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## **THE STANDARD OPERAS**

Their Plots, Their Music, and Their Composers

A Handbook

by

**GEORGE P. UPTON**

Twelfth Edition

Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Company

1897

## **PREFACE.**

The object of the compiler of this Handbook is to present to the reader a brief but comprehensive sketch of each of the operas contained in the modern repertory which are likely to be given during regular seasons. To this end he has consulted the best authorities, adding to the material thus collected his own observations, and in each case presented a necessarily brief sketch of the composer, the story of each opera, the general character of the music, its prominent scenes and numbers,—the latter in the text most familiar to opera-goers,—the date of first performances, with a statement of the original cast wherever it has been possible to obtain it, and such historical information concerning the opera and its

composition as will be of interest to the reader. The work has been prepared for the general public rather than for musicians; and with this purpose in view, technicalities have been avoided as far as possible, the aim being to give musically uneducated lovers of opera a clear understanding of the works they are likely to hear, and thus heighten their enjoyment. In a word, the operas are described rather than criticised, and the work is presented with as much thoroughness as seemed possible considering the necessarily brief space allotted to each. In the preparation of the Handbook, the compiler acknowledges his indebtedness to Grove's excellent "Dictionary of Music" for dates and other statistical information; and he has also made free use of standard musical works in his library for historical events connected with the performance and composition of the operas. It only remains to submit this work to opera-goers with the hope that it may add to their enjoyment and prove a valuable addition to their libraries.—G.P.U.

CHICAGO, August, 1885.

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## **AUBER.**

Daniel François Esprit Auber, one of the most prominent representatives of the opera comique, was born at Caen, in Normandy, Jan. 29, 1784. He first attracted attention in the musical world by his songs and ballads, written when a mere boy. Young as he was, they were great favorites in French and English drawing-rooms, and their success diverted him from his commercial intentions to that profession in which he was destined to achieve such popularity. His début was made as an instrumental composer in his twentieth year, but before he had reached his thirtieth he was engrossed with operatic composition. His first two works were unsuccessful; but the third, "La Bergère Châtelaine," proved the stepping-stone to a career of remarkable popularity, during which he produced a large number of dramatic works, which not only secured for him the enthusiastic admiration of the Parisians, with whom he was always a favorite, but also carried his name and fame throughout the world, and obtained for him marks of high distinction from royalty, such as the office of Director of the Conservatoire from Louis Philippe, and that of Imperial Maître de Chapelle from Louis Napoleon. He died May 13, 1871, amid the fearful scenes of the Paris Commune. His best-known operas are: "Masaniello" (1828); "Fra Diavolo" (1830); "The Bronze Horse" (1835); "The Black Domino" (1837); "The Crown Diamonds" (1841); and "Zerline" (1851),—the last-named written for the great contralto, Mme. Alboni. Of these, "Fra Diavolo," "Masaniello," and "The Crown Diamonds" are as fresh as ever in their French and Italian settings, though their finest successes in this country have been made in their English dress.

### **FRA DIAVOLO.**

"Fra Diavolo," opera comique, in three acts, words by Scribe, was first produced at the Opera Comique, Paris, Jan. 28, 1830; in English, at Drury Lane, London, Nov. 3, 1831; in Italian, at the Lyceum, London, July 9, 1857, for which occasion the spoken dialogue was converted into accompanied recitative. The composer himself also, in fitting it for the Italian stage, made some changes in the concerted music and added several morceaux. The original Italian cast was as follows:—

ZERLINA Mme. BOSIO.

LADY ALLCASH Mlle. MARAI.

FRA DIAVOLO Sig. GARDINI.

LORD ALLCASH Sig. RONCONI.

BEPPA Sig. TAGLIAFICO.

GIACOMO Sig. ZELGER.

The original of the story of Fra Diavolo is to be found in Lesueur's opera, "La Caverne," afterwards arranged as a spectacular piece and produced in Paris in 1808 by Cuvellier and Franconi, and again in Vienna in 1822 as a spectacle-pantomime, under the title of "The Robber of the Abruzzi." In Scribe's adaptation the bandit, Fra Diavolo, encounters an English nobleman and his pretty and susceptible

wife, Lord and Lady Allcash, at the inn of Terracina, kept by Matteo, whose daughter Zerlina is loved by Lorenzo, a young soldier, on the eve of starting to capture Fra Diavolo when the action of the opera begins. In the first scene the English couple enter in great alarm, having narrowly escaped the robbery of all their valuables by Fra Diavolo's band. The bandit himself, who has followed them on their journey in the disguise of a marquis, and has been particularly attentive to the lady, enters the inn just as Lord Allcash has been reproving his wife for her familiarity with a stranger. A quarrel ensues in a duet of a very humorous character ("I don't object"). Upon the entrance of Fra Diavolo, a quintet ("Oh, Rapture unbounded!") ensues, which is one of the most effective and admirably harmonized ensembles Auber has ever written. Fra Diavolo learns the trick by which they saved the most of their valuables, and, enraged at the failure of his band, lays his own plan to secure them. In an interview with Zerlina, she, mistaking him for the Marquis, tells him the story of Fra Diavolo in a *romanza* ("On Yonder Rock reclining"), which is so fresh, vigorous, and full of color, that it has become a favorite the world over. To further his schemes, Fra Diavolo makes love to Lady Allcash and sings an exquisitely graceful *barcarole* to her ("The Gondolier, fond Passion's Slave"), accompanying himself on the mandolin. Lord Allcash interrupts the song, and the trio, "Bravi, Bravi," occurs, which leads up to the finale of the act. Fra Diavolo eludes the carbineers, who have returned, and they resume their search for him, leaving him unmolested to perfect his plans for the robbery.

The second act introduces Zerlina in her chamber about to retire. She first lights Lord and Lady Allcash to their room, a running conversation occurring between them in a trio ("Let us, I pray, good Wife, to rest"), which by many good critics has been considered as the best number in the work. Before Zerlina returns to her chamber, Fra Diavolo and his companions, Beppo and Giacomo, conceal themselves in a closet, and, somewhat in violation of dramatic consistency, Fra Diavolo sings the beautiful serenade, "Young Agnes," which had been agreed upon as a signal to his comrades that the coast was clear. Zerlina enters, and after a pretty *cavatina* ("Tis to-morrow") and a prayer, charming for its simplicity ("Oh, Holy Virgin"), retires to rest. The robbers in attempting to cross her room partially arouse her. One of them rushes to the bed to stab her, but falls back awe-stricken as she murmurs her prayer and sinks to rest again. The trio which marks this scene, sung *pianissimo*, is quaint and simple and yet very dramatic. The noise of the carbineers returning outside interrupts the plan of the robbers. They conceal themselves in the closet again. Zerlina rises and dresses herself. Lord and Lady Allcash rush in *en deshabille* to find out the cause of the uproar. Lorenzo enters to greet Zerlina, when a sudden noise in the closet disturbs the company. Fra Diavolo, knowing he will be detected, boldly steps out into the room and declares that he is there to keep an appointment with Zerlina. Lorenzo challenges him, and he promises to give him satisfaction in the morning, and coolly effects his escape. One of his comrades, however, is captured, and to secure his own liberty agrees to betray his chief.

The third act introduces Fra Diavolo once more among his native mountains, and there is the real breath and vigor of the mountain air in his opening song ("Proudly and wide my Standard flies"), and rollicking freedom in the *rondeau* which follows it ("Then since Life glides so fast away"). He exults in his liberty, and gleefully looks forward to a meeting with Lord and Lady Allcash, which he anticipates will redound to his personal profit. His exultation is interrupted by the entrance of the villagers arrayed in festival attire in honor of the approaching wedding ceremonies, singing a bright pastoral chorus ("Oh, Holy Virgin! bright and fair"). The finale of the act is occupied with the development of the scheme between Lorenzo, Beppo, and Giacomo, to ensnare Fra Diavolo and compass his death; and with the final tragedy, in which Fra Diavolo meets his doom at the hands of the carbineers, but not before he has declared Zerlina's innocence. This finale is strong and very dramatic, and yet at the same time simple, natural, and unstudied. The opera itself is a universal favorite, not alone for its naturalness and quiet grace, but for its bright and even boisterous humor, which is sustained by the typical English tourist, who was for the first time introduced in opera by Scribe. The text is full of spirit and gayety, and these qualities are admirably reflected in the sparkling music of Auber. Not one of the books which the versatile Scribe has supplied for the opera is more replete with incident or brighter in humor. How well it was adapted for musical treatment is shown by the fact that "Fra Diavolo" made Auber's reputation at the Opera Comique.

## **MASANIELLO.**

"Masaniello," or "La Muette de Portici," a lyric opera in five acts, words by Scribe and Delavigne, was first produced in Paris, Feb. 29, 1828; in English, at London, May 4, 1829; and in Italian, at London, March 15, 1849. The original cast included Mme. Damoreau-Cinti as Elvira, Mlle. Noblet as Fenella, and M. Massol as Pietro. In the Italian version, Sig. Mario, Mme. Dorus-Gras, and Mlle. Leroux, a famous mime and dancer, took the principal parts; while in its English dress, Braham created one of the greatest successes on record, and established it as the favorite opera of Auber among Englishmen.

The scene of the opera is laid near Naples. The first act opens upon the festivities attending the

nuptials of Alphonso, son of the Duke of Arcos, and the Princess Elvira. After a chorus of rejoicing, the latter enters and sings a brilliant cavatina ("O, bel Momento") expressive of her happiness. In the fourth scene the festivities are interrupted by the appearance of Fenella, the dumb girl, who implores the princess to save her from Selva, one of the Duke's officers, who is seeking to return her to prison, from which she has escaped, and where she has been confined at the orders of some unknown cavalier who has been persecuting her. The part of Fenella is of course expressed by pantomime throughout. The remainder of the act is intensely dramatic. Elvira promises to protect Fenella, and then, after some spirited choruses by the soldiers, enters the chapel with Alphonso. During the ceremony Fenella discovers that he is her betrayer. She attempts to go in, but is prevented by the soldiers. On the return of the newly wedded pair Fenella meets Elvira and denounces her husband, and the scene ends with a genuine Italian finale of excitement.

The second act opens on the sea-shore, and shows the fishermen busy with their nets and boats. Masaniello, brother of Fenella, enters, brooding upon the wrongs of the people, and is implored by the fishermen to cheer them with a song. He replies with the barcarole, "Piu bello sorse il giorno,"—a lovely melody, which has been the delight of all tenors. His friend Pietro enters and they join in a duet ("Sara il morir") of a most vigorous and impassioned character, expressive of Masaniello's grief for his sister and their mutual resolution to strike a blow for freedom. At the conclusion of the duet he beholds Fenella about to throw herself into the sea. He calls to her and she rushes into his arms and describes to him the story of her wrongs. He vows revenge, and in a magnificent, martial finale, which must have been inspired by the revolutionary feeling with which the whole atmosphere was charged at the time Auber wrote (1828), incites the fishermen and people to rise in revolt against their tyrannical oppressors.

In the third act, after a passionate aria ("Il pianto rasciuga") by Elvira, we are introduced to the market-place, crowded with market-girls and fishermen disposing of their fruits and fish. After a lively chorus, a fascinating and genuine Neapolitan tarantelle is danced. The merry scene speedily changes to one of turmoil and distress. Selva attempts to arrest Fenella, but the fishermen rescue her and Masaniello gives the signal for the general uprising. Before the combat begins, all kneel and sing the celebrated prayer, "Nume del ciel," taken from one of Auber's early masses, and one of his most inspired efforts.

The fourth act opens in Masaniello's cottage. He deploras the coming horrors of the day in a grand aria ("Dio! di me disponesti") which is very dramatic in its quality. Fenella enters, and after describing the tumult in the city sinks exhausted with fatigue. As she falls asleep he sings a slumber song ("Scendi, o sonno dal ciel"), a most exquisite melody, universally known as "L'Air du Sommeil." It is sung by the best artists mezzo voce throughout, and when treated in this manner never fails to impress the hearer with its tenderness and beauty. At its close Pietro enters and once more rouses Masaniello to revenge by informing him that Alphonso has escaped. After they leave the cottage, the latter and Elvira enter and implore protection. Fenella is moved to mercy, and a concerted number follows in which Masaniello promises safety and is denounced by Pietro for his weakness. In the finale, the magistrates and citizens enter, bearing the keys of the town and the royal insignia, and declare Masaniello king in a chorus of a very inspiring and brilliant character.

The last act is very powerful, both dramatically and musically. It opens in the grounds of the Viceroy's palace, and Vesuvius is seen in the distance, its smoke portending an eruption. Pietro and companions enter with wine-cups in their hands, as from a banquet, and the former sings a barcarole ("Ve' come il vento irato"). At its close other fishermen enter and excitedly announce that troops are moving against the people, that Vesuvius is about to burst into flame, and that Masaniello, their leader, has lost his reason. This is confirmed by the appearance of the hero in disordered attire, singing music through which are filtered fragments of the fishermen's songs as they rise in his disturbed brain. This scene, the third in the act, is one not only of great power but of exquisite grace and tenderness, and requires an artist of the highest rank for its proper presentation. Fenella rouses him from his dejection, and he once more turns and plunges into the fight, only to be killed by his own comrades. On learning of her brother's death she unites the hands of Alphonso and Elvira, and then in despair throws herself into the burning lava of Vesuvius.

"Masaniello" made Auber's fame at the Grand Opera, as "Fra Diavolo" made it at the Opera Comique. It has no points in common with that or any other of his works. It is serious throughout, and full of power, impetuosity, and broad dramatic treatment. Even Richard Wagner has conceded its vigor, bold effects, and original harmonies. Its melodies are spontaneous, its instrumentation full of color, and its stirring incidents are always vigorously handled. In comparison with his other works it seems like an inspiration. It is full of the revolutionary spirit, and its performance in Brussels in 1830 was the cause of the riots that drove the Dutch out of Belgium.

## THE CROWN DIAMONDS.

"The Crown Diamonds" ("Les Diamans de la Couronne"), opera comique, in three acts, words by Scribe and St. George, one of the most charming of Auber's light operas, was first produced in Paris in 1841, but its reputation has been made on the English stage. It was first performed in London, at the Princess Theatre, May 2, 1844, with Mme. Anna Thillon, a charming singer and most fascinating woman, as Catarina; but its success was made at Drury Lane in 1854 by Louisa Pyne and Harrison, who took the parts of Catarina and Don Henrique. The other rôles, Count de Campo Mayor, Don Sebastian, Rebolledo, and Diana, were filled by Mr. Horncastle, Mr. Reeves, Mr. Borroni, and Miss Pyne, sister of the preceding, and with this cast the opera ran a hundred nights.

The story of the opera is laid in Portugal, time, 1777. The opening scene discloses the ruins of a castle in the mountains, near the monastery of St. Huberto, where Don Henrique, nephew of the Count de Campo Mayor, Minister of Police at Coimbra, overtaken by a storm, seeks shelter. At the time of his misfortune he is on his way to take part in the approaching coronation, and also to sign a marriage contract with his cousin Diana, daughter of the Minister of Police. He solaces himself with a song ("Roll on, Roll on"), during which he hears the blows of hammers in a distant cavern, and on looking round discovers Rebolledo, the chief of the coiners, and two of his comrades, with his trunk in their possession, the contents of which they proceed to examine. Don Henrique conceals himself while Rebolledo is singing a rollicking muleteer's song ("O'er Mountain steep, through Valley roaming"). At its conclusion Rebolledo, about to summon the other coiners to their secret work, discovers Don Henrique, and thinking him a spy rushes upon him. He is saved by the sudden entrance of Catarina, the leader of the gang, who tells the story of her life in a concerted number that reminds one very strikingly of the bandit song in "Fra Diavolo." After examining Don Henrique, and, to his surprise, showing an intimate acquaintance with his projects, she returns him his property, and allows him to depart on condition that he shall not speak of what he has seen for a year. He consents; and then follows another of the concerted numbers in which this opera abounds, and in which occurs a charming rondo ("The Young Pedrillo"), accompanied by a weird, clanging chorus. Before he can effect his departure the gang find that they are surrounded by troops led by Don Sebastian, a friend of Don Henrique. The coiners, in company with the latter, however, make their escape in the disguise of monks on their way to the neighboring monastery, singing a lugubrious chorus ("Unto the Hermit of the Chapel"), while Catarina and Rebolledo elude the soldiers by taking a subterranean passage, carrying with them a casket containing some mysterious jewels.

The second act opens in the Château de Coimbra, and discovers the Count, Don Henrique, Don Sebastian, and Diana. The first scene reveals to us that Don Henrique is in love with the mysterious Catarina, and that Diana is in love with Don Sebastian. In a sportive mood Diana requests Don Henrique to sing with her, and chooses a nocturne called "The Brigand," which closes in gay bolero time ("In the Deep Ravine of the Forest"). As they are singing it, Don Sebastian announces that a carriage has been overturned and its occupants desire shelter. As the duet proceeds, Catarina and Rebolledo enter, and a very flurried quintet ("Oh, Surprise unexpected!") occurs, leading up to an ensemble full of humor, with a repetition of the brigand song, this time by Catarina and Diana, and closing with a bravura aria sung by Catarina ("Love! at once I break thy Fetters"). Catarina and Rebolledo accept the proffered hospitality, but the latter quietly makes his exit when Diana begins to read an account of a robbery which contains a description of himself and his companion. Catarina remains, however, in spite of Don Henrique's warning that she is in the house of the Minister of Police. In a moment of passion he declares his love for her and begs her to fly with him. She declines his proffer, but gives him a ring as a souvenir. A pretty little duet ("If I could but Courage feel") ensues between Diana and Don Henrique, in which she gently taunts him with his inattention to her and his sudden interest in the handsome stranger. At this juncture the Count enters in wild excitement over the announcement that the crown jewels have been stolen. Don Henrique's ring is recognized as one of them, and in the excitement which ensues, Catarina finds herself in danger of discovery, from which she is rescued by Diana, who promises Don Henrique she will send her away in the Count's carriage if he will agree to refuse to sign the marriage contract. He consents, and she departs upon her errand. At this point in the scene Don Henrique sings the beautiful ballad, "Oh, whisper what thou feelest!" originally written for Mr. Harrison. This song leads up to a stirring finale, in which Don Henrique refuses to sign the contract and Catarina makes her escape.

The last act opens in the anteroom of the royal palace at Lisbon, where Diana is waiting for an audience with the Queen. She sings another interpolated air, originally written for Louisa Pyne ("When Doubt the tortured Frame is rending"), and at its close the Count, Don Henrique, and Don Sebastian enter. While they are conversing, Rebolledo appears, announced as the Count Fuentes, and a quintet occurs, very slightly constructed, but full of humor. An usher interrupts it by announcing the Queen will have a private audience with the Count Fuentes. While awaiting her, the latter, in a monologue, lets us into the secret that the real crown jewels have been pledged for the national debt, and that he has been



employed to make duplicates of them to be worn on state occasions until the real ones can be redeemed. The Queen enters, and expresses her satisfaction with the work, and promotes him to the position of Minister of Secret Police. On his departure she sings a charming cavatina ("Love, dwell with me"), and at its close Count de Campo Mayor enters with the decision of the Council that she shall wed the Prince of Spain. She returns answer that she shall make her own choice. The Count seeks to argue with her, when she threatens to confiscate his estate for allowing the crown jewels to be stolen, and commands him to arrest his daughter and nephew for harboring the thieves. Diana suddenly enters, and an amusing trio ensues, the Queen standing with her back to Diana lest she may be discovered. The latter fails to recognize her as Catarina, and implores pardon for assisting in her escape. The situation is still further complicated by the appearance of Don Henrique, who has no difficulty in recognizing Catarina. Bewildered at her presence in the Queen's apartments, he declares to Diana that he will seize her and fly to some distant land. His rash resolution, however, is thwarted by his arrest, on the authority of the Queen, for treason. A martial finale introduces us to the Queen in state. Don Henrique rushes forward to implore mercy for Catarina. The Queen reveals herself at last, and announces to her people that she has chosen Don Henrique, who has loved her for herself, for her husband and their king. And thus closes one of the most sparkling, melodious, and humorous of Auber's works. What the concerted numbers lack in solidity of construction is compensated for by their grace and sweetness.

## **BALFE.**

Michael William Balfe was born at Dublin, Ireland, May 15, 1808. Of all the English opera-composers, his career was the most versatile, as his success, for a time at least, was the most remarkable. At seven years of age he scored a polacca of his own for a band. In his eighth year he appeared as a violinist, and in his tenth was composing ballads. At sixteen he was playing in the Drury Lane orchestra, and about this time began taking lessons in composition. In 1825, aided by the generosity of a patron, he went to Italy, where for three years he studied singing and counterpoint. In his twentieth year he met Rossini, who offered him an engagement as first barytone at the Italian Opera in Paris. He made his *début* with success in 1828, and at the close of his engagement returned to Italy, where he appeared again on the stage. About this time (1829-1830) he began writing Italian operas, and before he left Italy had produced three which met with considerable success. In 1835 he returned to England; and it was in this year that his first English opera, the "Siege of Rochelle," was produced. It was played continuously at Drury Lane for over three months. In 1836 appeared his "Maid of Artois;" in 1837, "Catharine Grey" and "Joan of Arc;" and in 1838, "Falstaff." During these years he was still singing in concerts and opera, and in 1840 appeared as manager of the Lyceum. His finest works were produced after this date,—*"The Bohemian Girl"* in 1843; *"The Enchantress"* in 1844; *"The Rose of Castile,"* *"La Zingara,"* and *"Satanella"* in 1858, and *"The Puritan's Daughter"* in 1861. His last opera was *"The Knight of the Leopard,"* known in Italian as *"Il Talismano,"* which has also been produced in English as *"The Talisman."* He married Mlle. Rosen, a German singer, whom he met in Italy in 1835; and his daughter Victoire, who subsequently married Sir John Crampton, and afterwards the Duc de Frias, also appeared as a singer in 1856. Balfe died Oct. 20, 1870, upon his own estate in Hertfordshire. The analysis of his three operas which are best known—*"The Bohemian Girl,"* *"Rose of Castile,"* and *"Puritan's Daughter"*—will contain sufficient reference to his ability as a composer.

### **THE BOHEMIAN GIRL.**

*"The Bohemian Girl,"* grand opera in three acts, words by Bunn, adapted from St. George's ballet of *"The Gypsy,"* which appeared at the Paris Grand Opera in 1839,—itself taken from a romance by Cervantes,—was first produced in London, Nov. 27, 1843, at Drury Lane, with the following cast:—

ARLINE Miss ROMER.

THADDEUS Mr. HARRISON.

GYPSY QUEEN Miss BETTS.

DEVILSHOOF Mr. STRETTON.

COUNT ARNHEIM Mr. BORRANI.

FLORESTEIN Mr. DURNSET.

The fame of *"The Bohemian Girl"* was not confined to England. It was translated into various European languages, and was one of the few English operas which secured a favorable hearing even in critical Germany. In its Italian form it was produced at Drury Lane as *"La Zingara,"* Feb. 6, 1858, with

Mlle. Piccolomini as Arline; and also had the honor of being selected for the state performance connected with the marriage of the Princess Royal. The French version, under the name of "La Bohémienne," for which Balfe added several numbers, besides enlarging it to five acts, was produced at the Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, in December, 1869, and gained for him the Cross of the Legion of Honor.

The scene of the opera is laid in Austria, and the first act introduces us to the château and grounds of Count Arnheim, Governor of Presburg, whose retainers are preparing for the chase. After a short chorus the Count enters with his little daughter Arline and his nephew Florestein. The Count sings a short solo ("A Soldier's Life"), and as the choral response by his retainers and hunters dies away and they leave the scene, Thaddeus, a Polish exile and fugitive, rushes in excitedly, seeking to escape the Austrian soldiers. His opening number is a very pathetic song ("Tis sad to leave your Fatherland"). At the end of the song a troop of gypsies enter, headed by Devilshoof, singing a blithe chorus ("In the Gypsy's Life you may read"). He hears Thaddeus's story and induces him to join them. Before the animated strains fairly cease, Florestein and some of the hunters dash across the grounds in quest of Arline, who has been attacked by a stag. Thaddeus, seizing a rifle, joins them, and rescues the child by killing the animal. The Count overwhelms him with gratitude, and urges him to join in the coming festivities. He consents, and at the banquet produces a commotion by refusing to drink the health of the Emperor. The soldiers are about to rush upon him, when Devilshoof interferes. The gypsy is arrested for his temerity, and taken into the castle. Thaddeus departs and the festivities are resumed, but are speedily interrupted again by the escape of Devilshoof, who takes Arline with him. The finale of the act is very stirring, and contains one number, a prayer ("Thou who in Might supreme"), which is extremely effective.

Twelve years elapse between the first and second acts, and during this time Count Arnheim has received no tidings of Arline, and has given her up as lost forever. The act opens in the gypsy camp in the suburbs of Presburg. Arline is seen asleep in the tent of the Queen, with Thaddeus watching her. After a quaint little chorus ("Silence, silence, the Lady Moon") sung by the gypsies, they depart in quest of plunder, headed by Devilshoof, and soon find their victim in the person of the foppish and half-drunken Florestein, who is returning from a revel. He is speedily relieved of his jewelry, among which is a medallion, which is carried off by Devilshoof. As the gypsies disappear, Arline wakes and relates her dream to Thaddeus in a joyous song ("I dreamed I dwelt in Marble Halls"), which has become one of the world's favorites. At the close of the ballad Thaddeus tells her the meaning of the scar upon her arm, and reveals himself as her rescuer, but does not disclose to her the mystery of her birth. The musical dialogue, with its ensemble, "The Secret of her Birth," will never lose its charm. Thaddeus declares his love for her just as the Queen, who is also in love with Thaddeus, enters. Arline also confesses her love for Thaddeus, and, according to the customs of the tribe, the Queen unites them, at the same time vowing vengeance against the pair.

The scene now changes to a street in the city. A great fair is in progress, and the gypsies, as usual, resort to it. Arline enters at their head, joyously singing, to the accompaniment of the rattling castanets, "Come with the Gypsy Bride;" her companions, blithely tripping along, responding with the chorus, "In the Gypsy's Life you may read." They disappear down the street and reappear in the public plaza. Arline, the Queen, Devilshoof, and Thaddeus sing an unaccompanied quartet ("From the Valleys and Hills"), a number which for grace and flowing harmony deserves a place in any opera. As they mingle among the people an altercation occurs between Arline and Florestein, who has attempted to insult her. The Queen recognizes Florestein as the owner of the medallion, and for her courage in resenting the insult maliciously presents Arline with it. Shortly afterwards he observes the medallion on Arline's neck, and has her arrested for theft. The next scene opens in the hall of justice. Count Arnheim enters with a sad countenance, and as he observes Arline's portrait, gives vent to his sorrow in that well-known melancholy reverie, "The Heart bowed down," which has become famous the world over. Arline is brought before him for trial. As it progresses he observes the scar upon her arm and asks its cause. She tells the story which Thaddeus had told her, and this solves the mystery. The Count recognizes his daughter, and the act closes with a beautiful ensemble ("Praised be the Will of Heaven").

The last act opens in the salon of Count Arnheim. Arline is restored to her old position, but her love for Thaddeus remains. He finds an opportunity to have a meeting with her, through the cunning of Devilshoof, who accompanies him. He once more tells his love in that tender and impassioned song, "When other Lips and other Hearts," and she promises to be faithful to him. As the sound of approaching steps is heard, Thaddeus and his companion conceal themselves. A large company enter, and Arline is presented to them. During the ceremony a closely veiled woman appears, and when questioned discovers herself as the Gypsy Queen. She reveals the hiding-place of her companions, and Thaddeus is dragged forth and ordered to leave the house. Arline declares her love for him, and her intention to go with him. She implores her father to relent. Thaddeus avows his noble descent, and boasts his ancestry and deeds in battle in that stirring martial song, "When the Fair Land of Poland." The Count finally yields and gives his daughter to Thaddeus. The Queen, filled with rage and despair,

induces one of the tribe to fire at him as he is embracing Arline; but by a timely movement of Devilshoof the bullet intended for Thaddeus pierces the breast of the Queen. As the curtain falls, the old song of the gypsies is heard again as they disappear in the distance with Devilshoof at their head.

Many of the operas of Balfe, like other ballad operas, have become unfashionable; but it is doubtful whether "The Bohemian Girl" will ever lose its attraction for those who delight in song-melody, charming orchestration, and sparkling, animated choruses. It leaped into popularity at a bound, and its pretty melodies are still as fresh as when they were first sung.

### **THE ROSE OF CASTILE.**

"The Rose of Castile," comic opera in three acts, words by Harris and Falconer, adapted from Adolphe Adam's "Muletier de Tolède," was first produced at the Lyceum Theatre, London, Oct. 29, 1857, with the following cast:—

ELVIRA Miss LOUISA PYNE.

MANUEL W.H. HARRISON.

CARMEN Miss SUSAN PYNE.

DON PEDRO Mr. WEISS.

DON SALLUST Mr. ST. ALBYN.

DON FLORIO Mr. HONEY.

The scene of the opera is laid in Spain. Elvira, the Rose of Castile, Queen of Leon, has just ascended the throne, and her hand has been demanded by the King of Castile for his brother, Don Sebastian the Infant. Having learned that the latter is about to enter her dominions disguised as a muleteer, the better to satisfy his curiosity about her, she adopts the same expedient, and sets out to intercept him, disguised as a peasant girl, taking with her one of her attendants.

The first act opens upon a rural scene in front of a posada, where the peasants are dancing and singing a lively chorus ("List to the gay Castanet"). Elvira and Carmen, her attendant, enter upon the scene, and are asked to join in the dance, but instead, Elvira delights them with a song, a vocal scherzo ("Yes, I'll obey you"). The innkeeper is rude to them, but they are protected from his coarseness by Manuel, the muleteer, who suddenly appears and sings a rollicking song ("I am a simple Muleteer") to the accompaniment of a tambourine and the snappings of his whip. A dialogue duet follows, in which she accepts his protection and escort. She has already recognized the Infant, and he has fulfilled the motive of the story by falling in love with her. At this point the three conspirators, Don Pedro, Don Sallust, and Don Florio, enter, the first of whom has designs on the throne. They indulge in a buffo trio, which develops into a spirited bacchanal ("Wine, Wine, the Magician thou art!"). Observing Elvira's likeness to the Queen, they persuade her to personate her Majesty. She consents with feigned reluctance, and after accepting their escort in place of Manuel's, being sure that he will follow, she sings a quaint rondo ("Oh, were I the Queen of Spain!"), and the act closes with a concerted number accompanying their departure.

The second act opens in the throne-room of the palace, and is introduced by a very expressive conspirators' chorus ("The Queen in the Palace"); after which Don Pedro enters and gives expression to the uncertainty of his schemes in a ballad ("Though Fortune darkly o'er me frowns") which reminds one very forcibly of "The Heart bowed down," in "The Bohemian Girl." The Queen, who has eluded the surveillance of the conspirators, makes her appearance, surrounded by her attendants, and sings that exquisite ballad, "The Convent Cell" ("Of Girlhood's happy Days I dream"), one of the most beautiful songs ever written by any composer, and certainly Balfe's most popular inspiration. At the close of the ballad Manuel appears, and is granted an audience, in which he informs her of the meeting with the peasant girl and boy, and declares his belief that they were the Queen and Carmen. She ridicules the statement, and a very funny trio buffo ensues ("I'm not the Queen, ha, ha!"). He then informs her of the conspirators' plot to imprison her, but she thwarts it by inducing a silly and pompous old Duchess to assume the rôle of Queen for the day, and ride to the palace closely veiled in the royal carriage. The plot succeeds, and the Duchess is seized and conveyed to a convent. In the next scene there is another spirited buffo number, in which Don Pedro and Don Florio are mourning over the loss of their peasant girl, when, greatly to their relief, she enters again, singing a very quaint and characteristic scena ("I'm but a simple Peasant Maid"), which rouses the suspicions of the conspirators. They are all the more perplexed when the Queen announces herself, and declares her intention of marrying the muleteer.

The last act opens with a song by Carmen ("Though Love's the greatest Plague in Life"), which falls far below the excellence of the other songs in the work. It is followed by a buffo duet between Carmen and Florio, who agree to marry. The Queen and ladies enter, and the former sings a bravura air ("Oh, joyous, happy Day!"), which was intended by the composer to show Miss Pyne's vocal ability. At this point a message is brought her from Don Sebastian, announcing his marriage. Enraged at the discovery

that the muleteer is not Don Sebastian, she severely upbraids him, and he replies in another exquisite ballad ("Twas Rank and Fame that tempted thee"). At its close she once more declares she will be true to the muleteer. Don Pedro is delighted at the apparent success of his scheme, as he believes he can force her to abdicate if she marries a muleteer, and gives vent to his joy in a martial song ("Hark! hark! methinks I hear"). The last scene is in the throne-room, where Manuel announces he is king of Castile, and mounts the throne singing a stirring song closely resembling, in its style, the "Fair Land of Poland," in "The Bohemian Girl." Elvira expresses her delight in a bravura air ("Oh, no! by Fortune blessed"), and the curtain falls. The story of the opera is very complicated, and sometimes tiresome; but the music is well sustained throughout, especially the buffo numbers, while some of the ballads are among the best ever written by an English composer.

## BEETHOVEN.

Ludwig Von Beethoven, the greatest of composers, was born Dec. 17, 1770, at Bonn, Germany, his father being a court singer in the chapel of the Elector of Cologne. He studied in Vienna with Haydn, with whom he did not always agree, however, and afterwards with Albrechtsberger. His first symphony appeared in 1801, his earlier symphonies, in what is called his first period, being written in the Mozart style. His only opera, "Fidelio," for which he wrote four overtures, was first brought out in Vienna in 1805; his oratorio, "Christ on the Mount of Olives," in 1812; and his colossal Ninth Symphony, with its choral setting of Schiller's "Ode to Joy," in 1824. In addition to his symphonies, his opera, oratorios, and masses, and the immortal group of sonatas for the piano, which were almost revelations in music, he developed chamber music to an extent far beyond that reached by his predecessors, Haydn and Mozart. His symphonies exhibit surprising power, and a marvellous comprehension of the deeper feelings in life and the influences of nature, both human and physical. He wrote with the deepest earnestness, alike in the passion and the calm of his music, and he invested it also with a genial humor as well as with the highest expression of pathos. His works are epic in character. He was the great tone-poet of music. His subjects were always lofty and dignified, and to their treatment he brought not only a profound knowledge of musical technicality, but intense sympathy with the innermost feelings of human nature, for he was a humanitarian in the broadest sense. By the common consent of the musical world he stands at the head of all composers, and has always been their guide and inspiration. He died March 26, 1827, in the midst of a raging thunder storm, one of his latest utterances being a recognition of the "divine spark" in Schubert's music.

## FIDELIO.

"Fidelio, oder die eheliche Liebe" ("Fidelio, or Conjugal Love"), grand opera in two acts, words by Sonnleithner, translated freely from Bouilly's "Léonore, ou l'Amour Conjugal," was first produced at the Theatre An der Wien, Vienna, Nov. 20, 1805, the work at that time being in three acts. A translation of the original programme of that performance, with the exception of the usual price of admissions, is appended:—

Imperial and Royal Theatre An der Wien.

New Opera.

To-day, Wednesday, 20 November, 1805, at the Imperial and Royal Theatre An der Wien, will be given for the first time.

FIDELIO;

Or, Conjugal Love.

Opera in three acts, translated freely from the French text by

JOSEPH SONNLEITHNER.

The music is by LUDWIG VON BEETHOVEN.

### *Dramatis Personae.*

*Don Fernando*, Minister Herr Weinkoff. *Don Pizarro*, Governor of a State Prison Herr Meier. *Florestan*, prisoner Herr Demmer. *Leonora*, his wife, under the name of *Fidelio* Fräulein Milder. *Rocco*, chief jailer Herr Rothe. *Marcellina*, his daughter Fräulein Müller. *Jaquino*, turnkey Herr Cache. *Captain of the Guard* Herr Meister. *Prisoners, Guards, People.*

The action passes in a State prison in Spain, a few leagues from Seville. The piece can be procured at the box-office for fifteen kreutzers.

During this first season the opera was performed three times and then withdrawn. Breuning reduced it to two acts, and two or three of the musical numbers were sacrificed, and in this form it was played twice at the Imperial Private Theatre and again withdrawn. On these occasions it had been given under Beethoven's favorite title, "Leonore." In 1814 Treitschke revised it, and it was produced at the Kärnthnerthor Theatre, Vienna, May 23, of that year, as "Fidelio," which title it has ever since retained. Its first performance in Paris was at the Théâtre Lyrique, May 5, 1860; in London, at the King's Theatre, May 18, 1832; and in English at Covent Garden, June 12, 1835, with Malibran in the title-rôle. Beethoven wrote four overtures for this great work. The first was composed in 1805, the second in 1806, the third in 1807, and the fourth in 1814. It is curious that there has always been a confusion in their numbering, and the error remains to this day. What is called No. 1 is in reality No. 3, and was composed for a performance of the opera at Prague, the previous overture having been too difficult for the strings. The splendid "Leonora," No. 3, is in reality No. 2, and the No. 2 is No. 1. The fourth, or the "Fidelio" overture, contains a new set of themes, but the "Leonora" is the grandest of them all.

The entire action of the opera transpires in a Spanish prison, of which Don Pizarro is governor and Rocco the jailer. The porter of the prison is Jacquino, who is in love with Marcellina, daughter of Rocco, and she in turn is in love with Fidelio, Rocco's assistant, who has assumed male disguise the better to assist her in her plans for the rescue of her husband, Florestan, a Spanish nobleman. The latter, who is the victim of Don Pizarro's hatred because he had thwarted some of his evil designs, has been imprisoned by him unknown to the world, and is slowly starving to death. Leonora, his wife, who in some way has discovered that her husband is in the prison, has obtained employment of Rocco, disguised as the young man Fidelio.

The opera opens with a charming, playful love-scene between Jacquino and Marcellina, whom the former is teasing to marry him. She puts him off, and as he sorrowfully departs, sings the Hope aria, "Die Hoffnung," a fresh, smoothly flowing melody, in which she pictures the delight of a life with Fidelio. At its close Rocco enters with the despondent Jacquino, shortly followed by Fidelio, who is very much fatigued. The love-episode is brought out in the famous canon quartet, "Mir ist so wunderbar," one of the most beautiful and restful numbers in the opera. Rocco promises Marcellina's hand to Fidelio as the reward of her fidelity, but in the characteristic and sonorous Gold song, "Hat man nicht auch Geld daneben," reminds them that money as well as love is necessary to housekeeping. In the next scene, while Don Pizarro is giving instructions to Rocco, a packet of letters is delivered to him, one of which informs him that Don Fernando is coming the next day to inspect the prison, as he has been informed that it contains several victims of arbitrary power. He at once determines that Florestan shall die, and gives vent to his wrath in a furious dramatic aria ("Ha! welch ein Augenblick!"). He attempts to bribe Rocco to aid him. The jailer at first refuses, but subsequently, after a stormy duet, consents to dig the grave. Fidelio has overheard the scheme, and, as they disappear, rushes forward and sings the great aria, "Abscheulicher!" one of the grandest and most impassioned illustrations of dramatic intensity in the whole realm of music. The recitative expresses intense horror at the intended murder, then subsides into piteous sorrow, and at last breaks out into the glorious adagio, "Komm Hoffnung," in which she sings of the immortal power of love. The last scene of the act introduces the strong chorus of the prisoners as they come out in the yard for air and sunlight, after which Rocco relates to Fidelio his interview with Don Pizarro. The latter orders the jailer to return the prisoners to their dungeons and go on with the digging of the grave, and the act closes.

The second act opens in Florestan's dungeon. The prisoner sings an intensely mournful aria ("In des Lebens Frühlingstagen"), which has a rapturous finale ("Und spür' Ich nicht linde"), as he sees his wife in a vision. Rocco and Fidelio enter and begin digging the grave, to the accompaniment of sepulchral music. She discovers that Florestan has sunk back exhausted, and as she restores him recognizes her husband. Don Pizarro enters, and after ordering Fidelio away, who meanwhile conceals herself, attempts to stab Florestan. Fidelio, who has been closely watching him, springs forward with a shriek, and interposes herself between him and her husband. He once more advances to carry out his purpose, when Fidelio draws a pistol and defies him. As she does so, the sound of a trumpet is heard outside announcing the arrival of Don Fernando. Don Pizarro rushes out in despair, and Florestan and Leonora, no longer Fidelio, join in a duet ("O Namenlose Freude") which is the very ecstasy of happiness. In the last scene Don Fernando sets the prisoners free in the name of the king, and among them Florestan. Pizarro is revealed in his true character, and is led away to punishment. The happy pair are reunited, and Marcellina, to Jacquino's delight, consents to marry him. The act closes with a general song of jubilee. As a drama and as an opera "Fidelio" stands almost alone in its perfect purity, in the moral grandeur of its subject, and in the resplendent ideality of its music.

## BELLINI.

Vincenzo Bellini was born Nov. 3, 1802, at Catania, Sicily, and came of musical parentage. By the generosity of a patron he was sent to Naples, and studied at the Conservatory under Zingarelli. His first opera was "Adelson e Salvini," and its remarkable merit secured him a commission from the manager, Barbaja, for an opera for San Carlo. The result was his first important work, "Bianca e Fernando," written in 1826. Its success was moderate; but he was so encouraged that he at once went to Milan and wrote "Il Pirata," the tenor part for Rubini. Its success was extraordinary, and the managers of La Scala commissioned him for another work. In 1828 "La Straniera" appeared, quickly followed by "Zaira" (1829), which failed at Parma, and "I Capuletti ed i Montecchi," a version of "Romeo and Juliet," which made a great success at Venice in 1830. A year later he composed "La Sonnambula," unquestionably his best work, for La Scala, and it speedily made the tour of Europe, and gained for him an extended reputation. A year after its appearance he astonished the musical world with "Norma," written, like "Sonnambula," for Mme. Pasta. These are his greatest works. "Norma" was followed by "Beatrice di Tenda," and this by "I Puritani," his last opera, written in Paris for the four great artists, Grisi, Rubini, Tamburini, and Lablache. Bellini died Sept. 23, 1835, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, preserving his musical enthusiasm to the very last. He was a close follower of Rossini, and studied his music diligently, and though without a very profound knowledge of harmony or orchestration, succeeded in producing at least three works, "Norma," "Sonnambula," and "I Puritani," which were the delight of the opera-goers of his day, and still freshly hold the stage.

## NORMA.

"Norma," a serious opera in two acts, words by Romani, was first produced during the season of Lent, 1832, at Milan, with the principal parts cast as follows:—

NORMA Mme. PASTA.

ADALGISA Mme. GRISI.

POLLIONE Sig. DONZELLI.

It was first heard in London in 1833, and in Paris in 1855, and Planché's English version of it was produced at Drury Lane in 1837. The scene of the opera is laid among the Druids, in Gaul, after its occupation by the Roman legions. In the first scene the Druids enter with Oroveso, their priest, to the impressive strains of a religious march which is almost as familiar as a household word. The priest announces that Norma, the high priestess, will come and cut the sacred branch and give the signal for the expulsion of the Romans. The next scene introduces Pollione, the Roman proconsul, to whom Norma, in defiance of her faith and traditions, has bound herself in secret marriage, and by whom she has had two children. In a charmingly melodious scena ("Meco all' altar di Venere") he reveals his faithlessness and guilty love for Adalgisa, a young virgin of the temple, who has consented to abandon her religion and fly with him to Rome. In the fourth scene Norma enters attended by her priestesses, and denounces the Druids for their warlike disposition, declaring that the time has not yet come for shaking off the yoke of Rome, and that when it does she will give the signal from the altar of the Druids. After cutting the sacred mistletoe, she comes forward and invokes peace from the moon in that exquisite prayer, "Casta Diva," which electrified the world with its beauty and tenderness, and still holds its place in popular favor, not alone by the grace of its embellishments, but by the pathos of its melody. It is followed by another cavatina of almost equal beauty and tenderness ("Ah! bello a me ritorna"). In the next scene Adalgisa, retiring from the sacred rites, sings of her love for Pollione, and as she closes is met by the proconsul, who once more urges her to fly to Rome with him. The duet between them is one of great power and beauty, and contains a strikingly passionate number for the tenor ("Va, crudele"). Oppressed by her conscience, she reveals her fatal promise to Norma, and implores absolution from her vows. Norma yields to her entreaties, but when she inquires the name and country of her lover, and Adalgisa points to Pollione as he enters Norma's sanctuary, all the priestess's love turns to wrath. In this scene the duet, "Perdoni e ti compiangio," is one of exceeding loveliness and peculiarly melodious tenderness. The act closes with a terzetto of great power ("O! di qual sei tu"), in which both the priestess and Adalgisa furiously denounce the faithless Pollione. In the midst of their imprecations the sound of the sacred shield is heard calling Norma to the rites.

The second act opens in Norma's dwelling, and discovers her children asleep on a couch. Norma enters with the purpose of killing them, but the maternal instinct overcomes her vengeful thought that they are Pollione's children. Adalgisa appears, and Norma announces her intention to place her children in the Virgin's hands, and send her and them to Pollione while she expiates her offence on the funeral pyre. Adalgisa pleads with her not to abandon Pollione, who will return to her repentant; and the most effective number in the opera ensues,—the grand duet containing two of Bellini's most

beautiful inspirations, the "Deh! con te li prendi," and the familiar "Mira, O Norma," whose strains have gone round the world and awakened universal delight. Pollione, maddened by his passion for Adalgisa, impiously attempts to tear her from the altar in the temple of Irminsul, whereupon Norma enters the temple and strikes the sacred shield, summoning the Druids. They meet, and she declares the meaning of the signal is war, slaughter, and destruction. She chants a magnificent hymn ("Guerra, guerra"), which is full of the very fury of battle. Pollione, who has been intercepted in the temple, is brought before her. Love is still stronger than resentment with her. In a very dramatic scena ("In mia mano alfin tu sei") she informs him he is in her power, but she will let him escape if he will renounce Adalgisa and leave the country. He declares death would be preferable; whereupon she threatens to denounce Adalgisa. Pity overcomes anger, however. She snatches the sacred wreath from her brow and declares herself the guilty one. Too late Pollione discovers the worth of the woman he has abandoned, and a beautiful duet ("Qual cor tradisti") forms the closing number. She ascends the funeral pyre with Pollione, and in its flames they are purged of earthly crime. It is a memorable fact in the history of this opera, that on its first performance it was coldly received, and the Italian critics declared it had no vitality; though no opera was ever written in which such intense dramatic effect has been produced with simple melodic force, and no Italian opera score to-day is more living or more likely to last than that of Norma.

## **LA SONNAMBULA.**

"La Sonnambula," an opera in two acts, words by Romani, was first produced in Milan, March 6, 1831, with the following cast:—

AMINA Mme. PASTA.

ELVINO Sig. RUBINI.

RODOLFO Sig. MARIANO.

LISA Mme. TOCCANI.

It was brought out in the same year in Paris and London, and two years after in English, with Malibran as Amina. The subject of the story was taken from a vaudeville and ballet by Scribe. The scene is laid in Switzerland. Amina, an orphan, the ward of Teresa, the miller's wife, is about to marry Elvino, a well-to-do landholder of the village. Lisa, mistress of the inn, is also in love with Elvino, and jealous of her rival. Alessio, a peasant lad, is also in love with the landlady. Such is the state of affairs on the day before the wedding. Rodolfo, the young lord of the village, next appears upon the scene. He has arrived incognito for the purpose of looking up his estates, and stops at Lisa's inn, where he meets Amina. He gives her many pretty compliments, much to the dissatisfaction of the half-jealous Elvino, who is inclined to quarrel with the disturber of his peace of mind. Amina, who is subject to fits of somnambulism, has been mistaken for a ghost by the peasants, and they warn Rodolfo that the village is haunted. The information, however, does not disturb him, and he quietly retires to his chamber. The officious Lisa also enters, and a playful scene of flirtation ensues, during which Amina enters the room, walking in her sleep. Lisa seeks shelter in a closet. Rodolfo, to escape from the embarrassment of the situation, leaves the apartment, and Amina reclines upon the bed as if it were her own. The malicious Lisa hurries from the room to inform Elvino of what she has seen, and thoughtlessly leaves her handkerchief. Elvino rushes to the spot with other villagers, and finding Amina, as Lisa had described, declares that she is guilty, and leaves her. Awakened by the noise, the unfortunate girl, realizing the situation, sorrowfully throws herself into Teresa's arms. The villagers implore Rodolfo to acquit Amina of any blame, and he stoutly protests her innocence; but it is of no avail in satisfying Elvino, who straightway offers his hand to Lisa. In the last act Amina is seen stepping from the window of the mill in her sleep. She crosses a frail bridge which yields beneath her weight and threatens to precipitate her upon the wheel below; but she passes it in safety, descends to the ground, and walks into her lover's arms amid the jubilant songs of the villagers. Elvino is convinced of her innocence, and they are wedded at once, while the discovery of Lisa's handkerchief in Rodolfo's room pronounces her the faithless one.

Such is the simple little pastoral story to which Bellini has set some of his most beautiful melodies, the most striking of which are the aria, "Sovra il sen," in the third scene of the first act, where Amina declares her happiness to Teresa; the beautiful aria for barytone in the sixth scene, "Vi ravviso," descriptive of Rodolfo's delight in revisiting the scenes of his youth; the playful duet between Amina and Elvino, "Mai piu dubbi!" in which she rebukes him for his jealousy; the humorous and very characteristic chorus of the villagers in the tenth scene, "Osservate, l'uscio è aperto," as they tiptoe into Rodolfo's apartment; the duet, "O mio dolor," in the next scene, in which Amina asserts her innocence; the aria for tenor in the third scene of the second act, "Tutto e sciolto," in which Elvino bemoans his sad lot; and that joyous ecstatic outburst of birdlike melody, "Ah! non giunge," which closes the opera. In fact, "Sonnambula" is so replete with melodies of the purest and tenderest kind, that it is difficult to specify particular ones. It is exquisitely idyllic throughout, and the music is as quiet, peaceful, simple,

and tender as the charming pastoral scenes it illustrates.

## **I PURITANI.**

"I Puritani di Scozia," an opera in two acts, words by Count Pepoli, was first produced at the Théâtre Italien, Paris, Jan. 25, 1835, and in London in the following May, under the title of "I Puritani ed i Cavalieri." The original cast was as follows:—

ELVIRA Mme. GRISI.

ARTURO Sig. RUBINI.

RICARDO Sig. TAMBURINI.

GIORGIO Sig. LABLACHE.

This cast was one of unexampled strength, and was long known in Europe as the Puritani quartet. The story of the opera is laid in England, during the war between Charles II. and his Parliament, and the first scene opens in Plymouth, then held by the parliamentary forces. The fortress is commanded by Lord Walton, whose daughter, Elvira, is in love with Lord Arthur Talbot, a young cavalier in the King's service. Her hand had previously been promised to Sir Richard Forth, of the parliamentary army; but to the great delight of the maiden, Sir George Walton, brother of the commander, brings her the news that her father has relented, and that Arthur will be admitted into the fortress that the nuptials may be celebrated. Henrietta, widow of Charles I., is at this time a prisoner in the fortress, under sentence of death passed by Parliament. Arthur discovers her situation, and by concealing her in Elvira's bridal veil seeks to effect her escape. On their way out he encounters his rival; but the latter, discovering that the veiled lady is not Elvira, allows them to pass. The escape is soon discovered, and Elvira, thinking her lover has abandoned her, loses her reason. Arthur is proscribed by the Parliament and sentenced to death; but Sir Richard, moved by the appeals of Sir George Walton, who hopes to restore his niece to reason, promises to use his influence with Parliament to save Arthur's life should he be captured unarmed. Arthur meanwhile manages to have an interview with Elvira; and the latter, though still suffering from her mental malady, listens joyfully to his explanation of his sudden flight. Their interview is disturbed by a party of Puritans who enter and arrest him. He is condemned to die on the spot; but before the sentence can be carried out, a messenger appears with news of the king's defeat and the pardon of Arthur. The joyful tidings restore Elvira to reason, and the lovers are united.

The libretto of "I Puritani" is one of the poorest ever furnished to Bellini, but the music is some of his best. It is replete with melodies, which are not only fascinating in their original setting, but have long been favorites on the concert-stage. The opera is usually performed in three acts, but was written in two. The prominent numbers of the first act are the pathetic cavatina for Ricardo, "Ah! per sempre io ti perdei," in which he mourns the loss of Elvira; a lovely romanza for tenor ("A te o cara"); a brilliant polacca ("Son vergin vezzosa") for Elvira, which is one of the delights of all artists; and a concerted finale, brimming over with melody and closing with the stirring anathema chorus, "Non casa, non spiaggia." The first grand number in the second act is Elvira's mad song, "Qui la voce," in which are brought out not only that rare gift for expressing pathos in melody for which Bellini is so famous, but the sweetest of themes and most graceful of embellishments. The remaining numbers are Elvira's appeal to her lover ("Vien, diletto"), the magnificent duet for basses ("Suoni la tromba"), known as the "Liberty Duet," which in sonorousness, majesty, and dramatic intensity hardly has an equal in the whole range of Italian opera; a tender and plaintive romanza for tenor ("A una fonte afflitto e solo"); a passionate duet for Arthur and Elvira ("Star teco ognor"); and an adagio, sung by Arthur in the finale ("Ella è tremante").

## **BIZET.**

Georges Bizet was born at Paris, Oct. 25, 1838, and in an artistic atmosphere, as his father, an excellent teacher, was married to a sister of Mme. Delsarte, a talented pianist, and his uncle, a musician, was the founder of the famous Delsarte system. He studied successively with Marmontel and Benoist, and subsequently took lessons in composition from Halevy, whose daughter he afterwards married. His first work was an operetta of not much consequence, "Docteur Miracle," written in 1857, and in the same year he took the Grand Prix de Rome. On his return from Italy he composed "Vasco de Gama" and "Les Pecheurs de Perles," neither of which met with much success. In 1867 "La Jolie Fille de Perth" appeared, and in 1872, "Djamileh." During the intervals of these larger works he wrote the Patrie overture and the interludes to "L'Arlesienne," a very poetical score which Theodore Thomas



introduced to this country, and both works were received with enthusiasm. At last he was to appreciate and enjoy a real dramatic success, though it was his last work. "Carmen" appeared in 1875, and achieved a magnificent success at the Opera Comique. It was brought out in March, and in the following June he died of acute heart-disease. He was a very promising composer, and specially excelled in orchestration. During his last few years he was a close student of Wagner, whose influence is apparent in this last work of his life.

## **CARMEN.**

"Carmen," an opera in four acts, words by Meilhac and Halevy, adapted from Prosper Mérimée's romance of "Carmen," was first produced at the Opera Comique, Paris, March 3, 1875, with Mme. Galli-Marie in the title-rôle and Mlle. Chapuy as Michaela. The scene is laid in Seville, time 1820. The first act opens in the public square, filled with a troop of soldiers under command of Don José, and loungers who are waiting the approach of the pretty girls who work in the cigar-factory near by, and prettiest and most heartless of them all, Carmen. Before they appear, Michaela, a village girl, enters the square, bearing a message to Don José from his mother, but not finding him departs. The cigar-girls at last pass by on their way to work, and with them Carmen, who observes Don José sitting in an indifferent manner and throws him the rose she wears in her bosom. As they disappear, Michaela returns and delivers her message. The sight of the gentle girl and the thought of home dispel Don José's sudden passion for Carmen. He is about to throw away her rose, when a sudden disturbance is heard in the factory. It is found that Carmen has quarrelled with one of the girls and wounded her. She is arrested, and to prevent further mischief her arms are pinioned. She so bewitches the lieutenant, however, that he connives at her escape and succeeds in effecting it, while she is led away to prison by the soldiers. In the second act Carmen has returned to her wandering gypsy life, and we find her with her companions in the cabaret of Lillas-Pastia, singing and dancing. Among the new arrivals is Escamillo, the victorious bull-fighter of Grenada, with whom Carmen is at once fascinated. When the inn is closed, Escamillo and the soldiers depart, but Carmen waits with two of the gypsies, who are smugglers, for the arrival of Don José. They persuade her to induce him to join their band, and when the lieutenant, wild with passion for her, enters the apartment, she prevails upon him to remain in spite of the trumpet-call which summons him to duty. An officer appears and orders him out. He refuses to go, and when the officer attempts to use force Carmen summons the gypsies. He is soon overpowered, and Don José escapes to the mountains. The third act opens in the haunt of the smugglers, a wild, rocky, cavernous place. Don José and Carmen, who is growing very indifferent to him, are there. As the contrabandists finish their work and gradually leave the scene, Escamillo, who has been following Carmen, appears. His presence and his declarations as well arouse the jealousy of Don José. They rush at each other for mortal combat, but the smugglers separate them. Escamillo bides his time, invites them to the approaching bullfight at Seville, and departs. While Don José is upbraiding Carmen, the faithful Michaela, who has been guided to the spot, begs him to accompany her, as his mother is dying. Duty prevails, and he follows her as Escamillo's taunting song is heard dying away in the distance. In the last act the drama hurries on to the tragic dénouement. It is a gala-day in Seville, for Escamillo is to fight. Carmen is there in his company, though her gypsy friends have warned her Don José is searching for her. Amid great pomp Escamillo enters the arena, and Carmen is about to follow, when Don José appears and stops her. He appeals to her and tries to awaken the old love. She will not listen, and at last in a fit of wild rage hurls the ring he had given her at his feet. The shouts of the people in the arena announce another victory for Escamillo. She cries out with joy. Don José springs at her like a tiger, and stabs her just as Escamillo emerges from the contest.

Carmen is the largest and best-considered of all Bizet's works, and one of the best in the modern French repertory. The overture is short but very brilliant. After some characteristic choruses by the street lads, soldiers, and cigar-girls, Carmen sings the Havanaise ("Amor, misterioso angelo"), a quaint song in waltz time, the melody being that of an old Spanish song by Tradier, called "El Aveglito." A serious duet between Michaela and Don José ("Mia madre io la rivedo") follows, which is very tender in its character. The next striking number is the dance tempo, "Presso il bastion de Seviglia," a seguidilla sung by Carmen while bewitching Don José. In the finale, as she escapes, the Havanaise, which is the Carmen motive, is heard again.

The second-act music is peculiarly Spanish in color, particularly that for the ballet. The opening song of the gypsies in the cabaret, to the accompaniment of the castanets ("Vezi e anella scintillar"), is bewitching in its rhythm, and is followed in the next scene by a stirring and very picturesque aria ("Toreador attento"), in which Escamillo describes the bull-fight. A beautifully written quintet ("Abbiamo in vista"), and a strongly dramatic duet, beginning with another fascinating dance tempo ("Voglio danzar pel tuo piacer"), and including a beautiful pathetic melody for Don José ("Il fior che avevi"), closes the music of the act.

The third act contains two very striking numbers, the terzetto of the card-players in the smugglers'

haunt ("Mischiam! alziam!"), and Michaela's aria ("Io dico no, non son paurosa"), the most effective and beautiful number in the whole work, and the one which shows most clearly the effect of Wagner's influence upon the composer. In the finale of the act the Toreador's song is again heard as he disappears in the distance after the quarrel with Don José.

The last act is a hurly-burly of the bull-fight, the Toreador's taking march, the stormy duet between Don José and Carmen, and the tragic dénouement in which the Carmen motive is repeated. The color of the whole work is Spanish, and the dance tempo is freely used and beautifully worked up with Bizet's ingenious and scholarly instrumentation. Except in the third act, however, the vocal parts are inferior to the orchestral treatment.

## **BOIELDIEU.**

François Adrien Boieldieu was born Dec. 16, 1775, at Rouen, France. Little is known of his earlier life, except that he studied for a time with Broche, the cathedral organist. His first opera, "La Fille Coupable," appeared in 1793, and was performed at Rouen with some success. In 1795 a second opera, "Rosalie et Myrza," was performed in the same city; after which he went to Paris, where he became acquainted with many prominent musicians, among them Cherubini. His first Paris opera was the "Famille Suisse" (1797), which had a successful run. Several other operas followed, besides some excellent pieces of chamber music which secured him the professorship of the piano in the Conservatory. He also took lessons at this time of Cherubini in counterpoint, and in 1803 brought out a very successful work, "Ma Tante Aurore." We next hear of him in St. Petersburg, as conductor of the Imperial Opera, where he composed many operas and vaudevilles. He spent eight years in Russia, returning to Paris in 1811. The next year one of his best operas, "Jean de Paris," was produced with extraordinary success. Though he subsequently wrote many operas, fourteen years elapsed before his next great work, "La Dame Blanche," appeared. Its success was unprecedented. All Europe was delighted with it, and it is as fresh to-day as when it was first produced. The remainder of Boieldieu's life was sad, owing to operatic failures, pecuniary troubles, and declining health. He died at Jarcy, near Paris, Oct. 8, 1834.

### **LA DAME BLANCHE.**

"La Dame Blanche," opera comique in three acts, words by Scribe, adapted from Walter Scott's novels, "The Monastery" and "Guy Mannering," was first produced at the Opera Comique, Dec. 10, 1825, and was first performed in English under the title of "The White Maid," at Covent Garden, London, Jan. 2, 1827. The scene of the opera is laid in Scotland. The Laird of Avenel, a zealous partisan of the Stuarts, was proscribed after the battle of Culloden, and upon the eve of going into exile intrusts Gaveston, his steward, with the care of the castle, and of a considerable treasure which is concealed in a statue called the White Lady. The traditions affirmed that this lady was the protectress of the Avenels. All the clan were believers in the story, and the villagers declared they had often seen her in the neighborhood. Gaveston, however, does not share their superstition nor believe in the legend, and some time after the departure of the Laird he announces the sale of the castle, hoping to obtain it at a low rate because the villagers will not dare to bid for it through fear of the White Lady. The steward is led to do this because he has heard the Laird is dead, and knows there is no heir to the property. Anna, an orphan girl, who had been befriended by the Laird, determines to frustrate Gaveston's designs, and appears in the village disguised as the White Lady. She also writes to Dickson, a farmer, who is indebted to her, to meet her at midnight in the castle of Avenel. He is too superstitious to go, and George Brown, a young lieutenant who is sharing his hospitality, volunteers in his stead. He encounters the White Lady, and learns from her he will shortly meet a young lady who has saved his life by her careful nursing after a battle,—Anna meanwhile recognizing George as the person she had saved. When the day of sale comes, Dickson is empowered by the farmers to purchase the castle, so that it may not fall into Gaveston's hands. George and Anna are there; and the former, though he has not a shilling, buys it under instructions from Anna. When the time comes for payment, Anna produces the treasure which had been concealed in the statue, and, still in the disguise of the White Lady, discovers to him the secret of his birth during the exile of his parents. Gaveston approaches the spectre and tears off her veil, revealing Anna, his ward. Moved by the zeal and fidelity of his father's protégée, George offers her his hand, which, after some maidenly scruples, she accepts.

The opera is full of beautiful songs, many of them Scotch in character. In the first act the opening song of George ("Ah, what Pleasure a Soldier to be!") is very poetical in its sentiment. It also contains

the characteristic ballad of the White Lady, with choral responses ("Where yon Trees your Eye discovers"), and an exquisitely graceful trio in the finale ("Heavens! what do I hear?"). The second act opens with a very plaintive romanza ("Poor Margaret, spin away!"), sung by Margaret, Anna's old nurse, at her spinning-wheel, as she thinks of the absent Laird, followed in the fifth scene by a beautiful cavatina for tenor ("Come, O Gentle Lady"). In the seventh scene is a charming duet ("From these Halls"), and the act closes with an ensemble for seven voices and chorus, which has hardly been excelled in ingenuity of treatment. The third act opens with a charmingly sentimental aria for Anna ("With what delight I behold"), followed in the third scene by a stirring chorus of mountaineers, leading up to "the lay ever sung by the Clan of Avenel,"—the familiar old ballad, "Robin Adair," which loses a little of its local color under French treatment, but gains an added grace. It is stated on good authority that two of Boieldieu's pupils, Adolph Adam and Labarre, assisted him in the work, and that the lovely overture was written in one evening,—Boieldieu taking the andante and the two others the remaining movements. Though a little old-fashioned in some of its phrasing, the opera still retains its freshness and beautiful sentiment. Its popularity is best evinced by the fact that up to June, 1875, it had been given 1340 times at the theatre where it was first produced.

## **BOITO.**

Arrigo Boito was born in 1840, and received his musical education in the Conservatory at Milan, where he studied for nine years. In 1866 he became a musical critic for several Italian papers, and about the same time wrote several poems of more than ordinary merit. Both in literature and music his taste was diversified; and he combined the two talents in a remarkable degree in his opera of "Mephistopheles," the only work by which he is known to the musical world at large. He studied Goethe profoundly; and the notes which he has appended to the score show a most intimate knowledge of the Faust legend. His text is in one sense polyglot, as he has made use of portions of Marlowe's "Doctor Faustus," as well as excerpts from Blaze de Bury, Lenau, Widmann, and others who have treated the legend. He studied Wagner's music also very closely, and to such purpose that after the first performance of this opera at La Scala, in 1868, the critics called him the Italian Wagner, and, in common with the public, condemned both him and his work. After Wagner's "Lohengrin" had been produced in Italy and met with success, Boito saw his opportunity to once more bring out his work. It was performed at Bologna in 1875, and met with an enthusiastic success. Its introduction to this country is largely due to Mme. Christine Nilsson, though Mme. Marie Roze was the first artist to appear in it here.

### **MEPHISTOPHELES.**

"Mephistopheles," grand opera in a prologue, four acts, and epilogue, words by the composer, was first performed at La Scala, Milan, in 1868. The "Prologue in the Heavens" contains five numbers, a prelude, and chorus of the mystic choir; instrumental scherzo, preluding the appearance of Mephistopheles; dramatic interlude, in which he engages to entrap Faust; a vocal scherzo by the chorus of cherubim; and the Final Psalmody by the penitents on earth and chorus of spirits. The prologue corresponds to Goethe's prologue in the heavens, the heavenly choirs being heard in the background of clouds, accompanied by weird trumpet-peals and flourishes in the orchestra, and closes with a finale of magnificent power.

The first act opens in the city of Frankfort, amid the noise of the crowd and the clanging of holiday bells. Groups of students, burghers, huntsmen, and peasants sing snatches of chorus. A cavalcade escorting the Elector passes. Faust and Wagner enter, and retire as the peasants begin to sing and dance a merry waltz rhythm ("Juhé! Juhé!"). As it dies away they reappear, Faust being continually followed by a gray friar,—Mephistopheles in disguise,—whose identity is disclosed by a motive from the prologue. Faust shudders at his presence, but Wagner laughs away his fears, and the scene then suddenly changes to Faust's laboratory, whither he has been followed by the gray friar, who conceals himself in an alcove. Faust sings a beautiful aria ("Dai campi, dai prati"), and then, placing the Bible on a lectern, begins to read. The sight of the book brings Mephistopheles out with a shriek; and, questioned by Faust, he reveals his true self in a massive and sonorous aria ("Son lo spirito"). He throws off his disguise, and appears in the garb of a knight, offering to serve Faust on earth if he will serve the powers of darkness in hell. The compact is made, as in the first act of Gounod's "Faust;" and the curtain falls as Faust is about to be whisked away in Mephistopheles's cloak.

The second act opens in the garden, with Faust (under the name of Henry), Marguerite, Mephistopheles, and Martha, Marguerite's mother, strolling in couples. The music, which is of a very

sensuous character, is descriptive of the love-making between Faust and Marguerite, and the sarcastic passion of Mephistopheles for Martha. It is mostly in duet form, and closes with a quartet allegretto ("Addio, fuggo"), which is very characteristic. The scene then suddenly changes to the celebration of the Witches' Sabbath on the summits of the Brocken, where, amid wild witch choruses, mighty dissonances, and weird incantation music, Faust is shown a vision of the sorrow of Marguerite. It would be impossible to select special numbers from this closely interwoven music, excepting perhaps the song ("Ecco il mondo") which Mephistopheles sings when the witches, after their incantation, present him with a globe of glass which he likens to the earth.

The third act opens in a prison, where Marguerite is awaiting the penalty for murdering her babe. The action is very similar to that of the last act of Gounod's "Faust." Her opening aria ("L' altra notte a fondo al maro") is full of sad longings for the child and insane moanings for mercy. Faust appeals to her to fly with him, and they join in a duet of extraordinary sensuous beauty blended with pathos ("lontano, lontano"). Mephistopheles urges Faust away as the day dawns, and pronounces her doom as she falls and dies, while the angelic chorus resounding in the orchestra announces her salvation.

In the fourth act a most abrupt change is made, both in a dramatic and musical sense. The scene changes to the "Night of the Classical Sabbath" on the banks of the Peneus, amid temples, statues, flowers, and all the loveliness of nature in Greece. The music also changes into the pure, sensuous Italian style. Faust, still with Mephistopheles, pays court to Helen of Troy, who is accompanied by Pantalis. The opening duet for the latter ("La luna immobile") is one of exceeding grace and loveliness, and will always be the most popular number in the work. With the exception of a powerfully dramatic scena, in which Helen describes the horrors of the destruction of Troy, the music is devoted to the love-making between Helen and Faust, and bears no relation in form to the rest of the music of the work, being essentially Italian in its smooth, flowing, melodious character. At the close of the classical Sabbath another abrupt change is made, to the death-scene of Faust, contained in an epilogue. It opens in his laboratory, where he is reflecting upon the events of his unsatisfactory life, and contemplating a happier existence in heaven. Mephistopheles is still by his side as the tempter, offers him his cloak, and urges him to fly again. The heavenly trumpets which rang through the prologue are again heard, and the celestial choirs are singing. Enraged, Mephistopheles summons the sirens, who lure Faust with all their charms. Faust seizes the Sacred Volume, and declares that he relies upon its word for salvation. He prays for help against the demon. His prayer is answered; and as he dies a shower of roses falls upon his body. The tempter disappears, and the finale of the prologue, repeated, announces Faust has died in salvation. The opera as a whole is episodic in its dramatic construction, and the music is a mixture of two styles,—the Wagnerian and the conventional Italian; but its orchestration is very bold and independent in character, and the voice-parts are very striking in their adaptation to the dramatic requirements.

## **DELIBES.**

Leo Delibes, the French composer, was born at St. Germain du Val in 1836, and was graduated at the Paris Conservatory, where he reached high distinction. His first work, written in 1855, was an operetta entitled "Deux Sous de Carbon;" but he did not make his mark until his "Maitre Griffard" was produced at the Theatre Lyrique in 1857. In 1865 he was appointed Chorus-master at the Opera, and there his real career began. His first great triumph was in ballet-music, which has ever since been his specialty. His first ballet, "La Source," was produced at the Opera, Nov. 12, 1865, and delighted all Paris. It was followed by a divertissement for the revival of Adam's "Corsaire" (1867), the ballet "Coppelia" (1870), a three-act opera "Le Roi l'a dit" (1873), and the exquisite ballet in three acts and five tableaux, "Sylvia" (1876), with which Theodore Thomas has made American audiences familiar. His opera "Lakme" was written in 1879.

## **LAKME.**

The romantic opera, "Lakme," written in 1879, was first performed in this country by the American Opera Company in 1886, Mme. L'Allemand taking the title-rôle. The principal characters are Lakme, daughter of Nilakantha, an Indian priest, Gerald and Frederick, officers of the British Army, Ellen and Rose, daughters of the Viceroy, and Mrs. Benson, governess. The scene is laid in India. Nilakantha cherishes a fond hatred of all foreigners. The two English officers, Gerald and Frederick, accompanied by a bevy of ladies, intrude upon his sacred grounds. They stroll about and gradually retire, but Gerald remains to sketch some jewels, which Lakme has left upon a shrine while she goes flower-gathering

with her slave Mallika, evidently also to await developments when she returns. Lakme soon comes sailing in on her boat, and there is a desperate case of love at first sight. Their demonstrations of affection are soon interrupted by the appearance of the priest, whose anger Gerald escapes by fleeing, under cover of a convenient thunder-storm. In the next act Lakme and her father appear in the public market-place, disguised as penitents. He compels his daughter to sing, hoping that her face and voice will induce her lover to disclose himself. The ruse proves successful. Nilakantha waits his opportunity, and stealing upon his enemy stabs him in the back and makes good his escape. In the third act we find Gerald in a delightful jungle, where Lakme has in some manner managed to conceal him, and where she is carefully nursing him with the hope of permanently retaining his love. She saves his life; but just at this juncture, and while she is absent to obtain a draught of the water which, according to the Indian legend, will make earthly love eternal, Gerald hears the music of his regiment, and Frederick appears and urges him back to duty. His allegiance to his queen, and possibly the remembrance of his engagement to a young English girl, prove stronger than his love for Lakme. The latter returns, discovers his faithlessness, gathers some poisonous flowers, whose juices she drinks, and dies in Gerald's arms just as the furious father appears. As one victim is sufficient to appease the anger of Nilakantha's gods, Gerald is allowed to go unharmed.

The first act opens with a chorus of Hindoos, oriental in its character, followed by a duet between Lakme and her father; the scene closing with a sacred chant. The Hindoos gone, there is a charming oriental duet ("Neath yon Dome where Jasmines with the Roses are blooming") between Lakme and her slave, which is one of the gems of the opera. The English then appear and have a long, talky scene, relieved by a pretty song for Frederick ("I would not give a Judgment so absurd"), and another for Gerald ("Cheating Fancy coming to mislead me"). As Lakme enters, Gerald conceals himself. She lays her flowers at the base of the shrine and sings a restless love-song ("Why love I thus to stray?"). Gerald discovers himself, and after a colloquy sings his ardent love-song ("The God of Truth so glowing"), and the act closes with Nilakantha's threats.

The second act opens in the market square, lively with the choruses of Hindoos, Chinamen, fruit-venders, and sailors, and later on with the adventures of the English party in the crowd. Nilakantha appears and addresses his daughter in a very pathetic aria ("Lakme, thy soft Looks are over-clouded"). Soon follows Lakme's bell-song ("Where strays the Hindoo Maiden?"), a brilliant and highly embellished aria with tinkling accompaniment, which will always be a favorite. The recognition follows; and the remaining numbers of importance are an impassioned song by Gerald ("Ah! then 't is slumbering Love"), with a mysterious response by Lakme ("In the Forest near at Hand"). A ballet, followed by the stabbing of Gerald, closes the act.

In the third act the action hastens to the tragic denouement. It opens with a beautiful crooning song by Lakme ("Neath the Dome of Moon and Star") as she watches her sleeping lover. The remaining numbers of interest are Gerald's song ("Tho' speechless I, my Heart remembers"), followed by a pretty three-part chorus in the distance and Lakme's dying measures, "To me the fairest Dream thou 'st given," and "Farewell, the Dream is over." Though the opera is monotonous from sameness of color and lack of dramatic interest, there are many numbers which leave a charming impression by their grace, refinement, and genuine poetical effect.

## **DONIZETTI.**

Gaetano Donizetti was born at Bergamo, Italy, Sept. 25, 1798. He studied music both at Bologna and Naples, and then entered the army rather than subject himself to the caprice of his father, who was determined that he should devote himself to church music. While his regiment was at Naples he wrote his first opera, "Enrico di Borgogna" (1818), which was soon followed by a second, "Il Falegname de Livonia." The success of the latter was so great that it not only freed him from military service but gained him the honor of being crowned. The first opera which spread his reputation through Europe was "Anna Bolena," produced at Milan in 1830, and written for Pasta and Rubini. Two years afterwards, "L' Elisir d' Amore" appeared, which he is said to have written in fifteen days. He wrote with great facility. "Il Furioso," "Parisina," "Torquato Tasso," "Lucrezia Borgia," and "Gemma di Vergi" rapidly followed one another. In 1835 he brought out "Marino Faliero," but its success was small. Ample compensation was made, however, when in the same year "Lucia" appeared and was received with acclamations of delight. He was invited to Paris as the successor of Rossini, and wrote his "Marino Faliero" for the Theatre des Italiens. In 1840 he revisited Paris and produced "Il Poliuto," "La Fille du Regiment," and "La Favorita." Leaving Paris he visited Rome, Milan, and Vienna, bringing out "Linda di

Chamouni" in the latter city. Returning to Paris again, he produced "Don Pasquale" at the Théâtre des Italiens and "Don Sebastien" at the Académie, the latter proving a failure. His last opera, "Catarina Comaro," was brought out at Naples in 1844. This work also was a failure. It was evident that his capacity for work was over. He grew sad and melancholy, and during the last three years of his life was attacked by fits of abstraction which gradually intensified and ended in insanity and physical paralysis. He died at Bergamo, April 8, 1848.

### **THE DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT.**

"The Daughter of the Regiment" ("La Fille du Regiment") opera comique in two acts, words by Bayard and St. Georges, was first produced at the Opera Comique, Paris, Feb. 11, 1840, with Mme. Anna Thillon in the rôle of Marie. Its first performance in English was at the Surrey Theatre, London, Dec. 21, 1847, under the title of "The Daughter of the Regiment," in which form it is best known in this country. In 1847 it was performed as an Italian opera in London, with added recitatives, and with Jenny Lind in the leading part.

The music of the opera is light and sparkling, the principal interest centring in the charming nature of the story and its humorous situations, which afford capital opportunities for comedy acting. The scene is laid in the Tyrol during its occupation by the French. Marie, the heroine, and the vivandière of the Twenty-first regiment of Napoleon's army, was adopted as the Daughter of the Regiment, because she was found on the field, after a battle, by Sergeant Sulpice. On her person was affixed a letter written by her father to the Marchioness of Berkenfeld, which has been carefully preserved by the Sergeant. At the beginning of the opera the little waif has grown into a sprightly young woman, full of mischief and spirit, as is shown by her opening song ("The Camp was my Birthplace"), in which she tells the story of her life, and by the duet with Sulpice, known the world over as "The Rataplan," which is of a very animated, stirring, and martial character, to the accompaniment of rattling drums and sonorous brasses. She is the special admiration of Tony, a Tyrolean peasant, who has saved her from falling over a precipice. The soldiers of the regiment are profuse in their gratitude to her deliverer, and celebrate her rescue with ample potations, during which Marie sings the Song of the Regiment ("All Men confess it"). Poor Tony, however, who was found strolling in the camp, is placed under arrest as a spy, though he succeeds in obtaining an interview with Marie and declares his love for her. The declaration is followed by a charming duet ("No longer can I doubt it"). Tony manages to clear up his record, and the soldiers decide that he may have Marie's hand if he will consent to join them. He blithely accepts the condition and dons the French cockade. Everything seems auspicious, when suddenly the Marchioness of Berkenfeld appears and dashes Tony's hopes to the ground. The Sergeant, as in honor bound, delivers the letter he has been preserving. After reading it she claims Marie as her niece, and demands that the regiment shall give up its daughter, while Tony is incontinently dismissed as an unsuitable person to be connected in any capacity with her noble family. Marie sings a touching adieu to her comrades ("Farewell, a long Farewell"), and the act closes with smothered imprecations on the Marchioness by the soldiers, and protestations of undying love by Tony.

The second act opens in the castle of Berkenfeld, where Marie is duly installed, though she does not take very kindly to her change of surroundings. The old Sergeant is with her. Grand company is expected, and the Marchioness desires Marie to rehearse a romance ("The Light of Early Days was breaking"), which she is to sing to them.

Before she finishes it she and the Sergeant break out into the rollicking Rataplan and go through with the military evolutions, to the horror of the Marchioness. While regret for the absent Tony keeps her in a sad mood, she is suddenly cheered up by the sound of drums and fifes, announcing the approach of soldiers. They are the gallant Twenty-first, with Tony, now a colonel, at their head. He applies once more for Marie's hand. The soldiers also put in a spirited choral appeal ("We have come, our Child to free"). The Marchioness again refuses. Tony proposes an elopement, to which Marie, in resentment at her aunt's cruelty, consents. To thwart their plans, the Marchioness reveals to Marie that early in life she had been secretly married to an officer of lower family position than her own, and that this officer was Marie's father. Unable to dispute the wishes of her mother, she renounces Tony in an agony of grief. At last Marie's sorrow arouses old associations in the mind of the Marchioness, and she consents to the union of Tony and Marie.

While the music of the opera is light, it is none the less very attractive, and the work is nearly always popular when performed by good artists, owing to the comedy strength of the three leading parts, Marie, Tony, and the Sergeant. The rôle of the heroine, small as it is, has always been a favorite one with such great artists as Jenny Lind, Patti, Sontag, and Albani, while in this country Miss Kellogg and Mrs. Richings-Bernard made great successes in the part. The latter singer, indeed, and her father, whose personation of the Sergeant was very remarkable, were among the first to perform the work in the United States.

## **LA FAVORITA.**

"La Favorita," an opera in four acts, words by Royer and Waëtz, the subject taken from the French drama, "Le Comte de Comminges," was first produced at the Académie, Paris, Dec. 2, 1840, with Mme. Stolz as Leonora, Duprez as Fernando, and Baroelst as Balthasar. Its success in England, where it was first produced Feb. 16, 1847, was made by Grisi and Mario. The scene of the opera is laid in Spain, and the first act opens in the convent of St. James, of Compostella, where the young novice, Fernando, is about to take monastic vows. Before the rites take place he is seized with a sudden passion for Leonora, a beautiful maiden who has been worshipping in the cloisters. He confesses his love to Balthasar, the superior, who orders him to leave the convent and go out into the world. Leonora, meanwhile, is beloved by Alphonso, king of Castile, who has provided her a secret retreat on the island of St. Leon. Though threatened by the pontiff with excommunication, he has resolved to repudiate his queen, in order that he may carry out his intention of marrying the beautiful Leonora. To her asylum a bevy of maidens conducts Fernando. He declares his passion for her and finds it reciprocated. He urges her to fly with him, but she declares it impossible, and giving him a commission in the army signed by the King, urges him to go to the wars and win honors for her sake.

In the second act Balthasar, in the name of the pontiff, visits their retreat and pronounces the papal anathema upon the guilty pair. The same curse is threatened to all the attendants unless Leonora is driven from the King, and the act closes with their vengeful menaces.

In the third act Fernando returns victorious from the war with the Moors. Already beginning to fear the result of the papal malediction, and having learned of Leonora's passion for the victor, Alphonso heaps rewards upon him, even to the extent of giving him Leonora's hand. Fernando, who is ignorant of her past relations to the King, eagerly accepts the proffer; but Leonora, in despair, sends her attendant, Inez, to inform him of the real nature of the situation and implore his forgiveness. The King intercepts her, and the marriage takes place at once, Fernando not discovering Leonora's shame until it is revealed by the courtiers, who avoid him. He flies from the world to the convent once more for shelter and consolation, followed by Leonora, who dies in his arms after she has obtained forgiveness.

The music of the work is very dramatic in its character, some of the finales being the strongest Donizetti has written. In the first act there is a beautifully melodious aria ("Una Vergine"), in which Fernando describes to Balthasar the vision of Leonora which had appeared to him at his orisons, and a very tender duet ("Deh, vanne! deh, parti") between Fernando and Leonora, in which they sorrowfully part from each other. In the second act the King has a very passionate aria, where he curses his courtiers for leaguings against him at Rome, followed by a very dramatic duet with Leonora ("Ah! l'alto ardor"). The third act contains the beautiful aria, "O mio Fernando!" which is a favorite with all contraltos. It is remarkable for its warmth and richness, as well as its dramatic spirit, and the act closes with a concerted finale of splendid power, in which Fernando breaks his sword, and once more Balthasar anathematizes the King. The fourth act is the most beautiful of all in its music and the most powerful in dramatic effect. The chorus of monks in the first scene ("Scaviam l'asilo") is remarkable for its religious character and solemnity. In the third scene occurs one of the tenderest and loveliest romanzas ever written ("Spirto gentil"), which Donizetti transferred to this work from his opera, "Le Duc d'Albe," which had not been performed, and the libretto of which was originally written by Scribe for Rossini. The closing duet between Fernando and Leonora is full of pathos and beauty, and forms a fitting close to an act which, in one sense at least, is an inspiration, as the whole act was composed in four hours,—a proof of the marvellous ease and facility with which Donizetti wrote.

## **DON PASQUALE.**

"Don Pasquale," an opera buffa in three acts, was first produced at the Théâtre des Italiens in Paris, Jan. 4, 1843, with the following extraordinary cast:

NORINA Mme. GRISI.

ERNESTO Sig. MARIO.

DR. MALATESTA Sig. TAMBURINI.

DON PASQUALE Sig. LABLACHE.

The scene of this brilliant and gay little opera is laid in Rome. Don Pasquale is in a rage with Ernesto, his nephew, because he will not marry to suit him. Dr. Malatesta, his friend and physician, who is also very much attached to the nephew, contrives a plot in the latter's interest. He visits the Don, and urges him to marry a lady, pretending that she is his sister, though in reality she is Norina, with whom Ernesto is in love. He then calls upon Norina, and lets her into the secret of the plot, and instructs her how to play her part. She is to consent to the marriage contract, and then so harass the Don that he will not only be glad to get rid of her, but will give his consent to her marriage with Ernesto. The

second act opens in Don Pasquale's house, where Ernesto is bewailing his fate. The Don enters, magnificently dressed, and ready for the marriage. Norina appears with Malatesta, and feigns reluctance to enter into the contract; but when the notary arrives she consents to sign. No sooner, however, has she signed it than she drops her assumed modesty. Ernesto, who is present, is bewildered at the condition of affairs, but is kept quiet by a sign from the Doctor. Norina refuses all the Don's amatory demonstrations, and declares Ernesto shall be her escort. She summons the servants, and lays out a scheme of housekeeping so extravagant that the Don is enraged, and declares he will not pay the bills. She insists he shall, for she is now master of the house. In the third act we find Norina entertaining milliners and modistes. Don Pasquale enters, and learning that she is going to the theatre forbids it, which leads to a quarrel, during which Norina boxes his ears. As she leaves the room she drops a letter, the reading of which adds the pangs of jealousy to his other troubles. The Doctor at this juncture happens in and condoles with him. The Don insists that Norina shall quit his house at once. In the next scene he taxes her with having a lover concealed in the house, and orders her to leave. The Doctor counsels him to let his nephew marry Norina; and in the course of explanations the Don discovers that the Doctor's sister and Norina are one and the same person, and that the marriage was a sham. He is only too glad of an escape to quarrel with the Doctor for his plot, and the young couple are speedily united, and have the old man's blessing.

The charm of the opera lies in its comic situations, and the gay, bright music with which they are illustrated. It is replete with humor and spirit, and flows along in such a bright stream that it is almost impossible to cull out special numbers, though it contains two duets and a quartet which are of more than ordinary beauty, and the exquisite serenade in the last act, "Com'e gentil," which has been heard on almost every concert-stage of the world, and still holds its place in universal popular esteem. For brilliant gayety it stands in the front rank of all comic operas, though Donizetti was but three weeks in writing it. It is said that when it was in rehearsal its fate was uncertain. The orchestra and singers received it very coldly; but when the rehearsal was over, Donizetti merely shrugged his shoulders and remarked to his friend, M. Dormoy, the publisher: "Let them alone; they know nothing about it. I know what is the matter with 'Don Pasquale.' Come with me." They went to the composer's house. Rummaging among a pile of manuscripts, Donizetti pulled out a song. "This is what 'Don Pasquale' wants," he said. "Take it to Mario and tell him to learn it at once." Mario obeyed, and when the opera was performed sang it to the accompaniment of a tambourine, which Lablache played behind the scenes. The opera was a success at once, and no song has ever been more popular.

In strange contrast with the gay humor of "Don Pasquale," it may be stated that in the same year Donizetti wrote the mournful "Don Sebastian," which has been described as "a funeral in five acts." Crowest, in his "Anecdotes," declares that the serenade is suggestive of Highland music, and that many of his other operas are Scottish in color. He accounts for this upon the theory that the composer was of Scotch descent, his grandfather having been a native of Perthshire, by the name of Izett, and that his father, who married an Italian lady, was Donald Izett. The change from Donald Izett to Donizetti was an easy one. The story, however, is of doubtful authenticity.

### **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR.**

"Lucia di Lammermoor," an opera in three acts, words by Cammarano, was first produced at Naples in 1835, with Mme. Persiani and Sig. Duprez, for whom the work was written, in the principal rôles of Lucia and Edgardo. Its first presentation at Paris was Aug. 10, 1839; in London, April 5, 1838; and in English, at the Princess Theatre, London, Jan. 19, 1843. The subject of the opera is taken from Sir Walter Scott's novel, "The Bride of Lammermoor," and the scene is laid in Scotland, time, about 1669.

Sir Henry Ashton, of Lammermoor, brother of Lucy, the heroine, has arranged a marriage between her and Lord Arthur Bucklaw, in order to recover the fortune which he has dissipated, and to save himself from political peril he has incurred by his participation in movements against the reigning dynasty. Sir Edgar Ravenswood, with whom he is at enmity, is deeply attached to Lucy, who reciprocates his love, and on the eve of his departure on an embassy to France pledges herself to him. During his absence Edgar's letters are intercepted by her brother, who hints to her of his infidelity, and finally shows her a forged paper which she accepts as the proof that he is untrue. Overcome with grief at her lover's supposed unfaithfulness, and yielding to the pressure of her brother's necessities, she at last consents to her union with Lord Arthur. The marriage contract is signed with great ceremony, and just as she has placed her name to the fatal paper, Edgar suddenly appears. Learning from Lucy what she has done, he tramples the contract under foot, hurls an imprecation upon the house of Lammermoor, and bursts out of the room in a terrible rage. Sir Henry follows him, and a fierce quarrel ensues, which ends in a challenge. Meanwhile, at night, after the newly wedded couple have retired, a noise is heard in their apartment. The attendants rush in and find Lord Arthur dying from wounds inflicted by Lucy, whose grief has made her insane. When she returns to reason, the thought of what she has done and the horror of her situation overcome her, and shortly death puts an end to her



wretchedness. Ignorant of her fate, Edgar goes to the churchyard of Ravenswood, which has been selected as the rendezvous for the duel with Sir Henry. While impatiently waiting his appearance, the bell of the castle tolls, and some of the attendants accosting him bring the news of her death. The despairing lover kills himself among the graves of his ancestors, and the sombre story ends.

The popular verdict has stamped "Lucia" as Donizetti's masterpiece, and if the consensus of musicians could be obtained, it would unquestionably confirm the verdict. It contains incomparably the grandest of his arias for tenor, the Tomb song in the last act, and one of the finest dramatic concerted numbers, the sextet in the second act, that can be found in any Italian opera. Like the quartet in "Rigoletto," it stands out in such bold relief, and is so thoroughly original and spontaneous, that it may be classed as an inspiration. The music throughout is of the most sombre character. It does not contain a joyous phrase. And yet it can never be charged with monotony. Every aria, though its tone is serious and more often melancholy, has its own characteristics, and the climaxes are worked up with great power. In the first act, for instance, the contrasts are very marked between Henry's aria ("Cruda, funesta smania"), the chorus of hunters ("Come vinti da stanchezza"), Henry's second aria ("La pietade in suo favore"), in which he threatens vengeance upon Edgar, the dramatic and beautifully written arias for Lucy, "Regnava nel silenzio" and "Quando rapita in estasi," and the passionate farewell duet between Lucy and Edgar, which is the very ecstasy of commingled love and sorrow. The second act contains a powerful duet ("Le tradirmi tu potrai") between Lucy and Henry; but the musical interest of the act centres in the great sextet, "Chi mi frena," which ensues when Edgar makes his unexpected appearance upon the scene of the marriage contract. For beauty, power, richness of melody and dramatic expression, few concerted numbers by any composer can rival it. The last act also contains two numbers which are always the delight of great artists,—the mad song of Lucy, "Oh, gioja che si senti," and the magnificent tomb scena, "Tomba degl'avi miei," which affords even the most accomplished tenor ample scope for his highest powers.

#### **L'ELISIR D'AMORE.**

"L'Elisir d'Amore," an opera buffa in two acts, words by Romani, was first produced in Milan, in 1832, and in English, at Drury Lane, in 1839, as "The Love Spell." The heroine of this graceful little opera is Adina, a capricious country girl, who is loved by Nemorino, a young farmer, whose uncle lies at the point of death, and by Belcore, a sergeant, whose troops are billeted upon the neighboring village. While Adina keeps both these suitors in suspense, Dr. Dulcamara, a travelling quack, arrives at the village in great state to vend his nostrums. Nemorino applies to him for a bottle of the Elixir of Love,—with the magical properties of which he has become acquainted in a romance Adina has been reading that very morning. The mountebank, of course, has no such liquid, but he passes off on the simple peasant a bottle of wine, and assures him that if he drinks of it he can command the love of any one on the morrow. To thoroughly test its efficacy, Nemorino drinks the whole of it. When he encounters Adina he is half tipsy, and accosts her in such disrespectful style that she becomes enraged, and determines to give her hand to the sergeant, and promises to marry him in a week. Meanwhile an order comes for the departure of the sergeant's detachment, and he begs her to marry him the same day. She gives her consent, and the second act opens with the assembling of the villagers to witness the signing of the marriage contract. While the sergeant, Adina, and the notary have retired to sign and witness the contract, Nemorino enters in despair, and finding Dulcamara enjoying a repast, he implores him to give him some charm that will make Adina love him at once. Having no money, the quack refuses to assist him, and Nemorino is again plunged into despair. At this juncture the sergeant enters, not in the best of humor, for Adina has declined to sign the contract until evening. Discovering that Nemorino wants money, he urges him to enlist. The bonus of twenty crowns is a temptation. Nemorino enlists, takes the money, hurries to the quack, and obtains a second bottle of the elixir, which is much more powerful than the first. In the next scene the girls of the village have discovered that Nemorino's uncle has died and left him all the property, though Nemorino himself has not heard of it. They crowd about him, trying to attract his attention with their charms and blandishments. He attributes his sudden popularity to the effects of the elixir, and even the quack is somewhat bewildered at the remarkable change. Nemorino now determines to pay Adina off in kind, and at last rouses her jealousy. Meanwhile Dulcamara acquaints her with the effects of the elixir and advises her to try some of it, and during the interview inadvertently informs her of Nemorino's attachment for her. Struck with his devotion, she repays the sergeant herself, announces her change of mind, and bestows her hand upon the faithful Nemorino. Like "Don Pasquale," the opera is exceedingly graceful in its construction, and very bright and gay in its musical effects, particularly in the duets, of which there are two,—one between Dulcamara and Nemorino in the first act ("Obbligato, ah! si obbligato"), and one between Dulcamara and Adina in the second act ("Quanto amore! ed io spietata"), which are charming in their spirit and humor. There is also an admirable buffo song in the first act, beginning with the recitative, "Udite, udite, o rustici," in which the Doctor describes his wares to the rustics, and a beautiful romanza in the second act for tenor ("Una furtiva lagrima"), which is of world-wide popularity, and bears the same

relation to the general setting of the work that the Serenade does to "Don Pasquale."

## **LUCREZIA BORGIA.**

"Lucrezia Borgia," an opera in three acts, words by Romani, was first produced at La Scala, Milan, in 1834. The subject was taken from Victor Hugo's tragedy of the same name, and its text was freely adapted by Romani. When it was produced in Paris, in 1840, Victor Hugo took steps to suppress any further representations. The libretto was then rewritten, under the title of "La Rinegata," the Italian characters were changed to Turks, and in this mutilated form the performances were resumed. It was in this opera that Signor Mario made his English *début*, in 1839, with great success. Its first presentation in English was at London, Dec. 30, 1843.

The history of Lucrezia Borgia, daughter of Rodrigo Borgia, afterwards Pope Alexander VI., and sister of Cæsar Borgia, is too well known to need recapitulation. It is necessary to the comprehension of the story of the opera, however, to state that she had an illegitimate son, named Genarro, who was left when an infant with a fisherman, but who subsequently entered the Venetian army and rose to an eminent rank. The opera opens with a brilliant festival in the gardens of the Barberigo Palace, which is attended by Genarro, Orsini, and others, all of them cordial haters of the detestable Borgias. While they are telling tales of Lucrezia's cruel deeds, Genarro lies down and goes to sleep, and Orsini in a spirited aria ("Nelle fatal di Rimini") relates to his companions the story of Genarro's gallantry at the battle of Rimini. As they leave, Lucrezia approaches, masked, in a gondola, and is received by Gubetta, with whom she has come to Venice on some secret errand. She discovers Genarro asleep, and expresses her delight at his beauty, and at the same time her maternal love, in a brilliant aria ("Com'e bello"). As she kisses his hand he wakes, and in the duet which follows tells her the story of his early life in an exquisite *romanza* ("Di pescatore ignobile"), which is one of the most familiar numbers in Italian opera. He begs her to reveal her name, but she refuses. As he continues to implore her, his friends return and denounce her to Genarro as the hated Borgia, in a concerted number ("Chi siam noi sol chiarirla") of great dramatic power, which closes the first act.

The second act opens in the public square of Ferrara, with the palace of the Borgias on the right. The Duke Alphonso, Lucrezia's husband, who has been observant of Lucrezia's attachment to Genarro, vows vengeance in a passionate aria ("Vieni la mia vendetta"). In the next scene Genarro, who has been taunted by his friends with being a victim of Lucrezia's fascinations, recklessly rushes up to the palace door and strikes off the first letter of her name with his dagger. When Lucrezia discovers the insult, she demands of the Duke that the guilty person shall be arrested and condemned to death. The Duke has already seized Genarro, and agrees to carry out his wife's demands. When the prisoner is brought before them for judgment, she is horror-stricken to find he is her son. She implores his life, but the infuriated Duke retaliates upon her with the declaration that she is his paramour. The duet between them ("O! a te bada"), in which Lucrezia passes from humble entreaties to rage and menace, is a fine instance of Donizetti's dramatic power. The Duke, however, is resolute in his determination, and will only allow her to choose the mode of Genarro's death. She selects the Borgia wine, which is poisoned. Genarro is called in, and after a trio ("Le ti tradisce"), which is one of the strongest numbers in the opera, he is given the fatal draught under the pretence of a farewell greeting from the Duke, who then leaves mother and son together. She gives him an antidote, and he is thus saved from the fate which the Duke had intended for him.

The last act opens at a banquet in the palace of the Princess Negroni, which is attended by Genarro and his friends, Lucrezia, meanwhile, supposing that he has gone to Venice. During the repast she has managed to poison their wine. In the midst of the gay revel Orsini sings the popular drinking-song, "Il segreto per esser felici," which is now familiar the world over. The festivities are interrupted, however, by the appearance of Lucrezia, who reveals herself with the taunting declaration: "Yes, I am Borgia. A mournful dance ye gave me in Venice, and I return ye a supper in Ferrara." She then announces that they are poisoned. The music is changed with great skill from the wild revelry of drinking-songs to the sombre strains of approaching death. Five coffins are shown them, when Genarro suddenly reveals himself to Lucrezia and asks for the sixth. The horror-stricken woman again perceives that her son has been poisoned by her own hand. As his companions leave the apartment she implores Genarro to take the antidote once more, and at last reveals herself as his mother. He steadily refuses to save himself, however, since his companions have to die, and expires in her arms just as the Duke and his followers enter. She discloses Genarro's relationship, and then dies with the despairing cry on her lips that Heaven has pronounced its final judgment upon her. Among all of Donizetti's operas, not one, unless it be "Lucia," is more popular than "Lucrezia Borgia," which may be attributed to the fact that while the story itself is one of fascinating dramatic interest, the musical numbers are simple, beautiful, and effective.

## **FLOTOW.**

Friedrich von Flotow was born April 27, 1812, in the duchy of Mecklenberg-Schwerin, and in 1827 went to Paris, where he studied music under Reicha. His first work was "Stradella," a mere sketch in its original form, which was brought out at the Palais Royal in 1837; but his first public success was made in 1839, with his opera, "Le Naufrage de la Méduse," which had a run, and was afterwards produced in Germany under the title of "Die Matrosen." "L'Esclave de Camoens" appeared in Paris in 1843; "Stradella," rewritten as an opera, in Hamburg (1844); "L'Âme en peine," in Paris (1846); "Martha," in Vienna (1847). The works of his later period, which never equalled his earlier ones in popularity, were "Die Grossfürstin" (1850); "Indra" (1853); "Rubezahl" (1854); "Hilda" (1855); "Der Müller von Meran" (1856); "La Veuve Grapin" (1859); "L'Ombre" (1869); "Naïda" (1873); "Il Flor d'Harlem" (1876); and "Enchanteresse" (1878). Of these later works, "L'Ombre" was the most successful, and was received with favor in France, Italy, Spain, and England, in which latter country it was performed under the title of "The Phantom." In 1856 he received the appointment of Intendant of the theatre of the Grand Duke of Mecklenberg, and he entered upon his duties with high hopes of making the theatre exercise the same influence upon music in Germany as the Weimar stage; but court intrigues and rivalries of artists so disgusted him that he resigned in 1863 and went to Paris, and a few years later to Vienna, where he took up his abode. Outside of a few of his operas his works are little known, though he composed a "Fackeltanz," some incidental music to the "Winter's Tale" of Shakspeare, and several overtures, songs, and chamber-pieces. An interesting episode in his career occurred in 1838, when he brought out an opera in three acts, the "Duc de Guise," at the Théâtre de la Renaissance, the libretto based upon Dumas's "Henri III." The performance was organized by the Princess Czartoryska, for the benefit of the Poles. Mme. de Lagrange made her début in a leading part, and the parts of the choristers were filled by duchesses and princesses of the Faubourg St. Germain, upon whose persons two million dollars worth of diamonds were blazing,—sufficient evidence that the performance was brilliant in at least one sense. He died at Wiesbaden, Jan. 24, 1883.

### **MARTHA.**

"Martha," an opera in three acts, libretto by St. Georges, translated into German by Friedrich, was first produced at Vienna, Nov. 25, 1847, with Mlle. Anna Zerr in the title-rôle, Herr Ander as Lionel, and Carl Formes as Plunkett. It was first produced in English and Italian at London in 1858, and in French at Paris in 1865. The history of its origin is interesting. M. de St. Georges, at the request of the manager of the Paris Grand Opera, wrote in 1842 the libretto to a ballet entitled "Lady Henrietta, or the Servant of Greenwich," the subject being suggested to him by the adventures of two ladies of his acquaintance who had mingled with servants at a fair. The music was confided to three composers. The first act was given to Herr von Flotow, the second to Herr Burgmuller, and the third to M. Deldeves. The ballet had such a remarkable success, and Flotow was so delighted with the plot, that he entreated St. Georges to rewrite it for an opera. The latter consented, and the result of their collaboration was the appearance of one of the most popular operas which has ever been placed upon the stage.

The scene of the opera is laid at Richmond, England, and the time is during the reign of Queen Anne, though the Italian version places it in the fifteenth century, and the French in the nineteenth. Lady Henrietta, an attendant upon the Queen, tired of the amusements of court life, contrives a plan to visit the servants' fair at Richmond disguised as a servant-girl, and accompanied by Nancy, her maid, and Sir Tristan, her somewhat aged cousin, who is also her devoted admirer. In the first three scenes their plans are laid much to the disgust of Sir Tristan, who is to pass as John, while his fair cousin masquerades as Martha. The duet between the ladies ("Of the Knights so brave and charming"), and the trio with Tristan, are in dance time, and full of animation. The fourth scene opens in the market-place at Richmond, where the people are gathering to the fair. Thither also resort Plunkett, a farmer, and Lionel, his brother by adoption, whose parentage is unknown, and who has no souvenir of his father except a ring which has been left for him, with instructions to present it to the Queen if he ever finds himself in trouble. Lionel tells his story in an aria ("Lost, proscribed, an humble Stranger") which is universally popular, and the melody of which has been set to various words. They have come to the fair to procure help for their farm. While the sheriff, according to law, is binding the girls for a year's service, Plunkett and Lionel meet Martha and Nancy, and are so delighted with their appearance that they tender them the customary bonus, or "earnest-money," which secures them. Too late for escape, they find that they are actually engaged, and they are obliged to drive away with the young farmers, leaving Sir Tristan in despair.

The second act opens in the farm-house, where the four have arrived. The farmers inquire their names, and seek to find out what they can do, testing them first at the spinning-wheel. The spinning quartet ("When the Foot the Wheel turns lightly") is very gay and full of humor, and is one of the most

delightful concerted numbers in the opera. The brothers soon find that their new servants are useless, but they are so pleased with them that they decide to keep them. At last Nancy, in a pet, kicks her wheel over and runs off, followed by Plunkett. Lionel, left alone with Martha, grows very tender to the new servant, and at last finds himself violently in love. He snatches a rose from her bosom, and refuses to return it unless she will consent to sing. She replies with the familiar ballad, "'Tis the last Rose of Summer," which Flotow has interpolated in this scene, and in the performance of which he makes a charming effect by introducing the tenor in the close. Her singing only makes him the more desperately enamoured, and he asks her to be his wife on the spot, only to find himself the victim of Martha's sport, although his devotion and sincerity have made a deep impression upon her. Plunkett and Nancy at last return, and another charming quartet follows ("Midnight sounds"), better known as the "Good Night Quartet." The two brothers retire, but Martha and Nancy, aided by Tristan, who has followed them and discovered their whereabouts, make good their escape. The next scene opens in the woods, where several farmers are drinking and carousing, among them Plunkett, who sings a rollicking drinking-song ("I want to ask you"). Their sport is interrupted by a hunting-party, composed of the Queen and her court ladies. Plunkett and Lionel recognize their fugitive servants among them, though the ladies disclaim all knowledge of them. Plunkett attempts to seize Nancy, but the huntresses attack him and chase him away, leaving Lionel and Lady Henrietta together again. The scene contains two of the most beautiful numbers in the opera,—the tenor solo, "Like a Dream bright and fair" ("M' appari" in the Italian version), and a romance for soprano ("Here in deepest forest Shadows"); and the act closes with a beautiful concerted finale, quintet and chorus, which is worked up with great power. In this finale the despairing Lionel bethinks him of his ring. He gives it to Plunkett, desiring him to present it to the Queen. By means of the jewel it is discovered that he is the only son of the late Earl of Derby, and she orders his estates, of which he has been unjustly deprived, to be restored to him.

The last act is not important in a musical sense, for the climax is attained in the previous finale. The dramatic dénouement is soon reached, and the Lady Henrietta, who has for some time been seriously in love with Lionel, is at last united to him; and it is almost needless to add that the fortunes of Plunkett and Nancy are also joined. The charm of "Martha" is its liveliness in action and tunefulness in music. Though not a great opera from a musical point of view, it is one of the most popular in the modern repertory, and though few others have been performed so many times, it still retains that popularity. Its melodies, though sung in every country of the civilized world by amateurs and professional artists, have not yet lost their charms.

## **STRADELLA.**

"Stradella," a romantic opera in three acts, was first written as a lyric drama and produced at the Palais Royal Theatre, Paris, in 1837, and was subsequently rewritten in its present form under the title of "Alessandro Stradella" and produced at Hamburg, Dec. 30, 1844. The English version, which was somewhat altered by Bunn, was produced in London, June 6, 1846. The story follows the historic narrative of Stradella, the Italian musician, except in the dénouement. Stradella woos and wins Leonora, the fair ward of Bassi, a rich Venetian nobleman, with whom the latter is himself in love. They fly to Rome and are married. Bassi hires two bravoos, Barbarino and Malvolio, to follow them and kill Stradella. They track him to his house, and while the bridal party are absent enter and conceal themselves, Bassi being with them. Upon this occasion, however, they do not wait to accomplish their purpose. Subsequently they gain admission again in the guise of pilgrims, and are hospitably received by Stradella. In the next scene Stradella, Leonora, and the two bravoos are together in the same apartment, singing the praises of their native Italy. During their laudations the chorus of a band of pilgrims on their way to the shrine of the Virgin is heard, and Leonora and Stradella go out to greet them. The bravoos have been so moved by Stradella's singing that they hesitate in their purpose. Bassi enters and upbraids them, and finally, by the proffer of a still larger sum, induces them to consent to carry out his design. They conceal themselves. Stradella returns and rehearses a hymn to the Virgin which he is to sing at the festivities on the morrow. Its exquisite beauty touches them so deeply that they rush out of their hiding-place, and falling at his feet confess the object of their visit and implore his forgiveness. Leonora enters, and is astonished to find her guardian present. Explanations follow, a reconciliation is effected, and the lovers are happy. The dénouement differs from the historical story, which, according to Bonnet, Bourdelot, and others, ends with the death of the lovers at Genoa, at the hands of the hired assassins.

The opera is one of the most charming of Flotow's works for its apt union of very melodious music with dramatic interest. Its most beautiful numbers are Stradella's serenade ("Horch, Liebchen, horch!"), the following nocturne ("Durch die Thäler, über Hügel"), the brilliant and animated carnival chorus ("Freudesausen, Jubelbrausen") of the masqueraders who assist in the elopement, in the first act; the aria of Leonora in her bridal chamber ("Seid meiner Wonne"), the rollicking drinking-song of the two bravoos ("Raus mit dem Nass aus dem Fass") and the bandit ballad ("Tief in den Abruzzen") sung by Stradella, in the second act; an exquisite terzetto ("Sag doch an, Freund Barbarino") sung by

Bassi and the two braves when they hesitate to perform their work, and Stradella's lovely hymn to the Virgin ("Jungfrau Maria! Himmlisch verklärte"), in the last act.

## **GLUCK.**

Christoph Willibald Gluck, one of the most eminent of German operatic composers, was born at Weidenwang in the Upper Palatinate, July 2, 1714. He began his musical studies in a Bohemian Jesuits' School at the age of twelve. In his eighteenth year he went to Prague, where he continued his education with Czernhorský. Four years later he was fortunate enough to secure Prince Melzi for a patron, who sent him to Milan, where he completed his studies with Sammartini. From 1741 to 1745 he produced numerous operas, which were well received, and in the latter year visited London, where he brought out several works, among them "La Caduta de' Giganti." His English experience was far from satisfactory, and he soon returned to Germany, stopping at Paris on the way, where Rameau's operas had a strong influence upon him. From 1746 to 1762 he wrote a large number of operas, with varying success so far as performance was concerned, but with great and lasting benefit to his style and fame, as was shown when his "Orpheus" was first produced, Oct. 5, 1762. Its success determined him at once to acquaint the musical world with his purpose to reform the opera by making it dramatically musical instead of purely lyric, thus paving the way for the great innovator of Baireuth. "Alceste," produced in 1767, was the first embodiment of these ideas. Strong criticism greeted it, to which he replied with "Iphigénie en Aulide," written in 1772, and performed for the first time in Paris two years later, under the auspices of Marie Antoinette, who had once been his pupil. It was followed by "Orpheus and Eurydice," adapted from his earlier work of the same name, which met with brilliant success. In 1777 he brought out "Armide." It aroused an unprecedented excitement. Piccini was at that time in Paris. He was the representative of the old Italian school. His partisans gathered about him, and a furious war was waged between the Gluckists and Piccinists for three or four years; the combatants displaying a bitterness of criticism and invective even worse than that which Wagner brought down upon his devoted head. When Gluck brought out his great work, "Iphigénie en Tauride," in 1779, however, the Piccinists quitted the field and acknowledged the reformer's superiority. "Echo et Narcisse" was written in the same year, but "Iphigénie en Tauride" was his last great work. He retired shortly afterwards to Vienna, where he died Nov. 15, 1787.

## **ORPHEUS.**

"Orpheus," the libretto by the Italian poet Calzabigi, was first produced at Vienna, Oct. 5, 1762, and for the first time outlined the new ideas which Gluck had advanced for the reform of the lyric stage. Twelve years later the composer revised the work. Several new numbers were added, its acts were extended to three, and the principal rôle was rewritten for a high tenor in place of the alto, to whom it had been originally assigned. In this form it was brought out at the Paris Académie, Aug. 2, 1774. In 1859 it was revived in Paris, for which occasion Berlioz restored the original alto part for Mme. Viardot-Garcia. With its performances in this country by the American Opera Troupe during the season of 1885-86, under the direction of Mr. Theodore Thomas, our readers are already familiar. The three soloists during that season were Helene Hastreiter, Emma Juch, and Minnie Dilthey.

The story, except in its denouement, closely follows the antique legend. After performing the funeral rites of Eurydice, Orpheus resolves to seek for her in the world of Shades, having received permission from Zeus upon condition that he will not look upon her until they have safely returned. Orpheus descends to Hades; and though his way is barred by phantoms, his pleading appeals and the tender tones of his harp induce them to make way for him. He finds Eurydice in the Elysian fields, and taking her by the hand leads her on to the upper world. In a fatal moment he yields to her desire to see him, and she sinks back lifeless. Love, however, comes to the rescue, and full of compassion restores her. Thus the happy lovers are reunited; and the opera closes without the tragic denouement of the old myth. In the American performances the opera was divided into four acts, which is the order we shall follow.

The short overture is characterized by a grandeur and solemnity that well befit the pathetic story. The curtain rises upon a grotto containing the tomb of Eurydice, against which Orpheus mournfully leans, while upon its steps youths and maidens are strewing flowers as they chant the sombre song, "Ah! in our still and mournful Meadow." The sad wail of Orpheus upon the single word "Eurydice" is heard through its strains, which continually increase in solemnity. At last, as if too much to bear, Orpheus interrupts their threnody with the words, "The Sounds of your Lament increase my bitter

Anguish." The chorus in reply resumes its melancholy tribute to Eurydice and then retires, leaving Orpheus alone, who in a monologue full of pathos and sorrow ("My Eurydice! my Eurydice! lost forever"), sings his grief and implores the gods to restore his loved one. In answer to his prayer, Amor, god of love, appears and announces that the gods have been moved to compassion; and if his song and lyre can appease the phantoms, death shall give back Eurydice upon the conditions already named. The act closes with the joyful song of Orpheus: "Will pitying Heaven with wondrous Favor restore mine own?"

The second act opens in the abysses of the underworld. Flames shoot up amid great masses of rock and from yawning caverns, throwing their lurid glare upon the phantoms, who writhing in furious indignation demand in wild and threatening chorus, as the tones of Orpheus's lyre are heard, "Who through this awful Place, thinking alive to pass, rashly dares venture here?" Madly they call upon Cerberus "to kill thy new Prey here." The barking of the triple-headed monster is heard in the tones of the orchestra. They surround Orpheus as he approaches, and with renewed clamor continue this thrilling chorus. In the midst of its cruel intensity is heard the appealing voice of Orpheus ("In Pity be moved by my Grief"). With overwhelming wrath comes the reiterated monosyllable, "No," from the Furies,—one of the most daring and powerful effects ever made in dramatic music,—followed by another appalling chorus, as they announce to him, "These are the Depths of Hell, where the Avengers dwell." At last they are touched by the charm of his music and the sorrow of his story; and as their fury dies away, the song of Orpheus grows more exultant as he contemplates the reunion with Eurydice.

The gates of the lower world are opened, and in the third act Orpheus enters Elysium. The scene begins with a tender, lovely song by Eurydice and her companions ("In this tranquil and lovely Abode of the Blest"), the melody taken by the flute with string accompaniment. All is bright and cheerful and in striking contrast with the gloom and terror of the Stygian scene we have just left. After a short recitative ("How mild a Day, without a Noon"), Orpheus seeks her. She is brought to him by a crowd of shadows; and breaking out in joyful song he takes her by the hand and turns his face to the upper world.

The fourth act is almost entirely an impassioned duet between Orpheus and Eurydice. He releases her hand for fear that he may turn and look upon her. Eurydice chides him ("Am I changed or grown old that thou wilt not behold me?"). In vain he urges her to follow him. She upbraids him for his coldness, and demands one glance as a test of his love. He still refuses, and then she sorrowfully bids him farewell. At last, overcome with weariness and sorrow, he gazes upon her; and at that instant she falls lifeless. Then Orpheus breaks out in that immortal song, the *Che faro senza Eurydice* ("I have lost my Eurydice"), the beauty and pathos of which neither time nor change of musical custom can ever mar. He is about to take his life with his sword; but Amor suddenly appears upon the scene, stays his hand, and tells him the gods are moved by his sufferings. He restores Eurydice to life, and the opera closes with a beautiful terzetto in Love's temple. The denouement is followed by ballet music.

## GOETZ.

Hermann Goetz, to whose life attaches a mournful interest, was born at Königsberg, Dec. 17, 1840. He had no regular instruction in music until his seventeenth year. At that period he began his studies with Köhler, and then passed successively under the tuition of Stern, Ulrich, and Von Bülow. At the age of twenty-three he obtained a position as organist at Winterthur, and also taught at Zurich. It was during this time that he composed his opera, "The Taming of the Shrew," meanwhile supporting himself as he best could, sometimes struggling with actual poverty. For years he attempted to secure a hearing for his opera; but it was not until 1874 that its great merit was recognized, for in that year it was produced at Mannheim with instant success. Its fame travelled all over Germany. It was performed in Vienna in 1875, and the same year in Leipsic and Berlin, and reached London in 1878. It was not heard in this country until the season of 1885-86, when it was produced by the American Opera Company. The composer did not live long enough, however, to enjoy the fruits of his work, as he died in 1876. He also left behind him an unfinished score of a second opera, "Francesca di Rimini," which was completed by his friend Franke at his request, but proved a failure. His other works include a symphony in F, a suite for orchestra, and many chamber compositions.

## THE TAMING OF THE SHREW.

"The Taming of the Shrew," as related in the sketch of the composer's life, was written about the year

1863, and first produced at Mannheim in 1872. Its first performance in this country was in January, 1886, when the cast was as follows:—

**KATHARINE PAULINE L'ALLEMAND. BIANCA KATE BENSBERG. PETRUCHIO WILLIAM H. LEE. BAPTISTA W.H. HAMILTON. LUCENTIO W.H. FESSENDEN. HORTENSIO ALONZO STODDARD. A TAILOR JOHN HOWSON.**

The libretto is freely adapted from Shakspeare's comedy by Joseph Victor Widmann. The plot is very simple. Baptista, a rich Paduan gentleman, has two daughters,—Katharine, the shrew, and Bianca, of sweet and lovable disposition. Both Hortensio and Lucentio are in love with Bianca; but the obdurate father will not listen to either until Katharine shall have been married. In this apparently hopeless situation a gleam of comfort appears, in the suit which the rich gallant Petruchio, of Verona, pays to Katharine, in disgust with the sycophants who have been manifesting such deference to his wealth. The remainder of the story is occupied with the details of the various processes by which he breaks and tames the shrew, and the ingenious ruse by which Lucentio gains the hand of the lovely Bianca.

The curtain rises upon a night scene in Padua, with Lucentio before Bianca's house singing a melodious serenade. Its strains are interrupted, however, by a hurly-burly in the house, caused by the shrew's demonstrations. The tumult is transferred to the street, and gives occasion for a very vigorous ensemble. When the crowd disperses, Lucentio resumes his serenade, Bianca appears upon the balcony, and the two join in a very pleasing duet. This number is also interrupted by Hortensio, at the head of a band of street musicians, who has also come to serenade his mistress. The encounter of the two lovers brings on a quarrel, which is averted, however, by the interposition of Baptista. A duet follows between them, at the close of which Lucentio retires. Petruchio now appears upon the scene, and learns from Hortensio of Katharine's vixenish disposition, which determines him to woo her. With a stirring song ("She is a Wife for such a Man created"), the act comes to an end.

The second act opens in a chamber in Baptista's house, where Katharine is berating Bianca for accepting serenades from suitors, and abuses her even to blows. The scene closes with a vigorous song for Katharine ("I'll give myself to no one"), which is greeted with cynical applause by Petruchio, Baptista, Lucentio, and Hortensio, who enter, the last two disguised as teachers. In the next scene, Petruchio and Katharine alone, we have the turbulent wooing, which is accompanied throughout by characteristic music. As the others return Petruchio announces his success in the song, "All is well," the theme of which is taken by the quintet, closing the act.

The third is the most interesting act of the three. It opens on the day selected for the wedding of Katharine and Petruchio, in Baptista's garden; the first number being a charming quintet for Katharine, Bianca, Lucentio, Hortensio, and Baptista. The guests are present, but Petruchio is not there. An explanation is made, followed by a chorus as the guests leave; and then Bianca is free to take her lessons, in one of which Lucentio makes his avowal of love to her. The arrangement of the two lessons is both unique and skilful. Lucentio turns the familiar opening lines of the *Æneid*, "Arma virumque cano," etc., into a love-song by declarations interposed between them; while Hortensio explains the mysteries of the scale to her, each line of his love-song beginning with one of its letters. It is soon found, however, that Lucentio is the accepted lover. Baptista now enters and announces Petruchio's return, which leads to a charming quartet. The finale of the opera, which is very spirited, includes the preparations for the marriage-feast, the wedding, and the scene in which Petruchio abruptly forces his bride to leave with him for his country house.

## **GOLDMARK.**

Karl Goldmark was born at Keszthely, Hungary, May 18, 1832. He first studied with the violinist Jansa at Vienna, and in his fifteenth year entered the Conservatory in that city. Little is known of the events of his early life. Indeed, his success in his profession is generally credited more to his native ability and industry than to the influence of teachers or schools. He began composition at an early period, and produced his works in concerts with much success under the encouragement of Hellmesberger and others, who recognized his ability before he had made any impression out of Vienna. Four of his compositions during the past fifteen years, the "Sakuntala" overture, the operas "The Queen of Sheba" and "Merlin," and "Die ländliche Hochzeit" (The Country Wedding) symphony have made a permanent reputation for him. The overture and operas have been performed several times in this country. Besides these he has written several pieces of chamber music.

## THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.

"The Queen of Sheba" was first produced in Vienna, March 10, 1875, and was first heard in this country at New York, Dec. 2, 1885, when the cast was as follows:—

KING SOLOMON Herr ROBINSON.

HIGH-PRIEST Herr FISCHER.

SULAMITH Fraülein LEHMANN.

ASSAD Herr STRITT.

BAAL HANAN Herr ALEXI.

QUEEN OF SHEBA Frau KRAMER-WEIDL.

ASTAROTH Fraülein BRANDT.

The libretto by Mosenthal is one of rare excellence in its skilful treatment of situations and arrangement of scenes with the view to spectacular and dramatic effect. The Biblical story has but little to do with the action of the opera beyond the mere fact of the famous visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon. The stirring episodes during the journey and the visit spring from the librettist's imagination. The story in substance is as follows:—

King Solomon, learning of the Queen's intention to visit him, sends his favorite courtier Assad to escort her. While she waits outside the gates of Jerusalem, Assad announces her arrival to the King and Sulamith, the daughter of the high-priest, to whom the courtier is affianced. Observing his disturbed looks, the King, after dismissing his attendants, inquires the cause. Assad replies that on their journey through the forest he had encountered a nymph bathing whose beauty had so impressed him as to banish even the thoughts of his affianced. The wise Solomon counsels him to marry Sulamith at once. Meanwhile the Queen comes into the King's presence, and as she lifts her veil reveals the unknown fair one. She affects ignorance of Assad's passion; but when she learns that he is to wed Sulamith love for him springs up in her own breast. Upon the day of the wedding ceremony Assad, carried away by his longing for the Queen, declares her to be his divinity, and is condemned to death for profaning the Temple. Both the Queen and Sulamith appeal to the King for mercy. He consents at last to save his life, but banishes him to the desert. The Queen seeks him there, and makes an avowal of her love; but Assad repulses her. As Sulamith comes upon the scene a simoom sweeps across the desert. They perish in each other's arms; while in a mirage the Queen and her attendants are seen journeying to their home.

The first act opens in the great hall of Solomon's palace with a brilliant, joyous chorus ("Open the Halls, adorn the Portals") in praise of the King's glory. After the entrance of the high-priest, Sulamith sings a fascinating bridal song ("My own Assad returns"), richly oriental both in music and sentiment, dreamy and luxurious in its tone, and yet full of joyous expectation, with characteristic choral refrain and dainty accompaniment. The fourth and fifth scenes are full of agitation and unrest, and lead up to Assad's explanation of his perturbed condition ("At Lebanon's Foot I met Arabia's Queen"), a monologue aria of rich glowing color and reaching a fine dramatic climax as it progresses from its sensuous opening to the passionate intensity of its finale. It is followed by the entrance of the Queen, accompanied by a brilliant march and a jubilant chorus ("To the Sun of the South our Welcome we bring") and a stirring concerted number, describing the recognition of the Queen by Assad; after which the chorus resumes its jubilant strain, bringing the act to a close.

The second act opens in the gardens of the palace and discloses the Queen, who gives expression to her love for Assad and her hatred of Sulamith in an impassioned aria ("Let me from the festal Splendor"). In the second scene Astaroth, her slave, appears and lures Assad by a weird strain, which is one of the most effective passages in the opera ("As the Heron calls in the Reeds"). After a short arioso by Assad ("Magical Sounds, intoxicating Fragrance"), a passionate duet with the Queen follows, interrupted by the call of the Temple-guard to prayer. The scene changes to the interior of the sanctuary with its religious service; and with it the music changes also to solemn Hebrew melodies with the accompaniment of the sacred instruments, leading up to the stirring finale in which Assad declares his passion for the Queen, amid choruses of execration by the people.

The third act opens in the banquet-hall upon a scene of festivity introduced by the graceful bee dance of the Almas. It is followed by the powerful appeal of the Queen for Assad's life, rising to an intensely dramatic pitch as she warns the King of the revenge of her armed hosts ("When Sheba's iron Lances splinter and Zion's Throne in Ruins falls"). In sad contrast comes the mournful chant which accompanies Sulamith as she passes to the vestal's home ("The Hour that robbed me of him"), and ends in her despairing cry rising above the chorus of attendants as Solomon also refuses her petition.

The last act passes in the desert. Assad beneath a solitary palm-tree laments the destiny which pursues him ("Whither shall I wend my weary Steps?"). In the next scene the Queen appears, and an agitated duet follows, ending with her repulse. Assad in despair calls upon death to relieve him. The sky



darkens. Clouds of sand envelop the fugitive. The palm bends before the blast as the simoom sweeps by. The storm at last subsides. The sky grows brighter; and the Queen and her attendants, with their elephants and camels, appear in a mirage journeying eastward as Sulamith and her lover expire in each other's arms. As their duet dies away, the chorus of maidens brings the act to a close with a few strains from the love-song in the first act.

## **MERLIN.**

The opera of "Merlin" was first performed at Vienna, Nov. 17, 1886, and was heard for the first time in this country at New York, Jan. 3, 1887, under the direction of Mr. Walter Damrosch, with the following cast:—

KING ARTHUR Herr ROBINSON.

MODRED Herr KEMLITZ.

LANCELOT Herr BURSCH.

GAWEIN Herr HEINRICH.

GLENDOWER Herr VON MILDE.

MERLIN Herr ALVARY.

VIVIANE Fraülein LEHMANN.

BEDWYR Herr SIEGLITZ.

THE FAY MORGANA Fraülein BRANDT.

THE DEMON Herr FISCHER.

The libretto of the opera is by Siegfried Lipiner. The scene is laid in Wales, and the hero, Merlin, is familiar as one of the knights of King Arthur's round-table. The story is as follows:—

The Devil, ambitious to banish all good from the world, unites himself to a virgin in order that he may beget a child who shall aid him in his fell purpose. The child is Merlin, who partakes of the mother's goodness, and instead of aiding his father, seeks to thwart his design. The Devil thereupon consults the Fay Morgana, who tells him that Merlin will lose his power if he falls in love. In the opening scene King Arthur sends Lancelot to Merlin for aid, who promises him victory and achieves it by the assistance of his familiar, a demon, who is in league with the Devil. Tired of his service to Merlin, the demon contrives to have him meet the beautiful Viviane, with whom he falls in love. The second act transpires in Merlin's enchanted garden, and reveals his growing passion, and at the same time his waning power of magic; for when once more Arthur summons his aid he attempts to tear himself away from her only to realize his weakness. She seeks to detain him by throwing a magic veil over him which has been given her by the demon; in an instant the scene changes, and Merlin appears confined to a rock by fiery chains, while the demon mocks him from a neighboring eminence, and Viviane gives way to anguish. In the last act Viviane is told by the Fay Morgana that Merlin's release can only be secured by woman's self-sacrifice. Once more an appeal for help comes to him from Arthur, and he promises his soul to the demon in exchange for his freedom. His chains fall off. He rushes into the battle and secures the victory, but is fatally wounded. The demon claims him; but Viviane, remembering the words of the Fay Morgana, stabs herself and thus balks him of his expectant prey.

Like Wagner's operas, "Merlin" has its motives, the principal ones being that of the demon, or the evil principle, and two love motives. In its general treatment it is also Wagnerish. The first scene opens with the spirited message of Lancelot to Glendower, beseeching Merlin's aid for the hard-pressed Arthur. It is followed by the strains of Merlin's harp in the castle and his assurance of victory, and these in turn by very descriptive incantation music summoning the demon and the supernatural agencies which will compass the defeat of Arthur's enemies. Then comes the interview between the demon and the Fay Morgana, in which he learns the secret of Merlin's weakness. In the next scene Arthur returns from his victory over the Saxons to the tempo of a stirring march, and accompanied by the joyous choruses of women. A vigorous episode, in which Bedwyr, one of Arthur's knights, is charged with treachery, is followed by Merlin's chant of victory with chorus accompaniment. As its strains die away a distant horn announces Viviane, who makes her appearance singing a breezy hunting song with her maidens, leading up to a spirited septet. Then follows the baffled attempt of Viviane to crown Merlin, the scene closing with a repetition of the chant of victory and the choruses of jubilation.

The second act opens in the enchanted gardens of Merlin; and the first scene reveals a conspiracy to seize the crown during Arthur's absence and proclaim Modred king, and the farewell of Arthur and his suite to Merlin. The magic-veil scene follows with its fascinating dance tempos, and leads with its graceful measures up to the passionate love-scene between Merlin and Viviane, which is harshly broken in upon by the clash of arms between Modred and his perfidious companions and the faithful friends of Arthur. A dramatic scene of great energy follows, in which Viviane at last throws the magic veil around Merlin with the transforming results already told.

The last act opens with Viviane's mournful lament for the wretched fate which she has brought down upon her lover, and the announcement of the means by which he may be released made to her in slumber by the Fay Morgana. Her maidens seek to rouse her with choral appeals, in which are heard phrases of her hunting song. Meanwhile mocking spirits appear about Merlin and taunt him in characteristic music. Then follows the compact with the demon, which releases him. He rushes into the battle accompanied by an exultant song from Viviane; but soon the funeral march, as his followers bear him from the field, tells the mournful story of his fate. A very dramatic ensemble contains the deed of self-sacrifice, by which Viviane ends her life to redeem Merlin from the demon, and with this powerful effect the opera closes.

## **GOUNOD.**

Charles François Gounod was born, in Paris, June 17, 1818. He studied music in the Conservatory, under the direction of Halevy, Lesueur, and Paer, and in 1839 obtained the first prize, and, under the usual regulations, went to Italy. While at Rome he devoted himself largely to religious music. On his return to Paris he became organist of the Missions Étrangères, and for a time seriously thought of taking orders. In 1851, however, he brought out his first opera, "Sappho," which met with success. At this point his active career began. In 1852 he became conductor of the Orphéon, and wrote the choruses for Ponsard's tragedy of "Ulysse." The year 1854 brought a five-act opera, "La Nonne Sanglante," founded on a legend in Lewis's "Monk." In 1858 he made his first essay in opera comique, and produced "Le Médecin malgré lui," which met with remarkable success. The next year "Faust" was performed, and placed him in the front rank of living composers. "Philémon et Baucis" appeared in 1860, and "La Reine de Saba," which was afterwards performed in English as "Irene," in 1862. In 1863 he brought out the pretty pastoral opera "Mireille." This was succeeded in 1866 by "La Colombe," known in English as "The Pet Dove," and in 1867 by "Roméo et Juliette." In 1877 he produced "Cinq Mars," and in 1878 his last opera, "Polyeucte." He has also written much church music, the more important works being the "Messe Solennelle," a "Stabat Mater," the oratorio "Tobie," a "De Profundis," an "Ave Verum," and many single hymns and songs, among which "Nazareth" is universally popular. His list of compositions for orchestra is also very large, and includes such popular pieces as the "Saltarello," "Funeral March of a Marionette," and the Meditation, based on Bach's First Prelude, which is accompanied by a soprano solo. He was elected a member of the Institut de France in 1866.

## **FAUST.**

"Faust," a grand opera in five acts, words by Barbier and Carré, founded upon Goethe's tragedy, was first produced at the Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, March 19, 1859, with the following cast of the principal parts:—

MARGUERITE Mme. MIOLAN-CARVALHO.

SIEBEL Mlle. FAIVRE.

FAUST M. BARBOT.

VALENTIN M. REGNAL.

MEPHISTOPHELES M. BALANQUÉ.

MARTHA Mme. DUCLOS.

The opera was first produced in London as "Faust," June 11, 1863; in English, Jan. 23, 1864; and in Germany as "Margarethe."

The story of the opera follows Goethe's tragedy very closely, and is confined to the first part. It may be briefly told. Faust, an aged German student, satiated with human knowledge and despairing of his ability to unravel the secrets of nature, summons the evil spirit Mephistopheles to his assistance, and contracts to give him his soul in exchange for a restoration to youth. Mephistopheles effects the transformation, and reveals to him the vision of Marguerite, a beautiful village maiden, with whom Faust at once falls in love. They set out upon their travels and encounter her at the Kermesse. She has been left by her brother Valentin, a soldier, in care of Dame Martha, who proves herself a careless guardian. Their first meeting is a casual one; but subsequently he finds her in her garden, and with the help of the subtle Mephistopheles succeeds in engaging the young girl's affection. Her simple lover, Siebel, is discarded, and his nosegay is thrown away at sight of the jewels with which Faust tempts her. When Valentin returns from the wars he learns of her temptation and subsequent ruin. He challenges the seducer, and in the encounter is slain by the intervention of Mephistopheles. Overcome by the

horror of her situation, Marguerite becomes insane, and in her frenzy kills her child. She is thrown into prison, where Faust and Mephistopheles find her. Faust urges her to fly with them, but she refuses, and places her reliance for salvation upon earnest prayer, and sorrow for the wrong she has done. Pleading for forgiveness, she expires; and as Mephistopheles exults at the catastrophe he has wrought, angels appear amid the music of the celestial choirs and bear the sufferer to heaven.

The first act is in the nature of a prelude, and opens with a long soliloquy ("Interrogo invano") by Faust, in which he laments the unsatisfactoriness of life. It is interwoven with delightful snatches of chorus heard behind the scenes, a duet with Mephistopheles ("Ma il ciel"), and the delicate music accompanying the vision of Marguerite.

The second act is contained in a single setting, the Kermesse, in which the chorus plays an important part. In the first scene the choruses of students, soldiers, old men, girls, and matrons are quaintly contrasted, and are full of animation and characteristic color. In the second, Valentin sings a tender song ("O santa medaglia") to a medallion of his sister which he wears as a charm. It is followed by a grim and weird drinking-song ("Dio dell' or"), sung by Mephistopheles. The latter then strikes fire from the fountain into his cup, and proposes the health of Marguerite. Valentin springs forward to resent the insult, only to find his sword broken in his hands. The students and soldiers recognize the spirit of evil, and overcome him by presenting the hilts of their swords in the form of a cross, the scene being accompanied by one of the most effective choruses in the work ("Tu puvì la spada"). The tempter gone, the scene resumes its gaiety, and the act closes with one of the most animated and delightful of waltz tempos ("Come la brezza").

The third act is the Garden scene, full of fascinating detail, and breathes the very spirit of poetry and music combined in a picture of love which has never been excelled in tenderness and beauty on the operatic stage. Its principal numbers are a short and simple but very beautiful ballad for Siebel ("La parlate d'amor"); a passionate aria for tenor ("Salve dimora casta e pura"), in which Faust greets Marguerite's dwelling; a double number, which is superb in its contrasts,—the folk-song, "C'era un re di Thule," a plaintive little ballad sung at the spinning-wheel by Marguerite, and the bravura jewel-song, "Ah! e' strano poter," which is the very essence of delicacy and almost-childish glee; the quartet commencing, "V'appoggiato al braccio mio," which is of striking interest by the independent manner in which the two pairs of voices are treated and combined in the close; and the closing duet ("Sempre amar") between Faust and Marguerite, which is replete with tenderness and passion, and closes in strains of almost ecstatic rapture, the fatal end of which is foreshadowed by the mocking laugh of Mephistopheles breaking in upon its lingering cadences.

The fourth act is known as the Cathedral act, and established Gounod's reputation as a writer of serious music. It opens with a scena for Marguerite, who has been taunted by the girls at the fountain ("Nascose eran là le crudeli"), in which she laments her sad fate. The scene abruptly changes to the square in front of the cathedral, where the soldiers, Valentin among them, are returning, to the jubilant though somewhat commonplace strains of the march, "Deponiam il branda." As the soldiers retire and Valentin goes in quest of Marguerite, Faust and Mephistopheles appear before the house, and the latter sings a grotesque and literally infernal serenade ("Tu, che fai l' addormentata"). Valentin appears and a quarrel ensues, leading up to a spirited trio. Valentin is slain, and with his dying breath pronounces a malediction ("Margherita! maledetta") upon his sister. The scene changes to the church, and in wonderful combination we hear the appeals of Marguerite for mercy, the taunting voice of the tempter, and the monkish chanting of the "Dies Irae" mingled with the solemn strains of the organ.

The last act is usually presented in a single scene, the Prison, but it contains five changes. After a weird prelude, the Walpurgis revel begins, in which short, strange phrases are heard from unseen singers. The night scene changes to a hall of pagan enchantment, and again to the Brocken, where the apparition of Marguerite is seen. The orgy is resumed, when suddenly by another transformation we are taken to the prison where Marguerite is awaiting death. It is unnecessary to give its details. The scene takes the form of a terzetto, which is worked up with constantly increasing power to a climax of passionate energy, and at last dies away as Marguerite expires. It stands almost alone among effects of this kind in opera. The curtain falls upon a celestial chorus of apotheosis, the vision of the angels, and Mephistopheles cowering in terror before the heavenly messengers.

## **ROMEO AND JULIET.**

"Roméo et Juliette," a grand opera in five acts, words by Barbier and Carré, the subject taken from Shakspeare's tragedy of the same name, was first produced at the Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, April 27, 1867, with Mme. Miolan-Carvalho in the rôle of Juliet. The story as told by the French dramatists in the main follows Shakspeare's tragedy very closely in its construction as well as in its dialogue. It is only necessary, therefore, to sketch its outlines. The first act opens with the festival at the house of Capulet.

Juliet and Romeo meet there and fall in love, notwithstanding her betrothal to Paris. The hot-blooded Tybalt seeks to provoke a quarrel with Romeo, but is restrained by Capulet himself, and the act comes to a close with a resumption of the merry festivities. In the second act we have the balcony scene, quite literally taken from Shakspeare, with an episode, however, in the form of a temporary interruption by Gregory and retainers, whose appearance is rather absurd than otherwise. The third act is constructed in two scenes. The first is in the friar's cell, where the secret marriage of the lovers takes place. In the second, we are introduced to a new character, invented by the librettist,—Stephano, Romeo's page, whose pranks while in search of his master provoke a general quarrel, in which Mercutio is slain by Tybalt, who in turn is killed by Romeo. When Capulet arrives upon the scene he condemns Romeo to banishment, who vows, however, that he will see Juliet again at all hazards. The fourth act is also made up of two scenes. The first is in Juliet's chamber, and is devoted to a duet between the two lovers. Romeo departs at dawn, and Capulet appears with Friar Laurence and announces his determination that the marriage with Paris shall be celebrated at once. Juliet implores the Friar's help, and he gives her the potion. The next scene is devoted to the wedding festivity, in the midst of which Juliet falls insensible from the effects of the sleeping-draught. The last act transpires in the tomb of the Capulets, where Romeo arrives, and believing his mistress dead takes poison. Juliet, reviving from the effects of the potion, and finding him dying, stabs herself with a dagger, and expires in his arms.

While many numbers are greatly admired, the opera as a whole has never been successful. Had not "Faust," which it often recalls, preceded it, its fate might have been different. Still, it contains many strong passages and much beautiful writing. The favorite numbers are the waltz arietta, very much in the manner of the well-known "Il Bacio," at the Capulet festival, the Queen Mab song, by Mercutio ("Mab, regina di menzogne"), and the duet between Romeo and Juliet ("Di grazia, t' arresta ancor!"), in the first act; the love music in the balcony scene of the second act, which inevitably recalls the garden music in "Faust;" an impressive solo for Friar Laurence ("Al vostro amor cocente"), followed by a vigorous trio and quartet, the music of which is massive and ecclesiastical in character, and the page's song ("Ah! col nibbio micidiale"), in the third act; the duet of parting between Romeo and Juliet, "Tu dei partir ohime!" the quartet, "Non temero mio ben," between Juliet, the nurse, Friar Laurence, and Capulet, and the dramatic solo for the Friar, "Bevi allor questo filtro," as he gives the potion to Juliet, in the fourth act; and the elaborate orchestral prelude to the tomb scene in the last act.

## **MIREILLE.**

"Mireille," a pastoral opera in three acts, words by M. Carré, the subject taken from "Mireio," a Provençal poem by Mistral, was first produced at the Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, March 19, 1864, with the following cast:—

MIREILLE Mme. MIOLAN-CARVALHO  
TAVENA | Mme. FAURE-LEFEBVRE.  
ANDRELUNO |  
VINCENZINA Mlle. LEROUX.  
VINCENZO M. ISMIEL.  
URIAS M. PETIT.  
RAIMONDO M. MORINI.

In December, 1864, the opera was reduced to three acts, in which form it is still given. In this abridged shape, and with the addition of the waltz now placed in the finale, it was brought out in London with Titiens, Giuglini, Santley, and Trebelli in the cast. In English it is always given under the title of "Mirella." The first scene opens in a mulberry grove, where Mireille is rallied by the village girls upon her attachment to Vincenzo, the basket-maker, and is also warned by Tavenna, the fortune-teller, against yielding to her love, as she foresees that her father, Raimondo, will never consent to the union. In the next scene she meets Vincenzo, and the warning of Tavenna is soon forgotten. The lovers renew their pledges, and agree to meet at the Chapel of the Virgin if their plans are thwarted. The second act introduces us to a merrymaking at Arles, where Mireille is informed by Tavenna that Vincenzo has a rival in Urias, a wild herdsman, who has openly declared his love for her, and asked her hand of her father. Mireille repulses him when he brings the father's consent. Ambrogio, Vincenzo's father, accompanied by his daughter, Vincenzina, also waits upon Raimondo and intercedes in his son's behalf, but is sternly refused. Mireille, who has overheard the interview, declares to her father her irrevocable attachment for Vincenzo. Her declaration throws him into such a rage that he is about to strike her, but she disarms his anger by appealing to the memory of her mother.

The last act opens on a barren, sunburnt plain. Andreluno appears, singing a pastoral song to the accompaniment of his bagpipe, followed by Mireille, who is toiling across the hot sands to meet her lover at the Chapel of the Virgin. She is met by Tavenna, who assures her that Vincenzo will keep his appointment, and then returns to Arles to plead with the father in Mireille's behalf. The poor girl toils

on through the heat, and at last arrives nearly prostrated by sunstroke. Vincenzo soon appears, and is shortly followed by Raimondo, who, seeing the sad condition of his daughter, is moved to pity and gives his consent to the union of the lovers. The sudden joyful change of affairs restores her wandering senses and the happy pair are united.

The music is in no sense dramatic, but lyric and pastoral throughout, and is specially marked by the beautiful French chansons with which it abounds. The first act opens with a delightful pastoral chorus of the maidens under the mulberry-trees ("Facciam carole, o giovinette"), which is very fresh and graceful. The second begins with an equally delightful chorus and farandole ("La Farandola tutti consola"), followed by the beautiful Provençal folk-song, "Dolce una brezza, intorno olezza," which is full of local color. Tavena sings a quaint fortune-teller's roundelay ("La stagione arriva"), and in the next scene Mireille has a number of rare beauty ("Ah! piu non temo fato"), in which she declares her unalterable attachment to Vincenzo. The finale of this act, with its strong aria ("Qui mi prostro innanzi ate"), is very spirited, and in fact may be considered the only dramatic episode in the whole work. The third act opens with the quaint little song of Andreluno, the shepherd boy ("L'alba tranquilla"), with oboe accompaniment. It also contains a plaintive song for tenor ("Ah! se de preghi miei"), and closes with a waltz song ("O d'amor messagera"), which is fairly gorgeous in bravura effects, and Hanslick says was a concession to Miolan-Carvalho, like the jewel song in "Faust" and the waltz song in "Romeo and Juliet." In the original libretto the song had its place in the first act, and indeed numerous changes have been made in the libretto since the opera first appeared; as in the original, Mireille dies in the arms of her lover, and Urias, Vincenzo's rival, is drowned in the Rhone. When it first appeared, however, great objection was made to several of the situations, and the libretto was declared fantastic and uninteresting; hence the changes. As a lyric drama, delightfully picturing the quaintness and simplicity of provincial life, not alone in the tunefulness of the music, but also in its pastoral naïveté and what may be termed its folk-characteristics, it will hold a high place upon the stage as long as young and fresh voices can be found to sing it.

## HALEVY.

Jacques François Fromenthal Elias Halevy was born at Paris, May 27, 1799, of Israelitish parents, whose name was originally Levy. He entered the Conservatory in 1809, and in 1819 obtained the Grand Prize for his cantata of "Hermione." After his arrival in Italy he wrote several minor pieces, but his music did not attract public attention until his return to Paris, when his three-act opera, "Clari," brought out Dec. 9, 1828, with Malibran in the principal rôle, made a success. "Le Dilettante d'Avignon" (a satire on Italian librettos), "Manon Lescaut" (a ballet in three acts), "La Langue Musicale," "La Tentation," and "Les Souvenirs" rapidly followed "Clari," with alternating successes and failures. In 1835 his great work, "La Juive," appeared, and in the same year, "L'Éclair," one of his most charming operas, written without chorus for two tenors and two sopranos. It was considered at the time a marvellous feat that he should have produced two such opposite works in the same year, and great hopes were entertained that he would surpass them. These hopes failed, however. He subsequently wrote over twenty operas, among them "Guido et Ginevra" (1838); "Charles VI." (1842); "La Reine de Chypre" (1842); "Les Mousquetaires de la Reine" (1846); "Le Val d'Andorre" (1848); "La Tempête" (1853); "Le Juif Errant" (1855), and others; but "La Juive" and "L'Éclair" remained his masterpieces, and procured him admission into the Institute. He was also a professor in the Conservatory, and among his pupils were Gounod, Massé, Bazin, Duvernoy, Bizet, and others. He enjoyed many honors, and died March 17, 1862. A *De Profundis* was sung on the occasion of his funeral, written by four of his pupils, MM. Gounod, Massé, Bazin, and Cohen. As a composer he was influenced largely by Meyerbeer, and is remarkable rather for his large dramatic effects than for his melody.

## THE JEWESS

"La Juive," a grand opera in five acts, words by Scribe, originally written for Rossini and rejected in favor of "William Tell," was produced for the first time at the Académie, Paris, Feb. 23, 1835, with the following cast of the principal parts:—

RACHEL Mlle. CORNELIA FALCON.  
EUDOXIA Mme. DORUS-GRAS.  
ELEAZAR M. NOURRIT.  
CARDINAL M. LEVASSEUR.

It was first produced in England in French, July 29, 1846, and in Italian under the title of "La Ebreja," July 25, 1850. In this country it is most familiar in the German version. The scene of the opera is laid in Constance, time, 1414. Leopold, a prince of the empire, returning from the wars, is enamoured of Rachel, a beautiful Jewess, daughter of Eleazar the goldsmith. The better to carry out his plans, he calls himself Samuel, and pretends to be a Jewish painter. Circumstances, however, dispel the illusion, and Rachel learns that he is no other than Leopold, husband of the princess Eudoxia. Overcome with indignation at the discovery of his perfidy, she publicly denounces his crime, and the Cardinal excommunicates Leopold, and pronounces his malediction on Rachel and her father. Rachel, Eleazar, and Leopold are thrown into prison to await the execution of the sentence of death. During their imprisonment Eudoxia intercedes with Rachel to save Leopold's life, and at last, moved by the grief of the rightful wife, she publicly recants her statement. Leopold is banished, but Rachel and her father are again condemned to death for conspiring against the life of a Christian. Eleazar determines to be revenged in the moment of death upon the Cardinal, who has sentenced them, and who is at the head of a church which he hates; and just before they are thrown into a caldron of fire, reveals to the spectators that Rachel is not his own, but an adopted daughter, saved from the ruins of the Cardinal's burning palace, and that she is his child.

The opera of "The Jewess" is pre-eminently spectacular, and its music is dramatic and declamatory rather than melodious. The prominent numbers of the first act are the solemn declaration of the Cardinal ("Wenn ew'ger Hass"), in which he replies to Eleazar's hatred of the Christian; the romance sung by Leopold ("Fern vom Liebchen weilen"), which is in the nature of a serenade to Rachel; the drinking-song of the people at the fountain, which is flowing wine ("Eilt herbei"); and the splendid chorus and march ("Leht, es nahet sich der Zug") which preludes the imposing pageantry music of the Emperor's arrival, closing with the triumphant Te Deum to organ accompaniment and the greeting to the Emperor, "Hosanna, unser Kaiser hoch."

The second act opens with the celebration of the Passover in Eleazar's house, and introduces a very solemn and impressive prayer ("Allmächt'ger blicke gnädig"). In the next scene there is a passionate ensemble and duet for Eudoxia and Leopold ("Ich will ihn seh'n"), which is followed by a second spirited duet between Rachel and Leopold ("Als mein Herz"); an intensely dramatic aria ("Ach! Vater! Halt ein!"), in which she claims her share of Leopold's guilt; and the final grand trio of anathema pronounced by Eleazar.

The third act is principally devoted to the festivities of the royal pageants, and closes with the anathema of the Cardinal ("Ihr, die ihr Gottes Zorn"), which is a concerted number of magnificent power and spirited dramatic effect. The fourth act contains a grand duet between Eleazar and the Cardinal ("Hört ich recht?"), and closes with one of the most powerful scenas ever written for tenor ("Das Todesurtheil sprich"), in which Eleazar welcomes death and hurls defiance at the Christians. The last act is occupied with the tragic dénouement, which affords splendid opportunities for action, and is accompanied by very dramatic music to the close, often rising to real sublimity. In the pageantry of the stage, in the expression of high and passionate sentiment, in elaborateness of treatment, and in broad and powerful dramatic effect, "The Jewess" is one of the strongest operas in the modern repertory.

## **HUMPERDINCK.**

Engelbert Humperdinck, the latest star in the German musical firmament, was born, Sept. 1, 1854, at Siegburg on the Rhine, and received his earliest musical training at the Cologne Conservatory. He made such rapid progress in his studies, showing special proficiency in composition, that he carried off in succession the three prizes of the Mozart, Mendelssohn, and Meyerbeer stipends. These enabled him to continue his lessons at Munich, and afterwards in Italy. While in Naples, in 1880, he attracted the attention of Richard Wagner as a rising genius, and two years later had the honor of an invitation to go to Venice as his guest, upon the occasion of the performance of Wagner's only symphony. In 1885 he went to Barcelona, Spain, where he taught composition, and was the director of a quartette at the Royal Conservatory for two years. In 1887 he returned to Cologne, and since 1890 has been identified with a Conservatory at Frankfort-on-the-Main. In addition to the opera "Hansel and Gretel," which has given him a world-wide fame, he produced, a few years ago, a chorus ballad, "Das Glück von Edenhall," and a cantata, "Die Wallfahrt nach Kevelaar," based upon Heine's poem, and scored for soloists, chorus, and orchestra. He has also written several songs and piano pieces, and, it is now reported, is engaged upon a dramatic composition called "The Royal Children." He is regarded in Germany as the one composer who gives promise of continuing and developing the scheme of the music-drama as it was

propounded by Wagner.

## **HANSEL AND GRETEL.**

"Hansel and Gretel," a fairy opera in three acts, words by Adelheid Wette, was first produced in Germany in 1894. In January, 1895, it was performed in London by the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company, rendered into English by Constance Bache; and in the fall of the same year it had its first representation in New York, at Daly's Theatre, with the following cast:—

PETER, a broom-maker Mr. JACQUES BARS.

GERTRUDE, his wife Miss ALICE GORDON.

THE WITCH Miss LOUISE MEISSLINGER.

HANSEL Miss MARIE ELBA.

GRETEL Miss JEANNE DOUSTE.

SANDMAN, the Sleep Fairy Miss CECILE BRANI.

DEWMAN, the Dawn Fairy Miss EDITH JOHNSTON.

The story is taken from one of Grimm's well-known fairy tales, and the text was written by the composer's sister, Adelheid Wette. It was Frau Wette's intention to arrange the story in dramatic form for the amusement of her children, her brother lending his co-operation by writing a few little melodies, of a simple nature, to accompany the performance. When he had read it, however, the story took his fancy, and its dramatic possibilities so appealed to him that he determined to give it an operatic setting with full orchestral score, and thus placed it in the higher sphere of world performance by an art which not alone reveals the highest type of genial German sentimentality, but, curiously enough, applied to this simple little story of angels, witches, and the two babes in the woods the same musical methods which Wagner has employed in telling the stories of gods and demigods. Perhaps its highest praise was sounded by Siegfried Wagner, son of Richard Wagner, who declared that "Hansel and Gretel" was the most important German opera since "Parsifal," notwithstanding its childishness and simplicity.

After a beautifully instrumented prelude, which has already become a favorite concert piece, the curtain rises upon the home of Peter, the broom-maker. The parents are away seeking for food, and Hansel and Gretel have been left in the cottage with instructions to knit and make brooms. There is a charming dialogue between the two children, beginning with a doleful lament over their poverty, and ending with an outburst of childish hilarity in song and dancing,—a veritable romp in music,—which is suddenly interrupted by the return of Gertrude, the mother, empty-handed, who chides them for their behavior, and in her anger upsets a jug of milk which was the only hope of supper in the house. With an energetic outburst of recitative she sends them into the forest, telling them not to return until they have filled their basket with strawberries. After lamenting her loss, and mourning over her many troubles, she falls asleep, but is awakened by the return of Peter, who has been more fortunate, and has brought home some provisions. A rollicking scene ensues, but suddenly he misses the children, and breaks out in a fit of rage when he is informed that they have gone into the forest. To the accompaniment of most gruesome and characteristic music he tells his wife of the witch who haunts the woods, and who, living in a honey-cake house, entices little children to it, bakes them into gingerbread in her oven, and then devours them.

The second act, "In the Forest," is preluded by a characteristic instrumental number, "The Witches' Ride." The children are discovered near the Ilsenstein, among the fir-trees, making garlands, listening to the cuckoos, and mocking them in a beautiful duet with echo accompaniment. At last, however, they realize that they are lost; and in the midst of their fear, which is intensified by strange sights and sounds, the Sandman, or sleep fairy, approaches them, strews sand in their eyes, and sings them to sleep with a most delicious lullaby, after they have recited their prayer, "When at night I go to sleep, fourteen Angels watch do keep." As they sleep the mist rolls away, the forest background disappears, and the fourteen angels come down a sort of Jacob's ladder and surround the children, while other angels perform a stately dance, grouping themselves in picturesque tableau as the curtain falls.

The third act is entitled "The Witch's House." The children are still sleeping, but the angels have vanished. The Dawn-Fairy steps forward and shakes dewdrops from a bluebell over them, accompanying the action with a delightful song, "I'm up with early Dawning." Gretel is the first to wake, and rouses Hansel by tickling him with a leaf, at the same time singing a veritable tickling melody, and then telling him what she has seen in her dream. In place of the fir-trees they discover the witch's house at the Ilsenstein, with an oven on one side and on the other a cage, both joined to the house by a curious fence of gingerbread figures. The house itself is constructed of sweets and creams. Attracted by its delicious fragrance and toothsome-ness, the hungry children break off a piece and are nibbling at it, when the old witch within surprises and captures them. After a series of incantations, and much riding upon her broomstick, which are vividly portrayed in the music, she prepares to cook Gretel

in the oven; but while looking into it the children deftly tumble her into the fire. The witch waltz, danced by the children and full of joyous abandon, follows. To a most vivid accompaniment, Hansel rushes into the house and throws fruit, nuts, and sweetmeats into Gretel's apron. Meanwhile the oven falls into bits, and a crowd of children swarms around them, released from their gingerbread disguises, and sing a swelling chorus of gratitude as two of the boys drag the witch from the ruins of the oven in the form of a big gingerbread-cake. The father and mother appear. Their long quest is ended. The family join in singing a pious little hymn, "When past bearing is our grief, God the Lord will send relief;" and the children dance joyously around the reunited group. The story is only a little child's tale, but it is wedded to music of the highest order. The union has been made so deftly, the motives are so charming and take their places so skilfully, and the music is so scholarly and characteristic throughout, that no one has yet considered this union as incongruous. In this respect "Hansel and Gretel" is a distinct creation in the operatic world.

## **LEONCAVALLO.**

Ruggiero Leoncavallo, a promising representative of the young Italian school, was born in Naples, March 8, 1858. He first studied with Siri, and afterwards learned harmony and the piano from Simonetti. While a student at the Naples Conservatory he was advised by Rossi, one of his teachers, to devote himself to opera. In pursuance of this counsel, he went to Bologna, and there wrote his first opera, "Tommaso Chatterton," which still remains in manuscript and unperformed. Then followed a series of "wander years," during which he visited many European countries, giving lessons in singing and upon the piano, and meeting with varying fortunes. In all these years, however, he cherished the plan of producing a trilogy in the Wagnerian manner with a groundwork from Florentine history. In a letter he says: "I subdivided the historical periods in the following way: first part, 'I Medici,' from the accession of Sextus IV. to the Pazzi conspiracy; second part, 'Savorola,' from the investiture of Fra Benedetto to the death of Savorola; third part, 'Cesare Borgia,' from the death of the Duke of Candia to that of Alexander VI." The first part was completed and performed in Milan in November, 1893, and was a failure, notwithstanding its effective instrumentation. It was not so, however, with the little two-act opera "I Pagliacci," which was produced May 21, 1892, at Milan, and met with an instantaneous and enthusiastic success. His next work was a chorus with orchestral accompaniment, the text based upon Balzac's rhapsodical and highly wrought "Seraphita," which was performed at Milan in 1894. It has been recently reported that the Emperor of Germany has given him a commission to produce an opera upon a national subject, "Roland of Berlin." Of his works, "I Pagliacci" is the only one known in the United States. It has met with great favor here, and has become standard in the Italian repertory.

### **I PAGLIACCI.**

"I Pagliacci," an Italian opera in two acts, words by the composer, Ruggiero Leoncavallo, was first performed at Milan, May 21, 1892, and was introduced in this country in the spring of 1894, Mme. Arnoldson, Mme. Calvé, and Signors Ancona, Gromzeski, Guetary, and De Lucia taking the principal parts. The scene is laid in Calabria during the Feast of the Assumption. The Pagliacci are a troupe of itinerant mountebanks, the characters being Nedda, the Columbine, who is wife of Canio, or Punchinello, master of the troupe; Tonio, the Clown; Beppe, the Harlequin; and Silvio, a villager.

The first act opens with the picturesque arrival of the troupe in the village, and the preparations for a performance in the rustic theatre, with which the peasants are overjoyed. The tragic element of the composition is apparent at once, and the action moves swiftly on to the fearful dénouement. Tonio, the clown, is in love with Nedda, and before the performance makes advances to her, which she resents by slashing him across the face with Beppe's riding-whip. He rushes off vowing revenge, and upon his return overhears Nedda declaring her passion for Silvio, a young peasant, and arranging to elope with him. Tonio thereupon seeks Canio, and tells him of his wife's infidelity. Canio hurries to the spot, encounters Nedda; but Silvio has fled, and she refuses to give his name. He attempts to stab her, but is prevented by Beppe, and the act closes with the final preparation for the show, the grief-stricken husband donning the motley in gloomy and foreboding silence.

The second act opens with Tonio beating the big drum, and the people crowding to the show, among them Silvio, who manages to make an appointment with Nedda while she is collecting the money. The curtain of the little theatre rises, disclosing a small room barely furnished. The play to be performed is almost an identical picture of the real situation in the unfortunate little troupe. Columbine, who is to poison her husband, Punchinello, is entertaining her lover, Harlequin, while Taddeo, the clown,



watches for Punchinello's return. When Canio finally appears the mimic tragedy becomes one in reality. Inflamed with passion, he rushes upon Nedda, and demands the name of her lover. She still refuses to tell. He draws his dagger. Nedda, conscious of her danger, calls upon Silvio in the audience to save her; but it is too late. Her husband kills her, and Silvio, who rushes upon the stage, is killed with the same dagger. With a wild cry full of hate, jealousy, and despair, the unfortunate Canio tells the audience "La commedia è finita" ("The comedy is finished"). The curtain falls upon the tragedy, and the excited audience disperses.

The story is peculiarly Italian in its motive, though the composer has been charged with taking it from "La Femme de Tabarin," by the French novelist, Catulle Mendès. Be this as it may, Leoncavallo's version has the merit of brevity, conciseness, ingenuity, and swift action, closing in a dénouement of great tragic power and capable, in the hands of a good actor, of being made very effective. The composer has not alone been charged with borrowing the story, but also with plagiarizing the music. So far as the accusation of plagiarism is concerned, however, it hardly involves anything more serious than those curious resemblances which are so often found in musical compositions. As a whole, the opera is melodious, forceful, full of snap and go, and intensely dramatic, and is without a dull moment from the prologue ("Si può? Signore") sung before the curtain by Tonio to that last despairing outcry of Canio ("La commedia è finita"), upon which the curtain falls. The prominent numbers are the prologue already referred to; Nedda's beautiful cavatina in the second scene ("O, che volo d'angelo"); her duet with Silvio in the third scene ("E allor perchè"); the passionate declamation of Canio at the close of the first act ("Recitur! mentre preso dal delirio"); the serenade of Beppe in the second act ("O Colombino, il tenero"); and the graceful dance-music which plays so singular a part in this fierce struggle of the passions, which forms the motive of the closing scenes.

## **MASCAGNI.**

Pietro Mascagni, who leaped into fame at a single bound, was born at Leghorn, Dec. 7, 1863. His father was a baker, and had planned for his son a career in the legal profession; but, as often happens, fate ordered otherwise. His tastes were distinctly musical, and his determination to study music was encouraged by Signor Bianchi, a singing teacher, who recognized his talent. For a time he took lessons, unknown to his father, of Soffredini, but when it was discovered he was ordered to abandon music and devote himself to the law. At this juncture his uncle Stefano came to his rescue, took him to his house, provided him with a piano, and also with the means to pursue his studies. Recognizing the uselessness of further objections, the father at last withdrew them, and left his son free to follow his own pleasure. He progressed so rapidly under Soffredini that he was soon engaged in composition, his first works being a symphony in C minor and a "Kyrie," which were performed in 1879. In 1881 he composed a cantata, "In Filanda," and a setting of Schiller's hymn, "An die Freude," both of which had successful public performances. The former attracted the attention of a rich nobleman who furnished young Mascagni with the means to attend the Milan Conservatory. After studying there a short time, he suddenly left Milan with an operatic troupe, and visited various Italian cities, a pilgrimage which was of great value to him, as it made him acquainted with the resources of an orchestra and the details of conducting. The troupe, however, met with hard fortunes, and was soon disbanded, throwing Mascagni upon the world. For a few years he made a precarious living in obscure towns, by teaching, and had at last reached desperate extremities when one day he read in a newspaper that Sonzogno, the music publisher, had offered prizes for the three best one act operas, to be performed in Rome. He at once entered into the competition, and produced "Cavalleria Rusticana." It took the first prize. It did more than this for the impecunious composer. When performed, it made a success of enthusiasm. He was called twenty times before the curtain. Honors and decorations were showered upon him. He was everywhere greeted with serenades and ovations. Every opera-house in Europe clamored for the new work. In a day he had risen from utter obscurity and become world-famous. His sudden popularity, however, had a pernicious effect, as it induced him to rush out more operas without giving sufficient time to their preparation. "L'Amico Fritz," based upon the well-known Erckmann-Chatrian story, and "I Rantzau" quickly followed "Cavalleria Rusticana," but did not meet with its success. Last year however he produced two operas at Milan, "Guglielmo Rattcliff" and "Silvano," which proved successful. Whether "Cavalleria Rusticana" is to remain as his only hold upon popular favor, the future alone can tell; but that he has talent of the highest order, and that he has produced an opera whose reception has been almost unparalleled in the world of music cannot be questioned.

## **CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA.**

"Cavalleria Rusticana," an opera in one act, words by Signori Targioni-Tozzetti and Menasci, music by Pietro Mascagni, was written in 1890, and was first performed at the Costanzi Theatre in Rome, May 20, of that year, with Gemma Bellinconi and Roberto Stagno in the two principal rôles. It had its first American production in Philadelphia, Sept. 9, 1891, with Mme. Kronold as *Santuzza*, Miss Campbell as *Lola*, Guille as *Turridu*, Del Puente as *Alfio*, and Jeannie Teal as *Lucia*.

The story upon which the text of "Cavalleria Rusticana" is based is taken from a Sicilian tale by Giovanni Verga. It is peculiarly Italian in its motive, running a swift, sure gamut of love, flirtation, jealousy, and death,—a melodrama of a passionate and tragic sort, amid somewhat squalid environments, that particularly lends itself to music of Mascagni's forceful sort. The overture graphically presents the main themes of the opera, and these themes illustrate a very simple but strong story. Turridu, a young Sicilian peasant, arrived home from army service, finds that his old love, Lola, during his absence has married Alfio, a carter. To console himself he makes love to Santuzza, who returns his passion with ardor. The inconstant Turridu, however, soon tires of her and makes fresh advances to Lola, who, inspired by her jealousy of Santuzza, and her natural coquetry, smiles upon him again. The latter seeks to reclaim him, and, when she is rudely repulsed, tells the story of Lola's perfidy to Alfio, who challenges Turridu and kills him.

During the overture Turridu sings a charming Siciliana ("O Lola c'hai di latti"), and the curtain rises, disclosing a Sicilian village with a church decorated for Easter service. As the sacristan opens its doors, the villagers appear and sing a hymn to the Madonna. A hurried duet follows, in which Santuzza reveals to mother Lucia her grief at the perfidy of Turridu. Her discourse is interrupted by the entrance of Alfio, singing a rollicking whip-song ("Il cavallo scalpita") with accompaniment of male chorus. The scene then develops into a trio, closing with a hymn ("Inneggiamo, il Signor"), sung by the people in the square, and led by Santuzza herself, and blending with the "Regina Coeli," performed by the choir inside the church with organ accompaniment, the number finally working up into a tremendous climax in genuine Italian style.

In the next scene Santuzza tells her sad story to Lucia, Turridu's mother, in a romanza of great power ("Voi lo sapete"), closing with an outburst of the highest significance as she appeals to Lucia to pray for her. In the next scene Turridu enters. Santuzza upbraids him, and a passionate duet follows in which Santuzza's suspicions are more than confirmed by his avowal of his passion for Lola. The duet is interrupted by a song of the latter, heard in the distance with harp accompaniment ("Fior di giaggiolo"). As she approaches the pair the song grows livelier, and at its close she banters poor Santuzza with biting sarcasms, and assails Turridu with all the arts of coquetry. She passes into the church, confident that the infatuated Turridu will follow her. An impassioned duo of great power follows, in which Santuzza pleads with him to love her, but all in vain. He rushes into the church. She attempts to follow him, but falls upon the steps just as Alfio comes up. To him she relates the story of her troubles, and of Turridu's baseness. Alfio promises to revenge her, and another powerful duet follows.

As they leave the stage, there is a sudden and most unexpected change in the character of the music and the motive of the drama. In the place of struggle, contesting passions, and manifestations of rage, hate, and jealousy ensues an intermezzo for orchestra, with an accompaniment of harps and organ, of the utmost simplicity and sweetness, breathing something like a sacred calm, and turning the thoughts away from all this human turmoil into conditions of peace and rest. It has not only become one of the most favorite numbers in the concert repertory, but is ground out from every barrel-organ the world over, and yet it has retained its hold upon popular admiration.

At its close the turmoil begins again and the action hastens to the tragic dénouement. The people come out of the church singing a glad chorus which is followed by a drinking song ("Viva il vino"), sung by Turridu, and joined in by Lola and chorus. In the midst of the hilarity Alfio appears. Turridu invites him to join them and drink; but he refuses, and the quarrel begins. Lola and the frightened women withdraw. Turridu bites Alfio's right ear,—a Sicilian form of challenge. The scene closes with the death of the former at Alfio's hands, and Santuzza is avenged; but the fickle Lola has gone her way bent upon other conquests.

## **MEYERBEER.**

Giacomo Meyerbeer, the eldest son of Herz Beer, was born in Berlin, Sept. 5, 1794. He was named Jacob Meyer Beer, but afterwards called himself Giacomo Meyerbeer. His early studies were pursued

with the pianist Lanska, and Bernard Anselm Weber, chief of the Berlin orchestra. At fifteen he became the pupil of Vogler in Darmstadt, with whom he displayed such talent in composition that he was named Composer to the Court by the Grand Duke. At eighteen his first dramatic work, "The Daughter of Jephtha," was performed at Munich. He then began the world for himself, and made his *début* in Vienna as a pianist with great success. His first opera, "The Two Caliphs," met with complete failure, as it was not written in the Italian form. He at once transformed his style and brought out "Romilda e Costanza," a serio-comic opera, with great success, at Padua. In 1820, "Emma di Resburgo" appeared at Venice, and from this period his star was in the ascendant. "The Gate of Brandenburg," "Margharita d' Anjou," "Esule di Granata," and "Almanzar" followed in quick succession, and were well received, though with nothing like the furor which "Il Crociato in Egitto" created in Venice in 1824. His next great work, "Robert le Diable," was produced in Paris, Nov. 21, 1831, the unparalleled success of which carried its fame to every part of the civilized world. In 1836 "The Huguenots," unquestionably his masterpiece, was brought out, and it still holds its place as one of the grandest dramatic works the world has ever seen. In 1838 Scribe furnished him the libretto of "L'Africaine," but before the music was finished he had changed the text so much that Scribe withdrew it altogether. He was consoled, however, by Meyerbeer's taking from him the libretto of "Le Prophete," this opera being finished in 1843. During the following year he wrote several miscellaneous pieces besides the three-act German opera, "Ein Feldlager in Schlesien," in which Jenny Lind made her Berlin *début*. In 1846 he composed the overture and incidental music to his brother's drama of "Struensee," and in 1847 he not only prepared the way for Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" in Paris, but personally produced "Rienzi,"—services which Wagner poorly requited. In 1849 "Le Prophete" was given in Paris; in 1854, "L'Etoile du Nord;" and in 1859, "Dinorah;" but none of them reached the fame of "The Huguenots." In 1860 he wrote two cantatas and commenced a musical drama called "Goethe's Jugendzeit," which was never finished. In 1862 and 1863 he worked upon "L'Africaine," and at last brought it forward as far as a rehearsal; but he died April 23, 1863, and it was not performed until two years after his death.

## THE HUGUENOTS.

"Les Huguenots," a grand opera in five acts, words by Scribe and Deschamps, was first produced at the Académie, Paris, Feb. 29, 1836, with the following cast of the principal parts:—

VALENTIN Mlle. FALCON.  
 MARGUERITE DE VALOIS Mme. DORUS-GRAS.  
 URBAIN Mlle. FLECHEUX.  
 COUNT DE ST. BRIS M. LERDA.  
 COUNT DE NEVERS M. DERIVIS.  
 RAOUL DE NANGIS M. NOURRIT.  
 MARCEL M. LEVASSEUR.

At its first production in London in Italian, as "Gli Ugonotti," July 20, 1848, the cast was even more remarkable than that above. Meyerbeer specially adapted the opera for the performance, transposed the part of the page, which was written for a soprano, and expressly composed a cavatina to be sung by Mme. Alboni, in the scene of the *château* and gardens of Chenonceaux, forming the second act of the original work, but now given as the second scene of the first act in the Italian version. The cast was as follows:—

VALENTIN Mme. PAULINE VIARDOT.  
 MARGUERITE DE VALOIS Mme. CASTELLAN.  
 URBAIN Mlle. ALBONI.  
 COUNT DE ST. BRIS Sig. TAMBURINI.  
 COUNT DE NEVERS Sig. TAGLIAFICO.  
 RAOUL DE NANGIS Sig. MARIO.  
 MARCEL Sig. MARINI.

The action of the opera passes in 1572, the first and second acts in Touraine, and the remainder in Paris. The first act opens on a scene of revelry in the salon of Count de Nevers, where a number of noblemen, among them Raoul de Nangis, a Protestant, accompanied by his faithful old Huguenot servant, Marcel, are present, telling stories of their exploits in love. Marguerite de Valois, the betrothed of Henry IV., for the sake of reconciling the dispute between the two religious sects, sends her page to De Nevers's salon and invites Raoul to her *château*. When he arrives, Marguerite informs him of her purpose to give him in marriage to a Catholic lady, daughter of the Count de St. Bris. Raoul at first consents; but when Valentin is introduced to him and he discovers her to be a lady whom he had once rescued from insult and who had visited De Nevers in his salon, he rejects the proposition, believing that her affections have been bestowed upon another, and that his enemies are seeking to entrap him. St. Bris challenges Raoul for the affront, but the Queen disarms the angry combatants. Valentin is now

urged to marry Count de Nevers, and begs that she may pass the day in prayer in the chapel. Meanwhile Count de St. Bris, who has been challenged by Raoul, forms a plot for his assassination, which is overheard by Valentin from within the chapel. She communicates the plot to Marcel, who lies in wait with a party of Huguenots in the vicinity of the duel, and comes to Raoul's rescue when danger threatens him. A general combat is about to ensue, but it is suppressed by Marguerite, who suddenly appears upon the scene. Raoul thus discovers that he owes his life to Valentin, and that her visit to De Nevers was to induce him to sever the relations between them, as she was in love with Raoul. The announcement comes too late, for the marriage festivities have already begun. Raoul visits her for the last time. Their interview is disturbed by the approach of De Nevers, St. Bris, and other Catholic noblemen, who meet to arrange the details of the plot conceived by Catherine de Médicis for the slaughter of the Huguenots on St. Bartholomew's Eve. Valentin hurriedly conceals Raoul behind the tapestries, where he overhears their plans and witnesses the conjuration and the blessing of the swords, as well as the refusal of the chivalrous De Nevers to engage in murder. After the conspirators have departed, Raoul and Valentin have a long and affecting interview, in which he hesitates between love and honor, Valentin striving to detain him lest he may be included in the general massacre. Honor at last prevails, and he joins his friends just before the work of slaughter begins. He rushes to the festivities which are about to be given in honor of the marriage of Marguerite with the King of Navarre, and warns the Huguenots of their danger. He then makes his way to a chapel where many of them are gathered for refuge. He finds Marcel, who has been wounded, and who brings him the tidings of the death of De Nevers. The faithful Valentin joins them to share their fate. Amid the horrors of the massacre Marcel blesses and unites them. They enter the church and all perish together.

The first act opens with the brilliant chorus of the revellers ("Piacere della mensa"), which is full of courtly grace. Raoul tells the story of the unknown fair one he has encountered, in the romanza, "Piu bianca del velo." When Marcel is called upon, he hurriedly chants the hymn, "O tu che ognor," set to the Martin Luther air, "Ein feste Burg," and heightened by a stirring accompaniment, and then bursts out into a graphic song ("Finita è pe' frati"), emphasized with the piff-paff of bullets and full of martial fervor. In delightful contrast with the fierce Huguenot song comes the lively and graceful romanza of Urbain ("Nobil donna e tanto onesta"), followed by a delightful septet. The scene now changes, and with it the music. We are in the Queen's gardens at Chenonceaux. Every number, the Queen's solo ("A questa voce sola"), the delicate "Bathers' Chorus," as it is called ("Audiam, regina, in questo amene sponde"), the brilliant and graceful allegretto sung by Urbain ("No, no, no, no"), the duet between the Queen and Raoul, based upon one of the most flowing of melodies, and the spirited and effective finale in which the nobles take the oath of allegiance ("Per la fè, per l'onore"),—each and every one of these is colored with consummate skill, while all are invested with chivalrous refinement and stately grace.

The second act opens with a beautiful choral embroidery in which different choruses, most striking in contrast, are interwoven with masterly skill. It is a picture, in music, of the old Paris. The citizens rejoice over their day's work done. The Huguenots shout their lusty Rataplan, while the Papist maidens sing their solemn litany ("Ave Maria") on their way to chapel; and as they disappear, the quaint tones of the curfew chant are heard, and night and rest settle down upon the city. It is a striking introduction to what follows,—the exquisite duet between Marcel and Valentin, the great septet of the duel scene, beginning, "De dritti miei ho l'alma accesa," with the tremendous double chorus which follows as the two bands rush upon the scene. As if for relief from the storm of this scene, the act closes with brilliant pageant music as De Nevers approaches to escort Valentin to her bridal.

The third act is the climax of the work, and stands almost unrivalled in the field of dramatic music, for the manner in which horror and passion are illustrated. After a dark and despairing aria by Valentin ("Eccomi sola ormai"), and a brief duet with Raoul, the conspirators enter. The great trio, closing with the conjuration, "Quel Dio," the awful and stately chant of the monks in the blessing of the unsheathed daggers ("Sia gloria eterna e onore"), and the thrilling unisons of the chorus ("D'un sacro zel l'ardore"), which fairly glow with energy, fierceness, and religious fury,—these numbers of themselves might have made an act; but Meyerbeer does not pause here. He closes with a duet between Raoul and Valentin which does not suffer in comparison with the tremendous combinations which have preceded it. It is filled with the alternations of despair and love, of grief and ecstasy. In its movement it is the very whirlwind of passion. Higher form dramatic music can hardly reach. In the Italian version the performance usually closes at this point; but there is still another striking and powerful scene, that in which Raoul and Valentin are united by the dying Marcel. Then the three join in a sublime trio, and for the last time chant together the old Lutheran psalm, and await their fate amid the triumphant harpings that sound from the orchestra and the hosanna they sing to its accompaniment.

## **THE STAR OF THE NORTH.**

"L'Étoile du Nord," an opera in three acts, words by Scribe, was first performed at the Opera Comique, Paris, Feb. 16, 1854, and in Italian as "La Stella del Nord" at Covent Garden, London, July 19, 1855. In

English it has been produced under the title of "The Star of the North." The opera contains several numbers from the composer's earlier work, "Feldlager in Schlesien," which was written for the opening of the Berlin opera-house, in memory of Frederick the Great, and was subsequently (Feb. 17, 1847) performed with great success in Vienna, Jenny Lind taking the rôle of Vielka. The "Feldlager," however, has never been given out of Germany.

The action of the opera transpires in Wyborg, on the Gulf of Finland, in the first act, at a camp of the Russians in the second, and at the palace of the Czar Peter in the third. In the first, Peter, who is working at Wyborg, disguised as a carpenter, makes the acquaintance of Danilowitz, a pastry-cook, and Catharine, a cantiniere, whose brother George is about to marry Prascovia. Catharine brings about this marriage; and not only that, but saves the little village from an invasion by a strolling horde of Tartars, upon whose superstition she practises successfully, and so conducts herself in general that Peter falls in love with her, and they are betrothed, though she is not aware of the real person who is her suitor. Meanwhile the conscription takes place, and to save her newly wedded brother she volunteers for fifteen days in his place, disguising herself as a soldier. In the next act we find Catharine going her rounds as a sentinel in the Russian camp on the Finnish frontier. Peter and Danilowitz are also there, and are having a roistering time in their tent, drinking and making love to a couple of girls. Hearing Peter's voice she recognizes it, and curiosity leads her to peep into the tent. She is shocked at what she beholds, neglects her duty, and is found by the corporal in this insubordinate condition. He remonstrates with her, and she answers with a slap on his ears, for which she incurs the penalties of disobedience to orders as well as insulting behavior to her superior officer. Peter at last is roused from his drunkenness by the news of an insurrection among his own soldiers and the approach of the enemy. He rushes out and promises to give Peter into their hands if they will obey and follow *him*. At last, struck with his bearing and authority, they demand to know who he is, whereupon he declares himself the Czar. The mutiny is at once quelled. They submit, and offer their lives as warrant for their loyalty. The last act opens in the Czar's palace, where his old companion, Danilowitz, has been installed in high favor. Catharine, however, has disappeared. George and Prascovia arrive from Finland, but they know nothing of her. The faithful Danilowitz finds her, but she has lost her reason. Her friends try to restore it by surrounding her with recollections of home, and Peter at last succeeds by playing upon his flute the airs he used to play to her in Finland. Her senses come back, and thus all ends happily; for Catharine and Peter are at last united amid the acclamations of the people.

In the first act the character of Peter is well expressed in the surly, growling bass of his soliloquy ("Vedra, vedra"). It is followed by a characteristic drinking-chorus ("Alla Finlanda, beviam"), a wild, barbaric rhythm in the minor, which passes into a prayer as they invoke the protection of Heaven upon Charles XII. In the eighth scene occur the couplets of Gritzensko as he sings the wild song of the Kalmucks. In charming contrast, in the next scene, Catharine sings the gypsy rondo, which Jenny Lind made so famous ("Wlastla la santa"), which is characterized by graceful coquetry; and this in turn is followed by a striking duet between Catharine and Peter, in which the individual characteristics of the two are brought out in genuine Wagnerian style. In the thirteenth scene occurs the bridal song of Prascovia ("Al suono dell'ora"), with choral accompaniment, of a delicate and coquettish cast, leading up to the finale, beginning with the soldiers' chorus ("Onor che a gloria"), with an accompaniment of drums and fifes, again passing to a pathetic prayer ("Veglia dal ciel su lor") sung by Catharine amid the ringing of bells as the bridal wreath is placed upon Prascovia's head, and closing with a florid barcarole ("Vascel che lasci") as she sails away.

The second act opens with ballet music, full of Eastern color, and then ensues one of those choral combinations, like that in the second act of "the Huguenots," in which Meyerbeer so much delighted,—a cavalry chorus ("Bel cavalier del cuor d'acciar"), followed by the Grenadier's song, accompanied by chorus ("Granadier di Russia esperti"), the chorus taking up the "tr-r-r-um" refrain in imitation of the drum. In the eighth scene we have the orgy in the tent in the form of a very spirited dramatic trio, in which Peter sings a blithe drinking-song ("Vedi al par del rubino"); this in turn resolving into a quintet ("Vezze vivandiere"), and again into a sextet, as Ismailoff enters with a letter for the Czar. The finale is a superb military picture, made up of the imposing oath of death to the tyrant, the stirring Dessauer march, the cavalry fanfare, and the Grenadiers' march, interwoven with the chorus of women as they cheer on the marching soldiers.

The third act opens with a romanza ("Dal cor per iscacciare"), very tender and beautiful, in which the rugged Czar shows us the sentimental side of his character. In the third scene occurs a long buffo trio between Peter, Gritzensko, and Danilowitz, which is full of humor. In the finale we have Catharine in the mad scene, singing the scena, "L'aurora alfin succede," with bits of the old music running through the accompaniment; and in the final scene, as her reason returns, breaking out in the florid bravura, "Non s'ode alcun," accompanied by the first and second flutes, which is a triumph of virtuosity for the voice. This number was taken from "The Camp in Silesia," and was given by Jenny Lind with immense success, not only in the latter work, but upon the concert stage. The opera as a whole abounds in

humor, its music is fresh and brilliant, and its military character makes it specially attractive.

## **ROBERT THE DEVIL**

"Robert le Diable," a grand opera in five acts, words by Scribe and Delavigne, was first produced at the Académie, Paris, Nov. 21, 1831, with the following cast:—

ALICE Mlle. DORUS.

ISABELLE Mme. CINTI-DAMOREAU.

THE ABBESS Sigr. TAGLIONI.

ROBERT M. NOURRIT.

BERTRAM M. LEVASSEUR.

RAIMBAUT M. LAFONT.

In the following year two versions in English, both of them imperfect, were brought out by the rival theatres, Covent Garden and Drury Lane. On the 20th of February it appeared at Drury Lane under the title of "The Demon; or, the Mystic Branch," and at Covent Garden the next evening as "The Fiend Father, or Robert Normandy." Drury Lane had twenty-four hours the start of its rival, but in neither case were the representations anything but poor imitations of the original. On the 11th of the following June the French version was produced at the King's Theatre, London, with the same cast as in Paris, except that the part of Alice was taken by Mme. De Meric, and that of the Abbess by the danseuse Mlle. Heberlé. On the 4th of May, 1847, the first Italian version was produced at Her Majesty's Theatre, with Jenny Lind and Staudigl in the cast. Gruneisen, the author of a brief memoir of Meyerbeer, who was present, says: "The night was rendered memorable, not only by the massacre attending the general execution, but also by the début of Mlle. Lind in this country, who appeared as Alice. With the exception of the débutante, such a disgraceful exhibition was never before witnessed on the operatic stage. Mendelssohn was sitting in the stalls, and at the end of the third act, unable to bear any longer the executive infliction, he left the theatre."

The libretto of "Robert the Devil" is absurd in its conceptions and sensational in its treatment of the story, notwithstanding that it came from such famous dramatists as Scribe and Delavigne; and it would have been still worse had it not been for Meyerbeer. Scribe, it is said, wished to introduce a bevy of sea-nymphs, carrying golden oars, as the tempters of Robert; but the composer would not have them, and insisted upon the famous scene of the nuns, as it now stands, though these were afterwards made the butt of almost endless ridicule. Mendelssohn himself, who was in Paris at this time, writes: "I cannot imagine how any music could be composed on such a cold, formal extravaganza as this." The story runs as follows: The scene is laid in Sicily, where Robert, Duke of Normandy, who by his daring and gallantries had earned the sobriquet of "the Devil," banished by his own subjects, has arrived to attend a tournament given by the Duke of Messina. In the opening scene, while he is carousing with his knights, the minstrel Raimbaut sings a song descriptive of the misdeeds of Robert. The latter is about to revenge himself on the minstrel, when Alice, his foster-sister and the betrothed of Raimbaut, appears and pleads with him to give up his wicked courses, and resist the spirit of evil which is striving to get the mastery of him. Robert then confides to Alice his hopeless passion for Isabella, daughter of the Duke. While they are conversing, Bertram, "the unknown," enters, and Alice shrinks back affrighted, fancying she sees in him the evil spirit who is luring Robert on to ruin. After she leaves, Bertram entices him to the gaming-table, from which he rises a beggar,—and worse than this, he still further prejudices his cause with Isabella by failing to attend the tournament, thus forfeiting his knightly honor.

The second act opens upon an orgy of the evil spirits in the cavern of St. Irene. Bertram is present, and makes a compact with them to loose Robert from his influence if he does not yield to his desires at once. Alice, who has an appointment with the minstrel in the cavern, overhears the compact, and determines to save him. Robert soon appears, mourning over his losses and dishonor; but Bertram promises to restore everything if he will visit the ruined Abbey of St. Rosalie, and carry away a mystic branch which has the power of conferring wealth, happiness, and immortality. He consents; and in the next scene Bertram pronounces the incantation which calls up the buried nuns. Dazed with their ghostly fascinations, Robert seizes the branch and flies. His first use of it is to enter the apartments of Isabella, unseen by her or her attendants, all of whom become immovable in the presence of the mystic talisman. He declares his intention of carrying her away; but moved by her entreaties he breaks the branch, which destroys the charm. In the last act Bertram is at his side again, trying to induce him to sign the fatal compact. The strains of sacred music which he hears, and the recollections of his mother, restrain him. In desperation Bertram announces himself as his fiend-father. He is about to yield, when Alice appears and reads to him his mother's warning against the fiend's temptation. As he still hesitates, the clock strikes, and the spell is over. Bertram disappears, and the scene changes to the cathedral, where Isabella in her wedding robes awaits the saved Robert.

From the musical point of view "Robert le Diable" is interesting, as it marks the beginning of a new school of grand opera. With this work, Meyerbeer abandoned the school of Rossini and took an independent course. He cut loose from the conventional classic forms and gave the world dramatic music, melodies of extraordinary dramatic force, brilliant orchestration, stately pageants, and theatrical effects. "Robert le Diable" was the first of the subsequent great works from his pen which still further emphasized his new and independent departure. It is only necessary to call attention to a few prominent numbers, for this opera has not as many instances of these characteristics as those which followed and which are elsewhere described. The first act contains the opening bacchanalian chorus ("Versiamo a tazza piena"), which is very brilliant in character; the minstrel's song in the same scene ("Regnava un tempo in Normandia"), with choral accompaniment; and a very tender aria for Alice ("Vanne, disse, al figlio mio"), in which she delivers his mother's message to Robert. The second act opens with a spirited duet between Bertram and Raimbaut, leading up to a powerful and characteristic chorus of the evil spirits ("Demoni fatali"). An aria for Alice ("Nel lasciar in Normandia"), a duet between Bertram and Alice ("Trionfo bramato"), and an intensely dramatic trio between Bertram, Alice, and Robert ("Lo sguardo immobile"), prepare the way for the great scena of the nuns, known as "La Temptation," in which Meyerbeer illustrates the fantastic and oftentimes ludicrous scene with music which is the very essence of diabolism, and in its way as unique as the incantation music in "Der Freischütz." The third act contains two great arias. The first ("Invano il fato"), sung at the opening of the act by Isabella, and the second the world-famous aria "Roberto, o tu che adoro," better known by the French words ("Robert! toi que j'aime"). The closing act is specially remarkable for the great terzetto in its finale, which is one of the most effective numbers Meyerbeer has written. The judgment of Hanslick, the great Viennese critic, upon this work is interesting in this connection. He compares it with "William Tell" and "Masaniello," and finds that in musical richness and blended effects it is superior to either, but that a single act of either of the works mentioned contains more artistic truth and ideal form than "Robert le Diable,"—a judgment which is largely based upon the libretto itself, which he condemns without stint.

## DINORAH

"Dinorah," an opera in three acts, founded upon a Breton idyl, words by Barbieri and Carré, was first produced at the Opera Comique, Paris, April 4, 1859, under the title of "Le Pardon de Ploermel." It contains but three principal characters, and these were cast as follows: Dinorah, Mme. Cabel; Corentin, M. Sainte-Foy; and Höel, M. Faure. On the 26th of July, 1859, Meyerbeer conducted the work himself at Covent Garden, London, with Mme. Miolan-Carvalho as Dinorah, and it was also produced in the same year in English by the Pyne-Harrison troupe. The first representative of Dinorah in this country was Mlle. Cordier.

The scene of the opera is laid in Brittany, and when the first act opens, the following events are supposed to have transpired. On one of the days set apart by the villagers of Ploermel for a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Virgin, Höel, the goatherd, and Dinorah, his affianced, set out to receive a nuptial benediction. The festivity is interrupted by a thunder-storm, during which Les Herbières, the dwelling-place of Dinorah, is destroyed by lightning. Dinorah is in despair. Höel determines to make good the loss, and upon the advice of Tonick, an old wizard, resolves to go in quest of a treasure which is under the care of the Korigans, a supernatural folk belonging to Brittany. In order to wrest it from them, however, it is necessary for Höel to quit the country and spend a year in solitude in a desolate region. He bravely starts off, and Dinorah, thinking he has abandoned her, loses her wits, and constantly wanders about the woods with her goat, seeking him. Meanwhile the year expires and Höel returns, convinced that he has the secret for securing the treasure.

The overture to the work is unique among operatic overtures, as it has a chorus behind the curtain interwoven with it. It is a picture of the opera itself, and contains a will-o'-the-wisp passage, a rustic song with accompaniment of goat-bells, a storm, and in the midst of the storm a chant to the Virgin, sung by the unseen chorus, and then a Pilgrimage march, the whole being in the nature of a retrospect. The curtain rises upon a rustic chorus, after which Dinorah appears, seeking her goat, and sings a slumber-song ("Si, carina, caprettina") which is very graceful, and concludes with phrases in imitation of birds. In the next scene, Corentin, the bagpiper, who has been away three months, and is nearly dead with terror of goblins and fairies, returns to his cottage, and to reassure himself sings a very quaint and original song ("Sto in casa alfine"), to the accompaniment of his pipe. Dinorah suddenly appears and enters the cottage, and much to his alarm keeps him playing and singing, which leads to a very animated vocal contest between her and the bagpiper. It is abruptly terminated, however, by the arrival of Höel. Dinorah makes her escape by a window, and Höel relates to Corentin the story of the Korigans' treasure. As the first person who touches it will die, he determines that Corentin shall be his messenger, and to rouse his courage sends for wine. While Corentin is absent, Höel sings an aria ("Se per prender") which has always been a favorite with barytones. After Corentin returns, the tinkling of the goat's bell is heard. Dinorah appears in the distance, and a charming trio closes the act, to the

accompaniment of the whistling wind and booming thunder on the contra basses and drums of the orchestra.

The second act opens with a drinking-song by wood-cutters, and as they withdraw, Dinorah enters, seeking Höel. She sings a tender lament, which, as the moonlight falls about her, develops into the famous "Shadow Song," a polka mazurka, which she sings and dances to her shadow. The aria, "Ombra leggier," is fairly lavish in its texture of vocal embroidery, and has always been a favorite number on the concert stage. The next scene changes to the Val Maudit (the Cursed Vale), a rocky, cavernous spot, through which rushes a raging torrent bridged by a fallen tree. Höel and Corentin appear in quest of the treasure, and the latter gives expression to his terror in a very characteristic manner, with the assistance of the orchestra. Dinorah is heard singing the legend of the treasure ("Chi primo al tesoro"), from which Corentin learns that whoever touches it first will die. He refuses to go on, and a spirited duet ensues between them, which is interrupted by the entrance of Dinorah and her goat. Höel, fancying it is a spirit sent to keep him back, sings a very beautiful aria ("Le crede il padre"). The act closes with the fall of Dinorah, who attempts to cross the bridge, into the torrent, and her rescue by Höel, to the accompaniment of a storm set to music. The scene, though melodramatic, is very strong in its musical effects.

The last act opens with a scene in striking contrast, introduced with a quintet of horns, followed by a hunter's solo, a reaper's solo, a duet for shepherds; and a quartet in the finale. Höel arrives, bearing the rescued Dinorah, and sings to her an exquisite romance ("Sei vendicata assai"). The magic of his singing and her bath in the torrent restore her wandering senses. Höel persuades her that all which has transpired has been a dream. The old song of the Pardon of Ploermel comes to her, and as she tries to recall it the chorus takes it up ("Santa Maria! nostra donna") as it was heard in the overture. A procession is seen in the distance, and amid some exquisite pageant music Höel and Dinorah wend their way to the chapel, where the nuptial rites are supposed to be performed.

## **THE PROPHET.**

"Le Prophète," an opera in five acts, words by Scribe, was first produced in Paris, April 16, 1849, with Mme. Viardot-Garcia as Fides, and M. Roger as John of Leyden. "The Prophet" was long and carefully elaborated by its composer. Thirteen years intervened between it and its predecessor, "The Huguenots," but in spite of its elaboration it can only be said to excel the latter in pageantry and spectacular effect, while its musical text is more declamatory than melodious, as compared with "The Huguenots." In this sense it was disappointing when first produced.

The period of the opera is 1534. The first act transpires in Dordrecht and Leyden, in Holland, and the other three in Munster, Germany. The text closely follows the historical narrative of the period when Munster was occupied by John of Leyden and his fanatics, who, after he had been crowned by them as Emperor of Germany, was driven out by the bishop of the diocese. The first act opens in the suburbs of Dordrecht, near the Meuse, with the château of Count Oberthal, lord of the domain, in the distance. After a very fresh and vigorous chorus of peasants, Bertha, a vassal of the Count, betrothed to John of Leyden, enters and sings a cavatina ("Il cor nel sento"), in which she gives expression to emotions of delight at her approaching union. As she cannot go to Leyden, where the marriage is to take place, without the Count's consent, Fides, the mother of John, joins her to make the request. In the mean time the three Anabaptists, Zacarie, Gione, and Mathisen, leaders of the revolt in Westphalia, arrive on their mission of raising an insurrection in Holland, and in a sombre trio of a religious but stirring character ("O libertade") incite the peasants to rise against their rulers. They make an assault upon the castle of Count Oberthal, who speedily repels them, and turns the tide of popular feeling against the Anabaptists, by recognizing Gione as a former servant who had been discharged from his service for dishonesty. Fides and Bertha then join in a romanza ("Della mora un giorno"), imploring his permission for the marriage of Bertha and John. The Count, however, struck with her beauty, not only refuses, but claims her for himself, and seizes both her and Fides, and the act closes with a repetition of the warning chant of the Anabaptists.

The second act opens in the hostelry of John of Leyden, and is introduced with a waltz and drinking-chorus, in the midst of which the Anabaptists arrive and are struck with his resemblance to a portrait of David in the Munster Cathedral. From a very descriptive and highly wrought scena ("Sotto le vasti arcate") sung by him they also learn that he is given to visions and religious meditations. They assure him that he shall be a ruler; but in a beautiful romanza ("Un impero piu soave") he replies that his love for Bertha is his only sovereignty. Just as they depart, Bertha, who has escaped, rushes in and claims his protection. He conceals her; but has hardly done so when the Count enters with his soldiers, bringing Fides as a prisoner, and threatens to kill her unless Bertha is given up. He hesitates; but at last, to save his mother's life, delivers Bertha to her pursuers. Mother and son are left alone, and she seeks to console him. In this scene occurs one of the most dramatic and intense of Meyerbeer's arias



("O figlio mio, che diro"), known more popularly by its French words, beginning, "Ah! mon fils." It has enjoyed a world-wide popularity, and still holds its place in all its original freshness and vigor. Fides hardly disappears before the ominous chant of the Anabaptists is heard again. He does not need much persuasion now. They make their compact in a quartet of magnificent power, which closes the act; and some of John's garments are left behind stained with blood, that his mother may believe he has been killed.

The third act opens in the Anabaptists' camp in a Westphalian forest, a frozen lake near them, and Munster, which they are besieging, in the distance. In the second scene Zacarie sings a stirring psalm of victory ("In coppia son"), followed by the beautiful ballet music of the skaters as they come bringing provisions to the troops. Count Oberthal meanwhile has been taken prisoner and brought into camp. A buffo trio between himself and his captors follows, in which Gione penetrates his disguise and recognizes him. They are about to fall upon him; but John, learning from him that Bertha is still alive and in Munster, saves his life. He immediately resolves to take the place by assault, rouses his followers with religious chants of a martial character, and the act concludes with the march on the city.

The fourth act opens in the city itself after its capture. A mendicant appears in the public square begging for bread. It is Fides; and in a plaintively declamatory aria of striking power ("Pieta! pieta!") she implores alms. She meets with Bertha disguised as a pilgrim, and bent upon the destruction of the Prophet, who, she believes, has been the cause of John's death. The next scene opens in the cathedral, where the coronation of the Prophet is to take place; and among all Meyerbeer's pageants none are more imposing than this, with its accompaniment of pealing bells, religious chants, the strains of the organ, and the stately rhythms of the great Coronation March. It is a splendid prelude to the dramatic scene which follows. In the midst of the gorgeous spectacle, the voice of Fides is heard claiming the Prophet as her son. John boldly disavows her, and tells his followers to kill her if she does not confirm the disavowal. The feelings of the mother predominate, and she declares that she is mistaken. The multitude proclaim it a miracle, and Fides is removed as a prisoner. The dramatic situation in this finale is one of great strength, and its musical treatment has hardly been excelled.

The last act opens with a trio by the Anabaptist leaders, who, learning that the enemy is approaching in force, determine to save themselves by betraying John. In the third scene Fides in prison, learning that John is coming to see her, invokes the punishment of Heaven upon him in the passionate aria, "Spirto superno." A duet ("Tu che del cielo") of great power follows, in which Fides convinces him of the errors of his course. As they are about to leave, Bertha enters, bent upon the destruction of the palace, and in the trio which ensues learns that John and the Prophet are one. She stabs herself, and dying in the arms of Fides curses him. The last scene opens in a banqueting-hall of the palace, where John is revelling, with the Anabaptists around him. He sings a bacchanalian song of a wild description ("Beviam e intorno"), and, as it closes, the Bishop of Munster, the Elector, Count Oberthal, and the three Anabaptists who have betrayed him, enter the apartment. The revenge which John has planned is now consummated. An explosion is heard. Flames break out on all sides. Fides rushes in and forgives her son, and the Prophet, his mother, and his enemies perish together.

Although "The Prophet" did not meet with the popularity of some of his other operas, it contains some of the most vigorous and dramatic music Meyerbeer has written,—notably the arias of Zacarie and Fides, the skating-ballet, the Coronation March, and the drinking-song. As a pageant, "The Prophet" has never been surpassed.

## **THE AFRICAN.**

"L'Africaine," a grand opera in five acts, words by Scribe, was first produced at the Académie, Paris, April 28, 1865, with the following cast:—

SELIKA Mme. MARIE SAXE.  
INEZ Mlle. MARIE BATTEO.  
VASCO DI GAMA M. NAUDIN.  
NELUSKO M. FAURE.  
DON PEDRO M. BELVAL.  
HIGH PRIEST M. OBIN.

The libretto of the opera was first given to Meyerbeer by Scribe in 1838; but such were the alterations demanded by the composer, that at last Scribe withdrew it altogether, although the music was already set. In 1852 he furnished a revised libretto, and the music was revised to suit it. The work was not finished until 1860, and owing to the difficulty of filling the cast satisfactorily, was not brought to rehearsal until the fall of 1863. While still correcting and improving it, Meyerbeer died, and it was not produced until two years later. Shortly after the Paris performance it was brought out in London, with Mlle. Lucca in the part of Selika. Mme. Zucchi was one of the earliest representatives of the slave

in this country.

The scene of the opera is laid in Portugal and Africa, and the first act opens in the council chamber of the king of the former country. Inez, his daughter, is mourning the long absence of her betrothed, Vasco di Gama the explorer. Her father, wishing to marry her to Don Pedro, the President of the Council, tries to persuade her that Vasco has perished by shipwreck; but the refutation of the story comes in the sudden appearance of Vasco himself, who is summoned before the Council and narrates to them his discovery of a strange land, producing two of the natives, Selika and Nelusko, as confirmations of his announcement. Don Pedro incites the inquisitors to deny the truth of the story, at which Vasco breaks out in such a furious rage against them that he is arrested and thrown into a dungeon. The second act opens in the prison, where Selika is watching the slumbering Vasco. As he awakens she declares her love for him, and at the same time saves him from the dagger of the jealous Nelusko. She also indicates to him the course he should have taken to discover the island of which he is in quest. To save her lover, Inez consents to wed Don Pedro; and the latter, to cheat Vasco of his fame, takes command of the expedition under the pilotage of Nelusko, and sets sail for the new land. The Indian, thirsting for vengeance, directs the vessel out of her course towards a reef; but Vasco, who has followed in another vessel, arrives in time to warn Don Pedro of his danger. He disregards the warning, distrusts his motives, and orders him to be shot; but before the sentence can be carried out, the vessel strikes and is boarded by the savages, who slaughter the commander and most of his men. The fourth act opens on the island which Selika pointed out on the map, and of which she is queen. To save him from her subjects, she declares herself his spouse; but as the marriage rite is about to be celebrated, Vasco hears the voice of Inez in the distance, deserts Selika, and flies to her. In the last act, as the vessel sails away bearing Vasco and Inez back to Portugal, Selika throws herself down under the poisonous manchineel-tree and kills herself with its fatal flowers; expiring in the arms of Nelusko, who shares the same fate.

The first act opens with a very sweet but sombre ballad sung by Inez ("Del Tago sponde addio"), which recalls the English song, "Isle of Beauty, fare thee well," and is followed by a bold and flowing terzetto. The third scene opens with a noble and stately chorus ("Tu che la terra adora") sung by the basses in unison, opening the Council before which Vasco appears; and the act closes with an anathema hurled at him ("Ribelle, insolente"),—a splendid ensemble, pronounced in its rhythm and majestic in the sweep of its passionate music.

The second act opens with the quaint slumber-song ("In grembo a me") which Selika sings to Vasco in prison. It is oriental in color, and is broken here and there by a barcarole which Vasco murmurs in his sleep. In striking contrast with its dreamy, quiet flow, it leads up to a passionate aria ("Tranquillo e già") based upon a strong and fiery motive. In the next scene follows an aria of equal vigor sung by Nelusko ("Figlia dei Re"), in which his devotion to Selika changing to his hatred of Vasco is characterized by a grand crescendo. The act closes with a vigorous sextet, the motive of which is strangely similar to the old song, "The Minstrel Boy."

The third act contains a very impressive number, Nelusko's invocation of Adamastor ("Adamastor, re dell' onde profondo"), but is mainly devoted to the ship scene, which, though grotesque from the dramatic point of view, is accompanied by music of a powerful and realistic description, written with all the vividness and force Meyerbeer always displays in his melodramatic ensembles. The fourth act contains the most beautiful music of the opera,—Vasco's opening aria, "O Paradiso," an exquisite melody set to an equally exquisite accompaniment; the ensemble in the fourth scene, in which Selika protects Vasco and Nelusko swears vengeance ("Al mio penar de fine"); the grand duet between Vasco and Selika ("Dove son"), which has often been compared to the duet in the fourth act of "The Huguenots," though it has not the passionate intensity of the scene between Raoul and Valentin; and the graceful choruses of the Indian maidens and Inez's attendants which close the act.

The last act contains two scenes,—the first in Selika's gardens, where there is a long and spirited duet between Inez and Selika. The second, known as "La Scene du Mancenillier," has a symphonic prelude in the form of a funeral march, based upon a fascinating melody, which is beyond question the finest of Meyerbeer's orchestral numbers in any of his works. From this point the story hastens to its tragic dénouement; and nearly the entire scene is occupied with Selika's dying song, which opens with a majestic apostrophe to the sea ("Da qui io vedo il mar"), then turns to sadness as she sings to the fatal tree ("O tempio sontuoso"), and at the close develops into a passionate outcry of joy ("O douce extase"). Though the plot of "L'Africaine" is often absurd, many of its incidents preposterous, and some of its characters unattractive, the opera is full of effective situations, and repeatedly illustrates Meyerbeer's powers of realization and his knowledge of effects.

# MOZART.

Johann Chrysostomus Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born at Salzburg, Jan. 27, 1756. With this wonderful child music was a divine gift, for his first work, a minuet and trio for piano, was written in his fifth year. He began to study with his father when but three years of age, and at once gave signs of extraordinary promise. His sister was also very talented; and in 1762 the father determined to travel with his prodigies. They were absent a year, the most of that time being spent at Munich, Vienna, and Presburg, where they created a furor by their performances. A longer journey was then resolved upon. The principal German cities, Brussels, Paris, London, the Hague, Amsterdam, and the larger towns of Switzerland were visited in succession, and everywhere the children were greeted with enthusiasm, particularly when they played before the French and English courts. They returned to Salzburg in 1766, already famous all over Europe; and during the next two years Mozart composed many minor works. In 1768 he was again in Vienna, where he produced his little operetta, "Bastien und Bastienne," and in the same year the Archbishop of Salzburg made him his concertmeister. The next year he went to Italy, where he both studied and composed, and was received with extraordinary honors. In 1771 he brought out his opera, "Mitridate, Rè di Ponto," at Milan, with great success. The next year he produced "Lucio Silla," also in Milan, and during the next four years composed a great number of symphonies and other instrumental works. The mass of music which he composed up to his twenty-first year is simply bewildering. In 1781 he brought out "Idomeneo" at Munich, which left no doubt as to his position as a dramatic composer. In 1782 his "Entführung aus dem Serail" was produced at Vienna by the Emperor's command. His next great opera was "Le Nozze di Figaro," which was performed in 1786, and made all Vienna go wild. "Don Giovanni" followed it the next year, and was received with equal enthusiasm. In 1789 he composed the famous "Requiem;" and the same year the "Zauberflöte," his last great opera, appeared, and made a success even greater than its two great predecessors. Two years later, Dec. 5, 1791, Mozart died in poverty, and amid the saddest of surroundings. One of the world's greatest geniuses was carried to his last resting-place unaccompanied by friends, and was buried in the common pauper's grave. God endowed him with a wonderful genius, which the world of his time could not recognize.

## THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO.

"Le Nozze di Figaro," in the German version, "Die Hochzeit des Figaro," an opera buffa in four acts, the words by Lorenzo da Ponte, after Beaumarchais's comedy, "Le Mariage de Figaro," was first produced at the National Theatre, Vienna, May 1, 1786, with the following cast:—

COUNTESS ALMAVIVA Signora STORACE.

SUSANNA Signora LASCHI.

CHERUBINO Signora MANDINI.

MARCELLINA Signora BUSSANI.

BARBARINA Signora GOTTLIEB.

COUNT ALMAVIVA Signor MANDINI.

FIGARO Signor BENUCCI.

BARTOLO Signor OCCHELEY.

BASILIO Signor BUSSANI.

It was first brought out in Paris in 1793, with Beaumarchais's spoken dialogue, in five acts, as "Le Mariage de Figaro," and in 1858 at the Théâtre Lyrique in the same city, in four acts, as "Les Noces de Figaro," with text by Barbieri and Carré. The late Mme. Parepa-Rosa introduced it in this country in its English form with great success.

At the time the libretto was written, Beaumarchais's satirical comedy, "Le Mariage de Figaro," had been performed all over Europe, and had attracted great attention. It had been prohibited in Paris, and had caused great commotion in Vienna. Mozart's notice was thus drawn to it, and he suggested it to Da Ponte for a libretto, and the Emperor Joseph subsequently commissioned the composer to set it to music, though he had already composed a portion of it. The entire opera was written during the month of April, and the wonderful finale to the second act occupied him for two nights and a day. When it came to a performance, its success was remarkable. Kelly, who was present, says, in his Reminiscences: "Never was there a greater triumph than Mozart enjoyed with his 'Figaro.' The house was crowded to overflowing, and almost everything encored, so that the opera lasted nearly double the usual time; and yet at its close the public were unwearied in clapping their hands and shouting for Mozart." Popular as it was, it was soon laid aside in Vienna through the influence of the Italian faction headed by Salieri, one of Mozart's rivals.

The story of the opera is laid in Spain. Count Almaviva, who had won his beautiful Countess with the

aid of Figaro, the barber of Seville, becomes enamoured of her maid Susanna, and at the same time, by the collusion of the two, in order to punish him, is made jealous by the attentions paid to the Countess by Cherubino, the page. Meanwhile Figaro, to whom Susanna is betrothed, becomes jealous of the Count for his gallantry to her. Out of these cross-relations arise several humorous surprises. Besides these characters there are two others who have been disappointed in love,—Bartolo, who has been rejected by Susanna, and Marcellina, whose affection for Figaro has not been requited. The Count seeks to get rid of Cherubino by ordering him off to the wars, but he is saved by Susanna, who disguises him in female attire. The Countess, Susanna, Figaro, and Cherubino then conspire to punish the Count for his infidelity. The latter suddenly appears at his wife's door, and finding it locked demands an entrance. Cherubino, alarmed, hides himself in a closet and bars the door. The Count is admitted, and finding the Countess in confusion insists upon searching the closet. He goes out to find some means of breaking in the door, and Cherubino improves the opportunity to jump out of the window, while Susanna takes his place and confronts the puzzled Count. Antonio, the gardener, comes in and complains that some one has jumped from the window and broken his flower-pots. Figaro at once asserts that he did it.

A ludicrous side plot unfolds at this point. Marcellina appears with a contract of marriage signed by Figaro, bringing Bartolo as a witness. The Count decides that Figaro must fulfil his contract, but the latter escapes by showing that he is the son of Marcellina, and that Bartolo is his father. Meanwhile the main plot is developed in another conspiracy to punish the Count. Susanna contrives a rendezvous with the Count at night in the garden, having previously arranged with the Countess that she should disguise herself as the maid, the latter also assuming the part of the Countess, and arrive in time to surprise the two. The page also puts in an appearance, and gets his ears boxed for his attentions to the disguised Countess. Figaro, who has been informed that Susanna and the Count are to meet in the garden, comes on the scene, and in revenge makes a passionate declaration of love to the supposed Countess, upon which the Count, who is growing more and more bewildered, orders lights and makes his supposed wife unveil. The real wife does the same. Covered with confusion, he implores pardon of the Countess, which is readily given. The two are reconciled, and Figaro and Susanna are united.

The whole opera is such a combination of playfulness and grace that it is a somewhat ungracious task to refer to particular numbers. In these regards it is the most Mozartean of all the composer's operas. The first act opens with a sparkling duet between Figaro and Susanna, in which she informs him of the Count's gallantries. As she leaves, Figaro, to the accompaniment of his guitar, sings a rollicking song ("Se vuol ballare, Signor Contino"), in which he intimates that if the Count wishes to dance he will play for him in a style he little expects. In the second scene Bartolo enters, full of his plans for vengeance, which he narrates in a grim and grotesque song ("La Vendetta"). The fourth scene closes with an exquisite aria by Cherubino ("Non so piu cosa son"). After an exceedingly humorous trio ("Cosa sento? tosto andate") for the Count, Basilio and Susanna, and a bright, gleeful chorus ("Giovanni lieti"), Figaro closes the act with the celebrated aria, "Non piu andrai." Of the singing of this great song at the first rehearsal of the opera Kelly says in his Reminiscences: "I remember Mozart well at the first general rehearsal, in a red furred coat and a gallooned hat, standing on the stage and giving the tempi. Benucci sang Figaro's aria, 'Non piu andrai,' with the utmost vivacity and the full strength of his voice. I stood close beside Mozart, who exclaimed, *sotto voce*, 'Brava! brava! Benucci!' and when that fine passage came, 'Cherubino, alla vittoria, alla gloria militar,' which Benucci gave in a stentorian voice, the effect was quite electrical, both on the singers on the stage and the musicians in the orchestra. Quite transported with delight, they all called out, 'Brava! brava, Maestro! viva! viva! viva il grande Mozart!' In the orchestra the applause seemed to have no end, while the violin-players rapped their bows on their desks. The little Maestro expressed his gratitude for the enthusiasm, testified in so unusual a manner, by repeatedly bowing."

The second act is the masterpiece of the opera, and contains in itself music enough to have made any composer immortal. It opens with a serious aria by the Countess ("Porgi amor") followed by Cherubino's well-known romanza ("Voi che sapete,") one of the sweetest and most effective songs ever written for contralto, and this in turn by Susanna's coquettish song, "Venite, inginocchiatevi," as she disguises Cherubino. A spirited trio and duet lead up to the great finale, begun by the Count, ("Esci omai, garzon mal nato"). Upon this finale Mozart seems to have lavished the riches of his musical genius with the most elaborate detail and in bewildering profusion. It begins with a duet between the Count and Countess, then with the entrance of Susanna changes to a trio, and as Figaro and Antonio enter, develops into a quintet. In the close, an independent figure is added by the entrance of Marcellina, Barbarina, and Basilio, and as Antonio exits, this trio is set against the quartet with independent themes and tempi.

The third act opens with a duet ("Crudel, perche finora") for the Count and Countess, followed by a very dramatic scena for the Count, beginning with the recitative, "Hai già vinta la causa?" which in turn leads up to a lively and spirited sextet ("Riconosci in questo amplesso"). The two numbers which follow

the sextet are recognized universally as two of the sweetest and most melodious ever written,—the exquisite aria, "Dove Sono," for the Countess, and the "Zephyr Duet," as it is popularly known ("Canzonetta su l'aria. Che soave zeffiretto"), which stands unsurpassed for elegance, grace, and melodious beauty. The remaining numbers of prominent interest are a long and very versatile buffo aria for tenor ("In quegli anni"), sung by Basilio, Figaro's stirring march number ("Ecco la marcia"), and a lovely song for Susanna ("Deh, vieni, non tardar"). The opera is full of life and human interest. Its wonderful cheerfulness and vital sympathy appeal to every listener, and its bright, free, joyous tone from beginning to end is no less fascinating than the exquisite melodies with which Mozart has so richly adorned it. Like "Don Giovanni" and the "Magic Flute," the best test of the work is, that it is rounding its first century as fresh and bright and popular as ever.

## **DON GIOVANNI.**

"Don Giovanni," an opera buffa in two acts, words by Da Ponte, was first produced at Prague, Oct. 29, 1787. The full title of the work is "Il dissoluto punito, ossia il Don Giovanni," and the subject was taken from a Spanish tale by Tirso de Molina, called "El comedido de piedra." The original cast of the opera was as follows:—

DONNA ANNA Signora TERESA SAPORITTI.

DONNA ELVIRA Signora MICELLI.

ZERLINA Signora BONDINI.

DON OTTAVIO Signor BAGLIONI.

DON GIOVANNI Signor LUIGI BASSI.

LEPORELLO Signor FELICE PONZIANI.

MASETTO and DON PEDRO Signor LOLLI.

The success of the "Marriage of Figaro" prepared the way for "Don Giovanni." Mozart wrote the opera in Prague, and completed it, except the overture, Oct. 28, 1787, about six weeks after he arrived in the city. The first performance took place the next evening. The overture was written during the night, the copyist received the score at seven o'clock in the morning, and it was played at eight in the evening. He had only a week for stage rehearsals, and yet the opera created a furor. As an instance of his extraordinary memory, it is said that the drum and trumpet parts to the finale of the second act were written without the score, from memory. When he brought the parts into the orchestra, he remarked, "Pray, gentlemen, be particularly attentive at this place," pointing to one, "as I believe that there are four bars either too few or too many." His remark was proved true. It is also said that in the original scores the brass instruments frequently have no place, as he wrote the parts continually on separate bits of paper, trusting to his memory for the score. The next year (1788) the opera was brought out in Vienna, and for this production he wrote four new numbers,—a recitative and aria for Donna Elvira ("In quali eccessi, o numi"); an aria for Masetto ("Ho capito, Signor, si"); a short aria for Don Ottavio ("Dalla sua pace"); and a duet for Zerlina and Leporello ("Per queste tue manine").

The scene of the opera is laid in Spain. Don Giovanni, a licentious nobleman, becomes enamoured of Donna Anna, the daughter of the Commandant of Seville, who is betrothed to Don Ottavio. He gains admission to her apartments at night, and attempts to carry her away; but her cries bring her father to her rescue. He attacks Don Giovanni, and in the encounter is slain. The libertine, however, in company with his rascally servant, Leporello, makes good his escape. While the precious pair are consulting about some new amour, Donna Elvira, one of his victims, appears and taxes him with his cruelty; but he flies from her, leaving her with Leporello, who horrifies her with an appalling list of his master's conquests in various countries. Don Giovanni next attempts the ruin of Zerlina, a peasant girl, upon the very eve of her marriage with her lover, Masetto. Donna Elvira, however, appears and thwarts his purposes, and also discovers him to Donna Anna as the murderer of her father, whereupon she binds her lover, Don Ottavio, to avenge his death. Don Giovanni does not abandon his purpose, however. He gives a fête, and once more seeks to accomplish Zerlina's ruin, but is again thwarted by her three friends.

The second act opens in a public square of Seville at night. Don Giovanni and Leporello appear before the house of Donna Elvira, where Zerlina is concealed. Leporello, disguised in his master's cloak, and assuming his voice, lures Donna Elvira out, and feigning repentance for his conduct induces her to leave with him. Don Giovanni then proceeds to enter the house and seize Zerlina; but before he can accomplish his purpose, Masetto and his friends appear, and supposing it is Leporello before them, demand to know where his master is, as they are bent upon killing him. Don Giovanni easily disposes of Masetto, and then rejoins his servant near the equestrian statue, which has been erected to the memory of the murdered Don Pedro. To their astonishment the statue speaks, and warns the libertine he will die before the morrow. Don Giovanni laughs at the prophecy, and invites the statue to a banquet to be given the next day at his house. While the guests are assembled at the feast, an ominous knock is

heard at the door and the statue unceremoniously enters. All except Leporello and Don Giovanni fly from the room in terror. The doomed man orders an extra plate, but the statue extends its hand and invites him to sup with it. He takes the marble hand, and its cold fingers clutch him in a firm grasp. Thrice the statue urges him to repent, and as many times he refuses; whereupon, as it disappears, demons rise, seize Don Giovanni, and carry him to the infernal regions.

Musically considered, "Don Giovanni" is regarded as Mozart's greatest opera, though it lacks the bright joyousness of the "Marriage of Figaro," and its human interest. Its melodies are more pronounced, and have entered more freely into general use, however, than those of the former. Repulsive as the story is, some of the melodies which illustrate it have been impressed into the service of the church. The first act is introduced with a humorous aria by Leporello ("Notte e giorno faticar"), in which he complains of his treatment by his master. After the murder of Don Pedro, in the second scene, occurs a trio between Donna Elvira, Don Giovanni, and Leporello, the leading motive of which is a beautiful aria sung by Donna Elvira ("Ah! chi mi dici mai"). The scene closes with the great buffo aria of Leporello ("Madamina il catalogo") popularly known as the "Catalogue Song," which is full of broad humor, though its subject is far from possessing that quality. In the third scene occur the lovely duet for Don Giovanni and Zerlina ("La ci darem, la mano"), two arias of great dramatic intensity for Donna Elvira ("Mi tradi") and Donna Anna ("Or sai chi l'onore"), and Don Giovanni's dashing song, "Finchè dal vino," the music of which is in admirable keeping with the reckless nature of the libertine himself. The last scene is a treasure-house of music, containing the exquisitely coquettish aria, "Batti, batti," which Zerlina sings to the jealous Masetto, and the beautiful trio of Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, and Don Ottavio, known as the Mask Trio, set off against the quaint minuet music of the fête and the hurly-burly which accompanies the discovery of Don Giovanni's black designs.

The second act opens with a humorous duet between master and servant ("Eh, via, buffone"), followed by the trio, "Ah! taci, inquisito care," as Elvira appears at her window. After she leaves with Leporello, Don Giovanni sings a serenade ("Deh? vieni all finestra") to Zerlina, which is interrupted by the appearance of Masetto and his friends. Zerlina is summoned to the scene by the cries of Masetto after Don Giovanni has beaten him, and sings to him for his consolation the beautiful aria, "Vedrai carino," which has more than once been set to sacred words, and has become familiar as a church tune, notwithstanding the unsanctity of its original setting. The second scene opens with a strong sextet ("Sola, sola, in bujo loco"), followed by the ludicrously solemn appeal of Leporello, "Ah! pieta, signori miei," and that aria beloved of all tenors, "Il mio tesoro." The finale is occupied with the scenes at the statue and at the banquet, a short scene between Donna Anna and Don Ottavio intervening, in which she sings the aria, "Non mi dir." The statue music throughout is of a sepulchral character, gradually developing into strains almost as cold and ominous as the marble of the Commandant himself, and yet not without an element of the grotesque as it portrays the terror of Leporello.

It is said that in revenge at his Italian rivals, Mozart introduced an aria from Martin's "Cosa Rara," arranged for wind instruments, and also a favorite aria of Sarti's, to be played at the banquet when the hungry Leporello beholds his master at the table and watches for some of the choice morsels, and parodied them in an amusing manner. He never could retain an enmity very long, however, and so at the end of the banquet he parodied one of his own arias, the famous "Non piu andrai," by giving it a comical turn to suit Leporello's situation. The criticism of one of the best biographers of Mozart upon this opera is worth repeating in this connection: "Whether we regard the mixture of passions in its concerted music, the profound expression of melancholy, the variety of its situations, the beauty of its accompaniment, or the grandeur of its heightening and protracted scene of terror—the finale of the second act,—'Don Giovanni' stands alone in dramatic eminence."

## **THE MAGIC FLUTE.**

"Die Zauberflöte," an opera in two acts, words by Emanuel Schickaneder, was first produced at Vienna, Sept. 30, 1791, with the following cast:

QUEEN OF NIGHT Mme. HOFER.  
PAMINA Mlle. GOTTLIEB.  
PAPAGENA Mme. GORL.  
TAMINO Herr SCHACK.  
MONOSTATOS Herr GORL.  
SARASTRO Herr SCHICKANEDER, Sr.  
PAPAGENO Herr SCHICKANEDER, Jr.

The "Magic Flute" was the last great work of the composer, and followed the "Cosi fan tutte," which was given in January, 1791. In 1780 Mozart had made the acquaintance of Schickaneder at Salzburg. He was a reckless, dissipated theatre manager, and at the time of the composition of the "Magic Flute"

was running a small theatre in Vienna. The competition of the larger theatres had nearly beggared him, and in the midst of his perplexities he applied to Mozart to write him an opera, and intimated that he had discovered an admirable subject for a fairy composition. Mozart at first objected; but Schickaneder, like himself, was a Freemason; he had been his companion in dissipation, and exercised a great influence over him. Mozart at last consented. A compact was made, and Schickaneder set to work on the libretto. As he was a popular buffoon, he invented the part of Papageno, the bird-catcher, for himself, and arranged that it should be dressed in a costume of feathers. It is a trivial part, but Schickaneder intended to tickle the fancy of the public, and succeeded. The first act was finished, when it was found that the same subject had been chosen by a rival theatre, the Leopold Stadt, which speedily announced the opera of "Kaspar der Fagottist, oder die Zauber-Zither," by a popular composer, Wenzel Müller. The piece had a successful run, and in order to prevent a duplication, Schickaneder reversed the point of his story, and changed the evil magician, who stole the daughter of the Queen of Night, into a great philosopher and friend of man. It is owing to this change that we have the magnificent character of Sarastro, with its impressive music.

The scene of the opera is laid in Egypt. Sarastro, the high-priest of Isis, has induced Pamina to leave her mother, Astrifiamenti, the Queen of Night, who represents the spirit of evil, and come to his temple, where she may be trained in the ways of virtue and wisdom. At the opening of the opera the dark Queen is trying to discover some plan of recovering her daughter and punishing Sarastro. In the first act appears Tamino, an Egyptian prince, who has lost his way, and is attacked by a huge serpent, from which he is rescued by the three attendants of the Queen. The latter accosts him, tells him her daughter's story, and demands that, as the cost of his deliverance, he shall rescue her. He consents. She gives him a magic flute, and with his companion Papageno, a rollicking bird-catcher, who is also presented with a magical chime of bells, they set out for Sarastro's temple. Papageno arrives there first, and in time to rescue Pamina from the persecutions of Monostatos, a slave, who flies when he beholds Papageno in his feather costume, fancying him the Devil. They seek to make their escape, but are intercepted. Tamino also is caught, and all are brought before Sarastro. The prince consents to become a novice in the sacred rites, and to go through the various stages of probation and purification, and Pamina again returns to her duties. They remain faithful to their vows, and the last ordeal, that of passing through a burning lake up to the altar of the temple, is triumphantly accomplished. The Queen of Night, however, does not abandon her scheme of revenge. She appears to Pamina in her sleep, gives her a dagger, and swears that unless she murders Sarastro she will cast her off forever. Pamina pays no heed to her oath, but goes on with her sacred duties, trusting to Sarastro's promise that if she endures all the ordeals she will be forever happy. In the closing scene, Monostatos, who has been inflamed against Sarastro by the Queen, seeks to kill him, but is vanquished by the might of the priest's presence alone. The night of the ordeals is over. At a sign from Sarastro, the full sunlight pours in upon them. The evil spirits all vanish, and Tamino and Pamina are united amid the triumphant choruses of the priests and attendants, as the reward of their fidelity.

In the opening scene, after the encounter of Tamino with the serpent, Papageno has a light and catching song ("Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja"), which, like all of Papageno's music, was specially written for Schickaneder, and has been classed under the head of the "Viennese ditties." Melodious as Mozart always is, these songs must be regarded as concessions to the buffoon who sang them. Papageno's song is followed by another in a serious strain ("Dies Bildniss ist bezaubernd schön") sung by Tamino. In the sixth scene occurs the first aria for the Queen of Night ("O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn"), which, like its companion to be mentioned later, is a remarkable exercise in vocal power, range, and gymnastics, written for an exceptional voice. The next scene, known as the Padlock Quintet, is very simple and flowing in style, and will always be popular for its humorous and melodious character. In the eleventh scene occurs the familiar duet between Pamina and Papageno, "Bei Männern, welche Liebe füllen," which has done good service for the church, and will be recognized in the English hymn version, "Serene I laid me down." It leads up to the finale, beginning, "Zum Ziehle führt dich diese Bahn," and containing a graceful melody for Tamino ("O dass ich doch im Stande wäre"), and another of the Viennese tunes, "Könnte jeder brave Mann,"—a duet for Papageno and Pamina, with chorus.

The second act opens with a stately march and chorus by the priests, leading up to Sarastro's first great aria ("O Isis und Osiris"), a superb invocation in broad, flowing harmony, and the scene closes with a strong duet by two priests ("Bewahret euch vor Weibertücken.") The third scene is a quintet for Papageno, Tamino, and the Queen's three attendants ("Wie ihr an diesem Schreckensort?"), and is followed by a sentimental aria by Monostatos ("Alles fühlt der Liebe Freuden"). In the next scene occurs the second and greatest aria of the Queen of Night ("Der Hölle Rache kocht"), which was specially written to show off the bravura ability of the creator of the part, and has been the despair of nearly all sopranos since her time. In striking contrast with it comes the majestic aria for Sarastro in the next scene ("In diesen heil'gen Hallen"), familiarly known on the concert-stage by its English title, "In these sacred Halls," the successful performance of which may well be the height of any basso's ambition. In the twelfth scene there is a terzetto by the three boys ("Seid uns zum zweitenmal"), and in

the next scene a long and florid aria for Pamina ("Ach! ich fühl's es ist verschwunden"), full of plaintive chords and very sombre in color. The sixteenth scene contains another stately chorus of priests ("O Isis und Osiris"), based upon a broad and massive harmony, which is followed by a terzetto between Sarastro, Pamina, and Tamino ("Soll ich dich, Theurer nicht mehr sehen?"). Once more a concession to the buffoon occurs in a melody "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen," which would be commonplace but for Mozart's treatment of the simple air. The finale begins with another terzetto for the three boys ("Bald prangt, den Morgen zu verkünden"). It may be termed a finale of surprises, as it contains two numbers which are as far apart in character as the poles,—the first, an old choral melody ("Der, welcher wandelt diese Strasse"), the original being, "Christ, our Lord, to Jordan came," set to an accompaniment, strengthened by the trombones and other wind instruments; and the second, a nonsense duet ("Pa-pa-Papageno") for Papageno and Papagena, which would close the opera in a burst of childish hilarity but for the solemn concluding chorus of the priests ("Heil sei euch Geweithen").

The great charm of the opera is its originality, and the wonderful freshness and fruitfulness of the composer in giving independent and characteristic melodies to every character, as well as the marvellous combination of technicality with absolute melody. Beethoven said of it that this was Mozart's one German opera in right of the style and solidity of its music. Jahn, in his criticism, says: "'The Zauberflöte' has a special and most important position among Mozart's operas. The whole musical conception is pure German, and here for the first time German opera makes free and skilful use of all the elements of finished art."

## **ROSSINI.**

Gioachini Antonio Rossini was born at Pesaro, Italy, Feb. 29, 1792. His early lessons in music were taken with Tesei, and as a lad he also appeared upon the stage as a singer. In 1807 he was admitted to the class of Padre Mattei at the Bologna Conservatory, where he took a prize for a cantata at the end of his first year. At the beginning of his career in Italy he was commissioned to write an opera for Venice. It was "La Cambiale di Matrimonio," an opera buffa in one act, and was produced in 1810. During the next three years he wrote several works for Venice and Milan, which were successful, but none of them created such a furor as "Tancredi." This was followed by "L' Italiana in Algeri," "Aureliano in Palmira," and "Il Turco in Italia." In 1815 appeared "The Barber of Seville." Strange as it may seem, it was at first condemned, not on its merits, but because the composer had trenched, as it was supposed, upon the ground already occupied by the favorite Paisiello, though he applied to the latter before writing it, and received his assurances that he had no objection to his use of the same subject. "Otello" followed the "Barber" at Naples in 1816, and "Cenerentola" in 1817, and both were extraordinarily successful. The "Gazza Ladra" was produced at Milan in 1817, and was followed by "Armida" at Naples in the same year. His next great work was the oratorio, "Moses in Egypt," which is also given as opera. The "Donna del Lago," based upon Walter Scott's "Lady of the Lake," was produced at Naples in 1819. The same year he opened the Carnival in Milan with "Bianca e Faliero," and before its close he produced "Maometto secondo" at Naples. During the next two or three years his muse was very prolific, and in 1823 appeared another of his great works, "Semiramide," which made a furor at Venice. That year he went to London and gave concerts, in which he sang, and thence to Paris, which now became his home. His greatest work for Paris was "William Tell," which was produced in 1829, and it was also his last, though by an arrangement with the Government of Charles X. it was to be the first of a series of five. The revolution of 1830 destroyed his plans. In 1836 he heard Meyerbeer's "Huguenots," and resolved to write no more. Four years before this he had written the "Stabat Mater," but it was not produced complete until 1842. From this time on he lived at his villa at Passy the life of a voluptuary and died there Nov. 13, 1868. The catalogue of his works is immense, including fifty operas alone, of which in a necessarily brief sketch it has been possible to mention only those best known.

### **THE BARBER OF SEVILLE.**

"Il Barbiere di Siviglia," an opera buffa in two acts, words by Sterbini, founded on Beaumarchais's comedy, was first produced at the Argentina Theatre, Rome, Feb. 5, 1816, with the following cast:—

ROSINA M<sup>me</sup>. GIORGI RIGHETTI.  
BERTAO M<sup>lle</sup>. ROSSI.  
FIGARO Sig. LUIGI ZAMBONI.  
COUNT ALMAVIVA Sig. GARCIA.



BARTOLO Sig. BOTTICELLI.

BASILIO Sig. VITTARELLI.

The story of the writing of "The Barber of Seville" is of more than ordinary interest. Rossini had engaged to write two operas for the Roman Carnival of 1816. The first was brought out Dec. 26, 1815, and the same day he bound himself to furnish the second by Jan. 20, 1816, with no knowledge of what the libretto would be. Sterbini furnished him with the story of the "Barber" by piecemeal, and as fast as the verses were given him he wrote the music. The whole work was finished in less than three weeks. Its original title was "Almaviva, ossia l'inutile precauzione," to distinguish it from Paisiello's "Barber of Seville." The original overture was lost in some manner, and that of "Aureliano" substituted. In the scene beneath Rosina's balcony Garcia introduced a Spanish air of his own; but it failed, and before the second performance Rossini wrote the beautiful cavatina, "Ecco ridente il cielo" in its place, the melody borrowed from the opening chorus of his "Aureliano," and that in turn from his "Ciro in Babilonia." The subject of the effective trio, "Zitti, zitti," was taken from Haydn's "Seasons," and the aria sung by the duenna Berta ("Il vecchiotto cerca moglie"), from a Russian melody he had heard a lady sing in Rome and introduced for her sake. For the music-lesson scene Rossini wrote a trio which has been lost; and thus an opportunity has been given Rosinas to interpolate what they please.

The scene of the opera is laid at Seville, Spain. Count Almaviva has fallen in love with Rosina, the ward of Dr. Bartolo, with whom she resides, and who wishes to marry her himself. After serenading his mistress, who knows him only by the name of Count Lindoro, he prevails upon Figaro, the factotum of the place, to bring about an interview with her. In spite of her guardian's watchfulness, as well as that of Don Basilio, her music-teacher, who is helping Bartolo in his schemes, she informs the Count by letter that she returns his passion. With Figaro's help he succeeds in gaining admission to the house disguised as a drunken dragoon, but this stratagem is foiled by the entrance of the guard, who arrest him. A second time he secures admission, disguised as a music-teacher, and pretending that he has been sent by Don Basilio, who is ill, to take his place. To get into Bartolo's confidence he produces Rosina's letter to himself, and promises to persuade her that the letter has been given him by a mistress of the Count, and thus break off the connection between the two. By this means he secures the desired interview, and an elopement and private marriage are planned. In the midst of the arrangements, however, Don Basilio puts in an appearance, and the disconcerted lover makes good his escape. Meanwhile Bartolo, who has Rosina's letter, succeeds in arousing the jealousy of his ward with it, who thereupon discloses the proposed elopement and promises to marry her guardian. At the time set for the elopement the Count and Figaro appear. A reconciliation is easily effected, a notary is at hand, and they are married just as Bartolo makes his appearance with officers to arrest the Count. Mutual explanations occur, however, and all ends happily.

The first act opens after a short chorus, with the serenade, "Ecco ridente in cielo," the most beautiful song in the opera. It begins with a sweet and expressive largo and concludes with a florid allegro, and is followed by a chorus in which the serenaders are dismissed. In the second scene Figaro enters, and after some brief recitatives sings the celebrated buffo aria, "Largo al factotum," in which he gives an account of his numerous avocations. The aria is full of life and gayety, and wonderfully adapted to the style of the mercurial Figaro.

A light and lively duet between Figaro and the Count, closing with the sprightly melody, "Ah! che d'amore," leads up to the chamber aria of Rosina, so well known on the concert-stage, "Una voce poco fa," which is not only very expressive and of great compass, but is remarkably rich in ornamentation. A short dialogue in recitative then occurs between Bartolo and Basilio, in which they plot to circumvent Rosina by calumny, which gives occasion for the Calumny aria, as it is generally known ("La calunnia"), a very sonorous bass solo, sung by Basilio. Another dialogue follows between Figaro and Rosina, leading to the florid duet, "E il maestro io faccio." A third dialogue follows between Rosina and Bartolo, ending in a bass aria ("Non piu tacete"), very similar in its general style to the Calumny song, but usually omitted in performances. In the tenth scene the Count arrives disguised as the drunken soldier, and the finale begins. It is composed of three scenes very ingeniously arranged, and full of glittering dialogue and very melodious passages.

The second act opens with a soliloquy by Bartolo ("Ma redi il mio destino"), in which he gives vent to his suspicions. It is interrupted at last by a duet with the Count, in which the two characters are strikingly set off by the music. The music-lesson scene follows, in which the artist personating Rosina is given an opportunity for interpolation. In the next scene occurs a dialogue quintet, which is followed by a long aria ("Sempre gridi") by the duenna Bertha, called by the Italians the "Aria de Sorbetto," because the people used to eat ices while it was sung; reminding one of the great aria from "Tancredi," "Di tanti palpiti," which they called the "aria dei rizzi," because Rossini composed it while cooking his rice. In the eighth scene, after a long recitative, an instrumental prelude occurs, representing a stormy night, followed by a recitative in which the Count reveals himself, leading up to a florid trio, and this in turn to the elegant terzetto, "Zitti, zitti." A bravura and finale of light and graceful melody close the

opera.

## SEMIRAMIDE

"Semiramide" a lyric tragedy in two acts, words by Gaetano Rossi, the subject taken from Voltaire's "Semiramis," was first produced at the Fenice, Venice, Feb. 3, 1823, with the following cast:—

SEMIRAMIDE Mme. ROSSINI-COLBRAN.

ARSACES Mme. MARIANI.

IDRENO Mr. SINCLAIR.

ASSUR Sig. GALLI.

OROE Sig. MARIANI.

On the 9th of July it was produced in French at the Académie, Paris, as "Semiramis," with Carlotta Marchisio as Semiramide, Barbara, her sister, as Arsaces, and M. Obin as Assur. At Rossini's request M. Carafa arranged the recitatives and wrote the ballet music. "Semiramide" was the last opera Rossini wrote for Italy; and so far did he depart from the conventional Italian style, that he was charged with imitating the German. It was probably for this reason that the opera when first performed did not meet with a kindly reception from the Venetians. Although he was occupied six months in negotiating for his stipulated price (one thousand dollars), he wrote the opera in three weeks. Of its first performance, a correspondent of the "Harmonicon," who was present, writes: "The first act, which lasted two hours and fifteen minutes, was received very coldly, with the exception of one passage in the overture, which overture, however, was unconscionably long. The second act, which lasted two hours and a half, began to please in an air of Mariani, but the applause was rather directed to this favorite singer. After this a duet between her and Colbran, together with an air of Galli, and particularly a terzetto between him and the two ladies, were well received. Rossini was also called for at the end of the second act. It is all over with Madame, his own wife" (Mme. Colbran), who took the title-rôle.

The scene of the opera is laid in Babylon, and the story briefly told is as follows: Ninus, the King of Babylon, has been murdered by his Queen, Semiramis, aided by Assur, a prince enamoured of her and aspiring to the throne. One of the Queen's warriors, Arsaces, supposed to be of Scythian origin, but in reality her own son, returns from a foreign expedition and is loaded with honors for the victory he has won. Semiramis, ignorant of his parentage, has a secret passion for him, he in the mean time being devoted to Azema, one of the princesses royal. As all gather together in the temple to swear allegiance to the Queen, the gates of Ninus's tomb suddenly open, and his ghost appears and announces that Arsaces will be the successor to the crown. At midnight Semiramis, Assur, and Arsaces meet at the tomb, and by mistake Assur stabs her instead of Arsaces, who in turn kills Assur, and, all obstacles being removed, is united to Azema and ascends the throne.

An introductory chorus of Babylonians and a terzetto by Idreno, Assur, and Oroe open the opera and lead up to the first appearance of Semiramis, which is followed by a very dramatic quartet ("Di tanti regi"). In the fourth scene Arsaces has a very brilliant aria ("O! come da quel di"), which also did service in one or two of Rossini's other operas, and is followed by a very animated duet ("Bella imago degli dei") between himself and Assur. The eighth scene is introduced by a graceful female chorus which leads to Semiramis's brilliant and well-known aria, "Bel raggio." In the tenth scene occurs an elegant duet ("Serbami agnor si fido"), followed in the next scene by a stately priests' march and chorus ("Ergi omai la fronte altera"), set to ecclesiastical harmony and accompanied by full military band as well as orchestra, this being the first instance where a military band was used in Italian opera. It leads to the finale, where Semiramis on her throne announces to her people her choice for their future king. The oath of allegiance follows in an impressive quartet with chorus ("Giuro al numi"), and a defiant aria by the Queen leads to the sudden appearance of the ghost of Ninus, accompanied by characteristic music repeated in quintet with chorus. As the ghost speaks, the statue scene in Don Giovanni is inevitably recalled, especially in some phrases which are literally copied.

The second act opens with a vindictively passionate duet ("Assur, icenni mici") between Assur and Semiramis, closing with a fierce outburst of hatred ("La forza primiera"). The scene is a very long and spirited one, and is followed by a second chorus of priests, leading to a great aria with chorus ("Ah! tu gelar mi fai") for Arsaces. In the fifth scene occurs a long duet between Arsaces and Semiramis, the second part of which ("Giorno d'orrore") is the strongest number in the opera. Though intensely passionate in its tone, the music is smooth and flowing and very florid for both voices. The seventh scene is composed of a scena, aria and chorus, followed by still another chorus in the mausoleum. Semiramis sings a prayer of great pathos and beauty ("Ah mio pregar"). A terzetto ("L'usato ardir"), which like the mausoleum chorus is based upon an aria from Mozart's "Cosi fan tutti," closes the opera. "The Harmonicon," to which reference has already been made, in an analysis of the work, has the following apt criticism: "It has been said, and truly, that 'Semiramide' is composed in the German style,

but it is the German style exaggerated. Rossini is become a convert to this school, and his conversion does his judgment credit, though like all proselytes he passes into extremes. Not satisfied with discarding the meagre accompaniments of the Italian composers, he even goes far beyond the tramontane masters in the multitude and use of instruments, and frequently smothers his concerted pieces and choruses by the overwhelming weight of his orchestra." But what would the "Harmonicon" have said, had it had Wagner's instrumentation before it?

## **WILLIAM TELL**

"William Tell," an opera in three acts, words by Étienne Jouy and Hippolyte Bis, the subject taken from Schiller's drama of the same name, was first produced at the Académie, Paris, Aug. 3, 1829, with the following cast:—

MATHILDE Mme. DAMOREAU-CINTI.  
JEMMY Mme. DABODIE.  
HEDWIG Mlle. MORI.  
ARNOLD M. NOURRIT.  
WALTER M. LEVASSEUR.  
TELL M. DABODIE.  
RUODI M. DUPONT.  
RODOLPHE M. MASSOL.  
GESSLER M. PRÉVOST.  
LEUTOLD M. PRÉVÔT.

Rossini wrote for Paris only two new operas, "Le Comte Ory" and "William Tell,"—the latter his masterpiece in the serious style. The libretto was first prepared by M. Jouy, but it was so bad that M. Bis was called in, and to him is due the whole of the second act. Even after the two authors had changed and revised it, Rossini had to alter it in many places. When it was first performed the weakness of the drama was at once recognized, though its music was warmly welcomed, especially by the critical. It was represented fifty-six times in its original form, and was then cut down to three acts, the original third act being omitted and the fourth and fifth condensed into one. For three years after this time the second act was alone performed in Paris; but when M. Duprez made his début in the part of Arnold, a fresh enthusiasm was aroused, and there was a genuine Tell revival.

The scene of the opera is laid in Switzerland, period the thirteenth century, and the action closely follows the historical narrative. The disaffection which has arisen among the Swiss, owing to the tyranny of Gessler, suddenly comes to a climax when one of Gessler's followers attempts an outrage upon the only daughter of the herdsman Leutold, and meets his death at the hands of the indignant father. Leutold seeks protection at the hands of Tell, who, in the face of the herdsman's pursuers, succeeds in placing him beyond the reach of danger, and this circumstance arouses the wrath of Gessler. Melchtal, the village patriarch, is accused by him of inciting the people to insubordination, and is put to death. Meanwhile Arnold, his son, is enamoured of Mathilde, Gessler's daughter, and hesitates between love and duty when he is called upon to avenge his father's death. At last duty prevails, and he joins his comrades when the men of the three cantons, who are loyal to Tell, meet and swear death to the tyrant. In the last act occurs the famous archery scene. To discover the leading offenders Gessler erects a pole in the square of Altorf, upon which he places his hat and commands the people to do homage to it. Tell refuses, and as a punishment is ordered to shoot an apple from his son's head. He successfully accomplishes the feat, but as he is about to retire Gessler observes a second arrow concealed in his garments, and inquires the reason for it, when Tell boldly replies it was intended for him in case the first had killed his son. Gessler throws him into prison, whereupon Mathilde abandons her father and determines to help in the rescue of Tell and his son. Her lover, Arnold, meanwhile, raises a band of brave followers and accomplishes the rescue himself. After slaying the tyrant and freeing his country Tell returns to his family, and Arnold and Mathilde are united.

The overture to "William Tell," with its Alpine repose, its great storm-picture, the stirring "Ranz des Vaches," and the trumpet-call to freedom, is one of the most perfect and beautiful ever written, and is so familiar that it does not need analysis. The first act opens with a delightfully fresh Alpine chorus ("E il ciel sereno"), which is followed by a pastoral quartet between a fisherman, Tell, Hedwig, and Jemmy. Arnold enters, and a long duet, one of Rossini's finest inspirations, follows between Arnold and Tell. The duet is interrupted by the entrance of several of the peasants escorting two brides and bridegrooms, which is the signal for a most graceful chorus and dance ("Cinto il crine"). Leutold then appears, seeking Tell's protection, and a very dramatic finale begins, closing with the arrest of Melchtal, which leads to an ensemble of great power.

The second act opens with a double chorus of huntsmen and shepherds ("Qual silvestre metro

intorne"), which is followed by a scena preluding a charming romanza ("Selva opaco") sung by Mathilde. Its mild, quiet beauty is in strange contrast with the remainder of this great act. It is followed by a passionate duet with Arnold, a second and still more passionate duet between Tell and Walter, which leads to the magnificent trio of the oath ("La gloria inflammi"), and this in turn is followed by the splendid scene of the gathering of the cantons. For melodic and harmonic beauty combined, the spirited treatment of masses, and charm and variety of color, this great scene stands almost alone.

The last act opens with a duet between Mathilde and Arnold, which is followed in the next scene by a march and chorus as the multitude gathers in the square of Altorf, closing with a lovely Tyrolean chorus sung by the sopranos and accompanied with the dance. The dramatic scene of the archery follows, and then Arnold has a very passionate aria ("O muto asil"). Some very vivid storm-music preluding the last scene, and the final hymn of freedom ("I boschi, i monti") close an opera which is unquestionably Rossini's masterpiece, and in which his musical ability reached its highest expression. "Manly, earnest, and mighty," Hanslick calls it; and the same authority claims that the first and second acts belong to the most beautiful achievements of the modern opera.

## **RUBINSTEIN.**

Anton Gregor Rubinstein was born Nov. 30, 1829, at Weghwotynez in Russia. His mother gave him lessons at the age of four, with the result that by the time he was six she was unable to teach him anything more. He then studied the piano with Alexander Villoing, a pupil of John Field. In 1840 he entered the Paris Conservatory, where he attracted the attention of Liszt, Chopin, and Thalberg. He remained in that city eighteen months, and then made some professional tours, in which he met with extraordinary success. In 1844 his parents removed to Berlin, and he was placed under Dehn, the famous contrapuntist, to study composition. From 1846 to 1848 he taught music in Pressburg and Vienna, and then went back to Russia. For eight years he studied and wrote in St. Petersburg, and at the end of that time had accumulated a mass of manuscripts destined to make his name famous all over Europe, while his reputation as a skilful pianist was already world-wide. He visited England again in 1857, and the next year returned home and settled in St. Petersburg, about which time he was made Imperial Concert Director, with a life-pension. At this period in his career he devoted himself to the cause of music in Russia. His first great work was the foundation of the Conservatory in the above city in 1862, of which he remained principal until 1867. He also founded the Russian Musical Society in 1861, and in 1869 was decorated by the Czar. In 1870 he directed the Philharmonic and Choral Societies of Vienna, and shortly afterwards made another tour, during which, in 1872, he came to this country with the eminent violinist, Wieniawsky, as will be well remembered. His greatest works are the "Ocean Symphony," "Dramatic Symphony," and a character sketch for grand orchestra called "Ivan the Terrible;" his operas, "Children of the Heath," "Feramos," "Nero," "The Maccabees," "Dimitri Donskoi," and the "Demon;" the oratorios "Paradise Lost," and "Tower of Babel," and a long and splendid catalogue of chamber, salon, and concert music, besides some beautiful songs, which are great favorites in the concert-room.

## **NERO.**

The opera of "Nero," the libretto by Jules Barbier, was first produced in Hamburg in 1879,—though it was originally intended for the French stage,—and in this country, March 14, 1887, at New York, by the American Opera Company, under the direction of Mr. Theodore Thomas, with the following cast:—

NERO Mr. CANDIDUS.

JULIUS VINDEK Mr. LUDWIG.

TIGELLINUS Mr. STODDARD.

BALBILLUS Mr. WHITNEY.

SACCUS Mr. FESSENDEN.

SEVIRUS Mr. HAMILTON.

TERPANDER Mr. LEE.

POPPOEA SABINA Miss BERTHA PIERSON.

EPICHARIS Miss CORNELIA VAN ZANTEN.

CHRYSA Miss EMMA JUCH.

AGRIPPINA Miss AGNES STERLING.

LUPUS Miss PAULINE L'ALLEMAND.

The first act opens in the house of Epicharis, a courtesan, which is a rendezvous for the dissolute Roman nobles. The guests assembled sing a chorus in praise of the establishment, followed by a scene in which Vindex, the prince of Aquitania, Saccus the poet, Terpander the citharist, and others conspire against Nero. Suddenly Chrysa, daughter of Epicharis, who is ignorant of her mother's real character and dwells apart from her, rushes in and implores the protection of Vindex from a crowd of revellers who have pursued her. A very spirited duet follows in which the prince promises her his assistance. Upon hearing the shouts of her pursuers he conceals her just in time to escape the masked band, headed by Nero himself, which bursts into the apartment. The tyrant demands the girl; and as he throws off his mask the guests stand amazed. Saccus at last breaks the spell by the suggestion that Nero shall marry the girl. When she is led out, and Vindex discovers that Epicharis is her mother, he no longer espouses her cause. Then follows the music of the mock marriage, interspersed with dance strains and sardonic choruses by the courtesans and their associates, at last rising to a wild bacchanalian frenzy, in the midst of which Vindex breaks out in a spirited song, with harp accompaniment, and finally hurls invectives at Nero, as Chrysa, who has drunk a narcotic at her mother's order, falls senseless. The latter declares she has been poisoned, and the act closes with a scene of great power in which Vindex is hurried away as Nero's prisoner.

The second act opens in the dwelling of Poppoea, Nero's mistress, whose attendants are trying to console her. She has heard of Nero's new infatuation; but her apprehensions are relieved when Balbillus, the astrologer, enters and not only announces that Chrysa is dead, but tells the equally grateful news that Octavia, Nero's wife, has been condemned to die. Nero himself now appears upon the scene, and a duet follows in which Poppoea reproaches him for his fickleness and he seeks to console her with flattery. At its close the death of Octavia is announced, and Poppoea is appeased by the prospect of sharing the throne. Meanwhile Chrysa has fallen into the custody of Agrippina, Nero's mother, who keeps close charge of her to further her own ambitions. During the interview between the tyrant and his mistress, Epicharis rushes in and implores Nero to give up Chrysa, which leads to a powerful ensemble. Learning that Chrysa is still alive he leaves the apartment to find her. The second scene is brilliantly spectacular. Nero and his mother appear in front of the temple, followed by a long procession to the music of a brilliant march. They enter the temple. After a short episode, in which Poppoea informs Epicharis of the refuge Chrysa has found, the ballet is given in the open square, with its fascinating dances of warriors, bacchantes, jugglers and buffoons, and their mimic combats, the music of which is very familiar from its frequent performance in our concert-rooms. Nero then appears and announces his divinity in a finale, which is rich with scenic, spectacular, and choral effects, accompanied by full military band and orchestra.

The third act opens in Chrysa's new asylum of refuge. The persecuted girl sings a beautiful prayer, at the close of which Vindex joins her in a love-duet, which will always remain as one of the most refined and noble products of Rubinstein's skill in harmony. The next number is one of almost equal beauty,—a duet for Chrysa and Epicharis, the motive of which is a cradle song. Its soothing tones are interrupted by the appearance of Nero, followed by Poppoea and Saccus, the last-named announcing to the tyrant that Rome is in flames, which leads up to a vigorous trio. The concluding scene is full of characteristic music. It shows us Nero watching the fire from his tower, while he sings a hymn ("O Ilion") to the accompaniment of his lyre; the death of Chrysa, who proclaims herself a Christian and is killed by the infuriated populace; and the fate of Epicharis, who is crushed beneath a falling house as she mourns for her daughter.

The fourth act furnishes a dramatic denouement to the mournful story. The tyrant, wild with rage and frenzy, appears in the tomb of Augustus, where the shades of his murdered victims terrify him. Saccus enters and tells him of the revolt of his army and the danger which threatens him. He rushes out again and kills himself on the highway of the Campagna, just as Vindex at the head of his legions comes up with him. As he expires a cross appears in the sky and a chant is heard, herald of the coming Christianity.

## **THOMAS.**

Charles Ambroise Thomas was born at Metz, Aug. 5, 1811, and entered the Paris Conservatory in 1828, where he carried off the Grand Prize in 1832, which entitled him to go to Italy. During his Italian residence he wrote a cantata, "Hermann und Ketty," and several instrumental works. His first work at the Opera Comique was the one-act opera, "La double echelle," produced in 1837 with success. He then brought out several ballets at the Académie, but returned to the Opera Comique again, where, between

1840 and 1866, he composed thirteen operas, the most successful of which were "Le Songe d'une nuit d'été" (1850), "Raymond" (1851), "Psyche" (1857), and "Mignon" (1866). During this period he also wrote a large number of cantatas, choruses, part-songs, and instrumental works. His next great work was "Hamlet," first produced March 9, 1868, the success of which gained him the position of Director of the Conservatory in 1871. Since that time he has written only the opera "Françoise de Rimini," performed April 14, 1882. In 1880 he was made a member of the Legion of Honor. In common with Gounod he now shares the honor of being one of the few French writers who hold a high rank among modern composers.

## MIGNON

"Mignon," an opera comique in three acts, words by Barbier and Carré, the subject taken from Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister," was first produced at the Opera Comique, Paris, Nov. 17, 1866, with the following cast:—

MIGNON Mme. GALLI-MARIÉ.  
WILHELM MEISTER M. ACHARD.  
LAERTES M. CONDERS.  
LOTARIO M. BATAILLE.  
FILINA Mme. CABEL.

The scene of the first two acts is laid in Germany, and of the third in Italy. Mignon, the heroine, in her childhood was stolen by gypsies. She is of noble birth. The mother died shortly after her bereavement, and the father, disguised as the harper Lotario, has wandered for years in quest of his daughter. The opera opens in the yard of a German inn, where a troupe of actors, among them Filina and Laertes, are resting, on their way to the castle of a neighboring prince, where they are to give a performance.

A strolling gypsy band arrives about the same time, and stops to give an entertainment to the guests. Mignon, who is with the band, is ordered to perform the egg dance, but, worn out with fatigue and abusive treatment, refuses. Giarno, the leader, rushes at her, but the old harper interposes in her behalf. Giarno then turns upon Lotario, when the wandering student, Wilhelm Meister, suddenly appears and rescues both Mignon and the harper. To save her from any further persecution he engages her as his page, and follows on in the suite of Filina, for whom he conceives a violent and sudden passion. Touched by his kind attentions to her, Mignon falls in love with Wilhelm, who, ignorant of his page's affection, becomes more and more a prey to the fascinations of Filina. At last the troupe arrives at the castle, Wilhelm and Mignon with them. Wilhelm enters with the others, leaving Mignon to await him outside. Maddened with jealousy, she attempts to throw herself into a lake near by, but is restrained by the notes of Lotario's harp. She rushes to him for counsel and protection, and in her despair invokes vengeance upon all in the castle. As the entertainment closes, Filina and her troupe emerge, joyful over their great success. She sends Mignon back for some flowers she has left, when suddenly flames appear in the windows. Maddened by his own grief and Mignon's troubles Lotario has fired the castle. Wilhelm rushes into the burning building and brings out the unconscious Mignon in his arms.

The last act opens in Lotario's home in Italy, whither Mignon has been taken, followed by Wilhelm, who has discovered her devoted attachment to him, and has freed himself from the fascinations of Filina. Through the medium of a long-concealed casket containing a girdle which Mignon had worn in her childhood, also by a prayer which she repeats, and the picture of her mother, Lotario is at last convinced that she is his daughter, and gives his blessing to her union with Wilhelm.

The overture recites the leading motives of the work. The first act opens with a fresh and melodious chorus of the townspeople over their beer in the inn yard ("Su borghesi e magnati"). During their singing a characteristic march is heard, and the gypsy band enters. The scene is a charming one, the little ballet being made still more picturesque by the fresh chorus and a song of Filina's in waltz time. The scene of the encounter with Giarno and Mignon's rescue follows, and leads up to a very spirited quintet, which is followed by a graceful trio between Wilhelm, Filina, and Laertes, the actor. In the next scene Wilhelm questions Mignon as to her history, and at the end of their pathetic duet, when he says, "Were I to break thy chains and set thee free, to what beloved spot wouldst thou take thy way?" she replies in the beautiful romanza, "Non conosci il bel suol," more familiarly known in Goethe's own words, "Kennst du das Land,"—a song full of tender beauty and rare expression, and one of the most delightful inspirations of any composer. It is said that much of its charm comes from the composer's study of Ary Scheffer's picture of Mignon. Be this as it may, he has caught the inner sense of the poem, and expressed it in exquisite tones. It is followed almost immediately by a duet between Mignon and Lotario ("Leggiadre rondinelle") of almost equal beauty, known as the Swallow duet. After a somewhat uninteresting scene between Laertes, Filina, and Frederick, who is also in love with Filina, the finale

begins with the departure of the actors to fulfil their engagement, in which Filina, in a graceful aria ("Grazie al gentil signor"), invites Wilhelm to be of the number.

The second act opens in Filina's boudoir, where she is at her toilet, arraying herself for her part as Titania in the forthcoming performance of the "Midsummer Night's Dream" at the castle. As Wilhelm and Mignon enter the apartment, a very dramatic conversation ensues between them in the form of a *terzetto* ("Ohimè quell' acre riso"). Mignon is in despair at the attention Wilhelm pays Filina, and the latter adds to her pangs by singing with him a gay coquettish aria ("Gai complimenti"). As they leave the room Mignon goes to the mirror and begins adorning herself as Filina had done, hoping thereby to attract Wilhelm, singing meanwhile a characteristic song ("Conosco un zingarello") with a peculiar refrain, which the composer himself calls the "Styrienne." It is one of the most popular numbers in the opera, and when first sung in Paris made a furor. At the end of the scene Mignon goes into a cabinet to procure one of Filina's dresses, and the lovelorn Frederick enters and sings his only number in the opera, a bewitching rondo gavotte ("Filina nelle sale"). Wilhelm enters, and a quarrel between the jealous pair is prevented by the sudden appearance of Mignon in Filina's finery. She rushes between them, Frederick makes his exit in a fume, and Wilhelm announces to Mignon his intention to leave her, in the aria, "Addio, Mignon, fa core," one of the most pathetic songs in the modern opera. In the next scene she tears off her finery and rushes out expressing her hatred of Filina. The scene now changes to the park surrounding the castle where the entertainment is going on. Mignon hears the laughter and clapping of hands, and overcome with despair attempts to throw herself into the lake, but is restrained by Lotario, and a beautiful duet ensues between them ("Sofferto hai tu?"). In the next scene Filina, the actors, and their train of followers emerge from the castle, and in the midst of their joy she sings the polacca, "Ah! per stassera," which is a perfect *feu de joie* of sparkling music, closing with a brilliant cadenza. The finale, which is very dramatic, describes the burning of the castle and the rescue of Mignon.

The last act is more dramatic than musical, though it contains a few delightful numbers, among them the chorus barcarole in the first scene, "Orsu, sciogliam le vela," a song by Wilhelm ("Ah! non credea"), and the love duet, "Ah! son felice," between Wilhelm and Mignon, in which is heard again the cadenza of Filina's polacca. "Mignon" has always been a success, and will unquestionably always keep its place on the stage,—longer even than the composer's more ambitious works, "Hamlet" and "Françoise de Rimini," by virtue of its picturesqueness and poetic grace, as well as by the freshness, warmth, and richness of its melodies. In this country opera-goers will long remember "Mignon" by the great successes made by Miss Kellogg as Filina, and by Mme. Lucca and Mme. Nilsson in the title-rôle.

## VERDI.

Giuseppi Verdi was born at Roncale, Italy, Oct. 9, 1813. He displayed his musical talent at a very early age; indeed, in his tenth year he was appointed organist in his native town. He then studied for a time at Busseto, and afterwards, by the help of a patron, M. Barezzi, went to Milan. Curiously enough he was refused a scholarship on the ground that he displayed no aptitude for music. Nothing daunted, he studied privately with the composer Lavigne, and five years afterwards commenced his career as an operatic writer. His first opera, "Oberto," was given at La Scala, Milan, with indifferent success. He was not fairly recognized until his opera "I Lombardi" was performed. In 1844 "Ernani" was received with great enthusiasm. "Attila" (1846) was his next great triumph; and then followed in rapid succession a large number of operas, among them: "I Masnadieri" (1847), written for the English stage, with Jenny Lind, Lablache, and Gardoni in the cast; "Luisa Miller" (1849); "Stifellio" (1851); "Rigoletto" (1851); "Il Trovatore," Rome (1853); "La Traviata," Venice (1853); "I Vespri Siciliani," Paris (1855); "Simon Boccanegra," Venice (1857); "Un Ballo in Maschera," Rome (1858); "La Forza del Destino," St. Petersburg (1862); "Don Carlos," Paris (1867), and "Aida," his last opera, Cairo (1871). Since that time Verdi has produced nothing but a Pater Noster and an Ave Maria (1880), and the "Requiem," composed in memory of the patriot Manzoni, and produced at Milan in 1874, on the occasion of the anniversary of his death. It has been reported that he is at work upon a new opera, "Othello," the words by Arrigo Boito, the composer of "Mephistopheles;" but nothing more than the report has been heard from it during the past three or four years. The great melodist now spends a very quiet life as a country gentleman upon his estates near Busseto.

## ERNANI.

"Ernani," a tragic opera in four acts, words by F.M. Piave, the subject taken from Victor Hugo's tragedy

of "Hernani," was first produced at Venice, March 9, 1844. The earlier performances of the opera gave the composer much trouble. Before the first production the police interfered, refusing to allow the representation of a conspiracy on the stage, so that many parts of the libretto, as well as much of the music, had to be changed. The blowing of Don Silva's horn in the last act was also objected to by one Count Mocenigo, upon the singular ground that it was disgraceful. The Count, however, was silenced more easily than the police. The chorus "Si ridesti il Leon di Castiglia" also aroused a political manifestation by the Venetians. The opera was given in Paris, Jan. 6, 1846, and there it encountered the hostility of Victor Hugo, who demanded that the libretto should be changed. To accommodate the irate poet, the words were altered, the characters were changed to Italians, and the new title of "II Proscritto" was given to the work.

The action of the opera takes place in Arragon, Spain, and the period is 1519. Elvira, a noble Spanish lady, betrothed to the grandee Don Gomez de Silva, is in love with the bandit Ernani, who forms a plan to carry her off. While receiving the congratulations of her friends upon her approaching marriage with Silva, Don Carlos, the King of Spain, enters her apartment, declares his passion for her, and tries to force her from the castle. She cries for help, and Ernani comes to her rescue and defies the king. The situation is still further complicated by the sudden arrival of Silva, who declares he will avenge the insult. Finding, however, that it is the King whom he has challenged, he sues for pardon. In the second act, as the nuptials are about to be solemnized, Ernani enters, disguised as a pilgrim, and believing Elvira false to him, throws off his disguise and demands to be given up to the King, which Silva refuses, as he cannot betray a guest. Discovering, however, that Elvira and Ernani are attached to each other, he determines on vengeance. The King eventually carries off Elvira as a hostage of the faith of Silva, whereupon the latter challenges Ernani. The bandit refuses to fight with him, informs him that the King is also his rival, and asks to share in his vengeance, promising in turn to give up his life when Silva calls for it, and presenting him with a horn which he is to sound whenever he wishes to have the promise kept. In the third act, the King, aware that the conspirators are to meet in the catacombs of Aquisgrana, conceals himself there, and when the assassins meet to decide who shall kill him, he suddenly appears among them and condemns the nobles to be sent to the block. Ernani, who is a duke, under the ban of the King of Castile, demands the right to join them, but the King magnanimously pardons the conspirators and consents to the union of Ernani and Elvira. Upon the very eve of their happiness, and in the midst of their festivities, the fatal horn is heard, and true to his promise Ernani parts from Elvira and kills himself.

The first act opens with a spirited chorus of banditti and mountaineers ("Allegri, beviami") as they are drinking and gambling in their mountain retreat. Ernani appears upon a neighboring height and announces himself in a despondent aria ("Come rugiada al cespite"). A brief snatch of chorus intervenes, when he breaks out in a second and more passionate strain ("Dell' esilio nel dolore"), in which he sings of his love for Elvira. The third scene opens in Elvira's apartments, and is introduced with one of the most beautiful of Verdi's arias, "Ernani, involami," with which all concert-goers have become acquainted by its frequent repetition. A graceful chorus of her ladies bearing gifts leads to a second and more florid number ("Tutto sprezzo che d' Ernani"). Don Carlos enters, and in the seventh scene has an aria ("Bella come un primo amore") in which he declares his passion for Elvira, leading up to a very dramatic duet between them ("Fiero sangue d' Aragona"). This is followed in turn by a trio between the two and Ernani. The finale commences with an impressive and sonorous bass solo ("Infelice! e tuo credevi") by Silva, and closes with a septet and chorus of great power.

The second act, like the first, opens with a chorus, this time, however, of mixed voices, the power of which is amplified by a military band on the stage. After three scenes of dramatic dialogue, an impassioned duet ("Ah! morir potessi adesso!") occurs between Ernani and Elvira, followed by a second, of great dramatic intensity, in the seventh scene ("La vendetta piu tremenda"). The finale begins with a spirited appeal by Silva and Ernani for vengeance against the King ("In arcione, cavalieri") which is met by a stirring response from their followers ("Pronti vedi li tuoi cavalieri"), sung by full male chorus and closing the act.

The third act is devoted to the conspiracy, and in the second scene Don Carlos has a very impressive and at times thrilling soliloquy ("Gran Dio! costo sui sepolcrali marmi"). The conspiracy then begins with very characteristic accompaniments, closing with the chorus in full harmony ("Si ridesti il Leon di Castiglia"), which at the performance of the work in Venice roused such a fury among the Venetians. The finale commences with the appearance of Don Carlos among the conspirators, and closes with the great sextet and chorus, "O Sommo Carlo." Opening with a barytone solo, it is gradually worked up in a crescendo of great power and thrilling effect. The number is very familiar from its English setting under the title, "Crowned with the Tempest."

The fourth act rapidly hurries to the tragic close, and is less interesting from a musical point of view, as the climax was reached in the finale of the third. The principal numbers are the chorus of masks in the first scene ("O come felici"), accompanied by military band, and the great duet between Elvira and



Ernani ("Cessaro i suoni"), which passes from rapturous ecstasy to the despair of fate ("Per noi d' amore il talamo") as the horn of Silva is heard, reminding Ernani of his promise. Though one of the earliest of Verdi's works, "Ernani" is one of his strongest in dramatic intensity, in the brilliancy and power of its concerted finales, and in the beauty of its great chorus effects.

## **RIGOLETTO.**

"Rigoletto," an opera in three acts, words by Piave, the subject taken from Victor Hugo's tragedy, "Le Roi s'amuse," was first produced at Venice, March 11, 1851. The part of Gilda has always been a favorite one with great artists, among whom Nantier-Didiée, Bosio, and Miolan-Carvalho played the rôle with extraordinary success. In the London season of 1860 Mario and Ronconi in the respective parts of the Duke and Rigoletto, it is said, gave dramatic portraiture which were among the most consummate achievements of the lyric stage. The records of its first production, like those of "Ernani," are of unusual interest. Verdi himself suggested Victor Hugo's tragedy to Piave for a libretto, and he soon prepared one, changing the original title, however, to "La Maledizione." Warned by the political events of 1848, the police flatly refused to allow the representation of a king on the stage in such situations as those given to Francis I. in the original tragedy. The composer and the manager of the theatre begged in vain that the libretto should be accepted, but the authorities were obstinate. At last a way was found out of the difficulty by the chief of police himself, who was a great lover of art. He suggested to the librettist that the King should be changed to a duke of Mantua, and the title of the work to "Rigoletto," the name of the buffoon who figures in the place of the original Triboulet. Verdi accepted the alterations, and had an opera ready in forty days which by nearly all critics is considered his musical masterpiece, notwithstanding the revolting character of the story.

The scene of the opera is laid in Mantua. Rigoletto, the privileged buffoon of the Duke, who also plays the part of pander in all his licentious schemes, among numerous other misdeeds has assisted his master in the seduction of the wife of Count Ceprano and the daughter of Count Monterone. The latter appears before the Duke and Rigoletto, and demands reparation for the dishonor put upon his house, only to find himself arrested by order of the Duke, and taunted in the most insolent manner by the buffoon, upon whom he invokes the vengeance of Heaven. Even the courtiers themselves are enraged at Rigoletto's taunts, and determine to assist in Monterone's revenge by stealing Gilda, the jester's daughter, whom they suppose to be his mistress. Closely as she had been concealed, she had not escaped the observation of the Duke, who in the guise of a poor student wins her affections and discovers her dwelling-place. Pretending that it is Count Ceprano's wife whom they are about to abduct, they even make Rigoletto assist in the plot and help convey his own daughter to the Duke's apartments. In his blind fury when he discovers the trick that has been played upon him, he hires Sparafucile, a professional assassin, to kill the Duke. The bravo allures the Duke to his house, intending to carry out his agreement; but his sister, Magdalena, is so fascinated with the handsome stranger, that she determines to save him. Sparafucile at first will not listen to her, but finally promises if any one else comes to the house before the time agreed upon for the murder he shall be the victim. Rigoletto meanwhile disguises his daughter in male attire in order that she may escape to Verona; but before she sets out he takes her to the vicinity of Sparafucile's house, that she may witness the perfidy of the Duke. While outside, she overhears the quarrel between Sparafucile and Magdalena, and learns his intention to murder the Duke, who is even then sleeping in the house. With a woman's devotion she springs forward to save the Duke's life, knocks at the door, and demands admittance. Sparafucile opens it, and as she enters stabs her. He then thrusts her body into a sack, and delivers it to her father as the body of the man whom he had agreed to slay. Rigoletto, gloating over his revenge, is about to throw the sack into the river near by, when he suddenly hears the voice of the Duke. He tears open the sack to see whose body it contains, and by the glare of the lightning is horrified to find that it is his own daughter, and realizes that the malediction of Monterone has been accomplished. She expires in his arms, blessing her lover and father, while he sinks to the ground overwhelmed with the fulfilment of the terrible curse.

The first act opens in the ball-room of the ducal palace. After a brief dialogue between the Duke and one of his courtiers, the former vaunts his own fickleness in one of the most graceful and charming arias in the whole opera ("Questa o quella"). Some spirited dramatic scenes follow, which introduce the malediction of Monterone and the compact between Rigoletto and Sparafucile, and lead up to a scena of great power ("Io la lingua, egli ha il pugnali"), in which the buffoon vents his furious rage against the courtiers. A tender duet between Rigoletto and Gilda follows, and a second duet in the next scene between Gilda and the Duke ("Addio, speranza ed anima"), which for natural grace, passionate intensity, and fervid expression is one of Verdi's finest numbers. As the Duke leaves, Gilda, following him with her eyes, breaks out in the passionate love-song, "Caro nome," which is not alone remarkable for its delicacy and richness of melody, but also for the brilliancy of its bravura, calling for rare range and flexibility of voice. The act closes with the abduction, and gives an opportunity for a delightful male chorus ("Zitti, zitti") sung pianissimo.

The second act also opens in the palace, with an aria by the Duke ("Parmi veder le lagrime"), in which he laments the loss of Gilda. Another fine chorus ("Scorrendo uniti remota via") follows, from which he learns that Gilda is already in the palace. In the fourth scene Rigoletto has another grand scena ("Cortigiani vil razza dannata"), which is intensely dramatic, expressing in its musical alternations the whole gamut of emotions, from the fury of despair to the most exquisite tenderness of appeal as he pleads with the courtiers to tell him where his daughter is. In the next scene he discovers her, and the act closes with a duet between them ("Tutte le feste al tempio"), which, after a strain of most impassioned tenderness, is interrupted by the passage of the guards conveying Monterone to prison, and then closes with a furious outburst of passion from Rigoletto. With the exception of two numbers, the last act depends for its effect upon the dramatic situations and the great power of the terrible denouement; but these two numbers are among the finest Verdi has ever given to the world. The first is the tenor solo sung in Sparafucile's house in the second scene by the Duke,—*"La donna e mobile,"* an aria of extreme elegance and graceful abandon, which is heard again in the last scene, its lightly tripping measures contrasting strangely with the savage glee of Rigoletto, so soon to change to wails of despair as he realizes the full force of the malediction. The second is the great quartet in the third scene between the Duke, Gilda, Magdalena, and Rigoletto ("*Bella figlia dell' amore*"), which stands out as an inspiration in comparison with the rest of the opera, fine as its music is. The story itself is almost too repulsive for stage representation; but in beauty, freshness, originality, and dramatic expression the music of "*Rigoletto*" is Verdi's best; and in all this music the quartet is the masterpiece.

### **LA TRAVIATA.**

"*La Traviata*," an opera in three acts, words by Piave, is founded upon Dumas's "*Dame aux Camelias*," familiar to the English stage as "*Camille*." The original play is supposed to represent phases of modern French life; but the Italian libretto changes the period to the year 1700, in the days of Louis XIV.; and there are also some material changes of characters,—Marguerite Gauthier of the original appearing as Violetta Valery, and Olympia as Flora Belvoix, at whose house the ball scene takes place. The opera was first produced at Venice, March 6, 1853, with the following cast of the principal parts:—

VIOLETTA Mme. DONATELLI.

ALFREDO M. GRAZIANI.

GERMONT M. VARESI.

The opera at its first production was a complete failure, though this was due more to the singers than to the music. It is said that when the doctor announced in the third act that Mme. Donatelli, who impersonated the consumptive heroine, and who was one of the stoutest ladies ever seen on the stage, had but a few days to live, the whole audience broke out into roars of laughter. Time has brought its consolations to the composer, however, for "*Traviata*" is now one of the most popular operas in the modern repertory. When it was first produced in Paris, Oct. 27, 1864, Christine Nilsson made her début in it. In London, the charming little singer Mme. Piccolomini made her début in the same opera, May 24, 1856. Adelina Patti, since that time, has not only made Violetta the strongest character in her repertory, but is without question the most finished representative of the fragile heroine the stage has seen.

The story as told by the librettist simply resolves itself into three principal scenes,—the supper at Violetta's house, where she makes the acquaintance of Alfred, and the rupture between them occasioned by the arrival of Alfred's father; the ball at the house of Flora; and the death scene and reconciliation, linked together by recitative, so that the dramatic unity of the original is lost to a certain extent. The first act opens with a gay party in Violetta's house. Among the crowd about her is Alfred Germont, a young man from Provence, who is passionately in love with her. The sincerity of his passion finally influences her to turn aside from her life of voluptuous pleasure and to cherish a similar sentiment for him. In the next act we find her living in seclusion with her lover in a country-house in the environs of Paris, to support which she has sold her property in the city. When Alfred discovers this he refuses to be the recipient of her bounty, and sets out for Paris to recover the property. During his absence his father, who has discovered his retreat, visits Violetta, and pleads with her to forsake Alfred, not only on his own account, but to save his family from disgrace. Touched by the father's grief, she consents, and secretly returns to Paris, where she once more resumes her old life. At a ball given by Flora Belvoix, one of Violetta's associates, Alfred meets her again, overwhelms her with reproaches, and insults her by flinging her miniature at her feet in presence of the whole company. Stung by her degradation, Violetta goes home to die, and too late Alfred learns the real sacrifice she has made. He hastens to comfort her, but she dies forgiving and blessing him.

After a short prelude the first act opens with a vivacious chorus of the guests at Violetta's supper, leading to a drinking-song ("*Libiamo, libiamo*") in waltz time, sung first by Alfred and then by Violetta, the chorus echoing each couplet with very pretty effect. After a long dialogue between the two, closing

with chorus, Violetta has a grand scena which is always a favorite show-piece with concert artists. It begins with an andante movement ("Ah! fors e lui"), expressive of the suddenly awakened love which she feels for Alfred, with a refrain of half a dozen measures in the finale which might be called the Violetta motive, and then suddenly develops into a brisk and sparkling allegro ("Sempre libera") full of the most florid and brilliant ornamentation, in which she again resolves to shut out every feeling of love and plunge into the whirl of dissipation. This number, unlike most of Verdi's finales which are concerted, closes the act.

The second act opens in the country-house with an effective tenor aria ("De' miei bollenti") sung by Alfred. In the next scene Germont enters, and after a brief dialogue with Violetta sings a short cantabile ("Pura siccome un angelo"), leading to a duet ("Dite alia giovine") with Violetta which is full of tenderness. In the interview which immediately follows between Germont and Alfred, the father appeals to his son with memories of home in an andante ("Di Provenza il mar") which in form and simplicity and simple pathos of expression might almost be called a ballad. It is always a favorite, and is usually considered the best number in the opera, notwithstanding its simple melody. The next scene changes to the ball-room of Flora, and is introduced with a peculiar chorus effect. A masked chorus of gypsies, accompanying their measures with tambourines, is followed by a second chorus of matadors, also in mask, who accent the time with the pikes they carry, the double number ending with a gay bolero. The act closes with a long duet between Violetta and Alfred, developing in the finale, by the entrance of Germont, to a very strong and dramatic trio.

The third act opens in Violetta's chamber with a reminiscence of the introduction. As she contemplates her changed appearance in the mirror, she bids a sad farewell to her dreams of happiness in the aria, "Addio! del passato," in harsh contrast with which is heard a bacchanalian chorus behind the scenes ("Largo al quadrupede"). In the next scene occurs the passionate duet with Alfred, "Parigi, o cara," which is a close copy of the final duet in "Trovatore" between Manrico and Azucena. It is followed by the aria, "Ah! gran Dio," for Violetta, which leads to the concluding quintet and death scene.

## **IL TROVATORE.**

"Il Trovatore," an opera in four acts, words by Cammarano, was first produced in Rome, Jan. 19, 1853. In 1857 it was brought out in Paris as "Le Trouvere," and in London, 1856, in English, as "The Gypsy's Vengeance." It was produced in Rome in the same year with "La Traviata," but unlike the latter, it was greeted at once with an enthusiastic welcome; and it has held the stage ever since as one of the most popular operas in the modern repertory. In this regard, indeed, it shares with "Martha" and "Faust" the highest place in popular admiration.

The opera opens with a midnight scene at the palace of Aliaferia, where the old servitor, Ferrando, relates to his associates the story of the fate of Garzia, brother of the Count di Luna, in whose service they are employed. While in their cradles, Garzia was bewitched by an old gypsy, and day by day pined away. The gypsy was burned at the stake for sorcery; and in revenge Azucena, her daughter, stole the sickly child. At the opening of the opera his fate has not been discovered.

As the servitor closes his narrative and he and his companions depart, the Count di Luna enters and lingers by the apartment of the Duchess Leonora, with whom he is in love. Hearing his voice, Leonora comes into the garden, supposing it is Manrico the troubadour, whom she had crowned victor at a recent tournament, and of whom she had become violently enamoured. As she greets the Count, Manrico appears upon the scene and charges her with infidelity. Recognizing her error, she flies to Manrico for protection. The Count challenges him to combat, and as they prepare to fight she falls to the ground insensible.

In the second act we are introduced to a gypsy camp, where Azucena relates to Manrico, who has been wounded in the duel with the Count, the same story which Ferrando had told his friends, with the addition that when she saw her mother burning she caught up the Count's child, intending to throw it into the flames, but by a mistake sacrificed her own infant. As the story concludes, a messenger arrives, summoning Manrico to the defence of the castle of Castellar, and at the same time informing him that Leonora, supposing him dead, has gone to a convent. He arrives at the convent in time to rescue her before she takes her vows, and bears her to Castellar, which is at once besieged by the Count's forces.

The third act opens in the camp of the Count, where Azucena, arrested as a spy, is dragged in. She calls upon Manrico for help. The mention of his rival's name only adds fuel to the Count's wrath, and he orders the gypsy to be burned in sight of the castle. Ferrando has already recognized her as the supposed murderer of the Count's brother, and her filial call to Manrico also reveals to him that she is his mother. He makes a desperate effort to rescue her, but is defeated, taken prisoner, and thrown into a dungeon with Azucena. Leonora vainly appeals to the Count to spare Manrico, and at last offers him

her hand if he will save his life. He consents, and Leonora hastens to the prison to convey the tidings, having previously taken poison, preferring to die rather than fulfil her hateful compact. Manrico refuses his liberty, and as Leonora falls in a dying condition the Count enters and orders Manrico to be put to death at once. He is dragged away to execution, but as the Count triumphantly forces Azucena to a window and shows her the tragic scene, she reveals her secret, and informing the horror-stricken Count that he has murdered his own brother, falls lifeless to the ground.

The first act opens with a ballad in mazurka time ("Abbietta Zingara"), in which Ferrando relates the story of the gypsy, leading up to a scena for Leonora, which is treated in Verdi's favorite style. It begins with an andante ("Tacea la notte placida"), a brief dialogue with her attendant Inez intervening, and then develops into an allegro ("Di tale amor") which is a brilliant bit of bravura. A brief snatch of fascinating melody behind the scenes ("Deserto sulla terra") introduces Manrico, and the act closes with a trio ("Di geloso amor sprezzato"), which as an expression of combined grief, fear, and hate, is one of the most dramatic and intense of all Verdi's finales.

The second act opens with the Anvil chorus in the camp of the gypsies ("La Zingarella"), the measures accented with hammers upon the anvils. This number is so familiar that it does not need further reference. As its strains die away in the distance, Azucena breaks out into an aria of intense energy, with very expressive accompaniment ("Stride le vampa"), in which she tells the fearful story of the burning of her mother. A very dramatic dialogue with Manrico ensues, closing with a spirited aria for tenor ("Mai reggendo") and duet ("Sino all' elsa"). The scene is interrupted by the notes of a horn announcing the arrival of a messenger. The second scene is introduced by a flowing, broad, and beautifully sustained aria for the Count ("Il balen del suo"), and, like Leonora's numbers in the garden scene, again develops from a slow movement to a rapid and spirited march tempo ("Per me ora fatale"), the act closing with a powerful concerted effect of quartet and chorus.

The third act is introduced with a very free and animated soldiers' chorus. Azucena is dragged in and sings a plaintive lament for Manrico ("Giorni poveri"). Two duets follow, between Azucena and the Count, and Manrico and Leonora,—the second worked up with beautiful effect by the blending of the organ in the convent chapel. The act closes with the spirited aria, "Di quella pira," for Manrico,—a number which has always been the delight of great dramatic tenors, not alone for its fine melody, but for its opportunity of showing the voice and using the exceptional high C which is introduced in the finale of the aria.

The last act is replete with beautiful melodies following each other in quick succession. It opens with a very florid aria for Leonora ("D' amor sull' ali rosee"), leading to the exquisite scene of the Miserere, "Ah che la morte,"—a number which has never yet failed to charm and arouse audiences with the beauty and richness of its musical effect. As the Count enters, Leonora has another powerful aria ("Mira di acerbe"), which in the next scene is followed by the familiar duet between Azucena and Manrico, "Si la stanchezza," upon which Verdi lavished his musical skill with charming effect. The last scene closes with the tragedy. The whole opera is liberally enriched with melodies, and is dramatic throughout; but the last act is the crown of the work, and may successfully challenge comparison, for beauty, variety, and dramatic effect, with any other opera in the purely Italian school.

## **IL BALLO IN MASCHERA.**

"Il Ballo in Maschera," an opera in three acts, but usually performed in four, words by M. Somma, was first produced in Rome, Feb. 17, 1859. In preparing his work for the stage, Verdi encountered numerous obstacles. The librettist used the same subject which M. Scribe had adopted for Auber's opera, "Gustavus III.," and the opera was at first called by the same name,—"Gustavo III." It was intended for production at the San Carlo, Naples, during the Carnival of 1858; but while the rehearsals were proceeding, Orsini made his memorable attempt to kill Napoleon III., and the authorities at once forbade a performance of the work, as it contained a conspiracy scene. The composer was ordered to set different words to his music, but he peremptorily refused; whereupon the manager brought suit against him, claiming forty thousand dollars damages. The disappointment nearly incited a revolution in Naples. Crowds gathered in the streets shouting, "Viva Verdi," implying at the same time, by the use of the letters in Verdi's name, the sentiment, "Viva Vittorio Emmanuele Re Di Italia." A way out of his difficulties, however, was finally suggested by the impresario at Rome, who arranged with the censorship to have the work brought out at the Teatro Apollo as "Un Ballo in Maschera." The scene was changed to Boston, Massachusetts, and the time laid in the colonial period, notwithstanding the anachronism that masked balls were unknown at that time in New England history. The Swedish king appeared as Ricardo, Count of Warwick and Governor of Boston, and his attendants as Royalists and Puritans, among them two negroes, Sam and Tom, who are very prominent among the conspirators. In this form, the Romans having no objection to the assassination of an English governor, the opera was produced with great success.

The first act opens in the house of the Governor, where a large party, among them a group of conspirators, is assembled. During the meeting a petition is presented for the banishment of Ulrico, a negro sorcerer. Urged by curiosity, the Governor, disguised as a sailor and accompanied by some of his friends, pays the old witch a visit. Meanwhile another visit has been planned. Amelia, the wife of the Governor's secretary, meets the witch at night in quest of a remedy for her passion for Richard, who of course has also been fascinated by her. They arrive about the same time, and he overhears the witch telling her to go to a lonely spot, where she will find an herb potent enough to cure her of her evil desires. The Governor follows her, and during their interview the Secretary hurriedly rushes upon the scene to notify him that conspirators are on his track. He throws a veil over Amelia's face and orders Reinhart, the Secretary, to conduct her to a place of safety without seeking to know who she is. He consents, and the Governor conceals himself in the forest. The conspirators meanwhile meet the pair, and in the confusion Amelia drops her veil, thus revealing herself to Reinhart. Furious at the Governor's perfidy, he joins the conspirators. In the denouement the Secretary stabs his master at a masquerade, and the latter while dying attests the purity of Amelia, and magnanimously gives his secretary a commission appointing him to a high position in England.

After a brief prelude, the first act opens with a double chorus, in which the attitude of the friends of the Governor and the conspirators against him is strongly contrasted. In the next scene Richard and his page, Oscar, enter; and after a short dialogue Richard sings a very graceful romanza ("La rivedra nell'estasi"), which in the next scene is followed by a spirited aria for Reinhart ("Di speranze e glorie piena"). In the fourth scene Oscar has a very pretty song ("Volta la terrea"), in which he defends Ulrica against the accusations of the judge, leading up to a very effective quintet and chorus which has a flavor of the opera bouffe style. In grim contrast with it comes the witch music in the next scene ("Re del abisso"), set to a weird accompaniment. As the various parties arrive, a somewhat talky trio ensues between Amelia, Ulrica, and Richard, followed in the next scene by a lovely barcarole ("Di' tu se fedele") sung by Richard, leading to a beautifully written concerted finale full of sharp dramatic contrasts.

The second act opens upon a moonlight scene on the spot where murderers are punished; and Amelia, searching for the magic herb, sings a long dramatic aria ("Ma dall arido") consisting of abrupt and broken measures, the orchestra filling the gaps with characteristic accompaniment. Richard appears upon the scene, and the passionate love-duet follows, "M'ami, m'ami." The interview is ended by the sudden appearance of Reinhart, who warns the Governor of his danger, the scene taking the form of a spirited trio ("Odi tu come"). A buffo trio closes the act, Sam and Tom supplying the humorous element with their laughing refrain.

The last act opens in Reinhart's house with a passionate scene between the Secretary and his wife, containing two strong numbers, a minor andante ("Morro, ma prima in grazia") for Amelia, and an aria for Reinhart ("O dolcezza perdute"), which for originality and true artistic power is worthy of being classed as an inspiration. The conspiracy music then begins, and leads to the ball scene, which is most brilliantly worked up with orchestra, military band, and stringed quartet behind the scenes supplying the dance-music, and the accompaniment to the tragical conspiracy, in the midst of which, like a bright sunbeam, comes the page's bewitching song, "Saper vorreste." The opera closes with the death of Richard, set to a very dramatic accompaniment. "The Masked Ball" was the last work Verdi wrote for the Italian stage, and though uneven in its general effect, it contains some of his most original and striking numbers,—particularly those allotted to the page and Reinhart. In the intensity of the music and the strength of the situations it is superior even to "Trovatore," as the composer makes his effects more legitimately.

## **AIDA.**

"Aida," an opera in four acts, was first produced at Cairo, Egypt, Dec. 27, 1871, and was written upon a commission from the Khedive of that country. The subject of the opera was taken from a sketch, originally written in prose, by the director of the Museum at Boulak, which was afterwards rendered into French verse by M. Camille de Locle, and translated thence into Italian for Verdi by Sig. A. Ghizlandoni. It is the last opera Verdi has composed, and is notable for his departure from the conventional Italian forms and the partial surrender he has made to the constantly increasing influence of the so-called music of the future. The subject is entirely Egyptian, and the music is full of Oriental color.

The action of the opera passes in Memphis and Thebes, and the period is in the time of the Pharaohs. Aida, the heroine, is a slave, daughter of Amonasro, the King of Ethiopia, and at the opening of the opera is in captivity among the Egyptians. A secret attachment exists between herself and Rhadames, a young Egyptian warrior, who is also loved by Amneris, daughter of the sovereign of Egypt. The latter suspects that she has a rival, but does not discover her until Rhadames returns victorious from an

expedition against the rebellious Amonasro, who is brought back a prisoner. The second act opens with a scene between Amneris and Aida, in which the Princess wrests the secret from the slave by pretending that Rhadames has been killed; and the truth is still further revealed when Rhadames pleads with the King to spare the lives of the captives. The latter agrees to release all but Aida and Amonasro, bestows the hand of Amneris upon the unwilling conqueror, and the act closes amid general jubilation. Acting upon Amonasro's admonitions, Aida influences Rhadames to fly from Egypt and espouse the cause of her father. The lovers are overheard by Amneris and Ramfis, the high priest. The Princess, with all the fury of a woman scorned, denounces Rhadames as a traitor. He is tried for treason and condemned to be buried alive in the vaults under the temple of the god Phtah. Pardon is offered him if he will accept the hand of Amneris, but he refuses and descends to the tomb, where he finds Aida awaiting him. The stones are sealed above them and the lovers are united in death, while Amneris, heart-broken over the tragedy her jealousy has caused, kneels in prayer before their sepulchre.

After a short prelude, consisting of a beautiful pianissimo movement, mainly for the violins, and very Wagnerish in its general style, the first act opens in a hall of the King's palace at Memphis. A short dialogue between Rhadames and the priest Ramfis leads to a delicious romanza ("Celeste Aida") which is entirely fresh and original, recalling nothing that appears in any of Verdi's previous works. It is followed by a strong declamatory duet between Rhadames and Amneris, which upon the appearance of Aida develops to a trio ("Vieni, o diletta"). In the next scene the King and his retinue of ministers, priests, and warriors enter, and a majestic ensemble occurs, beginning with a martial chorus ("Su! del Nilo") in response to the appeal of the priests. As the war chorus dies away and the retinue disappears, Aida has a scena of great power. It begins with a lament for her country ("Ritorna vincitor"), in passionate declamatory phrases, clearly showing the influence of Wagner; but in its smooth, flowing cantabile in the finale, "Numi pietà," Verdi returns to the Italian style again. The final scene is full of oriental color and barbaric richness of display. The consecrated arms are delivered to Rhadames. The priestesses behind the scene to the accompaniment of harps, and the priests in front with sonorous chant, invoke the aid of the god Phtah, while other priestesses execute the sacred dance. An impressive duet between Ramfis and Rhadames closes the act. In this finale, Verdi has utilized two native Egyptian themes,—the melody sung by the priestesses with the harps, and the dance-melody given out by the flutes.

The second act opens with a female chorus by the slave girls, the rhythm of which is in keeping with the oriental scene, followed by an impassioned duet between Amneris and Aida ("Alla pompa che si appresta"), through which are heard the martial strains of the returning conqueror. The second scene opens the way for another ensemble, which with its massive choruses, and its stirring march and ballet, heralding the victory of Rhadames, is one of the most picturesque stage scenes the opera has ever furnished. A solemn, plaintive strain runs through the general jubilation in the appeal of Amonasro ("Questo assisa ch' io vesto") to the King for mercy to the captives. The finale begins with the remonstrances of the priests and people against the appeals of Amonasro and Rhadames, and closes with an intensely dramatic concerted number,—a quintet set off against the successive choruses of the priests, prisoners, and people ("Gloria all' Egitto").

The third act, like the first, after a brief dialogue, opens with a lovely romanza ("O cieli azzuri") sung by Aida, and the remainder of the act is devoted to two duets,—the first between Amonasro and Aida, and the second between Rhadames and Aida. Each is very dramatic in style and passionate in declamation, while they are revelations in the direction of combining the poetic and musical elements, when compared with any of the duets in Verdi's previous operas. In the last act the first scene contains another impressive duet between Rhadames and Amneris ("Chi ti salva, o sciagurato"), ending with the despairing song of Amneris, "Ohime! morir mi sento." In the last scene the stage is divided into two parts. The upper represents the temple of Vulcan, or Phtah, crowded with priests and priestesses, chanting as the stone is closed over the subterranean entrance, while below, in the tomb, Aida and Rhadames sing their dying duet ("O terra, addio"), its strains blending with the jubilation of the priests and the measures of the priestesses' sacred dance. "Aida" is the last and unquestionably the greatest, if not the most popular, of Verdi's works. It marks a long step from the style of his other operas towards the production of dramatic effect by legitimate musical means, and shows the strong influence Wagner has had upon him. Since this work was produced, no other for the stage has come from his pen. Should he break his long silence, some new work may show that he has gone still farther in the new path. If the time for rest has come, however, to the aged composer, "Aida" will remain his masterpiece among musicians and connoisseurs, though "Trovatore" will be best loved by the people.

## **OTHELLO.**

Othello has formed the subject of the following compositions:  
"Otello," opera in 3 acts, text by Berio, music by Rossini (1816);

"Othelleri," parody by Müller, Vienna (1828); Othello, overture by Krug (1883); "Un Othello," operetta, by Legoux, Paris (1863); and "Othello," opera in 4 acts, text by Boito, music by Verdi (1886).

"Othello," the last of the long and brilliant series of Verdi's operas, was completed in 1886, and first produced at the La Scala Theatre, Milan, Feb. 5,

1887, with remarkable success, Signora Pantaleoni, Signors Maurel and Tamagno taking the three leading rôles. The libretto was prepared by the accomplished Italian scholar and musician, Arrigo Boito, and closely follows the story of the Shakspearian tragedy.

The curtain rises upon a scene in Cyprus. A storm is raging, and a crowd, among them Iago, Cassio, and Roderigo, watch the angry sea, speculating upon the fate of Othello's vessel, which finally arrives safely in port amid much rejoicing. After returning the welcomes of his friends he enters the castle with Cassio and Montano. The conspiracy at once begins by the disclosure of Iago to Roderigo of the means by which Cassio's ruin may be compassed. Then follows the quarrel, which is interrupted by the appearance of Othello, who deprives Cassio of his office. A love-scene ensues between Desdemona and the Moor; but in the next act the malignity of Iago has already begun to take effect, and the seeds of jealousy are sown in Othello's breast. His suspicions are freshly aroused when Desdemona intercedes in Cassio's behalf, and are changed to conviction by the handkerchief episode and Iago's artful insinuation that Cassio mutters the name of Desdemona in his sleep; at which the enraged Moor clutches him by the throat and hurls him to the ground. In the third act Iago continues his diabolical purpose, at last so inflaming Othello's mind that he denounces Desdemona for her perfidy. The act concludes with the audience to the Venetian embassy, during which he becomes enraged, strikes Desdemona, and falls in convulsions. The last act transpires in her chamber, and follows Shakspeare in all the details of the smothering of Desdemona and the death of Othello.

There is no overture proper to the opera. After a few vigorous bars of prelude, the scene opens with a tempestuous and very striking description of a sea-storm by the orchestra, with the choruses of sailors and Cypriots rising above it and expressing alternate hope and terror. After a short recitative the storm dies away, and the choral phrases of rejoicing end in a pianissimo effect. A hurried recitative passage between Iago and Roderigo introduces a drinking scene in which Iago sings a very original and expressive brindisi with rollicking responses by the chorus. The quarrel follows with a vigorous and agitated accompaniment, and the act comes to a close with a beautiful love-duet between Othello and Desdemona.

The second act opens with recitative which reveals all of Iago's malignity, and is followed by his monologue, in which he sings a mock Credo which is Satanic in utterance. It is accompanied with tremendous outbursts of trumpets, and leads up to a furious declamatory duet with Othello. The next number brings a grateful change. It is a graceful mandolinata, sung by children's voices and accompanied by mandolins and guitars, followed by a charming chorus of mariners, who bring shells and corals to Desdemona. The intercession episode ensues, leading to a grand dramatic quartet for Desdemona, Emilia, Iago, and Othello. The latter then sings a pathetic but stirring melody with trumpet accompaniment, the farewell to war, and the act closes with a tumultuous duet between himself and Iago.

The third act opens with a very expressive duet for Othello and Desdemona, in which the growing wrath of the former and the sweet and touching unconsciousness of the other are happily contrasted. A sad monologue by Othello prepares the way for the coming outbreak. The handkerchief trio follows, in which the malignity of Iago, the indignation of Othello, and the inability of Cassio to understand the fell purpose of Iago are brought out with great force. At its close a fanfare of trumpets announces the Venetian embassy, and the finale begins with much brilliancy. Then follows the scene in which Othello smites down Desdemona. She supplicates for mercy in an aria of tender beauty, which leads up to a strong sextet. All the guests depart but Iago; and as Othello, overcome with his emotions, swoons away, the curtain falls upon Iago's contemptuous utterance, "There lies the lion of Venice."

The fourth act is full of musical beauty. After an orchestral introduction in which the horn has a very effective solo, the curtain rises and the action transpires in Desdemona's chamber. The scene opens with a touching recitative between Desdemona and Emilia. While the former prepares herself for slumber she sings the "Willow Song," an unaffected melody as simple and characteristic as a folk-song. Emilia retires, and by a natural transition Desdemona sings an "Ave Maria," which is as simple and beautiful in its way as the "Willow Song." She retires to her couch, and in the silence Othello steals in, dagger in hand, the contra-basses giving out a sombre and deep-toned accompaniment which is startling in its effect. He kisses her, the motive from the love-duet appearing in the orchestra; then, after a hurried dialogue, stifles her. He then kills himself, his last words being a repetition of those in the duet, while the strings tenderly give out the melody again.

## FALSTAFF.

"Falstaff," an opera in three acts, words by Arrigo Boito, was first performed March 12, 1893, at the Teatro alla Scala, Milan, with the following cast of characters:—

Mistress FORD Signora ZILLI  
NANNETTA Madame STEHLE  
FENTON M. GARBIN  
Dr. CAIUS Signor PAROLI  
PISTOLA Signor ARIMONDI  
Mistress PAGE Signora GUERRINI  
Mistress QUICKLY Signora PASQUA  
FORD Signor PINI-CORSI  
BARDOLFO Signor PELAGALLI-ROSSETTI  
FALSTAFF M. MAUREL

The libretto, which is mainly based upon "The Merry Wives of Windsor," also makes some contributions upon "Henry IV.," particularly in the introduction of the monologue upon honor, and illustrates Boito's skill in adaptation as well as his remarkable powers in condensation. In the arrangement of the comedy the five acts are reduced to three. The characters Shallow, Slender, William, Page, Sir Hugh Evans, Simple, and Rugby are eliminated, leaving Falstaff, Fenton, Ford, Dr. Caius, Bardolph, Pistol, Mistress Ford, Mistress Page, Anne, Dame Quickly and three minor characters as the *dramatis personæ*, though Anne appears as Nannetta and is the daughter of Ford instead of Page.

The first act opens with a scene at the Garter Inn, disclosing an interview between Falstaff and Dr. Caius, who is complaining of the ill treatment he has received from the fat Knight and his followers, but without obtaining any satisfaction. After his departure, Falstaff seeks to induce Bardolph and Pistol to carry his love-letters to Mistresses Ford and Page; but they refuse, upon the ground that their honor would be assailed, which gives occasion for the introduction of the monologue from "Henry IV." The letters are finally intrusted to a page, and the remainder of the act is devoted to the plots of the women to circumvent him, with an incidental revelation of the loves of Fenton and Nannetta, or Anne Page. In the second act, we have Falstaff's visit to Mistress Ford, as planned by the merry wives, the comical episode of his concealment in the buck-basket, and his dumping into the Thames. In the last act, undaunted by his buck-basket experiences, Falstaff accepts a fresh invitation to meet Mistress Ford in Windsor Park. In this episode occurs the fairy masquerade at Herne's Oak, in the midst of which he is set upon and beaten, ending in his complete discomfiture. Then all is explained to him; Nannetta is betrothed to Fenton; and all ends merry as a marriage bell.

There is no overture. After four bars of prelude the curtain rises, and the composer introduces Dr. Caius with the single exclamation, "Falstaff," and the latter's reply, "Ho! there," which are emblematic of the declamatory character of the whole opera; for although many delightful bits of melody are scattered through it, the instrumentation really tells the story, as in the Wagner music-drama, though in this latest work of the veteran composer there is less of the Wagnerian idea than in his "Aida." The first scene is mainly humorous dialogue, but there are two notable exceptions,—the genuine lyrical music of Falstaff's song ("Tis she with eyes like stars"), and the Honor monologue, a superb piece of recitative with a characteristic accompaniment in which the clarinets and bassoons fairly talk, as they give the negative to the Knight's sarcastic questions. The most attractive numbers of the second scene are Mistress Ford's reading of Falstaff's letter, which is exquisitely lyrical, a quartet, a capella, for the four women ("He'll surely come courting"), followed by a contrasting male quartet ("He's a foul, a ribald thief"), the act closing with the two quartets offsetting each other, and enclosing an admirable solo for Fenton.

The second act opens with the interview between Dame Quickly and Falstaff, in which the instrumentation runs the whole gamut of ironical humor. Then follows the scene between Ford and Falstaff, in which the very clink of the money, and Falstaff's huge chuckles, are deliberately set forth in the orchestra with a realism which is the very height of the ridiculous, the scene closing with an expressive declamation by Ford ("Do I dream? Or, is it reality?"). The second scene of the act is mainly devoted to the ludicrous incident of the buck-basket, which is accompanied by most remarkable instrumentation; but there are one or more captivating episodes; such as Dame Quickly's description of her visit ("Twas at the Garter Inn") and Falstaff's charming song ("Once I was Page to the Duke of Norfolk").

The third act opens in the Inn of the Garter, and discloses Falstaff soliloquizing upon his late disagreeable experiences:—



"Ho! landlord!  
Ungrateful world, wicked world,  
Guilty world!  
Landlord! a glass of hot sherry.  
Go, go thy way, John Falstaff,  
With thee will cease the type  
Of honesty, virtue, and might."

As the fat Knight soliloquizes and drinks his sack the orchestra takes part in a trill given out by piccolo, and gradually taken by one instrument after the other, until the whole orchestra is in a hearty laugh and shaking with string, brass, and wood wind glee. Then enters Dame Quickly, mischief-maker, and sets the trap at Herne's Oak in Windsor Forest, into which Falstaff readily falls. The closing scene is rich with humor. It opens with a delightful love-song by Fenton ("From those sweet lips a song of love arises"). The conspirators enter one after the other, and at last Falstaff, disguised as the sable hunter. The elves are summoned, and glide about to the delicious fairy music accompanying Nannetta's beautiful song ("While we dance in the moonlight"). From this point the action hastens to the happy dénouement, and the work concludes with a fugue which is imbued with the very spirit of humor and yet is strictly constructed. While the vocal parts are extraordinary in their declamatory significance, the strength of the opera lies in the instrumentation, and its charm in the delicious fun and merriment which pervades it all and is aptly expressed in the closing lines:—

"All in this world is jesting.  
Man is born to be jolly,  
E'en from grief some happiness wresting  
Sure proof against melancholy."

## **WAGNER.**

Richard Wagner, who has been somewhat ironically called the musician of the future, and whose music has been relegated to posterity by a considerable number of his contemporaries, was born at Leipsic, May 22, 1813. After his preliminary studies in Dresden and Leipsic, he took his first lessons in music from Cantor Weinlig. In 1836 he was appointed musical director in the theatre at Magdeburg, and later occupied the same position at Königsberg. Thence he went to Riga, where he began his opera "Rienzi." He then went to Paris by sea, was nearly shipwrecked on his way thither, and landed without money or friends. After two years of hard struggling he returned to Germany. His shipwreck and forlorn condition inspired the theme of "The Flying Dutchman," and while on his way to Dresden he passed near the castle of Wartburg, in the valley of Thuringia, whose legends inspired his well-known opera of "Tannhäuser." He next removed to Zurich, and about this time appeared "Lohengrin," one of his most favorite operas. "Tristan and Isolde" was produced in 1856, and his comic opera, "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg," three years later. In 1864 he received the patronage of King Louis of Bavaria, which enabled him to complete and perform his great work, "Der Ring der Nibelungen." He laid the foundation of the new theatre at Baireuth in 1872, and in 1875 the work was produced, and created a profound sensation all over the musical world. "Parsifal," his last opera, was first performed in 1882. His works have aroused great opposition, especially among conservative musicians, for the reason that he has set at defiance the conventional operatic forms, and in carrying out his theory of making the musical and dramatic elements of equal importance, and employing the former as the language of the latter in natural ways, has made musical declamation take the place of set melody, and swept away the customary arias, duets, quartets, and concerted numbers of the Italian school, to suit the dramatic exigencies of the situations. Besides his musical compositions, he enjoys almost equal fame as a litterateur, having written not only his own librettos, but four important works,—"Art and the Revolution," "The Art Work of the Future," "Opera and Drama," and "Judaism in Music." His music has made steady progress through the efforts of such advocates as Liszt, Von Bülow, and Richter in Germany, Padeloup in France, Hueffer in England, and Theodore Thomas in the United States. In 1870 he married Frau Cosima von Bülow, the daughter of Liszt,—an event which provoked almost as much comment in social circles as his operas have in musical. He died during a visit to Venice, Feb. 13, 1883.

### **RIENZI.**

"Rienzi der letzte der Tribunen," a tragic opera in five acts, words by the composer, the subject taken from Bulwer's novel, "The Last of the Tribunes," was first produced at Dresden, Oct. 20, 1842, with

Herr Tichatscheck, Mme. Schröder-Devrient, and Mlle. Wiest in the principal rôles. It was designed and partly completed during Wagner's stay in Riga as orchestra leader. In his Autobiography the composer says that he first read the story at Dresden in 1837, and was greatly impressed with its adaptability for opera. He began it in the fall of the same year at Riga, and says: "I had composed two numbers of it, when I found, to my annoyance, that I was again fairly on the way to the composition of music à la Adam. I put the work aside in disgust." Later he projected the scheme of a great tragic opera in five acts, and began upon it with fresh enthusiasm in the fall of 1838. By the spring of 1839 the first two acts were completed. At that time his engagement at Riga terminated, and he set out for Paris. He soon found that it would be hopeless for him to bring out the opera in that city, notwithstanding Meyerbeer had promised to assist him. He offered it to the Grand Opera and to the Renaissance, but neither would accept it. Nothing daunted, he resumed work upon it, intending it for Dresden. In October, 1842, it was at last produced in that city, and met with such success that it secured him the position of capellmeister at the Dresden opera-house.

The action of the opera passes at Rome, towards the middle of the fourteenth century. The first act opens at night, in a street near the Church of St. John Lateran, and discovers Orsini, a Roman patrician, accompanied by a crowd of nobles, attempting to abduct Irene, the sister of Rienzi, a papal notary. The plot is interrupted by the entrance of Colonna, the patrician leader of another faction, who demands the girl. A quarrel ensues. Adriano, the son of Colonna, who is in love with Irene, suddenly appears and rushes to her defence. Gradually other patricians and plebeians are attracted by the tumult, among the latter, Rienzi. When he becomes aware of the insult offered his sister, he takes counsel with the Cardinal Raimondo, and they agree to rouse the people in resistance to the outrages of the nobles. Adriano is placed in an embarrassing position,—his relationship to the Colonnas urging him to join the nobles, and his love for Irene impelling him with still stronger force to make common cause with the people. He finally decides to follow Rienzi, just as the trumpets are heard calling the people to arms and Rienzi clad in full armor makes his appearance to lead them.

The struggle is a short one. The nobles are overcome, and in the second act they appear at the Capitol to acknowledge their submission to Rienzi: but Adriano, who has been among them, warns Rienzi that they have plotted to kill him. Festal dances, processions, and gladiatorial combats follow, in the midst of which Orsini rushes at Rienzi and strikes at him with his dagger. Rienzi is saved by a steel breastplate under his robes. The nobles are at once seized and condemned to death. Adriano pleads with Rienzi to spare his father, and moved by his eloquence he renews the offer of pardon if they will swear submission. They take the oath only to violate it. The people rise and demand their extermination. Rienzi once more draws the sword, and Adriano in vain appeals to him to avert the slaughter. He is again successful, and on his return announces to Adriano that the Colonnas and Orsinis are no more. The latter warns him of coming revenge, and the act closes with the coronation of Rienzi.

The fourth act opens at night near the church. The popular tide has now turned against Rienzi, upon the report that he is in league with the German Emperor to restore the pontiff. A festive cortège approaches, escorting him to the church. The nobles bar his way, but disperse at his command; whereupon Adriano rushes at him with drawn dagger, but the blow is averted as he hears the chant of malediction in the church, and sees its dignitaries placing the ban of excommunication against Rienzi upon its doors. He hurries to Irene, warns her that her brother's life is no longer safe, and urges her to fly with him. She repulses him, and seeks her brother, to share his dangers or die with him. She finds him at prayer in the Capitol. He counsels her to accept the offer of Adriano and save herself, but she repeats her determination to die with him. The sounds of the approaching crowd are heard outside. Rienzi makes a last appeal to them from the balcony, but the infuriated people will not listen. They set fire to the Capitol with their torches, and stone Rienzi and Irene through the windows. As the flames spread from room to room and Adriano beholds them enveloping the devoted pair, he throws away his sword, rushes into the burning building, and perishes with them.

The overture of "Rienzi" is in the accepted form, for the opera was written before Wagner had made his new departure in music, and takes its principal themes, notably Rienzi's prayer for the people and the finale to the first act, from the body of the work. The general style of the whole work is vigorous and tumultuous. The first act opens with a hurly-burly of tumult between the contending factions and the people. The first scene contains a vigorous aria for the hero ("Wohl an so mög es sein"), which leads up to a fiery terzetto ("Adriano du? Wie ein Colonna!") between Rienzi, Irene, and Adriano, followed by an intensely passionate scene ("Er geht und lässt dich meinem Schutz") between the last two. The finale is a tumultuous mass of sound, through which are heard the tones of trumpets and cries of the people. It opens with a massive double chorus ("Gegrüsst, gegrüsst"), shouted by the people on the one side and the monks in the Lateran on the other, accompanied by an andante movement on the organ. It is interrupted for a brief space by the ringing appeal of Rienzi "Erstehe, hohe Roma, neu," and then closes with an energetic andante, a quartet joining the choruses. This finale is clearly Italian in form,

and much to Wagner's subsequent disgust was described by Hanslick as a mixture of Donizetti and Meyerbeer, and a clear presage of the coming Verdi.

The second act opens with a stately march, introducing the messengers of peace, who join in a chorus of greeting, followed by a second chorus of senators and the tender of submission made by the nobles. A *terzetto* between Adriano, Orsini, and Colonna, set off against a chorus of the nobles, leads up to the finale. It opens with a joyful chorus ("Erschallet feier Klänge"), followed by rapid dialogue between Orsini and Colonna on the one hand and Adriano and Rienzi on the other. A long and elaborate ballet intervenes, divided into several numbers,—an Introduction, Pyrrhic Dance, Combat of Roman Gladiators and Cavaliers, and the Dance of the Apotheosis, in which the Goddess of Peace is transformed to the Goddess, protector of Rome. The scene abruptly changes, and the act closes with a great ensemble in which the defiance of the conspirators, the tolling of bells, the chants of the monks, and the ferocious outcries of the people shouting for revenge are mingled in strong contrasts.

The third act is full of tumult. After a brief prelude, amid the ringing of bells and cries of alarm, the people gather and denounce the treachery of the nobles, leading up to a spirited call to arms by Rienzi ("Ihr Römer, auf!"). The people respond in furious chorus, and as the sound of the bells and battle-cries dies away Adriano enters. His scene opens with a prayer ("Gerechter Gott") for the aversion of carnage, which changes to an agitated *allegro* ("Wo war ich?") as he hears the great bell of the Capitol tolling the signal for slaughter. The finale begins with a massive march, as the bells and sounds of alarm are heard approaching again, and bands of citizens, priests and monks, the high clergy, senators and nobles, pass and repass in quick succession, at last followed by Rienzi, which is the signal for the great battle-hymn, "Santo spirito cavaliere," which is to be sung with great fire and energy, accompanied by great and small bells ringing behind the scenes, the clash of swords upon shields, and full power of chorus and orchestra. A dialogue follows between Adriano and Rienzi, and then the various bands disappear singing the *ritornelle* of the hymn. A great duet ("Lebwohl, Irene") ensues between Adriano and Irene, which in its general outlines reminds one of the duet between Raoul and Valentin in "The Huguenots." At its conclusion, after a prayer by the chorus of women, the battle hymn is heard again in the distance, gradually approaching, and the act closes with a jubilee chorus ("Auf! im Triumph zum Capitol"), welcoming the return of the conquerors.

The fourth act is short, its principal numbers being the introduction, *terzetto* and chorus ("Wer war's der euch hierher beschied?"), and the finale, beginning with a somewhat sombre march of the cortège accompanying Rienzi to the church, leading to the details of the conspiracy scene, and closing with the malediction of the monks, "Vae, vae tibi maledicto." The last act opens with an impressive prayer by Rienzi ("Allmacht'ger Vater"), which leads to a tender duet ("Verlässt die Kirche mich") as Irene enters, closing with a passionate aria by Rienzi ("Ich liebte glühend"). The duet is then resumed, and leads to a second and intensely passionate duet ("Du hier Irene!") between Adriano and Irene. The finale is brief, but full of energy, and is principally choral. The *dénouement* hurries, and the tragedy is reached amid a tumultuous outburst of voices and instruments. Unlike Wagner's other operas, in "Rienzi" set melody dominates, and the orchestra, as in the Italian school, furnishes the accompaniments. We have the regular overture, aria, duet, trio, and concerted finale; but after "Rienzi" we shall observe a change, at last becoming so radical that the composer himself threw aside his first opera as unworthy of performance.

## **THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.**

"Der Fliegende Holländer," a romantic opera in three acts, words by the composer, the subject taken from Heinrich Heine's version of the legend, was first produced at Dresden, Jan. 2, 1843, with Mme. Schröder-Devrient and Herr Wechter in the two principal rôles. It was also produced in London in 1870 at Drury Lane as "L'Ollandose dannato," by Signor Arditì, with Mlle. Di Murska, Signors Foli, Perotti, and Rinaldini, and Mr. Santley in the leading parts; in 1876, by Carl Rosa as "The Flying Dutchman," an English version; and again in 1877 as "Il Vascello fantasma." In this country the opera was introduced in its English form by Miss Clara Louise Kellogg.

Wagner conceived the idea of writing "The Flying Dutchman" during the storm which overtook him on his voyage from Riga to Paris. He says in his Autobiography: "'The Flying Dutchman,' whose intimate acquaintance I had made at sea, continually enchained my fancy. I had become acquainted, too, with Heinrich Heine's peculiar treatment of the legend in one portion of his 'Salon.' Especially the treatment of the delivery of this Ahasuerus of the ocean (taken by Heine from a Dutch drama of the same title) gave me everything ready to use the legend as the libretto of an opera. I came to an understanding about it with Heine himself, drew up the scheme, and gave it to M. Léon Pillet [manager of the Grand Opera], with the proposition that he should have a French libretto made from it for me." Subsequently M. Pillet purchased the libretto direct from Wagner, who consented to the transaction, as he saw no opportunity of producing the opera in Paris. It was then set by Dietsch as "Le Vaisseau fantôme," and

brought out in Paris in 1842. In the mean time, not discouraged by his bad fortune, Wagner set to work, wrote the German verse, and completed the opera in seven weeks for Dresden, where it was finally performed, as already stated. Unlike "Rienzi," it met with failure both in Dresden and Berlin; but its merits were recognized by Spohr, who encouraged him to persevere in the course he had marked out.

The plot of the opera is very simple. A Norwegian vessel, commanded by Daland, compelled by stress of weather, enters a port not far from her destination. At the same time a mysterious vessel, with red sails and black hull, commanded by the wandering Flying Dutchman, who is destined to sail the seas without rest until he finds a maiden who will be faithful until death, puts into the same port. The two captains meet, and Daland invites the stranger to his home. The two at last progress so rapidly in mutual favor that a marriage is agreed upon between the stranger and Senta, Daland's daughter. The latter is a dreamy, imaginative girl, who, though she has an accepted lover, Eric, is so fascinated with the legend of the stranger that she becomes convinced she is destined to save him from perdition. When he arrives with her father she recognizes him at once, and vows eternal constancy to him. In the last act, however, Eric appears and reproaches Senta with her faithlessness. The stranger overhears them, and concludes that as she has been recreant to her former lover, so too she will be untrue to him. He decides to leave her; for if he should remain, her penalty would be eternal death. As his mysterious vessel sails away Senta rushes to a cliff, and crying out that her life will be the price of his release, hurls herself into the sea, vowing to be constant to him even in death. The phantom vessel sinks, the sea grows calm, and in the distance the two figures are seen rising in the sunlight never to be parted.

The overture characterizes the persons and situations of the drama, and introduces the motives which Wagner ever after used so freely,—among them the curse resting upon the Dutchman, the restless motion of the sea, the message of the Angel of Mercy personified in Senta, the personification of the Dutchman, and the song of Daland's crew. The first act opens with an introduction representing a storm, and a characteristic sailors' chorus, followed by an exquisite love-song for tenor ("Mit Gewitter und Sturm"), and a grand scena of the Dutchman ("Die Frist ist um"), which lead up to a melodious duet between the Dutchman and Daland. The act closes with the sailors' chorus as the two vessels sail away.

After a brief instrumental prelude, the second act opens in Daland's home, where the melancholy Senta sits surrounded by her companions, who are spinning. To the whirring accompaniment of the violins they sing a very realistic spinning song ("Summ' und brumm du gutes Mädchen"), interrupted at intervals by the laughter of the girls as they rally Senta upon her melancholy looks. Senta replies with a weird and exquisitely melodious ballad ("Johohae! trifft ihr das Schiff im Meere an"), in which she tells the story of the Flying Dutchman, and anticipates her own destiny. The song is full of intense feelings and is characterized by a motive which frequently recurs in the opera, and is the key to the whole work. A duet follows between Eric and Senta, the melodious character of which shows that Wagner was not yet entirely freed from Italian influences. A short duet ensues between Senta and her father, and then the Dutchman appears. As they stand and gaze at each other for a long time, the orchestra meanwhile supplying the supposed emotions of each, we have a clew to the method Wagner was afterwards to employ so successfully. A duet between Senta and the Dutchman ("Wie aus der Ferne") and a terzetto with Daland close the act.

The third act opens with another sailors' chorus ("Steuermann, lass' die Wacht"), and a brisk dialogue between them and the women who are bringing them provisions. The latter also hail the crew of the Dutchman's vessel, but get no reply until the wind suddenly rises, when they man the vessel and sing the refrain with which the Dutchman is continually identified. A double chorus of the two crews follows. Senta then appears accompanied by Eric, who seeks to restrain her from following the stranger in a very dramatic duet ("Was muss ich hören?"). The finale is made up of sailors' and female choruses, and a trio between Senta, Daland, and the Dutchman, which are woven together with consummate skill, and make a very effective termination to the weird story. There are no points in common between "The Flying Dutchman" and "Rienzi," except that in the former Wagner had not yet clearly freed himself from conventional melody. It is interesting as marking his first step towards the music of the future in his use of motives, his wonderful treatment of the orchestra in enforcing the expression of the text, and his combination of the voices and instrumentation in what he so aptly calls "The Music-Drama."

## **TANNHÄUSER**

"Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg" ("Tannhäuser and the singers' contest at the Wartburg"), a romantic opera in three acts, words by the composer, was first produced at the Royal Opera, Dresden, Oct. 20, 1845, with Mme. Schröder-Devrient and Herr Niemann as Elizabeth and Tannhäuser. Its first performance in Paris was on March 13, 1861; but it was a failure after three representations, and was made the butt of Parisian ridicule, even Berlioz joining in the tirade. In England it was brought out in Italian at Covent Garden, May 6, 1876, though its overture was played by the London Philharmonic orchestra in 1855, Wagner himself leading.

In the spring of 1842 Wagner returned from Paris to Germany, and on his way to Dresden visited the castle of Wartburg, in the Thuringian Valley, where he first conceived the idea of writing "Tannhäuser." The plot was taken from an old German tradition, which centres about the castle where the landgraves of the thirteenth century instituted peaceful contests between the Minnesingers and knightly poets. Near this castle towers the Venusberg, a dreary elevation, which, according to popular tradition, was inhabited by Holda, the goddess of Spring. Proscribed by Christianity, she took refuge in its caverns, where she was afterwards confounded with the Grecian Venus. Her court was filled with nymphs and sirens, who enticed those whose impure desires led them to its vicinity, and lured them into the caverns, from which they were supposed never to return. The first act opens in this court, and reveals Tannhäuser, the knight and minstrel, under the sway of Venus. In spite of her fascinations he succeeds in tearing himself away, and we next find him at the castle of Wartburg, the home of Hermann the Landgrave, whose daughter Elizabeth is in love with him. At the minstrel contest he enters into the lists with the other Minnesingers, and, impelled by a reckless audacity and the subtle influence of Venus, sings of the attractions of sensual pleasures. Walter, of the Vogelweide, replies with a song to virtue. Tannhäuser breaks out in renewed sensual strains, and a quarrel ensues. The knights rush upon him with their swords, but Elizabeth interposes and saves his life. He expresses his penitence, makes a pilgrimage to Rome and confesses to the Pope, who replies that, having tasted the pleasures of hell, he is forever damned, and, raising his crosier, adds: "Even as this wood cannot blossom again, so there is no pardon for thee." Elizabeth prays for him in her solitude, but her prayers apparently are of no avail. At last he returns dejected and hopeless, and in his wanderings meets Wolfram, another minstrel, also in love with Elizabeth, to whom he tells the sad story of his pilgrimage. He determines to return to the Venusberg. He hears the voices of the sirens luring him back. Wolfram seeks to detain him, but is powerless until he mentions the name of Elizabeth, when the sirens vanish and their spells lose their attraction. A funeral procession approaches in the distance, and on the bier is the form of the saintly Elizabeth. He sinks down upon the coffin and dies. As his spirit passes away his pilgrim's staff miraculously bursts out into leaf and blossom, showing that his sins have been forgiven.

The overture to the opera is well known by its frequent performances as a concert number. It begins with the pilgrim's song, which, as it dies away, is succeeded by the seductive spells of the Venusberg and the voices of the sirens calling to Tannhäuser. As the whirring sounds grow fainter and fainter, the pilgrim's song is again heard gradually approaching, and at last closing the overture in a joyous burst of harmony. The first act opens with the scene in the Venusberg, accompanied by the Bacchanale music, which was written in Paris by Wagner after the opera was finished and had been performed. It is now known as "the Parisian Bacchanale." It is followed by a voluptuous scene between Tannhäuser and Venus, a long dialogue, during which the hero, seizing his harp, trolls out a song ("Doch sterblich, ach!"), the theme of which has already been given out by the overture, expressing his weariness of her companionship. The second scene transports us to a valley, above which towers the castle of Wartburg. A young shepherd, perched upon a rock, sings a pastoral invocation to Holda ("Frau Holda kam aus dem Berg hervor"), the strains of his pipe (an oboe obligato) weaving about the stately chorus of the elder pilgrims ("Zu dir wall' ich, mein Herr und Gott") as they come along the mountain paths from the castle. The scene, which is one of great beauty, closes with the lament of Tannhäuser ("Ach! schwer drückt mich der Sünden Last"), intermingled with the receding song of the pilgrims, the ringing of church-bells in the distance, and the merry notes of hunters' horns as the Landgrave and his followers approach. The meeting with Tannhäuser leads to an expressive septet, in which Wolfram has a very impressive solo ("Als du in kühnem Sange").

The second act opens in the singers' hall of the Wartburg. Elizabeth, entering joyfully, greets it in a recitation ("Froh grüss ich dich, geliebter Raum"), if we may so term it, which is characterized by a joyous but dignified dramatic appeal, recalling the scenes of her youth. The interview between Tannhäuser and Elizabeth, which follows, gives rise to a long dialogue, closing with a union of the two voices in the charming duet, "Gepriesen sei die Macht." Then follows the grand march and chorus, "Freudig begrüßen wir die edle Halle," announcing the beginning of the song contest. The stirring rhythm and bold, broad outlines of this march are so well known that it is needless to dwell upon it. The scene of the contest is declamatory throughout, and full of animation and spirit; its most salient points being the hymn of Wolfram ("O Himmel lasst dich jetzt erleben") in honor of ideal love, and Elizabeth's appeal to the knights to spare Tannhäuser ("Zurück von ihm"), which leads up to a spirited septet and choral ensemble closing the act.

In the third act we are once more in the valley of the Wartburg. After a plaintive song by Wolfram ("Wohl wusst ich hier sie im Gebet zu finden"), the chorus of the returning pilgrims is heard in the distance, working up to a magnificent crescendo as they approach and cross the stage. Elizabeth, who has been earnestly watching them to find if Tannhäuser be of their number, disappointed, sinks upon her knees and sings the touching prayer, "Allmächt'ge Jungfrau, hör mein Flehen." As she leaves the scene, Wolfram takes his harp and sings the enchanting fantasy to the evening star, "O, du mein holder Abendstern,"—a love-song to the saintly Elizabeth. Tannhäuser makes his appearance. A long

declamatory dialogue ensues between himself and Wolfram, in which he recites the story of his pilgrimage. The scene is one of extraordinary power, and calls for the highest vocal and dramatic qualities in order to make it effective. From this point on, the tragedy hastens. There is the struggle once more with the sirens, and amid Wolfram's touching appeals and Tannhäuser's exclamations is heard the enticement of the Venus music. But at the name "Elizabeth" it dies away. The mists grow denser as the magic crew disappears, and through them is seen a light upon the Wartburg. The tolling of bells and the songs of mourners are heard as the cortège approaches. As Tannhäuser dies, the pilgrims' chorus again rises in ecstasy, closing with a mighty shout of "Hallelujah!" and the curtain falls.

## **LOHENGRIN.**

"Lohengrin," a romantic opera in three acts, words by the composer, was first produced at Weimar, Aug. 28, 1850, the anniversary of Goethe's birthday, under the direction of Franz Liszt, and with the following cast of the leading parts:—

LOHENGRIN Herr BECK.  
TELAMUND Herr MILDE.  
KING Herr HOFER.  
ELSA Frau AGATHE.  
ORTRUD Fraülein FASTLINGER.

"Lohengrin" was begun in Paris, and finished in Switzerland during the period in which Wagner was director of the musical society as well as of the orchestra at the city theatre of Zurich, whither he had fled to escape the penalties for taking part in the political agitations and subsequent insurrection of 1849. Though it manifests a still further advancement in the development of his system, it was far from being composed according to the abstract rules he had laid down. He says explicitly on this point, in his "Music of the Future:" "The first three of these poems—'The Flying Dutchman,' 'Tannhäuser,' and 'Lohengrin'—were written by me, their music composed, and all (with the exception of 'Lohengrin') performed upon the stage, before the composition of my theoretical writings."

The story of Lohengrin, the son of Parsifal, upon which Wagner has based his drama, is taken from many sources, the old Celtic legend of King Arthur, his knights, and the Holy Grail being mixed with the distinctively German legend of a knight who arrives in his boat drawn by a swan. The version used by Wagner is supposed to be told by Wolfram von Eschenbach, the Minnesinger, at one of the Wartburg contests, and is in substance as follows: Henry I., King of Germany, known as "the Fowler," arrives at Antwerp for the purpose of raising a force to help him expel the Hungarians, who are threatening his dominions. He finds Brabant in a condition of anarchy. Gottfried, the young son of the late Duke, has mysteriously disappeared, and Telramund, the husband of Ortrud, daughter of the Prince of Friesland, claims the dukedom. The claimant openly charges Elsa, sister of Gottfried, with having murdered him to obtain the sovereignty, and she is summoned before the King to submit her cause to the ordeal of battle between Telramund and any knight whom she may name. She describes a champion whom she has seen in a vision, and conjures him to appear in her behalf. After a triple summons by the heralds, he is seen approaching on the Scheldt, in a boat drawn by a swan. Before the combat Lohengrin betroths himself to Elsa, naming only the condition that she shall never question him as to his name or race. She assents, and the combat results in Telramund's defeat and public disgrace.

In the second act occur the bridal ceremonies, prior to which, moved by Ortrud's entreaties, Elsa promises to obtain a reprieve for Telramund from the sentence which has been pronounced against him. At the same time Ortrud takes advantage of her success to instil doubts into Elsa's mind as to her future happiness and the faithfulness of Lohengrin.

In the next scene, as the bridal cortège is about to enter the minster, Ortrud claims the right of precedence by virtue of her rank, and Telramund publicly accuses Lohengrin of sorcery. The faith of Elsa, however, is not shaken. The two conspirators are ordered to stand aside, the train enters the church, and Elsa and Lohengrin are united.

The third act opens in the bridal chamber. The seeds of curiosity and distrust which Ortrud has sown in Elsa's mind have ripened, and in spite of her conviction that it will end her happiness, she questions Lohengrin with increasing vehemence, at last openly demanding to know his secret. At this juncture Telramund breaks into the apartment with four followers, intending to take the life of Lohengrin. A single blow of the knight's sword stretches him lifeless. He then places Elsa in the charge of her ladies and orders them to take her to the presence of the King, whither he also repairs. Compelled by his wife's unfortunate rashness, he discloses himself as the son of Parsifal, Knight of the Holy Grail, and announces that he must now return to its guardianship. His swan once more appears, and as he steps into the boat he bids Elsa an eternal farewell. Before he sails away, however, Ortrud declares to the

wondering crowd that the swan is Elsa's brother, who has been bewitched by herself into this form, and would have been released but for Elsa's curiosity. Lohengrin at once disenchant the swan, and Gottfried appears and rushes into his sister's arms. A white dove flies through the air and takes the place of the swan, and Lohengrin sails away as Elsa dies in the embrace of her newly found brother.

The Vorspiel, or prelude, to the opera takes for its subject the descent of the Holy Grail, the mysterious symbol of the Christian faith, and the Grail motive is the key to the whole work. The delicious harmonies which accompany its descent increase in warmth and power until the sacred mystery is revealed to human eyes, and then die away to a pianissimo, and gradually disappear as the angels bearing the holy vessel return to their celestial abode. The curtain rises upon a meadow on the banks of the Scheldt, showing King Henry surrounded by his vassals and retainers. After their choral declaration of allegiance, Telramund, in a long declamatory scena of great power ("Zum Sterben kam der Herzog von Brabant"), tells the story of the troubles in Brabant, and impeaches Elsa. At the King's command, Elsa appears, and in a melodious utterance of extreme simplicity and sweetness, which is called the dream motive ("Einsam in trüben Tagen"), relates the vision of the knight who is to come to her assistance. The summons of the heralds preludes the climax of the act. Amid natural outcries of popular wonderment Lohengrin appears, and, as he leaves his boat, bids farewell to his swan in a strain of delicate beauty ("Nun sei gedankt, mein lieber Schwan"). The preparations for the combat are made, but before it begins, the motive of warning is sounded by Lohengrin ("Nie sollst du mich befragen"). The finale of the act takes the form of a powerful ensemble, composed of sextet and chorus, and beginning with the prayer of the King, "Mein Herr und Gott, nun ruf ich Dich."

The second act opens upon a night scene near the palace, which is merry with the wedding festivities, while the discomfited Telramund and Ortrud are plotting their conspiracy without in a long duet ("Erhebe dich, Genossin meiner Schmach"), which introduces new motives of hatred and revenge, as opposed to the Grail motive. In the second scene Elsa appears upon the balcony and sings a love-song ("Euch Lüften, die mein Klagen"), whose tenderness and confidence are in marked contrast with the doubts sown in her mind by Ortrud before the scene closes. The third scene is preluded with descriptive sunrise music by the orchestra, followed by the herald's proclamations, interspersed by choral responses, leading up to the bridal-procession music as the train moves on from the palace to the cathedral, accompanied by a stately march and choral strains, and all the artistic surroundings of a beautiful stage pageant. The progress is twice interrupted; first by Ortrud, who asserts her precedence, and second by Telramund, who, in the scena "Den dort im Glanz," accuses Lohengrin of sorcery. When Elsa still expresses her faith, the train moves on, and reaches its destination amid the acclamations of the chorus ("Heil, Elsa von Brabant!").

The third act opens in the bridal chamber with the graceful bridal song by Elsa's ladies, "Treulich geführt, ziehet dahin," whose melodious strains have accompanied many unions, the world over, besides those of Elsa and Lohengrin. The second scene is an exquisite picture of the mutual outpouring of love, at first full of beauty and tenderness, but gradually darkening as Ortrud's insinuations produce their effect in Elsa's mind. Tenderly Lohengrin appeals to her, but in vain; and at last the motive of warning is heard. The fatal questions are asked, the tragedy of Telramund follows, and all is over. The last scene introduces us once more to the meadow on the Scheldt, where Lohengrin appears before the King and his vassals. In their presence he reveals himself as the son of Parsifal, in a scena of consummate power ("In fernem Land, unnahbar euren Schritten"), wherein the Grail motive reaches its fullest development. It is followed by his touching farewell, "O Elsa! nur ein Jahr an deiner Seite," the melody of which can hardly be surpassed in dignity and impressiveness. The dénouement now hastens, and Lohengrin disappears, to the accompaniment of the Grail motive.

## **TRISTAN UND ISOLDE.**

"Tristan und Isolde," an opera in three acts, words by the composer, was first produced at Munich, June 10, 1865, under the direction of Hans von Bülow, with the following cast of characters:—

TRISTAN Herr LUDWIG SCHNORR VON CAROLSFELD.

KURWENAL Herr MITTERWURZER.

KING MARK Herr ZOTTMAYER.

ISOLDE Mme. SCHNORR VON CAROLSFELD.

BRANGOENA Mlle. DEINET.

"Tristan and Isolde" was commenced in 1857 and finished in 1859, during the period in which Wagner was engaged upon his colossal work, "The Ring of the Nibelung." As early as the middle of 1852 he had finished the four dramatic poems which comprise the cyclus of the latter, and during the next three years he finished the music to "Das Rheingold" and "Die Walküre." In one of his letters he says: "In the summer of 1857 I determined to interrupt the execution of my work on the Nibelungen

and begin something shorter, which should renew my connection with the stage." The legend of Tristan was selected. It is derived from the old Celtic story of "Tristram and Iseult," the version adopted by Wagner being that of Gottfried of Strasburg, a bard of the thirteenth century, though it must be said he uses it in his own manner, and at times widely departs both from the original and the mediæval poem.

In "Tristan and Isolde" Wagner broke completely loose from all the conventional forms of opera. It has nothing in common with the old style of lyric entertainment. As Hueffer says, in his recent *Life of Wagner*: "Here is heard for the first time the unimpaired language of dramatic passion intensified by an uninterrupted flow of expressive melody. Here also the orchestra obtains that wide range of emotional expression which enables it, like the chorus of the antique tragedy, to discharge the dialogue of an overplus of lyrical elements without weakening the intensity of the situation, which it accompanies like an unceasing passionate undercurrent." In an opera like this, which is intended to commingle dramatic action, intensity of verse, and the power and charm of the music in one homogeneous whole, the reader will at once observe the difficulty of doing much more than the telling of its story, leaving the musical declamation and effects to be inferred from the text. Even Wagner himself in the original title is careful to designate the work "Ein Handlung" (an action).

The Vorspiel to the drama is based upon a single motive, which is worked up with consummate skill into various melodic forms, and frequently appears throughout the work. It might well be termed the motive of restless, irresistible passion. The drama opens on board a ship in which the Cornish knight, Tristan, is bearing Isolde, the unwilling Irish bride, to King Mark of Cornwall. As the vessel is nearing the land, Isolde sends Brangoena to the Knight, who is also in love with her, but holds himself aloof by reason of a blood-feud, and orders him to appear at her side. His refusal turns Isolde's affection to bitterness, and she resolves that he shall die, and that she will share death with him. She once more calls Tristan, and tells him that the time has come for him to make atonement for slaying her kinsman, Morold.

She directs Brangoena to mix a death-potion and invites him to drink with her, but without her knowledge Brangoena has prepared a love-potion, which inflames their passions beyond power of restraint. Oblivious of the landing, the approach of the royal train, and all that is going on about them, they remain folded in mutual embrace.

The second act opens in Cornwall, in a garden which leads to Isolde's chamber, she being already wedded to King Mark. With Brangoena she is waiting for Tristan. The King goes out upon a night hunt, and no sooner has he disappeared than Isolde gives the signal for his approach, while Brangoena goes to her station to watch. The second scene is a most elaborate love-duet between the guilty pair, the two voices at first joining ("Bist du mein? Hab'ich dich wieder?"). A passionate dialogue ensues, and then the two voices join again ("O sink' hernieder, Nacht der Liebe"). After a brief dialogue Brangoena's warning voice is heard. Absorbed in each other, they pay no heed, and once more they join in the very ecstasy of passion, so far as it can be given musical form, in the finale of the duet, "O süsse Nacht! Ew'ge Nacht! Hehr erhabne Liebes-Nacht." The treachery of Sir Melot, Tristan's pretended friend, betrays the lovers to the King. Tristan offers no explanations, but touched by the King's bitter reproaches provokes Sir Melot to combat and allows himself to be mortally wounded.

The third act opens in Brittany, whither Kurwenal, Tristan's faithful henchman, has taken him. A shepherd lad watches from a neighboring height to announce the appearance of a vessel, for Kurwenal has sent for Isolde to heal his master's wound. At last the stirring strains of the shepherd's pipe signal her coming. In his delirious joy Tristan tears the bandages from his wounds, and has only strength enough left to call Isolde by name and die in her arms. Now a second vessel is seen approaching, bearing King Mark and his men. Thinking that his design is hostile, Kurwenal attempts to defend the castle, but is soon forced to yield, and dies at the feet of his master. The King exclaims against his rashness, for since he had heard Brangoena's story of the love-potion he had come to give his consent to the union of the lovers. Isolde, transfigured with grief, sings her last farewell to her lover ("Mild und leise wie er lächelt"), and expires on his body. The dying song is one of great beauty and pathos, and sadly recalls the passion of the duet in the second act, as Isolde's mournful strains are accompanied in the orchestra by the sweetly melodious motives which had been heard in it, the interweaving of the two also suggesting that in death the lovers have been reunited.

## **THE MASTERSINGERS.**

"Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg," a comic opera in three acts, words by the composer, was first produced at Munich, June 21, 1868, under the direction of Hans von Bülow, with the following cast:

HANS SACHS Herr BETZ.

WALTER Herr NACHBAUER.

BECKMESSER Herr HÖLZEL.



DAVID Herr SCHLOSSER.  
EVA Mlle. MALLINGER.  
MAGDALENA Mme. DIETZ.

The plan of "The Mastersingers" was conceived about the same time as that of "Lohengrin," during the composer's stay at Marienbad, and occupied his attention at intervals for twenty years, as it was not finished until 1867. As is clearly apparent both from its music and text, it was intended as a satire upon the composer's critics, who had charged that he was incapable of writing melody. It is easy to see that these critics are symbolized by the old pedant Beckmesser, and that in Walter we have Wagner himself. When he is first brought in contact with the Mastersingers, and one of their number, Kothner, asks him if he gained his knowledge in any school, he replies, "The wood before the Vogelweid", 'twas there I learnt my singing;" and again he answers:—

"What winter night.  
What wood so bright,  
What book and nature brought me,  
What poet songs of magic might  
Mysteriously have taught me,  
On horses' tramp,  
On field and camp,  
On knights arrayed  
For war parade  
My mind its powers exerted."

The story is not only one of love as between Walter and Eva, but of satirical protest as between Walter and Beckmesser, and the two subjects are illustrated not only with delicate fancy but with the liveliest of humor. The work is replete with melody. It has chorales, marches, folk-songs, duets, quintets, ensembles, and choruses, and yet the composer does not lose sight of his theories; for here we observe as characteristic a use of motives and as skilful a combination of them as can be found in any of his works. To thoroughly comprehend the story, it is necessary to understand the conditions one had to fulfil before he could be a mastersinger. First of all he must master the "Tabulatur," which included the rules and prohibitions. Then he must have the requisite acquaintance with the various methods of rhyming verse, and with the manner of fitting appropriate music to it. One who had partially mastered the Tabulatur was termed a "scholar;" the one who had thoroughly learned it, a "schoolman;" the one who could improvise verses, a "poet;" and the one who could set music to his verses, a "mastersinger." In the test there were thirty-three faults to be guarded against; and whenever the marker had chalked up seven against the candidate, he was declared to have oversung himself and lost the coveted honor.

The vorspiel is a vivid delineation of mediæval German life, full of festive pomp, stirring action, glowing passion, and exuberant humor. The first act opens in the Church of St. Katherine, at Nuremberg, with the singing of a chorale to organ accompaniment. During the chorale and its interludes a quiet love-scene is being enacted between Eva, daughter of the wealthy goldsmith Veit Pogner, and Walter von Stolzing, a noble young knight. The attraction is mutual. Eva is ready to become his bride, but it is necessary that her husband should be a mastersinger. Rather than give up the hand of the fair Eva, Walter, short as the time is, determines to master the precepts and enter the lists. As Eva and her attendant, Magdalena, leave the church, the apprentices enter to arrange for the trial, among them David, the friskiest of them all, who is in love with Magdalena. He volunteers to give Walter some instructions, but they do not avail him much in the end, for the lesson is sadly disturbed by the gibes of the boys, in a scene full of musical humor. At last Pogner and Beckmesser, the marker, who is also a competitor for Eva's hand, enter from the sacristy. After a long dialogue between them the other masters assemble, Hans Sachs, the cobbler-bard, coming in last. After calling the roll, the ceremonies open with a pompous address by Pogner ("Das schöne Fest, Johannis-Tag"), in which he promises the hand of Eva, "with my gold and goods beside," to the successful singer on the morrow, which is John the Baptist's Day. After a long parley among the gossiping masters, Pogner introduces Walter as a candidate for election. He sings a charming song ("So rief der Lenz in den Wald"), and as he sings, the marker, concealed behind a screen, is heard scoring down the faults. When he displays the slate it is found to be covered with them. The masters declare him outsung and rejected, but Hans Sachs befriends him, and demands he shall have a chance for the prize.

The second act discloses Pogner's house and Sachs's shop. The apprentices are busy putting up the shutters, and are singing as they work. Walter meets Eva and plots an elopement with her, but Sachs prevents them from carrying out their rash plan. Meanwhile Beckmesser makes his appearance with his lute for the purpose of serenading Eva and rehearsing the song he is to sing for the prize on the morrow. As he is about to sing, Sachs breaks out into a rollicking folk-song ("Jerum, jerum, halla, halla, he!"), in which he sings of Mother Eve and the troubles she had after she left Paradise, for want of shoes. At last he allows Beckmesser a hearing, provided he will permit him to mark the faults with his

hammer upon the shoe he is making. The marker consents, and sings his song, "Den Tag seh' ich erscheinen," accompanied with excruciating roulades of the old-fashioned conventional sort; but Sachs knocks so often that his shoe is finished long before Beckmesser's song. This is his first humiliation. Before the act finishes he is plunged into still further trouble, for David suspects him of designs upon Magdalena, and a general quarrel ensues.

The third act opens upon a peaceful Sunday-morning scene in the sleepy old town, and shows us Sachs sitting in his arm-chair at the window reading his Bible, and now and then expressing his hopes for Walter's success, as the great contest is soon to take place. At last he leans back, and after a brief meditation commences a characteristic song ("Wahn! wahn! Ueberall wahn!"). A long dialogue ensues between him and Walter, and then as Eva, David, Magdalena, and Beckmesser successively enter, the scene develops into a magnificent quintet, which is one of the most charming numbers in the opera. The situation then suddenly changes. The stage-setting represents an open meadow on the banks of the Pegnitz. The river is crowded with boats. The plain is covered with tents full of merrymakers. The different guilds are continually arriving. A livelier or more stirring scene can hardly be imagined than Wagner has here pictured, with its accompaniment of choruses by the various handicraftsmen, their pompous marches, and the rural strains of town pipers. At last the contest begins. Beckmesser attempts to get through his song and dismally fails. Walter follows him with the beautiful prize-song, "Morgenlich leuchtend in rosigem Schein." He wins the day and the hand of Eva. Exultant Sachs trolls out a lusty lay ("Verachtet mir der Meister nicht"), and the stirring scene ends with the acclamations of the people ("Heil Sachs! Hans Sachs! Heil Nürnberg's theurem Sachs!").

### **THE RING OF THE NIBELUNG.**

"Der Ring des Nibelungen," a trilogy, the subject taken from the Nibelungen Lied and adapted by the composer, was first conceived by Wagner during the composition of "Lohengrin." The four dramatic poems which constitute its cyclus were written as early as 1852, which will correct a very general impression that this colossal work was projected during the closing years of his life. On the contrary, it was the product of his prime. Hueffer, in his biographical sketch of Wagner, says that he hesitated between the historical and mythical principles as the subjects of his work,—Frederick the First representing the former, and Siegfried, the hero of Teutonic mythology, the latter. Siegfried was finally selected. "Wagner began at once sketching the subject, but gradually the immense breadth and grandeur of the old types began to expand under his hands, and the result was a trilogy, or rather tetralogy, of enormous dimensions, perhaps the most colossal attempt upon which the dramatic muse has ventured since the times of Æschylus." The trilogy is really in four parts,—"Das Rheingold" (the Rhinegold); "Die Walküre" (the Valkyrie); "Siegfried"; and "Die Götterdämmerung" (the Twilight of the Gods), "The Rhinegold" being in the nature of an introduction to the trilogy proper, though occupying an evening for its performance. Between the years 1852 and 1856 the composer wrote the music of the "Rhinegold" and the whole of "The Valkyrie;" and then, as he says himself, wishing to keep up his active connection with the stage, he interrupted the progress of the main scheme, and wrote "Tristan and Isolde," which occupied him from 1856 to 1859. During its composition, however, he did not entirely forsake the trilogy. In the autumn of 1856 he began "Siegfried," the composition of which was not finished until 1869, owing to many other objects which engaged his attention during this period, one of which was the composition of "The Mastersingers," which he wrote at intervals between 1861 and 1867. From the latter year until 1876, when the trilogy was produced at Baireuth, he gave himself wholly to the work of completing it and preparing it for the stage.

Prior to the production of the completed work, separate parts of it were given, though Wagner strongly opposed it. "The Rhinegold," or introduction, came to a public dress-rehearsal at Munich Aug. 25, 1869, and "The Valkyrie" was performed in a similar manner in the same city, June 24, 1870, with the following cast:—

WOTAN Herr KINDERMANN.  
SIEGMUND Herr VOGL.  
HUNDING Herr BAUSERWEIN.  
BRÜNNHILDE Fr. STEHLE.  
SIEGLINDE Frau VOGL.  
FRICKA Fr. KAUFFMANN.

The "Siegfried" and "Götterdämmerung," however, were not given until the entire work was performed in 1876. Upon the completion of his colossal task Wagner began to look about him for the locality, theatre, artists, and materials suitable for a successful representation. In the circular which he issued, narrating the circumstances which led up to the building of the Baireuth opera-house, he says: "As early as the spring of 1871 I had, quietly and unnoticed, had my eye upon Baireuth, the place I had chosen for my purpose. The idea of using the Margravian Opera-House was abandoned so soon as I saw

its interior construction. But yet the peculiar character of that kindly town and its site so answered my requirements, that during the wintry latter part of the autumn of the same year I repeated my visit,—this time, however, to treat with the city authorities.... An unsurpassably beautiful and eligible plot of ground at no great distance from the town was given me on which to erect the proposed theatre. Having come to an understanding as to its erection with a man of approved inventive genius, and of rare experience in the interior arrangement of theatres, we could then intrust to an architect of equal acquaintance with theatrical building the further planning and the erection of the provisional structure. And despite the great difficulties which attended the arrangements for putting under way so unusual an undertaking, we made such progress that the laying of the corner-stone could be announced to our patrons and friends for May 22, 1872." The ceremony took place as announced, and was made still further memorable by a magnificent performance of Beethoven's Ninth or Choral Symphony, the chorus of which, set to Schiller's "Ode to Joy," was sung by hundreds of lusty German throats. In addition to the other contents of the stone, Wagner deposited the following mystic verse of his own:

"I bury here a secret deep,  
For centuries long to lie concealed;  
Yet while this stone its trust shall keep,  
To all the secret stands revealed."

He also made an eloquent address, setting forth the details of the plans and the purposes of the new temple of art. The undertaking was now fairly inaugurated. The erratic King of Bavaria had from the first been Wagner's steadfast friend and munificent patron; but not to him alone belongs the credit of the colossal project and its remarkable success. When Wagner first made known his views, other friends, among them Tausig, the eminent pianist, at once devoted themselves to his cause. In connection with a lady of high rank, Baroness von Schleinitz, he proposed to raise the sum of three hundred thousand thalers by the sale of patronage shares at three hundred thalers each, and had already entered upon the work when his death for the time dashed Wagner's hopes. Other friends, however, now came forward. An organization for the promotion of the scheme, called the "Richard Wagner Society," was started at Mannheim. Notwithstanding the ridicule which it excited, another society was formed at Vienna. Like societies began to appear in all the principal cities of Germany, and they found imitators in Milan, Pesth, Brussels, London, and New York. Shares were taken so rapidly that the success of the undertaking was no longer doubtful. Meanwhile the theatre itself was under construction. It combined several peculiarities, one of the most novel of which was the concealment of the orchestra by the sinking of the floor, so that the view of the audience could not be interrupted by the musicians and their movements. Private boxes were done away with, the arrangement of the seats being like that of an ancient amphitheatre, all of them facing the stage. Two prosceniums were constructed which gave an indefinable sense of distance to the stage-picture. To relieve the bare side walls, a row of pillars was planned, gradually widening outward and forming the end of the rows of seats, thus having the effect of a third proscenium. The stage portion of the theatre was twice as high as the rest of the building, for all the scenery was both raised and lowered, the incongruity between the two parts being concealed by a façade in front. "Whoever has rightly understood me," says Wagner, "will readily perceive that architecture itself had to acquire a new significance under the inspiration of the genius of Music, and thus that the myth of Amphion building the walls of Thebes by the notes of his lyre has yet a meaning."

The theatre was completed in 1876, and in the month of August (13-16) Wagner saw the dream of his life take the form of reality. He had everything at his command,—a theatre specially constructed for his purpose; a stage which in size, scenery, mechanical arrangements, and general equipment, has not its equal in the world; an array of artists the best that Europe could produce; an orchestra almost literally composed of virtuosi. The audience which gathered at these performances—composed of princes, illustrious men in every department of science and culture, and prominent musicians from all parts of the world—was one of which any composer might have been proud, while the representation itself marked an epoch in musical history, and promulgated a new system of laws destined to affect operatic composition ever after.

The casts of the various portions of the trilogy upon this memorable occasion were as follows:

**DAS RHEINGOLD. (PRELUDE.)**

WOTAN | (Herr BETZ.  
DONNER | (Herr GURA.  
| Gods  
FROH | (Herr UNGER.  
LOGE | (Herr VOGL.  
  
FASOLT | (Herr EILERS.

| Giants  
FAFNER | (Herr VON REICHENBERG.

ALBERICH | (Herr HILL.  
| Nibelungs  
MIME | (Herr SCHLOSSER.

FRICKA | (Frau VON GRÜN-SADLER.  
FREIA | Goddesses (Fr. HAUPT.  
ERDA | (Frau JÄIDA.

Woglinde ) ( Fr. Lilly Lehmann.  
Wellgunde ) Rhine daughters ( Fr. Marie Lehmann.  
Flosshilde ) ( Fr. Lammert.

## **DIE WALKÜRE.**

SIEGMUND Herr NIEMANN.  
HUNDING Herr NIERING.  
WOTAN Herr BETZ.  
SIEGLINDE Fr. SCHEFZKY.  
BRÜNNHILDE Frau FRIEDRICH-MATERNA.  
FRICKA Frau VON GRÜN-SADLER.

## **SIEGFRIED.**

SIEGFRIED Herr UNGER.  
MIME Herr SCHLOSSER.  
DER WANDERER Herr BETZ.  
ALBERICH Herr HILL.  
FAFNER Herr VON REICHENBERG.  
ERDA Frau JÄIDA.  
BRÜNNHILDE Frau FRIEDRICH-MATERNA

## **DER GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG.**

SIEGFRIED Herr UNGER.  
GUNTHER Herr GURA.  
HAGEN Herr VON REICHENBERG.  
ALBERICH Herr HILL.  
BRÜNNHILDE Frau FRIEDRICH-MATERNA.  
GUTRUNE Fr. WECKERLIN.  
WALTRAUTE Frau JÄIDA.

The motive of the drama turns upon the possession of a ring of magic qualities, made of gold stolen from the Rhine daughters by Alberich, one of the Nibelungen, who dwelt in Nebelheim, the place of mists. This ring, the symbol of all earthly power, was at the same time to bring a curse upon all who possessed it. Wotan, of the race of the gods, covetous of power and heedless of the curse which follows it, obtained the ring from Alberich by force and cunning, and soon found himself involved in calamity from which there was no apparent escape. He himself could not expiate the wrong he had done, nor could he avert the impending doom, the "twilight" of the gods, which was slowly and surely approaching. Only a free will, independent of the gods, and able to take upon itself the fault, could make reparation for the deed. At last he yields to despair. His will is broken, and instead of fearing the inevitable doom he courts it. In this sore emergency the hero appears. He belongs to an heroic race of men, the Volsungs. The unnatural union of the twins, Siegmund and Sieglinde, born of this race, produces the real hero, Siegfried. The parents pay the penalty of incest with their lives; but Siegfried remains, and Wotan watches his growth and magnificent development with eager interest. Siegfried recovers the ring from the giants, to whom Wotan had given it, by slaying a dragon which guarded the fatal treasure. Brünnhilde, the Valkyr, Wotan's daughter, contrary to his instructions, had protected Siegmund in a quarrel which resulted in his death, and was condemned by the irate god to fall into a deep sleep upon a rock surrounded by flames, where she was to remain until a hero should appear bold enough to break through the wall of fire and awaken her. Siegfried rescues her. She awakens into the full consciousness of passionate love, and yields herself to the hero, who presents her with the ring, but not before it has worked its curse upon him, so that he, faithless even in his faithfulness, wounds her

whom he deeply loves, and drives her from him. Meanwhile Gunther, Gutrune, and their half-brother Hagen conspire to obtain the ring from Brünnhilde and to kill Siegfried. Through the agency of a magic draught he is induced to desert her, after once more getting the ring. He then marries Gutrune. The curse soon reaches its consummation. One day, while traversing his favorite forests on a hunting expedition, he is killed by Hagen, with Gunther's connivance. The two murderers then quarrel for the possession of the ring, and Gunther is slain. Hagen attempts to wrest it from the dead hero's finger, but shrinks back terrified as the hand is raised in warning. Brünnhilde now appears, takes the ring, and proclaims herself his true wife. She mounts her steed, and dashes into the funeral pyre of Siegfried after returning the ring to the Rhine-daughters. This supreme act of immolation breaks forever the power of the gods, as is shown by the blazing Walhalla in the sky; but at the same time justice has been satisfied, reparation has been made for the original wrong, and the free will of man becomes established as a human principle.

Such are the outlines of this great story, which will be told more in detail when we come to examine the component parts of the trilogy. Dr. Ludwig Nohl, in his admirable sketch of the Nibelungen poem, as Wagner adapted it, gives us a hint of some of its inner meanings in the following extract: "Temporal power is not the highest destiny of a civilizing people. That our ancestors were conscious of this is shown in the fact that the treasure, or gold and its power, was transformed into the Holy Grail. Worldly aims give place to spiritual desires. With this interpretation of the Nibelungen myth, Wagner acknowledged the grand and eternal truth that this life is tragic throughout, and that the will which would mould a world to accord with one's desires can finally lead to no greater satisfaction than to break itself in a noble death.... It is this conquering of the world through the victory of self which Wagner conveys as the highest interpretation of our national myths. As Brünnhilde approaches the funeral pyre to sacrifice her life, the only tie still uniting her with the earth, to Siegfried, the beloved dead, she says:—

"To the world I will give now my holiest wisdom;  
Not goods, nor gold, nor godlike pomp,  
Not house, nor lands, nor lordly state,  
Not wicked plottings of crafty men,  
Not base deceits of cunning law,—  
But, blest in joy and sorrow, let only love remain."

We now proceed to the analysis of the four divisions of the work, in which task, for obvious reasons, it will be hardly possible to do more than sketch the progress of the action, with allusions to its most striking musical features. There are no set numbers, as in the Italian opera; and merely to designate the leading motives and trace their relation to each other, to the action of the *dramatis personæ*, and to the progress of the four movements, not alone towards their own climaxes but towards the ultimate dénouement, would necessitate far more space than can be had in a work of this kind.

## **DAS RHEINGOLD.**

The orchestral prelude to "The Rhinegold" is based upon a single figure, the Rhine motive, which in its changing developments pictures the calm at the bottom of the Rhine and the undulating movement of the water. The curtain rises and discloses the depths of the river, from which rise rugged ridges of rock. Around one of these, upon the summit of which glistens the Rhinegold, Woglinde, a Rhine-daughter, is swimming. Two others, Wellgunde and Flosshilde, join her; and as they play about the gleaming gold, Alberich, a dwarf, suddenly appears from a dark recess and passionately watches them. As they are making sport of him, his eye falls upon the gold and he determines to possess it. They make light of his threat, informing him that whoever shall forge a ring of this gold will have secured universal power, but before he can obtain that power he will have to renounce love. The disclosure of the secret follows a most exultant song of the Undines ("Rheingold! leuchtende Lust! wie lachst du so hell und hehr!"). In the announcement made by them also occurs the motive of the ring. The Rhine-daughters, who have fancied that Alberich will never steal the gold because he is in love with them, are soon undeceived, for he curses love, and snatches the gold and makes off with it, pursued by the disconsolate maidens, whose song changes into a sad minor leading up to the next scene. As they follow him into the dark depths the stream sinks with them and gives place to an open district with a mountain in the background, upon which is the glistening Walhalla, which the giants have just built for the gods. Wotan and Fricka are discovered awakening from sleep and joyfully contemplating it, the latter, however, filled with apprehension lest the giants shall claim Freia, the goddess of love, whom Wotan has promised to them as the reward for their work. Loge, the god of fire, however, has agreed to obtain a ransom for her. He has searched the world over, but has been unable to find anything that can excel in value or attraction the charm of love. As the gods are contemplating their castle Loge appears, and in a scene of great power, accompanied by music which vividly describes the element he dominates ("Immer ist Undank Loge's Lohn"), he narrates the tidings of his failure. The giants, however, have

heard the story of the Rhinegold, and as they carry off the weeping Freia agree to release her whenever the gods will give to them the precious and all-powerful metal. As love departs, the heavens become dark and sadness overcomes the gods. They grow suddenly old and decrepit. Fricka totters and Wotan yields to despair. Darkness and decay settle down upon them. The divine wills are broken, and they are about to surrender to what seems approaching dissolution, when Wotan suddenly arouses himself and determines to go in quest of the all-powerful gold. Loge accompanies him, and the two enter the dark kingdom of the gnomes, who are constantly at work forging the metals. By virtue of his gold Alberich has already made himself master of all the gnomes, but Wotan easily overpowers him and carries him off to the mountain. The Nibelung, however, clings to his precious gold, and a struggle ensues for it. In spite of his strength and the power the ring gives to him it is wrenched from him, and the victorious Wotan leaves him free to return to his gloomy kingdom. Infuriated with disappointment over his loss and rage at his defeat, Alberich curses the ring and invokes misfortune upon him who possesses it. "May he who has it not, covet it with rage," cries the dwarf, "and may he who has it, retain it with the anguish of fear;" and with curse upon curse he disappears. Now that he has the ring, Wotan is unwilling to give it up. The other gods implore him to do so, and the giants demand their ransom. He remains inflexible; but at last Erda, the ancient divinity, to whom all things are known, past, present and future, appears to Wotan and warns him to surrender the ring. She declares that all which exists will have an end, and that a night of gloom will come upon the gods. So long as he retains the ring a curse will follow it. Her sinister foreboding so alarms him that at last he abandons the gold. Youth, pride, and strength once more return to the gods.

The grand closing scene of the prelude now begins. Wotan attempts to enter Walhalla, but all is veiled in oppressive mist and heavy clouds. The mighty Donner, accompanied by Froh, climbs a high rock in the valley's slope and brandishes his hammer, summoning the clouds about him. From out their darkness its blows are heard descending upon the rock. Lightning leaps from them, and thunder-crashes follow each other with deafening sounds. The rain falls in heavy drops. Then the clouds part, and reveal the two in the midst of their storm-spell. In the distance appears Walhalla bathed in the glow of the setting sun. From their feet stretches a luminous rainbow across the valley to the castle, while out from the disappearing storm comes the sweet rainbow melody. Froh sings, "Though built lightly it looks, fast and fit is the bridge." The gods are filled with delight, but Wotan gloomily contemplates the castle as the curse of the ring recurs to him. At last a new thought comes in his mind. The hero who will make reparation is to come from the new race of mortals of his own begetting. The thought appears in the sword motive, and as its stately melody dies away, Wotan rouses from his contemplation and hails Walhalla with joy as "a shelter from shame and harm." He takes Fricka by the hand, and leading the way, followed by Froh, Freia, Donner, and Loge, the last somewhat reluctantly, the gods pass over the rainbow bridge and enter Walhalla bathed in the light of the setting sun and accompanied by the strains of a majestic march. During their passage the plaintive song of the Rhine-daughters mourning their gold comes up from the depths. Wotan pauses a moment and inquires the meaning of the sounds, and bids Loge send a message to them that the treasure shall "gleam no more for the maids." Then they pass laughingly and mockingly on through the splendor to Walhalla. The sad song still rises from the depths of the Rhine, but it is overpowered by the strains of the march, and pealing music from the castle. The curtain falls upon their laments, and the triumphant entrance of the gods into their new home.

## **DIE WALKÜRE.**

In "The Valkyrie," properly the first part of the cyclus, the human drama begins. Strong races of men have come into existence, and Wotan's Valkyres watch over them, leading those who fall in battle to Walhalla, where, in the gods' companionship, they are to pass a glorious life. According to the original legend, Wotan blessed an unfruitful marriage of this race by giving the pair an apple of Hulda to eat, and the twins, Siegmund and Sieglinde, were the result of the union. When the first act opens, Siegmund has already taken a wife and Sieglinde has married the savage warrior Hunding, but neither marriage has been fruitful. It is introduced with an orchestral prelude representing a storm. The pouring of the rain is audible among the violins and the rumbling of the thunder in the deep basses. The curtain rises, disclosing the interior of a rude hut, its roof supported by the branches of an ash-tree whose trunk rises through the centre of the apartment. As the tempest rages without, Siegmund rushes in and falls exhausted by the fire. Attracted by the noise, Sieglinde appears, and observing the fallen stranger bends compassionately over him and offers him a horn of mead. As their eyes meet they watch each other with strange interest and growing emotion. While thus mutually fascinated, Hunding enters and turns an inquiring look upon Sieglinde. She explains that he is a guest worn out with fatigue and seeking shelter. Hunding orders a repast and Siegmund tells his story. Vanquished in combat by a neighboring tribe, some of whose adherents he had slain, and stripped of his arms, he fled through the storm for refuge. Hunding promises him hospitality, but challenges him to combat on the morrow, for the victims of Siegmund's wrath were Hunding's friends. As Sieglinde retires at Hunding's bidding, she

casts a despairing, passionate look at Siegmund, and tries to direct his attention to a sword sticking in the ash-tree, but in vain. Hunding warns her away with a significant look, and then taking his weapons from the tree leaves Siegmund alone. The latter, sitting by the fire, falls into dejection, but is soon roused by the thought that his sire had promised he should find the sword Nothung in his time of direst need. The dying fire shoots out a sudden flame, and his eye lights upon its handle, illuminated by the blaze. The magnificent sword-melody is sounded, and in a scene of great power he hails it and sings his love for Sieglinde, whom now he can rescue. As the fire and the song die away together, Sieglinde reappears. She has drugged Hunding into a deep sleep, and in an exultant song tells Siegmund the story of the sword. They can be saved if he is strong enough to wrench it from the trunk of the ash. He recognizes his sister and folds her passionately in his arms. The storm has passed, and as the moonlight floods the room he breaks out in one of the loveliest melodies Wagner has ever written, the spring song ("Winterstürme wichen dem Wonnemond"), a song of love leading to the delights of spring; and Sieglinde in passionate response declares, "Thou art the spring for which I longed in winter's frosty embrace." The recognition is mutual, not alone of brother and sister but of lover and mistress,—the union which is destined to beget Siegfried, the hero. Seizing her in his arms, Siegmund disappears with her into the depths of the forest, and the curtain falls.

The second act opens in the mountains of the gods, and discloses Wotan with spear in hand in earnest converse with Brünnhilde, his daughter, who is arrayed in the armor of a Valkyr. He tells her of the approaching combat, and bids her award the victory to Siegmund the Volsung, beloved of the gods. As she disappears among the rocks, shouting the weird cry of the Valkyres, the jealous Fricka, protector of marriage vows, comes upon the scene in a chariot drawn by rams. A stormy dialogue occurs between them, Fricka demanding the death of Siegmund as compensation for the wrong done to Hunding. Wotan at last is overcome, and consents that the Valkyres shall conduct him to Walhalla. As he yields, Brünnhilde's jubilant song is heard on the heights, and Wotan summons her and announces his changed decision. Siegmund must perish. As he stalks gloomily away among the rocks, Brünnhilde falls into deep dejection, and turns away moaning: "Alas! my Volsung! Has it come to this,—that faithless the faithful must fail thee?" As she enters a cave for her horse, the fugitives Siegmund and Sieglinde hurriedly approach, pursued by the infuriated Hunding. They stop to rest, and Sieglinde falls exhausted in his arms. The scene is marked by alternations of passionate love and fear, hope on the one side, despair on the other, vividly portrayed in the instrumentation. As the music dies away and Sieglinde rests insensible in his arms, Brünnhilde, with deep melancholy in her visage, shows herself to Siegmund. In reply to his question, "Who art thou?" she answers, "He who beholds me, to death in the battle is doomed. I shall lead thee to Walhalla." Eagerly he asks, "Shall I find in Walhalla my own father Wälse?" and she answers, "The Volsung shall find his father there." With passionate earnestness he asks, "Shall Siegmund there embrace Sieglinde?" The Valkyre replies, "The air of earth she still must breathe. Sieglinde shall not see Siegmund there." Then furiously answers Siegmund, "Then farewell to Walhalla! Where Sieglinde lives, in bliss or blight, there Siegmund will also tarry," and he raises his sword over his unconscious sister. Moved by his great love and sorrow, Brünnhilde for the first time is swayed by human emotions, and exultantly declares, "I will protect thee." Hunding's horn sounds in the distance, and soon is heard his defiant challenge to battle. Siegmund rushes to the top of one of the cloudy summits, and the clash of their arms resounds in the mists. A sudden gleam of light shows Brünnhilde hovering over Siegmund, and protecting him with her shield. As he prepares himself to deal a deadly thrust at Hunding, the angry Wotan appears in a storm-cloud and interposes his spear. Siegmund's sword is shivered to pieces. Hunding pierces his disarmed enemy, and he falls mortally wounded. Brünnhilde lifts the insensible Sieglinde upon her steed and rides away with her. Wotan, leaning upon his spear, gazes sorrowfully at the dying Volsung, and then turning to Hunding, so overcomes him with his contemptuous glance that he falls dead at his feet. "But Brünnhilde, woe to the traitor. Punishment dire is due to her treason. To horse, then. Let vengeance speed swiftly." And mounting his steed he disappears amid thunder and lightning.

The last act opens in a rocky glen filled with the Valkyres calling to each other from summit to summit with wild cries as they come riding through the clouds after the combat, bearing the dead bodies of the warriors on their saddles. The scene is preluded with an orchestral number, well known in the concert-room as the "Ride of the Valkyres," which is based upon two motives, the Valkyre's call and the Valkyre melody. In picturesque description of the rush and dash of steeds, amid which are heard the wild cries of the sisters, "The Ride" is one of the most powerful numbers ever written. Brünnhilde arrives among the exultant throng in tears, bearing Sieglinde with her. She gives her the fragments of Siegmund's sword, and appeals to the other Valkyres to save her. She bids Sieglinde live, for "thou art to give birth to a Volsung," and to keep the fragments of the sword. "He that once brandishes the sword, newly welded, let him be named Siegfried, the winner of victory." Wotan's voice is now heard angrily shouting through the storm-clouds, and calling upon Brünnhilde, who vainly seeks to conceal herself among her sisters. He summons her forth from the group, and she comes forward meekly but firmly and awaits her punishment. He taxes her with violating his commands; to which she replies, "I obeyed not thy order, but thy secret wish." The answer does not avail, and he condemns her to sleep by

the wayside, the victim of the first who passes. She passionately pleads for protection against dishonor, and the god consents. Placing her upon a rocky couch and kissing her brow, he takes his farewell of her in a scene which for majestic pathos has never been excelled. One forgets Wotan and the Valkyre. It is the last parting of an earthly father and daughter, illustrated with music which is the very apotheosis of grief. He then conjures Loge, the god of fire; and as he strikes his spear upon the rock, flames spring up all about her. Proudly he sings in the midst of the glare:—

"Who fears the spike  
Of my spear to face,  
He will not pierce the planted fire,"—

a melody which is to form the motive of the hero Siegfried in the next division of the work—and the curtain falls upon a scene which for power, beauty, and majesty has not its equal on the lyric stage.

## **SIEGFRIED.**

The second division of the tragedy, "Siegfried," might well be called an idyl, of the forest. Its music is full of joyousness and delight. In place of the struggles of gods and combats of fierce warriors, the wild cries of Valkyres and the blendings of human passions with divine angers, we have the repose and serenity of nature, and in the midst of it all appears the hero Siegfried, true child of the woods, and as full of wild joyousness and exultant strength as one of their fauns or satyrs. It is a wonderful picture of nature, closing with an ecstatic, vision of love.

After the death of Siegmund, Sieglinde takes refuge in the depths of the forest, where she gives birth to Siegfried. In her dying moments she intrusts him to Mime, who forged the ring for Alberich when he obtained possession of the Rhinegold. The young hero has developed into a handsome, manly stripling, who dominates the forests and holds its wild animals subject to his will. He calls to the birds and they answer him. He chases the deer with leaps as swift as their own. He seizes the bear and drags him into Mime's hut, much to the Nibelung's alarm. But while pursuing the wild, free life in the forest, he has dreams of greater conquests than those over nature. Heroic deeds shape themselves in his mind, and sometimes they are illuminated with dim and mysterious visions of a deeper passion. In his interviews with Mime he questions him about the world outside of the forest, its people and their actions. He tires of the woods, and longs to get away from them. Mime then shows him the fragments of his father's sword, which had been shattered upon Wotan's spear, the only legacy left her son by Sieglinde, and tells him that he who can weld them together again will have power to conquer all before him. Mime had long tried to forge a sword for Siegfried, but they were all too brittle, nor had he the skill to weld together the fragments of Siegmund's sword, Nothung. The only one who can perform that task is the hero without fear. One day Siegfried returns from a hunting expedition and undertakes it himself. He files the fragments into dust and throws it into the crucible, which he places on the fire of the forge. Then while blowing the bellows he sings a triumphant song ("Nothung! Nothung! neidliches Schwert"), which anticipates the climax towards which all the previous scenes have led. As he sings at his work Mime cogitates how he shall thwart his plans and get possession of the sword. He plots to have him kill Fafner, the giant, who has changed himself into a dragon, for the more effectual custody of the Rhine-treasure and the ring. Then when Siegfried has captured the treasure he will drug him with a poisoned broth, kill him with the sword, and seize the gold. Siegfried pours the melted steel into a mould, thrusts it into the water to cool, and then bursts out into a new song, accompanied by anvil blows, as he forges and tempers it, the motive of which has already been heard in the "Rhinegold" prelude, when Alberich made his threat. While Mime quietly mixes his potion, Siegfried fastens the hilt to his blade and polishes the sword. Then breaking out in a new song, in which are heard the motives of the fire-god and the sword, he swings it through the air, and bringing it down with force splits the anvil in twain. The music accompanying this great scene, imitating the various sounds of the forge, the flutter of the fire, the hissing of the water, the filing of the sword, and the blows upon the anvil, is realism carried to the very extreme of possibilities.

The great exploit has been successful, and Siegfried at last has Siegmund's sword. Mime takes him to the cave where Fafner, the giant-dragon, guards the gold. Siegfried slays the monster, and laughs over the ease of the task. His finger is heated with the dragon's blood, and as he puts it to his lips to cool it he tastes the blood, and thus learns the language of the birds. He cares nought for the treasure, and takes only the ring and a magic helmet, which enables the wearer to assume any form. After the contest he throws himself at the foot of a tree in the forest and dreamily listens to the "Waldweben," the rustle and mysterious stirrings of the woods. Amid all these subtle, soothing sounds, pierced now and then with the songs of the birds, and distant cries in far-away sylvan recesses, he realizes that he is alone, while his old companions of the woods are together. He thinks of the mother whom he has never known, and of that mysterious being whom he has never seen, who should make the companionship he observes among the birds. The passion of love begins to assert itself vaguely and strangely, but full



soon it will glow out with ardent flame. A bird flying over his head sings to him. He can understand its song and fancies it his mother's voice coming to him in the bird-notes. It tells him now he has the treasure, he should save the most beautiful of women and win her to himself. "She sleeps upon a rock, encircled with flames; but shouldst thou dare to break through them, the warrior-virgin is thine." The bird wings its flight through the forest, and Siegfried, joyously seizing his sword, follows it with swift foot, for he knows it is guiding him to Brünnhilde. The time for great deeds has come. The wild, free life of the forest is over.

The third act once more shows us the god Wotan still plunged in gloom. Gazing into a deep abyss, he summons Erda, who knows the destiny of all the world, to question her again as to the twilight of the gods. The mysterious figure appears at his bidding, but has nothing further to communicate. Their doom is certain. The fearless race of men is destined to efface the gods, and Walhalla must disappear. The hero is at hand, and coming rapidly. The despairing Wotan, who appears in this scene as "Der Wanderer" (the wanderer), cries out, "So be it. It is to this end I aspire." He turns gloomily away, and confronts Siegfried bounding from rock to rock like a deer, still following his airy guide. The god angrily tries to bar his way, but in vain. His lance is shattered at a single blow of the sword Nothung, which he himself had once so easily shivered. It is the first catastrophe of the final fate which is approaching. The hero without fear has come, the free will of man has begun to manifest itself. The power of the gods is breaking. Joyously Siegfried rushes on over the rocks. He is soon bathed in the glow of the fire, which casts weird shadows through the wild glen. Now the burning wall of red flames is before him. With a ringing cry of exultation he dashes through them, and before him lies the sleeping maiden in her glistening armor. Mad with her beauty and his own overpowering passion, he springs to her side and wakes her with a kiss. The Volsung and the Valkyr gaze at each other a long time in silence. Brünnhilde strives to comprehend her situation, and to recall the events that led up to her penalty, while love grows within her for the hero who has rescued her, and Siegfried is transfixed by the majesty of the maiden. As she comes to herself and fully realizes who is the hero before her and foresees the approaching doom, she earnestly appeals to him:—

"Leave, ah, leave,  
Leave me unlost,  
Force on me not  
Thy fiery nearness.  
Shiver me not  
With thy shattering will,  
And lay me not waste in thy love."

What is preordained cannot be changed. Siegfried replies with growing passion, and Brünnhilde at last yields, and the two join in an outburst of exultant song:—

"Away, Walhalla,  
In dust crumble  
Thy myriad towers.  
Farewell, greatness,  
And gift of the gods.  
You, Norns, unravel  
The rope of runes.  
Darken upwards,  
Dusk of the gods.  
Night of annulment,  
Draw near with thy cloud.  
I stand in sight  
Of Siegfried's star.  
For me he was,  
And for me he will ever be."

With this great duet, which is one of the most extraordinary numbers in the trilogy for dramatic power and musical expression of human emotion, this division closes.

## **DIE GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG.**

The last division of the tragedy opens under the shade of a huge ash-tree where the three Fates sit spinning and weaving out human destinies. As they toss their thread from one to the other,—the thread they have been spinning since time began,—they foresee the gloom which is coming. Suddenly it snaps in their fingers, whereupon the dark sisters crowding closely together descend to the depths of the earth to consult with the ancient Erda and seek shelter near her. Meanwhile as day breaks Siegfried

and Brünnhilde emerge from the glen where they have been reposing in mutual happiness. Brünnhilde has told her lover the story of the gods and the secrets of the mystic runes, but he is still unsatisfied. His mission is not yet fulfilled. He must away to perform new deeds. Before he leaves her he gives her the ring as his pledge of fidelity, and they part, after exchanging mutual vows of love and constancy.

In his search for further exploits, Siegfried arrives at the dwelling of Gunter, a powerful Rhenish chief, head of the Gibichungen, another race of heroes, where also resides Guttrune, his fascinating sister, and the evil Hagen, begotten by Alberich of Crimhilda, Gunter's mother, who was the victim of his gold. Alberich's hatred of the gods and all connected with them is shared by his son, who has been charged by the Nibelung to recover the gold. From this point the tragic denouement rapidly progresses. Siegfried's horn is heard in the distance, and he soon crosses Gunter's threshold, where his ruin is being plotted by the sinister Hagen. He is hospitably received, and at Hagen's bidding Guttrune pours out and offers him a draught so cunningly mixed that it will efface all past remembrances. He is completely infatuated with the girl's beauty, and as the potion takes effect, the love for Brünnhilde disappears. He demands Guttrune in marriage, and Hagen promises her upon condition that he will bring Brünnhilde as a bride for Gunter. Siegfried departs upon the fatal errand, and after taking from her the ring drags her by force to deliver her to Gunter. The Valkyr rises to a sublime height of anger over her betrayal, and dooms Siegfried to death in the approaching hunt, for by death alone she knows that she can regain his love.

The last act opens in a rocky glen on the banks of the Rhine, the ripple of whose waters is repeated in the melody of "The Rhinegold." Siegfried is separated from his companion, and while alone, the song of the Rhine-daughters is heard. They rise to the surface of the gleaming water and demand their gold, but Siegfried refuses to restore it. They warn him again to fly from the curse, but he proudly exclaims that his sword is invincible and can crush the Norms. Sadly they float away to the sound of harps shimmering over the water. Gunter's horn is heard among the hills, and Siegfried exultantly answers it. The huntsmen assemble and prepare for a feast. Siegfried relates his adventure with the Rhine-daughters, and when Hagen asks him if it is true that he can understand the language of the birds, he tells the whole story of his life in the "Rheinfahrt," a song built up of all the motives which have been heard in the "Siegfried" division,—the melody of the sword, the stir of the woods, the song of the mysterious bird, Mime's enticement, the love of Brünnhilde, and the flaming fire following each other in rapid and brilliant succession through the measures of the picturesque description. As the song dies away, two ravens, messengers of ill-omen, fly across the stage. The curse motive sounds gloomily through the orchestra. Hagen springs to his feet and suddenly and treacherously plunges his spear into Siegfried's back, then sullenly leaves and disappears among the rocks. The hero falls to the earth and dies, breathing Brünnhilde's name, for in the last supreme moment the spell of Hagen's draught passes away. With his last breath he breaks out in a death-song of surpassing beauty and majesty, in which the motives are those of the Volsung and the Valkyr, as well as of the destiny which is to reunite them in death. Once more he murmurs the name of Brünnhilde, and then his companions tenderly place him upon his shield, and lifting him upon their shoulders carry him to the misty summits and disappear in the cloud, to the mighty and impressive strains of a funeral march, built up on the motives of Siegmund, the love-duet of Siegmund and Sieglinde, the sword and Volsung motives, and Siegfried's great theme. In the interweaving of these motives and their sombre coloring, in massive fortissimo and crescendo effects, in expressive musical delineation, and in majestic solemnity, the Siegfried funeral march must take precedence of all other dirges. In truth it is a colossal and heroic funeral poem fit to celebrate the death of a demigod. In the last scene Siegfried's body is borne back to the hall of the Gibichungen amid loud lamenting. When Guttrune learns what has occurred, she bitterly curses Hagen and throws herself on Siegfried's corpse. Hagen and Gunter quarrel for the possession of the ring, and Gunter is slain; but when Hagen tries to take the ring, the hand of the dead hero is raised in warning. Then Brünnhilde solemnly and proudly advances in the light of the torches and bids the empty clamor cease, for "this is no lamenting worthy of a hero." She orders a funeral pyre to be built, and Siegfried is laid thereon. She contemplates the dead hero with passionate love and sadness, and then solemnly turning to those about her, exclaims: "Those who efface the fault of the gods are predestined to suffering and death. Let one sacrifice end the curse. Let the Ring be purified by fire, the waters dissolve it forever. The end of the gods is at hand. But though I leave the world masterless, I give it this precious treasure. In joy or in suffering, happiness can alone come from love." She seizes a burning brand, and invoking Loge, god of fire, flings it into the pyre. Her horse is brought to her, and she proudly mounts it:—

"Grane, my horse,  
Hail to thee here!  
Knowest thou, friend,  
How far I shall need thee?  
Heiaho! Grane!  
Greeting to him.

Siegfried! See, Brünnhilde  
Joyously hails thee, thy bride."

She swings herself upon her steed and dashes into the furious flames. At last they die away, and the Rhine rushes forward from its banks and covers the pyre. The exultant Rhine-daughters are swimming in the flood, for Brünnhilde has thrown them the ring. Hagen makes a last desperate effort to clutch it, but Woglinde and Wellgunde wind their arms about him, and as they drag him into the depths Flosshilde holds the ring above the waters, and the exultant song of the Rhine-daughters is heard above the swelling tide, while far in the distance a red flame spreads among the clouds. Walhalla is blazing in the sky. The Dusk of the Gods has come. Reparation has been made. The hero without fear is victorious. Free will, independent of the gods, will rule the world, and the gods themselves are lost in the human creation. Love is given to men, and conquers death.

## **PARSIFAL.**

"Parsifal," a "Bühnenweihfestspiel" (festival acting-drama), words by Wagner, was concluded in 1879, and first produced at Baireuth, July 22, 1882, only about seven months before the distinguished composer's death, with Mme. Friedrich-Materna as Kundry, Herr Winckelmann as Parsifal, and Herr Scaria as Gurnemanz.

The theme of the opera is taken from the cycle of Holy Grail myths to which "Lohengrin" also belongs. The reader will remember that Lohengrin in his final address declares himself son of Parsifal, the King of the Grail; and it is with this Parsifal that Wagner's last work is concerned. Parsifal, like Siegfried, represents free human nature in its spontaneous, impulsive action. He is styled in the text, "Der reine Thor" (the guileless fool), who, in consonance with the old mythological idea, overcomes the evil principle and gains the crown by dint of pure natural impulse. The opera differs widely from "The Nibelung Ring." The composer has used the free instead of the alliterative form of verse, which he then contended was best adapted to musical setting. In "The Ring" the chorus is not introduced at all until the last division is reached, while in "Parsifal" it plays an important part in every act, in the second scene of the first act there being three choirs on the stage at a time. Still there is no trace of the aria, the duet, or the recitative, of the Italian style, though there is plenty of concerted music, which grows out of the dramatic necessities of the situations. When these necessities do not urge themselves, the music flows on in dialogue form, as in "The Ring."

The Vorspiel is based upon three motives connected with the mystery of the Grail, which forms the key-note of the opera, though in a different aspect from that which the Grail assumes in "Lohengrin," where it can only be visible to the eye of faith, while in "Parsifal" it distinctly performs its wonders. Let it be remembered that the Grail is the chalice from which Christ drank with his disciples at the Last Supper, and in which his blood was received at the cross. The first of these motives is of the same general character as the Grail motive in the "Lohengrin" Vorspiel; the second is an impressive phrase for trumpets and trombones, which will be heard again when the Knights of the Grail are summoned to their duties; and the third is a broad, dignified melody in the chorale form.

The action of the drama occurs in the north of Spain, and in the vicinity of Monsalvat, the Castle of the Holy Grail, where this chalice was brought by angels when Christianity was in danger. The curtain rises upon a lovely forest glade on the borders of a lake, at daybreak, and discovers the Grail Knight, Gurnemanz, and two young shield-bearers, guardians of the castle, sleeping at the foot of a tree. Trumpet-calls, repeating the motive first heard in the prelude, arouse them from their sleep; and as they offer up their morning prayer the chorale is heard again. As they wend their way to the castle, they meet two knights preceding the litter upon which the wounded Amfortas, King of the Grail, is carried. In the subsequent dialogue Gurnemanz tells the story of the King's mishap. He is suffering from a wound which refuses to close, and which has been inflicted by the sacred spear,—the spear, according to the legend, with which our Saviour's side was pierced. Klingsor, a magician, had aspired to become a knight of the Grail, but his application was refused; for only those of holy lives could watch the sacred vessel and perform its ministrations. In revenge, Klingsor studied the magic arts and created for himself a fairy palace, which he peopled with beautiful women, whose sole duty it was to seduce the Knights of the Grail. One of these women, a mysterious creature of wonderful fascinations, Kundry by name, had beguiled Amfortas, who thus fell into the power of Klingsor. He lost his spear, and received from it a wound which will never heal so long as it remains in the hands of the magician. In a vision he has been told to wait for the one who has been appointed to cure him. A voice from the Grail tells him the following mystery:—

"Durch Mitleid wissend,  
Der reine Thor,  
Harre sein'

Den ich erkor."

["Let a guileless fool only, knowing by compassion, await him whom I have chosen."]

Meanwhile, as the shield-bearers are carrying Amfortas towards the lake, the savage, mysterious Kundry is seen flying over the fields. She overtakes Gurnemanz and gives him a balm, saying that if it will not help the King, nothing in Arabia can, and then, refusing to accept thanks or reveal her identity, sinks to the ground in weariness. The King takes the drug with gratitude; but she scorns thanks, and sneers at those about her with savage irony. Gurnemanz's companions are about to seize her, but the old Knight warns them that she is living incarnate to expiate the sins of a former life, and that in serving the Order of the Grail she is purchasing back her own redemption. As Gurnemanz concludes, cries are heard in the wood, and two knights, approaching, announce that a swan, the bird sacred to the Grail, which was winging its way over the lake, and which the King had hailed as a happy omen, has been shot. Parsifal, the murderer, is dragged in, and when questioned by Gurnemanz, is unaware that he has committed any offence. To every question he only answers he does not know. When asked who is his mother, Kundry answers for him: "His mother brought him an orphan into the world, and kept him like a fool in the forest, a stranger to arms, so that he should escape a premature death; but he fled from her and followed the wild life of nature. Her grief is over, for she is dead." Whereupon Parsifal flies at her and seizes her by the throat; but Gurnemanz holds him back, and Kundry sinks down exhausted. Parsifal answers to the "Thor," but it remains to be seen whether he is the "reine Thor." Gurnemanz conducts him to the temple where the holy rites of the Grail are to be performed, hoping he is the redeemer whom the Grail will disclose when the love-feast of the Saviour is celebrated.

The scene changes to the great hall of the castle and the celebration of the feast of the Grail. The scene is introduced with a solemn march by full orchestra, including trombones on the stage, accompanied by the clanging of bells as the knights enter in stately procession. They sing a pious chant in unison, the march theme still sounding. As the younger squires and pages enter, a new melody is taken in three-part harmony, and finally an unseen chorus of boys from the extreme height of the dome sing the chorale from the introduction, without accompaniment, in imitation of angel voices. The shield-bearers bring in Amfortas upon his litter, when suddenly from a vaulted niche is heard the voice of Titurel, Amfortas's aged father, and the founder of Monsalvat, now too feeble to perform the holy offices, bidding the Grail to be uncovered. Amfortas, mourning that he, the unholyest of them, should be called, opens a golden shrine and takes out the crystal vessel. Darkness falls upon the hall, but the Grail is illuminated with constantly increasing brilliancy, while from the dome the children's voices sing, "Take My blood in the name of our love, and take My body in remembrance of me." Parsifal watches the scene with bewildered eyes, but upon saying in reply that he does not understand the holy rite, he is contemptuously ejected from the place.

The second act reveals Klingsor's enchanted palace. The magician gazing into a mirror sees Parsifal approaching, and knows he is the redeemer who has been promised. He summons Kundry before him, and commands her to tempt him with her spells. She struggles against the task, for in her soul the powers of good and evil are always contending for the mastery. She longs for eternal sleep, and rest from her evil passions, but Klingsor holds her in his power. Parsifal enters, and the scene changes to a delightful garden filled with girls of ravishing beauty in garments of flowers. They crowd about him, and by their fascinating blandishments seek to gain his love, but in vain. He is still the "guileless fool." Then Kundry appears in all her loveliness, and calls him by name, the name he had heard his mother speak. He sorrowfully sinks at Kundry's feet. The enchantress bends over him, appeals to him through his longing for his mother, and kisses him. Instantly he comprehends all that he has seen, and he cries, "The wound burns in my heart, oh, torment of love!" Then quickly rising he spurns her from him. He has gained the world-knowledge. She flies to him again, and passionately exclaims, "The gift of my love would make thee divine. If this hour has made thee the redeemer, let me suffer forever, but give me thy love." He spurns her again, and cries, "To all eternity thou wouldst be damned with me, if for one hour I should forget my mission," but says he will save her too, and demands to know the way to Amfortas. In rage she declares he shall never find it, and summons the help of Klingsor, who hurls the sacred lance at Parsifal. The weapon remains suspended over his head. He seizes it and makes the sign of the Cross. The gardens and castle disappear. Parsifal and Kundry are alone in a desert. She sinks to the ground with a mournful cry, and turning from her, his last words are, "Thou knowest where only thou canst see me again."

In the third act we are again in the land of the Grail. Parsifal has wandered for years trying to find Monsalvat, and at last encounters Gurnemanz, now a very old man, living as a hermit near a forest spring, and the saddened Kundry is serving him. It is the Good Friday morning, and forests and fields are bright with flowers and the verdure of spring. Gurnemanz recognizes him, and in reply to his question what makes the world so beautiful, the aged knight makes answer:—

"The sad repentant tears of sinners  
Have here with holy rain  
Besprinkled field and plain,  
And made them glow with beauty.  
All earthly creatures in delight  
At the Redeemer's trace so bright,  
Uplift their prayers of duty.  
And now perceive each blade and meadow flower,  
That mortal foot to-day it need not dread."

Kundry washes "the dust of his long wanderings" from his feet, and looks up at him with earnest and beseeching gaze. Gurnemanz recognizes the sacred spear, hails him as the King of the Grail and offers to conduct him to the great hall where the holy rites are once more to be performed. Before they leave, Parsifal's first act as the redeemer is to baptize Kundry with water from the spring. The sound of tolling bells in the distance announces the funeral of Titurel, and the scene changes to the hall where the knights are carrying the litter upon which Amfortas lies, awaiting the funeral procession approaching to the strains of a solemn march. The knights demand he shall again uncover the Grail, but he refuses, and calls upon them to destroy him and then the Grail will shine brightly for them again. Unobserved by them, Parsifal steps forward, touches the king's wound with the spear, and it is immediately healed. Then he proclaims himself King of the Grail, and orders it to be uncovered. As Amfortas and Gurnemanz kneel to do him homage, Kundry dies at his feet in the joy of repentance. Titurel rises from his coffin and bestows a benediction. Parsifal ascends to the altar and raises the Grail in all its resplendent beauty. A white dove flies down from the dome of the hall and hovers over his head, while the knights chant their praise to God, re-echoed by the singers in the dome, whose strains sound like celestial voices:—

"Miracle of supreme blessing,  
Redemption to the Redeemer."

## **WALLACE.**

William Vincent Wallace was born at Waterford, Ireland, in 1815. He first studied music with his father, a bandleader, who afterwards sent him to Dublin, where he speedily became an excellent performer on the clarinet, violin, and piano. At the early age of fifteen he was appointed organist at the Cathedral of Thurles, and soon afterwards was engaged as a theatre director and concert conductor. At the age of eighteen he had a fit of sickness, and upon his recovery went to Australia for his health, and thence to Van Diemen's Land and New Zealand. He passed some time in the latter country, and then began a long series of wanderings, in the course of which he visited the East and West Indies, Mexico,—where he conducted Italian opera,—and the United States. He remained in New York a considerable period, and gave concerts which were very remunerative. In 1846 he returned to Europe, and shortly afterwards his pretty little opera, "Maritana," appeared, and made quite a sensation among the admirers of English opera. In 1847 "Matilda of Hungary" was produced, and met with success. Thirteen years of silence elapsed, and at last, in 1860, he produced his legendary opera, "Lurline," at Covent Garden. It gave great satisfaction at the time, but is now rarely performed. Besides his operas he also wrote many waltzes, nocturnes, studies, and other light works for the piano. After the production of "Lurline" he went to Paris for the purpose of bringing out some of his operas, and while in that city also composed the first act of an opera for London, but his health was too delicate to admit of its completion. He died at Château de Bayen, Oct. 12, 1865.

### **MARITANA.**

"Maritana," a romantic opera in three acts, words by Fitzball, founded upon the well-known play of "Don Caesar de Bazan," was first produced at Drury Lane, London, Nov. 15, 1845. The text closely follows that of the drama. The first act opens in a public square of Madrid, where a band of gypsies are singing to the populace, among them Maritana, a young girl of more than ordinary beauty and vocal accomplishments. Among the spectators is the young King Charles, who after listening to her is smitten with her charms. Don José, his minister, to carry out certain ambitious plans of his own, resolves to encourage the fascinations which have so attracted the King. He extols her beauty and arouses hopes in her breast of future grandeur and prosperity. At this juncture Don Caesar de Bazan, a reckless, rollicking cavalier, comes reeling out of a tavern where he has just parted with the last of his money to

gamblers. In spite of his shabby costume and dissipated appearance he bears the marks of high breeding. In better days he had been a friend of Don José. While he is relating the story of his downward career to the minister, Lazarillo, a forlorn young lad who has just attempted to destroy himself, accosts Don Caesar, and tells him a piteous tale of his wrongs. Don Caesar befriends him, and in consequence becomes involved in a duel, which leads to his arrest; for it is Holy Week, and duelling during that time has been forbidden on pain of death. While Don Caesar is on his way to prison, Don José delights Maritana by promising her wealth, a splendid marriage, and an introduction to the court on the morrow.

The second act opens in the prison, and discovers Don Caesar asleep, with his faithful little friend watching by him. It is five o'clock when he wakes, and at seven he must die. Only two hours of life remain for him, but the prospect does not disturb him. On the other hand he is gayer than usual, and rallies Lazarillo with playful mirth. In the midst of his gayety the crafty Don José enters and professes strong friendship for him. When Don Caesar declares that he has but one last wish, and that is to die a soldier's death instead of being ignominiously hanged, Don José says it shall be gratified upon condition that he will marry. The prisoner has but an hour and three quarters to live, but he consents. He is provided with wedding apparel, and a banquet is spread in honor of the occasion. During the feast Lazarillo brings in a paper to Don José containing the King's pardon for Don Caesar, but the minister promptly conceals it. Maritana, her features disguised by a veil, is introduced, and as the nuptial rites are performed the soldiers prepare to execute the penalty. At the expiration of the hour Don Caesar is led out to meet his fate, but Lazarillo has managed to abstract the balls from the guns. The soldiers perform their duty, and Don Caesar feigns death; but as soon as the opportunity occurs, he leaves the prison and hurries to a grand ball given by the Marquis and Marchioness de Montefiori at their palace, while the Marquis, who has had his instructions from Don José to recognize Maritana as his long-lost niece, is introducing her as such. Don Caesar enters and demands his bride. The astonished Don José, perceiving that his scheme to introduce Maritana at court is liable to be frustrated, offers the Marquis a rich appointment if he will induce his wife to play the part he shall suggest. The scheme is soon arranged, and the Marchioness, closely veiled, is presented to Don Caesar as the Countess de Bazan. Disgusted at "the precious piece of antiquity," as he terms her, and fancying that he has been duped, he is about to sign a paper relinquishing his bride, when he suddenly hears Maritana's voice. He recognizes it as the same he had heard during the marriage rites. He rushes forward to claim her, but she is quickly carried away, and he is prevented from following.

The last act opens in a palace belonging to the King, where Maritana is surrounded with luxury, though she is as yet unaware that she is in the royal apartments. Don José, fancying that Don Caesar will not dare to make his appearance, as he does not know of his pardon, carries out his plot by introducing the King to her as her husband. She at first rejects him, and as he presses his suit Don Caesar breaks into the apartment. The King in a rage demands to know his errand. He replies that he is in quest of the Countess de Bazan, and with equal rage inquires who he (the King) is. The King in confusion answers that he is Don Caesar, whereupon the latter promptly replies, "Then I am the King of Spain." Before further explanation can be made, a messenger arrives from the Queen with the announcement that she awaits the King. After his departure Don Caesar and Maritana mutually recognize each other, and upon her advice he resolves to appeal to the Queen to save her. He waits for her Majesty in the palace garden, and while concealed, overhears Don José informing her that the King will meet his mistress that night. He springs out, and denouncing him as a traitor to his King slays him, and then returning to Maritana's apartment finds the King there again, and tells him what has occurred. He has saved the King's honor: will the King destroy his? The monarch, overcome with Don Caesar's gallantry and loyalty, consigns Maritana to him and appoints him Governor of Granada. The appointment does not suit Don Caesar, for Granada is too near his creditors. The King, laughing, changes it to Valencia, a hundred leagues away, and thither Don Caesar conducts his happy bride.

The drama is one which is well adapted to bright, cheerful, melodious music, and the opportunity has been well improved, for "Maritana" is one of the sprightliest and brightest of all the English operas, and contains several ballads which for beauty and expressiveness may well challenge any that Balfe has written. The principal numbers in the first act are Maritana's opening song in the public square ("It was a Knight of princely Mien"); the romanza which she subsequently sings for Don José, "I hear it again, 'tis the Harp in the Air," which is one of the sweetest and most delicate songs in any of the lighter operas; the duet between Maritana and Don José, "Of fairy Wand had I the Power;" Don Caesar's rollicking drinking-song, "All the World over, to love, to drink, to fight, I delight;" and the tripping chorus, "Pretty Gitana, tell us what the Fates decree," leading up to the stirring ensemble in the finale, when Don Caesar is arrested. The first scene of the second act is the richest in popular numbers, containing an aria for alto, Lazarillo's song ("Alas! those Chimes so sweetly pealing"); a charming trio for Don Caesar, Lazarillo, and Don José ("Turn on, old Time, thine Hourglass"); Don Caesar's stirring martial song, "Yes, let me like a Soldier fall;" the serious ballad, "In happy Moments, Day by Day," written by Alfred Bunn, who wrote so many of the Balfe ballads; and the quartet and chorus closing the

scene, "Health to the Lady, the lovely Bride!" The second scene opens with a pretty chorus in waltz time ("Ah, what Pleasure! the soft Guitar"), followed by an aria sung by the King ("The Mariner in his Bark"), and introduced by an attractive violin prelude. The finale is a very dramatic ensemble, quintet and chorus ("What Mystery must now control"). The last act falls off in musical interest, though it is very strong dramatically. It contains a few numbers, however, which are very popular; among them one of the most admired of all English songs ("Scenes that are brightest"), which Maritana sings in the King's apartments at the beginning of the act; the humorous duet between the King and Don Caesar when they meet; the love-duet between Don Caesar and Maritana ("This Heart with Bliss o'erflowing"); and Don Caesar's song, "There is a Flower that bloometh," which is in the sentimental ballad style. The freshness, brightness, and gracefulness of the music of this little opera, combined with the unusual interest and delicate humor of the story, have always commended it to popular admiration.

## **WEBER.**

Carl Maria von Weber was born Dec. 18, 1786, at Eutin, and may almost be said to have been born on the stage, as his father was at the head of a theatrical company, and the young Carl was carried in the train of the wandering troupe all over Germany. His first lessons were given to him by Henschkel, conductor of the orchestra of Duke Friedrich of Meiningen. At the age of fourteen he wrote his first opera, "Das Waldmädchen," which was performed several times during the year 1800. In 1801 appeared his two-act comic opera, "Peter Schmoll and his Neighbors," and during these two years he also frequently played in concerts with great success. He then studied with the Abbé Vogler, and in his eighteenth year was engaged for the conductorship of the Breslau opera. About this time appeared his first important opera, "Rubezahl." At the conclusion of his studies with Vogler he was made director of the Opera at Prague. In 1814 he wrote a cantata, "The Lyre and Sword," for a festive occasion, and it was greeted with the wildest enthusiasm. In 1816 he went to Berlin, where he was received with the highest marks of popular esteem, and thence to Dresden as Hofcapellmeister. This was the most brilliant period in his career. It was during this time that he married Caroline Brandt, the actress and singer, who had had a marked influence upon his musical progress, and to whom he dedicated his exquisite "Invitation to the Dance." The first great work of his life, "Der Freischütz," was written at this period. Three other important operas followed,—*"Preciosa," "Euryanthe,"* the first performance of which took place in Vienna in 1823, and *"Oberon,"* which he finished in London and brought out there. Weber's last days were spent in the latter city; and it was while making preparations to return to Germany, which he longed to see again, that he was stricken down with his final illness. On the 4th of June, 1826, he was visited by Sir George Smart, Moscheles, and other musicians who were eager to show him attention. He declined to have any one watch by his bedside, thanked them for their kindness, bade them good-by, and then turned to his friend Fürstenau and said, "Now let me sleep." These were his last words. The next morning he was found dead in his bed. He has left a rich legacy of works besides his operas,—a large collection of songs, many cantatas (of which "The Jubilee," with its brilliant overture, is the finest), some masses, of which that in E flat is the most beautiful, and several concertos, besides many brilliant rondos, polaccas, and marches for the piano.

## **DER FREISCHÜTZ.**

"Der Freischütz," a romantic opera in three acts, words by Friedrich Kind, was first produced at Berlin, June 18, 1821. It is one of the most popular operas in the modern repertory. It was first performed in Paris, Dec. 7, 1824, as "Robin des Bois," with a new libretto by Castile Blaze and Sauvage, and many changes in the score, such as divertissements made up of the dance-music in "Preciosa" and "Oberon," and of "The Invitation to the Dance," scored by Berlioz. In 1841 it was again given in Paris, with an accurate translation of the text by Pacini, and recitatives added by Berlioz, as "Le Franc Archer." Its first English performance in London was given July 22, 1824, as "Der Freischütz, or the Seventh Bullet," with several ballads inserted; and its first Italian at Covent Garden, March 16, 1850, with recitatives by Costa, as "Il Franco Arciero." So popular was it in England in 1824 that no less than nine theatres were presenting various versions of it at the same time. The original cast was as follows:—

AGATHA Frau CAROLINE SEIDLER.

ANNCHEN Fräulein JOHANNA EUNIKE.

MAX Herr CARL STÜMER.

CASPAR Herr HEINRICH BLUME.

OTTAKAR Herr RUBINSTEIN.

KUNO Herr WANER.  
HERMIT Herr GERN.  
KILIAN Herr WIEDEMANN.

The text of the opera is taken from a story in "Popular Tales of the Northern Nations," and is founded upon a traditional belief that a demon of the forest furnishes a marksman with unerring bullets cast under magical influences. Kuno, the head ranger to the Prince of Bohemia, too old to longer continue in his position, recommends Max, a skilful marksman, who is betrothed to his daughter Agatha, as his successor. The Prince agrees to accept him if he proves himself victor at the forthcoming hunting-match. Caspar, the master-villain of the play, who has sold himself to the demon Zamiel, and who also is in love with Agatha, forms a plot to ruin Max and deliver him over to Zamiel as a substitute for himself, for the limit of his contract with the Evil One is close at hand. With Zamiel's aid he causes Max to miss the mark several times during the rehearsals for the match. The lover is thrown into deep dejection by his ill luck, and while in this melancholy condition is cunningly approached by Caspar, who says to him that if he will but repeat the formula, "In the name of Zamiel," he will be successful. He does so, and brings down an eagle soaring high above him.

Elated with his success, Caspar easily persuades him that he can win the match if he will meet him at midnight in the Wolf's Glen, where with Zamiel's aid he can obtain plenty of magic bullets.

The second act opens in Kuno's house, and shows us Agatha melancholy with forebodings of coming evil. A hermit whom she has met in the woods has warned her of danger, and given her a wreath of magic roses to ward it off. An ancestral portrait falling from the walls also disturbs her; and at last the appearance of the melancholy Max confirms her belief that trouble is in store for her. Max himself is no less concerned. All sorts of strange sounds have troubled him, and his slumbers have been invaded with apparitions. Nevertheless, he goes to the Wolf's Glen; and though spectres, skeletons, and various grotesque animals terrify him, and his mother's spirit appears and warns him away, he overcomes his fright and appears with Caspar at the place of incantation. Zamiel is summoned, and seven bullets are cast, six of which are to be directed by Max himself in the forthcoming match, while the seventh will be at the disposal of the demon. Little dreaming the fate which hangs upon the seventh, Caspar offers no objections.

The third act opens, like the last, in Kuno's house, and discovers Agatha preparing for her nuptials, and telling Annchen a singular dream she has had. She had fancied herself a dove, and that Max fired at her. As the bird fell she came to herself and saw that the dove had changed to a fierce bird of ill omen which lay dying at her feet. The melancholy produced by the dream is still further heightened when it is found that a funeral instead of a bridal wreath has been made for her; but her heart lightens up again as she remembers the magic rose-wreath which the hermit had enjoined her to wear on her wedding day. At last the eventful day of trial comes, and the Prince and all his courtiers assemble to witness the match. Max makes six shots in succession which go home to the mark. At the Prince's command he fires the seventh, Zamiel's bullet, at a dove flying past. As he fires, Agatha appears to him as the dove, and he fancies he has slain her. The wreath protects her, however, and Zamiel directs the bullet to Caspar's heart. The demon claims his victim, and Max his bride, amid general rejoicing.

The overture, which is one of the most favorite numbers of its class in the concert-room as well as in the opera-house, is a masterpiece of brilliant and descriptive instrumentation, and furnishes us with a key to the whole story in its announcement of the leading themes. It opens with an adagio horn passage of great beauty, giving us the groundwork of the entire action; and then follow motives from Max's grand scena in the first act, the Incantation music, Agatha's moonlight scene, and other episodes connected with the action of Max and Caspar. Indeed, the frequent and expressive use of the *Leit motif* all through the work seem to entitle Weber to the credit of its invention.

The first act opens with a spirited chorus of villagers, followed by a lively march and a comic song by Kilian, in which he rallies Max upon his bad luck. The next number is a trio and chorus, with solos for the principals, Max, Kuno, and Caspar ("O diese Sonne, furchtbar steigt sie mir empor"). Max laments his fate, but Kuno encourages him, while Caspar insinuates his evil plot. The trio is of a sombre cast at the beginning, but by a sudden change the horns and an expressive combination of the chorus give it a cheerful character. It is once more disturbed, however, by Caspar's ominous phrases, but at last Kuno and his men cheer up the despondent lover with a brisk hunting-chorus, and the villagers dance off to a lively waltz tempo. Max is left alone, and the next number is a grand tenor scene. It opens with a gloomy recitative, which lights up as he thinks of Agatha, and then passes into one of the most tender and delicious of melodies ("Durch die Wälder, durch die Auen"), set to a beautiful accompaniment. Suddenly the harmony is clouded by the apparition of Zamiel, but as he disappears, Max begins another charming melody ("Jetzt ist wohl ihr Fenster offen"), which is even more beautiful than the first. As Zamiel reappears the harmony is again darkened; but when despairing Max utters the cry, "Lives there no God!" the wood-demon disappears, and the great song comes to an end. In this mood Caspar meets



him, and seeks to cheer him with an hilarious drinking-song ("Hier im ird'schen Jammerthal"), furious in its energy, and intended to express unhallowed mirth. The act closes with Caspar's bass aria of infernal triumph ("Triumph! die Rache, die Rache gelingt"), accompanied by music which is wonderfully weird and shadowy in its suggestions.

The second act opens with a duet ("Schelm! halt fest") in which Agatha's fear and anxiety are charmingly contrasted with the lightsome and cheery nature of Annchen, her attendant, and this in turn is followed by a naive and coquettish arietta ("Kommt ein schlanker Bursch gegangen") sung by the latter. Annchen departs, and Agatha, opening her window and letting the moonlight flood the room, sings the famous scena and prayer, "Leise, leise, fromme Weise," beginning, after a few bars of recitative, with a melody full of prayer and hope and tender longings, shaded with vague presentiment. It is an adagio of exquisite beauty, closing with an ecstatic outburst of rapture ("Alle meine Pulse schlagen") as she beholds her lover coming. The melody has already been heard in the overture, but its full joy and splendid sweep are attained only in this scene. In the next scene we have a trio ("Wie? was? Entsetzen?") between Max, Annchen, and Agatha, in which the musical discrimination of character is carried to a fine point; and the act concludes with the incantation music in the Wolf's Glen, which has never been surpassed in weirdness, mystery, and diablerie, and at times in actual sublimity. Its real power lies in the instrumentation; not alone in its vivid and picturesque presentation of the melodramatic scene with its hideous surroundings, but in its expressiveness and appositeness to the action and sentiment by the skilful use of motives.

The last act has an instrumental prelude foreshadowing the Hunters' Chorus. It opens with a graceful but somewhat melancholy aria of a religious character ("Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle"), sung by Agatha, in which she is still wavering between doubt and hope, and succeeded by another of Annchen's arias, beginning with the gloomy romance, "Einst traumte meiner sel'gen Base," and closing with a lively allegro ("Trübe Augen, Liebchen"), which is intended to encourage her sad mistress. Then the bridesmaids sing their lively chorus, "Wir winden dir den Jungfern-Kranz," so well known by its English title, "A rosy Crown we twine for Thee." The pretty little number is followed by the Hunters' Chorus, "Was gleicht wohl auf Erden dem Jägervergnügen," which is a universal favorite. It leads up to a strong dramatic finale, crowded with striking musical ideas, and containing Agatha's beautiful melody in the closing chorus.

Few operas have had such world-wide popularity as "Der Freischütz," and yet it is an essentially German product. The composer's son has aptly characterized it, in his Biography of his father: "Weber did not compose 'Der Freischütz;' he allowed it to grow out of the rich soil of his brave German heart, and to expand leaf by leaf, blossom by blossom, fostered by the hand of his talent; and thus no German looks upon the opera as a work of art which appeals to him from without. He feels as if every line of the work came from his own heart, as if he himself had dreamed it so, and it could no more sound otherwise than the rustling of an honest German beech-wood."

## **OBERON.**

"Oberon, or the Elf King's Oath," a romantic and fairy opera in three acts, words by J.R. Planché, was first produced at Covent Garden, London, April 12, 1826, in English. Its first Italian performance was given in the same city, July 3, 1860, the recitatives being supplied by Benedict, who also added several numbers from "Euryanthe." The original cast was as follows:—

REIZA Miss PATON.  
FATIMA Mme. VESTRIS.  
PUCK Miss CAWSE.  
HUON Mr. BRAHAM.  
OBERON Mr. BLAND.  
SHERASMIN Mr. FAWCETT.  
MERMAID Miss GOWNELL.

The librettist, Planché, in a tribute to Weber, gives the origin of the story of "Oberon." It appeared originally in a famous collection of French romances, "La Bibliothèque Bleue," under the title of "Huon of Bordeaux." The German poet Wieland adopted the principal incidents of the story as the basis of his poem, "Oberon," and Sotheby's translation of it was used in the preparation of the text. The original sketch of the action, as furnished by Planché, is as follows:—

Oberon, the Elfin King, having quarrelled with his fairy partner, vows never to be reconciled to her till he shall find two lovers constant through peril and temptation. To seek such a pair his 'tricksy spirit,' Puck, has ranged in vain through the world. Puck, however, hears the sentence passed on Sir Huon of Bordeaux, a young knight, who, having been insulted by the son of Charlemagne, kills him in single combat, and is for this condemned by the monarch to travel to Bagdad to slay him who sits on

the Caliph's left hand, and to claim his daughter as his bride. Oberon instantly resolves to make this pair the instruments of his reunion with his queen, and for this purpose he brings up Huon and Sherasmin asleep before him, enamours the knight by showing him Reiza, daughter of the Caliph, in a vision, transports him at his waking to Bagdad, and having given him a magic horn, by the blasts of which he is always to summon the assistance of Oberon, and a cup that fills at pleasure, disappears. Here Sir Huon rescues a man from a lion, who proves afterwards to be Prince Babekan, who is betrothed to Reiza. One of the properties of the cup is to detect misconduct. He offers it to Babekan.

On raising it to his lips the wine turns to flame, and thus proves him a villain. He attempts to assassinate Huon, but is put to flight. The knight then learns from an old woman that the princess is to be married next day, but that Reiza has been influenced, like her lover, by a vision, and is resolved to be his alone. She believes that fate will protect her from her nuptials with Babekan, which are to be solemnized on the next day. Huon enters, fights with and vanquishes Babekan, and having spell-bound the rest by a blast of the magic horn, he and Sherasmin carry off Reiza and Fatima. They are soon shipwrecked. Reiza is captured by pirates on a desert island and brought to Tunis, where she is sold to the Emir and exposed to every temptation, but she remains constant. Sir Huon, by the order of Oberon, is also conveyed thither. He undergoes similar trials from Roshana, the jealous wife of the Emir, but proving invulnerable she accuses him to her husband, and he is condemned to be burned on the same pile with Reiza. They are rescued by Sherasmin, who has the magic horn. Oberon appears with his queen, whom he has regained by their constancy, and the opera concludes with Charlemagne's pardon of Huon.

The overture, like that of "Der Freischütz," reflects the story, and is universally popular. Its leading themes are the horn solo, which forms the symphony of Sir Huon's vision, a short movement from the fairies' chorus, a martial strain from the last scene in the court of Charlemagne, a passage from Reiza's scene in the second act, and Puck's invocation of the spirits.

The first act opens in Oberon's bower with a melodious chorus of fairies and genii ("Light as fairy Feet can fall"), followed by a solo for Oberon ("Fatal Oath"), portraying his melancholy mood, and "The Vision," a quaint, simple melody by Reiza ("Oh! why art thou sleeping?"), which leads up to a splendid ensemble ("Honor and Joy to the True and the Brave"), containing a solo for Oberon, during which the scene suddenly changes from the fairy bower to the city of Bagdad. Huon has a grand scena ("Oh! 't is a Glorious Sight"), a composition in several movements beginning with a dramatic bravura illustrative of the scenes of the battlefield, and closing with a joyous, brisk allegretto ("Joy to the high-born Dames of France"). The finale begins with an aria by Reiza ("Yes, my Lord"), in the Italian style, passing into a duet for Reiza and Fatima, and closing with the chorus ("Now the Evening Watch is set.")

The second act opens with a characteristic chorus ("Glory to the Caliph"), the music of which has been claimed by some critics as genuinely Moorish, though it is probable that Weber only imitated that style in conformity to the demands of the situation. A little march and three melodramatic passages lead up to an arietta for Fatima ("A lovely Arab Maid"), beginning with a very pleasing minor and closing in a lively major. This leads directly to the lovely quartet, "Over the Dark Blue Waters,"—one of the most attractive numbers in the opera. It is a concerted piece for two sopranos, tenor, and bass, opening with two responsive solos in duet, first for the bass and tenor, and then for the two sopranos, the voices finally uniting in a joyous and animated movement of great power. The music now passes to the supernatural, and we have Puck's invocation to the spirits, whom he summons to raise a storm and sink the vessel in which the lovers have embarked. Puck's recitative is very powerful, and the chorus of the spirits in response, a very rapid presto movement, is in its way as effective as the incantation music in "Der Freischütz." The storm rises, the orchestra being the medium of the description, which is very graphic and effective. Huon has a short prayer ("Ruler of this Awful Hour"), which is impressively solemn, and then follows Reiza's magnificent apostrophe to the sea ("Ocean, thou mighty Monster that liest curled like a green Serpent round about the World"). The scene is heroic in its construction, and its effective performance calls for the highest artistic power. It represents the gradual calm of the angry waters, the breaking of the sun through the gloom, and the arrival of a boat to the succor of the distressed Reiza. The immense effect of the scene is greatly enhanced by the descriptive instrumentation, especially in the allegro describing the rolling of the billows and the recitative and succeeding andante picturing the outburst of the sun. The mermaid's song ("Oh! 't is pleasant"), with its wavy, flowing melody, forms a fitting pendant to this great picture of elementary strife; and a delicate and graceful chorus closes the act.

The third act opens with a lovely song for Fatima ("Oh! Araby, dear Araby"), consisting of two movements,—an andante plaintively recalling past memories, and an allegro of exquisite taste. The song, even detached from the opera, has always been greatly admired in concert-rooms, and, it is said, was a special favorite also with the composer. It is followed by a duet for Sherasmin and Fatima ("On the Banks of sweet Garonne"), which is of a vivacious and comic nature in Sherasmin's part, and then passes into a tender minor as Fatima sings. The next number is a trio for soprano, alto, and tenor ("And

must I then disassemble?"), written very much in the style of the trio in "Der Freischütz," and yet purely original in its effect. Reiza follows with a smooth, flowing, and pathetic cavatina ("Mourn thou, poor Heart"), which is succeeded in marked contrast by a joyous rondo ("I revel in Hope") sung by Sir Huon. The next scene is that of Sir Huon's temptation, a voluptuous passage for ballet and chorus, interrupted at intervals by the energetic exclamations of the paladin as he successfully resists the sirens. The gay scene leads up to the finale. Sir Huon and Reiza are bound to the stake, surrounded by slaves singing a weird chorus. A blast from the magic horn sets them dancing, and a quartet for the four principal characters based upon the subject of the slaves' Chorus ensues. Oberon appears and takes his leave after transporting the whole company to the royal halls of Charlemagne. A stirring march opens the scene, a beautiful aria by Huon follows ("Yes! even Love to Fame must yield"), and a chorus by the whole court closes the opera.

## **EURYANTHE.**

The opera of "Euryanthe" was written for the Kärnthnerthor Theatre, Vienna, where it was first produced Oct. 25, 1823, though not with the success which afterwards greeted it in Berlin, owing to the Rossini craze with which the Austrian capital was afflicted at that time. The libretto is by Helmine von Chezy, an eccentric old woman who proved a sad torment to the composer. The plot, which is a curious mixture of "Cymbeline" and "Lohengrin," was adapted from an old French romance, entitled "L'Histoire de Gerard de Nevers et de la belle et vertueuse Euryanthe, sa mie," and is substantially as follows:—

In the palace of King Louis of France, where a brilliant assemblage is gathered, Count Adolar sings a tribute to the beauty and virtue of Euryanthe, his betrothed. Count Lysiart replies with a sneer, and boasts that he can gain her favor; but Adolar challenges him to bring a proof. The scene then changes to the castle of Nevers, and discloses Euryanthe longing for Adolar. Eglantine, who is also in love with Adolar, and who is conspiring against Euryanthe, soon joins her, and in their interview the latter rashly discloses the secret of a neighboring tomb known only to herself and Adolar. In this tomb rests the body of Emma, Adolar's sister, who had killed herself, and whose ghost had appeared to Euryanthe and her lover with the declaration that she can never be at peace until tears of innocence have been shed upon the ring which was the agency employed in her death. Lysiart arrives from court with a commission to take Euryanthe to the King, while Eglantine is left behind in possession of the secret.

In the second act Lysiart deplures his failure to obtain the favor of Euryanthe; but his hopes are renewed when he meets Eglantine emerging from the tomb with the ring, and learns from her that it can be made to convict Euryanthe of indiscretion, or at least of breaking her promise not to reveal the tomb secret. He obtains the ring, confronts Euryanthe with it at the palace, and forces her to admit the broken promise. Adolar, believing that she is guilty, drags her away to a wilderness where it is his intention to kill her; but on the way they are attacked by a serpent. Adolar slays the monster, and then, seized with sudden pity, he abandons his intention of killing her, but leaves her to her fate. She is subsequently found by the King while on a hunting expedition, and to him she relates the story of Eglantine's treachery. The King takes her with him to the palace. Meanwhile Adolar has begun to suspect that Euryanthe has been the victim of her base wiles, and on his way to Nevers to punish Lysiart he encounters the wedding-procession of the guilty pair, and challenges him. The King suddenly arrives upon the scene and announces Euryanthe's death, whereupon Eglantine declares her love for Adolar. The furious Lysiart turns upon her and stabs her. Euryanthe is not dead. She has only fainted, and is soon restored to her lover, while Lysiart is led off to the scaffold.

The overture, which is familiar in our concert-rooms, gives a sketch of the principal situations in the opera. The first act opens in the great banquet-hall of the King with a flowing and stately chorus ("Dem Frieden Heil") alternating between female and male voices and finally taken by the full chorus. Then follows Adolar's lovely and tender romanza ("Unter blühenden Mandelbäumen"). The next number, a chorus ("Heil! Euryanthe"), with recitatives for Adolar, Lysiart, and the King leads up to a vigorous trio ("Wohlan! Du kennst"). Euryanthe's idyllic and touching cavatina ("Glöcklein im Thale") is a match in beauty and tenderness for Adolar's romanza. The recitative which follows introduces a sentimental aria for Eglantine ("O mein Leid ist unermessen"), leading to a duet with Euryanthe ("Unter ist mein Stern gegangen"). A scena for Eglantine, characterized by all the hatred and fury of jealousy, introduces the finale, which consists of a vigorous chorus ("Jubeltöne") accompanying Euryanthe's solo ("Fröhliche Klänge").

The second act opens with a powerful recitative and aria for Lysiart ("Wo berg ich mich"), which is full of passion. A duet of a menacing and sombre character between Lysiart and Eglantine ("Komm denn unser Leid zu rächen") stands out in gloomy contrast with Adolar's aria ("Wehen mir Lüfte Ruh") and the duet with Euryanthe ("Hin nimm die Seele mein"), so full of grace and tenderness. They lead up to the finale, a grand quartet ("Lass mich empor zum Lichte"), with powerful chorus accompaniment.

The last act opens with the serpent episode, with characteristic music, and a recitative scene between Euryanthe and Adolar leads up to a pathetic cavatina for Euryanthe ("Hier am Quell wo Weiden stehn"). The ringing notes of the horns behind the scenes announce the approach of the King's party, who sing a fresh and sonorous hunting chorus ("Die Thale dampfen"). The remaining numbers are a duet for Euryanthe and the King with chorus ("Lasst mich hier in Ruh' erblassen"), a lovely and melodious aria with chorus for Euryanthe ("Zu ihm"), a bright wedding-march and scene with chorus, and a duet for Adolar and Lysiart with chorus, leading to the grand quintet and chorus which bring the opera to a close.

## **APPENDIX.**

A work of this kind, by whomsoever written, must be somewhat arbitrary in its selection of THE STANDARD OPERAS; and the writer has often found it difficult to say where the line should be drawn, —what excluded and what admitted. In addition to the operas treated of, there are others, without a mention of which such a work as this would scarcely be considered complete; and a list of these is herewith submitted, together with the dates of their first performance. Many of these are familiar to the public by their past reputation, while others still hold the stage in Europe. Others have never been given out of the native country of their composers; and still others, like those of Mr. Sullivan, are in reality operettas, and cannot be classed as standard, although their popularity is extraordinary.

ADAM - Le Postilion de Longjumeau (1835).

AUBER - Le Cheval de Bronze (The Bronze Horse) (1835); L'Ambassadrice (1836); Le Domino Noir (The Black Domino) (1837); Zanetta (1840); Manon Lescaut (1856).

BALFE - Enchantress (1845); Satanella (1858); Puritan's Daughter (1861); The Talisman (1863).

BENEDICT - The Lily of Killarney (1862).

CORDER - Nordisa (1887).

DONIZETTI - Polinto (1840); Linda (1842); Maria di Rohan (1843); Don Sebastian (1843); Gemma di Vergi (1845).

FLOTOW - L'Ombre (1869).

GOETZ - Francesca von Rimini (1874); The Taming of the Shrew (1874).

GOLDMARK - The Queen of Sheba (1875); Merlin (1886); Cricket on the Hearth (1896).

GOMEZ - Il Guarany (1870).

GOUNOD - Polyeucte (1878).

HALEVY - L'Éclair (1835).

HEROLD - Zampa(1831); Pré aux Clercs(1832).

ISOUARD - Joconde (1814).

KREUTZER - Das Nachtlager in Granada (1834).

LEONCAVALLO - I Medici (1893).

MARCHETTI - Ruy Blas (1870).

MARSCHNER - Der Vampyr (1828); Hans Heiling (1833).

MASCAGNI - L'Amico Fritz (1892); I Rantzau (1892); Silvano(1895); Guglielmo Ratcliff (1895).

MASSÉ - La Reine Topaze (1856); Paul et Virginie (1876).

MASSENET - Le Roi de Lahore (1877); Manon Lescaut (1884); Le Cid (1886); Esclarmonde (1889).

NICOLAI - Merry Wives of Windsor (1849).

PACINI - Saffo (1840).

PLANQUETTE - The Bells of Corneville (1877).

PONCHIELLI - La Gioconda (1876).

RICCI - Crispino (1850).

ROSSINI - La Gazza Ladra (1817); Moses in Egypt (1818).

RUBINSTEIN - Dimitri Donskoi (1852); The Demon (1875); Feramors (1863).

SAINT SAENS - Le Timbre d'Argent (1877); Étienne Marcel (1879); Henry VIII. (1883); Proserpine (1887).

STRAUSS - Indigo (1871); Die Fledermaus (The Bat) (1872); Der Lustige Krieg (The Merry War) (1875).

SULLIVAN - Trial by Jury (1875); The Sorcerer (1877); Pinafore (1878); Pirates of Penzance (1880); Patience (1881); Iolanthe (1882); The Princess (1883); The Mikado (1885); Ruddygore (1887); The Yeomen of the Guard (1888); King of Barataria (1889); Hesse Halbpennig (1896).

SUPPE - Fatinitza (1876); Boccaccio (1882).

THOMAS - Hamlet (1868); Françoise de Rimini (1882).

VERDI - The Sicilian Vespers (1855); La Forza del Destino (Force of Destiny) (1862); Don Carlos (1867).

WALLACE - Lurline (1860).

WEBER - Abu Hassan (1811); Preciosa (1823).

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