

THE GREAT COMPOSERS.

SOME NEW AND INTERESTING ANECDOTES CONCERNING THEM.

First Comes Emphatic Handel—Then Cynical Haydn—Again the Single-Minded Mozart, and Anon the Methodical Cherubini.

Here are a few fresh anecdotes concerning the wit, humor, and eccentricity of the old composers on the Continent.

George Friedrich Handel directed for some time the opera in London. He led on the harp. One evening, just as the orchestra was finishing the overture, an attendant told him that the prima donna, Signora Cuzzoni, had sent down word from her dressing room that she was too ill to sing. Handel knew that her action was mere caprice. In a passion he let fall his harp, sprang up to her room, burst open her door, and, seizing the songstress, dragged her toward a window.

"I know you are a she devil," he shouted, "but I will compel you to behave yourself. If you don't go directly to the stage and sing, you will be lying out there on the pavement in five minutes."

This argument was too much for the prima donna. She hurried down stairs and sang like a nightingale.

Handel played the harp so beautifully that his accompaniment often attracted more attention from the audience than the singing. A jealous Italian tenor after a humiliating experience or two with a thus distracted house swore that the next time Handel tried to monopolize the applause he would jump down from the stage and smash the harp.

"Do it, do it," said Handel to the tenor, after having heard of the remark. "Only let me know beforehand when you will do it, for, by proper advertising, this performance may be made much more popular and profitable than your singing."

Joseph Haydn long lived away from his wife. One day a friend directed his attention to a bundle of unopened letters addressed to him and lying on his study table.

"Ah, you must not notice them. I don't. They are from my wife. She sends me the odious things once a month and I answer them once a month without having read the addresses. She does the same by my letters to her."

A young musician asked Mozart what to do in beginning to compose music.

"Do nothing," was the answer.

"But you did composition when much younger than I."

Certainly; but I asked no questions. If a man has the soul for it, he is shaken and tortured by it. He is forced to do it, and asks not how or why."

Mozart was the most absent minded of men. While he was busy with the composition of "Don Juan" he made a trip to Paris. He took chambers, and sat down immediately to work. After several hours he looked at the clock to find it long past dinner time. He clapped on his hat with all haste, and half ran, half trotted to the Palais Royal. Just as he stepped on the threshold a new idea budded in his mind. He walked in hesitatingly and abstractedly, sat down mechanically, and glanced thoughtlessly at the menu.

"A portion of vermicelli soup," he muttered.

The soup was brought, but the composer did not stir. Five minutes, ten minutes—a quarter of an hour passed, and the soup grew cold while the music of "Don Juan" took form in Mozart's mind. Finally the waiter removed the soup and asked what next.

"Fried sole," was Mozart's answer.

The soup was carried off untouched, and shortly the sole was placed before him. Mozart remained still completely absorbed in the thoughts of the composition. Six dishes were served consecutively with intervals of fifteen or twenty minutes, and all were carried away untasted and apparently unseen. Two hours after his entrance into the Palais Royal a small cup of black coffee was on the table before him. He raised his hand as if to take it, then suddenly his closed fist fell on the saucer, breaking it to splinters, and sending the coffee in every direction. "At last I have it!" he shouted, as he sprang from his chair. Before his untasted dinner he had composed the finale of the third act of "Don Juan."

Luigi Cherubini, the creator of "The Water Carrier," and an ardent admirer of Mozart, was his antipode in the method of his daily life. He could endure no perfumery, and usually left a room whenever a scented handkerchief was drawn from a woman's pocket. He was exceedingly painstaking in every detail of

life. Everything with him was carefully regulated. The smallest bit of his wardrobe and toilet articles was numbered. In his most prosperous seasons his overcoat, the crowning piece of his wardrobe, would bear the number 449 or 450. In less prosperous times, however, the number might fall as low as 225 or 230. On the morning of the day on which he died he called to his nurse for a pocket handkerchief. She brought it. He unfolded it carefully, looked at one corner and read there "No. 8."

"This won't do," he said. "Everything must be done in order, and here I have handkerchief No. 8, while the last one I used was No. 6."

"Yes, I know," answered the nurse; "but a drop of cologne fell on No. 7, and I knew you could not endure the odor of it."

"That makes no difference," said Cherubini. "Everything must be done in order. Bring in No. 7."

The handkerchief was brought, and Cherubini, after making a terrible face on account of the odor from the cologne, rubbed it across his nose with mutterings of disgust. Then he threw it on the floor and said: "Now give me No. 8." No. 8 was the last handkerchief that the composer ever used.

One winter afternoon a caller on Cherubini was surprised to find him in an unheated room in company with three full-bearded men, who had their feet in tubs of ice water.

"In the name of heaven, what are you doing here?" asked his friend.

"To-morrow we shall give a new mass," answered Cherubini, "and I need a couple of very heavy basses. None of the men here has a voice heavy enough, and so I am trying to deepen their notes a little."

MUSIC AND COLOUR.

Some Curious Suggestions as to the Connection Between Sound and Tint.

It is known to many, especially musicians, that some persons have a peculiar faculty by which the sound of certain instruments in an orchestra will produce in their minds an impression as of colour. So marked is this curious peculiarity in some people, that they will, on hearing a trombone, or French horn, or clarinet, at once announce that they see certain hues, usually the primary colours. In a note to a life of Haydn, the composer, occurs the following: "Perhaps there is nothing in nature that is capable of being so well represented by sound as light." The answer of the blind man, who, on being asked what idea he had of scarlet, replied that it was like the sound of a trumpet, is less absurd than may at first be apprehended. It should be observed that the character of different instruments depends not only on the acuteness or gravity of their tone, but also on the degree of force with which sounds are produced by them. If, as Sir Isaac Newton supposed, the impulse upon the nerves of the eye produced by colours is similar in kind or degree to that produced upon the ear by sounds, the impression upon the sensorium, or seat of sense in the brain, will probably be the same, or so nearly so that the ideas of the respective external objects will be associated in the mind. According to this theory the different musical instruments may be characterized by corresponding colours so as to be fancifully classed in the following manner:—

Wind Instruments.

Trombone.....	Deep red
Trumpet.....	Scarlet
Clarinet.....	Orange
Oboe.....	Yellow
Bassoon (alto).....	Deep yellow
Flute.....	Sky-blue
Diapason.....	Deeper blue
Double diapason.....	Purple
Horn.....	Violet

String Instruments.

Violin.....	Pink
Viola.....	Rose
Violoncello.....	Red
Double bass.....	Deep crimson-red

The sinfonia in "The Creation," which represents the rising of the sun, is an exemplification of this theory. In the commencement of this piece our attention is attracted by a soft, streaming note from the violin, which is scarcely discernible till the rays of sound which issue from the first violin diverge into the chord of the second, to which is gradually imparted a greater fulness of colour as the violas and violoncellos steal in with expanding harmony. At the fifth bar the oboes begin to shed their yellow lustre, while the flutes silvers the mounting rays of the violin. As the notes continue ascending to the highest point of brightness, the orange, the scarlet, and the purple unite in increasing splendour, and the glorious orb at length appears refulgent with all the brightest beams of harmony.

"And there was light."

This burst of the whole orchestra in the resounding key of C, accompanied with all the harmony possible, and prepared by the gradual failing of the sounds, actually produces upon us, at the first representation, the effect of a thousand torches suddenly flashing light into a dark cavern.—From the Illustrated American.

BEETHOVEN'S LAST HOURS.

For a long time Beethoven's musical compositions appealed to the public in vain for a recognition of their great merits. The master was led almost to doubt his own genius. He was disappointed and unhappy. He retired to Baden, where he lived, isolated and sad, in a small house which scarcely sufficed for his necessities. To crown his misfortunes he there became completely deaf. Alone with the birds and the flowers he spent his time in wandering in the green alleys of the forests, around the old town, giving scope to his genius, composing his marvellous symphonies while he approached the very gates of heaven with his melodious accents, too beautiful for human ears, and which the angels could only comprehend.

In the midst of this extreme solitude a letter arrived, which brought new griefs, and, unwillingly, he was obliged to turn again to worldly affairs. A nephew, whom he had brought up, and to whom he was really attached, wrote him, desiring his immediate presence in Vienna. He had become unexpectedly tied up in business affairs of a disastrous nature, from which his uncle alone could release him. Obligated to perform the journey on foot, because of his poverty, he stopped extremely exhausted, and with still several leagues to go, at the gate of a small, mean looking house, to rest and ask shelter from the storm that was then raging. The humble inmates received him with hospitality, invited him to partake of the supper, and he was given the master's place at the warm fireplace. When the simple meal was over the old man of the family rose and opened an old-fashioned clavecin, the three sons taking each a violin, and the mother and daughter their domestic work. The father giving the key note, the four began playing in concert with that harmony and precision known only to the German people. Their whole souls went out to the instruments as they played. When they had finished each shook the other's hands warmly as if they were very happy in each other's ability; and even the young girl threw herself, weeping, into her mother's arms. After consulting together they again resumed their instruments. This time their enthusiasm reached its height, their eyes filled with tears and the color mounted to their cheeks.

"My friends," said Beethoven, much affected, "I, too, love music, but I cannot enjoy it now, as you see I am stone deaf. I have not heard a sound! Let me look at the notes that have produced such wonderful emotion."

He took the paper in his hands, his eyes grew dim, his breath shorter, then he dropped the music, and he too burst into a flood of tears.

These peasants had been playing "The Allegretto of Beethoven's Symphony in A." The curiosity of the whole family was now aroused at this unlooked for demonstration, and all gathered around him. For some minutes his sobs prevented his utterance, then raising his head, he said, modestly, "I am Beethoven!"

Then they uncovered their heads in wonder and amaze, and bent before him in respectful silence. Beethoven extended his hand, which they pressed, and kissed, and wept over, for they knew that greater than a king was the man they were now entertaining. Seeing their look of reverence, Beethoven held out his arms and embraced them all—father, mother, young girl and three brothers. All at once he rose up, went to the clavecin, motioned the young men to take up their violins, and himself performed the piano part of this wonderful composition. It was an inspiration to the performers; never had they heard such music. Half the night passed and the enraptured peasants still listened. Those were the last notes of the dying man!

The old father made him accept his own bed, but poor Beethoven in the night, becoming feverish and restless, rose to take the air, and went forth from the dwelling with bare feet. The winds were sighing through the branches of the trees and moaned along the avenues of the wood. Beethoven wandered about till early morning, when he returned to the house, not knowing whither he had gone. He had been seized with a severe chill, and his mind was already wandering. The kind old man sent at once for a physician, but

dropsy on the chest was found to have declared itself, and within two days, spite of all care and skill, it was pronounced that Beethoven must die. And in truth, life was every moment ebbing.

As he lay upon his bed, pale and in great suffering, a man entered. It was Hammel, the friend of many years—his only friend. He had learned of his illness, while on a visit to Vienna, and came not only to nurse him, but to bring him money. It was too late! Beethoven could never speak to him again. The only thing he could do was to bestow upon him a grateful smile and firmly press his hand.

Hammel bent over him and, by means of an instrument, succeeded in making him hear the words of his compassion and regret, and more than all, of his long and deep affection. Beethoven's face lighted up like that of an angel. His eyes shone, he struggled for utterance, and at length gasped: "Is it not true, dear Hammel, that I have some talent after all?" These were the last words of Beethoven. He was buried in the little cemetery of Döbling, and very recently his remains have been removed to the great cemetery of Vienna in company with those of Schubert, who earnestly desired to be buried by his side.—Mrs. G. Hall in New York Observer.

ABBE LISZT DEAD.

End of a Famous and Somewhat Eccentric Career.

BAYREUTH, Aug. 1.—Abbe Liszt died at midnight last night.

Abbe Fritz Liszt, the celebrated pianist, who was received with such tremendous enthusiasm when he visited Paris and London last spring, had just lived long enough to be present at the wedding of his grand-daughter Daniela Von Bulow, Mme. Wagner's child by her first marriage. He made his appearance as a pianist in 1820, being then only in his ninth year. After eighteen months of zealous study in his native country, Hungary, he proceeded to Paris where he performed before the Duke of Orleans, and to London, where he became a great favorite of King George IV. His youth was one of wild adventure. At the age of 23 he eloped with the young Countess D'Agoult and lived with her during several years in a pretty villa on the shore of the Lake of Geneva. She bore him several children, among others Cosimo, who married firstly the pianist Hans Van Bulow, from whom she obtained a divorce to marry Richard Wagner. Another daughter, now dead, married M. Emilie Olivier, the Prime Minister of France at the time of the declaration of war with Germany in 1870. The Countess D'Agoult, who is better known by her nom de plume of Daniel Stern and who is reported to have been the most utterly depraved woman of the century, suddenly left him to become the mistress of Emile D'Girardin. Liszt, almost heart broken by her desertion, recommenced his travels, giving performances in all the capitals of Europe. Being, however, of a very impressionable nature, he was deeply attached to two married ladies one of whom was a Russian and the other a German princess, Sagnio Witegenstein. The latter after a great deal of difficulty, obtained a divorce from her husband, which was granted on the very day on which the Russian lady became a widow. Liszt having solemnly promised marriage to each of them separately was now at his wits end and in despair appealed to his friend and patron, Cardinal Hohenlohe, for assistance. Acting on the latter's advice he solved the difficulty by entering the priesthood, and probably with a view of escaping from the vengeance of two deeply wronged ladies. He took up his residence at the Vatican, where he remained until 1872. Since then he has lived mostly in Germany and has been the recipient of honors from almost every sovereign in Europe. He was covered with decorations, possessing close upon sixty, and was proud of them. His vanity was beyond all belief and hundreds of anecdotes are related of his extraordinary behavior in society.

HARMONY.

He who with bold and skilfull hand sweeps o'er
The Organ keys of some cathedral pile,
Flooding with music vault and nave and aisle,
While on his ear falls but a thunderous roar,
In the composer's lofty motive free,
Knows well that all that temple, vast and dim,
Thrills to its base with anthem, psalm and hymn,
True to the changeless laws of harmony,
So he who on these changing chords of life
With firm, sweet touch plays the Great Master's score
Of Truth and Love and Duty evermore,
Knows, too, that far beyond this roar and strife,
Though he may never hear, in the true time
These notes must all accord in symphonies sublime.
—The Leader.