, "should be the glory of God and pleasant recreation," and the "glory of God" was the mainspring of every action of his simple and pious life.

He was born on or about March 31st, 1685<sup>1</sup> at Eisenach in Thuringia, under the shadow of the famous Wartburg. A house still standing in the Frauenplan is pointed out by tradition as his birthplace, and contains a tablet to that effect. He was the youngest son of John Ambrosius Bach, at that time Court and Town musician of Eisenach, a place which had a good reputation for its music.

The lofty artistic and moral standard which permeated the whole of the numerous members of the Bach family seems to have culminated in the subject of this sketch. We have seen that for many generations they had been musicians, and had held the chief posts as organists and town musicians throughout Thuringia; and John Sebastian naturally had no other thought than to follow the family profession. Of the first few years of his life little is known. It is probable that he learned the violin from his father.

In January 1695, when he was not yet ten years old, his father died, and his eldest brother Johann Christoph, who was organist of St Michael's Church at Ohrdruf and had married, now undertook to provide for him and educate him. Johann Christoph, who had been a pupil of Pachelbel for three years, taught his younger brother the harpsichord. Sebastian soon mastered all the studies and pieces he was given to learn, and began to aspire to higher things. His brother had made a MS. collection of compositions by Froberger, Fischer, Kerl, Buxtehude, Pachelbel,

*Goes to  
Ohrdruf*

<sup>1</sup> See Spitta, "Life of Bach," vol. i. p. 181, note.

# Bach

Bruhns, Böhm, and others, and this book was eagerly yearned for by Sebastian. The MS. was kept in a book-case, shut in with a wire lattice-work, and his brother for some unknown reason denied him the use of it. Such was his zeal, however, that he managed to abstract it through the lattice-work, night after night, for six months, until he had copied the whole of it by moonlight! His pleasure in it was of short duration, for when he began to practise the music his brother discovered the copy, and was hard-hearted enough to confiscate it. No reason is assigned for his having done so, and Sebastian did not recover it until his brother's death in 1721.

At Ohrdruf he joined the Lyceum,<sup>1</sup> where he laid the foundation of his general education, in Latin, Greek (from the New Testament), theology, rhetoric and arithmetic. He also took part in the chorus, whose duties were to perform in church on Sundays and festivals, as well as to sing motets at weddings and funerals, and at certain times to sing in the streets.<sup>2</sup> He became one of the principal singers, and had a fixed salary.

When he was fifteen he was obliged to leave his brother's house, and he now determined to make his own way independently of assistance from others. Recommended by Herda, the cantor of the Lyceum, he went to the school of the convent of St Michael at Lüneburg, accompanied by his friend Georg Erdmann, about Easter

<sup>1</sup> The Lyceum is now the Burgerschule. It is shown in the photograph on the left hand side.

<sup>2</sup> The custom of singing in the streets is still kept up. The writer heard one Sunday morning this year at Ohrdruf, excellent singing by the choir-boys, in four parts, two treble and two alto.



St Michael's Church, Ohrdruf  
with the Lyceum, now the Burgerschule



# Earnest Student

1700, and both were admitted to the choir as discantists with a salary. Bach's voice soon broke, but he remained three years at Lüneburg as accompanist at rehearsals, besides playing the violin when required and taking part in the band that played through the streets at the New Year. His salary was probably twelve thalers a year, besides free board and lodging, and a share in the profits of the processional performances in the streets.

Lüneburg, like Eisenach, seems to have cultivated music with considerable energy. Besides the choir of which Bach became a member, there was a similar one belonging to the school of St John, and the rivalry which naturally arose led to collisions, which were put an end to by certain streets being allotted to each choir for its performances.

Bach, being now above want, devoted the whole of his available time to self-improvement, in spite of the great demands made on him by his duties. He found in the library of the convent compositions by all the best composers up to that period — Hammerschmidt, Scheidt, Ahle, Briegel, Schütz, Rosenmüller, Michael, Schop, Jeep, Krieger, Selle, Crüger, and his own relatives Heinrich and John Christoph Bach. To these compositions we know that he devoted unremitting study, and at the same time worked with enormous industry day and night to improve his technique on keyboard instruments.

The organist of St John's Church was Böhm, a native of Thuringia, and a man of considerable genius. He had studied in Hamburg, and his compositions show the influence of Sweelinck and of Reinken the organist of St Catherine's Church. The distinguishing characteristics of

# Bach

his school were "technical neatness, pleasing ingenuity, and a taste for subtle effects of tone."<sup>1</sup>

Bach was now learning all he could from Böhm, but in order to further advance himself he made several expeditions to Hamburg on foot, a distance of some 25 English miles.

Of one of these expeditions the following story is told. Bach, on his return journey, sat down outside an inn halfway between the two cities with not sufficient money in his pocket to avail himself of the excellent dinner that was being prepared, the odours of which reached him from the kitchen, when a window was suddenly opened and two herrings' heads were thrown out. The herring in those days, as now, was one of the favourite articles of food in Germany, and the boy at once picked up the two heads. Inside each he found a Danish ducat. Who his benefactor was never became known to him; and the money not only paid for a dinner, but another journey to Hamburg as well.

From Reinken he obtained models for his early compositions of which Spitta mentions three as showing Reinken's influence; organ arrangements of the two chorales "Es ist gewisslich an der Zeit,"<sup>2</sup> "An Wasserflüssen Babylon";<sup>3</sup> and a toccata in G.

But Bach was not satisfied to study only the works of his own countrymen. About forty-five English miles to the south of Lüneburg is Celle, where the ducal court maintained a band which played French dance music, and where also French harpsichord music was held in considerable estimation. He took frequent opportunities of

<sup>1</sup> Spitta, vol. i. p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> In a MS. collection in possession of F. A. Roitzsch of Leipsic.

<sup>3</sup> MS. in Lib. of R. Inst. for church music, Berlin



# First Post

hearing this band, and so became familiar with the French style of music, which he admired, and much of which he copied.

Spitta considers that the chorale partitas "Christ, der du bist der helle Tag," and "O Gott, du frommer Gott,"<sup>1</sup> were composed at Lüneburg, since they were certainly early works, and show the influence of Böhm, in the elaboration of the motives and the use of *basso ostinato*, &c. It would seem that there was no good organ at Lüneburg, for his compositions of this period are either for harpsichord or, if for organ, show that he was not yet experienced in writing for the latter instrument.

In 1703 Bach was invited by Johann Ernst, younger brother of Duke Wilhelm Ernst, to join his orchestra at Weimar as a violinist with the title of "Hof-musikus," or Court musician. This brought him into contact with a great deal of instrumental music, especially Italian works, and among musicians he there met Westhoff, the Duke's private secretary, a good violinist, and Johann Effler an organist.

From Weimar he paid a visit to Arnstadt, only a few miles off, the former meeting-place of his family. Here he had an opportunity of trying the organ lately erected in the "New Church," the organist of which was Börner, a man of no great attainments. The Consistory heard him, and, at once dismissing Börner, offered Bach the post: a high-handed proceeding, which they softened by making Börner "organist at Matins" and deputy to the Franciscan Church, on his full salary. Bach's salary was raised by outside contributions, and the youth of

*First  
appoint-  
ment*

<sup>1</sup> Peters, vol. 244.

# Bach

eighteen found himself more highly paid than any of his fellow officials.

On August 14th, 1703, he was solemnly installed, and exhorted to industry and fidelity in his calling, and to act as an honourable servant and organist before God, the authorities, and his superiors. His official duties were to play on Sunday and Thursday mornings, and at one service on Mondays; so that he had ample leisure for study.

The organ, which was a very fine one of two manuals, had the following stops:

## OBERWERK (GREAT).

1. Principal (open diapason), 8 ft.
2. Viola da gamba, 8.
3. Quintatön, 8.
4. Gedackt, 8.
5. Quint, 6.
6. Octava (principal), 4.
7. Mixture, 4 ranks.
8. Gemshorn, 8 ft.
9. Cymbal, 3.
10. Trumpet, 8.
11. Tremulant.
12. Glockenaccord.

## BRUST-POSITIV (CHOIR).

1. Principal (open diapason), 4 ft.<sup>1</sup>
2. Still gedact, 8.
3. Spitzflöte, 4.
4. Quint, 3.
5. Sesquialtera.

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary, Positiv.





The Keyboards of Bach's Arnstadt Organ  
now in the Rathaus

# First Cantata

6. Nacht-horn, 4 ft.
7. Mixture, 4 ranks.
8. Octava, 2 ft.
9. Glockenaccord.

## PEDAL.

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

Couplers for manuals and pedals.<sup>1</sup>

The keyboards, of which we give a photograph, are preserved in the Rathhaus. The instrument was built by Wender of Mühlhausen in 1703.

Bach had also the direction of a small school choir, which was augmented by "adjuvanten" or amateur singers, and he had to accompany and attend the rehearsals of the church choir, besides which he probably played the violin in the Count's band. There was also a theatre belonging to the Count, in which "Singspielen" or operettas were occasionally performed.

The cantata for the first day of Easter, "Denn du wirst meine Seele nicht in der Hölle lassen," which was afterwards remodelled for use at Leipsic, was composed at Arnstadt, probably for Easter 1704.<sup>2</sup>

It was his first cantata, and is in character similar to those in vogue in Northern Germany.

It consists of a short introductory sonata, for three

<sup>1</sup> The above list, which slightly differs from that of Spitta, was taken from the existing stop handles.

<sup>2</sup> Spitta, vol. i. p. 231.

*First  
Cantata*

# Bach

trumpets, drums, strings and organ, then a bass solo, "For thou shalt not leave my soul in hell," in which are important ritornels. This is followed by a recitative, a duet for soprano and alto in Italian aria form,<sup>1</sup> a tenor solo, "Be not dismayed," after which the cantata closes with a soprano aria, "Up soul, and be joyful."

During his stay at Arnstadt he chiefly cultivated instrumental music and composition, and, according to Mizler, began to show his eminence in organ-playing.

In 1704, Johann Jacob, Sebastian's elder brother, who had entered the Swedish Guard as an oboe-player, came to bid farewell to his family and friends. For him Bach wrote the early "capriccio on the departure of his beloved brother." This was modelled on Johann Kuhnau's "Bible Sonatas."<sup>2</sup>

A chorale arrangement for two manuals and pedals "Wie schön leuchtet uns der Morgenstern" of this period exists in MS. in the R. Library at Berlin, and seventeen variations on "Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr" were in the possession of the late Dr Rust of Leipsic.

Towards the end of 1705 Bach determined to go to Lübeck to hear and study the style of Buxtehude, one of the greatest organists then living. He found a deputy, and having obtained one month's leave of absence, started on foot, on the journey of over 200 miles, with the object of arriving in time to hear the "evening performances" at the Marienkirche, which took place in November and

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* like many of Handel's songs, which have a da capo after the change of key.

<sup>2</sup> For an account of these see J. G. Shedlock, "The Pianoorte Sonata," London, 1895.

## Cited to Appear

December, which were peculiar to Lübeck, and which Buxtehude had worked up to a high pitch of excellence. They consisted of sacred music both vocal and instrumental, with organ solos.<sup>1</sup>

Bach outstaid his leave of absence by some three months, and on his return to Arnstadt in February 1706 received a "citation" to appear before the Consistory to explain his conduct. The Consistory at the same time brought a charge against him of neglecting the training of the choir, and of introducing unseemly variations on the organ during the singing of the chorale, whereby the congregation were thrown into confusion; and they complained of the great length and unseemly figuration of his preludes to the chorales.

Bitter gives the whole of the report of this "citation," in which the several charges are put to Bach and answered by him.

"The organist of the New Church, Bach, is required to say where he has been for so long of late, and from whom he received leave of absence?"

### ILLE.

"He has been to Lübeck in order to learn things connected with his art, but that he had previously asked permission from the Herr Superintendent."

<sup>1</sup>The organ had fifty-four stops, three manuals, and pedal; and the post of organist at this church was one of the best in Germany. It had one drawback, however; on the resignation or death of an organist, the person appointed to succeed him was obliged to marry his daughter. Mattheson and Handel in 1704 and Bach in 1706 had thought of applying for the post, but were all frightened away by this condition. Buxtehude's successor was Johann Christian Schieferdecker, who had been harpsichord player in the opera at Hamburg.

# Bach

## DER SUPERINTEND.

“He had only asked permission for four weeks, but had remained away four times as long as that.”

## ILLE.

“Hopes that the organ would have been played by him whom he had put in, in such a manner that no complaint can be made on that point.”

## Nos.

“Charge him with having made extraordinary variations in the chorales, and with intermixing many strange sounds, so that thereby the congregation were confounded. He must in the future, when he wishes to introduce some *tonus peregrinus*, continue in it, and not go off too quickly to something else, or, as he had hitherto been in the habit of doing, play a *tonum contrarium*. And then it is very strange that up to this time he has had no rehearsals, because he will not agree with the scholars. Therefore he is to declare whether he will play both figural and choral music with the scholars, since a capellmeister cannot be kept. If he will not do this, let him say so categorically of his own accord, that a change may be made, and some one who will undertake it can be appointed to the post.”

## ILLE.

“If an honest Director be appointed, he will play again.”



# Explanations Needed

## RESOLVITUR.

“He must explain his conduct within eight days. That scholar Rambach (the choir prefect) now appear, and be reprov'd for the disorders which up to this time have taken place between the scholars and the organist of the New Church.”

## ILLE.

“The organist, Bach, played for too long a time, but after this was notified to him, by the Herr Superintendent, he at once went quite to the opposite extreme and has made it too short.”

## THE CONSISTORY.

“Accuse him (Rambach) of having gone to a wine-cellar last Sunday during the sermon.”

## ILLE.

“Was very sorry, and it should never happen again, and the clergy have already spoken to him very severely about it. The organist need not complain of him about the conducting, because it was undertaken not by him, but by the youth Schmidt.”

## Nos.

“He must for the future behave quite differently and better, otherwise the gift which was intended for him would be withheld. If he has anything to remember against the organist, he must bring it forward at the proper place, and not take the law into his own hands,

# Bach

but behave in such a way as to give satisfaction, as he had promised. The servant of the Court is now ordered to tell the Rector to have Rambach imprisoned on four successive days for two hours each day."

Bach was always irritable and obstinate, and had completely alienated his choir. He was too much engaged in composition to take any interest in training it, and it was in any case not good enough for him. The Consistory allowed that there were faults on both sides, and hoped that by giving him more time than the eight days he would come to some agreement with the choir: but in vain. For Bach having come fresh from the artistic life of Lübeck found the drudgery of training the rough scholars unbearable. The answer that he was required to give in eight days completely left his mind, and after more than eight months the Consistory again "represented to the organist Bach that he should declare whether, as he has been ordered to do, he will rehearse with the scholars or not; as, if he feels no shame in remaining in the Church and receiving the salary, he must also not be ashamed to 'make music' (*i.e.* rehearse) with the scholars: for it is intended that these should exercise themselves, so that for the future they may have more skill in music."

ILLE.

"Will make the declaration on this subject in writing."

THE CONSISTORY.

"Furthermore ask him by what power he has latterly allowed the strange maiden to appear, and to make music in the choir."

# Second Post

ILLE.

“Has already spoken about it to Master Uthe.”<sup>1</sup>

The “strange maiden” who made music with Bach in private in the church seems to have been his cousin, Maria Barbara, youngest daughter of Michael Bach of Gehren,<sup>2</sup> whom he married in the following year. It is not known how the matter ended, but Bach, from this time, began to endeavour to find another post.

An important post at St Blasius, Mühlhausen, some 20 miles north of Gotha, fell vacant through the death of Johann Georg Ahle on December 2nd, 1706, and there were many candidates. It seems, from Gerber's account (vol. ii. p. 764), to have been at first offered to Johann Gottfried Walther of Erfurt, but to have been declined by him;<sup>3</sup> and when Bach, whose friction with the Consistory made him anxious to leave Arnstadt, offered himself as a candidate, the Council, after hearing him play, were unanimous in his favour.

*Second  
appoint  
ment*

The church of St Blasius is a fine Gothic building, in strong contrast to the homely, towerless New Church at Arnstadt; and the office of organist is proportionately more important. Its present holder is Herr Musik-director Möller.

<sup>1</sup> A preacher in the New Church.

<sup>2</sup> No. 14 in the Genealogical Table.

<sup>3</sup> This Walther was the author of the “Musikalisches Lexicon,” Leipsic, 1732.

## Chapter III

Bach's salary—He borrows a cart from the Consistory for his furniture—The agreement is made verbally—Bach's first marriage—His duties at St Blasius—The festival compositions—Repairs to the organ—Difficulties with the Pietists—He resigns his post—Is appointed chamber-musician at Weimar—His duties there—His relations with Walther—Studies instrumental music—His journeys—His competition with Marchand.

THE competition took place at Easter 1707, and terms were arranged a month later. An organist is rarely a highly paid individual: but modern organists may well be astonished at the meagreness of the salary for which the greatest of their predecessors was content to work. The request for the loan of a cart to bring his modest furniture from Arnstadt brings the matter very plainly before us. One sees in Thuringia, even at the present day, the clumsy four-wheel carts which have not varied in shape for centuries, drawn by a cow and a pony, rarely by two horses; and one can easily imagine such a cart conveying the household goods of the young musician across the plain from Arnstadt to Gotha, and from Gotha to Mühlhausen.

The terms were eighty-five gülden (about £8, 10s.); three malter (twelve bushels) of corn, two cords of wood, six trusses of brushwood; the last in place of some arable

## At Mühlhausen

land formerly held by the organist. The cost of conveyance to his door was to be borne by the Council. In addition, he was to receive annually three pounds of fish, and he asked that a cart might be lent him for transporting his furniture from Arnstadt, to which request the Council agreed.

A fire had, a fortnight before, destroyed a large portion of the parish of St Blasius, and when the clerk brought the agreement to the Council to sign, pens and ink were not forthcoming, so that a verbal agreement was made to all the terms.

The actual appointment took place on June 15th; and a fortnight later he was again in Arnstadt, where he thanked the Council for past favours, announced his resignation, and gave up the key of the organ. A sum of five gülden was due to him as salary, but he requested the Consistory to pay this to his cousin Ernst,<sup>1</sup> who had formerly assisted him, but who was now ill and poor.

His duties at St Blasius were to play the organ on Sundays, saints' days and festivals. He was anxious to raise the whole of the church music to a higher level, and mentioned this wish to the Council in an address. His predecessor Ahle had left a number of compositions which were frequently performed, but Bach, not being satisfied with them, as quickly as possible made a good collection of music and had it performed, paying for it out of his own pocket. He also made efforts to improve the choir and orchestra.

*Work at  
Mühl-  
hausen*

He received considerable assistance in these endeavours from his pupil Johann Martin Schubart (who afterwards

<sup>1</sup> No. 27 in the Genealogical List.

# Bach

succeeded him in his post at Weimar), and from his choir leader, Johann Sebastian Koch, afterwards Capellmeister to Count Reuss, and a Bachelor of Theology at Jena University.

In October 1707, Bach returned to Arnstadt for his wedding, which took place on the 17th of that month, and it is evident that he had parted on good terms with the Consistory, for the prescribed fees were remitted. In September of the same year Tobias Lämmerhirt, of Erfurt, a maternal uncle of Sebastian, had died, and left 50 gülden (about £5) to each of his sister's children, and this legacy must have been welcome to Sebastian at the time of his wedding.

Among the duties expected of the organist of St Blasius, was the composition of a cantata for the yearly change of Town Council (Rathswahl); and it was customary to have the music printed after the performance, at Mühlhausen.

The first of the cantatas thus composed by Bach is preserved; it was for the festival of 1708, and was performed in the Church of the Holy Virgin on February 4 of that year. The text is taken from the Old Testament, together with part of a hymn or a chorale, and Bach called it a motet. It was accompanied by three trumpets, drums, two flutes, two oboes, a bassoon and strings, the band being divided into four groups of brass, wood-wind (with cello), reed, and strings. The form is in imitation of some of Buxtehude's church cantatas.<sup>1</sup>

Bach found the organ of St Blasius in very bad con-

<sup>1</sup> This is, according to the Bachgesellschaft, the only cantata published in Bach's life-time. Its title is "Gott ist mein König," No. 71 of the Bachgesellschaft edition.

## St Blasius Organ

dition. It had not sufficient bellows, and there was insufficient pressure on the bass pipes, owing to there being too small a wind passage. There was no 32 feet stop and the trombone was too weak. Moreover the choir-organ had become useless, as had also several stops in the great.

He drew up a list of deficiencies which he presented to the Council, and asked for the addition of a "Glockenspiel" or peal of bells, to be acted on by pedals, an invention of his own. The latter addition was at once subscribed for by the parishioners. There was a smaller organ in the church, which he proposed to sell and apply the proceeds to repairing the principal organ. The Council placed the entire management of the matter in his hands, and he obtained an estimate from Wender the organ-builder who agreed to do the work for 230 thalers,<sup>1</sup> and to allow 40 thalers for the small organ.

*Repairs the organ*

The requirements were :—

Three new bellows ; stronger wind to the four old ones,<sup>2</sup> a new 32 feet stop with a separate wind chest for it ; renewal of the old bass wind chests ; new and larger pipes, with differently arranged mouthpieces for the bass trombone ; the addition of the new glockenspiel of twenty-four bells ; the trumpet on the great to be removed and a 16 feet bassoon to take its place ; the gemshorn to be changed for a viol da gamba of 8 feet ; a 3 feet nassat to be put in instead of the quint ; revoicing of all the rest of the pipes ; sundry alterations in the choir-organ ; and

<sup>1</sup> The thaler=3 shillings. Bitter says 200 thalers was offered for the work and 50 thalers to be allowed for the small organ.

<sup>2</sup> The organ in the Nicolai Church at Leipsic had in 1885 ten bellows, requiring four men to manipulate them.

# Bach

a coupler to connect it with the third manual ; the tremulant to be put in working order.

Unfortunately, however, difficulties soon began to arise. He was looked upon as an outsider, for the post had previously always been held by a native ; and obstacles which appeared insurmountable soon began to beset him. Religious differences arose between the "Pietists" and the "Old Lutherans," the former being led by J. A. Frohne, dean of Mühlhausen, and the latter by G. C. Eilmar, archdeacon of the Church of the Blessed Virgin.

Bach sided with the orthodox Lutherans, and Eilmar was godfather to his first child. The Pietists conceived of art as part of "the world," and therefore absolutely hostile to a Christian life: it could only be rightly used in religion, and then only in the narrowest possible of "spiritual songs" from which all expression must be excluded. Hence any attempt to introduce higher forms or new ideas must be sinful. It is easily seen, therefore, that Frohne would naturally place what obstacles he could in the way of Bach's endeavours to raise church music to the highest possible artistic standard. Moreover, the Pietists were opposed to the doctrine of regeneration by baptism, and to the whole of the simple but truly religious views which Bach had inherited from generations of his family, dedicated to the work of the church as organists and cantors. He was no theologian, and was perfectly content with the faith of his fathers.

The most beautiful and deeply religious of his church cantatas were a sinful abomination in the eyes of the Pietists. What wonder then that he should have found difficulties and obstacles and want of appreciation in



# Weimar Appointment

carrying out his aims. Even while he was in the midst of the interesting work of repairing his organ, the situation began to become intolerable, and a post at Weimar falling vacant, he took steps to obtain it.

On June 5 he went to Arnstadt for the second wedding of his friend Pastor Stauber, who had performed the service a year before at Bach's own wedding, and on June 25th 1708 he sent in his resignation to the Council at Mühlhausen, a year after he had received the appointment. He had always been on the best of terms with them, and it is evident, from the tone of his letter of resignation, that he was sorry to leave them. The Council on their side also regretted the step, but granted his dismissal, only requiring that he should supervise the repairs to the organ, which were not completed till 1709.

*Resigns  
his post*

The post at Weimar, which he now obtained, was that of Court-organist and chamber-musician to Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Saxe-Weimar. Forkel says that he made a journey to Weimar, and so pleased the Duke with his organ-playing, that the post was at once offered to, and accepted by him.

*Third  
appoint-  
ment*

"Here," says Hilgenfeldt, "he devoted himself to acquiring that overwhelming mastery of the organ for which his fame is assured for all time: and he also laid the foundation for his future greatness as a composer."

His circumstances were now very favourable. His employer was a man of wide culture and refinement, deeply interested in music and other branches of art, but more particularly in church music. He was religious, and took much interest in religious matters; and in all

# Bach

things he and Bach were in the closest sympathy. Bach's position at Weimar was much the same as that of Franz Liszt at the same Court in the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to observe how this small and poor Court for such a long period was famous for its encouragement of art and literature. Bach in the first decades of the eighteenth century, Goethe and Schiller in the last quarter of the eighteenth and first part of the nineteenth, Liszt and Wagner later on, besides many lesser men, received help and encouragement at this remarkable Thuringian "Residenz."

Bach, as we have seen, was appointed organist and "Kammermusik" (chamber-musician)—his salary for the first three years being 156 gülden, 15 groschen (£15, 13s. 3d.), which was always punctually paid, but in 1711, 1713, and 1714 it was considerably increased.

The organ of the castle was small, but had a good pedal. There were 9 stops on the Great, 8 on the Choir, and 7 on the Pedal. The pitch was a minor third below the kammerton or ordinary pitch.

As Kammermusik Bach played the harpsichord and violin, and afterwards became "Concertmeister" or leader. The number of musicians was about twenty-two, including singers, but the latter could also play some instruments, and many members of the band performed on several. The orchestra would also be occasionally strengthened by the addition of the town musicians. Johann G. Walther was organist of the town church, and a great friendship sprang up between the two men. He

<sup>1</sup> This is pointed out by G. H. Lewes in his "Life of Goethe," vol. i. p. 314.

# Sight-Reading Poser

was connected with Bach by marriage, his mother being a Lämmerhirt. One of his chorales has been erroneously ascribed to Bach. It is Peters, vol. 245, Book vi., No. 24—"Gott der Vater wohn' uns bei."

Bach stood godfather to Walther's eldest son, and a friendly rivalry in composition arose between them. Later on, however, some unfortunate disagreement seems to have arisen between the friends, for Walther, in his Lexicon, omits the mention of events and compositions during the nine years' period at Weimar, which must have been well known to him.

Forkel tells the following anecdote:—Bach, while still at Weimar, had advanced so far in clavier playing that he said to a friend that he believed he could play anything at first sight. His friend invited him to breakfast in a week's time, and for a joke placed on the harpsichord a newly composed piece which looked simple enough. While the friend was preparing breakfast in the next room, Bach instinctively began playing what he saw on the harpsichord, but was not able to advance very far. He tried several times, but always with the same result. On joining his friend, he laughingly acknowledged that no one could play everything at first sight, it was not possible.

Amongst other things Bach began to study Italian instrumental music at Weimar, especially with regard to the forms then in use, the concerto, the suite and the sonata. To this period may therefore perhaps be assigned some of the concertos for clavecin and other instruments, the suites for violin, etc., and the sonatas for harpsichord and violin.

The sonata of this date was usually performed by two

# Bach

violins and a violoncello, with a figured bass part for a harpsichord or organ (*e.g.* the twelve sonatas of Purcell in Italian style, and the four sets of twelve sonatas each by Corelli op. 1, 2, 3, 4). These sonatas had nothing in common with the modern sonata as begun by Emanuel Bach and perfected by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

Bach has left some examples in the sonatas for two violins and clavier (Peters, 237); for flute, violin, and clavier (Peters, 237): by clavier must be understood here a part for figured bass, which would be played by violoncello or double bass and harpsichord. Besides this, he adopted the form for other combinations, such as violin and figured bass, flute and figured bass (Peters, 232 to 235) viola da gamba and figured bass, etc. (Peters, 239).

Bach and Walther had plenty of encouragement in this kind of music, since the Duke's nephew Joh. Ernst (who unfortunately died young) had considerable skill on the violin, and also was a fair composer. They vied with one another in arranging Italian concertos for the harpsichord and organ. Sixteen of Vivaldi's violin concertos were arranged by Bach for the harpsichord (Peters, 217) and three for the organ (Peters, 247).<sup>1</sup> Walther arranged thirteen for organ from the works of Torelli, Taglietti, Albinoni, etc., and they are preserved in MS. in the Royal Library at Berlin. The arranging of these concertos led Bach to the use of the new form for clavier compositions, of which the well-known Italian concerto is

<sup>1</sup> Vivaldi takes an important place as one of those who studied and brought forward form. He wrote concertos for one, two, three and four solo violins, improved the orchestra, and invented new means of expression. He died in 1743 at Venice. See Spitta, vol. i. p. 411.

# Halle Incident

an example. Is it possible that the friendly rivalry was the commencement of the estrangement with Walther?

Bach was in the habit of making expeditions to try different organs, or for other musical purposes, and his reputation began to spread through North and Central Germany. He invented a peculiar form of fingering for keyboard instruments in order to increase his facility, and his use of the pedal rose to unheard-of heights. He also became an expert in questions of organ construction, and was often called upon to give his opinion in this respect. He was very ingenious in his use of the stops and of artistic combinations, but, unfortunately, with one small exception, none of his registering has come down to us. He was never in command of a really fine instrument, and the above exception, which consists of the chorale "Ein feste Burg," Peters, vol. vi., No. 22, seems to have been written for the newly arranged organ at Mühlhausen. It is for three manuals—the left hand has to play on a "fagott," and over the right hand is written "sesquialtera." These directions are omitted in Peters' edition, but are given in Walther's collection at Königsberg.

*Artistic  
journeys*

In 1713 he went to Halle, where a large organ of sixty-three stops had recently been placed in the Liebfrauenkirche. Here he won laurels by his magnificent playing, and, since the post was vacant through the death of F. W. Zachau, he offered his services to the Council as organist. He remained long enough to go through the prescribed test of composing and conducting a cantata, after which he returned to Weimar in haste to fulfil his engagements. The authorities of the church wrote to him stating the salary and conditions, but Bach,

# Bach

considering that the payment was inadequate to the amount of work, returned the agreement they had sent him to sign. The Halle authorities then said that Bach had only opened the negotiations in order to obtain an increase of salary at Weimar. This naturally annoyed him, and drew from him a firm and dignified answer to the affront.

In 1714 Bach went to Cassel to try an organ, which had been recently renovated. His extraordinary execution, especially on the pedals, so astonished the Crown Prince Friedrich (afterwards King of Sweden) that he drew a valuable ring from his finger and presented it to him.

On the first Sunday in Advent 1714 he paid his first visit to Leipsic, where he conducted his cantata, "Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland," and made the acquaintance of Kuhnau, Cantor of the Thomas Church, whose works he much admired.

The autograph score of this cantata is still in existence, and on it is noted, in Bach's own hand, the order of the service in just the same way as any modern organist, who was taking a service in a strange church, would note it.

*Order of church service*      The order on this occasion was a prelude on the organ, then a motet, then the kyrie, which was preceded by a prelude on the organ. Then came the epistle, the litany (which was sung), and the prelude to the chorale. Then the gospel, and after this the cantata, which was also preceded by a prelude. To this followed the sermon, then the Communion, during which he had to extemporise another prelude to a chorale, and the service concluded with a voluntary on the organ.

# Examining an Organ

The organ solo portions of the service were all called "Preludes"; and it does not seem that a concluding "voluntary" was usual. The prelude was played at the beginning of the service, and before the chorales. With us it is customary to simply play through the tune of a hymn or chant, in order to let the congregation know what they are to sing, and to give them time to find their places in the books. In Germany an artistic and somewhat elaborate prelude, in which the organist is expected to show his skill, precedes each chorale.

A hymn was sung between the epistle and gospel, in the place of the "Gradual" of the Roman service, and here the most elaborate prelude was introduced, based on the melody of the hymn.

Before the "church music," which takes the place of our anthem, an extempore prelude was played in order to allow the instruments to be tuned. This was in the form of a fantasia, in which the performer had to remain longest in the key which most coincided with the strings to be tuned. The prelude had to stop on a sign from the conductor that the instrumentalists were ready. It was supposed to have some connection with the piece that was to follow, but the unhappy effusions of incompetent organists led to occasional remonstrance from the Council.

In 1716 the Council of the Liebfrauenkirche at Halle invited him to examine their organ, which was now completed. He answered their invitation very politely, and with Kuhnau of Leipsic and Ch. F. Rolle of Quedlinburg began the examination in the second week after Easter. The organ was built by Cuncius of Halberstadt, and the three ex-

*Examination of a new organ*

# Bach

aminers reported that he had carried out the work (which had occupied three years) in the most satisfactory way possible, the only part requiring alteration being the bellows. After many difficulties, owing to the smallness of the salary, the authorities eventually found an efficient organist in G. Kirchoff, a pupil of Zachau and a man of the same age as Bach.

About 1716 the friend of Bach's youth, G. Erdmann, visited him. He had held a legal post under the Russian government since 1713.

In the autumn of 1717 Bach made a journey to Dresden to hear the performances at the theatre, which was supported by Friedrich August I. There happened to be visiting Dresden a famous French organist and harpsichord player Jean Louis Marchand, organist at Versailles, and of several churches at Paris. He enjoyed an immense reputation as player and composer, though his compositions have not borne the test of time, and are now entirely forgotten. Vain, arrogant, and conceited, the spoilt idol of French society, he came to Dresden, where his playing became much in favour at the Court and he was given two medals. Soon after Bach's arrival there arose a discussion among the artists as to which was the greater performer. The Court musicians took the part of Marchand, while the members of the orchestra, who were mostly Germans, preferred Bach. The matter ended in Bach's being persuaded by his friends to write to Marchand, offering to go through any musical test that Marchand might suggest, on condition that he would undergo the same test.

The challenge was accepted; a date was fixed for a



# A Victory

meeting at the house of Field Marshal von Flemming,<sup>1</sup> a jury of musicians was chosen, and a brilliant company assembled. Bach and the jury arrived punctually, but Marchand did not appear. After a time he was sent for, when it was found that he had departed by express coach that morning from Dresden, certain, no doubt, of being defeated. Marchand seems to have heard Bach privately beforehand; while Bach was already familiar with Marchand's works, and admired them much. Spitta<sup>2</sup> considers that they are not inferior to those of Couperin in variety and grace, but are rather thin for the more solid German taste. The news of Bach's victory soon spread far and wide, and did much to enhance his already great reputation. He, however, never seems to have obtained any recognition from the Court at Dresden.

<sup>1</sup> According to Bitter.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i. p. 585.

## Chapter IV

Bach becomes capellmeister to the Duke of Cöthen—His Weimar pupils—His new duties—Death of his wife—Journey to Hamburg—He competes for an organistship there—The post is sold—Disgust of Mattheson at the transaction—Bach endeavours to meet Handel—His second marriage—Is obliged to leave Cöthen.

BACH returned from Dresden to prepare for a jubilee at Weimar, in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. The festival took place from October 31st to November 2nd, and for it Bach composed at least one cantata and perhaps two. On this occasion the Duke established a fund, of which the interest was to be distributed yearly, the Court organist to receive 3 gülden from it.

The old capellmeister, Samuel Drese, had for twenty years been too much out of health to fulfil his duties. The duke, however, would not dismiss him, but gave him a deputy, G. C. Strattner, at a salary of 200 gülden. Drese died on December 1, 1716, and it would seem natural that Bach should be appointed in his place. For some reason, however, he was passed over, and Drese's son (who had succeeded Strattner as deputy capellmeister) was installed. Bach, therefore, accepted an offer made by Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen of a capellmeister-ship, and in November 1717 moved to

*Fourth  
appoint-  
ment*

# Organ Pupils

Cöthen. His post at the Weimar Castle organ was filled by his pupil Schubart.

Amongst Bach's duties at Weimar was that of composing and conducting a certain number of sacred pieces every year, to texts by Franck, the secretary to the Superior Consistory of the Principality of Weimar, and librarian to the duke. Franck was a good poet, and had written excellent masques, besides occasional pieces for weddings, etc.

Bach's fine playing naturally attracted many pupils. In those days there were no Conservatoires or Academies of Music; and pupils were "articled," as in our own country, to eminent organists, taking much the same place as apprentices in any trade—in fact, they were called apprentices. His first pupil, who was also his amanuensis, was J. M. Schubart; of J. C. Vogler, Gerber says that Bach considered him his best organ pupil. He became Court organist and burgomaster of Weimar.

## *Pupils*

Another pupil was Joh. T. Krebs, who, however, did not begin studying till he was married and had already a post as organist at Buttstädt near Weimar, whence he used to walk weekly to Weimar, for seven years, to obtain instruction from Walther, and afterwards from Bach.

Krebs' son, Joh. Ludwig, became a pupil of Bach at Leipsic at the age of thirteen, and Bach had a very high opinion of him. He received the appointment of organist of Buttstädt. According to Gerber, he was Bach's pupil and assistant at the harpsichord for nine years, and was second only to Vogler in eminence.

In repayment for his elder brother's care at Ohrdruf, Bach took charge of his nephew Bernhard<sup>1</sup> at Easter, 1715,

<sup>1</sup> No. 45 in the Genealogy.

# Bach

teaching him the clavier and composition. Bernhard afterwards was appointed organist of Ohrdruf, in succession to his father. Some of his compositions still exist in MS. and show the influence of his uncle.

Bach's duties at Cöthen did not comprise any organ playing or church music: in fact, he never held an organistship after he left Weimar. The organ of the castle was merely a little chamber instrument, with only thirteen stops, of which ten belonged to the two manuals and three to the pedals.

The Prince was highly cultivated, with a great taste for music, which had been developed by travels in Italy. After the custom of German princes of that time, he became a patron of art, practising it himself. Spitta (vol. ii. p. 3) infers from an inventory in the ducal archives at Cöthen, that he played the violin, gamba, and harpsichord.

There is no sign of there having been a trained chorus at Cöthen. One of the members of the band was Chr. F. Abel, who afterwards became famous as a viola-da-gambist, while his second son Karl Friedrich was the well-known virtuoso on this instrument.

J. Schneider became a pupil of Bach's at this time. He was a violinist in the band, but afterwards became organist of the Nicolai-church at Leipsic. Bach's salary here amounted to 400 thalers (about £60); it commenced from August 1, though he remained in office at Weimar until November.

The private performances at the castle were full of zeal for art. The Prince would not part with Bach, even for a short time, and took him on his journeys; Bach reciprocated this feeling, and cherished his memory

## Death of his Wife

after his early death. In the Royal Library at Berlin is the autograph of a serenade written for the Prince's birthday. It is scored for soprano and bass solo voices, string band, harpsichord, two flutes and one bassoon: this being the entire resources available. The words, which are very meagre, are by an unknown author, probably Bach himself. The cantata itself is not published, but its music is used with other words in the Whitsuntide Cantata "Erhöhtes Fleisch und Blut."<sup>1</sup>

In May 1718, and again in 1720, Bach and six members of the orchestra accompanied the Prince to Carlsbad. In November 1718 the Prince and his younger brother and sister stood god-parents to Bach's seventh child, Leopold August, who died in the following year. The fact of so many high personages standing sponsor to this child is a proof of the estimation in which the Prince's capellmeister was held.

Bach's artistic journeys were continued from time to time, and on December 16, 1717, he found himself at Leipsic again, in response to an invitation to examine a large new organ recently erected in the University Church of St Paul. The builder was Johann Scheibe, and Bach declared it to be one of the best organs in Germany.

*Examines a  
new organ  
at Leipsic*

In July 1720, on his return from the second visit with Prince Leopold to Carlsbad, he was met with the terrible news that his wife had died, and had been buried on the 7th of that month. She was only thirty-six, and was in good health when he left her. She had borne him seven children, had been

*Death of  
first wife*

<sup>1</sup> Spitta, vol. ii. pp. 6, 7.

# Bach

the best of companions, and was keenly sympathetic towards her husband's work.

He went to Hamburg to perform a new cantata on the text "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted,"  
*Visit to* in November 1720. He found Reinken  
*Hamburg* still playing the organ of St Catherine, though now ninety-seven years old. Reinken, though a very great artist, was vain, and jealous, and it was a question how he would receive Bach. Mattheson, who did not love him, said that he was a "constant admirer of the fair sex, and much addicted to the wine cellar of the Council," though he admitted that he had no equal on the organ in his own style. Moreover, he kept his instrument in excellent tune, and was always talking of it. When Bach came, an appointment was made, and he played for more than two hours, half an hour of which was occupied in a masterly improvisation on the chorale "By the waters of Babylon," in motet style. After the performance, at which the chief men of the city were present, Reinken came to him, and saying, "I thought this art was dead, but I perceive that it still lives in you," invited him to visit him, and treated him with every attention. Reinken's praise was the more complimentary, because he himself had composed and published a very successful arrangement of the same chorale.<sup>1</sup>

The organ at St Catherine had four manuals and pedal, with an abundance of good reeds, of which Bach was fond (a specification is in Niedt, Mus. Handl. II., p. 176). There was also a posauene, a 32 ft. open diapason, and

<sup>1</sup> Hilgenfeldt, p. 26.

# Deceived

a mixture of 10 ranks. It dated from the sixteenth century, and had been renovated in 1670 by Besser of Brunswick.<sup>1</sup>

A still larger instrument was that of St James' Church in the same city, built by Arp Schnitker between 1688 and 1693, containing sixty stops, four manuals and pedal. The organist of this church, H. Friese, had recently died, and Bach, being tempted by the organ, and the prospect of again having an opportunity of composing cantatas, offered himself for the post.

There were seven other candidates, the two most important being a son of Vincentius Lübeck, and Wiedeburg, capellmeister to the Count of Gera. An examination was fixed for November 28, the examiners being the elders of the church, together with Gerstenbüttel the cantor, Reinken, and two other Hamburg organists, Kniller and Preuss. Wiedeburg, Lübeck and one other candidate retired. The tests were performances of the two chorales "O lux beata Trinitas," and "Helft mir Gott's Güte preisen," and an extemporised fugue on a given theme.

Bach could not wait for the examination, since his duties at Cöthen required him to return home. He was, however, excused having to submit to the test, on account of his great reputation, and arranged to announce by letter whether he would accept the post. He wrote in the affirmative, though the contents of his letter are not known. The committee had his letter publicly read, and then elected an entirely unknown man, J. Joachim Heitmann, who had done nothing for the art of music, but

<sup>1</sup> Spitta, vol. ii. p. 18.

# Bach

who on January 6, 1721, paid to the treasury of the church four thousand marks, which he had promised in the event of his being elected. The committee came to the conclusion that "the sale of a post of organist should not become a custom, since it pertained to the service of God; but if, after election, a person of his own free will should show his gratitude by money payment, the church should not refuse it."

Neumeister, a famous preacher, who had not been able to prevent this extraordinary transaction, left the committee in anger. Mattheson thus describes the state of public opinion when it became known.<sup>1</sup> "I remember, and no doubt other people still remember likewise, that some years ago a great musician, who since then has, as he deserves, obtained an important appointment as cantor, appeared in a certain town of some size, boldly performed on the largest and finest instruments, and attracted universal admiration by his skill. At the same time, among other inferior players, there offered himself the son of a well-to-do artisan, who could prelude better with thalers than with his fingers, and the office fell to him, as may easily be guessed, although almost everyone was angry about it. It was nigh upon Christmas-tide, and an eloquent preacher, who had not consented to this simony, expounded very beautifully the Gospel concerning the angelic music at the birth of Christ, which very naturally gave him the opportunity of expressing his opinions as to the recent event as regarded the rejected artist, and of ending his discourse with this noteworthy epiphonema: 'He believed quite certainly that if one of

<sup>1</sup> In "Der Musicalische Patriot," 1728, quoted by Spitta, vol. ii. p. 20.



# Seeking Handel

the angels of Bethlehem came from heaven, who played divinely, and desired to be organist of St James' Church, if he had no money he would have nothing to do but to fly away again.'"

Bach had no equal in Germany as an organ player—this was soon admitted on all sides.<sup>1</sup> Handel's fame had reached Germany from England, both as a composer and organ player. Comparisons were made between Handel's oratorios and Bach's cantatas and Passion music—the former were widely known, while the latter were hardly yet appreciated, and were forgotten after the death of the composer.

We have a contemporary opinion in Mattheson, who had often heard Handel. "No one," says he, "can easily surpass Handel in organ playing, unless it were Bach of Leipsic, for which reason these two are mentioned first, out of their alphabetical order. I have heard them in the prime of their powers, and have often competed with the former both in Hamburg and Lübeck."<sup>2</sup> Handel, however, did not devote himself so entirely to the organ and organ compositions as Bach; he left no unaccompanied solos for that instrument. Moreover, it is doubtful if he found instruments of respectable size in England.

Bach and Handel never met, though they were twice very near one another. Handel came to Halle, his native town, in 1719, while on a journey as *impresario* for the opera in London. Bach hearing of it, made a journey to Halle from Cöthen, but unfortunately arrived there the very day Handel had left. In 1729, he made another

*Endeavours  
to meet  
Handel*

<sup>1</sup> Scheibe *Kritikus Musicus*, 1745, pp. 839, 875.

<sup>2</sup> Vollk. *Capellmeister*, 1739, quoted by Spitta, vol. ii. p. 26.

# Bach

attempt to meet Handel by sending him a polite invitation, through his son Friedemann, to come to Leipsic; but Handel refused the invitation. On a third visit of Handel to Halle, Bach was dead. Bach greatly admired Handel's music, and copied some of it for his own use.

We have seen that Bach's first wife died in 1720. It was not at all in accordance with the family traditions to remain a widower, and in 1721 he began to think of re-marrying. He opened negotiations in this year with Anna Magdalena Wülken, a Court singer at Cöthen, twenty-one years old, and the youngest daughter of the Court trumpeter, and was married to her on December 3 in the same year.

Bach's second wife was a good musician, and had a fine soprano voice, which she used for the performance of her husband's works in the privacy of the home circle. She had lessons from her husband in clavier and figured bass playing, and also gave him immense help in copying music; amongst other things, her MS. copy of a great part of Handel's *Passion-music* still exists.

Just before Bach's second marriage the widow of his uncle Tobias Lämmerhirt died, leaving him part of her estate. This was the uncle who died just before Bach's first marriage, leaving him a legacy. The second accession of money caused some trouble. The distribution under the will of the widow was disputed in the names of five relations, Joh. Christoph Bach of Ohrdruf, Joh. Jacob Bach, Joh. Sebastian Bach, Maria Wiegand (born Bach), and Anna Zimmermann (born Lämmerhirt). Unfortunately for the petitioners, they had used the names of the three Bachs without ever informing them. As a matter of fact, Joh. Christoph was already dead, and Joh.

# A Large Family

Jacob was in Sweden ; Joh. Sebastian was most indignant when he heard of it, and wrote to the Council of Erfurt disclaiming both for himself and his brother all desire to dispute the will ; saying that they were perfectly satisfied with their share, and that the petition was drawn up without any notice being sent to them. The proceedings were then dropped at once, and nothing more is heard of them.

Immediately after their marriage the Bachs started a MS. music-book between them, entitled "Clavier Bûchlein vor Anna Magdalena Bachin, Anno 1720," on the first page of which is written a playful inscription to the effect that the book was directed against the Calvinism, and its attendant melancholy and hostility to all art, which was rife at Cöthen at this period. This book was followed in 1725 by a second and larger book ; both are preserved in the Royal Library at Berlin. The books contain various clavier compositions by Bach, Böhm, Gerhard and others, besides sundry hymns and sacred songs, also a song on the reflections of a smoker ; and others evidently addressed to his wife, to whom he was devoted.

*Little  
Clavier  
Book*

He had thirteen children, six sons and seven daughters, by this wife ; making, together with those by his first wife, nineteen children in all.

Anna Magdalena's portrait was painted by Cristofori, and came into the possession of Philip Emanuel, but it has now disappeared.

Most of his chamber music was written at Cöthen, where he remained more than five years.

His position was so peaceful and pleasant that he proposed to spend the rest of his life there. His prince was in full sympathy with him, as we have seen. He had

# Bach

none of the contentions which seem to be almost inevitable between an organist and his church authorities when the organist wishes for anything beyond a mere conventional standard of church music.<sup>1</sup> He had nothing to do with either the composition or performance of church music; and if he had remained there the world would have been the poorer by the *Passion-music* and nearly all the cantatas. Fortunately for us, however, his circumstances altered. His prince married a lady who had no sympathy with music or its professors, and his interest in music began to flag. After five years Bach found himself again obliged to seek another post: and he found one in which he remained till his death.

<sup>1</sup> After leaving Cöthen, Bach still held the title of honorary Capellmeister to the Prince, until the death of the latter in 1728. Bach composed a "Trauer Musik" for his funeral, which is unfortunately lost.





The Thomasschule at Leipsic

## Chapter V

The position and duties of the Cantor of St Thomas' School at Leipsic—  
The condition of the school in 1722—Kuhnau's death—Competition  
and election of two cantors in succession—Bach offers himself—Is  
elected—Difficulties with the authorities. The Council make irritat-  
ing regulations—Bach endeavours to leave Leipsic—Election of a new  
Rector, and temporary disappearance of Bach's troubles.

OF the three ancient schools at Leipsic, St Thomas,  
dating from the thirteenth century under the Augustines,  
was the oldest and most important. It was  
endowed with no less than fifty-four scholar-  
ships for the encouragement of church music,  
and its cantor was a person of considerable  
importance, who ranked next below the Rector and  
Conrector. These three officials, together with the chief  
Latin master, were "Superiores," who kept apart from the  
"Inferiores" or lower masters. The cantor's duty was to  
teach singing for seven hours a week, to take the boys to  
church on Thursdays at 7 o'clock in the morning, and to  
give certain Latin lessons. He had also to take his turn  
with the other Superiores in inspecting and examining the  
boys for one week in four. The boys lived with them, and  
the regulations of the school required all to get up at 5  
in summer, 6 in winter, to dine at 10, to have supper at 5,  
to go to bed at 8.

*St Thomas'  
School,  
Leipsic*

The boys of the Thomas-school had to supply the

# Bach

music every Sunday in four churches, St Thomas, St Nicholas, St Peter and St Matthew ; but at St Peter's only chorales were sung, so that the younger singers sufficed for this duty.

A motet or cantata was performed every Sunday at the Thomas-Church and Nicolai-Church alternately : a custom which still continues ; the service is at 9 A.M., and the cantata, which is always accompanied by the town orchestra with the organ, takes somewhat the place of the anthem in an English cathedral. The composition to be performed on each Sunday is now announced in the previous Saturday's papers.

On great festivals the music was performed in both churches at once, and twice a day. The cantor was responsible for the music at one church, the choir prefect for that at the other.

In order to lighten the work that this must have imposed on the boys, the choir that sang at St Thomas in the morning would sing the same music at St Nicholas in the afternoon ; and the cantata which was sung at St Nicholas in the morning would be repeated at St Thomas in the afternoon. The rehearsals took place on Saturday afternoons from about 2.30 to 4.

Wedding and funeral music had also to be supplied by the cantor. Moreover he had not only to choose the music for these occasions, and teach it to the choir, but appear in person to direct it, though he frequently left the last duty to the prefect.

The choristers had to take part in certain processions at Michaelmas, New Year, on St Martin's and St Gregory's days : and these performances were conducted by the prefects. For this purpose they were divided into four



## Office of Cantor

choirs, but the four choirs had only two or three voices for each part. The cantor had to direct the music in the two other churches, *i.e.* St John and St Paul, to inspect their organs, and to superintend the town musicians who took part in the church music.

The holidays consisted of one week during each of the fairs,<sup>1</sup> followed by a week of half-holidays. In the summer four weeks of half-holidays. Morning lessons were omitted on Saints' days, funeral days, and academical speech days. Four whole holidays in the year took place on the "Name days" of the four principal masters.

In Lent no church music was performed, except on the festival of the Annunciation; and on the last three Sundays in Advent there was no church music.

The above list of holidays may seem at first sight ample; but it had this great drawback: the masters were never free, as in English schools, to go away for change of scene. The boys appear to have lived with them throughout the year. It is possible that German boys do not cause so much anxiety to their masters as English boys, and that work was not carried on at such high pressure as nowadays; it is quite certain that no master of an English public school could pursue his work continuously, year after year, as these old Germans seem to have done, without breaking down in health.

The cantor was provided with a residence in the school: the salary was 100 gülden (about £13), but the whole income from various sources amounted to about 700 thalers (about £100), together with certain allowances

<sup>1</sup> The three fairs, called "Messe," are held at Easter, Michaelmas and New Year. Leipzig is at these times crowded with merchants from all parts of the world.

# Bach

of corn, wine and firewood. A curious custom, though not an uncommon one in those days, was, that certain scholars twice a week went round the town to collect donations for the school; and out of these, 6 pfennige (about three farthings) per week were taken for each scholar and divided between the four upper masters. The moneys collected during the processional singing in the streets, and also the fees paid for funerals and weddings were divided according to certain fixed rules. Bach mentions to Erdmann that when the air of Leipsic is good there are few funerals, and therefore the cantor's income is smaller. Many efforts were made by the public to evade these taxes, by holding funerals and weddings without music; and there arose a certain feeling of indignation that an important school and church official should partly derive his means of subsistence from money obtained by begging.

Owing to the insufficiency of accommodation the school was a centre of illness, until the building was enlarged.

The Rector, Ernesti, was very old—he was a learned man, but was not able to control either masters or boys. The former quarrelled among themselves, and neglected their duties; the boys were undisciplined, and the many calls on their time for musical performances made their education difficult. When Ernesti was appointed there were one hundred and twenty boys in the lower school; there were now only fifty-three.

The scholarships had plenty of applicants, but the better class of citizens sent their sons to the other schools. The lowest classes of the Thomas School consisted of boys of the worst character, who went about the town barefoot and begging.

# Troubles

All reform which might result in curtailing his salary was opposed by Ernesti, and the cantor seconded his opposition. Things therefore grew worse and worse till his death in 1729. In 1730 the superintendent reported that the school had run wild, and that there were so few scholars that it was proposed to close the lower classes altogether. As to the singing, it must have been very bad. The slow processions in the worst of weather, the running up long flights of stairs to sing before the doors of the higher "flats" ruined the voices. Kuhnau complained in 1717 that the trebles lost their voices before they had learned to use them.

*Kuhnau's  
troubles*

In addition to this, they were undisciplined and often feeble and miserable from illness, so that they did not offer an attractive material for the cantor to work upon.

Kuhnau worked his hardest to remedy this state of things, but without avail. In reply to his very reasonable request that at least two trebles should be set apart for church music only, and not allowed to run about the streets and attend funerals for money, the Council took no further steps than to allow 4 gülden for this purpose, and that two boys should be released from the winter processions.

When from 1693 to 1729 a house in the Brühl, one of the chief streets of Leipsic, was used for the performance of operas during the fairs, much damage was done to the musical tendencies of the inhabitants of Leipsic. The students of the University, who had formerly taken an important part in the performance of the church cantatas, now left Kuhnau (after he had been at the trouble of training them), and joined the chorus of the opera. The trouble was most acute when Telemann was organist of

# Bach

the Church of St Matthew. He had been a student in the University, had composed an opera, and had formed a musical society amongst the students. Looking upon him as one of themselves, they entirely left Kuhnau, who had to supply the music for the churches as best he could. A new and operatic style of music came into vogue under Telemann at St Matthew's Church, which became very popular; and his musical society became the most important in Leipsic. There were sixty members, who practised twice a week from 8 to 10 in the evening, and their performances, which took place during fair time, became important. This "Musical Union" practised in the coffee-houses, and members of the public were admitted; its meetings had none of the formality of school practice, but were cheerful and attractive. Some of its better instrumentalists obtained engagements in good bands, as at Dresden, Darmstadt, Wolfenbüttel and Hamburg.

Telemann's post, when he left, was successively occupied by good musicians, and the union and opera were kept up; the cantor had, in consequence, a hard time of it. At festivals and fairs, when he was naturally anxious to do well before the public, he had nothing to rely on but a few inefficient town musicians and unruly schoolboys.

The organ at the Thomas Church was "belaboured first by one, then by another pair of unwashed hands," the director of the music being either unable to play it, or absent. Kuhnau begged that a regular organist should be appointed, but he begged in vain. The Council, like everyone else, were more interested in the attractions of the opera than in the serious music of the two important churches.

# The Thomas School

At last even the boys took to the opera. Those who had any voices got engaged by an *impresario*, ran away from school, and returned only to appear in the theatre during fair time, thus exciting the admiration and envy of their former school-fellows. The music at the Thomas School had reached its lowest ebb at the time of Kuhnau's death.

Kuhnau, the cantor of this School of St Thomas at Leipsic, died on June 5, 1722. Six candidates applied for the post—Fasch, a former pupil of Kuhnau, and now capellmeister to the Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst; Rolle, musical director at Magdeburg, and *The Successor to Kuhnau* formerly organist of Quedlinburg; Telemann, who had composed cantatas for St Thomas' Church, and operas for the Leipsic theatre, cantor at Hamburg; G. F. Kauffmann, a pupil of Buttstedt, and organist of Merseburg; Graupner, capellmeister of Darmstadt; and Schott, the organist of St Matthew's Church at Leipsic.

Telemann was elected, and arrangements were made for his installation, when he wrote from Hamburg that he would not accept the office. The Council were therefore, much against their will, obliged to elect another, and their choice fell on Graupner, who had been nine years a boy in the Thomas School, and was a pupil of Kuhnau. He was considered one of the best composers for the harpsichord of the day. He was backed by strong recommendations and testimonials from Heinichen, the capellmeister of Dresden, but the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt refusing to part with him, he was forced to retire.

At the end of 1722 Bach, after long and anxious deliberation, offered himself for the appointment.

# Bach

He did not wish to leave his comfortable post at Cöthen, and moreover the position of cantor was somewhat less dignified than the office of capellmeister.

*Bach offers himself* On the other hand, the education of his sons could be better carried out at Leipsic, and the marriage of the Prince had to some extent put him out of favour. After some three months' hesitation, acting on the advice of friends, he went to Leipsic and performed his test piece, "Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe" (Peters, 1290), on February 7, 1723.

On the retirement of Graupner Bach was chosen, with the proviso that if he could not teach all the Latin required, they would pay a deputy to do it for him. Not wishing to be behind his predecessor Kuhnau, he undertook all the duties, but soon finding the Latin too much of a task, he paid his colleague Pezold 50 thalers per annum to relieve him of this part of his work. He had to sign an agreement to lead a respectable and sober life ; to be faithful and diligent in the performance of his duties ; to have a proper respect for the Council ; not to make the church music too long or too operatic ; to instruct the boys in instrumental as well as vocal music ; to treat them with humanity ; not to send incapable singers to the New Church ;<sup>1</sup> not to make any journeys without permission from the Burgomaster ; and not to accept any office in the University without leave from the Council.<sup>2</sup>

After signing this agreement, he had to pass an examination as to his religious views, and on the 13th of May 1723, he was confirmed in the appointment :

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* the Church of St Matthew.

<sup>2</sup> Spitta, vol. ii. p. 186.

# Cloud and Sunshine

though the installation did not take place till the 31st.

Bach's residence was in the left side of the school buildings: but in 1731 the building was enlarged and he for a year lived in a temporary residence, for which the Council paid a rent of 60 thalers.

This particular post of cantor was one of the most important in Germany and had been always held by a distinguished man. The work was not heavy, though the list of duties seems a long one; and he would have time for his own engrossing occupation of composing. He still held the rank of a capellmeister, and in addition to that of Cöthen, he was given honorary rank as capellmeister of the Court of Weissenfels in the year he removed to Leipsic.

And with the resumption of church work came difficulties of many kinds. The authorities never, from first to last, recognised that they had one of the world's greatest geniuses to deal with; in fact they did not require a genius; all they asked was that their cantor should be able to carry out the church music in a respectable conventional manner. Bach, with his lofty ideals, was so often at variance with them that the history of his life at Leipsic seems at first sight to consist of one long turmoil and trouble.

*Troubles  
with the  
Authorities*

Yet there are bright spots in the picture; and nothing was able to disturb the equanimity with which, in spite of external rubs, he for twenty-seven years continued to pour forth his marvellous Passion music and cantatas.

It was very important from Bach's point of view that he should be in a position to control and regulate all the

# Bach

church music that was performed at Leipsic; and for this purpose he was obliged to take steps to obtain control of the students' chorus, which now sang in the University Church. The organist there was Görner, a conceited and not very competent musician, who had been in the habit of directing the music after Kuhnau's death.

Görner persuaded the authorities that the cantor of St Thomas could not possibly serve St Paul's<sup>1</sup> as well as St Thomas and St Nicholas; and he therefore continued in his post as musical director to the University.

The music for the University Festivals had, however, been from time immemorial conducted by the cantor; and Bach seems to have gained his way in the matter. The cantor had a special payment for these services; but Görner had appropriated part of it. Bach tolerated this for two years, and then addressed a letter to the King of Saxony explaining that he, by right of office, conducted the music, but was only paid half the official salary. The letter was dated September 14, 1725, and on the 17th the Ministry of Dresden wrote to the University requiring them to restore the salary to the petitioner, or to show their reasons for not doing so.

The University wrote justifying themselves, whereupon Bach, suspecting that they had not properly stated the case, petitioned the King to allow him to see a copy of their justification. He wrote a refutation of this, and

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* the University Church. In Bach's time there were six churches at Leipsic—St Thomas, St Nicholas (or Nicolai), St Paul (or University Church), St Matthew (or New Church), St Peter (or Petri), and St John.





St Thomas' Church, Leipsic



## ‘Matthew Passion’ Music

the business dragged on till May 23, 1726, when a document, which seems to have been in Bach's favour, was presented to the University, and the matter appears to have ended. He and Görner were both employed to compose the music for extra festivals, but Bach the more often.<sup>1</sup>

Though Bach put all his energy into the music at the two chief churches, he took care not to be merely a cantor. He had formerly been, and still held honorary rank as capellmeister; and having a very proper pride in himself and his profession, he now always called himself Director Musices and Cantor. Considerable importance is attached in Germany to such titles as Professor, Doctor, Capellmeister, Musicdirector, etc., which have a recognised order of precedence; and it is significant of the conditions that prevailed between Bach and his church authorities that the latter nearly always persisted in giving him the lower title of cantor.

The first performance of the *Matthew Passion* music took place in Holy Week of 1729. In his efforts to improve the choir, he had asked the Council to allow nine of the scholarships to be allotted to boys with voices; and he hoped that the magnificent Passion music he had just composed and performed would show them the importance of providing better material; but all was in vain. They took no notice of his request, and showed a complete ignorance of the value of their cantor's work.

About this time he became conductor of the Musical

<sup>1</sup> According to Spitta, vol. ii. p. 223. But Görner's name appears in the "Chronicle" far more often than that of Bach in connection with the music for these festivals.

# Bach

Union, which had been founded by Telemann, but even here troubles arose. The Union was expected to strengthen the choir at St Thomas' Church. No money, however, being available to pay the students who took part, they naturally fell off. Yet when the church music deteriorated the Council were the first to blame the cantor.

They now began to observe, or imagine they observed, neglect of duty on his part, and addressed various warnings and admonitions to him. He became *Bach is* defiant and refused to explain, whereupon *admonished* they said that he was incorrigible. The chief trouble arose over the teaching of Latin. We have already seen that the Council had originally offered to pay a deputy to do this part of the cantor's work, but that Bach had undertaken the whole. Finding it too irksome, however, he had himself paid Pezold to act as his deputy, but the Council, considering Pezold incompetent, wished to employ one Krügel. Instead of settling the matter by insisting on Bach's doing the work himself, they showed their petulance by bringing charges against him of not having behaved with propriety, of sending a member of the choir into the country without giving notice to the authorities, of going a journey without permission, of neglecting his singing classes, and, in short, of doing nothing properly. At first it was proposed to put him down to one of the lowest classes, next to refuse payment of his salary, and at the same time to admonish him. His doing "nothing" consisted in composing and conducting an enormous number of church cantatas, including the *Matthew Passion*.

But the Council merely required hack work of him,

## Vestry Squabbles

and no doubt as they paid him to do hack work (which could probably have been equally well done by an inferior musician) they had a right to demand it.

He had, it is true, given over half the singing practices to the choir prefect, but this was only in accordance with long established custom, and no one had previously complained. Moreover the Council themselves had refused Bach's request for a more efficient choir, and it was only natural that he should not take much interest in the drudgery of teaching an unruly rabble, when he was occupied with work which was to prove so much more important to the world at large.

In the constant state of conflict between masters, boys, Council and Consistory, Bach chose to go his own way. With the Rector, Ernesti, who troubled himself little about the musical arrangements, he had been on excellent terms.

Several stories are told of the petty tyranny sought to be exercised over the great man by an ignorant and fussy vestry. Thus, Bach insisted, for sufficient reasons, on his right of choosing the hymns and ignoring those selected by Gaudlitz, the subdean of St Nicholas. Gaudlitz reported him to the Consistory, who sent him a notice that he must have the hymns sung which were chosen by the preacher. He therefore appealed to the Council, showing that it had been the custom for the cantor to select the hymns. This caused a squabble between the Council and the Consistory, but it is not known how the matter ended.

Another instance occurred over the announcement of the performance of a *Passion* music, for which the Council

# Bach

suddenly discovered that their permission was necessary. The work had been performed several times previously, and the irritating restriction was entirely uncalled for. Bach simply reported to the superintendent of the Consistory that the Council had forbidden the performance; and thus produced another quarrel between the two bodies which was to his advantage.

Bach had not only to organise and train his choir, but to teach some of his pupils to play on instruments, since the town musicians were only seven in number, four wind and three string players. Money was not forthcoming to pay professional musicians, though there were plenty in Leipsic. Bach therefore got hold of the more gifted of his pupils and taught them instruments, and many of them became accomplished artists.

The regulations ordered that two hours of singing practice should be held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 12 to 2; but as this arrangement interfered with the cantor's dinner hour, his colleagues petitioned that it should be changed. The Council refused to alter the regulation, and in consequence Bach soon began to absent himself.

As the Council could not withhold his salary, they not only confiscated certain fees collected for various outside duties but also contrived that he should obtain no benefit from a legacy left to be divided among the teachers and poorer scholars of the School. Bach was silent for a time, but, when at last forced to speak, he wrote a long letter, showing how absolutely inadequate were the means placed at his disposal: incompetent town players, with mere

## Sick of Leipsic

boys to complete the bands; singers who, not having had time to be trained, were obliged to be admitted to the vacant places before they had any knowledge of music; choirs with only two voices to a part, one of whom would often be, or pretend to be, ill.

Bach's letter irritated the Council, who, however, let the matter drop after expressing their opinion on it.

The Council acted according to their lights. Though they would not give Bach the means he required for carrying out the music properly, they could understand when an organ required repairing, and voted sums of money from time to time for this purpose, and for the purchase of violins, violas, violoncellos for church use; and they allowed Bach to purchase Bodenschatz's *Florilegium Portense*<sup>1</sup> for the use of the scholars. They did not actively hinder Bach's development, but they had no conception of the greatness of the man they had to do with. They curtailed his income in a moment of anger, but soon afterwards reinstated it.

Bach became thoroughly hurt, and sought for a means of leaving Leipsic. The friend of his boyhood, Erdmann, now held a post at Dantzic, under the Emperor of Russia, and to him Bach applied, in an interesting letter which is still extant.<sup>2</sup> He describes

*Bach tries  
to leave  
Leipzig*

his wish to leave Leipsic under four heads: (1) that the post was by no means so advantageous as he was led to expect; (2) that many of the fees had been stopped; (3) that the place is very dear to live in; (4) that the authorities were strange people, with small love of music, who vexed and persecuted and were jealous of him. Bach asked Erdmann to find him a post at

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary.

<sup>2</sup> Spitta quotes it in full, vol. ii. p. 253.

# Bach

Dantzic, but nothing came of it, for he remained at Leipsic. In spite of the high prices of necessities, he saved enough to leave behind him a well-furnished house, a sum of money and a collection of instruments and books. Like many other good organists he had his rubs with an unthinking vestry, but got over them.

The Rector, Ernesti, died in 1729, and in 1730 Bach's Weimar friend, Gesner, was appointed: a member of the Council saying that he "hoped that they would fare better in this appointment than they had done in that of the cantor."<sup>1</sup>

The new rector was in most respects the opposite of Ernesti. He was energetic; had the power of governing, with a special talent for the management of schoolboys. He was a brilliant scholar, and did much to revive the study of Greek as part of a mental and moral training rather than as a mere intellectual gymnastic.

The Council were delighted, and did everything for him. As he was in delicate health they not only had him carried to and from the school in a chair, but remitted his duty of inspecting the school once every three weeks. He smoothed over the disputes among the masters so that they were no longer at enmity among themselves; won the affection of his pupils by his new methods of instruction, his interest in their welfare, and the enforcement of discipline and morality.

The State, he said, had need of every kind of talent: and if he saw boys working at something useful, which was not actually school work, he would encourage them. He also revived the Latin prayers morning and evening, which had been replaced by prayers in the German language.

<sup>1</sup> Spitta, vol. ii. p. 242.



## A Vast Combination

Between him and Bach there grew up a strong friendship. He helped the music in every way he could: himself applying to the Council for the books, etc., required by Bach.

Gesner, in his appreciation of Bach, appends a note in his edition of the *Institutiones Oratoriæ* of Quintilianus, to the author's remark on the capacity of man for doing several things at once, such as playing the lyre, and at the same time singing and marking time with the foot. He says, "All this, my dear Fabius, you would consider very trivial could you but rise from the dead and hear Bach: how he, with both hands, and using all his fingers, either on a keyboard which seems to consist of many lyres in one, or on the instrument of instruments, of which the innumerable pipes are made to sound by means of bellows; here with his hands, and there with the utmost celerity with his feet, elicits many of the most various yet harmonious sounds: I say, could you only see him, how he achieves what a number of your lyre-players and six hundred flute-players could never achieve, presiding over thirty or forty performers all at once, recalling this one by a nod, another by a stamp of the foot, another with a warning finger, keeping tune and time; and while high notes are given out by some, deep tones by others, and notes between them by others. Great admirer as I am of antiquity in other respects, yet I am of the opinion that my one Bach, and whosoever there may chance to be that resembles him, unites in himself many Orpheuses, and twenty Arions."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Bitter, vol. i. p. 303. This appreciation of the skill required to conduct a musical performance is remarkable as coming

# Bach

Gesner did all he could to smooth away Bach's troubles, and probably the latter was much happier than under the disorder which prevailed while J. H. Ernesti was rector. Moreover, after one more dispute, Bach and the Council at last learned to understand one another, and quarrelled no more.

from one who, not being musical, might be expected to think, with the majority of non-musicians, that the conductor merely has to "beat time."

## Chapter VI

Home life at Leipsic—Personal details—Music in the family circle—Bach's intolerance of incompetence—He throws his wig at Görner—His preference for the clavichord—Bach as an examiner—His sons and pupils—His general knowledge of musical matters—Visit from Hurlebusch—His able management of money—His books and instruments—The Dresden Opera—A new Rector, and further troubles—Bach complains to the Council.

LET us now turn for a moment from this account of troubles and see what the man was like in his own home. We have fairly full accounts from which to draw a picture. It was related in chapter i. how the various members of the Bach family clung together, meeting once every year at various towns. The same traits are found in the household. The pupils and sons all loved him. His character was amiable in the extreme, but at the same time such as to command respect from all. Of his hospitality, especially towards artists, we have special mention; no musician passed through Leipsic without visiting him. He never cared either himself to blame, or hear others find fault with, his fellow-musicians. Of the Marchand incident he would never willingly speak. He was modest in the extreme, and never seemed to know how much greater he was than all the musicians he was fond of praising.

In the midst of all his occupations he found time for

# Bach

music in the family circle, and in later years he used to prefer playing the viola, as he was then "in the midst of the harmony." He would occasionally *Home Life* temporise a trio or quartet on the harpsichord from a single part of some other composer's music: if the composer happened to be present, however, he would first make sure that no possible injury would be done to his feelings.

Though kindly and generous in his criticisms of others, he would never tolerate superficiality and incompetence. He was therefore looked upon as an excellent examiner when a new organist was to be appointed to a church. He was quick-tempered, like most musicians in matters of music. It is related that on one occasion, when the organist of the Thomas Church, Görner, made a blunder, he pulled the wig off his own head, threw it at Görner, and, in a voice of thunder, cried: "You ought to be a shoemaker."

His favourite instrument was the clavichord, on account of its power of expression: and he made his pupils chiefly practise on this. He learned to tune it and the harpsichord so quickly that it never took him more than a quarter of an hour. "And then," says Forkel, "all the twenty-four keys were at his service: he did with them whatever he wished. He could connect the most distant keys as easily and naturally together as the nearest related, so that the listener thought he had only modulated through the next-related keys of a single scale. Of harshness in modulation he knew nothing: his chromatic changes were as soft and flowing as when he kept to the diatonic genus."

Of his conscientiousness in examining organs and organists, Forkel ironically remarks, it was such that

## Of Many Parts

he gained few friends thereby. But when he found that an organ-builder had really done good work, and was out of pocket by so doing, he would use his influence to obtain further payment for the man, and in several cases succeeded.

If he happened to be away from home with his son Friedemann on a Sunday, he would make a point of attending the church service. He would criticise the organist ; would tell his son what course the fugue ought to take (after hearing the subject), and would be delighted if the organist played to his satisfaction.

He did his best for his sons and pupils ; in fact he treated the latter as sons. He sent his two eldest sons to the University of Leipsic, and used his influence to get appointments for them and their brothers. On the marriage of his daughter Elizabeth with his pupil Altnikol, he obtained an organistship for him at Naumburg without informing him beforehand.

Though he would have nothing to say to musical mathematics, his knowledge of everything to do with the art and practice of music was astounding. He was intimate with every detail of organ construction ; he not only tuned but quilled his own harpsichords, and, as we shall see later, he invented new instruments. When he was shown the newly built opera house at Berlin, he observed the construction of the dining saloon, and said that if a person whispered in a corner, another person, standing in the corner diagonally opposite would hear every word, though no one else could do so. Experiment proved this to be a fact, though neither the architect nor anyone else had discovered it.

An amusing story is told of a visit paid to him at

# Bach

Leipsic by one Hurlebusch, a superficial and exceedingly conceited organist. Hurlebusch had the reputation of being angry if his listeners praised him instead of being so overcome with his playing that they could say nothing. His visit to Bach was made, not to hear but to be heard by, and to astonish, the great man. Bach took him to the harpsichord and listened attentively to a very feeble minuet with variations. Hurlebusch, taking Bach's politeness as a recognition of his great talent, showed his gratitude by presenting Friedemann with a printed collection of very easy sonatas, recommending him to practise them diligently. His host, who could hardly repress a smile, thanked him politely, and took leave of him without in the least betraying his amusement.

When we think that the education of his large family, the hospitality to strangers, the journeys to try organs in various places, were all accomplished on an income of not much over £100 a year, we must admire the business-like capacity of the man, even though all due allowance is made for the difference in the purchasing power of money in those days.<sup>1</sup> But he managed to collect a by no means contemptible library of music and theological books; for in his simple piety he took great interest in religious questions. He also possessed a goodly number of keyboard instruments, several of which he

<sup>1</sup> A rough estimate of this difference may be made thus: The Council paid 60 thalers = £9 a year for a "dwelling" for Bach during the alterations to the Thomas School. Such a "dwelling" or "flat" would now cost about £60 a year. An income of £100 in those days would therefore represent the purchasing power of about £630 now: not a large sum on which to give nineteen children a first-class education, and send two to the university.

## More Storm

gave to his sons on their obtaining appointments. Of stringed instruments he possessed enough for the performance of concerted music in the home circle. Some few of his personal belongings are preserved in the De Wit collection at Leipsic, not twenty yards from his residence. They consist of his clock, a few pictures and trifles belonging to his study table, and show at once that they come from a house of refinement and comfort.

In later life he heard and studied with great pleasure the works of Fux, Handel, Caldara, Keiser, Hasse, the two Grauns, Telemann, Zelenka, Bendax, and others. He knew most of these personally, and received Hasse and his wife Faustina as visitors at Leipsic. He often went to Dresden from Leipsic to hear the opera there, and used to say to his son "Friedemann, shall we not go and hear the pretty little Dresden songs again?" He was, says Forkel, far too deeply interested in his art and his home life to enrich himself by travelling and exhibiting his powers, though he might, especially at the time in which he lived, have easily become wealthy by so doing. He preferred the quiet homely life, and the unbroken work at his art, and was contented with his lot. The "glory of God," not fame, was his object. But though his home life and his work were a source of so much happiness, the external horizon began to be stormy again.

*Preference  
of a Simple  
Home Life  
to Riches*

Gesner resigned his post in 1734, and was succeeded by the Conrector, Joh. August Ernesti, a young and learned man, who, however, had no sympathy with music.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For his installation Bach composed a cantata "Thomana sass annoch betrübt"—"St Thomas School was still in grief." From the *Leipsic Chronicle*, 1734, quoted in *Centralblatt*, 1884.

# Bach

He was at first on excellent terms with the cantor, and was godfather to two of his sons ; but, unfortunately, his want of appreciation of music led, within a short time, to trouble. Poor Bach seems at Leipsic to have been rarely free from disputes and worries. It is true he was proud, sensitive, and irritable, where the dignity of his art or his own personal rights were concerned ; but that the fault was not all on his side is shown by his friendly relations with the Dukes of Weimar and Cöthen, and with all true artists. His reputation throughout Germany was by this time enormous ; and in Leipsic itself he was considered by all except the Council and Consistory, as the "glory of the town." It is true his compositions were heard with more respect than appreciation ; but his fame as an organist, harpsichord player, and learned musician was recognised at Leipsic as elsewhere.

The trouble with Ernesti was not of an uncommon nature ; where there is a want of appreciation of music on the part of learned men, there is very apt to be jealousy of the reputation and influence of its professors. Disputes arising from this cause seem to have been not at all rare in Germany at the time. Ernesti hated music, and was undignified enough to make sarcastic remarks to any boy whom he happened to see practising an instrument. He endeavoured, being young and active, to intermeddle in the musical arrangements, with serious results. There is preserved in the "Acta" of the Town Council, a "Complaint" by Bach, dated August 12, 1736, to the effect that the Rector Ernesti had exceeded his powers by promoting the prefect of the second choir to be prefect of the first. This may appear at first sight an unimportant matter ; but, as Bach points out, the prefect of the



## War with Rector

first choir must not only be chosen on account of his voice and character, but he must also have the ability and knowledge to conduct the music when the cantor is not able to be present. It stands to reason, therefore, that the cantor is the only person who can make the selection.

*The  
Appointment  
of a Choir  
Prefect*

On the following day Bach addressed another letter to the Council saying that Ernesti had threatened to reduce and flog any boys who obeyed the cantor's directions ; that he (Bach) had not allowed the "incompetent Krause" (the prefect chosen by Ernesti) to conduct the motet at St Nicolai, but had requested a student, Krebs, to do so ; that the boys were afraid to obey Bach in consequence of the rector's threats ; and that his authority, which was necessary for the proper performance of the music, would be destroyed if this kind of thing were allowed to go on. The quarrel continued ; Bach wrote two more letters, and, since the Council would not move, he appealed to the Court at Dresden. Ernesti also wrote stating his side of the question. This Krause was a *mauvais sujet*, was deeply in debt, and had a bad character, and the rector wished to give him a chance of recovering his character before leaving school. In order to settle the matter, the Council finally ordained that as it was Krause's last term he was to remain prefect to the end of it.

Bitter says that the fault lay as usual on both sides : but with this we cannot agree. Bach was a man nearly twice as old and experienced as the rector ; and he was undoubtedly within his rights in insisting on choosing those responsible for carrying out the music. On this occasion Ernesti said he was "too proud to conduct a simple chorale."

## Chapter VII

Bach obtains a title from the Saxon Court—Plays the organ at Dresden—Attacked by Scheibe—Mizler founds a musical society—Further disputes—Bach's successor chosen during his life-time—Visit to Frederick the Great—Bach's sight fails—Final illness and death—Notice in the *Leipsic Chronicle*—The Council—Fate of the widow and daughter.

AT the end of 1736 Bach went to Dresden where he was given the title of composer to the Saxon Court. He had applied for a title three years before, in the hope that it would place him in a better position with regard to the Council and Consistory; but it was in vain that he hoped for this. Neither his works nor his titles were able to impress them.

We learn from a Dresden newspaper of that date that he played from two to four in the afternoon of December 1st on the new organ in the church of St Paul, in the presence of the Russian Ambassador, von Kayserling, and many artists and other persons who heard him with very great admiration. In the same year, 1736, was published a book of hymns with their melodies by Schemelli, as a second volume to the book of Freytingshausen, to which Bach had in his early days contributed some of the music. On the 14th of May, 1737, there appeared a severe criticism of the way in which Bach wrote out all his *manieren* or grace notes, instead

# Disputes

of leaving them for the performer to add at his discretion. The music thereby loses all its charm of harmony, says the critic, and the melody becomes incomprehensible. He wonders that a man should give himself so much trouble to act against reason. The writer was J. A. Scheibe, a young man who had failed in a competition for an organistship in which Bach was one of the examiners. The attack was answered by Birnbaum, a friend of Bach's, in an interesting critical analysis of Bach's works. This was answered by Scheibe, and the dispute went on for some time, other writers joining in it, until, as Bitter remarks, "all their powder was exhausted." Bach, however, worked away without troubling himself about the matter.

*An Adverse  
Criticism*

In 1738 Mizler,<sup>1</sup> a pupil of Bach's, founded a society for raising the status of music. Though it was successful, the great musician was not induced to join it until 1747, nine years later, when he handed into the society a triple canon in six voices on the chorale "Von Himmel hoch, da komm' ich her" as an "exercise." It is to Mizler's society that we owe the preservation of the portrait by Hausmann, now in the Thomas-schule, which is reproduced in this work : and still further have we to thank it for the account of his life, on which all later biographies are based.

Spitta gives accounts of further disputes. On one occasion a prefect having punished some small boys at Bach's special order, the rector ordered him to be publicly flogged, whereupon the prefect immediately left the school rather than suffer such indignity. A boy happening to pitch a hymn at St Nicholas too low for the congregation to sing, Bach was summoned before the Council and told to see that it did not happen again. The rector threatened to

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary.

# Bach

confiscate the boys' money if they obeyed the cantor and accused Bach of being accessible to bribery. In the *Leipsic Chronicle* for 1749 we read that on June 8th Gottlob Harrer was chosen as the future cantor of St Thomas, "when Capellmeister and Chosen Cantor Herr Sebastian Bach should die." The text of the cantata performed before the Council on this occasion was "The rich man died and was buried." The Council seemed indeed anxious to get rid of the great man who had done more than all others to make their city famous.

There is little more to relate. Bach from time to time made his journeys to various towns, and paid visits to Erfurt, where his cousin, Joh. Christoph, and Adlung were settled. As he advanced in years he gave up these journeys. The last he made was to the Court of Frederick the Great at Potsdam in 1747. His son Emanuel had been capellmeister to Frederick since 1740; and the king had frequently, and always with more insistence, thrown out hints that he would like to hear the great artist. Bach being much occupied, and disinclined for travelling, did not accede to the king's wishes until they amounted to a positive command. Then, taking Friedemann with him, he started for Potsdam, which he reached early in May. The story of the meeting with Frederick is variously told. We will tell it in Friedemann's own words: "When Frederick II. had just prepared his flute, in the presence of the whole orchestra, for the evening's concert, the list of strangers who had arrived was brought him. Holding his flute in his hand he glanced through the list. Then he turned round with excitement to the assembled musicians, and, laying down his flute, said, 'Gentlemen, old Bach is come.' Bach,

## ‘● Only One Bach’

who was at his son's house, was immediately invited to the castle. He had not even time allowed him to take off his travelling clothes and put on his black Court-dress. He appeared, with many apologies for the state of his dress, before the great prince, who received him with marked attention, and threw a deprecating look towards the Court gentlemen, who were laughing at the discomposure and numerous compliments of the old man. The flute concerto was given up for this evening ; and the king led his famous visitor into all the rooms of the castle, and begged him to try the Silbermann pianos, which he (the king) thought very highly of, and of which he possessed seven.<sup>1</sup> The musicians accompanied the king and Bach from one room to another ; and after the latter had tried all the pianos, he begged the king to give him a fugue subject, that he could at once extemporise upon. Frederick thereupon wrote out the subject (afterwards used in the musical offering), and Bach developed this in the most learned and interesting manner, to the great astonishment of the king, who, on his side, asked to hear a fugue in six parts. But, since every subject is not adapted for so full a working out, Bach chose one for himself, and astounded those present by his performance. The king, who was not easily astonished, was completely taken by surprise at the unapproachable mastery of the old cantor. Several times he cried ‘ There is only one Bach.’ On the follow-

<sup>1</sup> These pianos were made in the years 1746-7 after the invention of Cristofori of Florence, who was the first to use the hammer action. This action, however, did not suit Bach's touch, and though he praised the tone, he does not appear to have become possessed of one. The writer was shown one of the above-mentioned Silbermann pianos in the Palace of Sansouci at Potsdam in 1884.

# Bach

ing day he played on all the organs in the churches of Potsdam, and again in the evening on the Silbermann pianos. From here he paid a visit to Berlin, where he was shown the opera house."<sup>1</sup>

A newspaper account of the visit to Frederick varies in several details from the above; but as the account of the son, who was with Bach, and perhaps an eye-witness, is the more trustworthy, we have not thought it necessary to trouble our reader with the second account.<sup>2</sup>

In the following year the enormous strain he had all his life put upon himself began to take its effect. Although of *Last Illness* unusual strength, the work had worn out his body. First his eyes, which had been used day and night from the time he copied his brother's book by moonlight, began to give way. The weakness gradually increased, and pains began to trouble him, yet he could not believe that he was near his end. Friends persuaded him to undergo an operation at the hands of an eminent English oculist, who was then in Leipsic. But the result of two operations was that he lost his sight altogether, and his health was so broken down by them that he never again left his house, while he was in constant pain till his death.

But he continued to work, even through his hours of greatest suffering. He set the chorale "When we are in the greatest need" in four parts, dictating them to Altnikol, his son-in-law. An extraordinary thing happened ten days before his death; one morning he was able to see well and to bear daylight; but a few hours after an

<sup>1</sup> See page 79.

<sup>2</sup> It can be found in Bitter, vol. ii. p. 317, Spitta, vol. iii. p. 231, and elsewhere.





St John's Church, Leipsic



# Death

apoplectic stroke, followed by a violent fever, completely overcame him. The attentions of the two best doctors in Leipsic could not avail against the illness, and at a quarter past eight o'clock in the evening of July 28, 1750, he breathed his last.

He was buried in St John's churchyard, and, like that of Mozart, his grave was forgotten and lost. The churchyard was altered early in the nineteenth century, to allow of a new road being made, and his bones with those of many others were removed. Some remains lately discovered on the south side of the church are supposed with good reason to be those of Bach; but nothing is known for certain.

On his deathbed he had dictated to Altnikol the chorale "Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiemit." The *Leipsic Chronicle* notices his death as follows: "July 28, at eight in the evening the famous and learned musician Herr Joh. Sebastian Bach, composer to His Majesty the King of Poland and Elector of Saxony; Capellmeister to the Courts of Cöthen and Weissenfels, Director and Cantor of the school of St Thomas, died." Here follows a sketch of his life. "The Bach family came from Hungary, and all, as far as is known, have been musicians, from which perhaps arises the fact that even the letters b, a, c, h, form a melodic succession of notes."<sup>1</sup>

That is all; not one word of regret. Nor do we find that much notice anywhere was taken of the death of the great man. A meeting of the Council took place shortly afterwards in which, while no expressions of sympathy were heard, the remark was made, "Herr Bach was a great musician no doubt, but we want a schoolmaster,

<sup>1</sup> h being the German term for B♭.

# Bach

not a capellmeister"; and they proceeded at once to arrange for the instalment of Harrer.

The sons of the first marriage took possession of all music that was of value, and sold the rest of the property. Görner, Bach's former rival, undertook the duties of guardian to his younger children, and seems to have fulfilled the task with propriety and reverence. *Fate of the Widow and Children* Bach's widow was allowed her husband's salary for six months, after which, receiving no help from her stepsons, she supported her younger children as well as she could, and becoming gradually poorer, died in an almshouse and was buried in a pauper's grave. The youngest daughter, Regina, lived till 1809, and was supported by charity in her old age.

The family of Joh. Sebastian Bach gradually died out, and is now extinct, the last representative, a farmer of Eisenach, having died in 1846.

Bach's music fell more and more into oblivion, and for a time his name seems to have been forgotten. In 1883 a room in the Thomas-schule was used as the English Church, and on the first floor a smaller room was used as the vestry. In the latter was a cupboard in which the communion plate and surplices were kept. The writer was told that this cupboard had formerly been full of music MSS., and that during the years of oblivion, whenever a Thomas-schule boy wanted a piece of paper to wrap up his "Butterbrod" he was allowed to tear out a sheet of paper from one of Bach's manuscripts.<sup>1</sup>

Thus after his death were treated the family and works of the man "to whom music owes as much as religion does to its founder."

<sup>1</sup> This story may or may not be true—we give it for what it is worth.

## Chapter VIII

### The Cantatas and the Chorale

THE prevailing characteristics in Bach's compositions are intense earnestness of purpose, and, in his church music, a deep religious feeling, too deep for the ordinary everyday person to appreciate; an absolute absence of anything extraneous, such as concessions to singers and performers, or to the fashion of the day. When Bach writes florid or highly ornamental passages, they are not intended merely to exhibit the skill of the performer—their most important purpose is the exact expression of the words or emotions in hand. In this he and Beethoven were at one. Their difficulties of execution arise from the necessities of artistic expression, and such difficulties will be found in all the truest and best art, the art that lives beyond the fashion of the hour.

*Character-  
istics of  
Bach's  
Music*

Bach, like Beethoven, suffered from the influx of a superficial kind of music which so easily captivates an unthinking public.

The proximity of the Dresden Court, with its Italian Opera Company and the opening of an opera-house in Leipsic itself, had much the same effect in attracting the

## Bach

Leipsic public away from the solidity and severity of the cantor (whom, all the same, they never ceased to respect) as the Rossini fever had in the beginning of the nineteenth century at Vienna with regard to Beethoven's music. Bach, however, was in a worse position than Beethoven, for he lived and worked in a small circle of German towns, and only in the domain of church music. Teutonic to the backbone, he expressed his thoughts in his own way without swerving to the right or left. He never had occasion to try and please any but a North German public, and he mostly endeavoured only to please himself, and promote the "glory of God" in his own way, by adhering strictly to what his genius told him was right; and posterity has endorsed his views.

Beethoven, on the other hand, lived at a time when communications between countries were beginning to be more rapid and frequent. The French Revolution, and the constant wars brought about by the ambition of Napoleon, though temporarily hostile to the actual practice of art, had the effect of making whatever art was produced more cosmopolitan, and therefore more easily appreciated outside the artist's country. Thus Beethoven's music soon became known in England: and at the very time when the Rossini fever was causing him to be forgotten in Vienna (the town of his adoption) the English Philharmonic Society was negotiating with the great composer for the composition of a symphony, and these negotiations, as is well known, resulted in the production of the greatest symphony the world has yet seen.

It is customary to compare the two musical giants of the first half of the eighteenth century, Handel and Bach.

## Compared with Handel

Both were born in the same year, 1685, Handel being the senior by one month only: both were natives of small German towns, within a few miles of each other. Both received their earliest musical education in Germany, but with the difference that Bach, coming of a family of professional musicians, there was never any thought of bringing him up to any other profession, while Handel's father, a surgeon, had all the prejudices of his time and profession against music, and did his best to stifle his son's proclivities, till they became too strong for him to longer withstand.

*Bach and  
Handel*

After early childhood the ways of the composers were widely different. While Bach was painfully acquiring the technique of his art, by making long journeys on foot to hear and get instruction from eminent German organists, by practising assiduously day and night, and by copying all the best music he could lay hands on, Handel was playing the violin and harpsichord in the German opera conducted by Keiser at Hamburg.

At the age of twenty-one Handel went to Italy and remained there three years studying, and successfully composing operas for the Italians, who called him "Il caro Sassone,"—"the dear Saxon." At twenty-one Bach was organist of a small and unimportant German town, still working hard to improve his technical powers in every direction. Everyone knows that Handel made his first reputation as a composer of Italian operas which are completely forgotten, and not till he was fifty-five years old did he begin that series of oratorios or sacred dramas by which he is immortalised. Bach, on the other hand, making the organ and the chorale his

# Bach

starting-point, continued all his life to compose sacred music—"church music" as it was called, and never wrote for the theatre. Handel, domiciled in England, knew his public and knew them so well that he wrote works which not only became popular at once, but have never ceased to be popular. Bach either did not know, or did not care to please his public, and wrote far above their heads, so that for a time after his death he was forgotten entirely: only when Mozart, and afterwards Mendelssohn, became acquainted with the wonders of his genius did the public, almost against their will, begin to appreciate what a giant had been on the earth in those days.<sup>1</sup>

Bach's place in Lutheran Church history is very important. He is connected directly with the Reformation through the chorale, which Luther so much encouraged as a means of spreading the new views of religion. Bach was a strict Lutheran; and the chorale, or hymn to be sung by the congregation, was perhaps the most important expression of Lutheran religious feeling. The words will explain this perhaps better than anything else, if we take an example at random from the Leipziger *Gesangbuch*, in literal prose translation—*e.g.*

*Ein feste* No. 171: "A strong castle is our God; a  
*Burg* good defence and weapon; he freely helps us in all trouble that can meet us. The ancient wicked enemy is in earnest; his cruel armour is great power and much deceit: there is none like him on the earth.

"We can do nothing of our own power, we are

<sup>1</sup> Burney devotes nearly a whole volume to Handel, and only one paragraph to Bach.



# Bach

*Alto* **f**

A strong - - - - - hold sure our God re-

mains, A shield and hope un - fail - - - - -

*Sop.* A strong - - - - - &c. <sup>1</sup>

A strong - - - - - &c. <sup>1</sup>

A shield - -

ing

This is worked in bold fugato (both chorus and orchestra taking the subject or the counter-subject), for thirty-six bars, which are then repeated, note for note, to the words: "In need His help our freedom gains, o'er all we fear prevailing."

A short quotation may serve to give some idea of the fulness of the writing and the boldness of the counterpoint, of which the effect, when sung with proper energy, is overwhelming.

<sup>1</sup> The original tune would be, with the above words—

A strong - hold sure our God re - mains





# Bach

The words "our old malignant foe" follow, with the new fugue subject

Our old malignant foe.

Orch. &c.

Detailed description: This musical notation is for the words "Our old malignant foe." It is written on a single staff in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is a simple, rhythmic line. The words are placed below the notes: "Our" under the first note, "old" under the second, "malig - nant" under the next two notes, and "foe." under the final note. The word "Orch." is written below the first two notes, and "&c." is at the end of the line.

occupying twenty-four bars.

Then

Alto

Would fain work us woe would fain

&c.

Detailed description: This musical notation is for the words "Would fain work us woe would fain." It is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is a simple, rhythmic line. The words are placed below the notes: "Would" under the first note, "fain" under the second, "work" under the third, "us" under the fourth, "woe" under the fifth, and "would fain" under the final two notes. The word "Alto" is written above the first note, and "&c." is at the end of the line.

treated fugato for twenty bars; and each line is worked in the same way.

The whole chorus is 221 bars in length, and is a masterpiece of massive choral and orchestral writing, in keeping with the sentiment of the words. It opens with three trumpets, drums, violoncello, and organ manual, the pedal being silent for the first twenty-three bars. At the twenty-fourth bar (the first quoted on page 97) the pedal enters with the 16 feet Posaune, and makes a bold canon of eight bars, with the melody played in the highest register of the trumpet. The canon concludes with a drum passage on the dominant; and fresh canons between trumpet and pedal occur at bars 49, 88, 122, 147, 178 and 200.

These seven canons are all formed on the musical phrases of the tune: and one might almost look upon the chorus as a gigantic "choral-vorspiel" with long vocal and instrumental interludes between the phrases given out by the trumpets and pedal.

# A Florid Duet

The second verse is set as a duet for treble and bass, still in the key of D. After a ritornello, the bass enters with the words "all men born of God our Father, at the last will Jesus gather," set to exceedingly florid passages, above which floats the melody in the treble voice.

*Treble Solo*

Our ut - most

*Bass Solo*

All . . . . .

might . . . . . is all in

&c.

&c

. . . men, All

men born of God our

&c.

&c.

# Bach

A bass recitative, commenting on the preceding sentiments follows, and then a treble aria, "Within my heart of hearts, Lord Jesus, make thy dwelling." In the fifth number the whole chorus sings the melody in unison, now changed to  $\frac{6}{8}$  time, and with a very florid accompaniment.

*Unison—Treble*  
*Alto*

*Tenor*  
*Bass* If all the world with fiends were filled.

This is followed by a tenor recitative, "Then close beside Thy Saviour's blood-besprinkled banner, my soul remain," &c., a duet for alto and tenor, "How blessed then are they, who still on God are calling;" and the cantata concludes with the chorale simply harmonised in four parts, "That word shall still in strength abide," in the form familiar to English congregations.

We have given a fairly full description of this fine cantata in order to show our readers what is meant when it is said that Bach based his church music essentially on chorale. Most of the cantatas are constructed in the same kind of way, *i.e.* a chorale is used as the chief subject. But that Bach did not merely work on a fixed model is shown by the fact that no two of the one hundred and ninety cantatas published by the Bachgesellschaft are alike. Nothing astonishes us more than the enormous fertility of invention shown in these wonderful works, the variety of detail, and yet the unity of purpose. The one idea of the composer was the religious effect to be obtained by the highest efforts of art devoted to the

# Choral-Vorspiele

service of God. Except in Germany, they are rarely heard in their proper place as part of the church service: but the mere reading through of the scores produces a most profound effect, and creates a perpetual astonishment in the reader at the enormous resources of the composer.

Bach is generally considered as the greatest composer for the organ, but his organ works, wonderful as they are, seem small in comparison with these marvellous cantatas, all different and yet all connected, as it were, by an underlying unity of purpose.

Bach took the melody of "Ein feste Burg" for one of his finest choral-vorspiele (Peters, 245, No. 22). This is a particularly interesting composition, since it is the only chorale in which we obtain any clue to Bach's methods of registering. In *The Choral-vorspiel* Walther's MS. are given a few indications "a 3 clav." for three manuals. The left hand is to begin with the fagott, sixteen feet, and the right hand on the choir with the "sesquialtera." The piece was doubtless intended for the organ at Mühlhausen which was renovated and enlarged under Bach's directions, and which had three manuals, containing on one a sixteen feet "fagott," and on another a combination producing a "good sesquialtera tone." It is one of the larger choral-vorspiele, containing fifty-eight bars.

It is worth while noticing how Bach, in this, and all other choral-vorspiele, does not adhere literally to the notes of the melody, but introduces ornamental passages, or lengthens and shortens notes to serve his purpose, or introduces the subject in augmentation and diminution. This was the regular custom amongst German organists. The choral-vorspiel is, in its simplest form, merely intended to prepare the congregation for the melody that is

# Bach

to be sung, but instead of a mere bald playing through of the tune, as is usual in English churches, the organist was expected to use his art in elaborating it.

Bach, in his younger days, was accused of over-elaborating, not only the *vorspiele*, but the accompaniment. It was a fault of youth, and hardly called for the official censure that the Council at Arnstadt thought fit to administer. He was practically his own teacher. If he had been under the guidance of an older and more experienced organist, he would undoubtedly have curbed his zeal for "surprising variations."

At that time he seems to have lost sight of the fact that he was expected to accompany the congregation. He forgot all about them, and gave free rein to his imagination so that the "congregation were confounded." And well they might be, by the following example of his accompaniment.

## "WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT LÄSST WALTEN."

*From the Leipziger Gesangbuch. As sung.*

Wer nur den lie - ben Gott lässt wal - ten

und hoff - et auf ihn al - le - zeit.

# ‘ Surprising Variations ’

BACH'S METHOD OF ACCOMPANYING WHEN AT ARNSTADT.

*Peters 244, Variante zu No. 52.*

Wer nur den lie - ben Gott lässt walten

*Interlude.*

hoff - et auf ihn al - - le - zeit

He was in reality not suited to be a mere accompanist—his genius was too great to be tied down to the formal notes sung by the congregation, and a far lesser man would have suited this kind of work better. His choralvorspiele are masterpieces of organ work ; his extemporised

# Bach

or written accompaniments are artistic, but quite impracticable.

But when he harmonises a chorale in vocal parts for his choir to sing with the congregation, his genius shines forth in the most exquisite harmonic combinations possible. Examples abound, and a volume might be written on this subject alone. We can only indicate here a few instances of various treatments of the chorale.

Every one knows the opening double chorus in the *Matthew Passion*. After an instrumental introduction full of dignity and solemnity, built chiefly on tonic and dominant pedals (E minor), the first chorus sings, "Come ye daughters, weep with me, behold the Lamb as a bridegroom." The second chorus exclaims, "Whom? How?" while the first continues its course, and a "Soprano ripieno" chorus enters with the chorale—

O thou be - got - ten son of God. &c.

Who on the cross wast slain.

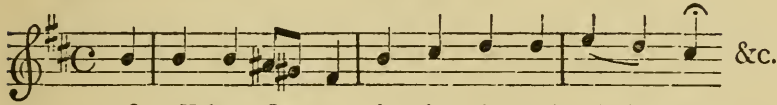
The work is now performed every Good Friday in the Thomas Church at Leipsic. The organ gallery occupies the whole of the west end of the nave and two side aisles. On each side are placed the singers, the soprano and alto parts being sung by women. This chorale is sung by the boys of the Thomas Schule, some forty in number, and the effect of the contrast of tone bringing it in is overwhelming. Poor Bach, with his miserable little rabble of a choir with three voices to a part, can



# Uses of the Chorale

hardly have realised how his music would sound many years after his death, when performed by a large body of enthusiastic and intelligent musicians.

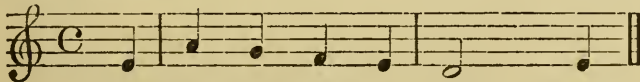
The next chorale in the work is



O Holy Je - su how hast thou of - fend - ed,

harmonised for four voices, and accompanied by violins, flutes, oboes, violas and basses, in unison with the respective voices and figured bass organ part. This accompaniment is used for all the succeeding chorales, and we may remark that the melody is given to the two flutes and two oboes as well as the first violins, that it may be made prominent.

All the other chorales in this work, six in number, are thus arranged and accompanied. The well-known Phrygian melody



Herz - lich - thut mir ver - lan - - gen.

occurs no less than five times, sometimes harmonised in the Ionian, sometimes in the Phrygian mode, and he has arranged it in the latter mode as a very beautiful vorschpiel for the organ (Peters 244, No. 27).

We may here remark that in playing the organ choral-vorspiele no notice is to be taken of the *fermata*, which are only used when the melodies are sung.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the choral-vorspiele, and the introduction of the melody in conjunction with a chorus, and the harmonisation in four parts, with orchestra doubling the voice parts, Bach makes many other uses of the chorale. In

<sup>1</sup> See Griepenkerl's Introduction to Peters, vol. 244.

# Bach

the *Christmas Oratorio*, for example, he combines it with recitative, the melody being freely accompanied by the orchestra, and interspersed with recitative passages of the nature of interludes between the lines. Or he harmonises it in four parts, with free orchestral interludes.

The above quoted melody appears in the *Christmas Oratorio* with brilliant orchestral accompaniment and interludes, three trumpets, drums and two oboes being used besides the strings and organ.

Erk has collected 319 chorales in two volumes (Peters), extracted from the church cantatas, &c., and has given full particulars of the sources. Sometimes they are worked up as fugues. Thus, the tune composed by Kugelmann about 1540, and generally known in England as the "Old Hundredth," appears in the cantata "Gottlob! nun geht das Jahr zu Ende" in the following form, the voice parts being doubled by strings, cornet, two oboes, three trombones and organ.

Nun lob mein Seel.

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a vocal line with the lyrics "Nun lob mein Seel." written below it. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a piano accompaniment. The music is in 4/4 time and begins with a whole rest on the vocal line and a bass line starting with a half note G, followed by quarter notes A, B, and C.

Nun lob mein Seel.

The second system of the musical score also consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a vocal line with the lyrics "Nun lob mein" written below it. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a piano accompaniment. The music continues from the first system, with the vocal line starting on a half note G and moving to quarter notes A, B, and C.

# Orchestration

The choral-vorspiele published in the Peters' edition number about 143—besides several sets of partitas or variations on chorales, and many "Varianten," or different workings of the same vorspiel.

Although this eminently national German and Lutheran form of religious art sank deeply into Bach's soul, and more or less influenced and coloured all his compositions for the Church, he was accused at Leipsic of being too proud to demean himself to conducting or accompanying a mere chorale!

What he did was to allow his genius full play on a form which intensely interested him, and to exhibit it in new and original aspects.

The orchestration of the cantatas is of great interest. It is generally known that Bach did not usually employ the orchestral instruments in the modern manner, but made each play an independent counterpoint. Thus there were as many contrapuntal parts as there were voices and instruments combined; and a cantata was described as being, for example, "in nine parts, for one oboe, two violins, one viola, one violoncello, soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices with organ continuo," or as a "concerto for four voices, two oboes, viola and continuo." Sometimes, as in "Erforsche mich Gott," there is a violin obbligato above the voice parts in the final four-part chorale. In other cantatas it is noted that the "cantus firmus (the chorale-melody) is in the soprano," or other voice. In the opening chorus of "Herr Gott dich loben wir," the cantus firmus is in the soprano, the other voices sing throughout, making the interludes which are usually allotted to the instruments.

*Orchestra-  
tion*



# A Mannerism

FROM THE CANTATA "ES IST NICHTS GESUNDES AN MEINEM LEIBE." No. 25.

Bars 14 to 17.

14

15

3 Flutes  
Cornet

3 Trombones

1st Viol.

2nd Viol.

Viola

Sop.

Es ist nichts Gesundes au

Alto

Es ist nichts Gesundes an mei - nem

Tenor

Bass  
(Voices continuo and Strings).

6 6 6 4 6 6 4 #  
4 5 3 #4 5  
2

# Bach

3 Flutes  
Cornet  
3 Trombones  
1st Viol.  
2nd Viol.  
Viola  
Sop.  
Alto  
Tenor  
Bass  
(Voices continuo and Strings).

16 17

mei - - nem Lei - be an meinem Lei - - -  
Lei - - be

6 7 7 8 6 7 8 6 4 5 2 3 6 4 2

# Technical Skill

The above quotation is only a specimen of what is found throughout a long chorus, all the sections of the chorale being introduced in turn, with a never-ceasing flow of counterpoint in the voice parts, accompanied in the same way by strings.

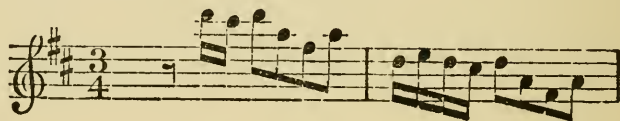
If we examine the voice parts we shall find that they practically amount to a double canon, the tenor imitating the bass, the treble imitating the alto. But the canon is not carried out with an iron-bound rule which would crush all beauty out of the music; on the contrary, the imitations are quite free and unconstrained. Each voice must have its melody, even if collisions occur now and then, such as between alto and tenor bar 15, last quaver: alto and bass just previously to this: the consecutive sevenths in the treble and alto bar 16, third and fourth quavers, or the entry of the tenor on  $F\sharp$  bar 17, against the  $F\sharp$  in the bass. This rough and healthy vigour is thoroughly characteristic; the parts must express themselves by their melody; if they happen occasionally to collide, this is of much less importance than that their vigorous melody should be sacrificed in order to sweeten the harmony.

The string accompaniment must also take its part. The instruments are all treated as individuals, not merely as filling up harmonies. Therefore they do not reiterate one note in each chord, but move about. The wind instruments play in four part harmony which is complete in itself. It might perhaps appear that this is merely a display of learning and contrapuntal skill, but a close examination of Bach's most elaborate works will reveal the fact that the greater the contrapuntal task he sets himself, the more expressive is the music. Such choruses exhibit the highest possible technical skill, but all this is

# Bach

as nothing compared to the wonderfully artistic effect that the composition as a whole produces.

In some cases Bach writes an organ obligato part in addition to the "continuo," or figured bass. Thus the opening symphony of "Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir," composed for the election of the Town Council at Leipsic in 1737, consists of the "Prelude" of the violin solo suite No. 6 transposed to D,



on the obligato organ, with accompaniments for three trumpets, drums, two oboes, strings and continuo (to be played on another organ<sup>1</sup>).

Bach seems to have tried every kind of experiment with his orchestra. For instance in "Freue dich erlöste Schaar" an aria is accompanied by a flute, a muted violin, the rest of the strings pizzicato, and the organ part to be played staccato. One peculiarity, however, of his orchestration is that the combination of instruments he chooses for a particular movement remains the same throughout. Rests occur in the parts, but there is no variety of treatment within the movement. Thus in the above-mentioned aria the lower strings having begun pizzicato play pizzicato

<sup>1</sup> According to Gesner the keyboard of the Rück-positiv (back choir) of the St Thomas' organ stood apart from the chief organ, and was used by Bach to conduct from (see the frontispiece of Walther's Lexicon, 1732). If there was an organ obligato part, it would be played on this manual, while another person played the *continuo* on the chief organ.



# Cantatas

throughout, the first violins remain muted throughout, and the organ plays staccato throughout. Again, in the opening chorus of "Es ist nichts gesundes," referred to above, the wind never plays anything but the chorale in four parts. Of variety there is plenty, but it is not produced by modern methods.

Bach was just as careful in the choice of instruments for his particular effects as in the choice of stops in organ playing. Many of the instruments he used are now obsolete, and their intonation must have been very faulty. Yet if they had the particular tone colour he considered fitting he would not hesitate to employ them, to the exclusion of, or together with, the more manageable instruments such as the violin, viola, oboe, &c. Amongst the obsolete instruments he employed to accompany the voices in his cantatas and Passion music were violoncello piccolo,<sup>1</sup> viola da gamba,<sup>1</sup> taille,<sup>2</sup> viola d'amore,<sup>1</sup> cornet,<sup>1</sup> oboe d'amore,<sup>3</sup> oboe da caccia,<sup>1</sup> lituus,<sup>1</sup> violetta,<sup>1</sup> violino piccolo.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the cantatas are called solo cantatas; they consist of a series of movements usually founded on a chorale, for one or more solo voices, and contain no choruses, though occasionally a chorale is to be sung by the congregation.

The cantatas are often called by Bach "Concertos." Thus "Bereitet die Wege" for fourth Sunday in Advent is entitled "Concerto à 9, 1 oboe, 2 violini, 1 viola, 1 violoncello, soprano, alto, tenor, bass, col basso per organo di J. S. Bach."

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> A minor third below the oboe, and of more pathetic tone.

## Chapter IX

### The Matthew Passion and B Minor Mass <sup>1</sup>

IT was Luther's chief intention to make the congregation take more part in the service of the Church than they had formerly done. The first thing therefore was to diminish or abolish the use of Latin; and the people were made to sing what they could understand and appreciate.

*The Lutheran Services* Luther translated a number of excellent old church hymns, and made new tunes for them, being assisted in this work by friends. The newly arranged hymns were to take the place of the Graduals, Offertories, &c.

He also translated and reorganised the chief parts of the Mass; thus the Kyrie became "Gott Vater in Ewigkeit," the Gloria, "Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr," the Creed, "Wir glauben all an einem Gott," and the Agnus Dei, "Christe du Lamm Gottes."

The Preface, the Benedictus, and Hosanna were left in Latin.

Besides the chorales, he instituted the motet for the choir, which was accompanied ordinarily by the organ, but on high festivals by cornets and trombones. The style of the motets was that of Palestrina and Orlando Lasso, and the texts were chosen from the Bible, especially the Psalms. On days of humiliation, a long Litany and several

<sup>1</sup>A considerable portion of this chapter is from an article by A. F. Rochlitz in the *Allg. Musik Zeitung*, 1831.

# The German Mass

Latin hymns were sung instead of the Gloria. In Holy Week and on Palm Sunday and Good Friday, instead of the Epistle, the Story of the Passion was sung antiphonally from one of the gospels by two priests before the altar.

But several inconveniences gradually arose. In spite of Luther's urgent order, "A priest *must* be able to sing," there were, in course of time, only a few who could, and those sang badly—most priests could not even keep to a single note.

Let us imagine an unbroken monotone or monotonous chant badly intoned, of the length of perhaps over one hundred verses; and the service, being lengthened by the addition of hymns, &c., occupied sometimes from four to five hours, all in one wearisome unison, and entirely deprived of the variations which gave life to the Catholic service. Moreover if anyone came late or left early he was severely reprimanded.

Luther said, "We arrange the German Mass as well as we can; our successors will improve it." But for a hundred years after his death men held most conscientiously to the letter of his sayings, and when alterations were made, they were done so sparingly that they were of little effect. The Latin songs were almost all assigned to other services, *e.g.* the "Rex Christe" was assigned to the vespers, the "Crux fidelis" to Thursday in Holy Week, and the singing of the Passion before the altar was changed to a mere reading from the pulpit.

But when read, only a very small portion of the congregation either heard or understood it in a large and well-filled church; and soon there arose disorders, especially when the old Protestant strictness of discipline began to decline, and the Thirty Years' War had produced much roughness in manners. A way out of the difficulty was

# Bach

found, which must be mentioned, though it only lasted a few years. It was certainly conceived in accordance with Luther's principles, but it was soon found to be entirely impracticable. The congregation were *themselves* to sing the Passion story. For this purpose a song was composed by Paul Stockmann ("Jesu Leiden, Pein und Tod") containing all the chief points in the story. Not only did the composition prove entirely unsatisfactory in itself, but can one imagine four and thirty strophes of eight lines each being sung straight away to one of the dullest and most monotonous melodies that was ever composed!

During this period, however, Figural music had, outside the Church, been gradually developing in a freer and more easily appreciated manner, and was therefore becoming widely cultivated.

It found favour with the people, since there was no law against its use, so that it began to enter the Church, not in ordinary services, but on festivals. The result was most favourable. We find expressly stated the attention and the devout pleasure with which the congregation listened to the conjunction of song and strings. Gradually, therefore, this music was received into favour, first on festivals and afterwards on Sundays in the principal churches, and that without any special care that the text and expression had any regular connection with particular parts of the Liturgy, much less with the special subject of the sermon. The cantor and music director in fact did not know beforehand what the subject was to be.

Everything else that had been used from former times remained, except that after Frederick Augustus, Elector of Saxony, entered the Roman Church in 1697, and organised

## Passion Music Origin

such splendid services in his Court church as had never been before heard in North Germany, more freedom was allowed in the Lutheran churches.

The celebration of the Passion remained as before, and we have only to add that during the Fast and Advent weeks all instruments, including the organ, had to be silent, even during the singing of the thirty-four strophes.

At last there came to the head of spiritual affairs at Leipsic a man of decided character, highly esteemed as a learned theologian, a very impressive preacher, and respected for his strictness of teaching and life, Salomon Deyling, Doctor and Professor of Theology, &c. (1677-1755). He could no longer endure the state of things in Passion Week, and, since in 1723 the great and famous Sebastian Bach had become cantor of the Thomas School and music director of the two chief churches at Leipsic, he associated himself with him in order to see if his ideas could be put in practice. The idea which he propounded to Bach was this: "The early arrangement of the service was the best, but was only suitable to its own date: we must try and make our arrangement on the model of the earliest, but in keeping with modern requirements.

*The Origin  
of Bach's  
Passion  
Music*

"On each Palm Sunday and Good Friday the history of the Passion of the Lord is made known antiphonally, according to one or other of the Evangelists, exactly in accordance with the sacred writer's words! Who could improve on this? They must be sung, how else are they to be understood by all? But they must be sung by some one who can sing! namely by you: and so that everything may sound well and be impressive they must be musically sung, and accompanied.

# Bach

“Your best singer, who can pronounce clearly and well, must sing the words of the Evangelist in recitative, and, in order to produce more impression and life and variety, the other persons of the story must be represented by other singers, and the Jewish people by a chorus. At the chief points in the story there will be pauses, during which, by means of an aria, the congregation shall lay to heart what they have heard ; and that all of us shall be refreshed from time to time, there shall be well chosen verses from all the known hymns, in which the congregation can join. Now, your business is to carry all this out in a connected and artistic manner.” And thus arose Bach’s Passion music, which completely fulfilled everything that was expected of it. However few there were who could understand and honour and enjoy them as art works, these services, and Bach’s method of treating them, were gladly received by the congregation, and the performance of such oratorios became every time a truly edifying and Christian artistic feast.

This account refers of course chiefly to Leipsic. It is supposed that the decay of the performance of the Passion was due to the pupils and sons of Bach, who tried to improve on his and Deyling’s arrangement by the introduction of Italian and lighter methods, which, though pleasing, were soon found to be unsuitable to the simple words of the Bible and Hymn-book.

The custom of performing the Passion in an epic and dramatic form during Holy Week is exceedingly ancient. It exists still in the Catholic Church in an ancient traditional way, consisting of the relation of the gospel narrative by one singer, the speeches of Jesus by another, while a third represents the crowd called *turba*. Music and the dramatic element are little represented, and the performers

## Passion Services

only make use of accent or intonations. In the Reformed Church the performance of the Passion in German, and in artistic style, did not take place earlier than the last half of the sixteenth century.

Winterfeld finds the earliest Passion music arranged for chorus after the Gospel of St Matthew in Keuchenthal's Gesangbuch, Wittenberg, 1573. A short instrumental piece precedes it and another closes it, and for the rest, only the words of the *turba* are allotted to chorus. A similar work is the Passion according to St John, which is found in Selnecker's Gesangbuch, 1587, but here there are hymns to be sung by the congregation.

*Early  
Passion  
Services*

The Passion according to St John, of Bartholomäus Gese, 1588, begins with a five voice chorus, followed by the gospel narration by a tenor in Plainsong. The words of Christ are usually sung by four chorus voices, the words of Peter and Pilate by three voices, those of the maid and servant of the High Priest by two voices, the *turba* are in five voices, and a five voice chorus concludes the work.

Heinrich Schütz, 1585—1672, in whose "Resurrection of the Lord" modern forms are found, has very sparingly used similar forms in his Passions according to all four Evangelists, but chiefly in the concluding choruses. The Passions in Vopelius' Gesangbuch, 1682, show that the early forms were still in use at that date.

The Passion of Capellmeister Johann Sebastiani, 1672, at Königsberg, shows an advance in form here and there; and here also for the first time do we find the artistic use of hymn tunes, while in Schütz only the final movements of his Passions have any connection with the chorale. The biblical narrative is no longer in plainsong, but recitative, accompanied either by two violins or two violas and bass,

# Bach

and this is the first example of instrumental accompaniment in a Passion music. The *turba* are in four voice chorus, with a fifth part in high tenor for the Evangelist. Two violins, four violas and bass always accompany him. The hymns are directed only to have their melodies sung, the remaining parts being played by the strings.

A remarkable appearance was that of the Passion oratorios at Hamburg, in which Handel, Keiser and Mattheson introduced the regular song forms, the recitative, aria, and the duet of the opera, and in such a method as only could be performed by very highly trained singers. At first the words of Scripture in their original formed the basis.

In 1704, however, an entirely new departure was made in "The bleeding and dying Jesus" of Reinhold Keiser, with words by Hunold-Menantes. Here there was no Evangelist, nor were words of the Scripture introduced, but three cantatas or soliloquies, similar to dramatic scenes, took an important place. They were called the "Lamentation of Mary," the "Tears of Peter," and the "Lovesong of the Daughter of Zion."

The novelty, which excited the fiercest criticism and raised a great contest, did not take root, although through its means a new way was opened up. For this attempt led the Hamburg Councillor Brockes to write a musical poem of a similar kind, in which the evangelist was retained in order to fill the gaps between the scenes.

This composition, which was greatly admired, was set to music by Keiser, and afterwards by Handel, Mattheson and Telemann. The first performance of Keiser's setting took place in Holy week in 1712, and it is of special interest, since Bach took some of the words for the arias in his *St John Passion*.



## Passion Settings

In the *Matthew Passion* Bach follows that of Sebastiani with the addition of new forms derived from the drama, but enriched and ennobled by the mind of the Master. Scripture words and hymns no longer satisfied his contemporaries or himself; and as long as the kernel of the work was scriptural, according to use consecrated by time, no objection could be made to the introduction of what had already been accepted in other services in the Church. Only the soliloquies, those theatrical scenes in which biblical persons appear with words other than biblical, he would not introduce, for it was too like the stage. Thus in a form, which though new, was intimately connected with the old, did the *Passions* of Bach appear, and the congregation took part by singing the chorales. It is not known for certain how many *Passions* Bach wrote; the number is said to be five.

Regarding the author and composer of the *St Luke's Passion* nothing is known for certain, for Bach gives neither in his copy. The arguments for its being his work are that it is in his writing, and is possibly a youthful composition, and that he recopied it in later years so that it should not be forgotten; while the chief argument against its genuineness is its insignificance. The Bachgesellschaft publish it with the above reservation.

It consists mostly of chorales in four parts with short recitatives between them. There are few arias or choruses, and a sermon is to be preached in the middle.<sup>1</sup>

The first performance of the *Matthew Passion* took place on Good Friday, 1729. The words, where not scriptural, are by Picander. All the resources of art are employed in this tremendous work. A double chorus,

<sup>1</sup> See Conrad E. F. "Echt oder unecht. zur Lucas Passion."

# Bach

a ripieno chorus of sopranos, a double orchestra and double organ part; a part for the Evangelist which calls forth the very highest powers of the greatest singers; all the instruments known in Bach's time are at various points brought into requisition. We have already alluded (p. 104) to the effect of the opening chorus when sung in the Thomas Church. The never-ceasing flow of quavers in 12-8 time, the call to the contemplation of the Passion, the questioning second chorus which finally unites with the first, the solemn and dignified march of the orchestra, have a devotional expression which has never been surpassed. Throughout the work the words of the Saviour are accompanied by strings alone in four parts, with the continuo (which was never omitted in those days). The chorales, which are of frequent occurrence, are to be sung in unison by the congregation, and harmonised by the choir and instruments. The words of the *turba* or Jewish people are always allotted to double choruses, which throw the expressions backwards and forwards at each other in a turbulent manner (see p. 123).

The disciples are also represented by a double chorus, as are the Christian congregation; and the music of the various double choruses is in keeping with sentiments which might be supposed to actuate the singers. The arias which fill the "pauses" suggested by Deyling are allotted to an alto, soprano, tenor, or bass, and are accompanied, in addition to the organ, by two flutes, or two oboi d'amore, or oboi da caccia, or by a viola da gamba, or by a violin solo with string band.

After Bach's death this magnificent work was performed at St Thomas Church till the end of the ~~seventeenth~~ century, when it was laid aside until revived by Mendelssohn in 1829, just one hundred years after its first performance.

# Matthew Passion

1st Chorus

Ja nicht auf das Fest auf dass nicht ein Aufruhr werde &c.

2nd Chorus

Ja nicht auf das Fest auf das nicht ein Aufruhr &c.

Refrain.

Weissage, Weissage, Weissa . . .

Weissage Weissa

# Bach

The gigantic B Minor Mass was gradually composed. At first it was to have been a "missa brevis," but the rest was added later. Hilgenfeldt<sup>1</sup> makes the following remarks on it:—"This Mass is one of the noblest works of Art, full of inventive genius, depth of feeling, and astonishing artistic power: there is no other of the same calibre which can be compared to it. It was originally written for the Saxon Court, and was first performed at Dresden. On his other compositions of the same kind Bach has expended far less energy. It is possible that a Protestant artist such as he was could not entirely enter into the religious point of view which he was obliged to take in composing for the Catholic Church, and several of his other masses are merely collected from portions of his cantatas."

This is, however, also the case with the B minor Mass: thus the Crucifixus occurs in the cantata "Weinen Klagen," the Hosanna in "Preise dein Glücke," the Agnus in "Lobet Gott in seinen Reichen."

The Mass is dedicated to Frederick Augustus in the following words:—

"ILLUSTRIOUS ELECTOR,—GRACIOUS MASTER,—To Your Royal Highness I offer in deepest devotion this small fruit of the knowledge to which I have attained in music, with the most humble prayer that you will look upon it, not according to the poor composition, but with your world-renowned clemency, and therefore will take me under your powerful protection.

I have for some years had the direction of the music in the two chief churches at Leipsic, but have suffered several disagreeable things, and my income has been reduced though

<sup>1</sup> P. 115.

## B Minor Mass

I am myself blameless ; but these troubles would be easily overcome if your Highness would grant me the favour of a decree, after conference with your Court orchestra.

“The gracious granting of my humble prayer would bind me to everlastingly honour you, and I offer myself to do anything with obedience that Your Royal Highness may require of me in the way of composing church or orchestral music, and to give unwearied industry, and to dedicate my whole strength to your service.—With ever-increasing faithfulness, I remain, Your Royal Highness’ most obedient Servant,—JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH.”

This letter was handed in to the Court at Dresden when Bach was there on a visit, July 27th, 1733. The reader will remember that he was at this time in conflict with Ernesti, and the Council ;—the title of “Hof compositeur,” Court composer, was not however given him until 1736. Though Hilgenfeldt says the B minor Mass was first performed at Dresden, it is doubtful whether it was ever performed outside the two chief churches at Leipsic, and even there it was only done in parts. On a score of the “Gloria” made in 1740 the note occurs “on the feast of the Nativity.” The “Sanctus” also was originally intended as a Christmas piece. The “Kyrie” is of great length ; its score occupies forty-six pages in the Bach Gesellschaft edition. Like the rest of the choral portions, it has five voices, two sopranos, alto, tenor and bass. The orchestra consists of two flutes, two oboi d’amore, two bassoons, strings and continuo.

The Gloria is scored for three trumpets, drums, two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, strings and continuo. It will be observed that for the joyful music of the Gloria the tone of the oboe proper was considered more suitable

# Bach

than the perhaps more plaintive tone of the oboe d'amore, which is used in the Kyrie.

At the very outset the hearers are made aware that a work of unusual proportions is commencing. The words *Kyrie eleison* are sung in a massive five part adagio with independent orchestral parts, coming to a full close at the end of the fourth bar. Here an instrumental "largo ed un poco piano" commences and continues for twenty-five bars; it foreshadows the vocal fugue, of which the following is the impressive subject:

*Largo. Tenor.*

Kyrie e-le - - - - i - son Ky - ri - e

After this fugue has been worked at considerable length there is an instrumental interlude, and it recommences, the bass leading off with the subject in the tonic. The *Christe eleison* is set as a duet for two sopranos in D major, and the second kyrie as a fugue, *alla breve*, in four parts, in which the instruments double the voices. It has the following stirring subject:

*Alla breve*

Ky - ri - e e lei - - - son e - le - i - son

# “Et incarnatus est”

The “Gloria” begins in D major, and consists of eleven movements, opening with a vigorous five part chorus vivace.

*Orchestra. Vivace.*

“Quoniam solus Sanctus” is a bass aria accompanied by Corno di caccia, two fagotti and continuo. There are no other instruments.

The Creed contains seven movements. The words “Credo in unum deum” are a fugue on the ancient Plain-song, which is in semibreves, with a perpetually moving bass on the organ in crotchets. The only orchestral instruments are two violins, which play independent parts.

“Et incarnatus est” for five voices is based on an arpeggio figure imitated in all the parts:

# Bach

The "Crucifixus," one of the most impressive movements, is founded on a chromatic ground bass, which recurs thirteen times, the four part chorus singing various harmonies above it. This is the form of the Passacaglia, and the same bass was used by Bach in the opening chorus of the cantata, "Jesu, der du meine Seele," though in a very different manner. "Et resurrexit" is another movement conceived in Bach's happiest mood. It is in D major, like the Gloria, and has, if possible, even more energy and swing. This is the vigorous opening phrase :

*Sop. I.*  
*Sop. II.*  
*Alto*  
*Tenor*  
*Bass*

Et re-sur - rex - - it re-sur - rex - it.

and it is repeated for the words "Cujus regni non erit finis."

"Et in Spiritum sanctum" forms a bass solo accompanied by two oboi d'amore.



# The Sanctus

“Confiteor unum baptisma,” a closely knit fugue on two subjects, is in five parts with an independent organ bass. After a time the tempo becomes adagio, and one of the most overpowering effects in the whole of music introduces the words “et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum”; as it were the whole of creation is called to witness the supreme miracle of the resurrection of the dead.

The Sanctus is a six part chorus; the voices move for the most part in flowing triplets, the bass generally in an octave figure. After a time the triplets give way to the following powerful passage:

The musical score is arranged in five systems. The first system shows three vocal parts: Soprano I, Soprano II, and Alto I. They are all playing a long, sustained note, with a fermata over it. The lyrics "San - - - - - ctus." are written below. The second system shows Alto II and Tenor, also with sustained notes and a fermata. The third system shows the Bass part, which is moving in a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The lyrics "Sanc - tus Dom-i-nus De - us Sa - ba - oth. &c." are written below. The fourth and fifth systems show the Orchestra (Orch.) with two staves. The upper staff has a complex, rhythmic accompaniment of chords, while the lower staff has a simpler bass line.

after a few bars of which the triplets are resumed.

# Bach

“Pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria ejus,” is a six part fugue, and “osanna” is a double chorus. The “Dona nobis pacem” has the same opening passage as the Rathswahl cantata. The work from beginning to end is on a gigantic scale, in which each separate movement is a masterpiece from every point of view.

## Chapter X

The *Wohltemperirte Clavier*—"The Art of Fugue"—"Musical Offering"  
—Bach as a Teacher—Bach's Works in England.

THE *Wohltemperirte Clavier* was gradually compiled and formed into a complete work in two parts. The first part was completed at Cöthen in 1722, and entitled "The well tempered clavier, or preludes and fugues through all tones and semitones, both with major and minor thirds. For the edification and use of young musicians who are eager to learn, and for the recreation of those who are already facile in this study. Collected and prepared by Johann Sebastian Bach, Grand-ducal Capellmeister and Director of Chamber music to the Court of Cöthen, Anno 1722."

The expression "well-tempered" refers to the equal temperament, of which Bach was so strong an advocate, and many of the pieces would be impossible with any other system of tuning. There is sufficient internal evidence to show that these delicate and beautiful compositions were primarily intended for the clavichord, as this instrument had a power of expression which was denied to all the other keyed instruments of that period. It is a mistake therefore to play them on the harpsichord, and Spitta is right

*The Wohltemperirte Clavier intended for Clavichord*

# Bach

in his assertion that they require for their adequate performance the very best pianoforte that the skill of modern makers can produce. The larger number of the pieces in the first collection were written at Cöthen, and probably quickly after one another. According to a tradition they were written on one of his journeys, when he had not access to an instrument. Schumann considered that many of the preludes were not originally connected with the fugues. Bach made three copies which still exist. He never had any intention of publishing a work which would scarcely meet with success among the general public from its difficulty. The second part was completed in 1740 or 1744. The only autograph is in the British Museum, add. MS. 35,021, of a page of which we give a photograph. It is written on large paper, fourteen staves to a page.

Gerber says that Bach valued the work highly for its educational value, and played it through no less than three times to him.

It was first printed by A. F. C. Kollmanns in London in 1799, but this impression was never published. The three first editions were those of Hoffmeister and Kühnel,<sup>1</sup> Simrock in Berlin, and Nägeli in Zurich, all in 1801. The first English edition was that of Wesley and Horn, 1811.

That by Hoffmeister and Kühnel was edited by Forkel, who, selecting from a great number of copies, published many of the fugues in a shortened form, believing that these were Bach's last arrangements of them. It is well known that Bach constantly polished and improved his

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards the firm of C. F. Peters, Leipsic.

Pre lusion 15

Fr. J. Bach

This image shows a handwritten musical score for a prelude by Fr. J. Bach. The score is written on 15 staves, arranged in two columns of seven staves each, with the final staff on the right. The notation is dense and characteristic of the Baroque period, featuring a variety of rhythmic values, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, as well as rests and accidentals. The piece begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The handwriting is clear and legible, with some ink bleed-through visible from the reverse side of the page. The overall structure of the piece appears to be a single melodic line with a complex rhythmic accompaniment.

# Bach

works; and the number of different readings of the *Wohltemperirte Clavier* would fill a large volume. Amongst the more noticeable varieties of reading is

*Various readings* that of the E minor prelude in Part I. In Litolf's edition (Köhler) and Novello's (Best) there is a florid melody in the right hand, above the chords, which accompany the moving bass. In Chrysander's edition it is explained that Bach's more mature taste led him to discard the florid passages, and it is accordingly published from a later MS. with only the chords on the first and third beats of the bar, the melody being entirely omitted.<sup>1</sup>

The "Art of Fugue" is a series of workings of a single subject in many different ways. Like the *Wohltemperirte Clavier* it was primarily intended for educational purposes. Forkel gives the following account of it:

"This excellent and unique work was not published till 1752, after the composer's death, but was for the most part engraved during his life by one of his sons. Marpurg, at that time at the helm of musical literature in Germany, wrote a preface to the edition, in which much that is good and true is said concerning the work.

"But this 'Art of Fugue' was too lofty for the great world; it became only known in the very small world of *connoisseurs*. This small world was soon provided with copies; the plates were useless, and were finally sold by Bach's heirs as old copper." . . .

"The last fugue but one has three subjects, the third being the notes b, a, c, h. This fugue was however in-

<sup>1</sup> See Forkel, p. 64.

## “Musical Offering”

errupted by the blindness of the author, and could not be finished.

“To make up for the unfinished fugue, the editors added at the end the four voice chorale ‘Wenn wir im höchsten Nöthen sind,’ which he dictated to his son-in-law Altnikol on his death-bed.”

The work was brought out at the Leipsic Fair of Easter 1752. Mattheson was loud in his praise saying it would astonish all French and Italian fugue-makers. But the work was in reality finished. The MS. was complete, and the engraving was being done under the author’s direction when he died in 1750. No one could fulfil his intentions, and the engravers simply went on engraving everything that came to hand, both sketches and completed movements, and it was full of printer’s errors. Hauptmann clearly shows that the last (unfinished) fugue is certainly Bach’s own work, but that it has no connection with the “Art of Fugue,” which closes in reality with the fugue for two claviers. The series of fugues are all on one subject; the unfinished work leaves the subject, and has nothing to do with the other fugues. We have therefore Bach’s last work complete, and the incomplete portion is due to a mistake of the first publishers.

“The Musical Offering” is a series of fugues and canons on a subject given to Bach at Potsdam by Frederick the Great. The work consists of—

1. Fuga (ricercata) for three voices.
2. Fuga (ricercata) for six voices. *Musical*
3. VIII. Canons. *Offering*
4. Fuga canonica in epidiapente.
5. Sonata (Trio) for flute, violin, and bass.
6. Canon perpetuus for flute, violin, and bass.

# Bach

It is headed :

“Regis Iussu Cantio, Et Reliqua Canonica Arte Resoluta.”

The dedicatory letter will explain its purpose :

“MOST GRACIOUS KING,—To Your Majesty is proffered herewith in humblest obedience a musical offering, whose most excellent portion originates from your noble hand. I recall with respectful pleasure the peculiarly royal favour with which during my visit to Potsdam your Majesty was pleased to play to me a fugue theme, and to require me immediately to work it out in your presence. Obedience to your Majesty's command was my duty. I however soon remarked, that for want of proper preparation the working out was not as good as so excellent a theme required. I therefore resolved to work out this most royal theme properly and to make it known to the world. This project is now fulfilled to the best of my ability, and it has no other object than in some small way to do honour to the fame of a monarch, whose greatness and power both in the arts of peace and war, and especially in that of music are acknowledged and admired by all. I make bold to add this humble request: that your Majesty will accord a gracious reception to this small work, and by so doing still further extend your royal condescension.—Your Majesty's most humble and obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR.

“LEIPSIK, July 7, 1747.”

This dedication however only referred to a portion of the work, which was gradually completed and engraved later. The epithet *ricercata* perhaps refers to the mechanical difficulty of the pieces.



## As Teacher

The six Great or English Suites are so called according to Forkel<sup>1</sup> because they were written for some Englishman of rank. The same authority says that the six little French suites received their name because they are in French taste. It does not appear that the composer gave either of these names. Both sets seem to have been written at Cöthen.

All accounts agree as to Bach's wonderful capacity for teaching, and we have a description of his methods from one of his pupils, H. N. Gerber,<sup>2</sup> which we make no apology for quoting in full: *Bach as a teacher*

"He went to Leipzig to study partly law and partly music under the great Joh. Seb. Bach. . . . In the first six months he heard much excellent church music and many concerts under Bach's direction, but no opportunity arose which gave him courage to approach the great man, until at last he mentioned his wish to one of his friends called Wilde (afterwards organist at St Petersburg) who introduced him to Bach. Bach received him in the most friendly manner and at once called him 'Fellow-countryman.'<sup>3</sup> He promised to give him instruction, and asked whether he had practised fugues diligently. At the first lesson he placed the 'Inventions' before him. When Gerber had studied these to Bach's satisfaction, he was given a number of suites, and then the *Wohltemperirte Clavier*. This work Bach played through three times to him with unapproachable art; and my father counted those amongst his most enjoyable lessons when Bach, under the excuse that he felt indisposed to teach, would seat himself at one of his excellent instruments, and the

<sup>1</sup> P. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Father of the author of Gerber's Lexicon.

<sup>3</sup> Gerber was a Thuringian.

# Bach

hours passed like minutes. The end of a lesson was taken up with figured bass-playing, for which Bach would choose the violin solos of Albinoni; and I must confess that the skill with which my father performed these basses in Bach's manner, and especially in the flow of the parts amongst each other was unsurpassable. This accompaniment was so beautiful in itself that no solo part that I have heard could give me so much pleasure." Gerber was for two years under Bach.

Forkel<sup>1</sup> tells us that the first thing he taught was his own peculiar touch, and for this purpose the pupil was kept for several months at finger exercises, in fact they sometimes lasted from six to twelve months; but when the pupil's patience began to flag he was given little pieces which Bach composed specially for him, such as the six little preludes for beginners, and the two-part inventions. He wrote these during the lesson, and was thus able to make them suit the particular requirements of the pupil. Together with the finger exercises the pupil had to practise all manner of ornaments, and Bach demanded the severest possible application from all his pupils.

As soon as possible he was made to learn whichever of Bach's greater works suited him. In order to lighten the difficulties, Bach played the piece through to the pupil, and said, "that is how it must sound."

One can, says Forkel, scarcely enumerate the many advantages of such a method. Even if it were only that the pupil is roused to emulation through the pleasure of hearing such a performance, the advantage would be very great. But in addition to this he obtains at once a grip of the piece in its complete form, instead of having to

<sup>1</sup> P. 38.

# Teaching Composition

work it out bit by bit as he gradually overcomes the mechanical difficulties.

The instrument on which Bach taught was the clavichord, on account of its expressive quality which trained the ear to fine shades of tone; he would have nothing to say to mere finger training apart from understanding the music, and insisted on the cultivation of both art and technique together.

In teaching composition Bach did not begin with dry counterpoints leading to nothing, as in his time was done by all other teachers; still less did he trouble his pupils about tone-relationships, which in his opinion concerned only theorists and instrument makers. He started at once with pure four part figured bass, and insisted on the proper leading of the parts, because this would give the clearest insight into the harmonic progressions. He then went on to the chorale, to which he at first set the basses and made the pupil only write the tenor and alto, afterwards gradually making him write the bass. He insisted at all times not only on the greatest possible purity in the harmony, but on the natural and flowing connection of all the single voices. The models he himself has left are known to every connoisseur, and his inner voices are often so singable that they might serve for the upper part. This style had to be striven for by the pupil, and until he had reached a high degree of proficiency Bach did not consider it wise to allow him to try inventing on his own account. He took for granted that all his composition pupils had the faculty of thinking in music. If any had not this faculty he was advised not to attempt composition.

*Method of  
teaching  
Composition*

As soon as the above-mentioned preparations in

# Bach

harmony were finished, he began with two voice fugue, and in this, and all composition practice, the pupil was strictly forbidden to use the clavier. Those who were obliged to do so he called "Knights of the keyboard."

In fugue he was especially careful about the part writing—no voice must merely fill in the harmony, or break off before it had finished what it had to say. He looked upon his voices as persons, who conversed together as in private society, in which it would be unseemly for anyone to disturb the conversation either by uninteresting remarks, or by not finishing his sentences. On the other hand, he allowed his pupils as much freedom as possible with regard to intervals. They might try any experiments they liked as long as no damage was done to the purity of the harmony, or the inward meaning of the movement. He tried all possible experiments himself, and was glad to see his pupils do so. The whole of his system is to be found in Kirnberger's "Kunst des reinen Sätzes" (Art of pure writing).<sup>1</sup>

Among his pupils were his sons, of whom an account has already been given. The others were the following:—Johann Caspar Vogler, who began studying under him at Arnstadt and Weimar, and, according to Bach's own showing, was a very fine organist. He became organist and Burgomaster at Weimar.

Gottfried August Homilius, subsequently music director of the three chief churches at Dresden, and  
*Pupils* cantor of the Kreuzschule. He was also of considerable reputation as an organist and church composer. Died 1785.

Christoph Transchel, who died in 1800 at Dresden,

<sup>1</sup> Forkel, pp. 40, 41.

## Notable Pupils

was an esteemed teacher and clavier player. He was the owner of a considerable musical library.

Johann Ludwig Krebs eventually became Court organist and music director at Altenburg, where he died in 1803. He was a very good organist and composer. Bach's pun, "Ich habe in meinem Bache nur einen Krebs gefangen," "I have only caught one Crab in my stream," was intended to show the esteem in which he held him.<sup>1</sup>

J. G. Goldberg of Königsberg was declared by Bach to be one of his best pupils on the clavier and organ.

Altnikol, his son-in-law, a fine organ player, and organist at Naumburg. He helped his father-in-law considerably during his blindness.

John Philipp Kirnberger, born 1721, died at Berlin in 1783, was Court musician to Princess Amelia of Prussia, and celebrated as a theorist and composer.

Johann Friedrich Agricola (1720-1774) became composer to the Prussian Court. He was more known by his theoretical works than his compositions.

Johann Christian Kittel, who was organist at Erfurt and died in 1809, was a thorough harmonist, a clever and learned organist, an able composer, and a good teacher.

Johann Schneider, Court organist and first violinist at Saalfeld, and afterwards organist of the Nicolai Church at Leipsic. He was also a pupil of Graun.

Johann Martin Schubart (1690-1721) was Bach's first pupil; he became organist at Weimar, but died early.

A pupil named Voigt is mentioned by Emmanuel Bach as having come to his father after he (Emmanuel) had left the house. Perhaps he is the author of a "Con-

<sup>1</sup> See page 49.

# Bach

versation between an organist and his deputy about music," mentioned by Walther.

Gotthilf Ziegler, organist and music director at St Ulrich, Halle, was a renowned teacher, composer and writer.

Ernst Bach, his cousin, was Capellmeister at Eisenach, having first studied law, and become a barrister. He was also a composer and organist.

J. H. Müthel, organist in Riga, a good performer and composer. Gerber gives a long account of him, and Burney praises his playing and compositions.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that the first attempt to publish the *Wohltemperirte Clavier* was made in London. England was early in its recognition of the composer, chiefly through the efforts of Samuel Wesley (1766-1837) who, becoming acquainted with his works, eagerly propagated a knowledge of them. Wesley's edition of the *Wohltemperirte Clavier* was published in conjunction with C. F. Horn in 1810; and through his influence, Forkel's "Life" of Bach was translated and published in 1820. He became famous for his performances of Bach's organ fugues, or as they were called in those days "pedal fugues," and perhaps the name of his third son, Samuel Sebastian, may have some connection with his admiration for Sebastian Bach.

In 1849 the English Bach Society was founded, having as its objects the collection of the compositions and the performance of the works of J. S. Bach. It gave the first

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the above-mentioned professional pupils, all amateurs living near obtained at least a few lessons from "so great and celebrated a man."—FORKEL, p. 42.

## In England

performance of the "Matthew Passion" in England at Hanover Square Rooms in 1854 under Sterndale Bennett. After a few more performances the society was dissolved in 1870, and its library given to the Royal Academy of Music.

In 1875 the "Bach Choir" was formed under the conductorship of Mr Otto Goldschmidt, for the performance of the B minor Mass, which was effected in 1876 at St James's Hall, and the society was then placed on a permanent footing for the purpose of performing works of Bach and other composers. In 1885 Mr Otto Goldschmidt was succeeded by Professor Villiers Stanford, under whose *bâton* many of Bach's important works have been performed.

Bach is perhaps best known in England at present by his organ works, which are familiar to all competent organists, and his violin solos, which Herr Joachim has done so much to propagate. The *Wohltemperirte Clavier* is a household word to every earnest musician, and his *Passions* of *St Matthew* and *St John*, besides the *Christmas Oratorio* and a few cantatas, are frequently performed in London churches.

Selections from the organ works have been published in England from time to time: by S. Wesley, by Coventry and Hollier (with the pedal part arranged by Dragonetti for double bass), by Best and by Novello with Best as editor. A complete edition is being brought out by Sir F. Bridge and Mr J. Higgs.

## Chapter XI

The Christmas Oratorio — The Magnificat — The Lost Works—  
Instrumental Works—Bach's Playing—The Manieren, or Grace  
Notes.

BACH never wrote an oratorio in the sense of a sacred dramatic work to be performed on a stage without action. We have shown that the Passion settings are a portion of the Lutheran Lenten services; and the church cantatas take much the same place as the anthem in the English Cathedral service, with the difference of greater length, orchestral accompaniment, and an opportunity for the congregation to take part in the final chorale.

The so-called *Christmas Oratorio*, dated 1734, is nothing more than a series of six cantatas, to be sung during the service on six successive days at Christmas time. Each *Christmas Oratorio* begins with a chorus which is followed by several arias and recitatives, and each ends with a chorale, besides which, chorales are also interspersed in the body of the work. The second cantata opens with a most exquisite symphony, of a pastoral nature something akin to the pastoral symphony in the "Messiah," but longer, and with the most subtle orchestral effects; especially are the passages for two oboes interchanging with the strings most beautiful; and the chief "motive" of the symphony recurs in the



## Smaller Masses

accompaniment of the closing chorale. The character of the choruses is for the most part one of triumphant joyfulness, and the arias have all the tender effects which Bach so well knew how to produce.

The *Easter Oratorio* is a short cantata without a chorale.

The motets are compositions in several movements for unaccompanied voices, from three to eight in number. The movements are interspersed with chorales harmonised in four parts. The seventh motet, "Ich lasse dich nicht," though as fine as any, is considered to be almost certainly not by Bach, and is therefore only given as an appendix in vol. 39 of the Bach Gesellschaft edition. The appendix also gives a figured bass and instrumental accompaniment to No. 2. "Der Geist hift unsere Schwachheit auf."

*Easter  
Oratorio*

Motets by Bach and other composers are sung in the Thomas Church at Leipsic, and in the Kreuz-Church at Dresden at vespers on Saturday afternoons.

Bach also wrote a few secular vocal works. Among these are several birthday, wedding and funeral cantatas—odes for important personages; some "Dramme per Musica," two of which, the "Choice of Hercules," and "Tonet ihr Pauken" are taken bodily from the *Christmas Oratorio*, other words being adapted to the music; a cantata for the dedication of a new organ at Störmthal, a comic cantata in praise of coffee. Some of the secular cantatas were composed for the Concert Society which met once a week about 1736 in a coffee-house in the Katharinen-strasse at Leipsic, and of which Bach was the director. Among these was "The strife between Phoebus and Pan."

*Secular  
Works*

Besides the B minor Mass Bach wrote four "short"

# Bach

masses of much smaller calibre, four "Sanctus," and a "Magnificat" in D major of great power and beauty.

*Smaller* This work appears in two forms, of which  
*Masses and* one is much finer than the other, and is there-  
*Magnificat* fore considered to be the latest. It was the  
custom to intersperse the singing of the Latin  
Magnificat with four chorales, but this custom not coincid-  
ing with Bach's sense of the fitness of things, he added  
the chorales as an appendix to his score.

The work is for a five part choir, with arias, a duet, and a trio. The trio is a remarkable canon, or rather piece of canonic imitation in the voice parts, to the words "suscepit Israel puerum suum," to which the strings play an accompaniment, while the oboes play in their highest register the chorale "meine Seel' erhebt den Herren" ("my soul doth magnify the Lord"). And, as showing Bach's sense of form, the whole work is welded together by a fresh working of the material of the opening chorus, at the words "sicut erat in principio et nunc. . . . Amen." We have remarked on this kind of construction in the second cantata of the *Christmas Oratorio*,<sup>1</sup> and it is not at all infrequent with Bach.

Except opera and oratorio Bach wrote every kind of work that was known in his day. The Bach Gesellschaft completed the publication of his works in full score in 1898 in some sixty large quarto volumes. Complete editions of the vocal works in pianoforte score and the instrumental in full score have been published by Peters, and by Breitkopf and Härtel of Leipsic, while the editions of selected portions published from time to time since the beginning of the nineteenth century are innumerable.

<sup>1</sup> P. 144.

## MSS. of Works

But when we say "complete edition" it must be understood as referring only to the works that have been preserved, for a large number seem to have been lost when the great man died: before his property was valued for probate there was an unseemly scramble for his manuscripts among his elder sons.

Mizler, in his "Necrology," tells us the bare fact that there were five "year courses" of cantatas, *i.e.* sets of cantatas for each Sunday and holy day throughout the year. The Lutheran ecclesiastical year contains fifty-nine such days (six Sundays in Lent and three in Advent are excluded). The five courses would therefore require no less than 295 cantatas. Of these W. Friedemann took three "year courses," since he could use them in his post of organist at Halle, but his wretched circumstances forced him afterwards to part with them one by one.

Forkel only knew of "eight to ten motets for double chorus," and twenty-one church cantatas, two five-voice masses, a mass for two choirs, of which the first choir is accompanied by strings, the second by wind, a double-chorus Passion with text by Picander (this must be the "Matthew Passion"), a Sanctus, some motets, a single fugue for four voices, and a comic cantata.

The other two "year courses," which included about ninety cantatas, and the two known Passions, went to C. P. Emmanuel Bach.

The MSS. of the larger number of the existing works of Bach are in the Royal Library and in that of the Joachimsthal at Berlin. Many of these are in autograph. The parts are of more value than the scores, since they are not only more carefully copied, but contain the corrections for performance.

# Bach

Bach used to wrap up his scores and parts in covers on which the name of the work and title of the composer were fully given, while on the MSS. themselves nothing was given. If the cover were lost, therefore, the composer's name was lost. Many works by other composers are found in Bach's handwriting, both score and parts.

The Bach Gesellschaft has been at immense pains to search for all that exists of Bach's compositions. In *Difficulties in the way of publication* vol. vi. they give a long account of the difficulties they had to contend with in publishing the B minor Mass; the owner of the autograph score, placing every difficulty in their way, would neither sell it nor lend it to them, and finally tried to dispose of it secretly to some unknown person. They were obliged, therefore, to publish it from such copies as they could collect; but almost immediately after they had done so they obtained access to the precious MS. and were able to publish an appendix, giving whatever variations from their own edition were found there.

Of Bach's instrumental compositions the most important are, as we have indicated, those for the organ and other keyed instruments. He has left many orchestral works, but these have not the significance of his organ and clavier music, for the symphony, in the modern sense, was not yet developed.

His playing is thus described by the poet Schubart:—  
*Bach's playing* “J. S. Bach was a genius of the highest order, his soul is so peculiar, so gigantic, that centuries will have to pass before he is reached by anyone. He played the clavier, the

# His Playing

flügel, the cymbal with equal creative power, and the organ—who is like him? who will ever equal him? His fist was gigantic; he could, for example, stretch a 12th with the left hand, and perform running passages between with the three inner fingers; he made pedal runs with the greatest possible exactness, he drew the stops so silently that the hearer almost sank under the magic effect; his hand was never weary, and lasted out through a whole day's organ playing.

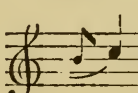
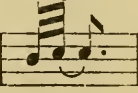
“The comic style was just as familiar to him as the earnest; he was equally a virtuoso and composer. What Newton was as a philosopher Bach was as a musician. He had such a wealth of ideas, that no one except his own great son can come near him; and with all this he combined also the rarest talent for teaching.”

With respect to the *Manieren* or grace-notes attacked in the “*Kritische Musik*” by Scheibe, a friend of Bach's answered the attack by saying that by means of these signs no performer would now be able to destroy the effect of a piece by applying his own method; those who went wrong would be put in the right way, and the honour of the master would be retained.

*The Grace notes*

The four chief ornaments are—

1. The *Vorschlag* (*appoggiatura*)

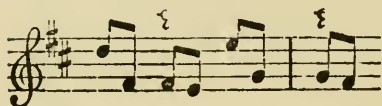
	Written	Played
		

It appears more in the parts than in the scores, and seems to have been mostly added after they were written out. When Bach required it to be played slowly he wrote out its exact value in full-sized notes.

# Bach

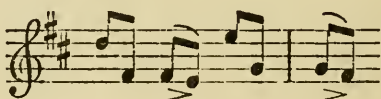
The Trill (*tr.*) seems to have been put down rather recklessly, perhaps on account of fashion. Thus, the oboe sometimes has trills given it which are quite impossible to perform.

Each composer had his own method of writing the various signs and there was of course hopeless confusion. There is no doubt that the trill was used to mean three different things, at the choice of the performer: namely, the vibrato of the violin and tremulant of the organ, or a real trill, or simply a *tenuto*. The sign




appears to be equivalent

to *tenuto*, thus



Notes which are neither detached (*gestossen*) nor slurred, nor held out, must be sustained for half their value, but if the word *ten.* appears above them they must be given their full value. These notes are generally quavers and crotchets in moderate and slow tempo, and they must not be played weakly, but with a refined and quite gentle touch. Some of the signs can be interpreted by the fact that they are written out in full in the parts. In this way

Reitz has shown the Schleifer (Glide)  to mean



It was called in French *Coulé*, sometimes written

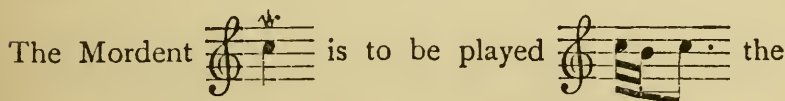
# Manieren or Grace Notes



is lengthened when over long notes. It means no precise number of notes. This is J. S. Bach's own explanation,



It will be seen that all four signs mean the same thing, and no turn is to be played as in the shake. According to C. P. Emmanuel Bach it must be so rapid that one does not perceive any loss of time from the principal note.<sup>1</sup>



the lower note being either a semitone, as above, or a tone, as in the little E minor fugue (Peters, 242).

<sup>1</sup> This description of the *Manieren* is extracted from the Introduction to vol. vii. of the Bach Gesellschaft Edition.

## Chapter XII

Innovations in the Fingering and Use of Keyed and Stringed Instruments.

AT Weimar Bach had devoted a considerable part of his energies to the clavier, as his official duties demanded. The harpsichord, being deficient in expression and in duration of sound, required rapidity of movement and polyphonic writing to produce its due effects. Bach did what was possible, however, to use the legato style on it, and on the other hand introduced on the organ, as far as it would bear it, the rapid execution peculiar to the harpsichord.

Before his period the fingering of keyed instruments had not been reduced to any systematic method. Michael Prætorius in his *Syntagma Musicum* thinks the matter of no importance, and that if a note was produced clearly and distinctly it was a matter of indifference how it was done.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In "The Compleat Tutor for the Harpsichord or Spinnet, wherein is shown the Italian manner of Fingering, &c." by S. and S. Thompson, the date of which is later than 1742, since it contains the minuet in *Samson*, the little finger is never used in a scale, and fingers are made to go under one another, in the way the thumb is used nowadays. The English numbering is used; and the example of an ascending and descending scale on p. 153 shows the chaotic condition of things.



# Fingering

+ 1 2 3 + 1 2 3 1 2 3 + 1 2 3 2 1 + 3 2 1 + 2 1 + 1

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the necessity of some method seems to have dawned on musicians; up to that time the thumb and little finger had hardly been used, owing to their shortness. In order to play legato on the organ, the middle fingers were made to go under and over each other. Daniel Speer, in 1697, gives the following fingering for the scale of C (for convenience we alter it to English numbering):—

*Right Hand* 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2

*Left Hand* 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1

*Right Hand* 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1

*Left Hand* 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2

Mattheson taught—

*Right Hand* 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 4

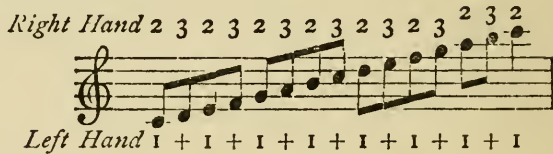
*Left Hand* 2 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 +

*Right Hand* 4 3 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2

*Left Hand* 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 3

# Bach

J. F. B. C. Majer, a Swabian organist about the same time, taught—



There is no advance in these fingerings on the book by Ammerbach, published in 1571.

The right thumb it will be seen was unused, and hung helpless—the fingers being stretched out flat to reach the keys.

In order to bring the thumb into use, Bach caused the fingers to be curved and to remain over their respective keys, so as to be able to strike them accurately and rapidly. The thumbs had to pass under the fingers, and to take an equal part with them in the playing.

The new kind of fingering was made the more necessary by the use of all the keys equally; for hitherto only a few keys had been used. The hand and arm were to be held horizontally, the wrist straight; the fingers bent in the natural position assumed by the hand when about to grasp any object. Each finger had to fall without disturbing the others; and Bach devoted an immense amount of labour to make his fingers independent and equal in strength. He could perform trills with all fingers equally well, and could play melodies at the same time with the other fingers. After a finger had held down a note as long as was necessary it was drawn towards the inner part of the hand on leaving the key. The wrist and elbows were kept perfectly quiet. The method was the same for both

## Other Fingering Methods

organ and harpsichord. The keys were not struck but pressed down. Bach raised his fingers so little that their movement was hardly noticeable. They were, however, still passed over one another, as well as the thumb, and in order not to break the legato effect, the finger passed over was drawn back before leaving the key. This method was particularly applicable to the clavichord, one of Bach's favourite instruments.

He liked the upper row of keys to be shallower than the lower, so that he could slip down from one to the other without change of finger.

But others were at work on the same ground. Couperin, organist of St Gervais at Paris, published in 1717 his "L'art de toucher le clavecin." J. G. Walther used the thumb, and has left some organ chorales with this indicated.

Heinichen and Handel also used the thumbs, and bent their fingers over the notes, so that they struck the right ones unconsciously.

Two short pieces with Bach's fingering in his own hand have come down to us—the rules laid down by his son C. P. Emanuel differ from them considerably—thus Emanuel limits the crossing to the thumb; Sebastian prescribes crossing of fingers as well.

Sebastian, in fact, retained all that was advantageous in the old system and engrafted on it the use of the thumb, etc. His son, who was the forerunner of modern piano-playing, simplifies his father's rules. His compositions were of a far less complicated nature than those of his father, and he therefore was able to use simpler fingering.

The hammer-like stroke required for the modern piano

# Bach

effectually banished the crossing of fingers over one another, by which pressure only, not a blow, could be obtained. The loss of Bach's complete method of fingering (which is not adapted for the piano) causes his compositions to be more difficult to the modern player than they were to him, but this does not hold good of the organ, the nature of which remains the same as in his time.

He played equally in all keys, and for this purpose had his instruments tuned in equal temperament, as is universally the case at present. Experiments had been made in this method of tuning by Werkmeister, who died in 1706, and, later, by J. G. Neidhardt.

The early experiments in tempering must have led to curious results—thus the major-thirds were flattened; and yet only when three major-thirds are sharpened (CE, E *Equal* G $\sharp$ , G $\sharp$  (Ab) C) do they reach a purely *temperament* tuned octave. Bach mastered the problem for himself. He tuned his own harpsichord and clavichord, making the major-thirds rather sharp; and he must have flattened the fifths as we do. His son Emanuel speaks of his testing the fifths by tuning their octave below, and making this a fourth below the starting point. What he did was the result of practical experiment, for he would have nothing to do with mathematical theory. He always quilled his harpsichord himself; and he made a point of practising the clavichord, since the expression possible on this instrument made the ear keener and more sensitive to the possibility of effect on the more inexpressive harpsichord.

Spitta considers that Bach's genius in a way foresaw the advent of a more perfect instrument than either the

# An Inventor

clavichord or harpsichord—an instrument which should combine the expression of the first with the power of the latter, and at the same time approach the organ in possibilities of legato and sustained sounds. Such an instrument is the modern pianoforte.

In 1740 Bach planned a lute-harpsichord, and got Zacharias Hildebrand, an organ-builder, to make it under his direction. It had gut strings, two to each key, and a set of octave metal strings. It had also cloth dampers, which made the instrument sound something like a real lute; and when these were raised, it sounded like a theorbo—it was in size shorter than an ordinary harpsichord (Adlung Mus. Mech. II., p. 139).

*The Lute-harpsichord*

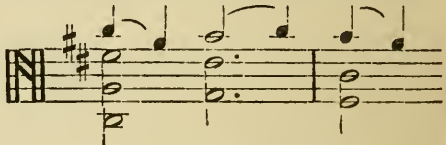
Although Bach was concertmeister, or leader of the orchestra at Cöthen, it is not to be supposed that he had any extraordinary facility on the violin. Quantz, in "Versuch einer Anweisung, etc.," rightly considers that for such a post, at any rate in those days, it was more necessary that the holder should be a good all-round musician with sufficient facility to execute the ordinary orchestral music, than that he should be a "virtuoso"—and not every virtuoso makes a good leader.

His knowledge of the construction of stringed instruments was sufficient for him to invent a new one while he was at Cöthen, in order to meet the demands made on the performer by his own music. This instrument, which he called the viola pomposa, was something between the viola and violoncello. It was played like a violin, and had five strings tuned to the four strings of the violoncello, with the addition of E above the first string. This additional

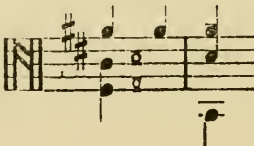
*Knowledge of stringed instruments*

# Bach


string makes the performance of his sonatas for violoncello comparatively easy. Thus in the sixth violoncello sonata, which is expressly written for five strings, in the third bar of

the saraband the chords 

are comparatively easy with the additional string; and

in the gavotte  the first chord would

be played with two open strings, which is impossible with a four-stringed instrument. He also altered the tuning of his violoncello, as in the fifth sonata, where he lowers the first string to G<sup>1</sup> and obtains the chords

 etc.

It seems impossible that he could have himself performed his violin and violoncello sonatas; they tax the highest efforts of the best performers of the present day; but his knowledge of stringed instruments and their possibilities is shown by these compositions to have been as profound as his knowledge of the organ. No mere theoretical knowledge could have sufficed to enable him

<sup>1</sup> Our readers will remember the familiar case in Schumann's piano-forte quartet, where he lowers the C string to B<sub>♭</sub> for a particular effect. De Beriot *raises* his fourth (violin) string to A for certain passages.

# Practical Knowledge

to write these things; he must have had a wider practical knowledge than any but the best *virtuosi*, and to this he united his enormous genius for composition.

It appears natural that the German violinists, with their feeling for full harmony, should have cultivated the art of double-stopping on stringed instruments, rather than that of pure melody and tone. It is said that Bruhns the organist, Buxtehude's pupil, while playing in three and four parts on his violin, would sometimes sit before an organ, and add a bass on the pedals.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. Vivien, a pupil of Léonard, and one of the first violins in the orchestra at Brussels about 1876, had a violin of which the bridge was cut nearly flat at the top. This enabled him to play on three and (with a little extra pressure of the bow) four strings at once, by which he produced very full effects.

## Chapter XIII

The Organs in Leipsic Churches—Bach's Method of Accompanying—  
The Pitch of Organs.

THERE were two organs in the Thomas Church, the larger of which dated from 1525. In 1721 it was enlarged by Scheibe, a builder of whom Bach had a very good opinion. In 1730 it was again improved, by giving the choir organ a keyboard of its own, instead of its being acted on by the great key-board as was formerly the case.

The organ contained :—

### GREAT

1. Principal (open diapason), .	16 ft.
2. Principal (open diapason), .	8 „
3. Quintadena, . . . . .	16 „
4. Octave (our principal), .	4 „
5. Quinta, . . . . .	3 „
6. Superoctava (our fifteenth),	2 „
7. Spiel-Pfeiffe, . . . . .	8 „
8. Sesquialtera gedoppelt, .	
9. Mixture, . . . . .	6, 8 and 10 ranks.

### BRUSTWERK<sup>1</sup>

1. Grobgedackt, . . . . .	8 ft.
2. Principal (open diapason), .	4 „

<sup>1</sup> The portion in front of the main organ and therefore behind the performer.



# Thomas Church Organ

3.	Nachthorn,	.	.	.	4 ft.
4.	Nasal,	.	.	.	3 „
5.	Gemshorn,	.	.	.	2 „
6.	Cymbal,	.	.	.	2 ranks.
7.	Sesquialtera,	.	.	.	
8.	Regal,	.	.	.	8 ft.
9.	Geigenregal,	.	.	.	4 „

## RÜCKPOSITIV <sup>1</sup>

1.	Principal,	.	.	.	8 ft.
2.	Quintadena	.	.	.	8 „
3.	Lieblich Gedacktes,	.	.	.	8 „
4.	Klein Gedacktes,	.	.	.	4 „
5.	Traversa,	.	.	.	4 „
6.	Violino,	.	.	.	2 „
7.	Raschquint gedoppelt,	.	.	.	
8.	Mixtur,	.	.	.	4 ranks.
9.	Sesquialtera,	.	.	.	
10.	Spitzflöt,	.	.	.	4 ft.
11.	Schallflöt,	.	.	.	1 „
12.	Krumhorn,	.	.	.	16 „
13.	Trommet,	.	.	.	8 „

## PEDAL

1.	Sub-bass von Metall,	.	.	.	16 ft.
2.	Posaune Bass,	.	.	.	16 „
3.	Trommeten Bass,	.	.	.	8 „
4.	Schalmeyen Bass,	.	.	.	4 „
5.	Cornet,	.	.	.	3 „

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary.

# Bach

There were also Tremulant, Vogelgesang, Zimbelstern-Ventils and ten bellows. The organ loft has been twice enlarged, first in 1802, and afterwards in 1823. It now accommodates the whole of the large double chorus and double orchestra employed in performance of the Passion music on Good Friday.

The smaller organ was built in 1489. In Bach's time it stood in a gallery opposite the large organ. It was of very little use, and in 1740 was sold to St John's Hospital. It had three manuals, pedal, and twenty-one stops, and was only employed on high festivals. As it was at a considerable distance from the other organ, difficulty was felt in keeping the two choirs together. This gallery remained, and was used for musical purposes, till 1886.

The organ of the Nicolai Church was built in 1598, repaired in 1692, and in 1725 was thoroughly renewed by Scheibe at a cost of 600 thalers.

The organ at the University Church was the best in Leipsic at that time. It consisted of:—

## GREAT

1. Principal (open diapason),	.	.	.	16	ft.
2. Quintatön,	.	.	.	16	„
3. Principal (open diapason),	.	.	.	8	„
4. Schalmey,	.	.	.	8	„
5. German Flute,	.	.	.	8	„
6. Gemshorn,	.	.	.	8	„
7. Octave,	.	.	.	4	„
8. Quinte,	.	.	.	3	„
9. Quintnasat,	.	.	.	3	„
10. Octavina,	.	.	.	2	„

# Leipsc University Organ

11.	Waldflöte, . . . .	2 ft.
12.	Mixture, . . . .	5 and 6 ranks.
13.	Cornet, . . . .	3 ranks.
14.	Zink, . . . .	2 „

## BRUSTWERK

1.	Principal, . . . .	8 ft.
2.	Gamba, . . . .	8 „
3.	Grobgedackt, . . . .	8 „
4.	Octave, . . . .	4 „
5.	Rohrflöte, . . . .	4 ft.
6.	Octave (fifteenth), . . . .	2 „
7.	Nasat, . . . .	2 „
8.	Sedesima, . . . .	1 „
9.	Schweizer Pfeife, . . . .	1 „
10.	Largo (No. of feet not stated).	
11.	Mixture, . . . .	3 ranks.
12.	Clear Cymbal, . . . .	2 „

## THIRD MANUAL

1.	Lieblich Gedackt, . . . .	8 ft.
2.	Quintatön, . . . .	8 „
3.	Flûte douce, . . . .	4 „
4.	Quinta Decima, . . . .	4 „
5.	Decima Nona, . . . .	3 „
6.	Hohlflöte, . . . .	2 „
7.	Viola, . . . .	2 „
8.	Vigesima Nona, . . . .	1½ „
9.	Weitpfeife, . . . .	1 „
10.	Mixtur, . . . .	3 ranks.
11.	Helle Cymbal, . . . .	2 ft.
12.	Sertin (perhaps serpent), . . . .	8 „

# Bach

## PEDAL

1.	Principal,	.	.	.	.	16	ft.
2.	Quintatön,	.	.	.	.	16	„
3.	Octave,	.	.	.	.	8	„
4.	Octave,	.	.	.	.	4	„
5.	Quinte,	.	.	.	.	3	„
6.	Mixtur,	.	.	.	.	5	and 6 ranks
7.	Quinten-bass,	.	.	.	.	6	ft.
8.	Jubal,	.	.	.	.	8	„
9.	Nachthorn,	.	.	.	.	4	„
10.	Octave,	.	.	.	.	2	„
11.	2nd Principal,	.	.	.	.	16	„
12.	Sub-bass,	.	.	.	.	16	„
13.	Posaune,	.	.	.	.	16	„
14.	Trompete,	.	.	.	.	8	„
15.	Hohlflöte,	.	.	.	.	1	„
16.	Mixtur,	.	.	.	.	4	ranks.

The organ had been tried by Bach on its completion in 1716, who wrote a very elaborate report.<sup>1</sup> It may be of interest to quote some of Bach's remarks. 1. He says that the space occupied is too confined to admit of easy access to some of the parts, in case of repairs being required. This was, however, not the fault of the builder Scheibe, as he was not allowed the space he asked for.

2. The wind must be made to come more equally, so as to avoid heavy rushes of wind.

3. The parts quite fulfil the description in all respects; and the contract, with the exception of the Schallmey and Cornet, which were changed by order of the college for a 2 ft. Octave (15th) and 2 ft. Hohlflöte, is completed.

<sup>1</sup> Given by Spitta, vol. ii. p. 289.

## Playing Figured Bass

4. The defects of intonation must be done away with ; and the lowest pipes of the Posaune and Bass Trumpet made to speak less roughly and harshly. The instrument to be frequently and thoroughly tuned in good weather.

5. The keys have too great a fall, but this cannot be helped, owing to the narrowness of the structure.

6. Finally, the window behind the organ should be built up as far as the top of the organ, or covered with an iron plate, to prevent damage by weather.

The above list of 54 stops is given by Spitta, who quotes from the "Acta" of the university ; but a MS. chronicle of Leipsic, discovered after 1880, of which the references to musical matters are quoted in the "Musikalisches Centralblatt" for 1884, has the following entry:—"1716, June. This summer the beautiful Pauliner organ, which consists of 67 stops, was finished." A complete list of the stops follows, but is not given in the "Musikalisches Centralblatt."

During the concerted music, the organist had to accompany from figured bass, and the voice part was rarely given him, as the cantor would not trouble to write it out, though Bach, with his characteristic thoroughness did so in many cases.

There exists a specimen of Bach's method of playing from figured bass in a MS. accompaniment to a violin sonata of Albinoni, by H. N. Gerber, a pupil of Bach.<sup>1</sup> It contains a few autograph corrections by Bach himself,

*Bach's  
method of  
playing from  
figured bass*

<sup>1</sup> It is given by Spitta as a supplement to vol. iii. It is worth noticing that the right hand plays the three upper notes in each chord, the left only playing the bass ; and this is how harmony exercises are still written in Germany.

# Bach

and it may be taken, therefore, as an example of the manner which Bach approved of. It is described by Spitta as of no melodic character, as being in four parts throughout, and as not adhering strictly to the harmonies given by Albinoni where an improvement was possible. The adornment of a figured bass accompaniment by a melody in the right hand was only possible to the greatest artists, such as Bach himself; and it soon went out of fashion.

During the seventeenth century it was the custom for performers to elaborate the melody written by a composer, and naturally Bach's were treated in this way. But it was complained that he left little for the performer to add, for he "indicated all the *manieren*, the small ornaments, and everything else that is understood by 'Method' in playing, by actual notes," and the performer could therefore not impress his own individuality on the piece.<sup>1</sup> Bach was particular to show exactly what he required; and it is evident that there was at this time a school of musicians rising, who objected to superfluous ornaments on the part of the performer. J. S. Petri objects to extemporised shakes and right hand melodies. Scheibe objects to contrapuntal accompaniment. Kirnberger says that the accompanist should aim at simplicity, and only add such ornaments as were absolutely necessary.

If the pedal was employed, the left hand helped with the harmonies. But if the bass moved rapidly the pedals only played short notes to mark the essential harmonic progressions; or the bass was even omitted, as the other

<sup>1</sup> There are organists still living who have not forsaken the ancient custom of adding small ornaments to the written notes.

## Organ-playing

instruments played it. For accompanying the solo voices in arias and recitatives the Gedact 8 feet was usually used alone, and was sometimes therefore called the "Musik gedact": it is the same as the English stopped diapason. The chords in a recitative were not held long, even if the bass notes were. They were played arpeggio, as on a harpsichord. But Petri considers that if there is a very soft stopped flute, the chords may be held in the tenor register and the changes of harmony indicated by a short pedal note.

Staccato playing was universal on the organ, but Bach and his pupils insisted on a legato style, and gradually eliminated the staccato, though in accompanying they still kept to it. The tradition of Bach's style of accompaniment was carried on by Kittel a pupil of Bach, who spread the knowledge of it through Thuringia, and one of Kittel's pupils, M. G. Fischer of Erfurt, continued it. He died in 1829, and was heard by Grell of Berlin (b. 1800, d. 1886), who described the performance to Spitta. He played the bass with considerable power, and accompanied it by short chords in the right hand on another manual, thus agreeing with Petri's direction that the organist is to accompany in as short a style as possible, and to withdraw the fingers after striking the chord.

But this was by no means Bach's only method of accompanying, for he demands in the majority of cases a legato accompaniment, and sometimes a "melodic" manner. In his *Matthew Passion* and some of his cantatas the organist is to play short chords in *recitativo secco*.

He considered the Gedact peculiarly adapted for purposes of accompaniment; and in many passages he

# Bach

dispensed with part or the whole of the bass instruments.

In order not to drown the voices, or make the organ too prominent, no reeds or mixtures were allowed to be used in accompanying. They were reserved for solo organ work, in which Bach made use of astonishing combinations of stops. Orchestral effects were produced by the contrasts of tone-colour in the different groups of instruments, string, brass, reeds and flutes. To these the organ, making use of diapason work only, formed a background, and it was not allowed to predominate over them.

Bach, in 1730, fixed the number of voices requisite for the performance of a cantata at twelve, and of instrumentalists, excluding the organist, at eighteen. His sympathies were so much more with instrumental than vocal music, that he treated the voice merely as an instrument capable of expressing words. The influence of Handel's works, in which the voice parts were of more importance than those of the instruments, brought about the change of arrangements by which the singers outnumbered the instrumentalists.

Students and admirers of Bach's music have often wondered how he could have got boys to overcome the immense difficulties of its execution. They certainly complained of the difficulties, but execution was at that time, owing to the Italian influence, more studied than now. Boys were made to practise shakes diligently every day. They were not expected to enter very much into the spirit of the music; it sufficed if they sang the notes correctly. Moreover there were plenty of falsetto



# Organ Pitch

sopranos and altos, and these could, of course, take the upper parts. The tenor voice became a soprano, the bass an alto. A falsetto soprano could sing up to E and F above the treble stave.

The pitch question at Leipsic must have caused considerable difficulty. The organ at St Thomas' Church was a tone higher than that of St Nicholas,<sup>1</sup> and many of the cantatas have the organ (continuo) parts in two keys, for the two organs. There must have been a separate set of string and wind instruments for each church; for the frequent alterations of strings by so great an interval as a tone would hardly conduce to good intonation.

*The pitch  
of organs*

There were in fact two recognised pitches in use, called chorus pitch and chamber pitch. Of these the chamber pitch was used for ordinary orchestral performances, and was a tone lower than the chorus pitch, to which the organ was usually tuned. This would cause no inconvenience if the orchestras were not used in the churches; but it is very strange that such a troublesome arrangement should have been allowed to continue after it had become the custom to employ the orchestra every Sunday.

<sup>1</sup> This is referred to by Berlioz in his "Instrumentation." Organ builders would frequently use the higher pitch to save the expense of the largest pipes, unless carefully watched.

## Chapter XIV

Bach as "Familien-Vater"—As a choirmaster—His eagerness to learn all that was new and of value in music—He finds time to conduct public concerts—His self-criticism—Bach was never a poor man—His reputation was gained by his playing rather than compositions—Portraits—Public monuments.

ONE often hears in Germany the expressions "Familien-Vater," "Haus-Vater," applied as terms of special commendation to public men, in the sense that their private life is of estimable character, that they do their duty well by their families instead of spending their whole energy in accumulating money or fame. To no artist could these terms be more fittingly applied than to the subject of this memoir. We have seen that he was unremitting in his efforts to give his sons and pupils the best possible education, and helped them forward in every way he could when they entered their professions, and how he secretly obtained a post for his son-in-law, Johann Christoph Altnikol, as a kind of wedding-present. Forkel says he was a "*vorzüglich guter* (particularly excellent) *Haus-Vater, Freund* (Friend) *und Staatsbürger* (Citizen). His company was pleasant to everyone, whether a stranger or an intimate, and anyone visiting him was sure of a courteous reception, so that his house was seldom without guests."

## Bach as Choirmaster

An interesting feature in his private life is his choice of persons to act as god-parents to his children. They were seldom his own relations, but persons of distinction, who might be able to help the children on in their subsequent career.

*Choice of Sponsors*

Among them were Bach's great friend, Prince Leopold of Cöthen, his brother Prince August Ludwig, his sister Princess Elenore, Privy Councillor Von Zanthier, Dr Gilmar, one of the chief men in the church at Mühlhausen; Gesner, rector of the Thomas School. Though far from seeking wealth, Bach was sufficiently a man of the world to see the value of ensuring a respectable position both for himself and his sons by any legitimate means in his power.

As a choirmaster Bach seems to have been a failure. He was far too irritable to be able to control boys, and the task was evidently extremely distasteful to him. Though he was sympathetic in the extreme with those who were in earnest in matters of art, it is very clear that he had not the tact and patience required for elementary teaching. One can well imagine how the stupidity and incompetence of many of the boys who came under him must have galled his ardent nature; and he was quite unfit to be a schoolmaster. Yet it is evident that he gained the confidence of some boys from the fact of his having trained them to assist him in the orchestra.

*Bach as choirmaster*

Of his own boyhood at Lüneberg a remarkable story is told to the effect that when his voice broke he for some days spoke and sang in octaves. It is of course quite conceivable on acoustical grounds that the first harmonic

# Bach

may have been prominent enough to be heard with the fundamental note ; and that he, being a musician, observed a phenomenon which would escape an ordinary boy.

Throughout his life he was ever eager to become acquainted with everything new that was of any value. New organs, new compositions, newly-invented instruments, were all a source of interest to him. Thus, directly Silbermann of Freiburg had made a few of his "fortepianos" in imitation of the new invention of Cristofori, Bach was eager to try them. But the hammerlike blow required was quite foreign to Bach's method of playing, in which the fingers were always kept as close as possible to the keys ; and though he praised the tone, he rather freely condemned the touch. Silbermann was exceedingly angry and would not have anything to do with Bach for a long time ; but he, nevertheless, set to work to improve the touch, and after some fifteen years of patient labour succeeded in producing the satisfactory instruments which Bach played on at Potsdam shortly before his death. Hilgenfeldt considers that the general use of the pianoforte took its origin from these perfected instruments.

In the midst of all his occupations Bach found time to conduct public concerts, of which Hilgenfeldt quotes the following advertisement :

## "NOTICE OF THE MUSICAL CONCERTS AT LEIPSIK."

"The two public musical concerts or assemblies, which are held here every week, are still flourishing.

## Self-Criticism

One is directed by Herr John Sebastian Bach, Capellmeister to the Grand-duke of Weissenfels, Music director of the Churches of St Thomas and St Nicholas; and it takes place in the Coffee-house of Zimmermann, in Catherine Street, every Friday evening from 8 to 10 o'clock; but during the Fair twice a week, namely, Tuesdays and Fridays. The members of these musical concerts consist for the most part of students, and there are always good musicians among them, so that often, as is known, some of them become in time celebrated performers. Every musician is allowed to perform publicly in these musical concerts, and there are usually some among the audience who are able to judge the value of a competent musician."

*Public  
concerts*

Bach was a severe critic of his own works. Hilgenfeldt tells us that many of those which did not come up to his ideal of what they should be were cast aside by him, and that such of his youthful works as he considered worth keeping were constantly improved by him and brought to a higher standard. Thus, the first movement of the third organ sonata, which originally belonged to the *Wohltemperirte Clavier*, was altered to the extent of having large portions cut out, and others essentially changed and improved, so that phrases of small significance obtained an importance of which no signs appeared in the earlier composition.

*Self-  
criticism*

He reserved his teaching for those who could really profit by it, and if he found that a pupil had not sufficient talent, he would, with every kindly courtesy, recommend him not to seek his living by music. The result was that a strong feeling for the dignity and value of art was spread by his pupils, who for the

*Teaching*

# Bach

most part attained to important positions in their profession. One of his pupils, Doles, whose name had a place of honour in the old Gewandhaus at Leipsic, was Cantor of St Thomas for thirty-four years (after the death of Harrer), and was held in great esteem as a teacher and composer.

Though at no time rich, Bach was never a poor man. *A good standing always maintained* The various payments in kind, such as rent-free dwelling, garden produce, etc., were almost sufficient to support him, and to make his salary available for self-improvement, for journeys, and for the education of his children.

And that he was able to collect more than eighty theological works, at a time when books were an expensive luxury, and that he could give no less than three clavichords with pedals at once to his son, Joh. Christian, shows that his position was one of comfort.

Though the Council and the *Leipsic Chronicle* took little notice of his death, it appears that the Society *Recognition on his death* founded by Mizler caused a funeral ode by the then rector, Dr Ventzky, to be set to music and performed; and he seems to have been much mourned outside Leipsic, as the chief support of serious German music.

Not as a composer, but as a performer, however, was he mourned. It was reserved for later generations to fully appreciate what Hilgenfeldt describes as the "spiritual and everlasting" side of his genius. In those days the composer and performer were one and the same person. No one was considered an artist who could only perform, however well, if he could not also compose; and, especially on the organ, good improvisation was considered the chief

## Portraits and Statues

qualification of a musician. He was expected to be in a position to extemporise at any time and under any conditions a fugue, or a set of variations on any theme given to him; and his ability in this respect was the criterion by which he was judged. It was natural, therefore, that Bach's fame during his lifetime should rest more on his extempore performances than on his written compositions, which, remaining in manuscript, would probably serve chiefly as models for his pupils to work from.

Four portraits of Bach are known to have been painted. One, which seems to have been the first, is a half length picture showing him in a dress coat of the fifth decade of the eighteenth century. It belonged to Kittel, and was kept by him as a kind of sacred possession, only to be shown on special occasions, or as a reward to a diligent pupil. It was in a massive gold frame, and hung behind a curtain over the harpsichord in Kittel's study. On his death it came into the possession of the church of which he was organist.

The second was also a half-length, and belonged to his son Carl Philip Emanuel. It was painted by Hausmann.

The third, also by Hausmann, is shown in our frontispiece. It is preserved in the Thomas School, and, according to Becker, was painted on his becoming a member of the Leipsic Musical Society. A fourth, preserved in the Joachimsthal Gymnasium at Berlin, was formerly in the possession of Princess Amalie of Prussia, and seems to have been painted by Geber.

A few good copper engravings were made from the various portraits, and a number of bad lithographs from

# Bach

the engravings. Some successful plaster busts have also been made from the pictures.

Germany is much given to honouring those of her sons who have distinguished themselves in art by erecting memorials to them in public places: but not till nearly one hundred years after his death was such a monument thought of for Bach. In 1840, Mendelssohn gave an organ recital in the Thomas Church, with the object of opening a fund for this purpose with the proceeds, and on April 23, 1843, a medallion by Knauer was solemnly unveiled on the walls of the Thomas Church. The opportunity was taken of performing many of Bach's compositions; and amongst those present was the last descendant of the great man, with his wife and two daughters. This was William Bach, then 81 years of age, a son of the Bückeburger Bach.

In 1864 a large new organ was erected in the New Church at Arnstadt "in honour of John Sebastian Bach," containing his portrait over the keyboards: and in 1884 a Bach festival was held at Eisenach on the occasion of the unveiling of a fine bronze statue of the composer in the Market-place.



# Catalogue of Bach's Vocal Works

*Matthew Passion.* First performed, 1729. English edition, Novello.

*St John Passion.* Probably written at Cöthen, and much altered before it received its present form. English edition, published by Novello.

*St Luke Passion.* Of doubtful authenticity. English edition, Novello.

*Mass in B minor.*

” *F.*

” *A.* Written in 1737. Partly borrowed from other works.

*Mass in G minor.* } Adapted from cantatas.

” *G major.* }

These four “*Missæ breves*” contain the Kyrie and Gloria, the only part of the Mass retained in the Lutheran Service in Latin.

*Magnificat in D.* Written for the Christmas Festival at St Thomas' Church, and sung at vespers after the sermon. Edition with English words, Novello. It is for five voices, three trumpets, two flutes, two oboes, strings and organ.

*Sanctus in C.* }  
 ” *D.* } Sung after the morning sermon, as an  
 ” *D minor.* } introduction to the Communion Ser-  
 ” *G.* } vice.

## CHURCH CANTATAS

*The numbers refer to the Bachgesellschaft Edition.*

2 *Ach Gott vom Himmel sieh darein.* Second Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.

# Bach

- 3 *Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid.* Second Sunday after Epiphany. Chorale Cantata.
- 58 *Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid.* Second Sunday after Christmas. Solo Cantata for soprano and bass.
- 135 *Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder.* Third Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata, Leipsic.
- 162 *Ach, ich sehe, itzt, da ich.* Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.
- 114 *Ach, lieben Christen, seid getrost.* Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 26 *Ach wie flüchtig, ach wie nichtig!* Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 33 *Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ.* Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 72 *Alles nur nach Gottes Willen.* Third Sunday after Epiphany.
- 68 *Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt.* Tuesday in Whitsun-week. English edition, "God so loved the World," Novello.
- 42 *Am Abend aber desselbigen Sabbaths.* First Sunday after Easter (Quasimodogeniti).
- 186 *Arg're dich, o Seele nicht.* Seventh Sunday after Trinity.
- 128 *Auf Christi Himmelfahrt allein.* Ascension Day.
- 131 *Aus der Tiefe rufe ich, Herr, zu dir.* Composed for Dr. G. C. Gilmar, Pastor of Mühlhausen.
- 38 *Aus tiefer Noth schrei ich zu dir.* Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 131 *Aus tiefer Noth schrei ich zu dir.* Composed at Mühlhausen about 1707.
- 185 *Barmherziges Herze, der.* Fourth Sunday after Trinity.
- 132 *Bereitet die Wege, bereitet.* For no special season. Weimar, 1715. Words by Salomo Franck.
- 87 *Bisher habt ihr nichts gebeten in meinem Namen.* Fifth Sunday after Easter.
- 6 *Bleib' bei uns, denn es will Abend.* Tuesday in Easter Week. English edition, "Bide with us," Novello.
- 39 *Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot!* First Sunday after Trinity.
- 148 *Bringet dem Herrn Ehre.* Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

# Cantatas

- 63 *Christen, ätzt diesen Tag.* Christmas.
- 4 *Christ lag in Todesbanden.* Easter Day.
- 121 *Christum wir sollen loben schon.* Christmas. Chorale Cantata.
- 7 *Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam.* St John's Day. Chorale Cantata.
- 95 *Christus, der ist mein Leben.* Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.
- 141 *Das ist je gewisslich wahr.* Third Sunday in Advent.
- 122 *Das neu gebor'ne Kindelein.* First Sunday after Christmas. Chorale Cantata.
- 40 *Dazu ist erscheinen der Sohn.* Christmas.
- 195 *Dem Gerechten muss das Licht.* Wedding Cantata.
- 15 *Denn du wirst meine Seele nicht in Hölle lassen.* Monday in Easter Week. Composed at Arnstadt, probably in 1704. See p. 27.
- 157 *Der Friede sei mit dir.* Purification; also for Easter.
- 196 *Der Herr denket an uns.* Wedding Cantata.
- 112 *Der Herr ist mein getreuer Hirt.* Second Sunday after Easter (Misericordias).
- 31 *Der Himmel lacht, die Erde jubiliret.* Monday in Easter Week. One of the few cantatas containing a chorus for five voices. The instrumental introduction is called "Sonata."
- 75 *Die Elenden sollen essen.* First Sunday after Trinity.
- 76 *Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre.* Second Sunday after Trinity.
- 116 *Du Friedensfürst, Herr Jesu Christ.* Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 104 *Du Hirte Israel, höre.* Second Sunday after Easter (Misericordias). English edition, "Thou Guide of Israel," Novello.
- 77 *Du sollst Gott, deinen Herren, lieben.* Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.
- 23 *Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn.* Quinquagesima (Estomihi).  
*Ehre sei dir Gott gesungen.* Part V. of Christmas oratorio. English edition, Novello.  
*Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe.* Christmas. Incomplete.

# Bach

- 80 *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.* Reformation Festival. English edition, "A Stronghold Sure," Novello. Composed 1717, when Bach went to Cöthen. This was the first cantata published in the nineteenth century. It was also arranged to Latin words, beginning, "Gaudete, omnes populi."
- 134 *Ein Herz, das Seinen.* Wednesday in Easter Week. Cöthen, between 1717 and 1723.
- 24 *Ein ungefärbt Gemüthe.* Fourth Sunday after Trinity.
- 136 *Erforsche mich Gott, und erfahre.* Eighth Sunday after Trinity. Leipzig, 1737 or 1738.
- 66 *Erfreut euch, ihr Herzen!* Tuesday in Easter Week.
- 83 *Erfreute Zeit im neuen Bunde.* Purification.
- 126 *Erhalt' uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort.* Sexagesima. Chorale Cantata.
- 173 *Erhöhtes Fleisch und Blut.* Tuesday in Whitsun-week. The music was originally written for a Serenade for the birthday of Prince Leopold of Cöthen. The MS. Serenade is in the Royal Library at Berlin.
- 175 *Er ruft seinen Schafen mit.* Wednesday in Whitsun-week. Solo Cantata for tenor and bass.
- 172 *Erschallet, ihr Lieder.* Whitsunday.
- 184 *Erwünschtes Freudenlicht.* Wednesday in Whitsun-week.
- 19 *Es erbub sich ein Streit.* Michaelmas Day.
- 9 *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her.* Sixth Sunday after Trinity.
- 45 *Es ist dir gesagt, Mensch, was gut ist.* Eighth Sunday after Trinity.
- 176 *Es ist ein trotzig und verzagt Ding.* Trinity Sunday.
- 108 *Es ist euch gut, dass ich hingehe.* Fourth Sunday after Easter (Cantata).
- 25 *Es ist nichts Gesundes an meinem Leibe.* Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity. Edition with English words, "Lo, there is no soundness within my body." Rieter-Biedermann.
- 90 *Es reifet euch ein schrecklich.* Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.
- 187 *Es wartet Alles auf dich.* Seventh Sunday after Trinity, 1737. Music is used for Mass in G minor.

# Cantatas

- Fallt mit Danken.* Part IV. of Christmas oratorio. English edition, Novello.
- 52 *Falsche Welt, dir trau.* Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity. Solo Cantata for soprano.
- 30 *Freue dich, erlöste Schaar.* St John's Day, originally a "Dramma per Musica" in honour of the Saxon Minister, Von Henicke. Composed in 1737, and arranged as a church cantata, 1738, after Bach had received the title of Court Composer. It is in the "Lombardic" style introduced by Vivaldi, consisting of frequent syncopation.
- 35 *Geist und Seele wird.* Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.
- 129 *Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott.* Trinity Sunday.
- 91 *Gelobet seist du, Jesus Christ.* Christmas. Chorale Cantata. Words by Martin Luther.
- 18 *Gleich wie der Regen und.* Sexagesima. The orchestration is unusual, consisting of four violas, fagotto, violoncello and organ.
- 191 *Gloria in excelsis Deo.* Christmas. Rearranged from the B minor Mass.
- 79 *Gott der Herr, ist Sonn' und Schild.* Reformation Festival.
- 106 *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit.* For no special season. English edition, "God's time is the best," Novello. Called "Actus tragicus," probably a funeral cantata. Mühlhausen about 1708.
- 43 *Gott fährt auf mit Jauchzen.* Ascension Day. English version, "God goeth up with shouting," Novello.
- 71 *Gott ist mein König.* Election of Town Council at Mühlhausen, 1708. See p. 36.
- 191 *Gott ist uns're Zuversicht.* Wedding Cantata.
- 28 *Gottlob! nun geht das Jahr.* First Sunday after Christmas.
- 120 *Gott, man lobet dich in der Stille.* Election of Town Council at Leipsic. In the score the letters J.J. (Jesu juva) frequently occur.
- 169 *Gott soll allein mein Herze.* Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity. For alto solo.
- 171 *Gott, wie dein Name, so ist auch dein Ruhm.* Circumcision. The first chorus occurs with modifications as part of the "Credo" of the B minor Mass.

# Bach

- 67 *Halt' im Gedächtnis Jesum Christ.* First Sunday after Easter (Quasimodogeniti). Edition with English words, "Hold in remembrance Jesus Christ," Rieter-Bieder-mann.
- 96 *Herr Christ, der ein'ge Gottes Sohn.* Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata. Words by Elizabeth Creutzinger.
- 102 *Herr, deine Augen sehen nach dem.* Tenth Sunday after Trinity.
- 105 *Herr, gehe nicht in's Gericht.* Ninth Sunday after Trinity.  
*Herr Gott, Beherrscher aller Dinge.* Wedding Cantata. Incomplete.
- 130 *Herr Gott, dich loben alle wir.* Michaelmas Day.
- 16 *Herr Gott, dich loben wir.* Circumcision. Chorale Cantata.
- 113 *Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut.* Eleventh Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 127 *Herr Jesu Christ, wahr'r Mensch und Gott.* Quinquagesima (Estomihi). Chorale Cantata.  
*Herrscher des Himmels.* Part III. of Christmas oratorio. English edition, Novello.  
*Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde schnauben.* Part VI. of Christmas oratorio. English edition, Novello.
- 73 *Herr, wie du willst, so schick's mit mir!* Third Sunday after Epiphany.
- 147 *Herz und Mund und That und Leben.* The return of Mary from Egypt.
- 182 *Himmelskönig, sei willkommen.* Annunciation. Originally composed for Palm Sunday.
- 194 *Höchst erwünschtes Freudenfest.* Dedication of the organ at Störmthal.
- 55 *Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht.* Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity. For tenor solo.
- 85 *Ich bin ein guter Hirt.* Second Sunday after Easter (Misericordias).
- 84 *Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke.* Septuagesima.
- 48 *Ich elender Mensch wer wird mich.* Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

# Cantatas

- 133 *Ich freue mich in dir.* Christmas. Chorale Cantata. Leipsic, 1737.
- 49 *Ich geh' und suche mit.* Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.
- 109 *Ich glaube lieber Herr, hilf meinem.* Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.
- 82 *Ich habe genug.* Purification.
- 188 *Ich habe meine Zuversicht.* Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity. The copyist directs that the "organ concerto" of "Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal" in D minor (arranged from the Clavecin Concerto in that key) is to be used as an "introduction." Words by Picander.
- 92 *Ich hab' in Gottes Herz und Sinn.* Septuagesima. Chorale Cantata. Words by Paul Gerhardt.
- 21 *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis.* "Per ogni tempi," "For all times." English edition, "My spirit was in heaviness," Novello. Composed on his being made concert-meister at Weimar, and performed there on the third Sunday after Trinity, 1714.
- 162 *Ich, ich sehe, jetzt da ich zur Hochzeitgehe.* Solo Cantata for soprano, alto, tenor, bass.
- 158 *Ich lasse dich nicht, du segnest.* Purification. Solo Cantata for tenor and bass. The violetta occurs in the score.
- 174 *Ich liebe den Höchsten von ganzem.* Whitsunday. Solo Cantata for alto, tenor, bass.
- 177 *Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ.* Fourth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 156 *Ich steh' mit einem Fuss im Grabe.* Third Sunday after Epiphany.
- 160 *Ich weiss, dass mein Erlöser.* Monday in Easter Week.
- 56 *Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen.* Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity. For bass solo.
- 164 *Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo.* Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity. Solo Cantata for soprano, alto, tenor, bass.
- 167 *Ihr Menschen, rühmet Gottes.* St John's Day. Solo Cantata for soprano, alto, tenor and bass.
- 193 *Ihr Pforten zu Zion.* Election of Town Council.
- 103 *Ihr werdet weinen und heulen.* Third Sunday after Easter (Jubilate).

# Bach

- 97 *In allen meinem Thaten.* For no special season. Words by Dr Paul Flemming.  
*Jauchzet, frohlocket.* Christmas oratorio. Part I., English version, Novello.
- 51 *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen.* Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity. Solo Cantata for soprano.
- 78 *Jesu, der du meine Seele.* Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity. In this cantata the ground bass of the "Crucifixus" of the B minor Mass is used. Edition with English words, "Jesu, Saviour, who by dying," Rieter-Biedermann.
- 41 *Jesu, nun sei gepreiset.* Circumcision. Chorale Cantata. English edition, "Jesus, now will we praise Thee," Novello.
- 22 *Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe.* Quinquagesima (Estomihi). Bach's test piece for the Leipsic post after the death of Kuhnau. Performed there, February 7th, 1723.
- 81 *Jesus schläft, was soll ich hoffen?* Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.
- 161 *Komm du süsse Todesstunde!* Purification ; also for the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.  
*Kommt, eilet, lauft.* Easter oratorio.
- 181 *Leicht gesinnte Flattergeister.* Sexagesima.
- 8 *Liebster Gott, wann werd' ich sterben.* Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.
- 123 *Liebster Immanuel, Herzog der Frommen.* Epiphany. Chorale Cantata.
- 32 *Liebster Jesu, mein Verlangen.* First Sunday after Epiphany. Called "Dialogue." Solo Cantata for soprano and bass.
- 137 *Lobe den Herren, den Mächtigen.* Twelfth Sunday after Trinity. Leipsic, between 1742 and 1747. Words by Joachim Neander.
- 69 *Lobe den Herrn meine Seele!* Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.
- 143 *Lobe den Herrn meine Seele.* New Year's Day.
- 11 *Lobet Gott in seinen Reichen.* Ascension Day. Called by Bach "oratorium festo ascensionis Christi." Part of this cantata is used in the B minor Mass.



# Cantatas

- 115 *Mache dich, mein Geist, bereit.* Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 149 *Man singet mit Freuden vom Sieg.* Michaelmas Day.
- 124 *Meinen Jesum lass' ich nicht.* First Sunday after Epiphany. Chorale Cantata.
- 10 *Meine Seel' erhebt den Herren.* Return of Mary from Egypt. Chorale Cantata.
- 189 *Meine Seele rühmt und preist.* For no special season.
- 13 *Meine Seufzer meine Thränen.* Second Sunday after Epiphany. Solo Cantata for soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices, accompanied by wind instruments and organ, no strings being used.
- 155 *Mein Gott, wie lang'.* Second Sunday after Epiphany.
- 154 *Mein liebster Jesus ist verloren.* First Sunday after Epiphany.
- 125 *Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr' dahin.* Purification. Chorale Cantata.
- 150 *Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich.* For no special season.
- 101 *Nimm' von uns Herr, du treuer Gott.* Tenth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 144 *Nimm, was dein ist, und gehe hin!* Septuagesima.
- 192 *Nun danket alle Gott.* For no special season.
- 50 *Nun ist das Heil und die Kraft.* For no special season.
- 61 *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland.* First Sunday in Advent. First composition in A minor. Inside the cover of this cantata Bach has written the order of the service for the morning of Advent Sunday, 1714, at Leipsic. See p. 44.
- 62 *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland.* First Sunday in Advent. Chorale Cantata. Second composition in B minor.
- 163 *Nur Jedem das Seine!* Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity. Solo Cantata for soprano, alto, tenor and bass.
- 34 *O ewiges Feuer, o ursprung der Liebe.* Whitsunday. English edition, "O Light Everlasting," Novello.  
*O ewiges Feuer.* Wedding Cantata. Incomplete.
- 20 *O Ewigkeit du Donnerwort.* First Sunday after Trinity.
- 60 *O Ewigkeit du Donnerwort.* Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity. Solo Cantata for alto, tenor and bass.

# Bach

- 165 *O heil'ges Geist und Wasserbad.* Trinity Sunday. Solo Cantata for soprano, alto, tenor, bass.
- 118 *O Jesu Christ mein's Lebenslicht.* The accompaniment is for two luiti, cornet and three trombones; no strings or organ. It was probably intended for the open air (perhaps for a funeral) as it is the only cantata with no continuo part.
- 119 *Preise Jerusalem den Herrn.* Performed in the Nicolai Church on August 30, 1723, at the election of Town Council. It was also performed by Mendelssohn on the unveiling of the Bach Memorial at Leipsic, April 23, 1843.
- 46 *Schauet doch und sehet.* Tenth Sunday after Trinity.
- 153 *Schau' liebe Gott wie meine Feinde.* Second Sunday after Christmas.
- 53 *Schlage doch! gewünschte Stunde.* Funeral Cantata for alto solo.
- 180 *Schmücke dich o liebe Seele.* Twentieth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 36 *Schwingt freudig euch empor.* First Sunday in Advent.
- 64 *Sehet welch' eine Liebe.* Christmas.
- 159 *Sehet, wir geh'n hinauf.* Quinquagesima (Estomihi).
- 117 *Sei Lob und Ehr' dem höchsten Gut.* For no special season.
- 57 *Selig ist der Mann.* Christmas. Solo Cantata for soprano and bass.
- 88 *Siehe ich will viel Fischer.* Fifth Sunday after Trinity.
- 179 *Siehe zu dass deine Gottesfurcht nicht.* Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.
- 65 *Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen.* Epiphany. Edition with English words, "They all shall come from Saba," Rieter-Biedermann.
- 44 *Sie werden Euch in den Bann thun.* Sunday after Ascension Day (Exaudi).
- 183 *Sie werden Euch in den Bann thun.* Sunday after Ascension Day (Exaudi).
- 190 *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied.* Circumcision. Incomplete. Performed 25th of June 1730, at the second Jubilee celebration of the Augsburg Confession.
- 145 *So du mit deinem Munde bekennest.* Easter Day, and Wednesday in Easter Week.

# Cantatas

- 151 *Süsse Trost, mein Jesu kommt.* Christmas.
- 168 *Thue Rechnung Donnerwort.* Ninth Sunday after Trinity. Solo Cantata for soprano, alto, tenor, bass.
- 152 *Tritt auf die Glauben's Bahn.* First Sunday after Christmas.  
*Und es waren Hirten auf dem Felde.* Part II. Christmas oratorio. English edition, Novello.
- 110 *Unser Mund sei voll Lachens.* Christmas.
- 142 *Uns ist ein Kind geboren.* Christmas.
- 170 *Vergnügte Ruh' beliebte.* Sixth Sunday after Trinity. For alto solo.
- 140 *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme.* Twenty-seventh Sunday after Trinity. Leipsic, 1742. Words by P. Nicolai.
- 70 *Wachet, betet, seid bereit allezeit.* Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.
- 86 *Warlich ich sage euch.* Rogation Sunday.
- 14 *Wär' Gott nicht mit uns diese Zeit.* Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.
- 138 *Warum betrübst du dich mein Herz.* Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity. Leipsic, 1737. Words by Hans Sachs.
- 94 *Was frag' ich nach der Welt!* Ninth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 98 *Was Gott thut das ist wohlgethan.* Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.
- 99 *Was Gott thut, das ist wohlgethan.* Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.
- 100 *Was Gott thut, das ist wohlgethan.* For no special season. Words by S. Rudigast.
- 111 *Was mein Gott will das g'sche all' zeit.* Third Sunday after Epiphany. Chorale Cantata.
- 89 *Was soll ich aus dir machen.* Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.
- 107 *Was willst du dich betrüben.* Seventh Sunday after Trinity.
- 12 *Weinen, klagen, sorgen, zagen.* Third Sunday after Easter (Jubilate). The opening chorus is on the same ground bass as the "Crucifixus" of the B minor Mass.
- 37 *Wer da glaubet und getauft wird.* Ascension Day.

# Bach

- 17 *Wer Dank opfert der preiset mich.* Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity. Edition with English words, "Whoso offereth praise," Reiter-Biedermann.
- 59 *Wer mich liebet der wird mein.* Whitsunday.
- 74 *Wer mich liebet der wird mein.* Whitsunday. Solo Cantata for soprano and bass.
- 93 *Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten.* Fifth Sunday after Trinity.
- 47 *Wer sich selbst erhöht der soll.* Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.
- 27 *Wer weiss wie nahe mir mein Ende.* Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity. English edition, "When will God recall my spirit, Novello.
- 54 *Widerstehe doch der Sünde.* For no special season. Alto solo.
- 1 *Wie Schön leuchtet der Morgenstern.* Annunciation. Chorale Cantata.
- 29 *Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir.* Election of Town Council at Leipsic, 1737.
- 146 *Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal.* Third Sunday after Easter (Jubilate).
- 166 *Wo gehest du hin?* Fourth Sunday after Easter (Cantata). Solo Cantata for alto, tenor, bass.
- 178 *Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns hält.* Eighth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.
- 139 *Wohl dem der sich auf seinem Gott.* Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata, Leipsic, between 1737 and 1744.
- 5 *Wo soll ich fliehen hin.* Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity. Chorale Cantata.

## FUNERAL ODE

*Lass, Fürstin, lass noch einen Strahl.* Called "Weeping Leipsic." Written for the death of Princess Christiane Eberhardine, wife of Augustus the Strong.

## MOTETS

*Jesu meine Freude.* Five voices. English edition, "Jesu, priceless treasure," Novello. A hymn by Franck in six stanzas.

# Secular Cantatas

- Der Geist hilft unsrer Schwachheit auf.* Eight voices. Written for the funeral of the Rector Heinrich Ernesti, 1729. The composer added a figured bass for the organ. English edition, "The Spirit also helpeth us," Novello.
- Furchte dich nicht.* Eight voices. English edition, "Be not afraid," Novello.
- Komm Jesu, komm.* Eight voices.
- Lob und Ehre und Weisheit und Dank.* Eight voices. English edition, "Blessing, Glory and Wisdom," Novello.
- Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied.* Psalm 149, eight voices. English edition, "Sing ye to the Lord," Novello.
- Ich lasse dich nicht.* Eight voices. This motet is by some attributed to Joh. Christoph Bach. English edition, "I wrestle and pray," Novello.
- A Latin motet for two choruses heard by J. L. Gerber at Christmas, 1767, is lost.
- Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden.* Psalm 117. Four voices.

## SECULAR CANTATAS

- Drama: Geschwinde, ihr wirbelnden Winde.* The contest between Phœbus and Pan.
- Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten.* For soprano voice.
- Amore traditore.* For bass voice, accompanied by cembalo only.
- Drama: Zerreisset, zerspringet, Zertrümmert die Gruft.* For the name-day of Dr A. F. Muller. Leipsic, Aug. 3, 1725.
- Drama: Schleicht, spielende Wellen.* For the birthday of Augustus III.
- Drama: Vereinigte Zwietracht der wechselnden Saiten.* For a University celebration, Leipsic, 1726.
- Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd.*
- Non sache sia dolore.* For soprano solo.
- O holder Tag, erwünschte Zeit.* Wedding Cantata for soprano solo.
- Schweigt stille, plandert nicht.* In praise of coffee.
- Mer hahn en neue Oberkeet.* Complimentary Cantata to Carl Heinrich von Dieskan.
- Mit Gnaden bekröne der Himmel die Zeiten.*

# Bach

*O angenehme Melodei.* Soprano solo.

*Durchlauchster Leopold.* Serenade for two solo voices and orchestra.

*Schwingt freudig euch empor.* For the birthday of a teacher.

*Die Freude reget sich.* For the birthday of Professor Rivinus.

*Drama: Lasst uns sorgen, lasst uns wachen.* Complimentary Cantata to a Saxon Princess. The opening chorus from Christmas oratorio.

*Tönet ihr Pauken! erschallet Trompeten!* For the birthday of the Queen of Saxony, December 1733. See p. 145.

*Drama: Preise dein Glück.* For the anniversary of the election of Augustus III. as King of Poland, 1734.

*Drama: Angenehmes wiederan.* Persons represented—Fate, Happiness, Time, and the river Elster. The opening chorus from the cantata "Freue dich erlöste Schaar."

*Drama: Auf schmetternde Töne der muntern Trompeten.* For the name-day of King Augustus III.

## WORKS KNOWN TO BE LOST

Three Passions. It is known that Bach wrote five Passions, from information given by his son C. P. Emanuel, and his pupil Agricola in Mizler's Necrology.

A great funeral ode on the death of Prince Leopold of Cöthen.

Several Cantatas.

# Catalogue of Instrumental Works

## ORGAN

*The numbers refer to the volumes in Peters' edition in which each work will be found.*

*Six sonatas for two manuals and pedal* (240). These sonatas and the passacaglia were written for his young son, W. Friedemann, to practise on the pedal clavichord. Many of the trills, which are necessary on this instrument, are intended to be omitted when the pieces are played on the organ. According to tradition the date is 1723. The first movement of the sonata in D minor appears in 1722, as the prelude in that key in Part I. of the Forty-eight.

*Passacaglia in C minor* (240).

*Trio for two manuals* (243) *and pedal in D minor*. This trio is overladen with grace notes in the fashion of the day. The performer is recommended by Griepenkerl to exercise his taste as to which he retains or omits.

*Pastorale in F* (240). In four movements. Mostly copied singly. Forkel possessed a copy in which all four movements were combined in a whole.

*Preludes and Fugues* (241).

*In C.*

*In G.* The subject of the fugue is the same as that of the opening chorus in the cantata, "Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis."

*In A.*

*Fantasia and Fugue in G minor* (241). Composed at Cöthen, probably as an act of homage to Reinken. In one copy the fantasia is called "prelude." In another copy the fugue is in F minor with a remark, "The very best pedal-piece by Herr Joh. Seb. Bach."

# Bach

*Prelude and Fugue in C* (241).

*A minor.*

*E minor.*

*B minor.* The Peters' edition is from the original MS. in the possession of Sir Herbert Oakeley.

*Prelude and Fugue* (242) *E flat.* From the "Clavierübung."

The fugue, like those of Buxtehude, is in three movements.

*Toccatà and Fugue* (242) *in F.* The compass of the pedals in this toccata shows that it must have been written for the organ in the Lutheran Church at Cöthen. (See Glossary "Orgelbuchlein.") In the Bachgesellschaft edition the toccata is called fantasia.

*In D minor.* Called Dorian from the flat being omitted from the signature. The toccata is called "prelude" in some copies.

*Preludes and Fugue* (242) *in D minor.* The prelude has no pedal part. The fugue is arranged from the earlier violin solo fugue in G minor (228).

*In G minor.*

*Fantasia and Fugue* (242) *in C minor.*

*Prelude and Fugue in C* (242). This was originally in E major. The fugue is in two portions, divided by nine bars of florid passages. It was transposed to C for some of the old organs which had only two octaves of pedals. In Kirnberger's MS. it is called "Preludio con Fantasia con Pedal."

*Toccatà and Fugue in C* (242). The toccata is separated from the fugue by a very beautiful aria, in which a melody is accompanied by chords and staccato bass, the only instance of the kind in Bach's organ works. In one MS. the toccata is called "Preludium."

*Prelude and double Fugue* (242) *in A minor.*

*Prelude and Fugue* (242) *in E minor.*

*Prelude and Fugue* (243) *in C major.*

*In G.*

*In D.* The prelude is in two movements. The work, which is very brilliant, is inscribed "Concertata" as if intended more for concert than church use. In one copy the work is called simply "Pièce d'orgue, von Joh. Seb. Bach."



# Organ Compositions

- Tocatta and Fugue in D minor* (243).  
*Prelude and Fugue in C minor* (243). In some MSS. this is in D minor.
- Fugues* (243) in C minor. On a theme by Legrenzi. A second subject appears in the course of the fugue, which after being worked independently is finally united to the first in a double fugue.
- In G minor.*  
*In B minor.* The subject is by Corelli.  
*In C minor.* Probably written for pedal clavichord. Composed at Arnstadt.
- Canzona in D minor* (243). In two movements. It was popular, and many copies appear to have existed.
- Fantasias* (243) in G. In three movements of which the tempi are indicated by Bach. "Très Vitement," "Grave," "Lentement." From the number of copies which exist this fantasia, also called "Pièce d'orgue," appears to have been very popular.
- In C minor.* In five voices. In some MSS. called "Prelude."
- Prelude in A minor* (243).  
*Fifty-six short Chorale-preludes* (244).  
*Three sets of Chorale Variations called "Partite"* (244).  
*Some Canonic Variations on the Christmas hymn "Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her"* (244).  
*Seven Chorale-preludes* (244).  
*Sixty-three "Larger and more artistic Chorale-preludes"* (245 and 246).  
*Four Concertos for two manuals and pedal* (247). Arranged from the Violin Concertos of Vivaldi. The originals were, like Handel's "Concerti grossi," for four violins, one or two violas, violoncello, bass and continuo.
- Eight small Preludes and Fugues* (247). For the instruction of his son Friedemann.
- Allabreve pro organo pleno* (247). Organo pleno means a complete organ, as opposed to a positiv, or one manual instrument. It has the same kind of sense as our expression "Full orchestra," and does not mean that the full force is to be employed the whole time.
- Prelude in C* (247). Without pedal.

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*In G "pro organo pleno" (247).*

*Fantasia in C (247).* Without pedal.

*Fugue in C (247).* The pedal only enters in the last five bars, and is used in Buxtehude's manner, merely to complete the harmony.

*Prelude in G (247).* Composed at Weimar.

*Fugue in G minor (247).*

*Fantasia and Fugue in A minor (2067).* An early work, in some MS. called "Preludio e Fuga per il cembalo," so that it was probably intended for the pedal clavichord.

*Fugue in G (2067).*

*Little Harmonic Labyrinth (2067).* Consisting of three movements called "Introitus," "Centrum," "Exitus." Starting in the key of C, it perpetually modulates, chiefly by enharmonic changes, and finishes by a return to C.

*Fugue in G (2067).*

*Fugue in D (2067).*

*Concerto in G (2067).* Called also "Fantasia."

*Trio for two manuals and pedal in C minor (2067).*

*Aria in F for two manuals and pedal (2067).*

*Eleven Chorale-preludes (2067).*

## ORCHESTRA

*Concerto in F (261).* For violins, piccolo, three oboes, and two corni di caccia, with accompaniment for two violins, viola, violoncello and bass.

*Concerto in F (262).* For violin, flute, oboe, and trumpet concertante, with accompaniment for two violins, viola, violoncello and bass.

*Concerto in G (263).* For three violins, three violas, three violoncellos and one bass. Rearranged as the introductory "symphony" to the cantata "Ich liebe den Höchsten."

*Concerto in G (264).* For violin and two flutes concertante, with accompaniment for two violins, viola, violoncello and bass.

*Concerto in D (265).* For clavecin, flute and violin concertante, with accompaniment for one violin, viola, violoncello and bass.

## Orchestral Works

*Concerto in B flat* (266). For two violas, two violas da gamba, with accompaniment for violoncello and bass.

*Overture or Suite in C major* (267). For two violins, viola, two oboes, bassoon, violoncello and bass.

*Overture or Suite in B minor* (268). For two violins, viola, violoncello, flute and bass.

*Overture or Suite in D major* (269). For two violins, viola, bass kettle-drums, two oboes, and three trumpets.

## Works for Cembalo, Clavichord, Spinnet, &c.

- The Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues. Part I. (1 and 1a).  
Part II. (2 and 1b).* For clavichord. See p. 131.
- Sonatas (213) in A minor.* From a sonata for two violins,  
viola da gamba and bass in Reinken's "Hortus Musicus."
- In C major.* Arranged from Reinken's "Hortus Musicus."
- In D minor.* Arranged from the sonata in A minor for violin  
alone (228).
- Prelude and Fugue in E flat (214).*
- Fugue in B minor (214).*
- Suites in A minor (214).*
- In E flat.*
- In G.*
- Preludio con Fughetta in F (214).*
- In G.*
- Prelude in G (214).*
- The adagio of violin solo sonata in C arranged for clavier (214).*
- Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor (207).*
- Prelude and Fugue in A minor (207).* Composed at Cöthen.
- Toccatà and Fugue in E minor (210).* The toccatà is in three  
movements.
- Toccatà and Fugue in F sharp minor (210).* Allegro moder-  
ato, lento, fugue (for three voices) allegro moderato  
fugue (for four voices).
- Toccatà and Fugue in C minor (210).* The toccatà is in two  
movements—allegro moderato and adagio.
- Fantasia and Fugue in A minor (208).*

# Cembalo, Clavichord, Spinnet, &c.

*Fantasia and Fughetta in B flat* (212). These are written on one staff, with figures for the harmony.

*In D.*

*Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo* (208). See p. 28.

*Toccatà and Fugue in D minor* (210). The toccatà contains three movements—allegro moderato, allegro, adagio.

*Four Duets* (208). For right and left hand.

*A Prelude with Fugue on the notes B, A, C, H* (212). Apocryphal.

*Six Partitas in B flat, C minor, A minor, D, G, E minor* (205). From the Clavierübung, Part I.

*Concerto "in the Italian style"* (207). From the Clavierübung, Part II.

*Suite in B minor* (208) or *Partita*. From the Clavierübung, Part II. The work is entitled "an overture after French taste, for a clavicymbal with two manuals."

*Air with thirty variations for harpsichord with two manuals* (209). From the Clavierübung. The theme is in the bass. The work was composed for his clever pupil, J. T. Goldberg, at the request of Baron Kayserling, who presented Bach with a snuff-box containing one hundred louis d'or in return for it.

*Six little Preludes* (200).

*Little two-part Fugue in C minor* (200).

*Fifteen two-part Inventions* (201).

*Fifteen three-part Inventions; also called Symphonies* (202).

*Six little Suites called the French Suites* (202). From Anna Magdalena's first book.

*Six large Suites called the English Suites* (203).

*Toccatà and Fugue in G minor* (211). The toccatà is in three movements.

*Prelude and Fugue in A minor* (211).

*Fantasia and Fugue in D* (211). The fantasia is in five movements.

*Prelude and Fughetta in D minor* (200).

" " *E minor* (200).

*Prelude and Fugue in A minor* (200).

*Two Fantasias in C minor* (207, 212).

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- Two Fugues in C* (200).  
*Two Fugues in D minor* (212).  
*Fugues in A major* (212).  
    „ *E minor*.  
    „ *A minor*.  
*Twelve little Preludes or exercises for beginners* (200). No. 3 is also intended for the lute. Some of these are found in the "Clavierbüchlein für W. F. Bach."  
*Part of a Suite in F minor* (212).  
*Unfinished Fugue in C minor* (212).  
*Sixteen Concertos arranged from the Violin Concertos of Vivaldi* (217).  
*Art of Fugue* (218). See p. 134.  
*The Musical Offering* (219). See p. 135.  
*Fantasia in A minor* (215).  
*Air varied in G minor* (215).  
*Toccatà in G* (215). In three movements.  
*Overture in F*. Consisting of "Overture," "Entrée," "Minuet," "Trio," "Bourrée," "Gigue," all in the same key.  
*Fantasia in G minor* (215).  
*Capriccio in E* (215). "In honour of J. C. Bach of Ohrdruf."  
*Fantasia con imitazione in B minor* (216). It is doubtful whether this is intended for organ or pedal harpsichord.  
*Sonata in D* (216). Modelled on Kuhnau.  
*Two Fugues in A* (216).  
*Three Minuets* (216).  
*Minuet in G minor* (1959).  
*Adagio and Presto in D minor* (1959).  
*Prelude in E flat* (1959).  
*Fugue in B flat* (1959). From a fugue by J. C. Erselius.  
*Sixty-nine Chorale Melodies with figured bass*. Published in 1736.
- Of doubtful authenticity* (1959):
- Sarabande with 16 Partite*.  
*Passacaille in D minor*.  
*Suite in B flat*.

# Cembalo, Clavichord, Spinnet, &c.

*Allemande* }  
*Courante* } in A.  
*Gigue* }

*Fantasia*. Through all keys. Attributed to J. D. Heinichen.

*Fantasia in G minor*. In five movements.

*Fantasia and Fugue in D minor*.

*Fugue in G minor*.

*Scherzo in D minor*.

*Andante in G minor*.

*Fugue in B flat*. An extension of a sonata movement in  
Reinken's "Hortus Musicus."

*Fugues*—

In C.

„ E minor.

„ G.

„ D.

„ (a) E minor.

„ (b) E minor.

*Chaconnes*—

In A.

„ G.

Of works not already mentioned, the "Bachgesellschaft" publishes in vol. xlii., Part II., the following apparently authentic compositions:—

*Prelude and Fugue in A minor*.

*Concerto and Fugue in C minor*.

*Prelude in B minor*.

*Of more doubtful authenticity:*

*Fantasia in C minor*. Molto allegro.

*Toccatà quasi fantasia con fuga, A major*.

*Partie, A major*.

*Allemande in C minor*.

*Gigue, F minor*.

*Allemande and Courante, A major*

*Allemande in A minor*.

*Two Fantasias and Fughettas*.

*An Unfinished Fugue in E minor*.

# Bach

## KEYED INSTRUMENTS WITH ACCOMPANIMENT.

- Concerto in F* (248). For clavecin and two flutes concertante, with accompaniment for two violins, viola and bass.
- Concerto in G minor* (249). For clavecin, with accompaniment for two violins, viola, violoncello and bass.
- Concerto in F minor* (250). For clavecin, with accompaniment for two violins, viola and bass.
- Concerto in D major* (251). For clavecin, with accompaniment for two violins, viola and bass.
- Concerto in A major* (252). For clavecin, with accompaniment for two violins, viola, violoncello and bass.
- Concerto in E major* (253). For clavecin, with accompaniment for two violins, viola and bass.
- Concerto in D minor* (254). For clavecin, with accompaniment for two violins, viola and bass. The first allegro is arranged as the introductory symphony of the Cantata, "Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal."
- Concerto in A minor* (255). For clavecin, flute and violin, with accompaniment for two violins, viola, violoncello and bass.
- Concerto in C* (256). For two clavecins, with two violins, viola and bass.
- Concerto in C minor* (257). For two clavecins, with two violins, viola and bass.
- Concerto in C minor* (257*b*). For two clavecins, with two violins, viola and bass. Arranged from the concerto for two violins.
- Concerto in D minor* (258). For three clavecins, with two violins, viola and bass.
- Concerto in C* (259). For three clavecins, with two violins, viola and bass.
- Concerto in A minor, after a concerto for four violins by Vivaldi* (260). For four clavecins, with accompaniment for two violins, viola and bass.

## FOR OTHER INSTRUMENTS.

- Concerto in A minor* (229<sup>1</sup>). For violin, with accompaniment for two violins, viola and bass. Also arranged for clavecin and strings in G minor.

<sup>1</sup> Pianoforte score.



# Cembalo, Clavichord, Spinnet, &c.

*Concerto in E* (230<sup>1</sup>). For violin, with accompaniment for two violins, viola and bass.

*Concerto* (231<sup>1</sup>) *in D minor*. For two principal violins, with accompaniment for two violins, viola and bass. Also arranged for two clavecins and strings in C minor (257*b*).

*Three Sonatas and three Suites for violin, without accompaniment* (228). Composed at Cöthen. The fugue of the sonata in G minor is also arranged for organ in D minor. The sonata in A minor is also arranged for clavecin alone in D minor (213), and the suite in E major in the same key for clavecin. The prelude in E forms the obbligato organ part of the opening chorus of the cantata "Wir danken dir."

*Six Sonatas for* (232 and 233) *Violin and Figured Bass*.

*Six Sonatas for Flute or Violin and Clavier* (234 and 235).

*Suite in A for Violin and Clavier* (236).

*Sonata in E minor for Violin and Clavier* (236).

*Fugue in G minor for Violin and Clavier* (236).

*Sonata in C for two Violins and Clavier* (237).

*Sonata in G for Flute, Violin and Clavier* (237).

*Trio for Flute, Violin and Clavier* (237). From the "Musical Offering"; the clavier part supplied from the figured bass by Kirnberger.

*Six Sonatas or Suites for the Violoncello* (238).

*Three Sonatas for the Viola da Gamba and Clavier* (239).

*Clavierbuch of Anna Magdalena Bach*, 1725. Contains twenty easy pieces, consisting of minuets, polonaises, rondos, marches, and one song.

*Principles of Thorough-bass for his pupils*. Dated 1738, and preserved by J. P. Kellner. It is divided into two parts for beginners and advanced pupils. The author says, "The ultimate end and aim of thorough-bass should only be the glory of God and recreation of the mind. Where these are not kept in view there can be no real music, only an infernal jingling and bellowing." The complete work is quoted as an appendix in Spitta, vol. iii.

<sup>1</sup> Pianoforte score.

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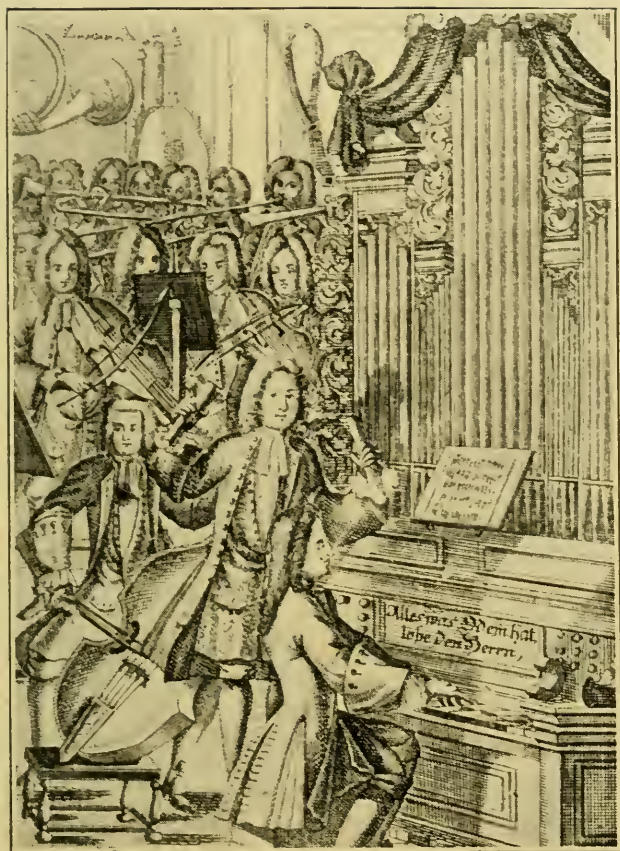
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The performance of a Church Cantata  
From Walther's Lexicon, Leipsic, 1732



## Glossary

**Ahle, Joh. Rudolph,** was born 1625, and, after holding a post at Erfurt, became organist and burgomaster of his native town Mühlhausen. His chorale tunes are still popular in Thuringia. On his death in 1673 he was succeeded by his son Joh. Georg, who was a member of the Town Council, and poet laureate to the Emperor Leopold I.

**Böhm, Georg.** Is described by Walther as a fine composer and organist of St John at Lüneburg. Bach modelled some of his early chorale-preludes, notably "Wir glauben all' an einen Gott" on Böhm's style.

**Brust-positiv.** The name given to the choir manual when its pipes stand in front of the rest of the organ, as in many of the old English cathedral organs.

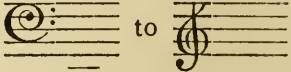
**Buxtehude, Dietrich, 1637-1707,** organist at the Marien-Kirche at Lübeck. His organ fugues, toccatas, &c., are of great importance as having furnished Bach with his earliest models. The fugues are usually in three portions, as in Bach's great E flat fugue (Peters, 242). Many of his organ works have been published by Spitta.

**Caldara, Antonius.** Born at Venice 1678, a pupil of Legrenzi and Fux, and the writer of many operas, and much church music. He was successively Capellmeister at St Mark's, the Court of Mantua, and to Charles VI. at Vienna. He was a clever imitator, but had little inventive genius. On coming to Germany, his style improved in vigour. Bach admired him sufficiently to copy his Magnificat in C.

**Cantor, Choirmaster.** The office is rarely held by the organist as in England, since the cantor has to conduct the "Hauptmusik" with a baton while the organist plays.

# Bach

**Cembalo**, or clavicymbal, or clavessin, or clavecin, for which Bach wrote his clavier works, was in shape like the modern grand piano, but its interior construction was something after the model of the organ. It had, in common with the organ, the defect of being unable to produce piano or forte by the touch alone, this being done by stops. A com-

plete cembalo had the compass of 

and two manuals. Each note had four strings producing 4, 8, and 16 ft. tone, two being of 8 ft. The strings were sounded by plectra made of quill, called jacks. The instruments were sometimes also provided with organ pedals. It will be seen at once that a piece played on 16, 8 and 4 ft. stops would sound far fuller than when played on the modern piano with only unison strings.

The cembalo was used to play the basso continuo in all concerted music outside the church; and even in a concerto for clavier, a second cembalo appears to have accompanied. The lute or regal, however, sometimes took its place, for convenience of portage.

Transposing clavicymbals, and clavicymbals with keyboards at both ends were in use. The tuning was very troublesome, and had to be done before each performance. Other names were Gravecymbalum, Flügel, Schweinskopf, Steertstück. The claviorganum was a combination of clavicymbal and positive.

**Choral** is the German name for the Plainsong of the Roman Church. After the Reformation the name Choral (English "Chorale") was given to the hymns which were either translated from the Latin, or originally written in the fourteenth century by Johannes of Salzburg, Muscatblüet, Hans Foltz, Michel Beheim, Johannes Gosseler, Jörg Breining, and Heinrich von Laufenberg, and which took a firm hold on the German people through the efforts of Martin Luther, Michael Vehe, W. Heintz, Joh. Hofmann,



# Glossary

and others. The peculiar variety to be observed in the metrical construction of the German Chorale is directly traceable to the influence of the Volkslied, for Luther himself wrote sacred words for secular melodies. Other names connected with the chorale are Valentin Triller, Veit Heefen, Count Albrecht the younger of Brandenburg, Culmbach, Speratus, Spengler, Hans Sachs, Schensing, Decius Graumann, Joh. Walter, a friend and fellow-worker of Luther, L. Senfl, von Bruck and Fink. Later poets were Nic. Hermann, P. Nicolai, Calvisius Hassler, &c., H. and J. Prætorius, Neumark, Flemming, Teschner, Gerhard and Crüger. The music of the chorale was brought to perfection by J. S. Bach.

**Chorale-Cantatas**, those in which a complete hymn is carried out, each verse forming as a rule a separate movement, whether for chorus or solo voices, though occasionally a verse is omitted in the longer hymns. Sometimes recitatives break the course of the chorale melody, or the melody is played by the instruments and accompanied by vocal recitative. The chorales chosen are always well-known ones, and among the finest of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

**Church Music.** The services at Leipsic were regulated by an act passed in 1540 by Duke Heinrich applying to all Saxony. A morning service called matins was celebrated at St Nicholas every Sunday at 5.30 A.M., in which the Venite, Psalms, Te Deum and Benedicamus Domino were sung by the choir, and directed by the St Nicholas cantor.

Morning service took place at 7 at both St Thomas and St Nicholas; a Latin motet was sung, followed by the Kyrie, Gloria in excelsis, Collect in Latin, and at St Thomas a Litany was sung by four boys and the choir alternately. The Gospel and Epistle and Creed were intoned by the priest, and on certain days the Nicene Creed was sung in Latin by the choir. The "Hauptmusik" (the cantata) followed the intoning or singing of the Creed in Latin, and after it was finished the Creed was sung by the congregation in German. This was

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followed by a sermon of an hour's duration. The service concluded with the general confession, the Lord's Prayer and blessing. Chorales were sung by the congregation during the course of the service.

At the mid-day service there were only a sermon and two congregational hymns without the choir. It began at a quarter to twelve. At vespers, the choir sang a motet, and the Magnificat in German, besides leading the congregation in some hymns. At Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide, similar services were performed for three consecutive days, matins beginning at five instead of half-past to allow more time for the festival services.

**Cithara**, Cither, a favourite instrument in the sixteenth century of the guitar family, bearing 4, 5 or 6, or even 12 metal strings. Prætorius condemns the four-stringed cithara as being "a vulgar instrument only used by cobblers and tailors." In England it was kept at barbers' shops for the amusement of customers waiting their turn.

**Clarino**. Lichtenthal C. *Dizionario della Musica*, Milan, 1826, says "the clarino is, according to some, a species of small trumpet, of which the tube is narrower than that of the ordinary trumpet, and which gives a more acute sound; but Northerners hold that the word means the ordinary trumpet." The word frequently occurs in Bach's scores.

**Clavichord**. A key-board instrument having brass strings which were neither plucked with a quill as in the harpsichord, nor struck with a hammer as in the pianoforte, but made to sound by a brass blade called a tangent, which pressed against the string as long as the key was held down. Although its tone had little power, the effects of crescendo, diminuendo, and vibrato, called in Germany "Bebung," were entirely under the player's control, and on this account it was a favourite instrument with Bach. The clavichord was sometimes provided with pedals for the use of organ students.

**Clavicymbal**. See Cembalo.

**Clavier**, literally Keyboard. The German name for all key-board instruments, such as the clavichord, harpsichord,

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spinet, instrument, &c. The term is also applied to both the manuals and pedals of the organ.

**Clavierbüchlein**, little clavier book for Bach's son W. Friedemann, when nine years old, in 1720. A diagram shows the keys and principal ornaments, and one of the pieces is figured and called "Applicatio, in nomine Jesu." Some of the pieces are composed by the boy himself. Eleven of the preludes of the Wohltemperirte clavier first appeared in this book; some of the pieces are by other composers as J. C. Richter and G. H. Stölzel of Gotha, and there are many of Bach's own fugues.

**Clavierbüchlein**, vor Anna Magdalena Bach in 1720 and 1725. See p. 57.

**Clavierübung**, clavier practice. A work in four parts, consisting of preludes, allemands, the Italian concerto, the French overture, choralvorspiele, &c., intended, as the name implies, for educational purposes. The work includes the well-known prelude and fugue for organ in E flat, Peters 242, and the air in G with thirty variations written for Goldberg.

**College of Instrumental Musicians of Upper and Lower Saxony**. The full text is given by Spitta, vol. i. p. 145, *et seq.* The statutes enacted that no member was to settle in any town where another member was already settled; no member was to take lower fees than his predecessor; no member was to boast that he played on a superior instrument to others; offices were only to be obtained by proper examination; no member was to sing immoral songs; every member must conduct himself with propriety in social "attendances," and to see that his assistants did the same; no member was to bring his art to disrepute by playing on bagpipes, hurdy-gurdies, triangles, &c.

No bad language was to be allowed, and all low company to be avoided; apprentices must, before binding, produce credentials of respectability, and must serve for five years with industry and constant prayer. After an apprentice has served his five years he is to serve another three as an "assistant," except when he marries his master's

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daughter, in which case he shall only serve one year as assistant. In case of dissension arising, the matter must be brought before six master-musicians, who shall decide it. No man is to seek to oust an old master; but if a man becomes too old to do his work, an assistant shall be appointed who shall receive half the salary. Every master is to see that his assistants are properly paid for services rendered. In order that the art of music may not be brought into contempt by inadequate performance, no man shall be allowed to keep more than three apprentices at one time (for this would compel him to employ properly qualified assistants to carry out concerted music). A master neglecting to teach his apprentices could be punished; and an apprentice running away could never become a member of the college. However great the number of members, no man was to be refused membership who was found, after due trial, to be properly qualified. Questions of evil morals arising among members were to be decided by a board of elders.

**Concertmeister**, the leader of an orchestra who ranks immediately after the conductor. In early times he was also the conductor of purely instrumental music, while the capellmeister conducted whenever voices were employed. The title is also bestowed as a mark of respect on musicians of eminence who are not connected with an orchestra.

**Concerto**. A term applied to both vocal and instrumental concerted music. Several of Bach's Cantatas are thus named; thus "Ein Herz das seinen Jesum lebend weiss" is entitled "Concerto à quattro voci, 2 oboi, 2 violini, viola e continuo di J. S. Bach." Concertos for instruments were in several movements, but usually three. There was sometimes a single solo instrument, but more frequently there were several. The fine concerto in G in two movements is for three violins, three violas, three violoncellos and bass without a solo instrument. The concertos of Handel and Vivaldi, &c., are orchestral compositions in several movements with or without wind

# Glossary

- instruments. The Italian Concerto is a piece in three movements for clavecin without accompaniment.
- Consistory.** The authorities of an important church, somewhat analogous to the Dean and Chapter of an English cathedral.
- Continuo**=Basso Continuo, the bass of a composition for voices or instruments or both. It was always the lowest part, and was usually provided with figures, that the accompanist might be able to fill in the harmonies and keep the body of performers together. It was performed on the organ, or cembalo or regal, according to circumstances. The continuo of most of Bach's cantatas was written out in two keys, to suit the two pitches in use, "Chorton" being a tone higher than "Kammerton." All chamber music required the accompaniment of a cembalo in figured bass; and even if there were one or more "Cembali" obbligati a separate instrument would be employed for the continuo. In all Bach's church compositions in which there is an organ obbligato part, there is another organ part for the continuo. The conductor stood near the organist, as may be seen in the frontispiece to Walther's Lexicon.
- Cornet, Cornetto, Zink,** consisted of a curved wooden tube covered with leather and having holes for the fingers with a cup mouthpiece like a trumpet. Two cornets hang on the wall near the organ in Walther's illustration.
- Drese, Johann Samuel, 1654-1716,** was organist of the Court at Jena, and afterwards Capellmeister at Weimar. He composed sonatas for the clavier, motets and operas.
- Estomihi.** Quinquagesima Sunday.
- Figural Music.** Florid music, or all church music that is not Plainsong, or its Lutheran equivalent the chorale-melody.
- Florilegium Portense,** a work containing 115 "cantiones selectissimas" of from four to eight voices, with figured bass for organ. A second part contained 150 "concentus selectissimas" of from five to ten parts. Published 1603 and 1621 by Bodenschatz, Cantor of Schulpforta, and Pastor at Rehausen. A complete catalogue is given in Groves' Dictionary, vol. i. p. 253.

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**French Overture.** A form of opera overture consisting of a slow introduction, followed by a fugue or fugato, and concluding with a slow movement. This form was applied to the clavier by Bach in the "Overture in the French style" (E. P. 208) of the B minor Suite or Partita.

**Fux, Joh. Joseph,** born in Styria, 1660, organist, Court composer, and Capellmeister at Vienna. A prolific composer of church music and opera, but he is best known by his theoretical works, amongst which is his Latin "Gradus ad Parnassum," a treatise on composition, which has been through many editions.

**Görner, J. Gottlieb,** was appointed organist of the Nicolai Church at Leipsic in 1721 and was also head of a "Collegium Musicum" or musical society. In 1729 he succeeded Gräbner as organist of St Thomas. He was a mediocre musician, but put himself in rivalry with Bach, and is reported by Scheibe to have "by his rudeness asserted his pre-eminence among a large number of his equals." He gave Bach a good deal of trouble by assuming the position and emoluments of director of music to the University; but they appear to have worked amicably together afterwards, and Bach, by will, appointed him guardian of his children, an office which he appears to have satisfactorily fulfilled.

**Hammerschmidt, Andreas,** born in Bohemia, 1611, organist of Freiburg, afterwards at Zittau. According to Gerber, one of the greatest of German contrapuntists. Walther gives a list of his compositions, which are mostly for the church. His "Musical discourses on the Gospel" were an important step in the development of oratorio.

**Hunold, Christian Friedrich.** A poet, known as Menantes, who wrote poems for the Hamburg Theatre 1700 to 1706; became a professor at Halle, and was much at the Cöthen Court, where he wrote texts for Bach's cantatas.

**Instrument.** A name given to a keyed instrument of which the strings went from side to side as in the obsolete square pianoforte, the key-board being in the middle.

**Inventions.** The fifteen Inventions and Symphonies were entitled by Bach "A genuine introduction whereby a

# Glossary

clear method is shown to lovers of the clavier, and especially to those who are eager to learn, not only (1) of playing in two voices clearly, but also, on making further progress, (2) of playing three obbligato parts properly and well; so that they at the same time will learn to make good inventions and play them themselves, and will also learn what is most important, the art of cantabile playing; and will acquire a good taste in composition. Prepared by J. S. Bach, 1723."

**Keiser**, Reinhard, was for forty years the celebrated composer and conductor of operas at Hamburg. He had as colleagues Telemann and Matheson. He wrote 116 operas, and produced many by other composers, particularly Handel's *Rinaldo*. Born near Leipzig, 1673, died 1739.

**Kühnau**, Johann, 1667-1722, Bach's predecessor as cantor at the Thomas-schule, was a prolific writer on musical subjects. Amongst his compositions are six Bible sonatas, representing scenes from Scripture on the cembalo. He was the first to write chamber sonatas for the clavier instead of for several instruments. He was also learned in languages, mathematics, and law. He wrote passions, cantatas, &c., but his style seems to have soon become antiquated, and his works could not hold their own against the opera and the younger school.

**Lituus**. The cantata No. 118, "O Jesu Christ mein's Leben's Licht," is scored for two litui, cornet and three trombones. There are no string or organ parts, and the work is evidently intended for the open air, perhaps for a funeral. There is no reason given for calling the trumpets by their Latin name in this instance.

**Lute**. This instrument appears in the score of the St John's Passion. It was sometimes used instead of a clavecin to accompany concerted music.

**Lute-Harpsichord**. A keyed instrument with gut strings made after Bach's design by Zacharias Hildebrand, an organ builder. See p. 157.

**Matheson**, 1681-1764, wrote 89 volumes chiefly on musical subjects, besides being a composer. He was a classical scholar, a student of modern languages, law, and political

# Bach

science, a good musician, dancer, and fencer. He appeared on the Hamburg stage as a singer, composed and conducted operas there, became a great friend of Handel, was made secretary of the English Legation, and cantor and canon of the Cathedral. By his writings he materially helped forward the development of the church cantata.

**Mizler**, von Kolof, Doctor of Philosophy and historian, born 1711 at Wurtemberg, was a good amateur musician. In 1731 he went to Leipsic to study divinity and afterwards philosophy and music. Here he founded a "Society for Musical Science," and became on friendly terms with Bach, who seems to have given him some lessons. He wrote various works dealing with the philosophy of music; and his chief importance in connection with Bach was his "Necrology" in which he gives valuable information concerning him. The work is in several numbers; unfortunately that portion of it which deals with Bach is not in the British Museum Library.

**Motet.** The character and scope of the German motet are thus described by Spitta, vol. i. p. 54. "It is in several parts; it admits of no obbligato instruments, and its subjects are set to a text of the Bible, or to a verse of a hymn. The period of its fullest bloom was about 1600, when music was essentially polyphonic, vocal, and sacred." Under the influence of harmony it gradually changed its form, introducing solo voices and instruments, especially the organ.

**Oboe da Caccia.** Hunting oboe, bent like a knee, and differing but slightly from the modern Cor Anglais, or English horn. It occurs very frequently in Bach's scores. It is described in Grove's Dictionary as a bassoon raised a fourth, carrying the bass tone of the latter upwards rather than lowering the treble tone of the oboe a fifth. It is also called by Bach, Taille de basson, or tenor of the bassoon.

**Oberwerk.** The Great organ.

**Oberpositiv.** A choir organ of which the wind-chest is placed above the others.

**Orgel-büchlein,** "Little organ-book." The first collection was



# Glossary

made, according to Bach himself, at Cöthen between 1717 and 1723. The second collection, consisting of six chorales, was published and sold by Bach and his sons at Leipsic, Halle, and Berlin. The third collection was continued till his death and was not published. The last portion was dictated during his blindness to his son-in-law Altnikol. The two unpublished parts were written on two staves only. The pedal compass in the chorales extends to high F and F $\sharp$ . These notes were found on the organ of the Lutheran Church at Cöthen only. This organ is described by Hartmann in 1803 as "an uncommonly powerful and excellent instrument." It had 8 stops on the pedals, 10 on the great, 10 on the choir. It is now reduced in size and ruined in order to obtain more room in the church.

**Partita.** A name given to sets of variations for organ or cembalo, and appropriated from the town pipers.

**Pachelbel, Johann, 1653-1706,** born at Nüremberg, was assistant organist at the Church of St Stephen in Vienna, whence he moved to Eisenach as Court organist in 1677. From Eisenach he went to Erfurt and to Gehren. In 1690 he became Court organist at Stuttgart; and after a stay of three years at Gotha he became organist of a church at Nüremberg till his death. He taught W. Friedemann Bach, and Bernhard, son of Ægidius. According to Gerber, he improved church music, used the overture form on the clavier, and continued the good work which Froberger had begun in respect of clavier composition. Bach used his chorales as models during the Arnstadt period.

**Picander.** A poet of considerable reputation in his time named Christian Friedrich Henrici. Born 1700 at Stolpen. Went to the University at Leipsic, 1720. Became a lawyer, but was afterwards able to live by his poetical compositions, though he obtained important posts in Leipsic. Died 1764. He wrote the text for many of Bach's compositions.

**Positiv.** The name given to that portion of an organ and its manual which corresponds to our choir organ. In a three manual organ there are usually two choir manuals.

# Bach

The swell shutters, if any, are only applied to a few stops, used generally on a fourth or "echo" manual. Properly speaking the positive, called in Italian organs, piccolo, had its foundation pipes pitched an octave higher than those of the ordinary organ. Its diapason would therefore be a four-foot register.

**Regal.** Sometimes used to accompany secular cantatas instead of the clavecin. It was also used for choir practices. In 1709 Kühnau in a Memorial to the Council says, "A new regal is needed, the old one being constantly in need of repair." An inventory of the instruments at the Thomas-schule between 1723 and 1750 mentions, "1 Regal, old and quite done for"; "1 ditto bought 1696."

The regal was a small reed instrument of the harmonium class, but with small pipes to enhance the sound of the reeds. It could easily be carried about, and was placed on a table when played. It could be made so small as to take the size and shape of a large book, hence sometimes called Book or Bible-regal.

**Schubart, Christian F. Daniel.** Born 1739. Master of Philosophy, Theatre director, Court poet of Stuttgart, a good amateur musician. Was a good organist and held various posts. In 1777 to 1787 he was imprisoned in a castle on account of some views expressed in his political paper "Deutsche Chronik." Burney, who met him, remarks on his great facility as a clavier player. He published several compositions and works on music.

**Schütz, Heinrich.** 1585-1672. Brought opera from Italy to Germany and also composed Passions. He was considered the best German composer of his century. He wrote music to the Passions of Matthew, Luke and John for the Court of Dresden, where he was Capellmeister. These are the greatest works of the kind next to those of Bach. His compositions are in the old church tones, but strongly influenced by the coming tonality of modern music.

**Solo Cantatas.** Those written for one or more solo voices without a chorus. They sometimes conclude with the chorale in four parts.

# Glossary

**Spinet.** Is defined by Hipkins ("The Pianoforte," p. 121) as "a Jack keyboard instrument with one string to a note," as opposed to the cembalo, harpsichord, &c., which had several strings to a note. Adlung says the spinet was of limited compass, its lowest octave being "short" and it was tuned a fifth above chorus pitch. It was sometimes triangular in shape and could be placed on a table; its strings ran from right to left of the performer, as in the "Instrument."

**Rück-positiv.** The name given to the choir manual when its pipes stand behind the rest of the organ.

**Telemann, G. Philipp.** 1681-1767. A poet and musician who composed no less than 600 overtures, 12 complete year courses of cantatas, 44 passions, 32 compositions for the instalment of preachers, 32 so-called oratorios, 20 coronation pieces, 40 operas, and a mass of other music. Besides all this he is described by Walther as the "greatest Polygraph that Germany can show," having written a number of books on music, besides a quantity of bad poetry. He was successively organist and director of the New Church at Leipsic (during which time he mastered the English Italian and French languages), Capellmeister in Sorau, Concertmeister in Eisenach, Kapellmeister at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, Music Director at Hamburg, where he formed one of the trio of musicians, Keiser and Matheson being the others. He was on very friendly terms with Bach and Handel. He was a candidate for the post of Cantor at St Thomas, having during his previous residence in Leipsic (1701-4) founded a flourishing "Collegium Musicum" among the students. He had a great reputation throughout Germany. Bach copied some of his music, and the influence of Telemann, at that time very popular, is seen in Bach's cantata "Herr Gott dich loben wir."

**Theorbo.** A lute with an extra neck bearing the bass strings.

**Tromba da tirarsi.** A slide trumpet, the soprano of the trombone. Often used in Bach's scores.

**Viola d'amore.** A tenor viol of a specially agreeable and silvery tone (Walther). It sometimes had sympathetic strings, though these were not a necessary adjunct.

# Bach

**Viola da gamba.** Leg viol, the bass of the viol family, held between the knees, like the violoncello, when played. It had six strings, the lowest of which was the D below the bass stave, and its finger-board was fretted. Its tone (like that of all the viol class) was weak compared to the violoncello.

**Viola pomposa,** an instrument invented by Bach. See p. 157.

**Violetta.** This instrument occurs in the cantata "Herr Gott dich loben wir" as an alternative of the "oboe di caccia." It is described by Walther as a fiddle (Geige) playing an inner part, constructed like a viola, or small viola da gamba.

**Violino piccolo.** A small violin whose lowest string was a fourth higher than that of the violin. Its tuning was therefore C, G, D, A, an octave above the viola. It frequently occurs in Bach's scores.

**Violoncello piccolo,** with five strings. This instrument occurs in the score of a tenor aria in cantata No. 41, "Jesu nur sei gepreiset." The additional string was tuned to E, and enabled the performer to execute the very florid high passages which Bach writes.

**Ziegler, Christiane Mariane von,** who wrote words for some of the cantatas was born in 1695 at Leipsic. Began to publish poems when she was fifteen. Left a widow in 1722, she devoted herself to writing poetry and the practice of the keyboard instruments and lute, and flute, and was held in honour by the most artistic society of her time. Spitta gives an account of her life in *Curtius' Historisches Aufsätze*, 1884. See p. 197.

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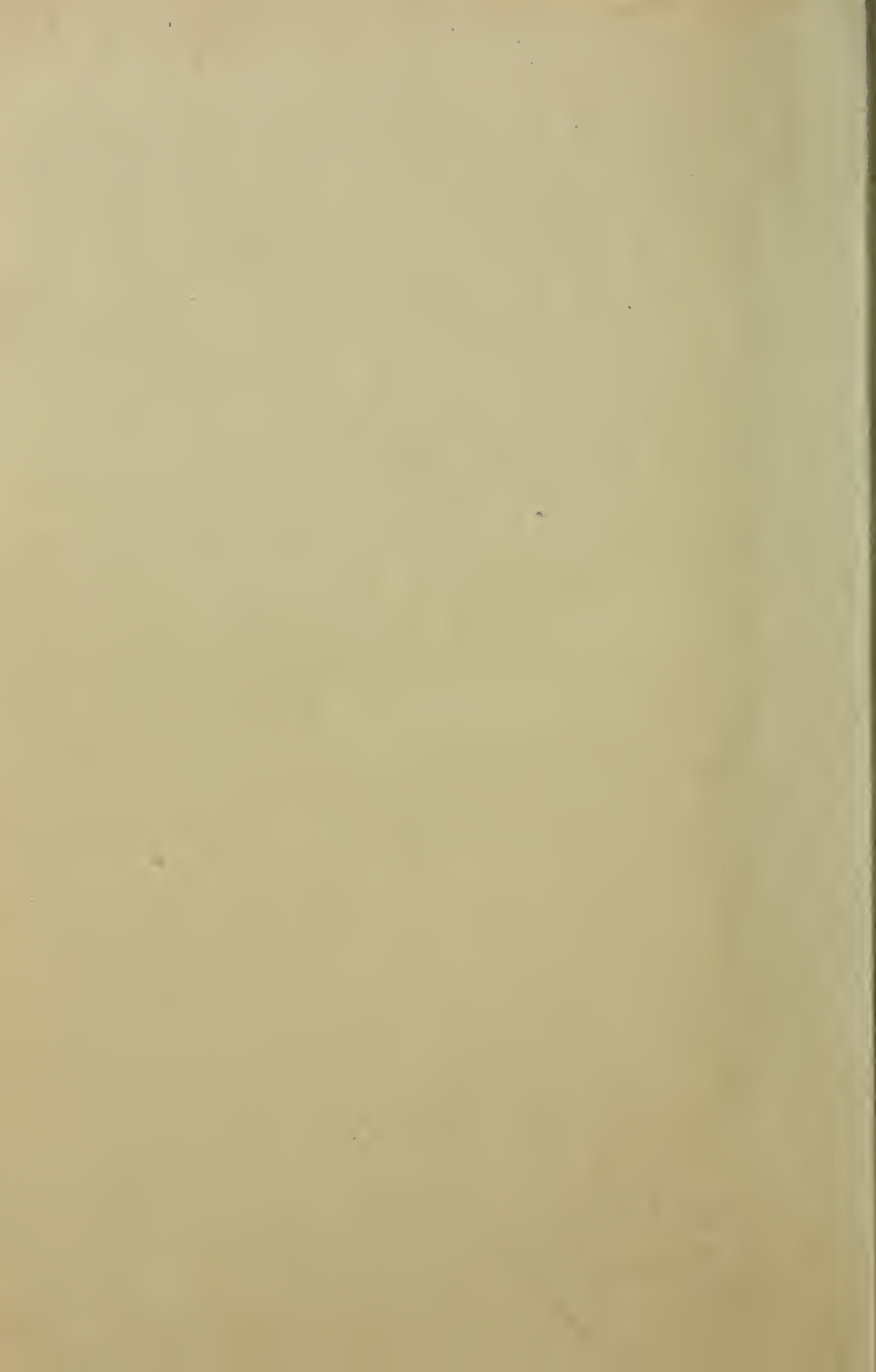


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