



A

**A Few Words**

ABOUT

**MUSIC.**

BY

**M. H.**

J. A. NOVELLO, LONDON.



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A  
FEW WORDS  
ABOUT  
MUSIC:  
CONTAINING  
HINTS TO AMATEUR PIANISTS;  
TO WHICH IS ADDED  
A SLIGHT HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF THE  
RISE AND PROGRESS  
OF THE  
**Art of Music.**  
BY  
M. H.

“ Mr. Hullah's talent and philanthropy is better employed in training a thousand tolerable singers than in perfecting one Lablache. It is better that the many should have some power, than that one should be a Titan.”—*Fraser's Magazine.*

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J. ALFRED NOVELLO, 69, DEAN STREET, SOHO,  
AND 24, POULTRY.  
1851.

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1851

## DEDICATION.

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The circling seasons of the year  
Have nearly brought again the day  
When you began your stormy way,  
Cheer'd by bright hopes, my Mother dear.

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How dreary were those months to me!—  
When my mind saw through fancies dark,  
Your lone night-wandering little bark  
Upon the great Atlantic sea.

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When welcome tidings came at last,  
The letter seemed a friendly voice,  
Saying, in silvery tones, Rejoice,  
For they are safe,—all grief is past.

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Great perils cause us to pass o'er  
All lesser woes, and I did yoke  
To my heart's chariot, Joy and Hope,  
And dream of flights from shore to shore.

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Wild dreams;—we must contented be,  
To dwell where'er our lot is cast:  
He knows the Future as the Past,  
Who died for love of you and me.

M. H.

*Feb. 3rd, 1851.*

## ADVERTISEMENT.

The greater part of this little work has already appeared in "*The Lady's Newspaper*." When it had reached the Ninth Chapter, it was thought advisable to complete the series, and publish the whole together in one small volume. In furtherance of this view, some additional chapters on the History of Music are now included in the work.

The writer ventures to hope that the utility of the practical hints, with regard to Pianoforte Studies, will bear with it an apology for many defects in a literary point of view. This little work might have appeared in a more connected form, had it not originated in a series of ephemeral communications, commenced without any idea of its ever taking the shape of a book.

To those friends who have kindly enabled the writer to publish without delay, her thanks, and the thanks of those for whose sake such patronage has been bestowed, are very sincerely offered.

M. H.

Feb. 1st, 1851.

## A FEW WORDS ABOUT MUSIC.

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### CHAPTER I.

“ All true, all faultless, all in tune,  
Creation's wondrous choir,  
Opened in mystic unison,  
To last till time expire.”—*The Christian Year.*

IN the last number of *The Edinburgh* we find a passage which we ought not to omit bringing before our fair readers; and, indeed, we are not sorry to have so good an opportunity of saying a few words upon a subject which seems strangely neglected in the periodical literature of the day, considering that a knowledge of Music is now looked upon as an essential branch of female education. The passage we allude to in *The Edinburgh*, occurs at the commencement of the review on “Shirley.” The reviewer has been dwelling on the often-debated question, whether the minds of women are actually of a much lower order than those of men; or whether the intellectual inferiority of women arises entirely from the poverty of their education. This question we will not enter upon just now, but content ourselves with endeavouring to throw some light on the problem the reviewer professes himself unable to solve, encouraging ourselves with the recollection that a mouse once enabled a lion to escape from a net. The reviewer, after showing that one cannot account for female inferiority by setting it down to want of physical power, “because, in the great contentions of man with man, it has not been physical strength which has generally carried the day,” goes on to say, “It should

further be remembered that it is precisely in that art which demands least employment of physical force, viz., Music, that the apparent inferiority of women is most marked and unaccountable. Indeed, Music is, by far, the most embarrassing topic to which those who maintain the mental equality of the sexes can address themselves. It is true that, of all kinds of genius, a genius for Music is the least akin to, and the least associated with, any other. But, on the other hand, it is an art that is cultivated by all women who have the least aptitude for it; and in which, as far as mere taste and execution are concerned, many more women than men are actually found to excel. But, as composers, they have never attained any distinction. They have often been great, indeed, as performers, whether with the impassioned grandeur of a Pasta or a Viardot, or with the perfect vocalization of a Lind or an Alboni; whether pianists, such as Camille Pleyel; violinists, such as Madame Flipowitz, or the little Milanolo; whether as organists, or even as trombone-players! yet in musical composition they are without rank. We can understand their not creating the stormy grandeur and tumultuous harmonies of a Beethoven, since *to that* height women *never* have attained in any art; but why no one among them should yet have rivalled the moonlight tenderness and plaintive delicacy of a Bellini is a mystery to us." Now let us examine all this. First, we must enter a protest against some of the *assertions* made. We cannot see that, "of all kinds of genius, a genius for Music is the least akin to, and the least associated with, any other." If this were true, what an extraordinary blunder the ancients made when they placed the lyre in the hands of Apollo! Perhaps we may be charged with bigotry and pedantry for quoting such gone-by traditions. Nevertheless we cannot but feel that the old Greek idea of the Muses being sisters was not a mere fancy, but a matter of fact. All ages and all nations bear witness to it, if we except a certain class in England which has sprung up within the last two centuries,—Orpheus and Arion, Miriam, Sappho, King David, Timotheus, St. Ambrose, the bards of the Celtic

and Gothic nations, the Minnesingers, Troubadours, the Minstrels, the Improvisatori,—behold what a legion of spirits memory can call up as witnesses to the fact that Music and Poetry are “akin” and *closely* “associated” with each other!

Let us bring forward some more facts. Most of the great painters who go by the name of the “old masters” loved Poetry and Music with an ardour second only to their passion for their own art. Many of them were actually good poets and musicians. And then look at the great composers. Do we not observe in most of them that passionate love of nature and of the beautiful which belongs to the poet and the painter? And the poets, do not they love music? Listen to Milton:—

“Lap me in soft Lydian airs,  
 Married to immortal verse,  
 Such as the melting soul may pierce  
 In notes, with many a winding bout  
 Of linked sweetness long drawn out;  
 With *wanton head and giddy cunning*,  
 The melting voice *through mazes running*;  
 UNTWISTING ALL THE CHORDS THAT TIE  
 THE HIDDEN SOUL OF HARMONY.”

No one but a musician could have written that; and no one but a musician can fully appreciate the intense beauty, the thrilling *truthfulness*, of the two last lines of this common quotation. And then listen to Händel, when he “marries immortal Verse” to Music, worthy to be its bride:—

“Let me wander not unseen  
 By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green;  
 While the ploughman near at hand  
 Whistles o’er the furrow’d land;  
 And the milkmaid singeth blythe,  
 And the mower whets his scythe,  
 And every shepherd tells his tale  
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Could Handel have *actually expressed the landscape* by the aid of melody and harmony with as much fidelity as a painter could have done with the pencil, unless he had been gifted with an eye

for Nature and a soul for Poetry, as well as an ear for Music? There is positively *scenery* in the music of Beethoven, Weber, and Mendelssohn. Close your eyes when you listen to it, and your imagination will be filled with landscape. Now you see craggy mountains, with dark fir-trees; now verdant plains, with blue hills in the far distance; you will hear rushing waterfalls, or murmuring brooks, or the mighty ocean in all its varying moods. Sometimes the strain will bring before you early dawn with "the lark" singing at "heaven's gate;" anon it will be noonday, and you are transported to the shady greenwood, by quiet streams where water-lilies grow; now the sounds bring to you sunset's gorgeous hues; at another time the dim twilight: you may hear the sighing of the evening breeze, and see the stars come out one by one, or watch the moon sailing through the sky. We do not say that everybody is so fortunate as to possess the talisman which enables one to enter the Enchanted Palace of Harmony; but this we do say, that in nine cases out of ten, the deficiency arises more from utter want of cultivation of mind and taste, than from any natural defect of ear. But we are wandering from the subject immediately under consideration.

The next assertion we have to question is, that Music "is an art that is cultivated by all women who have the least aptitude for it, and in which, as far as mere taste and execution are concerned, many more women than men are actually found to excel." The reviewer is doubtless a great critic in literary matters, but it is probable he may not be a practical musician; at any rate it is unlikely that he should possess that sort of experience with regard to the musical education of ladies which alone will enable any one to form a correct judgment on the subject under discussion. With all due deference, therefore, to the *Edinburgh Review*, we must deny that the ART OF MUSIC is "cultivated by all women who have the least aptitude for it." On the contrary, we should be inclined to substitute "very few" for "all." True, every young lady learns to play and sing, by a certain mechanical process, similar to that by which she

acquires dexterity in Berlin-wool work or crochet-knitting. But is *that* studying the heaven-descended art of Music? Is any knowledge of its principles acquired or even sought,—any insight into the mysteries of sounds, from which a science is evolved, whereby the whole heart is taken captive and all its passions swayed at pleasure? We might as well suppose that a taste for poetry and painting was cultivated by the hand-mechanism of the fair transcriber and copyer of the usual versified and water-coloured embellishments of an album, purposely exposed for every one to admire at those idle moments when they are left without any thing to feel. We cannot allow that, “as far as mere taste and execution go, many more women than men are found to excel.” First-rate female singers we have, no doubt, quite equal to male singers. But when we come to instrumental music (which has been called “the *propre* of the art”), only contrast the male performers on the pianoforte who follow close on (their admirers will tell you rival, nay eclipse) the King of Pianists, Thalberg, with the few female performers who even approach Madame Dulcken, Mrs. Anderson, and the graceful, yet spirited, Kate Loder. Nor must one forget the organists of the cathedrals, college chapels, and great churches. How many of them are female performers? The reviewer may have been thinking of amateurs; but even here we doubt whether the preponderance is so great on the side of the ladies as he imagines. Two-thirds of the young ladies who can rattle through a host of polkas and waltzes with a brilliant finger, would be completely posed when they attempted Beethoven or Mendelssohn. When we come to music of a high class we are inclined to think (taking into consideration the small number of gentlemen who learn to play the piano at all compared with the large number of ladies who do) that the sterner sex will be found to outdo the softer, even in this branch of the arts. To be fair, too, we must not pass over the many gentlemen who play the violin, violoncello, &c., in a sufficiently musician-like style to be of use in a country Philharmonic concert, whereas there are not many ladies whose

piano performance would stand the test of playing with obligato accompaniments. And now we can fancy some of our fair readers inquiring what all this tends to, and whether it is good taste to make *their own paper* the organ for obtruding on the ladies of England, remarks as unpalatable as those made by the Edinburgh reviewer. We answer, that this unsparing criticism of the musical attainments of our fair countrywomen is intended to induce them to cultivate their talent *in the right way*, and so proving that the women of the nineteenth century are capable of something higher than mere mechanical skill in the art which is placed under the patronage of St. Cecilia.

In a future number we propose to point out the causes which prevent female amateurs in general from obtaining sound musical knowledge, and its result—pure taste ; and we hope, also, to give our fair readers some practical hints which may assist them materially in acquiring solid information with regard to the art in general, as well as fine execution on the piano.

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## CHAPTER II.

“ Lord, by every minstrel tongue  
 Be thy praise so duly sung,  
 That thine angels’ harps may ne’er  
 Fail to find fit echoing here :

We the while, of meaner birth,  
 Who in that divinest spell  
 Dare not hope to join on earth.

Give us grace to listen well.”—*Christian Year.*

In my last communications I promised to give some *practical* hints on the art of studying, and of teaching music. But, before entering on this part of my task, I shall have much to say on a subject which musical teachers generally appear to consider altogether out of their province, viz., the views and feelings with which music should be studied. I hope to put the motives for

seeking to acquire proficiency in art in a light ladies in general are not accustomed to see it placed in. Shall I startle you, fair reader, when I say that I consider cultivation of musical taste to be a *religious duty*? And for these reasons. Our Creator has given us, besides a soul, a mind and body, both of which require recreation as well as food and rest. There are few recreations so healthful as music, certainly none more so. In the first place, singing or playing in moderation are conducive to bodily health; secondly, they have the power of raising, and at the same time soothing, the spirits; thirdly, they occupy and amuse the mind, as much as light literature, without that strain upon the sight and brain which the eager reading of an exciting tale never fails to produce. I am aware that there is one class of persons on whose spirits music makes little or no impression; and another, less insensible, but who would deny that the pleasure they derive from music is to be compared with the charm of light literature. The first class of persons is, happily, a *very* small one, so small that one may put them into the same category with the deaf and dumb. For I am inclined to think that in that class I have styled "insensible" there are many who do like some particular kinds of music; for instance, a military band, or an exquisite voice, a flute, or an organ, I have known to please people who disliked the sound of the piano or violin. And with regard to persons of the second class, who are far more numerous than the first, I am convinced that it is want of musical education alone that prevents their feeling the magic power that exists in harmony.

I have begun by taking the above ground for my argument in favour of its being a duty to cultivate our musical taste. I have said so far only what might be adduced in favour of cultivating a love for the country, for gardening, for sketching, for home occupations. All these are innocent and healthful recreations, well calculated to fill up profitably that leisure time which hangs so heavily on the hands of many ladies, urging some into a never-ending round of visiting, others into incessant novel-

reading, both of which may be classed as mental dram-drinking. But, besides the reasons I have given for cultivating love of music, there exists another of a higher nature. The human soul is capable of feeling that music has some mysterious connection with the unseen world. The common expression "heavenly sound" shows how deeply this idea is planted in our nature. Just consider what music is, how it is produced, and what sensations and thoughts it creates in those who hear it. Is it not a wonderful thing? How can we account for its strange power? Looking at it in a matter-of-fact way, we behold nothing which will seem to us an adequate cause for the effect produced. The experimental philosopher will tell us it is only a vibration in the air; but how can merely mechanical action affect the mind and heart? I am not speaking of singing, because one might say that the words, the associations connected with a song, would have a strong influence on the listener; but I am supposing music to be sound, and nothing more, and it is in this form that it is so wonderful a thing. How astonishing that mere vibration in the air should have power to tell us things which no words could ever express! Where can we discover that subtle essence, more rapid and penetrating than the electric fluid, which dwells in fine music, and has power to make us turn pale with awe, glow with warmth, shed tears of joy or of sorrow, thrill with indescribable, incomprehensible sensations, and grow faint with the intensity of the enjoyment? Is it reasonable to attribute the power of music to anything mechanical? No; as the poet's soul speaks to us through the vehicle of words and letters, so does the composer's soul reveal itself to us by means of musical instruments. Let us not use words in a formal, canting manner, without weighing their meaning. I have spoken of the soul. Consider what the human soul is. That portion of our nature which was created in the image of God. It is from the soul that proceed that love of truth and beauty, that longing for perfection, that pleasure in acts of benevolence, that yearning after the mysterious and the unseen, which one finds in persons

of a poetic turn of mind, and in all young people who have not been early exposed to the blighting influence of worldliness. Persons who have been trained up in a dry, prosaic system of education, see nothing in nature beyond a vast storehouse of useful and agreeable articles spread out for the benefit of man and beast. And in art they see no more than a certain amount of human ingenuity and industry, well calculated to amuse an idle hour. They see, in short, only the external portion of nature and art—of that part which is not revealed by the senses they know nothing. They are too deaf to hear the low, sweet voice of nature, too blind to see the faint reflection of heavenly fire which glows in the lamp of art. I do not blame persons of this turn of mind for condemning the occupation of an artist—for calling it frivolous, worldly, useless, or worse than useless. For, truly, were there nothing loftier or deeper in art than that mechanical skill which the multitude too often hold to be its highest excellence, then would the life of an artist be a low, sordid trade, far more contemptible than that of the cobbler or the tinker, inasmuch as it would be a trade less indispensable as respects society, and therefore less manly.

Alas! must I say it? We have in these days too many artists undeserving of the lofty title—too many who are mere picture-mongers or sound-spinners, and who seem to have realized the ingenious Mr. Dousterswivel's idea of multiplying creations of the mind by the aid of machinery! And so it will continue until art in its higher walk is more generally cultivated by amateurs. Artists must live; and while the public taste demands flimsy, trashy works of art, there will always be a large class of painters and musicians ready to supply that demand. Neither have we any right to blame them for gaining their livelihood by executing what will bring them food and raiment instead of what would bring them barren laurels, if indeed it brought so much as that. It is all very fine to talk of artists pandering to the public, poets selling Pegasus to draw the plough or a strolling player's caravan, and so forth. Every artist who lives by his

profession feels that "they who live to please must please to live." The reformation must begin in another quarter; and, as music (though without any reason) is considered to be a feminine accomplishment, and consequently that the greater number of music publishers and music masters look upon the ladies of England as their patronesses, on this account it seems advisable for all those who have the cause of music at heart to do what they can to induce their fair countrywomen to study the art in the right way.

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### CHAPTER III.

"To other strains our souls are set;  
A giddy whirl of sin  
Fills ear and brain, and will not let  
Heaven's harmonies come in."—*Christian Year*.

At the risk of appearing *extreme* I do not hesitate to say that a large portion of the musical publications and performances of the present day are injurious not only to public taste but also to public morality. In the first place, they are opposed to truth and justice; they gild copper, and offer it to an ignorant confiding public as pure gold. Secondly, they appeal to the baser passions of the multitude—vulgar wonder, and coarse unfeeling merriment, equally excited, and to the same idle purpose, by the tricks of a conjuror and the grimaces of a buffoon. These things have their proper theatres; but, out of respect to the memory of the illustrious dead, let not buffoonery profane the charmed air, which has just been rendered sacred by conveying to spellbound listeners the magic sounds of some great master's glorious conceptions. In a concert-room, now-a-days, it is often dangerous to give way to the feelings excited by a sublime composition, on account of the painful reaction which is almost sure to follow when heavenly dreams are driven from one's mind by a comic song. Even if it were one of those first-rate compositions—a buffo song from a

good opera—it would jar upon the mind when it has just been lifted heavenwards on the harmonies of some mighty master ; but an English comic song, poor in wit and poorer in music,—a nigger song suitable to the taste of a pothouse or a street audience,—oh, it is unendurable ! The only safe plan when one glances down a programme and sees “Dall' tuo stellato soglio,” followed immediately by “Lucy Long,” the only safe plan in such a case is, to keep watch and ward over one's imagination ; to keep one's eyes open and fixed on the unpoetical-looking paraphernalia of the orchestra, so as to run no risk of fancying oneself in the seventh heaven ; and, if one has resolution to do that, one can enjoy that portion of the composition which is addressed to the ear and the mind ; and though one must deny oneself the highest of its attributes, viz., the Promethean spark which lifts us upwards, yet it is better to do that, and be content with moderate enjoyment, than

“To rise like a rocket, and fall like a stick.”

I do not mean to take so narrow-minded a view as to deny the merit of humorous music. But there is a time for all things, and I do not believe that those who have just felt deeply and intensely a fine composition can be in a mood to welcome an indifferent one, though they might be amused by it at another time. Drollery is well in its way, but there are moments when it is fatiguing and distasteful ; and one of those moments I hold to be the interval of silence that follows the last chord of a glorious composition. But my fair readers will say, are we to be condemned to listen to nothing but grave music ? By no means. By fine music I do not mean solemn music ; though, doubtless, solemnity is the highest attribute of music. Perhaps I shall illustrate my meaning better by giving examples taken from the sister arts of Poetry and Painting. Suppose you had just seen *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, and had been strongly excited and touched, would you be in a mood to enjoy a farce ? Or say you had just read *The Siege of Corinth*, and a person seeing you close the book offered to read you *The Natural History of a Gent* ? Or, again, if

you are in a picture gallery, and have been gazing entranced on a Raffaele or a Domenichino, till every earthly thought had passed from your mind, would you like the subject of the next picture that met your eye to be drunken Dutch boors, by one of the coarsest of the Flemish painters? But are we always to be in the clouds? you will say. No; but it is not agreeable to come to the earth too suddenly. One should descend gradually, if one would escape a violent shock. We can look with delight on such a picture as Creswick's "Chequered Shade" at any time; yet that picture is surely a long way off from the sublime, unless, indeed, one allows that there is always something solemn in Nature, even in her most cheerful dress:—

"Oh, pleasant land of idlesse!  
 Jollity hides not 'neath the trees,  
 But thought, that roams from folly free,  
 Through the pure world of poetry,  
 Puts on her strength in scenes like these!

And so, in poetry, a cheerful English landscape by Wordsworth or Mary Howitt would at once tranquillize and brace the mind after the excitement of *Othello* or *King Lear*; and on the same principle we could enjoy Hummel, Mendelssohn, and Thalberg, in their gayest compositions, immediately after Beethoven's "Sinfonia Eroica." And why? Because they are *never* vulgar, commonplace, poor. Their gaiety is the gaiety of the skylark, not of the monkey. If joy runs through their melodies, it is a pure, sparkling joy, always graceful, always refined. It is as unlike the noisy, empty merriment of indifferent music, as the keen wit of Sydney Smith or Thackeray is unlike the joking of "fast" men and clowns. But I am exceeding the limits allotted to me, and must come to an end rapidly. I have accused most modern music of sinning against truth and justice, and of flattering the lower passions of the many. I have a third accusation to bring forward, and that one concerns my fair readers especially. I say it fosters vanity, conceit, affectation, and insincerity. Are you shocked at my bitterness? But it is not easy to speak gently

of the enemies of what we love. And I love music, real music, and am indignant when I see her throne filled by a crowd of usurpers, struggling and fighting to maintain their ephemeral reign. Is it not the constant complaint of professors, that it is no use to play good music to the general run of audiences—vain to attempt making young ladies learn classical compositions? And whence does this proceed? From this cause, that governesses and masters who cannot play tolerably themselves are frequently employed to teach beginners. What should we say of the wisdom of the man who allowed an incompetent workman to lay the foundation of his house, with the idea of reserving his means for decorating the roof? Yet that is the common system adopted by most people with regard to the education, especially the musical education, of their children; and the natural result follows. If the child have a defective ear and little talent, but a good share of vanity and ambition, the chances are she will practise hard, and get noisy execution, in order to show off, but the ear and the taste will remain bad; and when she goes to a finishing master for a dozen lessons, fancying herself a brilliant performer, what can he do? If he be not a very honest man indeed, he will flatter her with the idea that she may venture to perform bravura pieces, and she will become a source of annoyance to her acquaintance from the obligation they feel under of asking her to play when they would sooner be excused listening to the scrambling performances common to players of that stamp. Take another case. Suppose a child with a good ear learns from a bad teacher. She will get weak, bungling execution; and, when she hears first-rate playing, will fancy that her hand is too small, her fingers too stiff, her wrist too weak, for her ever to play well. Her delicate ear will not allow her to endure a bad tone and incorrect passages, so she gets weary and disgusted with her practising; and when a good master tells her that two or three hours a day, for a few months, over scales, exercises, and studies, will give her that strength and flexibility of finger she thinks it impossible to attain, she either disbelieves him, or thinks the time and labour too

great, and so she shuts up her piano in despair, and plays no more, except a polka or quadrille for dancers on the carpet.

I could cite many other cases in which time and money have been expended upon young ladies' musical education without producing anything but disappointment to parents and weariness to pupils; and in cases where talent for music exists, and good taste has not been cultivated, those only who love harmony intensely can guess how heavy is the loss sustained.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

“I heard a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sate reclined,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

“To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran;  
And much it grieved my heart to think  
What man has made of man.”—*Wordsworth*.

The author of “The Seven Lamps of Architecture” tells us that he once asked a great artist for some simple rule for attaining excellence in art. The reply he received was, “Know what you have to do, and do it.”\* Now, this certainly looks like a truism, and, when first it is presented to us, a recollection of Mrs. Glass's famous receipt, beginning “First catch your hare,” will perhaps come into one's head, and force a smile against one's will.

But, on consideration, we see that there is deep, practical wisdom in this apparently trite saying, and that, instead of classing it with the witty cook's sensible remark, we ought rather to place it in company with the ancient sage's far-famed “Know thyself.” It is chiefly, however, to lady students of art that due consideration of Mr. Ruskin's golden rule would be valuable.

\* I am quoting from memory, and claim indulgence if I am not quite accurate.

The thoroughly well-trained artist needs no such rule. He has *acted on it*, or he could not have attained excellence; and he will endeavour to make those who study under him follow his example. And better, infinitely better, than all the hard work of the most industrious student, labouring alone and unassisted, is a lesson—yes only one lesson—from a great master. By a great master I do not mean a great genius, but a person possessed (in addition to a fair degree of executive power) of a real, unaffected love of art, a highly-cultivated taste, and an enlarged mind; one, too, who is endowed with patience and common sense. And I beg my fair readers to bear in mind that half a dozen lessons from a first-rate master, followed up by a few months' steady, energetic, careful study, alone, will do more towards attaining proficiency in the art they may be trying to acquire, than years of ill-directed labour. But there are a great number of ladies who find it absolutely impossible to obtain first-rate instruction at any period of their lives, as many who have not any inducement to do so, till it is too late, or till they are persuaded it is too late; and a still larger number who, if they had the opportunity of taking lessons, would be unable to profit by them, from the prejudices, bad habits, and vitiated taste instilled into them by incompetent teachers in childhood. It is to Englishwomen of these three classes that I am addressing myself. And, indeed, they comprehend many thousands of my fair countrywomen, of various ranks, from the lady who, seated at a magnificent grand Erard, astonishes or tortures, as the case may be, her hearers with *her interpretation* of the pieces commonly played at concerts, down to the factory girl who thumps away at the Row Polka and Co., on a little, wiry, toneless piano by a cheap maker, probably bought second-hand. I do not address myself to ladies who have had the advantages of a first-rate musical education. The daughter of the distinguished amateur will probably possess finer taste than most professional players. She has early seen art appreciated by those she looks up to most, and a reverence for it will have taken root in her mind in childhood. Her taste will have

been refined by frequent opportunities of hearing fine music, her industry excited by feeling that those it is her duty to please are capable of appreciating her progress, and she has had every assistance in gaining mechanical skill that good teaching can give. She stands in no need of my advice. But it is to those who are working up hill, unassisted, that I hope to be of some use. I address myself to young ladies in the country, out of the reach of a good master—to mothers forced to economize in the education of their children—to elder sisters in a large family who are anxious to assist in the school-room—to single ladies with plenty of leisure, who would be glad to bestow it on the children of a brother or sister who may have made a not too fortunate marriage—and above all I address myself to governesses, whom a tyrannical custom obliges to undertake the teaching of an art they have never learnt themselves.

Do not call me crochetty or quixotic. Understand clearly, gentle reader, that I lay no claim to anything like originality with regard to the method of study I am about to advise. I shall say nothing you might not hear from any good master. I do not profess to have discovered some wonderful new system which will do away with all difficulties, and enable idle amateurs to rival hardworking professors, as if by magic. There is no royal road to learning.

“ Oft has this truth been spoken,  
But never yet too oft.”

In the present day there is a tendency to putting faith in new and untried theories, and a strong fancy for off-hand, amusing systems of learning. Now if this “working-day world” of ours were truly that flowery garden, or vast playground, which the young too often expect to find it, then these modern systems of “all play and no work” (granting, for argument’s sake, that they attain their end) might answer well enough. But, inasmuch as human life has in it a much larger share of the dry and dull than of the bright and pleasant—of the hard and bitter than of the soft and sweet,—it seems a cruel kindness to surround the

young with an atmosphere of luxury, sparing their minds every kind of fatigue, contradiction, or annoyance, and so rendering them mentally delicate and feeble, though we are aware all the time that sooner or later they must one day leave their sheltered bower for the battle-field of life. But I had better not stop to sermonize, or we shall lose sight of the matter in hand.

I am afraid my space is nearly exhausted, and, therefore, I must confine myself to-day to giving advice to young ladies who have recently left the school-room, and who intend to pursue their musical studies unassisted by a master. The plan pursued by a great many young ladies in this case is, to waste a good deal of money in purchasing polkas and quadrilles (choosing them more by the decoration on the title-page than by any mark of musical merit), and then to play them in a careless, slovenly way, leaving out any double notes or passages requiring neat execution, and putting *ad libitum* harmonies in the bass, to save the trouble of reading the real notes correctly. The consequence of this plan is, that after wasting an hour a day in what she calls "practising," for a twelvemonth, the young lady plays a great deal worse than she did when she first left the school-room, and the chances are that as soon as a serious flirtation begins (unless the gentleman happens to be musical) her piano is closed altogether and novel-reading taken up instead. Some people would say, "So much the better, for she could not have possessed decided talent for music, and the hour a day devoted to practising was time wasted." Perhaps so, if she played nothing but an interminable succession of polkas. But, suppose during that twelvemonth she had practised selections from Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, chants and cathedral anthems, Scotch and Irish melodies, and a few good studies for pianoforte? Had she played such music as that, an hour a day for a twelvemonth, she would have gained not only a great increase of execution, but a still greater increase of taste and knowledge. "But that style of music is so difficult to read," objects one fair reader. Not so difficult as you fancy. Classical music is like cipher-

writing. Once get the key to it, and it is easier than any other. Showy, executive music requires constant and vigorous practice to keep it up. For that reason it is fit only for professional performers, and those ladies whose nearest relatives are sufficiently *music-mad* to endure willingly the sound of "practising," which is a very different thing from the sound of playing what has already been made perfect by practice. Classical music does not require that incessant labour. Doubtless you will find here and there in some solid compositions, quiet, unassuming little passages, which are far more difficult to execute *perfectly* than the noisiest and most brilliant tour de force that ever dazzled the eyes and amused the ears of a fashionable audience in a concert-room. To play classical music well, one requires good sense and good temper; for this reason, that it does not gratify vanity and a desire to show off. The lady who devotes the time she allows herself for the piano to classical music must expect to be thought little of whenever she plays to listeners who value a piece in proportion to the noise and dash it makes. But for her encouragement, I can assure her that a great many persons who know nothing about music, but are gifted with a good ear, will always prefer an old-fashioned expressive air, well harmonized and perfectly executed, to the most brilliant morceau of the modern school. Gentlemen, especially, she will find are fond of solid music. In general society "the Miss Lacquers" beginning to perform a long noisy bravura duet is the signal for energetic conversation, and, with the exception of such gentlemen as approach the piano for the sake of admiring the young ladies' fair hands and rounded arms, no one pays the smallest attention to the performance; and, should no admirers happen to be present, the chances are they will play for the amusement of the tables and chairs, the company doing their best to escape hearing a note. When they have hammered away to the last chord, thanks and compliments are showered upon them, by those who have wished the piano at the Antipodes during the last ten minutes. Was I wrong when I said that the musical system of

the present day produces insincerity? The musical performance of amateurs in general society is frequently nothing more or less than what Mr. Carlyle would call "an enormous sham," a "monstrous piece of flunkeydom." But supposing after a morceau de concert, with a few wrong notes added, has been performed, a young lady begins a simple song; let her have only a tolerable voice, under perfect control, and the power of accompanying herself without false harmonies, and I will engage she has plenty of silent gratified listeners immediately. If her voice is very sweet, her expression fine, and her song well chosen, she will have even an enthusiastic audience. Now, what is the lesson amateur pianoforte-players should learn from this? Why, that neither noise nor rapidity are *music*, and that nothing short of the perfect execution and powerful expression of a great pianist, aided by the rich tone of a first-rate instrument, will make any impression on the hearers of a modern pianoforte piece in general society. Do not be disheartened, fair reader; the case is not so desperate as it looks. I have a remedy to offer. Endeavour to give to your playing as much as you possibly can of those qualities which you observe to be so taking in vocal music. First, study to acquire *fine tone*. This is not to be got by playing modern music *alone*. If it is in your power, get a few lessons on the organ, in order to obtain the power of holding down the right notes, of sliding and changing a finger, of firmly grasping the harmonies, and of making every finger independent. In a word, it will enable you to "know what you have to do, and do it," which is what amateur pianists in general have very little idea of. In addition to giving you the power of legato and sostenuto playing, practising the organ will improve your ear both for sound and time. The true value of the long notes, and the beauty of harmony, are brought out much more strikingly on an instrument which has the power of sustaining the sound than on a piano. It is not recommended to pianists to practise the organ *much*. It is said to stiffen the fingers. I cannot say I have found it so myself; but perhaps I am not a fair judge, never having played

the organ regularly for many weeks together. If you take only a few organ lessons, just for the sake of improving your touch on the piano, you need not pay much attention to the management of the stops and the use of the pedals; but at the same time, if you choose to afford a regular course of lessons from a good organist, you will find gaining dexterity of foot and hand is not without its use to a pianist. If it is entirely out of your power to get organ lessons, or an organ, seraphine, or melodium to practise on, then the next thing I advise is to join a singing class on the Hullah system, so as to get a true idea of the value, in time, of semibreves, minims, and *rests*, and also a feeling for harmony. Singing in part and at sight is the grammar—the foundation—of all music; and every one who attempts to play an instrument ought, voice or no voice, to learn part singing. On no other plan can you acquire a knowledge of time and accent so easily and rapidly, as well as the power of reading music with facility. And while you are learning to sing for the sake of your playing, you should follow up that study by practising organ music on the piano. Mr. Novello has published a great quantity of classical music which would do admirably for this purpose. His catalogue comprehends religious music of every description, of various schools, of every degree of difficulty, and for the most part excessively cheap. I cannot speak too highly of a recently-started musical periodical called *Novello's Part-Song Book*. It contains, generally, three glees or madrigals of sterling musical worth, and at the same time of pleasing character, and by no means difficult to execute. Its price is a shilling, and it appears on the 15th of every month. The proprietors tell us, "that with the hope of supplying an impetus to art, by encouraging amongst their countrymen the study of pure vocal composition," they have resolved to offer a monthly premium of eight guineas for the best part-song which shall be composed for poetry given in the *Part-Song Book*. The competition is open to all composers, both professional and amateur, and the name of the successful candidate only is known. In the June number we are told that the winner

of the first prize is Walter Cecil Macfarren, and that his composition will be printed on the 15th of July in the *Part-Song Book*. It is also stated that there were fifty-eight candidate compositions, many of them of great merit. That certainly is a very encouraging piece of news, as it shows what progress musical taste and knowledge must have made in England of late years. Before concluding, I must beg my fair readers not to go away with the idea that I undervalue modern music; on the contrary, I consider the compositions of Thalberg, Döhler, and others, to be exquisitely beautiful, but fit only to be played by those who have it in their power to devote a good deal of time to practising, and who are moreover gifted with perseverance and energy, in addition to a fine taste for music. Besides, I am addressing myself to ladies who have not made any great progress in pianoforte-playing, and I should recommend them to begin at the fountain head, by studying the sort of solid music which all great pianists have mastered in their early studies. Having laid a good foundation, the amateur is at liberty to add such a superstructure as circumstances admit of; but this I must say, that the common plan of beginning to raise the edifice without laying any foundation at all, must naturally produce the fruits we see produced so often, viz., an uninhabitable, useless building, destined to be blown down by the first gale that attacks it. For forming the *finger* modern exercises are the best. Everybody knows Herz's Exercises, Czerny's *Etude de la Velocité*, Chaulieu's *First Six Months*, &c.; they are all admirable, and I strongly advise amateur pianists who are kept back by a weak or stiff finger to practise any one of these works steadily for some weeks. The newest work of this kind is Dreyschock's *Scales*, recently published by Messrs. Cocks—at a very low price, too. I shall have occasion to enter further upon this subject of forming the hand when I am addressing mothers and governesses, and therefore I take my leave of it for the present.

Should any of my fair friends be so situated that they cannot follow my advice with regard to learning the organ or joining a

singing class, then I recommend them to get and study alone Part I. of Wilhelm's *Method of Singing*, adapted to English use, by Mr. Hullah; Novello's *Musical Times*, the *Part-Song Book*, and as many as they please of those publications containing selections from great composers, arranged as short solos for organ or piano, which Mr. Novello has offered to the public at reduced prices. I have given now some hints which may be useful to those who can play tolerably. In future communications I shall say more upon the mechanical part of musical study, to assist those who wish to teach the piano properly to children.

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## CHAPTER V.

“Dark-brow'd sophist, come not anear;  
 All the place is holy ground;  
 Hollow smile and frozen sneer  
 Come not here.  
 Holy water will I pour  
 Into every spicy flower  
 Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it around.  
 The flowers would faint at your cruel cheer;  
 In your eye there is death;  
 There is frost in your breath;  
 Which would blight the plants.  
 Where you stand you cannot hear  
 From the groves within  
 The wild bird's din.  
 In the heart of the garden the merry bird chants;  
 It would fall to the ground if you came in.”—*Tennyson*.

Those among my fair readers who are expecting practical hints on the art of teaching the piano, must forgive me if I postpone the performance of my promise till I have fully developed certain views with regard to pianoforte-playing which I think ought to precede what I have to say on the mechanical part of the art. Many people have an idea that great proficiency in music is

necessary in order to enable one to delight others, but that for one's own private pleasure a very moderate amount of knowledge and skill is required. This is an utter mistake. In reality it is quite the other way, and ten times more musical power is required to make the piano a resource for our solitary hours than for our evenings in society. In company, especially at a distance from London, performers of very moderate calibre are valuable. It is not so much music, as something to break silence and dissipate dulness, that is wanted. A noisy piece of music, ill performed, is useful in giving shy people courage to talk with animation under cover of the din. A popular song, or a popular polka, will afford something to discuss. However, without taking extreme cases, we may safely assert, that a very moderate degree of musical acquirement will enable a young lady to amuse her friends and acquaintance, but that she will require something more to amuse herself. In order to make the pianoforte an agreeable companion to a lady who leads a retired life, and is thrown on her own resources for amusement, it is necessary that she should be mistress of her instrument.

There is little pleasure in playing till the performer has gained sufficient knowledge of time and harmony to enable her to read music with facility, and sufficient executive power to enable her to produce a fine tone, and to play without effort. And she who has got so far as this is a finished pianiste. Perhaps some of my fair readers may be inclined to dispute this point, by asserting that the pianoforte is a resource to many who can neither play well at sight, nor execute a difficult passage. A resource it may be, an amusement, an occupation, a rival to "knitting and netting and crochet;" but a companion—even in the same sense that a dog or a book is a companion—never! To a good pianiste the pianoforte is a loving friend. It gives you the most precious of all things—sympathy. As your finger presses the delicate ivory, exquisite sounds meet your longing ear. They express to you the ideas floating through your mind; they utter aloud the feelings buried deep within your heart; they satisfy the vague

mysterious yearnings after the unseen world that stir within your soul. What the face of Nature is to one who loves Wordsworth's poetry, such is her piano to one who loves Beethoven's music. Why have poets slighted you, dear treasure-house of harmony? Why do they ennoble the lyre, the harp, the lute, and leave you without one kind word? Sweet instrument, friend ever ready to smile or sigh with me, I would I were a poet for your sake! Is it your name or your form that has caused you to be thus scorned? Both, I fear; for your form (though dear to a player as the chest that holds his gold to a miser) is, I must own, far from graceful; and as for your name, though it flows as melodiously as an air of Mozart, it has, alas! been too often degraded by commonplace associations to render it fit for poetry. Yet, after all, I do not see that "pianoforte" is a worse constructive material for those architects who build in the air than "the train at Coventry."

But, to leave trifling, and to speak soberly and seriously, the pianoforte is, to those who know how to use it, a little world in itself. Most instruments require an accompaniment, but the pianoforte is to the skilful pianist an inexhaustible storehouse of harmony. Truly, I do not mean to say that the sounds are, in themselves, to be compared with those of a fine band. The pianoforte bears to the orchestra the same proportion that a sketch bears to a finished painting. The roughest sketch from the hand of a master gives pleasure to one who can draw, though a common observer may see little in it to admire. And why? Because the eye and mind of the artist are in a state to receive impressions from the faintest hints, which would be lost on one whose perception of the beautiful has not been rendered acute by cultivation. The artist sees on the paper a few grey lines and black touches, and they kindle his imagination, and bring to his memory distant hills clothed in aërial tints, foliage lit up by sunlight, wild moorland or shady glen, all invested with the charm of colour and effect. And even so it is with the musician. The pianoforte enables us to bring before the mind a spirited

sketch of some mighty composer's magical creation. You will understand what I mean if you compare the degree of pleasure with which you listen to an overture or symphony rendered upon the piano, *after* having heard the real effect given by a fine orchestra, with the degree of pleasure with which you listen to one of whose orchestral light and shade you are ignorant. Take, for instance, the overture to *The Midsummer Night's Dream*, play it on the piano, and what becomes of those enchanting chords with which it opens? Where are those "linked notes of sweetness long drawn out" which tell the listener that he is on the confines of fairy-land? those soft delicately-swelling chords which seem to come from afar, like invisible music in an enchanted region? How cold, how poor, how weak, is the interpretation on the piano! But, when you have heard a fine orchestra perform it, memory and fancy will help you with their magic spells, and the recollections of the past will throw their gorgeous colouring over the dull hues of the present.

Those who wish to make a companion and friend of their piano should attach some *idea* to what they play. It is related of Weber that he never saw a beautiful landscape without feeling corresponding musical ideas rise in his mind. And many persons without the slightest pretensions to musical *genius* have experienced something of the kind. The difference between their sensation and that of the great composer consists in the one being a creation of imagination, the other the congenial suggestion of memory. Any one with a fine ear for music and real love of poetry will find intense pleasure in playing certain pianoforte pieces, and attaching to them suitable passages from favourite authors. For instance, there is an exquisite little piece by Cramer, called "Souvenir of Bygone Days," which will serve to illustrate several of Tennyson's poems. Sometimes it reminds me of "The Lotus Eaters," at another of "The Lady of Shalott." Mendelssohn's "Songs without Words," too, are rich in ideas fit for the dreamy character of Tennyson's poetry. There is one spirited yet solemn melody in the sixth book of the *Lieder* which always seems to me to express

“Sir Galahad.” It is in E minor, and there is a sort of stately haste in the steady onward march of the tema, broken here and there by trumpet-like calls, which resemble Sir Galahad's solemn quest. It is too short, though, for the whole poem, and wants a subject more in the religious style for verses 3 and 4. It would be easy to find something in the works of the same composer that would come in there without injuring the effect of the rest. Beethoven is rich in subjects for poetry. They who play his music need hardly be told so. Weber, too, is eminently suggestive. What a gem of poetry is “The Mermaid's Song” in *Oberon*! There is an air in *Der Freischutz*, “Softly sighs the breeze of evening,” which forms a landscape. As the entrancing melody and harmony steal upon the ear, you feel that the twilight is dying away—that the stars are coming out—that the night-breeze is stealing among the willows which bend over the glassy surface of the quiet river; in a word, you feel that music can *paint*.

Thalberg's “Marche Funebre” is a poetical composition. As I understand it, it begins with deep, heavy sorrow, which gradually calms and softens, till hope springs up, and thoughts of heaven gleam brightly across the mind. Then the plaintive subject returns, varied by a murmuring accompaniment, and again the joyous air breaks in like the song of angels rejoicing over the safety of the departed spirit. Once more are heard a few bars of the funeral march, followed by the wailing melody in B flat minor, accompanied by a restless tremolo, expressive of emotion. Then comes a vehement octave passage, concluded by a few calm and solemn bars, which, without any great effort of imagination, we may fancy expresses passionate sorrow, exhausted by its own violence, and recalled to calmness by the voice of religion, subsiding into submission to the will of Heaven.

To give proper effect to this beautiful pianoforte composition great execution is required. I do not recommend it to any lady who does not possess a strong finger and resolution to practise vigorously. But there are some of Dreyschock's recent pieces

which have this same charm of poetry without any great difficulties in the way of execution. The two nocturnes, called "Bluettes," and the second nocturne in E flat, are full of grace and expression. There is something very captivating in their plaintive melody, and smooth flowing accompaniment. When one plays them in the twilight it is easy to fancy one hears the murmur of the river

"Flowing down to Camelot."

Then rises a vision of the place where

"Four grey walls and four grey towers  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle embowers  
The Lady of Shalott."

And still, as the dream-like music flows on, one sees her weaving her web and beholding in the mirror

"the highway near,  
Winding down to Camelot."

And then, as the gentle melody gradually dies away, one knows that

"Thro' the noises of the night  
She floateth down to Camelot ;

"And as the boat-head wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her singing her last song,  
The Lady of Shalott.—

"Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen wholly,  
Turned to tower'd Camelot ;

"For ere she reached upon the tide  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
The Lady of Shalott."

I could mention many slow movements from Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Spohr, and other great masters, which

would serve to illustrate this most musical of poems; but what I have pointed out will suffice for those among my fair readers who really *love* poetry and music; and to others, criticism of this kind would appear trifling and unreal.

*Note.*—It would occupy too much space were I to particularize all the modern composers for piano whose works possess sentiment; but I cannot forbear from mentioning one to whom I owe a deep debt of gratitude for the intense pleasure his works have recently given me—Adolphe Henselt.

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## CHAPTER VI.

“ Let us then be up and doing,  
 With a heart for any fate;  
 Still achieving, still pursuing,  
 Learn to labour, and to wait.”—*Longfellow.*

I have no doubt that my last article was condemned as romantic and over-strained by some of my fair readers. Now, as I wish to enlist in my cause minds of all casts, I mean to attempt what is often set down as an impossibility, viz., to please everybody. So, to-day, I am going to be as prosaic and business-like as the pence-table; and the most matter-of-fact lady breathing may venture to listen to me just now without fearing any flights of fancy. Most mothers and governesses are aware that until a child can hold its pen properly, and make strokes firmly, it is useless to set it to write words; and every village schoolmistress knows that coarse hemming must be *conquered* before fine stitching is attempted. Again, unless the multiplication-table is learnt perfectly it is vain to expect any progress in arithmetic; and, unless certain names and dates are firmly fixed in the memory, no clear ideas with regard to history can be hoped for. Even so it is with every art and science, from painting and mathematics down to knitting stockings and making puddings.

There are men and women in the world who never can do *any thing* well, because in childhood they were allowed to give way to

sloth and slovenliness. If any fair reader is shocked by these two ugly words, let her remember that the reality is uglier than the name, and that a lady who never does anything that gives her trouble from one year's end to another is guilty of those vices, though the united efforts of her dressmaker and her maid may conceal the fact from the world.

Music, studied properly, is a powerful aid in general education, but as it is learnt in many houses it is a hindrance rather than an aid. It may be made the means of opening the mind, strengthening the memory, refining the taste, and guiding rightly the imagination and feelings. But too often we see it made an agent to narrow and confine the intellect, dwarf the feelings and the memory, quench the fancy, and degrade the taste. The mechanical part of the art may be made to assist in giving habits of accuracy, attention, energy, patience, perseverance, and good temper. But a great number of children gain from their hour's "practising" only an increase of idleness, carelessness, or irritability, according to their different dispositions. Many mothers, and a still greater number of governesses, detest music, and wish the fashion of making it an indispensable branch of education would go out, as useless and unpleasant fashions generally do, after they have had their day. I should agree with them if I understood by music the senseless occupation of running the fingers about among pieces of ivory for an hour a day for years, and at the end of the time finding they had gained an acquirement which was no resource to themselves nor any great pleasure to their friends. And, depend upon it, did no young ladies cultivate music with any other aim than that of outshining a sister or a schoolfellow, the fashion *would* have gone out long ago. But some study the art to such good purpose, that they keep the light burning in spite of every effort to quench it.

If I am not careful I shall break my promise of being matter-of-fact, and so I will proceed at once to give practical advice for teaching the pianoforte to children. I will suppose that a governess who did not succeed in her piano studies in her own

school-days, and who gave up playing altogether on entering a family where the plan adopted was to have a music-master, finds it necessary to accept a situation where she is required to teach music to beginners. I will suppose there is a little girl able to perform indifferently a good many of the early lessons in an instruction-book; another whom mamma has been trying to teach "her notes" in vain for two or three months past; and a third who has been considered too young to learn. Most children have a great desire to begin music. It seems to them at first like a game of play; and it is most desirable to take advantage of this feeling, and to make the first month's lessons an amusement. Leave the hard work till some love of the art has been implanted in the young mind. If the new instructress observes that her eldest pupil reads the notes with difficulty, holds her hand ill, pays no attention to rests, and seems to have no ear for time, I recommend her to close the piano entirely for a week, and to give her lessons without an instrument, something in this way:— Let her place the three children before her, telling them to stand erect and well, as if they were going to take a dancing lesson. Then teach them to beat time, and get them to do it *gracefully*. The slow, graceful wave of the hand is worth gaining early: it will give an impression of the cantabile movement. In the singing class books beating time is fully explained; but for the sake of those who may not have it in their power to procure one conveniently, I will subjoin an explanation of the method.

The left hand should be held at a little distance from the waist, and the fingers of the right hand should give a smart, but not violent, tap upon the open palm of the other hand, to mark the first beat; lift the right hand and raise it to an erect position for the second beat; wave it to the left for the third beat, and to the right for the fourth. This should at first be done very slow, and always in a marked, emphatic manner. Take care that all the children strike on the palm of the left hand at the same moment, and all make the wave together. Some children will

catch this movement much quicker than others of course, just as some learn to dance with greater ease than others. Let them practise this beating of time, as they would practise the battements in a dancing lesson. Do not keep them so long at it as to tire them; but if they are in good health, and are good-humoured children, they will find it an amusing exercise, and will be willing to try again and again till it is conquered. Make them count 1, 2, 3, 4, with the beats; count with them, laying a strong emphasis on 1, and a slight emphasis on 3, which they will imitate unconsciously. From ten minutes to a quarter of an hour will be long enough for the beating. Then tell them to sit down, and after a few second's silence, to make them wonder what is coming, say E; then make them all repeat E, first together, and then separately. Then say G. Do not add B till the youngest child has learnt E and G perfectly. You may make this droll and amusing if you manage well. Then add D and F. If the children are *very* slow in capacity, or have been much spoiled, do not force too much on them. This will suffice for the first lesson in some cases; but with quick, well-trained children you may proceed as follows:—Take a slate and draw a long horizontal line upon it, and holding it up say, “What is this?” The children will say, “a line.” Then draw a second just above it, and say, “What is this?” “Another line,” they will probably answer. Then draw a third and ask again. Then say, “Which was the first line I drew?” The children will point to the bottom line. Then ask, “Which was the second line I drew?” and afterwards which is the third line. Then draw the fourth and fifth lines, and ask their names. You will find no child of average capacity will ever want to be told again which is the first line. Then ask if they have forgotten the letters you taught them just now, and say, “Which did I teach you *first*?” They will say E. Which second? G; and so on. Then write E on the first line, G on the second, &c., and make them tell you which letter belongs to each line. Ivory letters may be sought, if you see your little pupils tired or puzzled.

It will make a break. And then rule the lines very far apart, and allow each in turn (in a quiet orderly way) to put an ivory letter on a line as often as they wish. In this way very young children may master the five lines of the treble stave in one day; and it is by no means extraordinary to meet with grown-up girls who can play *pieces* after a fashion, who would be puzzled if you asked them to say the lines and spaces backward *rapidly*. How is it possible for them to *read* music if they do not know the musical alphabet perfectly? I consider the beating of time and the names of the five lines quite enough for a little child to learn in one day. A quick child would learn much more, but it would be forgotten again; and it is better to stop while the interest is at its height. If the children wish to prolong the lesson (and you may make it as amusing as any game of play), say, "Music is a treat, and that it would be greedy to allow oneself too much at a time."

I am supposing now that a governess, or an elder sister, or aunt is teaching these children, and that time is no great object. But, if one were teaching twenty children in a class, one might venture to proceed farther. Notice the difference in a dancing lesson in an academy and a dancing lesson at home. The sight of strangers—the going to another house—the force of example—tendency to imitate, to emulate, or to take warning by other children—all these influences act strongly on most young people, and enable a teacher to keep up the attention and spirits of pupils much longer in a class than in a private lesson. And I am inclined to think (though one cannot be sure till one has seen it tried), that musical academies and classes would bring children forward much quicker, as well as more pleasantly, than private teaching. At the same time, I should imagine it would be necessary to unite private lessons to class teaching, or there would be a danger of some pupils not exerting themselves.

But to return to our lessons. These music lessons must be of daily occurrence. The second day I would repeat the first lesson, making the pupils beat time very slowly and then quicker.

Having ascertained that all the children can tell you each line without hesitation, proceed to show them that there are empty spaces left between the lines, and get them to find out which is the first, and so on. The names they will learn directly by the help of the word "face." This done, make a note (a semibreve) on the first line, and tell them to call it E, and so proceed with the nine notes of the staff. Let them try to write the notes themselves on the slate. Rule the lines very wide apart, and neatly, for them, and show them how to make a semibreve. Having given a slate ruled to each child, say, "Write G, B, C," or any other letters at random. Make them *find out* that there are two E's in the staff. You will have accomplished enough for the second day when the children can write a note on any given line or space without help from you. I must defer till next week the conclusion of our little pupils' lessons.

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## CHAPTER VII.

"That is work of waste and ruin—  
 Do as Charles and I are doing!  
 Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,  
 We must spare them—here are many :  
 Look at it—the flower is small,  
 Small and low, though fair as any ;  
 Do not touch it? summers two  
 I am older, Anne, than you."—*Wordsworth.*

I need hardly say that, before beginning a second lesson, it is necessary to ascertain that all our little pupil acquired at the first has been retained. The grand mistake made by most ladies with regard to musical education is this—they care more about the quantity than the quality of the progress made in a given time. Professors of music soon find this out by sad experience, and feel that it is undertaking to row against wind and tide to attempt making the generality of their pupils lay a solid

foundation of musical study before beginning what may be called the decorative part of the art. I entreat all mothers who wish their children to excel in music to weigh well what I have said upon this subject in previous numbers. No branch of education will bear *hurrying*, and music less than any. Remember it is one of the fine arts, and that numbers of professional people devote their whole lives to it without attaining anything beyond mediocrity. How many years of daily labour, united to good teaching, does it take a girl to become a first-rate dressmaker or confectioner, or even a good housemaid or laundress! And those are common arts requiring but a moderate amount of intellect and dexterity.

Music requires the careful cultivation of a young lady's mind, fancy, taste, feeling, and memory, as well as of her manual strength and agility. If proper time be not allowed for getting over the fundamental part of the art in childhood, it will be found out too late that the old proverb, "Most haste, worst speed," has been verified. Parents are often so impatient to hear their children play "*pretty pieces*," and grown-up young ladies so anxious to shine in company, that masters have no chance of getting time and labour bestowed on what they well know to be indispensable to attaining good execution or fine taste; and then people complain that a teacher does not bring on their children, when they themselves put most effectual obstacles in the way of the pupils' improvement. Another remark I must make here is, that the custom of considering any wretched worn-out piano-forte good enough to be employed in schoolrooms, is quite enough to account for the immense preponderance of bad players over good, one finds among ladies.

And now to begin our second lesson. Begin with beating time as before, and then, having gone over again the lines and spaces, written them on the slate, and repeated them backwards as well as forwards, write the treble cleff, and let the pupils copy it; then rub it out and substitute the bass cleff. Then teach them G, B, D, F, A, and A, C, E, G, just as you did the treble notes.

That gained, return to the beating of time. Write on the slate a scale from E first line to E fourth space. Make the notes semibreves, one in each bar. Teach the pupils the word semibreve, and make them understand that *BAR* is the name common both to the line which *bars* one part of the music from the other, and also to the portion of music *barred*, or railed off as it were. Then make them beat time with the eye fixed on the notes, to which you must point with a pencil, taking care to do it in a decided manner, touching each note *exactly* at the same instant that they strike the loud beat and pronounce one, holding your pencil still on the note till the fourth beat has had its time. Then let your pupils try to point, and you join those who are beating. Then write two minims in each bar instead of the semibreves, and make them clearly understand the relative value of the notes by explaining that one is half the value of the other, as sixpence is half a shilling. Then proceed to the crotchet, and explain it as a quarter or fourth. Now we come to the quaver, which may be conquered something in this way:—Write the eight quavers in one bar as single notes, the others as groups of two and groups of four. Show the children, by cutting a piece of paper into eight, and joining it again, and by drawing divided lines on the slate, what an eighth is, and that eight eighths are the same as one whole, that four eighths are the same as two fourths, and take care that they understand that two quarters and one half are the same thing. You may make this part of the lesson bear on arithmetic, and with slow children it will be found useful, independent of musical acquirement.

Having made all this clear, teach them to beat as before, with the eye fixed on the notes. While they count and beat four, do you touch with your pointer two quavers, one after the other, saying at the very instant, One-un, two-oo, three-ee, four-or; or, if you prefer it, you can say One and, two and, &c.; but the other is more expressive. Go over this till it becomes easy, and till they feel that the dividing the quavers into groups does not alter their value. Show them that four quavers make half a bar,

and are, therefore, equal to one minim, or two crotchets, in the same way that four slices of a cake which had been cut into eight equal portions would be the very same quantity as one half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ), or two quarters ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ). This will be enough for the second lesson; indeed, should your pupils be slow or ill-trained, it would be too much. I do not mean my method to be followed slavishly. I profess merely to give hints which ladies may improve upon at pleasure; and, of course, much must depend on the mind and temper of the pupils.

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### CHAPTER VIII.

“ They twinkle to the wintry moon,  
And cheer th’ ungenial day,  
And tell us all will glisten soon  
As green and bright as they.”—*Keble*.

“ Thorough, yet simple and clear; for sublimity always is simple.  
Both in sermon and song, a child can seize on its meaning.”—*Longfellow*.

I do not consider it necessary to detail every individual lesson. We will, therefore, suppose that a few days' practice has perfected the first and second lesson, and added a knowledge of the semi-quaver and demisemi-quaver. One lesson will enable some children to gain an acquaintance with all the “rests,” others would get puzzled if shown more than one form at a time. The best way of showing the value of the rests is by writing notes in one bar and rests in another, and then singing the passage while the pupils beat time. The silent bars will strike them forcibly. If the teacher finds it *impossible* to sing, the piano must be resorted to, but I should say that persons so deficient in ear that they could not sing a few notes are hardly fit to teach music. There may be cases where delicacy of chest, or nervousness, not utter want of ear, are the bar to singing. But most ladies have more vocal power than they imagine, and if they could but be persuaded to sing without the support of the pianoforte, we

should have more solid singers than we have at present. But to return to our little pupils. Write eight bars in this way:— F first space, G second line, A second space, in semibreves; then a semibreve rest; then A A, G G, F F, all in minims, and two minim rests. Make the children beat steadily while you point to the notes, singing them if you possibly can; if not, playing them on the piano while the pupils are beating time, and, fixing their eyes on the slate or paper, say F, G, A, rest; A A, G G, F F, rest, rest. You may vary this passage of course at pleasure, only take care if you sing to begin on a note which will require no accidental sharp or flat to keep it in the major mode. You must take as many days as you find necessary to teach the whole of the rests. I will go on at once to ledger lines, so puzzling to many a grown-up young lady. If my reader has any imagination she will think of many ways of divesting these ledger lines of their mysterious character, but in case she happens to have none, I will give her a specimen of a good plan of making them plain to children. Say, “Fancy nine apples in a row, then three pears, and then nine more apples.” Write on the slate, as crotchets, the five lines and four spaces of the bass cleff; then write B, C, D, as semibreves, to catch the eye; and, lastly, the notes of the treble staff in crotchets; the whole arranged so as to form a scale from G first line in bass to F fifth line in treble. The children will show you the two rows of imaginary apples and the three pears between them very quickly. Next make them name each note as you point to it from the lowest to the highest. Stop when you get to the fifth line in bass, and say, “Now we have got through our first row of apples.” Then say (pointing to fifth line), “What is this note?” “A,” they will reply. “What letters follow A?” “B, C, D.” Stop them there and say, “Those are the three pears; we must learn them perfectly.” When B, C, D, are *firmly* fixed in the memory, point out that two are spaces and the middle one a note with a line through it. Impress “Middle C” upon their memories; I would say nothing of any other ledger lines at that lesson. At the

next show them G, A, B, C, above the treble staff, and F, E, D, C, below. If they are *quite perfect* in running backward as well as forward with the letters, they will find no difficulty in learning these notes. At the next lesson you may take them to the piano. Write on a sheet of music paper the well-known exercise for the five fingers (such as Herz's first exercises begin with), but with this difference, write it for four hands, two in the treble clef on one page, and two in the bass. In treble C, third space, and middle C; in bass, octave below. Write every note a semi-breve, and make them count four steady slow beats to each. Write the same passage twice, and put a double bar with two dots, and explain that the dots mean repeat. This will make the exercise played four times. Then write the same passage in the treble with rests for the bass, followed by rests for the treble and the passage for bass alone. Having written this before your pupils, seat one at the piano as "primo" player, and take the "secondo" part yourself, making the other children stand on each side of the instrument, and tell them to beat time and look at the written notes, not the keys. Then play the duet slowly and steadily, giving the full value of the four beats and the accent on the first beat of each bar. When your eldest pupil can execute this passage with ease, give up your own place to the second child, and make the two little performers get the passage perfect together. When it goes smoothly let the youngest try with you, while the other two beat time. At the next lesson add the same notes as minims; at the next as crotchets, then as quavers and semiquavers. If you find this beyond the youngest child, let her listen to her sisters and beat time instead of playing. Never let a child do anything in a slovenly way. When this passage is conquered, vary it, by writing it in this way:—The treble as before (in quavers); you may put one bar in groups of two, and another of four. The bass as a common chord of C, four crotchets in a bar. Then reverse it, giving the chords to the first performer and the run to the bass. The sound of this exercise pleases children. You can tell them that a chord is

two or more notes struck at the same instant, and that the full, rich sound made by a chord is called harmony, while the pleasant running sound of the single notes is called melody.

Before concluding, I must warn ladies who have never studied under a good master, that they should recollect that there is a proper position for sitting at the instrument, holding the hands, and moving the fingers. This has all been explained again and again in books of instruction, from the venerable "Cramer's Instructions" to "Benedict's Tutor." The remarks at the beginning of Czerny's and Chaulieu's exercises are valuable to those who have learnt of a bad teacher. But, for the benefit of ladies who cannot afford expensive works, I will mention the chief points to be attended to. Do not sit too close to the instrument, nor mounted up on too high a seat. Let the wrist be about the same level as the elbow, and generally a trifle higher than the knuckles, especially for modern music; but this may be caricatured, and often is, by players of the Liszt school. Take care that the hand is placed far enough on the key-board to enable all the fingers to touch the black notes without altering their general position, and guard vigilantly against the tendency to let the thumb strike close to the edge of the notes. Make your pupils keep the wrist *perfectly still* while they practise the passage recommended above, and be sure they play with their fingers, not with their arms. Take care, also, that each finger remains down till the next strikes, and then is lifted instantly. It often happens that the sound of "practising" is an annoyance in a house. A good deal of this may be saved by exercising the fingers on a table from ten minutes to a quarter of an hour a day. To governesses who wish to acquire or retain a brilliant finger I recommend this kind of practising. I should hardly venture to enforce much of it with children, for fear of making them hate their musical studies; but, where there is a large family of young ladies anxious to improve, and still more anxious (as they ought to be) not to annoy others, this silent practising will be found valuable.

## CHAPTER IX.

“ Trampled under foot  
The daisy lives, and strikes its little root  
Into the lap of Time.”—*Clare*.

I set out by declaring that I had no new system of musical study to offer to the public, but that my object was merely to place truths well known to all good pianists in a clear light before the general reader. I do not consider it necessary, therefore, to follow out my method step by step. The examples I have given of an easy practical method of instructing beginners are enough to put any lady who plays passably on the right track in the way of teaching. Having conducted her pupils as far as the point at which I left off in my last chapter, she will have no difficulty in proceeding further without any other directions than those she will find laid down in all good instruction books. I strongly recommend amateur teachers who have used my method up to the above-mentioned point to study the elements of thorough bass. I do not mean that I advise any lady (unless she happen to possess a turn for scientific pursuits) to puzzle herself with the advanced part of the theory of music. All I venture to recommend is that she should render herself *quite at home* with the common chord and chord of dominant 7th, and their inversions; and that she should be able to play them *readily* to a figured bass without making consecutives. And I further advise communicating this knowledge as soon as gained to her scholars, for I have observed that children learn the elements of thorough bass more readily than most grown-up young ladies do, for the same reason, I suppose that young people find it less irksome to acquire tables, dates, verbs, &c., when they are beginning their education than when they are supposed to be “finishing” it. In teaching a child thorough bass, be careful to ascertain that the intervals are firmly established in the pupil’s mind and memory before you advance another step. The table of intervals is to music what the multiplication table is to arithmetic. There

is no getting on without having it thoroughly at our command. I do not mean to advise teaching children all the chromatic intervals. Major and minor 3rd and 7th will be enough for them at first; and if they have followed the method developed in the preceding chapters they will know them without any additional instruction. Having been accustomed to write 3rds, 5ths, &c., they will have no difficulty in writing common chords to a figured bass. The only error they will fall into will be that of making consecutive 5ths and octaves. Explain it in this way:—Rule a stave *very* wide, and place upon it four small objects,—thimbles, seals, &c., will do. Place them on lines and spaces, which will form a common chord. Ask them to move them so as to form another common chord to the next note higher in the bass; then tell them that the rules of harmony forbid notes forming a 5th or 8th to move in the same direction; consequently that, if the thimble in the lowest place move a step upwards, the thimble at the top must avoid going the same way. You must illustrate this by taking common chords on several notes, having one thimble on the lower stave (with bass clef), and the other three on 3rd, 5th, and 8th of upper stave (with treble clef). When the pupils can place the thimbles rightly, make them write notes in their places, and when the writing is conquered take them to the pianoforte to play from a figured bass. I would not teach them the chord of the 6th till the common chord is *indelibly* fixed in the

8

mind. At first I would write  $\begin{matrix} 8 \\ 5 \end{matrix}$  under every chord, to accustom

3

them to look at the figures; afterwards they should play the same exercise with the figures removed. I advise you to show them the chords of 6th and  $\begin{matrix} 6 \\ 4 \end{matrix}$  at first by the figures, which, if they are ready with the table of intervals, they will name easily. When they see clearly that a chord of 6th is a note with its 3 and 6, you can show them the quicker way of finding the inversion by considering it as common chord of 3rd *below*. Proceed by the same method with the chord of  $\begin{matrix} 6 \\ 4 \end{matrix}$  and then slowly and gradually take the do-

minant 7th and its inversions. But it will be advisable to let the common chord and its inversions be practised for some weeks before the discord is mentioned. Let all the early exercises be simply exercises not *tunes*. Afterwards chants and well-harmonized hymns may be added. But it is necessary at first to guard against pupils playing by ear, and so catching the harmonies by chance. While cultivating the minds of your scholars, do not neglect the mechanical exercises for the fingers. If you cannot afford much time for musical studies, take the thorough bass every other day, and on those days merely allow the children to run through the earlier exercises as fast as they can, and, when the fingers are tired, turn to the theory. But, if two hours a day for music is not considered too great a sacrifice, it would be best to cultivate execution in the morning, and to take the headwork in the afternoon.\* Let no one imagine that these studies will advance a pupil's *musical* education alone. Children who study music in this solid manner will gain clearness of head, memory, accuracy of eye and ear, dexterity of hand, and an idea of method and order which will attend them in good stead in after life, and enable them to pursue other studies with facility.

It is not necessary, as I said before, for me to follow out my system in all its details. A standard book of instruction, with some good exercises and studies, will carry your scholars on in the road to perfect pianoforte-playing, provided correct reading and steady, careful hand mechanism are attended to in the daily practising. The course of works for students I prefer to all others, myself, are Cramer's. I was taught to venerate them as a child, my first teacher (in every sense of the word), she to whom I gratefully dedicate this little work, having been one of John Cramer's favourite pupils. And I believe I owe a considerable share of my intense love for classical music (which feeling I look upon as one of the greatest earthly blessings that has fallen to my

\* Children are generally stronger and more inclined for bodily exertion in the morning, and the strain upon a child's mind ought at no time, to be harder than can be easily borne after an early dinner or before it.

lot) to attempting in my childhood to play Cramer's "Studio." Still I do not think it would answer, in a general way, to allow beginners to attempt music quite beyond their power. Let the learner go through the whole of Cramer's "Instructions," including every prelude, all the scales, and most of the exercises; then proceed to Cramer's "Sequel," and finally play Bertini's "Exercises," before attempting the immortal "Studio" of John Cramer. But, as pupils generally have a great aversion to being kept long at one book, selections from standard pianoforte authors may be introduced as soon as the "Sequel" is mastered. But I should be inclined to dispense with that deluge of easy "pieces" which it is the habit of some teachers to rain down upon their pupils. Selections suited to learners from Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, and other classical authors, are to be met with, if sought for, far better adapted to improve the taste of students than the ephemeral productions of the day. Mr. Benedict, Mr. Sterndale Bennett, Mr. Callcott, and other eminent musicians, have edited a great deal of first-rate pianoforte music fit for study; and Mr. Novello's catalogue of church music includes much that may be played on the pianoforte with advantage as well as pleasure by amateurs of all grades.

I have apparently forfeited my pledge of giving advice to country ladies wishing to pursue their own musical studies unassisted by a master; but my reason for not having hitherto addressed myself exclusively to them is this—if they have not been thoroughly well-grounded, they could not do better than follow the method I have laid down for beginners. Czerny's "Etude de la Velocité," or some similar work, should be practised every day for a few months to gain strength and equality of finger. Dreyschock's "Scales" will be found very useful to ladies ambitious of executing perfectly the works of the modern pianoforte school. A novel feature in Dreyschock's scales is that their arrangement ensures calling the student's attention to two of the weak points of all ill-instructed players, viz., the passage of the thumb, and the power of making the hands move rapidly

in contrary directions. Kalkbrenner's "Studio" is one of the best works an amateur can practise. In addition to the great variety of passage-work, calculated to give firm and neat execution, there is a solidity of composition, a flow of melody and richness of harmony, which will assist the student's power of reading and improve her taste. A few exercises and studies practised carefully, till every note is just as it should be, will be found to do more towards gaining an increase of power than whole books full played in a slovenly, indolent manner. But the student must be on her guard against neglecting the art of reading while taken up with improving her execution. I advise her to vary her practising of scales and studies, by playing sacred music. If she is a very bad reader let her begin with chants, which contain nothing but chords. Afterwards she can play oratorios and masses, or rather selections from such compositions. The best specimens of solid composition are the works of Palestrina and his school, and their modern imitators, the composers of the music one hears in the English cathedrals. I must repeat here what I said before, that the quickest way\* of learning to play music of the severe school at sight, is to join a singing class on the Hullah system.

We will suppose our pupil can strike the common chord of C, and run the five notes up and down evenly, smoothly, and rapidly. Now we will take sharps and flats. Show them on the keyboard the black notes, and make them observe that the black keys are wanting between E and F, and B and C. Make them ascend the scale from C by semitones. Let them do it slowly and firmly, saying C, C sharp, D, D sharp, E, F, F sharp, G, G sharp, A, A sharp, B, C. Most children will say, "Then there is no E sharp or B sharp?" "When we want to use E sharp or B sharp," you answer, "we are obliged to take F and C, and call them E sharp and B sharp." Any child of inquiring mind will want an explanation of this; but you must tell her music is a science

\* I mean, of course, in the case of a lady who has been accustomed to play light music exclusively.

as well as an art, and that it has in it many things very hard to understand, and that she must wait till she is grown up to know the meaning of all the curious things she will meet with in studying music. Some children will want to know here "What is a science and what is an art." If the teacher be a mother, an elder sister, a *trusted friend* of the pupil's parents, this would be just one of those many opportunities which will spring out of the pianoforte lessons for leading the mind of an intelligent child on to glimpses of sound knowledge. I will not enter upon this subject now, as I wish to keep to the matter in hand; and I think, too, it would be better not to interrupt the music lesson, but to tell the child that you would answer all her questions at another time, out walking, or in the evening, or at any time when you were in the habit of amusing the children by telling them tales or talking with them.

I do not think the plan of making the hours of study long answers for girls. It is much better to let them be very short, but to insist upon close attention while they last. A great deal may be done to enlarge the mind and cultivate the taste during the hours given to air and exercise and nominal recreation. The high-pressure system of female education appears to me to make a few young ladies walking encyclopedias, and the majority superficial pretenders. But to return to our music. Having made your pupil point out readily the sharps, tell her that each of these sharps is also called a flat, but that the note that is a sharp to D, for instance, will be flat to E. This is puzzling to some children. Explain it by the parallel of sister and cousin. Say, "What relation are you to Anne?" (naming her sister.) "I am her sister." "And what relation are you to Louisa?" (naming a cousin). "Are cousin and sister the same thing? And yet you are only one person, though you are sister to Anne and cousin to Louisa. Well, it is the same with the flats and sharps. This note (touching the black key) is sharp to this note, but it is flat to that one, just as it might be (if some fairy made the three notes into little girls) sister to one and cousin to the other." Then

make your pupils tell you which is A sharp, which B flat, and so on till all the flats and sharps are mastered. Then write them, and teach the children to write them. Ascertain that they can write C sharp, B flat, or any other given note, without hesitation, before you proceed. Now for the intervals. Ask what is the first letter in the alphabet, what the second, what the third. The children answer unhesitatingly, A is the first, B second, C third. Then say, in an emphatic way, "What is the *third* from A?" They will say C. "Suppose B stood first, which would be the third then?" "B C D," a quick child will answer. "Then what is the third from B?" "D." "Suppose E were the first, which would be the third?" And so proceed till they can tell you the third from any given note without hesitation. This done, return to the piano, and resume the first exercise, playing it very slowly, without counting. Ask which note is the *third*. They will say E. Say, "Alter the E into E flat, and play the other note as before," Ask them if they cannot hear that it has a mournful sound. Then tell them that the third played that way is called MINOR. Tell them *minor* means less, or smaller, and show them that from C to E flat is one step less than from C to E. Then write an exercise with the E flat added, and make them play the chords and runs in the minor mode. When used to it let them change to the major, and play either for you unhesitatingly. The next step is to make them familiar with the 5th. This may be done immediately by making them observe the keys as they play the exercise.—They will see where the little finger comes, and knowing how many fingers they possess, will feel at once that G is the 5th note from C. Make them run up and stop at the 5th. Tell them to take off the hand and put the thumb on G, and begin the exercise on that note (the left hand following as before). While they are playing it, tell them they are playing in the key of G, and that the first was the key of C. Tell them to alter the major 3rd to a minor one. When this is done well, make them run on to D. Here you will have to stop, and show them that D to F is the same distance as G to

B $\flat$ , *i.e.* a minor 3rd. Make them comprehend clearly that F $\sharp$  is put to make the 3rd major, and that the black note makes the interval *the same size* as a white one did before. When they have played the exercise in D, major and minor, run on to A, and so proceed till they have got to the key of C $\sharp$ . When the sharp keys are perfect, teach them the flat keys in the same way, but ascending by fourths instead of fifths. You may now explain to them the scales. Take a narrow strip of cartridge paper and bend it into the form of a flight of stairs consisting of twelve steps. On these steps write C $\sharp$ , D D $\sharp$ , E F, F $\sharp$ , G G $\sharp$ , A A $\sharp$ , B C. Hold it lightly between the finger and thumb of the left hand in such a manner that the bottom step should rest on the table. Then with your pencil touch each step in turn, beginning with the table itself as the starting point, and ascending step by step to the top. Tell the children to fancy the point of your pencil as a person going up a flight of steps, and then, as you touch each, utter the letters given above, making C the starting point. My reason for beginning on the table is to show them at a glance that there are twelve semitones in the octave, and thirteen notes, counting the first and eighth. This ladder will make them perceive what a semitone is very readily. Then make them point and repeat the letters, and you at the same moment strike each corresponding note on the piano. Make them keep their eyes on the ladder at first, and listen to the sounds of the semitones. Afterwards show them to them on the instrument. Explain that semi means half, reminding them of the semi-quavers. Then go back to the table or the ladder, and explain the chromatic scale as consisting entirely of semitones, and afterwards the diatonic, consisting of tones and semitones, in the following order:—"Two tones and a semitone, three tones and a semitone." Repeat this sentence emphatically like an axiom, and let them learn it by heart. Then make your pencil ascend the ladder diatonically, *i.e.* skipping the sharps, and so ascending in the key of C major. Make them repeat the letters, looking at the steps as your pencil touches them, and afterwards "tone, tone, semitone: tone, tonic,

tone, semitone." You will observe here the advantage of starting from the table, as from the ground in ascending a ladder. When this is all clear, go to the piano and play to them the diatonic scale in C major. As they have not yet learnt to put the thumb under, reserve the playing the scale themselves, till the next lesson. Point out to them the two tones and the half tone, the three tones and the half tone; make them tell you between which intervals of the scale the semitones fall. As they are already familiar with thirds and fourths, they will find out sevenths and eighths without trouble. At the next lesson, let D be the starting note, and write upon the ladder  $D^{\sharp}$ , &c. The children will soon see, that to preserve the order of "Two tones and a semitone: three tones and a semitone," they must use  $F^{\sharp}$  and  $C^{\sharp}$ . Do not take them to the piano, till they have made this discovery by means of the ladder. That accomplished, the whole difficulty of sharps and flats disappears at once. By making E the key note they will find out that four sharps are wanted, and so on. This is as interesting as a joining map or Chinese puzzle, when well managed. The order of the sharps they will learn insensibly from their daily practising of the exercise I pointed out before, viz: running to the fifth and beginning afresh; bearing in mind that one sharp is added each time. Before proceeding to the minor mode, I would make the pupils write the scales, marking the tones and half tones; and the sharps before the notes. Afterwards I would show them that to save trouble, the sharps belonging to each key are put at the beginning of the staff, and this is called the signature. They should then learn to make a natural, and be told that when notes not belonging to the diatonic scale occurred in a melody, the sharp, flat or natural required will be marked close before the note, and that these are called Accidental, as they come in *by accident*, not belonging properly to the key. This sounds obscure in words, but with a sheet of music paper and a piano it can be made easy to a child. If all that I have now laid down has been *thoroughly mastered*, you may congratulate yourself on having laid your foundations.

Do not go beyond this till it is conquered. Some children would gain all this in a few weeks, others would take as many months. Do not be disheartened if your pupil's hands are awkward, her ear bad, her head confused. Have patience and spirit and you will make her play well in the long run, and, what is of more consequence, give her habits of perseverance, industry, method and good humour.

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### CHAPTER X.

“Then pours she on the Christian heart  
That warning, still and deep,  
At which high spirits of old would start  
Even from their Pagan sleep.  
Just guessing through their murky blind,  
Few, faint, and baffling sight,  
Streaks of a brighter heaven behind  
A cloudless depth of light.  
Such thoughts, the wreck of Paradise  
Through many a dreary age,  
Uppore whate'er of good and wise  
Yet lived in bard or sage.”—*Christian Year.*

“The heavens are telling, high and wide  
The glory of the Lord,  
The firmament and deeps of air  
His handy-work record.  
Day speaks to day,—a gushing fount  
Of praise that cannot fail;  
Day unto day, and night unto night,  
Tells out the wondrous tale.  
No sound, no converse; all unheard  
The solemn voice they send,  
Their line goes out o'er all the earth,  
Their words to the world's end.”

*Keble's Translation of the Psalms.*

Having pointed out what I conceive to be the true principles of musical study, and the best method of carrying them out, practically, which can be adopted by ladies, my concluding

chapters shall be devoted to a slight sketch of the history of music, and of the different schools the art possesses.

The ancient traditions of all nations unite in asserting that music is of divine origin; and let not evidence from such a source be despised. The heathen mythology, among its corrupt fables, still retained scattered relics of truth. The law of nature, though obscured, was not entirely lost. The noble-minded Athenians who erected an altar to "the unknown God" deserved that the great apostle of the Gentiles should declare to them Him whom they "ignorantly worshipped." Nor did St. Paul disdain to make use of a quotation from one of their own poets, to lead them on from the dim twilight of imagination to the noonday brightness of faith. And among the many truths which the law of nature had graven deeply upon the heathen mind, was this most beautiful one, that what we, in our modern jargon, call "high art," was neither more nor less than an emanation from the Divinity. Surely there is nothing overstrained in saying that the myth which personifies the Sun, and makes him the author of the science of healing as well as of the fine arts, bears a shadowy resemblance to the poetical figure in the New Testament, whereby our Lord, the source of light, health, strength, and beauty, is represented as the "Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings." And there is something touching in the thought that the Lord's-day has been made to fall upon *Sunday*.

Classic lore contains much that may be made to bear a mystical allusion to Christian truth, and to those who love symbolism; these *coincidences*, not to use too strong a word, produce upon the mind the same sort of pleasure which a musical ear receives from a singular modulation or an unexpected harmony. I am perfectly aware that there is a tendency in the present day to make an idol of art—to make her the queen where she ought to be the handmaid; and I know, too, that minds of a class who, under other influences, would be remarkable for heavenward aspirations, are by this most subtle

and refined species of idolatry chained down to earth. No doubt a love of æsthetics is dangerous, unless it be rightly directed and kept under proper controul; but we must not blame the noble steeds of the Sun for the fate of the rash Phæton. And what is there that may not be abused?—

“As in this bad world below,  
Noblest things find vilest using.”

So need we not marvel when we see lofty minds grovelling in the mire of earthliness. Still the art-worship of the present day is a more hopeful sign of the times than is its mammon-worship, and its blind and senseless adoration of fashion. High art has principles founded on never-changing truth; it has views which cannot be made to coalesce with vulgarity and sordid baseness, and it gives to its followers habits of thought and a tone of feeling, incompatible with paltry tastes and littleness of mind. Those whose imaginative faculties have been checked in the bud, by the nipping frost of a false system of education, may see, in the language of the æsthetic writers of our day, nothing but insane extravagance or childish folly; but those who believe that a love of what is “transcendental” is a gift from heaven, will recognise in those morbid aspirations the soul’s restless craving after the true and the perfect,—the thirst of an immortal spirit for the source of its being.

They who take this view, will look with tender compassion on the idolatry of Nature and Art, which is one of the characteristics of a very high class of minds in our own times; but, on the imaginings and reasonings of the poets and sages of the classical ages, they will look, not only with pity, but with reverential admiration:—

“The olive wreath, the ivied wand,  
The sword in myrtles drest,  
Each legend of the shadowy strand  
Now wakes a vision blest;

As little children lisp, and tell of heaven,  
So thoughts, beyond their thoughts, to those high Bards were given.”

It is worthy of remark, that the Pagan music, to which the classical poets and philosophers have attributed *divine* power, was the most ancient music, and that instead of improving as time went on and civilization increased, this art, according to the testimony of the Greek and Roman writers, soon deteriorated, and at last was entirely lost. This would accord perfectly with what we know of the gradual obscuration of the law of Nature, and the consequent loss of true traditions, which ended in Pagan idolatry of the grossest kind. The Fathers have held that Paganism preserved certain true traditions, which enabled those who loved truth and goodness, and who earnestly devoted themselves to seeking the one and practising the other, to raise their souls above the grovelling ideas of ordinary heathenism. Socrates and Plato, Numa, Virgil, Trajan, Pliny, Marcus Aurelius, and others too numerous to instance, are types of this order of minds. Perhaps it is hardly just to put Plato and Pliny in the same class: still there was sufficient elevation, both moral and intellectual, in the favorite of Trajan to raise him far above the common level. Some Protestant Divines have agreed with Catholic Doctors on the fact that the Sibylline books contained real prophecies. Leslie in his "Short Method with Deists," quotes Virgil's well-known ode to Pollio, containing a prophecy from the Sibyls,\* as a strong argument in favour of revelation. In the middle ages this was acknowledged by giving the Sibyls a place of ecclesiastical honour. In mediæval works of art, one frequently finds them introduced: and in the "Dies Iræ" they are distinctly alluded to:—"Testit David cum Sibylla."

I recollect once reading a sermon by the famous Scotch preacher who founded the sect of the Irvingites, in which there is a very striking and eloquent passage on the Greek philosophers,

\* This is my impression, but I am not sure whether Leslie does not suppose the Sibylline prophecies to have been borrowed from the Old Testament.

acknowledging that their earnest and disinterested love of truth, drew upon them light from above :—

“ From art, from nature from the schools,  
Let random influences glance,  
Like light in many a shiver'd lance  
That breaks about the dappled pools :

The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,  
The fancy's tenderest eddy wreathe,  
The slightest air of song shall breathe  
To make the sullen surface crisp.”

I have endeavoured to give all possible weight to the authority of mere antiquity, for this reason, that the Holy Scriptures do not afford any decisive testimony on this point. True, they do not contradict the opinion I am supporting, and we can find in them much of what I may be allowed to call, in Paley's language, “auxiliary evidence.” The historical account they give of the invention of Music amounts merely to the fact that Jubal, sixth in descent from Cain, “was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.” This statement, I must allow, is not particularly favourable to my argument, as the name of Cain is enough to cast discredit upon his descendant. At the same time, it must be allowed that nothing is recorded *against* Jubal.—But it is on the auxiliary evidence that I mainly rely. By this auxiliary evidence, I mean, the instances we find in Holy Scripture of music being used not only in formal religious ceremonies, but also, as a spontaneous effusion of the heart on occasions of thanksgiving, such as the songs of Moses and Miriam. When Saul met the company of prophets coming down from the high place, there went before them “a psaltery, a pipe, and a harp,” and at that time, be it remembered, they were under the influence of the Holy Ghost, for they prophesied.

Again, it is very plain that when Holy David drove the fiend from the heart of Saul, it was inspired music, and not inspired words, to which the power of exorcism was granted. Holy Scripture is explicit on this point :—When David “played with

his hand," the evil spirit departed from Saul. The Jews\* excelled all other nations in their skill in music. Their extraordinary musical power was known to surrounding nations, for in their captivity their conquerors required of them a song, saying, "Sing us one of the Songs of Sion."

Mr. Nathan, in his "Essay on the Theory and Practice of Music," asserts that the Chant in which the Psalms are sung in the Synagogue, has been handed down, by tradition, from remote antiquity, and that it is the very same that Moses received on Mount Sinai, together with the design of the Tabernacle. He says that this Chant was "handed down from father to son, till about the fifth century, when Rabbi Ben Asser invented certain characters to represent the accent and true tone that was given to each word, by which means the original chant has been preserved to this day." In Dr. Crotch's Specimen of the Music of all Nations, some Hebrew Chants of great antiquity, noticed by Marcello, are given.†

It is certain, that in the beginning, Almighty God gave to man a single universal tongue, though modern languages are traced to three primitive roots instead of one. Reasoning from analogy, it is probable that all primitive music was derived from that revelation which Father Martini holds to have been granted to Adam. If so, the older the art, the nearer the Divine Source; which accords perfectly with the heathen traditions of the golden age. And this would agree, too, with the view that ancient music, both Jewish and Pagan, were much alike. Afterwards, it is probable, the Pagans lost the unearthly character of the primitive art, by heaping meretricious ornaments upon it, and bringing it down to a level with their idolatrous rites, while the

\* It is remarkable that the Jews have retained their talent for music, as strikingly as their peculiar cast of countenance, to this day.

† Not to be guilty of anything so shabby as affecting familiarity with books one has not read, I beg to state that the information respecting the Hebrew Chants is taken from an anonymous Tract (published by Cradock) which has given me many useful hints.

Jews retained it, in its pristine majesty and purity, by means of the unalterable forms of the solemn worship of the Temple. Many hold that the Gregorian Song is actually the modern representative of the ancient inspired Jewish music.

“ My vows to Israel’s King  
 Make haste to let me pay,  
 ’Mid all his people bring  
 Mine homage due to day :  
 In His own courts, His holy ground,  
 Thy bulwarks, Salem, glittering round.”

“ O clap your hands together every nation ;  
 Sing to the Lord with voice of melody ;  
 God is most high, of dread and awful station ;  
 A mighty King o’er all the earth is He.  
 Now join’d in one, the lords all nations swaying,  
 One nation seal’d to Abraham’s God draw nigh ;  
 God is alone, the shields of earth arraying,  
 God is alone, lift up exceeding high.”

*Keble’s Translation.*

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## CHAPTER XI.

“ *In exitu Israel de Egitto.*  
 Cantavan tutti ’insieme ad una voce,  
 Can quanto di quel Salmi è poi scritto.”—*Dante.*

“ Beautiful times ! times past ! When men were not  
 The smooth and formal things they are to-day,  
 When the world travelling an uneven way,  
 Encountered greater truths in every lot,  
 And individual minds had power to force  
 An epoch, and divert its vassal course.  
 Beautiful times ! times past ! in whose deep art,  
 As in a field by angels furrowed, lay  
 The seeds of heavenly beauty ; set apart  
 For altar-flowers, and ritual display—  
 Beautiful times ! from whose calm bosom sprung  
 Abbeys and chantries, and a very host  
 Of quiet places upon every coast,  
 Where CHRIST was served, and blessed Mary sung ! ”—*Faber.*

Whether the primitive Christians employed the music of the

Jews, or that of the Pagans, in their religious worship, is a point much debated among musical antiquaries. I believe Father Martini's view on this subject, is in favour of the adoption of the Hebrew music. It seems most probable, that this would be the case for several reasons. The first Christians were all of Jewish birth, and would, naturally, be attached to the religious music they had been accustomed to. The Christian Church was the development of the Jewish. Both were founded by the same Divine hand, and bear marks of a common origin. In proof of this assertion I need only cite the fact, that the Psalms and other portions of the Old Testament form the chief share of the devotional exercises of the Christian Church to this day. The Jewish psalmody being then retained, is it likely that the Christians would sever the poetry of holy David from the inspired music to which it had ever been united? Is it likely that the Jewish converts would prefer, to the chants which had been sung in Solomon's Temple, the melodies which had resounded through the streets of heathen cities in honour of Bacchus and Cybele? Music has always held a high place in the services of the Christian Church. Even while the faithful formed but a small persecuted sect, meeting by stealth to celebrate the sacred rites, they sung hymns. And, as soon as Christianity was established as the religion of the empire, by Constantine the Great, Church Music was carefully cultivated, choirs were formed, and a place assigned to them in the churches—as Eusebius says, “The rites of the Church were decent and majestic, and there was a place appointed for those who sang psalms.” By the middle of the fourth century it had become customary to divide the choirs, placing one on each side of the Church, and these choirs answered each other by singing alternate verses of the Psalms. Whether this was taken from the Jewish services, or suggested by the choruses in the Greek Drama, I cannot tell. All knowledge of the ancient Greek music had been lost long before the birth of our Lord. Plutarch complains that in his time the art had

degenerated—bore no resemblance to the ancient style which he declares to have been divine.—Plato and Aristotle speak of music as possessed of heavenly power, and proper on that account to be used as an instrument of civilization and education. Father Martini is of opinion that Adam was endowed with the gift of song, as well as the gift of speech, by his Creator. And if so, the heavenly tradition would be handed down, together with the law of nature, to his descendants, and disappear gradually, as the light of truth was first dimmed, and finally quenched, when men forgot God. But to return from speculations to historical facts, about the year 386, St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, began his famous reformation of ecclesiastical music. He reduced the art of chanting to a regular system, which was called after him the *Cantus Ambrosianus*, or Ambrosian Chant. This Chant is sung in the Cathedral of Milan to this day. St. Ambrose, who was a classical scholar, made use of the Greek musical terms, calling the modes or scales, on which his Chants were formed, the Dorian, Phrygian, Æolian, and Mixo-Lylian Modes. This has caused some writers to imagine that he adopted the Greek music,—a most unlikely thing, if the Jewish music had been used in the Christian Church for nearly 400 years, and the *ancient* Greek art lost for centuries. Still it is not impossible that he may have taken some hints from the Greek music, for it is certain that he made great improvements both in the music and the method of singing. St. Austin speaks of being melted into tears and raised heaven-wards by the sounds of this psalmody.

The next great musical reformer we meet with is St. Gregory the Great, who filled the Pontifical chair from A.D. 590 to A.D. 604. During the fifth century ecclesiastical music greatly degenerated.—The airs of the theatre were allowed to find their way into the church, and religious music was divided into the *Canto fermo*, the old severe style, and the *Canto figurato*, which was light and florid. St. Gregory forbade this wordly music to be used in the churches, but to make up for its loss, he improved the ancient religious music. He gave greater variety to the Ambrosian Chant

by introducing four new modes, and this reform of St. Gregory's has been in use in the Catholic Church ever since, The eight tones to which Vespers and the other offices are still sung, commonly go by the name of the Gregorian Chants. St. Gregory paid great attention to the manner of singing, as well as to the music sung, and he established a school for singing at Rome, where orphan boys were trained as choristers. Originally, the letters of the Greek alphabet were employed as musical signs. "St. Gregory," says Baini, "ordered that in the Latin Church the song should be no longer noted with Greek letters, but with Latin in their stead." His method was to denote the lowest octave by the capital letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G; the second by a, b, c, d, e, f, g; and the third by these letters doubled.

Early in the eleventh century another great benefactor to art arose. This was the celebrated Guido d'Arezzo (Aretinus) who invented musical notation. He was a native of Arezzo, and became a monk, according to the general opinion, in the monastery of Pomposa. The Camaldolese annalists are of opinion that he lived for some time in their monastery of S. Croce di Avellano, and perhaps also in the Camaldolese hermitage, near Arezzo. The only grounds for these conjectures of the good fathers are as follows. First, because Guido, in a letter to the monk Michele, calls himself "Uomo Alpestre," which name would better suit a monk of Avellano, than of Pomposa; Avellano being situated upon the Alps. Secondly, because a celebrated portrait of Guido adorned the refectory of the Monastery of Avellano. And lastly, because the name of a "Guido Camaldolese Eremita near Arezzo, in the year 1033," is to be found in some record. Tiraboschi gives us all these particulars in his usual communicative style, and then informs us that it is his opinion that the Camaldolese annalists' reasons were worth very little, compared with the weight of evidence in favour of the claims of Pomposa. But as I profess to be writing about music, and music alone, I must not allow myself to be carried away by Tiraboschi's interesting antiquarian gossip. One thing, though, I will mention, for the sake of encouraging

those who find themselves opposed when they attempt any musical reforms. Guido's new method of notation gave great offence to many of his religious brethren, and raised a clamour against him in the convent. There is nothing new under the sun. An original idea will always displease the multitude, until time and authority have set their seal upon it. Tiraboschi conjectures that the monk Michele, to whom Guido wrote letters still extant, was his coadjutor in teaching the new method of reading music to the youths in the monastery, and that when his illustrious brother was driven, by the outcry raised against him, from the monastery, Michele remained behind "*ma travagliate e afflitto*" Guido found his way to Rome, where he met with a most honourable reception. Pope John XIX. appreciated the genius of Guido, and gave him every possible encouragement. The Sovereign Pontiff learnt the new system of singing at sight, in one lesson, which is not at all surprising, when we consider that a child would acquire it in a month, and that the Pope was doubtless skilled in the old system. Guido Aretinus is commonly called the inventor of musical notes, but that is not an accurate definition of what he did for art. Notes had been substituted for the Greek and Latin letters more than two centuries before Guido's time. Baini says, "it is certain that as early as Charlemagne's reign, the Roman song was written with notes and not with the letters prescribed by St. Gregory. But these notes were of very little use, for they had neither lines nor cleffs, and they did not mark the respective distance of one note from another, that is, they go up and down just the same, whether the interval they express is a tone or a semitone—nay, there is often no discoverable difference between a third, a fourth and a fifth. In the course of years the traditional memory of the melodies was partly obliterated, so that no certainty could be said to exist, and each master of a choir taught his singers the song according to his own manner of interpreting it. Hence arose incessant disputes, not only among masters, but between teachers and scholars, till there might be said to be as many modes of executing the song, as there were singers. Va-

rious attempts were made to remedy this state of musical anarchy, but without success.—About the end of the ninth century, Hucbald, a monk, invented new signs, by which the seven sounds of the scale, comprising the two semitones might be expressed with certainty, by means of their different position. Oddo, Abbot of Cluni, seeing that Hucbald's method was not popular, endeavoured to induce singers to discard the new signs for the old Roman letters of St. Gregory's system. The Abbot, in the dialogue on music, informs us that "according to the method then in vogue, of writing musical notes, no singer could hope to succeed in learning to sing by themselves any musical composition, even after fifty years study and practice!" I do not understand what Hucbald's improvements were, but the Abbot of Cluni, is alluding to a system of putting down mere notes, without letters, cleffs, or lines. Guido d'Arezzo is even harder upon the old system than the Abbot, for he calls it "a method which will not enable a singer, even *after a hundred years study*, to sing the smallest antiphon by himself." He says again, "Who does not deplore the existence of so much confusion in the church, that we should be found disputing with each other, when we ought to be singing the divine office. The master and the pupils disagree, and there are as many antiphonaries as there are masters. So that we no longer hear of the Antiphonary of Gregory, but that of Leo, Albert, or any other, and as it is already very difficult to learn one, it is certainly impossible to learn a great many." He means because so much had to be learned and retained *by heart*.

Guido proposed to keep the signs which they were accustomed to, but to place them in a regular order, by means of *lines*, on and between which he placed the notes, and thus fixed the respective distances of the intervals, next by placing the Roman letters of St. Gregory at the beginning of each line (which answered the purpose of cleffs) he determined the place of the semitone. We are told that this plan was so easy to understand that "*etiam pueruli sine magistro recte possunt cantare.*"

Guido's invention was adopted at Rome, after the trial the Pope

was pleased to make of it, and the rest of Italy soon followed the example of Rome. One often hears it most absurdly asserted that Guido "suddenly discovered the gamut!" by accidentally noticing the first syllables of a hymn, while singing in choir.

M. Fetis' account is as follows:—

"The invention of the syllables *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la*, is attributed to an Italian monk, whose name was Guido d'Arezzo, who took them from a hymn in honour of St. John.

" UT queant luxis, REsonare fibris,  
MIRA gestorum FAMuli tuorum,  
SoLve polluti, LABri reatum ;  
Sancte Joannes."

But in a letter to another monk, Guido merely advises him to recollect the air of this hymn, which rises one note on each syllable,—*ut, re, mi, &c.*, in order to find the tone of each degree of the scale." Those who have studied Guido's invention, will easily understand this. It is evident that the tune to which the hymn was sung in Guido's monastery began on what a modern singer would call *Do*, that the sixth note was *Re*, the first note in the second line of the verse *Mi*, and so on. In Gregorian hymn tunes, one usually finds a note for each syllable, and it is easy enough, by means of a little alteration, to make some of the plain chant hymns take the form I am supposing this tune to have had. Probably the gamut accidentally occurring in its natural order in this melody, struck Guido as a ready means of explaining the scale. Whether he made use of the syllables *ut, re, mi, &c.*, constantly from that time forward, or whether they were engrafted into his system afterwards, I do not know. For the main part of the information respecting Guido's method contained in this chapter, I am indebted to an article in the *Dublin Review*.

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## CHAPTER XII.

“As great Pythagoras of yore,  
 Standing beside the blacksmith's door,  
 And hearing the hammers as they smote  
 The anvils with a different note,  
 Stole from the varying tones, that hung  
 Vibrant on every iron tongue,  
 The secret of the sounding wire,  
 And formed the seven-chorded lyre.”—*Longfellow.*

“The great ennobling Past is only then  
 A misty pageant, an unreal thing,  
 When it is measured in the narrow ring  
 And limit of the Present, by weak men.”—*Faber.*

Though Guido d'Arezzo's invention enabled the musicians of the middle ages to note music with accuracy, yet we do not find that it had the effect of producing that perfect unanimity in church choirs which he anticipated. Baini says, “it did not quickly pass beyond the Alps. I have myself seen in our libraries at Rome, several MSS. written in France and Germany, of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in the ancient notation.” There is a celebrated MS. called the *Plaints* or *Sequences* of Abelard, which antiquaries have endeavoured to decipher in vain. It is written in the barbarous notation used before Guido's time, though Abelard must have composed it at least a hundred years after the new method had been adopted throughout Italy.

It cannot be ascertained whether Abelard composed the music as the verses of these “*Plaints*.” Baini inclines to the opinion that he wrote a poem on subjects drawn from the Holy Scriptures, and in measures adapted to the popular airs sung by the *Troubadours*, in order to serve as an antidote to the fascination of the ballad-poetry then in vogue, a good deal of which was not of a moral tone, to say no worse of it. Baini advances this supposition as one way of accounting for Abelard's MS. being written in the old notation, for if he merely wrote the words, the copyist of

the music would probably have transcribed the melodies as he found them in older books. These airs are unfortunately lost to us, for how can one discover sounds expressed by mere notes without lines or clefs? Baini says, "whoever has the presumption to imagine he has recovered them, is as great a fool as he who should go about to draw water from a deep well without a rope."

I am inclined to think that the melodies of the Troubadours were not unlike the hymns of the plain song, and for these reasons. The ancient national melodies of most countries have a sort of family likeness. Dr. Lind, who resided a long time in China, told Dr. Burney that "all the airs heard there, were like the old Scots' tunes." And the same has been said of the melodies of several other nations. That great inclination for the minor mode, characteristic of ancient music, is to be found equally in the secular and ecclesiastical music:—in such airs as "Roslin Castle," "Rich and rare," "Follia d'Espagna," and other ancient tunes, one can trace a strong resemblance to Gregorian music. There is an "Iste Confessor,"\* well known in England long before the recent movement in favour of Plain Chant became fashionable, which always reminds me of "Vive Henri Quatre." I do not mean to say that the two airs are alike in the same sense that many modern ballads and polkas are alike, but still there is a resemblance in the opening bars. They resemble each other as Handel's "Let me wander not unseen," resembles Corelli's "Pastorale" in the eighth Concerto, and as the Martial Movement in the grand Quartett in "Le Prophète," resembles the "Marseillaise." I will mention another coincidence.—Every one knows the popular ballad in Robert le Diable, "Jadis regnait en Normandie." It is natural to suppose that Meyerbeer aimed at imitating the songs of the Troubadours in that melody, and the first part of it is very like the well known Gregorian tune to which "Te lucis ante terminum" is usually sung. Observe I do not say "Jadis regnait" is

\* Published by Mr. Novello.

*copied* from "Te lucis," for the subjects of the two airs are quite distinct, and there is an appliance of the resources of modern art in the one which the other is without. But for all that they have the same character, just as Mr. Tennyson's "Morte d'Arthur," though a poem of great originality and exquisite polish, reminds one of the metrical tales of the old romance writers. The resemblance is similar to those striking likenesses one sometimes sees in living individuals, to the old family portraits hanging upon the walls of their ancestral dwelling-places. I am inclined to think that many of the old tunes, popular in the different countries of Europe, are really the very melodies of the Troubadours and Minnesingers. And this does not at all militate against what I have advanced with regard to the likeness to Gregorian, for it is a mistake to suppose that the Plain Chant is invariably mournful and grave. Many of the hymns are very joyous—indeed, some are what one may call *merry tunes*,—and though the minor key predominates, yet the major is to be found too. I have not, within reach, works which would enable me to pursue the interesting subject of the progress of secular music during the middle ages. Besides, I do not profess to be writing a complete treatise, but merely suggesting ideas, which can be followed out by those among my fair readers, who have a taste for research, and the means of indulging it. I would point out, as an interesting study, tracing the origin of the Irish, Scotch, and Welsh airs. Those who delight in Miss Strickland's antiquarian details, will be glad to discover another path in the pleasant mazes of by-gone times. Assistance in pursuing such inquiries can be procured easily now-a-days, through the corresponding columns of musical periodicals.

The introduction of harmony is as important an event in the history of music, as the discovery of America in the history of geographical science. It has been warmly debated, whether the ancients had any knowledge of harmony. M. Fétis, in his valuable work, "Music explained to the world," is of opinion that they were entirely ignorant of it. His reasons for this

conclusion, are as follows :—“ The equivalent of the word harmony is nowhere to be found used in the Greek and Latin treatises which have reached our times; the air of an ode of Pindar, and that of a hymn to Nemesis, with some other fragments, are all that have been preserved of the ancient Greek music, and in them we find no traces of chords; in fact, the form of the lyre and of the harp, the small number of their strings, which could not be modified like those of our guitars, those instruments being devoid of neck, all these reasons, I say, give much probability to the opinion of those who do not believe in the existence of harmony in the music of the ancients. Their adversaries object that harmony exists in nature. True, but how many things exist in nature which are not observed for a long time? Harmony is in nature, and yet the ear of the Turk, the Arab, and the Chinese, has not become accustomed to it.” Now this last remark appears to me shallow. The Turks, Arabs, and Chinese have not produced works of art, which are standards of perfection to this day. It is really quite irreverent, so coolly to put these barbarians on a level with the Greeks. It seems contrary to analogy to suppose that the land which produced poets, sculptors, and philosophers, whom the wisest and most refined among the moderns are content to acknowledge, gratefully, as their teachers and models, should have made no greater discoveries in music than nations which are still in a state of semi-barbarism. On the other hand, I must own, that however unwilling one’s fancy may be to admit such a supposition, yet that the evidence adduced by M. Fétis, with regard to the classical instruments and musical treatises extant, is very strong against the poetical view. But again, let us consider that the treatises quoted were written between the time of Alexander, and the end of the Greek Empire, and that Plutarch and others mourn over the degenerate state of music in *their* days, and declare that the *ancient* art was entirely lost. That there are “no traces of chords” to be found in the specimens of Greek music handed down to us, *proves* nothing,

and for these reasons :—first, the art of singing might exist in great perfection, before the art of writing the sounds sung was invented. Poetry sprung “Pallas-born,” from the lips of Homer, long before grammar and rhetoric were studied. Why may it not have been the same with the sister-art ?

Secondly ; it should be remembered that when musical notation first began to be used, after the Christian era, it was of a very imperfect kind, and a traditional explanation from the mouth of a skilful singer, was necessary to the full understanding of its meaning. I have not seen the specimens of Pagan\* music alluded to, nor have I been able to meet with any detailed account of them, therefore I am arguing in the dark ; but it seems probable they might be a species of musical shorthand, just as the early attempts at notation were. Had Greek music possessed no more art than we find in the rude melodies of barbarous nations, it is difficult to believe that the classic poets and sages would have given it so high a place as they did among intellectual attainments. And it is equally difficult to imagine that a people so exquisitely organized as the Greeks, and with whom poetry and song were almost synonymous terms, should be deficient in genius for music. It is improbable that a nation which produced a Pindar, an Æschylus, and a Phidias, should be, in musical feeling, on a level with Scythians and Tartars. They, however, whose faith in “Immortal Greece, dear land of glorious lays,” cannot be shaken by want of *circumstantial evidence*, have no right to expect others, of a less imaginative turn, to yield their opinion, in the absence of historical proof, and so the matter must always remain an open question. It is impossible too, to discover the nature of the ancient instruments. Vitruvius mentions an *hydraulic organ*, said by ancient writers to have been invented by Ctesibius, a mathematician who lived in the time of Ptolemy Evergetes. M. Fetis speaks with scorn of the efforts of some learned commentators, who have tried in vain to discover

\* I have no other authority for the genuineness of the professed specimen of Greek music, than the passing remark upon them in M. Fetis' book.

the mechanism of this water organ.\* He laughs, too, at the pneumatic organ of the Classic poets, which, he thinks, must have been neither more nor less than that barbarous instrument of the Scotch and Auvergnese, called the bag-pipe or *cornemuse*. I do not see why it may not have been an Æolian Harp, if all we know of it is, that it was "put in vibration by the action of the air." I am, unfortunately, no scholar, and, therefore, I cannot refer to the original description of this aerial instrument; but, in the absence of all proof, one may take the liberty of fancying it something more poetical than a bag-pipe; and, certainly, it is no great matter what one believes upon the subject. "The most ancient organ mentioned in history, is that which the Emperor Constantine Copronymus sent, in the year 757, to Pepin, the father of Charlemagne. This was the first seen in France. It was placed in the church of St. Corneille, at Compiègne. This organ was very small and portable, like that which was built by an Arab named Giafar, and sent to Charlemagne by the Caliph of Bagdad."—So says M. Fetis, but, in another writer, I find mention made of an organ nearly a century earlier than the oriental present received by King Pepin.—It is said that Pope Vitalian introduced the organ into the Church as early as 671. This was soon followed by part-singing. At first the Chant was harmonized for two voices only, but, by degrees, the third, fourth, and more parts were added. The first name given to Harmony was, oddly enough, *Discord*. No doubt it was given in opposition to the term Concord, which might naturally be applied to singing in unison. The earliest forms of Harmony were all written in notes of equal value or duration, Harmony was also called Counterpoint, or point against point. The next improvement was introducing notes of unequal duration played or sung together, and this was called *figured harmony*. Franco of Cologne (1020 to 1066) was the first writer who treats of measured notes. In his time the notation comprised the double

\* This reminds one of the water-clock which Haroun al Raschid is said to have sent to Charlemagne.

long, imperfect long, the breve, and the semibreve, with points to prolong their duration, and corresponding rests.

How simple a thing is Science, and how little that is *entirely new*, has been added by the moderns, to the grand discoveries of the ancients. Think of the multiplication table of Pythagoras, Euclid's Elements, the experiments of Archimedes, and the mental gymnastics of Aristotle and Plato. What are modern additions after all, compared to the everlasting foundations of all knowledge, laid down by the Giants of old time! And it is the same with Art. Michael Angelo and Raffaele owe even a deeper debt to Phidias than Cimabue and Giotto did. Dante acknowledges Virgil as his guide, and what does not Virgil owe to Homer? It is the height of ingratitude and self-conceit in the Moderns to forget what has been done for them by the Ancients. But it is only the half-educated who do so. The ignorant cannot, the shallow will not, reflect on the past. The present is enough for their purpose. Some throw down the ladder by which they have risen, but the majority are not aware that there ever was a ladder to climb. But human nature is the same in all ages. If Columbus was ungratefully treated by those he had benefited, so was Aristides before him.—It has always been so, and will be so to the end, and it is no use to sigh over what cannot be helped. Besides the truly great have always resigned themselves to their lot, for they feel sure of the future, and a lofty nature dwells rather on the past and the future, than on the present, whilst a little mind has only just energy enough to be absorbed in the passing hour, and cannot disengage itself from the trifling gains or petty pleasures of the moment, to look forward on what is to come. Now, to return to our Music:—Some say that chromatic passages were not used till about the end of the 13th century. M. Fetis complains that the term Diatonic is incorrectly used when applied to modern music, for Diatonic comes from two Greek words signifying "*By Tones*," and what we call the Diatonic scale does not ascend or descend entirely by tones. M. Fetis gives an oriental and

two Celtic scales, neither of which are entirely composed of tones. I do not know any music entirely devoid of semitones, for though they are used sparingly in Gregorian music, still they do occur. I have a faint recollection of having seen somewhere, an account of a scale formed from the old Scotch airs, in which the music moves by tones and sharp seconds, which would give a gamut devoid of half-tones.—“Chromatic,” says M. Fétis, “comes from the Greek word *Chroma*, colour; and in fact, this succession of semitones colours the music in a figurative sense.”

Towards the middle of the 14th century the science of Harmony received an impulse from some Italian musicians. Among these, Francis Landino and James of Bologna were the most distinguished. F. Landino, surnamed Francesco Cieco (the blind), and Francesco degli Organi, on account of his skill in playing on the organ, flourished between 1350 and 1390. After him we find Dufay and Brinchois, two Frenchmen of the Flemish School, and John Dunstable, an Englishman, who all flourished in the early part of the fifteenth century. These Composers greatly increased the stores of Harmony, and helped to lay the foundations of modern science. The best things are always liable to be most abused, and for this reason:—what is deep, and solid, and strong, is capable of enduring more than what is weak and trivial. The many, too, will always be caught by tinsel, and generally prefer the shadow to the substance, the imitation to the original idea; or at any rate, the lower qualities of a great work of art to its higher ones. And so one need not be surprised that Harmony, the most unearthly and mysterious of all the creations of Art, had not long been made visible to the world, before she came to be tampered with by those who were incapable of appreciating her loftiest attributes. For even in the old romantic times, so dear to poets, there were not wanting those, who, while they admired in her what is addressed to the ear (nay, sometimes, what appeals merely to curiosity, surprise, and vanity), were deaf to that which speaks to the soul.

As early as the beginning of the 14th century the ecclesi-

astical character of the Gregorian Song was entirely destroyed by the flourishes and quaverings introduced into it by musicians, who saw in its majestic beauty only a vehicle for the display of their so-called science. This was carried to such an extent, that, in 1322, Pope John XXII. issued a bull prohibiting the use of this style of music. The efforts of the Sovereign Pontiff appear to have had but a short-lived success, for in a few years, we find the evil increasing instead of diminishing, and the Church music becoming more and more of a secular cast. The blame of destroying the dignity of the Italian ecclesiastical music rests chiefly on the Flemish Masters. The Flemings seem to have ruled the musical world throughout Europe, during the 14th and 15th centuries. Two of the most celebrated schools for music in Italy, those of Naples and Venice, were founded by Flemings. The Pope's Chapel was supplied by Flemish and Spanish singers, and native talent so little cultivated, that few Italians were then found capable of sustaining the leading parts in a *Missa Cantata* of that day. The Flemish Masters delighted in fugues and imitations, which they introduced into their Masses, without paying any attention to the words which were to be sung; in short, losing sight of dignity, propriety, and expression, in their anxiety to make an ostentatious display of the science of the composer and the execution of the singers. Those among my fair readers who are fond of pictures, will remember that the Artists of the Low Countries, with a few great exceptions, have ever been as remarkable for their excellence in the lower, as for their deficiency in the higher walks of Art. Certainly the flats and fens of Holland would seem more conducive to industry and mechanical skill than to imagination and feeling. And though Belgium is many degrees better than Holland in point of climate, yet there is a family likeness in the two countries. We English partake of this dull character, too, that is, among the masses—for it must be allowed that when an Anglo-Saxon does happen to be of a poetical turn, he generally soars high. Perhaps in no country shall we find talent and

mental culture so unequally divided as in England. It is a mistake, though, to suppose that the English are peculiarly deficient in *musical* talent. We have had composers of great genius and science, from the first dawn of the Art. Not to go back so far as Alfred the Great and St. Dunstan, we may at least instance Dunstable, in the 15th century; and in the 16th and 17th centuries England was rich in composers, as the history of the Anthem books of the Cathedrals and Collegiate Chapels bear witness. It is true, many of these composers have owed their finest ideas to Palestrina and his school, but there is enough originality and fine taste among them to make good my assertion. I have said that the Flemish Composers introduced such an unmeaning quantity of ornament into their compositions, as to deprive them entirely of that solemnity indispensable to ecclesiastical music. So serious were the evils resulting from this system, that it was deemed worthy of notice by the Council of Trent, which sat between 1549 and 1563. At one time there seemed a danger of all the stores of musical science being lost to the Church, for the Pope (Pius V.) threatened to forbid all music being used in the offices, except the Plain-Song. Art was saved by one of the greatest musical geniuses that the world has ever produced. Giovanni Pierluigi, surnamed Palestrina, from the place of his birth, was, at that time, a young composer at Rome, also a singer in the Pontifical Chapel, and Maestro-di-Cappella of Santa Maria Maggiore. He was deeply afflicted at the prospect of the ruin hanging over his beloved Art, and he entreated Cardinals Vitellozo and Borromeo to obtain a delay before the final decision was pronounced, promising to write a harmonized Mass, which should not offend in any of the points censured by the Pope. This was granted, Palestrina's genius triumphed, and Art was saved. The devout composer always declared that his music was not his own, but as vivid a recollection as he could retain, waking, of the Singing of the Angels which he was permitted to hear in his sleep. On the 25th of April, 1565, three Masses, composed during that critical interval

when the cause of Art seemed to hang upon a thread, were performed before a congregation of Cardinals, and listened to with astonishment and delight by all who heard them. The idea of banishing figured music from the Church was given up by the Cardinals, and a few months after the most beautiful of the three Masses was performed before the Pope, and approved of by him. In 1568, Pius V. issued a bull, decreeing, in conformity with the decree of the Council of Trent, that the new Roman Breviary, in its corrected and amended form, should be adopted by all Catholic Churches; and in 1570 it was farther decreed that the Mass should be sung according to the mode prescribed by the new Missal.

These decrees rendered a thorough correction of the Choir books necessary. Pius V. died in 1572, but his successor, Gregory XIII., determined to carry on the reformation. He summoned Palestrina, who was then Master of the Vatican Basilica, and Composer to the Pontifical Chapel, and entrusted the work to his care. Palestrina associated with himself his pupil Guidetti, at whose suggestion he obtained from the Pontiff leave to abridge the notation of the Tracts and Graduals, as also of the Responsories in the Matins, as having become too long now that the ancient practice of singing Matins, separately, during the night, had been abandoned. Guidetti, in the course of seventeen years, completed four works; The Directorium Chori, The Office of Holy Week, The Passion, as it had been sung from time almost immemorial in the Pontifical Chapel, and lastly, The Prefaces in the Missal. Three years after the publication of these works Guidetti died, 30th Nov., 1592; having rendered great service to the liturgical song by his careful and extensive researches to recover its true traditions. During the fourth year of Palestrina's and Guidetti's labours, there appeared from the press of one Peter Liechtenstein, a native of Cologne established in Venice, the Gradual, the Antiphony, and the Hymnarium, corrected according to the Missal and Breviary of Pius V. It is not known who was the

author of this great work, but Guidetti considered it to be so well executed, as to render it unnecessary for him to continue his labours upon the same ground, and this Venice edition was therefore adopted by the singers of the Pontifical Chapel. Palestrina does not appear to have considered his portion of the undertaking, viz.—the correction of the Gradual, superseded by the appearance of the Venice edition, but continued his task for more than seventeen years. Palestrina applied himself with the zeal of one who had deeply at heart the majesty of divine worship. “But having completed the first part,” says Baini, “his pen fell from his hands, and, more wearied than Atlas under the weight of the sky, he abandoned his attempt, and at his death nothing was found but the incomplete manuscript.” A story most painful to tell is connected with the fate of these MSS. Love and reverence for the memory of Palestrina would make me avoid recording the baseness of one who bore his name, did not the majesty of Truth demand impartiality at the hands of all who venture to meddle, however slightly, with historical facts.—On the death of Palestrina, his unworthy son Igino, seized upon the imperfect MS., dishonestly procured its completion, and sold it, as the complete work of his father, to a bookseller for 2,500 scudi. The purchaser discovered the fraud on submitting it to the superiors for approbation, and brought an action against Igino, which he gained, and compelled this ignoble descendant of a great sire, to take back the MS., and refund the sum paid for them. What became of the MSS. is unknown. Baini thinks it may have fallen into the hands of Giovanelli, a pupil of Palestrina, who is believed to have superintended the edition of the Gradual, that appeared in Rome, from the Medician press, in 1614. This edition is now adopted by the Pontifical choir, and is considered by Baini to be superior to the Venice edition published by Liechtenstein.\*

Palestrina's death took place in 1571. He was interred in

\* For this account of Palestrini's labours I am indebted to an article in “*The Dublin Review*.”

St. Peter's, near the Altar of SS. Simon and Jude. His funeral was attended by all the musicians of Rome, and the "Libera me Domine," composed by himself in five parts, was sung by three choirs. Upon his coffin was this inscription:—"Johannes Petrus Aloysius Prænertinus, MUSICÆ PRINCEPS."

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Requiem æternam dona eis domine.

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Io mi rivolsi attente al primo tuono,  
 E *Te Deum laudamus* mi pareo  
 Udire in voce mista al dolce suono.  
 Tale imagine appunto mi rendea  
 Ciò ch'io udiva, qual prender si suole.  
 Quando a cantar con organi si stea ;  
 Ch' or sì or no s'intendon le parole.

DANTE.—(Purgatoria ix.)

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### CHAPTER XIII.

"Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,  
 Whose loves in higher love endure ;  
 What souls possess themselves so pure,  
 Or is there blessedness like theirs ?"—*Tennyson*.

Palestrina's predecessor, in the office of Maestro di Capella of S. Peter's, was Giovanni Annimuccia, a very devout man, who was a penitent of S. Philip Neri. S. Philip, the illustrious founder of the Oratory, is said to have been the inventor of the modern oratorio.—Perhaps "inventor" is too strong a word; for the miracles and mysteries of the middle ages, and the moralities of the renaissance period, certainly originated the idea of which the oratorio is the development. S. Philip was a poet and a musician, and well knew how to employ art in her highest office, that of the handmaid of religion. He was warmly seconded by his friend and disciple, Annimuccia, who, as we are told by Bacci, "went every day to the oratory, to sing before the sermons, always taking with him several singers." Annimuccia composed hymns

in parts, called *Laudi*, which were sung at the oratory, and afterwards Selections from the Holy Scriptures were worked up into a dramatic form, and sung, and this was the beginning of the modern oratorio, though it did not receive that name for full a century after S. Philip's death. It is singular that the oratorio, born under the sunny sky of Italy, should owe its growth and maturity to Saxon culture. For, certainly, it is Handel and Haydn, Spohr and Mendelssohn, who have brought the oratorio to perfection, and we English may claim some credit for the warm welcome we have given it. Handel is generally claimed as an English composer; and inasmuch as he wrote on English ground and in the English tongue, and is said to have owed much to the study of the works of Purcell, Wise, Croft, and others, the claim is not so unreasonable as many of our similar demands. Our Continental neighbours accuse us of believing that the world was created for the exclusive benefit of England and the English! The best Italian composers of oratorios are, I believe, Carissimi, Stradella, Cimarosa, and Zingarelli. Carissimi was born at Rome towards the close of the fifteenth century. Dr. Burney bears witness to his genius, when, speaking of the twenty-two cantatas by Carissimi, preserved in the collection of Christ Church, Oxford, he says—"There is not one which does not offer something that is still new, curious, and pleasing; but more particularly in the recitatives, many of which seem the most expressive, affecting, and perfect that I have seen. In the airs, there are frequently sweet and graceful passages, which more than a century and a half have not impaired." And again he calls them "archetypes of almost all the *arie di cantabile*, the *adagios*, and *pathetic songs*, as well as *instrumental slow movements*, that have since been composed." They furnish examples of melody and modulation, to the beauties of which the greatest masters of modern times have added but little. Carissimi's oratorio of "Jeptha" is a noble composition. Handel has borrowed the chorus 'Hear Jacob's God' in "Samson," from 'Phlorate filiæ Israel,' a chorus in "Jeptha." Stradella, a Venetian, and contemporary of Carissimi, composed an oratorio,

called "San Giovanni Battista," which saved his life. Some bravos hired by a Venetian nobleman to assassinate him, followed him to Rome, and tracked him to the church of S. John Lateran, where Stradella was conducting the performance of his oratorio, and singing the principal part. The bravos were true Italians: the music melted their hearts, they could not make up their minds to kill the artist, and departed, leaving him unmolested. They must have been of kindred nature to Don Rodrigo's Capo de' Bravi—the redoubtable Griso! Another Italian oratorio of a high and enduring character is "Il Sacrificio d' Abraham," by Cimarosa, a Neapolitan, who was born in 1754, and died 1801. This oratorio was performed in the year 1793, and no other of great merit appeared for a long time. Zingarelli, who was born at Naples in 1752, and died at Paris 1837, is the next great composer of oratorios on our list. His oratorio "La Destruzione di Gerusalemme" is one of the most striking compositions of this class which the Italian School has produced. Il Cavaliere di Morlacchi, born at Perugia, in 1784, composed an oratorio called "Isacco," in 1817. In this composition he substituted for the old form of recitative, a new method called *declamazione ritmica*. In 1824 he produced "Il Sacrificio d' Abelle," in which his new mode of singing was introduced with increased effect. The precise nature of this new recitative I do not know, but as it is said that Handel imitated Purcell's energetic style of declamation, probably Morlacchi adopted the same manner. Both of the above mentioned oratorios met with the utmost success, when they were performed at Dresden. Many other Italian masters have produced oratorios, and Scarlatti's especially have great merit.

After Palestrina and Carissimi, the following names occur, as links in the chain of ecclesiastical composers down to our own times:—Allegri, the author of the celebrated *Miserere* sung at *Tenebræ*, in Holy Week, at the Sistine Chapel, was born at Rome, 1590, and died 1652: Colonna, born at Brescia, 1630, was *Maestro di Capella* at Bologna. It was the opinion of

Dr. Boyce, that Colonna was Handel's model for choruses, accompanied with many instrumental parts different from the vocal. Colonna was the master of Clari, one of the most refined composers of the Italian school. Steffani, born in the territory of Venice, 1650. While a chorister in a Venetian church, his voice and manner attracted the notice of a German nobleman, who took him to Barona, and placed him under Ercole Bernabei. Steffani afterwards took holy orders and became an Abbé. While yet a student he composed several masses and other sacred pieces, which were performed at Munich, and the reigning Duke of Brunswick (father to George I.) was so greatly delighted with them, that he invited Steffani to the court of Hanover, and conferred on him the appointment of Maestro di Capella. Besides operas and madrigals, Steffani composed a great number of duetts for two voices, with a bass accompaniment. Handel paid them the compliment of professing to have imitated them in the twelve "Duetti di Camera," composed for Queen Caroline. Steffani was a man of diplomatic talent, and was frequently employed in negociations with foreign courts. He obtained a great pension, and the Bishopric of Spigna was bestowed on him by Pope Innocent XI. About 1724, the London Academy of Ancient Music elected him their President. He died at Frankfort in 1730—his death may be called sudden, for he only had the warning of a few days indisposition.

Clari, born at Pisa in 1760, was Maestro di Capella of the Cathedral of Pistoja, about the year 1695, the date of Purcell's death. The richest collection of his MS. works in England, is to be found in the Museum at Cambridge. Durante, born at Grumo, near Naples, in 1693 (two years before Purcell's death). He studied first under Scarlatti, and afterwards under Pasquini and Pettini, at Rome. He returned to Naples, where he devoted himself to composition and tuition; and to his principles and instruction, the Neapolitan School owes its greatest masters of the eighteenth century. He became Professor at

the Conservatorio of San Onofrio, about the year 1715. He wrote principally for the Church. His subjects are generally remarkable for simplicity, but so well conceived, and so ably expressed, as to produce a very impressive effect; his duettos, in particular, are admirably constructed. Durante died at Naples, at the age of sixty-two. Durante's music is tolerably well known in this country. So is Marcello, as so many of his compositions have been set to English words, and published in a popular form. There is a sweet soothing flow of melody in Marcello's music which will always make him popular, even among those who are not musicians. Marcello died in 1739.

Leo was born at Naples, 1694. He and Durante studied together under Scarlatti. Leo was one of the most sublime composers Italy has produced. He did much towards the progress of art. He succeeded both in secular and ecclesiastical music. In grandeur and conception of style, he has never been surpassed, except, perhaps, by Handel, who himself was much indebted to Leo for the method employed in the construction of some of his magnificent double choruses. Pergolesi, whose immortal "*Gloria in Excelsis*" is well known throughout England, was born in 1704, died 1737.—That far-famed "*Gloria*" is one of those works of art which one may well call inspired. In this composition we find a union of the most triumphant joy with the most gentle grace; strength is not sacrificed to softness, nor is refinement lost in vehemence. There is chastity without coldness, grandeur without gravity, spirit without tumultuousness, and over the whole is thrown an unearthly sweetness and purity, as well as an unearthly dignity and power. One can well imagine the heavenly song spreading through the chill air of the wintry night—

"Life's circles widening round,  
Upon a clear blue river,"

and the Angelic Host shedding upon the earth, not only the light, but the very glow and fragrance of heaven.

Pergolesi studied under Grew, and afterwards received lessons

from Vinci and Hasse. Being attacked by consumption, Pergolesi was persuaded by his first patron, Prince Stegliono, to take a small house at Torre del Greco, close to the foot of Mount Vesuvius. The Neapolitans have an idea that living there, either kills or cures consumptive patients quickly. In his last illness, Pergolesi composed his grand Cantata of "*Orfeo e Euridice*," and later his famous "*Stabat Mater*," and *Salve Regina*." Soon after finishing this last offering to Mary, he died, at the early age of thirty-three. Jomelli, a native of Aversa, was born in 1714, died in 1774. His name is well known in England through the famous Chaconne, a perfect gem of melody and harmony. Played even on a piano-forte, which deprives it of its "linked notes of sweetness long drawn out," there is in it a union of solemnity and sweetness which carries the soul heavenwards. I have heard old musical amateurs speak of the rapture they felt when they first heard this ravishing air played at the theatre, as an interlude to introduce the Ghost in "The Castle Spectre!" But to know what the Chaconne really is, one must hear it played on the organ in a cathedral. I have never heard it sung, but no doubt the voices would produce the most enchanting effect. The last of the Church composers is Pasiello, which brings us down to a recent date, as he lived to 1816. I have omitted a great many eminent composers in this chronological list, because I have not at hand books of reference to give the dates of their births and deaths. Cavi, Musetti, Casali,\* Mazzoni, Porpora, Caffaro, David Perez, are all classical composers, and Scarlatti and Hasse are very great names. The School of Church Music, which follows next, is that of Cherubini, Mozart, and Haydn. There cannot be two opinions among musicians as to the beauty of the ecclesiastical compositions of these masters. One might as well question the beauty of the Apollo or the Venus. But when

\* Mr. Burns has published some selections from the works of Cavi, Musetti, and Casali, which are very easy to execute, and especially suitable for amateur singers and for small choirs.

one comes to consider the propriety and fitness of such a style of music for PUBLIC devotion, there is much room for discussion. For several reasons I cannot enter fully upon the subject in this work.

It is worth remarking, however, that the theatrical style of Church music came in print before the revolutionary outbreak of the last century ravaged Europe. Since the suppression of the monasteries and hospitals, and the sale of the lands destined for their support, which has been permitted in countries still catholic, Church music has declined on the Continent; there are no longer wealthy cathedral chapters able to support vast choirs and singing schools, rich monasteries with great libraries, and means of giving an elaborate and scientific education to young musicians, and an asylum and place for pursuing their studies to poor composers of talent. The conservatories have sunk, and true ecclesiastical music seemed in danger of perishing in the first part of the nineteenth century. Many illustrious prelates have recently urged upon their clergy the necessity of restoring as much as possible the ancient Church music, and of banishing the theatrical, sometimes even, profane music which has been allowed to take possession of many continental churches. Nine years ago the Cardinal Archbishop of Mechlin communicated with the Abate Baini, director of the Pontifical Choir, concerning the possibility of recovering the true form of the ancient Gregorian song. The Abbé Jannssens undertook the journey to Rome to collect information, and in the mean time, the best editions and MSS. of the Roman song, that the north of Europe furnished, were diligently examined and collected. In 1849, M. E. Duval, a pupil of the Conservatoire of Paris, who for years previous, at the desire of the Archbishop,\* had been engaged in researches on this subject, was sent to Rome, to compare the result of his labours with the best Roman editions and the MSS. in the libraries of the eternal City. He spent ten months in these researches, assisted by his colleague, M. l'Abbé Jannssens. The results of these labours, which were

\* Monseigneur Affre, the Martyr of the Barricades.

examined by a body of ecclesiastics in 1849, has been given to the public at a very moderate price, and are well worthy the attention of English musicians. In one of M. Jannssen's works which I once saw, I met with beautiful melodies with an exquisitely harmonized organ accompaniment. There were some airs (the four Antiphones of B. V. M.) whose effect upon my mind I can express by no other language than the old word "ravishing." I could imagine them the very music played by S. Cecilia. There is a soft joyousness in some, a tender plaintiveness in others, and a gentle grace in all, producing the most perfect expression of the words that can be conceived.

Those who assert that the English are deficient in musical taste, would do well to consider the deep debt which the science of harmony owes to the English cathedrals and universities. I allow that the amount of good they do to the cause of high art is not proportionate to the means at their command. Much more might be done at the public schools by cultivating vocal music among the boys, and so enabling them to appreciate the choral service; and at the universities, certainly greater efforts might be made than are made, to give music her proper rank as sister to poetry. Still it is something that the Anglican establishment supports such a class of musicians as the organists and singers in cathedral and collegiate choirs. And good service to the cause of art and science accrues to the world therefrom. Far be it from me to undervalue this. The music of Tallis, Bird, Farrant, Purcell, Nares, and the rest of the English school, is exquisitely beautiful, and has served to keep up the traditional memory of the ecclesiastical music of the sixteenth century. A chant often attributed to Tallis is neither more nor less than one of the Gregorian tones; and let any one compare the music of Palestrina, Carissimi, Cavi, Musetti, Casali, &c., with that of the English church composers, and they will find that they belong to one school. I have heard the English cathedral music objected to as undevotional in character, by protestant dissenters, and even by

members of the established church, holding what are called "evangelical opinions" The cause of this impression arises, I imagine, from two distinct sources; one is that of the coldness, and sometimes irreverence of manner, with which the choral service is often performed. Though there is more external decency of late years on the part of choristers than there used to be, yet they appear generally to go through the service as if they would be glad when the task was done. Then one often sees people going to the cathedrals out of curiosity or mere love of music, not considering it as an act of worship. And lastly, the sight of the nave left empty and useless, lay people sitting in canons' stalls (the episcopal throne is sometimes filled with ladies!) sight-seers tramping up and down in the most irreverent way while service is going on, and similar incongruities, give an air of unreality to the whole thing. I can fancy the vials of Mr. Carlyle's wrath poured out upon the poor cathedrals, and their services designated by some such complimentary title as "Flunkeydom of the dark ages."

But all those incongruities have nothing whatever to do with the devotional character of the choral service taken as music, *and as music alone am I examining it.* But I have heard persons really fond of music say, that even if the choral service could be performed reverently, it would still seem to them cold and formal. This idea springs from their looking on congregational singing as the only method of making religious music an offering of the heart; they forget that prayer and praise can exist without being expressed by the lips at all. If the sound of another's voice, or the sound of an inanimate musical instrument, have the effect of lifting the soul heavenwards, and making it forget the cares and vanities of this world, they produce *mental prayer*, the highest and most perfect kind of prayer, and neither congregational singing, spoken prayer, nor sermons, could do more.

The oratorio has flourished of late years, more in protestant than in catholic countries; perhaps because catholic composers

find in the functions of the church, ample scope for employing all the resources of art, which the slender amount of ceremonial retained by protestantism does not admit of.

Graun, Kappell-Meister to Frederick the Great, at Berlin, was one of the first who brought the oratorio to perfection in Germany. He wrote "Der Tod Jesus," a work of great merit. Haydn's "Creation" and "Seasons" are so well known among us, that we almost claim them as our own. Beethoven's "Mount of Olives"\* is well known, too, with English verses. Mozart's "Davidde Penitente" was performed in England for the first time in 1843, at Norwich. Spohr is a truly great composer, though his harmonies are sometimes too abstruse for an uncultivated ear. His most celebrated oratorios are "The Last Judgment," "The Fall of Babylon," and "The Crucifixion." Karl Lowe is better known in Germany than in England. F. Mendelssohn is as celebrated in this country as in his own. "St. Paul" and "Elijah" are almost as popular as "The Messiah" or "The Creation."

I do not know how many purely English oratorios we have. The only one I have ever heard of is Dr. Crotch's "Palestine," and all I know of it is one air, "Ye faithful few." There is a something in that air which wins upon you insensibly. You may meet with many melodies more striking, many accompaniments more elaborately harmonized, but there runs through this song a touching plaintiveness united to calmness, that reminds one of the repose of Greek statuary. There are many oratorios by German composers of the present day, but none that hold the same rank as those of Spohr and Mendelssohn.

\* There is a chorus from it in Novello's "Select Organ Pieces," well worth the attention of amateur pianists.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

*Emigravit* is th' inscription on the tombstone where he lies;  
Dead he is not, but departed, for the Artist never dies.

Through these streets so broad and stately, these obscure and narrow lanes,  
Walked of old the Master Singers, chanting rude poetic strains.—*Longfellow*.

Were it not better done, as others use  
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade  
Or with the tangles of Nereus's hair?—*Milton*.

And old Silenus shaking a green stick  
Of Ilies, and the wood-gods in a crew  
Came blithe, as in the olive copses thick  
Cicadæ are, drunk with the noonday dew;  
And Driope and Faunus followed quick,  
Teazing the god to sing them something new.—*Shelley*.

A sketch of the progress of Music would be incomplete without some account of the origin of the Opera. Sacred Dramas and Pastoral Plays, with Choruses or Hymns interspersed, were common throughout Europe from a very early period. In Italy, some parts of the Orfeo of Politiano were sung in 1483, and from that time we find music employed in Tragedies, Comedies, and Pastorals. But these pieces were not Operas, for that term is applied only to Dramas which are entirely sung. M. Fetis' account of the origin of the Opera, is as follows:—"Music had been reduced to the symmetrical forms of counterpoint, applicable only to the music of the Church and of the parlour, when a number of literati and musicians, among whom we distinguish Vincent Galileo, Mei, and Caccini, conceived the idea of a union of poetry and music, in order to revive the dramatic system of the Greeks, in which poetry was sung. Galileo produced, in his attempt of these kind of pieces, the Episode of *Count Ugolino* which he had set to music. The reception which this first play met with, determined the poet Rinuccini to compose the Opera of *Daphne*, which was set to music by Peri and Caccini, between 1594 and 1597. This work

was followed by *Euridice*, and both had great success. Such was the origin of the Opera.\* *Euridice* was performed at Florence in 1600, in honour of the marriage of Marie de Medici with Henri Quatre. Emilio del Cavaliere, a Roman noble and amateur, composed a kind of oratorio, called "*Rappresentazione dell' Anima e del Corpo*," which was performed at Rome in 1600, on a stage in the Church of La Vaticella, with scenery, decorations, and choruses after the antique, and even an attempt at classical dancing. It must be remembered that this was a sacred drama, and the dancing was probably defended on the ground of the religious dances of the Jews, and the example of King David: The admirers of the noble composer asserted that he had recovered in his recitative, the ancient Greek dramatic song. This strange exhibition (which would have shocked a monk of the middle ages quite as much as it would shock us in the nineteenth century), took place when the renaissance period was in its glory. The famous pictures in the Louvre, descriptive of Marie de Medici's bridal, which Reubens painted about the same time, give one a specimen of the perverted taste of that period. Classic literature and classic art had not long been recovered, and many of those who gave themselves up to its fascinations, appear to have become intoxicated by that portion of it which appeals to the senses, while they lost sight of all that is high and pure in it, as well as of the truths veiled beneath its myths. Dante and Raffaele did not thus misuse antiquity, but those who came after them did. "To the pure all things are pure," and they who say with Tasso—

" O Musa, tu, che di caduchi allori  
Non circondi la fronte in Elicona  
Ma su nel cielo infra i beati Cori  
Hai di stelle immortali aurea corona,  
Tu spiri al petto mio celesti ardori."

can tread with firm step the laurel groves and myrtle bowers of Greece. But woe to those who dare "the bright land of

\* Fetis' "Music Explained," Chap. 16, Part 2, Boston edition.

battle and of song," without the shield of faith, and the breastplate of chastity! No wonder if such end in saying—

"I'd rather be

A pagan suckled in a creed outworn,  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn,  
Have sight of Proteus rising o'er the sea,  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn."

In 1606, the opera was performed for the first time at Rome. Claude Monteverde (famed for having discovered the harmony of the Dominant, in 1590) composed his opera of "Orfeo" for the Court of Mantua, in 1607, which was represented in the following year. The lyrical drama was introduced at Venice in 1637, and at Naples in 1646, but Venice took the lead of all other places. It will be remembered that in Shakspeare's time, Venice was one of the most fashionable and luxurious cities of Europe. And it will occur to many of my readers, no doubt, that one of the most beautiful passages on music, among the many to be found in Shakspeare, is in "The Merchant of Venice." In the opera of "Euridice" (which was the second written), one of the personages sings Anacreontic stanzas, which may be considered as the origin of what is called an air. This piece is preceded by a short prelude. The movements of the bass follows those of the voice, which gives a heavy character. In the recitative the bass frequently sustains its notes. In other respects the model of the airs of the opera existed before in the popular melodies which had been known time out of mind. Airs took a more settled form in a musical drama of Landi's, "Il Santo Alessio," represented at Rome in 1634. The airs of this epoch are monotonous and cut into couplets, like our vaudevilles and ballads. The same custom is found in all the operas of Cavalli, who composed more than forty, and particularly in his "Jason," represented at Venice in 1649. By a singular arrangement, all the airs of this period were placed at the beginning of the scenes, and not towards the close, as in modern operas.\* Towards the

\* Fetis' "Music Explained." Part 2, Chap. 16.

end of the seventeenth century, a fashion came in of beginning with a slow movement, continuing with a lively one, and lastly repeating the slow movement entire. This has a good effect for a ballad, and indeed the Troubadour poetry generally has a refrain as in the following exquisite little song, written by Thibaut, Count of Champagne, in the fourteenth century :—

Las ! si, j'avais le pouvoir d'oublier  
 Sa beaute, sa beauté et son bien dire,  
 Et son très doux, très doux regarder,  
 Plus n' aurais mon martire !  
 Mais de mon cœur je n'en puis rien ôter,  
 Et grand affolage,  
 Mais tel servage,  
 Donne courage  
 A tout endurer.

\* Et puis comment comment oublier  
 Sa beauté, beauté et son bien dire,  
 Et son très doux, très doux regarder,  
 Mieux aimer mon martire !

But in dramatic music a different treatment is required, and after having expressed passion with vehemence in the second movement, it has a cold effect to return quietly to the first movement, as if it were a mere refrain or burden. "Jomelli† was the first who perceived the necessity of ending with the four last lines. This style of airs lasted till the time of Piccini and Sacchini. Among the form of airs which had most success, the *rondeau* holds the first place." Its invention is attributed to Buononcini, an Italian composer of the eighteenth century. At a later period Sarti conceived the idea of the *rondeau* in two movements. Paisiello, Cimarosa, Mozart, Paer, and Mayer, have written many airs of a mixed character, composed of a slow movement followed by an allegro. Rossini has adopted the plan

\* I hold it true whate'er befall;  
 I feel it when I sorrow most;  
 'Tis better to have loved and lost  
 Than never to have loved at all.—*Tennyson.*

† Fetis.

of making the first movement an *allegro moderato*, followed by an *andante* or *adagio*, and terminating by a quick movement. This lengthens the piece so much as to weaken the dramatic action. A movement gradually increasing in rapidity is an infallible means of reviving the attention of an audience, and the imitators of Rossini, without his genius, frequently make use of it to conceal the poverty of their ideas.\* The first instance of a vocal duett occurs in the drama of "Il Santo Alessio," (1634). The first *terzetto* is found in an opera by Logroscino, a Venetian composer, 1750. Piccini carried concerted pieces to perfection in his "Buona Figliola." Mozart completed the musical revolution by his wonderful trios, quartetts, sextetts and finales in the "Zauberflöte," "Don Giovanni," and "Le Nozze di Figaro." "Rossini," says M. Fétis, "has not added anything to the form of concerted pieces, but he has made improvements in the details of rhythm, vocal effect, and instrumentation."

Gluck, a composer of great genius, settled the form of the French serious opera, towards the end of the last century. Gluck was born 1714. His brother was head forester to a German prince. After leading the life of an itinerant musician for some time, Gluck took some lessons of Martini, and became composer in Prince Melzi's establishment at Milan, where he wrote several operas. In 1745, he was invited to England, where he composed an opera called "La Caduta de' Giganti." Thence he proceeded to Copenhagen, in Germany, where he composed several works, and zealously applied himself to repair the defects of his education, both by the study of languages and by associating with literary persons. In 1754, he again visited Italy, and in a few years returned to Vienna, where he wrote his celebrated operas, "Orfeo" and "Alceste." He was invited to Paris, and in 1776 began the famous "Musical War" between him and Piccini, which is so often alluded to in French memoirs of the last century. He left Paris to settle at Vienna, where he appears to have enjoyed better fortune than generally falls to the lot of men

\* Fétis.

of genius; the concluding years of his life were more productive of comfort to himself than of romantic interest to his biographers, for he seems to have enjoyed a quiet, pleasant life, as well as a great reputation, and finally died of apoplexy at the age of sixty-three, leaving behind him a fortune of £25,000. Mozart was a great admirer of Gluck's, and paid him the highest of all compliments, by making use of parts of his operas, as models worthy to be followed. It has been said that Mozart alone has surpassed Gluck in the serious opera. Gluck's works are remarkable for grand severity of style, deep expression, and poetic feeling. The well known March in "Alceste," and the equally well known "Che farò senza Euridice," will probably occur to the memory of many of my readers, as examples of these characteristics. Cherubini is another original composer of the last century who wrote at Paris; he was born at Florence, 1760. His church music displays great genius, but is of an operatic cast. One of his compositions, the overture to "Les Deux Journées," is well known in England. It is an admirable study for amateur pianists arranged as a duett for pianoforte. It is not necessary for me to particularize all the great composers of modern times; a mere list of their names would be uninteresting and useless, and were I to attempt giving a critical and biographical catalogue of them, even of the briefest kind, it would swell this little work far beyond the limits to which I am compelled to restrict myself. For the same reason I must refrain from inserting the curious antiquarian information respecting the invention and improvements in musical instruments, which is to be found in M. Fétis' valuable book. I hope the extracts I have given from "Music Explained to the World," may induce some of my fair readers to read the entire work. The edition from which my extracts are taken is an American translation, made for the Boston Academy of Music.

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## CHAP. XV.

Nothing useless is, or low,  
 Each thing in its place is best ;  
 And what seems but idle show,  
 Strengthens and supports the rest.  
 Build to-day, then, strong and sure,  
 With a firm and ample base,  
 And ascending and secure  
 Shall to-morrow find its place.  
 Thus alone can we attain  
 To those turrets, where the eye  
 Sees the world as one vast plain,  
 And one boundless reach of sky.—*Longfellow.*

Full of long-sounding corridors it was  
 That over-vaulted grateful gloom,  
 Through which the live-long day my soul did pass  
 Well-pleased from room to room.  
 Full of great rooms, and small, the palace stood,  
 All various, each a perfect whole,  
 From living nature, fit for every mood  
 And change of my still soul.—*Tennyson.*  
 Sovereign masters of all hearts !  
 Know ye who hath set your parts ?  
 He who gave you breath to sing,  
 By whose strength ye sweep the string.  
 He hath chosen you, to lead  
 His hosannas here below ;  
 Mount and claim your glorious meed ;  
 Linger not with sin and woe.  
 But if ye should hold your peace,  
 Deem not that the song would cease :  
 Angels round His glory-throne,  
 Stars, His guiding hand that won,  
 Flowers that grow beneath our feet,  
 Stones in earth's dark womb that rest,  
 High and low in choir shall meet,  
 Ere his name shall be unblest.—*Kebie.*

I shall conclude with a sketch of the history of the pianoforte. This instrument may be deemed as an invention of the nineteenth century, inasmuch as modern improvements have rendered a

first-rate pianoforte of the present day quite a different instrument from the piano of the last century. M. Fetis says that the first stringed instrument struck by keys, was the clavicitherium, which had strings of catgut put in vibration by means of pieces of leather operated on by the keys. Another ancient keyed instrument was the virginal or virginals, familiar to us, as having been a favorite with Mary, Queen of Scots, and Elizabeth of England. Indeed, it has been asserted that the instrument received its name in compliment to the virgin queen; but unfortunately for the truth of this report, it so happens, that the virginal bore the same title thirty years before the "fair vestal throned in the west" was set up to be worshipped! Henry VIII. was a good musician, and all his children inherited talent for music. Mary had a love for the art which amounted to a passion. Miss Strickland mentions that her portraits (looked at with a phrenological eye) show the organ of tune developed to an extraordinary degree. It is certain she was a remarkably fine performer on the virginals. Poor Mary Stuart is often represented playing on this instrument. She cultivated music highly, and excelled in it, as she did in every graceful accomplishment. But probably the true reason of painters choosing to depict her playing, is, that the virginal looks well in a picture. Sorry as I am to admit a defect in my favorite instrument, I must own that the form of the pianoforte is neither picturesque nor even elegant. I am told that Mr. Lambert has just introduced a gothic case for cabinet and cottage pianos, which gives the instrument quite a mediæval appearance; but I fear the ugliness of the horizontal grand pianoforte is past all cure. It would defy the brilliant fancy and powerful pencil of Mr. Pugin himself. And unfortunately it is *the piano-forte par excellence*, except for that class of listeners who are able to hear with their eyes. At the same time we must allow that recent improvements\* have brought the cabinet piano, if not quite on a level

\* Mr. Lambert, who, while in the employ of Messrs. Collard, invented the check action cabinet piano, has recently added another improvement, "the Repeater," which is said to bring the touch and tone of the cabinet piano very near that of the horizontal!

with the horizontal, still near enough to satisfy any but the critical ear of an artist. The clavecin or harpsichord, according to M. Fetis, is as old [as 1530. He says, "This instrument, the largest of the kind, had almost the form of our long pianos. It often had two keys, which might be played together, and which struck two notes at a time tuned in octaves. The strings of the harpsichord were put in vibration by strips of wood, terminated with a piece of quill or leather, and which were raised by touching a key. The end of the leather fell as soon as it had touched the string, leaving the latter free to vibrate. The spinet was only a harpsichord of square form."—(Oblong like our square pianos?) The harpsichord, spinet, and clavichord, continued in use till about 1785. M. Fetis traces the origin of the pianoforte to the Eastern Psaltery. He says "This was composed of a square box, on which a thin pine board or tablet was glued; on this tablet strings of iron or brass wire were extended by means of pegs, and tuned so as to give all the sounds of the scale. The performers held in each hand a little rod, with which he struck the strings. An attempt was made to improve this instrument, and from thence sprang the clavichord, which consisted of a box of triangular form, with a sound-board and pegs, to which wires of brass were attached, and a key which operated on little plates of copper, by which the strings were struck. It was this instrument which afterwards suggested the idea of the piano.\* As early as 1716, Marius, a manufacturer at Paris, presented to the Academy of Sciences for examination, two harpsichords, in which he had substituted little hammers for the strips of wood used to strike the strings. Two years afterwards, Cristoforo, a Florentine, improved on this invention, and made the first pianoforte, which has served as a model for those made since. It appeared that the first attempts were received coldly, for it was not till 1760, that Zumpe, in England, and Silbermann, in Germany, had regular manufactories, and began to multiply pianos. In 1776, the brothers Erard made the first instruments of this kind constructed

\* Fetis, Part 2, Chap. 14.

in Paris; for until that time they were imported from London. These pianos had only five octaves, and two strings tuned in unison for each hammer. Afterwards the key-board was extended to six octaves and a half, and the number of the strings was increased to three.

M. Fetis's judgment upon the various schools of pianoforte playing is too well worth quoting to be omitted. He tells us "One of the greatest difficulties in touching the piano consists in producing a fine tone, by a peculiar manner of striking the keys. In order to acquire this art, the performer must learn to restrain the action of the arm upon the key-board, and to give equal suppleness and strength to the fingers, *a thing which requires great practice*. A good position of the hand and a constant study of certain passages, executed at first slowly and with evenness, and gradually increasing in rapidity, will, in the end, give this necessary quality of suppleness. This, however, is not saying that the art of drawing a fine tone from the piano is purely mechanical. It is with this, as with every other art, its principle dwells in the soul of the artist, and diffuses itself with the rapidity of lightning even to the end of his fingers."

There is an inspiration of sound, as there is of expression, of which it is one of the elements. M. Fetis divides pianoforte playing (including the harpsichord) into three chief epochs. First "the legato style, in which the fingers of the two hands played in four or five distinct parts on a plan of harmony rather than melody. This epoch ended with John Sebastian Bach, who had the finest talent of this kind which has ever existed. In order to play, upon this system, a strong perception of harmony is necessary, and all the fingers must be equally apt in the execution of difficulties." M. Fetis adds "that these difficulties are so great, that few pianists of our days can execute the music of Bach and Handel." Bach's fugues certainly do require a strong love for harmony, a clear head and a great stock of patience while reading them, but the assertion that few pianists of our day can play Handel, if it apply to France (which I doubt), certainly can-

not be said to apply to this country. There is not a cathedral town in England, where you may not meet with organists who can play Handel, and generally with amateurs who can acquit themselves very fairly in the legato style. Most of the great manufacturing towns now possess music halls, with organs in them, and some have churches where the full choral service is performed, as at Leeds. In the catholic churches of England the music of Palestrina and his school is beginning to be heard again, in spite of the opposition of those who have been so long accustomed to the melodious honeyed style of Mozart and Haydn, as to find the severity of the old music "harsh and crabbed." At St. Chad's, Birmingham, and at the Church of the Apostles, Clifton, (probably in many other catholic churches) Palestrina is sometimes exquisitely done. I can say nothing of the London churches, catholic or protestant, as I have never been there on a Sunday, and indeed, I have never heard any musical religious service in London, except once, and that was in Westminster Abbey. Certainly the music on that occasion was not to be compared with what I have heard at Canterbury, Windsor, Lichfield, Salisbury, Gloucester, Exeter, &c.

To return to our original subject. M. Fetis says that the second school of pianoforte playing began with Charles Philip Emanuel Bach, son of the great Sebastian. This school "introduced these combinations of the scales which for nearly sixty years have been the type of all the brilliant passages for the piano. After E. Bach came Mozart, Müller, Beethoven,\* and Dussek. Clementi, an Italian by birth, pursued the same course. His pupils, Cramer, Klengel, and a few others, brought this second epoch to a close.

"The third epoch began with Hummel and Kalkbrenner. These great artists, preserving all that was free and judicious in the mechanical action of the preceding school, introduced into the

\* In classing Beethoven with this school, I beg to say that I am giving M. Fetis' opinion, not my own. I hold Beethoven to be as distinct from Mozart and Dussek, as from Sebastian Bach.

style of the piano a new plan of brilliant passages, consisting in the dexterity of taking distant intervals and in grouping the fingers in passages of harmony, independent of the scales. This novelty, which would have enriched the music of the piano, if it had not been abused, completely changed the art of playing. When one step had been taken in this boldness of execution, the artists did not stop in their progress. Moschelles, in whom suppleness, firmness, and agility of finger have been wonderfully developed by labour, did not hesitate to encounter difficulties greater than those of which Hummel and Kalkbrenner had given the model. Herz\* carried to a still greater height these perillous leaps and rattling notes of the new school. The art of playing the piano has at last become the art of astonishing. Thought is no longer anything in the talent of the pianist; mechanical execution constitutes almost its whole merit. The folly of this direction of the art has however already become apparent to men of correct mind and of real talent.

“Moschelles, who possesses more ability than any other artist in overcoming difficulties, has come to a stand in this career, and for some time has devoted himself to the expressive style. Kalkbrenner and Hummel have resisted the torrent; it is probable that they will find imitators, and that the art of playing the piano will again become worthy of its origin.”

Thus ends M. Fetis, writing more than twenty years ago. Real study and true love of art will enable a scholar to see farther than the multitude.

Till old experience do attain  
To something like prophetic strain.”

M. Fetis' prediction has been accomplished. Henri Herz's later compositions bear witness to his having attempted to correct the errors of his early style. Jacques Herz, who always excelled his more popular brother in solidity and expression, has of late years

\* I repeat I am quoting the opinion of another, for my experience would tell me that there is nothing in Moschelles or Henri Herz so difficult as some passages of Hummel.

produced some compositions which may rank with those of Cramer and Hummel.

The new school, of which Thalberg, Benedict, Dohler, Listz, Chopin, Schulhoff, Gorla, Dreyschock, and Henselt, are the principal stars, all, more or less, do homage to science and feeling, and give execution a subordinate place. True, many of these composers, for the sake of astonishing the musical world, or to gain popularity, sacrifice high art too often. But indeed it may be questioned whether most of them have power to do more than just what they have done. And their compositions are so able and so pleasing, that pianoforte players may well be thankful for them, and not expect Mozarts and Beethovens to be born every year. Mendelssohn leaves us nothing to desire; some of his concertos would be heard with delight after one of Mozart's. Mendelssohn (I speak of him as a composer) has the *sostenuto* tone, and the gracefully flowing *legato* passage of Cramer, united to the bold effects of the new school, and in point of conception his music is, of course, superior to that of mere pianoforte writers, who however ingeniously they may weave together the ideas of others, cannot give them that unity and fixity of purpose which good original composition possesses. It is the difference between flowers growing in artificial beds in a garden, and flowers springing up in a wood, where they harmonise with all around them. Henselt, though one cannot claim for him the first of all gifts, invention, presents the ideas of others in so novel a form, that one is tempted to fancy one is hearing an original composition. His "*Gage d'Amour*" is a beautiful specimen of pianoforte music. It consists of two movements, both together filling less than five pages; but it is like a short lyric, perfect as far as it goes. True, the melody would be nothing striking, divested of the accompaniment, but that accompaniment is really a work of art. He may well call his piece "*Poeme d'Amour.*" The expression is most powerful. Intense feeling never flags from the first bar to the last; one hardly observes the executive difficulties, because, as in a poem, one is carried on by the irresistible force of the passion expressed, and

never thinks of the artist's skill, till one begins to examine it critically. The slow movement flows sweetly and gracefully, and is remarkable for tenderness and gentleness. There is much skill and originality shown in the mechanical details, which are so managed, as to increase the tone in the melody, and keep the under parts in their proper place.

The second movement, though not quick, is animated, and at times impassioned. The bold arpeggios produce rich and unexpected harmonies, and the modulation is exceedingly beautiful. There is a regular, yet ever-changing movement about it which bears the subject on, as a bark is borne over the waves of the sea, expressing with more truth than words can do, the restless, fluctuating nature of the passion described. •

Henselt has written many short pieces of very interesting character, and much easier to execute than his "Gage d'Amour." "Il Lamento," and "Sorrow in Happiness," are most expressive and plaintive songs without words. I have spoken of Dreysehoff already. His Nocturnes are very captivating, making up in grace and feeling for what they want in originality. Schulhoff is a composer of great talent, but writes too much for the multitude. His "Galop di Bravura" and "Carnival of Venice" delight the ears and dazzle the eyes of a mixed audience, for there is just enough solidity in them to please a musician at the first hearing, and a variety of novel and ingenious passages, which appear much more difficult than they really are, at first sight, even to a good pianist, while the constant flow of gay melody, and the brilliance of the executive work, fascinate and dazzle that numerous class, who "play a little" and know less. Schulhoff's "Souvenir de Venice" is a sweet flowing Nocturne, without one *tour de force* in it. Fradel is an agreeable composer. His harmonies are rich and his melodies well chosen. His music has the advantage of producing a good effect without requiring great execution. There are several very easy short pieces of Fradel's\* lately published, which would be found useful by amateur pianists who do not practice

\* By Messrs. Cocks.

regularly, and who have a difficulty in remembering long pieces. Fradel resembles Blumenthal ; neither of them have any claim to originality of idea, but they possess that fine taste which enables a composer to select from good sources, and to treat what they have selected in the best possible manner.

There is a duett of Fradel's called by the fantastic title of "Pique-Nique Musicale," which is particularly agreeable, both to play and to hear. It is very easy, but requires finished playing. Hear an indifferent performer play the tunes in Cramer's Instructions, and then listen to the same airs played by one who has that perfect control over the instrument which is necessary to producing fine tone and perfect expression, and you will admit good execution is required, to give proper effect to the easiest music. Space would fail me, were I to enter into a critical account of all the composers of the day ; and the most eminent are too well known to render it necessary. There is one whose name I must not pass over, because the cause I have at heart, viz., the advancement of musical knowledge among amateurs, owes much to him. I allude to Mr. Sterndale Bennett, who devotes himself to the classical school. Many of his compositions possess great beauty, but the one I find most fascinating is the *Capriccio*, in D minor. The more one plays it, the better one likes it, and after all, that is the true test of excellence. I do not say it would please those who prefer a set of M. Jullien's quadrilles to the overture to the "*Zauberflote*," but to those who can appreciate harmony, this little gem, worthy of days gone by, will always be heard with intense pleasure.

I will not conclude without expressing a charitable wish in favour of those orders of society, who having fewer means of enjoyment than others, should in a particular measure excite our sympathy. Much might be done for them by affording them opportunities of cultivating a taste for music. There are few who have not the germ of that taste. Other tastes are more often denied, and more difficult to acquire. Music is an innate love ; pleasure accompanies every step in its advancement ; in its pro-

gress it opens the mind, for it awakens imagination and bids thoughts flow. Classical music might be made a powerful instrument in civilization and moral improvement. Religious music, madrigal and motett singing, and chamber music, occupy the mind, and interest the fancy without exciting that *exhausting* degree of feeling which dramatic music does when enjoyed thoroughly. Classical music acts, too, as a species of mental cultivation. The study of Palestrina and Handel calls into action a degree of mental power which may lie dormant while performing or listening to the works of lighter composers. If any doubt the capacity of the lower orders for enjoying music of a scientific character, let them go into the nave of an English cathedral on a Sunday afternoon; there they will find crowds listening eagerly to the sounds proceeding from the choir. Some, it is true, go from mere idleness, and behave in a profane manner, but the majority go for the pure love of music. It is evident from their whole bearing that they do not look upon it as an act of worship. As soon as the music ceases they walk about and look at the monuments or anything else that catches their eye; generally in a serious, decent manner, but without any signs of devotion. As soon as the organ is heard again, they throng towards the entrances to the choir, and remain standing in a listening attitude while the music lasts. The very difficulty the working classes find in getting to hear good dramatic music helps to keep their ear unspoilt for serious music. Those who accustom themselves to a variety of highly-seasoned viands every day, have not generally so good an appetite as those who live on plain fare. And in like manner they who never hear the opera will enjoy the most keenly an old madrigal.

That the working classes are really fond of music no one who examines into the matter can doubt. The success which has crowned the philanthropic efforts of Mr. Hullah, may be attributed, perhaps, to his own talent and energy. But see how highly music is cultivated in the manufacturing districts. In Manchester and Birmingham good part-singing is quite common. The same may

be said of many great towns in the north. A music-seller in a great manufacturing town, told me, lately, that *classical* music sold better among the operatives than among any other class; and not long since, I heard a working man discuss the respective merits of Haydn and Mendelssohn with a critical acuteness which many a concert-going lady or gentleman would have found it difficult to follow. In the rural districts music is sadly behind-hand. Still one finds love for it there in spite of every possible disadvantage. The bands got up among the labourers and artisans in villages and little country towns, prove how deeply-rooted is the love of music in the Anglo-Saxon race. These bands in some parts of the country, go from home to home, at Christmas time, singing and playing alternately, as long as people will entertain them. Their performance, though rude and uncultivated, prove that the gifts of voice and ear are not wanting among the English. I have been told that wherever music is cultivated among the labouring classes, drunkenness decreases. Meeting for the purpose of practising part-singing is certainly a more harmless recreation than meeting for the purpose of puffing forth tobacco smoke and chartist or socialist clap-trap, as so many working men do of an evening. Perhaps some of my fair readers may ask how it is possible for them to give any aid to the musical movement alluded to. I answer, first by encouraging singing-classes, both among rich and poor. Secondly, by interesting themselves in the musical education of children in any charity schools\* they may be connected with. Thirdly, by studying classical music themselves. And fourthly, by supporting and recommending such periodicals as "The Musical Times," "The Part-Song Book," "The Parish Choir Book," "The Musical Miscellany," and similar works, which are put forth in the hope of diffusing sound musical knowledge, and pure taste among all classes. What has

\* Some good remarks on this subject have appeared in "The Lady's Companion." The evils resulting from the bad method of singing allowed in infant schools is forcibly pointed out.

been may be again. It is no utopian day dream, this idea of bringing high art within reach of the million. Poetry and music once shed their glorious light upon lowly dwellings. Why should they not shine upon us once more ?

“ Through these streets so broad and stately, these obscure and dismal lanes,  
Walked of old the master singers, chanting rude poetic strains.  
From remote and sunless suburbs, came they to the friendly guild,  
Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in spouts the swallows build.  
As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he too the mystic rhyme,  
And the smith his iron measures, hammered to the anvils' chime.  
Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom makes the flowers of poesy bloom,  
In the forges, dust and cinders, in the tissues of the loom.

And now what remains for me to say to those patient readers who have accompanied me thus far.—Only this.—That I trust many among them, who have hitherto regarded music as a trifling amusement, may have gained from this little book, a truer idea of its real nature. And that I may have had the good fortune to unlock for some few the golden gates of the palace of harmony. To them there will seem nothing unreal or strained in my applying to art, what he whom we have lately lost, has said of Nature.

“ When thy mind

Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,  
Thy memory be as a dwelling place  
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; Oh ! then  
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief  
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts  
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,  
And these my exhortations !”—

Yes, Art as well as Nature offers sympathy to the lonely, enjoyment to the care-worn.

The "Sky-lark" of Wordsworth is a type of High Art in all her forms.

"Up with me ! up with me into the clouds !  
 For thy song, Lark, is strong ;  
 Up with me, up with me into the clouds !  
 Singing, singing,  
 With clouds and sky about thee ringing,  
 Lift me, guide me till I find  
 That spot which seems so to thy mind.

\* \* \* \*

Happy, happy Liver,  
 With a soul as strong as a mountain river,  
 Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,  
 Joy and jollity be with us both !  
 Alas ! my journey, rugged and uneven,  
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind ;  
 But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,  
 As full of gladness and as free of heaven,  
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on,  
 And hope for higher raptures, when life's day is done.

THE END

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