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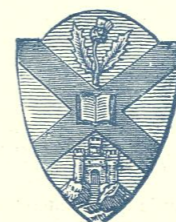
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SIXTH CONCERT
SATURDAY, 2nd MARCH 1918

PROGRAMME
WITH NOTES BY D. F. T.
PRICE SIXPENCE

THE KIRKHOPE CHOIR MAGAZINE,

An Anthology of Pure Polyphony,
Edited on New Methods

BY

D. F. TOVEY.

No. I.

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The rhythm of 16th-century music has been rendered quite unintelligible to modern readers and singers by the system of regular barring in modern scores. The publications of *The Kirkhope Choir Magazine* present the scores of 16th-century masterpieces sung by the Choir at the Concerts of the Reid Orchestra, and a system of barring is adopted which for the first time on record reveals the natural flow of the rhythm independently in each part.

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REID ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

SECOND SEASON

SIXTH CONCERT

IN

THE M'EWAN HALL,

ON

SATURDAY, 2ND MARCH 1918

at Three o'clock

THE KIRKHOPE CHOIR

Solo Pianist and Conductor

PROFESSOR DONALD FRANCIS TOVEY

Concert under the direction of

PATERSON & SONS, 27 George Street, Edinburgh

PROGRAMME

1. TRAGIC OVERTURE, Op. 81, - - - - - *Brahms*
2. MOTET, "Jesu, priceless treasure," for Five-part Chorus, - - - - - *Bach*

THE KIRKHOPE CHOIR.

3. "NORMANDY," Symphonic Variations for Pianoforte and Orchestra, - - - - - *Arthur Somervell*
(Conducted by the Composer.)

Pianoforte—Professor TOVEY.

4. FOUR SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MOTETS—
- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| "O God, the Rock of my whole strength," | - | - | <i>Wilbye</i> |
| "Paucitas dierum meorum," | } | - | - |
| "Exaltabo te," | | | |
| "Dum complerentur dies pentecostes," | | | |
| | | | |

THE KIRKHOPE CHOIR.

5. FANTASIA for Pianoforte, Chorus, and Orchestra, Op. 80, - - - - - *Beethoven*
Pianoforte—Professor TOVEY.

THE KIRKHOPE CHOIR.

STEINWAY CONCERT GRAND PIANOFORTE.

NOTES BY D. F. T.

I. TRAGIC OVERTURE, Op. 81 - - - - - *Brahms*

For one reason and another, the popular musical judgments of the last thirty or forty years seem often to show less grasp of the nature of tragedy than might be expected where the fine arts are taken seriously. It is to be hoped that the day is not distant when it shall be thought strange that so thorough a musician as Weingartner should endorse the once widespread doubt as to whether Brahms's Tragic Overture deserves its name, and when Tschaiakowsky shall be duly applauded for his wisdom in calling his last symphony "pathetic," though it was at first universally acclaimed as tragic.

Without troubling to go as far back as Aristotle, we may safely say that if there is any use in the special term "tragedy," the term implies something more sublime than pathos. When we try to define this sublime element, we instantly run counter to a large current of prejudice, which every age has regarded as its own modern unconventionality, though it belongs to the childhood of every human mind. This prejudice impels us to talk of the classic dignity and reserve of a truly tragic work of art when we wish to do it justice, and to talk of classical (or even of "academic") coldness when we are out of temper with it. The truth would seem to be that the word "reserve" already indicates far too negative a view of the whole matter. It is not academic coldness that makes Shakespeare close the tragedy of *Hamlet* in the triumph of Fortinbras: nor is it warmth of feeling that makes Garrick bring down the curtain on the moment of Hamlet's death. Shakespeare is far from despising the interests of the actor; he writes well for his instruments; but they are not going to prevent him from giving us the one final proof that the Hamlet whom we have been privileged to see in self-confessed weakness was not a successful actor-manager, but a man whose foes knew him for a soldier who as king would have "proved right royally."

Impressions of formality, and even of anti-climax, whether in music or in tragedy, are often by no means frigid in their ultimate results. We have been taken into an idealised world, and before we leave it we are made to understand that what we have been shown in it was really true. We have not been regaled by a mere feast of effects with "no dull moments, and the best reserved for the end"; still less have we had a story told us by a narrator who stands outside and points the moral or tells us what to admire. The story, the music, the art is made to convince us of its own reality, and the means by which it so convinces us are not merely those which rouse our emotion, but also those which show that we were justly moved. True art gives us more than the artist's word for his capacity to understand or believe in his own sentiments.

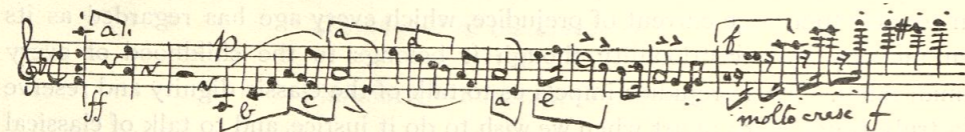
Brahms's Tragic Overture is certainly not written at the dictation of any

one tragedy, either in literature or in his own experience; and any tragic characters of which it may remind us can be safely regarded only as our own illustrations of its meaning. On this understanding, we may legitimately compare Brahms's energetic but severely formal conclusion with Shakespeare's Fortinbras, not as a course of events, but as an æsthetic fact; and there is no harm in comparing the mysterious and pathetic development (*Molto più moderato*, in the middle of the work) with the Fool in *King Lear*, or perhaps with some frightened child, the burden of whose grief is not "what will become of me?" but "what ought I to be doing?"

The order of events in this overture is as follows:—After two powerful chords which embody one of the principal figures of the themes, a noble subject is stated by the strings, rising swiftly to an uprush of energy, and followed by a counter-statement in the full orchestra—

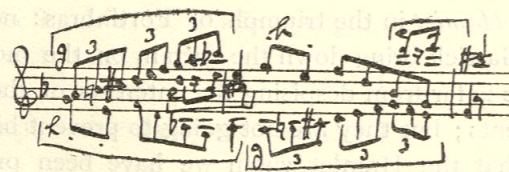
(All groups of notes bracketed under a letter, as [a], [b], are separately used in new developments and derivatives of the main themes.)

No. 1—



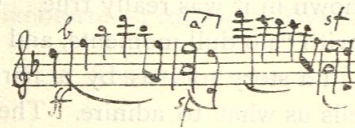
A procession of energetic and terse new themes follows, including one that has an important formal function, playing, as it were, the part of Fortinbras—

No. 2—



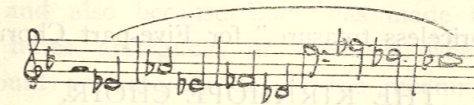
Soon there is a dramatic *crescendo* in which the basses, giving a fragment (b) of the first theme in a rising series of questions, are passionately answered by the wind-instruments (c). This culminates in a decisive close to the first Subject, a close which will eventually prove to be at the root of the whole tragedy—

No. 3—



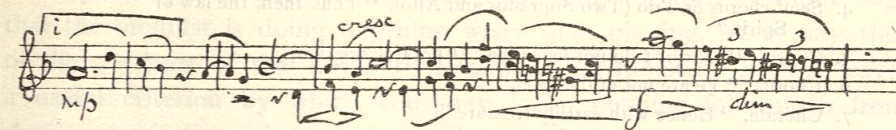
Then comes a sustained passage beginning in utter dejection, the broken utterances of an isolated oboe being sternly answered by the horns. The oboe nevertheless rises into the upper light while the clouds darken below. We are now in an extremely remote major key; and through the solemn darkness a message of peace comes from the trombones while the glow brightens above—

No. 4—



And so we reach what is technically called the Second Subject. This begins with an aspiring melody, full of passion and comfort—

No. 5—



It rises to a magnificent climax of pride, and ends defiantly with some of the terse sequels of the First Subject, notably No. 2. Then we return to the opening: the powerful short chords and the first theme (No. 1). The continuation of this, however, turns into a passage of solemn mystery, and leads to the long *più Moderato* (already described), which has the musical function of the Development, and the dramatic function of throwing an unexpectedly pathetic light on what we have hitherto known only as the most spirited and energetic traits of the first theme—

No. 6—



Upon this descends, in muted violins, the solemn message of peace which we have once before heard from the trombones (No. 4). It is now in the tonic major instead of in a remote key. The impassioned Second Subject (No. 5) follows, in accordance with principles of form which are no scholastic conventions to hamper an inspired composer, but are to this music what the laws of human probability are to the dramatist. The proud climax and defiant close of the Second Subject are a natural preparation for the Coda, which gathers up the remaining threads of the story in a catastrophe clearly represented by the solemn emphasis with which the trombones bring in the "decisive close of the First Subject" (No. 3). As the trombones have played so personal a part throughout the work, Brahms is not going to degrade them to the conventional function of adding more volume of tone to the last chords. Hence they are silent in the conclusion where the most formal of the energetic accessory themes (No. 2) shows us the poet's conviction that tragedy is more deeply pathetic in daylight than in lime-light.

2. MOTET, "Jesu, priceless treasure," for Five-part Chorus, - Bach

THE KIRKHOPE CHOIR.

1. Chorale, "Jesu, priceless treasure."
2. Chorus, "For there is now no condemnation."
3. Chorale, "In Thine arm I rest me."
4. Semi-chorus or Trio (Two Sopranos and Alto), "Thus then, the law of Spirit."
5. Chorus, "Death, I do not fear thee" (Chorale-variation).
6. Chorus, "Ye are not of the flesh."
7. Chorale, "Hence with earthly treasure."
8. Semi-chorus or Trio (Alto, Tenor, and Bass), "If therefore Christ in you."
9. Chorale-variation (Semi-chorus or Trio of Two Sopranos and Tenor, with Chorale in Altos), "Fare thee well that erreth."
10. Chorus, "If by His Spirit" (resuming No. 2).
11. Chorale, "Hence all fears and sadness" (to the music of No. 1).

Before attempting to describe this, one of the greatest of Bach's choral works, and easily the greatest "motet" ever written, it is necessary to make a statement as to its method of performance. Only five "unaccompanied" choral works of Bach are extant, nor are any known to have been lost. Of his choral works with organ and orchestra we possess at least two hundred and fifty and we know that at least another fifty have been lost. These facts alone would prove that the very notion of an unaccompanied chorus had become unfamiliar in Bach's day, even if we had not the still more striking fact that the creator of our standards of choral music, Handel, in all his works (as collected in one hundred volumes by the Händel-Gesellschaft) never wrote a line of unaccompanied choral music. Bach's five "motets" (the term requires explanation, which I will give in due course) would thus in any case be an isolated and experimental *tour de force* if it were certain that they were meant to be unaccompanied. He has no such view of choral music as the view of Palestrina and his great army of 16th-century fellow-masters, to whom the unaccompanied chorus was the one real instrument of music, and all artificial instruments the merest crutches. To Bach the unaccompanied chorus can exist, if it exists at all, only as a *tour de force* alike for composers and performers. For his part Bach is perfectly capable of such a *tour de force*. Neither a single violin nor a single violoncello can normally subsist without an accompaniment to supply basses and harmonies: yet Bach wrote twelve of his greatest instrumental works in the form of six sonatas for violin alone, and six suites for violoncello alone. And so thoroughly did his imagination grasp the nature of the problem that all attempts to provide accompaniments to these works have miserably failed, chiefly because Bach

has contrived that his melodies shall be their own basses, so that no other bass is possible; and also because Bach has made free use of the rich suggestiveness of notes ambiguous in harmony, where the only possible accompaniment would prematurely decide the meaning of the chord. A moment's comparison of Bach's unaccompanied violin-works with the numerous and interesting recent ones by Max Reger will show that the modern composer has made no attempt to grapple with Bach's problem at all; Reger's "unaccompanied" melodies merely lack bass and harmony without suggesting that the violinist is doing anything wiser than playing, let us say, the theme of the *Andante* of the *Kreutzer Sonata* all by himself. By the way, this is a useful criterion by which you may know genuine folk-music from false. Any one of the melodies of our Songs of the Hebrides is its own bass: whereas the first seven notes of *Annie Laurie* instantly betray the substratum of the pianoforte.

This digression proves that Bach is not in the habit of executing a pointless *tour de force*: when the conditions of a work are unusual, whether by nature or through custom, he applies his imagination to the problem and makes common-sense of the solution. Now it is very significant that he has not done this with the problem of the "unaccompanied" motet. There are hardly two consecutive pages in all these five motets without some passage which proves that Bach has imagined the basses to be supported by some instrument an octave below them. If he were a capricious and inexact writer like Haydn, it might be arguable that this means no more than it does in some of Haydn's early string-quartets, where there are, perhaps for three notes in twenty works, similar instances of the composer's forgetting that a violoncello is not a double-bass. But the cases are not parallel. Haydn's early quartets show the rapid rise of a highly organised chamber-music style out of the crude theatrical formalities of the small orchestra; and, this being so, the absence of mind (for it is nothing more) that can make him forget the octave a violoncello plays in might rather have been expected to show itself oftener than it does. With Bach's motets it is quite inconceivable that the many places in which the tenor goes below the bass can have been written in absence of mind. Now there is no single one of those places in which the tenor makes a really good support to the harmony. In many it is actually incorrect as a bass; and in every passage without exception the bass voice-part, if doubled in the lower octave, is obviously the only real and intended bass. Well, then, it might be said, why not put the bass voice an octave lower? All the authorities grant that these motets (of which three were written for funerals and so must have been hurriedly rehearsed) were actually performed by Bach himself with accompaniment; but was this not a mere make-shift though the vocal basses have taken advantage of it, and would not Bach have been the first to sanction a slight change that brings out the full

perfection of his unaccompanied choral style? Unfortunately the trouble here is that it is difficult, if not impossible, to find any good point at which the basses can make their descent to a lower octave; and, moreover, the loss in tone-colour is very serious. When all has been said and done the fact stands out more and more clearly that Bach not only failed to imagine the incorrect effect of these passages without an instrumental support in the 16-foot octave, but he did magnificently conceive with all the vividness of his imagination their effect when so supported.

Let us now turn to the orthodox view as given by the editor of the score from which we are singing. He writes:—"The vexed question of the Motets being sung without accompaniment need not be discussed here. A good case can be made for both sides. If by their being accompanied they are likely to be performed by choirs who might otherwise fight shy of them, then by all means let the voices be supported by the organ. But undoubtedly they have their finest effect when sung *a capella*."

If this is "making out a good case for both sides" I prefer my bad case! Few choirs can resist the moral pressure to show that they do not "fight shy" of unaccompanied singing. But where the moral pressure is so tremendous we may be allowed to suspect that the material case is weak. My case, I frankly admit, is not moral but grammatical, though I would cheerfully join Bach and a not very recent emperor in declaring myself *supra grammaticam* if I could think that Bach's *imagination* was on the side of unaccompanied singing of his motets. But I myself had always held as a pious opinion that their finest effect was *a capella*, until at one of our practices I casually used the organ in order to attack a difficulty with more confidence. With Palestrina the effect of so doing is obviously a makeshift, tolerable only as long as it is needed. With the Bach the effect once for all startled me out of any further belief that his motets should be sung *a capella*. If you want *a capella* music, go to the 16th century and to Brahms and a few very modern writers (mostly British, Dutch, and Spanish) for it. If you want Bach, use the organ according to 18th-century methods.

Of course the organ accompaniment is not a thing to be done by machinery. In the absence of the composer we need a carefully written organ-part in which each passage and each theme is supported or left alone in accordance with the forms of the music and the practice of Bach in all his other works. I will not trouble my audience with any further details of this practical kind; all that is done has been done with the sole purpose of realising Bach's intentions.

A glance at the list of movements in "Jesu, priceless treasure" shows that they are arranged in a remarkable symmetry. Six verses of a Chorale alternate with five passages from the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; the sixth Chorale is set to the same music as the first; of the prose Scriptural choruses the last resumes the music of the first, while the two scriptural numbers that are

for three-part semi-chorus or solo voices (Bach gives no indication) are at equal distances the one from the beginning and the other from the end.

The third of the six chorale-verses treats the chorale-melody so freely and elaborately that it probably was not recognised as a chorale-variation at all until Brahms pointed out the fact. Once pointed out, it is unmistakable, and I have devised my first quotation so as to include the whole original melody, and have placed underneath it note for note the corresponding phrases of this variation,

No. 1—

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is a vocal line in G major, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff is an organ accompaniment, also in G major, 4/4 time. The organ part is marked 'No 5' and includes the lyrics 'Heath, y do not say thee' written below the notes. The organ part features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes.

I follow the example of my master, Sir Walter Parratt, who, when this motet is sung in St George's Chapel at Windsor, gives the pitch to the choir by playing (transposed from C minor to the key of the motet) on the organ the short chorale-*prelude* on "Jesu, meine Freude," from the *Orgel-büchlein*; such being undoubtedly one of the purposes for which that collection of *preludes* was written.

The motet begins with a plain four-part setting of the first verse, as given in Ex. 1.

Jesu, priceless treasure,
Source of purest pleasure,
Truest friend to me;
Ah, how long I've panted,
And my heart hath fainted,
Thirsting, Lord, for Thee!
Thine I am, O spotless Lamb,
I will suffer nought to hide thee:
Nought I ask beside Thee.

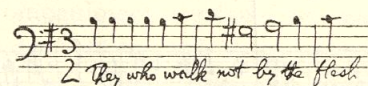
Then follows a five-part chorus to the following words (Romans viii. 1):—

So there is now no condemnation unto them which are in Jesus Christ: who walk not by the flesh corruptly, but as the Spirit leads.

The first part of this sentence is set as a broad and rhythmic melody ending on a half-close, which is repeated *piano*. The rest is treated in a form,

very characteristic of Bach, which may be described as a "masked fugue," *i.e.*, a fugue in which the subject, instead of being stated alone by an unaccompanied part, is concealed in a mass of harmony until it rises to the soprano. The *Matthew Passion* is proverbially said to "have no fugues": as a matter of fact it has rather more than most 18th-century works; but they are masked fugues. It is no defect in this form that the subject is not easily heard until it reaches the surface: the surface can do very well without it meanwhile, and what concerns the listener is the flow and balance of the whole musical paragraph. Ex. 2 shows the subject.

No. 2—



The masked fugue comes to a firm close in the dominant minor, at the words "but as the Spirit leads." Then in that key the first clause is again given twice in full (first loud, then soft). Its words are further developed in a more *fugato* style, leading back to E minor, in which key the fugue ("They who walk not by the flesh") is resumed unmasked and with a new counter-subject, and brought to a close in the tonic corresponding with the former close in the dominant. The whole chorus is thus in as solid a musical binary form as any instrumental suite-movement.

No. 3 is a five-part chorale, still plain, but with a good deal of movement and colour in the inner parts, following every suggestion of the words.

In Thine arm I rest me,
Foes who would molest me
Cannot reach me here:
Though the earth be shaking,
Every heart be quaking,
Jesus calms my fear.
Fires may flash and thunders crash,
Yea, and sin and hell assail me;
Jesus will not fail me.

No. 4, a trio or three-part semi-chorus, resumes the Epistle to the Romans. At the words "now hath made me free" the rhythm becomes independent of the barring in a style suggested by the words, and distinctly reminiscent of the liberty which musical rhythm enjoyed in earlier centuries.

Thus then, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ abiding, now hath made me free from the law of sin and death.—(*Rom.* viii. 2).

No. 5 interrupts, in the same tempo, with its vigorous defiance of Death and the powers below. I have been obliged to alter the translation, without any attempt at the impossible task of preserving the rhyme. Bach's family traditions remembered the Thirty Years' War; and the preachers of his religion not

only believed in Hell but took no pains to avoid the subject; and when they meant Hell they said Hell, or Tophet: not "Sheol" or "a future state of punishment." When these motets were first published, some eighty years after Bach's death, taste had changed, and Bach's texts were adapted to the Christianity of kind and bountiful persons who would probably have ruffled the temper of Bach's widow if they had visited her in the almshouse in which she ended her days. It is these adaptations which underlie the English version published in Novello's scores: and they do not fit the music. Taste or no taste, rhyme or no rhyme, it is astonishing how much better a chorus can sing when the words fit the notes than when they do not. When the words fit, you will get better results in a language which most of the singers do not speak, provided you explain the sense, than in a "translation" where "soar and vanquish Death" is to be sung to a descending *decrescendo* the only possible meaning of which is "rest in peace." Again, "God is God for ever" is a phrase which Bach would have set magnificently if it had been there for him, and he wrote magnificent music in the place where our translator gives it. But the translation does not account for the contorted movements of the bass: and what Bach meant by them was "*Ob sie noch so brummen*"—*i.e.*, "though they roar never so." I regret that I have not been able to get a singable translation of this boldest and most original of chorale-variations which shall realise accurately the apocalyptic figures which Bach's naïve text gave him. It is not "death" he defies, but "the old serpent": the first word is "*Trotz*" ("despite")—for which there is no monosyllable in English. The other points I have adjusted as well as I could, after consulting with friends better qualified to deal with poetic problems.

Ex. 1 (above) shows in its lower stave how this chorus follows the chorale-tune phrase by phrase. With the text I give in Roman figures the corresponding clauses of the tune (a "clause" being, of course, the two bars between each pause).

- I. Death, I do not fear thee,
Though thou standest (II.) near me,
Grave, I calmly spurn thee
Though to dust thou (III.) turn me!
Strong in hope and faith.
- I. Rising up and singing,
I shall, heavenward winging
- II. Soar [rising and singing]—
(Here the translation irremediably fails to follow the structure of the chorale).
- III. Soar and vanquish Death:
(Coda) And with the blest
Shall for ever rest.
- V. He that reigns
Will rend my chains.
- VI. Earth and Tophet shall be silenced
Though they rage exceeding.

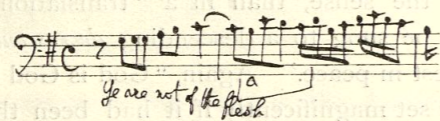
The main bulk of the next chorus is a fugue in another key (G major) on normal lines with a florid, yet formal subject, given out by the tenor. The text of the whole chorus is the ninth verse of the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; the text of the fugue is the first sentence, of which the first clause is the main subject (Ex. 3), while the second clause, just as its words are a condition connected with the first by an "if," is a second subject derived from the first by the figure marked (a).

(Ex. 3) Ye are not of the flesh, but of the Spirit,

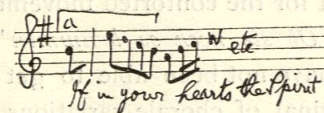
(Ex. 4) If in your hearts the Spirit abideth.

If Jesu's Spirit be not yours, ye are not His.

No. 3—



No. 4—



The fugue brings the two subjects into combination and comes to a close. The remaining sentence ("If Jesu's Spirit be not yours, ye are not His") is treated in massive harmony with a broad new melody first given by the soprano and then taken up by the bass. Just because the change of style is impressive there is the less reason (as there is no authority) for the pause and the radical change of tempo which early editions (followed by most conductors) make at this point. Bach has shown in literally dozens of parallel cases that he values the effect of a passage that begins by sounding like a central episode to be followed by a return to the opening, but leads instead to a new movement and so shows that completeness is not to be looked for until the whole work is finished. Here this impressive corollary to the fugue leads to B minor, the dominant of the main key; and the next chorale (in four parts, without expansion, but with a great deal of movement below the melody) points the moral.

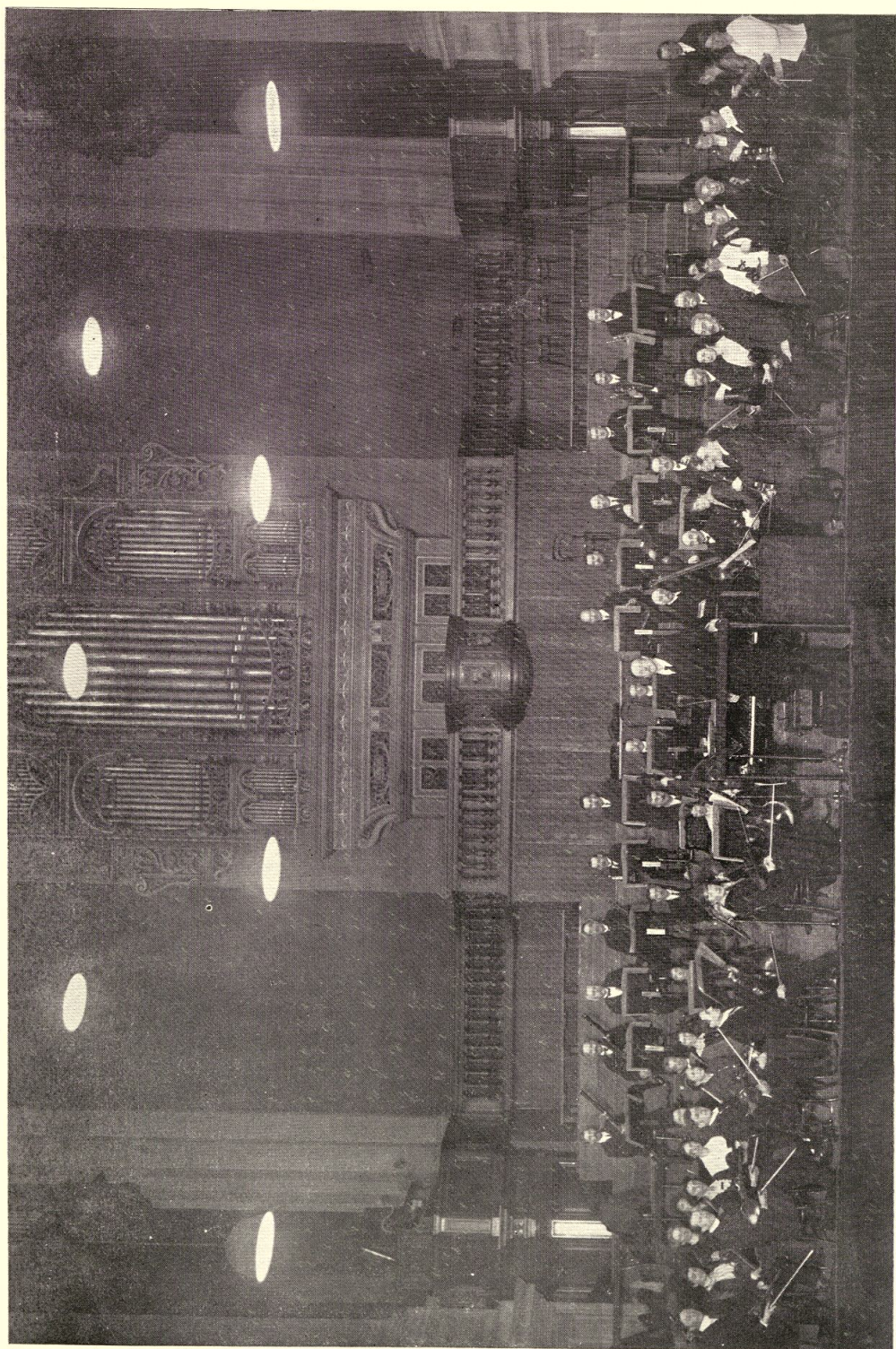
Hence with earthly treasure,
 Thou art all my pleasure,
 Jesu, all my choice.
 Hence, thou empty glory,
 Nought to me thy story,
 Told with tempting voice:
 Pain, or loss, or shame, or cross
 Shall not from my Saviour move me,
 Since He deigns to love me.

As the work reaches its middle point its range of key and style expands; and the next verse from the Epistle (ch. viii. v. 10) is in C major, 12/8 time, for alto, tenor, and bass. Its first clause is set in a flowing vein of melody, which the three voices share, taking up each other's phrases without breaking up the harmony or the rhythmic periods. With the second clause ("but the Spirit liveth") the style appropriately becomes that of a florid double fugue. This comes to a half close on the dominant of A minor, so that the movement is not complete in itself but leads to the next.

If therefore Christ abide in you, then is the body dead because of transgression: but the Spirit liveth because of righteousness.

The ninth movement, the fifth verse of the chorale, is one of Bach's great choral variations; not, this time, in the free declamatory style that so effectually disguises the structure of the third verse, but in a stupendously complete and clear form which only Bach has achieved though his examples of it are so numerous that they are believed to be normal specimens of academic music. (The first chorus of the *Matthew Passion* is one.) The essence of this form is that, while one voice or part sings the chorale phrase by phrase with pauses so long between each as to stretch the whole out to the length of a long movement, the other parts execute a complete design which may or may not have some connexion with the melody of the chorale, but which in any case would remain a perfectly solid whole if the chorale were taken away. This is a very different thing from the affair of shreds and patches that is taught in schools: we may confidently say that before Bach it was hardly known, and that it has never been attempted since. I have just tried the experiment of playing this ninth movement through, leaving out the chorale-melody except for a few unemphasised notes to complete the mere harmony. The effect is not noticeably less solid and natural than that of the foregoing trio, No. 8. Of course this does not mean that the chorale is not essential to the whole: many things are essential to a work of art that remains far from unintelligible though none of them be there. I even think that Bach has shown in about a hundred parallel cases (this figure is not rhetorical; I said "dozens" when I meant dozens)—that he wishes the chorale to be sung by the full chorus-part of altos while the surrounding independent trio is either a literal trio or a semi-chorus. As in the eighth movement the absence of a soprano left the *ensemble* with a tone of sweet gravity, here the absence of a bass leaves it poetically aloof from the world. The naïve poem which Bach set gives a pathetic irony which the translation misses. ("Gute Nacht"—"Good night"—is a finer reproach than "fare thee well").

Fare thee well that errest,
Thou that earth preferrest,
Thou wilt tempt in vain.



THE REID ORCHESTRA, 1918

Fare thee well, transgression,
Hence; abhorred possession,
Come not forth again.
Past your hour, O pride and power :
Worldly life, thy bonds I sever.
Fare thee well for ever.

And now the wheel swings full circle. The conclusion of the argument is set to the same music as the beginning. Bach's tenth movement is a compressed version of his second, the two statements of its contrasted themes being fused into one, with weightier climaxes. The first two clauses are set to the massive opening melody; and the conclusion ("by His Spirit that dwelleth within you") is set to the "masked fugue" (Ex. 2).

If by His Spirit God, that upraised Jesus from the dead, dwell in you,
He that raised Christ up from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal
bodies, by His Spirit that dwelleth within you.

The great work then ends with the music of the first plain chorale :

Hence all fears and sadness,
For the Lord of gladness,
Jesus, enters in ;
They who love the Father,
Though the storms may gather,
Still have peace within.
Yea, whate'er I here must bear,
Still in Thee lies purest pleasure,
Jesu, priceless treasure.

3. "NORMANDY," Symphonic Variations for Pianoforte and
Orchestra, - - - - - Arthur Somervell
(Conducted by the Composer.)

Pianoforte—PROFESSOR TOVEY.

The title of this work refers to its theme, a folk-song sung at the present day by the peasants of Varangeville. The notion of "Symphonic Variations" may perhaps also indicate something a little more definite than the mere general importance of the orchestra in their design: certainly it means more than Schumann meant by *Etudes Symphoniques*. Sir Hubert Parry's *Symphonic Variations* are strict variations on a short theme, but grouped in four great sections in *tempi* corresponding suggestively to the first movement, slow movement, scherzo, and finale of a symphony. Dr Somervell's variations are, after the first two formal counterstatements of his "Norman" theme, free fantasias which cannot possibly be numbered off into single variations,—the theme itself, for that matter, is not a closed melody but rather a thing that returns into itself. But these free fantasias have a very obvious resemblance to the four movements of a symphony; though on this view we must regard the three opening statements of the theme, with the following *cadenza* and *allegro*, as an

introduction, beginning the main movement at the *alla breve time*, including its important 3/2 section as a middle part, and calling the later group of variations in 4/4 time either a return to the introduction or the first part of the slow movement. All these questions, however, are of less importance than the natural flow and inexhaustible variety of the whole work, which (in times when the motto of musical fashion is *omne ignotum pro magifico*) are perhaps not so justly appreciated as the opposite qualities would be revered. At present, when a living composer says anything which can readily be understood, there is a real danger that the arbiters of musical fashion will assume first that they have understood all that he has said, and secondly that he has said nothing. Neither progress nor permanence in the fine arts have ever been secured by arbiters of fashion: it is even doubtful whether they have been hindered by them. When a work of art says a great deal, even the most favourable fashions can popularise only a fraction of its meaning. And, as Ruskin pointed out in one of his clearest and most accurate passages, it is really the loose and obscure writer that is least misunderstood: the clear and accurate writer is always taken up in mid-sentence by the careless reader who thinks he agrees with him.

We have here to deal with a clear and spontaneous work of art, so highly organised that its form is free, and so full of point that its clearness will not enable the listener to exhaust its meaning at a single hearing.

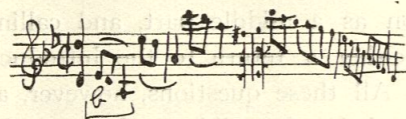
After a short and solemnly dramatic introduction, into which the figures of the theme are introduced by the brass instruments intervening softly in a remote key, the pianoforte states the theme in full, each of the two strophes being repeated by the orchestra :

No. 1—



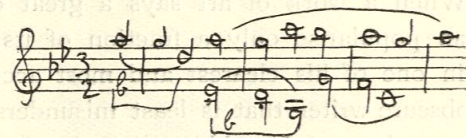
The oboe then takes up the theme, which thereafter bursts out in the full orchestra, coming at last to a pause which gives occasion for a *cadenza* for the pianoforte. Then, in a quick flowing *tempo (allegro)* the pianoforte begins a free development from figure (d) of Ex. 1, and continues, in dialogue with the orchestra, by an impassioned discussion of the three notes comprised in figure (b)—the most important and variously treated figure in the work. In spite of the interest of this whole passage it does not advance beyond an introductory manner; the slow *tempo* returns, with the mood of the original theme; and the figure (e), from its close, droops away in dreamy modulations; when suddenly a new movement (*molto allegro* in 2/2 time) starts with a vigorous awakening.

No. 2—



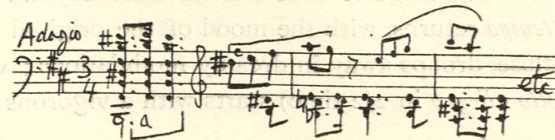
Ex. 2 gives its introductory start, showing figure (b). The main new theme, beginning on the tonic, is only harmonically connected with "Normandy," but when it shifts its key to B flat the orchestra surges up with figure (d), and then, in D minor, gets into dialogue with the pianoforte on a new version of (b). At the climax there is a pause, and with a change to 3/2 time the pianoforte, imitated by various single instruments, works out a sustained and melodious new development of (b).

No. 3—



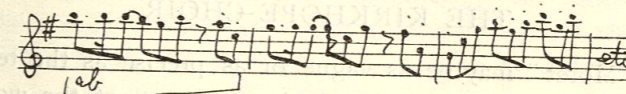
The orchestra interpolates a sentence which puts figure (d) into a similar new light. The pianoforte then resumes its sustained treatment of (b) with a shifted accent and a more flowing accompaniment. Soon the inner parts of the orchestra get to work on the theme of the *molto allegro*. The hint is not taken at once; but eventually, after very remote modulations the pianoforte asks suggestive questions, and the horn gives impressive warnings (figure (a), across the 3/2 time). The main theme of the *molto allegro* then swings back in such a way that the precise moment of the change back to 2/2 time is imperceptible. It continues on the same lines as before, but coming to its climax in the tonic, which gives it a distinct air of allusion to the form of a symphonic first movement. Its final close plunges into a return to a slower *tempo*, exactly half its pace, and slightly suggestive of the mood of the opening. What follows is in the manner of a sustained variation of "Normandy," chiefly in terms of figure (c). The pianoforte takes it up serenely with a sudden change to the major mode; and this change is followed up with increasingly intense calm and happiness. Here for the first time some development is made of the last figure (f) of the theme. Then the note deepens, as the pianoforte recalls the rhythmic figure of (a), (which has been absent for some time): and with a change of time a new section begins, which that figure pervades in great solemnity, with masses of deep harmony in the brass.

No. 4—



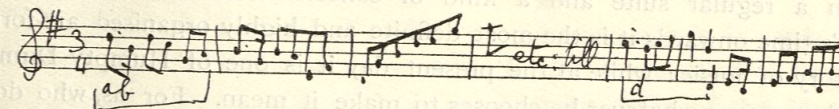
This is worked up with great breadth and swing twice to a solemn climax and a not less solemn quiet close. When it has died away the drum turns the rhythmic figure of (a) into a lively introduction to what may fitly be called a scherzo; of which the main theme is as follows—

No. 5—



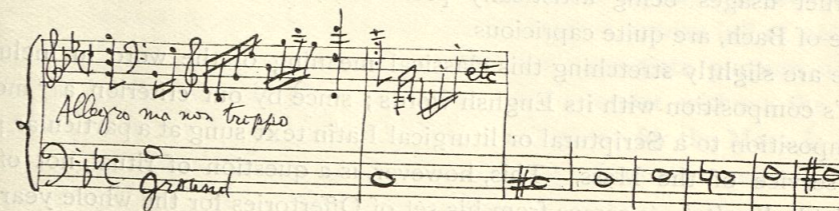
It alternates with a trio in which still more of the figures of "Normandy" are neatly embodied, while the drum maintains the rhythm of Ex. 5.

No. 6—



Modulating widely, this trio leads back to Ex. 5 in a new key, from which it easily swings back, not to its starting-point, E minor, but to its second key, G major, and thus rushes straight on into the finale, which begins in a very original way, with a series of wide curling arpeggios ending in violent chords on the fourth beat of a 4/4 bar. This explosive utterance conceals a ground bass,

No. 7—



on which the first part of the finale proceeds. The eleven variations on this ground show great variety in their unity; with the fifth there is a change to triple time, to say nothing of the happy entrance of the major mode for this one variation; at the ninth the 4/4 time returns, and the eleventh is a fierce climax. Meantime the figures of "Normandy" have been very happily interwoven at various points above the ground-bass, so that when the fury of the climax is spent nothing can be more natural than that the tune itself should, especially in its second part with figure (c), swing lustily in and stride from key to key with growing zest until the whole orchestra brings the work to a triumphant end.

4. FOUR SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MOTETS—

"O God, the Rock of my whole strength,"	—	Wilbye
"Paucitas dierum meorum,"	}	Palestrina
"Exaltabo te,"		
"Dum complerentur dies pentecostes,"		

THE KIRKHOPE CHOIR.

The term "Motet" may be as vague or as precise as the term "sonata." Everything depends on the period and circumstances of the work described. A "sonata" in the 17th century may be merely a piece or portion that is "sounded" on instruments instead of being a piece that is sung, *scilicet* "cantata." In the 18th century it may still be no more, or it may be anything between a regular suite and a kind of concerto without orchestra. From Mozart's time onwards it is the most definite and highly organised art-form in the history of music: while at the present day it is one of Humpty Dumpty's words that means whatever he chooses to make it mean. For us, who do not sit upon a wall and who cannot afford to pay our words overtime wages, the best plan is to agree to understand terms of art according to their highest classical usage. Thus the world agrees to understand "sonata" to mean usually what Beethoven meant by it, the earlier and later usages being far less significant and clear; and thus we ought to understand "motet" to mean usually what Palestrina meant by it, the etymology of the word being quite obscure and earlier usages being artistically prehistoric, while later usages, even by the time of Bach, are quite capricious.

We are slightly stretching this classical meaning of the word in including Wilbye's composition with its English words; since by our criterion a "motet" is a composition to a Scriptural or liturgical Latin text sung at a particular point in the service of the Mass. This, however, is a question of ritual, not of art. Palestrina's *Exaltabo te* comes from his set of Offertories for the whole year, and the Offertory is sung at another point of the service than the Motet. But only an exhaustive knowledge of liturgical texts would enable anyone to tell an Offertory from a Motet; and no musical expert is pedantic enough to draw the distinction. Similarly, Byrd's *Domine, exaudi me* did not cease to be a motet when it became "Bow Thine ear"; any more than a selection from an oratorio becomes a complete specimen of an Anglican art-form by being sung in "Quires and places" where "here followeth the Anthem."

The fact is that, just as in the period which comprises Haydn and Beethoven the highest musical art may be said to be in the sonata-style, so in the 16th century the highest art is in the motet-style. To this style even the madrigals aspire in their highest flights, though there is a distinct madrigal-style, not artistically lower than the motet-style, though incompatible with it.

But there is no higher or greater form of pure polyphony; even the style of the Mass is decidedly less elaborate except at its climax in the Sanctus, where it rises to what is indistinguishable from the motet-style. As an art-problem, it is mainly a question of how many words and what kind of sentences the 16th-century composer has to deal with. Such a text as *Kyrie eleison: Christe eleison: Kyrie eleison* will give him opportunity, or rather necessity, for expanding the words in something like a fugue-style, but the three sections into which it falls cannot be very long, nor can there be any definite reason for varieties of proportion in the flow of the musical paragraphs. On the other hand, so long a text as the Nicene Creed cannot be treated by the 16th-century composer's resources except in a comparatively straightforward declamation of most of its clauses, with few repetitions and, in consequence, only rare and special passages in an elaborately polyphonic style.

The ideal opportunity for the 16th-century composer is in such texts as those which we are about to hear; or rather in the combination of these, in all their individual characteristics, with the unchanging order of the Mass, which will harmonise with the motet and throw it into relief. For instance *Dum complerentur* is obviously to be sung on Whitsunday, and for that day Palestrina wrote not only this motet but the *Missa Dum complerentur*, a Mass on the same themes. This is quite a common case, and one composer might write a mass on another composer's motet. Often both Mass and Motet were written on themes derived from the Gregorian melodies associated with the words of the motet. We have to turn to Bach's treatment of Lutheran hymns for any parallel to such a system which should make the whole musical service full of old familiar meanings to those who took part in it. For our immediate purpose one inference may be drawn; a correct performance of a motet without the Mass (if there is one) associated with it is perfectly intelligible; for the Mass is always a late and diluted commentary on the Motet, though the two together may make a perfect scheme. But a concert-performance of the Mass without the Motet is a set of variations without the theme; though I remember such a performance in London, many years ago, of the *Missa O admirabile commercium*; and the analytical programme had the effrontery to refer to the Motet, which not a single person in the audience was ever likely to hear. (I have not heard it yet). On the whole I question whether the Mass is the right art-form to reveal the Golden Age of Music to concert-audiences who are not already familiar with 16th-century idioms: it seems better to begin with highly individual texts that express unmistakable moods and meanings. This is the more reasonable since some of the deepest and most devout moods are very rarely admitted into practical Church-music at all. I very much question whether Palestrina's realisation of the ultimate depth of Job's despair has ever been sung in church, though a 19th-century successor to Palestrina's official position in Rome, Baini,

declared his firm and literal belief that it was divinely inspired. But it is impossible to find time in an ordinary church-service for such broad contrasts as we can obtain in the concert-room by following *Paucitas dierum* with *Exaltabo te*; and one does not go to church to hear the voice of Job's despair with no answer from out of the whirlwind.

The best analysis for all 16th-century music is that which the words themselves will furnish if we follow them. In the motet-style each clause is given a theme to itself, the treatment of many, but not all, of the themes being more or less like a fugue. But there is no question of the different themes being combined, any more than there is of the different texts being arranged in any but their natural sequence: except that the voices overlap, with words as with themes, so that there is no awkward stoppage, just as there is no lack of effective articulation. Where you hear a new theme you may expect to hear new words, and *vice versâ*. Where the words admit of expansive repetition they will receive it for their own sake and not for any rigid rules of musical form, though, of course the musician has a good deal of voice as to where the climaxes shall come.

The 16th century is that period in which we in Great Britain were indisputably as great in music as any continental nation. If Weelkes may be called a romantic among madrigalists, Wilbye is a classic; though, as a matter of fact Weelkes is quite as perfect an artist, and the present specimen of Wilbye's work is a masterpiece of modern power of modulation which the theory of the Church Modes utterly fails to explain. Until such "trivial stuff" as Weelkes and Wilbye is universally treated with the reverence due to great oratorios, the foundations of our musical culture will not have been well and truly laid. Wilbye's *O God, the Rock of my whole strength* is one of his two contributions to Sir William Leighton's *Tears or Lamentacions of a Sorrowfull Soule*, published in 1614. The text is written in the metre of a certain version of the 50th Psalm, and Leighton adds that any Psalm in the same metre can be sung to these motets. This does not prevent Wilbye from making his setting suit the words he has before him: there is not a point on which he does not focus his imagination, from the breadth and firmness of the opening (with the unexpected minor harmonies of "mine anguish") to the profound modulations and tenderness of the last sentence "lest that I faint, despair and languish," with its remarkable theme, as clear and distinguished as any theme in a classical symphony.

O God, the Rock of my whole strength,
Let thy sweet mercy salve mine anguish,
And grant me grace, O Lord, at length,
Lest that I faint, despair and languish.

It is no mean source of national pride that this composition is not unworthy to precede Palestrina's sublime song of the despair from which Wilbye prays

to be protected. The text of *Paucitas dierum meorum* is the last three verses of the 10th chapter of the Book of Job with an interpolation from the 8th verse. The Vulgate differs in details from our Authorised Version: and where this is so I give first a translation of what Palestrina sets, and afterwards the Authorised Version in square brackets. The differences are quite enough to make Palestrina's setting appropriate only to the Vulgate Version: e.g., *ut plangam paululum dolorem meum*.

Paucitas dierum meorum finietur brevi:

Dimitte me Domine, ut plangam paululum
dolorem meum.

Antequam vadam ad terram tenebrosam
et opteram mortis caligine.

Manus tuæ, Domine, fecerunt me et plas-
maverunt me totum in circuitu; et sic
repente præcipitas me.

Antequam vadam (*da capo*).

My few days shall soon be finished;
[Are not my days few? cease then,]
let me go, Lord, that I may bewail my
sorrow awhile, [and let me alone, that I
may take comfort a little].

Before I go to the shadowy land and
enter upon the darkness of death.
[Before I go whence I shall not return,
even to the land of darkness and the
shadow of death].

Thy hands (O Lord) have made me and
fashioned me together round about:
and thus dost thou suddenly hurl me
down. [yet dost thou destroy me].

Before I go (*da capo*).

It will be noticed that there is no logical connexion in the words at the *da capo* of *Antequam vadam*, etc. This must not be ascribed to an oversight on the composer's part. The Roman liturgy is full of such cases: there is hardly a *Responsorium* of which the versicle which is repeated makes a perfect logical connexion with the sentence after which it is resumed. Nor is the object or manner of these utterances any logical narrative: it is something quite as natural and, rightly understood, more impressive. The stories, emotions, poetry, prophecies, whatever their form, are all ancient and ever-present history told by people not bent on giving information but repeating the familiar words like inspired children to whom no impulse is more irresistible than to hark back to just that point in the story where the *ipsissima verba* (always of inviolable sanctity to children) are most impressive.

After Job's despair we turn to one of the most famous of Palestrina's works, the Offertorium *Exaltabo te*, for the Eleventh Sunday after Whitsunday. Even the much-abused Burney, for all his insufferable dandified patronage of music prior to the one truly civilised art of Italian Opera, knew how to select the right things for his History of Music, and he saw enough of the splendour of this composition to score it in the right mode when the source from which he transcribed it gave it in the wrong. Here again the words are the best guide; and where you miss the support of rigid modern rhythms, as in the theme of *quoniam suscepisti me*, you have only to forget that notion and see for yourself how naturally and heartily those words are uttered in the rhythm of Palestrina's music. The lively flourish on *delectasti*, followed by the weightier rhythm of *inimicos meos*, has an effect which can be found elsewhere in Palestrina (notably

bassoon, and solo string-quartet) are exhibited in turn, and then various styles of music are passed in review on a larger scale. But first the full orchestra bursts out with the theme, and appends to it a Codetta—

No. 2—



which has the same function as that executed with more subtlety by a similar codetta at just the same point in the Ninth Symphony. The pianoforte takes it up and soars aloft into a cheerful *cadenza* from which it bursts into a violent temper with the variation in C minor (*Molto allegro 2/2*). To this it appends a cadence-phrase on the harmonic lines of the Codetta, and continues it in a gradual modulation to a very distant key, where it begins another variation of the theme. Three bars (5, 6, 7) of this are promptly taken up by the violins in a gently ruminating passage in three-bar rhythm, which suddenly flares up in A minor and eventually leads to the Adagio variation in A major 6/8 (in dialogue with clarinets), gentle, pleading, and ornate. Here too the Codetta is used to bring about the slow dramatic change to the March, in F major.

The March-variation again is followed by a codetta phrase, and then comes a passage of great poetic power in which the pianoforte moves in a dream of solemn concords while *pizzicato* strings in subdued agitation feel for the first notes of the theme (figure (a)). Suddenly there is a crash: the orchestra introduction is resumed, and leads to the return of the original theme (a little slower). Solo voices bring it in, with the following poem, which the chorus takes up at the third stanza, and the Codetta follows ("receive the gifts of Art divine") and leads to triumphant final developments.

Soft and sweet thro' ether winging,
Sound the harmonies of life
Their immortal flowers springing
Where the soul is free from strife.

Peace and joy are sweetly blended,
Like the waves alternate play;
What for mastery contended
Learns to yield and to obey.

When on Music's mighty pinion
Souls of men to heaven rise,
Then doth vanish earth's dominion,
Man is native to the skies.

Calm without and joy within us,
Is the bliss for which we long,
If of Art the magic win us,
Joy and calm are turned to song.

With its tide of joy unbroken
Music's flood our life surrounds;
What a master mind hath spoken
Through eternity resounds.

Oh! receive, ye joy-invited,*
All the gifts of Art divine:
When to love is power united
Music makes the Gods benign.

* The translator evidently intends by this phrase to introduce an allusion to the Ninth Symphony and Schiller's Ode to Joy. The rest of the stanza I have been compelled to change on account of the tangle of vocal impossibilities it involved. The whole question of musical translation is full of difficulties that make it a duty to sacrifice elegance and ease.

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