Music in the
XIXth Century
Edited by Robin H. Legge

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By

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE aim of this series of volumes is to give in a brief space an account, as exhaustive as possible, of the progress of music and of musical knowledge in the XIXth Century in such countries as England, France, Germany and Austria, Italy, the Slavonic lands, Scandinavia and the United States of America.

No musician requires to be told that in the case of one or two of these countries practically their whole musical story is included in the period 1800–1900, whilst in others, Germany for example, music apparently reached its apogee in the same time.

The revival of musical interest in Italy, and the "new movement" which produced Puccini, Leoncavallo and Mascagni, renders the last century especially remarkable in Southern Europe.

In North America the progress has been almost as well marked as in England. An ever-increasing

band of young musicians there has done, and is doing, for American music what their contemporaries have done, and are doing, in Great Britain since the renaissance in the XIXth Century.

In our own country musical knowledge has ncreased so fast, and become so comparatively wide-spread, that England bids fair to reoccupy among the so-called musical nations that position which she has not held since the day of Purcell, for Music is slowly but surely becoming again an integral part of the lite of the people.

ROBIN H. LEGGE.

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BEFORE THE RENAISSANCE

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CHAPTER I

MUSIC AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CENTURY

At the close of the XVIIIth century Europe was only just beginning to recover from the upheaval of the French Revolution, and to settle down again into the new conditions of political and social life, the new intellectual points of view, which were the result of the Revolution. The changes in the art of music were hardly less radical than those which passed over the rest of life, but they were longer in reaching their full accomplishment. Beethoven, the embodiment of all that is essentially modern in the art, had as yet written nothing that we should now call antagonistic to the ideals of an older day, nothing that would be held as jarring with the music of Haydn or Mozart. Of these two masters Haydn alone was alive, but in the nine years

that remained to him, the only important work that was yet to come was *The Seasons;* the short career of Mozart had come to an end nine years before the end of the century. Very different was the standing of the three German giants in the estimation of the English public at the turn of the centuries. Haydn was accepted as a great master, owing to the influence of Salomon and his concerts, which had been started in 1791; *The Creation* was given in March 1800, at Covent Garden in April, at the King's Theatre, and at the Birmingham Festival of 1802; it was published in Clementi's arrangement for voice and piano, at the price of £1 6*s*. It enjoyed a long period of the greatest popularity, as soon as the public had come to the comfortable decision that it was not as good as Handel's oratorios. Mozart's operas were not yet introduced into England, and his other works were by no means considered above criticism. In the diverting "Musical Memoirs" of W. T. Parke, who was principal oboist to Covent Garden Theatre for forty years, we read, under date 1801, that Mozart's *Requiem* is "a composition of infinite science and dulness"; but it is only fair to say that this attitude was soon given

up, if it was at all general even at the time. The Beethoven of 1800 was considered quite a harmless person, and the solemn head-waggings over his "extravagances" were not very noticeable until about 1809, when *Le Beau Monde*, a monthly periodical which contained a "critical catalogue" of new music, had a review of the septet (which had been played at one of Salomon's concerts on April 23, 1801, from the MS., and which the reviewer calls throughout a quintet for strings) and of the "Rasoumowsky" quartets. The septet—the identity of the work is conclusively proved by the fact that the reviewer mentions its division into two books, the first ending with a minuet and trio, the second beginning with an air and variations, an arrangement which agrees with no other work of Beethoven—calls forth nothing more scathing than the remark, "We regret the malady of the great composer, which deprives the musical world of the pleasure they might have derived from the fruits of his great original genius." The reviewer probably imagined Beethoven picking out his music on the pianoforte, and that his deafness must put an end to his creative activity. The three quartets "are at

least eccentric if not erratic, and we fear the flightiness which pervades them will prevent their being so popular as the more regular compositions of Haydn and Mozart. We do not always understand what the composer would be at." This mingling of recognition of the genius with regret for his eccentricities, is the usual tone adopted for many years; and it is not quite easy to see how the writers of the day managed to maintain, as they undoubtedly did, a respectful attitude towards the man of whose real greatness they were so completely unconscious. In 1820, the valuable *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* implies a curious comparison between works of Mozart and Beethoven, in speaking of a Philharmonic Concert, and "the comparative tameness with which Mozart's most masterly sinfonia, in C (No. 1) was received, and the applause lavished on Beethoven's, in C minor, on the fifth night." It is clear that there was a section of the public that had gone far ahead of those who professed to lead its opinions. The same magazine contains, at the time of Beethoven's death, two articles which show the state of opinion pretty clearly: one is a "Memoir," in which nothing but praise

occurs; while the other, a letter from one "Musicus," contains the startling opinion that "The effect which the writings of Beethoven have had on the art must, I fear, be considered as injurious." At the same time, their great originality is admitted, and it is certain that even upon such unwilling admirers, Beethoven had created an impression of grandeur and even sublimity.

These curiosities of criticism must not lead us too far from the state of things musical at the opening of the XIXth century. Very rarely has the art of music been at as low an ebb as in England at this point of time. The fact that the country had been at war for eight years or more is not enough to account for the barrenness of our composers, for, strange to say, the interest taken by the amateurs in music was considerable, and the established concert institutions were apparently quite successful. A good many of the most important of the societies formed during the XVIIIth century had been dissolved; the Anacreontic Society had collapsed in 1786 as the result of some comic songs being forbidden, which were considered unfit for the ears of the Duchess of Devonshire, who had been

admitted into a private box surreptitiously. The concerts given by John Christian Bach and Karl Friedrich Abel, which had been carried on as "Mrs. Cornelys' Subscription Concerts" since 1762, and with one of which the Hanover Square Rooms were opened, had ceased in 1787, and the "Academy of Ancient Music," which had been in existence since 1710, had come to an end in 1792. The "Professional Concerts," an enterprise intended to carry on the work of Bach and Abel, ceased some few years before the end of the century. Of the many convivial societies, by means of which the tradition of glees, madrigals, and catches was handed down, the oldest, the Madrigal Society, founded in 1741, is at the present moment in a more flourishing condition than ever; the "Catch Club," established in 1762, lasted far on into the XIXth century, and had many royal and aristocratic patrons; the "Glee Club," famous because Webbe wrote his "Glorious Apollo" for it, existed from 1787 to 1857; and the "Concentores Sodales" from 1798 to 1847. These societies undoubtedly kept alive the embers of the art, by encouraging the composers of the time to employ the specially

English forms of concerted vocal music. The more serious kind of music was to be heard at the "Ancient Concerts" (full title, "Concert of Antient Music"), which flourished from 1776 till 1848. At the beginning of the century these, conducted by Greatorex, were the only things of the kind; the concerts were arranged by the directors in rotation, and compositions less than twenty years old were strictly forbidden. The directors were for the most part noble or royal amateurs, and both George III. and the Prince Consort figure among those who arranged programmes. It is almost unnecessary to say that at the beginning of the century, and for a good many years afterwards, Handel's name preponderates to an extent that seems in the present day quite absurd. Occasionally the first part of a concert would be devoted to a single work by him, but far more often selections from his works would be given to the exclusion of almost all else. In 1802, for example, the first concert contained fourteen numbers from Handel and four from other sources; the second concert had eleven Handelian numbers to seven from elsewhere; the third programme has the name of

Handel thirteen times as against four of other composers; and so on. It is little wonder if the concerts, as time went on, got a name for aristocratic dulness, and really retarded the study of ancient music, which they were intended to encourage. It should be mentioned that, outside the regular series of twelve concerts, a performance was annually given of *The Messiah* for the benefit of the Royal Society of Musicians, a benevolent fund that has existed from 1738 to the present day. The "Vocal Concerts," which originated in the secession of Harrison and Bartleman, two of the soloists at the Ancient Concerts, in 1792, had been given up in 1794, when the seceders returned to the Ancient Concerts, having lost the patronage of the public owing to Salomon's concerts; when these ceased, Harrison and Bartleman started their "Vocal Concerts" again, and they flourished until 1822. The undertaking does not seem to have been based on any desire to rival the Ancient Concerts, as Greatorex, the conductor of the latter, was organist and conductor of the newer concerts; and Cramer, who led the violins at both sets, was conductor of the Vocal Concerts. The younger institution seems

rather to have attempted to set before the public at large the musical delights that in the older were reserved for the exclusively aristocratic directors and their friends. Its programmes were chosen with a far wider taste, although the distinction between orchestral and chamber music was so imperfectly understood that for many years chamber compositions were regularly performed in the course of concerts that were in the main orchestral. In 1813 was started the Philharmonic Society, with an admirable ideal of maintaining a strict equality among its members, all of whom were to be in the musical profession, and all of whom were to take prominent or obscure positions in the orchestra in their turn. While concerted "chamber music" was included in the scheme, it was enacted that no concerto for a solo instrument, no duets or solos, were ever to be allowed. The rule against solos was relaxed after about the third season, but the performance of chamber music seems to have been not unusual even later than 1829, when Spohr's double quartet appears in the programme. This master's performance of his own "Dramatic Concerto," in 1820, was apparently the first breach

of the rule forbidding concertos, and after that date they were of frequent occurrence. The City Concerts were founded in 1818, and were under the direction of Sir George Smart; their scope differed but little from that of the Vocal or Philharmonic Concerts, save only that amateurs, to the number of sixteen, were allowed to take part, each standing at the same desk with a professor. Until 1832 these concerts kept up a high standard, and must have done much good in spreading a knowledge of the best music. They were held at the City of London Tavern, the Philharmonic in the Argyll Rooms, Regent Street, and the Vocal Concerts at Willis's Rooms, while the Ancient Concerts began in a room in Tottenham Court Road, and after 1804 took place at the Hanover Square Rooms. Among later enterprises of much the same kind may be mentioned the "Società Armonica" (1827–1850) and the "Vocal Society," established in 1832 to promote the interests of English vocal music, but soon turned from its first object; its work ceased in 1838. The practice of giving oratorio performances at the opera-house during Lent, a practice begun by Handel, with such important

results, went steadily on, though the word "oratorio" was very liberally interpreted, and secular numbers were often intermixed with sacred. As the forerunner of the "Sacred Harmonic Society," the "Cæcilian Society" deserves mention here, as it was the only organisation formed for the special purpose of giving oratorios; it was started as early as 1785, and lasted till 1861.

At the beginning of the century, as at its close, the foremost soprano singers of the day shared the adoration of the public; there were three prime favourites, Mme. Mara, Mrs. Billington, and Mme. Catalani. Mme. Mara, the daughter of a poor musician named Schmeling, was born at Cassel in 1749, and was at first trained as a violinist, and brought out by her father as a prodigy. When she appeared in London, the ladies of society, disapproving of the violin as an unladylike instrument, persuaded her father to have her taught singing, and under the tuition of a certain Paradisi she attained a wonderful degree of vocal skill, while her violin training made her a thorough musician. She had a more or less chequered career on the continent, and her dispute

with Todi, a favourite of the Paris opera-goers, has become historical. In 1784 she came again to London, and made her first important appearance at Westminster Abbey in the Handel Commemoration. She visited London again several times before taking up her residence here, from 1791 to 1802, and becoming the foremost of the concert-singers. She excelled in the music of Handel, and her style was remarkable for "solemn inspiration, majesty, and fervour." She made the mistake of returning to London in 1820, and appearing at a single concert at the opera-house, when she was found to have lost less of power than was to be expected, but to be no longer in the possession of her finest attributes.

Mrs. Billington was born about 1768, and was the daughter of an oboist named Weichsel in the King's Theatre; like Mara, she was exhibited as a prodigy at a very early age, her instrument being the pianoforte. She married a double-bass player, named Billington, at the age of sixteen, and shortly afterwards appeared on the Dublin stage with great success. Her first appearance in London was as Rosetta in *Love in a Village*, in

1786. In 1794, by which time she was an established favourite here, and had even some idea of retiring, she went with her husband and brother to Naples, not for professional purposes but for pleasure, and was induced by Sir William Hamilton to appear at the opera in a work written by Bianchi expressly for her, and called *Inez di Castro*. After her husband's sudden death in Naples she sang often in Italy for some years, and married again a worthless person named Felissent, from whom she was soon separated, but who followed her to England in order to benefit by her earnings. Her return to England was in 1801, when it was arranged that she should sing alternately at Drury Lane and Covent Garden. She re-appeared in Arne's *Artaxerxes*, and from that time till 1809 she was a constant attraction at both the principal concert institutions as well as at the opera. A single appearance, after her retirement, in 1814, was made in the cause of charity, and in 1817 she left England for her estate near Venice, where she died in 1818. Her voice was a brilliant soprano, of very large compass and beautiful quality, but she had not Mara's power of emotional expression. She sang in Portogallo's

Merope with Brigitta Banti in the latter's last season, 1802.

If Mrs. Billington surpassed Mara in florid singing, as she undoubtedly did, her own ornaments, abundant as they were, were far exceeded by Catalani's, her successor in the position of public idol. She was so good a musician that her cadenzas were always in good taste, and her manner of executing them was faultless. Catalani's were far more profuse, but her execution was not as masterly as Billington's. She did not always sing quite in tune, but her power and agility were alike unsurpassed. She was born in 1779 at Sinigaglia, and appeared first in London in 1806, her enormous demands in the way of salary proving no bar to her success. For seven years she was pre-eminent in operas and concerts, but, like some other singers of a later age, she could endure no other good singer near her, and her terms were so high that no manager could afford to engage any other good artists. In the famous words of her husband, M. Valabrègue of the French Embassy, all that was required for operatic success was "ma femme et quatre ou cinq poupées." In 1813 she left England and

became director of the Théâtre Italien in Paris, and after a wandering life of some years appeared in London again in 1824 and in 1828, singing in the latter year at the York Festival. Soon after this she retired, and lived until 1849, when she fell a victim to cholera in Paris.

As a counterpart to these three famous foreign soprani, a triad of purely English singers must just be mentioned. Mrs. Salmon, born 1787, made her first name as a singer in Liverpool, and came to London in 1815, when she sang at an Ancient Concert. Her pure soprano voice and finished execution were lost after she gave way to habits of intemperance, and, in spite of various efforts to recover her position, she died in misery in 1849. Miss Catherine Stephens, born 1794, appeared, like so many of her contemporaries, in the part of Mandane in Arne's *Artaxerxes*, and in 1814 was permanently engaged at the Ancient Concerts, also at the main provincial festivals. After occupying the principal position on the stage and in concerts she retired in 1835, and three years afterwards was married to the Earl of Essex, becoming his widow in the following year, and living till 1882. Mary Anne Paton, born 1802,

was, like Mara, an infant prodigy, appearing in her native Edinburgh as a singer, reciter, and violinist at the age of eight. After the completion of her musical education, she re-appeared on the stage at Bath and other places, and made her London *début* as Susanna in *Figaro*. She was the original Agatha in the English adaptation of *Der Freischütz* in 1824, and the first Alice in the English version of *Robert le Diable* in 1832. In her earlier years she seems to have set herself to imitate Catalani, even adopting that singer's mannerisms so far as to move her mouth about with every note she sang. She married twice, and died in 1864.

Until the arrival of Grassini (1773–1850) the female alto, or contralto voice, was little cultivated, for the male alti had the same monopoly in general music which they still retain in cathedrals. The chief of the alto soloists at the beginning of the century were the two Knyvetts, father and son, the former of whom had sung in the Handel Commemoration of 1784, and had established the Vocal Concerts in 1791, dying in 1822; the latter, born 1779, was principal alto at the Ancient Concerts in 1795, and kept the position for more

than forty years, being especially excellent in glees. He, moreover, conducted the Birmingham Festival from 1834 to 1843, and wrote anthems for the coronation of Queen Victoria. He died in 1856. The father and son, together with Vaughan and Bartleman, brought glee singing to such perfection that it was said that whoever had heard them together had heard the perfection of concerted singing in the species.

Of the great tenors of the time, Samuel Harrison (1760–1812), one of the originators of the Vocal Concerts, was the representative of the old, severe style; he had sung in the Handel Commemoration, and the sweet tone of his voice suited Handel's gentler airs admirably; he was not at his best in more vigorous songs, and sang them reluctantly. At his last appearance, at his own benefit in 1812, he sang Pepusch's *Alexis*, a song that had always been identified with him. Incledon (1763–1826) was a strong contrast to Harrison in every way; he had been to sea in early life, and naturally excelled in the performance of sea songs; he seems to have been rather a "rough diamond," but to have represented the John Bull type of Englishman of the time;

delighted with his own singing, "he sang like one gratified." "He stopped where he was most pleased and prolonged the passage and the sensation exactly according to the scale of his own satisfaction." (*Quarterly Musical Review*, i. 79.) His best work was done on the English operatic stage; but for many years he was a regular attraction at Vauxhall Gardens and at Bath. Michael Kelly, the garrulous Irishman to whose memoirs students of English music owe so much, was rather a manager and composer than a singer, though in early life (he was born in 1764, and sang in the original performance of *Figaro* in 1786 at Vienna) he had made a successful career as a tenor from 1787 onwards. He was musical director at Drury Lane for many years, was joint director with his old friend Stephen Storace of the Italian Opera at the King's Theatre, and produced an extraordinary amount of incidental music to plays. His *Reminiscences*, published 1826, were written by Theodore Hook from materials supplied by Kelly. He tried various trade ventures, one a music shop and another a wine business, *à propos* of which Sheridan made his famous suggestion that Kelly should put up over

his shop, "Michael Kelly, composer of wines and importer of music." His vocal accomplishment was only one of several talents, and his fame in this line, like that of Harrison and Incledon before him, soon faded before the extraordinary popularity of John Braham, who, after his successful *début* at Bath in 1794, when he was twenty years of age, held the position of reigning tenor until the rise of Sims Reeves; he was the original Sir Huon in *Oberon*, and created many parts in less notable works. At first his style was pure, and his singing of Handel's more vigorous songs beyond compare; but even as early as 1824 he had contracted various bad vocal habits. In the thirties he lost large sums of money over the Colosseum in Regent's Park, and the St. James's Theatre; he died in 1856. The tone of Thomas Vaughan (1782–1843), and the simple dignity of his interpretation of Handel, made him the worthy successor of Harrison as the typical English tenor, and for more than a quarter of a century he was principal tenor at the Ancient and other concerts; he sang the tenor solo in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at the production of that work by the Philharmonic Society in 1826.

Amongst the English basses at the beginning of the century James Bartleman held the supreme position ; he had been famous as a boy singer for his power of expression, and from 1788 was connected with the Ancient Concerts, to which he returned after the temporary failure of the Vocal Concerts. He was especially fine in Purcell's songs, and although he is reproached in the *Quarterly Musical Review* with sacrificing the purity of his vowel sounds to the fulness of his tone, the same periodical pronounced that his place was not likely to be adequately filled when he retired. The voice seems to have been more of a baritone than an actual bass ; it is said to have resembled the violoncello in quality, and not to have blended well with other voices. It may be mentioned to Bartleman's lasting credit that he refused point-blank to take part in a performance of *The Messiah* if Mozart's extra accompaniments were used, and that his position was such that they were sacrificed on his account. The first performance of these accompaniments in England took place at the Lenten oratorios at Covent Garden in March 1805, and called forth a very judicious criticism from the *Sun* newspaper, extracts from which may

be seen in the *Musical Times*, January 1901. At the Ancient Concerts, Bartleman was succeeded by Richard Bellamy (1770–1843), who had been not only a concert-singer for many years, but a theatrical manager of some repute. John Bernard Sale (1779–1856) was the principal second bass at the same concerts, and he was, furthermore, a sound theoretical musician and a composer of some skill. He was organist of the Chapel Royal from 1838, and was music-master to the Princess Victoria, laying the foundation of the late Queen's remarkable proficiency in music.

The list of the eminent basses of the early years of the century is completed by the name of Harry Phillips (1801–1876), who was a most successful oratorio singer, and who delivered a ballad with great skill, although his career as a stage singer was less remarkable. He created the part of Caspar in the English performance of *Der Freischütz* in 1824; in 1843 he started what were called "table entertainments," in which he was the sole performer; he gave these in America and elsewhere with some success, and they undoubtedly set the pattern that was afterwards followed by John Parry, Corney Grain, and others.

Music in the XIXth Century

The taste of the British public at the beginning of the XIXth century was so much more pronounced in favour of vocal than of instrumental music that the players' names, taken as a whole, seem less famous to us in the present day than those of the singers. As to violinists, the older generation had almost died out, and the new developments of technique had not come in: Giardini died in 1796; Wilhelm Cramer, the leader of the King's band, the Ancient Concerts, and the opera band, died in 1799, and though Barthélémon lived till 1808 his work was finished before the end of the century. The son of W. Cramer, Franz, inherited many of his father's official posts, and his name is more often met with than that of any other orchestra leader. The Ashleys were one of those families which in England have kept the tradition of orchestral playing as a family business; Viotti appeared but seldom in London after 1802, though he lived till 1824; but his pupil, Nicolas Mori, was firmly established as leader at the principal concerts in London and the provinces. He was the master of J. B. Dando (1806–1894), a member of the Philharmonic Orchestra from 1831, who has the honour of starting concerts

devoted entirely to string quartets, works which had hitherto been heard only in the course of orchestral concerts. The first was given in 1835, and a regular series was afterwards instituted at the Hanover Square Rooms, the players being Henry Blagrove, Dando himself, H. Gattie, and Charles Lucas. From this time the performance of chamber music at the Philharmonic was gradually given up.

Among violoncellists Cervetto and Crosdill really belong to the preceding century, but the principal position was held for many years by Robert Lindley (1777–1855), who, although not a very remarkable solo player, was famous all over England on account of his long association with the double-bass player, Dragonetti (1755–1846), in the accompaniment of "dry recitative" after a manner which was long known as the English way of accompanying it. In Corelli's sonatas the two were hardly less renowned, and they were to be heard constantly together for a period of more than half a century. Charles Lucas, Lindley's pupil, succeeded him at the opera and in other orchestras, and from 1859 to 1866 was principal of the Royal Academy of Music, where he had been

one of the first batch of pupils. The career of Andrew Ashe, as an eminent flute-player, had almost closed by the beginning of the century, but he had become director of the concerts at Bath in succession to Rauzzini, a position he held from 1810 to 1822.

Griesbach, the principal oboist at the beginning of the century, was the uncle of a far more versatile, if not more distinguished man, J. H. Griesbach, who excelled, not only on the violoncello and pianoforte, but in composition, as well as in astronomy, painting in water-colours, entomology, and mathematics. An oratorio, *Belshazzar's Feast*, was his chief musical composition.

The harp was at this time not included among orchestral instruments; but as every young lady who possessed shapely arms was expected to play it, it had an important part in the sphere of what may be called domestic music, and its chief professor, Bochsa, a rogue of the first water, who had been compelled to fly from France on account of being detected in extensive forgeries, could not satisfy the applicants for lessons. He was born in 1789, composed a number of *opéras comiques* between 1813 and

1816, managed the Lenten oratorios (at first jointly with Smart), and from the foundation of the Royal Academy of Music till 1827 was professor of the harp, and secretary. As conductor of the King's Theatre he was succeeded by Costa; he ran away with the wife of Sir Henry Bishop in 1839.

The end of the XVIIIth century marks an interesting point in the history of stringed instruments played with keys. The harpsichord, which was in universal use almost throughout that century, fell so far into neglect at its end that harpsichords bearing the date 1800 or later are of the utmost rarity; the latest known is dated 1802. About this time the various improvements in the action, &c., of the pianoforte, with which the names of Sebastian Erard and John and James Broadwood are connected, gave a great impetus to the vogue of the newer instrument, and for the first twenty years of the new century it filled the place formerly occupied by the harpsichord in the orchestra, the "conductor" of orchestral concerts seating himself at a pianoforte, and probably playing it as occasion might require; for, strange as it seems, the bâton

was unknown in England until Spohr's arrival here in 1820, when he conducted with a stick at the Philharmonic Concert at which his "Dramatic Scena" was the first concerto played there.

The pianists of the early years of the century must be rapidly mentioned; first, there was Clementi, who was forty-eight years old when the century began, and who had done the greater part of his work as a solo pianist by then; he presided at the pianoforte for about fifteen years after the foundation of the Philharmonic Concerts. As a teacher, and in general as an influence in the world of music, he well deserves the name of the father of the pianoforte. After his one visit to England as director of the Professional Concerts, in 1791, Ignaz Pleyel appeared no more in England, and Dussek, having established himself as a teacher in London from 1788 to 1800, had to fly from his creditors in the latter year, and never came to England again. J. B. Cramer lived in London nearly all his life, being but a year old when, in 1772, his father settled in London. He set up a music-publishing business in 1828, and from 1832 to 1845 lived more in Paris than in England; but he returned here in

the last-named year and died in 1858. Clementi's best pupil, John Field (1782–1837), the first eminent pianist of English birth, was taken by his master to the Continent in 1802, and made his home in Russia soon afterwards, only returning to England on such exceptional occasions as the first performance of a concerto of his own at the Philharmonic Concert of February 27, 1832. Field's great friend and pupil, Charles Neate (1784–1877), was an original member of the Philharmonic Society, and often appeared as pianist or conductor; he had a passionate admiration for Beethoven, and visited Vienna in order to see him in 1815, becoming in some sort a pupil of his. He was the first to play in England two of Beethoven's concertos, those in C minor and E flat, besides Weber's "Concertstück" and other things. With Ignaz Moscheles we reach the border-line between ancient and modern pianists; his "Hommage à Handel" was played by him and Cramer at a concert of the latter in 1822; he appeared first at the Philharmonic in 1826, and was for a short time the regular conductor of the society. The first lady pianist engaged at the Philharmonic was Mrs. Lucy

Anderson (1790–1878), the wife of the master of the Queen's band, who was for some time teacher of Queen Victoria and her children. The first appearance of Liszt in England, in 1824, must here be mentioned; it took place in a concerto by Hummel at the Philharmonic; and in the same year his powers were set against those of an English boy three years younger than himself, George Aspull (1813–1832), who was said to have the stronger fingers of the two.

In 1823 the need for systematising the musical instruction of English musicians brought about the establishment of the Royal Academy of Music. Lord Westmorland, then Lord Burghersh, an amateur composer of considerable attainment, was the prime mover in the scheme, and Dr. Crotch was appointed the first principal, with a staff of professors under him which included Attwood, Greatorex, Shield, Sir George Smart, Horsley, J. B. Cramer, Bishop, Clementi, and Cipriani Potter. To these Moscheles was added in 1825; and in 1830, after a period of financial difficulty, a charter was granted by the Government, and since that time the school has flourished more or less continuously until the

present day. The successive principals have been Crotch (1823–1832), Cipriani Potter (to 1859), Charles Lucas (to 1866), Sir W. Sterndale Bennett (to 1875), Sir G. A. Macfarren (to 1887), and Sir A. C. Mackenzie, appointed in 1888. It was mainly in order to benefit the funds of this institution that a set of orchestral concerts, called the "Royal Academic Concerts," was started in the earliest years of its existence: these provided opportunity for the exhibition of promising performers, and in the scarcity of orchestral concerts they seem to have been carried on successfully for some few years.

In the early years of the century there was no systematic record of the concerts given in London, for the musical criticism in the journals was only very occasional, and even the advertisements are scarcely a safe guide. In the *Quarterly Musical Review* for 1822 there is given a list of the concerts that took place in the course of May in that year; the number of twenty-eight (excluding the opera) is mentioned as indicating the enormous vogue of music at the time. As compared with the seventy-one that were considered worth noticing in a leading journal during May 1901, the number is very

small, but from the tone of the remarks in the review, it must have been an unusually large number for the time, to be accounted for only by the fact that May was the height of the season. The review just mentioned was started in 1818 by Richard Mackenzie Bacon, a Norwich journalist with an ardent love of music and a remarkable critical faculty. Articles on musical science, æsthetics, current events, &c., appeared in the review, which lasted until 1829; from 1823 to 1833 appeared the monthly *Harmonicon*, edited by W. Ayrton, a son-in-law of Dr. Samuel Arnold, who had written occasional criticisms in the *Morning Chronicle* and elsewhere, gratuitously, He was one of the original members of the Philharmonic, and he was more than once director of the King's Theatre, the production of *Don Giovanni* and other operas of Mozart being in great part due to him. In 1835–6 there was a monthly, *The Musical Magazine*, edited by C. H. Purday, which was unsuccessful. In 1836 was started *The Musical World*, edited by Cowden Clarke, a weekly which was carried on continuously, though in several different forms, until 1891. As a record of musical events it is very valuable, and many of

its articles are most entertaining. In the sixties, when under the editorship of J. W. Davison, its tone was decidedly humorous, though the point of some of the jests is not always easy to detect in the present day. Messrs. Novello's *Musical Times* has existed since 1844, and in later years many periodicals devoted to music have sprung up, a remarkable proportion of which have attained permanent success, such as the *Tonic-Sol-Fa Reporter* (from 1853), ultimately merged in the *Musical Herald;* the *Musical Standard* (from 1862), the *Monthly Musical Record* (from 1871), and others. From time to time attempts have been made to carry on publications devoted to the higher interests of the art, not merely to registering current events or advertising the doings of country organists. *Concordia* (1875–76), the *New Quarterly Musical Review* (1893–96), and *The Musician* (1897) contain many articles of permanent interest.

To return to the state of things in the early part of the century, the casual reader of the periodicals cannot fail to be struck with the abundance of provincial musical festivals that were held in these early years compared with the

number that now exist. The history of British festivals begins with the foundation of the annual meeting in St. Paul's Cathedral in aid of the Sons of the Clergy Corporation, started in 1709, and still existing ; the festivals of the three choirs of Gloucester, Worcester, and Hereford began in 1724 in rotation in the three cities ; the first Leeds Festival took place in 1767, the first at Birmingham in 1768, and the first at Norwich in 1770. These three centres began their regular triennial festivals at different periods, the permanent series at Leeds not beginning till 1858. Among the undertakings that have proved to be of a less durable kind, there were very many in the early years of the century ; the York Festival was an annual event for some years up to 1802, and was revived in 1823, being followed by a second and third in 1825 and 1828. In the autumn of 1828, besides the York and the Hereford meetings, there were festivals at Cambridge, Salisbury, Derby, Manchester, Bury, Exeter, Brighton, and Denbigh. In other years we hear of musical festivals at Oxford, Guildford, Liverpool, and many other of the principal towns.

At Bath, where the fashionable world congregated at certain times of the year, there were series of concerts managed by Rauzzini, and after his death by Ashe ; and at Manchester there were other concerts of minor importance, and the continuance of the Gentlemen's Concerts from 1740 to the present day is a proof of the love of music in the North of England. Some of these festivals were merely speculations of managers, and had little more artistic significance than the provincial concert-tours of the present day; but many of them spread a taste for music through the country, and the fact that it was worth while to hold them is enough to show that there was a great amount of interest of one kind or another taken in music. With the single exception of the inordinate love of foreign as compared with English music, the general artistic atmosphere of the country was by no means a low one, and the reason that no very great works were produced here during the first half of the century must be sought elsewhere than in any public indifference to the art.

CHAPTER II

THE PALMY DAYS OF THE OPERA

In all countries and in all periods the student of musical history will remark that, wherever music has taken an important place, there has been a corresponding period of efflorescence in national opera; that is, in operas played in the language of the country where the performance takes place. This may seem almost a self-evident proposition, but it is not so obvious that the vogue of exotic opera—that is, opera given in a foreign tongue—has always accompanied a period of artistic sterility in music. The great German school, which maintained for two centuries the supremacy of that country in musical matters, had its rise at a time when German opera was beginning to free itself from the Italian domination; in France, where opera from the first had been given in French, the most unfruitful period

of the national musical life corresponded exactly with the time when the Théâtre des Italiens was in its highest fashion; the modern Russian school only began to flourish, and to have an important influence on the country's art, when Italian began to give way to Russian as the language in which operas were to be performed; and in England, although nothing has yet been done in the way of establishing a national opera, the period of the Carl Rosa Company's great success exactly synchronised with the beginning of the notable artistic renaissance that will come under consideration hereafter; and, even if the later vogue of opera in foreign tongues seems to have come about simultaneously with the great public interest in music generally, it must be remembered that all through the English provinces in the present day opera in English is continually and successfully performed by various touring companies, of which the Carl Rosa is only one. As regards the state of things in London, moreover, the fact that every opera is nowadays given in the language in which it was written (even English works having been sung in their own tongue on special occasions) marks a great

advance as compared with the days when Italian was the only language in which the fashionable world would endure dramatic music—days, we may remember, which lasted without intermission from the date of Handel down to a century after his death. It would be too much to say that exotic opera was the cause of artistic decadence; but, when the two are so closely connected as they are seen to have been all the world over, we may expect to find some real connection; and the truth would seem to be that, where musical life really exists in a nation, the opera is not considered as an exceptional enjoyment, or as a luxury reserved for the privileged few, but as intended for the public at large, and as an ordinary means of intellectual pleasure. The Italian opera of the "palmy days," which remained in vogue throughout the greater part of the XIXth century, was an amusement as far removed from the intellectual as could be imagined. From the time when Addison attacked it in the days of Handel to a date within the remembrance of all persons of middle age, a grasp of the action of the piece was not considered an essential part of the evening's enjoyment. Few of the subscribers

understood Italian; and from the boxes to the gallery the frequenters of the opera attended the representations, not in order to hear a certain work, but to hear some popular singer in what was called "a favourite part." Upon the life of the people this kind of opera had no influence whatsoever; the prices were for them prohibitive, and for most people of all classes a visit to the opera was a treat reserved for great occasions, not, as it is all over the Continent, a regular habit of their lives. There was a general impression that it was ridiculous to utter serious sentiments of any kind upon the stage in connection with music; and, although music of a sort had a share in most of the comic entertainments of the town, the idea of an opera as a reasonable vehicle for dramatic expression had not made itself generally felt, at all events in the early part of the century. The so-called operas compiled by such men as Shield, Kelly, Bishop, and Storace were nothing but incidental songs strung together on an extremely attenuated dramatic thread. When classical operas that had become well known in Italian were adapted, as they often were, for the English stage, it was the custom to

interpolate songs and other things, sometimes gathered from different works of the composer, but more often put together by the hack writers who had permanent engagements for the sake of such work. Even the more prominent numbers of certain operas were transferred without scruple from one part to another; thus it was for some years the custom to allot "Voi che sapete," in *Figaro*, to the Countess or to Susanna as often as to Cherubino, and everything we read in the shape of contemporary criticism, whether professional or amateur, goes to show that the dramatic idea of the opera was considered of the very slightest imaginable importance. Even the work which ought to have set English opera on a high pedestal in the estimation of the world—Weber's *Oberon* (1826)—conformed to this ballad-opera type far too closely; and it is evident that Planché, the librettist, had lacked the courage to set English traditions at defiance, a circumstance which is undoubtedly the chief bar to the revival of the beautiful work at the present time in England. A brighter day seemed to have dawned for native art when Barnett's *Mountain Sylph* appeared in 1834. The work is not very

ambitious, it is true, but at least it is an opera, and its successors, Edward Loder's *Nourjahad* (1834), Balfe's *Siege of Rochelle* (1835), Macfarren's *Devil's Opera,* and Benedict's *Gipsy's Warning* (1838) are one and all worthy of consideration as dramatic music of a certain kind. Each of the composers whose first works are here mentioned brought out more operas during the next few decades, and Balfe won himself a permanent position in public estimation, his *Bohemian Girl* (1843) sharing with Wallace's *Maritana* (1845) and Benedict's *Lily of Killarney* (1862) the honour of being performed at the present day. *The Bohemian Girl* was played on many continental stages, and ultimately Balfe, unlike the rest of his British contemporaries, was recognised by the adherents of Italian opera, his *Falstaff* being produced at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1838, with Lablache in the principal part. His last opera, *Il Talismano*, was also written for the Italian stage, and produced at Drury Lane in 1874. His career was, however, an exception to that of most English opera-writers in the earlier half of the century. Men like Loder and Macfarren, in a more satisfactory

condition of public taste, might have made a lasting mark as opera-writers, for the *Night Dancers* of the former, and the latter's *Robin Hood*, and other things, have merits far beyond the trivial tunes with which Balfe caught the ear of his vulgar audiences. No one who reads carefully the history of the time when these operas were appearing can doubt that, whether good or bad, an English work stood very little chance of making a real impression upon the upper classes, who were wholly devoted to the Italian opera and the various *prime donne* who in succession reigned over the fashionable world of London.

Though Lord Mount-Edgcumbe's "Musical Reminiscences" deals with things outside the fascinating sphere of the fashionable opera (his fourth edition embraces an account of the Handel Commemoration of 1834), he makes no mention of anything in the shape of English opera; even *Oberon* seems to have come in for some of the contempt the *habitués* felt for opera in English. The entertaining "Musical Recollections of the Last Half-Century," by Dr. Cox (1872), shows us, by the extreme rarity of reference to anything sung on the stage in English, how far inferior such enter-

tainments were generally considered. Lord Mount-Edgcumbe's occasional references to English singers were enough to show how prejudiced he, like the rest of the fashionable world, was against native art. Mme. Storace, according to him, had "a coarseness in her voice, and a vulgarity of manner, that totally unfitted her for the serious opera, which she never attempted." Mme. Storace, it may be remarked, was an Englishwoman by birth; and even Michael Kelly "retained so much of the English vulgarity of manner that he was never greatly liked." Perhaps, if opera in English had been a little more generously patronised by the upper classes in the early years of the century, the performers might have acquired more refinement; the mere fact that they were compelled to sing and act in such a way as to please the pit and gallery would naturally tend to increase any natural vulgarity of style they may have had; and surely the fashionable acceptance of everything that came from Italy, and the succession of crazy enthusiasms into which London society has been too apt to fall, have in them no small amount of vulgarity and artistic snobbishness. In Lord

Mount-Edgcumbe we have a link with the old school of operatic amateurs who, since the time of Handel, have admired voices in proportion to the height of their compass. The race of the sopranists was so nearly extinct that when Velluti, the last operatic *castrato*, appeared in 1825 in Meyerbeer's *Crociato in Egitto*, he was considered a great curiosity; the rarity of the tenor voice was even then beginning to be felt, and the writer of the "Reminiscences" complains that basses are being "thrust up into the first characters," and remarks in a footnote that even Mozart is not guiltless in this respect, since he gives the parts of Almaviva and Don Juan to "basses." The season before Velluti's appearance, that of 1824, was marked, for the noble amateurs, by the visit of Rossini, who brought out his *Zelmira* with rather qualified success. His wife, Mme. Colbran, had been a great singer, but her powers were no longer in their perfection; and the visit of the couple would have been disastrous—since the manager of the opera-house, Benelli, was a defaulter at the end of the season—if it had not been for the support of the fashionable world and the financial success of two concerts of Rossini's

music given at Almack's. At the second of these the composer sang a new "ottavino" on the death of Lord Byron; he made a great deal of money by accompanying at parties, and in general had a great social success. At the first of the two concerts the most popular performers of the day appeared, Mme. Colbran-Rossini's share in the programme being limited to some concerted pieces. Catalani and Pasta both appeared as *prime donne*; Mmes. Caradori and Vestris, Signor Garcia, and M. and Mme. Ronzi de Begnis were the secondary lights of the occasion; and in the second programme appears the name of Mlle. Garcia, which must be that of the eminent tenor's daughter, afterwards famous as Mme. Malibran, who made her regular *début* in the following season in the *Barbiere*. By this time Pasta's voice had begun to show signs of deterioration, although she did not retire for a good many years; her appearances were more or less occasional from this year, and the mention of her "forcible and vehement" manner indicates that her popularity was hardly what it had been, though many of the parts with which her name will always be connected were as yet untried.

The two next seasons were uneventful as regards Italian opera; Pasta was the only great singer engaged, and a whole series of misfortunes befell the management. With the different complaints of the successive managers (both John Ebers and Lumley, his successor, thought fit to take the public into their confidence) the historian has nothing to do; but it may be remarked that all through the years when Italian opera was the typical amusement of the upper classes of society, manager after manager was ruined by it, and the only marvel is that any one should have been found willing to undertake the business. 1826 saw the production of *Oberon*, Weber's lamented death a short time afterwards, and the well-deserved failure of Bishop's ill-judged imitation, *Aladdin*. Meanwhile Malibran was touring with her father in America, and the great time of her vogue in London was after her reappearance in 1829. In 1828 the appearance of the brilliant Sontag as Rosina was the great event of the opera, and in the following year she and Malibran were to a certain extent pitted against one another by their respective admirers, whose pleasure in such rivalries is a survival of the days of Faustina and

Cuzzoni. The retirement of Sontag on her marriage left Malibran undisputed mistress of the operatic world from 1830, the year in which Lablache arrived here, and showed the British public that there were other singers besides sopranos worthy of consideration. In the following season came Rubini, and in 1832 Tamburini, while Grisi's arrival in 1834 completed the *ensemble* which ultimately attained such renown in *I Puritani*. But before these more flourishing times were reached, record must be made of the specially disastrous season of 1832, which ruined Monck Mason, a manager who had begun his tenure with brilliant prospects of improvement. Under his management a series of German performances took place, at which *Fidelio* was given for the first time in England, with Mme. Schroeder-Devrient in the title-part. A French company came in the same season, and *Robert le Diable* was produced with Mme. Cinti-Damoreau, Nourrit and Levasseur. When, under Laporte's renewed management, Pasta came back in 1833, and appeared in *Norma*, then given for the first time in England, her voice was found to have lost its truth of intonation, but her acting was as

fine as ever. The original Adalgisa in Bellini's work, Giulietta Grisi, made her *début* in London in the following year in *La Gazza Ladra*, and so took the public by storm that for the time being even Malibran's popularity was in danger. The resources of the clever Spaniard were, however, so varied that she consented to sing in English opera, and appeared in Balfe's *Maid of Artois* in 1836, the year in which she died, a short time after singing a duet with Mme. Caradori-Allan at the Manchester Festival. *I Puritani*, given in 1835, with Grisi, Rubini, Tamburini, and Lablache, remained in great favour for a good many years, and the engagement of Mme. Persiani in 1838 strengthened the cast of this and of other operas, though her voice was so thin in quality that she never made the success her musical powers were held to deserve. As the sister of Malibran, Pauline Garcia, since known as Mme. Viardot-Garcia, found a warm welcome from the public in 1839, but had a good deal to endure from the strangely undignified means taken by Grisi and Mario, who first appeared in the same year, in order to make her performances ineffective. The great tenor was

at first a very poor actor, and although Grisi had acquired dramatic power by careful imitation of such models as Pasta, and even from her rival Malibran, she had no very great natural gift, such as that which distinguished Mme. Viardot. The performance of Cimarosa's *Matrimonio Segreto* in 1841, with Grisi, Persiani, Mme. Viardot, Rubini, Tamburini, and Lablache, must have been the highest point of *ensemble* ever attained in operatic annals. In the same year it must be mentioned, in passing, took place the extraordinarily successful *début* of Adelaide Kemble, in an English version of *Norma* at Covent Garden; she sang for only two seasons, retiring on her marriage in 1843. Before her time certain English operatic singers had made their mark, both abroad and in England, and some, such as Miss Paton and Miss Fanny Ayton, had appeared at the Italian opera with success. The "Tamburini row" of 1840 is familiar to every reader of the "Ingoldsby Legends," but its value as an historical episode is very slight. Under the management of Benjamin Lumley, which began in 1842, the ballet which almost inevitably succeeded the opera was a primary attraction for a good

many of the subscribers, and became of more and more importance; but the new operas given in his earlier seasons were few and comparatively unimportant. The Rossini fever had by this time begun to abate, and beyond the *début* of Clara Novello in Pacini's *Saffo* in 1843, and the production of Verdi's *Ernani* in 1845, there is little to record until the date of the famous schism which resulted in the establishment of a rival opera at Covent Garden, with Grisi, Persiani, Alboni (*début*), Mario, Tamburini, and Ronconi, Lablache alone of all the great "stars" remaining with Lumley. The manager put himself right with the public by securing the services of Jenny Lind for this year (1847), and the "Jenny Lind fever" drove all London wilder than it had ever been before. The "Swedish Nightingale's" hesitation to appear in London for fear of legal difficulties involved in her acceptance of a contract from Bunn, of Drury Lane, stimulated public excitement, and her own genius brought all music-lovers to her feet; but the story of her triumph is too familiar to be repeated here, and, after all, her three seasons as an opera-singer in London were but a small part of a career devoted throughout

to the highest interests of art. The *début* of Sims Reeves in the year after that of Jenny Lind, that of Catherine Hayes as a member of the Covent Garden Company in 1849, and in the latter year the leave-takings of Jenny Lind and the return of Sontag, complete the operatic record of the first half of the XIXth century. As successor to the ruined Delafield, the manager of Covent Garden, Gye began his long connection with that theatre in 1850, and in 1852 Piatti and Bottesini were members of his orchestra, reviving the fame of the English way of accompanying *recitativo secco*, for which Lindley and Dragonetti had formerly been celebrated. In 1852 Mme. Bosio, a too short-lived *prima donna*, appeared. An opera on which Jullien had staked fame and fortune, *Pietro il Grande*, was hissed off the stage, and Lumley's management came to an end mainly owing to the legal expenses connected with a Chancery suit in the matter of the contract with Johanna Wagner. This much-talked-of singer, who is now remembered as the niece of Richard Wagner rather than on her own account, did not sing in London till 1856, when Lumley resumed operatic management after Covent Garden

Theatre was burnt down. Before this accident, Gye had managed several seasons with varying fortune : in 1853, *Rigoletto*, Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini*, and Spohr's *Jessonda* were the novelties, but the season was not a success. The following year saw the return of Mme. Viardot, and Lablache and Cruvelli were also engaged by Gye.

To follow the details of the long, and generally disastrous, combat *à outrance* between the rival managers of Her Majesty's and Covent Garden Theatres would be of very little use from a historical point of view. After Lumley's final retirement, in 1859, and three seasons under E. T. Smith, Colonel Mapleson began his term of management of Her Majesty's Theatre in 1862, with Titiens and Giuglini as the two chief recruits from Lumley's company. *Les Huguenots* was produced at both houses in 1858 ; the *débuts* of Patti and Faure in 1860, of Santley in 1862, and of Lucca in 1863 (all at Covent Garden), did not impede the course of good luck with which the other management began, and which culminated in the production of *Faust*, a work refused by Gye on more than one occasion. The story of the managerial trick by which the partial

failure of its first performance was turned into a brilliant success is to be read in the amusing "Mapleson Memoirs." The latter manager strengthened his company greatly with the *début* of Nilsson in 1867, and for a short time it seemed that the new "Swedish Nightingale" would make as much sensation as her great predecessor. Though this was far from being the case, Mlle. Nilsson charmed London for a number of years, and divided the honours with Titiens, whose grand style proclaimed her the last of the great operatic sopranos of the palmy days; while in Trebelli was found a new and wonderfully clever representative of the mezzo-soprano parts. After the burning of Her Majesty's in 1867, a "coalition" season was arranged for 1869, and such artists as the two just mentioned appeared at Covent Garden side by side with Patti and Ilma di Murska. Tamberlik reappeared, and a famous performance of *Don Giovanni* was given, although Costa was absent from the post of conductor, which he had filled so well. The name of Mlle. Albani, who appeared in 1872, completes the list of the great singers brought forward under

Gye's management, who was practically alone in the field henceforward. When Her Majesty's Theatre was rebuilt it was at first devoted to the religious meetings of Messrs. Moody and Sankey, and the later efforts of Mapleson to win back the success he had once enjoyed are of small historical value. Mmes. Patti and Albani are the only links, among *prime donne*, between the opera of the seventies and that of the present day. For a considerable number of years public fashion turned its back on Italian and all other opera, and the last state of the old Covent Garden management was only less melancholy than that of the rival theatre. Down to the early eighties the history of Italian opera in London is a continuous record from the days of Handel; and though, by one means or another, there were various attempts to revive its glories, it was generally felt that Italian opera was dead, until the energies of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Augustus Harris succeeded in reviving it with a brilliance it had never known before. This clever manager had been connected more or less intimately with the Carl Rosa Company, and with various enterprises in the way of German opera. He saw that

the stupid tradition of Italian being the only language for opera must be broken down, and he set before himself the ideal of giving every opera in its original tongue. The history of this operatic revival belongs to a later part of the present volume, and enough has now been said to show the reader of the present day how complete in the earlier part of the century was the severance of the operatic stage from anything that could make for the interests of English art in any form.

CHAPTER III

FOREIGN DOMINATIONS

It is clear to all who take an interest in the history of music that among European nations the English is far more ready than any other to welcome musicians from abroad. That a nation newly awakened to the existence of a certain art should be thus receptive of influences from outside is perfectly natural; but it is strange to reflect that, long before the first foreign musician arrived in England, we had passed through more than one period of artistic musical eminence, and that the receptivity which is now our most salient characteristic is a quality of only comparatively recent growth. The habit of esteeming all foreigners superior to ourselves in music seems to have been formed after the Restoration, and then only by degrees; for at first musicians of other nations were criticised on their mere merits, and

a good English performer would be ranked by the public above an inferior claimant from without. If we may take Pepys as representing the average cultivated man of his time, it is clear that the attitude of his generation towards their own countrymen was a far more just one than that which prevailed during the greater part of the XIXth century. It was far more like that which is adopted all over the Continent, where, if there is to be any preference at all, it will be shown to the native rather than to the foreigner. In the latest years of the XIXth century signs were not wanting of a change in English taste, so far, at least, as singers were concerned. Apart from the operatic stage, where the prevalence of the Italian language could not fail to give the advantage to foreign artists, the chances of success for an English singer were quite as great as for one from abroad. If the reader of the present day wishes to realise what used to be the position of English musicians, he must not take the present state of things as a guide; for the revival of music as a living art among us has brought about in this respect, as in so many others, a complete transformation. Here and

there, in the case of overpowering genius, such as that of Sims Reeves or of Santley, the English singers could hold their own in public estimation against any of the foreigners; but the lady singers of England, and more especially the sopranos, were generally considered as more or less inefficient substitutes for the great *prime donne* from the opera, and as hardly worthy of the serious consideration of amateurs.

Financially the position of the foreigners must have caused no small amount of heart-burning to the better class of English performers, who were glad to receive payment at a rate far below that at which the foreign stars were paid; but it must not be forgotten that the continual stream of eminent instrumentalists and vocalists from abroad placed English audiences at a great advantage, for they have had for years an opportunity, such as has been granted to no other country, of judging the first-rate artists of every nation, and comparing their different styles. It is safe to say that the ease with which the best performers of all countries are to be heard in London was one of the causes of the musical renaissance, for it prepared, as it

were, the soil in which the seed of genius, once sown, could flourish rapidly. It may be doubted, too, supposing that the custom of this English hospitality to foreign artists had not existed, whether the money paid by the public to hear them would have gone into the pockets of English musicians instead. Until the latter part of the century it is to be feared that the British public cared little for the music performed in comparison with the eminence of the performer; and, if the distinguished aliens had been absent, it does not follow as a matter of course that any greater success would have befallen the native artists. It would be wearisome and useless to attempt to enumerate all the foreign executants of great distinction who through the XIXth century visited England, for the list would include practically every eminent name among European musicians. Certain landmarks may just be mentioned, as the dates of specially interesting first appearances here. Liszt's first visit took place as early as 1824, when he was but a boy, and was petted as a prodigy; Paganini came in 1831, Rubinstein in 1842, Joachim and Piatti in 1844, Mme. Schumann in 1856. The

last three of these artists exercised on English musical culture an influence the importance of which could not be exaggerated; through their agency the treasures of classical music were laid before the English public with a completeness and a perfection of interpretation that were of inestimable value.

But it is not with these, but with quite a different kind of foreign influence, that this chapter is mostly concerned. A country so receptive as England of everything that came from outside could not fail to come under the influence of foreign music as well as foreign interpreters, and long before the XIXth century began, the first of what I venture to call "foreign dominations" was in full force. Before going into details, I would point out that the manner in which the influence of important music is exercised is twofold. One man's works may fail at first to appeal to more than a very small circle, but that circle may widen continually till it embraces the whole musical population of the world. In the early days a few enthusiasts will incur ridicule for their devotion, and will quietly gain for their favourite music a tolerant hearing

which will gradually change to a wide acceptance. Another man, not less richly endowed with natural ability than the former, will create works which at once appeal to every one who hears them, and which attain and retain such a powerful influence over the public at large that thenceforward they are made into a standard from which no departure must be made by their successors. For these successors it is fatal to leave the well-worn road; the slightest attempt at originality is held as a blasphemous innovation upon the established pattern, and those who dare to express anything beyond what appears in the popular idol's creations are foredoomed to failure. The gentle influence of the former class is what most heartily stimulates the ideas of the younger men, who in developing the theories or studying the methods of the composer become themselves creative artists and attain originality. The latter kind of influence, whereby slavish copying of the model is imposed upon the younger men as the only means by which success can be reached, is almost wholly bad; the repression of new ideas, the insistence on conventionality, and the hopelessness of getting a hearing for anything outside

the well-worn pattern, cannot fail to repress all those in whom there may be a spark of genius, and to encourage the race of mere copyists, who are contented to obey the dictates of the public. In discriminating between these two classes of influence, I do not wish to give any opinion concerning the relative greatness of the composers whose works exercise the two kinds; the man who at once gains the ear of the world may be as great as he whose influence is slower in making its way, but as an agent in the production of creative minds there can be no doubt that the first kind of influence is of inestimable value, while the second means artistic death. The works of Bach, of Beethoven, of Schubert, of Schumann, and of Brahms are salient examples of the first kind of influence; no composer has ever yet been compelled to own that success was only to be attained by deliberately adopting the style of any one of these men or by slavish imitation of their manner. The public at large has only been slowly converted to them, and in all cases the musicians, in ever-increasing numbers, have shown the public the way. Of the other class the typical example is Handel, who, from the time of his arrival in

England, has so dominated one enormous section of the British public that for many years together it was true that, in the forms he used, no work could succeed unless it were written in deliberate imitation of his style. The influence of the Handelian type of opera was, it is true, quite short-lived, but the oratorios, which were nicely calculated to please the English taste, remained as the standard for such things for an enormous space of time. It is not my intention to speak slightingly of Handel's works, and it is obvious that no one but a man of immense power could possibly establish such a domination as his music exercised for so long; but, without a full admission of the fact, it would be impossible to obtain any sound idea of the causes which kept back the progress of music through the earlier part of the XIXth century. Neither in this case, nor in the shorter periods of similar tyrannies which succeeded that of Handel's music, is it suggested that the composers were in any way to blame for the repressing effect of their productions upon later men; the fault, so far as it was a fault at all, lay with the British public, whose ill-regulated enthusiasms made them intolerant of anything

that did not conform to the popular ideal. There would have been no harm done if the public had chosen to attend even more performances of Handel's music than were given; but their refusal to countenance any English music (in the shape of oratorios) that was not modelled on Handel was a grievous wrong, and worse still was the habit of thinking that such an attitude was indicative of a cultured taste. The amusing "Bach Letters" of Samuel Wesley, a set of twenty-four delightfully familiar epistles written to Benjamin Jacob, the organist of Surrey Chapel, in 1808 (not published till 1875), incidentally show how powerful was the influence of the Handelians in the early part of the century, and how hopeless seemed the task of obtaining a really public recognition of the greatness of "Saint Sebastian," as the writer calls his adored Bach, whose forty-eight preludes and fugues were all, or almost all, of his works at that time known in England. The programmes of the "Ancient Concerts," with their absurd preponderance of selections from Handel, have been already referred to, and even if they are considered as an exceptional thing, and the lack of proportion as due to the aristocratic

conservatism of the directors, the lists of music performed at the various provincial festivals for many years will serve to show how Handel's music was held to contain in itself all that was highest in the realms of music.

It was indeed the provincial festivals, and the peculiar conditions under which they exist, that did most to foster not only the Handelian domination, but the later and shorter tyrannies of the same kind. Coming round triennially in each of the cities where they are held, it is only natural that the moderately musical people of the neighbourhood should want to hear what they have heard before in preference to untried works; and conventionality of all kinds finds a most favourable soil in such provincial centres of music as those in which a musical feast occurring once in three years has to suffice for the artistic needs of the district till the next festival comes round. In London the foundation of the Sacred Harmonic Society in 1832 did much to place the music of Handel on a more reasonable level in relation with other composers, for throughout its existence its programmes show that Handel was never allowed to appropriate

too large a share of the society's attention. But it was due to this society that the English worship of Handel bore fruit in a way that appealed to the eye even more than to the ear, in the foundation of the triennial Handel Festivals at the Crystal Palace. After the first Handel Commemoration of 1784, similar meetings were held in Westminster Abbey in 1785, 1786, 1787, and 1791, after which no more seem to have occurred until 1834, when the conditions of the first festival were more or less accurately reproduced, although the proportion of voices to instruments was greatly changed from that of the original meeting. In 1784 there were 274 instrumentalists and 273 singers, and in 1834 222 instrumentalists accompanied 356 voices, a change which must have seemed revolutionary in those days. The practice of conducting with a bâton is noted by Lord Mount-Edgcumbe as another innovation. A slight and evidently temporary reaction against the monopoly of the Handelian music had come about as a consequence of the death of George III., who loved nothing so much as Handel's works. George IV., who was a most active patron of music, naturally gave a

more or less anti-Handelian direction to fashionable taste, and we may assume that it was as an indirect result of this that other music besides Handel's was admitted, as *The Creation* undoubtedly was, into the scheme of the 1834 celebration, although the festival was called by Handel's name. The Handel Festival as we now know it began under the auspices of the Sacred Harmonic Society at the Crystal Palace in 1857, in anticipation of the centenary of the master's death in 1759. It was a time when "monster" performances were admired, when Jullien's promenade concerts had given the public a taste for great masses of performers, and for loud as opposed to delicate sound; and the acoustic shortcomings of the vast building seemed as nothing in comparison with the effect produced upon the audience. At this first or preliminary festival, the band numbered 396, and the choir, of which the Sacred Harmonic Society was the nucleus, 2000; at the second meeting, in 1859, the actual centenary, the latter was increased to 2700 and the former to 460: and the success of the undertaking was so great that it was resolved to hold the festival every three years. For some time the

festivals have commanded less and less attention from musicians in London itself, and are now carried on in order to attract country people to the Crystal Palace. The various attempts that have been made to perform other works of more modern date, under the same conditions, have proved that the delicate effects of the modern orchestra are completely lost in the immense space, and it is hardly likely that any other experiments in the same direction will be made. After all, some of Handel's broader effects, notably some of the choruses in *Israel in Egypt*, do make an undeniably impressive effect at the Crystal Palace. But the great importance of the Crystal Palace in the musical history of our country is based upon foundations quite other than the Handel Festivals.

The second of the foreign dominations with which this chapter is concerned is that of Mendelssohn, which, beginning with the vogue of his "Songs without Words" in every family in the land, reached its culminating point in the production of *Elijah* at the Birmingham Festival of 1846. In all these dominations it is remarked that the public chooses one work as so far surpassing all the rest by its composer

that they may be disregarded. Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* was given in 1836 in England, and repeated with success in the next few years; but it has never been accepted with the same enthusiasm as has been bestowed upon the later work; and in the vogue of Tschaikowsky's "Pathetic" symphony in the present day we may see another symptom of this curious habit, which seems to be quite peculiar to the English public. *Elijah* is undeniably a very great work, but its superiority to *St. Paul* is not obvious enough to account for the difference between the two in popularity. With Handel the case is even more striking, for *The Messiah* is the only work which has entered into the hearts of the people, who can hardly be induced to attend a performance even of *Israel* or *Judas Maccabæus*, while the experiment of reviving one of the other oratorios is so certain to fail that it has long been given up by all except a small body of enthusiasts. In this confinement of attention to one special composition by the popular master of the time may be found the morbid element which exists in all these dominations. As with Handel so with Mendelssohn; the English

omposers of his time, or rather of the time during which the influence of his music was at its strongest, must write in as good an imitation of his manner as could be contrived ; and the risk of striking out a new line for themselves was too great for any but the most daring. Independence of thought was sure to bring about failure, and the career of Sterndale Bennett, which will be dealt with in detail in a later chapter, would undoubtedly have been less successful than it was if he had resisted his natural tendency to express himself in some of the Mendelssohnian idioms. As a contrast to his career that of Henry Hugo Pierson may be profitably studied, for his ways of expressing himself were so different from Mendelssohn's that his really great abilities never received their due meed of recognition, and the defects of his style grew upon him as the result of disappointment and failure, so that he had to be content with making a name in Germany, being one of the very few Englishmen who have succeeded in establishing a lasting reputation there.

Had it not been for the overwhelming popularity of Mendelssohn, a popularity due at first in very

great measure to his personal charm, Spohr's music would probably have established a domination all through England, as it only succeeded in doing in connection with some of the provincial festivals. Not as a famous violinist, nor as the composer of interesting chamber-music or orchestral works, but once more in connection with oratorios, did his name and music last in vogue long after his style had become antiquated. As a visitor to England, he preceded Mendelssohn by nine years, coming for the first time in 1820, while Mendelssohn did not arrive till 1829. As his last visit was paid to England in 1853, six years after Mendelssohn's early death, it might have been thought that his influence would have been wider and more lasting than it was; but there never actually was a date at which the budding composer of oratorio felt that his only chance of success lay in imitating Spohr, as had been the case in regard to Handel and Mendelssohn alike.

Like the ricochets of a stone along the surface of water, the periods of foreign dominations in music become shorter and shorter as time goes on, and the music of England takes a higher and

higher place. The third of such dominations has nowadays so completely passed away that many readers may be inclined to deny that it ever existed; yet we have only to glance at the average outpourings of the press in the direction of church music, to realise that there are still traces of its influence. The fame of Charles Gounod had been great and decisive ever since the success of his *Faust* had been accomplished by a sufficiently amusing trick; if no other of his many operas had taken anything like the same place, his various songs had been sung everywhere, and in a certain direction his sentimental muse found a profitable field in the semi-sacred song beloved of the average English audience. The success of these, and of the adaptations from his Masses which had found their way into the services of various London churches where the development of the Tractarian movement had thrown a glamour over everything that savoured of Rome, more than warranted the Birmingham Festival committee in commissioning an important work from his pen. *The Redemption*, brought out in 1882, was the result; and the fact that an enormous sum was known to have been paid for the copyright

naturally enhanced its value with the public at large, which for the next few years gave the work a popularity which even the dulness of its successor, *Mors et Vita* (1885), could not shake. As in the case of Handel and Mendelssohn, it became incumbent on the church composers who wished for success to write in the Gounod style; but it is to be noted as a most satisfactory feature of this last foreign domination that it existed a far shorter time than the others, for while *The Redemption* has ceased to have any active influence on the musical world, and its performances have become so rare that the work may properly be said to have been forgotten, *The Messiah* and *Elijah* have lost no particle of their hold over the nation, and though the evil influence of the tyranny they once exerted has long passed away, the works themselves are as much alive as ever. The next composition that made a *furore* at all comparable to that caused by the oratorios already mentioned was happily an English work, Sullivan's *Golden Legend*; and the fact that it was an English work is enough to show how things had changed in the course of the century. Its sensuous charm, which was at least equal to

that of Gounod's *Redemption*, was united with a distinction that comparatively few works possess. It had much to do with shortening the time of the Gounod domination, which, while it lasted, was a real danger to English art. The point at this moment is not, however, to discuss the relative merits of Sullivan's and Gounod's works, but to point out the change in the public point of view from the days in which no music could call forth real enthusiasm and send the public wild with excitement but what was foreign.

Some readers will be inclined to ask why the great, and in their view exaggerated, admiration of the music of Brahms, which has been one of the salient features of the latter part of the XIXth century, should not be included among these foreign dominations. In the first place, the great public has never lost its head over Brahms, and, as a consequence, it has never been imposed upon the young composers as a condition of success that they should write in Brahms' style. Many have shown the strong influence of Brahms upon their own productions; but the impulse to tread in his footsteps has

evidently come, not from without, but from within. The recent vogue of the Russian school —or, in other words, the immense amount of public favour bestowed on Tschaikowsky's "Pathetic" symphony—is hardly important or widespread enough to be called a domination, and the breadth of our modern musical culture is so infinitely greater than it was that even the judgment of the nation at large will, as time goes on, become saner and saner. Crazes we shall see, no doubt, and some of them are pretty sure to be over foreign compositions, for the nation has not executed such a complete *volte-face* as to make us, like the other European countries, intolerant of what comes from abroad; but as our own school gains in influence and in the appreciation of the public, we may be sure that these crazes will diminish.

I have omitted all mention of one of the most salient of modern British crazes, that which for many years together led the public to throng concerts devoted to selections from Wagner's dramatic works at a time when the dramatic works themselves presented on the stage failed to appeal very powerfully to the great public.

Whether on or off the stage, however, the Wagner domination never assumed the proportions of the others; and, to apply the test which has served in each of the former cases, it was at no time necessary for the composer courting success to adopt the manner of the creator of *Parsifal.* That his influence is upon every important operatic work of the later years of the XIXth century is certain, for neither Sullivan's *Ivanhoe* nor the operas of the young Italian school (to quote examples as far removed from Wagner's direct influence as from each other) would have been exactly what they are if Wagner had not lived; but of deliberate and slavish imitation of Wagner there is no trace in England. As a domination —that is, as a tyrannous influence, quite destructive of originality, and paralysing to national art, the Wagner domination is far more strongly felt in Germany than anywhere else; for men who might have found something of their own to say, and a vehicle of their own for its expression, have been compelled, on pain of forfeiting every chance of success, to curry favour with the public by copying Wagner's modes of conveying his ideas. In fact, taking into consideration the

different conditions of the two countries, the state of Germany in relation to the Wagner influence at present is closely parallel with the state of England at the darkest moment of the Handelian domination.

CHAPTER IV

CHURCH COMPOSERS AND GLEE WRITERS

THROUGHOUT the various periods of the foreign dominations considered in the last chapter one class of musicians remained faithful to the old traditions of English music, and one thin stream of creative power remained untainted by the influence from abroad until long after the renaissance had accomplished itself, when this stream, so long clear, became in turn affected by the turbid current from France, while the purified art of England flowed on in a broader channel than ever before. Until quite late in the XIXth century the music of the English Church was a thing by itself; the anthem was a form distinctively and characteristically English, for, even if some of its features were originally derived from the French form of motet, of which Lalande's are the most conspicuous examples, the composers of the

Restoration had so greatly modified these features that they may fairly claim to have invented a new pattern, or, rather, to have applied the principles of French music to a British form of far greater antiquity. It would, of course, be too much to say that all the English anthems produced in the early part of the XIXth century were free from foreign influences; but, though the prevailing fashions might be too strong for the average composer of sacred music, yet there was a purely English tradition in regard to church compositions which was maintained by a small number of men who, outside the sphere of sacred music, produced little or nothing. Side by side with these distinctly English anthems must be studied that part of the history of the glee—another exclusively English form—which affects the XIXth century. A great part of the course of development in the glee form had run in the XVIIIth century, and Jonathan Battishill, who died in 1801, was the only man of the older generation who survived into the new century. The glee reached its perfection in the hands of Samuel Webbe (1740–1816), whose best glees have never been surpassed in beauty or originality.

Such things as "Discord, dire Sister," and "When Winds breathe soft," are real classics in their kind, and the composer's various talents would have distinguished him in any walk of life. His chief contributions to sacred music are in his various settings of the Masses, for he belonged to the Roman Church, and many of his most beautiful compositions are in this form, differing not at all in design from the Masses of the continental composers of his day. One particular setting of "O salutaris Hostia" has won its way into the hearts of all lovers of church music, in its disguise as the hymn-tune called "Melcombe."

Before enumerating the later masters of the glee, it may not be out of place to discuss very shortly the essential characteristics of this form. Strictly speaking, it is for solo voices in combination, not for a chorus; an important feature of all genuine glees is that they are cast in separate movements, more or less strongly in contrast with one another; short solo passages for a single voice are present in many of the best specimens; and, finally, the general character of the music is far less elaborate than that of the madrigal, a far older and nobler form,

which has been revived in modern practice as the glee will probably never be again. The glee has in later days given place to the part-song, which differs only from a solo song in being vocally harmonised; here the top part nearly always has the melody while the others provide an accompaniment. The part-song is also "strophic" in design, that is, its verses are sung to the same music repeated over and over. The total absence of anything like severity in the glee made it especially popular with the people of the early XIXth century, but it was one of the principal reasons of its ultimate decay, and when the taste revived for massive effects and the deft interweaving of vocal parts, it was not the glee, but the madrigal, which came again into vogue. The glee-settings of Shakespeare's words by R. J. S. Stevens (1757–1837) and his spirited "From Oberon, in Fairyland," are among the classics of the form, and in some cases are so closely associated with the words that the music is missed if the play in which the words occur is performed without it. Sir John Stevenson (l. c. 1762–1833) was something besides a glee-writer, for he composed anthems, operas, and an

oratorio, besides putting the accompaniments to Moore's melodies. A little younger than Stevenson was the most popular, and in some ways the most distinguished of the later glee-writers, Dr. J. W. Callcott (1766–1821), the greater part of whose career lies outside the scope of this volume, but the popularity of whose glees throughout England remained in full force during much of the XIXth century. The story of his submitting a hundred compositions (glees) in a competition for the prizes offered by the Catch Club in 1787 is a typical instance of his wayward and original habits, which might have foreshadowed the eccentricity of his later years, and his final insanity. While "Father of Heroes" is perhaps his finest glee, "The Red-Cross Knight" was by far the most popular, and at one time it was sung in every family of any musical propensities. Another universal favourite was "Hail, smiling Morn," by Reginald Spofforth (1770–1827); and to continue the history of those who devoted themselves exclusively to glee-writing, William Horsley (1774–1858), who, after being assistant organist to Dr. Callcott, became his son-in-law, completes the list of those

who devoted themselves almost if not quite exclusively to the glee, or at least who made their name through this form alone. "By Celia's Arbour" is one of the best of his glees. A special interest attaches to Horsley, as it was through him that Mendelssohn became acquainted with this characteristic English composition, and the influence of the glee is plainly to be seen in many of the German master's part-songs. In the revival of the madrigal style, at first in a form less strict than that of the old madrigals, but still as distinct from the glee, William Beale (1784–1854) is famous as the author of "Awake, sweet Muse," and in Robert Lucas de Pearsall (1795–1856) the great line of madrigal composers seemed to be revived after a long interval. If his name is best known to the average Englishman through his "Hardy Norseman," or "Oh, who will o'er the Downs?" musicians have not forgotten the grandeur of effect in his choral ballad, "Sir Patrick Spens"; and such glorious compositions as "Great God of Love," "Lay a Garland," and "Light of my Soul" show that if English composers had had even the opportunities they now enjoy in the earlier part of

the century, the history of our national music for that time would be far more satisfactory than it now is.

One of the great drawbacks of modern life is the tendency to allow our lives to run in grooves, and it is a tendency to which musicians have always been especially prone. If men like the church composers, whose careers claim our attention in the next place, could have mixed more with the general world of music, or could have enjoyed ampler opportunities for perfecting themselves in such things as orchestration, they, or some of them, might have risen to an equal height with the great Germans of their day; and yet, inasmuch as this progress towards a wider ideal would have involved, almost as a certainty, their adoption of the styles of the foreign composers who happened to be in vogue, it is perhaps not wholly to be regretted that they stayed as it were in their organ-lofts, and preserved the pure traditions of the church music of their country. As it happens, the first of these composers requiring mention was also one who had a far wider outlook into the musical world than most of the others, and had even received a more or less cosmopolitan educa-

tion. Thomas Attwood (1765–1838) was sent by the Prince of Wales (George IV.) to Italy, and was abroad from 1783 to 1787, having the inestimable advantage of lessons from Mozart on his way home, during the two last years of his journey. He was given different appointments on his return, and became organist of St. Paul's in 1796; during the early years of the new century he was one of the so-called opera-writers whose duties consisted, as we have seen, in arranging the works of other composers to suit the English stage, and in providing incidental music for plays that have long been forgotten. His church music is of a facile, melodious type, with hardly a trace of the antique severity of the past English school; though the vogue of his anthems and services has passed, the best of them may occasionally be heard in the present day. Attwood is an especially interesting link between past and present; he wrote the coronation anthems for George IV. and William IV. and was engaged on one for Queen Victoria at the time of his death. A pupil of Mozart, he was one of the first to recognise the genius of Mendelssohn, and through his pupil, Goss, he handed down some of the Mozartian sweetness and melodic

flow to Sullivan. Another link with the past is Dr. William Crotch (1775–1847), of whose musical exploits as a child of two years old Burney wrote an account; he was an assistant organist at Cambridge when he was eleven, composed an oratorio at fourteen, and after a couple of years spent at Oxford in studies intended to prepare him for the Church, resumed the musical profession, and became organist of Christ Church. From 1797 he was professor of music in the university of Cambridge, and the lectures, the delivery of which is an essential duty of the position, were the first of many by which he did much in after years to cultivate the public taste. In 1812 came out his principal composition, the oratorio *Palestine*, one of the very few oratorios by an Englishman of the first half of the XIXth century which is still remembered, as its great beauties undoubtedly entitle it to be. In a good many of the choruses, Crotch, whether consciously or unconsciously, adopted the conventional means for obtaining the Handelian effects which were so much admired. As might be expected these are very poor as compared with the original, but the numbers for concerted solo voices, such as the exquisite quartet,

"Lo, star-led Chiefs," and the admirably planned sextet near the end, show great individuality, and have a strong personal style. Here, and in many of the solos, the themes are finely invented and carried out with masterly skill, and the only fault of the work, apart from its inevitable imitations of Handel, is to be found in the rather weak fugal numbers, and in the plenitude of small modulatory preludes which in the modern view would be wholly unnecessary. In 1822 Crotch was appointed the first principal of the newly founded Royal Academy of Music.

If the assertion be correct that the Wellesleys, the Wesleys, and the Ouseleys, come from one and the same original stock, we have an instance of family genius scarcely less remarkable than that of the Bachs in Germany. Be this as it may, the race of the Wesleys was no less rich in musicians than in divines, for the two sons and the grandson of Charles Wesley, one of the brothers who founded the sect of the Wesleyan Methodists, attained great distinction in music, and both Samuel and Samuel Sebastian Wesley must rank among the best English composers of their time. Samuel's elder brother, Charles (1757–1834), was

an infant prodigy, able at the age of two years and three-quarters to play a tune on the harpsichord with a correct bass; he became an excellent organist and harpsichord player, and his anthems, songs, and concertos show him to have possessed distinct ability. The more highly gifted brother, Samuel Wesley (1766–1837), has been already mentioned in connection with his amusing "Bach Letters"; but apart from his then peculiar opinions concerning the relative merits of the two great German masters of the XVIIIth century, which bore further fruit in an edition of the "Wohltemperirtes Clavier" in conjunction with C. E. Horn in 1810, he was a creative genius of no mean order, and his music reveals little or no taint of the prevailing fashions. He suffered during several years from an injury to his head caused by a street accident, to which the eccentricity for which he was remarkable throughout his life was in great measure due. The circumstance that his love of Gregorian music led him into very friendly relations with the Roman Church—he seems actually to have joined it about 1784 but to have returned in later life to the faith of his fathers—had the effect of reducing the

number of his compositions for the English Church as compared with those which he wrote for the Roman office, such as the four masses, and the numerous Latin motets or antiphons which contain his most remarkable work. Happily, in modern days, when breadth of artistic views is not as uncommon as it was formerly, his "In exitu Israel" has been performed at festivals, &c., not infrequently; but there is room for interesting revivals of the same kind, and the fact that only five out of thirty-four Latin works enumerated in Grove's dictionary were published, speaks eloquently for the absence of enterprise among English musical publishers. Beside these, the few anthems and services written for the Anglican Church are of minor importance, but the master's organ music, a good deal of which is accessible in modern collections, is so fine in conception and so dignified in style, that it is well worth the trouble of adapting it to the modern pedal organ, for in the composer's days the complete pedal-board of the present day which extends to the low C, was almost unknown in England. Wesley conducted the Birmingham Festival of 1811, and lived to hear Mendelssohn play the organ in September

1837, in Christ Church, Newgate Street, on which occasion he also played. It was the last musical act of his life, for he died in the following October.

His third son, Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810–76), was the offspring of an irregular connection; he inherited all the father's eccentricities, his ardent love of Bach, and a double portion of his musical genius. He was a chorister of the Chapel Royal in 1824, held various London appointments as organist from 1827, and in 1832 was appointed organist of Hereford Cathedral. It seems to have been on the occasion of the first service he played there, when the renovated organ was formally opened, that his masterly anthem, "The Wilderness," was first performed. In inspiration, in originality of ideas and treatment, and in massive beauty, it yields to none of his other works, and it is not surprising that at a Birmingham Festival some twenty years afterwards, he should have been represented by this work—the accompaniments being scored for orchestra—rather than by a new composition. In 1834 he conducted the Three-Choir Festival, and in the following year became organist of Exeter Cathe-

dral, a post he held for six years. A liberal offer was made by Dr. Hook, afterwards Dean of Chichester, to attract Wesley to the place of organist of Leeds Parish Church, and it was at Leeds that a great part of Wesley's finest church music was written. In 1849 he became organist of Winchester Cathedral, remaining there for fourteen years, until his last appointment, to the cathedral of Gloucester, in 1865. From 1850 he had been professor of the organ at the Royal Academy of Music. Twenty-three anthems, two full services, and other works of less importance, mostly intended for church use, represent the aggregate of Wesley's work; but it must be remembered that the anthems are compositions of considerable length, consisting, in some cases, of many movements which are capable of being performed as separate anthems, a form in which many such extracts have attained a wide and permanent popularity. For example, the splendid chorale-like "Thou Judge of Quick and Dead" is known to all lovers of beautiful church music, but it is only the minority who know that it is the close of an anthem, "Let us lift up our Hearts." The two anthems already mentioned, together with

"Ascribe unto the Lord," and "O Lord, Thou art my God" are generally considered the crowning works of his genius; and genius is the only term by which they can be rightly described. In spite of many harmonic progressions over which the wiseacres of the time shook their heads, the anthems are the legitimate descendants of the beautiful compositions of the older English school. It is through Wesley rather than through any other single composer that the pure tradition of English church music has descended. Mention should also be made of his famous five-part glee, "I wish to tune my quivering Lyre." Though the curious and rather truculent preface to his service in E (1845) betrays a warm admiration both for Spohr and Mendelssohn, there is no trace of servile copying of either composer to be found in his works, which possess a strong note of personal individuality, and a devotional character all their own. Through all the changes of fashion in Cathedral music, Wesley's anthems keep an honoured place, and their inherent vitality makes it certain that they will survive whatever may be the next form of foreign domination in church fashions, even as they have outlived the weak

adaptations from the French with which we were lately inundated.

Far less vigorous and original than Wesley, but equally loyal in his adherence to the pure tradition of English church music, was his senior by ten years, John Goss (1800–80), who received, through his master, Attwood, the gentle influences of the Mozartian melody. He succeeded Attwood as organist of St. Paul's in 1838, and kept the post until just after the thanksgiving for the recovery of the Prince of Wales in 1872, when failing health compelled him to resign. In that year he was knighted. The opening bars of his fine anthem written for the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, "If we believe that Jesus died," are carved upon the memorial tablet in the crypt of the cathedral, and it is rightly considered one of his best works; he also wrote a "Wilderness," which, with "O Saviour of the World" and "O taste and see," has endeared his name to many who do not greatly care for recondite or severe effects. Apart from sacred music, he made a few experiments in connection with the orchestra, two overtures being performed in 1827; his glee, "Ossian's Hymn to the Sun," is one of the finest

in existence, and one of the latest examples of the form before it lost favour with the best musicians.

Another pupil of Attwood, his godson, Thomas Attwood Walmisley (1814–56), was the son of a successful glee composer, T. F. Walmisley (1783-1866); it was by the circumstance of his going to Cambridge that he became almost exclusively a church composer, for in his eighteenth year, the unfortunate impresario, Monck Mason, approached him to write an English opera. He was organist of Trinity and St. John's Colleges in 1833, and in due course became university professor of music, succeeding Dr. J. Clarke-Whitfeld in 1836. Like the Wesleys, he was an ardent enthusiast for Bach, and in one of his professorial lectures prophesied the ultimate supremacy of Bach's music, at a time when such a prospect must have sounded incredible. His anthems and services, which were nearly all published after his death by his father, show beautiful feeling for legitimate church effect; he wrote excellently for the voice, and was a highly accomplished organist. One of the last successful imitations of an old madrigal, "Sweete Floweres," is among his best-known compositions.

It was perhaps inevitable that as the love of

good music increased throughout the nation, and as the conditions of artistic life widened year by year, those who from choice or necessity remained in exclusive devotion to the music of the church should lose touch with the outer world of music, and that their influence should become gradually less and less as compared with that of the men who were making their mark in any departments of music. It is as much by his influence on the younger race of organists as by the merits of his own compositions that Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley takes rank among the prominent figures of English church music. Born in 1825 and dying in 1889, the greater part of his life was passed during the period of the musical renaissance, yet he was probably not aware that a great artistic revolution was taking place. And although he was keenly alive to the doings of his contemporaries in detail, the fact that the nation was undergoing a change in regard to music would probably have moved him to incredulity. His wide culture, and the fact that his birth had entitled him to a more liberal education than most professional musicians received at that time, made him a most important influence on the men who passed through the admirable

establishment at Tenbury which he founded and superintended with parental love. The story of the inauguration of St. Michael's, Tenbury, "the first collegiate church founded since the Reformation," may be read at length in the Rev. F. W. Joyce's life of the composer, where a full catalogue of his music is given. This, with the exception of some exceedingly youthful compositions, dates from the period dealt with hereafter, for his famous oratorio, *St. Polycarp*, was written in 1854, the year in which the first stone of St. Michael's college was laid. In style, this work, as well as the rest of his music, belongs to an older time, and Ouseley's name, as the last of the definitely ecclesiastical composers who attained real eminence, is fitly commemorated here. He was exceedingly prolific, yet none of his compositions show signs of haste; the natural bent of his genius was declared in infancy, and in all that he wrote the hand of the skilful and learned musician is to be seen. He is a typical example of a church composer, for his style is thoroughly solid, reverent, and devotional; his workmanship shows no flaw, his invention no lack of freshness; yet it is impossible to imagine the circumstances in which his compositions, as

they are now, could be appreciated by the musical people of any European nation except England. That this of itself should convey some idea of depreciation is due to the fact that, even although English music has in the latter part of the XIXth century proved its right to exist and be studied with something like reverence, we have even now not so completely lost our dependence upon continental opinion that we can disregard it, as we are in the habit of doing in connection with the sister art of painting. As has already been pointed out, Ouseley's influence, whether as the founder of St. Michael's, the collector of its noble musical library, or the Oxford professor of music, was strong upon the younger men, and the general standard of culture among these has enormously improved as a direct consequence of his work.

It remains to speak of a few men of less important gifts than those already mentioned, men who remained on the whole true to the traditions of the national church and its music. Dr. Edward Hodges (1796–1867) spent the most important years of his life in America, where his influence as a church organist and composer was permanent. James Turle (1802–82) was assistant organist of

Westminster Abbey from 1819 to 1831, when he succeeded Greatorex in the post of organist, being succeeded by his own assistant, Dr. (now Sir Frederick) Bridge in 1875. His anthems and services are of no very great importance in comparison of his chants, many of which are to be found in every collection. The work of Dr. Henry John Gauntlett (1806–76) was a powerful influence in the crusade against the old-fashioned "G" organs which were formerly in use all over England, and in which the pedals went down only to G. He held various posts as organist, and wrote many hymn-tunes, &c., for the various collections of which he was editor. As a lecturer on music, and a somewhat severe critic, he was brought into contact with music at large outside the church; but his definite work as a musician was done in connection with the church alone. Three members of the Hopkins family held important posts as organists, and all composed church music of different kinds. The most eminent of the three was Edward John (1818–1901), for more than fifty years organist of the Temple Church, and a devoted adherent of the old school of sacred music; his brother John

(1822–1900) was for many years organist of Rochester Cathedral, and their cousin, John Larkin Hopkins (1820–73) was organist of Trinity College, Cambridge, from 1856. Dr. Edwin George Monk (1819–1900), organist of York Minster from 1858 to 1883, was associated with Ouseley in a famous psalter, as an examiner for musical degrees at Oxford, and in many other ways. His namesake, but not relative, Dr. William Henry Monk (1823–89), was professor of music in several colleges, and held various posts as organist; the most important work of his life was the musical editorship of "Hymns Ancient and Modern," a book which, with its wonderful financial success, has had a widespread influence wherever the English language is spoken. This book brought into world-wide celebrity the name of John Bacchus Dykes (1823–76), a clerical hymn-tune writer whose compositions have for many years enjoyed a surprising degree of popularity. Their studied avoidance of all that can be called severity, the sentimentality of the melodies, and the poverty of much of their harmony, are qualities that have appealed, and not in vain, to thousands of worshippers, and to those

among the clergy and laity whose leanings are towards the superficially emotional.

The later developments of the church musicians can be traced very shortly. Inasmuch as the progress of music through all classes has been greater than ever before, there is ever less and less inducement to the more accomplished of the younger men to remain so closely attached to the church that they have no ideas beyond sacred music. It is not to be denied that there are organists scattered over the cathedral cities and the large towns of England who practically ignore all music but their own anthem-lists; but their influence for good or evil is rapidly lessening, and by far the greater number, even among organists, contrive to find some outlet into the general stream of music. In one sense this emancipation has not been wholly for good; in the discovery that music exists outside the church, many of the younger men have found themselves unable to distinguish between good and bad, and a kind of eclecticism, in which music of every school is welcome, has come into a certain degree of fashion. At some important cathedrals, arrangements from Gounod's Masses are allowed to appear

in the company of the glorious compositions of the English golden age; and the choir which after hard training has to-day given an adequate performance of the pure harmonies of Palestrina, will be expected to-morrow to execute the chromatics of Spohr with equal skill. It were almost desirable that there were some authority or commission to regulate the type of music which should be considered admissible into the cathedral services.

If the musical influence of the English Church is less than it was, the cause is to be found in the wider artistic views of the average musician, and it is probably an inevitable result of the renaissance that for a time the noble traditions of the past should seem to suffer; as time goes on, and the influence of the renaissance is more strongly felt, the various foreign elements which have been introduced will gradually disappear and English church music again take its high place in the world.

CHAPTER V

EMINENT WRITERS BEFORE THE RENAISSANCE

After what has been said about the limitations which did so much to make English music unfruitful in the first half of the XIXth century, it would be convenient to present a picture of utter sterility in order to heighten the contrast with the work of the renaissance that came later. But, like most effective pictures of the kind, it would be untrue to history; there are a few names not definitely or exclusively connected either with operas or with church music which cannot be ignored or passed over lightly in any survey of the time before the renaissance began. To claim for such men as Bishop, Hatton, Loder, Smart, Macfarren, Pierson, or even Sterndale Bennett, a place beside Beethoven or Schubert would be palpably absurd; and even a comparison between any one of

these Englishmen and such masters of the romantic school as Weber, Mendelssohn, or Schumann would be completely out of place. Still, their works are important enough to demand rather a more detailed notice than has been given in the foregoing chapters, and if in some cases they failed to fulfil the promise of their natural genius, they achieved enough to show that in more favourable conditions they might have taken a high place in the roll of fame.

Concerning the multitude of so-called operas in which Sir Henry Bishop had a hand, nothing more need here be said save that they were the means by which his undoubted talents were most grievously wasted; not one of them was ever revived, or would bear revival; the low taste of the public was pandered to in each and all of them, and of the voluminous works and arrangements which he undertook nothing remains in any sort of vogue except certain scenas the melodies of which have become, as it were, national possessions. "Should he upbraid," "Bid me discourse," "Tell me, my Heart," and many others, have a distinctively English ring about their subjects, even if Bishop's Italian training under Bianchi is revealed in the

shape and manner of their ornamentation; and whether or no "Home, sweet Home," be a genuine Italian melody, it is undoubtedly to Bishop's *Clari* that we owe it, such as it is. His one attempt at writing in a more serious vein was an oratorio, *The Seventh Day*, performed by the Philharmonic Society with so little success that the composer's return to his lower and more profitable style is almost excusable. His last operatic composition, it is convenient to remember, was a masque, *The Fortunate Isles*, written in 1840 in honour of Queen Victoria's marriage.

In considering the career of the more prominent English writers of the first half of the century, it is necessary to judge of their work solely by quality; circumstances that have been already dwelt upon, such as the necessity for writing down to an imagined standard of public taste, compelled them in many instances to devote the bulk of their energies to the composition of trivial songs, but the few works in which they reached their highest level have remained and must remain among the lasting possessions of the country. As it was with Bishop, so with John Liptrot Hatton (1809–86), though perhaps to a less degree; so much of his

time was taken up with providing and arranging music for the theatre, and in acting as accompanist on various concert-tours, that the best of his qualities never came to the fore. His early fame as a pianist in Vienna, the production of his opera, *Pascal Bruno*, there in 1844, and the publication of his first set of songs soon after his return to England, seemed to start him on a career in which he might have won more than ephemeral fame. But although such songs as "To Anthea" and some few others prove him to have been within reach of greatness, he never attained it, and his attempts at more pretentious works, such as his *Hezekiah* (1877), really stand on a lower artistic level than his "Simon the Cellarer," which, after all, is a capital song of its kind.

Even less successful than Hatton, from a worldly point of view, was Edward James Loder (1813–1865), who, like Hatton, is remembered now by a few songs of great beauty. His operas, the best of which, *The Night Dancers*, was twice revived, have been already referred to; and, considering the conditions of their production (the composer entered into an arrangement with a publishing firm to supply them with one new composition

every week), a large proportion of his songs have real and lasting value. It is significant of the state of musical taste among us that the songs which mark his highest attainment should have appeared only in an album published by subscription for his benefit after he had become practically insane in 1856; in the collection of "Twelve Songs, six Sacred and six Secular," is contained one of the most beautiful compositions in existence, a setting of an English version of "Wohin?" which, as "The Brooklet," is worthy to stand beside Schubert's immortal lyric. It is quite certain that, had its author been a German, this and many other songs would to-day be known all the world over, instead of being quite inaccessible to the ordinary person who is not possessed of an album that is something of a rarity. There is a wealth of ideas, a skill in their treatment, and a degree of inspiration in Loder's work that make it all the more deeply to be regretted that the unmethodical habits which stood in his way in early life should have ended in actual cerebral disease.

Two almost exact contemporaries of Loder, Smart and Macfarren (both born 1813), suffered

from loss of sight; and it is significant that the latter, upon whom blindness came much earlier than upon the former, fought against his disabilities with far greater success. Henry Smart was an esteemed organist, holding several posts in London, ending with St. Pancras; if his opera *Bertha* (1855) has not many of the qualities that make for permanence, there are numbers in his cantatas, *The Bride of Dunkerron* (1864), *King René's Daughter*, and *The Fishermaidens* (1871) that have considerable charm and originality. In spite of his blindness, Sir George Alexander Macfarren (1813–87) contrived to get through a prodigious amount of work, and he may be considered as the typical English musician of the pre-renaissance period. Educated at the Royal Academy of Music, his successes were entirely confined to his native country. He wrote in every form of music, and was an important figure in the musical world even through the earlier years of the renaissance. His numerous operas and attempts at dramatic writing were pursued by ill-luck; one, a projected work on Caractacus, was refused a licence by the censor of plays on the ground of historical inaccuracy; another, *El Malechor*, was accepted by three

successive managers in 1839 and 1840, but each became bankrupt before it could be produced. His first success on the stage was with *The Devil's Opera* (1838), and among others must be mentioned *Don Quixote* (1846), *Charles II.* (1849), and *The Sleeper Awakened* (1850). One of the most successful, *Robin Hood*, came out in 1860; *Freya's Gift* was written in honour of the Prince of Wales's marriage in 1863, and soon afterwards two pieces for the German-Reed company saw the light; *She Stoops to Conquer* and *Helvellyn* date from 1864, but after that date Macfarren gave up the career of an opera-writer, excepting that in 1880 he wrote a work, *Kenilworth*, for Mme. Albani, which was never performed. The larger works of his later life were in the form of oratorios; the list is as follows: *St. John the Baptist* (Bristol, 1873); *The Resurrection* (Birmingham, 1876); *Joseph* (Leeds, 1877); and *King David* (Leeds, 1883). These and his cantatas, *May Day* (Bradford, 1857), *The Lady of the Lake* (Glasgow, 1877), and *St. George's Te Deum* (Crystal Palace, 1884), represent, if there were nothing more, an enormous labour in the mere process of dictating them to one of the devoted scribes who were willing and able to act

as musical amanuenses. Two symphonies, several overtures, three chamber works, anthems, songs, and glees appear in the list of Macfarren's works; and so many of those enumerated fall into the later period of half of the century that it might be thought they should be included among the works of the renaissance. They have, however, few or none of the qualities that distinguish the music of that time; with hardly an exception, they lack the spontaneity, the inspiration, and the modern style that mark the later composers. It is impossible to deny the presence, in most of Macfarren's music, of a certain dryness that seems inseparable from the music, or the musical performances, of those who lack the gift of sight: masterly as it is in construction, and often skilful in treatment, it seldom strikes the modern hearer as surprising that it should have suffered so much neglect of late years. In the oratorios there is often an unintentional *naïveté* in providing the words with musical setting that can hardly be noticed without a smile; and very odd consequences, due to the librettist rather than the composer, arise in some instances from the attempt to turn indirect into direct narration. The chorus, "We hate him, and

cannot speak peaceably unto him," in *Joseph*, is one of the least diverting examples of the latter peculiarity; and in *King David* the contralto solo describing David's fall, and the choral utterances connected with the revolt of Absalom, are difficult to hear with unmoved countenance. Perhaps Macfarren's name will be longer remembered as that of the author of the charming "Pack, clouds, away," a song with clarinet obbligato, than in connection with his more extensive compositions. His many lectures and contributions to musical literature did much to help forward the musical education of Englishmen, and his positions as principal of the Royal Academy of Music and professor in the University of Cambridge (from 1875) gave him great influence which was wisely used.

It is far from easy to account for the complete failure that befell Henry Hugo Pierson (1815–1873) in his efforts to obtain recognition from his countrymen. It is possible that his natural disposition may have had something to do with it, and more likely that a number of causes contributed to the result. In the first place, by birth and education he was markedly the superior of the average musician of his time; his father

was Dean Pearson of Salisbury, and he was educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge. It must be remembered that he was ten years older than Ouseley, the first member of the upper classes who gained success. After learning from Corfe, Walmisley, and Attwood, he studied his art in Germany, under Reissiger, Tomaschek, and Rinck, and this may have made him a little unpopular with his contemporaries; he held the Reid Professorship at Edinburgh for only one year, for his protest against the mismanagement of General Reid's bequest left him no alternative but to resign the office. He had definitely fixed his home in Germany, had brought out operatic works under the pseudonym of "Edgar Mansfeldt" (in deference to his father's objection to his signing dramatic compositions with his own name), and had enjoyed a certain measure of success on the Continent. Worst of all, he held opinions concerning Mendelssohn's music which would nowadays seem very harmless, and which, indeed, are not uncommon amongst modern musicians; but in the middle of the century such tenets meant the forfeiture of all chances of pecuniary success. In addition to this, his own

music was not of a kind that could be called in any sense "epoch-making"; had it been a little stronger than it was, the world at large might have accepted it, and Pierson might have been set up in definite opposition to Mendelssohn and his imitators. Unfortunately, there is no denying the weaknesses of even Pierson's best work, the oratorio *Jerusalem*, produced at the Norwich Festival of 1852. The beauties of structural design made no appeal to him; this is, perhaps, excusable when we consider the terrible degree of conventionality that was killing all original thought among English musicians; but, taken by itself, it is certainly a grave fault, and one that makes it impossible to read through one of Pierson's scores without weariness. The great innovators in form have, almost without exception, found the older forms unsatisfying; but they have had something else, some other plan or design to substitute for what they felt to be unfruitful; Pierson's themes, beautiful and individual in themselves, are seldom set in a way that puts them in the best light; and though the influence of the popular Spohr is to be seen here and there in the harmonic novelties that are

usually associated with his name, the composer's strong admiration is evidently rather for Schumann, and in 1852 Schumann's name was absolutely a dead letter in this country. An unworthy rivalry was started between the two new works brought out at the same festival, this, and Dr. Bexfield's *Israel Restored*, and the more influential critics espoused the cause of the latter, which was the composition of a Norwich musician. The course of time has adjusted the relations between the two more fairly, for while Bexfield is completely forgotten, Pierson is remembered by a student here and there, and, if his greater works are laid aside, his glee, "Ye Mariners of England," is still occasionally sung. It is only fair to add that the state in which *Jerusalem* is now extant differs considerably from the original edition of the work, as can readily be judged by comparing Macfarren's interesting criticism in the *Musical World* for September 1, 1852, with the second edition of the score. Among other things, the introduction of the trumpery hymn-tune "Helmsley" as the groundwork of a number in the latter part of the work has been excised, and the numbering of the sections shows that the

work was originally much longer than at present. For the credit of English music it is more encouraging to turn to Pierson's reputation in Germany, where his Incidental Music to *Faust* enjoyed a long popularity. An unfinished oratorio, *Hezekiah*, was given at Norwich in 1869, but fared no better than *Jerusalem*, although Titiens made a great effect in one of the solos; yet the mere fact that Pierson's name was included a third time (a selection from the *Faust* music was given at the Festival of 1857) shows that his music must have made an impression on a section of the Norwich public. Perhaps Pierson is at his best in songs, many of which have an almost Schubertian expressiveness; here, where he was not confronted with rules of form with which he could not comply, his genius found clear expression, and such things as his "Claribel," "Thekla's Lament," and "The White Owl" should not have been forgotten. Pierson died in Leipzig and was buried at Sonning, where his brother, Canon Pearson, was rector.

A stronger contrast than that which exists between the dispositions, ideals, circumstances, reputations and artistic positions of Pierson and

William Sterndale Bennett (1816–75) can hardly be imagined. Almost the only failure that Bennett ever had to experience was the loss of the Reid Professorship, to which Pierson was elected. Bennett's nature was perhaps as sensitive as Pierson's, but he yielded more readily to circumstances; as beauty, or at least symmetry, of form and design had special attractions for him, he found no difficulty in falling in with the Mendelssohn worship of the time, and his own style, which had been developed under Cipriani Potter and Crotch at the Royal Academy of Music, long before he had the opportunity of meeting Mendelssohn or knowing much about his music, was so remarkably similar to Mendelssohn's that he has often been accused of imitating him too closely, or even of having been his pupil. Almost the only thing he had in common with Pierson was that Schumann wrote laudatory reviews of the works of both composers; but Schumann's music had little or no appeal for Bennett, and probably the dedication of the *Etudes Symphoniques* seemed a good deal less valuable to the young Englishman than it would seem to any of his countrymen in the present day. The theme of

the *finale* of that work, as all the world knows, is a well-turned compliment to Bennett's nation ; it appears in Marschner's *Templer und Jüdin*, to the words "Du stolzes England, freue dich." Bennett's works, like his nature, had the qualities which make most surely for success, and he was not only one of the most popular men of his time, but was held in higher esteem among his countrymen than any musician since Purcell. The main events of his life may be easily summarised, for his career was singularly uneventful. Born at Sheffield, he was sent as a baby to his grandfather, a lay clerk of King's, St. John's and Trinity College choirs, was a choir-boy at King's from 1824, and entered the Royal Academy in 1826. He was organist of Wandsworth Church in 1834, in which year he played the viola at the Handel Festival held in Westminster Abbey. The overture *Parisina* was written as early as 1835, and the charming *Naiads* overture in 1836, in which year, by the liberality of the firm of Broadwoods, he was enabled to go to Leipzig, apparently for the purpose of intercourse with Mendelssohn and other musicians rather than for actual musical study. In 1849 the foundation of

the Bach Society occupied much of his attention, and he conducted the first English performance of the *Matthew Passion Music* in 1854. He was invited to conduct the Gewandhaus concerts at Leipzig in 1853, but his English engagements prevented his going there In 1856 he became University Professor at Cambridge, and his influence on the music of the university was of the greatest importance; he did much to inaugurate the changes in the conditions of the musical degrees which have made that degree a really valuable honour. In 1858 his elegant and charming *May Queen* was produced at the Leeds Festival, in 1862 he set the *Exhibition Ode* of Tennyson to music of far more than ephemeral value, and set Kingsley's *Installation Ode* for Cambridge. His best orchestral work, the overture *Paradise and the Peri*, dates from the same year, and the G minor Symphony from 1864, while his oratorio, *The Woman of Samaria*, was brought out at the Birmingham Festival of 1867. He was elected principal of the Royal Academy of Music in 1866, and it is hardly to be wondered at that his work as a composer fell off in quantity after that appointment. He was knighted in 1871,

and died 1875, being buried in Westminster Abbey. Although a good many of his more important compositions fall within the second half of the century, it would not be right to class him with the writers of the English renaissance; the old paths were good enough for him, and he trod them with no uncertain step. His music was the embodiment of musical good manners; refined to the last degree, it often strikes the hearer as being a little wanting in emotional force, for in modern times such self-restraint as his is not too common either in life or art. Many as are the beauties of his oratorio, one cannot help feeling that his muse was rather overweighted with the subject, and that he finds his happiest fields in the overtures, the pianoforte works, or the *May Queen*, which has held a high place among English compositions in spite of its terribly weak libretto. His "chamber trio" in A is a masterpiece in its own way, essentially chamber music, the effect of which is greatly lost in the concert-room. His pianoforte technique is, like his music, essentially conservative, and it is not at all easy for executants brought up on Liszt and the moderns; for

those who can perform it with the necessary ease and certainty it is entirely delightful. One mannerism he possessed in common with Mendelssohn, who never seemed to be aware that a commonplace does not become a brilliant witticism by the simple expedient of repeating it. Whether Bennett got the habit from Mendelssohn or not cannot be known, but it is certain that he does indulge himself in a trick of textual repetition of phrases to an extent that is almost irritating when once it is noticed. His songs, such as "May-dew," "Dawn, gentle flower," and "Maiden mine," have retained their popularity through all the changes of style that have passed over our national music since they were written. Of the composers before the renaissance, there can be no question that Sterndale Bennett is, and deserves to be, the most famous.

If one man had only been spared to complete the natural number of his days, the course of the renaissance might have been altogether different, or at least it might well have begun a good many years before it actually did begin. Francis Edward Bache (1833–58) saw, more clearly than any of his contemporaries, the direction in which musical

progress might most profitably tend. In the interesting memoir of him and his brother Walter, written by Miss Constance Bache, and published in 1901 under the title of "Brother Musicians," there is a very surprising letter to a Birmingham journal on the subject of founding a permanent local orchestra. That the editor found it inconvenient to print the letter will readily be guessed by any one who realises the condition of things before the renaissance; and though it had never been printed before the publication of the memoir, the man who had the foresight, the wisdom and the calm temperate way of stating his case, which appear in the letter, must have had a great effect on the course of the movement which he did not live to see begun. His own compositions are mostly in the department of songs and pianoforte pieces; but his trio, published posthumously, retained its hold upon the musical public for many years after his death, and is even now occasionally heard. His ideas are always fresh, owing nothing to the various foreign influences to which he was subjected, and his treatment, even though it may strike some modern hearers as a little timid, is uniformly musicianly.

BOOK II

THE RENAISSANCE

(1851–1900)

CHAPTER VI

THE TRANSITION

A SINGLE introduction is held by some readers as a tiresome and useless addition to a book; but it is unpardonable to offer a second half-way through. The only plea that can be advanced in extenuation of such a practice is that it is good, when we reach the middle point of our journey, to look before us and behind, to review the way by which we have come, and survey that part which lies before us. Certain changes in the face of the country through which we travel, and many differences of aspect, are to be noticed, and the great change that has passed over music in England can be fully appreciated in no other way than by comparing the past with the present.

I do not wish to force historical facts to suit convenient dates, but, even apart from a special reason for ascribing the first dawn of the renais-

sance to the year of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the mid-century makes the best halting-place for our survey. Music, indeed, held a remarkably humble place in the scheme of the 1851 Exhibition. There were, it is true, a large number of pianos exhibited, the various inventions in connection with which raised a furious strife between English and foreign manufacturers; five organs were erected in the building, and it would appear that they all played simultaneously when the Queen and the royal procession walked through the Crystal Palace. The rest of the music seems to have consisted simply of "God save the Queen" and a performance of the "Hallelujah" chorus, which is recorded to have impressed a Chinese mandarin so deeply that, "unable any longer to control his feelings, he made his way through foreign diplomatists, ministers of state, and the distinguished circle with which Court etiquette had surrounded the throne, and, advancing alone to her Majesty, saluted her by a grand salaam, which she most graciously acknowledged."

While English composers of eminence had succeeded one another in fairly close order during

the earlier years of the century, the twenty-six years between the birth of Bennett and that of Sullivan saw the advent of no eminent composers other than a few of those who were exclusively devoted to the service of the Church, with the single exception of F. Edward Bache (1833–58), whose early promise was so soon cut off that his career could have no lasting influence on the progress of art. The last of the older school, the men whose works were referred to in the preceding chapter, were working far past the middle of the century, but in most cases their best work falls in the earlier half, or within a few years of the middle. The change in general conditions was naturally a gradual one; it was not in 1851, nor even in any single decade, that it was possible to say, "Here the renaissance of music began"; but, putting together all the signs of change, it was somewhere about the middle of the century that the dawning of the new day of English music took place. By a mere coincidence, too, the births of those whom I venture to call the Masters of the Renaissance happened very near the beginning of the fifties.

It is not the advent of remarkable individuals

that makes a renaissance so much as the general condition of the time; as we have seen in the case of a good many of the earlier composers, their natural gifts were stunted, their characters warped, or their opportunities for development minimised, by the inartistic atmosphere in which they were compelled to live. The chief causes of this want of favourable surroundings for music have been referred to already, and it is not my contention that all the masters of the renaissance had greater natural gifts than those who went before them, but that they grew up in conditions far more favourable to their musical well-being. It is among the people at large that we must look for the manifestation of the change. Though, as I have said, there is no actual point of time at which we can say, "Before this year the nation was unmusical, after it musical," it is possible to realise that no less important a transformation of national character has taken place, though it has taken a long time to accomplish. In every class of society the standpoint of the average person in regard to music is seen to be completely different from what it used to be. There may remain country-houses where, after dinner, the butler

waits to bring what is still possibly called the "tea-equipage" into the drawing-room until the first notes of the piano are heard, as a signal that the clatter of teacups and loud and general conversation are to accompany the performance of the daughters of the house. But, if there are any such remote establishments in the depths of the country, they must be very few indeed; and even in these, the sons of the family are pretty sure to be as little ashamed of their musical preferences as their sisters are. Formerly the average English parent considered it almost an unmentionable disgrace that a taste for music should manifest itself in the case of the male children; the daughter who had a shapely arm was obliged to play the harp as a matter of course, and any two sisters nearly of an age were equally bound to display their charms in pianoforte duets; but a son who should take to singing or to "wasting his time" at the piano was held to be a sort of disgrace to any respectable family, and to require some grave treatment, medical or other, for his cure. At one time there was a fashion for the average young man to be able to play the flute a little; but even then it was not supposed to be

the correct thing for him to attain any proficiency, or to do more than tootle a mild accompaniment to his sister's piano-playing. This inversion of our present use of the word "accompaniment," by the way, was usual through all the earlier part of the century; it will be familiar to readers of Miss Austen, and even later novelists. In those times the word "music" was understood to be confined to instrumental music; it was contrasted with "singing," and, I believe, traces of this use of the word are still occasionally to be found among the poor. Both "music" and "singing" were thought by many people to be dangerous for the young, who might, by means of this art, be led into undesirable company. Members of the aristocracy gave employment and encouragement to musicians who came from abroad, and to no others; the life of the average English professional musician was one of the narrowest and most limited that could be conceived. The people at large had little or no opportunity for hearing any but the most miserable performances of organ-grinders and German bands. Promenade concerts existed, indeed, as the performances in the gardens of Vauxhall or Ranelagh

had done before them, but there was an atmosphere of something like dissipation about them that prevented their having any artistic influence, even if their programmes had been more interesting than they were. The Promenade Concert of the thirties and forties must have been as little like the really artistic performances of the present day, with their thousands of eager, silent listeners, as the "penny gaff" of the East End was like the modern music-hall. While the great operatic singers were admired by all classes who could afford to pay for hearing them, the average gentleman of the period looked upon music in general with a very doubtful eye; his favourite phrase, "Musicians' heads were as empty as their fiddles," has nowadays entirely lost whatever point it may ever have possessed, and the pleasant old term of contempt, "fiddlers," for all classes of musicians, is now heard no more except as applied to actual violinists. The average man no longer takes every opportunity of telling those whom he meets that he does not know one tune from another; if he really cannot distinguish musical sounds, he sees in that deficiency nothing to be proud of, and keeps rather quiet about it in the

present day. In judging the amount of musical instinct or taste spread through the country, we must be careful not to mistake an ignorance of the technical terms of music for an absence of musical feeling or perceptions. In Germany of the present day, where every man and woman is supposed to be as familiar with musical terminology as English men and women are with the main facts of general history, or the positions of the chief capitals of Europe on the map, one may find quite as much actual ignorance of the essential facts of music as in England, where the people at large are now much more ready than they were to take up the point of a musical joke, for example, or to discriminate between good and bad performances. Many an Englishman, not professedly even fond of music, will wince at a performer's playing or singing out of tune, when the average German will profess himself wholly delighted with the same thing. In the later years of the century every one must have noticed the great increase in children's musical faculty as compared with what there was formerly. In every class of life children are born who manifest at a very early age powers that would have seemed phenomenal fifty years ago;

this does not prove, of course, that their adult powers are necessarily greater than the average, or that the accounts given of them have not been exaggerated; but it does prove that parents are now alive to the importance of musical instinct and taste, and that the normal English parent sees no more objection to the talent for music being cultivated than if a taste for another art, or for science, had been as definitely shown. Students of heredity will probably look upon this abundance of musical prodigies as a sign of the parents' tastes, and very often it does happen that the children of enthusiastic amateurs turn out to be musicians from their cradles. This side of the subject lies beyond the historian's scope, but it may be pointed to as one of many signs that, as a nation, England has become far more musical than she was in the earlier part of the XIXth century. Music, so long ignored by the authorities of the country, who pride themselves on their practical natures, has received some encouragement from quarters where, a few years ago, such encouragement would have been quite unexpected. That the London County Council, for example, should spend a large sum annually on giving the frequenters of the

parks the opportunity of hearing good music would have seemed incredible not long since; and if the ideal of a National Opera is still unrealised, the mere fact that the plan was discussed as one within the region of practical politics shows that we have made rapid strides in the right direction. It would hardly be safe to point to the existence of our many concert-rooms in the present day as an actual evidence of our advancement; but when we consider that in the middle of the century there were only Exeter Hall and the Hanover Square Rooms available for those who wished to give public concerts, we can hardly ascribe the present enormous number of rooms used regularly for concerts to the mere numerical increase in the population of London, or to the spirit of emulation among pianoforte-makers, which forces every firm that would succeed to build a concert-hall on its premises. A more trustworthy sign of the extent to which an interest in music has spread, to put it on no higher ground, is to be found in the numerous music-schools that have sprung up in the latter years of the century. Besides the great chartered schools, the influence of which must be spoken of in a later chapter, the mere fact that it has seemed

worth while for so many private individuals to start music-schools shows that there must have been a widespread demand for musical training by other means than private lessons. It is not to the point that many of the less famous schools are of a kind that it is impossible to approve, attracting pupils by means of worthless "degrees," the permission to put certain letters after their names, or similar means; the fact that they exist and flourish to a greater or less extent is a proof of how wide an interest is taken in music among the people at large. The latter part of this book is to deal with the higher aspects of modern English music; but national progress in artistic taste may be almost as accurately gauged by comparing the heights of the lower levels before and after the renaissance. The average "ballad" of the present day is vulgar enough in all conscience, but it is produced by people who for the most part know the grammar of music, and are capable of better things than the stringing together of a few inconsequent chords in the way that was in favour in the earlier years. In the average drawing-room again, the artless ditties of "Claribel" have given place to such lyrics as those of Maude White, whose

music would have been infallibly condemned in the forties or fifties as far over the heads of any audience of fashionable people.

If we turn from the average amateur lover of music to those whose lives are given up to the art, whether or not they are numbered among the professionals, we shall be able to trace a wonderful change in many ways. The typical lady of the past generation, whose habit it was to profess herself "passionately fond of music" just before she settled herself close to the piano with a bosom friend, with the object of enjoying a long and confidential conversation "under cover of the music," is practically extinct, like her male counterpart, the country gentleman who used to declare that he did not know "God save the Queen" from any other tune. These good people have not changed more notably than those who are really devoted to music; the philandering amateur of the past has a very few modern successors, who may be seen during the opera season, and then alone; but their attention is only devoted to music for a very small part of the year, and as it is confined to operatic circles, it does not really count at all. On the one hand, there are hundreds of amateurs

who have equipped themselves at every point of execution in their own branch of the art, and who have studied music with as much application and success as any professor; yet they have not lost touch with the surroundings of ordinary life, and it is this combination of people of the world with intelligent lovers of music that has been and still is one of the most hopeful signs of the musical regeneration of the country. The type of professional musician whose ideas are entirely confined to his instrument or voice, who cannot enter into any general conversation, who is without external interests of any kind, is the type that has done most harm to artistic progress; and if it is not extinct, there can be no doubt that the class is a good deal smaller than it used to be in relation to the whole profession, and that there is an ever-increasing number of those who, although they are musicians, are intelligent, cultivated people at the same time. The frequency with which ladies and gentlemen in the truest sense, well born, well bred, educated and refined, have entered the ranks of the profession in the latter part of the XIXth century is not only eloquent concerning the important place now held by music, but has been

of the greatest service in raising the general tone of the profession itself. But, apart from this, the general knowledge of music has grown to an extraordinary extent among the musicians; while formerly the German musicians were the only ones who seemed to have any true grasp of their art as a whole, nowadays Englishmen and Englishwomen are not uncommonly found who realise the extent of music, who have at least a working outline of musical history in their heads, and who grasp the importance of branches of executive music outside their own.

Beside the improvement in the general attitude of the public towards the art, and the great advance in knowledge and practice among those who are engaged in music, it is also to be noticed that a far greater degree of interest is taken now, than was formerly the case, in the scientific side of music. Not only a few pedants or bookworms outside the active life of the profession, but the average professional or amateur musicians of the day find it desirable to know at least something of the scientific aspect of their own branch of music. Such a remark could not be made in the present

day as that which an eminent professor before the renaissance is reported to have made, that the study of acoustics was "as little use to practical musicians as it would be for pianists to study the anatomy of the elephant because the piano-keys were made of ivory." The study of old music has been greatly systematised; instead of mere guess-work concerning the manner of its performance, or the meaning of the old treatises on the subject, we now are enabled to be sure that certain characteristics were present, and that the original conditions of the performances were of such and such a kind; the restoration to practical use of many of the old instruments, such as the viola d'amore, the viola da gamba, the lute, the harpsichord, the clavichord, and many others, has made it possible to revive the conditions of the old performances. In the work of re-editing new and authoritative editions of the older classics, much has been done in England, and such a publication as the edition of the Purcell Society can claim a place beside any Continental edition of the kind. In musical literature, since the histories of Burney and Hawkins, there was extremely little of value, until Sir George Grove undertook the publication of the

"Dictionary of Music and Musicians" which bears his name, and which appeared between the years 1878 and 1889. The issue of this monumental work gave a new impetus to musical literature in England, and from time to time there have been many English contributions to this branch of the art which have put the study of music on a far firmer basis than before.

The agencies through which this knowledge was spread must be dealt with in the next chapter. It is enough to point out here that the English atmosphere has become favourable instead of unfavourable to musical development; there is no longer any inherent improbability that composers should be born, should be thoroughly educated in their art, and should ultimately attain success, in England; and we are next to consider what has already been wrought by the masters of the renaissance, whose work has been fostered and encouraged by the various musical institutions to be described later. In dealing with the younger generation of composers, it will be possible to enumerate only the most important names, those who have already made some mark; and, finally, it will be necessary

to discuss the outlook for the future, and to point out a few of the hindrances to the art which have sprung up as an inevitable consequence of the progress that has already been made.

CHAPTER VII

THE INSTITUTIONS

It would be absurd to contest that any renaissance is the result of the foundation of institutions, however important, influential or successful. The soil in which a seed is planted is not the parent of what springs from it, though without a congenial soil no seed can possibly come to perfection. By "institutions" I do not mean exclusively, or even mainly, music-schools, but rather all undertakings which give opportunities for young musicians to educate themselves by hearing music, all concert-enterprises founded with a purely artistic purpose, and in general everything which provides a favourable atmosphere for the progress of the art. In one sense, of course, schools of artists, whether creative or executive, whether in painting or music, do proceed from certain seats of learning, whether founded, like the Royal

Academy of Arts or that of Music, or unestablished, like the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the Lake School of Poetry, or the modest little association which, under the name of "The Working Men's Society," did so much in a private way to prepare the ground for the vogue of the modern developments of music and to make straight the path for the music of Wagner and Liszt. Schools may foster, they cannot beget; and they themselves are the result rather than the cause of artistic life. Whether founded and endowed, or not, all such educational institutions must have proceeded in the first instance from a conviction that opportunities were lacking to those who love music; and in our rapid survey of the various undertakings in the cause of music which have been started in the latter half of the XIXth century we shall see that, as time went on, a general broadening of artistic views is to be noticed, and that the artistic atmosphere became ever more and more vivifying. If we could transplant ourselves to the middle of the XIXth century, we should, I think, be amazed to see how few and poor were the opportunities given to the public for becoming acquainted with music in any

shape. The Philharmonic Society, existing rather for the delectation of its own professional members than for the public, and contented with music of the ultra-conservative type, was the only permanent home of orchestral music, the only institution in which a symphony could be heard; at the Sacred Harmonic Society's concerts only Handel and the most conventional choral works of other composers, could obtain a hearing; and the Musical Union, with all its interest and novelty of its programmes, was so closely hedged about with social restrictions as to be of very little artistic use to the public. The tradition of the Ancient Concerts hung over these chamber concerts, just as the original Philharmonic Society has never quite cleared itself from its original limitations, but has always regarded the art of music from the professional, or rather, professionalistic, point of view. In a rather modest way, the Society of British Musicians, which existed from 1834 to 1865, did what it could to encourage native art, but it had to give way to public prejudice against the work of English composers, and after various attempts to make its programmes of wider interest it had to be disbanded. Some schemes, such as that of the

National Concerts, seem hardly to have got beyond the prospectus stage; the Wednesday Concerts, established in 1848 for the purpose of providing the public at large with music at a cheap rate, hardly lasted beyond the middle of the century, and the Amateur Musical Society, founded in 1847 with Henry Leslie as its conductor, had not much influence on the public at large. In 1850 St. Martin's Hall was opened, and there John Hullah's educational work was carried on until the destruction of the building by fire in 1860. In 1852 various enterprises were started, it would seem, with the definite idea of avoiding the weak points in the existing institutions. The New Philharmonic Society set out under the conductorship of Berlioz, with a band led by Sivori, and a repertory of music formed on a far wider basis than that of the original Philharmonic; Spohr and Lindpaintner were conductors in subsequent seasons, but after 1858 Dr. Henry Wylde, the founder of the society, assumed the sole responsibility till 1879, when he retired in favour of Mr. Wilhelm Ganz. There is no doubt that many interesting works were first brought out at these concerts, and that they exercised for a considerable

time a healthful influence on the art. The Harmonic Union, which only lasted from 1852 to 1854, under Benedict's conductorship, was founded with the idea of giving the less hackneyed choral works, and in particular music by living composers. It was in the year of its decease that the Bach Society, founded in 1849 by Sterndale Bennett, bore its finest fruit in the first performance of the *St. Matthew Passion* in England. In the department of chamber music, the year 1852 saw the foundation of the Quartet Association, in which Sainton, Cooper, Hill, and Piatti were the strings, and such eminent pianists as Bennett, Wilhelmina Clauss, Mlle. Pleyel, Arabella Goddard, Pauer and Hallé were the pianists. The programmes were admirably chosen, but the enterprise ended in its third year. These three societies, if they proved nothing else, showed that beneath the surface, as it were, there was a feeling that more opportunities of hearing good music were wanted ; and if the support was not adequate in several cases, there was no doubt that the inception of these institutions was to be regarded as the stirrings of the new life that was finally to issue in the renaissance itself. Manchester was

before London in musical progress, for the Gentlemen's Concerts, the flourishing society founded in 1749, if not earlier, were conducted by Hallé from the year 1850.

In none of these quarters, nor, at first, in the provincial festivals, was the renaissance allowed to develop itself. As far as its source can be ascribed to any one spot, that honour must be assigned to the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. Soon after the materials of the Great Exhibition of 1851 were removed from Hyde Park and set up at Sydenham, a wind band was organised under the conductorship of a certain Schallehn, who in 1854 engaged a young German bandmaster, August Manns, as his sub-conductor; as Schallehn took the credit of a piece of work done by his subordinate, Manns resigned the position after a few months, but was appointed to succeed Schallehn in October 1855. At that time the concerts were held in the central transept of the Palace, and the work of transforming the wind band into a full orchestra was not accomplished all at once; it was not, in fact, until 1860 that the present concert-room was permanently fitted up as a room for music and covered in from the rest of the building. What

may be called the distinctive work of the Crystal Palace is by no means exclusively to be ascribed to Manns. Without the intelligence, the enthusiasm, and the influence of Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Grove, the secretary of the Palace for many years, Manns would have found his task almost impossible to perform. As it was, he was given almost a free hand in the selection of the programmes, and he and Grove threw themselves heart and soul into the work of making known the best music, and adhering to their policy, whether public support was or was not forthcoming. In this way, not merely the more hackneyed of the classical symphonies, but the works of the classical masters as a whole, were familiarised to those who frequented the Saturday Concerts; and, in particular, the greatest works of Schubert and Schumann became for many years a speciality of the place. Both masters were so strangely neglected in the concerts given in London proper, that it was not long before a public was formed of music-lovers who were wont to perform the railway journey to Sydenham every Saturday in order to enjoy the opportunity of becoming really acquainted with the classics of music in the widest sense. It was

at these concerts that the first streak of the dawn of the renaissance appeared. In April 1862 the music to *The Tempest*, newly written by a young Leipzig student, Arthur Sullivan, made so great an impression that it was repeated at the following concert. Since then, every composer of note has been fully represented at the Crystal Palace, but for many years any composition by an Englishman that was worthy of the honour was certain to be included in the programmes, and it would not be too much to say that there is none of the eminent English musicians of the present day who does not owe to Sydenham, and the encouragement of Manns, his first opportunity of showing the public what he could do. The fact that, as time went on, the performances lost a good deal of their former spirit, and that other attractions in London itself diminished the size of the audiences, while the directors of the Palace, with a regrettable pusillanimity, reduced the number of concerts, the dimensions of the band, and the interest of the programmes, must not lead us to forget what the world of English music owes to the institution, to Manns and to Sir George Grove. The foundation of Leslie's Choir was another important event

of 1855, and for many years that body maintained a high standard of excellence in choral music. The Vocal Association, started in the next year, had less influence on the art, but both these societies did much to promote the artistic welfare of the average amateur, whose participation in choral music was formerly not usual. A new impetus was given to music in Manchester by the foundation of Hallé's Concerts there in 1857, and in 1858 a very interesting experiment was tried in London in the Musical Society of London, a body founded by a number of members of the New Philharmonic Society who disapproved of its constitution. Charles Kensington Salaman (1814–1901) was the prime mover in the scheme, which had for its object the promotion of intercourse between all classes of cultivated musicians. As one of its rules was that all its members were expected to give evidence of proficiency in some branch of music, it could not receive a very large support; but the scope of its proposed work, including concerts of every kind, lectures, conversaziones, and the publication of occasional papers, shows that, in the opinion of some of its promoters, the time was

ripe for such a society. It ceased to exist in 1867.

In almost every case where a new hall has been built, a set of concerts primarily connected with that hall has been started, and in this way some of the most important and permanent undertakings have had their rise. As the Crystal Palace Concerts were a direct consequence of the transference of the Exhibition building to Sydenham, so the opening of St. James's Hall was followed in 1859 by the rise of the Popular Concerts, which for forty years had a great influence on the musical education of the public. At first the Saturday concerts, which are now the more important of the two, were merely public rehearsals for the Monday evening concerts; but, through the greater part of the life of the undertaking, the two have gone on side by side, with different programmes. At first the name "Popular" was not as much of a misnomer as has been imagined, for the kind of music was not restricted to the classics, but ballads were admitted: in spite of the low prices charged for admission in comparison with the usual rates of concert-tickets at the time, the scheme did not succeed, but the experiment was tried of making

the concerts more purely classical, and success was not long in following the change. From that time onwards, the policy of the undertaking has been to bring before the public the whole repertory of classical chamber music and only occasionally to include works by English composers, or by those whose music has not been generally accepted as classical. The only important exceptions were in favour of the works of Schumann at a time when his music was held to be revolutionary, and that of Brahms in the later years. For the popularity of both composers, and for the wide understanding of Beethoven's chamber compositions which now prevails in our midst, the "Pops" are chiefly responsible; and there is no doubt that if the concerts return to something like their former state in regard to programmes and performances, they will regain the high position which they just now (1901) seem to have forfeited by the efforts to catch the favour of that fickle public which likes to be astonished rather than instructed. But when we consider that artists like Joachim, Piatti, Mme. Schumann, Ludwig Straus, Hallé, and a host of distinguished soloists of all kinds, appeared constantly throughout the earlier years of the

undertaking, and that first-rate performances of the classical masterpieces were always to be heard, it is evident that the work of these concerts was of the greatest possible use in giving the public generally some notion of the extent of the classical repertory, and some idea of what may be called historical perspective. This part of the work was undoubtedly promoted by the analytical notes which, first started by John Ella at his Musical Union Concerts, were copied in more thorough-going analyses at the Crystal Palace, in connection with which Sir George Grove's name must be mentioned once more, and by the notes which did so much to instruct the earlier frequenters of the Popular Concerts.

The pianoforte recitals which Hallé had given since the year 1850 in his own house became public in 1861, and through his agency the literature of the pianoforte was introduced to the amateurs of London and Manchester in a thoroughly systematic way. Besides the whole of the sonatas of Beethoven, Hallé gave his audiences a feast of the works of all the great piano composers. The piano recital of those days was a much more serious as well as a much more unusual affair

than it is nowadays, when it is used rather as a vehicle for individual display than for the study of the music performed. In 1861 it was a novelty for any single artist to carry on a concert alone; and the Hallé recitals, which at first may have attracted some of the less earnest musicians on that account, soon became a most important factor in public education.

The orchestral concerts started at Newcastle by William Rea in 1867, and carried on, in spite of pecuniary loss, for nine years, helped to prepare the way in the North of England for the revival of music which was to come.

As the first Exhibition of 1851 had indirectly advanced the cause of music, so the third of these international shows, that of 1871, by the establishment of the vast Albert Hall, brought music of a certain kind within the ken of many who had not realised its power. It is unnecessary in the present day to point out the acoustical defects of the building or its complete unfitness for musical enjoyment of a rational kind, but the "monster" concerts given there attracted the large numbers of people who were impressed by the Handel Festivals at the Crystal Palace and brought them

within reach of music of the modern school. The close of the Franco-German War, which stimulated the greatest German master of the time to the composition of his splendid *Triumphlied* and *Requiem*, produced from the conquered nation nothing more important than Gounod's *Gallia*, the performance of which was one of the main attractions of the opening of the Albert Hall on May 1, 1871. By that time Sullivan's name had become recognised sufficiently for him to have a work performed, and *On Shore and Sea* was the representative of English music of the period. Gounod's influence in connection with the Exhibition led to the formation of a choir under his conductorship, which, passing after a time into the hands of Mr. (afterwards Sir Joseph) Barnby, formed the nucleus of the "Royal Choral Society," now conducted, since Barnby's death in 1896, by Sir J. Frederick Bridge. The actual artistic influence of the great hall at Kensington has not fulfilled the expectations of those who promoted it, but memorable performances have taken place in its walls, such as the first English production of Verdi's *Requiem* (May 15, 1875), the Wagner Festival of 1877, to which further reference will be

made later, and the concert-performance of his *Parsifal*, given almost in its entirety under Sir Joseph Barnby in 1884. The Wagner performances of 1877 may be regarded as the first cause of that worship of Wagner's music which was so curious a sign of our English life in the latter years of the XIXth century. There had been, ever since the master's appearance at the Philharmonic as a conductor, in 1853, a feeling that he had been unfairly judged. A party of six enthusiasts, calling themselves "The Working Men's Society,"* had done a good deal in a quiet way, from 1867 onwards, for the cause of all modern music, Wagner's in particular, and Walter Bache's annual concerts, begun in 1871, carried on the propagandist work, in regard to Liszt's music, with an indefatigable energy worthy of the best of causes. Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* had been given in London (of course in Italian) as early as 1871, *Lohengrin* under the same conditions in 1875, and *Tannhäuser* in 1876, in which year *The Flying Dutchman* was given in English by the Carl Rosa company. This year saw the

* See "Brother Musicians," by Miss Constance Bache p. 199.

opening of the Wagner Theatre at Bayreuth. The performances were attended by many English admirers of Wagner's music, but the financial results were so discouraging that, in order to obtain funds to carry on the scheme, Wagner was persuaded to try a set of six concerts of extracts from his works, both early and late, at the Albert Hall. If the pecuniary success of these was not enough to fulfil the purpose for which they were given, the concerts converted large numbers of amateurs to the new music, and were really the starting-point of the great tide of admiration for Wagner which, together with a certain amount of sham enthusiasm, such as is given to any fashionable craze, has been increasing ever since. The position of amateurs in the musical world began to improve about the year 1874, when Henry Leslie founded his "Guild of Amateur Musicians"; in that year the Musical Association was founded for the discussion of subjects connected with the scientific, theoretical, or historical sides of the art. In 1875 the Bach Choir was established, at first for the special purpose of giving performances of the great Mass in B minor, under Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, but afterwards formed into a

permanent society, the work of which, in regard to the music of the renaissance, has been of the utmost service. For ten years it was directed by the original conductor, who, after a festival performance of the B minor Mass at the Albert Hall in 1885 in honour of the bi-centenary of Bach's birth, resigned and was succeeded by Professor Stanford.

One of the most powerful agencies in the encouragement of all that was best in the renaissance of music in England was the series of private concerts given by Mr. Edward Dannreuther in his house, Orme Square, Bayswater, from 1874 to 1893. The enthusiasts who subscribed to them knew that nothing hackneyed or inferior would be heard; the programmes were most artistically made up, and the music was admirably performed. The younger English composers of the time found here opportunities for the performance of their chamber compositions which were denied them in the more public concerts, and their many admirers were permitted to realise, even in these early years, how far the course of musical progress had already gone, and how earnest were the aims and

masterly the execution of such men as Parry and Stanford. It was a special feature of these excellent concerts that interesting new works by the younger composers were kept in the regular repertory; instead of being given once, and then laid aside, they were repeated until even the less cultivated among the audience began to discern their beauties and to get some idea of their meaning. It is this habit of giving (often with great reluctance) single performances of English works, and then imagining that such performances are of themselves an encouragement to native art, that has done more than almost anything else to retard the progress of our national music and to undermine the work of the renaissance.

Towards the middle of the seventies it began to be perceived that there was room for an institution which should teach music on wider lines than those recognised at the Royal Academy, and the National Training School of Music was founded at South Kensington. Sullivan was its Principal until 1881, when Stainer succeeded him for the brief time that elapsed before it was reconstituted as the Royal College of Music in

1882. The work of the older school may not have been very important, but without it the Royal College would not have profited by its experience and begun with an advantage gained from its predecessor.

In 1878 yet another amateur choir was started, the London Musical Society, under Barnby; a goodly number of works of importance were given, among them Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*, the work which first brought his name into prominence as a composer of serious aims. The society ceased to exist in 1887. In 1879, Hans Richter, who had conducted many portions of the Wagner Festival performances, began the first of a series of visits which have happily been regular ever since; the concerts conducted by him, at first under the name of the "Orchestral Festival Concerts," attracted all the more cultivated amateurs in London; and as at first the programmes were thoroughly representative of all the new influences in art, the musical education of the nation was carried a stage farther than it had been by the Crystal Palace and the "Pops." Of course the fashion of making up programmes largely from extracts from the Wagnerian dramas,

a fashion which was greatly to be regretted in after years, was more than excusable at a time when they could only be heard in this way; and it was through the influence of the Richter Concerts that the memorable series of German operas was given at Drury Lane, under Richter's conductorship, in 1882, and again at Covent Garden in 1884. In 1882 the entire trilogy was also given at Her Majesty's Theatre under Angelo Neumann's management, and with Seidl as conductor. The Royal College of Music, which opened in that year, had been preceded by the Guildhall School of Music, which began in 1880; the work of this institution, lying as it does in a great measure among those who do not wish to enter the profession, has not been so prominently brought before the public as that of the other two chartered institutions, but an enormous number of pupils have passed through the Guildhall School and have received there a more or less thorough grounding in musical education. The first principal was T. H. Weist-Hill, who was succeeded by Sir Joseph Barnby in 1892; on Barnby's death, in 1896, Dr. W. H. Cummings succeeded him. The Royal College was begun

under the directorship of Sir George Grove, with a definite idea of giving its students a larger outlook into the world of music, of providing them, in fact, with something like the education which could be gained at the chief foreign conservatoriums. It was felt that the Academy encouraged the hide-bound traditions of the older days to an extent that could not be cured except by the establishment of another school of wider views; and not only did the Royal College fulfil the purpose with admirable steadfastness and success, but its existence stimulated the Academy to a new life. The amalgamation of the two great schools in the Associated Board examinations in 1889 was one of the most important events in the history of each school, and in its effects upon the general status of musical education throughout the Empire.

The Handel Society, founded in 1882, has done a fair amount of useful work beyond its avowed object of reviving the less known works of Handel; and the Magpie Madrigal Society, under the able conductorship of Mr. Lionel Benson, has since 1889 done great things in promoting the revival of interest in the splendid

madrigals of the past and in encouraging the composition of modern madrigals written in the same noble strain.

In 1885 Mr. Henschel started an interesting set of London Symphony Concerts, at which were regularly given compositions of English musicians, many of whom found a first opportunity through their agency. The concerts were carried on until 1897.

In 1893 the opening of the Queen's Hall, in Langham Place, gave a new impetus to music in London, mainly by the establishment of a permanent orchestra with a regular conductor. Constant association and practice together has brought both the Queen's Hall Orchestra and its conductor, Mr. Henry J. Wood, to a pitch of excellence in every detail of orchestral technique such as has never before been attained in London. If the conductor's conception of the great classical works was at first open to criticism in regard to the general interpretation of the music, his enthusiastic energy applied to the minutiæ of orchestral performance has been of the greatest possible service to art, and when the management shall adopt a rather more patriotic policy in

regard to the choice of music, giving due prominence to the noble English works which lie awaiting performance, rather than to every production, good or bad, of the new Russian school, which has been receiving more than its share of attention of late years, the importance of the undertaking will be very great indeed. Under Mr. Wood's conductorship various series of Symphony Concerts have been given. But a still more powerful factor in the musical education of the country is that the Promenade Concerts given every autumn have held up a high standard instead of pandering to an imagined low level of taste, with the natural result that the general public has been attracted, and a sight most gratifying to every real musician may be seen on any night in August or September, when the floor of the hall is filled with a standing audience listening with the utmost attention, and in perfect silence, to symphonies which half a century ago would have been considered as too difficult for the comprehension of an ordinary audience at highly priced tickets.

It is not merely from the benevolent point of view, but from the fact of its realising that no country can be called musical in which music is

confined to any one class, that the work of improving the musical proficiency and taste of the lower classes deserves something more than a passing notice. The enormous success of the Tonic Sol-Fa movement is wholly a product of the latter half of the century. Miss Eliza Glover's plan of teaching children by means of a modernised form of the Guidonian hexachords, and by letters instead of notes, was systematised by Mr. John Curwen, with the result that the "Tonic Sol-Fa Association" was founded in 1853 and the Tonic Sol-Fa College in 1869. In spite of much opposition from professional musicians, the system has made such extraordinary strides in the work of bringing music home to all classes of the community that its work can no longer be ignored by the historian. In the earlier days of the movement it was often spoken of as a satisfactory substitute for the staff-notation, and it seemed as if the standards of public taste were to be lowered because the compositions most easily understood by the readers of the Sol-Fa notation were compositions of the most wretched and conventional kind. Now that it is more widely recognised that the Sol-Fa system is one of the best and surest

stepping-stones to the more legitimate system of notation, and that it is rather a means than an end in itself, its work is of far more value than was formerly the case, and the adoption of the system in the Board Schools is a circumstance in which musicians may take much satisfaction.

Founded in 1878, the People's Concert Society, the chief and the oldest of many similar organisations formed with the object of popularising good music among the masses, has done an important work in different quarters of London. It has given more than one thousand concerts, at which the classics of chamber music have been performed in a thoroughly adequate manner; it has always maintained a high standard of artistic merit, but the real result of its work can hardly be measured except by those who are in constant touch with the class to which it appeals, and who can realise the amount of musical instinct and taste that lies dormant in the nature of many uneducated people.

CHAPTER VIII

SULLIVAN AND LIGHT MUSIC

From the list of musical institutions given in the preceding chapter there was one important omission, concerning a form of art that is quite peculiar to England. The English type of light opera has many of the characteristics of the German *Singspiel*, the French *opérette*, *opéra bouffe*, and other forms; but it struck out a new line for itself, and was indirectly a factor of no little force in the renaissance of music. It was in the fifties that the great rage for Offenbach's music began both in Paris and London, and its great success was increased by the fact that while the moralists shook their heads over the libretti, the musical pundits disapproved of the composer's frank indifference to the laws of style and to the artistic conventions of the time. But, in fact, the operettas of Offenbach were never meant for the

family or for musical students; they were primarily intended for the delectation of the pleasure-seeking class, and in each and all of them there is, both musically and ethically, an element of dissipation. There was, perhaps, no particular harm in any, except to those among the audience who came prepared to find *double-entendres* in everything that was said, and in general to "read between the lines." Apart from this side of the question, the music is undoubtedly very often vulgar in invention and casual in treatment, while at the best its appeal is most powerful to the lower impulses of human nature. If it cannot be called ennobling music, it is often so beautiful, so sparkling and brilliant as to be quite irresistible, and there is a certain Aristophanic humour in the music itself that has kept it alive far longer than was expected, and will probably keep it in favour of a certain kind for many years to come. The element of "naughtiness" was never very far away from any work of Offenbach or his school, and it was the conviction that light and amusing music need not be always associated with this undesirable element which brought about the creation of what I have called

a new form of art. There was at that time a large class of persons who, from religious or other reasons, abstained altogether from theatrical amusements. In order to obtain the patronage of this class, Mr. and Mrs. German Reed, both of them closely connected with the stage (German Reed himself had been musical director of various theatres, and had improved the standard of the music played between the acts, &c., while his wife, Miss Priscilla Horton, had made her mark as an actress in various "singing parts" under Macready's management and in Planché's burlesques at the Haymarket), started what were at first called "Miss P. Horton's Illustrative Gatherings" in St. Martin's Hall in 1855, in which the burden of the entertainment fell on Mrs. German Reed. The word "illustrative" was retained throughout the career of the entertainment, which was afterwards, from 1856 to 1873, given at the "Gallery of Illustration," a small and inconvenient theatre in Regent Street; the characters in the little pieces given were not grouped together at the beginning of the programme, according to the usual theatrical custom, but were entered as separate "illustrations" in a sort of synopsis of

the piece. The removal of the entertainment to St. George's Hall, Langham Place, brought the company before a larger audience, and the enterprise was successfully carried on until March 1895, when Mrs. German Reed, her son, Alfred Reed, and Corney Grain, died within a very short time of each other. Throughout the forty years during which the entertainment lasted there was never anything in word or "business" that could offend the most susceptible, and the result was that the company enjoyed the regular patronage of many who would have been horrified at the idea of entering a theatre. The German Reeds were assisted by the inimitable songs and monologues of John Parry from 1860 to 1869, and his place was taken after his death by Corney Grain, who remained a principal attraction of the entertainment until the end. Among the more ambitious of the earlier productions must be mentioned Macfarren's *Jessy Lea* (1863) and Balfe's *Sleeping Beauty;* occasionally, too, such deodorised versions of Offenbach, as *Too many Cooks* and *Lischen and Fritzchen*, were brought out, but the true vocation of the entertainment was not found until, in 1869, Sullivan's first

attempt as a writer of comic music, *Cox and Box*, was revived in more favourable conditions than those in which it had been originally heard. It was first given at Mr. Arthur Lewis's house on Campden Hill in 1867, and soon found its way to the public stage, being produced at the Adelphi in the same year. It was not the composer's first attempt at operatic writing, for he had undertaken an opera, *The Sapphire Necklace*, to a libretto by Chorley, and his ballet, *L'Ile Enchantée*, was actually produced. Admirers of his music need not regret the non-appearance of the opera, for, with an economy of material almost worthy of Handel, he used it up in many of his later works, so that the world is hardly the poorer because it was never brought out in the original shape. Both *Cox and Box* and *The Contrabandista* (1867) were set to words by Burnand, and it was not until 1871 that Gilbert's name first appeared as Sullivan's librettist in *Thespis; or, The Gods grown Old*, given at the Gaiety Theatre.

But for the comic side of Sullivan's art, it seems probable that he would have remained in the position of the average English composer of the period before the renaissance, writing works for

provincial festivals, such as *Kenilworth*, his charming cantata produced at Birmingham in 1864, or symphonies, overtures, and concertos, such as the *In Memoriam* overture, written in memory of his father in 1866. He held the place of organist in succession at St. Michael's, Chester Square, and St. Peter's, Cranley Gardens, and in these early years wrote a large number of songs which enjoyed great popularity. The best of all was "Orpheus with his Lute," written for the Manchester production of *Henry VIII.* in 1878; but the cycle, "The Window," to words by Tennyson (1871), reached a high standard of artistic merit. From beginning to end of his career, Sullivan wrote nothing that was subversive or polemical; the taste of the average man was what he sought to meet, and it was in meeting this taste that his work in regard to the renaissance was fulfilled. He took no part whatever in the work of the renaissance itself; but, inasmuch as he was the first Englishman who contrived to excite enthusiasm in his countrymen, he must be held to have done much to prepare the way of the revival of interest in English music. His long association with Mr. Gilbert, who threw himself ardently into

the work of providing amusing and "harmless" librettos for the company formed by D'Oyly Carte, at first at the Opéra Comique, and subsequently at the Savoy Theatre, built for the purpose, was not only financially successful beyond all precedent, but it taught the ordinary Englishman that there might be such a thing as music written by a compatriot that would appeal to him, and did much to explode the old-fashioned notion that the only music worth listening to must come from abroad. In *Trial by Jury* (1875) the vein was first worked of satire levelled at our national institutions; in *The Sorcerer* (1877) the Church, and in H.M.S. *Pinafore* (1878) the Navy, came in for their share of laughter, but in neither case could the most susceptible find anything to offend them. The policemen of *The Pirates of Penzance* (1880), the "æsthetes" of *Patience* (1881), and the army in both pieces, as well as in *Iolanthe* (1882), the next of the series, were admirable food for laughter; *Princess Ida* (1884), an adaptation of Tennyson's *Princess*, was in a more romantic vein, and in *The Mikado* (1885) the best of the series, as some think, was reached. It had an exceptionally long run, and was adapted for German use

with decided success. In *Ruddigore* (1887) and *The Yeomen of the Guard* (1888) there was an element of something more serious than in their predecessors, and the tragic ending of the latter seemed hardly in place on the Savoy stage. Another great success was achieved in *The Gondoliers* (1889), but neither *Haddon Hall* (1892)—the first of the series written by another hand than Gilbert's—*Utopia, Limited* (1893), the revised version of *The Contrabandista*, now called *The Chieftain* (1894), nor *The Grand Duke* (1896) found any exceptional degree of favour. *The Beauty-stone* (1898) had a serious subject and another librettist than Gilbert; and it was not until *The Rose of Persia* (1899), to Captain Basil Hood's libretto, that success returned to the theatre. The last of the series, *The Emerald Isle*, was completed after Sullivan's death (in 1900) by Edward German.

Apart from their pecuniary value, the work achieved by these operas was undoubtedly to alter the condition of music in England as regarded by the average member of the public. Instead of being a thing apart from his daily life, or a set of taking tunes associated with sentimental or

convivial words, here were pieces which the average man could grasp as a whole, and yet which so delighted musicians by their refinement, cleverness, and sparkling effect, that both classes could mingle their enthusiasms. Sullivan did not at first give up writing music of more ambitious aims than the Savoy operas, with which his name will always be primarily connected; his oratorios, *The Prodigal Son* (Worcester, 1869) and *The Light of the World* (Birmingham, 1873), are the longest works he undertook in his early period, but the less pretentious and more successful "Overtura di Ballo" (Birmingham, 1870) must be mentioned. He reserved his ideas for the comic operas for a considerable time, but, on his appointment as conductor of the Leeds Festival in 1880, he wrote a third oratorio, *The Martyr of Antioch.* He conducted the Philharmonic Concerts in the seasons 1885–87; in the six years that elapsed between the oratorio just mentioned and the greatest work of his life, *The Golden Legend*, he seems to have accommodated his style in some measure to the great difference in public taste that had come about as the fruit of the renaissance; for nothing could be more entirely at variance than the styles of these

two compositions. The oratorio contains little or nothing that would not have been approved by Mendelssohn, of whom Sullivan was an ardent admirer in his younger days: the cantata is modelled rather upon the style of Berlioz, and its beautiful orchestration is distinctly derived from that master's. It was one of Sir Arthur Sullivan's peculiar gifts that he could adapt himself to widely different styles, and when he adhered to one style he was almost always successful; but to combine them was to court failure. In 1891 he had it in his power to help forward the whole movement of the renaissance most materially, for a fine new theatre was built under the name of the English Opera House, and a grand opera by Sullivan was the attraction of the opening night and of more than a hundred nights afterwards. *Ivanhoe*, to a libretto by Mr. Julian Sturgis, had many points, and even whole scenes, that were of high merit, even if here and there they were not particularly original. But, in order not to lose the patronage of the Savoy public, the composer must needs put in a scene here, a song there, which jarred so obviously with the rest that the impression of the whole was of a jumble of heterogeneous materials.

In several ways the success of the experiment was endangered; the operas given were to be run consecutively for as many nights as possible, on the principle of the long runs usual at the non-operatic theatres; therefore no repertory was formed and, as the same singers could not be expected to sing in seven or eight performances of the same grand opera each week, there was a double company, and no one knew, in buying tickets beforehand, which artists would sing. The result of the long run, kept up long after public interest in *Ivanhoe* had begun to dwindle, was that the succeeding opera, Messager's charming *Basoche*, had only a comparatively short existence here, and the theatre, opened under such favourable auspices, was shortly afterwards converted to the base uses of a music-hall.

The list of Sullivan's larger works is completed by the ballet *Victoria and Merrie England*, produced at the Alhambra in celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897; but that shared the fate of *Ivanhoe*, outstaying its welcome until the public and the managers got tired of it.

Nothing is harder than to predict what the

ultimate verdict of musicians on Sullivan is likely to be. The difficulty is greatly increased by the tone adopted by his great admirers at the time of his death. Obituary notices are, of course, always laudatory, and they need not be taken *au pied de la lettre;* but the fulsome terms in which the deceased composer was referred to in various panegyrics, and the surprising amount of rash statements made by some of the men who in Sullivan's lifetime had never a good word to say of him or his music, make the task of assessing his real worth far harder than it would otherwise be. Anything like a sober judgment, read beside these strange outbursts of belated admiration, must seem like detraction; and it is better to leave the man's place for posterity to allot. A few of the qualities of the music may, however, be referred to without exciting controversy. In the great bulk of his work, notably in the Savoy operas, he exhibits a fastidious taste, a hatred of anything like vulgarity, which, entirely estimable as they are, assort but oddly with the indisputable fact that he did, at various points in his career, allow things of the utmost banality to appear under his name. That the man who wrote the concerted

pieces of *The Mikado*, the exquisitely ingenious quartet of vocal variations in *The Gondoliers*, or the mock-Greek chorus in *The Grand Duke*, should have brought himself to be acknowledged as the composer of such songs as "Will he come?" "Let me dream again," or another in which the complaint that "the gravy's cold" seems to be iterated and reiterated, the obviously sentimental "The Lost Chord," the hymn-tune "Onward, Christian soldiers," or the pointless strains of "The Absent-minded Beggar," is hardly credible, and Sullivan's better work will only be appreciated by musicians when these have passed into complete oblivion.

The vein of comic music without any trace of vulgarity was worked, as has been said, quite independently of the German Reed entertainment, and on much more flourishing and important lines than that; still, the German Reeds were the originators of the form which was afterwards so successfully employed at the Savoy; and among their actual productions were a good many works that deserve to be remembered, by other composers than Sullivan, whom Sullivan's example had fired, and who adopted from him certain peculiarities of

the form which naturally became more or less stereotyped in after years. It would not be accurate to call Frederic Clay (1840–89) a follower of Sullivan, since he began his career as a comic-opera writer long before Sullivan had ever tried his hand at writing for the stage. Clay's first attempts, it is true, were not performed publicly, but in *Court and Cottage* (1862), *Constance* (1865), and, above all, in *Ages Ago* (1869), one of the most charming pieces of the German Reed repertory, it was clear that a strong individuality was manifested, and one whose special fitness for comic music was indisputable. The music had the utmost refinement of diction, and ideas of admirably "taking" quality which yet never approached vulgarity or even the commonplace. *Happy Arcadia* (1872), like *Ages Ago*, was written to a libretto by Gilbert, who, with Clay, collaborated again in the delightful *Princess Toto* (1875). Before this last came out, Clay's name had been brought before a larger public by the great success of a *féerie*, *Babil and Bijou*, which drew all London by its spectacular magnificence in 1872. In this, as in his later operettas, such as *The Black Crook* (1873), *Don Quixote* (1875),

The Golden Ring, and *The Merry Duchess* (1883), there are plenty of numbers excellently adapted for their purpose, but in a good many of them the tastes of the Alhambra audience and similar sections of the public were too conscientiously followed, with the result that these works are often lacking in the refinement of the earlier time. Clay's more serious songs, such as "I'll sing thee songs of Araby," from a cantata, *Lalla Rookh* (1877), "She wandered down the mountain side," and "The Sands of Dee," have retained their hold upon the musical world long after most of his comic work has been forgotten.

In a less refined vein than Clay's, the music of Alfred Cellier (1844–91) attained a remarkable degree of success with the average man of the day; it appealed to the same public as Sullivan's, but if Sullivan's example had been removed, it is doubtful if Cellier could have worked the transformation in musical taste that Sullivan achieved. He had more of the Frenchman in him, and the title of the "English Offenbach" bestowed on Sullivan by a distinguished professor of music would have been more appropriately given to Cellier, whose muse was not always especially careful to

keep within the bounds of genteel behaviour. He had been, like Sullivan, a choir-boy of the Chapel Royal; had conducted at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, from 1871 to 1875, and conducted the Sullivan operas at the Opera Comique for some time, producing many short musical pieces to precede them. Meanwhile his first operetta, *Charity begins at Home*, had been given by the German Reeds as early as 1870; and his best work, *The Sultan of Mocha*, an operetta which would well bear reviving in the present day, was brought out at Manchester in 1874, and in London in 1876. A grand opera, to words by Longfellow, *The Masque of Pandora*, was produced at Boston, U.S.A., in 1881; and in 1886, his *Dorothy*, a rearrangement of a piece called *Nell Gwynne* that had failed ten years before, made a sensation in London, remaining in the bills for more than two years on end. Its successor, *Doris*, brought out at the Lyric Theatre in 1889, had a less remarkable career, though it contained much attractive music; and the amusing *Mountebanks* (1892) was produced a few days after the composer's death.

The most deliberate adaptation of the Sullivanian method was that in which Edward Solomon

(1853–95) won considerable success with his *Billee Taylor* (1880), an unmistakable copy of *H.M.S. Pinafore;* in *Pickwick* (1888) he struck out a more original line, and the little work was a masterpiece in its way; but his *Penelope* (1889) was too obviously an attempt to do for the farce of *The Area Belle* what Sullivan had done for *Box and Cox.* The charming *Red Hussar* (1889) showed that Solomon had a power of his own; but in *The Nautch Girl* (1891) he assimilated the Sullivanian traditions a little too openly, in order to suit the Savoy Theatre, where the work was brought out while Sullivan was otherwise occupied. In the following year, *The Vicar of Bray* made its appearance on the same stage; but later on, in *The Lady Slavey*, he lent his support to the nondescript form of variety entertainment which for a good many years seemed to swamp all individuality in the composers who undertook to dovetail their own music into that of others, and to turn it into something that might be presented as a whole. It is, perhaps, hardly the place to refer to this degradation of the art of comic music; but the public has surely the right to demand that powers like those of Lionel Monckton

should no longer be hampered by the necessity of providing "extra numbers" in a farrago of nonsense in which neither style, unity, nor originality is generally admissible. That comic music in England will recover from the dismal state in which it now has been for some years past, excepting for the example set, apparently in vain, at the Savoy until the time of Sullivan's death, we need not doubt; but as long as public favour is largely bestowed on the "go-as-you-please" entertainments so decidedly in vogue at present, they will be hardly likely to withdraw in favour of more beautiful things. After all, the non-musical person who wants a succession of amusing things presented to his eyes, and does not care for the music-hall, is not doing any particular harm by encouraging these exhibitions; only, they are not comic opera or even *opéra bouffe*, and do not supply the place of these really artistic things.

By no means all the operettas enumerated above fulfil the ideal of the German Reed entertainment or of the Savoy Theatre in respect to complete harmlessness of purpose; but from the early specimens was gradually developed a kind of tradition, and a musical style which, whatever

the subject of the libretto, was distinctly traceable to the influence of the purely English methods of writing comic music. The case is almost exactly paralleled by the popularity of the Robertsonian drama; in this, as in the Savoy pieces, a style of elocution was encouraged which resembled the speech of the upper classes a little more closely than had been the case on the English stage before. An essential part or feature of both classes of entertainment was the reticence and self-restraint of style, and a kind of "naturalness" which was as far from the stagey methods of the past, or the realistic methods that had not come into vogue, as it was from nature itself. The Savoy operas, like the Robertsonian plays, created a new convention and new traditions, which have left their mark on later works; and if the dramas of to-day show the strong influence of Robertson's reforms, in spite of their stronger subjects and freer handling, there is good hope that, in the fulness of time, some such fruit will be borne in the musical direction, when the public shall have become tired out with the variety entertainments that now seem to have supplanted English comic opera and the uproarious classics of *opéra bouffe*.

CHAPTER IX

THE LEADERS OF THE RENAISSANCE

In approaching the most interesting part of the XIXth century, as far as English music is concerned, I wish to make it quite clear to every reader that it is not part of my design to institute or even to imply comparisons between one and another of the great men whose work, in my opinion, makes up the first-fruits of the English renaissance. Being human, it is impossible that each of us should not form preferences for this or that work, for this or that composer; but these preferences, even those that are based on the widest knowledge, the deepest sympathy, or the most generous enthusiasm, must be conditioned by the personal element and by the natural affinity that one individual has for another. Even if it were of the smallest use or interest, it would be obviously difficult to record the convic-

tion that such a one was the greatest man of his time. With the passage of years, the group of composers will fall into truer and truer perspective; and it needs no special proof that we stand far too near them now to make a profitable comparison between them, even if the work of their lives was in every case complete. At the same time, all the five men who are rightly considered at the top of the musical profession as the masters of the English music in the latter half of the XIXth century have so clearly shown the bent of their genius, and their lives have been so fruitful, that it would be impossible to treat them as if they had still their mark to make, or as if we should be justified in expecting them in the future to surpass what they had done in the past. A period of five years covers the dates of birth of the men we have to consider in this chapter: Alexander Campbell Mackenzie was born in August 1847, Charles Hubert Hastings Parry in February 1848, Arthur Goring Thomas in November 1850, Frederic Hymen Cowen in January 1852, and Charles Villiers Stanford in September 1852. Not only by the chronological proximity, but in other more important ways, they are divided

off from the musicians that preceded them in England; all were men whose general culture and education, and whose views of art and life, were far wider than those of the preceding generation of musicians, and this shows distinct traces throughout the best work of each. Almost for the first time since the death of Purcell there is in them and their followers a recognisably British note. Various as are the characteristics of the composers, there is the precious quality of individuality in them all; and as a school or group of composers these five can be compared with any school that the world of music has seen. If they are put beside the modern Russian school, for example, the Englishmen are seen to have far more stability in aims, more extensive resources in the different styles of music, and at least as much originality of invention as the Russians, whose works have been so sedulously kept before the English public of late years. It is easy to say that none of the English composers has as yet shown the qualities which made the reputation of the supremely great German masters, and that none of them has been recognised by the world in general as the equal of Bach or Beethoven, of

Wagner or Brahms; but it is not unprofitable to remember that in Germany recognition has always been much quicker than it has ever been in England, and that each of the masters named had in his own day to struggle against popular prejudices, even in the country where musical taste was commoner than in any other. That certain individuals from this group of leaders of the English renaissance will ultimately be accepted by the world in general as among the greatest composers of all, is, no doubt, a private opinion, and therefore cannot carry much weight; but it is shared by a good many persons who have formed it with care, and who hold it with the strength of a conviction.

It is not insignificant that the majority of these leaders came from a class that had before their time been too seldom represented in the musical profession. That they formed in any sense a clique, or even a group of workers consciously associated together for the advantage of their art, was not the case; in this they were utterly different from the painters who dubbed themselves the "Pre-Raphaelite School." A "school" in this sense there was not, in the musical world of England,

until the time when the five leaders of the musical renaissance began to work on the same lines. And even after the date at which they became aware of each other, their different ideals and circumstances led them into divergent paths rather than in the same direction. Excepting that Mackenzie and Thomas both studied at the Royal Academy of Music, no two of the leaders had anything like the same upbringing; and even in this case it so happened that Mackenzie's last year of study at the Academy fell ten years before Thomas entered the institution to complete an education begun in Paris.

No great movement can be accomplished by men working in complete unconsciousness of each other's existence, and the actual conscious work of the musical renaissance may most justly be held to have begun in the early part of the "eighties," when, as it were, the streams of work converged. Each of the five masters had by 1880 made a distinct mark on the musical world of the time. It will be useful to pass in review the work of each up to that date; it is curious to see how differently they rank in regard to the dates at which their earliest important compositions were

widely noticed. Cowen, nearly the youngest of the five, had, after a short career as a child prodigy, studied seriously at the Leipzig Conservatorium, and later at Berlin; he directed the first performance of his *Rose Maiden* in November 1870, and by the time it came out he had already had a symphony and a concerto performed in December of the previous year. His second symphony was played at the Liverpool Philharmonic Society's concert in 1872; his cantata, *The Corsair*, was given at the Birmingham Festival of 1876; and his opera, *Pauline*, was produced by the Carl Rosa Company in 1876. If we fail to find in these works very much of what may be called the spirit of the renaissance, it is only fair to remember that up to this date Cowen was the only prominent composer, except Sullivan, engaged in the production of important works. The picturesque "Scandinavian" Symphony and the Suite, *The Language of Flowers*, were both brought out in 1880, and both showed the charming fancy and the romantic feeling that have distinguished so many of the author's works from that time onwards.

Mackenzie's quartet in E flat for piano and

strings, was played in 1875 in London, but although it is now ranked among the English classics, it made but little stir at the time of its production. The composer, after years of drudgery as a violin-player in the ducal orchestra of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, where he at least gained experience and made the intimate acquaintance of the most advanced music of the time, and after two years further study at the Royal Academy, had returned to his native Edinburgh and taken up the career of a teacher. The strain was too much for him, and he went for a considerable time to Florence to recover. Von Bülow, who had encouraged him by bringing out an overture, *Cervantes*, in Edinburgh in 1877–78, was a good friend to him, and it was at his recommendation that Mackenzie took the rest which was, no doubt, of great importance in fitting him for the career of a composer. Among the works of his earlier period must be mentioned the two Scottish Rhapsodies (1878), which contain a foretaste of the qualities in which Mackenzie excels. Poetic and imaginative, they have not merely local colour excellently handled, but something of the hidden fire that is present in the

best Scotch songs, the fire of passion that burns all the more ardently because it is not always on the surface.

Before Stanford's incidental music to Tennyson's *Queen Mary*, produced at the Lyceum Theatre in 1876, had brought his name before the general public, he had already made his mark at Cambridge, and had begun to make the University an important centre of music. During his boyhood in Dublin he had become known as a composer, Titiens having sung an aria of his early in the sixties, and from the date of his arrival at Cambridge as the winner of an organ scholarship at Queen's College in 1870, his influence was felt. He soon migrated to Trinity College, where he was appointed organist in 1873. In that year he effected the transformation of the Cambridge University Musical Society from a male-choir organisation of the usual amateur kind into a full chorus, by incorporating with it an "Amateur Vocal Guild" which he had founded a year or two before. The "C. U. M. S.," as it was usually called, became a great power in the land, and was the chief agency through which the transitory population of undergraduates was made acquainted

with the masterpieces of music, classical and modern. Beside a number of first performances in England, among which may be mentioned Bach's cantata, *Halt im Gedächtniss*, Brahms' first symphony, and the *Rhapsodie* for alto solo and male chorus, Joachim's *Elegiac Overture,* and the third part of Schumann's *Faust*, many important revivals took place, such as those of Handel's *Semele* and *Hercules*, and Astorga's *Stabat Mater*. On various occasions, owing to Stanford's influence in the University, honorary degrees in music were conferred on the most eminent composers of England and the Continent, and the performances of works representing the music of the recipients were of the highest interest and historical value. To Stanford it was mainly due that the five masters of the renaissance were formally recognised as a "school," a performance of their representative works, together with Sullivan's *Golden Legend*, being given in 1887. Stanford's principal compositions before the eighties were choral settings of Klopstock's *Resurrection* (1875) and Psalm xlvi. (1877); a first symphony in B flat, which gained the second prize at a competition offered by the management

of the Alexandra Palace in 1876; and a "Festival Overture," played at the Gloucester Festival of 1877. Many of his church services, which have enjoyed great popularity for many years, belong to this period, as well as his song-settings of twelve of Heine's poems, and sonatas for violin and violoncello. In these youthful days his style had scarcely declared itself; the works mentioned show, as is only natural, an earnest aim and much knowledge of effect, which had been gained not only during his studies in Leipzig under Reinecke, and in Berlin under Kiel, but by his frequent practical experience in conducting an orchestra.

Arthur Goring Thomas was the first of the renaissance leaders to complete an opera, but his work, *The Light of the Harem*, to a libretto by Clifford Harrison after Moore, has never seen the light as a whole; although a psalm for soprano solo, chorus, and orchestra was given in London in 1878, his name was better and more widely known as a writer of exquisitely graceful songs, which were sometimes considered to show rather too much of the influence of the French composers, with whom he had studied during the

most impressionable time of his life, from the age of twenty-five to twenty-seven. It was not until his cantata, *The Sun-Worshippers*, was produced at the Norwich Festival of 1881 that his place among the new composers was assured.

The last of the five masters to come before the public in any important way was Parry, although from his Eton days he had been renowned among his contemporaries for his skill in composition and performance. From Sebastian Wesley, with whom he had been brought in contact both at Winchester and Gloucester (Parry is the second son of Thomas Gambier Parry, of Highnam Court, near the latter city), he had learnt to love the music of Bach, and had imbibed the pure traditions of the English Cathedral school; while still at Eton he took the degree of Mus. Bac. at Oxford, and in 1867 he matriculated at Oxford at Exeter College, taking the B.A. degree in 1870. Neither Sterndale Bennett, Macfarren, nor Henry Hugo Pierson succeeded in striking the sympathetic note in Parry's nature, and he learnt more from Dannreuther than from any of these, with all of whom he had lessons at

one time or another.* Besides the pianoforte lessons which Dannreuther gave him, the teacher's ready sympathy and breadth of artistic views appealed strongly to the young composer during the years in which he was, as it were, fighting his way towards his own medium of speaking to the world. The numerous chamber compositions that were brought out at the semi-private music-meetings given by Dannreuther, from the E minor trio (1878), the duet for two pianos in the same key (1878), and the quartet in A flat for piano and strings (1879), to the works which, performed in MS., have never yet been published, owing partly to the composer's keenness of self-criticism and never-satisfied desire of revision, reveal at every turn an individuality such as had not appeared in England for many a long day. A strongly new method of expression cannot fail to disturb the mental equilibrium of those who try to appreciate it for the first time, and Parry's early chamber music in this respect was a parallel to the works of Browning or George Meredith; he was not careful always to dilate on his musical ideas, and his conciseness of musical phraseology,

* See a most interesting article on Parry in the *Musical Times* for July 1898.

as well as his many personal idioms, as they may be called, most certainly did puzzle the few people who in those early days realised that Parry was a man of consideration, and one whose work demanded an amount of serious attention that could only be compared with the attitude required for such music as Beethoven's posthumous quartets. At a private concert given in the house of the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour in 1879, the works named, a "fantasia-sonata" in one movement for piano and violin, and a set of pianoforte variations on a theme of Bach were played, and some of Parry's exquisitely melodious songs were sung, such as the three "Odes of Anacreon," and others, which should have convinced those who heard them that Parry's music came at least as much from the heart as from the head. Before passing to the other side of Parry's work, it is well that a list should be given of those chamber compositions which have hitherto been only played from the MSS. at Dannreuther's house; a string quartet and a violoncello sonata (1880), a string quintet, a trio in B minor (1884), a violin sonata (1889), and a third trio in G (1890), are works which nowadays many of us would give a good deal to hear again. Two sonatas for piano

solo, and some other pieces, such as the beautiful set of nineteen variations (1885), and the "Partita" in D for violin (1886) were published, but the amount of his published chamber music is sadly limited when we think of the number of works still in MS. Before the momentous year, 1880, an overture by Parry, on the subject of *Guillem de Cabestanh*, had been played at a Crystal Palace concert in 1879, this being his first orchestral work, with the exception of an "intermezzo religioso" for strings played at the Gloucester Festival as far back as 1868. A pianoforte concerto in F sharp was played by Dannreuther at the Crystal Palace in 1880, and in the autumn of that year Parry's first important choral work, "Scenes from Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*," was brought out at the Gloucester Festival, not without many a sneer in the press at "local talent." Looking back at this work from the point of view of Parry's later compositions for chorus, there seems nothing so very "advanced" about it; its expression is indeed sincere, not imitated from anywhere else; its ideas are distinguished and original, and the treatment of voices and instruments is masterly and effective. The mere circumstance that among the solo-

singers were two amateurs of high reputation can surely have hardly been sufficient reason for the failure of the performance, for it did undoubtedly fail at the time; and in spite of two interesting revivals by the Bach choir in after years, and the great popularity that Parry's music had attained in the meanwhile, it has never gained the place it deserves in public estimation. It was not until the next Gloucester Festival, in 1883, that with his setting of Shirley's "The glories of our blood and state," he made his first real success. The symphony in G, performed at the Birmingham Festival of 1882, completes the list of Parry's works down to the time when he found the perfect vehicle for his thoughts and the key to the hearts of his hearers.

Alone among the renaissance leaders, Parry has changed his style of writing; and for the sake of making this contrast clear, as well as by reason of the elevated character of the subjects in which his later successes have been won, it seems suitable to give to his maturer works the first place in reviewing the later careers of the renaissance masters. The change in Parry's style is not a radical one, proceeding from any alteration of

convictions or ideals, but it affects so strongly the impression produced by his music that it has altered the public point of view more surely than many a radical change might have done. In the elaborate choruses of *Prometheus Unbound* there appear the first evidences of a touch that had not appeared in English music before; the way in which the lovely strains of the quartet "We come from the mind," with its unaccompanied close, "Our feet now ev'ry palm," leads into the final chorus, the structure of this final chorus, with its ever-increasing sonority and the working-up of the climax at the words "To an ocean of splendour," are seen, in the light of his later works, to be their true foreshadowings.

The art of choral climax has been a peculiarity of the best English music, and even if its most eminent exponent, Handel, be given the benefit of his naturalisation, it must be remembered that it was from a study of the works of Purcell that he gained the skill which made his oratorios so far more successful in their own time, and afterwards, than the works of his earlier days. To call Parry's choruses "Handelian" would not, perhaps, be critically accurate; but though their harmonic and

melodic freedom is far greater than anything of the Handelian period, the love of piling up, as it were, one climax upon another often suggests the simple grandeur of the Handelian style. If structurally the scheme of Parry's choruses not seldom brings Handel before the mind, his treatment of the vocal parts, and occasionally of the instrumental accompaniments too, carries us rather to Bach, with whom the composer has evidently far deeper sympathy than with Handel. The strong affinity between his music and the poetry of Milton has often been noticed, and it is remarkable that the first thing which really impressed the musical world at large, and showed the full nobility of Parry's music, was the choral setting of Milton's *Ode at a Solemn Music*, written for the Bach choir, and performed in 1887. From that time forward, Parry's career as a composer has been almost uniformly in the direction of choral works either actually sacred, such as the oratorios, *Judith* (Birmingham, 1888), *De Profundis* (Hereford, 1891), *Job* (Gloucester, 1892), *King Saul* (Birmingham, 1894), *Magnificat* (Hereford, 1897), and *Te Deum* (Hereford, 1900), or such secular works as allow of the introduction of

an almost sacred effect, like the *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day* (Leeds, 1889), Milton's *L'Allegro ed il Pensieroso* (Norwich, 1890), *Invocation to Music* (Leeds, 1895), and *A Song of Darkness and Light* (Gloucester, 1898). To a purely secular section of Parry's work belong *Eton*, set to Swinburne's ode in honour of the 450th anniversary of the foundation of the college, and sung at Eton in 1891, and the choric song from Tennyson's *Lotos Eaters* (Cambridge, 1892). The incidental music to the two Aristophanic plays, *The Birds* (Cambridge, 1883), and *The Frogs* (Oxford, 1892), complete the list of works for chorus, works which have established Parry's name as a representative English master. Throughout the sacred and semi-sacred works, there is not one that does not at some point or other raise the nobler emotions of the intelligent hearer to the highest pitch, and it is Parry's especial gift to "bring all heaven before our eyes" by means of the mastery of his cumulative effect. His appeal is only to the most exalted feelings of which humanity is capable, and it has occasionally happened that, for this, or another reason, his treatment of the solo voice, like that of Bach, is not always what is

commonly called "grateful" to the singers, who are accustomed to regard Parry as too closely modelled on Bach to please them entirely. This is by no means the case with his *Judith*, where all the solo parts are wonderfully effective; or in *Job*, where the lamentation sung by the baritone is perhaps the longest, and certainly one of the most poignantly expressive solos to be found in music. The solo parts in *King Saul* are also quite effective, and throughout his choral and solo writing for voices, Parry is without a rival in the art of fitting words to music that corresponds absolutely in accentuation with the natural rhythm of the words he sets. In the four books of his "English Lyrics," and in the set of lovely part-songs published a few years ago, the same admirable quality is present, and his favourite Milton's famous sonnet to Henry Lawes, beginning

> Harry, whose tuneful and well-measured song
> First taught our English language how to span
> Words with just note and accent

might with almost equal justice be applied to Parry. In his treatment of the orchestra, we feel, as in the case of Brahms, that the form is more important than the colouring, the musical ideas

themselves than their treatment, whether in voices or orchestra. For this reason, his orchestration, excellently skilful as it is, seldom arrests the attention on its own account, and the preludes of his choral works are purely preparatory to what is to come. Three more symphonies, in F, C, and E minor—the last two brought out by Richter in 1889— a *suite moderne* for orchestra, an overture styled "On an Unwritten Tragedy" (1893), a suite for strings (1894), and a set of remarkably beautiful "symphonic variations" in E minor (1897), make up the list of Parry's orchestral works, and in one and all he shows himself a draughtsman rather than a colourist, for which reason our concert-givers devote a good deal of attention to neglecting these fine works, which appeal strongly to the public when they are brought out, and are then heard no more. With the choral works, the case is happily different; the provincial choral societies keep Parry's works before the public with a regularity that metropolitan institutions might well copy. For the rest, Parry's career must be summed up by stating that in 1883 he was appointed Choragus of Oxford University, and in 1900 he followed Sir John

Stainer as professor; in 1894 he succeeded Sir George Grove as Director of the Royal College of Music, and in 1898 received the honour of knighthood. In this place it is most appropriate to mention his valuable contributions to the literature of his art; besides many learned and original articles in Grove's "Dictionary," he wrote an admirable treatise, "The Art of Music," called in its second edition, "The Evolution of the Art of Music." A volume of "Studies of the Great Composers," and a "Summary of Musical History," are admirable text-books, and it is to be hoped that the substance of his professorial lectures will see the light some day or other. To the XXth century belongs the exquisite *Ode to Music*, written for the opening of the new concert-room at the Royal College of Music in 1901, a composition which, in its comparatively short extent, exhibits all the composer's greatest powers, and lifts the heart of every worthy hearer to the contemplation of the highest things in existence.

It is significant of the work of the renaissance in England that the two men who are generally regarded as primarily associated with the renaissance should, at the end of the century, be the

holders of the two University Professorships, and that it is so is surely a matter for national congratulation. Times have changed in England since the days when the most original of our composers were forced either to ape the mannerisms of Handel or of Mendelssohn, or to find themselves in opposition to the whole musical world of their own nation; when official positions were seldom or never given to any but the pedantic and dry-as-dust musicians of the older school and of ultra-conservative musical tenets. *À propos* of one of Stanford's operas, *The Canterbury Pilgrims* (1884), an interesting article in the *Musical Times* contains a remarkable reference to "a success which adds one more to the many recent proofs of the talent existing amongst our native artists, and the readiness of English audiences to acknowledge it." This is no more than the truth, and in connection with every one of the renaissance leaders the same testimony holds good. The first important work of Stanford's maturity was the opera *The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan* (Moore's *Lalla Rookh* appealed strongly to many of the composers of the day, and Mr. W. Barclay Squire's excellent libretto gave plenty of opportunity

for local colour, and the romantic treatment to which the young Irish composer was naturally prone), brought out at Hanover in 1881, but not given in London until 1893, when, produced on the last night of the season, it had not much chance of a permanent success. His next two dramatic works chanced to appear within ten days of each other, *Savonarola* being given with great success at Hamburg on April 18, 1884, and *The Canterbury Pilgrims* being brought out at Drury Lane by the Carl Rosa company on April 28. The former of these two was also given under Richter in the course of the German Opera season of the same year, but for reasons which any careful reader of the law-reports of the time will readily divine, was not a success; apart from various intrigues that nearly prevented the performance taking place at all, the appearance of Savonarola in a full yellow beard (as the tenor did not choose to shave for the evening) and the fact that the important dual *rôle* of the heroine and her daughter was taken by a subordinate singer, helped only too surely to wreck the performance. How far the failure of this affected the career of the delightful musical comedy that

so closely followed upon its heels cannot of course be accurately gauged; but it may be guessed that a work which excited none but favourable opinions, and filled Drury Lane for four performances, would have been worth occasional reviving after the first year. After these operas, Stanford left dramatic work writing alone for a good many years, and it was not until *Shamus O'Brien* was brought out at the Opera Comique that he was recognised as a master of the art of high comedy in music. His latest opera, the brilliant *Much Ado about Nothing*, two performances of which were given at Covent Garden in 1901, lies outside the scope of this volume; but it may be well to point out that in this, as in all Stanford's other operas, he has shown that gift of getting the "atmosphere" of his subject which very few save the highest manage to attain. His strong feeling for colour suggests that he is in some sort a musical parallel to Tennyson, and many of his greatest successes have been won in association with Tennyson's words. His first opportunity was in the music to *Queen Mary*. He arrested public attention more certainly than ever before in *The Revenge* (Leeds Festival, 1886), and followed it up in *The Voyage*

of Maeldune (Leeds, 1889); between these two came the masterly setting of the *Carmen Sæculare*, written for the Jubilee of 1887; the music to *Becket* (1893) was another tribute to his admiration for the poet laureate, and one of his latest compositions is a setting, for vocal quartet, of the lyrics in *The Princess*. One of the most interesting of his contributions to literature is an article on Tennyson in the *Cambridge Review* for October 1892; and here it may be said in passing that Stanford's various articles in warm commendation of works by his contemporaries, such as "The Golden Legend" (*National Review*, Nov. 1886), "Judith" (*Fortnightly Review*, Oct. 1888), and "Falstaff" (*Fortnightly Review*, April 1893), are a lasting monument to his critical insight, as well as to his complete lack of that professional jealousy which has spoilt the nature of too many English musicians. The short choral ballad, a form that was used with so much success in *The Revenge*, has always been a favourite form with Stanford; in 1884 his setting of Walt Whitman's *Elegiac Ode* was given at Norwich, in 1891 Campbell's *Battle of the Baltic* was set for Hereford, in 1893 Swinburne's *East to West* for the Royal Choral

Society, in 1895 Gray's *Bard* for Cardiff, in 1896 Sheridan Lefanu's *Phaudrig Crohoore* for Norwich, and in 1900 Henley's *Last Post* for Hereford. Here there is the same feeling for atmosphere that appears in his operas; every resource of effect is at his command, and all are used with unerring skill to produce the impression he requires. In the short ballads he goes straight to the point, and his manly style gives to those of a patriotic cast a direct vividness that is hardly to be found in the range of music elsewhere. Besides the Anglican church music to which allusion has already been made, he has written much sacred music, but though neither of his Birmingham oratorios—*The Three Holy Children* (1885) and *Eden* (1891)—has enjoyed the success that each seemed to deserve, he has been much more fortunate in sacred works written to Latin words, such as the Mass in G (Brompton Oratory, 1893), the *Requiem* (Birmingham, 1897), and the *Te Deum* (Leeds, 1898). Here he has caught not only the spirit of the words, but the exact shade of style which suggests and implies the ornate ritual of the Roman Church, and the kind of music which suits that ritual best. It must

not be supposed from this that these works are a merely theatrical presentation of a Roman function: they are deeply felt; and brilliant and effective as they are, they cannot be reproached with any want of sincerity.

From the character of the words he chooses; from the way he is appealed to by the picturesque, the poetical, or romantic sides of his subjects, and from the fact that his four later symphonies (putting aside the early work already referred to) are more or less illustrative of some definitely poetic idea, it might be gathered that upon the vexed question of "programme" music as against "absolute" music, he had strong leanings towards the former. This is certainly not the case, for, on the one hand, in these symphonies there is never a passage where the structural symmetry of the design is sacrificed to the illustrative function of the music, and, on the other, his chamber compositions, in which there is no attempt to illustrate any poetical or pictorial idea, are models of construction. There is in them no feeling of vague wandering such as is nearly always felt when the writer accustomed to "programme music" is compelled to write without a

programme, and is forced at every moment to show how much he needs its support. The pianoforte quintet in D minor is the work best known and most warmly and widely appreciated; but the three string quartets, a later trio, and many other things, show complete mastery and ease of structure, and a power of design that must appeal to every one competent to judge.

There is no form of music in which Stanford has not displayed that high accomplishment for which he is so highly renowned. Though it is not possible to enumerate all his works in every branch, space must be found for a few words on his smaller compositions, such as the "Elizabethan pastorals," beautiful and characteristic part-songs, and his deft arrangements of the national melodies of his native Ireland. It is not too much to say that he has put Irish music on a different level from any it had previously attained, for he has shown how its melodic beauties are to be treated in such a way as to make not only the best effect, but an effect analogous to that which they must have made when they were first heard. His study of the ancient modes, undertaken with the help of the late W. S. Rockstro, for the sake of

his *Eden*, enabled him to give the right harmonic colour to the older Irish melodies, which had before been presented in modernised and sadly garbled forms.

To sum up the events of Stanford's later life, it must be recorded that since his appointment as Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music in 1883, many of the most promising of the younger generation of English composers have passed through the invaluable system of training in which he has been so uniformly successful, and have been fired with the enthusiasm which he feels for everything that is best in art. In 1885 he succeeded Mr. Goldschmidt as conductor of the Bach choir; in 1887 was appointed Professor of Music in the University of Cambridge; conductor of the Leeds Philharmonic Society in 1897, and of the Leeds Festival in 1901.

The career of Sir Alexander Mackenzie has been traced down to the point when the exhausted Edinburgh teacher found it necessary to seek rest and recovery in Italy; in Florence, he wrote some of the works which rank highest in the list of his compositions. That this list is not a good deal larger than it is, is to be sincerely regretted; but

at least the composer cannot be reproached with over-productiveness. His first contribution to the music of the renaissance was a cantata, *The Bride*, given at the Worcester Festival of 1881, and followed by *Jason* at the Bristol Festival of the following year. Distinctly as these works foreshadow that love of the romantic side of music which was one of the signs of the renaissance, it was not until 1883 that Mackenzie found the key to the hearts of musicians in his beautiful opera, *Colomba*, produced by the Carl Rosa company in April, and at Hamburg and Darmstadt in the following year. In spite of Dr. Hueffer's terribly prosaic libretto, the "local colour" in the music is so strong that the work produces an impression it is impossible to forget; the *vocero*, "Gentle dove," the love-song, "Will she come from the hill?" and the old Corsican ballad, "So he thought of his love," have an individuality that is only surpassed in the operatic version of Mérimée's other famous story, *Carmen*. The orchestral ballad, *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, given at the Philharmonic a month after the production of *Colomba*, was distinguished by the same romantic charm as the opera, and it remains

one of the most directly impressive things in English music. The excessive prominence of the emotional quality was, in the opinion of some people, the only drawback to the oratorio, *The Rose of Sharon*, produced at the Norwich Festival of 1884. If it had only been an opera, the work would have been a lasting glory of the English stage, but as an oratorio it seemed to fall a little short in reverence. Mackenzie's second opera, *The Troubadour*, was brought out by the Carl Rosa company in 1886, but the subject was rather too gruesome for the public taste, and, apart from this, it was not one of his most inspired works. *The Story of Sayid*, produced at the Leeds Festival of that year, was far more successful, and its treatment of local colour, and the vigour with which the story is told, make it remarkably effective. The *Jubilee Ode*, 1887, and *The New Covenant*, 1888, are choral works that produced a favourable impression; in *The Dream of Jubal*, 1889, the mixture of the reciting voice with the choral and solo numbers was an experiment that was only successful when a more than ordinarily skilful reciter could be found, who, like Mr. Charles Fry, understood how to keep his

voice from coinciding with the important notes of the music. One of Mackenzie's finest works for chorus is the setting of the hymn, *Veni Creator Spiritus*, given at the Birmingham Festival of 1891; *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, 1892, had plenty of effective and appropriate passages, and has won renown in many quarters: and in *Bethlehem*, 1894, he returned again to oratorio, with some success. His orchestral works are full of colour and originality, and one of them, the *Britannia* overture, is such a delightful exhibition of musical high spirits and genuine humour, that the commission to write a comic opera for the Savoy was almost a matter of course. For various reasons with which the public had nothing to do, *His Majesty*, produced there in 1897, was not a success, although it abounds in drollery of a distinctively musical kind, and has in the *ensemble*, "Who goes home?" an incident of deeply expressive character and great charm. As with others of the leaders of the renaissance, the practice of commissioning distinguished composers to write incidental music for theatrical productions or revivals, gave Mackenzie some of his best opportunities. His music to *Ravenswood*

(1890), to *Marmion*, and *The Little Minister* (1897), exhibits many unmistakably Scottish characteristics; but in spite of this none of these is quite up to the high artistic level of his three *entr'actes* for a stage performance of *Manfred*, never yet given with the theatrical surroundings, or of the splendid *Coriolanus* music (Lyceum, 1900), with which Mackenzie's work in the XIXth century reached its apogee. For character, romantic warmth, and freshness of inspiration, Mackenzie's best works hold a distinguished place; and that he does not always seem to have attained his highest point is only as much as to say that he is human after all. In 1885–87 he conducted the Novello oratorio concerts, which for those two seasons had an important influence on choral music in London; in 1888 he was appointed Principal of the Royal Academy of Music in succession to Sir George Macfarren; he was conductor of the Philharmonic Society from 1893 to 1899; and he was knighted in 1895. His early experiences as a violinist may have suggested the composition of the beautiful violin concerto and the "Pibroch," as well as of the charming "From the North"; in these, and in his "Scottish"

fantasia for pianoforte, he seized the true characteristics of the music of his native land as no one had done before him. In his hands it becomes deeply and sincerely expressive, often wild with suggestion of restrained passion, but never vulgar, as it became in the hands of those who in the earlier days flooded the concert-rooms with imitations of the traditional Scotch ballads.

By a curious coincidence, the three composers last referred to were condemned by a certain school of critics as "academic." Their accusers belonged to a class whose skill in research is about equal to the task of discovering that while Parry and Stanford are the Professors of the two Universities, Parry and Mackenzie are the heads of the two principal music schools; so that Parry evidently deserves a double share of the epithet which, it may be guessed, the critics can only partly understand. If it means, as they possibly think, "connected with institutions in which music is taught," it surely conveys no suspicion of blame; but if they mean it to convey its usual idea of dry pedantry, unenlightened by originality, enthusiasm, or original power of any kind, then

nothing could possibly be more misleading. There have been times when the only men who displayed real technical power in composition in England were open to the accusation, when a dull process of manufacture represented the art of composition, and every trace of romantic expression was sedulously repressed in the composers themselves or in their pupils. But it is one of the features of the renaissance that these leaders, and the other two with whom we have to deal, have shown real inspiration in their most representative works; that their music comes mainly from the heart, not merely from the head; and that in their estimation no music is worth writing down which is not the expression of the writer's deepest feelings and of his personality in the fullest sense. It is at least singular that the epithet should never have been bestowed on the men who held no official position in any musical seminary, and perhaps the truth is that the word "academic" as used by these journalists may best be defined as an epithet applied to those who understand their work by those who do not. The allegation, considering the quarter from which it came, would not have merited the trouble of denial, were it not

that it tended to foster a ridiculous prejudice still existing in England, to the effect that there is something essentially antagonistic between musical learning and creative spontaneity. A certain large and ignorant section of the public imagines that the only music worth listening to is that which is, or pretends to be, thrown off at random, thought of between sleeping and waking, and scribbled down on scraps of paper to catch the fleeting inspiration. The opposite picture to this in the popular imagination is that of the learned composer, consuming the midnight oil in the task of elaborating some recondite fugue, which is supposed to be merely a mathematical problem, demanding nothing in the shape of inspiration for its perfection. Even supposing this to be an accurate portrait of the musicians who understand their business, there is nothing essentially unimaginative or unpoetical about a fugue; many of the "48" of Bach, and fugues by him and other masters, are among the most directly emotional works in music; and the power of writing a fine fugue does not exclude the power of inventing a beautiful melody such as the public thinks it loves. In no other art is careful workmanship so

generally despised by the public as in connection with music; if it were said in print that such and such a picture would be praiseworthy, save for the fact that it was drawn with an accurate knowledge of perspective and painted with well-prepared pigments, the average reader would be able to form a pretty fair estimate of the writer's powers. Who would dare to condemn a piece of elaborate prose because the words were evidently arranged with artistic care and an eye to their effect in juxtaposition? Yet these would be as reasonable as to imagine that natural spontaneity of musical invention is in any danger of evaporating when study is taken up in earnest. Every one to whom it occasionally occurs to be consulted about the future of some young musical "genius" who has jotted down the melody of a song, must have found it a common experience to have his advice questioned when he recommends that the child should be given instruction in the grammar of music, and to be told that there is a danger of the natural gift being spoilt thereby. One cannot tell whence this view of musical study had its rise; but one can well imagine that discredit should be systematically poured on the laborious

side of musical art by those who have no faculty for receiving instruction, and no application to make use of what they are taught, but who have an eye to public success, which, they think, waits for all who are ready to confess that they do not know how to write down their precious ideas for themselves. I do not of course wish to imply that academic or pedantic musicians do not exist, but I am certain that they are much rarer in England than in Germany, and that there never was a more unreasonable accusation made than that which was brought against the three masters referred to. It should be a sufficient refutation of the charge to point out that these three men are just the composers who have manifested most plainly the possession of the saving grace of humour, a grace which hardly coexists with the pedantic habit of mind. Musical humour is not an easy thing to discuss, for it is not every one who can enjoy its presence or even detect it when it is not superscribed in large letters, "The composer means this as a joke." The process of repetition, which in the more vulgar kind of farces is such a useful way of making a commonplace remark pass for a witticism at its thousandth

occurrence, has been applied in certain quarters with conspicuous success, and the celebrated bassoon joke which appears in the great majority of the Savoy operas at one point or other, is still safe to raise a laugh. It is certainly possible that such delicate humour as that in "When icicles hang by the wall" in the second set of Parry's *English Lyrics*, such sparkling wit as illuminates page after page of the *Britannia* overture of Mackenzie, and many points in *His Majesty*, or such richly unctuous fun as appears in abundance in Stanford's *Shamus O'Brien* or *Phaudrig Crohoore*—to say nothing of the Dogberry scene of *Much Ado about Nothing*—might not have a great vogue among the inmates of an idiot asylum; but among persons normally constituted it is hard to conceive their being missed, except on account of their not being endlessly repeated in such a way as to reach the dullest brains.

By his natural bent, and by such circumstances as his early education in Paris, Arthur Goring Thomas (1850–92) turned his attention almost exclusively to the lighter style of romantic music. Had he been a Frenchman in nationality as well

as in ideals, he would perhaps have made a more distinguished career than he did; for the mere fact that he expressed himself in music very much as a Frenchman would, kept him for some years from being duly appreciated as a really original and spontaneous writer. A good many of his songs, such as "A Summer Night," and many others, were widely known and loved no long time after his first attempt at anything more ambitious was made in *The Light of the Harem*, a work already mentioned, selections from which were given at a concert of the Royal Academy in 1879, when he had been at the Academy for two years. The promise contained in this induced Carl Rosa to commission a grand opera from him, and the result was *Esmeralda*, to a libretto by T. Marzials and A. Randegger, which was produced at Drury Lane in 1883, performed two years afterwards at Cologne and Hamburg, and in 1890 (in French) at Covent Garden. The work is dramatic and effective in no ordinary degree; every part is not merely grateful to the singer, but is characteristic of the personages invented by Victor Hugo, and the success of the opera was never in doubt. In spite of this, such

are the strange ways of English operatic managers that it has never taken the place in the regular repertory which it would have held if it had been written by a Frenchman for the French. In 1885 the last of his serious operas, *Nadeshda* (libretto by Julian Sturgis), was brought out by Carl Rosa, and given in 1890 at Breslau. Although it has not kept the stage any more surely than the rest of the operas of the renaissance, the mezzo-soprano aria from it, "My heart is weary," is one of the most hackneyed pieces in popular usage, and the tenor song, "Now is the hour of soft enchantment," seems at present to be enjoying a very tardy recognition at the hands of the singers. A comic opera, *The Golden Web*, to a libretto by F. Corder and B. C. Stephenson, was brought out, after the composer's tragic death, at Liverpool and in London in 1893. Besides the setting of the psalm, *De Profundis*, already mentioned, his choral ode, *The Sun-Worshippers*, given at Norwich in 1881, and a *suite de ballet* for orchestra, by which he was represented at the Cambridge concert of the renaissance composers' works in 1887, complete the list of his larger works brought out during

his lifetime; but one of his most beautiful, tender, and refined works is a cantata, *The Swan and the Skylark*, the pianoforte score of which was found among his papers after his death. It was orchestrated by Stanford and brought out at the Birmingham Festival of 1894. Small as is the extent of Thomas' work, in one and all of his compositions there is revealed a beautiful vein of individual melody, a strong feeling for the romantic and poetical side of music, and a power of realising the essential differences of character in the *dramatis personæ* of his operas. The varying moods of his songs and duets have no doubt contributed largely to their lasting popularity, and nothing is cleverer in the whole range of his art than the way in which the suggestion of a storm is evoked in a few very simple bars of the lovely duet, "Night Hymn at Sea." That mental disease should have fastened upon so brilliant and refined a nature, and have led to his melancholy death, was one of the heaviest blows that fell upon English music in the XIXth century.

Since the first performance of his *Scandinavian Symphony*, Frederic Hymen Cowen (b. 1852) has written three more, making the total number of

his symphonies six. The less ambitious side of his orchestral work, begun in the suite, *The Language of Flowers*, has been quite as successful as the other. He has a special predilection for fairy subjects, and in his treatment of light music, in which there is a suggestion of the gambols of elves, as in *In Fairyland* (1896); the flight of butterflies, as in *The Butterfly's Ball* (1900), or the like, he shows an easy mastery over his fancies which marks him as an undoubtedly original genius. In cantatas for female voices, too numerous to count, the same range of subjects is generally taken, and in all cases there is elegance, charm, and delicate workmanship; and in such poetical works as *The Sleeping Beauty* (Birmingham, 1885), *St. John's Eve* (Crystal Palace, 1889), *The Water Lily* (Norwich, 1893), he handles his chosen subjects with delightful certainty of success. His setting of Collins' *Ode on the Passions* (Leeds, 1898) is perhaps one of his very best works, for it has the higher qualities of genuine human emotion, of a feeling for climax, and of effects of a grander kind than he usually attempts. His sacred works, such as *St. Ursula* (Norwich, 1881), *Ruth* (Worcester, 1887), *The Transfiguration* (Gloucester, 1895),

have not the air of being thoroughly congenial to him; sometimes they are in a style that seems almost stilted, as if the composer were anxious to avoid the mistake of writing in his own natural manner. It may be the habit of deliberately adopting a style not his own that has prevented his operas from making the success they deserve; but here again he has shared the luck of all the renaissance leaders in regard to operatic works, and he has indeed come off no worse than the others. After *Pauline*, the production of which has already been mentioned, there was a space of a good many years before he again sought success on the stage in *Thorgrim*, to a libretto by Joseph Bennett (Drury Lane, Carl Rosa company, 1890). Three years afterwards, when the new Italian school was at the height of its popularity, he wrote *Signa*. This was produced at Milan, 1893, and at Covent Garden in the same year. Finally, his *Harold*, to a libretto by Sir Edward Malet, was produced at Covent Garden in 1895, being the first opera in the new *régime* to be given there in English. How far Cowen's fame will ultimately rest upon his powers as a conductor cannot of course be predicted, but these powers are very

considerable, and it is greatly to his credit that he increased them most remarkably between his first and second tenures of the Philharmonic conductorship. The first of these lasted from 1888 to 1892, and the second began in 1899 with far greater success; in 1896 he was appointed conductor of the Hallé concerts at Manchester, the Liverpool Philharmonic Society, and the Bradford Festival Choral Society. In an interesting article on Cowen published in the *Musical Times* for Nov. 1898 it is enumerated among the advantages of his position that he has never been a teacher of music, but has been always able to supply his needs by the proceeds of his publications. How far this is really an advantage may perhaps be doubted; and to some of us it would seem to be at least as useful an employment to impart knowledge as to undertake the composition of ballads which can hardly fail to lower the artistic standard of a man's work viewed as a whole. Such things as "The Better Land" or "The Promise of Life" remain in vogue with certain classes of the public, and, until the day when they are quite forgotten, the proper place of their composer cannot be estimated. The fatal temptation to "make the

best of both worlds" has already prevented more than one English musician from reaching the pinnacle of fame to which their gifts entitled them; and the direct result upon the market-value of the composer's best work is simply disastrous. Dr. Cowen has published some ten albums of songs professedly artistic in their aims and ideals, but these are actually kept back from public recognition by the inordinate popularity of the "pot-boilers," written to please the publishers. At the same time, when all this has been said, the fact remains that Cowen's gift of reflecting the graceful, picturesque sides of life is not a small one, or one to be despised or underrated. If his melodic ideas are not always very spontaneous, they are always treated in an interesting manner in his sincerer works, and the great bulk of his orchestral compositions are certain to enjoy the permanent appreciation of musicians.

There are a few men who cannot claim to be numbered either among the leaders or the followers of the renaissance, yet without whose work the renaissance would not have been exactly what it is. The later works of John Francis Barnett (b. 1837), whose *Ancient Mariner*, brought out at

Birmingham as far back as 1867, is still often heard, show that the alteration of ideals from the dry imitations of Mendelssohn that were formerly in vogue, to the sincerer expression of the present day, was fully recognised by him. *The Building of the Ship* (Leeds, 1880), *The Harvest Festival* (Norwich, 1881), *The Wishing-Bell* (Norwich, 1893), are good examples of his careful workmanship and of his power of adopting the modern manner, while many orchestral and chamber compositions have maintained a high standard of artistic excellence. Sir Walter Parratt (b. 1841) has made his name famous rather by his incomparable organ-playing than by his work as a composer, though his music to the *Agamemnon*, written for the performance at Oxford in 1880, and to the *Story of Orestes*, a condensed version of the Æschylean trilogy given in London in 1886, show remarkable skill in the treatment of themes conceived in the antique style. His work as conductor of the Windsor and Eton Madrigal Society, and as the prime mover in the volume of "Choral Songs in Honour of Queen Victoria" (1900) illustrates his enthusiasm for a truly scientific study of the older music, and as a

teacher of the organ he has done much to give pure ideals to many of the best of the young organists of the day. The talents of Thomas Wingham (1846–93) were chiefly devoted to the service of the Roman Church, and his excellent work at the Brompton Oratory cannot pass unacknowledged; his orchestral and choral works, and his elegy on Sterndale Bennett, his master at the Royal Academy, for whom he had a special affinity, distinguish him from the herd of exclusively church composers. Various cantatas, symphonies, and smaller works, of Henry R. Gadsby (b. 1842) have maintained a fairly high standard, though few or none have reached a point of striking excellence.

Apart from his position as organist of Westminster, Sir J. Frederick Bridge (b. 1844) has found time to write certain works of some importance, such as *Mount Moriah*, the exercise for the Mus. D. degree (1874); *Rock of Ages*, a remarkably expressive setting of Gladstone's translation of the hymn (1885); *The Repentance of Nineveh*, his most extensive work, brought out at the Worcester Festival (1890); *The Lord's Prayer* (1892); *The Cradle of Christ* (1894), and secular

cantatas and ballads, such as *Boadicea* (1880), *Callirrhoë* (1888), *The Festival* (1891), *The Inchcape Rock* (1892), *The Flag of England* (1897), and *The Ballad of the Clampherdown* (1899), besidesorchestral and church music. If he has not originated anything very striking, his work is at least deserving of praise for many good qualities; and as Gresham Professor of Music, he has turned the lectures from very dull and sleepy affairs into one of the greatest treats accessible to the ordinary Londoner.

His brother, Dr. Joseph Cox Bridge (b. 1853), organist of Chester Cathedral, is not only an excellent conductor, but a composer of considerable ability and some originality. It was in great part due to his energies that the Chester Festival was revived in 1879. His *Daniel*, an oratorio, was given there in 1885, his *Rudel* (1891) is a work of undeniable charm; a clever symphony in six movements was played in 1894; a serious and remarkably powerful cantata, *Resurgam*, given in 1897, and his *Requiem* (1900) show the bent of his mind towards music of a solemn and impressive cast.

To Charles Harford Lloyd (b. 1849) was

mainly due the transformation of the Three-choir Festivals from a very dry-as-dust institution to a living power for good. As organist of Gloucester Cathedral, from 1876 to 1882, he waged an active and effectual war on the old system by which the conductor of the festival was expected to produce a new oratorio as it were *ex officio*; under his *régime* all the then existing influences of the renaissance were encouraged; and in his successive appointments as organist of Christ Church, Oxford (1882), and precentor of Eton (1892), he has exerted a power not the less effectual because it has been so quiet. In his own works, such as the beautiful cantatas, *Hero and Leander* (1884), *The Song of Baldur* (1885), *Andromeda* (1886), *A Song of Judgment* (1891), *Sir Ogie* (1894), and other works, like his music to *Alcestis* (Oxford, 1887), he has shown a marked preference for conciseness of form, and has great originality of invention.

The career of Frederick Corder (b. 1852) has not been without its effect upon the course of the renaissance of music in England, even though he has very seldom come before the great public in an important way. He studied at the Royal

Academy of Music, and on winning the Mendelssohn Scholarship went to study with Hiller in Cologne. His orchestral and other works have been performed by the various organisations that encourage new English music; but none of them has ever made a very striking effect. His best opportunity was in connection with festivals such as Wolverhampton in 1886, when his *Bridal of Triermain* was successfully produced, and Leeds in 1889, when *The Sword of Argantyr* brought his name before the large public. Of his operas there are several, but only one has been given, *Nordisa*, set to his own libretto, at Drury Lane in 1887. A Roumanian suite for orchestra in the same year made a favourable impression, and *The Minstrel's Curse*, a ballad for declamation, was given at the Crystal Palace in 1888. It is not easy to account for Corder's lack of a real success as a composer, but perhaps his work may be felt to be too uncompromisingly modern and "advanced" in tendency to catch the public taste. As a teacher of composition at the Royal Academy of Music he has done excellent work, and his influence is so wholly for good that his name cannot justly be left out in any summary of the

movement which has regenerated music in England.

Bertram Luard Selby (b. 1853), organist of Salisbury Cathedral, 1881–83, subsequently of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, and since 1900 of Rochester Cathedral, is another of the men whose chief opportunity, apart from church music, has come in connection with Greek plays, ancient or modern. His music to *Helena in Troas*, a piece on Greek lines by Dr. Todhunter (London, 1886), was the first thing that brought him prominently into notice, and it was ten years before another great success was made, in the one-act *Weather or No*, a bright little operetta played at the Savoy Theatre, and at Berlin. In an idyll for orchestra, and in many chamber compositions at present unpublished, he reveals a strong instinct for beauty of form and structure, as well as for effect, and his piano pieces and songs are admirably artistic and musicianly.

In Charles Lee Williams (b. 1853) we have a composer of distinct power and skill in choral writing; he has made various successful essays in reviving the form of the church cantata, and his *Last Night at Bethany* (1889), *Gethsemane* (1892),

Dedication (1895), and *Harvest Song* (1898), have had much success. All except the last were written for Gloucester, where he succeeded Dr. Lloyd as organist in 1892; and these, as well as his church music, organ pieces, and songs, have attained the popularity that is the natural consequence of their being purposely easy to perform. Like his predecessor, he has helped forward the movement of the renaissance very considerably in the influence he has brought to bear upon the festival authorities, an influence which he used for the best ends of the art.

CHAPTER X

OPERA IN THE RENAISSANCE

Before passing in review the young composers of the English renaissance, it will be well to refer shortly to the revival of public interest in opera, which is one of the most marked, if not one of the healthiest signs of musical progress in England. In an earlier chapter the decay of Italian opera was described, and a short survey was attempted of the duel between the managers, Mapleson and Gye, which hastened the fall of Italian opera as a fashionable amusement. In the early years of the renaissance various more or less tentative schemes were tried, to supply Londoners with the means of becoming acquainted with the great masterpieces of modern opera. The German seasons of 1882 and 1884 served to introduce the mature works of Wagner, and to prepare the way for the more intimate knowledge of them which

was destined to fill the pockets of the managers in after years. In 1887, Mr. (afterwards Sir Augustus) Harris undertook the task of reinstating the opera on a firmer footing and attracting on the one hand the fashionable world, which had given up attending operatic performances, and on the other, the musical public, which had got tired of the "star" system, and wished to see operas properly staged and prepared at all points. From the first the help of the established favourites of the public in the soprano department was eschewed, with the single exception of Mme. Albani, who joined the new crusade after a year or two. At first even such singers as Mme. Melba, Mme. Nordica, Miss Macintyre, and Miss Ella Russell had to fight their way into renown. Favour, so far as it was shown to any performers, was given to the brothers De Reszke, who have been the idols of the subscribers ever since. In 1889 it seemed an over-bold experiment to announce a performance of Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* in the original French, but the result was that this work, which years before had been one of the least popular operas in Mme. Patti's repertory in an Italian version, became the rage, and its vogue even now

shows no signs of dying out. In process of time, the ideal of a polyglot opera was attained, and for some years past no opera has been given in a language other than its own, save for such absurd experiments as the production of *Tannhäuser* and *Die Walküre* in French. Even English has not been quite excluded, Cowen's *Harold* and Stanford's *Much Ado about Nothing* having made their appearance in their native language, which, happily, is the mother-tongue of a large proportion of the company. This, and the care taken to increase the vogue of Wagner's riper works, are perhaps the two most satisfactory points in Harris' period of management; and whatever else he did, he certainly rekindled the interest of the fashionable world in opera. Whether this is entirely an advantage or not is a question that does not belong to the purpose of this volume. There are a good many evils that are the inevitable result of a position so secured by a large subscription that the wishes of the numerous class who frequent the less expensive seats are apt to go for nothing, and the "musicians' nights," when Gluck, Mozart, or Beethoven are to be heard, are of the utmost rarity. The opera has naturally

followed the various whims of continental fashion, as, for instance, during the vogue of the "young Italy" school of composition, when the works of Mascagni and Leoncavallo occupied the great proportion of evenings in any week. It is curious, however, that neither Harris, nor the syndicate which took over the management after his death, has exercised much discretion in the choice of new works; like the theatrical managers, they have been anxious to get some one else to venture on doubtful experiments, and then to reap the advantage of their success. Thus, the later works of Wagner were given at special performances in 1882 and 1884, and Verdi's *Otello* was given by a company specially organised for the purpose.

The vogue of the Russian school was undoubtedly encouraged by performances of Tschaikowsky's *Eugen Onegin* under an impresario named Lago, to whom Londoners owe the first performance of *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and the memorable revival of Gluck's *Orfeo* with Giulia Ravogli. Smetana's delicious *Verkaufte Braut* was performed during a visit of the Saxe-Coburg and Gotha company to Drury Lane; Humperdinck's lovely *Hänsel und Gretel*, by the Carl Rosa

company, while at Covent Garden, only one German work outside the Wagner repertory was introduced, Kienzl's far-from-inspired *Evangelimann.* Among the works first performed under this management must be mentioned Massenet's noisy *Navarraise*, submitted to the London public (with Mlle. Calvé in the chief part) before any other; Mancinelli's poetic *Ero e Leandro*, and the two English works that have been named. Beside these, a good deal of trouble has from time to time been taken over operas that were certainly not worth it, such as L. E. Bach's *Irmengarda*, and *The Lady of Longford*; Isidore de Lara's *Light of Asia*, *Amy Robsart*, and *Messaline*, and Bemberg's *Elaine.* In regard to some of these works it was currently reported that their choice was not due to any overpowering sense of their merits on the part of the management, but that other inducements prevailed upon the authorities to bring them forward. It is only just to refer to the possibility of this having been the case, since it would be difficult in any ordinary circumstances to retain any respect for the artistic taste of a manager who should produce them. That far greater things might have been done by the

successful management of Covent Garden is unfortunately true; still, the public has much to be thankful for, and at the worst it must be admitted that the claims of all schools, except indeed that of classical opera, have been duly considered. To keep four more or less complete companies ready to perform operas in Italian, French, German, and English, is no slight undertaking; and looking back on the years during which Covent Garden has held its present position, there is not much fault to be found. Each year has brought its crop of new singers, and in some few cases lasting successes have been made. Among the younger sopranos, Frl. Ternina, Mme. Emma Eames, and Mme. Suzanne Adams, are the most popular; of late Miss Marie Brema has succeeded to the most important mezzo-soprano and contralto *rôles;* a large number of tenors, of whom the best are M. Alvarez, M. van Dyck, Signori De Lucia and Bonci, Mr. O'Mara and Mr. Coates, have appeared, and beside the brothers De Reszke, there are MM. Lassalle, Maurel, Plançon, Bispham, and many others, to be enumerated among the favourite male singers. As chief conductor Signor Mancinelli has won a lasting success in a trying

position; and various German conductors have been engaged for the Wagnerian dramas, the best among them being Dr. Muck, Herr Mottl, and Herr Lohse. The unfortunate death in New York of Herr Seidl deprived the German opera on both sides of the Atlantic of a great conductor.

During the last years of the century there was a discussion which aroused considerable interest as to the possibility of establishing a permanent opera-house in London under the control of Government or the County Council, and so placing London on an equality with any of the third-rate continental cities in respect of opera. The realisation of this seems as far off as ever, though it is not less needed than it was. The true lovers of opera—those who go to enjoy the work in the first place, and the performances of individual singers in the second, as contrasted with the fashionable people who go to talk and see their friends—have to be content with the rarely interesting performances of operas given by the pupils of the Royal College of Music as part of its regular curriculum. Putting aside the various classical operas, such as *Orfeo*, *Don Juan*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Cosi fan tutte*, *Der Frei-*

schütz, and Goetz's *Taming of the Shrew*, many operas have been brought out which amateurs have had no other chance of hearing, such as Cornelius' *Barber of Bagdad*, Schumann's *Genoveva*, Weber's *Abu Hassan*, Delibes' *Le Roi l'a dit*, Purcell's *Dido and Æneas*, and *Falstaff*, a work which, acclaimed as the crowning masterpiece of its composer's career, has now completely fallen out of the regular repertory at Covent Garden. Whether the choice of such operas as these, interesting as they are, and delightful as it is to amateurs to get a chance of hearing them, serves quite as useful an educational purpose as the more modest and rarer operatic performances given by the Royal Academy of Music, where new or unusual works are hardly ever given, may be doubted; but until the time comes when opera will be put on a proper footing in London, those who have its best interests at heart may feel deeply grateful to the Royal College for what it is doing.

The nearest approach we have ever had to a national opera is the Carl Rosa company, which has been referred to very often in the foregoing pages. It was formed by an enterprising German

violinist for the sake of his wife, Mme. Parepa-Rosa, who was the *prima donna* in his first years in America; it was not till after her death, in 1871, that his first season began in London, in the autumn of 1875. The Pyne and Harrison company had ceased its operations in 1862, so that there was a good field for Rosa; and by getting together the best native talent that could be procured, he achieved an amount of success which was quite exceptional for operatic managers in that day. His most important production was that of *The Flying Dutchman*, with Santley, in 1876; and as the years went on, he was always anxious to combine interesting revivals or productions with those tiresome English operas, such as *Maritana* and *The Bohemian Girl*, which have enjoyed the favour of the lower class of operatic audiences for so very long. It was in his fourth season, 1879, that he took Her Majesty's Theatre, and brought out Wagner's *Rienzi* in remarkably sumptuous style. Goetz's *Taming of the Shrew* was introduced by him to English audiences; and as soon as his position was secure he commissioned the group of works by the masters of the English renaissance to which reference was

made in the last chapter. In these works the great talents of Mme. Alwina Valleria found fine opportunities, and such artists as Georgina Burns, Ben Davies, Barton McGuckin, Leslie Crotty, and W. Ludwig, were among the popular favourites during the palmy days of English opera. After the death of the founder, in 1889, the company lost a good deal of its prestige, but among its more or less recent achievements may be mentioned the production of Mr. Hamish MacCunn's *Jeanie Deans* in Edinburgh (1894), and *Diarmid* (Covent Garden, 1897). The work for which it was originally formed has now been so far accomplished by the fashionable opera that its hold on Londoners has of late grown much slighter than it was; but while it is still active in spreading a knowledge of good operatic music through the provinces, it must not be forgotten that the disappearance of the old "star" system was due to the Carl Rosa company rather than to any other organisation. From time to time, owing to secessions from its ranks, or to other causes, rival companies have been started with the same objects; but the only one of any particular account is the Moody-Manners company, which

has done a considerable amount of praiseworthy work in the country.

All this activity, though directed into different channels, is enough to prove that as a nation we are not behind the rest of the world in the instinct for operatic music. How is it, then, that England has done so remarkably little in developing a national school of opera, and how is it that the works which have been produced present so uniform a record of failure, or, at least, of very partial success? No one can imagine that every English opera of whatever date is so exactly on the same level of merit as all the others, that the same fate is equally deserved in all cases. Yet all have fared identically; each has been received with acclamations from the press and the musicial public, and each, with a very few exceptions, has been dropped after the second representation; some have never reached a second representation, though in one or two quite exceptional cases, the number of performances has reached four or five. But even five performances are not enough to establish the fame of a musical composition in the country. Surely, if things were on a sounder footing, some one of the more famous operas of

English origin would have been by this time adopted into the musical life of the nation. The reason is plain to every one who takes the trouble to investigate the records of past successes and to compare them with the story of English opera. Every one who is not an operatic manager is aware that all theatrical productions, however enthusiastic their reception may be, begin to attract the public only when they have been going on for some time. The second performance is nearly always given before empty benches; and in the case of non-musical plays, the manager knows this so well that he proceeds with the run of the piece until the public has had time to form its real verdict. In reading the history of opera in the contemporary newspapers it is clear that this kind of perseverance has been shown only in the case of operas of established continental reputation, where the manager has felt encouraged to go on beyond the second representation by the moral support of continental opinion. Even such successes as those of *Faust* or *Carmen* were achieved only by persistence in performing the works to audiences which at first were very meagre. In the case of English works, or brand-new operas performed for

the first time in England, the managerial courage has oozed out generally on the second night, as though the poor attendance were an unusual thing, or had anything to do with the success that the opera might ultimately reach. In music, as everybody knows, it is doubly necessary to humour the English public, who still decline to admire anything that does not sound familiar, with repeated representations, until every regular opera-goer has had a chance of seeing the new work. There is little danger of ordinary managers falling into that opposite extreme of performing the new work too constantly which wrecked the fortunes of *Ivanhoe* and the Royal English Opera House.

CHAPTER XI

FOLLOWERS OF THE RENAISSANCE

If it was impossible to attempt to "place" the masters of the musical renaissance in anything like their relative order of merit or to gauge the degree of fame to which they may ultimately come, it is even more impossible to guess what may be done by some out of the many younger composers who, since the renaissance began, have shown original power or at least made it clear that they deserved a hearing on their own merits. I do not claim for all or even for the majority of those whom I am about to name, a place among the greatest composers of the earth; but I am convinced that each of them has, or has had, it in his power to attain greatness, and most of them have received encouragement which was denied to the men of the former generation in England. It will be said that I have hunted up the name of

every boy or girl who has won momentary distinction at a school concert, or had a work performed at the terminal celebrations of the great institutions for teaching music. I have not done so by any means; and there are many more than I shall name whose friends are certain to consider that they have been omitted from ignorance or prejudice. It is very possible that I may have made some omissions owing to the great difficulty of collecting data about performances of works not brought prominently forward; but, while not claiming that my list is complete, I wish to express my conviction that it is made up of names that well deserve to be known. In every case something has been actually brought to a public hearing that has revealed powers of one kind or another. Some composers, it is true, have fallen from their high ideals into the career of purveyors of "pot-boilers." The work of some few has been stopped by death; but in these cases the position of the writer is far from being universally recognised, so that, though it is quite possible to estimate the value of his work as a whole, it is not possible to predict the place which he will ultimately hold.

The most prominent among the older generation of the followers (the men born between 1855 and 1859) is undoubtedly Edward Elgar, whose star has risen rapidly within the last few years. He was born in Worcestershire in 1857, and it was at the Worcester Festival that his first important work, an overture, *Froissart*, was given in 1890; he had then been conductor of the Worcestershire Instrumental Society for some seven years. Not very long after that date he went to live quietly at Malvern, where his sequence of later works has been written. These included an oratorio, *The Light of Life* (1896), a cantata, *Caractacus* (Leeds, 1898), and an oratorio-setting of Newman's *Dream of Gerontius* (Birmingham, 1900), as well as a delightful set of orchestral variations, a symphonic poem, *Cockaigne*, and the popular set of songs for mezzo-soprano and orchestra, *Sea Pictures*. In all of these there are evidences of a truly poetic gift, of imagination rightly held in control, and of great technical skill in the management of voices and instruments. Alan Gray is the author of many finely felt songs, and several cantatas by him have been heard at festivals, such as *Arethusa*, *The Rock*

Buoy Bell, and other things for choir and orchestra; the comparative smallness of their number does not prevent their being very interesting. If the length of a composer's list were a criterion of his powers, then both Arthur Hervey and Frederick Cliffe would have to be content with a far lower position than that to which they are entitled. In both cases, some other occupation has engrossed so much of their time that composition is not the chief object of either's life, though the beauty of such things as the former's *Dramatic Overture*, or the latter's symphony, violin concerto, and a symphonic poem, *Cloud and Sunshine*, show that both are masters of the orchestra. Ernest Ford has attained to the dignity of writing an opera for the Savoy, where his *Jane Annie* was given in 1893. Before this he had written several operas, in one of which, *Joan*, produced for some special performances in 1890, Mr. Bispham made his first appearance on the English stage. His *Faust* ballet, given at the Empire Theatre with great success, was a very remarkable *tour de force*, seeing that it had to go over so much of the ground already covered by Gounod. His second ballet,

La Danse, was even better than this; and at the time it was produced hopes were formed that a brighter day was dawning for ballets of elaborate musical value in London. If Algernon Ashton had been born a little less clever, he would not have failed to reach a high place among contemporary musicians. His concerted chamber compositions show a great wealth of invention and a remarkable skill in structure, but it seems that only the severer moods of the great masters appeal to him very strongly, and he is content to follow, or even to surpass them, in intricacy, forgetting that they have in all cases been delightful to listen to as well as clever. Of Basil Harwood's fine *Inclina, Domine* (Gloucester, 1898), and his excellent work as organist of Christ Church, Oxford, and conductor of the Oxford "Bach Choir" brief mention must be made.

The composers of what may be called the next generation, those, namely, who were born between the years 1862 and 1869, are very numerous; perhaps the one who has had the most successful career of all hitherto is Edward German, an illustrious pupil of the Royal Academy. His strong affinity is for subjects affording opportunity

for grace and distinction, and his engagement as conductor at the Globe Theatre in 1889 made him acquainted with the requirements of the stage, to which he had already, before leaving the Academy, contributed a little operetta, *The Rival Poets*, which was found to be well worth reviving at the same institution in 1901. His incidental music to *Richard III.*, *The Tempter*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, and *As You Like It*, has many admirable qualities, for the sake of which, no doubt, he was chosen to finish Sullivan's last Savoy opera, *The Emerald Isle*. Symphonies, suites, serenades, and a great number of songs, have from time to time delighted the public at festivals and elsewhere, and German's position is well assured as one of the "coming men." Arthur Somervell, who received his musical education at Cambridge, Berlin, and the Royal College of Music, has many of the same qualities as German, such as a faculty for inventing lovely themes, and for illustrating graceful, lyrical poems. His Mass was given by the Bach Choir in 1891; *The Forsaken Merman* came out at the Leeds Festival of 1895; in the same year *The Power of Sound* had been given in connection

with the Wakefield competition at Kendal; a charming setting of an *Elegy* by Robert Bridges was given at one of the smaller festivals in 1896, his *Ode to the Sea* at the Birmingham Festival 1897. For orchestra alone, he has written a ballad, *Helen of Kirkconnell*, an orchestral suite, *In Arcady*, and he has also published many pianoforte pieces of interest and beauty; but his songs are the works by which his name will be longest remembered, for, though he scores well, his orchestral writing does not strike the hearer as being very spontaneous, or as being primarily intended for the orchestra. His many songs, among which the most beautiful are, perhaps, "When fairyland was young," "Love's Apology," and "Take, O take those lips away," have enjoyed an immense amount of popularity, and his cycle of lyrics from Tennyson's *Maud* is in the repertory of every baritone. Certain things in the set he has never surpassed in beauty of expression or felicity of treatment, and if he fails it is only where the words do not seem to call for lyrical illustration. The overture, *Spring and Youth*; the intermezzo, *The Shepherd's Call*, and the *Suite Villageoise* of Herbert Bunning are

enough to make the musical world wish for a good deal more music from the same pen; his studies in Italy give his music a southern character, which is not an unwelcome relief after the ordinary German models taken by many of the younger composers. An overture, *Leonatus and Imogen*, is the chief work of Dr. G. J. Bennett, a very able pupil of Rheinberger, whose work as organist of Lincoln Cathedral has taken him from the regular world of orchestral music. A remarkably fine Mass in D, by Stewart Macpherson, is the most ambitious effort of the careful and skilled conductor of the Westminster Orchestral Society; and a spirited *Song of the Western Men*, by G. R. Betjemann, was enough, even if the composer had nothing else, to show how great a loss his death in an Alpine accident in 1896 was to English music. C. A. Lidgey's orchestral pieces, *Women and Roses* and *A Day Dream*, were produced at the Crystal Palace with much success, and various songs of his have won deserved favour. As an Eton master, A. M. Goodhart's career as a composer has been necessarily limited, but his "School Songs" have marked a new era in such things, being straightforward and tuneful enough for the

average schoolboy to learn and like, and at the same time thoroughly interesting and beautiful as music. His madrigals, such as "Lady on the Silver Throne" from the collection of "Choral Songs in honour of Queen Victoria," are masterly in design, and in complete sympathy with the finest models of the past. Charles Wood, a prominent scholar of the Royal College, showed, in much of his earlier work, a leaning towards the scholastic side of music; his erudition was considerable, but real beauty often seemed to have escaped him. His music to the *Ion* of Euripides (Cambridge, 1890) and *Iphigeneia in Tauris* (Cambridge, 1894) revealed, however, very high qualities, and that he is strongly appealed to by poems of vigorous imagination is amply proved by his wonderful setting of Walt Whitman's "Ethiopia saluting the Colours," one of the most imaginative and romantic songs in existence. Amherst Webber, a clever pupil of Nicodé in Dresden, has published little beside some beautiful and expressive songs, but a MS. trio obtained great favour at Oxford some years ago, and his work in connection with the opera has borne important fruit on both sides of the Atlantic.

Some of G. B. Aitken's pieces for violin, piano, &c., are interesting, but he has not yet made any great mark, though some of his songs are deservedly popular. The compositions of Emil Kreuz are very numerous and their standard is invariably high; for the instrument by which he has made his name illustrious, the viola, he has written many solos; and besides a great many songs of real beauty he has written a good deal of chamber music, such as a trio in C, and a quintet for strings and horn. Godfrey Pringle's too short career allowed him to produce but little music, and scarcely any, except a fine ballad for baritone "Lo Zingaro," was heard outside the walls of the Royal College; but he had vivid imagination, and should have done much if he had lived. Samuel Liddle, whose fame as an accompanist is deservedly very great, has written many fine and expressive songs, of which the "Arabian Love Song" is perhaps the best; that his heart is in this style of music rather than in that wherein his chief successes have been gained, the semi-sacred and wholly sentimental ballads that are only too familiar, is obvious to every intelligent person; but circumstances are often

too strong for young artists, and for some success is in itself a snare. In the lighter forms of music, as in his operetta, *Cigarette*, &c., J. Haydn Parry (d. 1894) showed something more than mere promise, for he handled his subject with great artistic skill and originality, and success seemed well within his grasp.

Among sundry other young composers belonging to the same artistic generation as those just mentioned, there took place a kind of epidemic of resistance to the teaching of the schools; I am not concerned to decide with whom the fault lay in any given case; on the one hand, great originality of thought is very apt to produce a natural impatience with methods devised for the help of less sensitive organisms; and on the other hand, schools cannot easily change or modify their regulations whenever they undertake the education of an exceptional kind of talent. Considering the prodigious amount of distinct talent, not to say genius, that has appeared within the last few decades in England, it is wonderful that there should not have been more cases of what I may call revolt than I now have to enumerate. In all instances, the rebellion was a purely artistic one,

and in many cases the personal relations between the head of the school and the young man who went off in a fit of impatience have remained perfectly friendly; the result seems to show that schools of music, unless they could be far more elastic than they are, are not the best centres of education for exceptional genius, unless the genius can bear to be controlled for its own good. In very nearly all the cases to be spoken of the resistance to authority has in the end proved sadly detrimental to the ultimate success of the impatient student, who is pretty sure to acquire some twist of character, some artistic mannerism, or some defiant way of behaving himself, which must stand in his way. The earliest case in this generation was that of Eugene d'Albert, who withdrew from the National Training School, and has ultimately attained what we must suppose to have been the wish of his heart, to be reckoned among German musicians. From the successor of the Training School, the Royal College of Music, G. W. L. Marshall-Hall withdrew before completing his course of training; he is rich in ideas, but seldom very happy in their treatment, and he generally attempts more than he can quite carry

out. The College has managed to adapt itself to the needs of certain exceptional natures more successfully than the Academy has done; and it is to the credit of the younger institution that such a man as Hamish MacCunn fulfilled the period of his tutelage. No sooner was it over, than he took the public by storm with his overture, *Land of the Mountain and Flood*, given at the Crystal Palace in 1887, and followed at no long interval by another, *The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow*, his choral works, *Lord Ullin's Daughter* and *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, being given at the same centre of music with the greatest possible success. A number of other cantatas followed these, such as *Bonnie Kilmeny* and *Queen Hynde of Caledon*, and the list of his important earlier works is completed by the orchestral ballad, *The Ship of the Fiend*; his two operas, *Jeanie Deans* and *Diarmid*, have been referred to in the last chapter. A good many songs show the versatility of his talent, which sometimes approaches very near genius. A contemporary of his at the College, and his fellow-countryman, Edmonstoune Duncan, has come less prominently before the public, but his works, whether for instruments or

voices, show a decided feeling for structural beauty. Two other Scottish composers, pupils of the Royal Academy, J. Moir Clark and Learmont Drysdale, were in the institution for only a comparatively short time; the former wrote an admirable quintet, brought forward in 1893, and a less interesting "Scotch Suite" for orchestra, played in 1895; the latter, represented by a prize overture, *Tam o' Shanter* (Crystal Palace, 1891), produced a well-scored overture, *Herondean*, in 1894, and has written successful music to plays mostly performed out of London. Perhaps the healthiest manifestation of what I have called the spirit of rebellion took the shape of a bold experiment made by six pupils of the Royal Academy, not at all as a definite protest against the system of this school in particular, but rather as a means of bringing themselves and their music before the public in an important way. It was at a concert given by Mr. Granville Bantock at the end of 1896, in the Queen's Hall, that these six men came into notice as a definite group of new writers. The giver of the concert was almost the youngest of the set; William Wallace, the eldest of them, had shown strong individuality in his

incidental music to Ibsen's *Lady from the Sea* and *The Passing of Beatrice*, both in 1892; a number of other orchestral works full of poetry and imagination were heard since then, and he was represented at the concert under discussion by a scena, *The Rhapsody of Mary Magdalene*, for soprano and orchestra; he attained only in the first year of the XXth century the honour of performance at the Philharmonic, being represented by a very fine symphonic poem. The entry to the exclusive precincts of the Philharmonic was gained far earlier by Erskine Allon, whose beautiful ballad, *Annie of Lochroyan*, for soprano, chorus, and orchestra, was given with great success in 1893; he was a prolific and most ingenious writer, but though comparatively few of his works gained the ear of the public there is much in them, and his last work the cantata, *The Oak of Geismar*, produced by the Highbury Philharmonic Society shortly before the young composer's death in 1897, deserves to live. At the concert of 1896 he was represented by his interesting and picturesque overture, *The Maid of Colonsay*. Reginald Steggall, who had been represented at the Crystal Palace earlier in 1896 by a scena, *Alcestis*, contri-

buted a similar work, *Elaine*, to the scheme, and an *Ave Maria* of his was brought forward at a chamber concert intended to be in a manner supplementary to this one. He has the happy knack of writing well for the voice, and his ideas are decidedly expressive. Stanley Hawley has found a special branch of composition in which he has attained an unassailable position, that of writing music to accompany recitation. On the occasion of this concert, he contributed one of these compositions scored for orchestra. Of Granville Bantock's work it is not easy to speak very shortly; among the works of his early life must be mentioned *The Fire Worshippers*, a cantata, and *Caedmar* and *The Pearl of Iran*, one-act operas. His conceptions are of the grandest and most imposing kind; such a scheme as the illustration of Southey's *Curse of Kehama* by a series of two dozen symphonic poems, which are never intended to figure in one programme, has surely occurred to no one else; one of these, an overture to *Eugene Aram*, and a set of "Arabian Songs," formed his contribution to the concert. Various numbers of the set of symphonic poems have since been heard at the Philharmonic and elsewhere. The

composer's feeling for Oriental colouring is very remarkable, his musical ideas are commensurate with the grandeur of his imaginings, and it is beyond question that his is a nature which should do great things. He owned the interesting *New Quarterly Musical Review* during the three years of its existence. His work in popularising the best music of all schools, during his tenure of the conductorship of the Tower, New Brighton, was of great artistic value; and as head of the musical department of the Midland Institute, Birmingham, there is no doubt that his energies will have a great effect on music in the Midlands. He is, as it were, the centre of the group already spoken of, whose number is completed by Arthur Hinton, the composer of the orchestral work, *The Triumph of Cæsar*, at the concert so often mentioned, as well as of many piano pieces of great beauty, and some songs.

It is desirable in the next place to enumerate a group of female composers who have shown remarkable gifts, gifts which are certainly enough to warrant us in doubting the general dictum that no woman has ever yet succeeded in the creative arts. Putting aside the trivial produc-

tions of the "Claribels" and Virginia Gabriels, the music of Alice Mary Smith (Mrs. Meadows White) deserves more than passing mention; two of her choral works, the *Ode to the North-East Wind*, and the *Passions* were highly appreciated, and the list of her compositions left at her death in 1884, includes two symphonies and works in many forms. Ethel Smyth's genius lies in the direction of strong and even virile work; her overture, *Antony and Cleopatra*, given at the Crystal Palace and the London Symphony Concerts, showed that she understood all the resources of the orchestra, and that she was no amateur, and her Mass, given by the Royal Choral Society in 1893, was a masterpiece in its way. The influence of Bach was easily obvious to every hearer, but there was plenty of original thought in the work, and if it may be said with deference, Miss Smyth's work suffers, if at all, from a lack of those qualities which are usually associated with her sex, namely, grace, charm, and tenderness. Of her opera, *Fantasio*, the only adequate performance took place in the XXth century, at Carlsrühe in 1901; but it had been given before at Weimar, and, although it has not yet come

before her countrymen for criticism, there seems no doubt that it is a work of distinction and real power. Two pianists, pupils of the Royal Academy of Music, Agnes Zimmermann and Dora Bright, have written works of serious aim and remarkable accomplishment, mainly in the direction of concerted chamber music, in which the former has shown the true instinct for *ensemble* in her suite in trio-form, and elsewhere. The songs of Maude Valérie White are known and loved wherever the English language is spoken; here and there some of them have approached dangerously near the artistic level of the average "shop song"; but it is safe to say that not a note of hers has been put down because the public taste pointed in such or such a direction; whatever she has done has been from her own impulses, and it is this which has kept her best lyrics so long before the public, and has won them a way to the hearts of the best amateurs. They are not always learned, but they never fall short in inspiration, or in effectiveness for the voice. Mary Carmichael, an admirable accompanist, has written many songs that have been lastingly popular, and never one merely to sell. Rosalind F. Ellicott has produced several

works of importance at the Festivals of the Three Choirs, and her chamber-music is distinctly meritorious. Amy E. Horrocks' music to Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott" reaches a very high level of expressiveness. Edith Swepstone's cantatas for female voices, and solo songs, are deservedly successful; and Ethel Boyce's *Young Lochinvar* (1890) as well as her *Sands of Corriemie*, and other cantatas for ladies' choirs, as well as many songs of high aim, deserve mention in this place. Florence Gilbert, Frances Allitsen, and Florence Aylward have written songs that will not soon be forgotten, although in some of them they have fallen considerably below the line that is commonly called artistic; and Liza Lehmann, after her successful career as a concert-singer, celebrated the beginning of her married life by the publication of several cycles of songs and quartets, such as *In a Persian Garden* and *The Daisy Chain* for four voices, or the *In Memoriam* cycle for baritone solo. She has written many songs, and in all of them the convenience of the singer is duly consulted; her more ambitious efforts to give worthy utterance to some of the noblest words in the language, are not always absolutely

satisfactory in the highest sense, but in the face of such adulation as they have received from all classes of professional and amateur musicians, it seems ungracious to hint that she could do better, and in dealing with the remembered experiences of childhood, as in many a number of *The Daisy Chain*, she is nearly always happy. Ethel Barns, besides being an accomplished violinist, has written many charming pieces for her own instrument, as well as songs with and without violin obligato. A remarkably beautiful series of songs set to words taken, like many of those in *The Daisy Chain*, from Stevenson's immortal *Child's Garden of Verses*, and some from the same author's *Songs of Travel*, were written by Katharine M. Ramsay (now Marchioness of Tullibardine); and there are very few even of the great composers that need be ashamed to be supposed their author.

We next come to a generation very few of whom have passed their thirtieth year, and concerning most of whom, therefore, hope that they will fulfil the promise they have given is the only reasonable attitude. It must suffice to mention the chief attainments of each, and to restrict

criticism to the broadest generalisations. Percy Rideout, the eldest of the group, has as yet done little to establish the position he gained in his *Epipsychidion*, an overture given at one of Henschel's concerts in 1891. H. Walford Davies' choral ballad, *Hervé Riel*, was enough to show how vigorous was the composer's invention, and many of his songs are of a similar nature, as, for example, "The Farewell" and "Hymn before Action." As organist of the Temple Church he has good opportunities for keeping up a high standard of sacred music, and in his three sonatas for piano and violin we may easily trace a remarkable power of structural design, and great expressive beauty. S. P. Waddington's *John Gilpin* is an extremely humorous choral work, his "suite" for piano duet has remarkably beautiful things in it, and from the future of both these composers much may be expected. Various orchestral works by Walter Handel Thorley were brought out at a concert given for the purpose in 1899; a *Macbeth* overture fully justified the high position he has held for some time in the north of England. Reginald Somerville manifested a real dramatic talent in his one-act opera, *The 'Prentice Pillar*, produced at

Her Majesty's Theatre in September 1897; and Alick Maclean has already shown strong instinct for operatic composition in *Quentin Durward* (1895), and *Petruccio*, a prize work in one act. Another decided talent mainly exhibited hitherto, in a more or less light vein, is that of Percy Pitt, whose choral ballad *Hohenlinden*, various songs and pianoforte pieces, and his excellent skill as an accompanist, entitle him to favourable mention. His contemporary, Dr. Ernest Walker, is attracted rather by music of a very different stamp; beauty of design appeals to him strongly, and in his various works for violin, piano, or voice he shows great individuality and charm. His two-part songs for ladies' voices are a good deal more interesting than the average of such things, and his vocal quartets, "Songs from *England's Helicon*" with pianoforte accompaniment, are admirably effective as well as strikingly fresh in invention. R. Vaughan Williams has strong individuality, and an orchestral elegy of his, played at a concert of the Royal College, is as fine in its way as anything of the kind in existence. R. H. Walthew's *Pied Piper of Hamelin*, written while he was still at the Royal College,

has distinct humour, and many of his songs have obtained a wide success, since they are both taking and artistic. *The Ballad of Carmilhan* (1895) by A. Davidson Arnott, the various Scotch songs by W. Augustus Barratt, and an overture by Charles Macpherson, *Cridhe an Ghaidhil* show, the attraction of Scotch subjects on the younger Scotchmen; W. Henry Bell, in his *Canterbury Pilgrims* overture, has been no less happily inspired by English literature. E. W. Naylor's scena, *Merlin and the Gleam*, his cantata, *Arthur the King*, at present known only by its prologue, are sterling and dignified pieces of work; though Landon Ronald's talent has expended itself mostly in the direction of popular songs of distinct ability, and additions to the score of sundry comic operas, his powers are incontestable; while in music for the theatre Christopher Wilson, a holder of the Mendelssohn Scholarship and a pupil of the Royal Academy, has already done excellent work. G. von Holst's beautiful "Ave Maria" for female choir in eight parts is so deftly worked and so massively designed that he is certain to go far; and Nicholas Gatty's share of a comic opera, called *Tattercoats*, and various orchestral

works given at the Royal College, are enough to stamp him as an excellently artistic writer. His orchestral variations on "Old King Cole" are among the best modern *jeux d'esprit.*

In S. Coleridge-Taylor we come to a composer who has already made a distinguished mark with his scenes from *Hiawatha*, a work of which the three sections were honoured, the first by being produced at the Royal College while he was yet a pupil, the second by performance at a provincial festival, and the third by being commissioned for performance by the Royal Choral Society. In all that Mr. Taylor writes there is a warmth of colouring, an intensely individual note, and a richness of orchestration, that at once arrest the musical hearer, and in his music to *Herod*, one of his most recent works, these features made themselves appreciated notwithstanding the process of curtailment through which it had to pass, like almost all music written for stage-plays. If he has not at present shown very much instinct for the regular forms accepted as classical, his contemporary, Donald Francis Tovey, has in many concerted works displayed an extraordinary affinity for them, and in his hands they are again

alive, as they are in very few except those of the undoubted masters. That such powers as he evinced, when quite a child, will produce in the future very great results, is beyond question. Norman O'Neill, a descendant of the Callcotts, has a real gift of melody, and his concerted chamber compositions are full of interest and good ideas well treated.

T. Tertius Noble's music to *The Wasps* (Cambridge 1897) and his *Birthday Greeting*, a *pièce d'occasion* in honour of the birthday of Joachim, celebrated at the Hovingham Festival of 1898, are both of them works not only of high actual attainment but of still greater promise. W. Y. Hurlstone, in a pianoforte concerto, a violin sonata, and other things, has shown very remarkable originality and feeling for beauty. T. F. Dunhill has the gift of graceful tenderness, and strong feeling for colour in music, as well as for fine rhythms; and a violin sonata by Alfred Wall, and certain dances for strings and piano by J. C. Holbrook, are works from the authors of which much may be expected. Harry Farjeon's clever little opera, *Floretta*, given at the Royal Academy when the composer was just of age,

showed very marked aptitude for dramatic composition, and various works of his have justified the favourable opinion then formed of him.

In any survey of English music, it would be unjust to pass over without mention the merely executive artists, many of whom have helped on the movement of the renaissance very importantly. The influence of various foreign musicians, of whom Hallé and Richter are types, has been dealt with before in connection with their work in the direction of musical progress, and it is not necessary in this place to refer to the thousands of distinguished foreign executants who visit England for the same purposes that their ancestors did, namely, to benefit by the high rate at which we reward artistic effort if only it comes from abroad. Among English concert-singers of the highest class, Anna Williams succeeded to the place of chief concert-soprano on the retirement of Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, retiring herself while still in full possession of her splendid powers —an example which might have been more widely followed in the profession. Edith Wynne, Annie Marriott, Clara Samuell, Mary Davies, Mrs. Hutchinson, have all enjoyed success in oratorio

work, and Helen Trust, Liza Lehmann, and Louise Dale are among the most prominent of the sopranos whose work is or was mostly confined to concerts. The place among contralti so long and honourably held by Madame Patey after the retirement of Madame Sainton-Dolby, was taken by Hilda Wilson. Marian McKenzie and Alice Gomez have shared a great deal of popular favour; among the younger singers Marie Brema and Muriel Foster are pre-eminent for their artistic aims and vocal skill; and Clara Butt has established herself firmly in popular favour. Among tenors the supreme place, so long held by Sims Reeves, was taken for a time by Joseph Maas, who died greatly regretted in 1886. Before his death the fame of Edward Lloyd had been made, but since that time, until the end of the century when he retired, Lloyd has been unapproached. W. H. Cummings' career as a vocalist has been a little overlooked on account of his later work as head of the Guildhall School of Music, but in the third quarter of the century he was deservedly eminent. William Shakespeare brought great musical knowledge and skill to bear on the interpretation of the best music, and no

one has ever quite filled his place in such things as Brahms' "Liebeslieder," in the first production of which in England he was associated with such singers as Frl. Friedländer, Frl. Redeker (now Lady Semon), and Mr. Henschel. This seems the proper place to refer to the excellent work of Marie Fillunger, as the artistic successor of Friedländer and the recognised exponent of the classical soprano songs. Ben Davies seems now to be enjoying the kind of monopoly that Sims Reeves formerly had; but Gregory Hast's powers have come to the front ever since he determined to leave the glee party with which he was formerly associated. As Santley is still unrivalled in many respects, and has in no sense retired from professional life, it is a little premature to speak of his recognised successor. Among the foremost baritones and basses of the latter part of the century must be named Watkin Mills, W. H. Brereton, Andrew Black, Daniel Price, H. Plunket Greene, Ffrangcon Davies, R. Kennerley Rumford, Norman Salmond, Douglas Powell, Richard Green, and Denham Price.

Of native pianists, since the days of Kate Loder (now Lady Thompson) and Arabella Goddard,

the most prominent of late years have been Agnes Zimmermann, Fanny Davies, Leonard Borwick, Frederic Lamond, Frederick Dawson, Adela Verne, Katharine Goodson, to say nothing of the many younger players whose fame does not yet justify the mention of their names. Among violinists the name of J. T. Carrodus was for many years more eminent than that of any other Englishman, although Henry Holmes' work was marked by a higher zeal for his art. Never was England richer than she now is in excellent players of stringed instruments, and in the younger generation must be named Emily Shinner (Mrs. A. F. Liddell), an illustrious pupil of Joachim, whose death in 1901 was deeply regretted, Isabella Donkersley, Henry Such, Arthur Bent, Aldo Antonietti, A. J. Slocombe, A. W. Payne, and Maud MacCarthy. The clever members of the Grimson family have attained distinction on every kind of stringed instrument, and their *ensemble* is superlatively good. Alfred Gibson, Emil Kreuz, and Alfred Hobday are the most eminent viola players of the day; and among distinguished violoncellists are Charles Ould, Edward Howell, W. E. Whitehouse, Paul Ludwig, and W. H. Squire. Barrett

on the flute, Malsch on the oboe, Clinton on the clarinet, Wotton on the bassoon, Busby on the horn and Morrow on the trumpet have been for years at the top of the tree as players of wind instruments.

Amateur orchestral societies have done an excellent work in making the average man familiar with the best music; some of the societies are only partially amateur, the important places being filled by professional players. The Stock Exchange Orchestral Society (conductor, A. W. Payne), the Strolling Players' Orchestra (conductor Norfolk Megone — subsequently William Shakespeare), the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society (conductor Ernest Ford), and the Westminster Orchestral Society (conductor Stewart Macpherson) have all done capital work in London for many years past. In a more private way, the Wandering Minstrels (conductor Lionel Benson), the South Hampstead Orchestra (conductor Mrs. Julian Marshall), the string band conducted until a few years ago by the Countess of Radnor, and the Charles Williams Orchestra have made their mark on the music of the time, and have had great influence in spreading the love of music through all classes of society.

CHAPTER XII

DRAWBACKS AND PROSPECTS

It would be impossible to leave the music of the XIXth century without a few words on the condition in which the art finds itself at the century's close. In a thousand ways the musical atmosphere is more favourable than it was to native talent; the young student who, not so many years ago, was called upon to decide which of the foreign capitals he should favour if his musical education was to be a really complete one, now finds no need to go abroad at all, so many and so excellent are the opportunities for gaining skill, knowledge, and experience at home. When his education is finished, and he is ready to take his place in the profession, he now finds his nationality to be no bar to his success; the public and the press are no longer dazzled by the appellation "Herr," "Signor," or "Mme.," or by the

sight of a name they cannot pronounce. In connection with this, it is to be observed that among the better classes of English female singers are an increasing number who boldly call themselves "Mrs.," and who do not appear to have suffered any pecuniary inconvenience from the abandonment of the "Mme.," which was *de rigueur* for married musical ladies not so long ago. The difficulties that lie before the applicant for musical honours are now not so much the neglect or apathy of his countrymen, or foreign competition, as the overcrowded state of the profession in England. While we may regret this for the sake of individuals, it is clearly better that the bulk of the money spent in England on music should go into the pockets of the many English musicians rather than into those of comparatively few foreigners. While our proverbial hospitality is still freely exercised in the case of real merit shown by foreign artists, we are in these later days delivered from the plague of foreign mediocrities of the kind which used to swamp the concert-room ten or twelve years ago. Naturally, the amount of native competition has the inevitable tendency of raising the general standard of public perfor-

mances, and this most desirable result has been actually attained.

While we are justified in congratulating ourselves on what the renaissance has accomplished, it behoves us to look at the reverse of the picture, and to realise what are the actual hindrances to our musical progress, and whether they can be stopped or lessened. It seems to me that the main evils of our musical life are threefold: first, the diffusion of public interest; second, the bane of professionalism; and third, the fungus of commercialism. In the first place, owing to the enormous amount of interest taken in music, people at large are apt to have a far more definite idea than they formerly had as to why they like or dislike certain music or a certain performer; and there is a tendency among all classes to "run" certain individuals, to patronise only these individuals' concerts, and in general to avoid co-operation with other music-lovers for the good of the art as a whole. These kind-hearted persons do not see that if they applied their energies to supporting the larger enterprises more heartily it would be ultimately for the good of their own favourites, who are now too often made conceited

by the admiration of a few amateurs, with the necessary result that they are unjustly despised by the friends of some rival artist. At the bottom of the generosity which thus stultifies collective efforts in music there is generally a conscious or unconscious seed of pride; the lady who goes to no concerts but those which her favourite gives feels that she is in some sort the artist's owner, that she helped to "discover" him, and that therefore she is pledged to think him better than any one else in the same line. Notwithstanding the material support which is, of course, a great advantage to the recipient of such favour as this, there is an almost inevitable tendency in the artist to become only too conscious of his own merits, and to adopt an overbearing or intolerant manner, which must do him harm with those of the profession who have emerged from the state in which they were "protected" by a handful of rich amateurs. The harmfulness of musical coteries and cliques is exerted in this direction more than in any other, and if it could be conquered we should see, to take but one example, the best orchestral concerts more widely encouraged, and by a more intelligent

class of persons than those by whom they are now attended.

The second hindrance to music is certainly less obnoxious than it formerly was, and as musical culture increases both in depth and breadth, stimulating more thorough and scientific knowledge, and reaching an ever-increasing number of persons, it must disappear. It is not quite easy to define what I have called "professionalism"; but no one who knows the true condition of the profession can be ignorant of the harm it does. In various educational institutions—it is far more common, by the way, in the private establishments run on speculative lines, without any authority or recognition, than in the great chartered schools—the object set before the students is to succeed financially rather than artistically; money, not music, is held up as the ideal to be aimed at, and there is nothing to distinguish the general atmosphere from that which must prevail where young people are associated for the purpose of learning a mere trade. The various aspects of commercialism must be dealt with subsequently; but apart from the underhand tricks by which music is made a means of profit, there is a

confusion in too many professional minds between artistic and financial success. That those who make a great income out of music should be envied by their less fortunate colleagues is only natural; but that the fact of their making a great income should of itself raise them to a position of eminence inside the profession is greatly to be regretted. Yet they attain not only the price for which they have very often sold their artistic consciences, but a false position in the eyes of their own fellows, who pay to the favourites of the public that respect which should be given only to artistic worth, whether it be recognised outside or not. In many cases, too, it has happened that the various professional cliques have been so deeply engaged in decrying, or actually intriguing against, one another, that foreigners of cooler blood have walked off with the prize for which the various parties were contending. From time to time certain societies have been started with the object of defending native talent from the real encroachments of the foreigner, or from the imaginary terrors of a raid of amateurs who were represented as on the point of taking the bread out of the mouths of the professionals; but these societies

have only blinded the eyes of their members to the general movement of the art at home and abroad, and have fostered the narrow professionalistic attitude towards all music.

A far greater danger than either of these is the third of the hindrances I have named. The commercialism by which the art is surrounded on all sides is a growing evil, for it arises from the increased interest taken in music throughout the country, and if not checked is sure to effect an enormous amount of harm. The way in which the trade view of music, as opposed to the artistic view, is encouraged in certain centres of learning, prepares the young student for the temptations by which he is certain to be assailed as soon as his education is finished, and he is ready to appear before the public, whether as composer or performer. In one way or other, he is sure to be asked to prostitute his talent for the sake of getting a livelihood a little before the time at which he has a right to count upon earning enough to live upon. Nearly all the music-publishers, and a large proportion of the concert-givers, are vowed to the worship of the fetish popularity, and they have a good deal of excuse

for supposing the public to be attracted more by what is bad than by what is good. But surely it is not illogical to suppose it possible to overstock the market with bad music, and as easy to lose money over publishing a bad song that is not wanted as to risk financial failure with a good song. Every one who has watched the music-market for some years will readily grasp the fact that for one bad song that brings fortune to the publisher, he must publish a great number of experimental songs, all equally bad, in the false hope that some of them will succeed. If commercialism were true to itself, and were always to be depended upon for rewarding its votaries with the financial success for which they have sold their artistic birthright, there would be little hope of making headway against it; for the excuse universally alleged for the transaction, whatever form it takes, *Il faut vivre*, is always a valid one to the person who makes it, and who is seldom able to grasp that there may be something equally practical in the historical retort, *Je n'en vois pas la nécessité*. It is the worst, or the best, thing about the transaction that it so very often means financial failure, as well as the loss of all artistic

prestige; to sell one's soul is bad enough, but to lose money by the sale is a piece of unparalleled folly which would be hardly credible if it were not so common. For the genuine artist who manages to exist on a poor pittance rather than debase his art there is always the chance, however distant, that some day luck may turn, and he may be rewarded for his constancy; but the man who has sold himself, and is yet unsuccessful, finds no place of repentance, no way by which he may return to artistic purity. It is far harder to convince the average amateur that a writer or a performer who has once notoriously prostituted his gifts may after all do something worth hearing, than it is to persuade him that there is a real and unspoilt talent in danger of starvation in a London slum. Of the system by which singers are paid a royalty on every copy of the songs they undertake to introduce it is difficult to speak temperately; but this, and a good many of the other evils associated with the market for published music, would be remedied comparatively easily if there were a shop for the sale of music (not a publishing house, but a place where all publications could be seen) in central London just

as there is in every country town. Commercialism has many lures to spread for the confiding beginner, and in many different forms he is offered the bait of artistic success. The system by which an agent or a syndicate pays a young artist a fixed income for so many years, and then exploits him, compelling him to give the public his worst work instead of his best, is not as yet as widely recognised in the world of music as in that of painting, but it does exist. Concert-agents have much to answer for, and it is significant of the altered position of music in England that these parasites of prosperity have only existed in a prominent way since the renaissance was an accomplished fact. Like the ordinary publisher, the concert-agent is misled by his own preferences, which are generally for the worst types of music; he will contentedly face failure for his clients if only he can persuade them to cut out from their programmes all that is likely to interest the intelligent part of the public. His contentment, as may be guessed, is purely vicarious, for he takes care never to be a loser; whoever spends money on the concert he arranges, he makes something out of it, for even if it is announced as his own

speculation, he is probably receiving sums from the artists who are supposed to help him gratuitously, sums not recognised as bribes but ostensibly exacted to protect him against loss. This payment for the privilege of the *entrée* into the musical world is perhaps the most disgraceful fact in connection with the art in England. The system, imported some time ago from Germany, has unfortunately taken root among us, and the only comfort about it is that the people who are in the habit of paying their way into publicity very soon become more or less notorious for it, and their vogue is generally of very short duration. Things have a way of righting themselves in the musical world, though they may take some time; and for the great majority of artists it is true that they fall into their right places after a time, or, at least, that they attain no smaller success than they deserve. They may, by underhand means or the folly of the public, clamber to a higher place in public estimation than they can claim on their own merits, but even then it does not follow that they keep that place.

For reasons I need not give in detail, it is difficult for me to speak of the position of the musical

press in regard to music in England; but it is my belief that, with a very few and very notorious, though unimportant, exceptions, the accredited representatives of the leading newspapers are above suspicion on the score of honesty, and that, for the most part, they have given all the encouragement in their power to the best English music. They must be ranked, with the publishers and the concert-managers, among the "middlemen" of music, for they are but one of the channels through which the music-maker is brought into contact with the music-consumer; but the majority of them maintain a high standard of taste, and in regard to moral cleanliness of hands they can compare most favourably not only with the other middlemen of the art in England but with their foreign colleagues. Such press conspiracies as have been rumoured to exist abroad are happily unknown here; and the very disagreements in judgment which are sometimes sneered at in critics are in reality a healthy sign of an independence it is eminently desirable to preserve.

Whether English music will hold a higher position throughout the XXth century than it does at its beginning it is, of course, impossible to

predict; that more genius will be manifested in the future than has been in the recent past is most unlikely; but still more improbable is it that the renaissance of which I have traced the beginnings should cease to exert its influence in the years to come. During the last quarter of the XIXth century England has regained a position she has not held for at least two centuries, and it remains not only for English musicians to do good work in the future, but for English men and women not actively engaged in music themselves, to give the youngest of the arts that kind of recognition which the sister arts have never lacked. To many of those whose opinion is worth having, it seems that music in England is the only one of the arts that has a vivid life at the present moment; and it is for the English to set the example of appreciating native attainment, if that attainment is ever to enjoy, what English music has never yet obtained, the wide recognition of the rest of the world.

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