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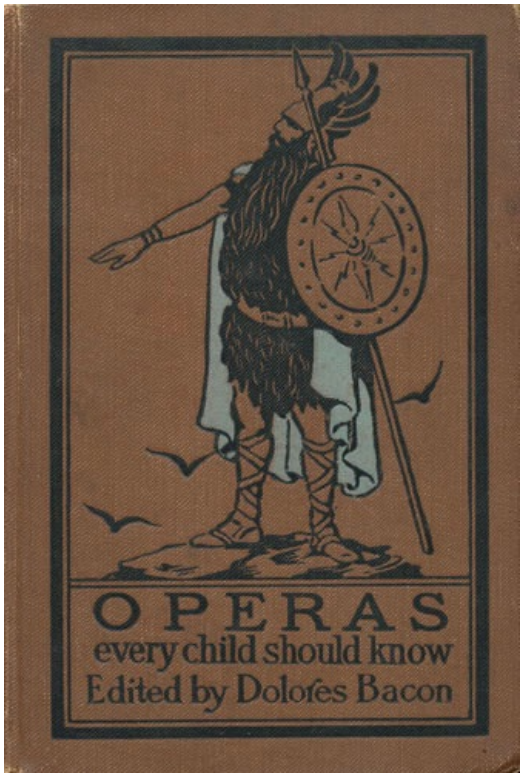

Brünnhilde the Valkyrie

Operas

EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE TEXT AND MUSIC OF SOME OF THE MOST FAMOUS MASTERPIECES

BY

DOLORES BACON

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FOREWORD

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IN SELECTING a few of the operas every child should know, the editor's greatest difficulty is in determining what to leave out. The wish to include "L'Africaine," "Othello," "Lucia," "Don Pasquale," "Mignon," "Nozze di Figaro," "Don Giovanni," "Rienzi," "Tannhäuser," "Romeo and Juliet," "Parsifal," "Freischütz," and a hundred others makes one impatient of limitations.

The operas described here are not all great compositions: Some of them are hopelessly poor. Those of Balfe and Flotow are included because they were expressions of popular taste when our grandfathers enjoyed going to the opera.

The Nibelung Ring is used in preference to several other compositions of Wagner because the four operas included in it are the fullest both of musical and story wonders, and are at the same time the least understood.

"Aïda" and "Carmen" belong here—as do many which are left out—because of their beauty and musical splendour. Few, instead of many, operas have been written about in this book, because it seemed better to give a complete idea of several than a superficial sketch of many.

The beginnings of opera—music-drama—are unknown; but Sulpitius, an Italian, declared that opera was heard in Italy as early as 1490. The Greeks, of course, accompanied their tragedies with music long before that time, but that would not imply "opera" as we understand it. However, modern opera is doubtless merely the development of that manner of presenting drama.

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After the opera, came the ballet, and that belonged distinctively to France. Before 1681 there were no women dancers in the ballet—only males. All ballets of shepherdesses and nymphs and dryads were represented by men and boys; but at last, the ladies of the court of France took to the ballet for their own amusement, and thus women dancers became the fashion.

Even the most heroic or touching stories must lose much of their dignity when made into opera, since in that case the "music's the thing," and not the "play." For this reason it has seemed necessary to tell the stories of such operas as "Il Trovatore," with all their bombastic trimmings complete, in order to be faithful in showing them as they really are. On the other hand, it has been necessary to try to treat "Pinafore" in Gilbert's rollicking fashion.

Opera is the most superficial thing in the world, even if it appears the most beautiful

to the senses, if not to the intelligence. We go to opera not specially to understand the story, but to hear music and to see beautiful scenic effects. It is necessary, however, to know enough of the story to appreciate the cause of the movement upon the stage, and without some acquaintance of it beforehand one gets but a very imperfect knowledge of an opera story from hearing it once.

A very great deal is said of music-motif and music-illustration, and it has been demonstrated again and again that this is largely the effort of the ultra-artistic to discover what is not there. At best, music is a "concord of sweet sounds"—heroic, tender, exciting, etc.; but the elemental passions and emotions are almost all it can define, or even suggest. Certain music is called "characteristic"—anvil choruses, for example, where hammers or triangles or tin whistles are used, but that is not music in its best estate, and musical purpose is best understood after a composer has labelled it, whether the ultra-artistic are ready to admit it or not. -vii-

The opera is never more enjoyed than by a music lover who is incapable of criticism from lack of musical knowledge: music being first and last an emotional art; and as our emotions are refined it requires compositions of a more and more elevated character to appeal to them. Thus, we range from the bathos and vulgarity of the music hall to the glories of grand opera!

The history of opera should be known and composers classified, just as it is desirable to know and to classify authors, painters, sculptors, and actors.

Music is first of all something to be felt, and it is one of the arts which does not always explain itself.

DOLORES BACON.

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OPERAS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW -3-

BALFE

THE story of The Bohemian Girl is supposed to have been taken from a French ballet entitled The Gipsy, which was produced in Paris in 1839. Again, it is said to have been stolen from a play written by the Marquis de Saint-Georges, which was named La Bohémienne. However that may be, it would at first sight hardly seem worth stealing, but it has nevertheless been popular for many decades. Balfe, the composer, had no sense of dramatic composition and was not much of a musician, but he had a talent for writing that which could be sung. It was not always beautiful, but it was always practicable.

The original title of La Bohémienne has in its meaning nothing to do with Bohemia, and therefore a literal translation does not seem to have been especially applicable to the opera as Bunn made it. The story is placed in Hungary and not in Bohemia, and the hero came from Warsaw, hence the title is a misnomer all the way around. It

was Balfe who tried to establish English opera in London, and to that purpose he wrote an opera or two in which his wife sang the principal rôles; but in the midst of that enterprise he received favourable propositions from Paris, and therefore abandoned the London engagement. When he went to Paris, The Bohemian Girl was -4- only partly written, and he took from its score several of its arias for use in a new opera. When he returned to London he wrote new music for the old opera, and thus The Bohemian Girl knew many vicissitudes off, as well as on, the stage.

The first city to hear this opera, outside of London, was New York. It was produced in America at the Park Theatre, November 25, 1844. The most remarkable thing about that performance was that the part of Arline was sung in the same cast by two women, Miss Dyott and Mrs. Seguin: the former singing it in the first act, the latter in the second and third. When it was produced in London, Piccolomini (a most famous singer) sang Arline and it was written that "applause from the many loud enough to rend the heavens" followed.

Because of this inconsequent opera, Balfe was given the cross of the Legion of Honour from Napoleon III., and was made Commander of the Order of Carlos III. by the regent of Spain. This seems incredible, for good music was perfectly well known from bad, but the undefined element of popularity was there, and thus the opera became a living thing.

A story is told of Balfe while he belonged to the Drury Lane orchestra. "Vauxhall Gardens" were then in vogue, and there was a call for the Drury Lane musicians to go there to play. The "Gardens" were a long way off, and there was no tram-car or other means of transportation for their patrons. Those who hadn't a coach had no way of getting there, and it must have cost Balfe considerable to go and come each day. He decided to find lodgings near the Gardens to save himself expense. He -5- looked and looked, on the day he first went out. Others wanted the same thing, and it was not easy to place himself. However, by evening, he had decided to take anything he could find; so he engaged a room at an unpromising looking house. He was kept waiting by the landlady for a long time in the passageway, but at last he was escorted up to his room, and, being tired out, he immediately went to bed and to sleep. In the morning he began to look about, and to his horror and amazement he found a corpse stowed away in a cupboard. Some member of his landlady's family who occupied the bed had died. When he applied for the room, he had been made to wait while the previous occupant was hastily tucked out of sight. After that, he never hired lodgings without first looking into the cupboards and under the bed.

Balfe was a good deal of a wag, and his waggishness was not always in good taste, as shown by an incident at carnival time in Rome. His resemblance to a great patroness of his, the Countess Mazzaras, a well-known woman of much dignity, induced him upon that occasion to dress himself in women's clothes, stand in a window conspicuously, and make the most extraordinary and hideous faces at the monks and other churchmen who passed. Every one gave the credit of this remarkable conduct to the Countess Mazzaras. Balfe had pianos carried up to the sleeping rooms of great singers before they got out of bed, and thus made them listen to his newly composed tunes. He sometimes announced himself by the titles of his famous tunes, as, "We May Be Happy Yet," and was admitted, and received as readily as if he had resorted to pasteboard politeness.

In short, Balfe was never a great musician, yet he had all the eccentricities that one -6- might expect a great musician to have, and he succeeded quite as well as if he had had genius.

Balfe was born May 15, 1808, and died October 20, 1870.

THE BOHEMIAN GIRL

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA WITH THE ORIGINAL CAST

Arline	Miss Romer.
Gipsy Queen	Miss Betts.
Thaddeus	Mr. Harrison.
Devilshoof	Mr. Stretton.
Count Arnheim	Mr. Borrani.
Florestein	Mr. Durnset.

Scene laid in Hungary.

Composer: Michael Balfe.
Author: Alfred Bunn.

First sung at London, England, Her Majesty's Theatre, Drury Lane, Nov. 27, 1843.

ACT I

MANY years ago, when noblemen, warriors, gipsies, lovers, enemies and all sorts and conditions of men fraternized without drawing very fine distinctions except when it came to levying taxes, a company of rich nobles met in the gardens of the Count Arnheim to go hunting together. The Count was the Governor of Presburg, and a very popular man, except with his inferiors.

They began their day's sport with a rather highfalutin song sung by the Count's retainers:

"Up with the banner and down with the slave,
  Who shall dare dispute the right,
Wherever its folds in their glory wave,
  Of the Austrian eagle's flight?"

The verses were rather more emotional than intelligent, but the singers were all in -7-
good spirits and prepared for a fine day's sport.

After this preliminary all the party—among whom was the young daughter of the Count, whose name was Arline, and a girlie sort of chap, Florestein, who was the Count's nephew—came from the castle, with huntsmen and pages in their train; and what with pages running about, and the huntsmen's bright colours, and the horns echoing, and the horses that one must feel were just without, stamping with impatience to be off, it was a gay scene. The old Count was in such high feather that he, too, broke into song and, while singing that

"Bugles shake the air,"

he caught up his little daughter in his arms and told how dear she was to him. It was not a proper thing for so young a girl to go on a hunt, but Arline was a spoiled young countess. When a huntsman handed a rifle to Florestein, that young man shuddered and rejected it—which left one to wonder just what he was going to do at a hunt without a rifle, but the others were less timid, and all separated to go to their various posts, Arline going by a foot-path in charge of a retainer.

These gay people had no sooner disappeared than a handsome young fellow, dishevelled, pursued, rushed into the garden. He looked fearfully behind him, and stopped to get his breath.

"I can run no farther," he gasped, looking back upon the road he had come; and then suddenly at his side, he saw a statue of the Austrian Emperor. He was even leaning against it. -8-

"Here I am, in the very midst of my foes!—a statue of the Emperor himself adorning these grounds!" and he became even more alarmed. While he stood thus, hesitating what to do next, a dozen dusky forms leaped the wall of the garden and stood looking at him. Thaddeus was in a soldier's dress and looked like a soldier. Foremost among the newcomers, who huddled together in brilliant rags, was a great brigand-looking fellow, who seemed to lead the band.

"Hold on! before we undertake to rob this chap, let us make sure of what we are doing," he cautioned the others. "If he is a soldier, we are likely to get the worst of it"—showing that he had as much wisdom as bravado. After a moment's hesitation they decided that caution was the better part of valour, and since it was no harm to be a gipsy, and there was a penalty attached to being a robber, they nonchalantly turned suspicion from themselves by beginning to sing gaily of their gipsy life. Frequently when they had done this, they had received money for it. If they mayn't rob this soldier chap, at least he might be generous and toss them a coin. During this time, Thaddeus was not napping. The Austrian soldiery were after him, and at best he could not expect to be safe long. The sight of the vagabonds inspired him with hope, although to most folks they would have seemed to be a rather uninspiring and hopeless lot. He went up to the leader, Devilshoof:

"My friend, I have something to say to you. I am in danger. You seem to be a decent sort—gay and friendly enough. The Austrian soldiers are after me. I am an exile from Poland. If I am caught, my life will be forfeited. I am young and you may count upon my good will. If you will take me along with you as one of you, I may stand a chance -9-
of escaping with my life—what do you say?"

The gipsies stared at him; and Devilshoof did so in no unfriendly manner. The leader was a good-natured wanderer, whose main fault was stealing—but that was a fault he shared in common with all gipsies. He was quite capable of being a good friend.

"Just who are you?" he asked, wanting a little more information.

"A man without country, friends, hope—or money."

"Well, you seem able to qualify as a gipsy pretty well. So come along." Just as he spoke, another gipsy, who was reconnoitering, said softly:

"Soldiers are coming——"

"Good—we'll give them something to do. Here, friend, we'll get ready for them," he cried, delighted with the new adventure.

At that the gipsies fell to stripping off Thaddeus's soldier clothes, and exchanging them for a gipsy's smock; but as this was taking place, a roll of parchment fell at Devilshoof's feet.

"What's this?" he asked, taking it up.

"It is my commission as a soldier of Poland—the only thing I have of value in the world. I shall never part with it," and Thaddeus snatched it and hid it in his dress and then mixed with the gipsies just as the Emperor's soldiers came up.

"Ho, there! You vagabonds—have you seen anything of a stranger who has passed this way?"

"What—a Polish soldier?"

"That's our man."

"Young?"

"Yes, yes—where did he go?" -10-

"A handsome fellow?"

"Have done there, and answer—where did he go?"

"I guess that may be the one?" Devilshoof reflected, consulting his comrades with a deliberation which made the officer wish to run his sword through him.

"Speak up—or——"

"Yes, yes—that's right—we have the right man! Up those rocks there," pointing. "That is the way he went. I shouldn't wonder if you might catch him."

The officer didn't wait to hear any more of this elaborate instruction, but rushed away with his men.

"Now, comrade," Devilshoof said to Thaddeus: "It is time for us to be off, while our soldier friends are enjoying the hunt. Only you lie around here while we explore a little; this gipsy life means a deal of wear and tear, if a fellow would live. There is likely to be something worth picking up about the castle, and after we have done the picking, we'll all be off."

As the gipsies and Thaddeus went away, the huntsmen rushed on, shouting to each other, and sounding their horns. Florestein came along in their wake. He was about the last man on earth to go on a hunt. He made this known without any help, by singing:

Is no succour near at hand?
  For my intellect so reels,
I am doubtful if I stand
  On my head or on my heels.
No gentleman, it's very clear,
  Such a shock should ever know,
And when once I become a peer,
They shall not treat me so——

That seemed to suggest that something serious had happened, but no one knew what till Thaddeus and a crowd of peasants rushed wildly in. -11-

"The Count's child, Arline, is attacked by an infuriated animal, and we fear she is killed,"—that is what Florestein had been bemoaning, instead of hurrying to the rescue! The Count Arnheim ran in then, distraught with horror. But Thaddeus had not remained idle; he had rushed after the huntsmen. Presently he hurried back, bearing the child in his arms. The retainer whose business it was to care for Arline fell at the Count's feet.

"Oh, great sir, just as we were entering the forest a wild deer rushed at us, and only for the bravery of this young gipsy,"—indicating Thaddeus—"the child would have been torn in pieces. As it is, she is wounded in the arm."

The Count took his beloved daughter in his arms.

"Her life is safe and the wound is not serious, thank God. Take her within and give her every care. And you, young man—you will remain with us and share our festivities—and ask of me anything that you will: I can never repay this service."

"Humph! Thaddeus is a fool," Devilshoof muttered. "First he served his enemy and now has to stand his enemy's thanks."

Thaddeus refused at first to remain, but when his refusal seemed to draw too much

attention to the gipsy band, he consented, as a matter of discretion. So they all seated themselves at the table which had been laid in the garden, and while they were banqueting, the gipsies and peasants danced to add to the sport; and little Arline could be seen in the nurse's arms, at a window of the castle, watching the fun, her arm bound up.

"Now," cried the old Count, when the banquet was over, "I ask one favour of all—and that is that you drink to the health of our great Emperor." He rose and lifted his -12- glass, assuming that all would drink. But that was a bit too much for Thaddeus! The Emperor was the enemy of Poland. Most certainly he would not drink—not even to save his life.

Florestein, who was always doing everything but what he ought, walked up to Thaddeus and pointed out his glass to him.

"Your fine acquaintance, uncle, is not overburdened with politeness, it seems to me. He does not respond to your wishes."

"What—does he not drink to the Emperor? My friend, I challenge you to drink this health." The old Count filled Thaddeus's glass and handed it to him.

"And thus I accept the challenge," Thaddeus cried; and before Devilshoof or any one else could stop him, the reckless chap went up to the statue of the Emperor and dashed the wine in its face.

This was the signal for a great uproar. The man who has dared insult the Emperor must be punished. The nobles made a dash for him, but the old Count was under an obligation too great to abandon Thaddeus yet. He tried to silence the enraged guests for a moment, and then said aside to Thaddeus:

"Go, I beg of you, your life is not worth a breath if you remain here. I cannot protect you—and indeed I ought not. Go at once," and he threw Thaddeus a purse of gold, meaning thus to reward him, and get him away quickly. Thaddeus immediately threw the purse amidst the nobles who were threatening him, and shouted:

"I am one whom gold cannot reward!" At that the angry men rushed upon him, but Devilshoof stood shoulder to shoulder with Thaddeus.

"Now, then, good folks, come on! I guess together we can give you a pretty -13- interesting fight, if it's fighting you are after!" A scrimmage was just in Devilshoof's line, and once and forever he declared himself the champion of his new comrade.

"Really, this is too bad," Florestein whimpered, standing at the table with the bone of a pheasant in one hand and a glass of wine in the other. "Just as a man is enjoying his dinner, a boor like this comes along and interrupts him." But by that time the fight was on, and Thaddeus and Devilshoof were against the lot. The old Count ordered his retainers to separate the nobles and the gipsies, and then had Devilshoof bound and carried into the castle. Thaddeus was escorted off by another path.

The row was over and the nobles seated themselves again at the table. The nurse, who had Arline at the window, now left her nursling and came down to speak with the Count.

Immediately after she left the castle chamber, Devilshoof could be seen scrambling over the castle roof, having escaped from the room in which he was confined. Reaching the window where Arline was left, he closed it. The nurse had been gone only a moment, when she reëntered the room. Whatever had taken place in her absence caused her to scream frightfully. The whole company started up again, while the nurse threw open the window and leaned out, crying:

"Arline is gone—stolen—help, help!" All dashed into the castle. Presently some of the nobles came to the window and motioned to those left outside. It was quite true. Arline was gone. Out they all rushed again. Every one in the place had gone distracted. The poor old Count's grief was pitiable. At that moment Devilshoof could -14- be seen triumphantly mounting the rocks, with Arline in his arms. He had avenged his comrade Thaddeus.

All at once the crowd saw the great gipsy leaping from rock to rock with the little child in his arms, and with a roar they started after him. Then Devilshoof seemed fairly to fly over the rocks, but the crowd gained upon him, till they reached a bridge which spanned a deep chasm; there Devilshoof paused; he was over, and with one tremendous effort he knocked from under the structure the trunk of a tree which supported the far end of the bridge, and down it went! The fall of timbers echoed back with Devilshoof's shout of laughter as he sped up the mountain with Arline.

The old Count ran to the chasm to throw himself headlong into it, but his friends held him back.

ACT II

TWELVE years after that day of the hunt in Count Arnheim's forests, the gipsies were encamped in Presburg. In those strange times gipsies roved about in the cities as well as in the fields and forests, and it was not at all strange to find the same old band encamped thus in the public street of a city. There, the gipsy queen had pitched her tent, and through its open curtains Arline could be seen lying upon a tiger's skin, while Thaddeus, who had never left the band, watched over her. There were houses on the opposite side of the street, and the gipsy queen's tent was lighted only dimly with a lamp that swung at the back, just before some curtains that formed a partition in the tent.

It was all quiet when the city patrol went by, and they had no sooner passed than -15-
Devilshoof entered the street, followed by others of the gipsy band, all wrapped in their dark cloaks.

"The moon is the only one awake now," they sang. "There is some fine business on foot, when the moon herself goes to bed," and they all drew their daggers. But Devilshoof, who was a pretty decent fellow, and who didn't believe in killing, whispered:

"Fie! Fie! When you are going to rob a gentleman, you shouldn't draw a knife on him. He will be too polite to refuse anything you may ask, if you ask politely"—which was Devilshoof's idea of wit. There was a hotel across the street, and one of the gipsies pointed to a light in its windows.

"It will be easy when our fine gentlemen have been drinking long enough. They won't know their heads from their heels." They stole off chuckling, to wait till they imagined every one to be asleep, but they were no sooner gone than Florestein, that funny little fop who never had thought of anything more serious than his appearance, reeled out of the hotel. He was dressed all in his good clothes, and wore golden chains about his neck—to one of which was attached a fine medallion. Rings glittered on his fingers, and altogether, with his plumes and furbelows, he was precisely the sort of thing Devilshoof and his companions were looking for. He was so very drunk that he could not imagine what a fool he was making of himself, and so he began to sing:

Wine, wine, if I am heir,
  To the count, my uncle's line;
  Wine, wine, wine,
Where's the fellow will dare
  To refuse his nephew wine?

This excellent song was punctuated by hiccoughs. There was another stanza which -16-
rebuked the boldness of the moon—in short, mentioned the shortcomings of most people compared to this elegant fellow's. Altogether, he was a very funny joke to the gipsies who were waiting for him and peering and laughing from round a corner as he sang. Then Devilshoof went up to him with mock politeness. He bowed very seriously.

My ear caught not the clock's last chime,
And might I beg to ask the time?

Florestein, even though he was drunk, was half alive to his danger. He hadn't enough courage to survive a sudden sneeze. So he braced up a little and eyed Devilshoof:

If the bottle has prevailed,
Yet whenever I'm assailed,
Though there may be nothing in it,
I am sobered in a minute.

One could see that this was quite true. Florestein was a good deal worried. He took out his watch, and assured Devilshoof that it was quite late.

I am really grieved to see
  Any one in such a state,
And gladly will take the greatest care
  Of the rings and chains you chance to wear,

Devilshoof said still more politely; and bowing all of the time he removed the ornaments from Florestein's person.

What I thought was politeness, is downright theft,
And at this rate I soon shall have nothing left,

the unfortunate dandy moaned, clutching his gewgaws hopelessly, while all the -17-
gipsies beset him, each taking all he could for himself. But Devilshoof having secured the medallion, made off with it. He was no sooner gone than a dark woman wrapped in a cloak came into the street and, when she was right in the midst of the squabble, she dropped her cloak and revealed herself as Queen of the band. All the gipsies

were amazed and not very comfortable either!—because, strange to say, this gipsy queen did not approve of the maraudings of her band; and when she caught them at thievery she punished them.

"Return those things you have stolen," she commanded, and they made haste to do so, while the trembling Florestein took a hurried inventory of his property. But among the things returned, he didn't find the medallion.

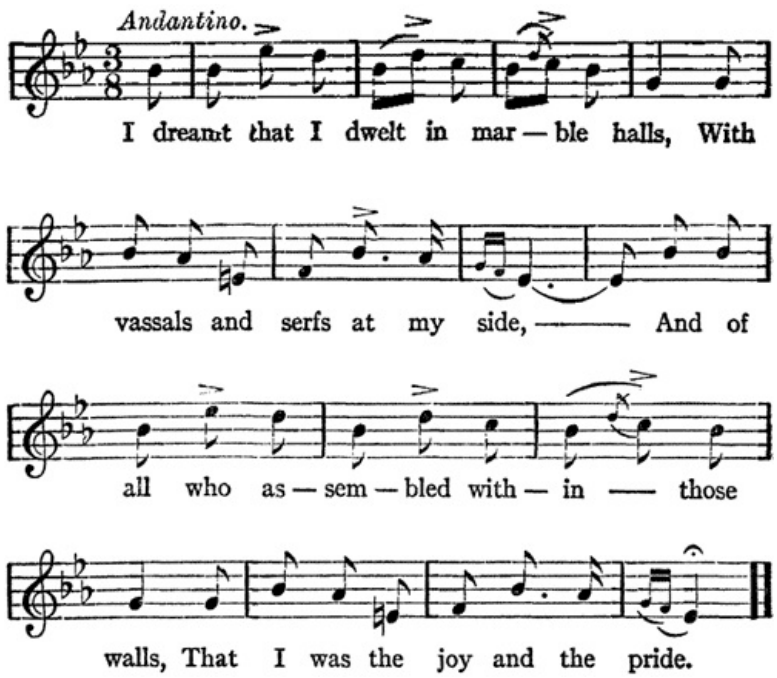
"I'm much obliged to you, Madame, whoever you are, but I'd like a medallion that they have taken, returned."

"That belongs to the chief—Devilshoof," they cried.

"I'll answer for your safety," the Queen said to Florestein, who was not overmuch reassured by this, but still tried to make the best of things. "Now follow me," she called the band, and went, holding Florestein and dragging him with her.

They had no sooner gone than Arline, who had been awakened by the noise outside the tent, came out into the street. Thaddeus followed her. She was greatly disturbed.

"Thaddeus," she said, "I have had a strange dream":



[Listen]

I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls,
With vassals and serfs at my side,
And of all who assembled within those walls,
That I was the joy and the pride.

I had riches too great to count;—could boast
Of a high ancestral name;
But I also dreamt (which pleased me most)
That you loved me still the same.

I dreamt that suitors sought my hand,
That knights upon bended knee
And with vows no maiden heart could withstand
They pledged their faith to me.

And I dreamt that one of that noble host
Came forth my hand to claim,
But I also dreamt (which pleased me most)
That you loved me still the same.

When she had ceased to sing, Thaddeus embraced her tenderly and assured her that he should love her always, "still the same."

Arline had often been troubled because of some difference between herself and the gipsies, and she had also been curious about a scar which was upon her arm. So upon that night she questioned Thaddeus about this, and he told her of the accident in the forest twelve years before, when she got the wound upon her arm. However, he did not reveal to her that she was the daughter of a noble.

"Thou wert but six years old when this accident befell thee," Thaddeus told her. But Arline was not yet satisfied.

"There is more to tell! I know that I am not of this gipsy band—nor art thou!—I feel that this is true, Thaddeus. Wilt thou not tell me the secret if there is one?" and Thaddeus had decided that he would do this, when the curtains at the back of the Queen's tent were parted and the gipsy Queen herself appeared.

"Do you dare throw yourself into the arms of this man, when I love him?" the Queen demanded angrily, at which Arline and Thaddeus were thrown into consternation. But Arline had plenty of courage, especially after what had just happened; hence she appealed to Thaddeus himself. He declared his love for her, and the two called for their comrades. All ran in and asked what the excitement was about.

Arline declared to them that she and Thaddeus loved each other and wished to be married—which pleased Devilshoof mightily. All life was a joke to him, and he knew perfectly that the Queen was in love with Thaddeus.

"Ho, ho," he laughed. "Now we shall have everybody by the ears. Come!" he cried to the Queen. "As queen of the gipsies, it is your business to unite this handsome pair. We are ready for the ceremony," and they all laughed and became uproarious. The Queen's pride would not let her ignore the challenge, so she advanced haughtily and took the hands of the lovers.

"Hand to hand and heart to heart,
Who shall those I've united part?"

she chanted; and with this gipsy rite, they were united.

Then the band sat down in groups and made merry; but the Queen began to plot revenge against Arline. -20-

While they lounged about, prolonging the revel, a gipsy entered and told them that day was dawning, and that already the people of the city were awake and wending their way to a fair which the gipsies were bound for; and if they were to make anything by their dances and tricks they had better be up and doing.

"Up, all of you!" cried the moody Queen, "and meet me in the public square; while you, Devilshoof, stay behind for further orders." Whereupon all went down the street, Thaddeus and Arline hand in hand.

As soon as the last gipsy had disappeared, the Queen turned on Devilshoof. "Now, then—that thing you are wearing about your neck—that medallion you stole! hand it over; and as for what has just happened, I shall not forget the part you had in it—it was you who urged the marriage and compelled me to perform it or else betray myself! You shall pay for this. Meantime, see that you take nothing more that doesn't belong to you," and she snatched the medallion from him. This did not endear her to Devilshoof, and he determined to have his revenge.

"Now be off and join the rest!" she cried; and while she left the square by one route Devilshoof departed by another.

After going a little way, Devilshoof was certain to come up with those who had gone before and who were dancing along, in front of Arline and Thaddeus, singing gaily about the wedding.

Come with the gipsy bride,
  And repair
  To the fair.
Where the mazy dance
  Will the hours entrance.
Come with the gipsy bride,
  Where souls as light preside.

Thus they pranced along having a fine gipsy time of it till they arrived at the fair, which was held in a great public square in the midst of the city. The courthouse was on one side, and over the door there was a sign which read "The Hall of Justice." Everybody seemed to be at the fair: peasants, nobles, soldiers, and citizens; rope-dancers, quack doctors, waxworks, showmen of all sorts, and bells rang and flags flew, and altogether it was just the thing for a gipsy's wedding day. -21-

The quack doctor blew his horn, and everybody surged about him, and while all that movement and fun were taking place, Devilshoof and Thaddeus formed a sort of flying wedge on the outskirts of the crowd and forced a passage for the gipsy band. At that moment Florestein came along, taking part in the day as all the rest of Presburg were doing, and the first man his eye lighted upon was that miscreant, Devilshoof. There stood the man who had stolen his medallion! There were several gentlemen with Florestein, and he called their attention to the gipsy group. Meantime Arline, like any gipsy, had been going about selling flowers and telling

fortunes, and while those things were taking place the old Count Arnheim and some officers of the city entered and tried to pass through the group to the courthouse, where the old Count presided as judge. Florestein stopped him.

"Uncle, just stop a bit and look at those gipsies! Do you see that pretty girl? I am delighted with her. Even an old gentleman like you should have an eye to a girl as pretty as that," he laughed. This was not in very good taste, but then, nobody ever accused the little idiot of having either good taste or good courage.

"I have no eyes for beauty since my Arline was lost to me, nephew," the old man returned sadly, and passed to his courtroom. But Florestein pressed through the crowd till he reached Arline's side. -22-

"You are a pretty girl," he said boldly, ogling her. "Come! you are teaching others" (Arline had been telling a fortune), "teach me."

"A lesson in politeness, sir?—you need it," and Arline slapped his face; not at all the sort of thing a countess would do, but then she had been brought up a gipsy, and couldn't be expected to have all the graces of her ancestors. The Queen, who had been watching, ready to make trouble, called Thaddeus's attention to the incident, and Thaddeus shouldered his way through the crowd just in time to slap Florestein's face from the other side, as he turned about. The fop was somewhat disturbed, while Arline and Thaddeus burst out laughing at him. The Queen, watching this episode, recognized in Florestein the chap to whom she had restored the trinkets. She herself had the medallion, and instantly a malicious thought occurred to her: it was her opportunity to revenge herself on Arline for loving Thaddeus. She approached Arline, and held out the medallion.

"You should be rewarded, my girl, for giving this presumptuous fellow a lesson. Take this from me, and think of it as my wedding gift," and she left the medallion with Arline. The girl was very grateful and kissed the Queen's hand.

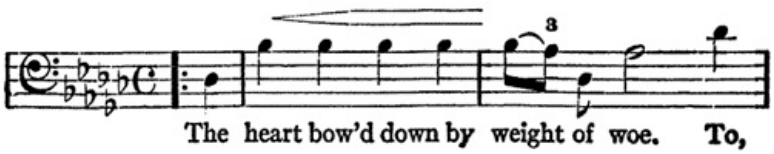
"Now we must go! call the band together," she commanded, leading the way; and slowly they all assembled and prepared to go. Thaddeus hung the medallion on Arline's neck and, with her, came last of the band. Now Florestein, smarting under their blows, saw the medallion on Arline's neck and at once drew the attention of his friends to it. They recognized it as his. He then went up to Thaddeus and Arline and pointed to the trinket. -23-

"You may stay awhile, my girl. How about that medallion of mine which you have on your neck? My friends here recognize it!"

"The Queen has given it to me—only now," she replied in amazement; but as she looked about she saw that the Queen was gone, and Devilshoof, who had witnessed all, was then sneaking off.

"That is a good story. We have all heard that sort of thing before. Come along," and he would have arrested her instantly, but Thaddeus sprang forward and took a hand in the matter. When Florestein saw the affair had grown serious he ran into the Hall of Justice, and returned with a guard who arrested the girl. Arline, in tears, declared her innocence, but everything appeared against her. She had only Thaddeus to stand by her, but at this crisis the other gipsies ran back, hearing of the row, and tried to rescue her. There Thaddeus, too, was seized, and a free fight took place in which the gipsies were driven off; finally, Arline, left alone, was marched into the Hall of Justice. The Queen then returned, and stood unseen, enjoying the young girl's peril, while Thaddeus threatened everybody concerned.

Now before the guards reached the Count Arnheim's apartment where Arline was to be tried, the Count had been sitting before a portrait of his lost daughter, which pictured her as she was twelve years before. He had never known a happy hour since her loss. As he looked at her portrait he sang:



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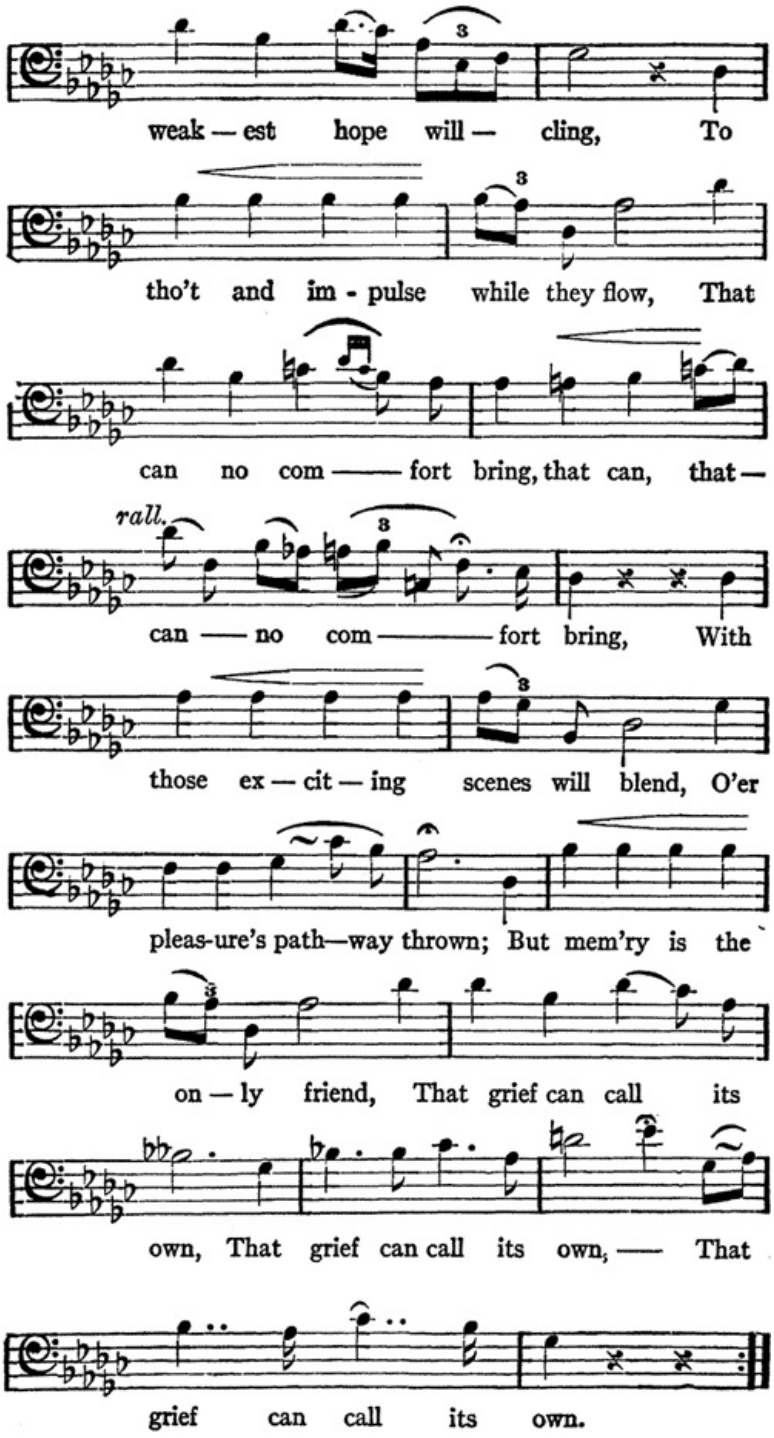


[Listen]

The heart bow'd down by weight of woe,
To weakest hope will cling,
To tho't and impulse while they flow,
That can no comfort bring, that can,
that can no comfort bring,
With those exciting scenes will blend,
O'er pleasure's pathway thrown;
But mem'ry is the only friend,
That grief can call its own,
That grief can call its own,
That grief can call its own.

The mind will in its worst despair,
Still ponder o'er the past,
On moments of delight that were
Too beautiful to last.
To long departed years extend
Its visions with them flown;
For mem'ry is the only friend
That grief can call its own.

Thus, while the old Count's mind was lingering sadly over the past, calling up visions

of the hopes that had fled with his daughter, she was being brought to him charged with a crime of which she was innocent. Soon the Count heard a noise near his apartment, and the captain of the guard burst in to tell him a robbery had been committed in the square. No sooner had Arnheim seated himself in his official place than the people hustled in Arline. Florestein was in the midst of the mob; going at once to his uncle he cried:

"Your lordship, it is I who have been robbed!"

"Ah! some more of your trouble-making. Why are you forever bringing the family name into some ill-sounding affair?"

"But, uncle, it is true that I am a victim. There is the very girl who robbed me!" he cried, pointing to Arline. The Count looked pityingly at her.

"What—the pretty girl I saw in the square? So young and innocent a face!"

"However that may be, she has stolen my medallion: we found it upon her!"

"Can this be true, my child?" the Count asked gently. -26-

"No, your lordship. I have done nothing wrong; but alas! there is no one to help me."

At that the Count became more distressed. The thought of his own child returned to him. She might be somewhere as hardly pressed and as helpless as this young gipsy girl.

"We can prove her guilty," Florestein persisted.

"Tell me your story, my child. I shall try to do you justice," the Count urged, looking kindly at Arline.

"The Queen of our tribe gave me that medallion. I do not know how she possessed herself of it, unless——" Arline suddenly remembered the scene at her wedding, and half guessed the truth. "Your lordship, I cannot prove it, but I believe she gave me a medallion which she knew to be stolen, in order to revenge herself upon me for giving her displeasure last night!" The old Count gazed thoughtfully at her. He believed her story: she looked truthful, and her tone was honest.

"I believe you," he answered, at last, "yet since you cannot prove this, I have no alternative but to hand you over to justice."

"Then, sir, I can deliver myself!" she cried, drawing a dagger, and was about to plunge it into her heart when the horrified Count sprung forward and stopped her. As he seized her arm, he glanced at the scar upon it: then started and looked closely at her face. Again the face of his lost daughter was before him. He looked at the painting of the little girl upon the wall, and again at Arline. They were so like that he could doubt no longer.

"Tell me—how did you come by that scar upon your arm—speak the truth, because my very life hangs upon it, my child." By this time the whole mob had gathered excitedly about the girl and the old judge. -27-

"When I was six years old a wild deer wounded me—" the Count nearly fainted with hope—"I was saved and—" at this moment, Thaddeus, having shaken off his guard, rushed in to help Arline. She cried out happily and pointed to him. "It was he who saved my life," she said. "It was Thaddeus!" The Count recognized the man who had refused to drink the health of the Emperor at the banquet years before! Clearly it was his own child who had been brought before him!

With a joyous cry he clasped her in his arms, but she did not know the meaning of his joy or of the excitement, and, frightened and bewildered, she ran to Thaddeus. Thaddeus pointed sadly to the Count:

"It *is* thy father, Arline. It is true," and he buried his face in his hands. He must now give her up. Since she had found a noble father he could not hope to be near her again, and while he stood with his face in his hands, and Arline was again in the arms of the Count, Devilshoof made his way in through the crowd, and tried to drag Thaddeus away. He loved his comrade of twelve years, and he saw that harm might come to him in the new situation.

ACT III

AFTER leaving the Hall of Justice, Arline returned with her father to the home of her childhood, for her dream had come true: she "dwelt in marble halls, with vassals and serfs at her side." Yet she was far from happy: Thaddeus had left the hall with Devilshoof on the day of Arline's arrest, and she had not seen him since. Gorgeously dressed in a ball gown, she was in a beautiful room in her father's house. Her father entered with Florestein and begged her to think kindly of her silly foppish cousin. -28-

"You have every reason to be resentful toward Florestein," he said, "but if you can

think kindly of him for my sake it would make me very happy. I have always intended you to marry each other."

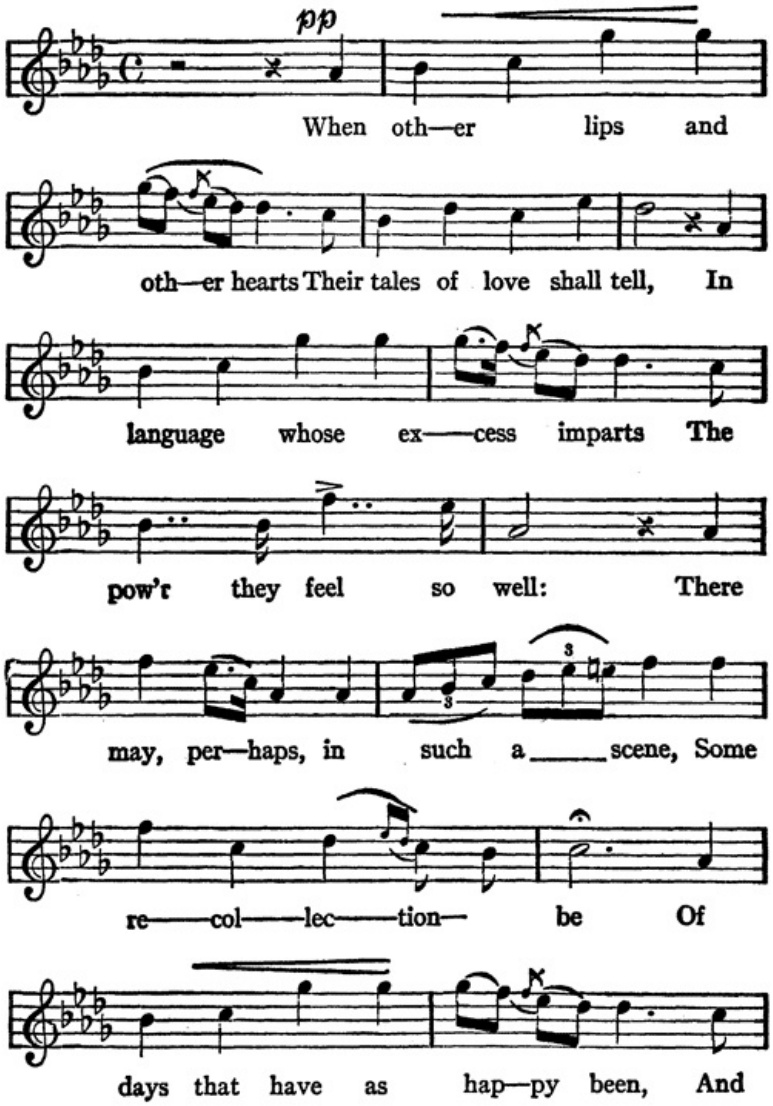
At that Arline was very wretched; and after a moment she said: "Father, I should like to please you, but I cannot think affectionately of my cousin," and before the argument could be carried further, a servant entered to tell them that the palace was filling with guests, and that the Count was needed. Florestein and the Count then went to meet the company, leaving Arline alone to recover her self-possession. She became very sad for she was thinking of Thaddeus and of the days she had spent wandering over the world with him and the gipsies. Suddenly she went to a cabinet, took her gipsy dress from it, and looked at it, the tears streaming from her eyes. While she was lost in the memories of other days, Devilshoof jumped in at the window and Arline nearly screamed upon seeing him so suddenly.

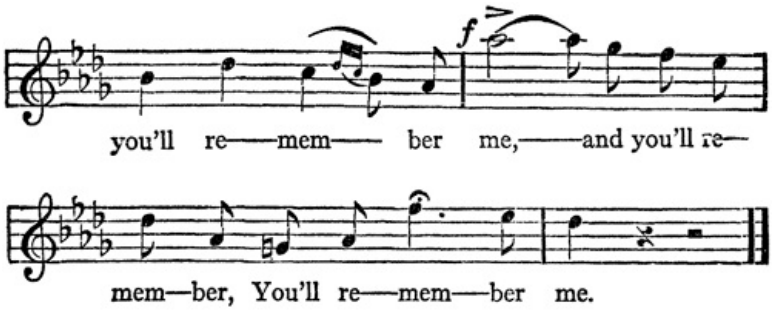
"Don't scream! Don't be frightened," he said quickly. "I have come to say how we all miss you, and to beg you to come back to the tribe. I have brought with me one whose powers of persuasion are greater than mine," he added, and instantly Thaddeus appeared at the window, while Arline, unable to restrain herself, rushed into his arms.

"Ah, I feared you would forget me in the midst of so much luxury and wealth," he said happily.

"Oh, Thaddeus, did I not also dream—which pleased me most—that you loved me still the same?" she reminded him.

"I came only to entreat you sometimes to think of me," he now said with a lighter heart, "and also I came to tell you—" he paused, kissed her, and then sang:





[Listen]

When other lips and other hearts
  Their tales of love shall tell,
In language whose excess imparts
  The pow'r they feel so well:
There may, perhaps, in such a scene,
  Some recollection be
Of days that have as happy been,
  And you'll remember me,
  and you'll remember,
  You'll remember me.

When coldness or deceit shall slight
  The beauty now they prize,
And deem it but a faded light
  Which beams within your eyes;
When hollow hearts shall wear a mask
  'Twill break your own to see:
In such a moment I but ask
  That you'll remember me.

The song only added to Arline's distress. She could not let Thaddeus go.

"You must never leave me, Thaddeus," she cried.

"Then will you fly with me?" he begged.

"It would kill my poor father; he has only now found me. I would go if it were not for love of him, but how can I leave him?" And while the lovers were in this unhappy coil Devilshoof, who had been watching at the window to warn them if any one was coming, called out:

"Your doom is sealed in another moment! You must decide: people are coming. There is no escape for you, Thaddeus."

"Come into this cabinet," Arline cried in alarm. "No one can find you there! and you, Devilshoof, jump out of the window." No sooner said than done! Out Devilshoof jumped, while Thaddeus got into the cabinet. The great doors were thrown open and the company streamed in to congratulate Arline on being restored to her father. The old Count then took Arline by the hand and presented her to the company, while Florestein, as the suitor who expected to be given her hand in marriage, stood beside her, smiling and looking the coxcomb. Everybody then sang a gay welcome, and Florestein, who seemed born only to do that which was annoying to other people, picked up the forgotten gipsy dress, declaring that it was not suitable to such a moment, and that he would place it in the cabinet.

That was the worst possible thing he could do, and Arline watched him with horror. If he should go to the cabinet, as she was now certain he would, he could not possibly help finding Thaddeus. She watched with excitement every moment; but in the midst of her fears there was a great noise without, and the gipsy Queen forced her way in, to the amazement of the company. She went at once to the old Count, who it seemed was never to have done with surprises.

"Who art thou, intruder?" he asked angrily. Upon this the Queen lifted her veil, which till then had concealed her face.

"Behold me!" she cried, very dramatically, "heed my warning voice! Wail and not rejoice!" A nice sort of caution to be injected into a merrymaking. "The foe to thy rest, is the one you love best. Think not my warning wild, 'tis thy refound child. She loves a youth of the tribe I sway, and braves the world's reproof. List to the words I say, he is now beneath thy roof!" This was quite enough to drive the entire company into hysterics.

"Base wretch," the Count cried, "thou liest!"

"Thy faith I begrudge, open that door and thyself be the judge," she screamed, quite beside herself with anger. Of course everybody looked toward the door of the cabinet, and finally the Count opened it, and there stood Thaddeus. -32-

He staggered back, the Queen was delighted, but everybody else was frightened half to death.

Everybody concerned seemed then to be in the worst possible way. Arline determined to stand by Thaddeus, and she was quite appalled at the wickedness of the Queen.

"Leave the place instantly," the Count roared to Thaddeus.

"I go, Arline," Thaddeus answered sorrowfully.

"Never!—unless I go with thee," she declared, quite overcome by the situation. "Father, I love thee, but I cannot give up Thaddeus," she protested sorrowfully to the Count. Then the Count drew his sword and rushed between them.

"Go!" he cried again to Thaddeus, and at the same time the Queen urged him to go with her. Then Arline begged to be left alone with her father that she might have a private word with him. Everybody withdrew except Thaddeus, wondering what next, and how it would all turn out.

"Father," Arline pleaded when they were alone, "I am at your feet. If you love me you will listen. It was Thaddeus who restored me to you; who has guarded me from harm for twelve years. I cannot give him up, and to send him away is unworthy of you." The Count made a despairing gesture of dismissal to Thaddeus.

"But, father, we are already united," she urged, referring to the gipsy marriage. At that the Count was quite horrified.

"United?—to a strolling fellow like this?" This was more than Thaddeus could stand, knowing as he did that he was every bit as good as the Count—being a Polish noble. -33- True, if he revealed himself, he might have to pay for it with his life, because he was still reckoned at large as the enemy of the Emperor, but even so, he decided to tell the truth about himself for Arline's sake.

"Listen," he cried, stepping nearer to the Count. "I am not what you think me. Let this prove to you my birth," and he took the old commission from his pocket where he had carried it for years, and handed it to the Count. "This will prove to thee, though I am an exile, that I am a noble like thyself; and my birth does not separate me from thy daughter." The Count read the paper tremblingly and then looked long at Thaddeus. Tears came to his eyes.

"The storms of a nation's strife should never part true lovers," he said softly, at last: "Thy hand!"—and taking Thaddeus's hand he placed it tenderly in that of Arline. As they stood thus united and happy, the Queen appeared at the window, pointing him out to a gipsy beside her. The gipsy was about to fire upon Thaddeus at the Queen's command, when Devilshoof knocked up the gipsy's arm, and the bullet meant for the lover killed the revengeful Queen.

"Guard every portal—summon all the guests!" the Count cried. "Suspend all festivities," at which the music which had been heard in the distant salon ceased, and the guests began to assemble. Arline rushed to the arms of Thaddeus. The Count explained all that had occurred, the danger Thaddeus had just been in, that he had been given the Count's daughter, and that congratulations were in order.

As you may believe, after so much fright and danger, everybody was overjoyed to find that all was well—everybody but Florestein, and he was certain to be satisfied presently when the banquet began, and he got some especially fine tit-bit on his own plate! -34-

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BEETHOVEN -35-

THE most complete, at the same time picturesque, story of Beethoven and his "Fidelio" is told in "Musical Sketches," by Elise Polko, with all the sentimentality that a German writer can command. Whole paragraphs might be lifted from that book and included in this sketch, but the substance of the story shall be told in a somewhat inferior way.

"Leonora" (Fidelio) was composed some time before it was produced. Ludwig van Beethoven had been urged again and again by his friends to put the opera before the public, but he always refused.

"It shall never be produced till I find the woman in whose powers I have absolute

confidence to sing 'Leonora.' She need not be beautiful, change her costume ten times, nor break her throat with roulades: but she must have *one* thing besides her voice." He would not disclose what special quality he demanded; and when his friends persisted in urging the production of his first, last, and only opera, Beethoven went into a great rage and declared if the subject were ever mentioned again, he would burn the manuscript. At one time friends begged him to hear a new prima donna, Wilhelmina Schröder, the daughter of a great actress, believing that in her he would find his "Leonora."

This enraged him still more. The idea of entrusting his beloved composition to a girl no more than sixteen years old! -36-

His appearance at that time is thus described:

"At the same hour every afternoon a tall man walked alone on the so-called Wasserglacis (Vienna). Every one reverentially avoided him. Neither heat nor cold made him hasten his steps; no passer-by arrested his eye; he strode slowly, firmly and proudly along, with glance bent downward, and with hands clasped behind his back. You felt that he was some extraordinary being, and that the might of genius encircled this majestic head with its glory. Gray hair grew thickly around his magnificent brow, but he noticed not the spring breeze that played sportively among it and pushed it in his eyes. Every child knew: 'that is Ludwig van Beethoven, who has composed such wondrously beautiful music.'"

One day, during one of these outings a fearful storm arose, and he noticed a beautiful young woman, whom he had frequently seen in his walks, frightened but standing still without protection from the weather. She stared at him with such peculiar devotion and entreaty that he stopped and asked her what she did there in the storm.

She had the appearance of a child, and great simplicity of manner. She told him she waited to see him. He, being surprised at this, questioned her, and she declared she was Wilhelmina Schröder, who longed for nothing but to sing his Leonora, of which all Vienna had heard. He took her to his home, she sang the part for him, and at once he accepted her.

It was she who first sang "Fidelio," and she who had the "quality" that Beethoven demanded: the quality of kindness. It is said that her face was instinct with gentleness and her voice exquisitely beautiful. It was almost the last thing that Beethoven heard. His deafness was already upon him, but he heard her voice; heard -37-
his beloved opera sung, and was so much overcome by the beauty of the young girl's art that during the performance he fainted.

Of all temperamental men, Beethoven was doubtless the most so, and the anecdotes written of him are many. He was especially irascible. His domestic annoyances are revealed freely in his diary: "Nancy is too uneducated for a housekeeper—indeed, quite a beast." "My precious servants were occupied from seven o'clock till ten, trying to light a fire." "The cook's off again—I shied half a dozen books at her head." "No soup to-day, no beef, no eggs. Got something from the inn at last." These situations are amusing to read about, decades later, but doubtless tragic enough at the time to the great composer!

That in financial matters Beethoven was quite practical was illustrated by his answer to the Prussian Ambassador at Vienna, who offered to the musician the choice of the glory of having some order bestowed upon him or fifty ducats. Beethoven took the ducats.

Beautiful as the production of "Fidelio" was, it did not escape criticism from an eminent source. Cherubini was present at the first performance at the Karnthnerthor Theatre in Vienna, and when asked how he liked the overture (Leonora in C) he replied:

"To be honest, I must confess that I could not tell what key it was in from beginning to end."

FIDELIO

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Marcelline (jailer's daughter).
Leonora (under name of Fidelio).
Florestan (her husband and a state prisoner). -38-
Jaquino (porter of the prison).
Pizarro (governor of the prison).
Hernando (the minister).
Rocco (the jailer).
Chorus of soldiers, prisoners and people.

Scene is laid in Spain.

Composer: Beethoven.

ACT I

MARCELLINE, the jailer's daughter, had been tormented to death for months by the love-making of her father's porter, Jaquino. In short, he had stopped her on her way to church, to work, to rest, at all times, and every time, to make love to her, and finally she was on the point of consenting to marry him, if only to get rid of him.

"Marcelline, only name the day, and I vow I'll never make love to you again," said the soft Jaquino. This was so funny that Marcelline thought he was worth marrying for his drollery; but just as she was about to make him a happy man by saying "yes," some one knocked upon the door, and with a laugh she drew away from him:

> Oh, joy! once again I am free;
> How weary, how weary his love makes me.

Quite disheartened, Jaquino went to open the door.

There had been a time—before a certain stranger named Fidelio had come to the prison—when Jaquino's absurd love-making pleased Marcelline, but since the coming of that fine youth Fidelio, she had thought of little but him. Now, while Jaquino was opening the door, and she watched his figure (which was not at all fascinating), she murmured to herself:

"After all, how perfectly absurd to think of it! I shall never marry anybody but Fidelio. He is quite the most enchanting fellow I know." At that moment Jaquino returned. -39-

"What, not a word for me?" he asked, noting her change of mood.

"Well, yes, and that word is no, no, no! So go away and let me alone," she answered petulantly.

Now Fidelio was certainly a most beautiful youth, but quite different from any Marcelline had ever seen. Fidelio observed, with a good deal of anxiety, that the jailer's daughter was much in love with him, and there were reasons why that should be inconvenient.

Fidelio, instead of being a fine youth, was a most adoring wife, and her husband, Florestan, was shut up in that prison for an offence against its wicked governor, Pizarro. He had been placed there to starve; and indeed his wife Leonora (Fidelio) had been told that he was already dead. She had applied, as a youth, for work in the prison, in order to spy out the truth; to learn if her dear husband were dead or alive.

There was both good and bad luck in the devotion of the jailer's daughter. The favourable part of the affair was that Leonora was able, because of her favouritism, to find out much about the prisoners; but on the other hand, she was in danger of discovery. Although the situation was tragic, there was considerable of a joke in Marcelline's devotion to the youth Fidelio, and in the consequent jealousy of Jaquino.

Love of money was Rocco's (the jailer) besetting sin. He sang of his love with great feeling:

> Life is nothing without money,
> Anxious cares beset it round;
> Sad, when all around is sunny,
> Feels the man whom none hath found. -40-
>
> But when to thy keeping the treasure hath rolled,
> Blind fortune thou mayest defy, then;
> Both love and power their secrets unfold,
> And will to thy wishes comply, then.

Rocco was also a man of heart; and since hiring Fidelio (Leonora) he had really become very fond of the young man. When he observed the attachment between Fidelio and Marcelline, he was inclined to favour it.

Don Pizarro had long been the bitterest enemy of Don Florestan, Leonora's husband, because that noble had learned of his atrocities and had determined to depose him as governor of the fortress prison.

Hence, when Pizarro got Florestan in his clutches, he treated him with unimaginable cruelties, and falsely reported that he was dead.

Now in the prison there had lately been much hope and rejoicing because it was rumoured that Fernando, the great Minister of State, was about to pay a visit of investigation. This promised a change for the better in the condition of the prisoners. But no one knew better than Don Pizarro that it would mean ruin to himself if Fernando found Don Florestan in a dungeon. The two men were dear friends, and so

cruelly treated had Florestan been that Pizarro could never hope for clemency. Hence, he called Rocco, and told him that Florestan must be killed at once, before the arrival of Fernando.

Rocco refused point blank to do the horrid deed; but as a dependent he could not control matters, and hence he had to consent to dig the grave, with the understanding that Pizarro, himself, should do the killing.

Thus far, Fidelio had been able to find out nothing about her beloved husband, but she had become more and more of a favourite with the unfortunate old jailer, and was permitted to go about with a certain amount of freedom. -41-

Upon the day when Pizarro had directed Rocco to kill a prisoner in a certain dungeon, she overheard a good deal of the plot, and she began to fear it might be her husband.

She went at once to Rocco:

"Rocco, I have seen very little of the prison. May I not go into the dungeon and look about?"

"Oh, it would never be allowed," Rocco declared. "Pizarro is a stern and cruel governor, and if I should do the least thing he did not command, it would go hard with me. I should not dare let you do that," he said, much troubled with the deed that was in hand.

"But wilt thou not ask him, Rocco?" Fidelio entreated so determinedly that Rocco half promised.

"Fidelio, I will tell thee. I have a bad job to do. It is to dig a grave in one of the dungeons." Fidelio could hardly conceal her horror and despair. Her suspicions were confirmed. "There is an old well, covered by a stone, down there, far underground, and if I lift the stone that covers it, that will do for the grave. I will ask Pizarro if I may have thee to help me. If he consents, it will be thy chance to see the dungeons, but if not, I shall have done all I can about it." So he went away to discuss the matter with Pizarro, while Fidelio waited between hope and despair.

Meantime, Pizarro was gloating over his triumph. Soon his revenge would be complete, and he sang of the matter in a most savage fashion:

Ha! what a day is this,
  My vengeance shall be sated.
Thou treadest on an abyss!
  For now thy doom is fated.

The words mean little, but Beethoven's music to them means much: -42-

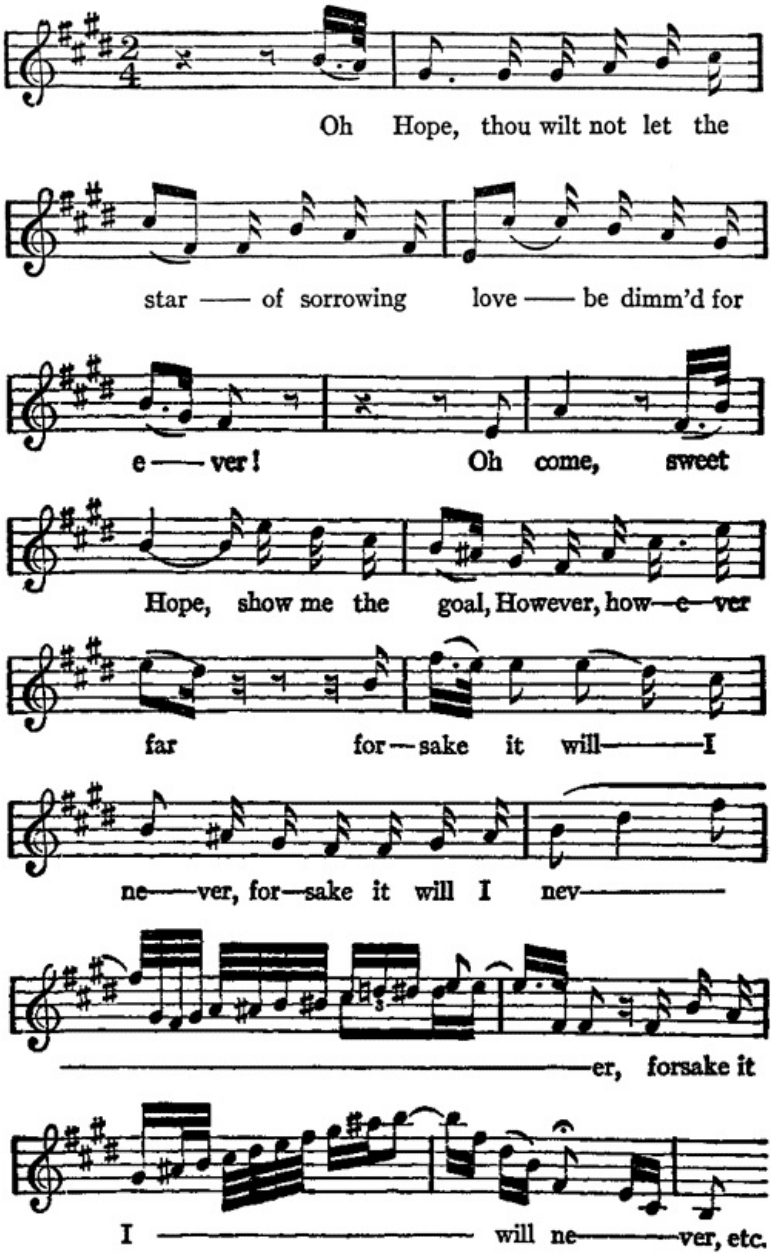
Remember, that once in the dust I trembled,
'Mid mocking fiends assembled;
Beneath thy conquering steel,
  But Fortune's wheel is turning,
  In torments thou art burning,
  The victim of my hate.

The guards told one another that they had better be about their business, as some great affair seemed afoot.

Rocco entered again.

"I do not see the need for this killing," he urged. "The man is nearly dead as it is. He cannot last long; but at least, if I must dig the grave, I shall need help. I have a youth in my service who is to marry my daughter—thus I can count upon his faithfulness; and I had better be permitted to take him into the dungeon with me, if I am to do the work. I am an old man, and not so strong as I used to be."

"Very well, very well," Pizarro replied. "But see to the business. There is no time to lose." And going back to Fidelio, Rocco told her the good news: that Pizarro had consented. Then she sang joyfully of it:



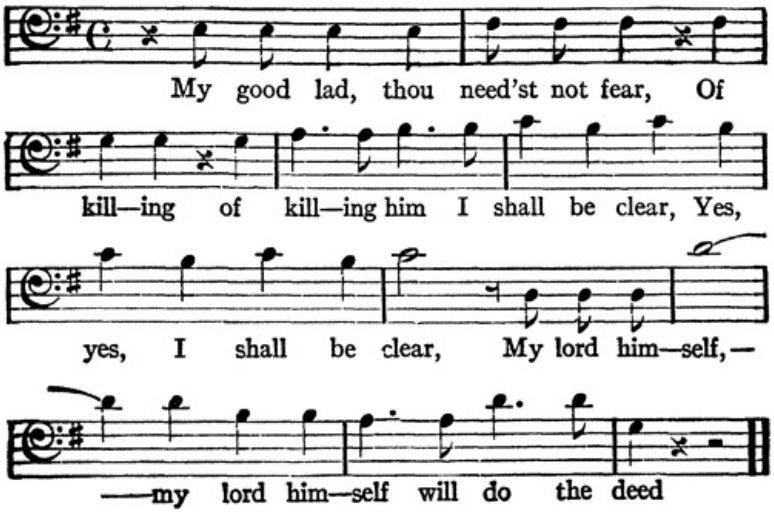
[Listen]

Oh Hope, thou wilt not let the star of sorrowing love be
dimm'd for ever!
Oh come, sweet Hope, show me the goal,
However, however far forsake it will I never,
forsake it will I never,
forsake it I will never, etc.

"But, Rocco, instead of digging a grave for the poor man, to whom we go, couldst thou not set him free?" she begged.

"Not I, my boy. It would be as much as my life was worth. I have not been permitted even to give him food. He is nearly dead from starvation already. Try to think as little as you can of the horrors of this place. It is a welcome release for the poor fellow."

"But to have a father-in-law who has committed a murder," Fidelio shuddered, trying to prevail upon Rocco by this appeal. But he sang:



[Listen]

My good lad, thou need'st not fear,
Of killing, of killing him I shall be clear,
Yes, yes, I shall be clear,
My lord himself, my lord himself will do the deed.

"Nay, do not worry—you'll have no murderer for a father-in-law. Our only business is to dig the man's grave."

In spite of herself Leonora wept.

"Come, come. This is too hard for thee, gentle boy. I'll manage the business alone."

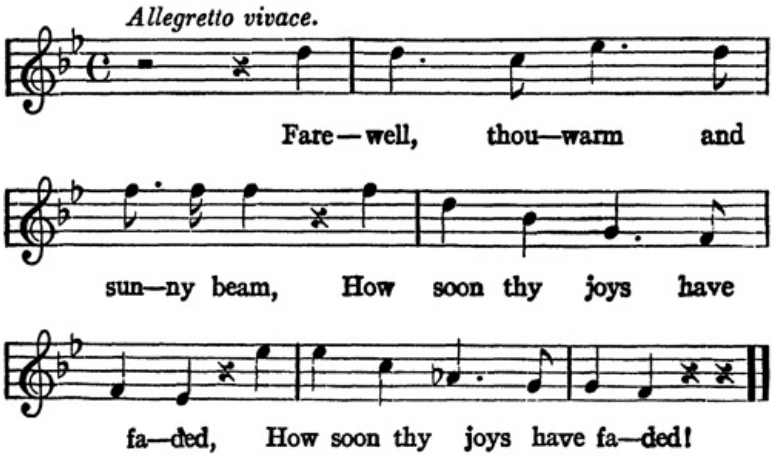
"Oh, no! No! I must go. Indeed I am not afraid. I must go with thee," she cried. While she was thus distracted, in rushed Marcelline and Jaquino.

"Oh, father! Don Pizarro is frantic with rage. You have given the prisoners a little light and air, and he is raging about the prison because of this. What shall we do?" Rocco thought a moment.

"Do nothing! He is a hard man, I—" At that moment Pizarro came in.

"What do you mean by this? Am I governing this prison or are you?"

"Don Pizarro," Rocco spoke calmly. "It is the King's birthday, and I thought it might be politic for you to give the prisoners a little liberty, especially as the Minister was coming. It will look well to him." At that Pizarro was somewhat appeased, but nevertheless he ordered the men back to their cells. It was a mournful procession, back to dungeon darkness. As they went they sang:



[Listen]

Farewell, thou warm and sunny beam,
How soon thy joys have faded,
How soon thy joys have faded!

While they were singing, Rocco once more tried to soften Pizarro's heart.

"Wilt thou not let the condemned prisoner live another day, your highness?" The request enraged Pizarro still more.

"Enough! Now have done with your whimpering. Take that youth of thine who is to help, and be about the job. Go! and let me hear no more." With that awful voice of revenge and cruelty in her ears, the unhappy Leonora followed Rocco to the dungeons, to dig her husband's grave. -46-

ACT II

DOWN in the very bowels of the earth, as it seemed to Leonora, was Florestan's dungeon. There he sat, manacled, despairing, with no ray of light to cheer him, and his thoughts occupied only with his visions of the beautiful home he had known, and of his wife, Leonora. When Leonora and Rocco entered the dungeon, Florestan had fallen, half sleeping, half dreaming upon the floor of his cell, and Leonora groped her way fearfully toward him, believing him to be dead.

"Oh, the awful chill of this vault," she sobbed. "Look! Is the man dead, already, Rocco?" Rocco went to look at the prisoner.

"No, he only sleeps. Come, that sunken well is near, and we have only to uncover it to have the job done. It is a hard thing for a youth like thee. Let us hurry." Rocco began searching for the disused well, into which he meant the body of Florestan to be dumped after the governor had killed him.

"Reach me that pickaxe," he directed Fidelio. "Are you afraid?"

"No, no, I feel chilled only."

"Well, make haste with the work, my boy, and it will warm you," Rocco urged. Then while he worked and urged Fidelio to do the same, she furtively watched the prisoner whose features she could not see in the gloom of the cell.

"If we do not hurry, the governor will be here. Haste, haste!" Rocco cried. -47-

"Yes, yes," she answered, nearly fainting with grief and horror.

"Come, come, my boy. Help me lift this great stone which closes the mouth of the well." The despairing Fidelio lifted with all her poor strength.

"I'm lifting, I'm lifting," she sobbed, and she tugged and tugged, because she dared not shirk the work. Then the stone slowly rolled away. She was still uncertain as to the identity of the poor wretch who was so soon to be put out of existence. She peered at him continually.

"Oh, whoever thou art, I will save thee. I will save thee," she thought. "I cannot have so great a horror take place. I must save him." Still she peered through the darkness at the hopeless prisoner. At the same time her grief overwhelmed her, and she began to weep. The prisoner was roused, and plaintively thanked the strange youth for his kindly tears.

"Oh, whoever this poor man may be, let me give him this piece of bread," Fidelio begged, turning to Rocco. (She had put bread into her doublet, thinking to succour some half-starved wretch.)

"It is my business, my boy, to be severe," he said, frowning. He was sorely tried, for his heart was kind and yet he dared not show pity. But she pleaded and pleaded, and finally Rocco nervously agreed.

"Well, well, give it, boy. Give it. He will never taste food again," and again the prisoner thanked Fidelio through the darkness of his cell. When he spoke she felt a strange presentiment. Suppose this should be the beloved husband whom she sought!

"Oh, gentle youth! That I might repay this humane deed!" the prisoner murmured, too weak to speak loudly.

"That voice—it is strange to me, yet—it is like some remembered voice," Fidelio said to herself, and she clasped her hands upon her heart, because it seemed to beat so loudly that Rocco might hear it. While she wavered between hope and fear, Don Pizarro entered the dungeon. He had come at last for his revenge. -48-

"Now, thou dog," he said to the prisoner, "prepare to die. But before you die, you are to know to whom you owe the deed." At that he threw off his cloak and showed himself to be Pizarro.

"It is Pizarro whom thou hast insulted. It is he who shall kill thee."

"Do not think I fear a murderer," Florestan replied, with what heroism his weakness would permit. At that Pizarro made a lunge at him with the knife, but Fidelio threw herself in front of him, suddenly recognizing him as he spoke to Pizarro.

"Thou shalt not kill him, unless thou kill his wife as well," she screamed. Rocco, Florestan and Pizarro all cried out in amazement.

"Wife!" Florestan clasped her weakly to his heart. Pizarro rushed at Fidelio, becoming frantic with rage. He hurled her away and shouted:

"No woman shall frighten me! Away with ye! The man shall die." Instantly, Fidelio drew a pistol and pointed it at the murderer.

"If he is to die, you shall die also," she cried, whereupon Rocco shouted in fright, since it was a dreadful thing to try conclusions with the governor of the prison. Pizarro himself drew back with fear.

Then a fanfare of trumpets was heard, announcing the arrival of Fernando, the Minister.

"Hark!" Pizarro cried. "I am undone! It is Fernando!" The assassin began to tremble. But Florestan and Fidelio knew that liberty was near. One word of the truth to the -49-
Minister, one word that should tell him of the governor's awful cruelty for a personal revenge, would set Florestan free and bring punishment to Pizarro. Then Jaquino hurried in:

"Come, come, quick! The Minister and his suite are at the gates."

"Thank God," said the kind-hearted jailer, under his breath. "The man is surely saved now. We're coming, my lad, we're coming," he answered. "Let the men come down and bear torches before Don Pizarro. He cannot find his way out." Rocco's voice was trembling with gladness, Florestan was almost fainting with weakness because of the sudden joy that had come to him. Fidelio was praying to heaven in gratitude, while Don Pizarro was horrified at the thought of what his punishment would be.

The jailer and Don Pizarro ascended, and soon Fernando ordered all the prisoners of the fortress brought before him. He had come to investigate the doings of the governor who had long been known as a great tyrant. When the unhappy men, who had been abused by starving and confinement in underground cells, stood before him, the Minister's heart was sorely touched, and Don Pizarro was more and more afraid. Presently, Rocco fearlessly brought Fidelio and Don Florestan in front of Fernando.

"Oh, great Minister, I beg you to give ear to the wrongs of this sad pair," he cried, and as Fernando looked at Florestan his eyes filled with tears.

"What, you? Florestan? My friend, whom I have so long believed was dead? Thou who wert the friend of the oppressed, who tried to bring to punishment this very wretch?" -50-
he said, looking at Pizarro; and his speech revealed why Pizarro had wanted to revenge himself upon the unhappy noble.

"Yes, yes, it is Don Florestan, my beloved husband," Fidelio answered, while the good Rocco pushed her ahead of him, closer to Fernando's side.

"She is no youth, but the noblest woman in the world, Don Fernando," Rocco cried, almost weeping in his agitation and relief at the turn things were taking for those with whom he sympathized.

"Just let me be heard," Pizarro called, becoming more and more frightened each moment.

"Enough of thee," Fernando answered, bitterly, in a tone that boded no good to the wretch. Then Rocco told the whole truth about the governor: how he, himself, had had to lend a hand to his wicked schemes, because as a dependent he could not control matters; and then all the prisoners cried out for Pizarro's punishment.

Fernando commanded Pizarro to give Fidelio the key of the prison, that she, the faithful wife, should have the joy of unlocking the doors and giving her husband his freedom. All the other prisoners and Fernando's suite, the jailer, his daughter, Marcelline, and Jaquino rejoiced and sang rapturously of Fernando's goodness. Pizarro was left, still uncertain of his punishment, but all hoped that he would be made to take Florestan's place in the dungeon and meet the fate he had prepared for the much abused noble.

BERLIOZ -51-

"THE Damnation of Faust" was first produced as an opera, by Raoul Gunsburg, in Monte Carlo, about 1903. Before that time it had been conducted only as a concerted piece. Later it was produced in Paris, Calvé and Alvarez singing the great rôles. That was in the late spring of 1903.

In Europe the opera was produced with the dream scene (the dream-Marguerite) as in the original plan of Berlioz, but in this country this dream-Marguerite was omitted,

also the rain in the ride to Hell; otherwise the European and the New York production were much the same. At the Metropolitan Opera House, in New York, there were three hundred people upon the stage in the first act, and every attention was given to scenic detail. This piece is meant for the concert room, and in no sense for the operatic stage, but great care and much money have been spent in trying to realize its scenic demands. As a dramatic production, it cannot compare with the "Faust" of Gounod, but it has certain qualities of a greater sort, which have made impresarios desire to shape it for the stage.

Berlioz was probably one of the least attractive of musicians. As a man, he was entirely detestable. He despised (from jealous rather than critical motives) all music that was not his own; or if he chose to applaud, his applause was certain to be for some obscure person without ability, in order that there might be no unfavourable -52- comparisons drawn between his own work and that which he was praising. Beyond doubt he was the greatest instrumentalist of Europe, but he was *bizarre*, and none too lucid.

His method of showing his contempt for other great composers like Beethoven, Mozart, and the like, was to conduct their music upon important occasions, without having given himself or any one else a rehearsal. He called Haydn a "pedantic old baby," and refused as long as he lived to hear Elijah (Mendelssohn). In short, he was one of the vastly disagreeable people of the earth, who believe that their own genius excuses everything.

The story of his behaviour at a performance of Cherubini's Ali Baba will serve as an illustration of his bad taste.

Cherubini had become old, and was even more anxious about the fate of his compositions than he had been in his youth, having less confidence in himself as he declined in years, and on the occasion of Ali Baba he was especially overwrought. Berlioz got a seat in the house, and made his disapproval of the performance very marked by his manner. Finally he cried out toward the end of the first act, "Twenty francs for an idea!" During the second act he called, "Forty francs for an idea!" and at the finale he screeched, "Eighty francs for an idea!" When all was over, he rose wearily and said, loud enough to be heard all over the place, "I give it up—I'm not rich enough!" and went out.

There is hardly an anecdote of Berlioz extant that does not deal with his cynicism or displeasing qualities, therefore we may more or less assume that they pretty -53- correctly reflect the man. One of the stories which well illustrates his love of "showing up" his fellows, concerns his Fuite en Egypte. When it was produced he had put upon the programme as the composer one Pierre Ducré "of the seventeenth century." The critics, one and all, wrote of the old and worthless score that Berlioz had unearthed and foisted upon the suffering public. Some of them wrote voluminously and knowingly of the life of Pierre Ducré, and hinted at other productions of his, which they said demonstrated his puerility. Then when he had roused all the discussion he pleased, Berlioz came forward and announced that there never had been any such personage as Ducré, and that it was himself who had written Fuite en Egypte. He had made everybody appear as absurd as possible, and there is no sign that he ever did that sort of thing for the pure love of a joke. He was malicious, born so, lived so, and died so. However great his music, he was unworthy of it.

DAMNATION OF FAUST

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

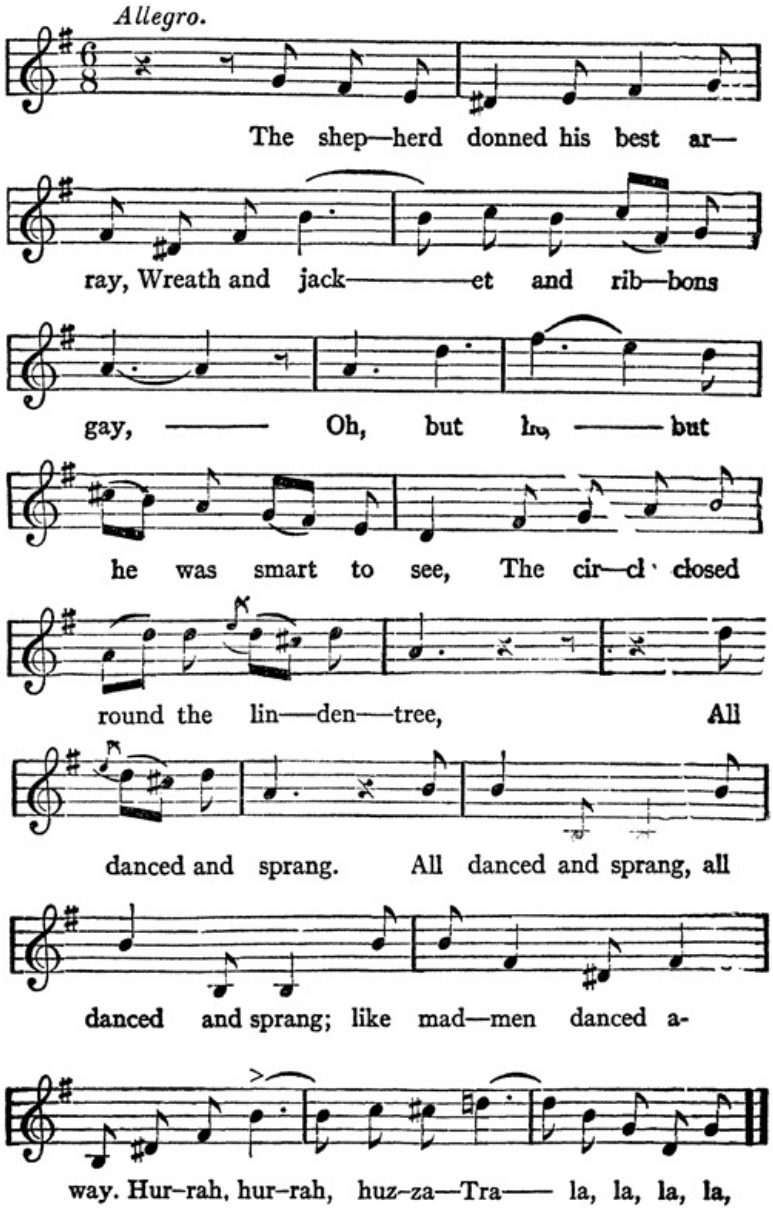
Faust.
Mephistopheles.
Brander.
Marguerite.
Sylphs, students, soldiers, angels.

Composer: Hector Berlioz.

ACT I

One lovely morning, in a Hungarian meadow, a scholar went to walk before he should begin his day's task of study and of teaching. He was an old man, who had thought of little in life, so far as his associates knew, besides his books; but secretly he had -54- longed for the bright joys of the world most ardently.

While he lingered in the meadow, possessed with its morning brightness, and its summer dress he heard some person singing not far away:



[Listen]

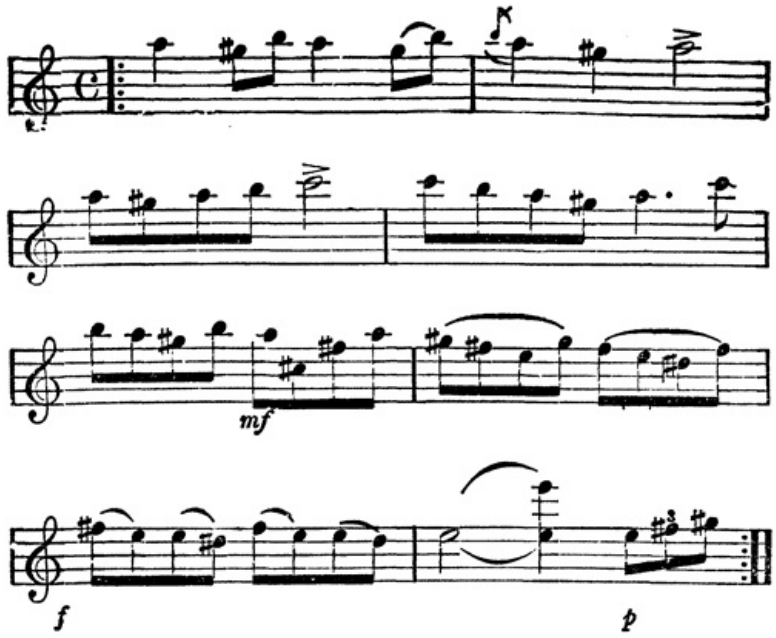
The shepherd donned his best array,
Wreath and jacket and ribbons gay,
Oh, but he, but he was smart to see,
The circle closed round the linden tree,
All danced and sprang,
All danced and sprang, all danced and sprang;
  like madmen danced away.
Hurrah, hurrah, huzza
Tra la, la, la, la.

At first a single voice was singing, but soon the song was taken up by a joyous chorus, and Faust, the scholar, stopped to listen.

Alas! It spoke of that gaiety he had so longed to enjoy. A group of peasants were out for a holiday, and their sport was beginning early. While he meditated on all that he had lost, the merrymakers drew near, and he watched them dance, listened to them laugh and sing, and became more and more heartsick. It was the youth of the revellers that entered into his heart. There was he, so old, and nearly done with life; done with its possibilities for joy and with its hardships!

Then, in the very midst of these thoughts the sound of martial music was heard. Faust shaded his eyes with his trembling old hand:

"Ha! A splendour of weapons is brightly gleaming afar: the sons of the Danube apparelled for war! They gallop so proudly along: how sparkle their eyes, how flash their shields. All hearts are thrilled, they chant their battle's story! While my heart is cold, all unmoved by glory." He sang this in recitative, while the music drew nearer and nearer, and as the army passed by, it marched to one of the famous compositions of history:



[Listen]

Then the scene changed, and Faust was once more alone in his study. He was melancholy.

"I left the meadow without regret, and now, without delight, I greet our haughty mountains. What is the use of such as I continuing to live? There *is* no use! I may as well kill myself and have done it." And after thinking this over a moment in silence he prepared himself a cup of poison, and lifted it to his lips. As he was about to drink and end his woes, the choir from the chapel began to sing an Easter hymn.

"Ah!" he cried, "the memories that overwhelm me! Oh, my weak and trembling spirit, wilt thou surely ascend to heaven, borne upward by this holy song!" He began to think of his happy boyhood, of his early home; then as the glorious music of the choir swelled higher and higher, he became gentler and thought more tolerantly of life.

"Those soft melodious strains bring peace to my soul; songs more sweet than morning, I hear again! My tears spring forth, the earth has won me back." He dropped his head upon his breast and wept. As he sat thus, in tender mood, a strange happening took place. A queer, explosive sound, and a jet of flame, and—there stood the devil, all in red, forked tail, horns, and cloven hoof! He stood smiling wickedly at the softened old man, while Faust stared at him wildly.

"A most pious frame of mind, my friend. Give me your hand, dear Doctor Faust. The glad Easter ringing of bells and singing of peans have certainly charmed you back to earth!"

"Who art thou, whose glances are so fierce? They burn my very soul. Speak, thou spectre, and tell me thy name." From his very appearance, one could hardly doubt he was the Devil.

"Why! so learned a man as you should know me. I am thy friend and comfort. Come, ye are so melancholy, Doctor Faust, let me be thy friend—I'll tell thee a secret: if you but say the word, I'll give ye your dearest wish. It shall be whatever you wish. Eh? Shall it be wealth, or fame?—what shall it be? Come! Let us talk it over."

"That is well, wretched demon! I think I know ye now. I am interested in ye. Sit, and we shall talk," the poor old Doctor replied, despising that which nevertheless aroused his curiosity. He, like everybody else, had heard of the Devil, but he doubted if any other had had the fortune actually to see him.

"Very well; I will be thine eye, thine ear. I will give thee the world; thou shalt leave thy den, thy hateful study. Come! to satisfy thy curiosity, follow me."

The old man regarded him thoughtfully for a moment, and then rose:

"Let us go," he said, and in the twinkle of an eye they disappeared into the air.

They were transported over hill and dale, village and fine city, till the Devil paused at Leipzig.

"Here is the place for us," he said; and instantly they descended to the drinking cellar of Auerbach, a man who kept fine Rhenish wine for jolly fellows.

They entered and sat at a table. By this time the Devil had changed Faust the scholar, into a young and handsome man, youth being one of Faust's dearest wishes.

All about them were coarse youths, soldiers, students, men off the street, all drinking and singing gaily. Faust and the Devil ordered wine and became a part of the company. They were all singing together at that moment:

Oh, what delight when storm is crashing,
To sit all the night round the bowl;
High in the glass the liquor flashing,
While thick clouds of smoke float around.

The rest of the words were not very dignified nor fascinating, and Faust looked on with some disgust. Presently some one cried out to a half-drunken fellow named Brander to give them one of his famous songs, and he got unsteadily upon his feet and began:

There was a rat in the cellar-nest
  Whom fat and butter made smoother;
He had a paunch beneath his vest
  Like that of Doctor Luther;
The cook laid poison cunningly,
  And then as sore oppressed was he,
As if he had love in his bosom.

He ran around, he ran about,
  His thirst in puddles laving;
He gnawed and scratched the house throughout,
  But nothing cured his raving;
He whirled and jumped with torment mad,
  And soon enough the poor beast had,
As if he had love in his bosom.

-59-

And driven at last, in open day,
  He ran at last into the kitchen,
Fell on the hearth and squirming lay
  In the last convulsion twitching;
Then laughed the murd'ress in her glee,
  "Ha, ha! He's at his last gasp," said she,
As if he had love in his bosom.

"Requiescat in pace, amen!" the Devil sang, and all joined on the "amen." "Now then, permit *me* to sing you a ballad," the Devil cried, gaily, and he jumped upon his feet.

"What, you pretend that you can do better than Brander?" they demanded, a little piqued.

"Well, you see, I am expert at anything nasty and bad; so let us see:

There was a king once reigning,
  Who had a big black flea,
And loved him past explaining,
  As his own son were he.
He called his man of stitches,
  The tailor came straightway,
'Here, measure the lad for breeches,
  And measure his coat, I say.'

In silk and velvet gleaming,
  He now was wholly drest,
Had a coat with ribbons streaming,
  A cross upon his breast.
He had the first of stations,
  A minister's star and name,
And also his relations,
  Great lords at court became.

And lords and dames of honour
  Were plagued awake and in bed.
The Queen, she got them upon her,
  The maids were bitten and bled.
And they did not dare to brush them,
  Or scratch them day or night.
We crack them and we crush them,
  At once whene'er they bite."

"Enough!" said Faust; "I want to leave this brutal company. There can be no joys found where there is so much that is low and degrading. I wish to go." And turning angrily to the Devil, he signified that he would leave instantly.

-60-

"Very well," said the Prince of Darkness, smiling his satirical smile. "Away we go—and better success with thee, next time." At which he placed his mantle upon the ground, they stood upon it, and away they flew into the air and disappeared.

When next they stopped, it was upon a grassy bank of the Elbe River.

"Now, my friend; let us rest. Lie thou down upon the grassy bank and close thine eyes, and dream of joys to come. When we awake we shall wish again and see what new experience the world holds for us. Thus far you do not seem too well satisfied."

"I will sleep," Faust answered, reclining upon the bank. "I should be glad to forget some things that we have seen." So saying he slept. No sooner had he done so, that the Devil summoned the most beautiful sylphs to dance before him, and thus to influence Faust's dreams. They began by softly calling his name. Then they lulled him to deeper sleep, and his dream was of fair women. In his dream he saw the lovely dance, the gracious forms, the heavenly voices of youthful women. The Devil directed his dream-laden eyes toward a loving pair who walked and spoke and loved apart. Then immediately behind those lovers walked, meditatively, a beautiful maiden.

"Behold," the Black Prince murmured to Faust; "that maiden there who follows: she shall be thy Marguerite. Shall it not be so?" And Faust sank back in his sleep, overcome with the lovely vision. Then the Devil motioned the sylphs away. -61-

"Away, ye dainty elves, ye have served my turn to-day, and I shall not forget." They danced to exquisite waltz music, hovering above Faust, and gradually disappeared in the mists of the air.

Slowly Faust awakened; His first word was "Marguerite!" Then he looked about him in a daze.

"What a dream! What a dream!" he murmured. "I saw an angel in human form."

"Nay, she was a woman," said the Devil. "Rise and follow me, and I will show her to thee in her home. Hello! Here comes along a party of jolly students and soldiers. They will pass her home. We'll move along with them, join their shouts and songs, and presently we shall arrive at her house." Faust, all trembling with the thought that at last he had found that which was to make his life worth living, joined the crowd and followed. The soldiers boisterously sang a fine chorus as they went. No sooner had they finished than the students began their song. It was all in Latin and seemed to Faust to echo that life which had once been his. Then the soldiers and students joined in the jollity and sang together.

This fun lasted what to Faust seemed too long a time. He was impatient to see and speak with the dear maiden Marguerite; and at last, his wish was to be granted. The Devil set him down without ceremony in the young girl's house. There, where she lived, where her meagre belongings were about, he sang rapturously of her. He went about the room, looking at her chair, her basket of work, the place where she should sleep, examining all with rapture. Then the Devil said in an undertone:

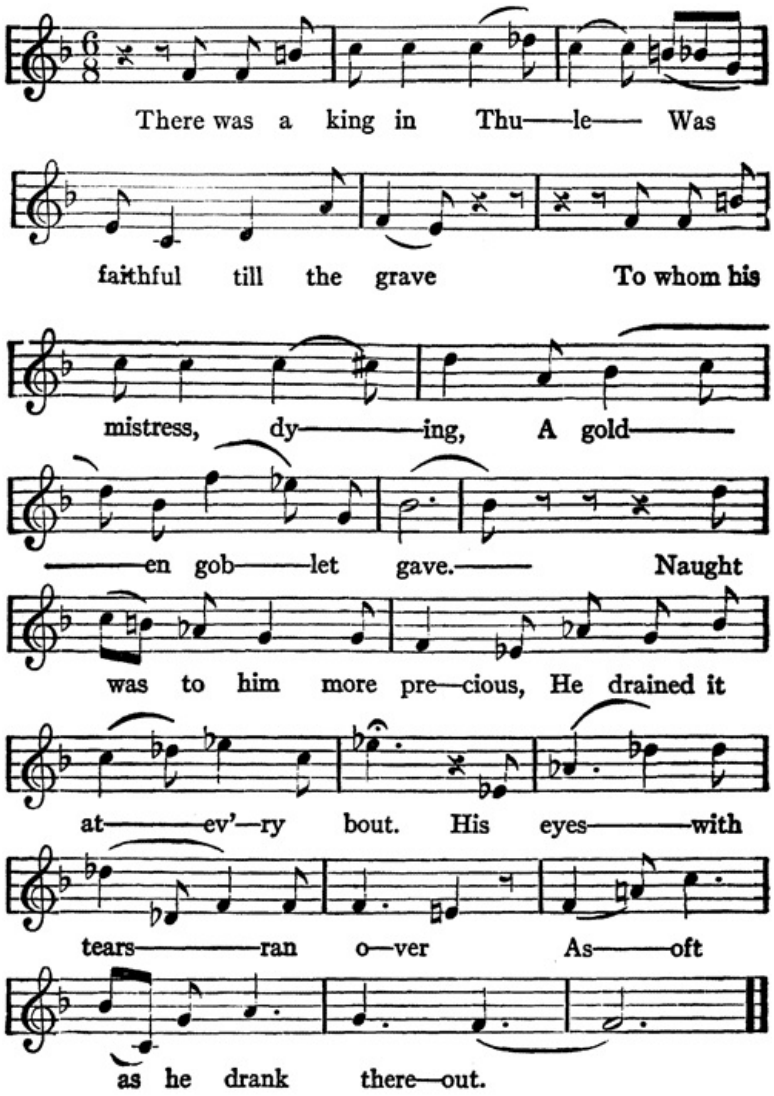
"She is coming! hide thyself, and frighten her not." Then he hid Faust behind some curtains and took himself off with the parting advice: -62-

"Have a care not to frighten her, or thou wilt lose her. Now make the most of thy time." Faust's heart beat so with love that he feared to betray himself.

Then Marguerite entered. She was as lovely as a dream. She was simple and gentle, and very young and innocent. She had never seen any one outside her little village. She was so good that she could fairly tell by instinct if evil influences were about her. She no sooner entered the chamber than she was aware of something wrong. She felt the presence of the evil one who had but just gone. She paused and murmured to herself:

"The air is very sultry," and she felt stifled. "I am trembling like a little child. I think it is the dream I had last night" (for the Devil had given her a dream as he had given Faust, and in it she had seen her future husband). "I think it is because I expect every moment since my dream, to see the one who is to love and cherish me the rest of my life." The simple folk of Marguerite's time believed in dreams and portents of all kinds.

There she sat in her chair and recalled how handsome the lover of her dream was, and how truly she already loved him. Then she decided to go to bed, and while she was folding her few things, putting her apron away, combing out her long and beautiful hair, she sang an old Gothic song, of the King of Thule:



[Listen]

There was a king in Thule
  Was faithful till the grave
To whom his mistress, dying,
  A golden goblet gave.
Naught was to him more precious,
  He drained it at ev'ry bout.
His eyes with tears ran over
  As oft as he drank thereout.

When came his time of dying,
  The towns in his land he told;
Naught else to his heir denying
  Except the goblet of gold.
He sat at the royal banquet,
  With his knights of high degree,
In the lofty hall of his fathers,
  In the castle by the sea.

There stood the old carouser,
  And drank the last life-glow,
And hurled the hallow'd goblet
  Into the tide below.
He saw it plunging and filling,
  And sinking deep in the sea,
Then his eyelids fell forever,
  And never more drank he.

There was a King once in Thule,
  Faithful was he—to the grave.

Then the Devil, who was watching all, summoned his imps. This time they took the form of Will-o'-the-wisps.

"Come! dance and confuse this maiden, and see what we can do to help this lovesick Faust," he cried to them, and at once they began a wonderful dance. Marguerite watched them entranced, and by the time Faust appeared from the folds of the curtains she was half dazed and confused by the unreal spectacle she had seen. Then she recognized the handsome fellow as the one she had seen in her dream.

"I have seen thee in my dreams," she said, "and thou wert one who loved me well." Faust, entranced with her beauty and goodness, promised to love her forever; and as he embraced her, the Devil suddenly popped in.

"Hasten," he cried. "We must be off."

"Who is this man?" Marguerite cried in affright.

"A brute," Faust declared, knowing well the devilishness of his pretended friend in whose company he travelled.

"Nay! I am your best friend. Be more courteous," the Devil cautioned, smiling.

"I expect I am intruding," he continued. "But really I came to save this angel of a girl. Our songs have awakened all the neighbours round, and they are running hither like a pack of hounds to see what is going on. They know this pretty girl has a young man in here talking with her, and already they are calling for her old gossip of a mother. When her mother comes ye will catch it finely. So come along."

"Death and Hell!" Faust cried, not knowing how near he was to both.

"There is no time for that. Just come along. You and the young woman will have plenty of time hereafter to see each other. But just now we must be off." -65-

"But she——"

"It will go hard with her if we are found here, so ye had better come on, if only for her sake."

"But, return, return," Marguerite cried, looking tenderly at Faust.

"I shall return, never to leave thee," he cried, and then, interrupted by the noise made by men and women in the street, who were coming to find out what he was doing there, Faust left hurriedly. Every night thereafter for a time they met, and Marguerite was persuaded by the Devil to give her old mother a sleeping potion to keep her from surprising them. Then one day the Devil again lured Faust away.

"Now thou shalt never see her again," the Devil said to himself, gloating over the sorrow Faust was sure to feel; and away they fled, the Devil sure of tempting Faust anew.

After that Marguerite, left quite alone, watched sadly, each day for the return of her lover, but alas! he never came. One night while she was leaning out of her casement, the villagers were singing of the return of the army.

"Alas, they are all making merry, soldiers and students, as on the night when I first saw my lover, but he is no longer among them." And then sadly she closed her window and kept her lonely vigil, ever hoping for his return.

Away in a cavern, in the depths of the forest, was Faust. He had never returned to Marguerite's village, and neither had he known any peace of mind. He had immediately found other pleasures which had for a time made him forget her, and then, when he was far away and it was too late to return, he desired again to be with her. Now, sitting apart in the wood, mourning, the Devil came to him. -66-

"How about that constant love of thine? Do ye never think of that poor child Marguerite, lonely and far away, awaiting thee month after month?"

"Be silent and do not torture me, fiend," Faust cried bitterly.

"Oh I have a lot to tell thee," the Black Prince replied. "I have been saving news for thee. Dost thou remember how, on those nights when thou didst go to see that good maiden, she was told to give her old mother a sleeping draught, that she might sleep soundly while ye billed and cooed? Well, when ye were gone, Marguerite still expected ye, and continued to give the draught, and one night the old dame slept forever, and I tell thee that draught killed her. Now thy Marguerite is going to be hanged for it." Upon hearing that, Faust nearly died with horror.

"What is it ye tell me?" he cried. "My God! This is not true."

"All right. All right. Believe it or not, it is the same to me—and to her—because that poor maid is about to die for killing her mother."

"Thou shalt save her, or I shall kill—" But he stopped in his fury, knowing that none could kill the Devil. He wrung his hands in despair.

"Now if thou wilt keep thyself a bit civil, I may save her for thee, but don't forget thy

manners."

At that Faust was in a fury of excitement to be off to Marguerite's village.

"Not so fast, not so fast," the Devil said "Now if I am to save thy love, I must have a little agreement with thee. I want your signature to this paper. Sign, and I promise to save her, without fail. But I must have that first." -67-

"I will give thee anything," Faust cried, and instantly signed the paper. That paper was really an agreement to give the Devil his soul when he should die, so Faust had abandoned his last hope on earth or hereafter. Then the Devil called for his horses—his black horses upon which damned souls rode with him to Hell.

"Mount," he said to Faust, "and in a trice we shall be with thy Marguerite and snatch her from the gallows." Instantly they mounted and then began the fearful ride to Hell.

Presently they came near a crowd of peasants kneeling about a roadside cross.

"Oh, have a care. Let us not ride upon them," Faust cried.

"Get on, get on," the Devil cried. "It is thy Marguerite we are hastening to," and the poor peasants scattered in every direction, some being trampled upon and little children hurt.

"Horrible, horrible," Faust cried. "What is that monster pursuing us?" he whispered, glancing fearfully behind him.

"Ye are dreaming."

"Nay! and there are hideous birds of prey now joining us. They rush upon us. What screams? Their black wings strike me." And then a bell tolled.

"Hark ye! It is the bell for her death. Hasten," the Devil urged.

"Aye, make haste, make haste." And the horses, black as night, were urged on and on. "See those ghastly skeletons dancing!" Faust screamed, as the fearful spectres gathered round them. -68-

"Think not of them, but of our Marguerite!" the Devil counselled.

"Our horses' manes are bristling. They tremble, the earth rocks wildly. I hear the thunders roar, it is raining blood," Faust shrieked. Then the Devil shouted:

"Ah! Ye slaves of Hell, your trumpets blow. I come triumphant. This man is mine!" And as he spoke, the two riders fell headlong into the abyss of Hell.

Then all the fiends of Hell began to sing wildly. The scene was one of damnation.

Then, grandly above Hell's din rose a mighty chorus. It was a heavenly strain. Marguerite had not been spared the horror of execution; but dead, the saints forgave her. In Heaven, as her soul ascended, they sang:

"Ascend, O trusting spirit! It was love which misled thee. Come, let us wipe away thy tears. Come, come, and dwell forever among the blest."

And thus Faust met his end, and Marguerite her reward for faith and innocence.

BIZET -69-

WHEN Bizet wrote his music around Prosper Mérimée's story of Carmen, he reflected his familiarity with Spanish life and his long living in the Pyrenees mountains. The character of Michaela is not found in the novel, but the clever introduction of it into the opera story adds greatly to dramatic effect, since the gentle and loving character is in strong contrast with that of Carmen.

Bizet's name was Alexandre César Léopold, and he was born on October 25, 1838, at Bougival, and died June 3, 1875. He with Charles Lécocq won the Offenbach prize for the best operetta while Bizet was as yet a youth, and from that time his art gained in strength and beauty. In those days it was a reproach to suggest Wagner in musical composition, but Bizet was accused of doing so. Thus he was handicapped by leaning toward an unpopular school at the very start, but the great beauty of his productions made their way in spite of all. He wrote, as his second composition of importance, an opera around the novel of Scott's Fair Maid of Perth—in French, La Jolie Fille de Perth—and this was not a success, but that same opera survives through his Carmen. The Bohemian dance in that opera was taken from it and interpolated into the fourth act of Carmen.

Bizet died only three months after the production of this last opera, but he had lived long enough to know that he had become one of the world's great composers. He wrote exquisite pastoral music for "l'Arlésienne"—whose story was adapted from Daudet's novel of that name. In short, Bizet was the pioneer in a new school of French opera, doing for it in a less measure what Wagner has finally done for the whole world. -70-

This genius left few anecdotes or personal reminiscences behind him. The glory of his compositions alone seems to stand for his existence.

CARMEN

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA WITH THE ORIGINAL CAST, AS PRESENTED AT THE FIRST PERFORMANCE

Don José, Corporal of Dragoons	M. Lhérie
Escamillo, Toreador	M. Bouhy
Zuniga, Captain of Dragoons	M. Dufriche
Morales, Officer	M. Duvernoy
Lillas Pastia, Innkeeper	M. Nathan
Carmen, Gipsy-girl	Mme. Galli-Marié
Michaela, a Village Maiden	Mlle. Chapuy
Frasquita	Mlle. Ducasse
Mercedes	Mlle. Chevalier
El Dancairo El Remendado } Smugglers.	
A guide.	

Dragoons, gypsies, smugglers, cigarette-girls, street-boys, etc.

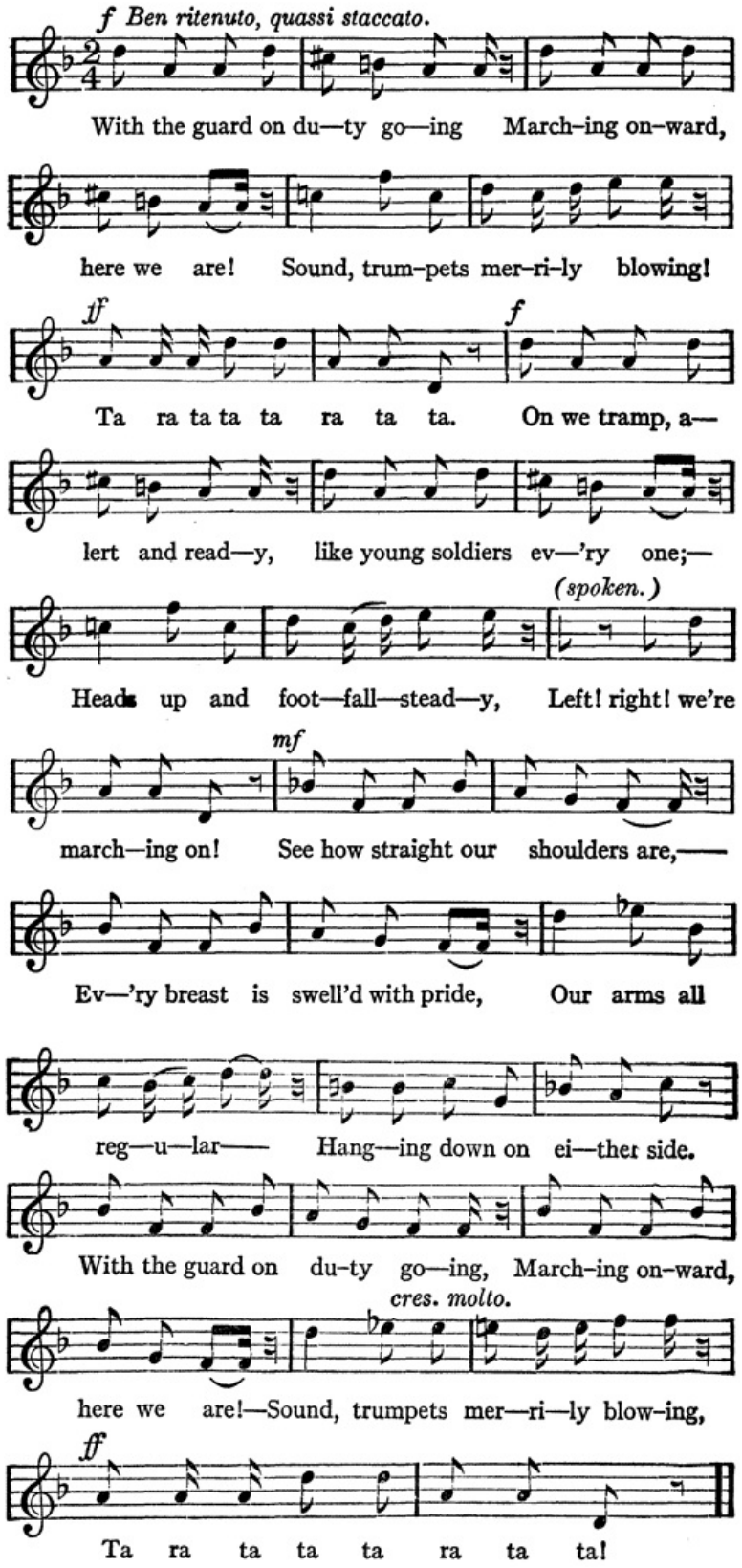
The time of the story is 1820, and it takes place in and near Seville.

Composer: Georges Bizet.

Book: H. Meilhac and L. Halévy.

First sung at the Opéra Comique, Paris, March 3, 1875.

I KNEW a boy who once said: "That soldier thing in 'Carmen' is the most awful bully thing to whistle a fellow ever heard; but if you don't get it just right, it doesn't sound like anything," which was a mistake, because if you don't get it "just right" it sounds something awful. That boy's whistle was twenty per cent. better than his syntax, but his judgment about music was pretty good, and we shall have the soldier song in the very beginning, even before learning how it happens, because it is the thing we are likely to recall, in a shadowy sort of way, throughout the first act: -71-



[Listen]

With the guard on duty going
Marching onward, here we are!
Sound, trumpets merrily blowing!
Ta ra ta ta ta ra ta ta.

On we tramp, alert and ready,
Like young soldiers ev'ry one;—
Heads up and footfall steady,
Left! right! we're marching on!

See how straight our shoulders are,
Ev'ry breast is swell'd with pride,
Our arms all regular
Hanging down on either side.

With the guard on duty going,
  Marching onward, here we are!
Sound, trumpets merrily blowing,
  Ta ra ta ta ta ra ta ta!

That is the way it goes, and this is the way it happens:

ACT I

ONCE upon a time there was a pretty girl named Michaela, and she was as good as she was beautiful. She loved a corporal in the Spanish army whose name was Don José. Now the corporal was a fairly good chap, but he had been born thoughtless, and as a matter of fact he had lived away from home for so long that he had half-forgotten his old mother who lived a lonely life with Michaela.

One day, about noontime, the guard, waiting to be relieved by their comrades, were on duty near the guard-house, which was situated in a public square of Seville. As the soldiers sat about, or walked with muskets over shoulders, their service was not especially wearisome, because people were continually passing through the square, and besides there was a cigarette factory on the other side of the square, and when -73-
the factory hands tumbled out, about noon, there was plenty of carousing and gaiety for an hour. Here in the square were little donkeys with tinkling bells upon them, and donkeys carrying packs upon their backs, and gentlemen in black velvet cloaks which were thrown artistically over one shoulder, and with plumes on their hats. Then, too, there were ragged folks who looked rather well, nevertheless, since their rags were Spanish rags, and made a fine show of bright colours.

Just as Morales, the officer of the guard, was finding the hot morning rather slow, and wishing the factory bell would ring, and his brother officer march his men in to relieve him, Michaela appeared. She had come into the city from the home of José's mother, which was somewhere near, in the hills. His old mother had become so lonely and worried, not having heard from José for so long, that at last the girl had undertaken to come down into the city, bearing a note from his mother, and to seek him out at his barracks. She had inquired her way till she found the square where the guard was quartered, and now, when she entered it, Morales was the first to see her.

"That is a pretty girl," Morales decided as he watched her. "Seems to be looking for some one—little strange in this part of the town, probably. Can I do anything for you?" he called to her, as she approached.

"I am looking for Don José, a soldier, if you know him——"

"Perfectly. He is corporal of the guard which is presently to relieve us. If you wait here, you are certain to see him." Michaela thanked him quietly, and went away. The soldiers were strange to her, and she preferred to wait in another part of the square -74-
rather than where they were idling. She had no sooner disappeared than the music of the relief guard was heard in the distance. It was the soldiers' chorus: a regular fife and drum affair. It came nearer, nearer, nearer, till it arrived in full blast, fresh as a pippin, the herald of all that was going to happen through four acts of opera. There was to be fighting and smugglers: factory-girls in a row, and Carmen everywhere and anywhere, all of the time.

With the new guard comes first the bugler and a fifer with a lot of little ragged urchins tagging along behind; then comes Zuniga strutting in, very much pleased with himself, and after him Don José, the corporal, whom Michaela has come to town to see. The street boys sing while the new guard lines up in front of the old one, and every one takes up the song. It is the business of every one in opera to sing about everything at any time. Thus the guard describes itself in song:

On we tramp, alert and steady,
  Like young soldiers, every one!
Head up, and footfall steady,
  Left, right! we're marching on!

See how straight our shoulders are,—
  Every breast is swelled with pride,
Our arms all regular—
  Hanging down on either side.

There is not much poetry in this, but there is lots of vim, and the new guard, as bright as a new tin whistle, has formed and the old guard marched off during the singing. Meantime, while things have been settling down, Morales has had a word with Don José.

"A pretty girl is somewhere near here, looking for you, José. She wore a blue gown -75-
and her hair is in a braid down her back; she's——"

"I know her; it is Michaela," José declares: and, with the sudden knowledge that she is so near, and that she comes directly from his old mother, he feels a longing for home, and realizes that he has been none too thoughtful or kind toward those who love him. As everybody finds himself in place, Zuniga points across to the cigarette factory.

"Did you ever notice that there are often some tremendously pretty girls over there?" he asks of José.

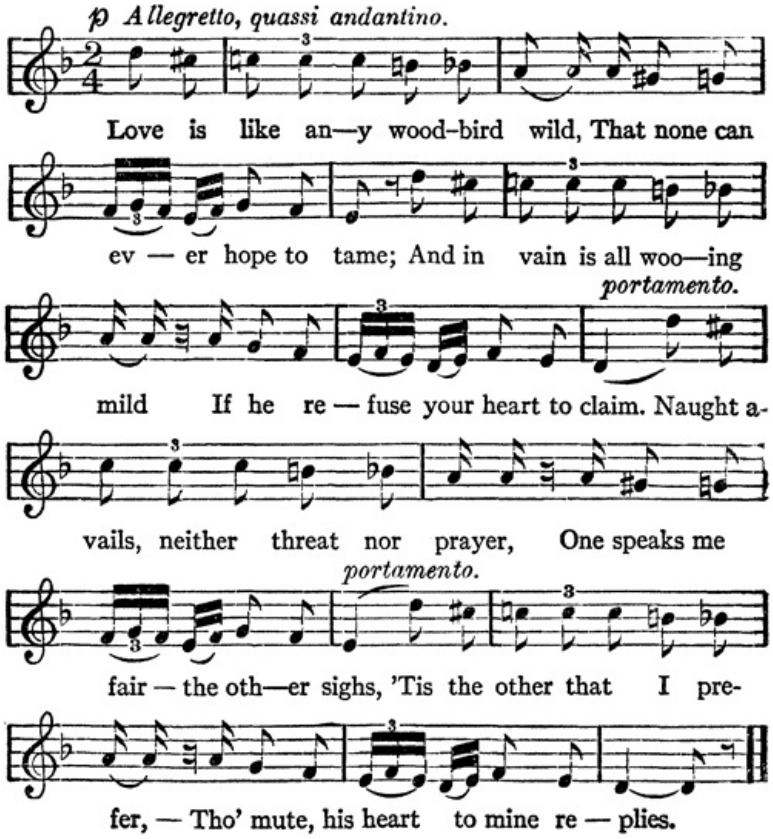
"Huh?" José answers, abstractedly. Zuniga laughs.

"You are thinking of the pretty girl Morales has just told you of," he says. "The girl with the blue petticoat and the braid down her back!"

"Well, why not? I love her," José answers shortly. He hunches his musket a little higher and wheels about. He doesn't specially care to talk of Michaela or his mother, with these young scamps who are as thoughtless as himself: he has preserved so much of self-respect; but before he can answer again the factory bell rings. Dinner time! José stands looking across, as every one else does, while the factory crowd begins to tumble out, helter-skelter. All come singing, and the girls smoking cigarettes, a good many of them being gipsies, like Carmen. They are dressed in all sorts of clothes from dirty silk petticoats, up to self-respecting rags. Carmen is somewhere in the midst of the hullabaloo, and everybody is shouting for her.

Carmen leads in everything. She leads in good and she leads in bad. She makes the best and the worst cigarettes, she is the quickest and she is the slowest, as the mood moves her; and now, when she flashes on to the stage in red and yellow fringes and bedraggled finery, cigarette in mouth and bangles tinkling, opera has given to the stage the supreme puzzle of humanity: the woman who does always what she pleases, and who pleases never to do the thing expected of her!

The first man she sees when she comes from the factory is José. The first thing that she pleases to do is to make José love her. It will be good fun for the noon hour. She has her friends with her, Frasquita and Mercedes, and all are in the mood for a frolic. They sing:



[Listen]

Love is like any wood-bird wild,
That none can ever hope to tame;
And in vain is all wooing mild
If he refuse your heart to claim.
Naught avails, neither threat nor prayer,
One speaks me fair—the other sighs,
'Tis the other that I prefer,
Tho' mute, his heart to mine replies.

While Carmen sings, her eyes do not leave Don José, and he is watching her in spite of himself. The racket continues till the factory bell rings to call the crowd back to work. Carmen goes reluctantly, and as she goes, she throws a flower at José. -77-

This little flower gave me a start
Like a ball aimed fair at my heart!

he says, half smiling, half seriously, as he picks it up. While he stands thus, looking toward the factory, holding the flower, thinking of Carmen, Michaela comes back into the square. They espy each other, and a sudden warmth and tenderness come upon José: after all, he loves her dearly—and there is his old mother! His better self responds: José, in imagination, sees the little house in the hills where he lived as a boy before he went soldiering. He recalls vividly for the first time in months, those who are faithful to him, and for a moment he loves them as they love him. They speak together. Michaela gives him the note from his mother. There is money in it: she has thought he might be in debt, or in other trouble and need it. José is surprised by the tears in his own eyes—it is a far cry from gay Seville to the little house among the hills!

"Go back to mother, Michaela, tell her I am going to get leave as soon as I can and am coming back to her and you. I am going to play fair. There's not much in life, otherwise. Go home and tell her I am coming, and I mean to make you both as happy as once I meant to."

His sudden tenderness enraptures the young girl, and kissing him she sets out to leave Seville with a glad heart. José, left alone, on guard, his life and thought interrupted by this incident of home and faithfulness, leans thoughtfully upon his musket. -78-

"It hasn't been quite right, and I am not happy. We'll change all this," he meditates.

As the afternoon sun grows hot the citizens begin to creep within doors for the *siesta*, as all Spanish life seems to grow tired and still in the burning day. Suddenly the silence is broken by a scream from over the way. José starts up and looks across.

"Hey, there! what the devil!" Zuniga shouts from the guard-house, and runs out. "Hello, hello! José, look alive there! What's gone wrong?—what the——" And the men start to run across the square.

"Help, help!" comes from the factory. "Will no one come? We're being killed—the she-devil—look out for her—Carmen! Look out for her—she has a knife!" Every one is screaming at once and trying each in his own way to tell what has happened.

"Get in there, José, and bring out the girl. Arrest the gipsy; and you men here get into this crowd and quiet it down. Make those girls shut up. Why, what the devil, I say! one would think a lunatic asylum loose. You've got the girl, José?" he calls across as the corporal brings Carmen out. "Bring her over," and Zuniga starts across to meet them, clattering on the cobblestones with his high heels.

"She knifed one of the girls, did she? All right—clap her into jail. You're just a bit too ready with your hands, my girl," the captain cries as José takes her into the guard-house.

José is set to guard her; which is about as wise as setting the cream where the cat can dip her whiskers.

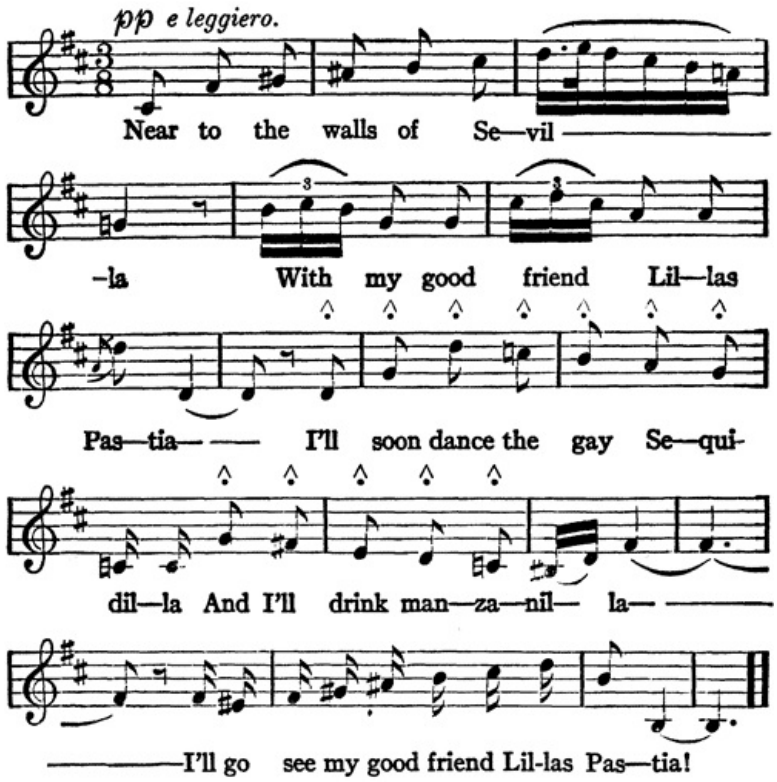
If it pleased the girl a moment before to stab a companion, it pleases her best now to get out of jail. She begins ably. -79-

"I love you," she remarks to José.

"It does not concern me," replies the heroic José.

"It should," Carmen persists.

"Ah!" replies José, noncommittally. This is unsatisfactory to Carmen. However, she is equal to the occasion. When is she so fascinating as when quite preoccupied?—she will try it now. She will sing:



[Listen]

Near to the walls of Sevilla
With my good friend Lillas Pastia
I'll soon dance the gay Seguidilla
And I'll drink manzanilla—
I'll go see my good friend Lillas Pastia!

José is disturbed. Carmen is conscious of it. She continues to sing, meanwhile coquetting with him. Before he is aware of his own mood, he has cut the cord that he bound her hands with, and has disgraced himself forever. In the fascination Carmen has for him, he has forgotten that he is a soldier. Presently Zuniga enters. Carmen is to be transferred in charge of José, with a guard detailed to go with him. It is arranged. Carmen also makes some arrangements. -80-

"When we have started, and are about to cross the bridge, I'll give you a push. You must fall—you could not see me locked up—one so young and gay!—and when you fall I shall run. After you can get away, meet me at Lillas Pastia's inn." José seems to himself to be doing things in a dream. He has earned a court-martial already if it were known what he has done. A corporal's guard start under José; the bridge is reached. Carmen makes a leap; down goes José. The others are taken unawares and she rushes at them. They too fall, head over heels, one down the bank. Carmen is up, and off! She flies up the path, laughing at them as they pick themselves up.

"This is a good business, eh?" Zuniga sneers. "On the whole, Don José, I think you will shine rather better under lock and key, in the guard-house, than you will as a soldier at large. Men, arrest him!" he orders sharply, and José has made the first payment on the score Fate has chalked up against him.

ACT II

FLYING to Lillas Pastia's inn, as she had agreed with José, Carmen is joined by her old comrades—smugglers and gipsy girls, chief of whom are Mercedes and Frasquita. It is late at night, and a carouse is in progress. Among those in the inn is Zuniga himself. As a matter of truth, he has fallen in love with Carmen on his own account, and has kept José under arrest in order to have him out of the way. There they are, all together, the gipsies playing on guitars and tambourines. The girls are mostly dancing. Carmen is coquetting with every man present, and the fun becomes a riot, so that the innkeeper has to interfere. -81-

"It is so late, I've got to close up," he says. "You'll all have to clear out." Zuniga looks at Carmen. He wants to have a talk with her.

"Will you go with me?" he asks.

"I've no good reason for going with you," she answers, tantalizingly.

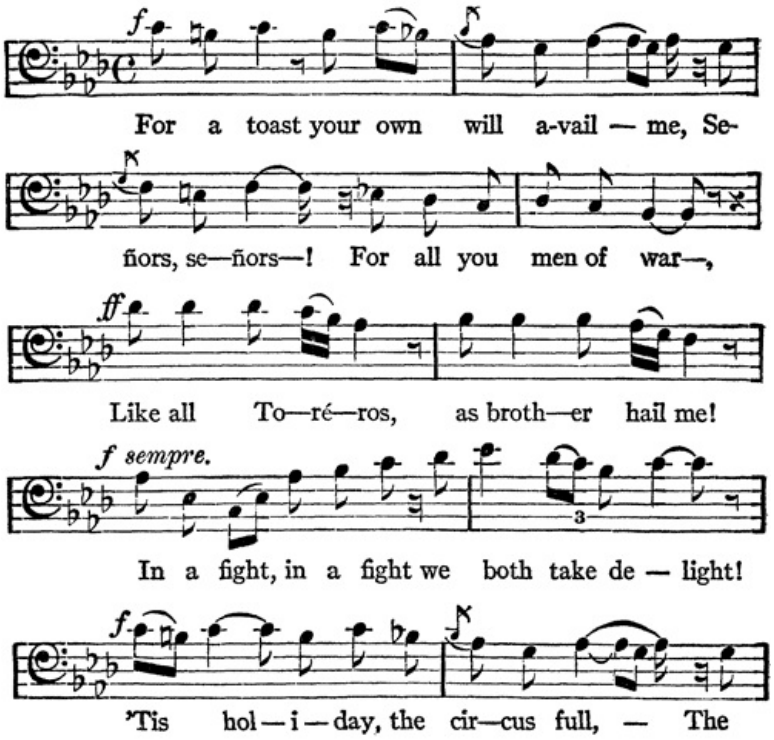
"Perhaps you're angry because I have locked José up," Zuniga suggests. "If you will

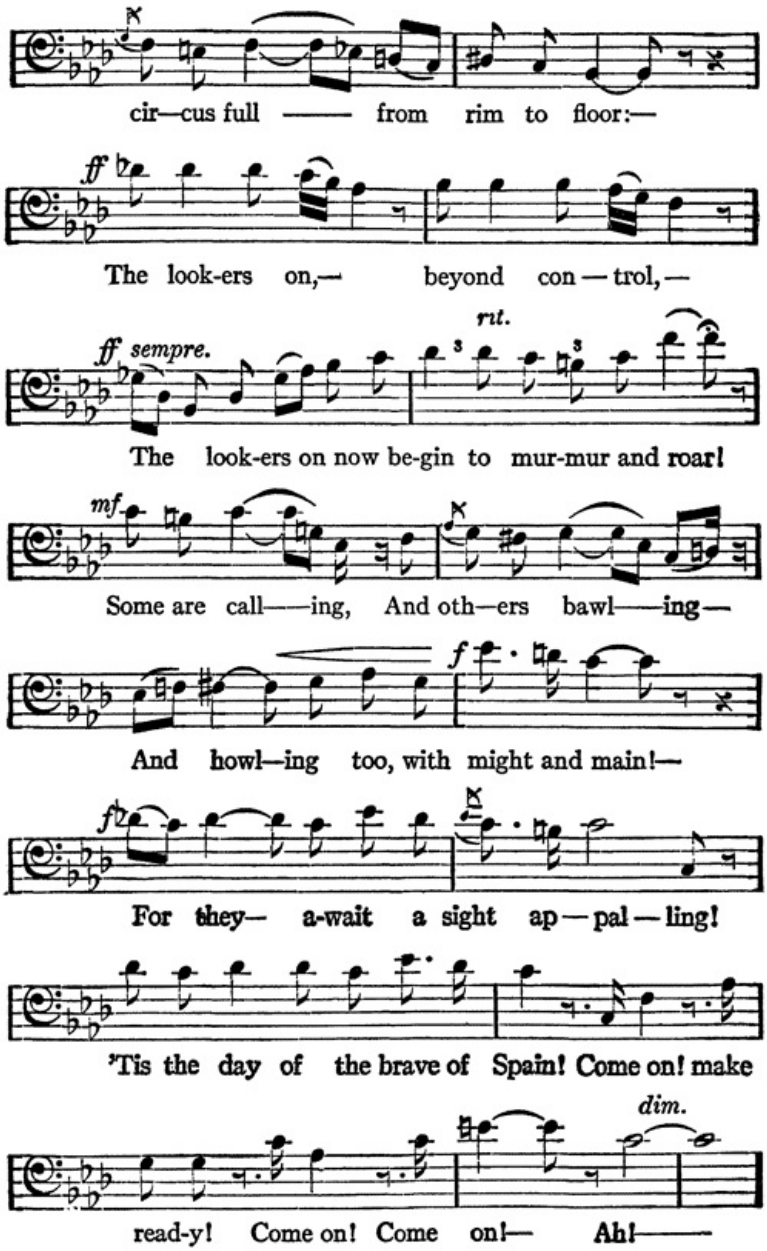
make yourself agreeable, I don't mind telling you I have had him set free."

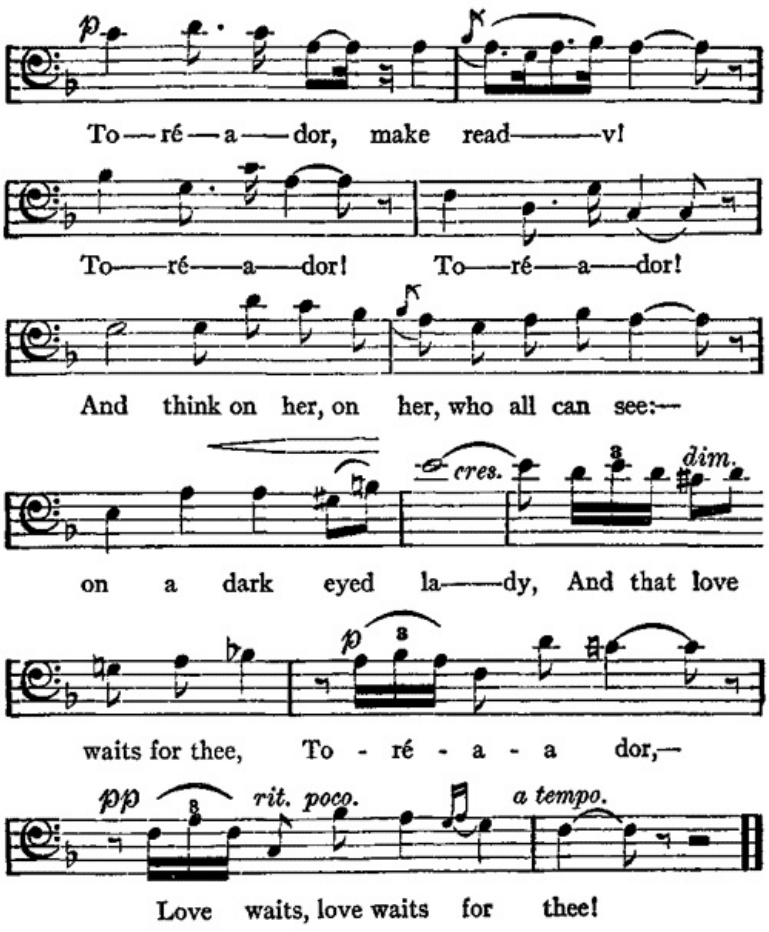
"What's that? Not in prison?" she asked. "Well, that's very decent of you, I'm sure," she sneers. "Good-night, gentlemen, I'm off!" she cries, and runs out into the night. Everybody follows her but Zuniga, who knows well enough he cannot trust her. They have no sooner disappeared than Zuniga hears shouts and "hurrahs" outside. He runs to the window and leans out.

"Hello! They are going to have a torch-light procession, eh?" and he leans farther out. "By the great horn spoon," he presently exclaims—or something which is its Spanish equivalent, "it's that bull-fighting fellow, Escamillo, who won that fight in Granada! Hello, out there, old friend! Come in here and have something to drink with me. To your past success and to your future glory!" Motioning to the bull-fighter outside, Zuniga goes toward the door. In he comes, this Escamillo, all covered with the glory of having killed some frisky and dangerous bulls—with all the chances against the bulls, nevertheless. Everybody else enters with Escamillo and all stand ready for refreshments at Zuniga's expense. Carmen comes back, and of course is to be found in the thick of the fun.

"Rah, rah, rah!" everybody yells, calling a toast to the bull-fighter, who is dressed up till he looks as fine as a little wagon. The toast suits him perfectly and he says so. He squares himself and strikes an attitude of grandeur without the least doubt that he is the greatest thing in the world, and while he is singing about it, half the people in the opera house are likely to agree with him. Here he goes:




cir—cus full —— from rim to floor:—
ff
The look-ers on,— beyond con — trol, —
rit.
ff sempre.
The look-ers on now be-gin to mur-mur and roar!
mf
Some are call——ing, And oth—ers bawl——ing—
f
And howl—ing too, with might and main!—
For they— a-wait a sight ap — pal — ling!
'Tis the day of the brave of Spain! Come on! make
dim.
read-y! Come on! Come on!— Ah!——



[Listen]

For a toast your own will avail me,
Señors, señors!
For all you men of war,
Like all Toréros, as brother hail me!
In a fight, in a fight we both take delight!

'Tis holiday, the circus full,
The circus full from rim to floor:
The lookers on, beyond control,
The lookers on now begin to murmur and roar!
Some are calling,
And others bawling
And howling too, with might and main!
For they await a sight appalling!
'Tis the day of the brave of Spain!
Come on! make ready!
Come on! Come on! Ah!

Toréador, make ready!
Toréador! Toréador!
And think on her, on her, who all can see:
On a dark eyed lady,
And that love waits for thee, Toréador,
Love waits, love waits for thee!

While Escamillo is singing the refrain of this song he is about the most self-satisfied fellow one ever saw. He hasn't the slightest doubt about himself and neither has any sensible person a doubt about him; but Carmen is not a sensible person.

The bull-fighter has been trying the same trick upon Carmen that she tried upon José. She is not indifferent to his fascinations, but—well, there is trouble coming her way, Escamillo's way, José's way, everybody's way, but it is some comfort to know that they all more or less deserve it.

When Escamillo has finished singing of his greatness, he asks Carmen what she would think of him if he told her he loved her, and for once in a way she is quite truthful. She tells him she would think him a fool.

"You are not over-encouraging, my girl, but I can wait," he returns.

"I am sure there is no harm in waiting," she answers him.

Now Carmen's familiar friends, the smugglers, have an enterprise in hand, and it has been their habit to look to Carmen, Frasquita, and Mercedes for help in their smuggling. When they find an opportunity, they approach Carmen.

"We need your help to-night."

"Indeed! well, you won't get it," she declares.

"What! you won't attend to business?"

"I won't."

"What's the matter now?" El Dancairo, chief of the smugglers, demands.

"If you particularly want to know—why, then, I am in love—for to-night only," she hastens to add, as the smugglers stare at her in disgust.

"Well, we wish you joy; but you'll show better sense to come along with us. If you wait here, your lover is likely not to come, and you'll lose the money in the bargain."

When any sly intrigue is weaving,
Whether for thieving,
Or for deceiving,
You will do well if you provide,
To have a woman on your side—

they sing—which shows what the smugglers think of their sisters and their cousins and their aunts. -86-

When they insist upon knowing for whom Carmen is going to wait at the inn, she finally tells them she is waiting for José, and pretends to some very nice sentiments indeed, on his account; says he got her out of prison, has been locked up for her sake, and of course she must treat him nicely.

"Well, all we have to say about it is that you had better have a care. Very likely he'll not come, and——" El Dancairo is interrupted by a song in the hills. It is José's voice signalling to Carmen.

"Think not?" she asks, nonchalantly.

When José enters, she really is glad to see him: he is very handsome indeed. After her comrades have gone outside the inn, she tells José of her regret that he has suffered for her, and starts to entertain him.

There, in the dingy inn, she begins a wonderful dance, shaking her castanets and making herself very beautiful and fascinating once more to José. In the midst of the dance they hear a bugle call. José starts up.

"Carmen, it is my squad going back to camp. It is the retreat that has sounded. I must go."

"Go?" she stares at him. Then, realizing that he is going to desert her for duty, she flies into a rage, throws his shako after him and screams at him to go and not come back. This puts José in a bad way, because he has been able to think of nothing but Carmen ever since she escaped and he went to prison in her place. Meantime, she raves about the inn, declaring that he doesn't love her, whereupon he takes the flower she once threw him, now dead and scentless, from his pocket, and shows it to her. He has kept it safely through all that has happened to him. -87-

"That is all very well, Don José, but if you truly loved me, you would leave this soldiering which takes you away, and go live with me and my companions in the mountains. There, there is no law, no duties, no——" Don José nearly faints at the idea.

"Disgrace my uniform!" he cries.

"Let your uniform go hang," she answers. She never was any too choice in her language. Poor José! poor wretch! he buries his face in his hands, and cries several times, "My God!" and looks so distracted that one almost believes he will pull himself together, take his shako, and go back to his men. Presently he decides that he will go, and starts toward the door, when there comes a knocking.

"What's that?" he whispers, pausing; but almost at the moment, Zuniga, looking for Carmen, opens the door.

"Fie, Carmen! Is this your taste?" the captain laughs, pointing to José. José is only a corporal, while Zuniga, being a captain, feels in a corporal's presence like a general at the very least.

"Come on, get out," he demands of José.

"No," José answers. "I think not," and there is no doubt he means it. Then the men begin to fight. Carmen, desiring to have one of them to torment, throws herself

between them. Her screams bring the gipsies and smugglers.

"Seize the captain," she cries, and Zuniga is seized and tied. He roars and fumes and threatens, but the smugglers carry him off. This puts José in a truly bad way. How can he return and tell Zuniga's men what has happened? and then when Zuniga is free he will be tried by court-martial and suffer the worst, beyond doubt. -88-

"Now then, José. What about it? You can't go back to your company, eh?"

"This is horrible," he tells her. "I am a ruined man."

"Then come with us and make the best of it," she cries, and Fate scores again.

ACT III

DISGRACED, there is nothing left for José but to go away to the smugglers' retreat in the mountains. There, in a cave looking out to sea, well located above the valley for smuggling operations, all the gipsies and the smugglers, headed by El Dancairo, lie waiting for the hour when they can go out without being caught. There, too, is Don José, sitting gloomily apart, cut off from all that is good, dishonoured and so distressed that he is no longer a good companion. Carmen looks at him, and feels angry because he seems to be indifferent to her.

"What do you see, that you sit staring down there into the valley?" she asks.

"I was thinking that yonder is living a good, industrious old woman, who thinks me a man of honour, but she is wrong, alas!"

"And who is this good old woman, pray?" Carmen sneers.

"If you love me do not speak thus," he returns, "for she is my mother."

"Ah, indeed! Well, I think you need her. I advise you to return to her." Don José needed her more than he knew.

"And if I went back—what about you?"

"Me? What about me, pray? I stay where I belong—with my friends." -89-

"Then you expect me to give you up, for whom I have lost all that I had in life!" Realizing that he has given so much for so little, his bitterness becomes uncontrollable, and though he says nothing, Carmen surprises a horrid look on his face.

"You'll be committing murder next, if you look like that," she laughs. "Well, you are not very good company. Hello, there! Mercedes, Frasquita—anybody instead of this fool—let's amuse ourselves. Get the cards. Let us tell our fortunes, eh?" The three girls gather about the table; the other two shuffle and cut. The cards turn out well for them. Carmen watches them. After a moment she reaches for the pack. She is very nonchalant about it, and glances at José as she shuffles the cards. Then she sits half upon the table and cuts. A glance! a moment of sudden fear! she has cut death for herself! The blow has come to her in her most reckless moment. After an instant's pause she sings with a simple fatalism in voice and manner:

In vain to shun the answer that we dread.

She cuts the cards again and yet again. Still her dreadful fate appears.

"There is no hope," she murmurs to herself, as El Dancairo starts up and cries:

"'Tis time to be off. The way is clear. Come."

The others, headed by Remendado and El Dancairo, file down the path, leaving Don José alone in the cave. It is a dismal scene: the loneliness of José, the menace of death in the air!

While José sits with bowed head, a girl's figure rises behind the rocks, and almost at the same moment there appears the form of a man, as well. José hears the rolling of -90-
the stones beneath their feet and starts up, musket in hand. Just as he rises, he sees the man's head. The girl cries out as he fires upon the man, and misses him; then she crouches down behind the rock. It is Michaela, come to find José wherever he may be. She knows of his disgrace; it is killing his mother. The lonely old woman is dying. Michaela has come to fetch him, if he has not lost all memory of gentler hours. As José fires, the man shouts.

"Hey, there! what are you about?"

"What are *you* about? What do you want up here?"

"If you were not so ready with your gun, my friend, you are more likely to find out. I'm Escamillo the Toreador."

"Oh, well, then come up. I know you and you are welcome enough, but you run a

fearful risk, let me tell you. You haven't sought very good company, I suppose you know."

"I don't care particularly; because, my friend, I am in love, if you want to know."

"Do you expect to find her here?"

"I am looking for her," Escamillo returns, complaisantly.

"These women are all gipsies."

"Good enough: so is Carmen."

"Carmen!" José cries, his heart seeming to miss a beat.

"That's her name. She had a lover up here—a soldier who deserted from his troop to join her—but that's past history. It's all up with him now." José listens and tries not to betray himself.

"Do you know that when a rival tries to take a gipsy girl from her lover there is a price to pay?" he tries to ask with some show of tranquillity. -91-

"Very well, I am ready."

"A knife thrust, you understand," José mutters, unable to hide his emotion. He hates Escamillo so much that he is about to spring upon him.

"Ho, ho! From your manner, I fancy you are that fine deserter. You want to fight? Good! I fight bulls for pleasure; you used to fight men for business. Evenly matched. Have at it," and the men fall to fighting. The fight grows hotter and hotter. Escamillo's knife suddenly snaps off short. José is about to kill him when Carmen and the men are heard running back. They have encountered some one in the valley below and have returned just in time to interrupt the quarrel.

"José," she screams, and holds his arm. Then he is set upon by the others and held in check. Escamillo throws his arms about Carmen and taunts the helpless fellow. José rages.

"I'm off, my fine dragoon," he cries, "but if you love me you will all come to the bull fight next week at Seville. Come, my friend," to José, "and see what a really good looking fellow is like," he taunts, looking gaily at Carmen. He goes off, down the path, while José is struggling to free himself, and at that moment, Michaela, nearly dead with fright, falls upon the rock, and is heard by the men. El Remendado hears her and runs out. He returns bringing the young girl with him.

"Michaela!" José calls.

"José! your mother is dying. I have come for you. For God's sake——"

"My mother dying," he shakes off the men. Then the voice of Escamillo is heard far down the mountain singing back at Carmen the Toreador's song. Carmen rushes for the entrance to the cave. She will follow Escamillo. José goes wild with rage. He bars -92-
the entrance.

"My mother is dying. I am going to her—but your time too has come," he swears, looking at Carmen. "I have lost friends, honour, and now my mother for you, and I swear you shall reckon with me for all this wrong. When we meet again, I shall kill you," and he disappears behind the rocks with Michaela.

ACT IV

BACK in gay Seville, not near to its cigarette factory and the guard-house, but at the scene of the great bull-fight, where Escamillo is to strut and show what a famous fellow he deserves to be! The old amphitheatre at the back with its awning stretched, the foreground with its orange-girls, fan-girls, wine-pedlars, ragged idlers and beggars, fine gentlemen, mules—all eager for the entertainment! Escamillo is the man who kills bulls and makes love to all the pretty girls he sees. Everybody wants to get a peep at him. The air is full of excitement. Everybody, wine-sellers, orange-girls, all dance and twirl about, and donkeys' bells tinkle, and some are eating, and some are drinking. The Alcalde is to attend, and all the fine ladies and gentlemen of Seville. Here comes Zuniga.

"Here, bring me some oranges," he orders, in his old at-least-a-general fashion. The smugglers had let him loose, of course, as soon as Carmen and José had got away from Lillas Pastia's inn, that night. He sits to eat his oranges and to watch the gradually assembling crowd. Frasquita and Mercedes are on hand, and there is a fair sprinkling of smugglers and other gipsies.

"Here they come, here they come!" some one cries, and almost at once the beginning -93-
of the bull-fighting procession appears. First the cuadrilla, then the alguazil, chulos, banderilleros—all covered with spangles and gold lace; and the picadors with their

pointed lances with which to goad the bull. Every division in a different colour, and everybody fixed for a good time, except the bull, perhaps. After all these chromo gentlemen have had a chance at him, Escamillo will courageously step up and kill him. Yes, Spain is all ready for a good time! Now at last comes Escamillo.

"Viva Escamillo!" If one ever saw a beauty-man, he is one! He might as well have been a woman, he is so good-looking. He has a most beautiful love song with Carmen, who of course is in the very midst of the excitement, and in the midst of the song, the great Alcalde arrives. Nobody wants to see the bull-fight more than he does. He was brought up on bull-fights. His entrance makes a new sensation.

In the midst of the hurly-burly Frasquita forces her way to Carmen.

"You want to get away from here. I have seen Don José in this crowd. If he finds you there will be trouble——"

"For him maybe." Carmen returns, insolently looking about to see if she can espy José. The girls urge her not to go too far; to keep out of José's way, but she refuses point blank.

"Leave the fight and Escamillo? Not for twenty Josés. Here I am, and here I stay," she declares. Everybody but Carmen thinks of the fortune in the cave: death, death, death! But gradually the great crowd passes into the amphitheatre, and Carmen has promised Escamillo to await him when he shall come out triumphant; and Escamillo has no sooner bade Carmen good-bye than José swings into the square in search of Carmen.

Carmen sees him and watches him. He does not look angry. As a matter of fact he has gone through so much sorrow (the death of his mother, and the jeers of his friends) that he has sought Carmen only with tenderness in his heart. He now goes up to her and tells her this.

"Indeed, I thought you had come to murder me."

"I have come to take you away from these gipsies and smugglers. If you are apart from them you will do better. I love you and want you to go away from here, and together we will begin over and try to do better."

Carmen looks at him and laughs. Suddenly she hears cheering from the amphitheatre and starts toward it. José interposes.

"You let me alone. I want to go in——"

"To see Escamillo——"

"Why not—since I love him——"

"How is that?"

"As I said——" At this, a blind rage takes possession of Don José. All his good purposes are forgotten. For a moment he still pleads with her to go away, and she taunts him more cruelly. Then in a flash José's knife is drawn, another flash and Carmen's fortune is verified: she falls dead at the entrance to the amphitheatre, just as the crowd is coming out, cheering the victorious Escamillo. José falls beside her, nearly mad with grief for what he has done in a fit of rage, while Escamillo comes out, already fascinated by some other girl, and caring little that Carmen is dead—except that the body is in the way. José is under arrest, Carmen dead, and the great crowd passes on, cheering:

"Escamillo, Escamillo forever!"

DeKoven

SMITH and DeKoven, who have made countless thousands laugh, are living still, and will very likely continue to do gracious things for the comic-opera-loving public.

The very imperfect sketch of the opera, "Robin Hood," given in this book, is lacking in coherence and in completeness in every way, but a prompt-book, being necessary properly to give the story, is not obtainable. Rather than ignore an American performance which is so graceful, so elegant, and which should certainly be known to every child, an attempt had been made to outline the story.

Little idea can be had of the opera's charm from this sketch, but the opera is likely to live, even after the topical stories of "Pinafore" and "The Mikado" have lost their application, because the story of Robin Hood is romantic forever, and the DeKoven music is not likely to lose its charm.

"Robin Hood" was first produced at the Chicago Opera House, June 9, 1890, by the Bostonian Opera Company. In January, 1891, under the management of Mr. Horace Sedger, the opera was produced, under the title of "Maid Marian," at the Prince of Wales's Theatre in London. The cast included Mr. Haydn Coffin, Mr. Harry Markham, Miss Marion Manola, and Miss Violet Cameron.

ROBIN HOOD

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

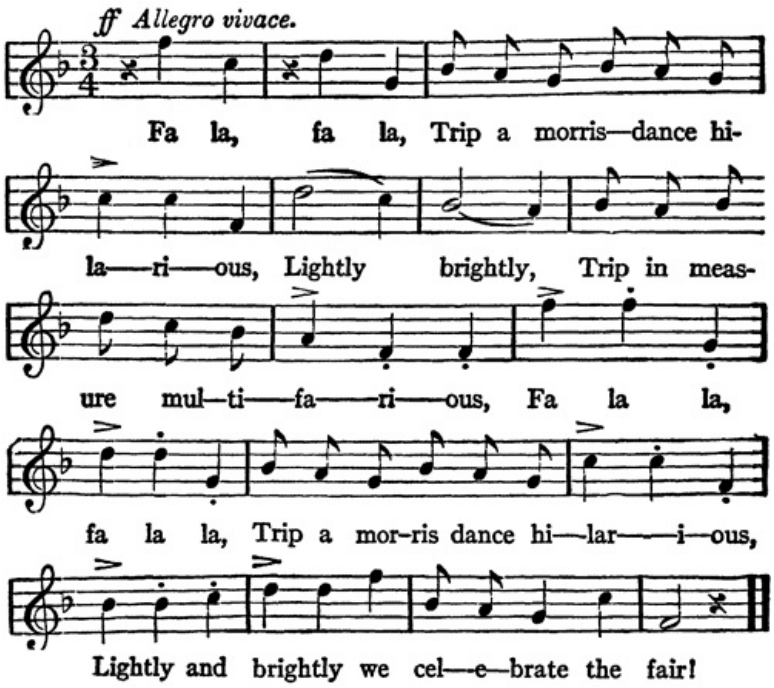
Robin Hood	Edwin H. Hoff
Little John	W.H. Macdonald
Scarlet	Eugene Cowles
Friar Tuck	George Frothingham
Alan-a-Dale	Jessie Bartlett Davis
Sheriff of Nottingham	H.C. Barnabee
Sir Guy	Peter Lang
Maid Marian	Marie Stone
Annabel	Carlotta Maconda
Dame Durden	Josephine Bartlett

ACT I

In Sherwood forest, the merriest of lives,
  Is our outlaw's life so free!
We roam and rove in Sherwood's grove,
  Beneath the greenwood tree.
Through all the glades and sylvan shades
  Our homes (through the glades) are found;
We hunt the deer, afar and near,
  Our hunting horns do we sound.

AND thus begins the merriest tale of the merriest lives imaginable. It is on a May morning: every young sprint and his sweetheart in Nottingham are out in their best, for the fair—May-day fair in Nottingham; and near at hand, Alan-a-Dale, Little John, Will Scarlet, Friar Tuck, and the finest company of outlaws ever told about, are just entering the town to add to the gaiety.

Now in the village of Nottingham lived Dame Durden and her daughter, Annabel. Annabel was a flirtatious young woman who welcomed the outlaws in her very best manner. She assured them that outlaws of such high position would surely add much to the happiness of the occasion; and they certainly did, before the day was over. The outlaws came in, as fine a looking lot and as handsome as one would wish to see, and joined the village dance. It was an old English dance, called a "Morris Dance," with a lilt and a tilt which set all feet a-going.



[Listen]

Fa la, fa la,
Trip a morris dance hilarious,
Lightly brightly,
Trip in measure multifarious,
Fa la la, fa la la,
Trip a morris dance hilarious,
Lightly and brightly we celebrate the fair!

If anything was needed to add to the gaiety of the day, the outlaws furnished it, because, among other things, they brought to the fair a lot of goods belonging to other people, and they meant to put them up at auction.

Friar Tuck was an old renegade monk who travelled about with the merry men of Sherwood, to seem to lend a little piety to their doings. He had a little bottle-shaped belly and the dirtiest face possible, a tonsured head, and he wore a long brown habit tied round the middle with a piece of rope which did duty for several things besides tying this gown. He was a droll, jolly little bad man and he began the auction with mock piety:

-98-

As an honest auctioneer,
I'm prepared to sell you here
  Some goods in an assortment that is various;
Here's a late lamented deer
(That was once a King's, I fear)
  Killing him was certainly precarious.

Here I have for sale
Casks of brown October ale,
  Brewed to make humanity hilarious;
Here's a suit of homespun brave
Fit for honest man or knave;
  Here's a stock in fact that's multifarious.

And so it was!

His stock consisted of the most curious assortment of plunder one ever saw even at a Nottingham fair in the outlaw days of Robin Hood.

While all that tow-wow was going on, people were coming in droves to the fair; and among them came Robert of Huntingdon. The name is very thrilling, since the first part gives one an inkling that he beholds for the first time the future Robin Hood. However, on that May morning he was not yet an outlaw. He was a simple Knight of the Shire.

The Sheriff, who was a great personage in Nottingham, had a ward whom he had foisted upon the good folks of Nottinghamshire as an Earl, but as a fact he was simply a country lout, and all the teachings of the Sheriff would not make him appear anything different. Robert of Huntingdon was the Earl, in fact, and the Sheriff was going to try to keep him out of his title and estates. The merry men of Sherwood forest were great favourites with Robert and they were his friends. During the fair a fine cavalier, very dainty for a man, fascinating, was caught by Friar Tuck kissing a girl, and was brought in with a great to-do. She declared that she had a right to kiss a pretty girl, since her business was that of cavalier. Robin Hood discovered her sex, underneath her disguise, and began to make love to her.

-99-

Among other reasons for Robin Hood being at the fair was that of making the Sheriff confer upon him his title to the Earldom. When he boldly made his demand, the foxy Sheriff declared that he had a half-brother brought up by him, and that the half-brother, and not Robert, was the Earl.

"You are a vain, presumptuous youth," the Sheriff declared. "You are no Earl, instead it is this lovely youth whom I have brought up so carefully." And he put forth Guy, the bumpkin. This created an awful stir, and all the outlaws who were fond of Robin Hood took up the case for him.

"A nice sort of Earl, that," Little John cried.

"You think we will acknowledge him as heir to the estates of Huntingdon? Never!" Scarlet declared.

"Traitor!" Robin Hood cried to the Sheriff. "In the absence of the King I know that your word is law; but wait till the King returns from his Crusade! I'll show you then whose word is to prevail."

"My friend!" Little John then cried, stepping into the middle of the row, "take thou this good stout bow of yew. You are going to join us and make one of Sherwood's merry men till his Majesty returns and reinstates you as the rightful Earl of Huntingdon. Come! Say you will be one of us." All the outlaws crowded affectionately about Robert and urged him.

-100-

"You shall become King of Outlaws, if you will," Scarlet cried. "Come! accept our friendship. Become our outlaw king!"

After thinking a moment, Robert turned and looked at the gay cavalier whom he knew to be his cousin Marian, in masquerade, and whom he loved. Then he decided he would go and live a gay and roving life in the forest till he could return and marry his cousin as the Earl of Huntingdon should.

"Farewell," he sang to her. "Farewell, till we meet again," and he was carried off amid the uproarious welcome of the outlaws of Sherwood forest, to become their leader till the King returned from the Crusades to make him Earl.

ACT II

AWAY in Sherwood forest the outlaws were encamped—which meant merely the building of a fire and the assembling of the merry men. Robin Hood had become their leader.

Oh, cheerily soundeth the hunter's horn,
  Its clarion blast so fine;
Through depths of old Sherwood so clearly borne,
We hear it at eve and at break of morn,
  Of Robin Hood's band the sign.
    A hunting we will go,
      Tra-ra-ra-tra-ra!
    We'll chase for the roe,
      Tra-ra-ra-tra-ra!
Oh where is band so jolly
  As Robin's band in their Lincoln green?
Their life is naught but folly,
  A rollicking life I ween!

Now the merry men gathered about their fire, and while the old monk was broiling the meat, they all lounged about in comfortable ways and Little John sang to them: -101-

And it's will ye quaff with me, my lads,
  And it's will ye quaff with me?
It is a draught of nut-brown ale
  I offer unto ye.
All humming in the tankard, lads,
  It cheers the heart forlorn;
Oh! here's a friend to everyone,
  'Tis stout John Barley-corn.

So laugh, lads, and quaff, lads!
  'Twill make you stout and hale,
Through all my days I'll sing the praise
  Of brown October ale!

While the outlaws were lounging thus, in came the Sheriff, Sir Guy, the spurious Earl, and a lot of journeymen tinkers. Immediately they began a gay chorus, telling how they were men of such metal that no can or kettle can withstand their attack, and as they hammered upon their tin pans, one believed them. Of all the merriment and nonsense that ever was, the most infectious took place there in the forest, while the tinkers sang and hammered, and Friar Tuck made jokes, and the other outlaws drank their brown October ale: but soon Maid Marian, the dainty cavalier, wandered that way, looking for Robin Hood—Robert of Huntingdon. She had missed him dreadfully, and finally could not refrain from going in search of him. She was certain she should find him thinking of her and as true to her as she was to him.

Robin Hood found that she had come to the forest, and sang to her a serenade which was overheard by the other outlaws. Alan-a-Dale, who was in love, became jealous, and the Sheriff came on to the scene, and the outlaws, finding him on their ground, took him prisoner, and Dame Durden, who secretly had been married to the Sheriff, -102-
and from whose shrewish tongue the Sheriff had fled, came to free him. She declared that if the Sheriff of Nottingham would acknowledge her, she would get him free from the stocks, into which the outlaws had put him, and would take him home. But the prospect of having to stand Dame Durden's tongue was so much worse than the stocks, that the Sheriff begged the outlaws to take him anywhere so long as it was away from his wife.

Woman, get thee gone,
I'd rather live alone!
  If Guy should come with the King's men,
  I'd turn the tables on them.

the Sheriff cried, trying to plan a way to get free.

At that all the outlaws danced gaily about him, gibing at him and making the pompous Sheriff miserable. They were trying to pay him for his mistreatment of Robin Hood, their beloved leader.

In the height of their gaiety in rushed Sir Guy with the King's men.

"We're lost," all cried.

"You are," Sir Guy recklessly shouts, "because we're brave as lions, all of us, and shall make short work of you."

We're brave as lions, every one,
We're brave as lions—for we're two to one,

all cried, and immediately they marched the gay outlaws off to prison and set the Sheriff free.

As it turned out, Maid Marian, the cousin and beloved of Robin Hood, had been commanded by the King himself to become Robin's wife, or rather the wife of the Earl of Huntingdon. As the false Earl, Guy had tried to make love to the maid, and to win her, but the cousins loved each other, and all Guy's efforts were quite hopeless. -103-
But now that the outlaws, and Robin Hood with them, were all in the power of the Sheriff again, the case looked serious. As outlaws, the Sheriff could hang them, every one. Little John and the leading outlaws pleaded for their friend, reminding the Sheriff and Sir Guy that, since Robin must, by the King's command, marry Marian, the Sheriff dare not kill him.

"Don't count upon that," the wily Sheriff cried "The King's command was to the Earl of Huntingdon—and he is my ward, Sir Guy; not your outlaw friend! Robin Hood shall go to the gallows and Guy shall marry the Maid Marian." At that everybody sighed very sadly. It really began to look as if the wicked Sheriff was going to get the best of them.

ACT III

AMONG the outlaws, the strongest and also the cleverest, perhaps, was Will Scarlet. He had not been captured with the others of the band, and so he had come into Nottingham, whence the prisoners had been taken, to spy out the ground and to see if he could not help to free his comrades. He had set up a blacksmith's shop and had set about forging a sword. All the while he was watching what took place about him, and hoping to get news of his friends.

Friar Tuck was finally discovered locked up in a tower, and with his dirty face at the window. It would have been a shame for so dirty and merry a gentleman as the Friar to have his life cut short, and of course he was freed, but before this happened he had plenty of chance to get scared half to death. -104-

At the very moment when Maid Marian was distracted because she feared that her lover, Robin Hood, was to be led to the gallows, a message came from the King, pardoning all of the outlaws. Some one had revealed to his Majesty the doings of the Sheriff, and the King had hastened to look into matters. When everybody's life seemed to be in danger, the King rushed back from the Crusades and saved them all, and put the temporary outlaw into his rightful place, and forgave all the other merry men because they had befriended Robert of Huntingdon.

In the midst of the rejoicing, Robin bade the foresters farewell, clasped his cousin in his arms, the Sheriff was properly punished, and the merriest of operas came to an end.

FLOTOW -105-

THERE has never been more uncertainty and disagreement about the production, composition, and source of any opera than about the opera of "Martha." Among the reasonable guesses as to its source is one that Flotow found the theme for the story in a French ballet named "Lady Henriette, ou la Foire de Richmond," also, "Lady Harriette, ou la Servante de Greenwich." Among the German titles we find "Martha, oder der Markt zu Richmond," and "Martha, oder der Mägdemarkt zu Richmond." When all is said and done, it is still a German opera.

Flotow belonged to the petty nobility of Mecklenburg. He was destined for the diplomatic profession and his art work was continually interrupted by revolutions in his own country and in France.

He had already written a number of unimportant pieces before he undertook "Martha." This opera was made under particularly interesting circumstances, being

originally the work of three composers. The Marquis Saint-Georges—the librettist of the day—asked Flotow to undertake the music of one act only, as the other two had already been assigned to two different composers. This proved to be on account of a contract made by the manager of the Grand Opéra with the French Government to produce a new ballet in three acts every year—and the Marquis had tried to evade the contract on the ground that it would bankrupt him. The manager's *Première* -106- heard of this appeal, and she in her turn went to headquarters, asking that the manager be compelled to put on the piece as agreed. The next day he received an offer of 100,000 francs to mount the new ballet if he would put the dancer, Mlle. Dumilatre, into the leading part, and do it in an incredibly short time. This was how three composers brought into being the piece that one day was to become the "Martha" with which we are now familiar. After Flotow had written "Stradella" he was asked to write an opera for the court, and remembering the peculiarly carpentered piece, "Martha," he went to Saint-Georges's ballet for his court-opera theme. When finished it was "Martha."

The librettist for "Martha" and another Flotow piece was Reise, but he wrote under the name of W. Friedrich. Balfe used the story for an opera which he called "The Maid of Honour." The opera was about ten years in gaining popularity outside of Germany. It was perhaps somewhat longer than that in reaching Paris and London. It was known in New York, having been presented at Niblo's Garden, before it was known in Paris or London, and Madame Anna Bishop sang it. The great singers who have appeared in the cast are Anna Bishop, Mario, Lehman, Nilsson, Patti, Brignoli, and others.

Flotow's best claim to distinction lies in this opera of "Martha." He was not a special favourite nor a genius, but in "Martha" he turned out a number of fascinating tunes of a humable sort. One of them has been adapted to sacred words, and is much used in churches, but for the most part "Martha" is made of a series of jiggy choruses. Berlioz, who especially hated Flotow, declared that the "introduction of the Irish melody ('Last Rose of Summer') served to disinfect the rottenness of the Martha -107- music."

Flotow was born April 27, 1812. Died January 24, 1883.

MARTHA

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA WITH THE ORIGINAL CAST AS PRESENTED AT THE FIRST PERFORMANCE

Lady Harriet	Anna Zerr
Nancy	Therese Schwarz
Lionel	Joseph Erl
Plunkett	Carl Formes

Sheriff of Richmond, three servants of Lady Harriet, three maid servants.

Chorus of ladies, servants, farmers, hunters and huntresses, pages, etc.

The story is enacted in England during Queen Anne's reign.

First sung at Vienna Court Opera, November 25, 1847.

Composer: Friedrich Freiherr von Flotow.
Author: W. Friedrich (F.W. Riese).

ACT I

One morning during fair time in Richmond the Lady Harriet, maid of honour to her Majesty Queen Anne, was sitting in her boudoir at her toilet table. She and all her maids and women friends who were attending at her toilet were bored to death.

"Did any one ever know such a stupid, dismal life as we are leading?" they declared. "In heaven's name, why doesn't some one think of something to do that will vary the monotony of this routine existence? We rise in the morning, make a toilet, go to her Majesty, make a toilet, breakfast, read to her Majesty, make a toilet, dine, walk with her Majesty, sup, unmake a toilet and go to bed! Of all the awful existences I really -108- believe ours has become the most so."

"It is as you say, but we cannot improve matters by groaning about it. Lady Harriet, Sir Tristram has sent you some flowers," Nancy, Lady Harriet's favourite, cried, handing them to her ladyship.

"Well, do you call that something new? because I don't! Why doesn't the cook send me some flowers—or maybe the hostler—somebody, something new? Take them out of my sight—and Sir Tristram with them, in case he appears."

"Look at these diamonds: they sparkle like morning showers on the flowers. The

sight of them is enough to please any one!"

"It is not enough to please me," Lady Harriet declared petulantly, determined to be pleased with nothing.

"Who is that? There is some one who wishes an audience with me! I'll see no one."

"Ah," a man's voice announced from the curtains, "but I have come to tell you of something new, Lady Harriet!"

"You? Sir Tristram? Is there anything new under the sun? If you really have something to suggest that is worth hearing, you may come in."

"Listen, ladies! and tell me if I haven't conceived a clever thought. The fair is on at Richmond——"

"Well—it is always on, isn't it?"

"Oh, no, ladies. Only once a year—this is the time. There is a fair and there are cock-fights——"

"Ah—that sounds rather thrilling."

"And donkeys——"

"Oh, there are always donkeys—always!" the ladies cried, looking hopelessly at poor Sir Tristram.

"I mean *real* donkeys," the poor man explained patiently.

"So do we mean *real* donkeys," they sighed.

"And there are the races—and—well, if you will come I am certain there are several new attractions. Let me take you, Lady Harriet, and I promise to make you forget your *ennui* for once. Cock-fights and——"

"Donkeys," she sighed, rising. "Very well, one might as well die of donkeys and cock-fights as of nothing at all. It is too hot, open the window——"

"I fly."

"Oh, heavens! now it is too cold—shut it——"

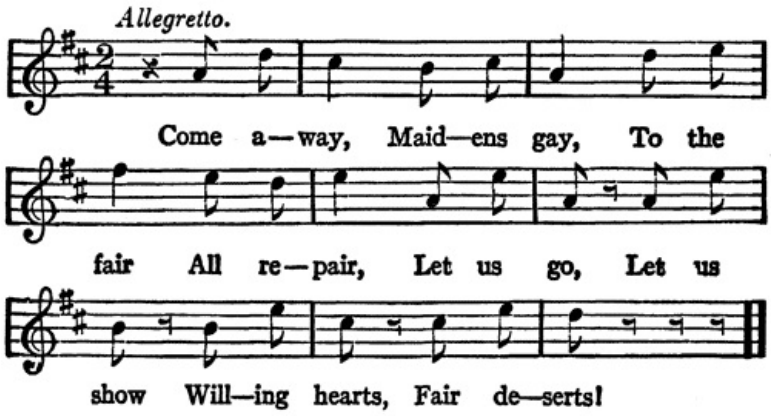
"I fly," the unhappy Sir Tristram replied.

"Give me my fan——"

"I fly." He flies.

"O lord, I don't want it——"

"I fl—oh!" he sighed and sank into a chair, exhausted.



[Listen]

Come away,
Maidens gay,
To the fair
All repair,
Let us go,
Let us show
Willing hearts,
Fair deserts!

"What is that?" Harriet asked impatiently, as she heard this gay chorus sung just outside her windows.

"A gay measure: the girls and lads going to the fair," Nancy replied. -110-

"Servant girls and stable boys—bah!"

"Yes—shocking! Who would give them a thought?" Sir Tristram rashly remarked.

"Why, I don't know! after all, they sound very gay indeed. You haven't very good taste, Sir Tristram, I declare." And at this the poor old fop should have seen that she would contradict anything that he said.

"Oh, I remember now! Fair day is the day when all the pretty girls dress in their best and go to the fair to seek for places, to get situations. They hire themselves out for a certain length of time!—till next year, I think. Meantime they dance in their best dresses and have a very gay day of it."

"That sounds to me rather attractive," Lady Harriet remarked thoughtfully.

"A foolish fancy, your ladyship," the unfortunate Sir Tristram put in.

"Now I am resolved to go! Get me that bodice I wore at the fancy dress ball, Nancy. We shall all go—I shall be Martha,—Nancy, and old Rob."

"And—and who may be 'old Rob,' your ladyship?" Sir Tristram asked, feeling much pained at this frivolity.

"Why, you, to be sure. Come! No mumps! No dumps! We are off!"

"Oh, this is too much."

"What, Sir Tristram, is that the extent of your love for me?"

"No, no—I shall do as you wish—but," the poor old chap sighed heavily.

"To be sure you will—so now, Nancy, teach old Rob how the yokels dance, and we'll be off."

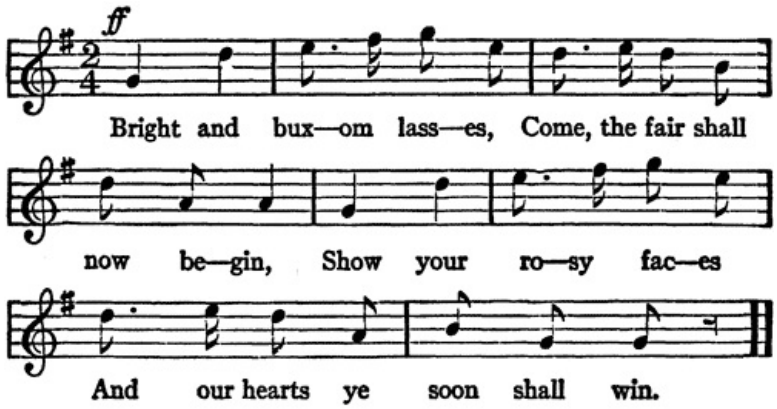
"This is too much. I can't dance in that manner." -111-

"Dance—or leave me! Dance—or stay at home, sir!" Harriet cried sternly.

"O heaven—I'll dance," and so he tried, and the teases put him through all the absurd paces they knew, till he fell exhausted into a seat.

"That was almost true to nature," they laughed. "You will do, so come along. But don't forget your part. Don't let us see any of the airs of a nobleman or you shall leave us. We'll take you, but if you forget your part we shall certainly leave you," and they dragged him off recklessly.

At the fair, ribbons were flying, bands were playing, lads and lasses were dancing, and farmers were singing:



[Listen]

Bright and buxom lasses,
Come, the fair shall now begin,
Show your rosy faces
And our hearts ye soon shall win.

Fleet of foot, and clad with neatness,
Come and let the master choose;
Sweet of temper, all discreetness,
Who a prize like this would lose?

Done is the bargain if the maid is trusty, blythe and willing;
Done is the bargain if she accepts the master's proffered shilling!

Thus, the farmers who had come to the fair to choose a maid-servant, sang together. The maid-servants were meanwhile singing a song of their own, and everybody was in high feather. -112-

Now to this fair had come two farmers in particular; one being farmer Plunkett, and the other, altogether a handsome fellow, named Lionel, who was the foster-brother of Plunkett. As a matter of fact, he was left in his babyhood on the doorstep of Plunkett's father, who adopted him and brought him up with his own son. The baby had had nothing by which he could be identified, but there was a ring left with him, and the instruction that it was to be shown to the Queen in case the boy should ever find himself in serious trouble when he grew up. Now both these gay farmers had come to secure maid-servants for the year, and Plunkett came up to inspect the girls as they assembled.

"What a clatter! This becomes a serious matter. How on earth is a man to make a choice with such confusion all about him?"

"Oh well, there is no haste," Lionel replied leisurely.

"No haste? I tell you, Lionel, we can't afford to lose any time. There is that farm falling to pieces for need of a competent servant to look after it! I should say there was haste, with a vengeance. We must get a good stout maid to go home with us, or we shall be in a pretty fix. You don't know much about these things, to be sure. You were always our mother's favourite, and I the clumsy bear who got most of the cuffs and ran the farm; but take my word for it, if we don't find good maids we shall soon be ruined, because you are of no more use on a farm than the fifth wheel is on a wagon."

"Oh, come, come, brother, don't——"

"That's all right! I meant no harm. You are my brother and I'll stick by you forever, but you aren't practical. Leave this maid-servant business to me, and take my word for it we must hurry the matter up and get home. Some day you'll be giving that fine ring of yours to Queen Anne, Lionel, and then heaven knows what will happen; but I suspect that whatever it is I shall find myself without a brother." -113-

"It shall never happen. I shall live and die quite contented beneath the roof where we have grown up together and where I have been happiest."

"Ohe! Ohe! Ohe! the fair begins! Here comes the sheriff with his bell. Ye maids, come forth now, both young and old! Come forth, come forth! Make way there for the Law!" bawled a crier, clearing the way for the sheriff, who had come to preside over the business of contract-making between the serving maids and the farmers.

I the statute first will read,
Then to business we'll proceed,

the burly sheriff called at the top of his voice; and all the yokels laughed and crowded about him while he mounted a box and began to read the Law. "'Tis our royal will and pleasure—' Hats off! Rustics, look at me! Loyal feelings let us cherish! 'We, Queen Anne, hereby decree to all subjects of the crown, dwelling here in Richmond town, whoso at the fair engages, to perform a servant's part, for a year her service pledges; from this law let none depart.'"

When the earnest money's taken, let the bargain stay unshaken!

"Now, then, ye have heard? Stick to the bargains ye make—or the law will get ye!"

"And now what can ye do, Molly Pitt?" -114-

I can sow, sir,
I can mow, sir,
I can bake and brew,
Mend things like new,
Can mind a house, and rule it, too,
There's naught I cannot do.

"She's worth four guineas. Who will hire her?"

Molly was at once hired by a farmer.

"And now you, Polly Smith?"

I can cook, sir,
By the book, sir,
I can roast and toast,
And 'tis my boast
That nothing in house
That I preside in yet was lost.

"Polly's worth five guineas. Who wants her?"

Polly was immediately hired by a farmer. After half a dozen buxom girls had told what they could do, and had found places for the year—none of them satisfying Plunkett and Lionel, however, who are feeling almost discouraged at the outlook—Lady Harriet (who called herself Martha) and Nancy and Sir Tristram came pushing merrily into the crowd. Lady Harriet (or Martha) was certain to want to see everything. Old Sir Tristram was protesting and having a most dreadful time of it.

"This way, Rob," Martha called, dragging him by the hand and laughing. "What! must I lead you?"

"Come, good, good Rob," Nancy mocked, entering into the spirit of it and poking the old beau ahead of her. Sir Tristram groaned.

"Oh, I am just like a lamb led to the slaughter."

"Look, brother," Plunkett now said, nudging Lionel. "What pretty lasses! Theirs are not like servants' faces." -115-

"Let's inquire," Lionel replied, a good deal interested and staring at Nancy and Martha.

"Do you see how these disgusting rustics are staring? Let us fly, Lady——"

"Martha," Lady Harriet reproved him. "Don't forget I'm Martha."

"Well, 'Martha,' let us go——"

"Not I! I am having the first moment of gaiety I have known in a year. No, ye'll not go." Then in bravado and to torment Sir Tristram she set up a cry:

"No, here in the open fair, I refuse you for my master! I won't go with you!" By that outbreak she had attracted the attention of everybody about. Nancy, too, set up a screech and everybody crowded about them. Sir Tristram dared not say a word to help himself, because if he should really displease Lady Harriet he knew it would be all up with him.

"Nonsense, nonsense," he said, confused and tormented.

"Well, you can't force her, Master Rob," the frolicsome Nancy joined in.

"Force the girl? No, I think not, old fellow," Plunkett now cried, coming forward with Lionel. The two of them had been watching the quarrel. "No farmer can hire a maid against her will. There are servants to spare here; take your pick and let these alone," and the tricky Martha and Nancy nearly fainted with trying to suppress their laughter as they witnessed Sir Tristram's plight.

At that moment all the unhired serving maids rushed to Sir Tristram and crowded about him and began their eternal, "I can bake, sir, I can brew, sir," etc., and begged him to hire them. Now this was the last straw, and Sir Tristram looked for Martha and Nancy to come to his assistance, but they only shrieked with laughter and urged -116-
the girls on. Meantime, Plunkett and Lionel had approached them, and, when Martha noticed that they were about to speak, she became a little frightened.

"Oh, see how they are looking at us!" she gasped to Nancy.

"Well, I can't say I mind it. I am willing to be seen," Nancy laughed, still more giddily than Lady Harriet.

"I'd like her to do the cooking," Plunkett remarked aside to Lionel and pointing to Nancy.

"I think it would be best to hire them both."

"Well, that might be a good plan. Go up and bargain with them."

"I do not dare," Lionel answered, hanging back.

"Pooh! Then I must show you, now then—er—now then—er—ahem!" Plunkett, too, found himself embarrassed. In fact, the women did not seem at all like the other serving maids, though their clothing was that of the others.

"Pooh, they'll never dare ask us!" Nancy told Martha.

"No, come on! Let's go!" and they turned away. At that Lionel became excited.

"We shall lose them altogether! They are going!"

So then Plunkett got up courage and went to them.

"Damsels, listen! We would hire you. Have you ears? If your floors and platters glisten, ye shall stay with us for years!"

"Yes—for—for years," Lionel managed to say.

"What, as your servants?" Lady Harriet gasped. Nancy laughed.

"You are laughing?" Lionel said. He was very anxious to hire them. They were quite the handsomest serving maids he had ever seen.

"No trouble about that," Plunkett declared. "If she laughs, she will certainly be good-natured about her work." -117-

"What work?"

"What work?" Lady Harriet and Nancy said in one breath.

"Oh, you are for the farmyard," Plunkett replied, reassuringly to Lady Harriet, "to keep the house and stable clean, you know. And you," to Nancy, "are to do the cooking."

"You don't mean that this tender creature is to clean stables, brother?" Lionel demanded impulsively.

"Well, she might work in the garden instead if she prefers it. Fifty crowns shall be your wages; and, to be brief, everything found! Beer and cheese for supper on week days; and on Sundays, good roast beef."

Lady Harriet tried to control her laughter.

"Who could resist so splendid an offer," she asked of Nancy. Nancy for her part was nearly dying of laughter.

"Not we, not we, Martha."

"'Tis done, then; we will go."

"Then by the powers, here's the shilling to bind the bargain," Lionel cried, fearful lest after all he and Plunkett should lose them; so he handed over the shilling to Lady Harriet, who, not knowing that this bound her to their service for a year, took it as a part of the fun.

Was there ever so droll a situation?
I began to feel not quite at ease,

the girls then said to each other, and they began to look about for Tristram. He had got away, trying to rid himself of the maids, but now he came back again, still followed by the whole of them. He was the image of despair. -118-

"Here's a pound to pay the forfeit," he cried to the maids, giving them money. "And now for heaven's sake let me go. But—but how is this—all so friendly," he gasped in amazement, observing Plunkett and Lionel, Lady Harriet and Nancy.

"Who are you?" demanded Plunkett in a threatening manner.

"Oh, good-bye," Harriet cried now to the farmers, and she went to Sir Tristram. They had had enough of it now, and decided to go home.

"Good-bye?" cried Plunkett. "Are you demented? Did ye not hire to us? Good-bye?"

"Hush! O lord! That wasn't our intention. What if it should be heard of at court?"

"Really we must go," she repeated, starting again to go to Tristram while Plunkett held her back.

"I guess you go no place but home with us! You're hired, do you understand? You took the shilling. You are hired to serve us for one year. Now no more nonsense. Here, sheriff, tell these girls about this."

"Why, if you have taken the earnest money, ye are bound to go," said the sheriff. "So go along and make no more trouble, or I'll look after ye." Now the women were in a pickle. If they persisted, of course they would be set free when it was known they belonged to Queen Anne's court; but they could never live down the disgrace of their prank. Plainly there was nothing left for them but to abide by their arrangement and go with Plunkett and Lionel. Everybody now set up an indignant howl at their behaviour. Tristram could not help them. The angry farmers pushed him aside, and Lady Harriet and Nancy were taken by their arms by the two farmers, and walked back to where the wagon waited. -119-

"Now then! no more nonsense, girls! Ye are hired to us and ye will go," Plunkett declared, lifting the women into the wagon, while Lionel got up beside them, and then amid the shouts of the crowd and the laughter of the other girls, and the noise of the hurdy-gurdies and the dancing and the calls of the people, Lady Harriet, Nancy, and Lionel were driven off to the farm by Plunkett.

ACT II

"Now, damsels, get to bed," Plunkett said to Martha and Nancy as he opened the door of the farmhouse upon their arrival. "Get to bed, because ye must get up at dawn."

The two giddy young women looked about them. There were doors at the right and left of the big room which they first entered, and they doubtless led to bedrooms. On the table a lamp was burning and there were a couple of spinning wheels to be seen. As they came in they noticed a bell hung on a pole just outside the door. Not a bit like the palace of Queen Anne! and altogether the lark didn't appear to have the advantages it first had.

"O heaven! What shall we do?" Martha said to Nancy. "We must get out of this soon, in some way."

"Well, the main thing is to get to bed now," Nancy declared, and so the girls turned to say good-night to the two farmers.

"Good-night? Not so. There are your duties to be done first."

"Our duties?" Martha exclaimed, looking blank.

"Oh, don't disturb them to-night," Lionel interrupted, speaking to his brother. Lionel was more and more impressed with both of them, especially with the beauty of Martha. "They are very tired. Don't disturb them to-night." -120-

"But you will spoil them to begin with," Plunkett insisted. "And by the way, what are your names?" he asked.

"Mine is Martha," Lady Harriet answered dolefully.

"Mine is—Julia," Nancy said impatiently.

"Ho, ho! Too grand to please me!—but, Julia, my dame of fashion, pray, put my cloak away," Plunkett returned, handing it to her.

"Upon my life! What impertinence!" she cried, throwing the cloak upon the floor. "Put away your own cloak."

"What—what?" Plunkett shouted, enraged, and starting up.

"Now, pray be lenient with them, brother. They are quite strange to our ways, perhaps—and then they are very tired, you know. Probably overworked by their last master. Leave matters to me. I'll put them quite at their ease;" whereupon Lionel took his hat and held it out to Martha.

"Martha—take it, if you please," Martha looked at him haughtily, and turned her back on him. Poor Lionel was distracted and abashed.

"Well, really, I don't—I don't know just what to do myself," he declared, as his brother snorted with satisfaction at Lionel's discomfiture.

"Well," said Lionel, hesitating a moment; then he took his hat and hung it up himself; then Plunkett picked up *his* cloak and waited upon *him*self.

"A pretty kettle-of-fish, I should say," he muttered. "Well, then, to your spinning!"

"To our spinning?" they cried in unison. -121-

"Yes, yes, to your spinning," Plunkett returned testily. "Do you expect to do nothing but entertain us with conversation? To your spinning, I said." Then all at once the women burst out laughing.

"Are ye good for nothing?" Plunkett shouted, in a greater rage. "Come, we've had enough of this! You go and bring those spindles," and Plunkett shouted this so loudly that the girls were downright frightened at last.

"Oh, do not scold us," Martha entreated, shrinking back.

"No, no, brother, let us be gentle."

"Stuff! Now, girls, you get at that spinning wheel as I tell you."

The two girls looked at each other. They no longer dared carry matters with a high hand, and yet how could they spin? They knew no more how to spin than did a couple of pussy-cats. After going up to the wheels and looking at them in wonder, they exclaimed:

"I can't."

"What?" yelled Plunkett.

"We—we don't know how."

"Well, upon my soul!" Plunkett cried. "Now you two sit down there as quick as you can." They sat as if they were shot. Plunkett seemed very much in earnest. "Now turn those wheels!"

"They—they will *not* turn," they cried, trying and making an awful botch of it.

"Twist the thread," Lionel instructed with much anxiety.

"O Lord! It *won't* twist, they *won't* turn. Oh, good gracious! We can't! we can't do it at all."

"Now then, look at this," Plunkett cried, and he took Nancy from the chair, and seated himself at the spinning wheel; and Lionel unseated Martha—gently—and took her place, and then the fun began. "Now watch—and we will teach you something about this business." -122-

This way set the wheel a-flying,
Set it whirring, set it flying.
Work the treadle with a will.
While an even thread you're plying,
Never let your wheel be still.

Come, you will not lose by trying,
I can see you have good will.

And while the girls joined in this gay spinning song, the men buzzed an accompaniment of "Brr, brr, brr," and the fun waxed fast and furious, the men spinning faster and faster every moment, the girls becoming more and more excited with watching and trying to learn—because they now saw that there was nothing for them but to begin business; and more than this, they began almost to like the farmer chaps. After a moment, first one began to laugh, then another, till suddenly they all dragged off into a merry "ha, ha, ha!"

Look! How the busy task he's plying,
  Hercules is at the wheel;
Look, I too can set it flying,
  Scold me if I do it ill

Nancy—or rather Julia—sang, as she took a turn at it. All had turned to fun and frolic, and now even Lady Harriet—or Martha—could not withstand the temptation to try her hand; so down she sat, and away she went spinning, and singing with the best of them. Suddenly Nancy upset her wheel, Plunkett gaily threatened her, and away she ran, with Plunkett chasing after her. In a minute they had disappeared, and Martha was left alone with Lionel. -123-

"Nancy—Julia—where are you? here! don't leave me—" Martha cried.

"Have no fear, gentle girl," Lionel said, detaining her. "There is no one who will hurt you." Martha regarded him with some anxiety for a moment, then became reassured.

"No—I will not be afraid," she thought. "This stranger has a kind way with him. True, they are strange in their ways—to me—but then I am strange in my ways—to them."

"Come! I'll promise never to be impatient with you nor to scold you if you do not get things right. I am sure you will do your best," he gently insisted, trying to put her at her ease. "To tell the truth—I am desperately in love with you, Martha."

"Oh, good gracious—it is—so sudden——" she gasped, looking about for some chance of escape. "Don't, sir! I assure you I am the worst sort of servant. I have deceived you: as a matter of fact, I know almost nothing of housework or farm work—I——"

"Well, at least, you know how to laugh and while the time away. Never mind about the work—we shall get on; we'll let the work go. Only sing for me—come, let us be gay."

"Alas! I do not feel gay——"

"Then sing something that is not gay. Sing what you will—but sing," he urged. He was more in love with her every moment, and not knowing what else to do Martha sang—"'Tis the Last Rose of Summer!"

By the time the song was sung, Lionel had quite lost his head.

"Martha, since the moment I first saw thee, I have loved thee madly. Be my wife and I will be your willing slave—you may count on me to do the spinning and everything else, if only you will be my wife. I'll raise thee to my own station." This was really too much. Martha looked at him in amazement. -124-

"Raise me—er—" In spite of herself she had to laugh. Then, with a feeling of tenderness growing in her heart, she felt sorry for him.

"I am sorry to cause you pain, but really you don't know what you are saying. I——" And at this crisis Nancy and Plunkett came in, Plunkett raising a great to-do because Nancy had been hiding successfully from him, in the kitchen.

"She hasn't been cooking," he explained; "simply hiding—and I can't abide idle ways—never could—now what is wrong with you two?" he asks, observing the restraint

felt by Lionel and Martha; but before any one could answer, midnight struck.

"Twelve o'clock!" all exclaimed.

"All good angels watch over thee," Lionel said impulsively to Martha, "and make thee less scornful."

For a moment, Plunkett looked thoughtful, then turning to Nancy he said manfully, while everybody seemed at pause since the stroke of midnight.

"Nancy, girl, you are not what I sought for—a good servant—but some way, I feel as if—as if as a wife, I should find thee a good one. I vow, I begin to love thee, for all of thy bothersome little ways."

"Well, well, good-night, good-night, sirs," Nancy cried hastily and somewhat disconcerted. To tell the truth, she had begun to think kindly of Plunkett. Plunkett went thoughtfully to the outer door and carefully locked it, then turned and regarded the girls who stood silently and a little sadly, apart. -125-

"Good-night," he said: and Lionel looking tenderly at Martha murmured, "Good-night," and the two men went away to their own part of the house, leaving the girls alone.

"Nancy——" Martha whispered softly, after a moment.

"Madame?"

"What next?—how escape?"

"How can we go?"

"We must——"

"It is very dark and the way is strange to us," she said, sadly and fearfully.

"Well, fortune has given us gentle masters, at least," Martha murmured.

"Yes—kind and good——"

"What if the Queen should hear of this?"

"Oh, Lord!" And at that moment came a soft knocking at the window. Both girls started. "What's that?" More knocking! "Gracious heaven! I am nearly dead with fear," Martha whispered, looking stealthily about. Nancy pointed to the window.

"Look——" Martha looked.

"Tristram—Sir Tristram!" she whispered excitedly. "Open the window. I can't move, I am so scared. Now, he'll rave—and I can't resent it. We deserve anything he may say." Nancy opened the window, and Sir Tristram stepped in softly, upon receiving a caution from the girls.

"Lady Harriet, this is most monstrous."

"Oh, my soul! Don't we know it. Don't wake the farmers up, in heaven's name! Things are bad enough without making them worse."

"Yes, let us fly, and make as little row about it as we can," Nancy implored. -126-

"Then come—no words. I have my carriage waiting; follow me quickly and say good-bye to this hovel."

"Hovel?" Lady Harriet looked about. Suddenly she had a feeling of regret. "Hovel?"

"Nay," Nancy interrupted. "To this peaceful house—good-bye." Nancy, too, had a regret. They had had a gleeful hour here, among frank and kindly folk, even if they had also been a bit frightened. Anything that had gone wrong with them had been their fault. Tristram placed a bench at the window that the ladies might climb over, and thus they got out, and immediately the sound of their carriage wheels was heard in the yard. Plunkett had waked up meantime and had come out to call the girls. It was time for their day's work to begin. Farmer folk are out of bed early.

"Ho, girls!—time to be up," he called, entering from his chamber. Then he saw the open window. He paused. "Do I hear carriage wheels—and the window open—and the bench—and the girls—gone! Ho there! Everybody!" he rushed out and furiously pulled the bell which hung from the pole outside. His farmhands come running. "Ho—those girls hired yesterday have gone. Get after them. Bring them back. I may drop dead the next instant, but I'll be bound they shan't treat us in this manner. After them! Back they shall come!" And in the midst of all this confusion in ran Lionel.

"What——"

"Thieves!—the girls have run off—a nice return for our affections!"

"After them!—don't lose a minute," Lionel then cried in his turn, and away rushed the

farmhands.

"They are ours for one year, by law. Bring them back, or ye shall suffer for it. Be off!" -127-
And the men mounted horses and went after the runaways like the wind.

"Nice treatment!"

"Shameful!" Plunkett cried, dropping into a chair, nearly fainting with rage.

ACT III

PLUNKETT'S men had hunted far and wide for the runaways, but without success. The farmer was still sore over his defeat: he felt himself not only defrauded, but he had grown to love Nancy, and altogether he became very unhappy. One day he was sitting with his fellow farmers around a table in a little forest inn, drinking his glass of beer, when he heard the sound of hunting horns in the distance.

"Hello! a hunting party from the palace must be out," he remarked, but the music of the horn which once pleased him could no longer arouse him from his moodiness. Nevertheless an extraordinary thing was about to happen. As he went into the inn for a moment, into the grove whirled—Nancy! all bespangled in a rich hunting costume and accompanied by her friends who were enjoying the hunt with her. They were singing a rousing hunting chorus, but Martha—Lady Harriet—was not with them.

"What has happened to Lady Harriet?" some one questioned of Nancy, who was expected to know all her secrets.

"Alas—nothing interests her ladyship any more," she replied! Nancy knew perfectly well that, ever since their escapade, Harriet had thought of nothing but Lionel. For Nancy's part, she had not thought of much besides Plunkett; but she did not mean to -128-
reveal the situation to the court busybodies. Then while the huntresses were roaming about the inn, out came Plunkett! and Nancy, not perceiving at first who he was, went up to him and began to speak.

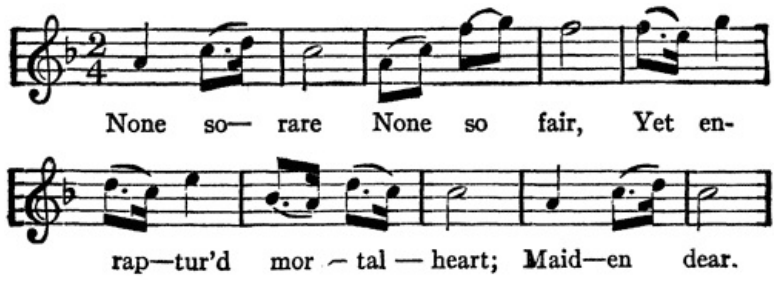
"Pray, my good man, can you tell—Good heaven!" she exclaimed, recognizing him; "Plunkett!"

"Yes, madame, Plunkett; and now Plunkett will see if you get the better of him a second time. We'll let the sheriff settle this matter, right on the spot."

"Man, you are mad. Do not breathe my name or each huntress here shall take aim and bring you down. Ho, there!" she cried distractedly to her friends; and she took aim at Plunkett, while all of the others closed round him. It was then Plunkett's turn to beg for mercy.

"They're upon me, they've undone me!" he cried. "This is serious," and so indeed it was. "But oh, dear me, there is a remarkable charm in these girls, even if they do threaten a man's life," and still looking back over his shoulder, away he ran, pursued by the girls. They had no sooner gone than Lionel came in. He was looking disconsolately at the flowers to which Martha sang the "Last Rose of Summer." He himself sang a few measures of the song and then looked about him.

"Ah," he sighed, thinking still of Martha:



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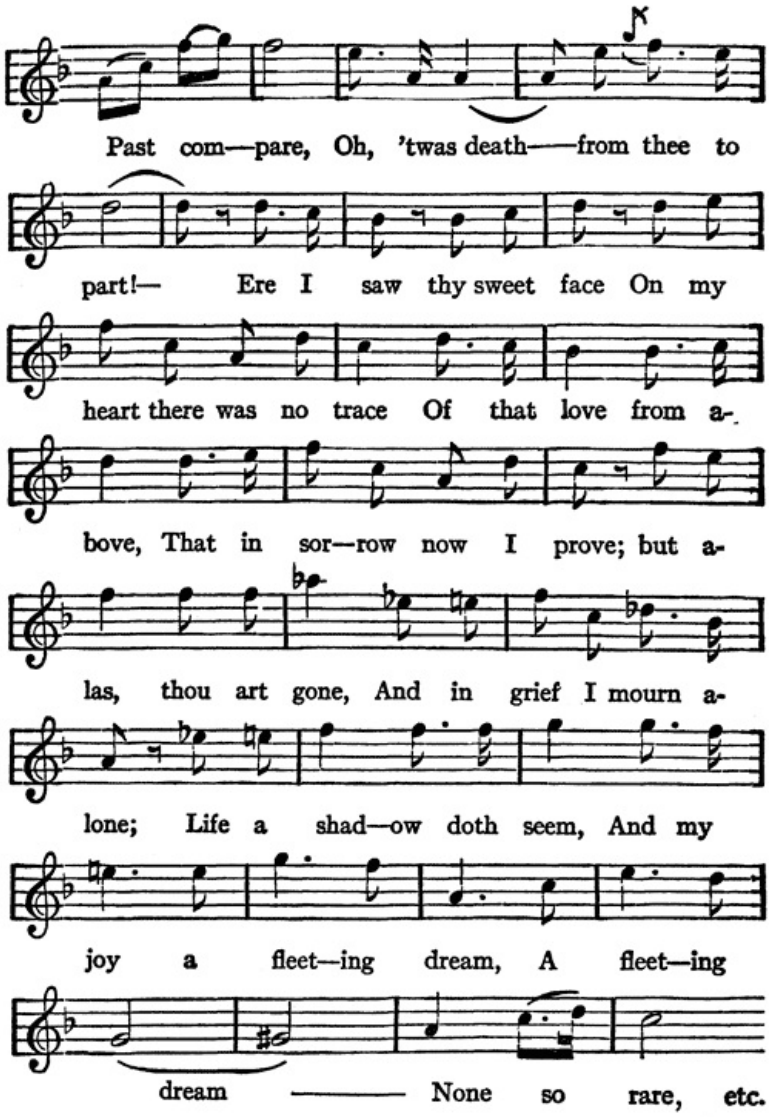

[Listen]

None so rare,
None so fair,
Yet enraptur'd mortal heart;
Maiden dear.
Past compare,
Oh, 'twas death from thee to part!
Ere I saw thy sweet face
On my heart there was no trace
Of that love from above,
That in sorrow now I prove;
but alas, thou art gone,
And in grief I mourn alone;
Life a shadow doth seem,
And my joy a fleeting dream,
A fleeting dream.
None so rare, etc.

And after he had sung thus touchingly of Martha, he threw himself down on the grass, and remained absorbed in his thoughts. But while he was resting there, Lady Harriet and Sir Tristram had also wandered thither. At first they did not see Lionel. -130-

"I have come here away from the others, in order to be alone," Harriet declared impatiently.

"Alone with me?" Sir Tristram asked indiscreetly.

"Good heaven—it doesn't matter in the least whether you are here or elsewhere. I am quite unconscious of you, wherever you are," she replied, not very graciously. "Do go away and let me alone!" and, finding that he could not please her, Tristram wandered off, and left her meditating there. After a while she began to sing to herself, softly, and Lionel recognized the voice.

"It is she!—Martha!" he cried, starting up. Harriet recognized him, and at once found herself in a dreadful state of mind.

"What shall I do? It is Lionel! that farmer I hired out to!" Well! It was Lionel's opportunity, and he fell to making the most desperate love to her—which she liked very much, but which, being a high-born lady of Queen Anne's Court, she was bound to resent. She called him base-born and a good many unpleasant things, which did not seem to discourage him in the least, even though it made him feel rather badly; but while he was still protesting his love, Tristram returned, and at once believed Harriet to be in the toils of some dreadful fellow. So he called loudly for everybody in the hunt to come to the rescue—which was about the most foolish thing he could do. Then all set upon Lionel. Plunkett, hearing the row, rushed in.

"Stand by me!" Lionel cried.

Nancy appeared. "What does this mean?" she in turn demanded in a high-handed manner.

"Julia, too," Lionel shouted, recognizing her. -131-

"Bind this madman in fetters," Tristram ordered.

"Don't touch him," Plunkett threatened.

"I shall die," Nancy declared.

"I engaged these girls in my service," Lionel shouted, "and now they wish to break the bargain!"

"What?" everybody screamed, staring at Nancy and Harriet. Tristram and the hunters laughed, Tristram trying to shield the girls and turn it into a joke.

"Have compassion on this madman"; Harriet pleaded wincing when she saw Lionel bound and helpless. Lionel then reproached her. She knew perfectly that she deserved it and felt her love for him growing greater. Everybody was in a most dreadful state of mind. Then a page rushed in and cried that Queen Anne was coming toward them, and immediately Lionel had an inspiration.

"Take this ring to her Majesty—quick," he cried, handing his ring to Plunkett.

A litter was then brought for Lady Harriet. She, heartbroken, stepped into it. Lionel was pinioned and was being dragged off. Plunkett held up the ring, to assure him that it should straightway be taken to the Queen.

ACT IV

AFTER the row had quieted down and Nancy and Harriet got time to think matters over, Harriet reached the conclusion that she could not endure Lionel's misfortune. Hence she had got Nancy to accompany her to the farmer's house. When they arrived some new maid whom the farmers had got opened the door to them.

"Go, Nancy, and find Plunkett, Lionel's trusty friend, and tell him I am repentant and cannot endure Lionel's misfortunes. Tell him his friend is to have hope," and, obeying -132-
her beloved Lady Harriet, Nancy departed to find Plunkett and give the message. In a few minutes she returned with the farmer. He now knew who the ladies were and treated Harriet most respectfully.

"Have you told him?" Lady Harriet asked.

"Yes, but we cannot make Lionel understand anything. He sits vacantly gazing at nothing. He has had so much trouble, that probably his brain is turned."

"Let us see," said Harriet; and instantly she began to sing, "'Tis the Last Rose."

While she sang, Lionel entered slowly. He had heard. Harriet ran to him and would have thrown herself into his arms, but he held her off, fearing she was again deceiving him.

"No, no, I repent, and it was I who took thy ring to the Queen! I have learned that thy father was a nobleman—the great Earl of Derby; and the Queen sends the message to thee that she would undo the wrong done thee. Thou art the Earl of Derby—and I love thee—so take my hand if thou wilt have me."

Well, this was all very well, but Lionel was not inclined to be played fast and loose with in that fashion. When he was a plain farmer, she had nothing of this sort to say to him, however she may have felt.

"No," he declared, "I will have none of it! Leave me, all of you," and he rushed off, whereupon Harriet sank upon a bench, quite overcome. Then suddenly she started up.

"Ah—I have a thought!" and out she flew. While she was gone, the farmer and Nancy, who had really begun to care greatly for each other, confessed their love.

"Now that our affairs are no longer in confusion, let us go out and walk and talk it

over," Plunkett urged, and, Nancy being quite willing, they went out. But when they got outside they found to their amazement that Plunkett's farmhands were rushing hither and thither, putting up tents and booths and flags, and turning the yard into a regular fair-ground, such as the scene appeared when Lionel and Harriet first met. Some of the girls on the farm were assuming the rôle of maids looking for service, and, in short, everything was as nearly like the original scene as they could possibly make it in a short time. -133-

"What, what is all this?" Plunkett asked, amazed. Then he learned it was all done by Harriet's orders, and he and Nancy began to understand. Then Harriet came in, dressed as Martha. Nancy ran off and returned dressed as Julia, and then all was complete.

"There is Lionel coming toward us," Nancy cried. "What will happen now?" and there he came, led sadly by Plunkett. He looked about him, dazed, till Plunkett brought up Lady Harriet and presented her as a maid seeking work.

"Heaven! It is Martha——"

"Yes, is this not enough to prove to thee that I am ready to renounce my rank and station for thee? Here I am, seeking thy service," she pleaded.

"Well, good lassies, what can ye do?" Plunkett asked, entering into the spirit of the thing, and then Nancy gaily sang:

I for spinning finest linen, etc.

Lady Harriet gave Lionel some flowers and then began "'Tis the Last Rose." Then presently, Lionel, who had been recovering himself slowly while the play had been going on, joined in the last measures, and holding out his arms to Lady Harriet, the lovers were united. Nancy and Plunkett were having the gayest sort of a time, and everybody was singing at the top of his voice that from that time forth there should be nothing but gaiety and joy in the world; and probably that turned out to be true for everybody but old Sir Tristram, who hadn't had a stroke of good luck since the curtain rose on the first act! -134-

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HUMPERDINCK -135-

THIS composer of charming music will furnish better biographical material fifty years hence. At present we must be satisfied to listen to his compositions, and leave the study of the man to future generations.

HÄNSEL AND GRETEL

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Peter, a broom-maker.
Gertrude, his wife.
Hänsel, Gretel } their children.
Witch, who eats little children.
Sandman, who puts little children to sleep.
Dewman, who wakes little children up.
Children.
Fourteen angels.

The story takes place in a German forest.

Composer: E. Humperdinck.
Author: Adelheid Wette.

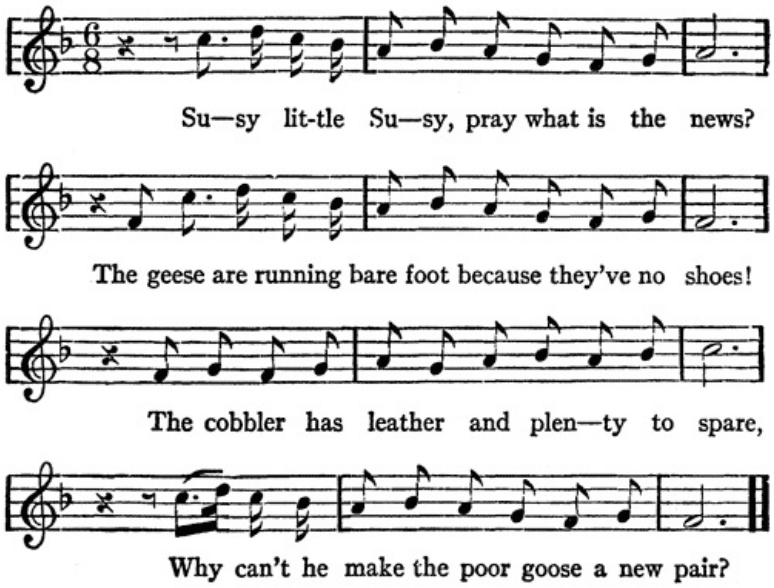
ACT I

ONCE upon a time, in a far-off forest of Germany, there lived two little children, Hänsel and Gretel, with their father and mother. The father and mother made brooms for a living, and the children helped them by doing the finishing of the brooms.

The broom business had been very, very bad for a long time, and the poor father and mother were nearly discouraged. The father, however, was a happy-go-lucky man who usually accepted his misfortunes easily. It was fair-time in a village near the broom-makers' hut, and one morning the parents started off to see if their luck wouldn't change. They left the children at home, charging them to be industrious and -136-

orderly in behaviour till they returned, and Hänsel in particular was to spend his time finishing off some brooms.

Now it is the hardest thing in the world for little children to stick to a long task, so that which might have been expected happened: Hänsel and Gretel ceased after a little to work, and began to think how hungry they were. Hänsel was seated in the doorway, working at the brooms; brooms were hanging up on the walls of the poor little cottage; and Gretel sat knitting a stocking near the fire. Being a gay little girl, she sang to pass the time:



[Listen]

Susy little Susy, pray what is the news?
The geese are running bare foot because they've no shoes!
The cobbler has leather and plenty to spare,
Why can't he make the poor goose a new pair?

This sounded rather gay, and, before he knew it, Hänsel had joined in: -137-

Eia popeia, pray what's to be done?
Who'll give me milk and sugar, for bread I have none?
I'll go back to bed and I'll lie there all day,
Where there's naught to eat, then there's nothing to pay.

"Speaking of something to eat—I'm as hungry as a wolf, Gretel. We haven't had anything but bread in weeks."

"Well, it does no good to complain, does it? Why don't you do as father does—laugh and make the best of it?" Gretel answered, letting her knitting fall in her lap. "If you will stop grumbling, Hänsel, I'll tell you a secret—it's a fine one too." She got up and tiptoed over to the table. "Come here and look in this jug," she called, and Hänsel in his turn tiptoed over, as if something very serious indeed would happen should any one hear him.

"Look in that jug—a neighbour gave us some milk to-day, and that is likely to mean rice blanc-mange."

"Oh, gracious goodness! I'll be found near when rice blanc-mange is going on; be sure of that. How thick is the cream?" the greedy fellow asked, dipping his finger into the jug.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself! Take your fingers out of that jug, Hänsel, and get back to your work. You'll get a good pounding if mother comes home and finds you cutting up tricks."

"No, I'm not going to work any more—I'm going to dance."

"Well, I admit dancing is good fun," Gretel answered him reluctantly. "We can dance a little, and sing to keep us in time, and then we can go back to work." -138-

Brother, come and dance with me,
Both my hands I offer thee,
Right foot first,
Left foot then,
Round about and back again,

she sang, holding out her hands.

"I don't know how, or I would," Hänsel declared, watching her as she spun about.

"Then I'll teach you. Just keep your eyes on me and I'll teach you just how to do it," she cried, and then she began to dance. Gretel told him precisely how to do it, and Hänsel learned very well and very quickly. Then they danced together, and in half a minute had forgotten all about going back to their work. They twirled and laughed and sang and shouted in the wildest sort of glee, and at last, perfectly exhausted with so much fun, they tumbled over one another upon the floor, and were laughing too hard to get up. Just at this moment, when they had actually forgotten all about hunger and work, home came their mother. She opened the door and looked in.

"For mercy's sake! what goings on are these?" she cried.

"Why, it was Hänsel, he——"

"Gretel wanted to——" they both began, scrambling to their feet.

"That will do. I want to hear nothing from you. You are the most ill-behaved children in the world. Here are your father and I slaving ourselves to death for you, and not a thing do you do but dance and sing from morning till night——"

"It would be awfully nice to eat, too," Hänsel replied reflectively. -139-

"What's that you say, you ungrateful child? Don't you eat whenever the rest of us do?" However harsh she seemed, the mother was only angry at the thought of there being nothing in the house to eat, and she felt so badly to think the children were hungry that she made a dive at Hänsel to slap him, when—horrors! she knocked the milk off the table, broke the jug, and all the milk went streaming over the floor. This was indeed a misfortune. There they stood, all three looking at their lost supper.

"*Now* see what you have done?" she screamed angrily at the children. "Get yourselves out of here. If you want any supper you'll have to work for it. Take that basket and go into the wood and fill it with strawberries, and don't either of you come home till it is full. Dear me, it does seem as if I had trouble enough without such actions as yours," the distracted mother cried; and quite unjustly she hustled the children and their basket outside the hut and off into the wood.

They had no sooner gone out than the poor, distracted woman, exhausted with the day's tramping and unsuccessful effort to sell her brooms, sat at the table weeping over the lost milk; and finally she fell asleep. After a while a merry song was heard in the wood, and the father presently appeared singing, at the very threshold. Really, for a hungry man with a hungry family and nothing for supper, he was in a remarkably merry mood.

"Ho, there, wife!" he called, and then entered with a great basket over his shoulder. He saw the mother asleep and stopped singing. Then he laughed and went over to her.

"Hey, wake up, old lady, hustle yourself and get us a supper. Where are the children?" -140-

"What are you talking about," the mother asked, waking up and looking confused at the noise her husband was making. "I can't get any supper when there is nothing to get."

"Nothing to get?—well, that is nice talk, I'm sure. We'll see if there is nothing to get," he answered, roaring with laughter—and he began to take things out of his basket. First he took out a ham, then some butter. Flour and sausages followed, and then a dozen eggs; turnips, and onions, and finally some tea. Then at last the good fellow turned the basket upside down, and out rolled a lot of potatoes.

"Where in the world did all of these things come from?" she cried.

"I had good luck with my brooms, when all seemed lost, and here we are with a feast before us. Now call the children and let us begin."

"I was so angry because the milk got spilt that I sent them off to the woods for berries and told them not to come home till they had a basket full. I really thought that was all we should have for supper." At this the father looked frightened.

"What if they have gone to the Ilsenstein?" he cried, jumping up and taking a broom from the wall.

"Well, what harm?" the wife inquired, "and why do you take the broom?"

"What harm? Do you not know that it is the awful magic mountain where the old witch who eats little children dwells?—and do you not know that she rides on a broomstick. I may need one to follow her, in case she has got the children."

"Oh, heavens above! What a wicked woman I was to send the children out. What

-141-

shall we do? Do you know anything more about that awful ogress?" she demanded of her husband, trembling fit to die.

An old witch within that wood doth dwell,
And she's in league with the powers of hell.
At midnight hour,
  When nobody knows,
  Away to the witches' dance she goes.

    Up the chimney they fly,
    On a broomstick they hie,
    Over hill and dale,
    O'er ravine and vale,
    Through the midnight air
    They gallop full tear,
    On a broomstick, on a broomstick
    Hop, hop, hop, hop, the witches!

And by day, they say,
She stalks around,
With a crinching, crunching, munching sound.
And children plump, and tender to eat,
She lures with magic gingerbread sweet.
On evil bent,
With fell intent,
  She lures the children, poor little things,
In the oven hot,
She pops the lot.
She shuts the door down,
Until they're done brown—all those gingerbread children.

"Oh, my soul!" the poor woman shrieked. "Come! We must lose no time: Hänsel and Gretel may be baked to cinders by this time," and out she ran, screaming, and followed by the father, to look for those poor children.

ACT II

AFTER wandering all the afternoon in the great forest, and filling their basket with strawberries, Hänsel and Gretel came to a beautiful mossy tree-trunk where they concluded to sit down and rest before going home. They had wandered so far that -142-
they really didn't know that they were lost, but as a matter of fact they had no notion of where they were. Without knowing it, they had gone as far as the Ilsenstein, and that magic place was just behind them, and sunset had already come. As usual, the gay little girl was singing while she twined a garland of wild flowers. Hänsel was still looking for berries in the thicket near. Pretty soon they heard a cuckoo call, and they answered the call gaily. The cuckoo answered, and the calls between them became lively.

"There is the bird that eats up other birds' eggs," Gretel said, poking a strawberry into Hänsel's mouth; and Hänsel sucked the berry up as if it were an egg. Then in his turn, he poked a berry into Gretel's mouth. This was very good fun, especially as yet they had had nothing to eat. They began to feed each other with berries, till before they knew it the full basket was empty.

Foolish children, who by their carelessness got themselves into all sorts of scrapes! Now what was to be done? They surely couldn't go home and tell their mother they had eaten up all the berries!

"Hänsel, you have eaten all the berries. Now this time it is no joke—this that you have done. What shall we do now?"

"Nonsense—you ate as many as I. We shall simply look for more."

"So late as this! We never can see them in the world. The sun is going down. Where can we have got to? We are surely lost."

"Well, if we are, there is nothing to be afraid of. Come, don't cry. We shall sleep here under the trees, and, when morning comes, find our way home," Hänsel replied, no longer blaming her, but trying to be very brave, notwithstanding he was nearly -143-
scared to death with the shadows which were then gathering quickly.

"Oh, oh! do you hear that noise in the bushes? I shall die of fright."

"It—it—is nothing, sister," Hänsel answered, his teeth chattering, while he peered all about him uneasily. "I'm a boy and not afraid of anything, and can take care of you wherever we are."

What's glimmering there in the darkness?

That's only the birches in silver dress.
But there, what's grinning so there at me?
Th-that's only the stump of a willow tree.

Hänsel tried to answer heroically. "I'll give a good call," he said, going a little way toward the Ilsenstein. Then putting his hands to his mouth, he called loudly:

"Who's there?"

"You there,—you there,—you there," the echoes came—but they seemed to come from the Ilsenstein.

"Is some one there?" Gretel timidly asked.

"There—where—there—" the echoes from the Ilsenstein again replied. "I'm frightened to death," Gretel said, beginning to cry.

"Little Gretelkin," said Hänsel, "you stick close to me, and I'll let nothing hurt you;" and while they huddled together, a thick white mist slowly gathered and spread between the children and the Ilsenstein.

"Oh! there are some shadowy old women, coming to carry me away," Gretel sobbed, hiding her face, as the mist seemed to sway and assume strange forms. Then while her face was hidden, the mist slowly cleared away, and a little gray manikin with a little sack upon his back came out of the shadows. Hänsel held his breath with fear -144-
and sheltered Gretel beside him as best he could.

"It is a shadowy queer little manikin, Gretel dear, with a little sack upon his back, but he looks very friendly." Then addressing the little manikin, "Do not hurt us, sir—and will you tell us who you are?"

I shut the children's peepers—sh!
And guard the little sleepers—sh!
For dearly I do love them—sh!
And gladly watch above them—sh!
    And with my little bag of sand,
    By every child's bedside I stand;
    Then little tired eyelids close,
    And little limbs have sweet repose;
And if they are good and quickly go to sleep,
    Then from the starry sphere above
    The angels come with peace and love,
And send the children happy dreams, while watch they keep.

All the while the little sand-man was telling them who he was, the children got sleepier and sleepier and nodded upon each other's shoulders.

"The sand-man was here?" little Hänsel asked, trying to rouse a bit.

"I guess so," said Gretel; "let us say our prayers," and so they folded their hands, and said a little prayer to the fourteen angels which guard little children. They prayed to the two angels who should stand at their head, to the two at their feet, two upon their right hand and two upon the left, and two should cover them warm, and two should guard them from harm, and two should guide them one day to Heaven; and so they sank to sleep.

As they slept, a beautiful light broke through the mist, which rolled up into a glittering staircase down which those angels came, two and two. They all grouped about Hänsel and Gretel as they had been prayed to do; and as they silently took -145-
their places the night grew dark, the trees and birds all slept, and Hänsel and Gretel were safe until the morning.

ACT III

THE night had passed, the angels had disappeared again in the mist which still hung over the forest at the back, and now as dawn broke, the dew-fairy came out of the mist as the manikin and the angels had done; and from a little blue bell she shook the dewdrops over the children's eyes. Just as they began to stir, away ran the dew-fairy, and when they were quite wide awake they found the sun rising and themselves all alone.

"Hänsel, where are we?" little Gretel asked, not recalling all that had happened to them since the day before. "I hear the birds twittering high in the branches. We certainly are not in our beds at home."

"No—but I had a fine dream," Hänsel answered—"that the angels were here looking after us all night, the entire fourteen. But look there!" he cried, pointing behind them. The mist was gradually lifting and revealing the house of the Witch of Ilsenstein. It looked very fine, with the sun's bright rays upon it; very fine indeed! A

little way off to the left of that queer little house was—an oven. Oh, dreadful! It was well Hänsel and Gretel did not know in the least what that oven meant. Then, on the other side of the house, was a cage—and heaven! it was certainly well that they had no idea of what that was for, either. Then, joining that cage to the house, was a queer-looking fence of gingerbread, and it looked strangely like little children.

"Oh, what a queer place!" Gretel cried. "And do you smell that delicious odour? That -146-
cottage is made all of chocolate cream!" She was overcome with joy.

The roof is all covered with Turkish delight,
The windows with lustre of sugar are white
And on all the gables the raisins invite,
And think! All around is a gingerbread hedge.

"Oh, to eat such a cottage!" they cried ecstatically.

"I hear no sound. Let's go inside," Hänsel urged.

"No, no! Who knows who may live in that lovely house."

"Well, anyway, it can't do any harm to nibble a little. They can have it repaired next baking day," he persisted.

"Maybe that is true,—and it does look too good to leave"; so Hänsel reached out and broke a little piece of the house-corner off.

Nibble, nibble, mousekin,
Who's nibbling at my housekin?

a voice called from within.

"Good gracious! Did you hear that?" he whispered, dropping the corner of the house. Gretel picked it up, hesitatingly.

"It's most awfully good," she declared, but at that very minute came the voice again:

Nibble, nibble, mousekin,
Who's nibbling at my housekin?

"Maybe that is the voice of the sweety maker," Hänsel suggested, all the same a good deal scared. And so they went on nibbling at a bit of the fence and then at the house-corner, until they became so full of good things that they began to laugh and caper about in high spirits. But while all this fun was going on, the upper part of the door opened and the old witch stuck her head out. Then slowly and softly, out she crept -147-
with a rope in her hand, and getting behind the children she suddenly threw it over Hänsel's head. When he turned and saw her he was frightened almost into fits.

"Let me go, let me go!" he howled, while the witch only laughed hideously at the two and, drawing them closer to her, she began to pat their heads and talk very nicely to them.

"You are lovely children! Don't give yourselves such airs. I am Rosina Dainty-Mouth and just love little children like you," but she didn't say how she preferred them—broiled or stewed. Nevertheless, Hänsel had his doubts about her, in spite of her affectionate pretensions.

Come, little mousey,
Come into my housey!
Come with me, my precious,
I'll give you sweets, delicious!

This extraordinary old lady cried, naming things that made the children's mouths water. But there was Hänsel's caution! He was not to be caught napping after sunrise. Gretel, however, recalled the flavour of the eave-spout which she had lately tasted and could not help showing a certain amount of interest.

"Just what shall I get if I go into your housey?" she inquired; but before the old creature could reply, Hänsel had pulled Gretel's petticoat.

"Have a care! Do not take anything from her that you can help. She is meaning to fatten us and cook us,"—which was the exact truth. At that moment, Hänsel got clear of the rope which had been about his neck and ran to Gretel, but the old witch pointed at them a stick which had been hanging at her girdle, and instantly they -148-
found themselves spellbound. She repeated this blood-curdling rhyme, and there they stood, quite helpless:

Hocus pocus, witches' charm!
Move not as you fear my arm.
Back or forward, do not try,
Fixed you are, by the evil eye!

And "fixed" they were. Now, right in the middle of the forenoon, it began to grow horribly dark, and as it darkened, the little knob on the end of her stick began to glow brilliantly, and as Hänsel watched it, fascinated, the witch gradually led him, by the stick's charm, into the stable, and fastened him in. Then the knob of the stick gradually ceased to glow, and Gretel was still standing there.

"Now while I feed Hänsel up till he is plump as a partridge, you stand where you are," said the witch, and into the house she went. Gretel stood horrified, and Hänsel whispered to her:

"Don't speak loud, and be very watchful, Gretelkin. Pretend to do everything the witch commands, yet be very watchful. There she comes again"; and so she did, with a basket full of raisins and other things for him to eat. She stuck good things into his mouth, as if she were fattening a Strasburg goose, and after that she disenchanted Gretel with a juniper branch.

"Now, then, you go and set the table," she ordered, then turning again to Hänsel she found him apparently asleep.

"That's good! It is a way to grow fat," she grinned. "I'll just begin my supper with Gretel. She looks quite plump enough as she is. Here, my love," she cried, opening the oven door, and sniffing some gingerbread figures within, "just look into the oven and tell me if it is hot enough to bake in," she called. -149-

Oh, when from the oven I take her,
She'll look like a cake from the baker,

the old wretch giggled to herself. But Gretel pretended not to hear her; and after all, she thought the oven not quite hot enough to push Gretel into, so she began jabbering about the witch's ride she was going to have that night at twelve, on her broomstick. As she thought about it she became very enthusiastic, and getting upon her broom she went galloping about the house and back. When she got through performing in this outrageous manner—which fairly froze Gretel's blood in her veins—the old witch tickled Hänsel with a birch-twig till he woke.

"Here, my little darling, show me your tongue," she said, and Hänsel stuck out his tongue as if the doctor had been called to investigate his liver. "My, but you are in fine condition," the old wretch mumbled smacking her lips. "Let me see your thumb," she demanded, and instead of sticking out his plump thumb, Hänsel poked a tiny bone through the bars of the cage. "Oh! how lean and scraggy! You won't do yet"; and she called to Gretel to bring more food for him, and there she stopped to stuff him again. Then she again opened the oven door, looking all the while at Gretel.

"How she makes my mouth water," she muttered. "Come here, little Gretelkin, poke your head into the oven and tell me if you think it hot enough for us to bake in." At this awful moment Hänsel whispered:

"Oh, be careful, Gretel!" Gretel nodded at him behind the witch's back. -150-

"Just smell that lovely gingerbread. Do poke your head in to see if it is quite done. Then you shall have a piece hot from the oven." Gretel still hung back.

"I don't quite know how to do it," she apologized. "If you will just show me how to reach up," she murmured; and the old witch, quite disgusted that Gretel should take so long to do as she was bid, and so delay the feast, said:

"Why, this way, you goose," poking her head into the oven, and instantly, Hänsel, who had slipped out of the stable, sprang upon the old woman, gave her the push she had intended to give Gretel, and into the oven she popped, and bang went the oven door, while the children stood looking at each other and shivering with fright.

"Oh, my suz! *Do* you suppose we have her fast?"

"I guess we have," Hänsel cried, grabbing Gretel about the waist and dancing wildly in glee. Then they rushed into the house and began to fill their pockets with good things. While they were at this, the oven began to crack dreadfully. The noise was quite awful.

"Oh, mercy! What is happening?" Gretel cried. And at that moment the awful oven fell apart, and out jumped a lot of little children with the gingerbread all falling off them, while they sprang about Hänsel and Gretel in great joy. But all their eyes were shut.

They laughed and sang and hopped, crying that Hänsel and Gretel had saved them because by baking the old witch they had broken the oven's charm.

"But why don't you open your eyes," Gretel asked.

"We shall not be entirely disenchanted till you touch us," they told her, and then upon being touched by Gretel they opened their eyes like ten-day-old kittens. -151-

Then Hänsel took a juniper branch and repeated what he had heard the witch say:

Hocus pocus elder bush,
Rigid body loosen, hush!

and there came that gingerbread hedge, walking on legs,—the beautiful gingerbread falling all over the place, and the whole fence turning back into little children.

At that very moment came the broom-maker and his wife, who had sought for the children till they had become nearly distracted. When the children saw them they ran into their mother's arms. All the gingerbread children were singing at the top of their voices and were carrying on in the most joyous way.

Two boys had run to the broken oven, and had begun to drag out an immense gingerbread—it was the old witch, turned into the finest cake ever seen. It was well that she turned out to be good in the end, if only good gingerbread. They dragged her out where everybody could see her, and broke a piece of her off; and then they shoved her into the cottage.

"Now, you see how good children are taken care of," the broom-maker sang; while everybody danced about the disenchanted Ilsenstein, before they went into the house for supper.

MASCAGNI

THIS composer is too contemporary to be discussed freely. He has done no great amount of work, and fame came to him in his youth. "Cavalleria Rusticana" is his supreme performance, and there is in it a promise of greater things.

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA[A]
(Rustic Chivalry)

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Santuzza.
Lola.
Turiddu.
Alfio.
Lucia.

Peasants.

The story is of peasant people in a small Sicilian village, on an Easter day.

Composer: Pietro Mascagni.
Authors: Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti and Guido Menasci.

First sung at Rome, May 20, 1890.

ACT I

ONE fine Easter morning, in a small Italian village, a fop, named Turiddu, came along the little street singing of Lola, an old sweetheart, who, since Turiddu went to serve his required term in the army, had married a wagoner. Turiddu was far from heartbroken, because when he returned and first heard of Lola's faithlessness, he straightway fell in love with a worthier girl—Santuzza. Neither Lola nor Turiddu was a faithful sort, but lived for a good time to-day, leaving luck to look after to-morrow; but it was not the same with Santuzza. She truly loved Turiddu, and being an Italian peasant, very emotional and excitable, it was going to be dangerous for Turiddu to ill-treat her.

If that Easter morning found Turiddu quite gay and free, it found Santuzza full of despair and misgiving, because she knew that her lover had returned to his former sweetheart. Lola's husband, the wagoner, was frequently away from his home, and in his absence his wife had been flirting. In a little village, where everybody knew everybody else, and all of each other's business, Santuzza's companions had learned that Turiddu had thrown his new love over for the old, and instead of pitying her, they had ridiculed and treated her unkindly.

On a Sunday morning, just before the villagers started to church, Santuzza started for Turiddu's home. He lived near the church, with Lucia, his old mother. Santuzza had been thinking all night of what she could do to win her lover back; and at daylight had risen with the determination to go to old Lucia, and tell her how her son had misbehaved. In Italy, even grown sons and daughters obey their parents more

promptly than the small children in America ever do. Santuzza, all tears and worn with sleeplessness, thought possibly Lucia could prevail upon Turiddu to keep his word and behave more like an honest man. All the little village was astir early, because Easter is a fête day in Italy, and the people make merry, as well as go to church. The peasants were passing and repassing through the little square as -154- Santuzza entered it. She looked very sad and her eyes were swollen with crying. But no one paid any attention to her as all were going into the church for early mass. After the crowd had gone in, the sound of the organ and of the congregation's voices could be heard in the square. They sang an Easter carol—about flowers and carolling larks and orange blossoms—which did not make Santuzza any the happier; but she went to the door of old Lucia's house and called softly:

"Mama Lucia—Mama Lucia—art thou there?"

"Thou, Santuzza? What wilt thou, my dear?" the old woman answered, hobbling out.

"Mama Lucia, where is thy son?" Santuzza demanded.

"Thou hast come to see Turiddu? I do not know, my girl. I have nothing to do with quarrels, you must understand," she answered cautiously, half suspecting Santuzza's trouble, because she had already suffered many times on account of her son's faithlessness to others.

"Mama Lucia, I beg of you not to turn me away. Listen to my troubles. It is thy son who has caused them, and I must see him," Santuzza sobbed.

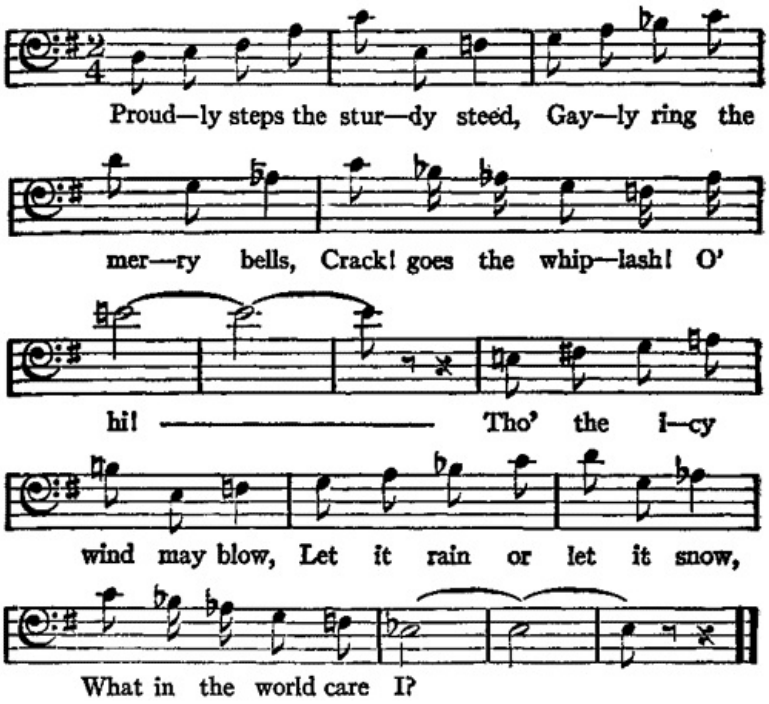
"Well, I cannot help thee—though I am truly sorry for thee," the mother answered, after a moment, observing all the signs of the sorrow that Santuzza felt. "He is not at home. He has gone to fetch the wine from Francofonte."

"No, no—he hasn't. He was seen about the village only last night."

"Who told thee that? I, his mother, should know if he is at home or not."

"Mama Lucia, do not turn me away—I am in great sorrow, and you will be unhappy all your life if you ill-treat me now." At this they were disturbed by the cracking of -155- whips and jingling of bells which told of the return to town of the wagoner. Alfio was returning on Easter morning in time to join the gaiety with his wife, Lola.

He came in jauntily, singing:



[Listen]

Proudly steps the sturdy steed,
Gayly ring the merry bells,
Crack! goes the whiplash! O' hi!
Tho' the icy wind may blow,
Let it rain or let it snow,
What in the world care I?

Soon all the neighbours appeared to welcome him. He was a most popular fellow—unlike Turiddu, who was a favourite mainly with the girls.

"Well, about all I have wished for all the week, neighbours, was to get home here to my wife, that we might spend this Easter day together. When I am away, I think of nothing but her, you may be sure! I can't stop here with you, jolly as you are. Lola is -156- certain to be waiting for me, so off I go!" and the wagoner waved his hand gaily and was about to hurry off, while some went back into the church again, and some went to their homes. But Mama Lucia could not but regard him anxiously. She, herself, was in trouble over her wild son.

"Ah, Alfio, you are always in such high spirits——"

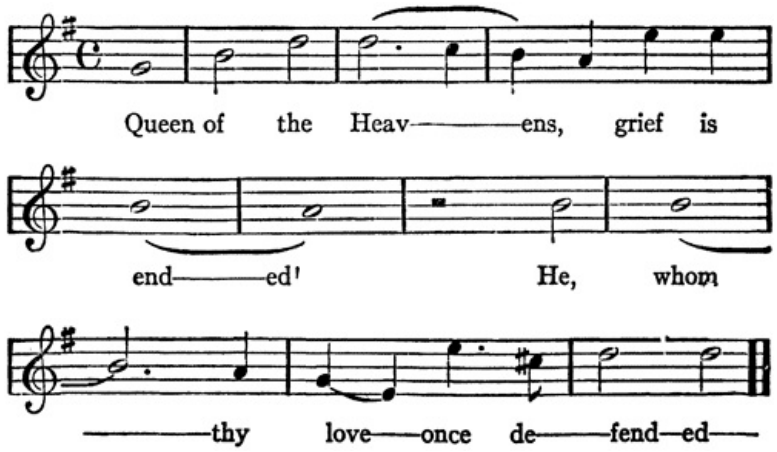
"Hello, Mama Lucia! Good day to you—have you any more of that famous wine?" Lucia's house was also the village inn, where the folks congregated to drink their wine, to play cards, and have a good gossip.

"No, not now; Turiddu has gone to Francofonte to get it."

"You are wrong: I met him near my cottage as I came into the village this very morning," the wagoner answered, and at the same moment Santuzza pulled old Lucia's skirt, signing to her to be silent. But the old woman, surprised and confused at the turn things seemed to be taking, persisted:

"How so? Are you certain of that?"

"Oh, yes, perfectly sure. And now I must be going: Lola will be expecting me," the unsuspicious wagoner answered, turning in earnest to go home. Now, while old Lucia and Santuzza stood without, the choir in the church sang:



[Listen]

Queen of the Heavens, grief is ended!
He, whom thy love once defended—

And those peasants who had gradually wandered back into the square knelt, as they heard the prayer. The scene was very devotional and beautiful, with the exquisite music floating out from the church, and the reverent people gathering about it. Presently they broke into a joyous chorus of "Hallelujah! Christ is risen!" while Santuzza and old Lucia joined in spite of their sadness. But after all had wandered away, old Lucia approached Santuzza:

"Why didst thou caution me not to speak when Alfio said he had seen my son near his house?" she asked, anxiously, already half guessing the reason.

"Good mama, do you not know that before Turiddu went to the war he was Lola's lover; and at first after he returned he cared for me, but now he has forgotten me and is again making love to Lola? If the wagoner knew of this, what do you think he would do?"

"Oh, what hast thou told me upon this holy morning! You are right—if Alfio knew of this he would kill them both maybe. He surely would kill my son."

"It seems to me all are cursed this beautiful day. Go and pray for us all, Mama Lucia, and so will I," Santuzza replied. And she was about to enter the church to say her prayers when there came Turiddu, himself, dressed in his best, ready to meet Lola in the square as she passed on her way to the church.

"Turiddu!" Santuzza called.

"Devils! What are you here for, Santuzza? Are you on your way to church?" -158-

"Not now. I am here to speak with you——"

"Well, well, I cannot stop for it; I must go into the inn and see my mother just now."

"You must stay here and speak with me. I warn you to do it, Turiddu. I am very unhappy, and if you will give up Lola I will forget all your wrongdoing. But if you neglect me, and will not give up Alfio's wife, Alfio will surely learn of it and make you trouble."

"Oh, come now—do you think you can frighten me? I will be a slave to no woman's whim, Santuzza. Go about your business. I shall attend to mine without your help. No, I will listen to you no longer," he cried, becoming angrier as she spoke, and pushing her away from him, as Lola, in the street near the square could be heard singing.

Santuzza and Turiddu both paused and listened. She was singing of Turiddu. She was calling him her "King of Roses." And then, while the two were standing uncertain what to do, Lola entered the square and spied them.

"Hello," she called loftily, looking at Santuzza. "Have you seen Alfio, Turiddu?"

"No, I have only just now come into the square."

"Oh, perhaps you have come to church," she persisted impertinently.

"I—I stopped to tell Santuzza—" he hardly knew what to say.

"I stopped to see Turiddu," Santuzza interrupted earnestly. "I stopped to say that the good Lord beholds all our deeds."

"Ah—then you are not going to mass?"

"No—those who go to mass must have a clear conscience. Which of us here has that?"

"Really I know nothing about you," Lola answered; "as for mine—it is clear!" Turiddu foreseeing trouble between them interrupted hastily. -159-

"Let us go in," speaking to Lola.

"Oh, stay with Santuzza—and her conscience! do!"

"Yes, Turiddu—I warn you!" At that Lola laughed and went into the church.

"Now what have you done? By your folly, angered Lola. I am done with you!" Turiddu exclaimed, throwing off Santuzza, who held him back while she spoke. He became so enraged that he treated her brutally; and in trying to rid himself of her he threw her down upon the stones, and then ran into the church. When she got upon her feet again she was furious with anger.

"Now I will punish him for all his faithlessness," she sobbed, and she no sooner took this resolve than fate seemed to give her the means of carrying it out, for at that moment Alfio came back into the square.

"Oh, neighbour Alfio! God himself must have sent you here!"

"At what point is the service?"

"It is almost over, but I must tell you—Lola is gone to it with Turiddu."

"What do you mean by that?" Alfio demanded, regarding her in wonder.

"I mean that while you are about your business Turiddu remains here, and your wife finds in him a way to pass the time. She does not love you."

"If you are not telling me the truth," Alfio said, with anguish, "I'll certainly kill you."

"You have only to watch—you will know the truth fast enough," she persisted.

Alfio stood a moment in indecision and looked at her steadfastly. -160-

"Santuzza, I believe you. Your words—and the sadness of your face—convince me. I will avenge us both." And off he ran. For a moment Santuzza was glad, then remorse overtook her. Now Turiddu would be killed! She was certain of it. Alfio was not a man to be played with. Surely Turiddu would be killed! And there was his old mother, too, who would be left quite alone. When it was too late, Santuzza repented having spoken. She tried to recall Alfio, but he had gone.

The organ within the church swelled loudly again, and, the music being most beautiful, Santuzza stood listening in an agony of mind. Soon people began to come out, and old Lucia hobbled from the church in her turn, and crossed to her inn, followed by the young men and women. The men were all going home to their wives, and the women to their duties, but it was proposed that all should stop a moment at old Lucia's for a glass of her famous wine before they separated. As they went to the bar of the inn, which was out under the trees, Lola and Turiddu came from the church together.

"I must hurry home now—I haven't seen Alfio yet—and he will be in a rage," she said.

"Not so fast—there is plenty of time! Come, neighbours, have a glass of wine with us," Turiddu cried to the crowd, going to his mother's bar, and there they gathered singing a gay drinking song.

"To those who love you!" Turiddu pledged, lifting his glass and looking at Lola. She nodded and answered:

"To your good fortune, brother!" And while they were speaking Alfio entered.

"Greeting to you all," he called.

"Good! come and join us," Turiddu answered.

"Thank you! but I should expect you to poison me if I were to drink with you, my friend," and the wagoner looked meaningly at Turiddu. -161-

"Oh—well, suit yourself," Turiddu replied, nonchalantly. Then a neighbour standing near Lola whispered:

"You had better leave here, Lola. Come home with me. I can foresee trouble here." Lola took her advice and went out, with all the women following her.

"Well, now that you have frightened away all the women by your behaviour, maybe you have something to say to me privately," Turiddu remarked, turning to Alfio.

"Nothing—except that I am going to kill you—this instant!"

"You think so? then we will embrace," Turiddu exclaimed, proposing the custom of the place and throwing his arms about his enemy. When he did so, Alfio bit Turiddu's ear, which, in Sicily, is a challenge to a duel.

"Good! I guess we understand each other."

"Well, I own that I have done you wrong—and Santuzza wrong. Altogether, I am a bad fellow; but if you are going to kill me, I must bid my mother good-bye, and also give Santuzza into her care. After all, I have some grace left, whether you think so or not," Turiddu cried, and then he called his mother out, while Alfio went away with the understanding that Turiddu should immediately follow and get the fight over.

"Mama," Turiddu then said to old Lucia when she hobbled out, "that wine of ours is certainly very exciting. I am going out to walk it off, and I want your blessing before I go." He tried to keep up a cheerful front that he might not frighten his old mother. At least he had the grace to behave himself fairly well, now that the end had come. -162-

"If I shouldn't come back——"

"What can you mean, my son?" the old woman whispered, trembling with fear.

"Nothing, nothing, except that even before I go to walk, I want your promise to take Santuzza to live with you. Now that is all! I'm off. Good-bye, God bless you, mother. I love you very much." Before she hardly knew what had happened, Turiddu was off and away. She ran to the side of the square and called after him, but he did not return. Instead, Santuzza ran in.

"Oh, Mama Lucia," she cried, throwing her arms about her.

Then the people who had met Alfio and Turiddu on their way to their encounter began to rush in. Everybody was wildly excited. Both men were village favourites in their way. A great noise of rioting was heard and some one shrieked in the distance.

"Oh, neighbour, neighbour, Turiddu is killed, Turiddu is killed!" At this nearly every one in the little village came running, while Santuzza fell upon the ground in a faint.

"He is killed! Alfio has killed him!" others cried, running in, and then poor old Lucia fell unconscious beside Santuzza, while the neighbours gathered about her, lifted her up and carried her into her lonely inn.

MEYERBEER -163-

GENIUS seems born to do stupid things and to be unable to know it. Probably no stupider thing was ever said or done than that by Wagner when he wrote a diatribe on the Jew in Art. He called it "Das Judenthum in der Musik" (Judaism in Music). He declared that the mightiest people in art and in several other things—the Jews—could not be artists for the reason that they were wanderers and therefore lacking in national characteristics.

There could not well have been a better plea against his own statement. Art is often national—but not when art is at its best. Art is an emotional result—and emotion is a

thing the Jews know something about. Meyerbeer was a Jew, and the most helpful friend Richard Wagner ever had, yet Wagner was so little of a Jew that he did not know the meaning of appreciation and gratitude. Instead, he hated Meyerbeer and his music intensely. Meyerbeer may have been a wanderer upon the face of the earth and without national characteristics—which is a truly amusing thing to say of a Jew, since his "characteristics" are a good deal stronger than "national": they are racial! But however that may have been, Meyerbeer's music was certainly characteristic of its composer. As between Jew and Jew, Mendelssohn and he had a petty hatred of each other. Mendelssohn was always displeased when the extraordinary likeness between himself and Meyerbeer was commented upon. They were so much alike in -164-
physique that one night, after Mendelssohn had been tormented by his attention being repeatedly called to the fact, he cut his hair short in order to make as great a difference as possible between his appearance and that of his rival. This only served to create more amusement among his friends.

Rossini, with all the mean vanity of a small artist, one whose principal claim to fame lay in large dreams, declared that Meyerbeer was a "mere compiler." If that be true, one must say that a good compilation is better than a poor creation. Rossini and Meyerbeer were, nevertheless, warm friends.

Meyerbeer put into practice the Wagnerian theories, which may have been one reason, aside from the constitutional artistic reasons, why Wagner hated him.

Meyerbeer was born "to the purple," to a properly conducted life, and yet he laboured with tremendous vim. He outworked all his fellows, and one day when a friend protested, begging him to take rest, Meyerbeer answered:

"If I should stop work I should rob myself of my greatest enjoyment. I am so accustomed to it that it has become a necessity with me." This is the true art spirit, which many who "arrive" never know the joy of possessing. Meyerbeer's father was a rich Jewish banker, Jacob Beer, of Berlin. It is pleasant to think of one man, capable of large achievements, having an easy time of it, finding himself free all his life to follow his best creative instincts. It is not often so.

Meyerbeer's generosity of spirit in regard to the greatness of another is shown in this anecdote:

Above all music, the Jew best loved Mozart's, just as Mozart loved Haydn's. Upon one occasion when Meyerbeer was dining with some friends, a question arose about -165-
Mozart's place among composers. Some one remarked that "certain beauties of Mozart's music had become stale with age." Another agreed, and added, "I defy any one to listen to 'Don Giovanni' after the fourth act of 'Les Huguenots'!" This vulgar compliment enraged Meyerbeer. "So much the worse then for the fourth act of 'The Huguenots'!" he shouted. Of all his own work this Jewish composer loved "L'Africaine" the best, and he made and remade it during a period of seventeen years. In this he was the best judge of his own work; though some persons believe that "Le Prophète" is greater.

Among Meyerbeer's eccentricities was one that cannot be labelled erratic. He had a wholesome horror of being buried alive, and he carried a slip about in his pocket, instructing whom it might concern to see that his body was kept unburied four days after his death, that small bells were attached to his hands and feet, and that all the while he should be watched. Then he was to be sent to Berlin to be interred beside his mother, whom he dearly loved.

THE PROPHET

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Count Oberthal, Lord of the manor.
John of Leyden, an innkeeper and then a revolutionist (the Prophet).
Jonas
Mathison
Zacharia } Anabaptists.
Bertha, affianced to John of Leyden.
Faith, John's mother.

Choir: Peasants, soldiers, people, officers.

Story laid in Holland, near Dordrecht, about the fifteenth century.

Composer: Meyerbeer.
Author: Scribe.

-166-

ACT I

One beautiful day about four hundred years ago the sun rose upon a castle on the

Meuse, where lived the Count Oberthal, known in Holland as Lord of the Manor. It was a fine sight with its drawbridge and its towers, its mills and outbuildings, with antique tables outside the great entrance, sacks of grain piled high, telling of industry and plenty. In the early day peasants arrived with their grain sacks, called for entrance, and the doors were opened to them; other men with grain to be milled came and went, and the scene presented a lively appearance.

Sheep-bells were heard in the meadows, the breezes blew softly, and men and women went singing gaily about their work. Among them was a young girl, more beautiful than the others, and her heart was specially full of hope. She was beloved of an innkeeper, John, who lived in a neighbouring village. He was prosperous and good, and she thought of him while she worked. She longed to be his wife, but John had an old mother who was mistress of the inn—in fact, the inn was hers—and it had been a question how they should arrange their affairs. John was too poor to go away and make a separate home, and the old mother might not care to have a daughter-in-law take her place as mistress there, carrying on the business while the active old woman sat idly by.

Upon that beautiful day, Bertha was thinking of all of these things, and hoping something would happen to change the situation. Even while she was thinking thus fate had a pleasant surprise in store for her, because the old mother, Faith, was at that very moment approaching the manor where Bertha lived. Like others of her class she owed vassalage to some petty seigneur, and while that meant oppression to be endured, it included the advantage of safety and protection in time of war. -167-

Bertha, looking off over the country road, saw Faith, John's mother, coming. Her step was firm for one so aged, and she was upheld on her long journey by the goodness of her mission. When Bertha saw her she ran to meet and welcome her.

"Sit down," she cried, guiding the old woman's steps to a seat, and hovering over her. "I have watched for your coming since the morning—even since sunrise," the young woman said, fluttering about happily. "I was certain thou wert coming."

"Yes, yes. John said: 'Go, go, mother, and bring Bertha home to me,' and I have come," she answered, caressing Bertha kindly. "I have decided to give over the work and the care to you young people; to sit by the chimneyside and see you happy; so bid farewell to this place, and prepare to return with me. John is expecting thee."

"At once, dear mother?" she asked with some anxiety. "You know, mother, I am a vassal of the Seigneur Oberthal, and may not marry outside of his domain, without his permission. I must first get that; but he cannot wish to keep me here, when there is so much happiness in store for me!" she cried, with all the assurance of her happiness newly upon her. But while she had been speaking, Faith had looked off toward the high-road:

"Look, Bertha! dost see three strange figures coming along there?" she asked in a low tone, pointing toward the road. Bertha looked. It was true: three men, in black, of sinister appearance, were coming toward them. The pair watched. -168-

"Who are they?" she repeated, still in low and half-frightened tones.

"I have seen them before," Bertha answered. "It is said that they are saintly men, but they look sinister to me."

By this time the men had been joined by many of the peasants and were approaching the castle. They were Jonas, Mathison, and Zacharia, seditionists; but they were going through the country in the garb of holy men, stirring up the people under cover of saintliness.

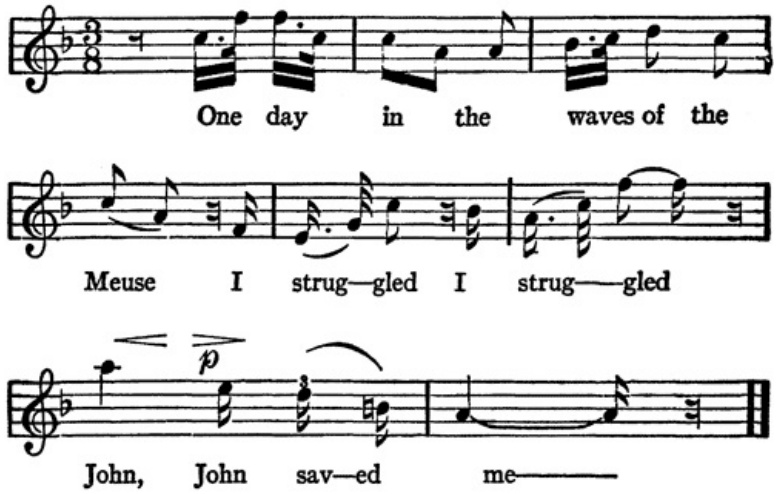
They preached to the people the most absurd doctrines; that they would have all the lands and castles of the nobles if they should rise up and rebel against the system of vassalage that then prevailed. They lacked a leader, however, in order to make their work successful. Now they had come to Dordrecht and were approaching the castle of the Count of Oberthal. All the peasants got into a frightful tangle of trouble and riot, and they called and hammered at the Count's doors till he and his retainers came out.

"What is all this noise?" he demanded, and as he spoke, he recognized in Jonas, the leader of the Anabaptists, a servant whom he had discharged for thievery. He at once told the peasants of this, and it turned them against the three strangers and stopped the disturbance, but at the back of the crowd the Count Oberthal had seen the beautiful Bertha and Faith.

"What do ye do here?" he asked, curiously but kindly, noticing the beauty of Bertha. At that she went toward him.

"I wish to ask you, Seigneur, for leave to marry outside your domain. I love John of Leyden, the innkeeper—this is his mother—and she has come to take me home with her, if I may go." She spoke modestly, never thinking but she would be permitted to leave. But Oberthal looked at her admiringly and decided that he would have her for -169-

himself. Then thinking of her love, she began to sing of how John had once saved her life, and Faith joined her in pleading.



[Listen]

One day in the waves of the Meuse
I struggled I struggled
John, John saved me—

"No," Oberthal said at last, smiling; "I will not have so much loveliness leave my domain. No! I shall not give my consent." At that she began to weep, while Faith protested against his decision. This made him angry and he ordered the two woman taken into his castle and confined there till he should decide what he wished to do with them.

The peasants, who were still gathered about the Anabaptists, uncertain how to treat them after the Count's disclosures, now showed great anger against Oberthal for his action toward Bertha and Faith. As the two women were dragged within the castle, the peasants set up a howl of rage, while the Anabaptists extended their hands above them in a pious manner and began their Latin chant once more. -170-

ACT II

At the little inn belonging to Faith, John had been waiting all day for her return with Bertha, and trying his best to look after those who came and went. Outside, people were waltzing and drinking and making merry, for the inn was a favourite place for the townsmen of Leyden to congregate.

"Sing and waltz; sing and waltz!" they cried, "all life is joy—and three cheers for thee, John!"

"Hey! John, bring beer," a soldier called merrily. "Let us eat, drink and—" At that moment Jonas, followed by the other Anabaptists, appeared at the inn.

"John! who is John?" they inquired of the soldier.

"John! John!" first one, then another called. "Here are some gentlemen who want beer—although they are very unlikely looking chaps," some one added, under his breath, looking the three fellows over. John came in to take orders, but his mind was elsewhere.

"It is near night—and they have not come," he kept thinking. "I wonder if anything can have happened to them! Surely not! My mother is old, but she is lively on her feet, and on her way home she would have the attention of Bertha. Only I should feel better to see them just now."

"Come, come, John! Beer!" the soldier interrupted, and John started from his reverie. As he went to fetch the beer, Jonas too started. Then he leaned toward Mathison.

"Do you notice anything extraordinary about that man—John of the inn?" he asked. -171-
The two other Anabaptists regarded the innkeeper closely.

"Yes! He is the image of David—the saint in Münster, whose image is so worshipped by the Westphalians. They believe that same saint has worked great miracles among them," Zacharia answered, all the while watching John as he moved about among the tables.

"Listen to this! Just such a man was needed to complete our success. This man's strong, handsome appearance and his strange likeness to that blessed image of those

absurd Westphalians is enough to make him a successful leader. We'll get hold of him, call him a prophet, and the business is done. With him to lead and we to control him, we are likely to own all Holland presently. He is a wonder!" And they put their heads together and continued to talk among themselves. Then Jonas turned to one of the guests.

"Say, friend, who is this man?"

"He is the keeper of this inn," was the answer. "He has an excellent heart and a terrible arm."

"A fiery temper, I should say," the Anabaptist suggested.

"That he has, truly."

"He is brave?"

"Aye! and devoted. And he knows the whole Bible by heart," the peasant declared, proud of his friend. At that the three looked meaningly at one another. This certainly was the sort of man they needed.

"Come, friends, I want you to be going," John said at that moment, his anxiety for his mother and Bertha becoming so great that he could no longer bear the presence of the roistering crowd. "Besides it is going to storm. Come. I must close up." They all rose good-naturedly and one by one and in groups took themselves off—all but the three Anabaptists, who lingered behind. -172-

"What troubles thee, friend?" Jonas said sympathetically to John, when all had gone, and he looked toward them inquiringly.

"The fact is, my mother was to have returned to Leyden with my fiancée before this hour, and I am a little troubled to know they are so late upon the road. I imagine I feel the more anxious because of some bad dreams I have had lately—two nights." He added, trying to smile.

"Pray tell us what your dreams were. We can some of us interpret dreams. Come! Perhaps they mean good rather than bad," Jonas urged.

"Why, I dreamed that I was standing in a beautiful temple, with everything very splendid about me, while everybody was bowing down to me——"

"Well, that is good!" Jonas interrupted.

"Ah! but wait! A crown was on my brow and a hidden choir were chanting a sacred chant. They kept repeating: 'This is the new king! the king whom heaven has given us.' And then upon a blazing marble tablet there appeared the words 'Woe through thee! Woe through thee!' And as I was about to draw my sword I was nearly drowned in a sea of blood. To escape that I tried to mount the throne beside me. But I and the throne were swept away by a frightful storm which rose. And at that moment the Devil began to drag me down, while the people cried: 'Let him be accursed!' But out of the sky came a voice and it cried 'Mercy—mercy to him!' and then I woke trembling with the vividness of my dream. I have dreamed thus twice. It troubles me." And he paused abstractedly, listening to the storm without, which seemed to grow more boisterous. -173-

"Friend, let me interpret that dream as it should be understood. It means that you are born to reign over the people. You may go through difficulties to reach your throne, but you shall reign over the people."

"Humph!" he answered, smiling incredulously, "I may reign, but it shall be a reign of love over this little domestic world of mine. I want my mother and my sweetheart, and want no more. Let them arrive safely this night, and I'll hand over that dream-throne to you!" he answered, going to the door.

"Listen again!" Jonas persisted. "You do not know us but you have heard of us. We are those holy men who have been travelling through Holland, telling people their sacred rights as human beings; and pointing out to them that God never meant them for slaves. Join us, and that throne you dreamed of shall become a real one, and thine! Come! Consent, and you go with us. That kingdom shall be yours. You have the head and heart and the behaviour of a brave and good man." Thus they urged him, but John only put them aside. He listened to them half in derision.

"Wait till I get my Bertha and my mother safe into this house this night, then we'll think of that fine kingdom ye are planning for me," he said. The Anabaptists seeing that his mind was too troubled with his own affairs, got up and went out.

"Well, thank heaven!" John cried when they had gone. "What queer fellows, to be sure! I wish it were not so late——" At that moment a great noise arose outside the inn. "What can that mean?" he said to himself, standing in the middle of the floor, hardly daring to look out, he was so disturbed. The noise became greater. -174-

"It is the galloping of soldiers, by my faith!" he cried, and was starting toward the

door when it was burst open and Bertha threw herself into his arms.

"What is this! What has happened? Good heaven! you are all torn and——"

"Save me, save and hide me!" she cried. "Thy mother is coming. The soldiers are after us—look!" And glancing toward the window he saw Oberthal coming near with his soldiers. He hastily hid Bertha behind some curtains in one part of the room, just as Oberthal rushed in.

He demanded Bertha, telling John how he had taken the two women and was carrying them to Haarlem when Bertha got away. Now he had Faith, the mother, and would keep her as hostage, unless Bertha was instantly given into his hands. Upon hearing that, John was distracted with grief.

"Give her up, or I'll kill this old woman before thy eyes!" he declared brutally. John was torn between love for his old mother and for his sweetheart, and while he stood staring wildly at Oberthal the soldiers brought his mother in and were about to cleave her head in twain when Bertha tore the curtains apart. She could not let John sacrifice his mother for her. Oberthal fairly threw her into the arms of his soldiers, while the old mother stretched her arms toward John, who fell upon a seat with his head in his hands. Then, after the soldiers and Oberthal had gone, the poor old woman tried to comfort him, but his grief was so tragic that he could not endure it, and he begged her to go to her room and leave him alone for a time. Soon after she had gone out, John heard the strange chant of the Anabaptists. He raised his head -175-
and listened—that was like his dream—the sacred chant!

"It is my dream," he said. Then he started up furiously. "It is my revenge. If those strange men should come again and ask——" And at that very moment they summoned him to the door. They knew what had passed, and believed it a good time to persuade him to join them.

"Enter, enter, enter!" he cried, half beside himself with his grief; and the three strange creatures came in.

"John of Leyden, we come to offer you a throne once more, and with it your revenge for what has happened here this night."

"I will join thee for my revenge. I need no throne—but my revenge! I must have my revenge!"

"Come, and thou shalt have it. Work henceforth as we direct, and as that sainted figure of David, beloved by those of Westphalia, and we promise you revenge against the whole nobility of Holland. Come!"

"Aye—thou shalt be to Holland what Jeanne d'Arc was to France!"

John went softly, yet quivering with hate and sorrow, to his mother's door.

"She mutters a prayer in her sleep," he said, hesitating what to do, yet overwhelmed with misfortune and fury.

"Thy revenge!" whispered Zacharia in his ear. John of Leyden looked at him darkly a moment, then:

"Let us go," he said, and the four conspirators went softly from the old inn.

ACT III

At the close of day, at the foot of an ice-covered mountain, forests on every side, the Anabaptists were encamped in Westphalia. John of Leyden had gone to that part of -176-
Germany under the direction of Jonas, Mathison, and Zacharia, and being introduced to the people as a sainted man, all had fallen down and worshipped him and he had become a great power. So many had rallied round him that his army had become very large, and the nobles and their families were fleeing from it in consternation.

Just before nightfall, while all seemed quiet in camp, a noise of battle was heard far off, which grew louder and louder, telling of the approach of the fighters. Finally, the noise of combat was right at hand, and when the soldiers rushed into the camp there was great confusion. Among the prisoners were men and women richly dressed, little children, and old people, all prisoners, or flying on every side. The Anabaptists were ferocious in their joy over every success, and since John of Leyden had joined and led them they had been most successful.

Peasants came into camp with baskets and loads of food, while those things were bought by giving in exchange many spoils of war—rich vases and fine stuffs of all sorts. Then the soldiers fell to eating and drinking, being served by their women and children while there was dancing and general rejoicing.

Many of the girls who had brought provisions into camp had skated over miles of frozen waterway, thinking little of such a performance in that country, and all was gaiety and expectation. It was known that the Emperor was marching against the

Anabaptist army, and while John of Leyden had been very successful, he had as yet no stronghold; so he decided, after talking with Jonas and the other two seditionists, to attack the city of Münster itself. That city was held by the father of the Count Oberthal, who had carried off Bertha. -177-

Then, when the rout and camp gaiety were at their height, a stranger who had been seen wandering about the camp was brought in. He was looked upon with suspicion, and it was decided that he must immediately take an oath to belong to the Anabaptists. He agreed to do so and then, while every one was talking about the Prophet, the stranger was brought before Jonas.

"Who is it?" he asked, for outside the rays of the camp lights the wood was dark.

"One who is ready to take the oath and join us," was the answer.

"Very well, but in this dense wood who can see anything at this time of the night? Strike a light there."

"Yes, have a care, brother," said Zacharia. "Let us be certain the man is sincere in his purpose to join us."

"To-morrow we go to take Münster, which is in the hands of that traitor Oberthal," Mathison said.

The stranger started violently.

"We shall massacre the wretch and his people," Jonas continued.

"Massacre!" the stranger exclaimed, then aside he murmured "my father!" because in truth the stranger who had been caught near the camp was none other than the Oberthal who had carried away Bertha.

The three Anabaptists continued to speak in so blood-thirsty a manner of their exploits that Oberthal was horrified by the thought that it was his father who was to fall into their hands on the morrow. More than that, they expected him to swear to join their expedition.

"Well, here we stand, talking in the darkness still. Let us get out of it," Jonas cried, and they moved toward the light of the camp, taking Oberthal with them. Suddenly when in the bright light, Jonas recognized his old master who had sent him away and -178-
punished him for stealing.

"Heaven! Well, I have you now!" he cried, wickedly. "Now I'll make short work of you!" and he called the guard. "Here! surround him. Lead him instantly to execution."

"Without consulting the Prophet?" all cried in amazement. That was high-handed work, indeed.

"Wait for nothing. Kill him," Jonas cried, going excitedly by one path, as John the Prophet came upon the scene by another. He was sad and cast down, and Zacharia spoke to him. "What is wrong with you?"

"I get small joy from all this," he answered. "Jeanne d'Arc was born to such affairs, but I was better off in my inn, serving my people. It is a bad business," and he was very melancholy.

"What is this you say?"

"I say that I think of my Bertha and my mother. I wish I were with them, while others were reforming Holland."

"But thy mother and thy sweetheart, since they got into the hands of Oberthal, are doubtless dead."

"Then there is little for me to fight for. I shall stop now; do you carry on your schemes as best you may. Who is that prisoner?" he asked, as Oberthal was brought back by the soldiers.

"It is a man who is about to be executed."

"Oh—he is? Who says so, since I say otherwise?" John replied, looking at Zacharia contemptuously. "I am thy Prophet," he declared with hardly less contempt in his tone than before. "I am thy Prophet and settle these matters of life and death. I settle this one. Yonder man shall not die. I am in a humane mood." He motioned the guard -179-
to bring Oberthal, whom he had not yet seen, before him. When face to face, John of Leyden lifted his eyes and looked again upon the man who had brought all his woes upon him; who had so persecuted him that he had in a mad moment left his peaceful inn, and undertaken to change the face of Germany. He had already wrought untold pain and suffering.

"Oberthal!" he said, hardly able to speak because of his emotion.

"Ah! thou wilt still treat him tenderly, I doubt not!" Zacharia cried, sneeringly. For a moment John of Leyden could not speak; then he said:

"Leave us!" His tone was awful, yet showed great self-repression.

"So!" he said, after gazing at Oberthal a moment. "Heaven has delivered thee into my hands!"

"It is just. My crime merits my punishment," Oberthal said in a low voice. "But I will tell thee one thing which is thy due and may save my soul from damnation: thy Bertha, to save herself from my hands, threw herself into the sea, and thus escaped me."

"Dead, dead!" John of Leyden said, bowing his head a moment upon his hands.

"No! there is more. Touched with remorse, I saved her."

"And then,—speak!"

"She fled to Münster, and I was on my way there to find her and to try to restore her to thee, when I was arrested."

"Oberthal, thy fate shall rest with her. I spare thee till she shall pronounce sentence upon thee." He had no sooner spoken than Mathison rushed in and cried that the troops had rebelled, and that John alone could stop the riot and stay the ruin. "The -180-
gates of Münster have been thrown open, its army has marched upon us, and our men are fleeing."

"Run! run!" John of Leyden shouted. "After them, and turn them back. Münster must be ours!" And he rushed off, the Anabaptists following.

When he managed to rally the soldiers, they turned upon him and accused him of being a false Prophet.

"Ye promised us to take Münster; thy dallying has lost it to us. We shall no longer tolerate a rule like thine. Thou art no Prophet." But since learning that Bertha was within the city of Münster, John of Leyden's purpose had become fixed. If he entered that city at all, it must be as a conqueror; because as a seditionist his head was wanted there. Yet if he did not enter he could not find Bertha.

When they had cried death to the Prophet, John of Leyden calmly, with great impressiveness, made them cower before his rage.

"I punish rebellion like this. If you have come to grief—or if the cause shall—it is because you have offended God by your haste, and by your disobedience to me," he cried, while the soldiers shouted:

"He speaks like a holy man! We have done wrong."

"Get to your knees, you impious men!" he cried, seeing his advantage over them, and they all fell upon their knees. His personality had gained the control over a great people once again. With this spirit of enthusiasm aroused, the city of Münster was soon taken, and a great hymn of triumph went up. All the people likened John of Leyden to David, and rallied round him, proclaiming him king. -181-

ACT IV

Before the city hall of the city of Münster, many citizens were collected, and many were continually arriving, bearing rich bronzes, and chests of treasure, which they were hoping to save for themselves by placing them under the direct protection of the city. The invading hosts of John's army filled all with fear. No one was more furious against the Prophet than Bertha, who, being in Münster, had no thought that the Prophet who had laid waste the whole country could be her beloved sweetheart.

The public square before the city hall was soon invaded by the soldiers of John, who were crying, "Long live the Prophet!" while answering cries of "Down with him! down with thy Prophet!" were courageously shouted by the people of Münster.

"This Prophet who is to be crowned King of the Anabaptists; he is of Satan and not of Heaven!" The whole city was full of despair.

While all was in confusion, Faith, John's mother, was seen to wander in and kneel in prayer.

"What art thou doing there, mother?" one of the crowd questioned.

"I am praying for my son. I am begging for money that I may buy masses for his soul. I am hungry and cold. I am alone in the world. All the world seems buried in grief. I pray. There is no other hope save in prayer!" she moaned, little thinking that it was her son who had brought upon a nation so much desolation, and who at the same time was about to be crowned by the revolutionists. As people passed, they dropped money into her hand, and some led her a little way to a seat where she could rest her -182-

weary body. She had become very old and trembling since that night when she had last seen her son. She had wandered from the old inn in search of him, and had never found him; and she had no sooner left the old home than Bertha, saved from Oberthal, had flown to the inn again, to throw herself into the strong arms of her lover. She had found the place closed, for Faith and John had gone, no one knew where.

After begging and praying in the public square, Faith found herself near a sick and almost helpless man, close to the palace toward which she had wandered. Many people were about. The Prophet was going to be crowned, so it was rumoured. Among others, Bertha had wandered near.

"Thou poor, helpless brother," said Faith. "Let me, out of my poverty, help thee a little." At the sound of that voice Bertha paused, turned, and nearly shrieked. She had wandered alone and hopeless; and there stood Faith, her lover's mother.

"Oh, dear mother!" she cried, and they threw themselves into each other's arms.

"Oh, mother! How I sought for thee!" she sobbed. "Since you were not to be found in Leyden, I turned myself toward Münster, hoping against hope to find you or John. Now take me to him. Let us go quickly!" she urged, but old Faith held back.

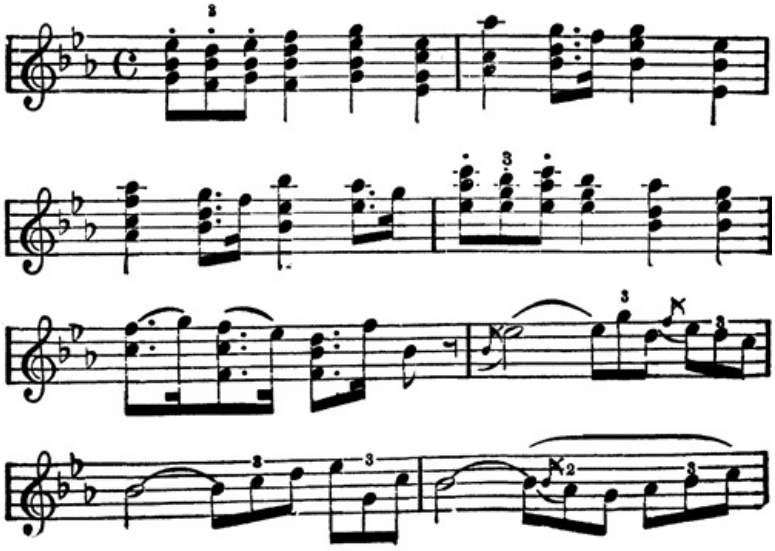
"My child, he is dead. I heard a voice declare to me that I should see him no more. It was an unseen voice. He is dead." Whereupon, both women fell to weeping in each other's arms.

"It has to do with these wicked men who have brought ruin upon Germany!—these Anabaptists!" Bertha cried. "Oh, John, if thou couldst rise from thy grave and help me now. Thy courage and goodness would raise up men to drive back these who do bad deeds in the name of God." -183-

She cursed the famous Prophet, neither of them dreaming who he might be, and that desolation had come because the man whom they loved best had sought revenge for the wrongs done to them. With those curses in their hearts, the forlorn women wandered on with the crowd toward the cathedral where the Prophet was to be crowned.

Some of his suite had already gone into the church, but many were arriving in a grand procession. The appearance of the Prophet's guard aroused great indignation among the citizens, who were compelled to look on helplessly.

Then came the Prophet himself, garbed all in white, from head to foot, and a wonderful march was being played, while the spectacle grew each moment more and more magnificent.



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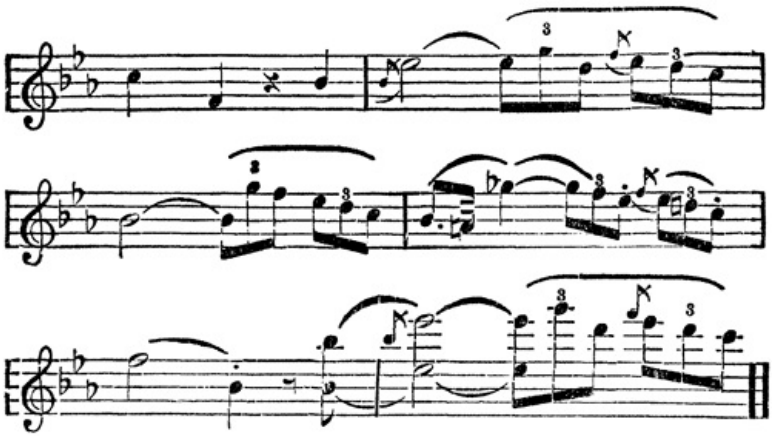


[Listen]

As John the Prophet passed, the revolutionary crowd threw themselves at his feet; young girls strewed flowers in his path, the choir chanted. Then, the Anabaptists having deposed the Elector Princes, were to take their places. The Prophet was anointed with holy oil, a great and impressive ceremony took place, and all the city rang with the cries that proclaimed him king. Faith and Bertha could not see the new king, but they were in the crowd, and they cursed this Prophet again—none so vigorously as Bertha, while Faith hailed her as a new Judith. After a time, all being prostrate upon their knees awaiting the reëntrance of the Prophet from the church, John appeared upon the great staircase which led from the cathedral. As he stood there looking unhappily upon all of those abased people who seemed to be worshipping him, he thought he heard the voice of his dream of long ago. "Woe through thee! Let him be accursed!" Overcome by the memory, he uttered those words aloud. Faith heard the voice and screamed:

"My son! my son!" John of Leyden trembled and started toward her, his arms outstretched, but Mathison, knowing the disastrous effect such an acknowledgment would have upon the crowd who believed him of holy origin, said in a low voice to John: -185-

"Speak! reply to her, and she shall die, instantly! Deny thy mother, or she shall be killed before thine eyes." The Anabaptists had no mind to lose all they had risked so much for, when it was just within their grasp. John looked at his mother, in agony and then he regained his self-possession.

"Who is this woman?" he asked: it was to save her life that he did it.

At that cold denial of her, Faith clasped her hands and wept. Then she became enraged at his ingratitude, and began to upbraid him.

"This poor wretch is mad," he said, but by that time the crowd was beginning to murmur against him.

"He said he was the son of God! He is an impostor." The Anabaptists seeing how fatal the effect of Faith's words was going to be, spoke menacingly to John. Then John cried, as Jonas raised his sword to strike the old mother down:

"Hold! respect the day! I, thy Prophet, hath to-day received His crown. No bloodshed. This poor creature is demented. A miracle alone can restore her reason," and he went toward Faith. "Woman, to thy knees!" he said, but she made a gesture of indignation. He continued to go toward her, then laying his hands lovingly upon her head he looked meaningly into her eyes.

"To thy knees." His voice was soft and gentle, and slowly Faith fell upon her knees, half comprehending that he was acting as fate compelled him.

"Put up thy swords!" he commanded the people who had drawn them. Then to Faith: "Thou wert wrong, good mother!" She looked at him a moment longer. -186-

"Yes!—wrong," she said, and bowed her head. At that the people burst into cries of enthusiasm.

"Is he thy child?" Jonas asked loudly, placing his sword-point upon her breast.

"Alas! No, he is not my son!" she answered in a weak voice.

"A miracle! A miracle!" all cried, and then the Prophet passed on, Faith looking after him without following, the people again acclaiming him with joyous shouts.

ACT V

In a dungeon underneath the palace, John found his mother. He went to the place

where he had privately ordered the Anabaptists to have her taken, the moment he could leave the ceremonies of his coronation. The feast of the day was yet to come, but while the ceremonies had been going on, the three Anabaptists had had a message from the Emperor of Germany, which promised safety to themselves, if they would give the Prophet into his hands. They had treacherously decided to do this at the coronation feast.

In the dungeon the poor old mother had huddled down, no longer in fear, because her grief had rendered her insensible to everything else.

"I forgive him," she sobbed, thinking of her son. "Let no ill come to him for what he has done to me this day." As she was thus plunged in deepest grief, the iron door opened, flambeaux lighted the palace up, and the guard cried the Prophet's name. -187-

"Woman, get upon thy knees; the Prophet is coming to thee," an officer said.

She started up: "He is coming here—I shall see him?" she whispered to herself. Then the guard left, and John of Leyden came in. He ran toward his mother.

"Mother! My mother!" he cried.

"Nay!" she answered. "In the crowd I obeyed thee—I read some strange message in thy face. But here, with only God's eye upon thee, go down on thy knees before me."

"Oh, mother, I love thee!"

But the old mother reproached him with what he had done—how he had brought a people to despair and had imposed himself upon them as the son of God; but all the while she chided him, she loved him dearly.

"It was my wrongs that made me do this thing, mother," he urged.

But she showed him all his wickedness with such vehemence that he could not answer, and could only weep. Then she spoke quietly.

"If thou art remorseful for thy sins, proclaim thy wrong. Be thyself, John of Leyden, the innkeeper, my son!"

"Desert my soldiers?" he asked, in a frightened voice. "I have led others into danger —dare I desert them?"

"Thy mother demands it: it is the only way to right thy wrongdoing. The blessing of God will only then descend upon thee." The Prophet, overwhelmed by her command, opened his arms to Heaven as a sign that he would obey, and Faith threw herself upon his breast.

Now Bertha, utterly distracted by her troubles, had disguised herself as a pilgrim, and in her madness she had determined to set fire to the stores of wood beneath the palace. She found her way into the dungeon just as John and his mother were embracing. As the iron doors were heard to open again, John turned around and saw a woman enter. As she saw John she cried bitterly: -188-

"Behold the Prophet!" Both John and Faith cried out upon recognizing her voice.

"Now, let us perish together!" Bertha said, wildly, approaching John. Then suddenly recognizing him she stifled a scream:

"Thou! the Prophet is thou? My God, my God! Then let us perish now!" She stared in horror at the man she loved, who was also the man she had cursed and despised—the famous Prophet.

"Oh, my child, speak low, speak low!" Faith implored, looking anxiously toward the iron door. "Abandon thy hate. I have found my son. He will do right. Have pity upon him," the old mother pleaded. Bertha looking at him, felt all the love of her heart enfold him again. The madness died out her eyes.

"Yes. Let us not hate. Let us curse no more. Far from this dread city, we three were to have been happy. Yes, I love thee still; but still thou art the infamous man whom I have cursed. Since I love thee, let this atone for thee," and before he could answer, she had plunged a dagger into her heart and fallen dead at his feet.

Then John summoned the guard. He no longer cared to live. The officer of the guard, who was faithful to him, told him, when he entered, of the plot to give him over to the Emperor, while the coronation feast was in progress.

"Very well. I am satisfied. Do thou take my mother to a place of safety. I shall be at the feast," he said significantly. Embracing his mother, he handed her into the care of the astonished guard, and left the dungeon. -189-

Nothing could have been more magnificent than the banquet prepared for the coronation. The tables were loaded with golden dishes, and young women passed, scattering flowers, while pages in gay dress ran hither and thither. There, John entered, and sat apart, as had been arranged. He was pale and sad. All was gaiety

about him, but he had prepared an awful fate for his betrayers. In the vaults of the palace were stored powder and firearms of all sorts. Just above those vaults was the banqueting room, which had great iron gates closed at one end. The company could only leave the room by those gates. John of Leyden had brought two officers whom he could trust into the hall with him, and unheard, he commanded them to close and lock the gates as soon as the Anabaptists Zacharia, Mathison, and Jonas, with Oberthal, the great power of Münster and the Bishops—all who were his enemies and to whom the Anabaptists meant to betray him—were assembled.

Then the feast began. All hailed the Prophet in loud voices, pretending great affection and faith in him. In the midst of a dance by which the guests were entertained, Faith, whom he thought quite safe, entered. She knew what he had done —that he meant to blow up the palace by firing the vaults below, and she had determined to die with her son. The Prophet had not yet seen her.

The Anabaptists and John's enemies spoke apart, and John watched them cynically. He knew well what they intended, and that he had them trapped.

"Now close the gates," he said in a low voice to his officers. "Lock them." He had not seen his mother. When the gates were closed, he turned smilingly to the company. -190- He called for wine.

"Let us drink!" he cried. Then Oberthal rose and shouted:

"Thou art mine, great Prophet! Surrender thyself." Still the Prophet smiled at them. Jonas then cried:

"Yes, thou tyrant—thou art betrayed. We have thee fast! Surrender!"

"Oh, ye poor creatures," he answered. "Listen! do ye hear nothing?" Still smiling upon them, as they stared at him, they heard a strange rumbling below. The train he had laid to blow up the palace had fired the powder.

"Thy time has come!" John of Leyden cried, and the vast hall began to fill with smoke and powder fumes. Riot reigned, and just at that moment Faith, her gray hair streaming about her, pushed through the crowd and threw herself into her son's arms. He gave a great cry of agony.

"Mother! Thou art here?"

"To die with thee, my son!" she shrieked, and with a roar the palace fell about their ears.

MOZART -191-

IT IS not at all probable that anything so ridiculous as the "Magic Flute" story was ever before written. It might have been the concerted effort of Artemus Ward, Theodore Hook, Bill Nye, and Mark Twain. But an effort at coherence must be made in the putting together of this story, because the opera is, above all things, one that every man, woman, and child should know. Mozart's lovely music could not be ruined, even by this story.

It has been said that the "Magic Flute" might have had some Masonic significance. That is quite likely, on the ground that it has no other significance whatever.

This opera proves one thing beyond a doubt: That Mozart could have written beautiful music with the New York Directory for a theme.

Rossini summed up Mozart very properly: "Who is the greatest musician in the world?" some one asked him. "Beethoven," Rossini answered. "But what about Mozart?" "Well, you see, Mozart is the *only* musician in the world," he answered, allowing of no comparisons! And he is the only one, yet, to some of us!

That he was a man of the most fascinating temper cannot be doubted, when one reads his memoirs. He was without any financial judgment. He could make money, but he couldn't keep it. There is a story illustrating the dominance of his heart over his head, told in connection with an offer of patronage from the King of Prussia. At -192- that time Mozart was Emperor Leopold's musician, and when he went to Leopold to offer his resignation and take advantage of the better arrangement which the Prussian King had offered, Leopold said urgently: "But, Mozart, you surely are not going to forsake me?" "No, of course not," Mozart answered hastily. "May it please your Majesty, I shall remain." When his friends asked him if he had not been wise enough to make some demand to his own advantage at such a time, he answered in amazement: "Why, who could do such a thing—at such a time?"

His sentiment was charming, his character fascinating. He married Constance

Weber, herself a celebrated person. She was never tired of speaking and writing of her husband. It was she who told of his small, beautifully formed hands, and of his favourite amusements—playing at bowls and billiards. The latter sport, by the way, has been among the favoured amusements of many famous musicians; Paderewski is a great billiard player.

As a little child, Mozart had a father who "put him through," so to speak, he being compelled to play, and play and play, from the time he was six years old. At that age he drew the bow across his violin while standing in the custom-house at Vienna, on the way to play at Schönbrunn for the Emperor, and he charmed the officers so much that the whole Mozart family baggage was passed free of tax. While at the palace he was treated gorgeously, and among the Imperial family at that time was Marie Antoinette, then a young and gay princess. The young princesses treated little Wolfgang Mozart like a brother, and when he stumbled and fell in the drawing room, it happened to be Antoinette who picked him up. "Oh, you are good, I shall marry you!" he assured her. On that occasion the Mozart family received the sum of only forty pounds for his playing, with some additions to the family wardrobe thrown in. -193-

Most composers have had favourite times and seasons for work—in bed, with a heap of sausages before them, or while out walking. Beethoven used to pour cold water over his hands till he soaked off the ceiling of the room below; in short, most musicians except Mozart had some surprising idiosyncrasy. He needed even no instrument when composing music. He could enjoy a game of bowls, sitting and making his MS. while the game was in progress, and leaving his work to take his turn. He was not strong, physically, and was often in poor circumstances, but wherever he was there was likely to be much excitement and gaiety. He would serenely write his music on his knee, on his table, wherever and however he chanced to be; and was most at ease when his wife was telling him all the gossip of the day while he worked. After all, that is the true artist. Erraticalness is by no means the thing that makes a man great, though he sometimes becomes great in spite of it, but for the most part it is carefully cultivated through conceit.

Mozart's burial was probably the most extraordinary commentary on fame and genius ever known. The day he was buried, it was stormy weather and all the mourners, few enough to start with, had dropped off long before the graveyard was reached. He was to be buried third class, and as there had already been two pauper funerals that day, a midwife's, and another's, Mozart's body was to be placed on top. No one was at the grave except the assistant gravedigger and his mother.

"Who is it?" the mother asked. -194-

"A bandmaster," the hearse driver answered.

"Well, Gott! there isn't anything to be expected then. So hurry up!" Thus the greatest of musical geniuses was done with this world.

Germany has given us the greatest musicians, but she leaves other people to take care of them, to love them, and to bury them—or to leave them go "third-class."

THE MAGIC FLUTE

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Queen of the Night.
Pamina (Queen's daughter).
Papagena.
Three ladies of the Queen's Court.
Three Genii of the Temple.
Tamino, an Egyptian Prince.
Monostatos, a Moor in the service of Sarastro.
Sarastro, High Priest of the Temple.
Papageno, Tamina's servant.
Speaker of the Temple.
Two priests.
Two armed men.

Chorus of priests of the Temple, slaves, and attendants.

The scene is near the Temple of Isis, in Egypt.

Composer: Mozart.

ACT I

ONCE upon a time an adventurous Egyptian youth found himself near to the Temple of Isis. He had wandered far, had clothed himself in another habit than that worn by his people, and by the time he reached the temple he had spent his arrows, and had nothing but his useless bow left. In this predicament, he saw a monstrous serpent

who made after him, and he fled. He had nothing to fight with, and was about to be caught in the serpent's fearful coils when the doors of the temple opened and three ladies ran out, each armed with a fine silver spear. -195-

They had heard the youth's cries of distress, and had rushed out to assist him. Immediately they attacked the monster and killed it, while Tamino lay panting upon the ground. When they went to him they found him unconscious. He seemed to be a very noble and beautiful youth, whose appearance was both heroic and gentle, and they were inspired with confidence in him.

"May not this youth be able, in return for our services to him, to help us in our own troubles?" they inquired of each other; for they belonged to the court of the Queen of the Night, and that sovereign was in great sorrow. Her beautiful daughter, Pamina, had been carried away, and none had been able to discover where she was hidden. There was no one in the court who was adventurous enough to search in certain forbidden and perilous places for her.

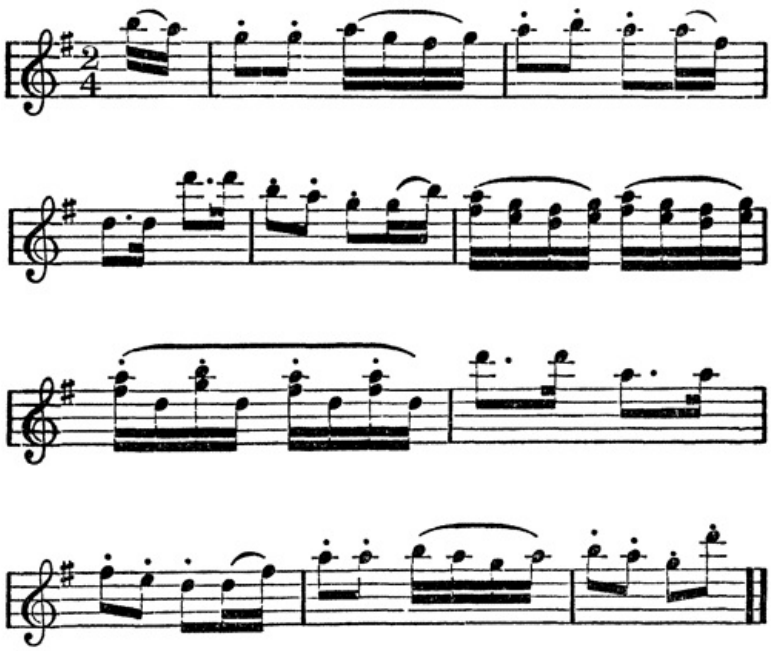
As Tamino lay exhausted upon the ground, one of the women who had rescued him declared that she would remain to guard him—seeing he had no arrows—while the others should go and tell the Queen that they had found a valiant stranger who might help them.

At this suggestion the other two set up a great cry.

"You stay to guard the youth! Nay, I shall stay myself. Go thou and tell Her Majesty." Thereupon they all fell to quarrelling as to who should remain beside the handsome youth and who should go. Each declared openly that she could gaze upon him forever, because he was such a beauty, which would doubtless have embarrassed Tamino dreadfully if he had not been quite too tired to attend to what they said. -196-

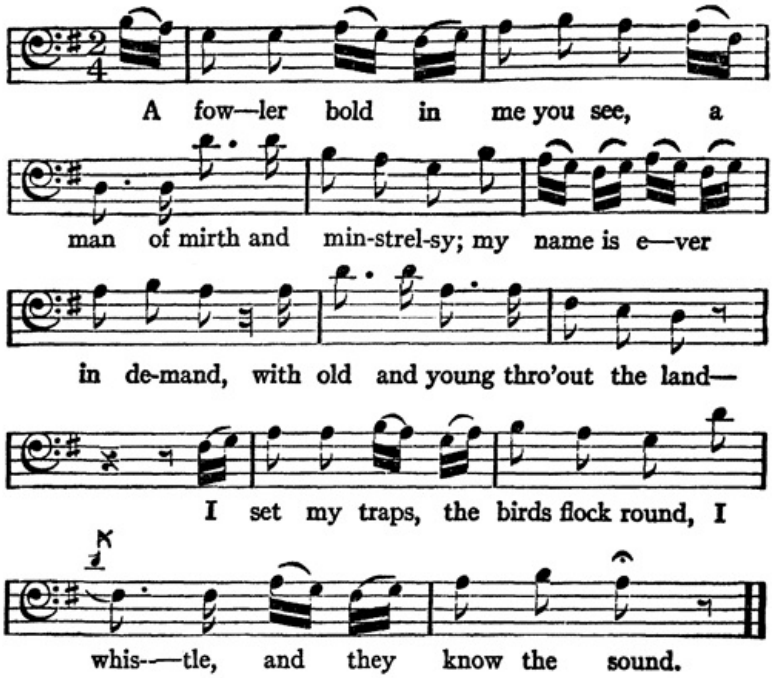
The upshot of it was that all three went, rather than leave any one of them to watch with him. When they had disappeared into the temple once more, Tamino half roused himself and saw the serpent lying dead beside him.

"I wonder where I can be?" he mused. "I was saved in the nick of time: I was too exhausted to run farther," and at that moment he heard a beautiful strain of music, played upon a flute:



[Listen]

He raised himself to listen attentively, and soon he saw a man descending from among the rocks behind the temple. Still fearful of new adventures while he was unarmed and worn, Tamino rose and hid himself in the trees. The man's name was Papageno, and he carried a great cage filled with birds upon his back; in both hands he held a pipe, which was like the pipe of Pan, and it was upon this that he was making music. He also sang: -197-



[Listen]

A fowler bold in me you see,
A man of mirth and minstrelsy;
My name is ever in demand,
With old and young thro'out the land—
I set my traps, the birds flock round,
I whistle, and they know the sound.

For wealth my lot I'd not resign,
For every bird that flies is mine.

I am a fowler, bold and free,
A man of mirth and minstrelsy;
My name is ever in demand,
With old and young throughout the land.
But nets to set for pretty maids:
That were the most divine of trades.

I'd keep them safe 'neath lock and key,
And all I caught should be for me.

So that exceedingly jolly fellow sang as he passed Tamino. He was about to enter the temple when Tamino, seeing he had nothing to fear, stopped him. -198-

"Hello, friend! Who are you?"

"I ask the same," the fowler answered, staring at Tamino.

"That is easily answered. I am a prince and a wanderer. My father reigns over many lands and tribes."

"Ah, ha! Perhaps in that land of thine I might do a little trade in birds," the fowler said, jovially.

"Is that how you make your living?" Tamino asked him.

"Surely! I catch birds and sell them to the Queen of the Night and her ladies."

"What does the Queen look like?" Tamino asked, somewhat curious.

"How do I know? Pray, who ever saw the Queen of the Night?"

"You say so? Then she must be the great Queen of whom my father has often spoken."

"I shouldn't wonder."

"Well, let me thank you for killing that great serpent. He nearly did for me," Tamino replied, taking it for granted that the man before him had been the one to rescue him, since he had fallen unconscious before he had seen the ladies. The fowler looked about at the dead serpent.

"Perfectly right! A single grasp of mine would kill a bigger monster than that," the fowler boasted, taking to himself the credit for the deed; but by this time the three ladies had again come from the temple and were listening to this boastful gentleman with the birds upon his back.

"Tell me, are the ladies of the court beautiful?" Tamino persisted.

"I should fancy not—since they go about with their faces covered. Beauties are not likely to hide their faces," he laughed boisterously. At that the ladies came toward him. Tamino beheld them with pleasure. -199-

"Now give us thy birds," they said to the fowler, who became suddenly very much quieter and less boastful. He gave them the birds and received, instead of the wine he expected, according to custom, a bottle of water.

"Here, for the first time, her Majesty sends you water," said she who had handed him the bottle; and another, holding out something to him, said:

"And instead of bread she sends you a stone."

"And," said the other, "she wishes that ready mouth of yours to be decorated with this instead of the figs she generally sends," and at that she put upon his lips a golden padlock, which settled his boasting for a time. "Now indicate to this youth who killed that serpent," she continued. But the fowler could only show by his actions that he had no idea who did it.

"Very well; then, dear youth, let me tell you that you owe your life to us." Tamino was ready to throw himself at the feet of such beautiful champions, but one of them interrupted his raptures by giving him a miniature set in jewels.

"Look well at this: our gracious Queen has sent it to you."

Tamino gazed long at the portrait and was beside himself with joy, because he found the face very beautiful indeed.

"Is this the face of your great Queen?" he cried. They shook their heads. "Then tell me where I may find this enchanting creature!"

"This is our message: If the face is beautiful to thee and thou would'st make it thine, thou must be valiant. It is the face of our Queen's daughter, who has been carried away by a fierce demon, and none have dared seek for her." -200-

"For that beautiful maiden?" Tamino cried in amazement. "I dare seek for her! Only tell me which way to go, and I will rescue her from all the demons of the inferno. I shall find her and make her my bride." He spoke with so much energy and passion that the ladies were quite satisfied that they had found a knight to be trusted.

"Dear youth, she is hidden in our own mountains, but——" At that moment a peal of thunder startled everybody.

"Heaven! What may that be?" Tamino cried, and even as he spoke, the rocks parted and the Queen of the Night stood before them.

"Be not afraid, noble youth. A clear conscience need have no fear. Thou shalt find my daughter, and when she is restored to my arms, she shall be thine." With this promise the Queen of the Night disappeared as suddenly as she had come. Then the poor boastful fowler began to say "hm, hm, hm, hm," and motion to his locked mouth.

"I cannot help thee, poor wretch," Tamino declared. "Thou knowest that lock was put upon thee to teach thee discretion." But one of the women went to him and told him that by the Queen's commands she now would set him free.

"And this, dear youth," she said, going to Tamino and giving him a golden flute, "is for thee. Take it, and its magic will guard thee from all harm. Wherever thou shalt wander in search of the Queen's daughter, this enchanted flute will protect thee. Only play upon it. It will calm anger and soothe the sorrowing." -201-

"Thou, Papageno," said another, "art to go with the Prince, by the Queen's command, to Sarastro's castle, and serve him faithfully." At that the fowler was frightened half to death.

No indeed! that I decline.
From yourselves have I not heard
That he's fiercer than the pard?
If by him I were accosted
He would have me plucked and roasted.

"Have no fear, but do as you are bid. The Prince and his flute shall keep thee safe from Sarastro."

I wish the Prince at all the devils;
For death nowise I search;

What if, to crown my many evils,
He should leave me in the lurch?

He did not feel half as brave as he had seemed when he told Tamino how he had killed the serpent.

Then another of the ladies of the court gave to Papageno a chime of bells, hidden in a casket.

"Are these for me?" he asked.

"Aye, and none but thou canst play upon them. With a golden chime and a golden flute, thou art both safe. The music of these things shall charm the wicked heart and soothe the savage breast. So, fare ye well, both." And away went the two strange adventurers, Papageno and Tamino, one a prince, the other a bird-catcher.

Scene II

After travelling for a week and a day, the two adventurers came to a fine palace. Tamino sent the fowler with his chime of bells up to the great place to spy out what he could, and he was to return and bring the Prince news. -202-

Without knowing it they had already arrived at the palace of Sarastro, and at that very moment Pamina, the Queen's daughter, was in great peril.

In a beautiful room, furnished with divans, and everything in Egyptian style, sat Monostatos, a Moor, who was in the secrets of Sarastro, who had stolen the Princess. Monostatos had just had the Princess brought before him and had listened malignantly to her pleadings to be set free.

"I do not fear death," she was saying; "but it is certain that if I do not return home, my mother will die of grief."

"Well, I have had enough of thy meanings, and I shall teach thee to be more pleasing; so minions," calling to the guards and servants of the castle, "chain this tearful young woman's hands, and see if it will not teach her to make herself more agreeable." As the slaves entered, to place the fetters upon her hands, the Princess fell senseless upon a divan.

"Away, away, all of you!" Monostatos cried, just as Papageno peeped in at the palace window.

"What sort of place is this?" Papageno said to himself, peering in curiously. "I think I will enter and see more of it." Stepping in, he saw the Princess senseless upon the divan, and the wretched Moor bending over her. At that moment the Moor turned round and saw Papageno. They looked at each other, and each was frightened half to death.

"Oh, Lord!" each cried at the same moment. "This must be the fiend himself."

"Oh, have mercy!" each shrieked at each other.

"Oh, spare my life," they yelled in unison, and then, at the same moment each fled from the other, by a different way. At the same instant, Pamina awoke from her swoon, and began to call pitiably for her mother. Papageno heard her and ventured back. -203-

"She's a handsome damsel, and I'll take a chance, in order to rescue her," he determined, feeling half safe because of his chime of bells.

"Why, she is the very image of the Prince's miniature and so it must be the daughter of the Queen of the Night," he decided, taking another good look at her.

"Who art thou?" she asked him, plaintively.

"Papageno," he answered.

"I do not know the name. But I am the daughter of the Queen of the Night."

"Well, I think you are, but to make sure"—He pulled from his pocket the portrait which had been given to him by the Prince and looked at it earnestly for a long time.

"According to this you shouldn't have any hands or feet," he announced gravely.

"But it is I," the Princess declared, looking in turn at the miniature. "Pray, where did you get this?"

"Your mother gave this to a young stranger, who instantly fell in love with you, and started to find you."

"In love with me?" she cried, joyfully.

"You'd think so if you saw the way he carries on about you," the fowler volunteered.

"And we are to carry you back to your mother even quicker than we came."

"Then you must be *very* quick about it, because Sarastro returns from the chase at noon exactly, and if he finds you here, you will never leave alive."

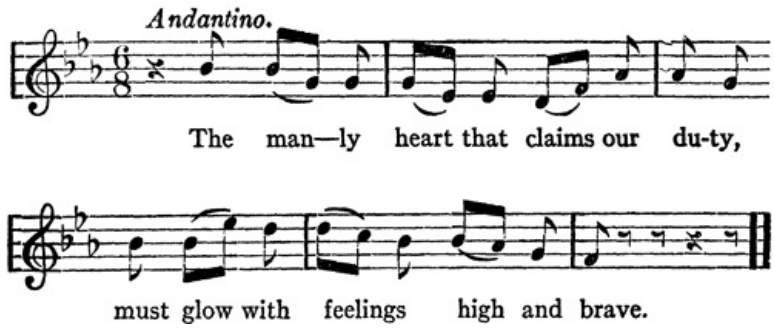
"Good! That will suit the Prince exactly." -204-

"But—if I should find that, after all, you are an evil spirit," she hesitated.

"On the contrary, you will find in me the best spirits in the world, so come along."

"You seem to have a good heart."

"So good that I ought to have a Papagena to share it," he answered, plaintively, whereupon Pamina sang affectingly:



[Listen]

The manly heart that claims our duty, must glow with feelings high and brave.

It is a very queer and incoherent opera, and not much sense to any of it, but, oh! it is beautiful music, and this duet between the fowler and Pamina is not the least of its beauties. At the end of it they rushed off together—Pamina to meet the Prince and be conducted back to her mother.

Scene III

In the meantime, Tamino, instead of looking for Pamina himself, had been invoking wisdom and help from a number of Genii he had come across. There were three temples, connected by colonnades, and above the portal of one of these was written, Temple of Wisdom; over another, Temple of Reason; the third, Temple of Nature. -205- These temples were situated in a beautiful grove, which Tamino entered with three Genii who each bore a silver palm branch.

"Now, pray tell me, ye wise ones, is it to be my lot to loosen Pamina's bonds?" he asked anxiously.

"It is not for us to tell thee this, but we say to thee, 'Go, be a man,' be steadfast and true and thou wilt conquer." They departed, leaving Tamino alone. Then he saw the temples.

"Perhaps she is within one of these temples," he cried; "and with the words of those wise Genii in my ears, I'll surely rescue her if she is there." So saying, he went up to one of them and was about to enter.

"Stand back!" a mysterious voice called from within.

"What! I am repulsed? Then I will try the next one," and he went to another of the temples.

"Stand back," again a voice called.

"Here too?" he cried, not caring to venture far. "There is still another door and I shall betake me to it." So he went to the third, and, when he knocked, an aged priest met him upon the threshold.

"What seek ye here?" he asked.

"I seek Love and Truth."

"That is a good deal to seek. Thou art looking for miscreants, thou art looking for revenge? Love, Truth, and Revenge do not belong together," the old priest answered.

"But the one I would revenge myself upon is a wicked monster."

"Go thy way. There is none such here," the priest replied.

"Isn't your reigning chief Sarastro?"

"He is—and his law is supreme." -206-

"He stole a princess."

"So he did—but he is a holy man, the chief of Truth—we cannot explain his motives to thee," the priest said, as he disappeared within and closed the door.

"Oh, if only she still lives!" Tamino cried, standing outside the temple.

"She lives, she lives!" a chorus within sang, and at that reassurance Tamino was quite wild with happiness. Then he became full of uncertainty and sadness again, for he remembered that he did not know where to find her, and he sat down to play upon his magic flute. As he played, wild animals came out to listen, and they crowded around him. While he was playing, lamenting the loss of Pamina, he was answered by Papageno from a little way off, and he leaped up joyously.

"Perhaps Papageno is coming with the Princess," he cried. He began to play lustily upon his flute again. "Maybe the sound will lead them here," he thought, and he hastened away thinking to overtake them. After he had gone, Pamina and Papageno ran in, she having heard the magic flute.

"Oh, what joy! He must be near, for I heard the flute," she cried, looking about. Suddenly her joy was dispelled by the appearance of Monostatos, who had flown after them as soon as he discovered Pamina's absence.

"Now I have caught you," he cried wickedly, but as he called to the slaves who attended him to bind Papageno, the latter thought of his chime of bells.

"Maybe they will save me," he cried, and at once he began to play. Then all the slaves began to dance, while Monostatos himself was utterly enchanted at the sweet sound. As the bells continued to chime, Monostatos and the slaves began to leave with a measured step, till the pair found themselves alone and once more quite safe. Then -207-
the chorus within began to sing "Long life to Sarastro," and at that the two trembled again.

"Sarastro! Now what is going to happen?" Papageno whispered.

While they stood trembling, Sarastro appeared, borne on a triumphal car, drawn by six lions, and followed by a great train of attendants and priests. The chorus all cried, "Long life to Sarastro! Long life to our guard and master!"

When Sarastro stepped from the car, Pamina knelt at his feet.

"Oh, your greatness!" she cried. "I have sorely offended thee in trying to escape, but the fault was not all mine. The wicked Moor, Monostatos, made the most violent love to me, and it was from him I fled."

"All is forgiven thee, but I cannot set thee free," Sarastro replied. "Thy mother is not a fitting guardian for thee, and thou art better here among these holy people. I know that thy heart is given to a youth, Tamino." As he spoke, the Moor entered, followed by Prince Tamino. For the first time the two lovers met, and they were at once enchanted with each other.

At once Monostatos's anger became very great, since he, too, loved the Princess. He summoned his slaves to part them. Kneeling in his turn at Sarastro's feet he protested that he was a good and valiant man, whom Sarastro knew well, and he complained that Pamina had tried to flee.

"Thou art about good enough to have the bastinado," Sarastro replied, and thereupon ordered the slaves to whip the false Moor, who was immediately led off to punishment. After that, Sarastro ordered the lovers to be veiled and led into the -208-
temple to go through certain rites. They were to endure a period of probation, and if they came through the ordeal of waiting for each other properly they were to be united.

ACT II

THE priests assembled in a grove of palms, where they listened to the story of Pamina and Tamino, told by Sarastro.

"The Princess was torn from the Queen of the Night, great priests, because that Queen would overthrow our temple, and here Pamina is to remain till purified; if you will accept this noble youth for her companion, after they have both been taught in the ways of wisdom, follow my example," and immediately Sarastro blew a blast upon a horn. All the priests blew their horns in concurrence.

Sarastro sang a hymn to the gods, and then he and his priests disappeared. Tamino and Papageno were next led in to the temple porch. It was entirely dark.

"Art thou still near me, Papageno?" he asked.

"Of course I am, but I don't feel very well. I think I have a fever. This is a queer sort of adventure."

"Oh, come, be a man. There is nothing to fear."

The priests asked Tamino at that moment why he had come to seek entrance in the temple.

"I came to find Friendship and Love," he replied.

"If you would have that, you must go through every trial; and how about you, Papageno?"

"Well, I do not care as much as I might for wisdom. Give me a nice little wife and a good bird-market, and I shall get on.'" -209-

"But thou canst not have those things, unless thou canst undergo our trials."

"Oh, well, I'll stay and face it out—but I must be certain of a wife at the end of it. Her name must be Papagena—and I'd like to have a look at her before I undertake all this sort of thing," he persisted.

"Oh, that is quite reasonable—but thou must promise not to speak with her."

"And Pamina?" Tamino suggested.

"Certainly—only thou too must not speak." Thus it was agreed, and the priests went out. Instantly the place was in darkness again.

"I should like to know why, the moment those chaps go out, we find ourselves in the dark?" Papageno demanded.

"That is one of our tests; one of our trials," Tamino responded. "Take it in good part." He was interrupted by the appearance of the three ladies of the Queen of the Night's court.

"Why are you in this place?" they demanded seductively. "It will ruin you."

"Do not say so," Tamino returned, stoutly, this being one of the temptations he was to meet: but Papageno was frightened enough. "Stop thy babbling, Papageno," Tamino cautioned. "Or thou wilt lose thy Papagena."

In short, the ladies did all that was possible to dishearten the youth and Papageno; but the Prince Tamino stood firm, and would not be frightened nor driven from his vow to the temple; but Papageno found himself in an awful state of mind, and finally fell down almost in a fit. At once the ladies sank through the temple floor.

Then the priests and a spokesman appeared and praised Tamino, threw another veil over him and led him out; but when a priest inquired of Papageno how it was with him, that fine gentlemen was so addled that he couldn't tell. -210-

"For me—I'm in a trance," he exclaimed.

"Well, come on," they said, and threw a veil over him also.

"This incessant marching takes away all thought of love," he complained.

"No matter, it will return"; and at that the priests marched him out, and the scene changed to a garden where Pamina was sleeping.

Scene II

Monostatos was watching the beautiful Pamina sleep, and remarking that, if he dared, he certainly should kiss her. In short, he was a person not to be trusted for a moment. He stole toward her, but in the same instant the thunder rolled and the Queen of the Night appeared from the depths of the earth.

"Away," she cried, and Pamina awoke.

"Mother, mother," she screamed with joy, while Monostatos stole away. "Let us fly, dear mother," Pamina urged.

"Alas, with thy father's death, I lost all my magic power, my child. He gave his sevenfold Shield of the Sun to Sarastro, and I have been perfectly helpless since."

"Then I have certainly lost Tamino," Pamina sobbed somewhat illogically.

"No, take this dagger and slay Sarastro, my love, and take the shield. That will straighten matters out."

Then the bloody Queen sang that the fires of hell were raging in her bosom. Indeed, she declared that if Pamina should not do as she was bidden and slay the priest, she would disown her. Thus Pamina had met with her temptation, and while she was rent between duty and a sense of decency—because she felt it would be very unpleasant -211-

to kill Sarastro—Monostatos entered and begged her to confide in him, that he of all people in the world was best able to advise her.

"What shall I do, then?" the trusting creature demanded.

"There is but one way in the world to save thyself and thy mother, and that is immediately to love me," he counselled.

"Good heaven! The remedy is worse than the disease," she cried.

"Decide in a hurry. There is no time to wait. You are all bound for perdition," he assured her, cheerfully.

"Perdition then! I won't do it." Temptation number two, for Pamina.

"Very well, it is your time to die!" Monostatos cried, and proceeded to kill her, but Sarastro entered just in time to encourage her.

"Indeed it is not—your schedule is wrong, Monostatos," Sarastro assured him.

"I must look after the mother, then, since the daughter has escaped me," Monostatos remarked, comforting himself as well as he could.

"Oh don't chastise my mother," Pamina cried.

"A little chastising won't hurt her in the least," Sarastro assured her. "I know all about how she prowls around here, and if only Tamino resists his temptations, you will be united and your mother sent back to her own domain where she belongs. If he survives the ordeals we have set before him, he will deserve to marry an orphan." All -212-
this was doubtless true, but it annoyed Pamina exceedingly. As soon as Sarastro had sung of the advantages of living in so delightful a place as the temple, he disappeared, not in the usual way, but by walking off, and the scene changed.

Scene III

Tamino and the speaker who accompanied the priests and talked for them were in a large hall, and Papageno was there also.

"You are again to be left here alone; and I caution ye to be silent," the speaker advised as he went out.

The second priest said:

"Papageno, whoever breaks the silence here, brings down thunder and lightning upon himself." He, too, went out.

"That's pleasant," Papageno remarked.

"You are only to think it is pleasant—not to mention it," Tamino cautioned. Meantime, Papageno, who couldn't hold his tongue to save his life, grew thirsty. And he no sooner became aware of it, than an old woman entered with a cup of water.

"Is that for me?" he asked.

"Yes, my love," she replied, and Papageno drank it.

"Well, next time when you wish to quench my thirst you must bring something besides water—don't forget. Sit down here, old lady, it is confoundedly dull," the irrepressible Papageno said, and the old lady sat. "How old are you, anyway?"

"Just eighteen years and two minutes," she answered. -213-

"Um—it is the two minutes that does it, I suppose," Papageno reflected, looking at her critically.

"Does anybody love you?" he asked, by way of satisfying his curiosity.

"Certainly—his name is Papageno."

"The deuce you say? Well, well, I never would have thought it of myself. Well, what's your name, mam?" but just as the old lady was about to answer, the thunder boomed and off she rushed.

"Oh, heaven! I'll never speak another word," Papageno cried. He had no sooner taken that excellent resolution than the three Genii entered bearing a table loaded with good things to eat. They also brought the flute and the chime of bells.

"Now, eat, drink, and be merry, and a better time shall follow," they said, and then they disappeared.

"Well, well, this is something like it," Papageno said, beginning at once to obey commands, but Tamino began to play upon the flute.

"All right; all right! You be the orchestra and I'll take care of the *table d'hôte*," he

said, very well satisfied; but at that instant Pamina appeared.

She no sooner began to talk to Tamino than he motioned her away. He was a youth of unheard-of fortitude.

"This is worse than death," she said. She found herself waved away again. Tamino was thoroughly proof against temptation.

Then Pamina sang for him, and she had a very good voice. Meantime, Papageno was sufficiently occupied to be quiet, but he had to call attention to his virtues. When he asked if he had not been amazingly still, there was a flourish of trumpets. Tamino signed for Papageno to go. -214-

"No, you go first!" Tamino only repeated his gesture.

"Very well, very well, I'll go first—but what's to be done with us now?" Tamino only pointed to heaven, which was very depressing to one of Papageno's temperament.

"You think so!" Papageno asked. "If it is to be anything like that, I think it more likely to be a roasting. No matter!" Nothing mattered any longer to Papageno, and so he went out as Tamino desired, and the scene changed.

Scene IV

Sarastro and his priests were in a vault underneath one of the temples. There they sang of Tamino's wonderful fortitude and then said:

"Let him appear!" And so he did. "Now, Tamino, you have been a brave man till now; but there are two perilous trials awaiting you, and if you go through them well—" They didn't exactly promise that all should be plain sailing after that, but they led the youth to infer as much, which encouraged him. "Lead in Pamina," the order then was given, and she was led in.

"Now, Pamina, this youth is to bid thee a last farewell," Sarastro said.

Pamina was about to throw herself into her lover's arms, but with amazing self-control Tamino told her once more to "Stand back." As that had gone so very well, Sarastro assured them they were to meet again.

"I'll bear whatever the gods put upon me," the patient youth replied.

Then he said farewell and went out, while Papageno (who if he ever did get to Heaven, would surely do so by hanging on to Tamino's immaculate coat-tail) ran after him, declaring that he would follow him forever—and not talk. But it thundered again, and Papageno shrunk all up. -215-

Then, while the speaker chided him for not being above his station, Papageno said that the only thing he really wanted in this world or the next was a glass of wine: he thought it would encourage him.

"Oh, well, you can have that," the speaker assured him, and immediately the glass of wine rose through the floor. But he had no sooner drunk that than he cried out that he experienced a most thrilling sensation about his heart. It turned out to be love; just love! So at once, the matter being explained to him, he took his chime of bells, played, and sang of what he felt. The moment he had fully expressed himself, the old water lady came in.

"Here I am, my angel," she said.

"Good! You are much better than nobody," Papageno declared.

"Then swear you'll be forever true," she urged.

"Certainly—since there is no other way out of it." And it was no sooner said than the old lady became a most entrancing young one, about eighteen years old.

"Well, may I never doubt a woman when she tells me her age again!" Papageno muttered, staring at her. As he was about to embrace her, the speaker shouted:

"Away; he isn't worthy of you." This left Papageno in a nice fix, and both he and the girl were led away as the Genii appeared.

The Genii began to sing that Pamina had gone demented, and no wonder. She almost at once proved that this was true, by coming in carrying a dagger; and she made a pass at the whole lot of them. No one could blame her. She thought each of them was Tamino. -216-

"She's had too much trouble," the penetrating Genii declared among themselves. "And now we'll set her right." They were about to do so when she undertook to stab herself, but they interfered and told her she mustn't.

"What if Tamino should hear you! It would make him feel very badly," they

remonstrated. At once she became all right again.

"Is he alive? Just let me look at him, and I'll be encouraged to wait awhile." So they took her away to see Tamino.

Then two men dressed in armour came in and said:

> He who would wander on this path of tears and toiling,
> Needs water, fire, and earth for his assoiling,

which means nothing in particular. Although "assoiling" is an excellent old English word.

Then Tamino and Pamina were heard calling to each other. She entreated him not to fly from her, and he didn't know what he had better do about it, but the matter was arranged by somebody opening some gates and the lovers at once embraced. They were perfectly happy, and there seemed to be a mutual understanding between them that they could wander forth together. They did so, and wandered at once into a mountain of fire, while Tamino played entertainingly upon his flute. Soon they wandered out of the fire, and embraced at leisure. Then they wandered into the water, and Tamino began again to play upon his flute, the water keeping clear of the holes in a wonderful way. After they got out of the woods—the water, rather,—they embraced as usual, and the gates of the temple were thrown open and they saw a sort of Fourth-of-July going on within. Everything was very bright and high-coloured. -217-
This would seem to indicate that their trials were over and they were to have their reward. Then the scene changed.

Scene V

Papageno was playing in a garden, all the while calling to his Papagena. He was really mourning for his lost love, and so he took the rope which he used as a girdle and decided to hang himself. Then the Genii, whose business it seemed to be to drive lovers to suicide and then rescue them just before life was extinct, rushed in and told him he need not go to the length—of his rope.

"Just ring your bells," they advised him; and he instantly tried the same old effect. He had no sooner rung for her than she came—the lovely Papagena! They sang a joyous chorus of "pa-pa-pa-pa" for eight pages and then the Queen of the Night and Monostatos, finding that matters were going too well, appeared. They had come to steal the temple.

"If I really get away with that temple, Pamina shall be yours," she promised Monostatos,—which would seem to leave Pamina safe enough, if the circumstances were ordinary. Nevertheless it thundered again. Nobody in the opera could seem to stand that. The Queen had her three ladies with her, but by this time one might almost conclude that they were no ladies at all. The thunder became very bad indeed, and the retinue, Monostatos, and the Queen sank below, and in their stead Sarastro, Pamina, and Tamino appeared with all the priests, and the storm gave way to a fine day.

Immediately after that, nothing at all happened.

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN -218-

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN was a man of many musical moods and varied performances, yet his surest fame, at present, rests upon his comic operas.

Perhaps this is because he and his workfellow, Gilbert, were pioneers in making a totally new kind of comic opera. "Pinafore" may not be the best of these works, "Mikado" may be better; but "Pinafore" was the first of the satires upon certain institutions, social and political, which delighted the English-speaking world.

Music and words never have seemed better wedded than in the comic operas of Gilbert and Sullivan. The music is always graceful, gracious, piquant, and gaily fascinating. The story has no purpose but that of carrying some satirical idea, and the satire is never bitter, always playful.

Sullivan's versatility was remarkable, his work ranging from "grave to gay, from lively to severe," and his was a genius that developed in his extreme youth. Many anecdotes are told of this brilliant composer, and all of them seem to illustrate a practical and resourceful mind, while they show little of the eccentricity that is supposed to belong to genius. It was Sir Arthur Sullivan who first popularized Schumann in England. Potter, head of the Royal Academy in London in 1861, had known Beethoven well, and had never been converted to a love of music less great

than his—nor was his taste very catholic—and he continually regretted Sullivan's championship of Schumann's music. But one day Sullivan, suspecting the academician didn't know what he was talking about, asked him point-blank if he had ever heard any of the music he so strongly condemned. Potter admitted that he hadn't. Whereupon Sullivan said, "Then play some of Schumann with me, Mr. Potter," and, having done so, Potter "blindly worshipped" Schumann even after. -219-

Frederick Crowest tells this story in his "Musicians' Wit, Humour, and Anecdote":

"The late Sir Arthur Sullivan, in the struggling years of his career, once showed great presence of mind, which saved the entire breakdown of a performance of 'Faust.' In the midst of the church scene, the wire connecting the pedal under Costa's foot with the metronome stick at the organ, broke. Costa was the conductor. In the concerted music this meant disaster, as the organist could hear nothing but his own instrument. Quick as thought, while he was playing the introductory solo, Sullivan called a stage hand. 'Go,' he said, 'and tell Mr. Costa that the wire is broken, and that he is to keep his ears open and follow me.' No sooner had the man flown to deliver his message than the full meaning of the words flashed upon Sullivan. What would Costa, autocratic, severe, and quick to take offence, say to such a message delivered by a stage hand? The scene, however, proceeded successfully, and at the end Sullivan went, nervously enough, to tender his apologies to his chief. Costa, implacable as he was, had a strong sense of justice, and the great conductor never forgot the signal service his young friend had rendered him by preventing a horrible *fiasco*."

There are numberless stories of his suiting his composition to erratic themes. Beverley had painted borders for a woodland scene. Sullivan liked the work and complimented Beverley, who immediately said: "Yes, and if you could compose something to fit it now." Instantly, Sullivan, who was at the organ, composed a score within a few minutes which enraptured the painter and which "fitted" his borders. -220-

Again: A dance was required at a moment's notice for a second *danseuse*, and the stage manager was distracted. "You must make something at once, Sullivan," he said. "But," replied the composer, "I haven't even seen the girl. I don't know her style or what she needs." However, the stage manager sent the dancer to speak with Sullivan, and presently he called out: "I've arranged it all. This is exactly what she wants: Tiddle-iddle-um, tiddle-iddle-um, rum-tirum-tirum—sixteen bars of that; then: rum-tum-rum-tum—heavy you know—" and in ten minutes the dance was made and ready for rehearsal.

H.M.S.[B] "PINAFORE"

The Right Honourable Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B.	First Lord of the Admiralty.
Captain Corcoran	Commanding H.M.S. *Pinafore*.
Ralph Rackstraw	Able seaman.
Dick Deadeye	Able seaman.
Bill Bobstay	Boatswain's mate.
Bob Becket	Carpenter's mate.
Tom Tucker	Midshipmate.
Sergeant of marines	
Josephine	The Captain's daughter.
Hebe	Sir Joseph's first cousin.
Little Buttercup	A Portsmouth bumboat woman.

First Lord's sisters, his cousins, his aunts, sailors, marines, etc.

The story takes place on the quarterdeck of H.M.S. *Pinafore*, off Portsmouth.

Composer: Sir Arthur Sullivan. Author: W.S. Gilbert.

ACT I

On the quarterdeck of the good ship *Pinafore*, along about noon, on a brilliant sunny day, the sailors, in charge of the Boatswain, are polishing up the brasswork of the ship, splicing rope, and doing general housekeeping, for the excellent reason that the high cockalorum of the navy—the Admiral, Sir Joseph Porter—together with all his sisters and his cousins and his aunts, is expected on board about luncheon time. When an Admiral goes visiting either on land or sea, there are certain to be "doings," and there are going to be mighty big doings on this occasion. If sailors were ever proud of a ship, those of the *Pinafore* are they. The *Pinafore* was, in fact, the dandiest thing afloat. No sailor ever did anything without singing about it, and as they "Heave ho, my hearties"—or whatever it is sailors do—they sing their minds about the *Pinafore* in a way to leave no mistake as to their opinions. -221-

We sail the ocean blue,
  And our saucy ship's a beauty.
We're sober men and true,

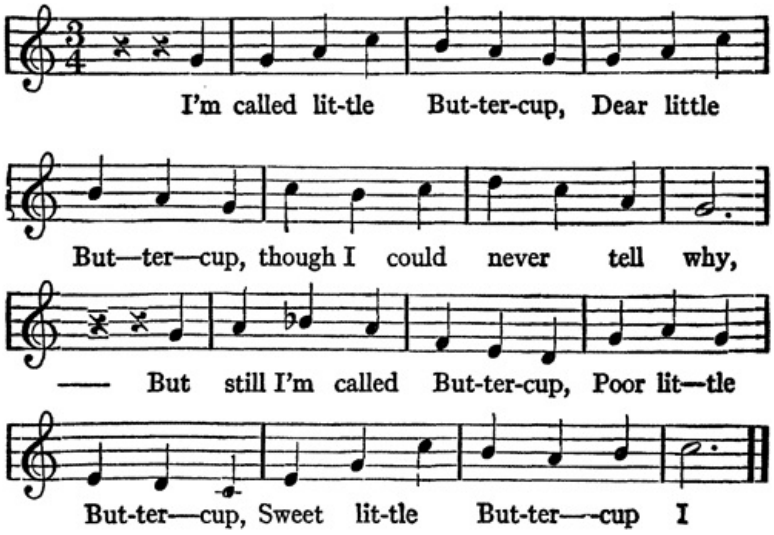
And attentive to our duty.

When the balls whistle free,
O'er the bright blue sea,
We stand to our guns all day.
When at anchor we ride,
On the Portsmouth tide,
We've plenty of time for play—Ahoy, Ahoy!

And then, while they are polishing at top speed, on board scrambles Little Buttercup. Naturally, being a bumboat woman, she had her basket on her arm.

"Little Buttercup!" the crew shouts; they know her well on pay-day.

"Yes—here's an end at last of all privation," she assures them, spreading out her wares, and this ridiculous "little" Buttercup sings:



[Listen]

I'm called little Buttercup,
Dear little Buttercup,
Though I could never tell why,
But still I'm called Buttercup,
Poor little Buttercup,
Sweet little Buttercup I.

I've snuff and tobaccy,
And excellent jacky;
I've scissors and watches and knives.
I've ribbons and laces
To set off the faces
Of pretty young sweethearts and wives.
I've treacle and toffee,
I've tea and I've coffee,
Soft tommy and succulent chops,
I've chickens and conies,
I've pretty polonies,
And excellent peppermint drops—

which would imply that Little Buttercup might supply on demand anything from a wrought-iron gate to a paper of toothpicks.

"Well, Little Buttercup, you're the rosiest and roundest beauty in all the navy, and we're always glad to see you."

"The rosiest and roundest, eh? Did it ever occur to you that beneath my gay exterior a fearful tragedy may be brewing?" she asks in her most mysterious tones.

"We never thought of that," the Boatswain reflects.

"I have thought of it often," a growling voice interrupts, and everybody looks up to see Dick Deadeye. Dick is a darling, if appearances count. He was named Deadeye because he *had* a dead-eye, and he is about as sinister and ominous a creature as ever made a comic opera shiver.

"You *look* as if you had often thought of it," somebody retorts, as all move away from him in a manner which shows Dick to be no favourite.

"You don't care much about me, I should say?" Dick offers, looking about at his mates.

"Well, now, honest, Dick, ye can't just expect to be loved, with such a name as Deadeye."

Little Buttercup, who has been offering her wares to the other sailors, now observes a very good-looking chap coming on deck.

"Who is that youth, whose faltering feet with difficulty bear him on his course?" Buttercup asks—which is quite ridiculous, if you only dissect her language! Those "faltering feet which with difficulty bear him on his course" belong to Ralph Rackstraw, who is about the most dashing sailor in the fleet. The moment Buttercup hears his name, she gasps to music:

"Remorse, remorse," which is very, very funny indeed, since there appears to be nothing at all remarkable or remorseful about Ralph Rackstraw. But Ralph immediately begins to sing about a nightingale and a moon's bright ray and several other things most inappropriate to the occasion, and winds up with "He sang, Ah, well-a-day," in the most pathetic manner. The other sailors repeat after him, "Ah, well-a-day," also in a very pathetic manner, and Ralph thanks them in the politest, most heartbroken manner, by saying:

I know the value of a kindly chorus,
  But choruses yield little consolation
When we have pain and sorrow, too, before us!
  I love, and love, alas! above my station.

-224-

Which lets the cat out of the bag, at last! "He loves above his station!" Buttercup sighs, and pretty much the entire navy sighs. Those sailors are very sentimental chaps, very!—They are supposed to have a sweetheart in every port, though, to be sure, none of them are likely be above anybody's station. But their sighs are an encouragement to Ralph to tell all about his sweetheart, and he immediately does so. He sings rapturously of her appearance and of how unworthy he is. The crew nearly melts to tears during the recital. Just as Ralph has revealed that his love is Josephine, the Captain's daughter, and all the crew but Dick Deadeye are about to burst out weeping, the Captain puts in an appearance.

"My gallant crew,—good morning!" he says amiably, in that condescending manner quite to be expected of a Captain. He inquires nicely about the general health of the crew, and announces that he is in reasonable health himself. Then with the best intentions in the world, he begins to throw bouquets at himself:

I am the Captain of the *Pinafore*,

he announces, and the crew returns:

And a right good Captain too.

You're very, very good,
And be it understood,
I command a right good crew,

he assures them.

Tho' related to a peer,
I can hand, reef and steer,
  Or ship a selvagee;
I'm never known to quail
At the fury of a gale,—
  And I'm never, never sick at sea!

-225-

But this is altogether too much. The crew haven't summered and wintered with this gallant Captain for nothing.

"What, never?" they admonish him.

"No,—never."

"What!—NEVER?" and there is no mistaking their emphasis.

"Oh, well—hardly ever!" he admits, trimming his statement a little: and thus harmony is restored. Now when he has thus agreeably said good morning to his crew, they leave him to meditate alone, and no one but Little Buttercup remains. For some reason she perceives that the Captain is sad. He doesn't look it, but the most comic moments in comic opera are likely enough to be the saddest. Hence Little Buttercup reminds him that she is a mother (she doesn't look it) and therefore to be confided in.

"If you must know, Little Buttercup, my daughter Josephine! the fairest flower that ever blossomed on ancestral timber"—which is very neat indeed—"has received an

offer of marriage from Sir Joseph Porter. It is a great honour, Little Buttercup, but I am sorry to say my daughter doesn't seem to take kindly to it."

"Ah, poor Sir Joseph, I know perfectly what it means to love not wisely but too well," she remarks, sighing tenderly and looking most sentimentally at the Captain. She does this so capably that as she goes off the deck the Captain looks after her and remarks abstractedly:

"A plump and pleasing person!" At this blessed minute the daughter Josephine, who does not love in the right place, and who is beloved from all quarters at once, wanders upon the deck with a basket of flowers in her hand. Then she begins to sing very distractedly about loving the wrong man, and that "hope is dead," and several other pitiable things, which are very funny. The Captain, her father, is watching her, and presently he admonishes her to look her best, and to stop sighing all over the ship—at least till her high-born suitor, Sir Joseph Porter, shall have made his expected visit.

-226-

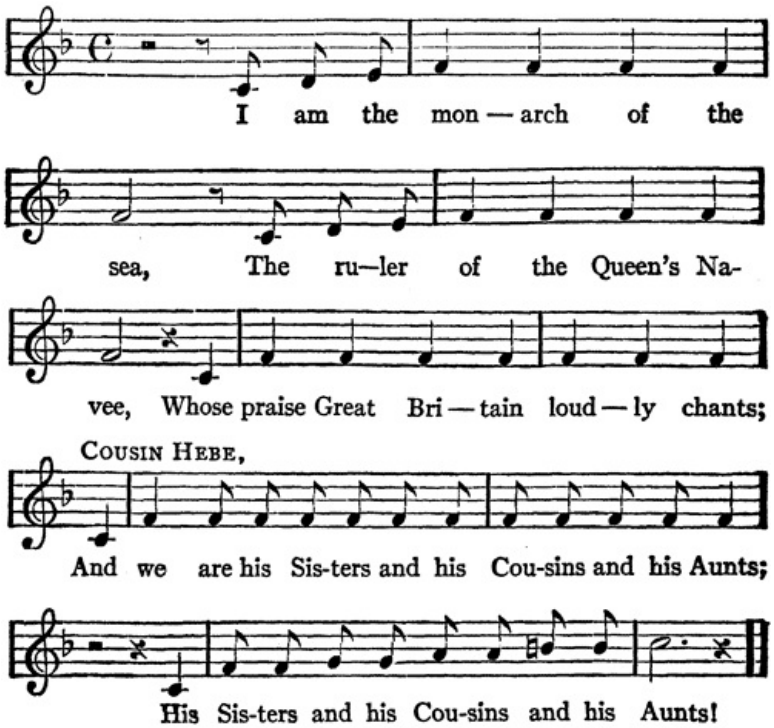
"You must look your best to-day, Josephine, because the Admiral is coming on board to ask your hand in marriage." At this Josephine nearly drops into the sea.

"Father, I esteem, I reverence Sir Joseph but alas I do not love him. I have the bad taste instead to love a lowly sailor on board your own ship. But I shall stifle my love. He shall never know it though I carry it to the tomb."

"That is precisely the spirit I should expect to behold in my daughter, my dear, and now take Sir Joseph's picture and study it well. I see his barge approaching. If you gaze upon the pictured noble brow of the Admiral, I think it quite likely that you will have time to fall madly in love with him before he can throw a leg over the rail, my darling. Anyway, do your best at it."

"My own, thoughtful father," Josephine murmurs while a song of Sir Joseph's sailors is heard approaching nearer and nearer. Then the crew of H.M.S. *Pinafore* take up the shout, and sing a rousing welcome to Sir Joseph and all his party. Almost immediately Sir Joseph and his numerous company of sisters and cousins and aunts prance upon the shining deck. They have a gorgeous time of it.

"Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!" the Captain and his crew cry, and then Sir Joseph informs everybody of his greatness in this song:



-227-

[Listen]

I am the monarch of the sea,
The ruler of the Queen's Navee,
Whose praise Great Britain loudly chants;

Cousin Hebe.
And we are his Sisters and his Cousins and his Aunts;
His Sisters and his Cousins and his Aunts!

When at anchor here I ride,

My bosom swells with pride,
And I snap my fingers at the foeman's taunts—

The chorus assures everybody that

So do his sisters and his cousins and his aunts.

In short, while we learn from Sir Joseph that he is a tremendous fellow, we also learn, from his sisters and his cousins and his aunts, that they are whatever he is. Among other things he tells precisely how he came to be so great, and gives what is presumably a recipe for similar greatness:

When I was a lad I served a term
As office boy to an attorney's firm.
I cleaned the window and I swept the floor,
And I polished up the handle of the big front door.

I polished up the handle so carefullee,
That now I am the ruler of the Queen's Navee.

As office boy I made such a mark
That they gave me the post of a junior clerk.
I served the wits with a smile so bland,
And I copied all the letters in a big round hand.

I copied all the letters in a hand so free,
That now I am the ruler of the Queen's Navee.

In serving writs I made such a name
That an articled clerk I soon became.
I wore clean collars and a brand new suit
For the pass examination at the Institute.

And that pass examination did so well for me
That now I am the ruler of the Queen's Navee.

This was only a part of the recipe, but the rest of it was just as profound. After he is through exploiting himself, he bullies the Captain a little, and then his eye alights on Ralph Rackstraw.

"You are a remarkably fine fellow, my lad," he says to Ralph quite patronizingly.

"I am the very finest fellow in the navy," Ralph returns, honouring the spirit of the day by showing how entirely satisfied with himself he is.

"How does your Captain behave himself?" Sir Joseph asks.

"Very well, indeed, thank you. I am willing to commend him," Ralph returns.

"Ah—that is delightful—and so, with your permission, Captain, I will have a word with you in private on a very sentimental subject—in short, upon an affair of the heart."

"With joy, Sir Joseph—and, Boatswain, in honour of this occasion, see that extra grog is served to the crew at seven bells."

"I will condescend to do so," the Boatswain assures the Captain, whereupon the Captain, Sir Joseph, and his sisters and his cousins and his aunts leave the deck.

"You all seem to think a deal on yourselves," Dick Deadeye growls, as he watches these performances.

"We do, we do—aren't we British sailors? Doesn't the entire universe depend on us for its existence? We are fine fellows—Sir Joseph has just told us so."

"Yes—we may aspire to anything—" Ralph interpolates excitedly. He had begun to think that Josephine may not be so unattainable after all.

"The devil you can," responds Dick. "Only I wouldn't let myself get a-going if I were you. What if ye got going and couldn't stop?" the one-eyed gentleman inquires solicitously.

"Oh, stow it!" the crew shouts. "If we hadn't more self-respect 'n you've got, we'd put out both our eyes," the estimable crew declares, and then retires to compliment itself,—that is, all but Ralph. He leans upon the bulwark and looks pensive; and at intervals he sighs. While he is sighing his very loudest, Josephine enters. Sir Joseph has been making love to her, and she is telling herself and everybody who happens to be leaning against the bulwark sighing pensively, that the Admiral's attentions oppress her. This is Ralph's opportunity. He immediately tells her that he loves her, and she tells him to "refrain, audacious tar," but he does not refrain in the least. In

short he decides upon the spot to blow out his brains. He pipes all hands on deck to see him do it, and they come gladly.

Now Ralph gets out his pistol, he sings a beautiful farewell, the Chorus turns away weeping—the sailors have just cleaned up and they cannot bear the sight of the deck all spoiled with a British sailor's brains so soon after scrubbing! Ralph lifts the pistol, takes aim—and Josephine rushes on. -230-

"Oh, stay your hand—I love you," she cries, and in less than a minute everybody is dancing a hornpipe, except Deadeye. Deadeye is no socialist. He really thinks this equality business which makes it possible for a common sailor to marry the Captain's daughter is most reprehensible. But nobody notices Dick. Everybody is quite happy and satisfied now, and they plan for the wedding. Dick plans for revenge.

He goes apart to think matters over. The situation quite shocks his sense of propriety.

Meantime the crew and Ralph and Josephine decide that:

This very night,
With bated breath
And muffled oar,
Without a light,
As still as death,
We'll steal ashore.
A clergyman
Shall make us one
At half-past ten,
And then we can
Return, for none
Can part us then.

Thus the matter is disposed of.

ACT II

It is about half-past ten, and everything ready for the elopement. The Captain is on deck playing a mandolin while holding a most beautiful pose (because Little Buttercup is also "on deck," and looking sentimentally at him). The Captain sings to the moon, quite as if there were no one there to admire him; because while this "levelling" business is going on in the Navy there seems no good reason why Buttercup or any other thrifty bumboat lady shouldn't do a little levelling herself. -231-
Now to marry the Captain—but just now, even though it is moonlight and a very propitious moment, there is other work on hand than marrying the Captain. She can do that almost any time! But at this moment she has some very mysterious and profound things to say to him. She tells him that:

Things are seldom what they seem,
Skim milk masquerades as cream.
High-lows pass as patent leathers,
Jackdaws strut in peacock feathers.

And the Captain acquiesces.

Black-sheep dwell in every fold.
All that glitters is not gold.
Storks turn out to be but logs.
Bulls are but inflated frogs.

And again the Captain wisely acquiesces.

Drops the wind and stops the mill.
Turbot is ambitious brill.
Gild the farthing if you will,
Yet it is a farthing still.

And again the Captain admits that this may be true. It is quite, quite painful if it is. On the whole, the Captain fears she has got rather the best of him, so he determines to rally; he philosophises a little himself, when he has time. He has time now:

Tho' I'm anything but clever,

he declares rhythmically, even truthfully;

I could talk like that forever,
Once a cat was killed by care,
Only brave deserve the fair.

He has her there, beyond doubt, because all she can say is "how true." -232-

Thus encouraged he continues:

Wink is often good as nod;
Spoils the child, who spares the rod;
Thirsty lambs run foxy dangers,
Dogs are found in many mangers.

Buttercup agrees;—she can't help it.

Paw of cat the chestnut snatches;
Worn-out garments show new patches;
Only count the chick that hatches,
Men are grown-up catchy-catches.

And Little Buttercup assents that this certainly is true. And then, just as she has worked the Captain up into a pink fit of apprehension she leaves him. While he stands looking after her and feeling unusually left alone, Sir Joseph enters and declares himself very much disappointed with Josephine.

"What, won't she do, Sir Joseph?" the Captain asks disappointedly.

"No, no. I don't think she will. I have stooped as much as an Admiral ought to, by presenting my sentiments almost—er—you might say emotionally, but without success; and now really I——"

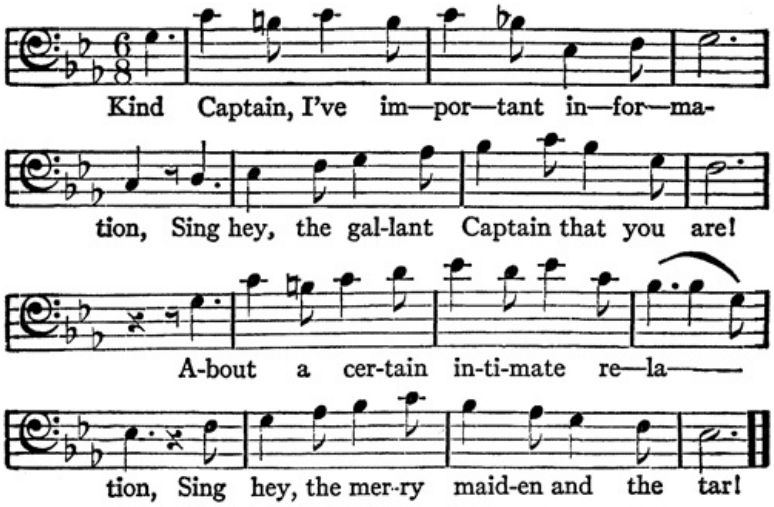
"Well, it must be your rank which dazzles her," the Captain suggests, and thinks how he would like to take a cat-o'-nine-tails to her.

"She is coming on deck," Sir Joseph says, softly, "and we might watch her unobserved a moment. Her actions while she thinks herself alone, may reveal something to us that we should like to know"; and Sir Joseph and the Captain step behind a convenient coil of rope while Josephine walks about in agitation and sings to herself how reckless she is to leave her luxurious home with her father, for an attic that, likely as not, will not even be "finished off." -233-

Of course Sir Joseph and her father do not understand a word of this, but they understand that she is disturbed, and Sir Joseph steps up and asks her outright, if his rank overwhelms her. He assures her that it need not, because there is no difference of rank to be observed among those of her Majesty's Navy—which he doesn't mean at all except for one occasion only, of course. At the same time, it is an admirable plea for his rival Ralph.

Now it is rapidly becoming time for the elopement, and Josephine pretends to accept Sir Joseph's suit at last, in order to get rid of him at half-past ten. He and Josephine go below while Dick Deadeye intimates to the Captain that he wants a word with him aside.

Then Dick Deadeye gives the Captain his information, thus:



[Listen]

Kind Captain, I've important information,
  Sing hey, the gallant Captain that you are!
About a certain intimate relation,
  Sing hey, the merry maiden and the tar!

Kind Captain, your young lady is a-sighing,
  Sing, hey, the gallant Captain that you are!
This very night with Rackstraw to be flying,

This information certainly comes in the nick of time, so the Captain hastily throws an old cloak over him and squats down behind the deck furniture to await the coming of the elopers. -234-

Presently they come up, Josephine, followed by Little Buttercup, and all the crew on "tip-toe stealing." Suddenly amid the silence, the Captain stamps.

"Goodness me!" all cry. "What was that?"

"Silent be," says Dick. "It was the cat," and thus reassured they start for the boat which is to take the lovers ashore. At this crisis the Captain throws off the cloak and creates a sensation. He is so mad he swears just as Sir Joseph puts in an appearance.

"Damme!" cries the Captain.

"What was that dreadful language I heard you use?" Sir Joseph demands, highly scandalized.

"He said 'damme,'" the crew assure him. Sir Joseph is completely overcome. To excuse himself the Captain is obliged to reveal the cause of his anger.

"My daughter was about to elope with a common sailor, your Greatness," he says, and at this moment Josephine rushes into the arms of Ralph. The Admiral is again overcome with the impropriety of the situation.

"My amazement and my surprise, you may learn from the expression of my eyes," the Admiral says. "Has this sailor dared to lift his eyes to the Captain's daughter? Incredible. Put him in chains, my boys," he says to the rest of the crew, "and Captain —have you such a thing as a dungeon on board?"

"Certainly," the Captain says. "Hanging on the nail to the right of the mess-room door —just as you go in."

"Good! put him in the ship's dungeon at once—just as you go in—and see that no telephone communicates with his cell," whereupon Ralph is lugged off. -235-

"When the secret I have to tell is known," says Little Buttercup, "his dungeon cell will be thrown wide."

"Then speak, in Heaven's name; or I certainly shall throw myself into the bilge water," Josephine says desperately.

"Don't do that: it smells so dreadfully," Buttercup entreats; "and to prevent accidents I will tell what I know:"

A many years ago,
  When I was young and charming,
As some of you may know,
  I practised baby farming.

Two tender babes I nursed,
  One was of low condition,
The other upper crust—
  A regular patrician.

Oh, bitter is my cup,
  However could I do it?
I mixed those children up,
  And not a creature knew it.

In time each little waif,
  Forsook his foster-mother;
The well-born babe was Ralph—
  Your Captain was the other!

So, the murder is out! Nobody outside of comic opera can quite see how this fact changes the status of the Captain and Ralph (the Captain not having been a captain when in the cradle) but it is quite enough to set everybody by the ears. Josephine screams:

"Oh, bliss, oh, rapture!" And the Admiral promptly says:

"Take her, sir, and mind you treat her kindly," and immediately, having fixed the ship's affairs so creditably, falls to bemoaning his sad and lonesome lot. -236-

He declares that he "cannot live alone," and his cousin Hebe assures him she will never give up the ship; or rather that she never will desert him, unless of course she should discover that he, too, was changed in the cradle. This comforts everybody but the changed Captain. Ralph has, in the twinkling of an eye, become the Captain of

the good ship *Pinafore*, while the Captain has become Ralph, and Ralph has taken the Captain's daughter. But while he is looking very downcast, Buttercup reminds him that she is there, and after regarding her tenderly for a moment, he decides that he has always loved his foster mother like a wife, and he says so:

I shall marry with a wife,
In my humble rank of life,
And you, my own, are she.

The crew is delighted. Everybody is happy. But the Captain adds, rashly:

I must wander to and fro,
But wherever I may go
I shall never be untrue to thee!

Whereupon the crew, which is very punctilious where the truth is concerned, cries:

"What, never?"

"No, never!" the Captain declares.

"What—never?" they persist.

"Well, hardly ever," the Captain says, qualifying the statement satisfactorily to his former crew. And now that all the facts and amenities of life have been duly recognized, the crew and Sir Joseph, Ralph and the former Captain, Josephine and Buttercup, all unite in singing frantically that they are an Englishman, for they -237-
themselves have said it, and it's greatly to their credit; and while you are laughing yourself to death at a great many ridiculous things which have taken place, the curtain comes down with a rush, and you wish they would do it again.

VERDI -238-

GIUSEPPE VERDI, born October 9, 1813, was the composer of twenty-six operas. His musical history may be divided into three periods, and in the last he approached Wagner in greatness, and frequently surpassed him in beauty of idea.

Wagner made both the libretti and the music of his operas, while Verdi took his opera stories from other authors. Both of these great men were born in the same year.

Of Verdi's early operas, "Ernani" was probably the best; then he entered upon the second period of his achievement as a composer, and the first work that marked the transition was "Rigoletto." The story was adapted from a drama of Hugo's, "Le Roi S'Amuse," and as the profligate character of its principal seemed too baldly to exploit the behaviour of Francis I, its production was suppressed. Then Verdi adjusted the matter by turning the character into the Duke of Mantua, and everybody was happy.

The story of the famous song "La Donna è Mobile," is as picturesque as Verdi himself. While the rehearsals of the opera were going on, Mirate, who sang the Duke, continued to complain that he hadn't the MS. of one of his songs. Verdi kept putting him off, till the evening before the orchestral rehearsal, when he brought forth the lines; but at the same time he demanded a promise that Mirate—nor indeed any of the singers—should not hum or whistle the air till it should be heard at the first -239-
performance. This signified Verdi's belief that the song would instantly become a universal favourite. The faith was justified. The whole country went "La Donna" mad.

"Il Trovatore" came next in this second period of the great composer's fame, and we read that "Nearly half a century has sped since Verdi's twelfth opera was first sung of a certain winter evening in Rome." Out of the chaff of Italian opera comes this wheat, satisfying to the generation of to-day, as it was to that first audience in Rome. We do not even know any longer why we love it, because in most ways it violates new and better rules of musical art, but we love it. Helen Keyes has written that "the libretto of 'Il Trovatore' is based on a Spanish drama written in superb verse by a contemporary of Verdi's, Antonio Garcia Gutierrez," and she relates a romantic story in connection with the Spanish play; the author was but seventeen years old when he wrote it and had been called to military duty, which was dreaded by one of his temperament. But his drama being staged at that moment, the authorities permitted him to furnish a substitute on the ground that such genius could best serve its country by remaining at home to contribute to its country's art.

At the time the opera was produced in Rome, the Tiber had overflowed its banks and had flooded all the streets near the theatre; nevertheless people were content to stand knee-deep in water at the box office, waiting their turn for tickets.

So great had Verdi become in a night, by this presentation, that his rivals formed a cabal which prevented the production of "Il Trovatore" in Naples for a time, but in the end the opera and Verdi prevailed. -240-

Now came "Traviata,"—third in that time of change in a great master's art, and this marked the limits of the second period. "Aïda" followed. It is well said that "the importance of Verdi's 'Aïda' as a work of musical art can hardly be overestimated!" This opera was written at the entreaty of the Khedive Ismail Pacha. He wished to open the opera house at Cairo with a great opera that had Egypt for its dramatic theme. Upon the Khedive's application Verdi named a price which he believed would not be accepted, as he felt no enthusiasm about the work. But his terms were promptly approved and Mariette Bey, a great Egyptologist, was commissioned to find the materials for a proper story. Verdi, in the meantime, *did* become enthusiastic over the project and went to work. Egyptian history held some incident upon which the story of "Aïda" was finally built. First, it was given to Camille du Locle, who put the story into French prose, and in this he was constantly advised by Verdi, at whose home the work was done. After that, the French prose was translated into Italian verse by Ghislanzoni, and when all was completed, the Italian verse was once more translated back into French for the French stage.

Then the Khedive decided he would like Verdi to conduct the first performance, and he began to negotiate for that. Verdi asked twenty thousand dollars for writing the opera, and thirty thousand in case he went to Egypt. This was agreed, but when the time came to go, Verdi backed out; he was overcome with fear of seasickness and wouldn't go at any price. Then the scenery was painted in Paris, and when all was ready—lo! the scenery was a prisoner because the war had broken out in France! Everything had to wait a year, and during that time Verdi wrote and rewrote, making -241-
his opera one of the most beautiful in the world. Finally "Aïda" was produced, and the story of that night as told by the Italian critic Filippi is not out of place here, since the night is historic in opera "first nights:"

"The Arabians, even the rich, do not love our shows; they prefer the mewings of their tunes, the monotonous beatings of their drums, to all the melodies of the past, present, and future. It is a true miracle to see a turban in a theatre of Cairo. Sunday evening the opera house was crowded before the curtain rose. Many of the boxes were filled with women, who neither chatted nor rustled their robes. There was beauty and there was intelligence especially among the Greeks and the strangers of rank who abound in Cairo. For truth's sake I must add that, by the side of the most beautiful and richly dressed, were Coptic and Jewish faces, with strange head-dresses, impossible costumes, a howling of colours,—no one could deliberately have invented worse. The women of the harem could not be seen. They were in the first three boxes on the right, in the second gallery. Thick white muslin hid their faces from prying glances."

This gives a striking picture of that extraordinary "first night."

Verdi was born at a time of turmoil and political troubles, and his mother was one of the many women of the inhabitants of Roncole (where he was born) who took refuge in the church when soldiery invaded the village. There, near the Virgin, many of the women had thought themselves safe, but the men burst in, and a general massacre took place. Verdi's mother fled with her little son to the belfry and this alone saved to the world a wonderful genius. -242-

When Verdi was ten years old he was apprenticed to a grocer in Busseto, but he was a musical grocer, and the musical atmosphere, which was life to Verdi, surrounded him. He had a passion for leaving in the midst of his grocery business to sit at the spinet and hunt out new harmonious combinations: and when one of his new-made chords was lost he would fly into a terrible rage, although as a general rule he was a peaceable and kindly little chap. On one such occasion he became so enraged that he took a hammer to the instrument—an event coincident with a thrashing his father gave him.

There is no end of incident connected with this gentle and kindly soul, who, unlike so many of his fellow geniuses, reflected in his life the beauty of his art.

RIGOLETTO

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA, WITH THE ORIGINAL CAST AS PRESENTED AT THE FIRST PERFORMANCE

The Duke of Mantua	Signori	Mirate
Rigoletto		Varesi
Sparafucile		Ponz
Count Monterone		Damini
Marullo		Kunnerth

Matteo Borsa		Zuliani
Count Ceprano		Bellini
Usher of the Court		Rizzi
Gilda	Signore	Teresa Brambilla
Maddalena		Casaloni
Giovanna.		Saini
Countess Ceprano		Morselli
Page		Modes Lovati

The story belongs to the sixteenth century, in the city of Mantua and its environs.

Composer: Giuseppe Verdi. Author: Francesco Maria Piave.

First sung in Venice, Gran Teatro la Fenice. March 11, 1851.

ACT I

DUKES and duchesses, pages and courtiers, dancing and laughter: these things all happening to music and glowing lights, in the city of Mantua four hundred years ago! —that is "Rigoletto." -243-

There lived, long ago, in Mantua, the Duke and his suite, and the only member of his household who dared do as he pleased was the Duke of Mantua's jester, Rigoletto. The more deformed a jester happened to be, the more he was valued in his profession, and Rigoletto was a very ugly little man, and as vindictive and wicked as he was ill-favoured in appearance. The only thing he truly loved was his daughter, Gilda. As for the Duke of Mantua, he loved for the time being almost any pretty woman who came his way.

On the night of a great ball at the Duke's palace he was thinking of his latest love, Gilda, the jester's daughter. The Duke usually confided his affairs to his servant Borsa, and the ball had no sooner begun than he began to speak with Borsa of his newest escapade. He declared that he had followed Gilda to the chapel where she went each day, and that he had made up his mind to speak with her the next time he saw her.

"Where does this pretty girl live, your Highness?"

"In an obscure and distant street where I have followed her each day. At night a queer-looking fellow is admitted, thus I am sure she has a lover. By the way, whom do you think that fellow to be?" the Duke asked with a laugh.

"Pray tell me."

"None other than Rigoletto!" the Duke cried, laughing more boisterously. "What do you think of that—the little hunchback!"

"And does he know that you have followed this sweetheart of his?"

"Not he. But look at all of these beautiful women," he exclaimed with delight as the company began to assemble from another room. "Alas, a man hardly knows whom to love among so many beauties," he sighed heavily. "But after all, I think it must be the Countess Ceprano! do you see her? Most beautiful!" -244-

"Just the same I advise you not to let the Count Ceprano hear you!" Borsa advised.

> Ah, in my heart, all are equally cherished,
> Every thought of exclusion within me I smother,
> None is dearer to me than another,
> In their turn, I for each one would die,

the Duke sang gaily, giving his friend and servant the wink.

Now, Rigoletto was in the habit of assisting the Duke in all his wrongdoing, and on this night the Duke confided to him his new enchantment—not Gilda, but the Countess Ceprano.

"The Countess has a jealous husband, Rigoletto; pray what do you advise?"

"Why, that you carry her off, to be sure; or else get rid of her husband the Count; maybe that would be the easiest way."

The Duke was wild enough to undertake almost anything, and so with the help of Rigoletto he was ready to undertake that. Hence, he made desperate love to the Countess all the evening, while the Count became more and more angry, and followed the pair continually about.

Even the courtiers were a good deal disgusted with the Duke's conduct, and they especially hated Rigoletto, who they thought was the real author of most of the Duke's misconduct. -245-

"I don't know what we are coming to," Marullo exclaimed.

> Yes, and 'tis here but as elsewhere!
> 'Tis gambling and feasting, duelling and dancing;
> And love-making always, wherever he goes.
> To-day he's for pastime, besieging the countess,
> While we watch the husband and laugh at his woes!

This condition of things exactly suited the malevolent dwarf, however.

After the Count had followed the Duke and Countess about the palace half the night, the Duke came into the room in a rage.

"What am I to do with this Count? I'd like to fight him and kill him. He torments me to death. If you don't think out a way to rid me of him while I am making love to the Countess, I'll get some other fellow to make life gay for me, Rigoletto," he cried to the dwarf.

"Well, have I not told you—run off with her."

"Oh, yes, that's easy enough to say."

"It's easy enough to *do*. Try it to-night!"

"But what about her husband?"

"Oh, I don't know—let him be arrested."

"No, no, that won't do; he's of noble birth. You are going too far."

"All right! If he is too good to be arrested, then exile him," the dwarf obligingly arranges, showing thereby his notion of the fitness of things.

"No! that would hardly do, either," the Duke exclaimed impatiently.

"Well, cut off his head, then." Rigoletto thought that should be an ending dignified enough for any one. Meantime Ceprano overheard that pleasing conversation.

"They are black-hearted villains," he muttered aside. -246-

"Cut off that head so unbending," the Duke exclaimed, looking at Ceprano, who was really a noble-appearing aristocrat.

"Aye—we have discovered its use. Cut it off; that will make it pliant," the charming dwarf said, facetiously; and that being a bit too much for any noble to put up with, the Count drew his sword.

"Enough! you ribald hunchback," he cried; at which the Duke became uneasy.

"Yes, come here, you jesting fool!" he called to Rigoletto, trying to turn the matter off. "We've had enough of your jests. We are tired of you. I advise you not to impose too much on our good humour, because some of this maliciousness may come back at you."

But the Count was not so easily to be pacified. He turned to the other nobles and asked them to help him revenge himself; but the Duke of Mantua was very powerful, and few were willing to displease him, however much they disapproved of his conduct.

"What can we do?" several of them murmured, and meanwhile the dwarf was trying aside to secure help in carrying off the Countess for the Duke. That was really too audacious, and all of the nobles finally sided with the Count, privately agreeing to help him ruin the dwarf, since they dared not directly oppose the Duke.

While the excitement of this general quarrel was at its height, the dancers all poured in from the other room and began to sing gaily of life's pleasures, which were about all that made life worth living. In the very midst of this revelry some one without made a great noise and demanded instant admittance. The Duke recognized the voice of Monterone, a powerful noble, whom he had wronged and cried out angrily: -247-

"He shall not come in." As a fact, Rigoletto had carried off Monterone's daughter for the Duke but a little time before.

"Make way there," the old Count insisted, more enraged than ever, and forcing his way past the attendants, he entered the room. He was an old and proud man and the nobles present were bound to give heed to him.

"Yes, Sir Duke, it is I. You know my voice! I would it were as loud as thunder!" he cried.

"Ah! I will deign to give you audience," Rigoletto spoke up, mimicking the Duke's voice in a manner insulting to Monterone.

He continued to speak insultingly to the old man, using the Duke's manner and voice,

till the Count cried out against the shameful action.

"Is this thy justice? Thou darest deride me? Then no place shall hide thee from my curse. I will pursue thee as long as I live, day and night. I will recall to you how you have taken my daughter away from me, and have disgraced us. You may cut off my head, but still I'll appear to thee and fill thee with fear. And thou, thou viper," he cried to Rigoletto, "be thou accursed!"

"Don't curse me," the dwarf exclaimed, turning pale. He was superstitious, and the fearful words of the wronged father sounded ominous. The scene became terrifying to the whole company and they cried out.

"Away with him," the Duke demanded, angrily. "Am I to have the gaiety of my guests spoiled because of this old dotard? Take him to prison." The attendants rushed in and seized Monterone, while he turned again upon the dwarf and cursed him roundly. Not only did the dwarf shrink back, the whole company became affrighted, while the old man was silenced at last by the guards, and Rigoletto hurried, panic-stricken, from the palace. -248-

Scene II

As Rigoletto hastened away from the palace with the curses ringing in his ears he could not rid himself of the terror they inspired; probably because he was so bad a man and knew that he deserved them. He was in a street very near to his home, when he was stopped by a forbidding-looking fellow.

"It was a father's curse he laid upon me," Rigoletto was muttering, thinking of his own daughter, the only thing in the world that he loved.

"Ho, there," said the fellow in the road, calling softly.

"Oh, don't stop me," Rigoletto answered with impatience. "I have nothing worth getting." He lived in a time of bandits and highwaymen, and, since he had nothing to be robbed of, was not much frightened. He was far more afraid of the Count's curse.

"No matter, good sir; that is not exactly what I stopped you for. You look to me like a man who might have enemies; or who might wish to employ me."

"What for, pray?"

Sparafucile laughed shortly. "Well, you are not a very benevolent-looking chap, and I'd murder my brother for money," he whispered, grinning at the crooked, odious-looking Rigoletto.

Rigoletto eyed him. The villain had spoken almost as if he knew the dwarf's fear.

"I believe you," he muttered, looking steadily at the cut-throat. "You look it, every inch. What do you charge to kill a noble?"

"More than I charge for a churl, by double." -249-

"And how do you want your money?"

"Half before I do the deed, and the other half when he is dead."

"You're a demon," Rigoletto murmured; and certainly he himself was bad enough to be able to judge of a rogue when he saw one. "Aren't you afraid of being discovered?"

"No, when it is dangerous to kill in the city, I do it in my own house. There in the gloom of night, far away from help, it is easy enough. No one ever finds it out."

"You are the wickedest man I know—not excepting myself," said Rigoletto, contemplating the wretch with curiosity. "Tell me how you lure people to your home?"

"Easy enough. I have a handsome sister there. Nobody ever thinks of resisting her. She gets them to come; I do the rest."

"I follow you."

"Then not a sound is heard. The knife is a silent fellow. Now what do you think?—that I can serve you?"

"No. I don't like the notion." Rigoletto was not half as daring of wicked deeds as he had been an hour before; the curse was still ringing in his ears.

"You have enemies, I judge," Sparafucile urged, shrewdly. "You'll regret not accepting my services."

"Nay. Be off. No, stay a moment! If I ever should need thee, where could I address thee?"

"You won't have to address me; you'll find me here each night."

"Well, be off, be off!" As a fact Rigoletto didn't much care to be seen with one of his own kind. But he looked after the *coupe-jarret* uneasily. "After all, we are equals, that fellow and I. He stabs in the dark—and so do I. I with my malicious tongue, he with his knife. Bah! I am all undone. I hear that old man's curse yet. How I hate them, all those nobles who hire me to laugh for them and to make them laugh! I haven't even a right to know sadness. It is my business in life, because I am born crooked, to make sport for these rats of fellows who are no better than I am. I am hired to bear the burden of their crimes. I wish they all had but one neck; I'd strangle them with one hand." Overwhelmed with the exciting scenes of the night, he turned toward the gate in his garden wall. As he opened it, Gilda ran out gaily to meet him. To her he was only the loving and tender father. She waited for his coming all day, and had no pleasure till she saw him. -250-

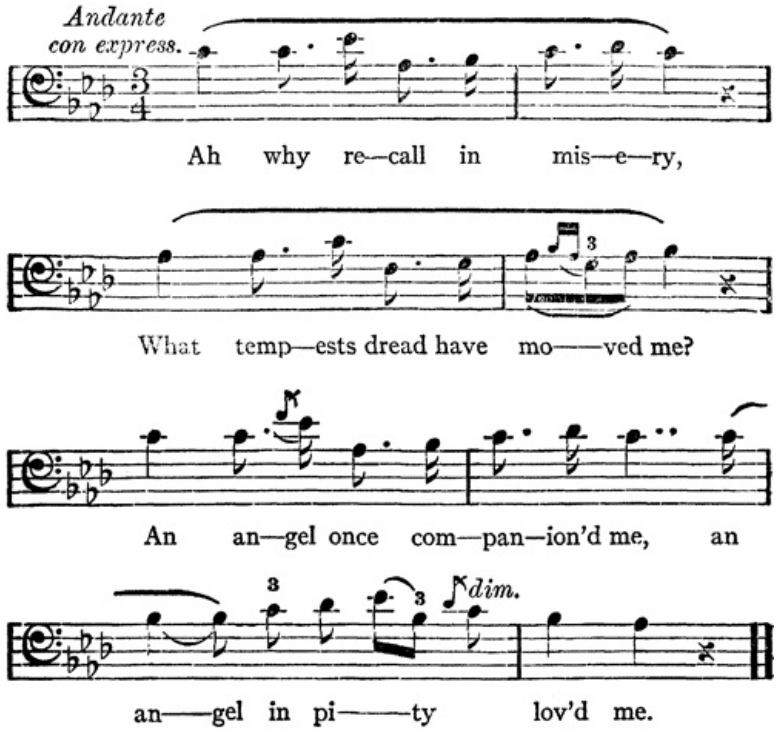
"Oh, in this abode, my nature changes," the crooked little man murmured as he folded his daughter in his arms.

"Near thee, my daughter, I find all the joy on earth that is left me," he said, trying to control his emotion.

"You love me, father?"

"Aye!—thou art my only comfort."

"Father, there is often something mysterious in thy actions. You have never told me of my mother. Who was my mother, dear father?"



[Listen]

-251-

Ah why recall in misery,
What tempests dread have moved me?
An angel once companion'd me,
An angel in pity lov'd me

he sang.

"Hideous, an outcast, penniless, she blessed my lonely years. Ah! I lost her, I lost her. Death wafted her soul to heaven!—But thou art left me," he said tenderly, beginning to weep.

"There, father, say no more. My questions have made thee sad. I shall always be with thee to make thee happy. But, father, I do not know that you are what you tell me. What is your real name? Is it Rigoletto?"

"No matter, child, do not question. I am feared and hated by my enemies. Let that suffice."

"But ever since we came to this place three months ago, you have forbidden me to go abroad. Let me go into the city, father, and see the sights."

"Never! You must not ask it." He was frightened at the very thought. If men like the Duke, his master, should see such a beautiful girl as Gilda, they would surely rob him of her. At that moment the nurse, Giovanna, came from the house and Rigoletto

asked her if the garden gate was ever left open while he was away. The woman told him falsely that the gate was always closed.

"Ah, Giovanna, I pray you watch over my daughter when I am away," he cried, and -252-
turned suddenly toward the gate upon hearing a noise. "Some one is without there, now!" he cried, running in the direction of the sound. He threw the gate wide, but saw no one, because the Duke—who it was—had stepped aside into the shadow, and then, while Rigoletto was without, looking up the road, he slipped within and hid behind a tree, throwing a purse to Giovanna to bribe her to silence. Giovanna snatched it and hid it in the folds of her gown, showing plainly that she was not to be trusted, as Rigoletto trusted her, with his precious daughter. There was the man whom Rigoletto had most cause to fear, who ran off with every pretty girl he saw, and he had now found the prettiest of them all in the dwarf's daughter.

"Have you noticed any one following Gilda?" the dwarf asked, returning to the garden and fastening the gate behind him. "If harm should come to my daughter it would surely kill me," he sobbed, taking Gilda in his arms. At that the Duke, listening behind the tree, was amazed. So! Gilda was no sweetheart of his jester; but was his daughter instead!

"Now," said Rigoletto, "I must be off, but I caution you once more; let no one in."

"What, not even the great Duke if he should come to inquire for you?"

"The Duke least of all," the dwarf answered in a new panic. And kissing Gilda he went out again.

No sooner had he gone than Gilda turned tearfully to her nurse.

"Giovanna, my heart feels guilty."

"What hast thou done?" the nurse asked, indifferently, remembering the purse of the
Duke which she carried in her bosom. -253-

"Ne'er told my father of the youth whom I have learned to love and who has followed me."

"Why should he know it? Would he not prevent it? If you wish that——"

"Nay, nay," Gilda replied, fearfully; and in her loneliness and distress she confided to Giovanna how much she loved the Duke. Mantua, behind the tree, heard all, and, motioning Giovanna to go away, he came toward Gilda. Giovanna went at once into the house, but Gilda cried to her to come back, as the sudden appearance of the Duke frightened her, after the scene she had just had with her father.

Then while the Duke was giving her a false name, and trying to reassure her, they heard voices outside the garden wall. The Duke recognized the voice of Borsa and Ceprano. They seemed to be searching for some house, and again, quite terror-stricken, Gilda started to rush within.

Giovanna met her. "I am afraid it is your father returned. The young gentleman must hasten away," she whispered under her breath, and immediately the Duke went out by another way, through the house. Then Gilda watched off, down the road, and while she was watching, Borsa, Ceprano, and other dare-devils of the Duke's court stole into the garden. Ceprano, who had heard that Gilda was some one beloved by Rigoletto, although it was not known that she was his daughter, meant to carry Gilda off, since he owed Rigoletto a grudge. Having seen the Duke disappear, Gilda had gone within again, and as the kidnappers were about to enter, they heard Rigoletto coming.

It was then their opportunity to plan a great and tragic joke upon the wretched
dwarf. -254-

"Listen to this!" Borsa whispered. "Let us tell him we are here to carry off the Countess Ceprano, who has fled here for safety from us. Then when we have blind-folded him, we will make him help to carry off his own sweetheart." Just as that infamous plan was formed, in came Rigoletto. He ran against one of the men in the dark.

"What's this?" he cried.

"H'st! Be silent!"

"Who spoke?" he unconsciously lowered his voice.

"Marullo, you idiot."

"The darkness blinds me, and I cannot see you."

"H'st, Rigoletto! We're for an adventure. We are going to carry off the Countess Ceprano: she has fled here from us. We had the Duke's key to get into her place." He holds out the key which the dwarf felt in the darkness and found the Duke's crest

upon it.

"Her palace is on the other side——"

"She fled here, we tell thee. We are stealing her for the Duke. Put on this mask, hurry!" Marullo tied on a mask and put the jester at the foot of a ladder which they had run up against the terrace.

"Now hold the ladder till one of us gets over and unfastens the door." Rigoletto, somewhat dazed, did mechanically what he was told, and the men entered the house.

"Ah, I shall have a fine revenge on that scamp," Ceprano muttered, looking toward Rigoletto through the dark.

"Sh! Be silent," Borsa whispered. "They will bring the girl out muffled so he can't hear her scream. Rigoletto will never hear a sound. No joke of his ever matched the one we are preparing for him." At that moment, Gilda was brought out, her mouth -255-
tied with her scarf; but as they were bearing her away, she got the scarf loose and uttered a piercing shriek, and the scarf fell near Rigoletto.

"Father, help, help!" she cried, but the voice seemed to come from afar off. Rigoletto only just heard. He could not collect his senses.

"Here, what does this mean? Aren't you nearly through?" he cried, angrily tearing off the mask and also the handkerchief that bound his ears. "What cry was that? I thought I heard a cry!" He was becoming mad with fear. All the conditions seemed so strange.

"Hello there!" But no one answered; all the men were gone. Then he snatched a lantern one of the men had left near, and suddenly he saw Gilda's scarf. He stared at it, rushed like a madman into the house and dragged out the nurse, tried to shriek "Gilda," but overcome with horror he fell senseless.

ACT II

Now if the Duke of Mantua was ever angry in his life, he was angry when the curtain rose on the second act. There he was, pacing about a sumptuous apartment, fuming with rage.

"If ever I loved any one in my life, it was that girl!" he cried. "And heaven knows what can have become of her." As a matter of fact, the Duke had some misgiving after he had left Gilda in the garden, and, later, he had returned. But he had found the place deserted and could get no news of her from that hour.

"Oh, but I would defend thee, if thou art in trouble," he cried; and in the midst of his excitement Marullo, Borsa, and Ceprano and other courtiers rushed into the room. -256-
All were fairly bursting with news of the escapade of the night before.

"Oh, Duke! Oh, Lord! What do you think? We have carried off the jester's sweetheart!"

"What?" The Duke stared and then gave a great cry. "Speak, speak. What have you done?"

"The jester's sweetheart."

"Where is she?" the Duke asked, hardly daring to trust his voice.

"Here, in this house."

"What do you say?"

"Yes, we brought her here."

"Oh, joy!" the Duke exclaimed; then aside: "She is near me," and forgetting all about his friends he went out excitedly.

"Why did he turn away from us?" the men asked each other. "He has enjoyed our adventures before now." They were a little uneasy and were conferring together when Rigoletto came in. He was a pitiful-looking fellow, worn with a night of horror and weeping, but he came singing:

"La, la, la, la, la,"—pretending not to be agitated. "Pray what is the news?" he asked off-hand, seeking not to betray his agony of mind, till he should have learned something about his daughter.

"Pleasant morning, Rigoletto!" the men answered, mockingly, and glancing with grins at each other. "Pray what *is* the news?" Rigoletto, half dead with anxiety, moved about the room looking for some sign of Gilda.

"Lord! See him fishing about in every corner for her? He thinks to find her under the table," one of them whispered, and the men burst out laughing. -257-

Then Rigoletto discovered a handkerchief on the floor and snatched it, hoping to find a clue, but it was not hers. Just then a page ran in to say that the Duchess was asking for the Duke.

"He is still in bed," one of the men answered, watching the effect of that upon Rigoletto, who was listening to every word.

"He cannot be," the page persisted. "Didn't he just pass me on the stairs?"

"All right, then! He has gone a-hunting," and they laughed.

"With no escort? Hardly. Come, don't think me a fool. Where's the Duke? The Duchess wishes to speak with him."

"It is you who are a dull fool," the men exclaimed, seeming to carry on the conversation aside, but taking good care that Rigoletto should hear. "The Duke cannot be disturbed—do you understand? He is with a lady."

"Ah! Villains!" Rigoletto shrieked, turning upon them like a tiger. "My daughter! You have my daughter—here in this palace. Give me my daughter!" The men all rushed after him as he made for the door.

"Your daughter? My God! Your daughter?" They were horrified at their own doings, hearing it was Rigoletto's daughter.

"Stand back! Don't think to keep me from my daughter." As they still held him tight, hardly knowing what then to do, he sank down in despair. He entreated help of the different courtiers whom he had so often and maliciously misused. Then he wept.

"Oh, have pity on me, my lords! Let me go to my daughter." While everybody was hesitating in consternation, Gilda, having got free, rushed from the next room, and -258-
into his arms. She screamed hysterically that she had been carried off by the Duke. Rigoletto nearly foamed at the mouth with rage, and at last the men became truly afraid of him.

"Go, all of you!" he stammered, no longer able to speak plainly. "And if the Duke comes into this room I will kill him." So the courtiers withdrew. The palace was in an uproar.

"It is a mistake to jest with a madman," Marullo whispered to Borsa as they went out. Father and daughter were left alone. After looking at Gilda a moment, trying to recover himself, Rigoletto whispered.

"Now, my child; they have gone. Speak!" Gilda throwing herself into her father's arms, told of her meetings with the Duke, and of how she had grown to love him, and finally of how in the night she had been carried away.

As they were in each other's arms the guard entered with old Count Monterone, who was being taken to his cell. As he was being led across the room, Rigoletto's wild eyes fixed themselves in horror upon the man whose curse had cursed him. The Count paused before the Duke's picture and cursed it.

"I shall be the instrument to fulfill thy curse, old man," Rigoletto whispered as the Count passed out, and he made a frightful oath of vengeance against the Duke of Mantua. His words frightened Gilda, because she dearly loved the Duke even though she believed he had caused her to be carried off. As the jester raised his hand to take the dreadful oath to kill, Gilda fell upon her knees beside him.

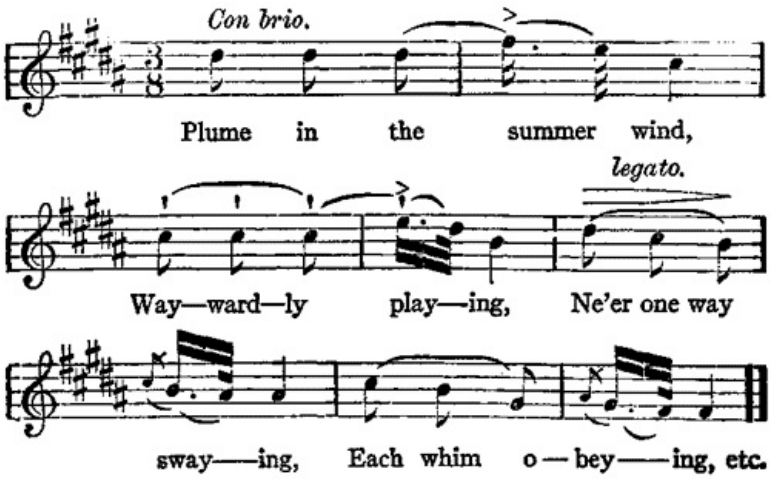
ACT III

RIGOLETTO and Gilda had fled from the palace, for the dwarf meant to hide his daughter away forever; and in the darkness they were hurrying on their way to an -259-
old inn, which could be seen near at hand. A swift, rushing river ran back of the inn, and the innkeeper could be seen inside his house sitting at a table polishing an old belt. It was the villainous old cut-throat, Sparafucile, who had stopped Rigoletto on his way home two nights before, offering to kill whomever Rigoletto would for a sum of money.

Gilda was very weary and she and her father were about to stop at the inn for the night. They were speaking in the road:

"Do you still love the Duke, my child?"

"Alas, father! I cannot help it. I think I shall always love him." At that moment Rigoletto espied a man, dressed as a cavalry officer, approaching the inn by another road. Instantly he recognized the Duke in disguise. He peeped through an opening in the wall which surrounded the house and could see the Duke greeting Sparafucile and ordering a bottle of wine, after which he gaily sang, while waiting:



[Listen]

Plume in the summer wind,
Waywardly playing,
Ne'er one way swaying,
Each whim obeying, etc.

The song was gay and thoughtless, and when it should be last heard by Rigoletto it was to have a fearful meaning. -260-

"Ah, ha?" Rigoletto murmured to himself. "This rat of a noble is seeking some new adventure! Let us see if Gilda will continue to love him when she knows the true wickedness of the wretch! when she knows that he is false to all that he has said to her: because there is of course another woman in the case!" While Rigoletto was observing him, the wine was brought to the Duke, who raised his sword and rapped upon the ceiling with its hilt. At that signal a pretty girl ran down the ladder and Mantua embraced her.

That freed Sparafucile and he ran out of the inn to look for Rigoletto, whose coming was expected. In fact, Rigoletto had at last made a bargain with the *coupe-jarret* to kill the Duke.

"Your man's inside. Shall I do the job at once, or wait a bit?"

"Wait a bit," said Rigoletto, glancing at Gilda, who heard nothing, "I'll give the signal," whereupon Sparafucile went off, toward the river. Then while the father and daughter stood outside the inn they could see all that was taking place within it. The Duke began to make love to the gipsy girl, and she laughed at him.

"You have told fifty girls what you tell me," she declared.

"Well, I'll admit all that. I am an unfaithful fellow—but you don't mind that! Just at this moment I love no one in the world but you," he returned.

"Father, do you hear that traitor?" Gilda whispered, tearfully, and Rigoletto nodded. He was indeed glad; maybe it would cure her of her infatuation.

"I must laugh to think how many girls you have made believe you," the gipsy said again, mocking the Duke. But he only protested the more, and Gilda threw her arms about her father in despair. -261-

"Now, my child, since this traitor is here, you cannot well go in; so return to Mantua, change thy dress for that of a youth; get a horse and fly to Verona. There I will meet thee and see thee safe. You can see that this man is no longer to be trusted."

"Alas, I know that is true;—yet, if I must go—come with me, father," she entreated, feeling very lonely and heartbroken, there in the dark night.

"Not at once. I cannot go at once; but I will soon join thee"; and in spite of her pleading he started her back to the city alone. Then he and Sparafucile stood together in the middle of the road while the dwarf counted out the half of the money to the cut-throat.

"Here is thy money, and I am going away. But at midnight I shall return and help thee throw him into the river. It will make a great noise,—this killing of a man of the Duke of Mantua's fame," he muttered.

"Never mind about coming back. I can dump him into the river, without help. It is going to be a bad night," the fellow said, uneasily looking up at the storm clouds that were gathering. As the lightning began to flash and the thunder to roll distantly, Rigoletto turned toward Mantua, while Sparafucile went into the inn.

"A fine night! Black as thunder and going to storm like Satan," he said as he entered.

"So much the better," the Duke answered, "I'll stay here all night, and you clear out," to Sparafucile;—"go to the devil, will you? I don't want you about." -262-

"You're a nice, soft spoken gentlemen—if a man doesn't care what he says," Sparafucile returned.

"You mustn't stay here," Maddalena said hastily to the Duke. She well knew the tricks her brother was up to when a stranger with money stopped at the house; and after the Duke had made himself so agreeable she didn't care to see him killed under her nose.

"You mind your business," her brother said to her, shortly, seeing his plans interfered with. Then speaking to her aside: "It's worth a pot-full of gold to us. Mind your own business, I say." Then to the Duke: "Sir, I am delighted to have you sleep at my inn. Pray take shelter in my own chamber. Come, I will show you the way." Sparafucile took the candle and went toward the ladder that led to the rooms above.

The Duke then whispered to the gipsy girl, and went laughing up the ladder. Maddalena looked thoughtfully after him. She liked money as well as her brother did. Should she let her brother kill him or not?

"Heavens! That thunder is loud," she exclaimed, as the storm struck the dreadful house. Up in the loft, the Duke was laughing with Sparafucile about the airiness of the chamber.

"Well, well, I'm tired," he said, after the cut-throat had gone down the ladder. "I'll take off my sword and have an hour's sleep, anyway." He removed his protecting sword, and began to hum to himself while he was waiting for more wine. The storm, the gay song, the murder which was about to be committed!—it was a fearful hour.

Down below Sparafucile was saying to his sister: "Go and get my dagger. This affair will give us a tidy sum of money." Maddalena listened to the Duke singing above and hesitated. -263-

"He—he is young and—no—we shall not do this thing, Sparafucile," she declared.

"Come! No foolishness, now," he growled. "Get my dagger and be quick." She reluctantly ascended the staircase again to where the Duke was sleeping. It was not very light. The flickering candle made but a wavering shadow over all, and as Maddalena went up the ladder, Gilda, who had returned, softly stole up to the inn door and began to listen to what went on within, but not daring to enter. She had returned because for some reason unknown to herself she was oppressed with a sense of danger to the Duke who had so ill-treated her. Through the chink of the door she could see the innkeeper at the table drinking. Gilda had already changed her girl's clothing for that of a youth with spurs and boots.

Now she saw Maddalena come back down the stairs with the Duke's sword which she had stolen from his side.

"Oh, it is a horrible night," Gilda whispered to herself, shuddering and cold and frightened there in the dark, with only Sparafucile's wicked face before her.

"Brother," Maddalena began, "I am not going to let you kill that young man up there. I have taken a fancy to him and I won't let you do it."

"You mind your own affairs and get away from here. I'll attend to my business," he snarled. Upon hearing there was a plan to kill the Duke whom after all she truly loved, unworthy as he was, Gilda nearly fainted.

"You just take this sack and mend it," Sparafucile said, throwing an old sack toward his sister.

"What for?" she asked suspiciously.

"It is to hold your fine young man, up there—when I shall throw him in the river." Upon hearing that, Gilda sank down upon the stone step. -264-

"See here! If it were not for the money you are to get, you would let him go, I know," Maddalena urged.

"Well, no—because you see already I have received half my pay, and the fellow I am doing the job for is a nasty customer, and, to tell the truth, I shouldn't dare let the Duke go.

"Then listen to my plan: The hunchback will presently return with the rest of the money." Gilda learned then to her horror that it was her father who had bargained for the Duke's assassination. "When the jester comes, kill him instead and take his money—all of it—and throw him into the river, and let this young man above go." At that Gilda could not longer support herself and she fell down upon the ground.

"No, I won't do it," the fellow said doggedly. "I agreed to kill the man upstairs—and there must be honour among rogues. It wouldn't be right to kill the one I hadn't bargained for. I make it a rule never to kill my employer," the rascal returned piously.

"I'll call him, then, and tell him to defend himself," the girl cried, running toward the stairs.

"Hold on there," Sparafucile cried; "I'll tell you—I agree to kill the first man who enters this house between now and midnight, in the Duke's stead, if that will suit you. Then we shall put him in the sack, and the hunchback will not know the difference. Will that suit you?" he repeated.

"That will do, and see that you keep your word or I will arouse the young man, I promise you."

At that moment the clock struck half past eleven, and Gilda was frantic with fear. Maddalena was in tears, fearing that no one would come along, in that storm, so late at night. -265-

"If no one comes!" Gilda thinks shudderingly. "Oh, how shall I save him?" But no sooner had she that thought than a desperate plan entered her mind. She would go into the inn! She was dressed like a young man and no one would ever know the difference in the darkness and the storm. She would go in and the Duke would be spared. Then she waited a moment, overcome with the fear of death; finally, summoning all her courage, she knocked against the door.

"Who's there?" Both Maddalena and Sparafucile exclaimed, looking in terror at each other. The knock was sudden and ominous. Then another knock.

"Who's there?" again he called.

"A stranger, caught in the storm. Will you give me shelter?" Gilda could hardly speak, with terror. Maddalena and the murderer looked at each other significantly. They knew well what they would do the moment the door was opened. The lightning flashed, the thunder rolled and broke above them, and the scene became terrifying. Sparafucile placed himself behind the door and motioned to Maddalena to open it.

"Thou art welcome," she said, throwing the door back suddenly; and as Gilda stumbled in, Maddalena ran out and closed the gateway. The candle went out in the gust of wind, and all was dark. Gilda stood an instant in the blackness of the room. With one blow of the knife, which could not be seen for the darkness, Sparafucile killed her, and then all was silent. After a moment the storm broke away, the moon came forth, and Rigoletto could be seen coming up the river bank.

"It is the time of my vengeance, now," he muttered to himself. He tried the inn door and found it locked. "He cannot have done the deed yet," he muttered. After waiting a little he knocked. -266-

"Who's there?"

"I am known to thee," he whispered back; at this Sparafucile came out, dragging behind him a sack.

"Bring a light," Rigoletto called, "that I may see him."

"That's all right—but you pay my money first," the cut-throat insisted. Rigoletto impatiently paid him.

"I'll throw him into the river, myself," Rigoletto said triumphantly.

"The tide is shallow here—go farther on—and be sure no one surprises you," Sparafucile advised. "Good night," he said shortly, and went inside the inn. Then Rigoletto stood in the dripping road looking gloatingly at the sack.

"I've got you at last," he chuckled, diabolically, "I have revenge for your treatment of my daughter. My dear daughter! The child of my heart!" At the very thought of what she had suffered the dwarf sobbed. "I'll put my foot upon you, you noble vermin," he cried, kicking the body in the sack. At that moment he heard a song—*La Donna è Mobile*—The voice! Was he going mad? He knew the voice. He had heard it only a few hours ago, in the inn—he had heard it daily at court—*La Donna è Mobile*! He looked toward the windows of the inn. *La Donna è Mobile!* As he looked he saw the Duke and Maddalena step from the window to the terrace that ran by the river bank. "*La Donna è Mobile*," the Duke sang gaily. With a frightful cry, Rigoletto dragged the sack open and the body of his murdered daughter rolled out upon the road. She moved ever so little.

"Father?" and she gasped out the truth, with a dying breath, while the dwarf shrieked and tore his hair. -267-

"The curse, the curse! Monterone's curse!" he screamed, and went raving mad.

IL TROVATORE

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA, WITH THE ORIGINAL CAST AS PRESENTED AT THE FIRST PERFORMANCE

Leonora	Penco
Azucena	Goggi
Inez	Quadri
Manrico	Baucardé
Count di Luna	Guicciardi
Ferrando	Balderi
Ruiz	Bazzoli

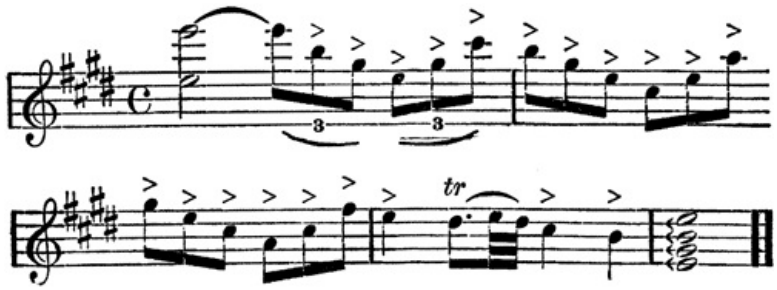
An old gipsy.
Messenger, jailer, soldiers, nuns, gipsies, and attendants.

The story belongs to the fifteenth century in Spain, and tells of the border wars of northern Spain, carried on in the provinces of Arragon and Biscay.

Composer: Giuseppe Verdi.
Author: Cammarano.

First sung in Rome, *Teatro Apollo*, January, 19, 1853; Paris, *Théâtre des Italiens*, December 23, 1854 (in Italian); at the *Opéra*, January 12, 1857 (in French); London, Covent Garden, May 17, 1855; New York, Academy of Music, April 30, 1855.

ACT I



[Listen]

THERE you are, prepared for almost anything in the way of battle, murder, or sudden death, to the accompaniment of beautiful music; opera in true Italian style, at its second best. -268-

Soldiers and servants were gathered about the beautiful columns of a porch of the Aliaferia palace just before midnight awaiting the return of the Count di Luna. Among them was Ferrando, the captain of the Count's guard. All were lounging in the vestibule of the palace gossiping till it was time to go on duty within.

"Hey, wake up! You'll be caught napping," Ferrando called to his comrades. "It is time for the Count to come. I suppose he has been under the Lady Leonora's windows. Ah, he is madly in love with her—and so jealous of that troubadour who sings beneath her windows that some day they will meet and kill each other."

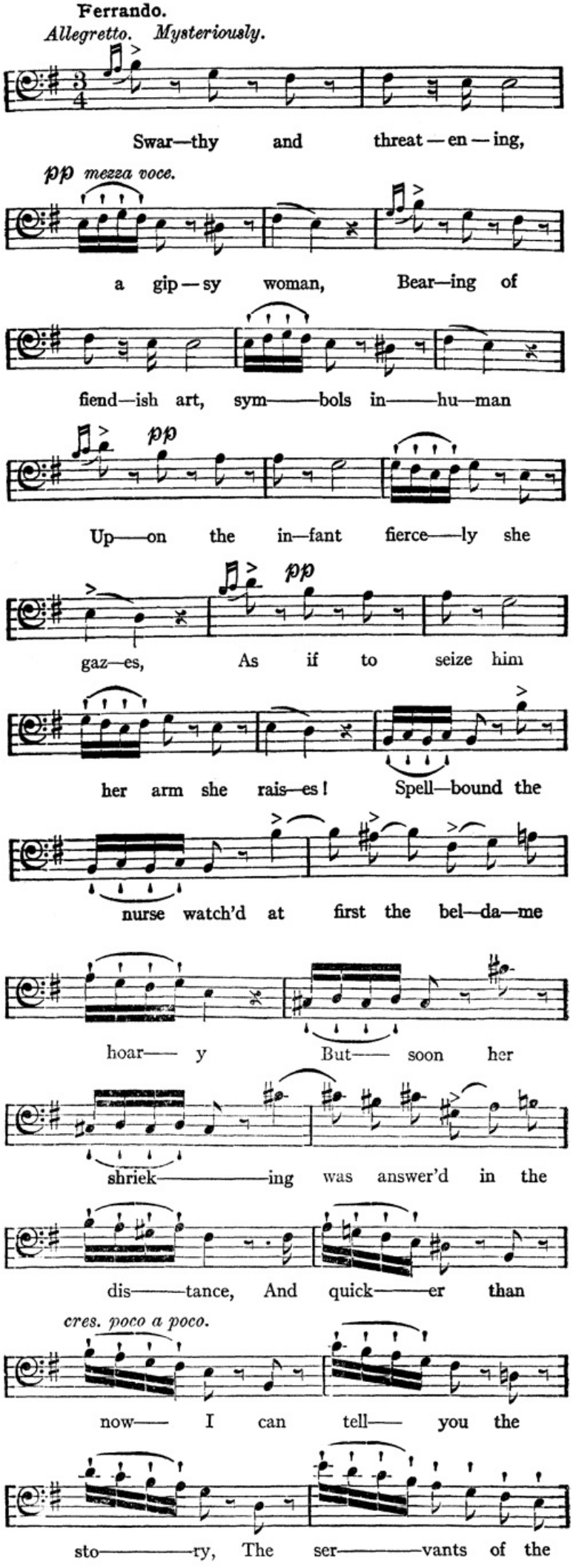
This was an old story to the men, and in their effort to keep awake they clamoured for the story of the Count di Luna's brother, which all had heard told with more or less of truth; but Ferrando knew the whole horrible tale better than any one else; besides, it was a good story to keep awake on.

"Ah, that was a great tragedy for the House of Luna," Ferrando began with a shiver. "I remember it as if it were but yesterday:"

When the good Count di Luna here resided,
  Two children fair he numbered;
One to a faithful nurse was once confided,
  By the cradle she slumbered.

At morning when she woke and gazed about her,
  Sorely stricken was she,
And what sight do ye think did so confound her?
  Cho. ... What, oh tell us did she see?

-269-


Ferrando.
Allegretto. Mysteriously.
Swar—thy and threat—en—ing,
pp mezza voce.
a gip—sy woman, Bear—ing of
fiend—ish art, sym——bols in——hu—man
pp
Up——on the in—fant fierce——ly she
pp
gaz—es, As if to seize him
her arm she rais—es! Spell—bound the
nurse watch'd at first the bel—da—me
hoar— y But— soon her
shriek————ing was answer'd in the
dis——tance, And quick——er than
cres. poco a poco.
now— I can tell— you the
sto————ry, The ser————vants of the

[Listen]

Ferrando.
Swarthy and threatening, a gipsy woman,
Bearing of fiendish art, symbols inhuman
Upon the infant fiercely she gazes,
As if to seize him her arm she raises!
Spellbound the nurse watch'd at first the beldame hoary
But soon her shrieking was answer'd in the distance,
And quicker than now I can tell you the story,
The servants of the

The frightful story was sung in a deep bass voice, by Ferrando. He sang of how the cry of the nurse on that morning years before had brought the servants running and they had put the gipsy out; but almost at once the baby grew ill, and the Count and his people believed the old hag had put a spell upon it, so that it would die. They sought wildly for her, and, when they finally found her, they burned her alive.

While that frightful scene was being enacted, the baby was stolen, outright, and the di Luna family saw it thrown upon the fire which had consumed the gipsy. -271-

This deed was done by the daughter of the gipsy whom they had burned alive. There were those who believed that the child burned had not been the Count's, but a young gipsy baby—which was quite as horrible. The name of the young woman who had done this fiendish thing was Azucena, and the di Lunas searched for her year after year without success.

It was believed that the spirit of the hag they had burned had entered into the younger woman's body. The gossiping soldiers and servants sang:

Anon on the eaves of the house-tops you'll see her,
In form of a vampire; 'tis then you must flee her;
A crow of ill-omen she often is roaming,
Or else as an owl that flits by in the gloaming.

While they were talking of this tragedy for the hundredth time, it approached the hour of midnight. The servants, through fear, drew closer together, and the soldiers formed a rank across the plaza at the back.

Each recalled some frightful happening in relation to witches; how one man who had given a witch a blow, had died, shrieking and in awful agony. He had been haunted. It was at the midnight hour that he had died! As they spoke of this, the castle bell tolled the midnight hour. The men, wrought up with fright, yelled sharply, and the face of the moon was hidden for a moment.

Scene II

When the cloud which had hidden the moon's rays cleared away, a beautiful garden belonging to the palace was revealed. The place was very silent, the soldiers and servants, excepting those on guard, having gone within. -272-

The Lady Leonora, whom the Count di Luna loved, was one of the suite of the Princess of Arragon, and when all in the palace were sleeping it was her custom to steal into the lovely gardens with her friend, Inez. Of late, when she came there, she had hoped, secretly, to find a mysterious young troubadour, who sang almost nightly beneath her windows. She loved this troubadour and not the Count.

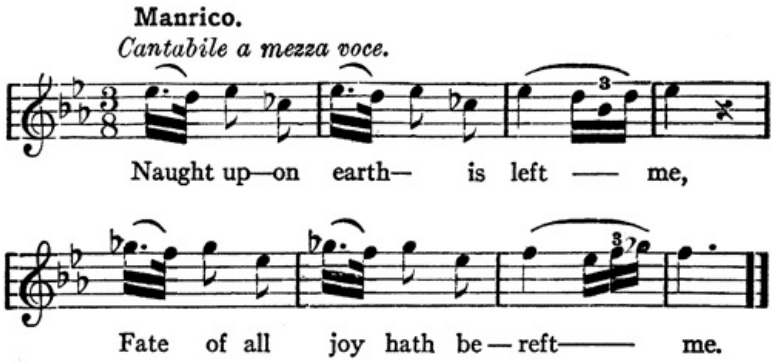
The first time she had met the handsome youth was at a tournament. There he had come, dressed in a suit of black, and all unknown; wearing a sweeping sable plume in his helmet; and when the jousting took place, he had vanquished all the nobles. It was Leonora, herself, who had placed the wreath of the victor upon his brow. From that very moment they had loved. He had worn no device upon his shield by which he could be known, but she had loved him for a gallant knight.

He belonged to the retinue of a neighbouring prince, who was an enemy of the Princess of Arragon, and he risked his life each time he came to sing in the gardens to Leonora.

"Ah, I fear some harm will come of this love of yours!" Inez said to her friend and mistress. "The Princess awaits thee, dear Countess, and we must go within. I hope your trust will never be betrayed by this unknown knight and singer." The women mounted the gleaming marble staircase, and then Leonora paused for a moment looking down into the garden again.

She had no sooner gone than a man peered out from the shadow of the trees. It was the Count di Luna, jealously watching for the knight who sang beneath the lady's window. Also, he hoped to see Leonora, herself, but all was still, and after watching the balcony a moment, he started toward the marble steps. At that instant a beautiful -273-

voice stole through the moonlight.



[Listen]

Manrico.
Naught upon earth is left me,
Fate of all joy hath bereft me.

It was Manrico the troubadour!

The Count paused upon the stair and looked down; but Leonora, too, had heard, and ran out upon the balcony, then down the steps, throwing herself into the Count's arms, mistaking him for Manrico. Manrico, still hidden by the shadows, witnessed this, and becoming enraged at the sight, believing Leonora faithless, he rushed upon them just as the moon again shone forth and revealed to Leonora that she was in the Count's arms, instead of the troubadour's.

"Traitress!" Manrico cried.

"Manrico, the light blinded me," she implored, throwing herself at the troubadour's feet.

For thee alone the words were meant,
If those words to him were spoken,

she sang.

"I believe thee," Manrico answered; while the Count, enraged in his turn, cried:

"You shall fight with me, Sir Knight!"

"Aye, behold me!" Manrico answered, lifting his visor and standing in the bright light of the moon. At the sight of him di Luna started back: -274-

"Manrico! The brigand! Thou darest——"

"To fight thee? Aye, have at it!" and Manrico stood *en garde*. Leonora implored them not to fight, but too late. They would fight to the death.

"Follow me," di Luna called, drawing his sword, which he had half sheathed when he had seen that his antagonist was not of noble birth like himself. "Follow me," and he hurried off among the trees, followed by Manrico.

"I follow, and I shall kill thee," the handsome troubadour cried, as he too rushed off after the Count. Whereupon the Countess Leonora fell senseless.

ACT II

THIS opera of shadows and darkness began again in a ghostly ruin in the mountains of Biscay. A forge fire blazed through a yawning doorway of tumbled-down stones. It was not yet day, but very soon it would be; and Manrico, the handsome knight, brigand, troubadour, lover of Leonora, lay wounded upon a low couch near the forge fire. Azucena, his gipsy mother, sat beside him, tenderly watching. Many months had passed since the night of the duel in the palace garden, when Manrico had had di Luna at his mercy, but had spared him. Since that time there had been war between the factions of Arragon and Biscay, and Manrico had been sorely wounded in his prince's service. Here he had lain ever since, in the gipsy rendezvous, cared for by his mother.

All night the gipsy band had been at work, forging weapons with which to fight, and just before the early dawn they were discovered singing a fine chorus, which they accompanied by a rhythmic pounding upon their anvils. -275-

There, beside him, through the long nights, Azucena had sat, conjuring back memories of her fierce past, and soon she broke into a wild song describing the

death of her mother, years before, when Manrico was a baby. She sang how that old mother had been burned at the stake by the di Lunas—by the father of the living Count.

"Di Luna, mother?" Manrico questioned.

"Aye, it was di Luna. Why did ye not kill the young Count when ye fought?" she asked, fiercely.

"I do not know," he murmured, rising upon his elbow. "Mother, do you know when I had disarmed him, something seemed to hold me back, to paralyze my arm. I hated him, but I could not strike the death-blow."

"His father burned my mother at the stake, Manrico. Ye must avenge me." And at that moment a gipsy interrupted the talk between mother and son by crying:

"The sun rises! we must be off!" Thereupon the gipsy band threw their tools into bags, gathered up their cloaks and hats, and one by one and in groups they disappeared down the mountain-side, leaving Azucena and her wounded son alone in the ruined hut. He remained wrapped in his mantle, sword and horn beside him, while the old hag continued to croon about the horrors of the past. In her ever-increasing rage she called again and again upon Manrico to avenge her.

"Again those vengeful words, mother! There is something in thy voice which I do not understand."

"Listen! I will tell thee! I have told thee how my mother was accused, arrested by the old Count and burned alive. Well, in that fearful moment, crazed with grief I crept into the palace, snatched the Count's child, and rushed out, thinking only of my -276-
revenge. With maddened mind I tossed the babe into the flames that were consuming my mother—or so I thought! But when I looked around there was the child of noble birth, and my own was gone. It was you who were left to me. My own child had gone into the flames. I snatched thee up and fled."

"What is this that ye tell me?" Manrico cried, his eyes strained, his body stiffened with horror. "Thou who art so tender of me—" and he fell back upon his couch overcome with the frightful deed.

"I was mad! but now you must avenge me. You must ruin my enemy. Have I not tended thee as my own, and loved thee?"

"Oh, tale of woe! Mother, speak no more." Frightful as the deed had been, he tried to soothe the demented old woman who had truly cared for him with a mother's care. He had known no other mother, but the tale had distracted him. The knowledge that the Count di Luna, whose life he had spared, was his own brother, explained much to him. No wonder something had stayed his hand when he might have killed him. Yet, he also recalled that his unsuspecting brother loved Leonora. In all their encounters, di Luna had shown only a hard, unyielding heart, and Manrico had no reason to love him. After all, Manrico was but a wild young brigand, living in a lawless time, when nobles themselves were highwaymen and without violating custom. Such a one had little self-control.

"Show di Luna no mercy, my son," Azucena urged. "Art thou not my son? my own, dear son?" Then suddenly remembering all that her distraught condition had betrayed her into saying, she cried remorsefully:

"I am an old and wretched woman who has seen much sorrow. When I spoke I was -277-
distracted with my griefs, but remember the Count di Luna and do not spare him. If you do, he will take the Lady Leonora from thee."

"True, mother, and I will kill him," the troubadour said suddenly. The thought of di Luna's rivalry overcame his sense of humanity.

The forge fire died down, and Manrico, exhausted by his mother's story, lay back upon his couch while his mother continued to sit, lost in her tragic thoughts, but while he rested, half sleeping, the long clear note of a horn was heard, and Manrico started up.

"It is Ruiz," he said anxiously, believing it to be his servant. Snatching his horn from his belt, he blew a clear, answering blast. In a moment a messenger, who was not Ruiz, ran in.

"Quick, what is thy news?" Manrico demanded, made apprehensive by illness and the stories he had heard. He expected misfortune from every quarter.

"A letter for thee, Master," the messenger panted, leaning against the rocky wall, worn with running. Manrico read excitedly:

"Our men have taken Castellar. The Prince's order is that thou shalt come instantly to defend it. Unless thy wounds have laid thee low, I shall expect thee. Know that, deceived by the tidings of thy death, the beautiful Lady Leonora will this day become

the elect of Heaven." Manrico started, then stared at the letter again. Leonora to enter a convent where he could never see her again! No!

"Bring me my horse, quick. I shall join thee below the hill. Mother, I go! My mantle!" And snatching his cloak and helmet, his mother threw her arms about him.

"Where do you go, my son?" she cried with anxiety. -278-

"To save Leonora—let me go."

"Thou art still ill. It will kill thee, and I shall die if I lose thee."

"Farewell, mother; I go. Without Leonora, I could not live. I go." Tearing himself from her he rushed down the mountain.

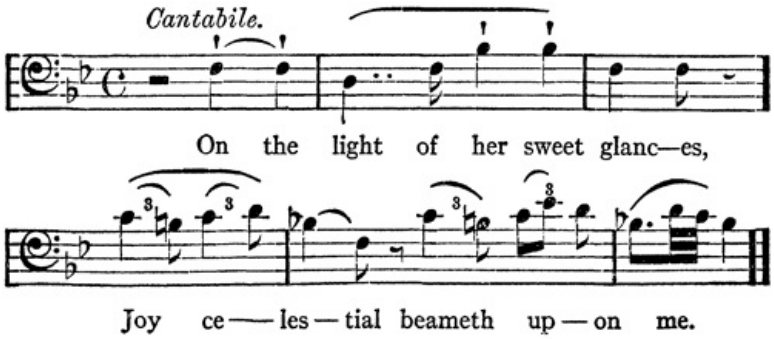
Scene II

Again it was night; there was always an appearance of darkness and gloom about the lovers. From the cloisters of the convent to which Leonora had gone, there stretched away at the back a deep wood. The Count, having heard where Leonora was hidden, had also started with his followers and vassals, to reach the convent before she could take the veil and retire forever beyond his reach. When he reached the convent it was just before day, and with Ferrando he stole into the gardens, wrapped in his long cloak.

"Everything is still; the convent is sleeping. They have ceased their prayers awhile and we are safe, Ferrando," the Count whispered.

"It is a bold adventure, Count. I fear——"

"Do not speak. A man does not fear when he is in danger of losing the woman he loves." He began to sing softly:



[Listen]

On the light of her sweet glances,
Joy celestial beameth upon me.

It was a love song to Leonora, who, within the convent, was about to bury herself from all the world, believing Manrico to be dead. As the light of day slowly flushed the scene, a bell sounded from the chapel tower. -279-

"That bell, Ferrando!"

"It is to summon the nuns to prayer. They will pass this way."

"Now to rescue her!" Di Luna motioned to his men, who had lain concealed in the shadows. "She is coming," he whispered, watching the convent door, while a weird chant floated out. The nuns were singing. While di Luna watched, Leonora came from the convent with her beloved friend, Inez, who was weeping.

"Why weep, Inez?" Leonora asked, gently.

"In another hour shall we not be forever parted?"

"Have no regrets for me, dear sister. There is no longer any happiness for me in this life, since Manrico is dead. Come, weep no more. Let us go to the altar."

"No," di Luna cried, rushing upon her, while the nuns from the convent screamed:

"Sacrilege! Help!" They struggled, and the Count's men rushed up to help him. The Count had overcome Leonora and was about to flee with her, when Manrico leaped into the midst of the fight. His men set upon the Count's men, while Manrico himself lifted Leonora and ran off with her.

His men vanquished the Count's. Leonora believed herself in Heaven upon finding herself in Manrico's arms, and as he carried her away he cried to di Luna that he

would be revenged upon him. Then he fled to Castellar.

ACT III

AT LAST this tragedy began to see daylight, inasmuch as the third act began in broad day with the banner of the Count floating from his tent, pitched before the ramparts -280- of Castellar, which could be seen in the distance. Soldiers were moving about, brightening their armour, and a band of strong crossbow-men crossed the ravine behind the camp.

"Those are the troops to reinforce us," some of the soldiers sang out.

"We shall vanquish Castellar then, without delay," others cried; and then comes a famous soldiers' chorus. The Count di Luna came from his tent and looked off toward the grim stronghold of Castellar.

"Thy day is over," he said, vindictively, thinking of Manrico, who, with Leonora, in the castle, was defending the domain. His thoughts were interrupted by a commotion in the camp.

"What is the trouble there?" he asked Ferrando, who came from the hill.

"A wandering gipsy has been found near the camp, and the men believe her to be a spy from Castellar. They have arrested her, and are bringing her to you, Count," he announced as Azucena appeared with some men.

"Let me go!" she screamed, struggling to get away from her captors.

"Bring her here," di Luna said, and they released her before him.

"Where is your home?"

"Not here," she replied sullenly.

"Well, where?"

"The gipsy has no home; she wanders. I come from Biscay, if you must know."

Biscay! Di Luna started at the word. Ferrando looked at him quickly.

"Say, old hag, how long hast thou been among the Biscay mountains? Dost thou -281- remember that many years ago—fifteen—a young child was stolen from a noble, by one of thy people?"

"What is that you say?" she screamed in fright.

"I say the child was my brother."

She stared at him in horror. "Well," she muttered, "thy tale is no concern of mine." But Ferrando, who had been watching her closely, believed he recognized her features.

"Count, do not let her go—it is the murderess herself; she who threw thy brother upon the fire."

"Ah, my God!" The Count cried, shrinking away from her. "Let me punish her. To the stake with her!" and she was instantly surrounded by the men.

She twisted and screamed, calling upon Manrico to come and save his mother, but Manrico was in the castle of Castellar defending it and Leonora from the Count below. He was about to marry the Countess and they were even at that moment on their way to the chapel. They entered the great hall, whose windows opened out upon the horrid scene below, where Azucena was to be burned at the stake. It was now dusk, and the clamour of battle could be plainly heard, within the hall. Leonora, being frightened, asked Manrico if the trouble would never end.

"Banish all sad thoughts, Leonora; our soldiers will win and it will soon be over. Think only of joyful things. We shall live and be happy." The organ sounded from the chapel. "That calls us to our marriage," Manrico said, leading her toward the chapel door, but as they were about to enter, Ruiz rushed in.

"Manrico! Look out—that gipsy." He pointed frantically out of the window. Manrico looked, and there he saw his old mother being tied to the stake, the fagots being -282- piled about her. He yelled with horror.

"Leonora! It is my mother. She was my mother before I loved thee. I go to save her. Call our men, Ruiz, I follow!" Embracing Leonora, he rushed wildly away, while the trumpets of war were heard, and the din of battle began.

ACT IV

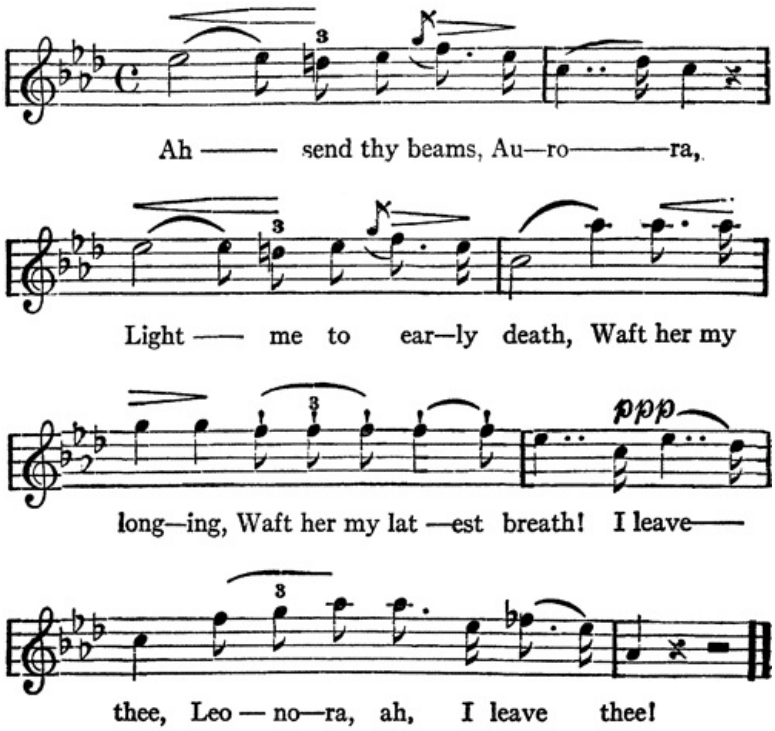
BACK at Aliaferia, Manrico was held prisoner. All was gloom and darkness again, with

the prison tower where Manrico was confined looming near, its bars seeming very sinister, the evening more forbidding by contrast with that first moonlight night, when he had sung to Leonora in the gardens.

Leonora, protected by Ruiz, the faithful servant, stole from the shadows, while Ruiz tried to reconnoitre and spy out where Manrico was hidden. The Countess was worn with fear and trouble. While they stood there, outside the prison, the "Miserere" was dolorously chanted. The sound was ominous.

"They chant prayers for the dead!" she whispered, and then the bell tolled.

"It is the bell for the dead," she whispered again, fainting with despair. "What voices of horror. My God! death is very near;" and she stood listening. Then, mingling with the death chant, the troubadour's glorious voice floated out upon the night.



[Listen]

Ah send thy beams, Aurora,
Light me to early death,
Waft her my longing,
Waft her my latest breath!
I leave thee, Leonora, ah, I leave thee!

It was the doomed Manrico singing, from his prison, while waiting, wearily, for the dawn.

It was a fearful hour: The death song! The bell for the dead, the lonely troubadour's voice, and prayer for the dead, sounding through the night.

As Leonora listened, her anguish became too great to bear, and she resolved to save his life or die. Then di Luna came, accompanied by his men; he was giving hurried orders:

"The moment the day dawns, bring out the man, and here, on this spot, cut off his head," he commanded. The attendants entered the prison tower, and di Luna, believing himself to be alone, began to sing passionately of Leonora. He thought her dead in the ruins of Castellar, which his soldiers had demolished. While cursing his fate, Leonora came near to him and threw herself at his feet.

"Thou art not dead!" he cried.

"Nay—but I shall die unless you give me Manrico's life," she murmured pleadingly.

"He dies at dawn," di Luna answered.

"Spare him and I will wed thee," she swore. At that di Luna regarded her in amazement.

"You speak the truth?" he demanded, scarcely daring to believe his senses.

"Unbar those gates; let me into his dungeon and take him word that he is free, and I swear to be thy wife," she repeated.

"Hola! You there!" He called to his men. "Show this woman to Manrico's dungeon," he commanded, trembling with joy. Unseen by him, she took a deadly poison from her ring. She would free Manrico with her promise, and before di Luna could reach her she resolved to die. The men stood ready, and she went into the prison with them.

Scene II

In the gloomy tower a lamp swung from the ceiling by a chain, casting a dim uncertain light upon Azucena, whom Manrico had saved from the flames, but who had been imprisoned with him, and was presently to be killed also. She was lying on a low bed with Manrico beside her, and in her half-waking dream anticipated the scorching of the flame, which was soon to be lighted about her. She cried out pitifully.

"Art thou waking, mother?"

"This fearful dungeon, my son! It is a living tomb. But they shall not torture me: I am already dying. I shall be dead before they come to drag me to the stake."

Manrico tried to soothe her to sleep, saying that he would guard her; and gradually the poor wretch slept. As she did so, Leonora slipped into the room, through the door -285- unbarred for her at di Luna's order.

"Leonora! I am dreaming," Manrico muttered.

"Nay, it is I. I have come to save thee. Do not waste a moment. Go!"

"Without thee—never! What have you done? How have you purchased my freedom?" he demanded, shrewdly. "It was by promising to be di Luna's wife," he cried. "Before that can be, I will kill thee and myself." He covered his face with his hands. He was in despair, and Leonora did not at first tell him that she was already dying.

"Go while there is time," she pleaded, feeling the poison in her veins.

Manrico saw her stagger and grow faint. "We shall not part," he whispered, as she fell at his feet! "We shall not part." He lifted her up, but she was already dying.

"Fly before di Luna discovers that I have cheated him," but Manrico still held the dying Leonora to his breast, and at that moment the Count entered.

"I have cheated him," she murmured. "I am dying." Hearing this the Count made an outcry and his guards rushed in.

"Away with him!" he shouted, pointing to Manrico; and Manrico was torn from Leonora, as she sank back dead. He was bound and hustled out, while Azucena was awakened by the confused sounds. She sat up and called desperately:

"Manrico!" Finding him gone and seeing di Luna, "Where hast thou taken him?" she screamed, tearing her gray hair.

"See—" and di Luna dragged her to the barred window. "See! The knife falls—look upon the sight, old fiend." She saw Manrico's head struck from his shoulders as the -286- day dawned. With a frightful shriek she cried:

"Mother, I am avenged! Fiend! he was thy brother!" Di Luna looked first at the dying gipsy, then at the horrid scene below, and staggered back, unable to speak his brother's name. His peace was destroyed forever.

AÏDA

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA, WITH THE ORIGINAL CASTS AS PRESENTED AT THE FIRST PERFORMANCES

	CAIRO	MILAN
Aïda	Signora Pozzoni	Signora Stolz
Amneris	Grossi	Waldmann
Radames	Signor Mongini	Signor Fancelli
Amonasro	Steller	Pandolfini
Ramphis	Medini	Maini
The King	Costa	Pavoleri
Messenger	Bottardi	Vistarini

Priests, priestesses, ministers, captains, soldiers, officials, Ethiopian slaves, prisoners, Egyptian populace, etc., etc.

The time of the story is when the Pharaohs were puissant, and the scenes are laid in the cities of Thebes and Memphis.

Composer: Giuseppe Verdi.
Author: A. Ghislanzoni.

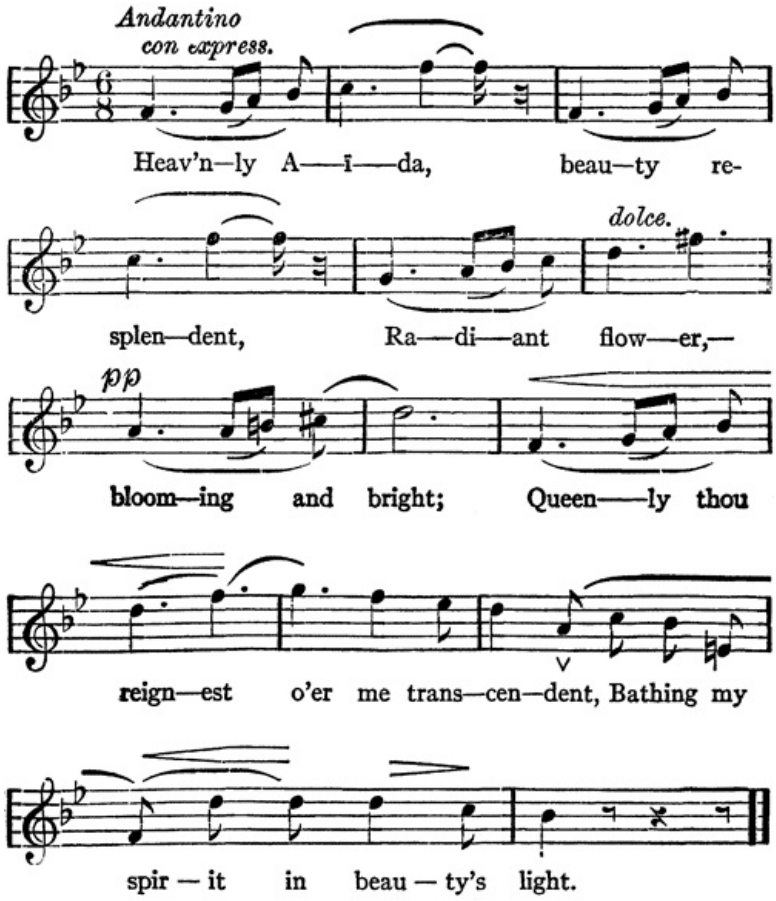
The opera was first sung at Cairo, Egypt, December 27, 1871; at Milan, February 8, 1872.

ACT I

All Egypt was troubled with wars and rumours of wars, and in Memphis the court of the King was anxiously awaiting the decision of the Goddess Isis, as to who should lead the Egyptian army against Egypt's enemies. The great hall of the Memphis palace was beautifully ornamented with statues and flowers, and from its colonnades -287- of white marble one could see the pyramids and the palaces of the city. It was in this vast and beautiful hall that Radames, a gallant soldier and favourite of the Egyptian court, met Ramphis, the High Priest, on the day when the Oracle, Isis, was to choose the general of the army.

Isis had already spoken, and Ramphis knew it, but he did not tell Radames. Together they spoke of Radames's loyal wish to serve his people, either as a great general or as a soldier. He was too modest to think that Isis would choose him, out of all the worthy men of the army, to lead the hosts of Egypt. His desire to do valorous deeds was inspired by his love for a slave girl, who attended the Princess Amneris. The slave's name was Aïda. The only thing that saddened him at the moment, was the fact of Aïda being an Ethiopian, for it was the Ethiopians whom the Egyptians were about to war against.

After he had spoken with the Priests, Radames sat down alone, in the hall, and fell to thinking of Aïda. Presently he sang of her loveliness:



[Listen]

Heav'nly Aïda, beauty resplendent,
Radiant flower, blooming and bright;
Queenly thou reignest o'er me transcendent,
Bathing my spirit in beauty's light.

Aïda could not be happy in an alien land, serving the daughter of the King who had been the conqueror of her people, and Radames knew this; but what he didn't know was that the Princess, herself, loved him, and therefore that her jealousy might do Aïda much harm. While he was thus sunk in deep reflection, Amneris, the Princess,

entered the hall, attended by her slave. Radames no sooner looked at Aïda than his love could be seen by any one present. He was so sincere and honest that he could not conceal his feelings.

"Ah, Radames, you are very happy to-day! Something has happened to please you! Are you not going to tell me?" Amneris asked, smiling happily at him.

"Nay, Princess," he answered. "I am not more happy than before, only I am thinking of this war that is about to be, and how I should love to do some valiant deed—for us all," he added as an after-thought, but Amneris surprised the look of tenderness that he gave to Aïda. From that moment she watched the lovers closely.

"To-day the Goddess is to decide who shall lead the Egyptians against the Ethiops; I would it were to be I," he sighed. Amneris flushed with anger, as she again saw a look of devotion pass between the slave-girl and Radames, the darling of the court. Still, she pretended to be unsuspicious. -289-

"Is there nothing to attract you in Memphis, that you wish to be off to the war?" she asked, narrowly observing him. Radames, so sensitive and so much in love, saw that he had betrayed his love for Aïda. All three became ill at ease, but the Princess called the slave girl to her, pretending great affection for her, and said:

"Why do you weep, Aïda? Neither you nor Radames seem to be happy to-day."

"Ah, Princess, I weep because of this war rumour. I have known the sadness and terror of war, and the thought of assembled war-hosts gives me pain. It means ruin and despair to so many."

"That is the only the reason for your tears?" she persisted, trying to hide her anger, but her glances belied the softness of her tone. Radames, noting this, trembled for Aïda. Even the life of the girl was in the hands of the Princess, and Radames knew it.

"Ah, my love, you are weeping for something besides a nation, and your blush betrays you," Amneris answered, gently enough, but in her heart she determined to punish the helpless girl. As the scene became more and more painful, trumpets, which always preceded the King's coming, were heard near at hand, and in he came, surrounded by guards, ministers, priests, and officers; a brilliant company, making a brilliant picture.

"Greeting!" he cried, "it is a mighty cause which brings us here together. A messenger has this moment arrived among us with news of great import. I need the support of all the gallant men of my kingdom. Now, messenger, come before us, if thou wilt, and tell thy news," the King cried in a fine and haughty manner, motioning the messenger before him. -290-

"I came to tell thee, Sire, that Egypt is invaded by Ethiop's King, and all her border lands are laid waste. Our crops are destroyed, great havoc hath been wrought, and unless thou shouldst send an army to resist the invading hosts, we are lost."

"Ah, the presumptuous bandit!" the King cried, thus regarding his brother ruler, and it is probable that the King of Ethiopia did not feel more temperately toward the King of the Egyptians.

"By whom are the Ethiopians led?" the King asked.

"By one Amonasro—a warrior who hath never been conquered."

"What? the Ethiopian King, himself," all cried, because that was news with a vengeance. Amonasro was known to be an invincible warrior, and, if he was going to take the field in person, Egypt had indeed something to fear. At the name, Aïda started.

"Amonasro!" she began to cry, but checked herself. Amonasro was her beloved father! Since she was already a slave, her life would be in danger if it were known that the Ethiopian King was her father. She leaned, almost fainting, against the Princess's throne, and in the excitement her agitation passed unnoticed. The messenger continued to speak:

"All Thebes has risen and sallied forth to check this foe."

"Death and battle, be our cry!" the King shouted; and all his nobles took up the war-cry: "Death and battle, death and battle!"

"War, war, war! fierce and unrelenting," cried Radames, loudest of all, his war spirit and love of country both aroused. At his cry all became still, and the King looked at him with great affection. -291-

"Egyptians, warriors, hear! the chief to lead our hosts against this bold invader has this day been named by the Goddess Isis." Every one leaned breathlessly forward. Many a brave fellow hoped the choice had fallen upon him. None listened more eagerly than the Princess and Aïda.

"There is the choice!" the King continued, pointing to Radames. A moment of silence followed, then Radames shouted:

"Ah! ye Gods! I thank thee! My dearest wish is mine." All the court and soldiers burst into shouts of joy and confidence.

"Now to the Temple of Vulcan, Chieftain, and there equip yourself and men for victory," the King cried, and all prepared to follow Radames.

"Take the war-standard from my hand, Radames," Amneris said, smiling at him with affection: but Aïda murmured unheard:

"Whom shall I weep for, my lover or my father?" Her heart was breaking, for the defeat of either her father or her lover would be a disaster to one so tender as she.

"Battle, battle," all cried excitedly, all certain of victory at the hands of their beloved leader, Radames. "May laurels crown thy brow!" they shouted, following him to the temple, where they were to don their armour, feel if their swords were sharp, and pray for success.

"Aye, may laurels crown thee," Aïda murmured. "I cannot wish thee ruin, yet what a wicked wish, since victory must mean my father's loss. If Radames shall conquer, I may see my father brought here in chains." The unhappy girl prayed in turn for her father and Radames. -292-

Scene II

When the men entered the Temple of Vulcan, a mysterious light came into the temple from above and long rows of columns could be seen, placed one behind the other, while statues stood between. The long rows of columns were lost in the dim distance. In the middle of the temple was placed a high altar, and all the scene was wrapped in the haze of incense which arose from golden bowls. The High Priestess sang a song of mystic beauty in which the High Priest and others joined, and then the Priestesses danced to an exquisite measure.

While this beautiful thing was happening, Radames entered, all unarmed, and went to the altar. There the gallant chief offered prayers for strength and victory.

A fine silver veil was placed upon his head, to show that he was favoured of the Gods and chosen by them.

The weapons, those of the Temple, given him were tempered by an immortal hand and were to bring him success forever in all battles.

While he knelt there before the God of War, all the sacred men and women of Vulcan's Temple joined in praise and in prayers for his safe return. The chorus swelled higher and higher, till at last in one mighty volume of glorious sound their invocations were completed, and Radames departed for war.

ACT II

THE return of the Egyptian troops was hourly expected; all Thebes was preparing to receive them with honours and rejoicing; and great fêtes were arranged for their amusement. Amneris was in her apartment, surrounded by her attendants. Slave-girls waved feather fans, others were hanging beautiful jewels upon her and anointing her with rare perfumes, all being done to prepare her for the celebration of Radames's return. The air was full of incense which rose from beautiful metal bowls placed on tripods about her chamber, and she, herself, was waiting impatiently for news that Radames and his men were in sight of Thebes. -293-

The Egyptian King had decided to reward Radames for his victories by giving him his daughter for a wife, but all the while Amneris was disturbed and devoured by jealousy for she believed that Radames and Aïda loved, though she could not be certain. She had thought and thought of this, till she could not rest longer without some proof, and after her slaves had danced awhile for her amusement, to make the time waiting for the fêtes pass more quickly, the Princess dismissed all but Aïda. Then she said to her:

"Ah, Aïda, my heart goes out to thee in this affliction—because thy people have been beaten in this fearful war, and so many taken captive." Her voice was very soft and affectionate, and she sighed, seeming to be deeply moved. "But I mean to make thee as happy as I may, and——"

"Princess, far from my home, my father's fate uncertain, what happiness is there in this world for me?"

"Time will bring thee comfort, Aïda; thou shalt be as my sister; and then this return of our brave men—alas! that the bravest of them all may not return to us." She seemed about to weep, and Aïda looked at her anxiously. -294-

"The bravest?" she faltered; "that can mean but one"; and she became pale with fear and apprehension.

"Aye—our brave Radames! He fell in battle; have you not heard?" While the Princess was speaking, Aïda clasped her hands wildly and cried out. Thus, she betrayed instantly all her love for Radames, and Amneris was no longer in doubt.

"So, you love him?" she cried. "That was what I wished to know. Now let me tell thee that he lives and is returning with honours—but not for thee. If you love him, so do I. What chance has one like you—a slave—beside a princess like me? I feel nothing but hate now for you, and from this moment you shall know all the humility of a slave. Since you have dared to love Radames, I shall be revenged."

"Not upon him, madame. I care not what my fate is, if he be happy. Surely you can spare a sad and despairing heart? I am poor and far from friends and country. My father is ruined, since he too was a soldier, and may even now be a captive. Can you wish me greater ill than this, Princess?"

"I wish thee every ill. Come, now, while I exhibit thee before Radames and all the court as my slave and servant. You shall see me triumph."

"I have no hope," Aïda answered, bowing her head, "but I have not harmed thee." The sound of a trumpet was heard, and outside the people shouted:

"The troops! They come! They are here!"

Scene II

Down an avenue lined with palms and with the Temple of Ammon to be seen near by, the people went. There was a stately throne with a purple and gold canopy, and a -295- vast, triumphal arch under which the returning heroes were to come. The trumpets sounded louder and nearer and the music became martial and triumphant.

First came the King of Egypt and his High Priest and standard-bearers and fan-bearers; then followed Amneris with Aïda and her other slaves. The King sat upon his throne and the Princess beside him, while all assembled were vibrating with excitement and pleasure.

Presently all burst into a loud song of celebration and rejoicing, and then the troops began to enter in procession. Trumpets sounded and one rank after another defiled before the King. There came more, more, more, covered with the glory of victory; all glittering in their armour and helmets, and their swords glancing. Then came the dancing girls laden with jewels and golden ornaments, and the fine spoils of war, brought by the soldiers. Then came the war-chariots, and banners borne aloft, and images of gods, and last and greatest came Radames.

The King descended from his throne to embrace him, the soldiers and people shouted his triumphs, and Radames knelt before Amneris to receive the crown of victory from her hands.

"Ask anything thou wilt and I will give it thee," she cried joyfully.

"First, Princess, order the captives of war brought before thee," Radames asked.

"The prisoners!" she called, and the Ethiopians entered surrounded by the guard, and among them marched a splendid figure dressed in an officer's uniform. Now this man's rank was quite unknown to Radames or to any one, but he was really the King of Ethiopia, himself, and Aïda's father. She gave a cry upon seeing him, but -296- Amonasro looked at her with a commanding, if agonized, glance, and spoke quickly:

"Yes, I am thy father," he answered cleverly, "and have fought and sought death in vain. My garment," pointing to his officer's dress, "tells that I fought for my King. The King is dead," he said impressively, looking at Aïda with meaning; "I would that I were dead, too, my child. But thou, great King of Egypt," he continued, turning to him, "hast conquered, and so I pray you spare the lives of my soldiers. Thou canst generously do so much for us." At this, Aïda understanding that she must not let it be known that the King himself was a prisoner, added her entreaties to Amonasro's.

"Nay, ye must face the fortune of war. Death is thy portion," the King answered. Then Aïda's grief became pitiful, and Radames, who was watching her lovingly, was sorrowful on her account. While all others clamoured for the death of the Ethiopians, Radames stepped forth and asked the King to hear him.

"My King, thou hast said that I should have whatever I would ask of thee."

"True! Ask!"

"Then give these captives their freedom. Their country is conquered. Oh, King! Do not take their lives," and he looked quickly at Aïda, to inspire her with hope.

The King thought upon this for a moment, and was inclined to grant the plea, but

Ramphis and the other priests clamoured for their death.

"At least keep this girl's father as a surety," they persisted.

"It shall be so," the King answered. "Aïda's father shall remain our prisoner; and since I cannot grant your request, Radames, yet love thee so for thy valour, I give -297- thee instead the greatest prize within man's gift; my daughter, Amneris."

Alas! The King could not well have done worse had he tried. If his gift was most distracting to the lovers, Amneris was overwhelmed with delight, ready to weep with joy and pride.

"You shall reign with her," the King added, but Radames could not speak, so overcome was he with his misfortune. All assumed his silence to mean an overmastering joy at the honour bestowed upon him.

Aïda, nearly fainting with pain to see her father a captive, and her lover given to another who was her enemy, stared motionless before her, but Amonasro had observed everything, had seen Radames's glances at Aïda, the distraction of the lovers, and suddenly, under his breath to Aïda, he said:

"Have courage. I will give thee thy revenge, daughter. Together we shall conquer." Radames roused himself and knelt before the Princess.

ACT III

THE eve before her marriage it was proper for Amneris to go to the Temple of Isis to pray. She went accompanied by Ramphis, the High Priest, who promised to remain near till morning, that she might feel safe, and not be lonely. She knew well that Radames's heart was then Aïda's, and her prayers were to be appeals for his love. The Temple was built upon a high rock, surrounded by beautiful palms, and the moon, which shone brightly upon it, silvered all the landscape. As Amneris entered the Temple, the chorus of priests and priestesses swelled forth and added to the weirdness of the scene. -298-

Amneris had no sooner disappeared within than Aïda approached the place. It was the last night of Radames's freedom, and he and she had arranged to meet near the Temple to speak together, perhaps for the last time of their lives. As she entered the grove she looked sadly about her.

"My griefs and misfortunes are now greater than I can bear," she murmured. "After to-night, all will be over. It is better to drown myself in the Nile than to live alone, without father, mother, country, or friends." Thinking of her lost country, she leaned against the rock and half forgot why she had come. She recalled the warmth and beauty of her childhood's home, and then by contrast her term of slavery in Egypt. While she waited, thinking of these sad things, she saw a man's form coming toward her, through the night; it was not Radames. As he drew nearer she recognized her father, Amonasro.

"Father, what brings thee here?" she whispered.

"A grave cause, my child. Naught escapes my eye. I know thy heart. I know that Radames loves thee and that thou art here to meet him;—also that thou art in the grasp of this Princess, who hates thee."

"Alas, there is no hope," she cried, despairingly.

"That shall be as you may decide, daughter. Our people are waiting for a signal to strike a blow at these Egyptians. Our backbone is not yet broken. All that is needful for our success is to know by what road our enemies will march in their next sortie upon us. That is for thee to find out for us. Radames alone knows—and Radames loves thee," he finished significantly.

"But since he loves me, how can I betray him, father?" she asked.

"Choose—between thy father and the man who is to marry Amneris.—Or—" with a -299- new thought he hesitated a moment—"or why should Radames not leave these cold people for a fairer place and kinder? Why should he not become one of us?" Aïda stared at her father in amazement.

"Betray his people?"

"Why not? Since he loves thee, shall not thy people become his people, even as thou wouldst have made his people thine, hadst thou been wedding him. Choose between us, child."

Amonasro looked at her menacingly. "Unless thou doest this, it means the destruction of thy people and of me; and, too, thou must live and die the hated bond-maiden of this cruel woman Radames is about to marry."

"Radames is coming," she whispered in affright. "What shall I do?"

"Thy duty to me and to thy people and to thyself. Make Radames join us. I shall wait near thee." So saying, he stepped within the shadow of the trees as Radames approached.

"Art thou there, Aïda?" Radames called softly.

"Alas, why should I meet thee," she sobbed, "since thou wilt marry Amneris to-morrow?"

"Aïda, I have come to tell thee there is hope," Radames whispered, trembling with happiness. "The Ethiopians have again risen against us. I am immediately to go forth to battle. I shall crush them this time, and on my return the King will once more be generous to me, and I shall demand then, that for my reward he free me from Amneris and give me thee for my wife. When I have twice saved his kingdom, he cannot refuse me."

"But do you not see that though the King should favour us, yet Amneris's rage would be beyond all bounds?" -300-

"I would defend thee."

"Thou couldst not. She is nearly as powerful as the King. If you slight her we are lost."

"Alas, then, what can I do?"

"But one thing can save us—all of us—my father, you, I."

"Name it," he cried.

"You would not listen to me," she sobbed, wringing her hands in despair.

"I will do whatever you desire," he cried recklessly.

"Then make my people thy people. Fly with us. Even now the Ethiopians are without the gates ready for battle. Join them, lead them, and——"

"A traitor to my country!" he cried, stricken with horror at the thought.

"Then there is no hope. The Princess will drive us to death and despair." She drew a picture that brought it all vividly into Radames's mind. At last with breaking heart he cried:

"I will go with thee—making thy people my people," and he started to leave the Temple with her.

"What path shall we take to avoid the Egyptian soldiers?" she questioned wildly.

"We may go by the same path that the army will take: the gorges of Napata: the way will be free till to-morrow." That was how Aïda discovered the way the Egyptians would take, while her father listened.

"Ah! I will post my men there," Amonasro cried, stepping forth into the moonlight, that Radames might see him.

"Who has heard?" Radames said, with a start. -301-

"Amonasro, Aïda's father, King of Ethiopia," he answered, proudly facing Radames.

"Thou—thou art the King—Amonasro—Aïda thy daughter! Do I dream? I have betrayed my people to thee!" He suddenly realized all that he had done, in wavering between love and duty.

"No, thy people are the people of Aïda. The throne is thine, to share with her."

"My name will be forever branded—a coward!" He groaned in despair.

"No blame to thee, son. It was thy fate; and with us thou wilt be far from these scenes that try thy heart: far away where none can reproach thee." But Radames knew that he had better die than live, knowing himself for a traitor. He determined that he would not go; that he would remain and undo the wrong that he had blindly done, but even then Aïda was trying to drag him away, and urging him with each loving breath to fly with them. As he would have broken away from her, Amneris, who had heard all, ran from the Temple, crying, "Traitor!"

"Destruction! She would undo us," Amonasro shouted, and as the people began to pour from the Temple, he sprang forward and would have plunged his sword through her had Radames not sprung between them.

"Thou art a madman," he shouted, horrified at the deed Amonasro would have done. Meantime all was confusion. People shouted for the guard, and Radames cried to Aïda:

"Fly with thy father. Fly or thou art lost." His voice was so full of agony for her that she suddenly turned and fled. -302-

"Follow them," Ramphis demanded of the soldiers, while Radames said hopelessly:

"Ramphis, I yield to thee."

ACT IV

THERE was no joy in the court, and Amneris sat in the vast hall of the palace between Radames's prison, on the one hand, and the hall of justice on the other, where the trial of the gallant soldier was soon to be held. He was in prison, and Aïda and her father were far away. Amneris still loved him, and hoped yet to save him, and thus to win his love. Presently she called to the guard to bring him before her, and almost at once he was brought through the hall accompanied by the priests who were to try him in the underground dungeon.

"Radames, the priests who are to judge thee are assembled. Consent to clear thyself. Say that thou didst not mean to betray us and I, myself, will kneel to the King, and promise you your freedom. I would give my life and power and country for thee," Amneris pleaded, as he passed before her.

"I would give no less for Aïda," Radames declared sadly. "I shall not try to save myself. I shall say nothing in my own defense. I wish to die."

At the mention of Aïda, Amneris was enraged.

"I'll hear no more of her!" she cried.

"Ah, you have killed her——"

"No! Her father is slain, but she lives. She has vanished—no one knows where!"

"Then may the gods guide her safe to her home and country, and keep her from knowing how I die."

"If you will swear to see her no more, Radames, I will save thee." -303-

"If I were to live I should find her. I will not swear."

"Then you shall die. If you will not hear me, I shall avenge myself," she answered bitterly, motioning to the guards to take him away.

Radames was taken below to the subterranean hall which was to be his grave and judgment hall alike, while Amneris was left alone, both grief-stricken and revengeful. Her jealousy was certain to bring fearful retribution upon her. As more white-robed priests passed below, looking spectral and ominous, she hid her face in her hands.

"It was I who brought him to this fate," she murmured, and then listened in anguish to the chorus of the priests which sounded dismally from below.

Then a voice called from the crypt, three times:

"Radames, Radames, Radames," and it was his summons to judgment.

"Oh, who can save him now?" Amneris murmured, horrified at what was taking place.

"Defend thyself!" she heard voices from below command. There was no answer.

"Radames, Radames, Radames," the High Priest called again in a fearful voice, and again the Princess shuddered.

"Thou hast deserted the encampment the very day before the combat!—defend thyself." She listened, but still no answer.

"Radames, Radames, Radames," again the High Priest called, and for the third and last time. Still no answer.

"Oh, have mercy on him," Amneris then cried, her love becoming greater than her desire for revenge. Then listening again, she heard the judge say:

"Radames, thy fate is decided. It is to be the fate of a traitor. You shall be buried alive beneath the altar of the God of War, whom thou hast derided and betrayed." -304-

"Oh, horror," Amneris shrieked.

"We have spoken," the priests replied, and then ascended.

"Ye priests of Isis, ye are tigers! demons!" and the Princess assailed them bitterly as they came into the hall. She was now mad with grief. Truly loving Radames, she cursed the priests and even the gods. Then the scene changed, revealing the interior of Vulcan's Temple and the crypt beneath the altar. There were spectral statues, and great marble columns which seemed to vanish in the gloom, and all was gloomy as the grave. Stairs led from the temple above into the vault, and Radames sat down upon the steps as the priests let down again the massive stone that covered the opening beneath the altar. Radames watched the closing of the opening, the descent

of the great stone into place.

"I can bear my fate, since Aïda may never know. She could not survive such horror," he said, under his breath. The vault, the ghostly cold about him, the rows upon rows of senseless marble, supported by the expressionless stone faces of the gods, these things overwhelmed the great warrior. Then, from the gloom, he saw a white figure emerge. Is it a phantom? At first he thought it some fearful vision. But as he peered through the twilight he recognized—Aïda. Perhaps it was her ghost come to comfort him, he thought, and raised himself to stare at the figure.

"Aïda!"

"I am here to die with thee," she answered, and Radames clasped her in his arms. He had thought her safe, unacquainted with his fate, but she was there to share it. -305-

"My heart foreboded thy fearful sentence," she said. "I hid here till the stone shut down upon thee, and now I am beside thee till the end."

Radames beat wildly upon the stone above. He called for help. He tried with his great strength to raise the deadly stone with his shoulders, only to sink down, exhausted and horrified. He could not save her. The chorus sung by priests began above; Aïda was already dying. At least she would not live slowly to starve. And while Amneris appeared above in black garments, dying of grief for Radames, and threw herself upon the stone, Radames held the dying Aïda in his arms and waited for death.

"Peace," Amneris moaned while lying prostrate above on the altar stone.

"Peace," and while the women were dying and Radames losing his senses below, the priests of Isis chanted, "Peace," the light faded out, and the tragedy ended.

WAGNER -306-

RICHARD WAGNER was born in Leipzig, on the 22d of May, 1813. His father was Chief of Police and his mother was Johanna Rosina Bertz.

His brothers and sisters were distinguished singers or actors; thus love of dramatic art was common to all the family. His father died and his mother married an actor, Ludwig Geyer. The stepfather became very fond of young Richard and intended to make a painter of him, but upon hearing him play some of his sister's piano pieces Geyer wondered if it were possible that he had the gift of music!

Wagner was a poor scholar during his school days, the only thing he especially enjoyed being literature, mainly Shakespeare, Sophocles, and Æschylus; and about the time the dramatic philosophies of these men filled his attention, he wrote a great drama in which there were forty-two characters, every one of whom was killed or died in the course of the play, so that he was compelled to finish his performance with the spectres of his original characters. Later he wished to put music to that remarkable drama, and he did so, much to the distraction of his family. It was actually performed. He thus described his composition:

> This was the culmination of my absurdities. What I did, above all things wrong, was a roll *fortissimo* upon the kettle-drums, which returned regularly every four bars throughout the composition. The surprise which the public experienced changed first to unconcealed ill-humour, and then into laughter, which greatly mortified me.

It was under Theodor Weinlig's teaching that he finally developed a fixed purpose of composition and something like regular study. -307-

When he first wished to marry, he could not for lack of money to provide a home for his wife. In time this difficulty was overcome, and later he started to London with his wife and his dog, which was named Robber. The terrors of that voyage impressed him so much that he was inspired with the idea for "The Flying Dutchman," one of his great operas. He was told the legend of "The Flying Dutchman" by the sailors; but long before he was able to write that splendid opera he was compelled to write music for the variety stage in order to feed his wife and himself. He wrote articles for musical periodicals, and did a great deal of what is known as "hack" work before his great genius found opportunity. One manager liked the dramatic idea of "The Flying Dutchman" so well that he was willing to buy it if Wagner would let him get *some one who knew how to write music*, to set it.

After the production of "Rienzi" in Dresden, his difficulties were never again so serious, and soon he became *Hofkapellmeister* (musical director at court), which gave him an income, leaving him free to write operas as he chose.

When "Rienzi" was produced, a great musician said: "This is a man of genius; but he

has already *done more than he can*! Listen to me, and give up dramatic composition!" But he continued to "do more than he could."

When he wrote "Tannhäuser" he was reduced almost to despair, for nobody liked it. Schumann said of it: "It is the empty and unpleasing music of an amateur." But Spohr wrote: "The opera contains certain new and fine things, which at first I did not like, but to which I became accustomed on repeated hearings." -308-

At last, this composer, whose inspirations had come entirely from historical subjects, found his mythological beginnings in the Scandinavian Eddas; and in a poem of the "Nibelung" he found the germ of "Siegfried."

As *Kapellmeister* of the court, Wagner did too many indiscreet things: allied himself with revolutionists and the like; and, before he knew it, he found himself an exile. Liszt was his friend, and when, on a visit to Weimar, politics made his presence hazardous, Liszt got him a passport which took him out of the country. He did not return for twelve years.

During his exile, which was passed mostly in Zurich, he had Karl Ritter and Hans von Bülow for pupils, and it was there that he did all of his most wonderful work. There he composed the "Nibelung Ring." He wrote the last of it first, and the first of it ("Das Rheingold") last. This was because his central idea, as it developed, seemed to need explanation, and successive operas upon the same dramatic and mythological theme became necessary.

Wagner's mythology is not the mythology of the Eddas. It is distinctly his own, he having adapted a great and rugged folklore to his dramatic purposes, regardless of its original construction.

In the Ring, the Goddess Fricka is a disagreeable goddess of domesticity, and the story is told of a first reading of the opera series, which involved an anecdote of Fricka and his hostess:

He went to the house of a friend, Wille, to read the poem after it was finished, and Madame Wille happened to be called from the room, while he was reading, to look after her little sick child. When she returned, Wagner had been so annoyed by the interruption that he thereafter named Madame Wille, Fricka. -309-

During a sleepless night in Italy he formed the plan for the music of "Das Rheingold," but not wishing to write on Italian soil, he got up and hastened to Zurich.

He would not come to America to give a series of concerts because he "was not disposed to go about as a concert-pedlar, even for a fabulous sum."

The irony of all the world is epitomized in a single incident that occurred to Wagner in London. He was accused of a grave fault because he conducted Beethoven's symphonies "from memory." Therefore he announced he would thereafter conduct them from the score. He reappeared with the score very much in evidence upon his rack, and won British approval completely. Then he announced that he had conducted from "Il Barbiere de Siviglia" with the Barber's score upside down!

He wrote to his friend Roekel: "If anything could increase my scorn of the world, it would be my expedition to London."

Wagner was fiery and excessive in all his feelings and doings. He hurt his friends without malice, and made them happy for love of doing so. His home was broken up by his own unruly disposition; and when his good, commonplace wife left him, it was said that he neglected to take care of her, but this was not true. She, herself, denied it before she died. His second marriage was a happy one—to the daughter of his friend Liszt.

When his little son was born, he named him Siegfried, after his favourite hero, and at the time of the christening he had a magnificent little orchestra hidden away, conducted by Hans Richter, which played the old German cradle-song, now woven into the third act of "Siegfried."

The manner in which the cycle of the "Nibelung Ring" was first presented was as follows: The first opera was given on a Sunday, the last on a Wednesday, and then there were three days of rest, beginning once more on a Sunday and ending as before. This order continued for three representations, and it has been followed in Bayreuth ever since. -310-

For lack of means, Wagner saw his theatre opened only three times, but since his death there have been several performances.

THE NIBELUNG RING
FIRST DAY

TETRALOGY

THE RHEIN DAUGHTERS: Woglinde, Wellgunde, Flosshilde; guardians of the Rheingold. They appear in the "Rheingold" and in the "Dusk of the Gods."

FRICKA: Goddess of Marriage or domesticity, Wotan's wife; sister of Donner, Froh, and Freïa. Appears in the "Rheingold" and in the "Valkyrie."

FREÏA: Goddess of Plenty; sister to Donner, Froh, and Fricka. Appears in the "Rheingold."

ERDA: Goddess of Wisdom; mother of the three Fates or Norns and of the nine Valkyries. Appears in the "Rheingold" and in "Siegfried."

SIEGLINDE: Daughter of Wotan under his name of Wälse. Hunding's wife, and then Siegmund's wife. Siegfried is her son. Appears in the "Valkyrie."

BRÜNNHILDE: A Valkyrie; daughter of Wotan and Erda; first Siegfried's wife, then Gunther's.

THE VALKYRIES: Helmwige, Gerhilde, Waltraute, Ortlinde, Rossweisse, Grimgerde, and Schwertleite. Daughters of Wotan and Erda, and sisters to Brünnhilde. Appear in the "Valkyrie," and Waltraute also in the "Dusk of the Gods."

NORNS: Earth's daughters who spin men's destinies.

GUTRUNE: Daughter of Gibich and Grimilde and Gunther's sister, Hagen's half-sister, and Siegfried's wife. Appears in the "Dusk of the Gods."

WOTAN: (The Wanderer) King of the Gods, and God of War, Father of the Valkyries, Father of Siegmund and Sieglinde. Appears in the "Rheingold," the "Valkyrie," and as the Wanderer, in "Siegfried." Married to Fricka.

ALBERICH: Gnome: King of the Nibelungs, Spirit of Darkness. Appears in the "Rheingold," "Siegfried," and the "Dusk of the Gods."

FASOLT: Giant and brother of Fafner; belongs to the race of mortals. Appears in the "Rheingold."

FAFNER: Giant and brother of Fasolt, and of the race of mortals. Appears in the "Rheingold" and "Siegfried."

FROH: God of Pleasure; brother of Donner and Freïa, and Fricka. Appears in the "Rheingold."

DONNER: God of Thunder, brother to Fricka, Freïa, and Froh. Appears in the "Rheingold."

LOGE: Spirit of Fire and Flame. Belongs first to the underworld and then the Gods. Appears in the "Rheingold."

MIME: Dwarf (Nibelung, foster-father of Siegfried.) Appears in the "Rheingold" and in "Siegfried."

SIEGMUND: Son of Wotan, husband to Sieglinde and Siegfried's father. Appears in the "Valkyrie."

SIEGFRIED: Son of Siegmund and Sieglinde, and grandson of Wotan (Wälse). Husband of Brünnhilde and Gutrune. Appears in "Siegfried" and the "Dusk of the Gods."

HUNDING: Sieglinde's husband. Appears in the "Valkyrie."

GUNTHER: Son of Gibich and Grimhilde and brother to Gutrune and husband to Brünnhilde; half-brother to Hagen. Appears in the "Dusk of the Gods."

HAGEN: Son of Alberich and Grimhilde; half-brother to Gunther and Gutrune. Appears in the "Dusk of the Gods."

THE RHEINGOLD

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Donner, Wotan, Froh, Loge } Gods.

Fricka, Freïa, Erda } Goddesses.

Alberich, Mime } Nibelungs.

Fasolt, Fafner } Giants.

Woglinde, Wellgunde, Flosshilde } Rhein-daughters.

Nibelungs.

ACT I

DEEP down in the jagged bed of the river Rhein there lay hidden a great treasure of gold, which for ages had belonged to the Rhein-daughters—three mermaids who guarded it. -312-

Above the gold, in and out of the shadowy fissures, the beautiful fishwomen had swum and played happily, and the years had never made them old nor weary nor sad. There they frolicked and sang and feared nothing. The golden treasure was heaped high upon the rock in the middle of the river's bed, and it shone through the waters of the stream, always to cheer and delight them.

Now, one tragic day, while the daughters of the Rhein were darting gaily about their water home, a little dark imp came from Nibelheim—the underground land of the Nibelungs—and hid himself in the dark cleft of a rock to watch the mermaids play. In all the universe there was probably not so malevolent a creature as that one. His name was Alberich. Hidden in his dark nook, he blinked his rheumy eyes at the mermaids, envied them their beauty, and thought how he might approach them. Above, on the surface of the earth, it was twilight, and the reflection from the gold upon the rock was soft and a beautiful greenish hue. The mermaids, all covered with iridescent scales from waist to tail, glimmered through the waters in a most entrancing way. In that shimmering, changeful light they were in amazing contrast with the slimy, misshapen Alberich, who came from that underworld where only half-blind, ugly, and treacherous creatures live. The mermaids disported themselves quite unconscious of the imp's presence, till he laughed aloud, and then, startled, they swam in haste and affright to the rock where the gold lay stored.

"Look to our gold," Flosshilde cried in warning to her sisters.

"Aye! It was just such a creature as this, whom our father warned us against. What does he want here, I should like to know?" Woglinde screamed, swimming frantically to join her sisters. -313-

"Can I not watch ye at play?" Alberich called, grinning diabolically. "Dive deeper,—here, near to me; I shall not harm ye."

At this they recovered a little from their fright, but instead of approaching the ugly fellow, they laughed at him and swam about, near enough to tantalize him.

"Only listen to the languishing imp," they laughed. "He thinks to join us in our sport."

"Why not swim down and torment him?" Flosshilde said. "He can never catch us—such a sluggish creature as he!"

"Hello!" Wellgunde cried; "Scramble up here, if you like." Alberich tried to join them, but he slipped and rolled about over the wet stones and cursed in a most terrible way.

"That is all very well, but I am not made for thy wet and slippery abode. The water makes me sneeze." He sneezed in a manner that set all the mermaids laughing till their scales shook. However, he at last reached the rock whereon the gold lay and he had no sooner got near than the sun shone out so brightly above, that the rays shot through the waters and reflected a beauteous gleam from the Rheingold. Alberich started back in amazement.

"What is that, ye sleek ones," he asked, "that gleams so brightly there?"

"What, imp! Dost thou not know the story of the Rheingold? Come, bathe in its glow and maybe it will take away a little of thy ugliness," one of the sisters cried.

"What do I care for the lustre of gold? It is the gold itself that I want." -314-

"Well, the lustre is all that thou wilt get," Flosshilde answered him. "The one who would take our gold and hope to make of it the magic ring must forswear love forever. Who is there who would do that?" she called, swimming triumphantly toward

the rock.

"What is the secret of thy ring that a man must forswear love for it?" Alberich asked craftily.

"The secret is, that he who would be so rash would have in return power over all the earth."

"What?" shouted the wretched Nibelung, "Well, then, since love has forsworn me, I shall lose nothing by forswearing love. I need not hesitate to use thy gold." Springing and clinging to the rock the Nibelung tore the gold from its resting place, dived deep into the river-bed and disappeared into the fissures of the earth. The mermaids followed frantically, but he was quite gone, and with him the beautiful gold, which till then had given only innocent pleasure to the Rhein-daughters. As soon as the gold vanished, the sun was hid, and the waters turned dark and gloomy. The waves began to grow black, rough, and high, while the water sank, sank, sank, till only darkness and a rushing sound could be seen or heard.

As the waves disappeared, a thick mist took their place, and soon separating, became detached clouds, till at last the sun shone forth again. As the cloudlets floated quite away a great mountain was revealed. The water had given place to the surface of the earth, and there, in the early morning light, lay Fricka, the Goddess of home and domesticity, and Wotan, the God of War, who was Fricka's husband. Behind them rose a great cliff and as the sun shone more and more brightly a splendid palace could be seen rising into the clouds. All its pinnacles sparkled in the sun's rays, while -315-
the river Rhein flowed peacefully between the mountain peak whereon the palace rose, and the hills where Wotan and his Goddess lay.

Scene II

Just as the sun arose, the Goddess Fricka lifted her head, and, looking behind her, saw the palace. It gave her a terrible fright, because it had not been there when she fell asleep.

"Look, Wotan!" she called loudly. "What do I see?" Wotan raised himself at her call. He gazed and was spellbound with delight.

"Walhall, the home of the Gods; the home of the Eternals!" he cried. "It appears as it did in my dreams."

"That which enraptures thee fills me with fear," Fricka replied sadly. "Hast thou not promised to give my sister Freïa to the Giants who builded it for thee? Their task is done, and now they will claim their reward. Hast thou no feeling? Thou art cold and cruel, knowing nothing of tenderness and love!"

"How falsely thou accusest me," Wotan answered. "Did I not give an eye to win thee, Fricka?" He looked tenderly at her with his single, brilliant eye. "True, I have promised Freïa to the Giants when they should have finished the palace, but I do not mean to keep that promise."

"How wilt thou evade it?" Fricka asked scornfully.

"Loge, the Spirit of Flame, shall prepare the way. He agreed to help me satisfy them in some other way and he will do it."

"Loge?" Fricka cried, still more scornfully. "That trickster! He is a fine one to look to. It was a sad day for us when thou didst rescue him from the underworld, where even -316-
his own did not trust him."

"He will keep his word," Wotan answered, confidently.

"Then it is time he appeared," the Goddess cried, "since here comes Freïa, the giants after her, to demand the reward." At that moment, Freïa, their Goddess sister, ran crying to Wotan to save her from Fasolt and Fafner, the Giants, who followed her with great strides.

"Save me, save me, brother," Freïa cried.

"I shall save thee," Wotan answered, reassuringly. "Did not Loge promise to ransom thee? He will be here presently. Have no fear." Nevertheless Wotan, himself, was not too confident, and he looked anxiously for the Spirit of Flame. Meantime the Giants were striding over the mountain.

"Come now," they shouted, "while we wrought, ye slept. Give us our reward as promised and we shall be off."

"Well, what do ye want? Name a suitable reward and I shall give it to ye." Wotan answered, trying to pacify them.

"We want only what is promised, and we shall have it. We shall take the Goddess Freïa." They struck the earth with their staves and roared loudly.

"Donner! Froh!" Freïa shrieked to her brothers, and immediately they rushed upon the scene. Donner, the God of Thunder, carried a great hammer with which he woke the thunders. "Save me from Fasolt and Fafner," Freïa cried.

"We'll save thee, sister," Froh answered, facing the Giants, while Donner menaced them with his thunders.

"You know the weight of my hammer's blow," he threatened, while the Giants laughed a horrible, rumbling laugh and Donner swung his hammer. Wotan feared the -317-
strife that would surely follow, and being a god of war, understood the value of diplomacy, as well as of force, so he interposed his spear between the Giants and Donner.

"Thy thunder is powerless against my spear, Donner. The whole world is shattered if only I interpose thus; so hold thy peace."

"Even Wotan abandons us," Fricka cried in despair. "Where is now thy fine Loge?"

"I can quench thy accursed Loge with only one blow of my hammer, which shall make the mists collect and the waters descend upon the earth till his fires are put out," Donner answered bitterly.

"Hold thy peace," Wotan commanded. "His cunning is worth all thy force and here he comes to straighten out this coil. Come, Loge," Wotan demanded, "thou hast promised to free us from this bargain; get thy wits to work."

"Alas, Wotan!" the tricky fellow replied, coming into their midst, "I have wandered everywhere for a substitute for the Goddess Freïa, and have found none; but I have brought news of great misfortune, which thou art called upon to set right," he said, watching the Giants craftily out of the corner of his eye. "The Rhein-daughters have lost their gold. It has been stolen by a Nibelung, and with the golden treasure he can rule the world. The bargain with the Fates was: he who should forswear love forever would be able to make of the Rheingold a magic ring which would give him power over all the earth and over the Eternals as well. Alberich has done this and has stolen the gold."

Now, while the cunning Loge spoke, the Giants had been listening, and exchanging -318-
glances. When Loge had finished, Fafner spoke up:

"I would not mind having that gold for myself."

"How? Wouldst thou take it in exchange for Freïa?" Wotan instantly asked.

"Have a care, brother," Fasolt interposed; "after all, a woman's love——"

"It will not gain for us what the Rheingold will gain," Fafner answered determinedly. "Wilt give us the gold for Freïa?" he asked Wotan.

All the Gods fell to talking among themselves. Freïa pleaded with Wotan, and Wotan reflected: the word "gold" made even the Gods tremble with pleasure. Why should Wotan not have the treasure for himself?

"Well, answer us!" Fafner shouted, making a motion to take the Goddess and flee. Fricka and Freïa shrieked with fright. "What is the secret of this ring?" Fafner asked again.

"That whoever shall make a ring out of the Rheingold shall rule the universe. Alberich has already forsworn love, and is already having the ring made."

"We shall take the Goddess Freïa," Fafner cried, "and give ye till evening to decide among yourselves. If ye have not the gold by that time the Goddess is ours forever." So saying he leaped toward Freïa, grasped her and fled over mountain and valley, while the Goddess Fricka cried out wildly, and Freïa echoed her shrieks. All looked anxiously toward Wotan.

"How darkly Wotan broods," Loge thought, while a great gloom settled upon all. A pale mist gradually enfolded all the Gods, as they stood uncertain and troubled. Until that moment they had appeared young and handsome, but now they looked at each other in fright. -319-

"What aileth thee?" each asked of the other. "Do the mists trick us?" Each stared at the other in horror, because all were growing old, suddenly.

"My hammer drops from my hand," Donner muttered, weakly.

"My heart stands still," Froh sighed faintly.

"Ah! Know ye not the fate that has overtaken you?" cried Loge. "Ye have not to-day eaten of Freïa's magic apples; the Apples of Life. Without them ye must grow old and die, ye well know. Without Freïa to tend the fruit, it must wither."

Reminded of what they had forgotten, the Gods started up in terror.

"'Tis true, 'tis true! We are fainting, dying! What is to be done?"

"Get the gold quickly from Alberich, and redeem the Goddess," the tricky Spirit of Flame answered with decision. "That is why they have taken Freïa. Well those Giants know that without her and her apples ye must die; thus they will overcome the good of the Gods. Ye must redeem her before the evening comes, or ye all must die."

"Up, Loge!" Wotan cried desperately. "Down to Nibelheim with me. The gold must be ours. Oh, death! stay thy hand an hour till We can buy back our youth and everlasting life!" Loge interrupted him, narrowly eyeing him:

"The gold belongs to the Rhein-daughters. It should be returned to them."

"Cease thy babbling," Wotan shouted, "and get thee down to Nibelheim."

"Shall we not go through the river Rhein?" Loge craftily asked. -320-

"Get thee through that sulphurous cleft," Wotan answered, pointing to the deep fissure in the rock. "Swing thyself down and I will follow thee." He no sooner ceased to speak than Loge swung himself into the black abyss, and a frightful, sulphurous vapour arose from the opening.

"Await us here till evening," Wotan charged the Gods and Fricka, and he in turn disappeared.

As Wotan followed Loge into the abyss, such clouds of vapour arose as to hide the Gods completely, and as Fricka called "farewell" through the mist the earth began slowly to rise, showing the descent of Wotan and Loge. Their passage through the earth was long and filled with astounding sights. It grew blacker and blacker, but after a time they saw the far-off glow of forge-fires, and heard the sound of hammers ringing upon anvils. These things, too, passed them by, and on a sudden, they found themselves in the midst of a large open space, formed by a cavern in the rock.

Scene III

As they arrived at that place, they heard groans and moans, and shrieks and wrangling. Presently they saw Alberich bring from a cleft of the rock a wretched Mime, one of the inhabitants of Nibelheim.

"Ah, thou mischievous imp! I'll pinch thee well if thou forgest me not the thing I commanded thee," Alberich shouted, at the same time pinching and poking the miserable little fellow.

"I've finished thy work," the Nibelung screamed, trying to flee from Alberich's blows.

"Then where is it?" the wretch demanded; as he wrenched open the Mime's hand in which was concealed a piece of metal called a Tarnhelm. -321-

"Ah, ha! Now thou shalt writhe," Alberich shouted, and setting the Tarnhelm upon his head he immediately became invisible. Unseen himself, he pinched and cuffed the Mime so as to make the tortured little imp cry for mercy.

"I cannot see you," the Mime screamed piteously, trying to dodge the blows.

"No matter, I am somewhere about," Alberich answered, giving him another pinch. Then taking the Tarnhelm from his head he stood there in his own shape.

"Now," shouted the imp of darkness, "Now I can punish thee properly! If thy work is not well done I can torment thee to death. With this magic helmet and my ring I can make the whole world smart if I choose. And I shall choose," he added, reassuringly. "Wait till I get at those fine Gods up there." He disappeared chuckling, into a crack in the rock while the Mime crouched down in pain.

Alberich had no sooner gone, than Loge and Wotan came from the darkness.

"What is wrong with thee, thou merry dwarf?" Wotan asked.

"Only leave me to myself," the Mime sobbed, moving his sore body.

"So we shall, but we shall do more than that; we shall help thee. Only tell us what ye forged for Alberich which gave him such power over ye!"

"Oh, it was a ring, made from the Rheingold. Now he has power over all the Nibelheim, and he will kill us. Till this happened, we wrought at the forge beautiful trinkets for our women-folks and laughed gaily all day, but now he has made us his slaves who must dig precious metals from the earth and turn them into what he commands. There is no more happiness for us. I thought to keep the Tarnhelm he bade me make, and learn its power, but I had to give it up." He went on whining and moaning. -322-

"Ah, thy case is a hard one! but we shall help thee." While Wotan was thinking what they should do, Alberich was heard returning. He was cracking his whip and driving

a great host of Nibelungs before him from the cleft of the rock. All were staggering under loads of valuable metals; gold and silver, and precious stones.

"Hi, there! Move thy fastest," he shouted, lashing them as he drove them before him. He had taken his Tarnhelm off and hung it at his girdle: turning, he saw Wotan and Loge.

"Hey! Who are these?" he cried. "Nibelungs, be off to your digging; and mind ye bring me treasure worth having." Lashing them soundly, and raising his magic ring to his lips, the Nibelungen shrunk away in affright and disappeared into the clefts of the rock.

"Ah, ye are a precious possession," he said to the ring. "Whoever fails to obey thy Lord, feels thy power." The little black villain looked gloatingly upon it; then turning to Wotan and Loge he asked: "What are ye doing in my domain?"

"We have heard of thy power, great sir, and came to see it," Loge replied.

"It were nearer the truth if ye come to envy me, and to spy out my possessions," he answered, but Loge laughed as he retorted:

"What! you miserable imp of darkness! You speak thus to me! Do you not remember me? I was once of thy realm. Pray tell me what you would do in your underground caverns with your forges and smithies if I were to deny you my flame? How, then, would you forge your precious rings?" Loge laughed mockingly. -323-

"You are that false rogue, the Spirit of Flame, then?" Alberich said.

"Never mind calling names; you can't get on without me, you know that well enough," Loge answered, grinning.

"What good can thy treasures do thee here in this perpetual night?" Wotan asked.

"My gold shall buy me even the Gods, themselves." Alberich replied; "and though I forswore love, I am likely to get even that; my gold shall buy it for me."

"What prevents some one stealing thy magic ring? Thou hast no friend in all the world, so when you sleep who shall guard the ring?"

"My own wit! What, think you I am a fool? Let us see! By my own cunning I have had fashioned this Tarnhelm which makes me invisible to all. Then who shall find me when I sleep?" he demanded triumphantly.

Loge smiled contemptuously.

"Doubtless thou wouldst be safe enough—if such magic could be," he answered, incredulously, "but——"

"You doubt?" Alberich shouted, his vanity all aroused.

"Well, if it be true—show us," the cunning Flame Spirit returned. Immediately Alberich set the Tarnhelm upon his head.

"What would ye that I become?"

"Oh, it matters not—so that you become something that you are not," Loge answered carelessly.

"Then behold!" Alberich cried, and instantly he turned into a great writhing serpent which coiled and uncoiled at Wotan's feet. -324-

"Oh, swallow me not," Loge cried, as if in mortal fear. Then Alberich, becoming himself again shouted, "Now will you doubt?"

"That was very well done," Loge assured him, "and I grant you frightened me; but as for your safety—if you could have turned yourself into some small thing—a toad or mouse for example—it would be safer for you."

"Then behold!" Alberich shouted again, losing all caution in his pique. He turned himself into a slimy crippled toad, which crawled upon the rock, near Wotan's foot. Instantly Wotan set his heel upon the creature and pinned him to the earth, while Loge grasped the Tarnhelm. Then Alberich becoming himself again squirmed and shouted, beneath Wotan's feet.

"Something to bind the imp, quickly," Wotan called to Loge, and in a trice the dwarf was bound, and borne upward by the God and Loge. Again they passed by the smithy lights, heard the ring of the anvils, and soon they were back at the trysting place. The Nibelung, still shrieking and cursing at his own folly, was placed upon a rock, while Loge and Wotan stood looking down at him.

Scene IV

"There, imp, the Gods have conquered thee and thy magic. Thus they conquer the

powers of evil and darkness. Thou art henceforth our slave unless you see fit to ransom yourself with the Rhein treasure."

At this, Alberich set up a great howling, but Wotan was impatient.

"Slavery for thee—worse than that of thy Mimes—or else give me the Rheingold quickly." Alberich remembered his ring—the Tarnhelm hung at Loge's girdle—and -325- thought he might safely give up the gold.

"With my ring, I can win it back and more too," he thought; so he said to Loge:

"Well, then, rascal, unbind my arm that I may summon the Nibelungen." Loge loosened one arm for him, Alberich raised the ring to his lips and called upon his host of imps. Instantly they poured from the crevasses of the rocks, laden with the Rheingold, which they dumped in a great heap before Wotan.

"Ah, thou rogues," Alberich shrieked to Loge and the War-god; "wait till my time comes!—I'll make you dance." The awful little fellow roared from his small throat with rage.

"Never mind that: we shall be able to take care of ourselves," the God answered, while Alberich lifted the ring and the Nibelungen rushed pell-mell into the rocks again.

"Being a God, you think you can take what you desire without pay; but even the Gods must pay. The gold was stolen and you need not think to profit by another's roguery."

"We shall chance it," Wotan replied, with a smile—"so take off that ring of thine—" At this Alberich gave a frightful scream.

"Never! I will give my life, but never this ring. Oh, you wretches! Rascals! Villains!" He stopped shouting for sheer lack of breath. He saw before him the loss of that which was to win him back his gold and power. Wotan made a motion to Loge, who laughed and dragged the ring from the dwarf's hand, Wotan put the magic ring upon his own finger, and Alberich nearly fainted with despair. Gathering his scattered senses, he began to utter a frightful curse upon the ring. He swore that whoever had -326- it should meet ruin and death instead of power and happiness, and cursing thus in a way to curdle even the blood of the Gods, he spat at Wotan.

"Have done, thou groundling," Loge said. "Go to thy hole." Alberich fled, still crying curses on the gold.

When Wotan and Loge first returned to earth with the imp, it had been twilight, but now, just before night, the light grew stronger, and when the mist that had hung lightly over all cleared away, Fricka, Donner, and Froh could be seen hurrying to the tryst.

"Thou hast brought Freïa's ransom," Fricka cried, joyously, looking at the great golden heap. "Already, she must be near, because see! Do we not all grow younger?" she asked tremblingly, looking at the others.

"It is true; we were dying and now I feel strength in all my limbs," Donner answered, looking in amazement at his brother Gods.

"Yes—here comes Freïa with Fafner and Fasolt." Freïa would have rushed into Fricka's arms, but the Giants still held her fast.

"She is not thine till we have the gold," they declared; and thrusting his staff into the earth, Fafner said:

"Thou shalt heap the Rheingold as high as my staff—which is as high as the Goddess, and the heap shall be made as thick and as broad as she. When this is done, she is thine." Wotan called out impatiently:

"Heap up the gold; make haste and be rid of them." So Loge and Froh fell to heaping the gold about the staff, while the Giants stood by and watched. When it all was piled, Fafner peered through the heap to see if there was an unfilled chink.

"Not enough," he cried; "I can still see the gleam of Freïa's hair—which is finer than -327- gold. Throw on that trinket at thy belt," he signified the Tarnhelm which hung at the girdle of Loge. Loge threw it contemptuously upon the heap. Then Fafner peeped again. "Ah! I still can see her bright eyes—more gleaming than gold. Until every chink is closed so that I may no longer see the Goddess and thus behold what I have sacrificed for the treasure, it will not do. Throw on that ring thou wearest on thy finger," he called to Wotan.

At that Wotan became furious.

"The ring. Thou shalt never have the ring—not if thou shouldst carry away the Eternals, themselves." Fafner seized Freïa as if to make off with her.

"What, thou cruel God! Thou art going to let them have our sister," Fricka screamed,

mingling her shrieks with Freïa's. Donner and Froh added their rage to hers, and assailed Wotan.

"I'll keep my ring," Wotan shouted, being overcome with the power it would give to him, and determined rather to lose his life.

"Thou wretched God! Thy wickedness means the doom of the Eternals," Fricka again screamed, beside herself with the shrieks of Freïa. As the Gods were about to curse Wotan, a bluish light glowed from a fissure in the earth.

"Look," cried Loge, and all turned to see, while Fafner, certain of one treasure or the other, looked and waited.

The bluish light grew and grew, and slowly from the ground rose a frost-covered woman, her glittering icy hair flowing to her waist, the blue light about her causing her garments of frost to glance and shimmer and radiate sparkles all about her. -328-

"Wotan," she spoke, "give up thy ring." All were silent, the Gods and Giants dumb with amazement.

Again she spoke: "It is Erda, she who knows the past, present, and the future. Thy ring is accursed. Ruin and disaster follow its possession. Give up thy ring!"

"Who art thou?" Wotan asked in amazement.

"I am mother of the three Fates—of her who weaves—her who watches—and her who cuts the cord of life. They are my daughters. Thy fate is spread out before me; give up thy ring." The Gods trembled before one who knew both good and evil. Erda had sunk into the earth as far as her breast.

"Give up thy ring," she sighed again, and disappeared in the earth, as Wotan rushed toward her. Donner and Froh held him back.

"Touch her not—to touch her would mean death!" they cried. Wotan stood thoughtfully, looking at the spot where Erda had been, till presently, with a quick movement, he threw the ring upon the Rheingold.

"Freïa!" he cried, "give us back our youth and life, and thou, Giants, take thy treasure." As Freïa sprung toward her sister Fricka to embrace her, the Giants fell to quarrelling over the gold.

"Here, thou! give me my share," Fafner roared, as Fasolt was trying to possess himself of all the hoard. Thus they fought while the Gods looked on.

"Keep the ring, Fafner," Loge called. "It is worth more to thee than all the gold." But the struggle became more fierce till at last Fafner with one great blow killed his brother, while the Gods looked on in horror.

"Behold how Alberich's curse begins to work," Loge cried to Wotan. -329-

"I must see Erda the Wise again," Wotan answered, abstracted and troubled.

"Nay," said Fricka, grasping his arm. "See thy palace—the Walhall of the Eternals for which thou hast nearly caused us to perish. Thou hast got what thou desired, yet hast not even entered its halls. Come—let us go and seek peace and happiness." Thus urged, but looking thoughtfully at the spot where Erda had disappeared, he permitted himself to be led toward Walhall.

"The place was paid for with an evil wage," one of the Gods said, moodily, for all saw the mists settling upon them and felt youth and hope leaving them. They had not yet eaten of their apples of life, but Donner at last aroused himself and strode to a high peak.

"Come," he cried, in a mighty voice; and swinging his mammoth hammer above his head he called again: "Come! Come, ye mists of all the earth! Gather around me. Come, ye hovering clouds, ye foreboding mists! Come with lightnings and with thunder and sweep the heavens clear," and swinging his hammer he shouted: "Heda, heda, heda! To me, all mists! To me, all ye vapours! Donner calls his hosts. Vapours and fogs; wandering mists, heda, heda, heda!"

The black clouds gathered about him till all the Gods were obscured, and as they enfolded them, even the Thunder God was hidden.

Out of the darkness flashed the lightning. Boom! his hammer crashed, and the thunders rolled away into the hills.

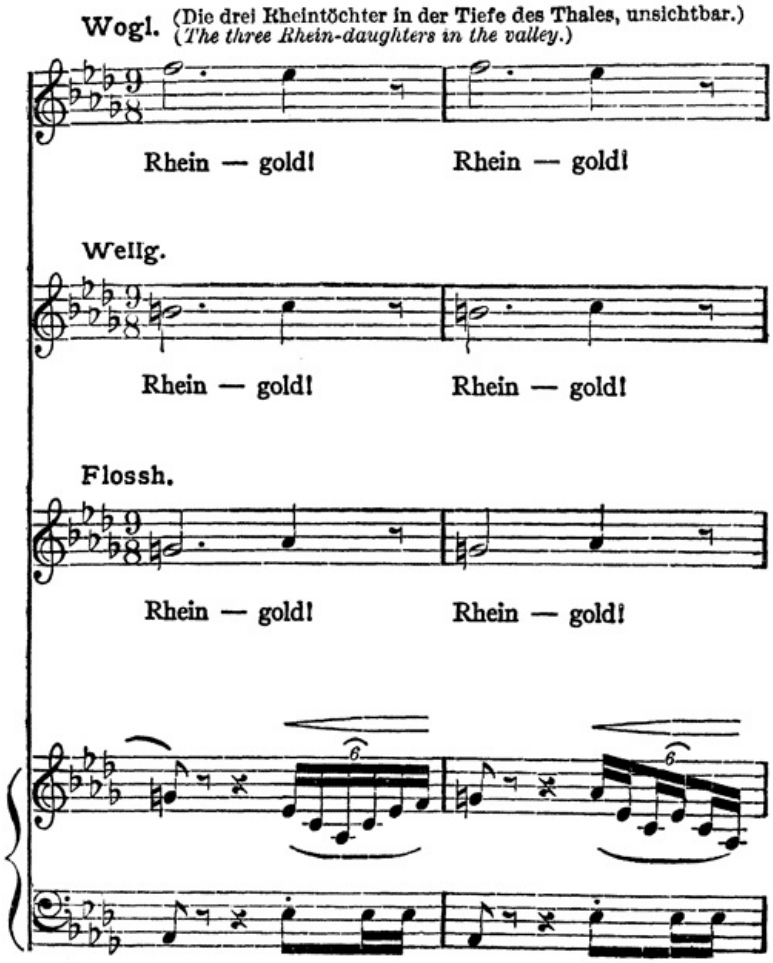
Boom! the hammer crashed against the rock again, and with another mighty stroke the darkness rolled away, the storm cleared, the sun shone forth and at Donner's feet a brilliant rainbow-bridge appeared. It bridged the way from peak to palace. It was -330-
the bridge of promise, and to it Froh pointed the way. As the sun beamed upon the earth, the pinnacles and roofs of Walhall shone like burnished gold, and Wotan took his Goddess by the hand and crossed the bridge of promise while the others followed

in his train. Loge, going last, paused.

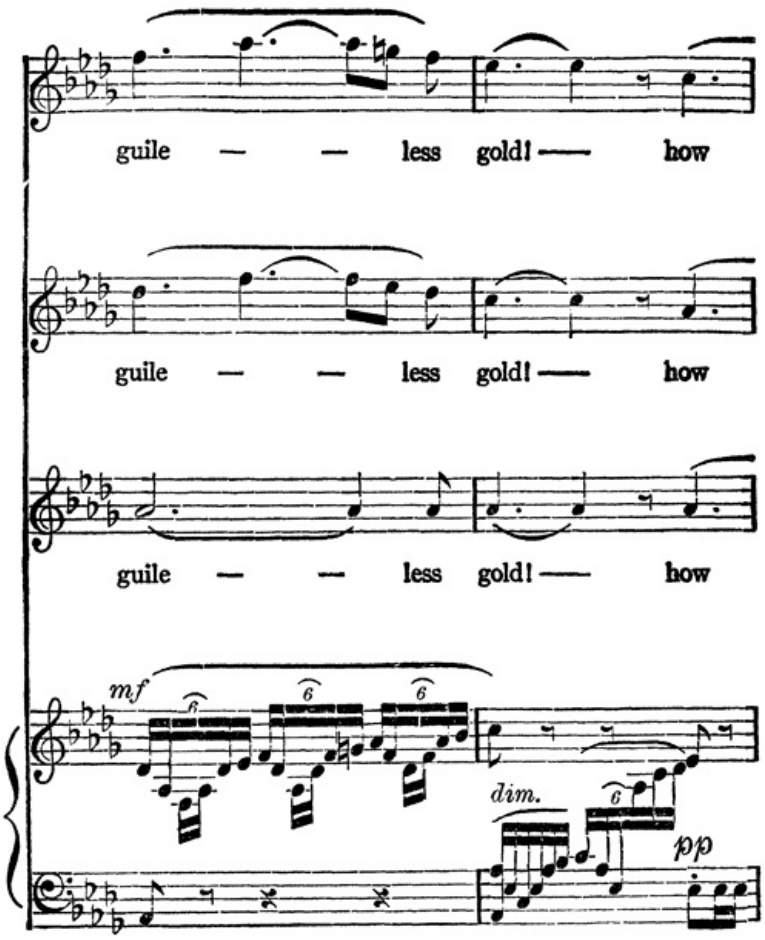
"I foresee the downfall of the Eternals," he murmured. "They have longed for ease and luxuries which they have bought with evil bargains. Shall I go with them, or shall I once more wander, flickering, dancing, wavering, glancing—a Spirit of Flame that shall destroy while others build?" Thinking of what was to come, he slowly crossed the rainbow-bridge and cast in his lot with the Eternals.

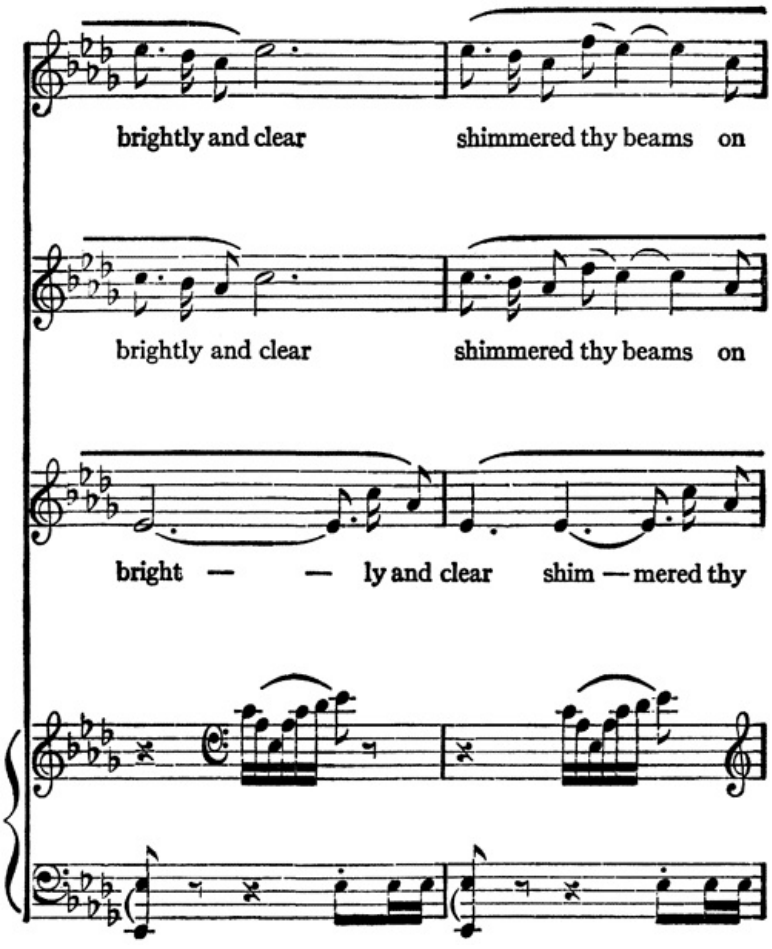
As the Gods departed for Walhall, the Rhein-daughters were lamenting their loss; but Wotan heard and turned to chide them. (*See following pages—in which the music is to be read straight across five pages: 331 to 335 inclusive.*)

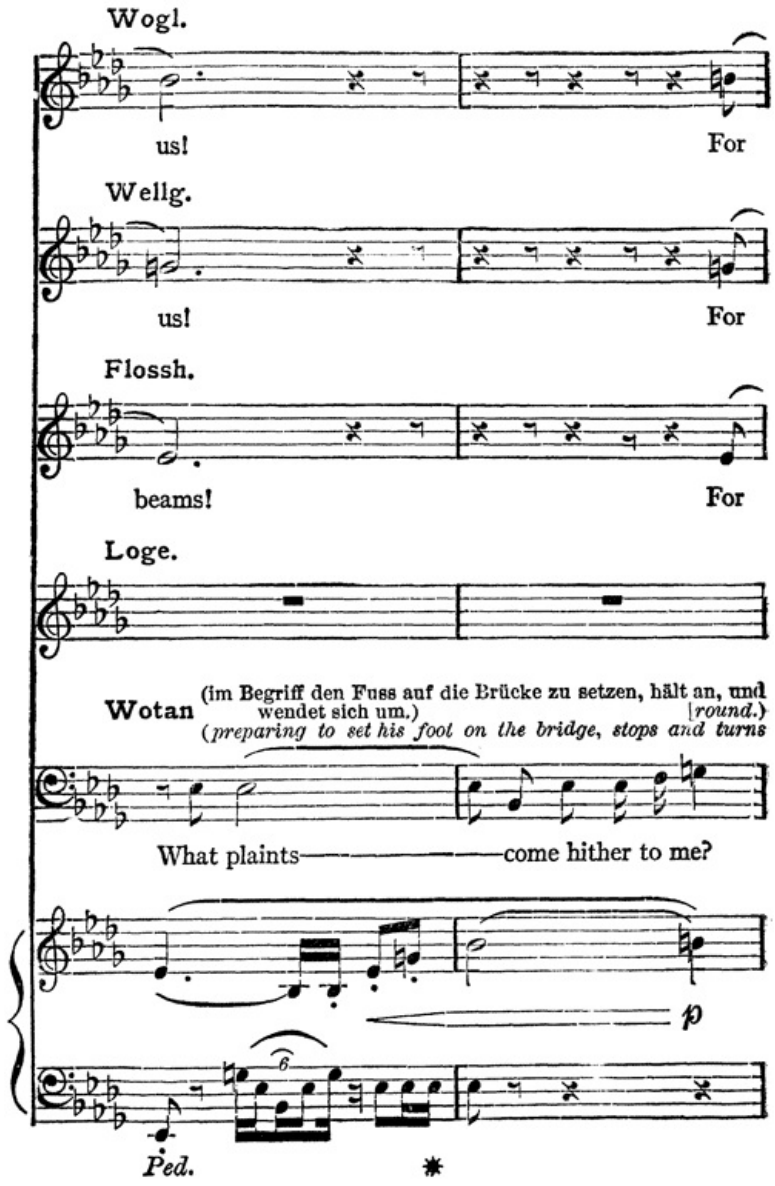
-331-

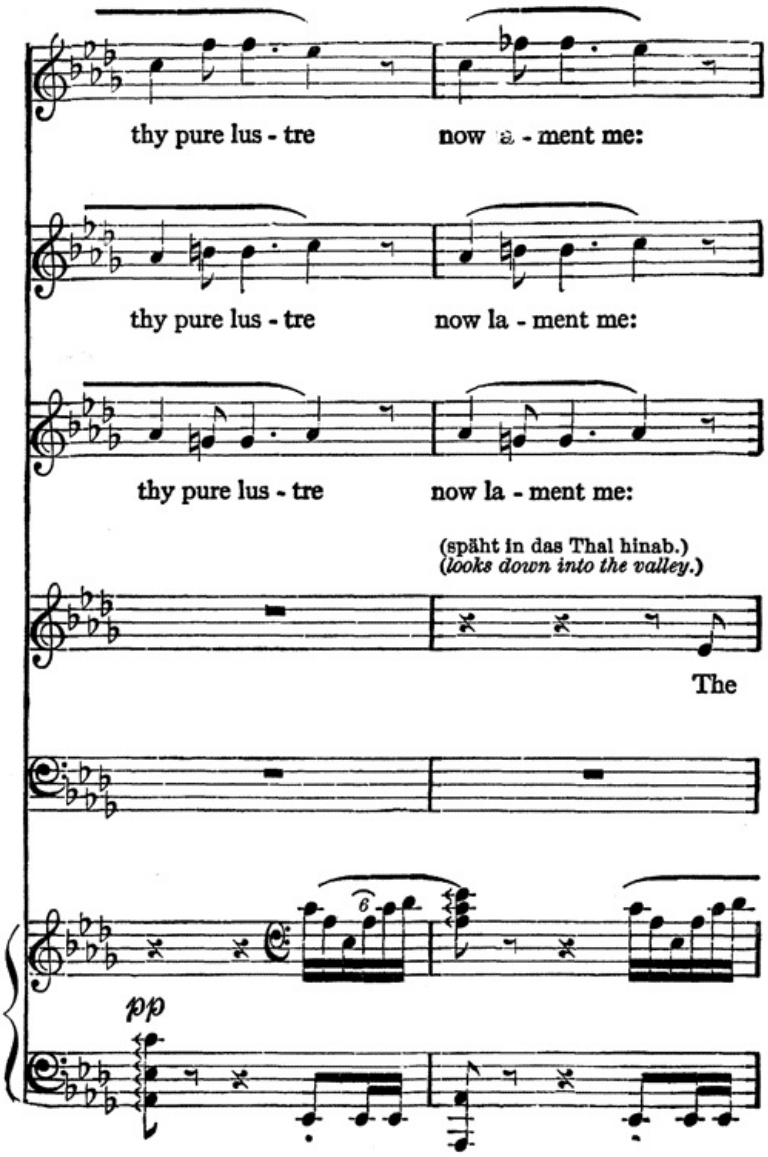


-332-


guile — — less gold! — how
guile — — less gold! — how
guile — — less gold! — how
mf
dim.
pp


brightly and clear shimmered thy beams on
brightly and clear shimmered thy beams on
bright — — ly and clear shim — mered thy


Wogl.
us!
For
Wellg.
us!
For
Flossh.
beams!
For
Loge.
Wotan
(im Begriff den Fuss auf die Brücke zu setzen, hält an, und wendet sich um.)
(preparing to set his foot on the bridge, stops and turns round.)
What plaints——————come hither to me?
p
Ped.
*



[Listen]

(Die drei Rheintöchter in der Tiefe des Thales, unsichtbar.)
(*The three Rhein-daughters in the valley.*)

Wogl.
Rheingold! Rheingold!
guileless gold!
how brightly and clear
shimmered thy beams on us!

Wellg.
Rheingold! Rheingold!
guileless gold!
how brightly and clear
shimmered thy beams on us!

Flossh.
Rheingold! Rheingold!
guileless gold!
how brightly and clear
shimmered thy beams!

Wotan
(im Begriff den Fuss auf die Brücke zu setzen, hält an, und wendet sich um.)
(*preparing to set his foot on the bridge, stops and turns round.*)

What plaints come hither to me?

Wogl.
For thy pure lustre now lament me:

Wellg.
For thy pure lustre now lament me:

Flossh.
For thy pure lustre now lament me:

Loge
(späht in das Thal hinab.)
(*looks down into the valley.*)

The

THE NIBELUNG RING
SECOND DAY

-336-

THE VALKYRIE

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Siegmund.
Hunding.
Wotan.
Sieglinde.
Brünnhilde.
Fricka.

The Valkyries: Gerhilde, Ortlinde, Schwertleite, Waltraute, Helmwige, Siegrune, Grimgerde, Rossweisse.

ACT I

FAR off in the forest lived a huntsman and his wife. The huntsman was rough and brutal, but his wife, Sieglinde, was a young and tender creature who lived far away from pleasure and friends, while her husband hunted all day, went to sleep as soon as he had his supper, and was always surly and rough.

The huntsman's house was strangely built, with the trunk of an ash tree in its very centre, while struck deep into its hole was a sword. The weapon had been driven so far into the tree's trunk, that only its hilt was to be seen. The house was poor, indeed, with only a table and some rough benches for furniture, and at one side, a fireplace where a dull fire flickered.

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One night, while Sieglinde was about to prepare Hunding's supper, a handsome youth burst into the hut, seeking shelter from the storm. The room was empty and he stood at the open door, looking about for some one from whom he might ask a welcome; but all was silent and deserted; so he staggered to the hearth and sank down before the fire upon a great bearskin. He appeared to be exhausted as if he had fled far from some persistent foe. He wore no armour, had no arms, and was quite defenceless and worn.

"Whoever owns this shelter and warmth must share it with me for a moment," he sighed: "I can go no farther;" and he stretched himself before the welcome blaze.

Sieglinde, hearing a sound and thinking Hunding might have returned, came from an inner room. Upon opening the door the sight that met her eyes was the man upon her hearth-stone.

"Some stranger here!" She whispered to herself, a little afraid, for she was not able to see his half-hidden face. Poor Siegmund had no sooner stretched himself before the blaze than he fell asleep. Presently Sieglinde drew nearer, looked into his face and saw that he was very handsome, besides being gentle in appearance.

"I wonder if he can be ill?" she thought, compassionately; and as she continued to look into his face a great feeling of tenderness and love for him crept into her heart. Half waking, he called for water, and Sieglinde gave it to him from the drinking horn. As she again bent to give him the water, he saw her for the first time, and he looked at her thoughtfully in his turn, and in his turn, too, he loved her. She appeared to him to be very beautiful and kind.

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"Whose house is this?" he asked, at last, watching Sieglinde wherever she went.

"It is the house of Hunding, the hunter," she answered, "and I am Sieglinde, his wife."

"I wonder will he welcome a wounded and defenceless guest?" he asked with some anxiety.

"What? art thou wounded?" she demanded with solicitude. "Show me thy wounds that I may help thee."

"Nay," he cried, leaping to his feet; "my wounds are slight and I should still have been fighting my foes, but my sword and shield were shattered and I was left at their mercy. They were many and I could not fight them single-handed and weaponless. I must now be on my way. I am but an ill-fated fellow, and I would not bring my bad luck upon thee and thy house." He started to go out of the door.

"Thou canst not bring ill-fate to me," she answered, looking at him sadly. "I am not happy here."

"If that be true," he said, pausing to regard her tenderly, "then I shall remain," and he turned back into the house.

Scene II

At that very moment, Hunding was heard returning. Sieglinde, hearing him lead his horse to the stable, opened the door for him, as was her wont, and waited for him to come in. When Hunding finally appeared, he paused at seeing Siegmund.

"Whom have we here?" he asked his wife, suspiciously.

"A wounded man whom I found lying upon the hearth-stone. I gave him water, and welcomed him as a guest." Hunding, hearing this, hung his sword and shield upon a branch of the dead ash tree, and taking off his armour, handed it to Sieglinde. -339-

"Set the meal for us," he said to her in a surly tone, looking sharply at the stranger. Sieglinde hung the armour upon the tree and began to prepare the meal.

"You seem to have come a long way," said Hunding at last to Siegmund. "Have you no horse?"

"I have come over mountain and through brake. I know not whither the journey has led me. I would find that out from thee; and may I ask who gives me shelter?"

"I am Hunding whose clan reaches far, and who has many kinsmen. Now for thyself?"

"I, too, have kinsmen who war for freedom. My father was a wolf and my mother is dead. I am the son of the Wälsungs—a warring race. Once my father, the wolf, and I wandered together in the forest. We went to hunt, and upon our return we found our hut laid waste and my mother burned to ashes. Then, sadly, my father and I went forth again."

"I have heard of this wolfling," Hunding answered, frowning. "A wild and wolfish race, truly! Tell me, stranger, where roams thy father, now?"

"He became the game of the Neidlings—they who killed my mother; but many a Neidling has been destroyed in his pursuit. At last my father must have been slain. I was torn from him, but later escaped from my captors and went in search of him. I found only his empty skin, and so I was left alone in the forest. I began to long for the companionship of men and women; but I was mistrusted; whatever I thought right, others thought wrong, and that which others thought well of appeared to me to be evil. Thus, in all my wanderings, I found no friend. In truth my name is Wehwalt: Woe. I may never find love and kindness. Foes wait ever upon my track. Since I am a wolf's son, who will believe that I have loving thoughts?" Hereupon, Sieglinde looked -340- at the handsome yet sorrowful stranger with great tenderness.

"Tell us, guest, how thy weapons were lost?" Hunding insisted.

"Willingly I shall tell thee. A sorrowing maid cried for help. Her kinsmen thought to bind her in wedlock to one she did not love; and when she cried to me to free her, I had to fight all her kinsmen single-handed. I slew her brothers and while protecting her as she bent above their bodies, her people broke my shield and I had to flee."

"Now I know you," Hunding shouted, rising and glaring at the young wolfling. "I was called to battle with my kinsmen—they were your foes! He who fought us fled before I could reach the battling place, and here I have returned to find my enemy in my house! Let me tell you, wolf-man, my house shall hold you safe for the night, since you came here wounded and defenceless; but to-morrow you must defend yourself, for I will kill you."

At that Hunding moved threateningly toward Siegmund, but Sieglinde stepped between them, regarding Siegmund with a troubled face.

"As for thee," said Hunding to her roughly; "have off with thee! Set my night-draught here and get thee to bed!"

Sieglinde took from the cupboard a box of spices from which she shook some into the drinking horn in which she was making the night-draught. All the while she moved about she tried to direct Siegmund's eye toward the sword hilt which gleamed upon the ash tree; but Hunding was not pleased with her and drove her from the room to her bed-chamber. Then taking the armour from the tree he glowered darkly at Siegmund. -341-

"Look well to thyself, to-morrow," he said; "for I mean to kill thee." Then he followed Sieglinde to the inner chamber.

Scene III

Siegmund sat down, sad and lonely, while the lights burned out and the fire flickered lower. The wolf-man with his head in his hands thought gloomily upon his unhappy fate. Never was he to find friends, though he was true and honest and meant harm to no man.

"I have no sword," he thought; "hence I cannot defend myself against Hunding. If only I could find, somewhere in the world, that enchanted sword of which my father told me!" he cried, aloud in his despair. Suddenly, the logs in the fire fell apart and the flame flared high—it was Loge doing the bidding of Wotan, who, from Walhall, was watching the movements of the Universe—and in the blaze the sword hilt could be seen shining upon the tree. The gleam caught Siegmund's eye, but he did not know what he saw.

"What is that so bright and shining?" he said to himself. "Ah, it must be the memory of dear Sieglinde's brilliant eyes, which rested so often upon that spot before she left the room. It is because I love her and think of her that I fancy I see a jewel shining in the dark." Musing thus he became sadder than before. Again Loge flamed up high, and again Siegmund saw the gleam of the sword, but still he did not know what he saw, so the lonely wolf-man was again left in darkness. Then the chamber door softly opened and Sieglinde stole into the room. She had left Hunding sleeping.

"Guest," she whispered. "Art thou sleeping?" Siegmund started up joyfully. -342-

"It is Sieglinde?" he whispered back.

"Listen! Make no sound. Hunding lies sleeping, overcome by the heavy drink that I have given him. Now, in the night, fly and save thy life. I have come to show thee a weapon. Oh, if thou couldst make it thine! Many have tried, but all have failed. It is only the strongest in all the world who can draw it from its strange sheath." Siegmund's glance wandered to where she pointed, and rested upon the sword hilt which the flame had shown him.

"I was given by my kinsmen to the cruel Hunding," she continued; "and while I sat sad and sorrowful on my wedding night, and my kinsmen gathered around rejoicing, there entered an old man, clad all in gray, his hat pulled low over his face, and one eye hidden; but the other eye flashed fear to all men's souls but mine. While others trembled with fear, I trembled with hope; because on me his eye rested lovingly. He carried a sword in his hand, and with a mighty stroke, buried it deep in the ash tree.

"'Only he who has a giant's strength can draw that sword,' he cried. After that, guests came and went, came and went, tried and tried; but none could draw the sword. So there it cleaves until this day. Ah! if thou couldst draw it out and save thy life! He who draws that sword shall also deliver me from Hunding," she added, wistfully.

At that, Siegmund leaped up and clasped her in his arms:

"Then in truth shall I draw it. It is I who shall free thee. And who but the God Wotan put the weapon there for thy deliverance? Thou sayst he had but one eye! Did not Wotan give one of his to win his wife, Fricka? Thou hast been guarded by the Gods -343-
themselves," he cried, and again clasping her to his breast he promised to free her forever from Hunding. "It is the weapon told of by my father, the wolf," he declared; and while they stood thus, the outer door swung noiselessly open and the moonlight streamed in.

"Ah! It is the Spring," he whispered. "The beautiful Spring! She has entered unannounced to bring us cheer and hope, it is an omen of good. I am no longer sad. I have found one to love who loves me, and a weapon to defend her." With a mighty wrench Siegmund pulled the sword from its bed and swung it above them.

ACT II

WHEN Sieglinde and Siegmund had fled and while they were wandering, waiting for the battle which was certain to occur between Siegmund and Hunding, Wotan was preparing to send out his war-maid, Brünnhilde, from the palace of the Gods—Walhall. The warrior-maid had been given him by Erda, and she went forth each day

to the ends of the earth, to guard all warriors. When men died in battle, she and her eight sisters, who were called the Valkyries, bore those heroes to Wotan, and they dwelt in Walhall forever. It was on the day of the battle that Brünnhilde and Wotan came to a high rock, armed and prepared for war. Wotan carried a magic spear.

"Listen, Brünnhilde! Thou art to hasten. There is this day to be a great battle between Siegmund, who is of the Wälsung race, and Hunding. As for Hunding, I want him not in Walhall. Yet it is Siegmund whom thou art to shield in the strife. Take thy horse and hurry forth." Brünnhilde, springing upon her beautiful horse, Grane, flew -344- shouting over the rocks, loudly calling her battle-cry:

"Ho-jo-to-ho! Ho-jo-to-ho! Heia-ha, heia-ha, heia-ha!" This loud clear cry, rang from peak to peak, from crag to crag, while the maid on her enchanted horse flew away to summon her sisters. On a far peak she paused, and called back to Wotan:

"Have a care war-father! Thy Goddess, Fricka, comes drawn in her car by rams. She will give thee a great battle I fear; she swings her golden lash, and makes the poor beasts dance. I tell thee, war-father, thy Goddess has some quarrel with thee!" and laughing, Brünnhilde flew on her way. Fricka's rams, scrambling over the rocks, dragging her car behind them, landed her close to Wotan.

"So, Wotan, I must look the world over for thee!" she cried angrily. "I have no time to chide thee, however. The hunter Hunding has called to me for help. He is sorely pressed. Siegmund is his foe, and has taken the magic sword from the ash tree. With that sword he is invincible. He has carried off Hunding's wife, and I, the Goddess of Home and Domesticity, must avenge him. I have come to warn thee not to interfere for Siegmund. I shall help Hunding."

"I know of thy Hunding," Wotan answered, frowning. "And I know no harm of Siegmund. It was the beautiful Spring which united the pair. Am I to overwhelm these two with ruin because thy cruel Hunding has come to thee for help? Spring's enchantment was upon Sieglinde and Siegmund."

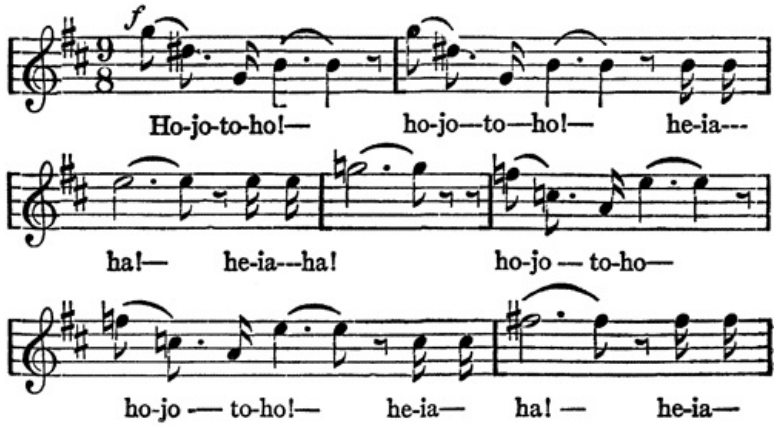
"What, ye speak thus to me, Wotan? When those two had been united in holy wedlock ——?"

"I do not call so hateful a union, 'holy'," Wotan answered, sternly. -345-

"Thy words are shameful. I have come to tell thee thou shalt take back the magic power thou hast given to Siegmund with the sword. I know well he is thy son, and that thou wandered upon the earth as a wolf, leaving behind thee this sword, invincible, for thy beloved wolf-boy, but I declare to you, I shall give you henceforth no peace till the sword is taken from him. Hunding shall have his revenge! The conduct of these mortals is shameful. But when Gods, such as thou, misbehave, what can be expected of mere mortals?" Fricka sighed. "However thou may seek to free thyself or defend thyself, I am thy eternal bride; thou canst not get away from me, and if thou wouldst have peace, thou wilt heed me. See to it that the wolf-man loses his life in this encounter." Fricka, for all the world like a shrewish, scolding mortal wife, quite overwhelmed the unhappy War-god.

"But what can I do, since I should have to fight against my own enchantments?" Wotan urged, hoping to save his beloved wolf-son.

"Thou shalt disenchant the sword. The magic thou gavest thou canst destroy." The quarrel was at its height, when Brünnhilde's cry could be heard afar.



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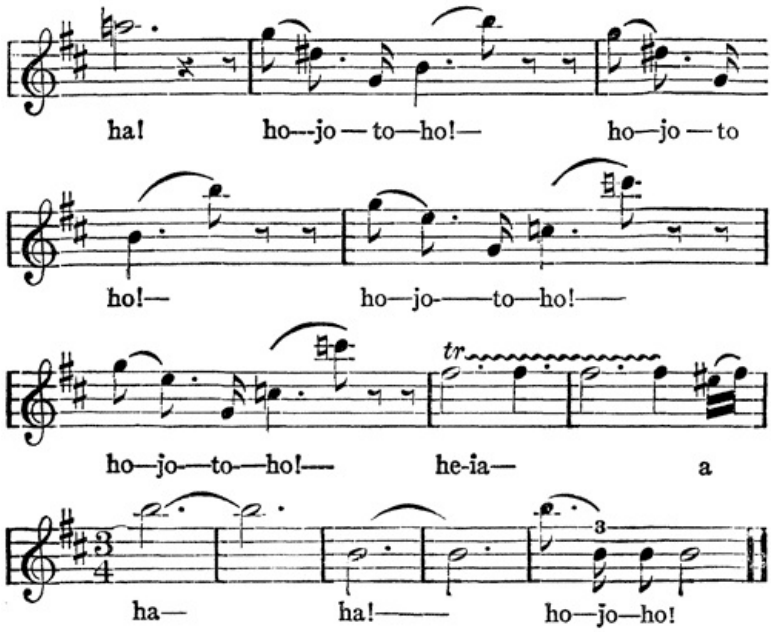


[Listen]

Ho-jo-to-ho! ho-jo-to-ho!
heia-ha! heia-ha!
ho-jo-to-ho! ho-jo-to-ho!
heia-ha! heia-ha!
ho-jo-to-ho! ho-jo-to-ho!
ho-jo-to-ho! ho-jo-to-ho!
heia-ha-ha!
ho-jo-ho!

"Ho-jo-to-ho-ho-to-jo-ho! Heia-ha, heia-ha, heia-ha!" Brünnhilde came leaping down the mountain again, upon her horse, Grane. Seeing a quarrel was in progress between the Goddess and Wotan she became quiet, dismounted, and led her horse to a cave and hid him there.

"There, Wotan, is thy war-maid now. Pledge me thine oath that the magic sword which Siegmund bears, shall lose its virtue! Give thy war-maid instruction." Fricka urged this in a manner calculated to show Wotan there would be no more peace in Walhall if he flouted his wife. He sat down in dejection.

"Take my oath," he said miserably; and thus Sieglinde's and Siegmund's doom was sealed. Fricka triumphantly mounted into the car drawn by rams, and in passing, spoke to Brünnhilde. -347-

"Go to thy war-father and get his commands." Brünnhilde, wondering, went to Wotan.

Scene II

"Father, Fricka has won in some encounter with thee, else she would not go out so gaily and thou sit there so dejected. Tell me, thy war-child, what troubles thee!"

At first Wotan shook his head, but presently his despair urged him to speak and he told Brünnhilde the story of the Rheingold and the ring of the Nibelungs.

"I coveted what was not mine," he said. "I got the gold from Alberich and in turn Fafner and Fasolt got it from me. Fafner killed his brother for love of the gold, and then turning himself into a dragon, set himself to watch over the gold forever. It was decreed by the Fates—Erda's daughters—that when Alberich should find a woman to love him, the overthrow of the Gods was at hand. Alberich had bought love with the treasure. Our only hope lay in the victory of some hero in whose life I had no part. I left for such a one a magic sword, so placed that only the strongest could draw it. He had to help himself before I gave him help. Siegmund has drawn the magic sword. If he had won in the battle with Hunding, the Eternals would have been saved; but Fricka demands that Hunding shall win the fight and a God must sacrifice all Walhall if his wife demands it. He had better be dead than browbeaten forever." Wotan almost wept in his anguish. "So must the Eternals face extermination. A wife can crush even a God!"

"What shall I do for thee, Father Wotan?" Brünnhilde cried distractedly. -348-

"Obey Fricka this day in all things. Desert Siegmund and fight on Hunding's side." Wotan sighed heavily.

"Nay, I shall defy thy commands for once," she declared, but at this Wotan rose in wrath.

"Obey me!—or thy punishment shall be terrible. To disobey would be treason to the Gods." He strode away.

Brünnhilde put on her armour once more.

"Why is my armour so heavy, and why does it hurt me so?" she asked of herself. "Alas! It is because I donned it in an evil cause." Slowly she went toward the cave where her enchanted horse, Grane, was hidden.

Scene III

Now that the Gods had forsaken them, the two lovers, Sieglinde and Siegmund, were in great danger, and Sieglinde, without knowing why, was filled anew with fright. She hurried painfully along, assisted by Siegmund who was all the time lovingly urging her to stop and rest.

"Nay," she answered always; "I cannot rest because I hear Hunding's hounds who would tear thee in pieces, if they caught thee." At that very moment they heard the blast of Hunding's horn in the distance.

"There he comes with all his kinsmen at his back, and they will surely overwhelm thee," she cried in distress; and fell fainting with fear.

As Siegmund placed her tenderly upon the ground, Brünnhilde came toward them from the cavern, leading her horse.

Scene IV

She regarded Siegmund sorrowfully and said in a troubled voice: -349-

"I have come to call thee hence, Siegmund." The youth stared at her curiously.

"Who art thou?" he asked.

"I am Brünnhilde, the Valkyrie; and whoever I look upon must die."

"Not I," Siegmund answered, incredulously. "I fight with the enchanted sword of Wotan. My life is charmed. I cannot die."

"Alas!" she answered, then paused. Presently she spoke again. "Whoever looks upon me must die, Siegmund," she said earnestly.

"When I have died, where do I go?" he asked. He was not sad at the thought of giving up a life so full of strife.

"Thou goest to Walhall to dwell with the Eternals."

"Do I find there Wotan, and the Wälsungs—my kinsmen who have gone before me?"

"Aye," she answered—"And Wish-maidens to fill thy drinking cup and to cheer thee. It is the home where heroes dwell, forever and forever."

Siegmund's face glowed with hope.

"And Sieglinde?" he cried.

"Ah, not she. She must stay yet a while behind thee."

Then a terrible change came upon Siegmund and he frowned at the Valkyrie.

"Begone! Thinkest thou I go to thy Walhall without Sieglinde? Begone! What do you of the Gods know of love such as ours. Walhall is not for me. I carry the enchanted sword given by Wotan. This day I kill Hunding, and live my life in peace with Sieglinde."

Brünnhilde could no longer let him deceive himself.

"The enchantment of thy sword is gone!" Siegmund started. "Wotan deserts thee. To-day thou must go hence with me. Hunding will kill thee." For a moment Siegmund -350- regarded the Valkyrie, then drawing his sword, he turned to where Sieglinde was lying, still unconscious.

"What wouldst thou do?" Brünnhilde cried.

"Kill Sieglinde, to save her from Hunding's wrath."

"Leave her to me," Brünnhilde entreated, moved with pity. "I swear to thee I will preserve her. Leave her with me."

"With thee—when Wotan himself has tricked me? Nay. The Gods are no longer trustworthy," he said, bitterly, turning again to Sieglinde. Brünnhilde, overcome with

pity and admiration for such devotion between mortals—a love more steadfast than the promises of the Gods themselves—sprang forward to stay him.

"Do not! I will preserve thee—thee and thy Sieglinde. I am here to guard Hunding, but it shall not be so. I will shield thee in the fight. I will brave the wrath of Wotan for such love as thine and Sieglinde's. If the magic of thy sword is destroyed, the power of my shield is not. I will guard thee through the fight. Up! Renew thy courage. The day is thine, and the fight is at hand." Mounting her horse, Grane, the Valkyrie flew over the mountain tops and disappeared. Siegmund's despair was turned to joy and again hearing Hunding's horn, he turned to go, leaving Sieglinde to sleep till the fight was over. The storm-clouds gathered, and all the scene became hidden.

Scene V

Lightning flashed and thunder rolled ominously. Siegmund bent to kiss Sieglinde and disappeared in the blackness of the storm. All the heavens and earth spoke of war -351- and death. The air grew thick with vapours, and lightning cleft the hills. Siegmund called through the darkness to Hunding to face him for the fight, and at the sound of his voice and the horns and the shouting of battle, Sieglinde awoke. She could see naught, but could hear the sounds of war. Her fear for Siegmund returned. She shrieked and ran toward the storm-shrouded mountain. The skies were rent, and high upon the rocky peak, Hunding and Siegmund stood forth in battle.

"The Goddess Fricka is with me!" Hunding shouted.

"Away with thy Goddess! It is the Gods who support me" Siegmund answered, bravely swinging his sword. Instantly Brünnhilde floated above the warriors. She interposed her burnished shield between Siegmund and the sword of Hunding, and cried:

"Thrust, Siegmund! Thy sword shall preserve thee!" Instantly the whole earth was filled with a dazzling fire, in which Wotan appeared, foaming with rage. He thrust his spear to catch the blow of the wolfling's sword, which broke in half upon it; while Hunding's point pierced Siegmund's breast. Brünnhilde fell at Wotan's feet, while with a shriek Sieglinde in the glade below fell as if dead. While Wotan faced Hunding, Brünnhilde rushed down the mountain to save Sieglinde. Taking her in her arms she sprang upon Grane and flew for the rock of the Valkyries.

"Now go, thou miserable being," Wotan thundered at Hunding, and waving his spear at him, the man fell dead.

"Now Brünnhilde, for thee! and for thy punishment!" he cried in an awful voice, and amidst the crashing of Donner's hammer against the sides of the universe and flames from heaven, Wotan disappeared. -352-

ACT III

AWAY on a far mountain, the Valkyries were waiting for Brünnhilde's coming. They were her sisters: Gerhilde, Ortlinde, Waltraute and Schwertleite, seated upon a high place, dressed in their armour. From time to time they gave the cry of the Valkyries:

"Ho-jo-to-ho! Ho-jo-to-ho! Heia-ha, heia-ha, heia-ha!" Soon this call was answered by Helmwige, who could be seen coming on her horse, with a slain warrior tied to her saddle.

The Valkyries were arriving from the four quarters of the earth—each bearing a slain warrior. At last, all but Brünnhilde had come.

"We cannot go to Wotan without her," they said among themselves. "She is his favourite and she brings to him those heroes he most desires. We must not start for Walhall till she has come." Thus they talked among themselves, now and then sounding their cry and laughing over the misfortunes of mortals. At last one called:

"Look! Brünnhilde is coming in wildest haste. Look, look! Her pace is so furious that the horse staggers. What lies on her saddle?" All peered in amazement into the vale below.

"It is no man," one cried.

"It is a maid," shouted another.

"She does not greet us." They ran to help her from her horse, shouting their war-cry as they went, and returned supporting Sieglinde, while they surrounded Brünnhilde and questioned her wildly.

"Shield us!" she cried to them. "I am pursued. The war-father is coming after me. He is foaming with rage. Hide us, shield us." All looked at her in consternation. -353-

"What hast thou done?" they questioned.

"Who can shield thee from our father's wrath, Brünnhilde?" one cried.

"I see him not," one who was on the look-out called. "But a fearful storm gathers."

"It is Wotan. Our father rides upon the storm. Oh, shield this poor wife," Brünnhilde called.

"Alas! the storm increases."

"Then he is near. His anger increases as he comes," Brünnhilde cried in terror. "Now who will lend me a horse to put this poor wife upon?" None dared brave the wrath of the God.

"All of you are silent," she said at last, in despair. Turning to the fainting Sieglinde, she cried:

"Up! Take the way to the east. There dwells the dragon, Fafner, and near him Alberich also watches. That is the only place in the world Wotan avoids. Go thou, and I will detain the Father till thou art far and safe. Take these pieces of the magic sword. I snatched them when Siegmund fell. Give them to thy son and Siegmund's, and that son shall be named Siegfried. With these sword-pieces again made whole, the sword shall win the world for that son of thine." With these words she turned Sieglinde's face toward the east, while she herself stood waiting.

Sieglinde was no sooner gone than the storm grew more fierce, and Wotan called with a loud voice from the clouds:

"Brünnhilde!" Full of fear she sought to hide herself in the midst of her sisters.

"He is coming, sister," they shouted. All the forest about them was lighted up with a lurid fire, and Wotan came raging through the midst of it. -354-

Scene II

Striding from the wood he called again:

"Come forth! Naught can save thee from thy punishment." Without hope, Brünnhilde came from the company of her sisters and threw herself on her knees before Wotan. He looked at her in pity because he loved her dearly.

"For thy treason to the Eternals and to me, I doom thee to roam the earth as a mortal woman. I take thy glory from thee. Walhall shall know thee no more. Thou art forever cast out from us. Henceforth thy fate shall be to spin the flax, to sit by the hearth, a slave to man." He could not look upon her because he loved her so.

At this, all the Valkyries cried out.

"Away!" he called to them. "Her punishment is fixed and whoever tries to help her shall share her fate."

At this threat, all fled wildly to their horses, and shrieking, flew away, leaving behind them a sound of rushing and a streaming light.

Scene III

Wotan regarded Brünnhilde mournfully. She raised herself and tried to move him with her tears.

"If I am doomed to become mortal, to suffer all mortals' ills and woes, remember still that my treason was partly for love of thee. I knew Siegmund was dear to thee. Wilt thou not pity me a little?" Her pleading was so mournful that Wotan at last listened to it.

"Brünnhilde, I will guard thee from the worst. Since thou must become as mortals -355-
are, and the slave of man, I will guard thee from all but the brave. I will enchant thee into a sleep from which only a hero can wake thee. Fire shall surround thee, and he who would win thee must pass through the flame." He kissed her on the eyelids which began to droop as with sleep, and he laid her gently down upon a little mound beneath a fir tree. He closed her helmet and laid upon her her shining shield, which completely covered her body. Then he mounted a height.

"Loge!" he called, and struck the rock three times with his spear. "Loge, Loge, Loge! Hear! Once I summoned thee, a flickering flame, to be companion of the Gods. Now, I summon thee to appear and wind thyself in wavering, dancing, fairy flame, about the fallen. Loge, I call!"

A little flashing flame burst from a riven place. It spread, it crept, it darted and stung; catching here, clutching there, fading, leaping, higher, higher, higher, till all the world was wrapped in fire. The shooting tongues drew about the God, who, stretching forth his magic spear, directed it toward the rock on which the Valkyrie lay asleep. The fiery sea spread round and in its midst Brünnhilde slept safely.

"He who fears my spear-point, may not cross the flame," he said, pointing his spear toward the tomb of fire; and then, with backward glances, the God of War passed through the flame and was seen no more.

THE NIBELUNG RING
THIRD DAY

-356-

SIEGFRIED

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Siegfried.
Alberich.
Mime.
Fafner.
The Wanderer.
Erda.
Brünnhilde.

ACT I

IN A cavernous rock in the forest, hammering upon an anvil, was a complaining Mime. As he hammered, the sparks flew from the sword which he was forging.

"Alas!" he cried, muttering to himself, as he worked at his task; "Alas! Here I am, day after day, trying to forge a sword which Siegfried cannot break. I, who have made swords for giants, am yet unable to satisfy this stripling."

At this the Mime flung the new-made sword upon the anvil with a crash, and stood gazing thoughtfully upon the ground.

"There *is* a sword to be forged which even that insolent boy cannot break; a sword which, if the race of Nibelungs could wield it would win them back the treasure and the ring. This sword must kill the dragon, Fafner, who guards that ring—the magic sword, Nothung! But my arm cannot forge it; there is no fire hot enough to fuse its -357-
metal! Alas! I shall always be a slave to this boy Siegfried; that is plain." While he lamented thus, Siegfried, himself, ran boisterously into the cavern, driving a great bear before him. The youth was dressed all in skins, wore a silver hunting-horn at his girdle, and he laughed as bruin chased the Mime into a corner.

"Tear this tinkering smith to pieces," Siegfried shouted to the beast. "Make him forge a real sword fit for men, and not for babes." The Mime ran about, shrieking with fear.

"There is thy sword, Siegfried," he shouted, pointing to the sword which he had thrown on the anvil.

"Good! Then for to-day thou shalt go free—the bear can eat thee another day?" he cried, mockingly; and giving the bear a blow with the rope which held him, the beast trotted back into the forest.

"Now to test thy great day's work! Where is this fine sword? I warrant it will be like all the others; fit only for a child's toy." The Mime handed him the sword saying:

"It has a fine, sharp edge"; thus trying to soothe the youth.

"What matters its edge if it be not hard and true?" he shouted irritably, and snatching the sword from the Mime's hand he struck it upon the anvil and it flew in pieces.

Siegfried flew into a great rage, and while he foamed about the smithy, the Mime got himself behind the anvil, to keep himself out of the angry fellow's way. When Siegfried's anger had spent itself, the Mime came from the corner and said solicitously:

"Thou must be hungry, my son." -358-

"Don't call me thy 'son,' thou little black fool," the boy again shouted. "What have I to do with a misshapen thing like thee, whose heart is as wicked as its body is ugly? When I want food, I'll cook it." The Mime held out a bowl of soup to him, but Siegfried dashed it to the ground.

"Did I not rescue thee from the forest when thou wert born, and have I not fed and clothed thee?" he whimpered.

"If so, it was for no good purpose. I know thee." Siegfried had a marvelous instinct which told him good from evil. "Dost know why I go forth and yet return, day after

day?" he asked presently, studying the Mime's face thoughtfully. "It is because I mean to learn from thee something of my mother and my father." Siegfried's voice had become gentle, and full of longing.

"What can I tell thee?" the Mime replied, craftily. "I found thy mother ill in the wood, and brought her to my cave, where I tended her till thou wert born. I know nothing of thy father—except one thing." He paused, considering whether or not he should reveal what he knew about the good sword, Nothung.

"Well, get on with thy tale. I will know it all," Siegfried threatened.

"Thy mother carried the fragments of a sword which had been thy father's, and when she died at thy birth, she named thee Siegfried and gave to me the pieces, saying if thou couldst reweld the sword, so as to make it new, it would win thee the world. The sword's name is Nothung."

"Where are those pieces," Siegfried roared, starting up and menacing the Mime.

"Do not set upon me so fiercely—I will give them to thee," the Mime pleaded, and taking the pieces from a cleft in the rock, he gave the youth a sword in two parts. "It -359- is useless to thee, I tell thee frankly; I could not make thee the sword. There is no fire hot enough to fuse the metal, and no arm strong enough to forge it—not even mine, which has fashioned swords for giants."

Siegfried shouted with joy.

"Thou old thief, have the good sword done ere I return or I will have the bear swallow thee at a gulp." Leaping with joy he went back into the forest. The Mime sat down in great trouble. He did not doubt Siegfried's word—yet he knew that he could never make the sword. He fell to rocking himself to and fro upon the stone seat, while he thought of what he should do to excuse himself upon Siegfried's return.

In the midst of his trouble a strange man entered the cavern, dressed in a dark blue cloak which nearly hid him. On his head was a great hat pulled low over his face, but one fierce eye shone from under it. When the Mime saw him, he felt new fear.

Scene II

"Who art thou?" the Mime demanded in an ugly tone, as the Wanderer stood watching him reflectively.

"I am one who brings wisdom, and whom none who have good hearts turn away. Only the evil turn from me. The good offer me shelter." The Mime, seeing only his own cunning and wickedness reflected in the Wanderer, tried to think how he should rid himself of one he believed had come to harm him. He thought the Wanderer must be a spy, but in reality, he was the God Wotan, who had seated himself upon the hearth, and was watching the Mime. -360-

"Listen!" he said, beholding the Mime's fear; "ask of me what thou wilt and I shall lighten thy burden, be it what it may." He looked long and curiously at the Mime and could read his heart.

"Wilt answer me three questions?" the Mime demanded.

"Aye—and stake my head upon the truth of the answers."

"Then tell me what race it is that dwells in the depths of the earth."

"It is the Nibelung race, and Nibelheim is their land. There, all are black elves, and once upon a time, Alberich was their lord. He tamed them with the spell of a magic ring formed of the Rheingold. Ask on."

"What is the race which dwells upon the surface of the earth?" The Mime asked, less timidly.

"It is the race of Giants. Riesenheim is their land and Fasolt and Fafner were their rulers, but, possessing themselves of the Nibelung's gold, they fought, and one killed the other; till now, Fafner alone, in the form of a dragon, guards the hoard and ring. Speak on."

"Thou hast told me much," the Mime said, wondering. "But now canst thou tell me who are they who dwell upon cloud-hidden heights?"

"They are the Eternals, and Walhall is their home. Wotan commands that world. He shaped his spear from the branches of an ash tree, and with that spear he rules the Gods. Whoever wields that spear rules all the giants and the Nibelungs." As if by accident, Wotan—the Wanderer—struck the spear he carried upon the ground and a low roll of thunder responded. The Mime was terror-stricken. -361-

"Well, Mime, is my head which I pledged to thee, free?"

"Aye, go."

"If thou hadst welcomed me, I could have solved thy problems for thee, but I had to pledge my head to thee before I could rest here. So now, by the law of wager, this matter is now reversed. It is for thee to answer me three questions—or lose thy head. Tell me, then: What race does Wotan the War-god favour?"

"Ah, I can answer that: it is the Wälsungs—a race sprung from wolves. The Wälsungs' mightiest son is his care. His name is Siegfried."

"Now tell me the name of the sword with which this same Siegfried is bound to conquer the world, to kill the dragon Fafner, and to get the Rheingold and the ring?"

"The name of the sword is Nothung," the dwarf replied, not daring to keep silence.

"Now one more answer, as wise as those gone before, and thy head is free: Who shall fashion this same sword, Nothung, for Siegfried?"

At this question the Mime leaped up and flung his tools all about in rage.

"I know not who has the power to make the sword," he screamed.

"I will tell thee," the Wanderer answered, smiling contemptuously upon the Mime. "The sword shall be forged by one who has never known fear. Now thy head is forfeit, but I shall leave it on thy shoulders for that same man—he who knows no fear —to strike from thee." Still smiling at the terror-stricken Mime, the Wanderer passed out into the forest.

He had no sooner gone, than the Mime began to think upon the last words he had spoken. He was to lose his head by the stroke of one who had never known fear. The -362- only one the Mime knew who was fearless was Siegfried. Then unless Siegfried could be made afraid, he would one day strike off the Mime's head.

Scene III

When Siegfried returned to the cavern, the Mime began to tell him that he must learn to fear, before he could go forth into the world to seek adventures. He told Siegfried of the horrible dragon, Fafner, who guarded the Rheingold and the Ring, thinking to strike terror to the youth's heart; but Siegfried became at once impatient to go in search of the dragon, that he might know what the experience of fear was.

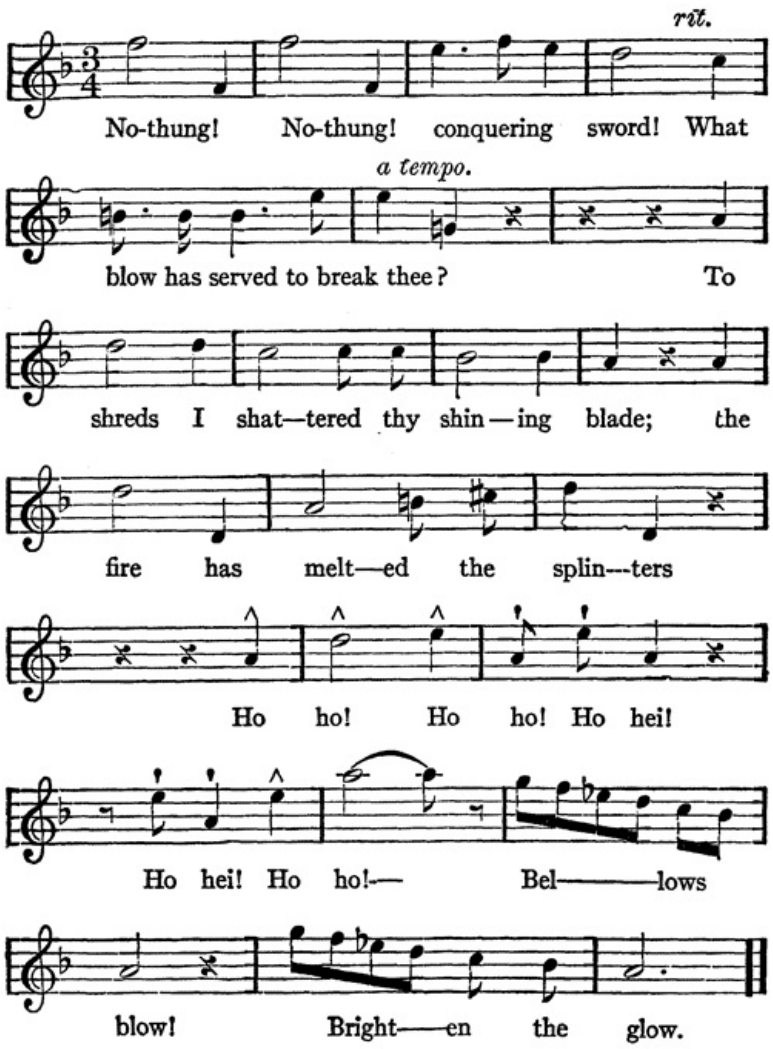
"Where is that strong sword you are to make for me?" he demanded, being thus put in mind of it again. The wretched Mime knew not what to answer.

"Alas!" he sighed; "I have no fire hot enough to fuse the metal."

"Now by my head, I will stand no more of thee!" Siegfried shouted. "Get away from that forge and give me the sword's pieces. I'll forge that sword of my father's and teach thee thy trade before I break thy neck." So saying, he grasped the fragments of the sword, began to heap up the charcoal, and to blow the bellows. Then he screwed the pieces into a vise and began to file them.

"Use the solder," the Mime directed. "It is there, ready for thee."

"Solder? What should I do with solder?" he said, and continued to file the pieces till the file was in shreds. In time he had ground the pieces to powder, which he caught in a crucible and put upon the fire. While he blew the bellows with a great roaring of -363- the fire, he sang the song of Nothung, the invincible sword.



[Listen]

Nothung! Nothung! conquering sword!
What blow has served to break thee?
To shreds I shattered thy shining blade;
the fire has melted the splinters
Ho ho! Ho ho! Ho hei!
Ho hei! Ho ho!
Bellows blow!
Brighten the glow.

As the Mime watched that easy forging of the mighty weapon, he believed that Siegfried was the one who would slay the dragon as Wotan had foretold. If he did that then he surely would possess himself of the treasure and the ring. So the Mime fell to planning how he could get the gold into his own hands. Siegfried knew nothing of gold and power, and so, why should he not willingly hand the treasure over to the Mime? Then the Mime would determine that Siegfried should perish, and by the ring's magic his destruction would come about, leaving the Mime lord of all. So the Mime decided it was well that Siegfried should forge the sword, because the Mime, even if he had such a sword, had known fear, and therefore, could not kill the Dragon with it. Siegfried must do this and the Mime should profit by it, and afterward kill Siegfried. Thus he reasoned. All this time Siegfried had been at work upon his sword. He had poured the molten metal into a mould, and held the mould high above his head. Presently he plunged it into cold water, and a great hissing of steam occurred. Again he thrust the sword into the fire to harden it the more, and meantime the Mime was fussing about the fire, making a broth.

"What is the devil's brew thou art making," Siegfried demanded giving him a lowering look.

"Something to take with us upon the journey to the Dragon's lair."

"None of it for me," Siegfried shouted. "I'll have none of thy brew."

But the Mime reasoned that by the morrow, when Siegfried would have slain the Dragon and have found himself weary, he would gladly drink of the broth. As it was poisoned, it would kill Siegfried as soon almost as he had killed the Dragon.

At last the broth was finished and poured into a bottle ready for taking, while the sword was done at the same time, Siegfried having tempered it and tested its point and its strength a little. -365-

"Now," shouted Siegfried, "if the good sword will stand, let us go." He stood before the anvil, swung Nothung about his head, and with a frightful blow he cleaved the anvil from top to bottom so that the halves fell apart with a great crash. The sight was more than the Mime could bear and he stood palsied with fear of such tremendous strength.

"Yes, yes, let us be off," he cried, when he could speak again. He longed to have the Dragon dead and Siegfried dying; only then would he feel safe.

Swinging the great sword about his head, Siegfried started off into the forest, in search of adventures.

ACT II

ALBERICH crouched, waiting near the Dragon's cave, having always known, even as the Gods knew, that the day would come when even Fafner, the Dragon, would meet his match.

When that time came, Alberich meant to possess himself again of the gold, for he felt capable of fighting any one but the Dragon.

As Siegfried and the Mime reached the part of the forest where the Dragon kept guard, it seemed to be black, black night and a storm was brewing. The scene was very frightful, indeed. The thunder muttered, showing that Donner was somewhere about, using his hammer. While Alberich, imp of the underworld, sat watching and waiting, he saw a bluish light, such as had appeared when Erda spoke to Wotan. Alberich started up in alarm.

"Can that light mean the coming of him who is to slay Fafner?" he wondered, as the -366-
bluish radiance grew brighter and brighter. Then the storm abated and the light died out. Next, the Wanderer entered the place before the Dragon's cave, and although it was very dark such a bright light seemed to come from him that Alberich recognized Wotan.

"What are you doing here, thief," cried the black revengeful spirit, "you who took the Rheingold? Once more let me gain possession of the ring and I'll come against all Walhall and thy celestial world."

"Peace! Thy rage means naught to me," the Wanderer replied. "Listen, and I will tell thee what thou wouldst like to know. The Mime brings hither a boy who shall kill the Dragon. The Mime plans to win the gold and the ring. I may not help the boy: I may not serve those whom I love; but if thou wouldst warn the Dragon, very likely he would give thee the treasure for thy reward. I'll call the Dragon to thee," he said, and stepped to the mouth of the cave.

"Fafner, Fafner, awake, thou Dragon!" Alberich trembled with fear when an awful voice roared in answer:

"Who wakes me from my sleep?"

"A friend," Wotan, the Wanderer, replied, bending his head toward the cave and listening.

Alberich, taking courage, listened too, and called:

"A foe is near who comes to snatch the Rheingold and the ring from thee."

"Then food is near at hand," the Dragon roared in his softest voice.

"Listen," Alberich persisted. "If thou wilt give the ring to me, I will help thee." The Dragon yawned terrifically:

"Don't trouble yourself. I will look after my hoard and my ring." Even if he had -367-
whispered, he could have been heard a mile away. As it was, he spoke in his loudest voice, although he was sleepy, and Alberich nearly fainted with terror.

"Thou hast failed with the Dragon, Alberich," the Wanderer said, smiling, "but I will give thee one word more of advice: Make terms with the Mime. Attack him; perhaps thou wilt have better luck with thy kind!" In a flash of lightning, the Wanderer mounted his magic steed and disappeared. When he had looked after him for a moment, Alberich slipped into the Dragon's cave, and as he disappeared, the day slowly dawned, and all the scene grew bright in the morning light.

Just at the dawn of day, Siegfried, and the Mime reached the glade before the Dragon's cave. The enchanted sword hung at Siegfried's belt.

Scene II

"Now we have arrived where the Dragon lives," the Mime said to Siegfried.

"Ah?" the youth said, sitting down to rest under a lime tree. He looked curiously about him. "Is it time to be afraid?" he asked, anxiously. "Because if so, I feel nothing yet—although maybe I do, and do not know it?"

"Oh, you'll know it fast enough," the Mime assured him. "In that cave there lies the Dragon. His great hairy jaws will open and swallow thee at one gulp." But Siegfried sat under the lime tree and asked if that were really true. It interested him greatly.

"But one thing I tell thee," he cried: "If this thing which you have told me be not true, we'll part company at once. I'm not to be fooled. I have come here to learn something —how to be afraid—and if I don't learn it as thou hast said, I'll teach thee to stop lying." -368-

"When, out of the Dragon's mouth, a poisoned foam pours, which will kill thee if any drop gets upon thee, I guess thou wilt shake a little. Thy body and thy bones would melt if that stuff touched thee."

"Well, I'll give him plenty of room, to be sure," Siegfried replied.

"His great tail will sweep about and if he should catch thy limbs in it, thy bones would be crushed like glass."

"That sounds very bad; but tell me if this thing has a heart which is placed where other hearts are placed?"

"Truly—a cold and cruel heart."

"Oh, as to that, I am not concerned, but if he has any heart, Nothung will slip into it. Now come, old babbler, is this the thing that is to teach me fear—this thing that spits a bit and lashes about with a clumsy old tail?"

"Laugh away, laugh away! But I have no mind to stay so near, so I shall go away and lie down beside a stream to sleep. Watch thou there, and have a care for thyself." So saying the Mime went off a little way and laid himself down. When he had gone, Siegfried stretched himself beneath the lime tree to listen to the birds' song. He cut himself a reed and tried to answer the birds, but could not. As he rested there in the bright day, he had lonely thoughts of his mother and his father, and longed for some one whom he could love. While in the midst of these musings, he looked up and there, with his frightful head resting upon the knoll, was Fafner, the Dragon. He was giving vent to a terrific yawn, and made such an awful sound that Siegfried regarded him in amazement, but suddenly burst out laughing. -369-

"Hello! Are you the beauty who is to teach me to be afraid? Well, well!" and he laughed again. The Dragon ceased to yawn and stared hard at Siegfried.

"You are a pretty plaything," Siegfried continued. "Such a nice, rosy little mouth. I fancy you must be the fellow who was to scare me to death. Thou art a beauty, surely!"

"Who is it?" the Dragon roared suddenly.

"Ho! And a sweet voice—like the birds," Siegfried grinned.

"Since my mouth is so rosy, let me see how my teeth will feel when set in a juicy morsel like you," said the Dragon and he spouted venomous vapours, stretching his horrid jaws, while Siegfried nimbly sprang to one side to avoid the poisonous steam. Standing watchful, with his sword, he tried to thrust it at the Dragon's tail, but Fafner roared and swished his tail away, and prepared to strike with his body; but to do this he had to raise himself upon high, and in so doing exposed his breast. Instantly Siegfried plunged Nothung into his heart, and the Dragon rolled over upon his side with a groan which shook the trees to their very roots. Siegfried left his sword in the wound and sprang to one side.

"Oh," groaned the Dragon, with a sigh like a weary earthquake. His blood spouted upon Siegfried and burnt his hand like fire. As the blood soused him, a little bird sang.

"It is almost as if that little bird was speaking to me," he said, pausing and looking up into the trees. "Can it be the Dragon's burning blood has some virtue which makes me understand the bird's song?"

"Siegfried now owns all the Nibelung's hoard which lies hidden in the cave. There will be found the Tarnhelm and the ring, which will give him power over all the earth," so the bird sang, and Siegfried understood. -370-

"I thank thee, dear birdling, for thy counsel. I shall follow thy call." He turned toward the cave and entered it in search of the treasures. At that moment, the Mime came into the glade, and Alberich, in the dark of the cavern's mouth, slipped out past Siegfried, and the Mime and he came face to face, while the dead Dragon lay between them.

"Thou sly and slippery knave," Alberich began pleasantly to address the Mime; "thou wouldst have the ring and the gold, eh?" He glared viciously at the little imp of Nibelheim.

The Mime tried to pacify the evil creature, but Alberich, who had waited long, would listen to nothing. Before they could fall a-fighting, however, Siegfried came from the cave bearing the ring and the Tarnhelm.

He slipped the ring upon his finger and hung the Tarnhelm at his belt.

"I know not what these things are for," he murmured to himself, "but I have taken them because the little bird gave me that advice." Unseen behind him, Alberich slipped into the cave to fetch the treasure. At that same moment the little bird sang:

"Let Siegfried wait to see what the Mime will do. Listen and learn and have a care."

"Good!" the youth cried. "I am the one to take advice." As the Mime approached him, Siegfried stood steadily, one foot upon the knoll where the Dragon had lain, and watched the imp. -371-

"Ah, my lovely boy, hast thou now learned to fear?" he said, in an ingratiating tone.

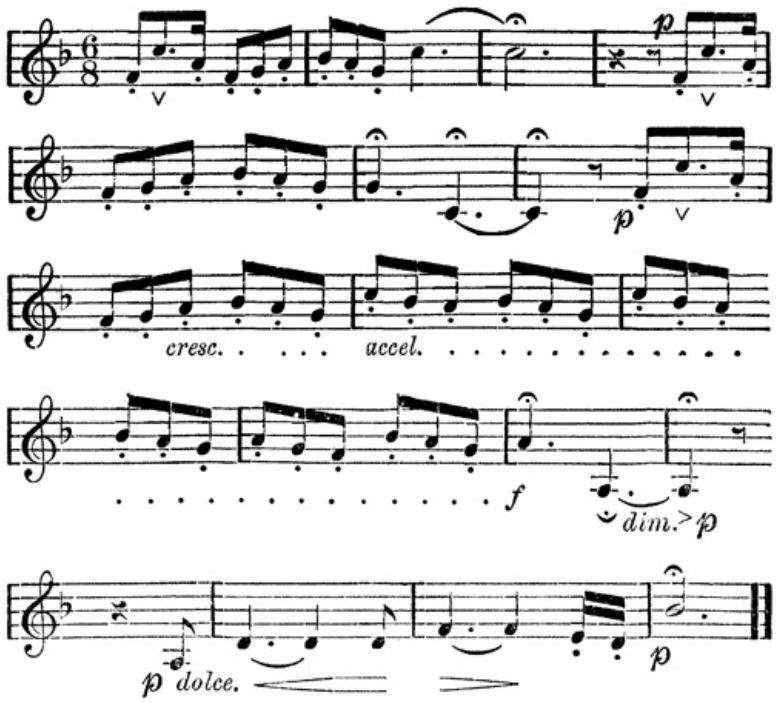
"Not yet, Mime!" Siegfried said, seriously.

"Well, at least thou art weary, so drink of this and rest a while," and the Mime drew forth his bottled broth. "It will give thee new courage." But Siegfried, filled with loathing for the little man, felled him with a single stroke of his sword. Thus the Mime was slain, as Wotan had said, by one who knew no fear.

After that, the youth picked up the Mime's body and threw it into the cave where the treasure lay still, and with a great effort he tugged at the Dragon's body till he had rolled it near, and in turn he dumped the Dragon into the cavern. After looking down into the darkness, he sighed and turned back to the green glade.

"I am truly tired," he said. "I think I can now stretch myself beneath this tree and rest." So saying he laid himself down and turned his face to the sky.

"Ah, little birdling," he said, "Here am I, so lonely, without father nor mother nor any one to love me. I wish thy clear voice would speak again to me and tell me of some fond friend." The bird trilled:



[Listen]

"Thou hast great treasure and power from this time forth; still thou art not happy without love and one to share thy fortune. I will tell thee then of a lovely bride who lies guarded round by fire in a rocky forest fastness. She sleeps and waits for one who shall dare the flames for love. The glorious maiden's name is Brünnhilde."

"Oh, song of joy," Siegfried cried, starting up. "Now indeed thou hast made me happy."

"Only he who has never known fear may wake her," the little bird sang.

"Have no fear, dear bird. I have known no fear and Brünnhilde shall be mine. Lead on, lead on, dear bird. Lead me to the rock where this dear maid lies and I shall know no fear." The little bird rose beside him, and circling a few times above his head, took a straight flight and led the way while Siegfried followed.

ACT III

WHILE Siegfried was on his way, led by the little bird, the Wanderer was seeking Erda, who had given to him Brünnhilde and his eight other warrior daughters. Erda was Wisdom, and the Wanderer sought her at the base of a wild and rock-made mountain. It was night and a storm was roaring all about. Wotan arrived at the -373-
mouth of a cave and called "Erda!"

"Waken," he cried, "I must waken thee from thy long sleep." The bluish light shone steadily and slowly Erda rose. She was covered with hoar frost and her iridescent garment shimmered as if made of ice.

"Erda, a youth has been found who knows no fear. He has slain Fafner. He is governed only by love, and I am about to resign my Godhood in his favour. Wisdom has been sleeping and the Gods have lost their power. Wisdom and the Gods must at last give way to love." Having heard this, Erda slowly sank back to her sleep. Wotan, the Wanderer, leaned gravely against the face of the rock, waiting for Siegfried. Suddenly a little bird fluttered along, dropped to the ground, and disappeared.

Siegfried, coming up afterward, saw the flight and disappearance of his birdling, so knew that his journey was ended and that Brünnhilde was near.

Scene II

"I must find the burning rock, without further help," he said. "I think the little bird would not have gone, if it had not left me very near the place." He looked impatiently about, and went toward the mountain. In passing the Wanderer, who stood watching him, he paused and asked which way he should take.

"Is there not a rock surrounded by flames, near by? And is there not a maiden?" He told the Wanderer his story; and as the old man did not speak, Siegfried became curious to know who he was. He looked closely into his face, questioned him about his queer hat, and suddenly saw that the strange old man had but one eye. He -374-
mocked at him, in his youth and strength.

Wotan, being a God and truly loving Siegfried, spoke gently to him, but the youth was defiant and mocked him again. The Wanderer became enraged and declared that Siegfried should never pass the flames that divided him from Brünnhilde.

"It is only he who fears naught," the God cried. "Look and say if thou art he," He pointed his spear toward the mountain top and the flames broke forth, burning fiercely.

"Ah," Siegfried cried; "it is there the lovely Brünnhilde sleeps! Farewell, old man. I go to waken her and claim my bride." But the Wanderer again halted the youth.

"That sword of thine has once been broken on my spear. I shall break it again, wild boy. No sword has ever yet withstood the shock of my spear. Thou canst not go!" He plunged his spear to bar Siegfried's way, but Siegfried stepped back and regarded him closely.

"If this sword of mine has once been broken on thy spear, then thou art the destroyer of my father—for this sword is Nothung. Thus, with one blow I avenge him." So saying, he struck once at the Wanderer's spear, and shattered it. The Wanderer stepped back, knowing then that the end of the Eternals was at hand. Thunder crashed and lightning splintered across the sky and sprung from the spear to the mountain-top.

Presently, the flaming mountain height seemed to descend nearer to Siegfried, and putting his horn to his lips he blew a great blast and plunged into the fire.

He was soon out of sight, but gradually the fire died down, and the red cloud hovering over all became less lurid in its reflection. Gradually the cloud dissolved till -375-
naught was left but a beautiful rosy mist. With the passing of the mist, Brünnhilde could be seen, still lying on the mound where Wotan had laid her, and she was still covered with her helmet and the beautiful shining shield.

Scene III

The fir tree spread itself above Brünnhilde, and she shone in her brilliant armour. Siegfried rose above a mound, and stood looking at her, spellbound. Near at hand, he

saw a beautiful steed, standing as if asleep: it was Grane, who had been enchanted along with his mistress.

Gently lifting Brünnhilde's shield he thought himself to be gazing upon a young man.

"I think his helmet must press too heavily upon his brow!" Siegfried murmured, and lifted it. The beautiful hair of Brünnhilde streamed down, and Siegfried paused in admiration; but still he thought her a man.

"I think his armour presses," he whispered. "I will lift it." He carefully cut the fastenings with his sword and lifting the breast-plate he saw the form of Brünnhilde lying shrouded in the soft folds of her gown. She was so beautiful that at last he was afraid.

"Oh, how shall I awaken her?" he cried, and stooping he kissed her lips, as she opened her eyes. At the same moment, Grane, the horse, moved and began quietly to graze.

Brünnhilde looked about her, saw her dear horse, and the sun and the glory of the day, and lastly beheld Siegfried who had delivered her from the enchantment of Wotan. -376-

"Is it thou who hast gone through flame for me?" she asked.

"It is I who will guard thee forever," he cried, embracing her tenderly. Knowing that she loved him, the only fear he had ever known, vanished. Thus mortal love overthrew the powers of evil, and of the Gods, as well.

NIBELUNG RING
FOURTH DAY

-377-

THE DUSK OF THE GODS

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Norns (3).
Fricka.
Brünnhilde.
Gutrune.
Waltraute.
Siegfried, Gunther, Hagen } Nibelungen.
Wotan.
Donner.
Alberich.
Woglinde.
Wellgunde.
Flosshilde.

PROLOGUE

On the Valkyries' rock, where Siegfried woke Brünnhilde, the Norns were gathering. The first Norn was old and tall and lay where Brünnhilde had lain—under the spreading fir tree. The second was younger and also tall, and she was stretched upon a rock in front of the cave. The third was the youngest, and she, too, was tall, and she sat upon a rock below the mountain peak, and all were clothed in dark and veil-like draperies.

They were Erda's daughters, and were called the Fates. Behind them shone the firelight which guarded the rock and it flared fitfully above the peaks. -378-

The first Norn unwound from her waist a golden rope and tied one end of it to a branch of the fir tree. While one wove into this rope the destinies of the world, another clipped it, and the three sang the story of creation. They sang of the ash tree, of Wotan and the Eternals; and as they sang they threw the rope from branch to branch, weaving and clipping, weaving and clipping. They sang the story of Brünnhilde, of the Rheingold, of all the strife in the world, and of the destinies of the Gods and mortals.

After a while the dawn began to glow, the sun to rise, and the fire-glow behind the mountain to die out.

On the Third Day, Brünnhilde and Siegfried had entered the cave; then when the sun rose and night was dispelled, they came out, Siegfried dressed in Brünnhilde's

armour and Brünnhilde leading her good horse, Grane.

"Now, I must be gone and do valorous deeds, dear Brünnhilde," Siegfried said to her. Taking the Nibelung ring from his finger, he put it upon hers. "Keep thou this ring and thou art all powerful and it shall keep our faith, truly."

In return Brünnhilde gave him her horse, Grane.

"Once he mounted above the clouds while now he can only pace the earth; but that he will do bravely for thee, my Siegfried," she assured him. The parting was full of promises and love for each other. Siegfried and Grane disappeared below the cliff, while Brünnhilde, standing upon a little mountain height, looked down at them and bade Siegfried a loving farewell.

ACT I

WHILE Siegfried was on his way to search for the glory suited to such a hero, a banquet was being held in the hall of the Gibichungs, a race of mortals living on the -379- banks of the river Rhein.

Gunther and his sister Gutrune were the rulers, and they sat upon a rude throne, side by side, while the banquet table was spread before them.

At one side sat Hagen, the half brother of Gunther, half a Nibelung—in short, the son of Alberich. Through the great door of the hall could be seen a green field stretching away to the bank of the Rhein.

"Tell me, Hagen," Gunther asked of his half brother, "is there anything I have left undone that could enhance the fortunes of my race?"

"That there is," Hagen cried. "Dost thou not know of the Nibelungs' ring?"

"I have heard there is a treasure stolen from the Rhein-daughters; and that of it a ring was made, which has magic power."

"That is true; but the ring belongs to a wonderful youth, who by its power hath won a beautiful maiden called Brünnhilde. She lay in an enchanted sleep, in a forest-fastness, guarded by fire. This youth, Siegfried, alone, by means of this ring and his sword, has dared that flame; and now he has power over all the world, over thee and the Nibelungs, and even over the Gods."

Upon hearing this, Gunther became moody and frowning.

"Why hast thou stirred up envy in my breast. Why should this youth have the most beautiful maiden for a wife, and also a golden treasure that gives him power over us all?"

"Why not have these things for thyself?" Hagen asked, eyeing him keenly.

"How could I manage that?"

"Dost thou remember a magic potion I brought here to the hall of the Gibichungs? If -380- Siegfried should chance to drink that when our sister Gutrune were in his sight, he would forget Brünnhilde and love none but Gutrune. Would not the ring and the treasure of the Rhein thus come into the hands of the Gibichungs?" Gutrune looked earnestly at Hagen.

"From what thou sayest of this brave youth, I long to have him for my husband; but he is not here! How are we to lure him hither?"

"He is an adventurous youth and hath heard of the fame of the Gibichungs. He will not rest until he has met with all the adventure the Gibichungs can afford him. Even now, he may be near this place." As Hagen spoke, the sound of Siegfried's horn was heard afar off.

"Ah, dost hear the challenge?" cried Hagen, running to the broad entrance from which could be seen the river Rhein. "There comes a horse and a man, standing in a boat which nears the shore. It must be he, because he is beautiful as none other is beautiful, and he wears the air of a brave man." Putting his hands to his mouth in the fashion of a trumpet he called loudly:

"Hoi-ho! Whom seekest thou, hero?"

"The stalwart son of the Gibichung."

"A welcome waits thee," Hagen answered. Siegfried could now be seen, disembarking with his horse, Grane. Hagen went to help him and made the boat's chain fast. Gunther followed his brother to the bank, while Gutrune stood in the great entrance to welcome the stranger.

Scene II

"Which is the son of the Gibich?" Siegfried asked, standing with his arm thrown across his horse. -381-

"I am he, Siegfried," Gunther answered.

"Thy fame as a fighter has spread to the farthest corners of the earth and I am come to seek thee. Fight me, or be my friend, whichever thou wilt," he said, tranquilly. Gunther held out his hand in welcome:

"Come thou in friendship, Siegfried," he begged; and Siegfried gave Grane's bridle into Hagen's hand.

"Care well for the horse, Hagen; for it is of the mightiest strain ever known, and dear to me as my eyes; but how do you know my name?" he asked curiously of Gunther.

"Thou hast the appearance of that bold knight of whom all have heard. There can be no braver in the world, and if thou art not he I know not who thou art," Gunther answered, and, unseen by Siegfried, he motioned his sister to leave the hall before they entered it.

"These lands and people are mine," he continued, leading the way. "This great hall is my heritage, and my kinsmen are legion. I give all to you; share all with me. Let us dwell together in peace." At this saying a beautiful light came into Siegfried's face.

"I have neither kinsmen nor lands," he answered, much moved; "but I have this good sword, Nothung, which I forged myself and it, with my life, shall be thine." Thus they made a compact of brotherhood.

"Dost thou not own the treasure of the Nibelungen, then?" Hagen asked.

"True, but when I won it I let all but the ring and the Tarnhelm lie. I cared naught for the gold." He held up the Tarnhelm for them to see.

"Aye, 'tis the Tarnhelm!" Hagen cried. "Thou hast only to set it on thy head to be transformed into what thou wilt. Put it on thy head and wish it so, and thou wilt be -382-
transported in a trice to other lands. But there is also the ring——"

"Aye," Siegfried said tenderly; "but that is held by a woman," Hagen and Gunther looked at each other, meaningly, for they knew he spoke of Brünnhilde.

"Brother, call Gutrune to bring Siegfried a refreshing drink," Hagen said, and Gunther opening the door called to his sister who came out and offered the magic drink to the knight.

No sooner had he drunk, than he raised his eyes to thank Gutrune and beholding her, loved her.

"I drink to thee, dear Brünnhilde," he had been about to say, but looking, he loved another.

"What is thy sister's name?" he asked of Gunther in a low voice, scarcely daring to speak for fear his love would depart.

"Gutrune."

"I must have her for my wife. Hast thou not a wife, Gunther—why hast thou none?" he said, not waiting for one question to be answered before asking another.

"Alas, I have no wife because I have set my heart on one I may not have. I long for Brünnhilde, the Valkyrie maid who lies surrounded by fire—and I may not cross the flame."

"What! Is that thy only reason for being lonely? Then thou shalt have thy Brünnhilde. If Gutrune may be mine, I will win thy Brünnhilde for thee. Wearing the Tarnhelm I shall change my shape to thine, and as thy brother go through fire for thee and bring forth the maid."

"Ah," the Gibichung cried, joyfully; "our oath of brotherhood upon that! Gutrune shall be thine, thou ours, Brünnhilde mine." -383-

Thus it was agreed. Hagen filled a drinking horn, while the two men cut their arms and let their blood mingle in the cup. Having drunk, they swore fidelity in the drink, and Hagen cut the horn in two with a single blow, while Siegfried and Gunther joined hands.

Putting on his armour again, Siegfried declared they should at once go forth and win Brünnhilde for Gunther.

"Wilt thou not rest, first?"

So eager was the enchanted Siegfried to win for another his own bride that he would take no rest till it was done; so Hagen was left to guard the hall till their return. Soon Gunther and the knight were pushing off from the river bank, and floating down the

middle of the stream.

Hagen, the half Gibichung, half Nibelung, thought of nothing but winning the Rheingold for the Nibelungs. He had sent Gunther after another's bride, by means of an evil enchantment, and when she was brought to the hall, she would certainly be wearing the ring. Thus the prize of the Nibelungen would once more be within the grasp of an evil race, and that which might be a power for good if rightly used, would become a power for evil and be badly abused.

Scene III

While Siegfried and Gunther were on their way to fetch Brünnhilde, she sat lonely upon her rock, looking at the ring given her by Siegfried. As long as she looked upon it, she felt Siegfried to be near; nevertheless she was lonely. Very soon she heard the thunder.

"It is Donner! It is like a greeting to me from the Eternals," she thought, smiling half sadly. Once again she heard it and saw the flash of lightning. In the clouds, she saw -384-
Waltraute, her sister, coming on her winged horse, and Brünnhilde started up joyfully.

"Wotan has forgiven me," she cried, running to meet Waltraute, who arrived in great excitement.

"Brünnhilde, I have braved the war-father's wrath to beg thee to save the Eternals," she cried. "Since the day of thine enchantment Wotan has sent us no more to the battle-field for heroes. He has roamed over all the earth, till he is known as the Wanderer. One day he returned to Walhall with his spear broken, and he ordered the ash tree to be hewn in pieces and its splinters piled about Walhall. Then he summoned all our heroes about him, mounted the throne with his broken spear in his hand, and while we Valkyries crouched at his feet, he closed his eyes and seemed to wait for calamity to overwhelm us.

"At last in despair I threw myself upon his breast and demanded to know our fate. He told me that the Nibelungs' ring was now yours, and that should you restore it to the Rhein-daughters, the Eternals would once more be given back their life and youth, and all would be well with the world. Now I have fled to thee to beg thee to save us by restoring the ring."

At that, Brünnhilde looked at her sister sorrowfully. "The ring given me by Siegfried? Nay! I will never give up my ring. So hasten back to Walhall, sister. I cannot aid thee." Sadly embracing the despairing Valkyrie, Brünnhilde parted from her.

Mounting her winged horse, Waltraute rose among the clouds whose bright effulgence was watched sadly by Brünnhilde, till with the last sight of the Valkyrie, the evening closed in and the fire which guarded the beautiful maid began to be reflected again from below. Soon the flames seemed to leap with anger, and -385-
Brünnhilde watched the strange sight with anxiety. Suddenly she heard a call. It was Siegfried's. She ran to the edge of the cliff to look below, and almost instantly he appeared, rushing to her through the flames which immediately grew dull. The knight wore the Tarnhelm, but it hid only the half of his face, and his eyes were visible. His form was strange to Brünnhilde because he had changed into the image of Gunther, and when she looked at the unknown figure she shrieked. Then she whispered:

"Who cometh?" At first Siegfried stood motionless, leaning upon his spear. Then he said in a strange voice:

"I am a Gibichung come to wed thee." This made Brünnhilde frantic with terror, and to protect herself she stretched out the hand which wore the ring.

"Go back," she cried, but Siegfried in the guise of Gunther tore the ring from her, and after that she had no more strength to fly from him, so seizing her he carried her away to the hall of the Gibichungs.

ACT II

BACK at the home of the Gibichungs sat Hagen, awaiting the return of Gunther and Siegfried. Altars to Fricka, Donner, and Wotan were raised upon the Rhein, ready for sacrifices to be offered, when Gunther should return with Brünnhilde for his bride.

Toward evening, Hagen sat just inside the entrance hall asleep and leaning upon his spear, his shield beside him. When the bright moon rose above the river, Alberich could be seen crouching at Hagen's knees, whispering evil dreams to him.

"Thou art my son," he said, "and must win back the Rheingold for the Nibelungen"; -386-
and in his dreams, Hagen promised to follow the counsel. Then the moon's light was hidden, and in the darkness Alberich disappeared. When he had gone, the dawn broke. Hagen woke and looked out upon the peacefully flowing Rhein.

Scene II

As the Rhein grew redder and redder in the morning light, Hagen heard Siegfried's call and, all at once, the knight's head rose above the river's bank. He still wore the Tarnhelm upon his head, but appeared in his own shape.

"Waken and greet me, Hagen!" he cried gaily.

"Where are Brünnhilde and Gunther?" Hagen called, going to meet Siegfried.

"They follow, more slowly, in the boat. When I called to thee just now, I was miles away—at Brünnhilde's rock; but with the Tarnhelm upon my head, I arrived before thou couldst answer. Where is the beautiful Gutrune?"

"She will come at once to hear thy tale and to greet thee." Hagen called to her, and she appeared to learn of Brünnhilde's coming with her brother. She looked shyly at Siegfried.

"Let us call all to the wedding and greet Brünnhilde gaily, that she may be glad to dwell with us, and not sigh for her mountain rock," she cried; and Siegfried, taking her hand, went with her to prepare the feast.

Meanwhile, Hagen, watching from a high rock, blew upon his cow-horn as he saw a boat slowly coming up the river bearing Gunther and Brünnhilde. -387-

Scene III

"Ho! Vassals! Come! Hither come ye with your arms!" he shouted, blowing again a sharp blast upon the horn. In response the warriors of Gunther began to pour from the hall, and to run in great excitement to the river-bank.

"What do we gather for? Whom shall we fight? Is our Lord, Gunther, in danger?"

"He comes hither with a Valkyrie maid, and ye are to make sacrifices to the Gods. Kill ye a boar for Froh, a goat for Donner, and for Fricka kill a sheep. After ye have done those things, take the drinking horns and drink yourselves drunk in honour of the Gods."

The vassals went, some of them to the river's bank to receive Gunther and Brünnhilde, some to the hall to await their coming, and to welcome them upon its threshold.

"If any one has done your Lord's bride wrong, see that ye avenge her," Hagen forewarned. He was already beginning to stir up strife for Siegfried in accordance with Alberich's advice.

Scene IV

Clashing their shields and arms together, the vassals formed a line through which Brünnhilde and Gunther should pass, and when the boat reached the landing place all cried "Hail!" But Hagen stood silently watching, planning Siegfried's ruin.

When the pair stepped ashore, Brünnhilde walked with eyes cast down, full of despair and sorrow, while Gunther led her by the hand.

They reached the hall, where Siegfried and Gutrune stood to welcome them, and the men hailed each other as brother. Gunther rejoiced that Siegfried had won Gutrune -388-
for his wife, but Brünnhilde raised her eyes to the knight, and beholding her own husband, the hero knight, she gave a great cry:

"Siegfried here?" She became distracted with horror. But Siegfried did not know her, and all her entreaties were in vain, since he was still enchanted by the potion.

Suddenly the Valkyrie maid saw the Nibelungen ring upon Siegfried's finger, and she pointed to it, trembling. Gunther, astounded by her appearance, touched her.

"Regard thy husband, Brünnhilde," he commanded; but instead of heeding him, she pointed to the knight.

"He is my husband," she cried, and Hagen at once demanded that all should give heed to what she might say. He foresaw the downfall of Siegfried, in her words.

"The one who won me, wore that ring," she said, pointing to it with shaking hand. "He was the image of Gunther, then, and he took the ring from me." Gunther looked at Siegfried and frowned while all stared at the men and at Brünnhilde in amazement.

"It was he who wrenched the ring from me," she declared, pointing to Gunther, "yet it is this knight who wears it." Gunther denied having given or taken from her the ring, and Siegfried declared she did not speak the truth. Gunther feared to have it

known that he had not dared the flame himself, for his bride, and yet he feared Siegfried had betrayed his honour. There was confusion among the spectators who said among themselves:

"Whose wife can Brünnhilde be?" But Siegfried, having quite forgotten the woman he so dearly loved, declared that he had got the ring he wore from no woman, but had taken it from a dragon, whom he attacked in his lair, and killed. This was true, of course, but it was also true that he had given the ring to Brünnhilde and under a wicked enchantment had taken it away. -389-

Hagen spoke next, seeing a chance to gain the ring for the Nibelungs:

"Brünnhilde, thou sayest it was Gunther who wooed thee, and that it was he who took the ring from thee? Since that is true, Siegfried has won the ring by some false deed. It must have been Siegfried who came to thee in the guise of Gunther."

At this all the vassals murmured, and Gunther began to feel resentment, notwithstanding the part he had played in the deception. Brünnhilde wildly accused them both, and everybody cried out against Siegfried, Gutrune, too, accusing him. All the women called upon the knight to defend himself if he could, but he called for the spear's point on which to take an oath. When Hagen presented the spear to him, the knight laid his two fingers upon it and swore that he had been a faithful friend to Gunther, and that Brünnhilde's words were false. Brünnhilde, thus wronged, struck his hand from the spear and placing her own upon it, swore that Siegfried should die by that same spear's point.

By this time the quarrel had waxed so hot that the vassals and women called upon Donner to send his thunder, to silence it.

In the midst of the threats and confusion, Siegfried went close to Gunther and said aside:

"Brother, I am sorrier than thou art for all this, but it must have been the fault of the Tarnhelm which must have hidden only half of me. Thus, Brünnhilde cannot know whose wife she really is. But thou knowest well, that I won her for thee, and have no love for any but Gutrune. Come, let's be gay, and leave this poor girl to rest, so that she may recover herself. Like enough it is the strangeness of this place, after her wild, free life in her mountains, that gives her these uncanny thoughts." -390-

Gunther, convinced by Siegfried's words, joined him in urging all to make gay upon this day of double marriage, and finally they followed Siegfried out into the forest, shouting and laughing, to feast and make sacrifices.

Scene V

Brünnhilde, Gunther, and Hagen remained in the hall after Siegfried had been followed out by the company, and the Valkyrie stood, gloomily bewailing her fate; till Hagen, watching fate work Siegfried's ruin, went at last to the unhappy wife.

"Give me thy trust, Brünnhilde," he said; "I will avenge thy wrongs."

"How wilt thou avenge me? One glance of Siegfried's eye would kill thee, if he so willed it." she answered, looking at Hagen darkly. "No weapon can pierce him in battle: I enchanted him against all danger—except some one thrust at him from behind. In the back I did not guard him. I would not protect him in cowardice, but Siegfried will never turn his back upon the enemy. Thou canst not kill him in battle."

Gunther then began to bemoan his disgrace; but Brünnhilde turned upon him.

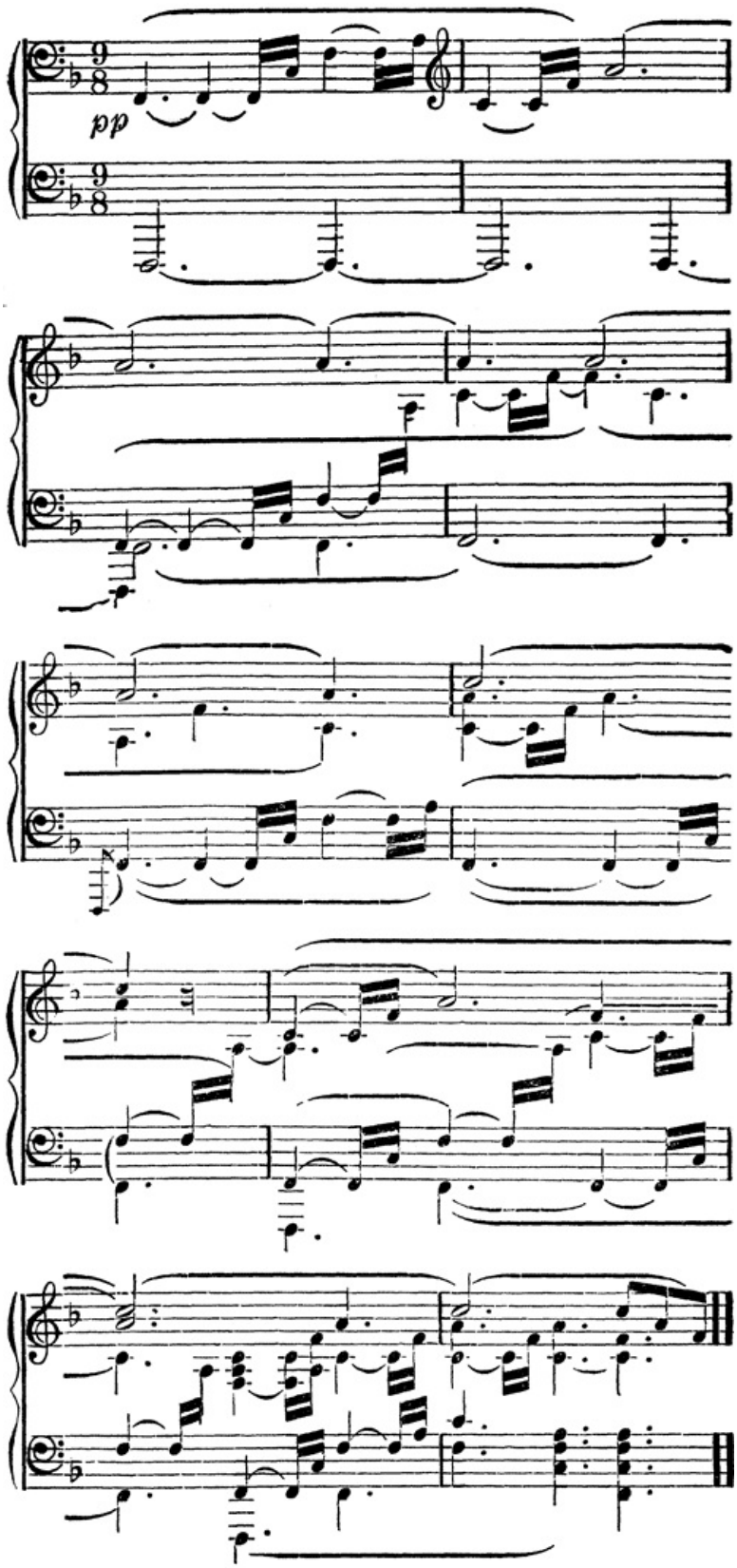
"Oh, thou most cowardly of men—betrayed and betrayer! If I dealt justice, the whole world's destruction could not pay for the wrong done me."

"Naught but Siegfried's death can wipe out the wrong," Hagen cried, watching Brünnhilde as he spoke. "Since he cannot be killed in battle, listen to my plan! To-morrow we hunt in honour of the weddings of Gutrune and the knight, Gunther and thee. While in the chase, and Siegfried all unsuspecting, I shall thrust at him from behind." -391-

"So let it be," Brünnhilde cried, and Gunther, too cowardly to know the right, consented. With the morrow's tragedy arranged Hagen saw the way at last to possess himself of the Nibelungen ring.

As they decided upon the deed, the bridal procession came from the inner hall. All the vassals and women bore spears and flowers. Gutrune and Siegfried were carried aloft, upon shields, and as Brünnhilde and Gunther met them, they too, were hoisted high and the procession moved onward, toward the altars on the river's bank, where they were to offer sacrifices unto the Gods.

ACT III



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[Listen]

THREE days had passed since the Rhein-daughters had lost their golden treasure, and on the fourth they were swimming near the surface of the river, popping their heads up and calling to each other, when they heard the sound of the Gibichung hunters. Fearing to be caught by mortals, they dived to the bottom of the Rhein. No sooner had they disappeared than Siegfried came into the wood, armed for the hunt. He had lost his way, having followed his game, far from the others, and as he began to complain that he had that day got no game, the Rhein-daughters rose again to the surface and mocked him.

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"If we grant thee some game to-day, wilt thou give us that ring upon thy finger?" they called to him.

"What! In return for a paltry bearskin give to you a ring which I gained in battling with the Dragon?" he laughed, "nay."

"Ah, maybe thou hast a scold for a wife, who would make thee feel her blows if thou gavest away the ring." This tormenting reply annoyed Siegfried and finally he took off the ring and held it up to them, offering it if they would cease to deride him. Then they regarded him gravely.

"Keep that ring," they said, "till thou hast tasted the ill-fate that goes with it; after that thou wilt gladly give it to us. Now thou art parting with it, reluctantly." So Siegfried replaced the ring on his finger.

"Tell me the ring's secret, wilt thou?" he asked, and the maidens told him that it was accursed, and that very day, even while he thought himself so safe and fortunate, his death was determined.

Upon hearing this, Siegfried became troubled and told them to hold their peace. So they swam away, while he stood watching them, reflecting gravely, till he heard Hagen's horn sound through the forest.

Scene II

Hearing Hagen's horn, Siegfried wound his own in reply, and soon Hagen, followed by Gunther and his vassals, entered the glade and flung their game in a great heap. -394-

"Ah, this is where thou hast hidden thyself?" Hagen cried, gaily. "Come, let us all rest a while," and he threw himself down upon the ground. "The chase has wearied us, so let us have the wine-skins and drink heartily."

"I shall have to share your booty, if I am to eat," Siegfried laughed, "for I have had no luck to-day. I might have found game, but I followed the water-birds and heard from them a tale of disaster. It seems that I am to meet my death to-day." Hagen and Gunther started and looked meaningly at each other. Siegfried, all unsuspecting, threw himself down between Hagen and Gunther to drink his wine, and presently, seeing Gunther downcast, he sat up and began to while the time by telling tales of his youth—how he had lived with the Mime; how he had forged his good sword Nothung. After he had told about Fafner the Dragon, Hagen interrupted him and bade him drink again. Then he gave Siegfried a horn of wine, into which he had unnoticed poured another potion, which was to disenchant the knight. As in a dream, Siegfried's memory returned. He told of slaying the Dragon, and then of the little bird who directed him to a beautiful maiden who slept upon a rock, surrounded by fire.

"It was Brünnhilde," he cried, joyfully; "I waked her and made her mine." At this saying, all the company roused themselves and regarded each other with troubled looks. Siegfried had confirmed the story that Brünnhilde had told.

At that moment two ravens, which Wotan had sent out from Walhall to learn the time when the doom of the Eternals had come, flew from a thicket near by, and Siegfried raised himself up to watch them. He turned his back to Hagen, and instantly the warrior plunged his sword into the knight's back and Siegfried fell dead. -395-

There was a frightful outcry then from all, and Gunther, remembering the truth, knowing that Siegfried had been betrayed by magic, and had believed himself to be serving Gunther without harm, felt remorse and knelt beside the body. Hagen turned away and went into the hills, while the vassals gathered about, prepared to take the body to the hall of the Gibichungs. As the funeral procession moved off, to the measure of wonderful music, the moon rose, its light flooded all the valley, and touched the corpse.

Back at the hall, Gutrune had risen from sleep, believing she heard some strange, threatening sound. First she went to Brünnhilde's door, but she appeared to be asleep. Next she went to the entrance of the great hall and listened, but she heard nothing; then after a little she saw Hagen, wearing a fearful look, coming from the river's bank. Something in her heart told her that a dreadful thing had happened.

"What misfortune has come to Siegfried?" she cried.

"They come—bearing his body," Hagen answered, looking upon the ground.

Scene III

After Hagen, came the men bearing the body, and when Gutrune saw it, she shrieked and fell upon it.

"Who hath done this wicked thing?" she shrieked, and Hagen looked at Gunther.

"Nay," said Gunther, shaking his head angrily, "do not look at me. It was not I who did this. It was that accursed man," and he pointed to Hagen. Already the fight for the ring, in the hall of the Gibichungs was beginning to divide brothers. "May grief and ill-fate be thine, forever!" -396-

"Well," said Hagen, "I admit the deed, and now I claim my heritage—the ring of the Nibelungen!" He tried to take the ring from the dead man's finger.

"Never shalt thou have it," Gutrune cried, flinging herself upon him.

"Away! What I have won, thou shalt ne'er make thine!" Gunther shouted. "Dost think to grasp Gutrune's dower?" The two men fell a-fighting; and Hagen, piercing Gunther's breast, sprang aside, while Gunther fell dead. Instantly Hagen leaped toward Siegfried's body to snatch the ring; but slowly, slowly the dead hand was raised threateningly, and Gutrune shrieked out.

Brünnhilde, who now appeared, advanced toward the corpse, solemnly.

"Do ye who have betrayed me, now think to make that which is mine your own?" she asked, looking at the company contemptuously, and speaking in a grave voice. "Thou wert no wife of his," she said to Gutrune. "Naught that was his is thine." Gutrune looked steadily at Brünnhilde, and believing that she spoke the truth, she crouched down beside her brother's body, and did not move again. Brünnhilde's appearance was so noble that her word convinced everybody and more than that, Siegfried's story and his last cry had told them the truth.

"Now," said Brünnhilde to the vassals, "bring great logs and heap them high beside the river Rhein. There shalt Siegfried's body find a tomb. Bring, too, his steed, and let it await me, here." While Brünnhilde knelt beside Siegfried's beloved body, the men heaped up the logs and the women strewed the top of the pile with garlands. -397-
The vassals came for Siegfried's body and as they lifted it, Brünnhilde drew the ring from his finger.

"There, ye sorrowing Rhein maidens, I give ye back this accursed ring," she cried. "Give heed, ye wayward sisters; this ring which has brought so much sorrow to Gods and men, shall now become yours. I thus restore the Rheingold to its owners. I place the ring upon my finger, and when I have leaped into the flames beside my Siegfried, the ring shall be purged by fire from all the stains that have come upon it since it was so wrongfully come by. Take the ring from amid the ashes, and return with it to your water-home." She flung a great brand upon the heap of wood where Siegfried's body lay, and immediately two ravens flew from the heap.

"Go thou, ye ravens, to Walhall, and tell Wotan what ye have seen. The end of Godhood is near. Then go to the rock where Loge burneth and tell him to go to Walhall." The ravens flew away, while the flames leaped about Siegfried. Turning to the horse, Grane, and putting her hand lovingly upon him, Brünnhilde took off his bridle. "Now, Siegfried, we join thee," she cried, and giving her great war-cry, Brünnhilde sprang upon the horse, and together they leaped upon the burning bier. Instantly the flames roared and flared high and seemed to seize upon the Hall of the Gibichungs, while all the company fled, crowding close together. When the fire was at its worst, the river Rhein overflowed its banks and rolled upon the land, extinguishing the flames. On the waves, the three Rhein-daughters swam and hovered over the place where the bodies were. Hagen, who saw before him the loss of the ring, became frantic with despair, so he rushed into the flood, to wrench the treasure from the maidens, but Woglinde and Wellgunde threw their arms about him, -398-
dragged him down into the depths, and swam away with him.

Flosshilde, having found the ring, swam before them, holding up the prize triumphantly. A great bank of clouds had piled up beyond the river, and soon this began to glow, as if with fire. The Rhein returned to its natural bed, while the maidens swam once more happily in its waters. The Hall of the Gibichungs had been destroyed, and all the vassals and women had crowded together, watching the scene with horror and wonderment. As the fiery clouds glowed more and more brightly, the Palace of the Gods appeared, and the inner courts of Walhall could be seen, brightly lighted by the fire which was consuming it. Wotan and the Eternals sat within, surrounded by the heroes and the Valkyries. All awaited the flames without resistance, and as the Gibichungs looked, Loge, the spirit of flame, seized upon everything and the Eternals were seen no more.

THE MASTERSINGERS OF NUREMBERG -399-

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Hans Sachs, shoemaker	}
Veit Pogner, goldsmith	}
Kunz Vogelgesang, furrier	}
Konrad Nachtigal, tinsmith	}
Sixtus Beckmesser, town clerk	}

Fritz Kothner, baker	}	Mastersingers.
Balthasar Zorn, pewterer	}	
Ulrich Eisslinger, grocer	}	
Augustin Moser, tailor	}	
Hermann Ortel, soap boiler	}	
Hans Schwarz, stocking weaver	}	
Hans Foltz, coppersmith	}	

Walther von Stolzing, a young knight from Franconia.
David, Sachs's apprentice.
Eva, Pogner's daughter.
Magdalene, Eva's nurse.
Night Watchman.

Burghers, women of all guilds, journeymen, apprentices, girls, and people.

The action takes place in Nuremberg about the middle of the sixteenth century.

Composer: Richard Wagner.

ACT I

FOUR hundred years ago in Nuremberg there was a great rivalry among the townsmen, as to who was the best singer. Indeed, in the history of this great yearly competition, some had become so noted for their excellence, that in a spirit of fairness they had almost ceased to compete. There were twelve Mastersingers, and this number was to be added to by future competitions. Among those who had -400- removed themselves from the contest (because his previous successes made it unfair that he should continue) was Hans Sachs, the cobbler. Hans was beloved by all, and had a spirit as well as a genius above his fellows.

The prize for which the singers contended had hitherto been a sum of money, given by the rich man of the city, one Veit Pogner, a goldsmith, but upon the occasion we are about to describe he had decided to make the prize far more precious. He agreed to give his daughter Eva in marriage to the best singer, provided she could love him; and if she could not love him, she was to live unmarried for the rest of her days.

On the morning of the preliminary trial, when those qualified to enter the real competition were to be chosen, the good folk of Nuremberg were assembled in the church, singing the last hymn. Eva and her nurse, Magdalene, were there and also the knight, Walther von Stolzing, a newcomer in Nuremberg, greatly in love with Eva. She, too, loved him, but it would have displeased her father had she been seen speaking with the handsome stranger.

Upon that day, both the young people lingered after the others had gone, in order to get speech together. All the time the hymn was being sung, the two looked tenderly at each other, and these glances were surprised by the devoted nurse, Magdalene. When the service was over, and Eva was near the door, she pretended to have left her handkerchief in her pew, and she sent Magdalene back to find it.

The lovers had but a minute together before Magdalene returned, so Eva had to think of a new way to be rid of her.

"Where can my buckle be," she cried, looking about her. "I must have left that as -401- well"; and back Magdalene went the second time. She had no sooner returned than Eva found she had forgotten her book, and back the nurse went again, grumbling and declaring that Master Pogner would be in a rage if he knew what was going on.

"Only promise that thou wilt marry me," Walther urged, while the nurse was gone for the last time.

"Now what do you mean by standing there and talking love?" Magdalene cried on her return, angry and half frightened, because she was responsible for her nursling's conduct. "Don't you know, Sir Walther, that Eva is to be given in marriage to the singer who shall this year carry off the prize—otherwise she may not marry at all?"

"The prize? What does she mean?" he questioned, greatly agitated.

"It is for him who shall prove to be the best singer in Nuremberg." The knight looked dejected.

"Can you not sing?" Eva asked anxiously.

"Alas, I do not know. I think not; I have never tried. What must I sing?"

"A song that you have made yourself, Sir Knight; you must make both rhyme and music yourself according to the rules of the Mastersingers."

"I fear I could never do it—unless I should be inspired by my love for you. Alas! I fear we are lost unless your father can be persuaded to change his mind."

"Nay, he cannot." Eva shook her head sadly, "He has given his word and cannot break it. You must try to sing for love of me," she pleaded.

Walther was quite distracted at the prospect. Meantime, after the church had become empty, David, the apprentice of Hans Sachs, came in with a great piece of -402-
chalk stuck in his belt, and carrying a big rule. Magdalene was quite in love with David, so that when Eva appealed to her for help, she had turned her attention to the apprentice.

"David, what are you doing there?" she cried, in order to give the lovers a little more time.

"Doing? Why is it not weighty business to-day? The Mastersingers are to have a trial of voices, to be sure. The pupil, whoever he may be, whose voice is fine and whose composition breaks none of the rules that govern those things is to be made free to enter for the prize; and later, when the great festival of song is on, he may even become a Mastersinger, himself."

"There, Sir Knight, is your opportunity! You must be the pupil. Eva, we must be gone and leave Sir Walther to try for thee."

"Oh, heaven! I am all of a fright. I fear I shall never understand what is expected of me," Walther cried distractedly.

"David here shall tell you, Sir Walther. Here, David, help this brave gentleman all that you can. I wish it." She looked admonishment at him.

"Tell him all the plan of the Mastersingers and how they will expect him to conduct himself in the competition. Come, Eva." But Eva still lingered. In came two other apprentices, bearing benches. Walther watched those formidable preparations with uneasiness, walking up and down the church in dismay.

"Good heaven! I am sure I cannot sing. I have never tried to sing. I shall never be able to sing. Yet I must sing. What in the world can a man do, in such a fix?"

"Well, well, do the best you can. David will instruct you, Sir Knight," said Magdalene, -403-
and she hurried away with Eva, leaving the poor knight alone with the apprentices.

These chaps came in thick and fast, bringing benches for the Mastersingers to sit upon, and arranging everything in the church for the trial of song. David kept watching Walther, who had flung himself into a great ecclesiastical chair, and sat there brooding. After observing him in silence for a time, David shouted:

"Begin," Walther started.

"What for?"

"Begin!"

"What for?"

"What for?—why that is how the Marker calls. You must then at once go and sing. Don't you understand anything about this business?" he asked in amazement.

"Who is the Marker?" Poor Walther asked, more and more bewildered.

"Were you never before at a singing trial?"

"Not where the judges were craftsmen," Walther answered. He was quite certain if he knew anything about music, it could not be the kind that shoe-makers, and boiler makers, and the like were acquainted with.

"Are you a poet?"

"I wish I were," Walther sighed dejectedly.

"Are you then a 'scholar'?"

"Lord, no, I think not—I don't know. What is a 'scholar?"

"Don't know that, and yet expect to become a Mastersinger!" David cried, in amazement. "Well, now, let me tell you, Sir Knight, no one gets to be a Mastersinger in a minute! For a full year, Hans Sachs, our greatest master, has been teaching me -404-
the art, and I am not yet even a 'scholar.'"

Shoemaker's craft and Poet's art,
Daily I learn by the heart.
  First, all the leather smooth I hammer,
  Consonants then, and vowels I stammer.
Next must the thread be stiff with wax,
Then I must learn it rhymes with Sachs.

David continued to tell of the difficulties of learning from a cobbler how to become a

Mastersinger, though the cobbler was one himself. By the time David had finished telling Walther about the process of shoemaking and music making, Walther threw up his hands in despair.

"Defend me from learning—the cobbler's trade," he cried, half humorously, yet troubled.

"You must learn:

The shortened, long, and over-long tones;
The paper mode, the black-ink mode;
The scarlet, blue, and verdant tones;
The hawthorn bloom, strawhalm, fennel mode:
The tender, the dulcet, the rosy tone;
The passing passion, the forgotten tone;
The rosemary, wallflower mode;
The rainbow mode and the nightingale mode
The English tin, the cinnamon mode,
Fresh pomegranates, green linden-bloom mode;
The lonely gormandizer mode,
The skylark, the snail, the barking tone;
And the honey flower, the marjoram mode;
The lion's skin, true pelican mode,
The bright glittering thread mode."

"Dreadful, dreadful," cried poor Walther. "What an endless medley of tones!"

"Oh, those are only the titles; after that comes the singing—and it has to be according to rules, remember." -405-

Walther groaned. David at once outlined some of the rules; they appeared quite hopeless.

"Why no one in the world could meet such demands, it is ridiculous."

"You had better not say so," David answered, significantly. "I want you to know that the great Mastersingers of Nuremberg run this thing; and it doesn't make any difference to anybody but you and Herr Pogner's daughter whether you approve or not." At the mention of Eva, Walther tried to control his feelings; he must try at least, the Lord help him—to come out somewhere in the midst of all that shoemaker's music of "modes" and "thread" and "buttons" and what-not!

By this time the apprentices had erected a small stage with a chair and a desk upon it and a blackboard behind, with a piece of chalk hanging from a long string upon the board, and all about that funny arrangement were black curtains which could be drawn close.

"The Marker will let seven faults slip by," David explained to the knight; but if he finds more than seven it is all over for the candidate.

So God save you from disaster,
May you, to-day, be a master,

he wound up poetically.

Having finished their preparations, the apprentices began to dance about in a ring. In the midst of the jollity in came Pogner from the sacristy; also, Beckmesser, who was the town clerk and a singer who believed in himself.

David took his place at the sacristy door, to let in the other Mastersingers, and the other apprentices stood waiting before the bench at back. Walther, sick to death -406-
through being teased by the apprentices, had sat himself down on the very front seat, and there, before all, was the dreaded Marker's seat. There was the great "singing chair"—where the candidate was to sit while under trial. Pogner stood talking with the town clerk, Beckmesser.

"Herr Pogner," the latter was saying, "I know what this prize is to be, and I love your daughter with all my soul." Beckmesser, who was a rather old and absurd chap, made a sentimental and dramatic gesture. "I want to beg of you if there is any preference shown, that it be shown to me."

"I cannot say there will be any favours shown, Beckmesser, but my plan should serve you well. Eva is to go to the best singer—in case of course that she loves him. She shall not be forced; and who sings so well as you?"

"Yet, in certain respects, I am weak," Beckmesser murmured. "I should like those weak points to be passed over." He was a foxy old fellow, far too old for the lovely Eva, and he was quite willing to take an unfair advantage of his brother singers.

Walther then jumped from his chair and went to Pogner.

"Herr Pogner, may I have speech with you?" he asked.

"What, Sir Walther seeks me in singing school?"

"Yet it is a fitting place, because, to tell the truth, Herr Pogner, I came to Nuremberg town, solely for the love of art," he said promptly, hoping he would be forgiven for the lie. "I failed to mention this yesterday, but to-day it seems fitting to tell you because I wish to enter the competition. In short, I wish to become a Mastersinger." Walther was fairly amazed at his own bravado. At the same moment, Kunz Vogelgesang and Konrad Nachtigal entered. -407-

"Vogelgesang, Nachtigal, listen to this: here is a noble knight, Walther of Stolzing, well known to me, who wishes to join our singing. This is very fine. I am sure we all welcome you to our guild, Sir Walther," he cried heartily. Beckmesser, who had observed the handsome Walther, became uneasy.

"If anything should go wrong with my singing," he thought, "I should stand small chance any other way with this whipper-snapper. I'll go to-night beneath Eva's window and sing a serenade which will surely win her heart. I'll not lose her even if this great knight should prove to be a great singer." Every time he thought of Walther, it was with a sneer. On the whole, Beckmesser was a nasty little man, even though he was quite a singer. He was old and ugly and it was quite ridiculous of him to think of marrying Eva.

Walther, still speaking with Pogner, confessed:

"My strongest reason for entering this competition is love for your dear daughter. I know well that she is to be the prize." Pogner was well pleased, for he liked the knight.

"I am glad to hear you say this, Sir Knight; but the matter has to be settled—after the promise I have given—according to certain regulations set down by the Mastersingers; but I shall try to give you the best of chances." Pogner said this heartily, for he would like to have that fine fellow for a son-in-law. Meanwhile, all the Mastersingers had arrived by way of the sacristy door, and Hans Sachs the very last. Kothner took from his pocket the list of names of those who were to sing, and standing apart, he began to call the roll. Each responded to his name, and then Pogner formally announced what the prize was to be. Each man cried that he would -408-
be the one to win the prize—since it was *such* a prize.

"But remember," Pogner interrupted their enthusiasm, "although I am determined she shall marry none but him who wins the prize, if she should not love that singer, she shall not be forced, but shall remain single all the rest of her life"; and with that they had to be content.

"Let me make still a suggestion, Herr Pogner," Hans Sachs, the shoemaker spoke up. He loved Eva with all his heart, but he was good and true and fair. He knew that he was growing old, and that he sang so finely that it was not fair he should enter into such a competition. If he sang for the prize, the contest would be won before it was begun. "Let me suggest that all the people of Nuremberg shall have a hand in choosing the best singer. To-morrow at the fête, let all the people hear the singers, and let theirs be the choice."

"Ho, ho! Then farewell, art," the Mastersingers cried, indignantly. "That is a fine joke, indeed, Sachs. Pray what do the people know about art? What do they know of the singing master's rules? Bah!"

"Listen!" Sachs said, impressively. "That which the people approve, is good; they know naught of rule, but they know what beauty of song and theme is better that we. Leave it to the people's choice and you shall not rue it. Besides, a maiden's heart is to be disposed of, and those who are judges among us are not without selfish feelings. Let the people decide and leave the maiden free."

"Oh, I suppose you are thinking and speaking for yourself—a widower," Beckmesser cried, trying to belittle the shoemaker.

"So little is that so, my friends, that I shall not sing." Every one loved Hans Sachs and -409-
now recognized his generosity. "I am too old for such as she." Thereupon Beckmesser became furious, because he was older than Hans, yet he considered himself quite young enough to marry her.

"Well, my friends, there is one more piece of business: this young knight," leading forth Walther, "wishes to enter the race, and I present him with right good will." This was almost too much for the beset Beckmesser. He fairly foamed at the mouth.

"Now, I understand this matter," he muttered aside. "Pogner would have it seem that he treated us fairly in this matter, while in reality he had this handsome fellow up his sleeve. A knight at that, and if he can sing it certainly is all up with the rest of us." He loudly declared it was far too late for Walther to be let into the competition; but there were several opinions about that, and a good deal of wrangling. All were

somewhat afraid of Walther, not knowing that he had no confidence in his own singing or making of verses. At last it was decided that he should have a trial that morning.

"But thou must say who has been thy master," they insisted; whereupon Walther named a great master, Sir Walther of the Vogelweid.

"In truth," Hans Sachs said, nodding kindly. "He is a great master." Hans meant to stand by the knight and to serve him if possible, because he seemed the best choice for Eva, whom Sachs loved above everything. Walther added that, for the most part, he had learned his songs from the birds, titmouses, and finches, and the like. He loved the woods and streams, and a joyous heart made him sing in spite of himself, and the song of birds was the one he loved best to imitate. The others were inclined -410- to jeer at these words, but Hans Sachs saw in them a beautiful nature, fine poesy.

"Very well, very well, let him begin," all cried, and so the knight took his place in the singer's chair while Beckmesser, who was appointed Marker, went to his place.

"As Marker, I guess I can settle his affair for him," Beckmesser muttered, in malice. All the while Walther, was in despair, having no confidence in himself.

"It is for thee, beloved," he murmured, trying to gain courage by putting his thoughts upon Eva. Then Beckmesser, hidden behind the curtain, cried:

"Now begin."

Walther hesitated a moment, then began, uncertainly, to sing. It was a beautiful song of the spring. At the end of the first part, Beckmesser scratched horribly upon his slate, and sighed in a most disconcerting manner. Walther listened and his heart nearly failed him, but he began again. This time he sang of winter, and as he went on he became so much inspired that he forgot his tremendous anxiety, rose from his chair, and sang passionately, with *abandon*. When he came to a pause in the theme, Beckmesser burst into the group with his slate. It was all covered with chalk marks.

"Will you never have done," he shouted angrily. "I've no more room in which to set marks against you. If we must go on listening to such singing we must use the side of the church if we would have room to set down your mistakes." Every one but Hans Sachs burst out laughing.

"But I have not finished," Walther pleaded. "Will none of you let me finish my song, good friends? It is not fair."

"That is true, that is true, not too much zeal, Beckmesser," Hans tried to interpose. Everybody was talking at once. -411-

"I could not understand one word of his meaning," one cried.

"There was false time, false everything; it was ridiculous!" another shouted.

"The most absurd thing I ever heard," another called. In short, every one shouted and mocked and offered suggestions, except Hans Sachs who had stood apart, and after the first notes of Walther, had listened with great earnestness. In the midst of the excitement he came forward.

"Master Beckmesser, you have gone too far. We do not all agree with your opinion. The song which you despise, I find both beautiful, new, and free from fault. It is not such as we sing, but it is true and fine. I fear you have forgotten your own rules."

"Never, never!" the Marker shouted.

"Now, friends, hear my final word. This young knight shall be heard to the end." With a decisive gesture he motioned Walther to the chair again. All shouted "No, no!" but Sachs insisted and amidst the riot and hullabaloo Walther again began his song. His clear, beautiful voice was heard above the noise, but every one was engaged in telling what they thought about it. Only Sachs stood determined, trying to quiet the frightful uproar. Beckmesser was making a terrible to-do, and the apprentices were shouting with laughter, following the lead of their masters. After a little, Walther became so confused that at last he could sing no longer.

The apprentices began to dance wildly about their masters, and in the midst of the extraordinary scene, the knight descended from the chair, and turned away with a contemptuous glance. He was about to go, as the Mastersingers were struggling toward the door; but to add to the confusion the apprentices who had torn up the -412- benches began marching about with them. While Walther, the Mastersingers, and the apprentices were struggling out, Sachs stood looking at the singer's chair, where Walther had lately sat, singing so beautifully that none but the splendid Sachs, with his good soul and his poetic nature, had been able to understand how great it was.

ACT II

NIGHT of the same day came on, and David and other apprentices were putting up the

shutters of their masters' houses, before it became too late. Hans Sachs's house—which was also his workshop—stood in a corner made by a little crooked path which crossed a Nuremberg street; while Pogner's house, much finer—altogether quite grand—stood opposite. Beside Hans's house grew an elder tree, and beside Pogner's, a lime. Magdalene, very anxious to know from David what had taken place in the church, had gone from her master's house with a little basket of the good things which David liked. This gave her a good excuse to seek him.

"What happened to the handsome knight?" she inquired, standing on Hans's side of the way, and speaking with David.

"Why what should happen? He was rejected, of course," David answered sulkily, while all the other apprentice boys laughed at him because Magdalene, his sweetheart, was trying to pump him.

"Ho, ho! Then you get nothing out of my basket," she answered, walking off. Again the boys mocked him, and he grew very angry, telling them to be off about their business. The quarrel grew so loud that finally Sachs, coming home unexpectedly, -413-
burst into the midst of them and scattered them.

"What is all this?" he cried.

"The rascals are plaguing me, master," David growled.

"Well, get thee within and light the lamp; lock up and bring the lamp here to me; after that, put the shoes on the lasts and go"; and as David went into the workshop to obey, Sachs followed. At that moment, Eva and her father passed along the path, and seeing the light in Sachs's house, Pogner peeped through the chink of the door.

"If Sachs is there I shall stop in and speak with him," he said to Eva. David just then came from the house with a lamp which he placed upon the work-bench, and seating himself began work upon a pair of shoes.

"To-morrow will be a fine day for the festival," Pogner said to his daughter, as they seated themselves upon a stone bench, on their own side of the path.

"But, father, must I certainly marry the best singer?" Eva asked anxiously.

"Not unless he pleases thee; but in case he does not, Eva, I have decided that thou shalt marry no other." He was interrupted by Magdalene who came to bid them to supper. Eva lingered behind to get a private word with her.

"What about the knight? Did he succeed?" she asked so anxiously that it broke Magdalene's heart to tell her the truth.

"David said not—but he would not tell what had happened."

"Maybe I can learn from Hans Sachs; he loves me very much, and may feel some distress over my trouble. I shall ask him." Just then Sachs came to the door of his house. -414-

"Come, boy," he said to David, "put up thy work for the night, and get thee to bed; to-morrow will be a busy day. Put my stool and table outside the door that I may finish a pair of shoes, and then get thee to bed." David gathered up his tools, and after arranging Sachs's work bade him good night. Sachs sat down, with his hands behind his head, and instead of going at once to work, began to think upon the day's happenings—and other things, maybe. He leaned his arms upon the lower half of the door and sometimes spoke his thoughts aloud:

"Truly the young knight is a poet," he mused. Hans himself was a true poet, tender and loving, and he could think of nothing but Eva's good. Becoming nervous and apprehensive while thinking of her he began to hammer at a shoe, but again he ceased to work and tried to think. "I still hear that strain of the young knight's" and he tried to recall some part of the song. While he mused thus alone, Eva stole shyly over to the shop. It had now become quite dark and the neighbours were going to bed.

"Good evening, Master Sachs! You are still at work?" she asked softly. Hans started.

"Yes, my child, my dear Evchen. I am still at work. Why are you still awake? Ah, I know—it is about your fine new shoes that you have come, those for to-morrow!"

"Nay, they look so rich and fine, I have not even tried them on."

"Yet to-morrow you must wear them as a bride, you know."

"Whose shoes are these that you work upon, Master Sachs," she asked, wishing to change the subject.

"These are the shoes of the great Master Beckmesser," Sachs answered, smiling a -415-
little at the thought of the bumptious old fellow.

"In heaven's name put plenty of pitch in them, that he may stick, and not be able to

come after me," she cried.

"What—you do not favour Beckmesser, then?"

"That silly old man," she said scornfully.

"Well, there is a very scanty batch of bachelors to sue for thee, or sing for thee," Hans answered, looking lovingly at her, with a little smile.

"Well, there are some widowers," Eva said returning his friendly look. Hans laughed outright.

"Ah, dear Evchen, it is not for an old chap like me to snare a young bird like thee. At the trial to-day, things did not go well," he ventured, trying to turn the conversation.

Instantly Eva was all attention, and she got from him the story of Walther's failure and unfair treatment, just as Magdalene called from the house over the way.

"St—st," she whispered. "Thy father has called for thee."

"I'll come presently," Eva answered. Then to Hans: "But tell me, dear Hans, was there not one who was his friend? Is there no hope?"

"No master has hope among other masters," Hans replied, sorrowfully. "I fear there is nothing for him but to give thee up." Hans knew well that Eva loved the knight.

"What man has a friend, whose own greatness makes other men feel small?" he asked still more sadly. "It is the way with men."

"It is shameful," she cried angrily, and hurried across the street. Hans closed the upper half of his door, so that he was almost shut in, and only a little light showed through. -416-

"Eva," Magdalene called at the house door, "that Beckmesser has been here to say he is coming to serenade you, and to win your love. Did ever one hear of such a ridiculous rascal."

"I will not hear him," Eva declared angrily. "I will not. I am going to see Walther to-night, and I will not see Beckmesser. Look out and see if any one is coming." Walther was at that moment coming round the corner of the path, and Eva rushed toward him.

"You have heard—that I may not sing to win thee?" he said under his breath, for fear Pogner should hear him. At that moment the horn of the Night Warder was heard, which assured them that the town was all quiet and people gone to bed.

"It does not matter, I have made up my mind. I will never give the victor's crown to any one but thee, and so we shall flee together—this night, at once, before it is too late." Walther, beside himself with joy, looked after her while she hurried into the house to get ready for flight. The Night Warder came round the house corner.

Hear all folk, the Warder's ditty,
'Tis ten o'clock in our city;
Heed well your fire and eke your light,
That none may be harmed this night!
Praise ye God, the Lord!

He blew a long loud blast upon his trumpet.

Hans Sachs had heard the plan concocted between the lovers, from behind his nearly closed door; so he put out the lamp, that he might not be seen, and opened his door a little way. He could never permit them to elope; it would cause no end of trouble. After a moment Eva and Magdalene came from Pogner's house with a bundle, while -417-
at the same moment Walther came from the shadow of the lime tree to meet them. They were hurrying off together when the clever shoemaker caught up his lamp from its place of concealment and turned it full upon the alley-way, so that it shone directly upon the path of the lovers.

Eva and Walther found themselves standing together in a bright light, when they had thought to escape unseen in the darkness. Again the Warder's horn was heard at a distance.

"Oh, good gracious! We shall be caught," Eva whispered, frightened half to death, as Walther drew her out of the streaming light.

"Which way shall we go?" he whispered, uneasily.

"Alas! look there—at that old rascal, Beckmesser," she returned, distracted with fright and anger, as she saw the old fool come in sight with his lute strung over his shoulder, while he twanged it lightly.

The moment Hans saw Beckmesser he had a new thought. He withdrew the light a little and opened the door. Then in the half light he placed his bench in the doorway

and began to work upon a pair of shoes.

"It is that horrible Marker who counted me out this morning," Walther murmured, looking at Beckmesser as he stole along the pathway. Then almost at once, Beckmesser began to bawl under Eva's window.

He looked up where he supposed her to be, in the most languishing manner, so that Walther and Eva would have laughed outright, if they had not been in such a coil.

He no sooner had struck the first notes, than Hans Sachs gave a bang upon his shoe-last. Thus began an awful scrimmage. Hans Sachs, disliking the absurd old -418-
Beckmesser as much, if not more, than others did, banged away at Beckmesser's shoes, in a most energetic way. He made such a frightful din that Beckmesser could hardly hear himself sing.

The town clerk tried by every device to stop the shoemaker,—to get him to put aside his cobbling for the night, but Hans answered that he had to work lively if he hoped to get the shoes done for the fête. Beckmesser did not dare tell why he was there, singing at that hour. Walther and Eva remained prisoners under the lime tree, wondering what on earth to do. After a while, poor Beckmesser, making the most frantic efforts to hear his own voice, pleaded with Hans to stop.

"I'll tell thee what to do—it will make the time pass pleasantly for me as well, you see," Hans cried. "Do thou go ahead and sing, and I'll be Marker. For every mistake of thine, I'll hammer the shoe. Of course there will be so few mistakes that there will then be but little pounding." Beckmesser caught at that suggestion. Of course it was imprudent, but then Beckmesser was in a bad way, and it was his only chance. So he began his serenade once more. Then Hans began to "mark" him. Before he had sung a line, Hans's hammer was banging away in the most remarkable manner. Even Walther and Eva had to laugh, frightened as they were. Beckmesser became so furious he could hardly speak. Sachs pretended to see nothing, and "marked" away valiantly. Then the Night Watch could be heard coming. Hans banged louder. Beckmesser put his fingers in his ears, that he might drown the sound of Hans and the Warder, and keep on the key. Hans too began to sing as he waxed his threads and banged upon his shoes. Meantime windows were going up, the people who had -419-
gone to bed having wakened.

"Stop your bawling there," one shouted.

"Leave off howling," another screamed.

"What's the matter? Have you gone crazy down there," others yelled, but Beckmesser still shrieked, unable to hear anybody but himself and Hans.

"Listen to that donkey bray," a neighbour called.

"Hear the wild-cat," another bawled; and in the midst of the singing Magdalene stuck her head out of the window. Beckmesser, thinking it was Eva, was encouraged to keep on, but David, who had come out at the rumpus, believed that Beckmesser was serenading Magdalene, and instantly became jealous. So out he rushed with a cudgel. The neighbours then began to come from their houses in their night-gowns and caps; some wearing red flannel about their heads and some in very short gowns, and all looking very funny. Meanwhile, Hans, who had got the row started, withdrew into his house and shut the door. Walther and Eva were still trembling under the lime tree, sure of being discovered, now that all Nuremberg was aroused and on the spot.

Beckmesser was surrounded by the neighbours, the apprentices came from every shop to swell the crowd, also the journeymen, while all the women bawled from the house windows where they were hanging out half way. David and Beckmesser were wrestling all over the place, Beckmesser's lute being smashed and his clothes torn off him. At last the Mastersingers themselves arrived.

Walther, at last deciding that the time had come when he must rescue Eva, drew his sword and rushed forth. Hans, who had been watching behind his door, then ran out, -420-
pushed his way through the mob and caught Walther by the arm. At that moment—Poof! Bist! the women in the windows threw down buckets of water over all the people, and Beckmesser was half drowned in the streams. This added to the confusion, so that Hans grasped Walther, and Pogner his daughter; Sachs and Walther retired into Sachs's house and Eva was dragged within her own. As Sachs disappeared, he gave David a kick which sent him flying, to pay him for his part in the fight.

Beckmesser, battered half to pieces, limped off, while the crowd, dripping wet and with ardour cooled, slunk out. When all was perfectly quiet and safe, and not a sound stirring, on came the Night Warder. It was comical to see the way he looked all about the deserted place, as if he had been taking a little nap, while all Nuremberg had been fighting like wild-cats, and he quavered out in a shaky voice:

Hear, all folks, the Warder's ditty,
Eleven strikes in our city,

Defend yourselves from spectre and sprite,
That no evil imp your soul affright.

He finished with a long-drawn cry:

Praise ye God, the Lord,

and all was still.

ACT III

THE morning of the song festival dawned clear and fine. Early in the morning, Hans Sachs seated himself in his shop, beside his sunny window, his work on the bench before him, but he let it go unheeded as he fell to reading. David found his master -421- thus employed when he stole into the shop, after peeping to make sure that Hans would pay no attention to him. David was not at all sure of the reception his master would give him after the riot in which he had taken a hand the night before. As Hans did not look up, David set the basket he carried upon the table, and began to take out the things in it. First there were flowers and bright-coloured ribbons, and at the very bottom a cake and a sausage. He was just beginning to eat the sausage when Hans Sachs turned a page of his book noisily. David, knowing his guilty part in the fight, looked warily at his master.

"Master, I have taken the shoes to Beckmesser and——" Sachs looked at him abstractedly.

"Do not disturb our guest, Sir Walther," he said, seeming to forget David's misbehaviour. "Eat thy cakes and be happy—only do not wake our guest."

Soon David went out while Sachs still sat thinking of the situation and half decided to take a part in the contest himself—since it were a shame to have Beckmesser win Eva. While he was thus lost in contemplation, Walther woke and came from his room.

"Ah, dear Hans—I have had a glorious dream," he cried. "It is so splendid that I hardly dare think of it."

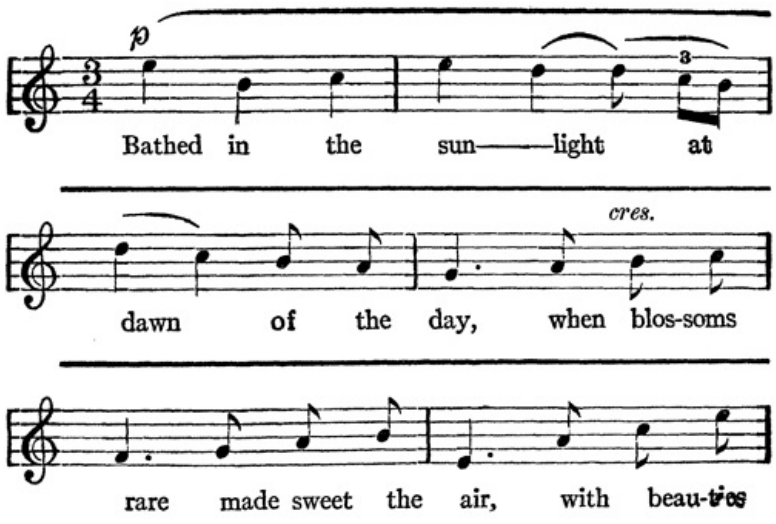
"Can it be thou hast dreamed a song?" Sachs asked breathlessly.

"Even if I had, what help would it bring me, friend Sachs, since the Mastersingers will not treat me fairly?" -422-

"Stay, stay, Walther, not so fast! I want to say of yesterday's experience: the Mastersingers are, after all, men of honour. They were hard on thee yesterday, but thou hast troubled them much. Thy song was as strange, its kind as new to them as it was beautiful, and they have thought of it again and again since then. If they can make themselves familiar with such beauty they will not fail to give thee credit. I own I am much troubled and know not what to do for you."

"I wonder could it be possible that I have had an inspiration in my sleep that might lead me to win my dear Eva?" the knight said, taking heart.

"That we shall soon know. Sir Walther, stand thou there, and sing thy song, and I will sit here and write it down. So it shall not escape thee. Come, begin, Sir Knight," Sachs cried, becoming hopeful for the young man. Trembling with anxiety Walther took his stand and began his song, while Hans placed himself at the table to write it down.



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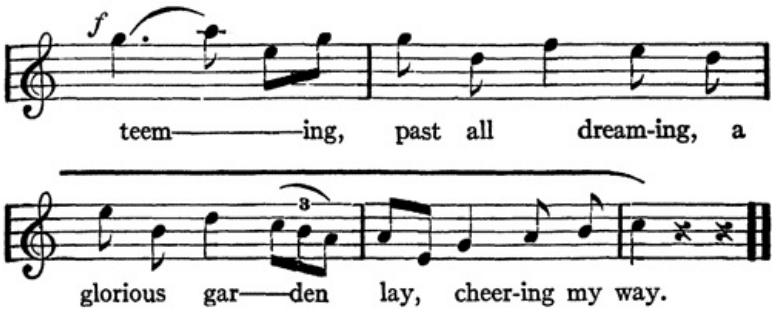


[Listen]

Bathed in the sunlight at dawn of the day,
when blossoms rare
made sweet the air,
with beauties teeming,
past all dreaming,
a glorious garden lay, cheering my way.

As the knight sang he became more and more inspired and when he had finished Hans Sachs was wild with delight.

"It is true!—you have had a wonderful inspiration. Go now to your room, and there you will find clothing gay enough for this great occasion. No matter how it came there!—it is there! I have all along believed in you, and that you would sing, and I have provided for it." The knight went rejoicing to put on his new clothes.

Now Hans, when he went with Walther to his bedroom, had left the manuscript of the great song upon the table, and no sooner had he gone out than Beckmesser, looking through the window and finding the place empty, slipped in. He was limping from the effects of the fight and altogether cut a most ridiculous figure. He was very richly dressed, but that did not conceal his battered appearance. Every step he took he rubbed first his back and then his shins. He should have been in bed and covered with liniments. Suddenly he espied the song upon Hans's table. He believed that after all Hans was going to sing, and if he should, all would be up with himself. Wild with rage, Beckmesser picked up the song and stuffed it into his pocket. No sooner had he done so than the bedroom door opened, and Hans Sachs came out in gala dress, ready for the festival; seeing Beckmesser, he paused in surprise. -424-

"What, you? Sir Marker? Surely those shoes of yours do not give you trouble so soon?"

"Trouble! The devil! Such shoes never were. They are so thin, I can feel the smallest cobblestone through them. No matter about the shoes, however—though I came to complain to you about them—for I have found another and far worse cause of complaint. I thought you were not to sing."

"Neither am I."

"What, you deny it—when I have just found you out!" Beckmesser cried in a foaming rage. Hans looked at the table and saw that the manuscript was gone. He grinned.

"So, you took the song, did you?" he asked.

"The ink was still wet."

"True, I'll be bound!"

"So then I've caught you deceiving!"

"Well, at least you never caught me stealing, and to save you from the charge I'll just give you that song," Hans replied, still smiling. Beckmesser stared at him.

"I'll warrant you have the song by heart," he said, narrowly eyeing the shoemaker.

"No, that I haven't. And further than that, I'll promise you not to lay any claim to it that shall thwart your use of it—if you really want it." Hans spoke carelessly, watching the greedy town clerk from the tail of his eye.

"You mean truly, that I may use that song as I like?"

"Sing it if you like—and know how," Sachs said obligingly. -425-

"A song by Hans Sachs!" he exclaimed, unable to hide his joy—because no one in Nuremberg could possibly write a song like Sachs. "Well, well, this is very decent of you, Sachs! I can understand how anxious you are to make friends with me, after your bad treatment last night." Beckmesser spoke patronizingly, while his heart was fairly bursting with new hope. Any song by Hans Sachs would certainly win him the prize, even if he could but half sing it.

"If I am to oblige you by using this song," he hesitated, "then swear to me you will not undo me by laying claim to it." After all, he was feeling considerable anxiety about it. That he should be saved in this manner was quite miraculous.

"I'll give my oath never to claim it so long as I live," Sachs answered earnestly, thinking all the while what a rascal Beckmesser was. "But, friend Beckmesser, one word; I am no scoffer, but truly, knowing the song as I do, I have my doubts about your being able to learn it in an hour or so. The song is not easy."

"Have no fear, Hans Sachs. As a poet, your place is first, I know; but believe me, friend, when it comes to 'tone' and 'mode,' and the power to sing, I confess I have no fear—nor an equal," the conceited ass declared. "I tell you, confidentially, I have now no fear of that presumptuous fellow, Walther. With this song and my great genius, we shall no longer fear his bobbing upon the scene and doing harm." Assured of success at last, away went Beckmesser, limping and stumbling, to learn his song.

"Well, never did I see so malicious a fellow," Hans declared, as Beckmesser stumbled out of sight. "And there comes Evchen—hello, my Evchen, thou art dressed very fine. -426-
Well, well, it is to be thy wedding day, to be sure."

"Yes—but the shoe pinches," she said putting her little foot upon the bench.

"That will never do. That must be fixed," Hans answered gravely, his eyes twinkling. He fell to examining the shoes. "Why, my child, what is wrong with it? I find it a very fine fit?"

"Nay, it is too broad."

"Tut, tut, that is thy vanity. The shoe fits close, my dear."

"Well, then I think it is the toes that hurt—or maybe the heel, or maybe—" she looked all about, hoping to see Walther. At that moment he entered, and Eva cried out. Then Hans said:

"Ah, ah! Ho, ho! That is where the shoe pinches, eh? Well, be patient, that fault I shall mend very soon," he declared, thinking of the song that Beckmesser had stolen, while he took off the shoe and sat once more at his bench. Then he said slyly:

"Lately I heard a beauteous song. I would I might hear its third verse once more." Immediately, Walther, looking at Eva, began softly to sing the famous song. As it magically swelled, Sachs came to her and again fitted the shoes. When the song was rapturously finished, Eva burst into hysterical sobbing, and threw herself into the shoemaker's arms. But this scene was interrupted by the coming of Lena and David, all dressed for the fête.

"Come, just in time!" Sachs cried. "Now listen to what I have to say, children. In this room, a song has just been made by this knight, who duly sang it before me and before Eva. Now, do not forget this, I charge you; so let us be off to hear him -427-
christened a Mastersinger."

All then went out into the street except David, who lingered a moment to fasten up the house. All the way to the meadow where the fête was to be held were sounding trumpets and horns, glad shouts and laughter. Very soon the little group from Sachs's reached the fête, and there they found a gala sight.

Many guilds had arrived and were constantly arriving. Colours were planted upon the raised benches which each guild occupied by itself. A little stream ran through the meadow, and upon its waters boats were continually being rowed, full of laughing men and women, girls and boys. As each new guild disembarked, it planted its colours. Refreshment stands were all about, and apprentices and journeymen were having great sport.

The apprentices and girls began a fine dance, while the people kept landing at the dock and coming from their boats.

There came the bakers, the tailors, and the smiths; then the informal gaiety came to a sudden pause and the cry went up that the great Mastersingers themselves had arrived. They disembarked and formed a long procession, Kothner going ahead bearing the banner, which had the portrait of King David and his harp upon it.

At sight of the banner all waved their hats, while the Masters proceeded to their platform.

When they had reached their place, Pogner led Eva forward, and at the same moment Hans Sachs arrived and again all waved and cheered loudly. Eva took the place of honour, and behind them all was—Beckmesser, wildly struggling to learn his great song. He kept taking the manuscript from his pocket and putting it back, -428-
sweating and mumbling, standing first on one of his sore feet and then upon the other, a ridiculous figure, indeed.

At length, Sachs stood up and spoke to those who had welcomed him so graciously.

"Friends, since I am beloved of thee, I have one favour to ask. The prize this day is to be a unique one, and I ask that the contest be open. It is no more than fair, since so much is to be won. I ask that no one who shall ask for a chance to sing for this fair prize be denied. Shall this be so?"

While he waited for an answer, every one was in commotion.

"Say, Marker," he asked of Beckmesser, "is this not as it should be?"

That rascal was wiping his face from which the sweat was streaming and trying in despair to conquer the knight's song.

"You know you need not sing that song unless you wish," Hans reminded him, aside.

"My own is abandoned, and now it is too late for me to make another," Beckmesser moaned; "but with you out of the contest—well, I shall surely win with anything. You must not desert me now."

"Well, let it be agreed," Hans cried aloud, "that the contest shall be open to all; so now begin."

"The oldest first," Kothner cried, thus calling attention to the age of Beckmesser. "Begin, Beckmesser," another shouted.

"Oh, the devil," Beckmesser moaned, trying to peep again at the song which he had not been able to learn. He desperately ascended the mound which was reserved for the singers, escorted by an apprentice. He stumbled and nearly fell, so excited was -429- he, and so frightened at his plight, for he did not know the song, and he had none of his own. Altogether he was in a bad way—but he was yet to be in a worse!

"Come and make this mound more firm," he snarled, nearly falling down. At that everybody laughed. Finally he placed himself, and all waited for him to begin. This is how he sang the words of the first stanza:

Bathing in sunlight at dawning of the day,
With bosom bare,
To greet the air;
My beauty steaming,
Faster dreaming,
A garden roundelay wearied my way.

Only compare this with the words of the song as Walther sang them! The music matched the words for absurdity.

"Good gracious! He's lost his senses," one Mastersinger said to another. Beckmesser, realizing that he was not getting the song right, became more and more confused. He felt the amazement of the people, and that made him desperate. At last, half crazed with rage and shame, he pulled the song from his pocket and peeped at it. Then he tried again, but turned giddy, and at last tottered down from the mound, while people began to jeer at him. Hans Sachs might have been sorry for the wretch, had he not known how dishonest he had been, willing to use another's song that he might gain the prize.

Beckmesser rushed furiously toward Sachs and shook his fist at him:

"Oh, ye accursed cobbler! Ye have ruined me," he screamed, and rushing madly away he lost himself in the crowd. In his rage, he had screamed that the song was Sachs's, -430- but nobody would believe him, because, as Beckmesser had sung it, it had sounded so absurd.

Sachs took the manuscript quietly up, after Beckmesser had thrown it down.

"The song is not mine," he declared. "But I vow it is a most lovely song, and that it has been sung wrong. I have been accused of making this, and now I deny it. I beg of the one who wrote it to come forth now and sing it as it should be sung. It is the song of a great master, believe me, friends and Mastersingers. Poet, come forth, I pray you," he called, and then Walther stepped to the mound, modestly. Every one beheld him with pleasure. He was indeed a fine and gallant-looking fellow.

"Now, Masters, hold the song; and since I swear that I did not write it, but know the one who did—let my words be proved. Stand, Sir Knight, and prove my truth." Then Kothner took the manuscript that the Mastersingers might follow the singing and know if the knight was honest; and Walther, standing in the singers' place, began the song a little fearfully.

The Masters following him recognized the truth of all that Hans Sachs had spoken, and presently dropped the paper in amazement. They became lost in listening to the music, which swelled higher and higher, growing more and more beautiful with every measure, till all the people of Nuremberg sat spellbound. At last:

"His prize, his prize!" they shouted; and Pogner came to him weeping with joy.

"It is thy doing," Walther said tremblingly to Hans; and then he was conducted to where Eva awaited him. He stooped and she placed the victor's wreath upon his head. But that was not the end. The Mastersingers turned to Pogner: -431-

"Herr Pogner, it is thy right to crown the knight who has won this prize," and with that Pogner hung a golden chain about Walther's neck, from which was suspended three medals. Walther would have refused it.

"I have a dearer prize than this, my friends," he cried, looking at Eva.

"Nay, take thy chain, too," Sachs urged him, smiling. "That shall be the sign of the Mastersingers' approval." Walther bowed his head and received the chain, while the people stood up and shouted.

Thus in one day, the knight, Walther von Stolzing, became a bridegroom and a Mastersinger.

LOHENGRIN -432-

CHARACTERS OF THE OPERA

Lohengrin, Knight of the Holy Grail.
Henry I, King of Germany.
Frederick of Telramund, a noble of Brabant.
The Royal Herald.
Gottfried, Elsa's brother, and mute.
Four nobles of Brabant.
Elsa von Brabant.
Ortrud, wife of Telramund.
Four pages.

Saxons, nobles of Brabant, ladies, and pages.

The story is laid in Antwerp, during the first half of the tenth century.

First production at Weimar, Germany, August 28, 1850.

Composer: Richard Wagner.

ACT I

On a meadow on the banks on the river Scheldt, King Henry and his Saxon nobles were one day assembled in their hall of justice, which in those times was beneath a broad-spreading oak. From another petty German political division had come Frederick of Telramund, with his wife Ortrud. In turn they were surrounded by their own retainers from their province, but all were assembled at King Henry's call to rally in defence of the Kingdom.

When all were awaiting Henry's will, his Herald stepped forth and blew a blast upon his trumpet. -433-

"Hark! Princes, Nobles, Freemen of Brabant! Our sovereign has called ye all to rally to his defence. May he count upon the loyalty of all?"

At once, the nobles took up the cry, and welcomed their sovereign to the country. Then King Henry thanked them for their good will and made the following announcement:

"Nobles, Freemen, all! I come not only to receive this welcome, but to tell ye that Germany is in danger of invasion from the Hungarian hordes; and that upon our frontiers there are German wives and children praying for our protecting arms. As the nation's guardian it is fitting that I make an end of this misrule which has left us threatened again and again by this lawless people. As ye will recall, I made a nine years' truce with our enemies, when they last tormented us; and now the time is past, they demand a tribute which, for the sake of our people, I have refused them. It is time for us to up and arm against them, and once for all defeat them."

Henry spoke earnestly, with evident devotion to his subjects, and both Saxons and Brabantians responded, but the men of Brabant looked to their immediate Lord, Frederick of Telramund, for assent. He hesitated a moment, and then stepped before the King.

"Great King," he said, "thou art here to judge, to listen to the differences of thy people, to make wrong right, so far as in thee lies, and on my part I will not stoop to falsehood. I have a grievance. Thou knowest when death took away our beloved Duke, his children, Elsa and Gottfried, were left in my charge. I became their guardian. I treasured them and guarded their interests valiantly; but one day, the

two wandered forth into the forest. In time Elsa, the elder, returned, trembling and seemingly full of fear. She was alone, and when questioned about the safety of her young brother could tell us nothing. We sought for him, but never found him. She pretended to be in great distress, but her manner betrayed her guilt; of that I am certain. There were but they two, alone, and yet she could give us no intelligent story of his disappearance. A horror of the young girl fell upon me. I could not bear her in my sight, because I felt she was responsible for her young brother's death. Her hand had been offered me in marriage by her father, but feeling that she was guilty, I gave her up. I could not have married one who, in my mind, was so wicked. Therefore I have chosen another wife, Ortrud of Radbod." As he spoke, he brought his wife before the King and she made an obeisance. -434-

"Now, my sovereign, I here charge the Lady Elsa with the crime, and ask thee to punish her as may be fitting. I also claim that as a fratricide she has forfeited her claim to all her lands; and as her nearest kinsman, I claim them." There ensued a painful silence, because the Lady Elsa of Brabant was a beautiful and gentle creature, and it was difficult for any one to believe such a monstrous story of her. Then arose a great outcry against the statement.

"Telramund, what hast thou said? This is a dreadful accusation."

"A fearful thing, indeed, Frederick," the good King protested.

"But if thou wilt consider, great King, there is cause for my belief. The maid, believing herself sole sovereign of Brabant, now that the boy was dead, became dreamy and strange, thinking upon some other with whom she might wish to share both her fortune and her power. Me she disdained, after her younger brother was gone." -435-

The just King became very thoughtful for a time, then he said sadly:

"Summon the accused maid, and all of ye prepare to utter a just judgment. Heaven help me to judge her rightly!"

The Herald again sounded his trumpet.

"Dost thou determine to hold thy court of judgment here, O King?"

"Aye! I will not rest beneath my shield until the truth is sifted." Then all the Saxon nobles, who had instantly bared their swords, struck them against the earth, but those of Brabant laid theirs flat upon the ground.

Scene II

"Appear, ye royal maid, appear!" the Herald cried, and slowly from behind the crowd of nobles the beautiful Elsa appeared. She left the ladies of her court behind her, and stood forth quite alone.

"Behold!" all cried. "See how her face is clouded with sorrow!" She appeared so beautiful and innocent that no one could believe in her guilt.

The King asked her if she were willing to recognize him as her sovereign and to abide by his judgment, and she bowed her head.

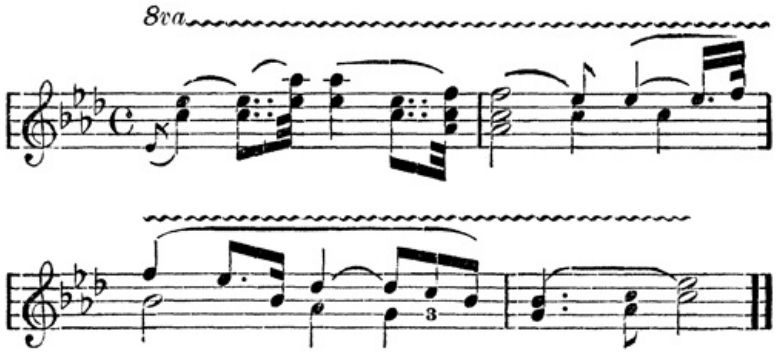
"Dost thou know the crime with which thou art charged?" he asked. Elsa looked toward Ortrud and Telramund, and bowed her head. "Canst thou deny the accusation?" he demanded in a kind voice. She shook her head, sadly, for she was without defence. -436-

"Then dost thou confess thy guilt?" he persisted, but her only answer was:

"Oh, my poor brother!" All those present looked sorrowfully at her. The King was much touched by her hopeless bearing.

"Come, Lady, confide freely in thy sovereign."

Then she stood alone and told what she knew had happened, as if she were speaking in a dream.



[Listen]

Oft when hours were lonely, I unto Heav'n have prayed,
One boon I asked for, only, to send the orphans aid;
I prayed in tears and sorrow, with heavy heart and sore,
Hoping a brighter morrow yet was for us in store.

Afar my words were wafted, I dreamt not help was nigh,
But one on high vouchsafed it, while I in sleep did lie.
I saw in splendour shining, a knight of glorious mien,
On me his eyes inclining with tranquil gaze serene.

A horn of gold beside him, he leant upon his sword,
Thus when I erst espied him 'mid clouds of light he soar'd;
His words so low and tender brought life renewed to me.
My guardian, my defender, thou shalt my champion be!

Thus she sang, while all present looked at her in amazement.

"She dreams!" they cried.

"Frederick of Telramund," the King cried, "it is hard to believe wrong of this maiden. -437-
Think, while yet there is time, of what ye say! Do not let any hate in thy heart make thee wrong a defenceless girl," he cautioned, while all the nobles protested that it seemed impossible she could have done so foul a thing as that of which she was accused.

"Her dreamy mood may deceive thee," Frederick said, "but it has never deceived me. Do ye not hear that she raves about a lover? I declare that I have spoken truly, and who will dare give me the lie?" Whereupon all the nobles of Brabant came forward to uphold their Lord.

"We stand by thee, Frederick of Brabant," they cried.

"I have always known thee to be honourable," the King replied, turning his eyes sadly upon Elsa, who still stood gazing ahead of her, as if half dreaming, or maybe seeing the vision she had described.

"Elsa of Brabant, I have no choice but to let Heaven decide for thee. I have no proof of thy guilt or innocence. This knight Frederick is known to me as an honourable man, and I cannot slight his word, so Heaven alone can help thee." The King drew his sword and struck it against the ground.

"Answer me, Frederick, wilt thou do battle here with whoever may appear to defend this Lady?"

"I will, right valiantly," he answered, his wife urging him on to all that he said.

"And thou, Elsa, wilt thou name thy champion, and leave thy honour in his hands?"

"Aye," she answered, simply.

"Then name the man," the King demanded.

"Now we shall hear the name of her lover," Frederick said hastily. "It will surely be he who was her accomplice." -438-

"To whomsoever will defend me I will give all my lands and love," she answered firmly, waiting for some knight to stand out from the others, and declare for her cause and defence.

Each looked at the other, but no one spoke or moved. Then the King cried:

"Sound the trumpet! Call the warrior knight by thy bugle!" The Herald advanced with four trumpeters, whom he turned toward north, south, east, and west, and had them sound their trumps.

"Who will here do battle for Elsa of Brabant," he shouted. No one answered and the lonely, defenceless Elsa looked about pitifully, in great anxiety.

"Ah, ye see how poor a cause she hath!" Frederick called, pointing to her.

"Dear sovereign, once again I beg the right to call for a defender. My knight dwells afar off, and cannot arrive at once."

"Again sound thy trumpets," the King directed the Herald, and again they called to the four points of the compass. Still all was silent. Then Elsa sank upon her knees, while the ladies of her court came forward to crowd protectingly about her because they loved her very much. She prayed earnestly that some defender might come to her, and so affected were all present, except Frederick and his wife, that all joined in her prayer.

Then a strange thing happened; those standing nearest the water's edge saw a boat coming up the river, drawn by a lovely swan. In the boat stood a handsome knight, so beautiful and kind of face, and so glittering with silver armour, that they fairly held their breath in admiration.

"See!" they cried. "Some one—a marvellous man appears upon the river." All the -439-
others, excepting Elsa, who remained upon her knees, went back to the river's edge to look.

"Oh, he is a brave knight—he stands in the prow—his armour gleams like the sun—a swan draws him. He wears a helmet of light upon his brow. He is nearing the shore! —He has golden reins upon his swan." All but the King, Telramund, Ortrud, and Elsa were crowding about the river's bank, to see the glorious sight.

Frederick and Ortrud were frightened, and cast strange looks of fear at each other; the King rose from his seat to see; but Elsa, overcome with joy, remained where she was, not even looking around.

"It is a miracle wrought among us," the nobles cried, and all the ladies of the court fell upon their knees.

Scene III

The gorgeous knight drew to the shore. He wore his shield upon his back, a little silver horn at his side, and he glittered and gleamed in his beautiful armour in a way almost sufficient to blind one. The people fell back to let him land, and Frederick looked frightened, while the moment Ortrud saw the swan she was for some reason seized with a terrible fright. As everybody bowed their heads, having doffed their helmets, Elsa looked around and gave one great cry of joy at the sight of her champion, who was the knight of her dream.

Lohengrin—for it was he—stepped from his boat, and with one foot upon the shore and one upon his boat gave thanks to his swan for having borne him so swiftly and safely.

"Now, thou trusty swan, return at once to that land whence we came, and rejoice, for -440-
thy task is over." After he had bade it farewell, the stately swan slowly sailed away.

Lohengrin came toward the King and bowed low.

"Hail! gracious sovereign. Thy name shall ever stand proudly in this land. I have come to fight for this dear maid's honour. I ask her, before thee all, if she will entrust to me her fame?" Elsa, so tender and confiding, sank upon her knees before him.

"If thou wilt protect me I am thine forever," she answered.

"I must ask of thee one promise in return, dear maid. It is this: If I win the fight in thy cause, and thou become my bride, never, as thou dost love me, must thou ask whence I came. I must never be asked by thee my name or race. This one promise alone must I crave of thee." He waited hopefully for her answer.

His appearance was so noble that none could doubt him, and she answered instantly:

"There is no doubt of thee in my heart, dear defender. I will never question thee. I will ever cherish thy command." He raised her to her feet, and embraced her.

"I shall guard and love thee always," Lohengrin answered, and led her to the King who gave her into his charge. After that he stepped into the midst of the crowd of nobles.

"I want you all to know that this maid is innocent. The tales of Frederick of Telramund are false, and now I shall prove it by vanquishing him in the fight. Great King, command us to begin." The company drew back to their places, and the King commanded six knights to measure a certain space upon each side, which he declared was a fenced field for the combat. Three Saxon nobles advanced for -441-
Lohengrin and three Brabantians for Frederick. When they had formed a circle, all

stuck their spears into the ground and waited.

The Herald declared that any one who interfered should lose his head. He also declared that neither combatant should use magic arts in fighting. The King stepped into the circle made for the fighters, and prayed to Heaven to let the right conquer; to give the champion of the right a stronger arm and more skill than his enemy.

The six men forming the circle stood beside their spears which were stuck into the ground; the other nobles and freemen formed a larger circle outside the battle ground, while Elsa and her ladies stood in front, beneath the oak tree beside the King, and the fighters prepared to enter the circle. The King struck his sword three times upon his great shield which hung upon the tree, as a signal to begin. At the first stroke the fighters entered the circle; at the second stroke they raised their shields and drew their swords; at the third stroke they began the fight. After a mighty battle, Frederick fell, and Lohengrin placed the point of his sword at his throat.

"I shall spare thee, Frederick of Telramund. Repent in peace," he said, standing aside that Telramund might get up from the ground. The six men drew their spears from the ground, and the others who had taken sides put their swords back into their scabbards, while Elsa rushed into the knight's arms. The King cried to Lohengrin:

"Hail!" As Elsa sank upon the knight's breast, she sang of her love for him and of her faith, and all rejoiced in having her innocence proven, except Ortrud. She, indeed, looked dark and menacing.

"How comes my power to naught?" she questioned of her husband aside, for in -442-
reality she was a wicked enchantress, who had lived in the wood near to Frederick. Her wicked magic had turned him into a bad man, and it was she who had made him accuse Elsa.

But the fear and resentment of those wicked people made little impression upon the crowd of exultant nobles. The King banished Frederick and his wife, ordering them immediately to leave the place, while plans for the wedding of Elsa and Lohengrin were being made. Frederick fell senseless upon the ground, and the youths, spreading their mantles upon the shield of the King, hoisted Elsa upon it, and a rejoicing procession of ladies, knights, and retainers moved away.

ACT II

In the great palace of King Henry I, at Antwerp, there were two parts, called the Palas, and the Kemenate. The former was where the knights lived, and the latter was the home of the ladies of the court. Late on the night of the battle between Frederick and Lohengrin, Frederick and his wife, Ortrud, were sitting without the palace, which was brightly illuminated, thinking of the misfortunes their wickedness had brought upon them. They were dressed in the garments of outcasts, as the King had commanded, and especially was Frederick gazing at the brightly lighted part where the knights were doubtless making merry since the wedding of Lohengrin and Elsa was to be on the morrow. He knew that had he been an honest man, he would have been among them and happy.

Music could be heard floating from the palace windows, and everything spoke of
gaiety and happiness. -443-

"Come, arouse thyself, Ortrud. You have brought this upon us, now rouse thyself, since it is near day, and we must be gone out of the city."

"I cannot flee! Some strange thing holds me here. I shall avenge us, you may be sure before I have gone from this place." She rose from the steps upon which she had been reclining and went toward the palace, looking up at the windows where the women dwelt in the Kemenate.

"I don't know what spell binds me to a woman so wicked as thou art, Ortrud," Frederick exclaimed, watching her moodily. "I should leave thee, and cast thee off. To tell the truth I never believed the crimes with which I charged that maiden."

"Get thyself up," she cried to him, for he had thrown himself upon the ground. "Thou art but a chicken-hearted creature, not fit for an heroic woman like me."

"Thou art a black-hearted woman," he answered, and so they fell to quarrelling vigorously. But at last, each being quite lost to goodness, they felt their only help lay in each other.

"If thou wilt be a decently conducted husband toward me, I tell thee I will use my enchantments to undo that strange knight, and then all will be well with us." The lights in the palace began to go out, one by one. "Now is the hour when the stars reveal their secrets to me, Telramund," she said. "Sit here by me, and I will tell you who that swan was who drew the knight's boat upon the river. It was the brother of Elsa—enchanted,—whom we accused her of destroying. More than that, the knight is

ruined if the secret of his home and his birth is discovered. If Elsa can be made to break her promise, and get him to reveal these things, he will be compelled to leave her and return whence he came. No one but she hath the power to drag the secret -444- from him; but should she do so, it is as I have said: all happiness is over for them."

"But she has promised—she will never ask that fatal question."

"Do thou go forth and say that sorcery hath triumphed over thee, and leave the rest to me. Rouse suspicion about this knight in every breast. He who will not tell of his birth nor land is soon suspected. Say that he won the fight by magic, and I will see that Elsa asks the fatal question."

"She will never do it——"

"Well, suppose she does not; the magic of my father is not forgotten by me. Let me tell you how we may force his ruin, even if we cannot make her break her word. If that knight should lose one drop of blood, he would be lost. All his power would then be gone."

"Oh, if I had but pricked his finger in the fight!"

"He would have been completely in thy power." As she said this, the door of the Kemenate slowly opened, and Elsa came out upon the balcony.

Scene II

Elsa was clothed all in white, and she came out into the night to think alone of her knight, to thank Heaven for her deliverance, and to take new vows of faith and steadfastness to her promise. All the while she stood there, Frederick and Ortrud were watching her from below, where they sat upon the steps.

"Now away!" she whispered to Telramund. "It is for me to be left alone with this affair. I shall speak with her." Telramund, hoping that by fair or foul means his wife -445- would win him back his forfeited knighthood, departed. After a little Ortrud called in a very sweet but sad voice:

"Elsa!" Elsa started and looked over the balcony.

"Ortrud! What art thou doing here? Wert thou not told to go far away from this place, where you tried so hard to wrong me?"

"Alas! Elsa, can you who are so happy, speak harshly to one so forlorn and deserted? Indeed it was not I who harmed thee. Telramund had some strange delusion, and it was he who cast a doubt upon thee. Now his eyes are opened and he is wandering sadly and alone; but I have done thee no harm. It was he who accused thee. I could not stay him. Yet I must suffer for it all, while thou art happy and serene. I am glad of thy happiness, but do not let it make thee unfeeling toward one who is so wretched."

That touched the soft heart of Elsa, and she listened kindly. After a little she spoke words of comfort to Ortrud:

"Hast thou no place to go this night?"

"Nay! We are quite abandoned; but I could rest well enough upon these steps if I did not remember that you had suffered through Telramund." That made Elsa's generous heart trouble her.

"Thou must come in, and stay this night with me," she said. "Wait here and I shall return." She went back into the Kemenate, and the moment she was left alone, Ortrud began rejoicing in the wickedest way, because she had been thus far successful in deceiving Elsa. Elsa returned with two of her maids bearing lights.

"Where art thou, Ortrud?" Elsa called before opening the door below the balcony; and the sorceress threw herself upon her knees and answered sweetly: -446-

"Here, kneeling before thee, generous maiden."

"Thou art worn and unhappy, and to-morrow is my wedding day. I could not be gay and know that thou wert suffering, so come in with me, and sleep beside me, and to-morrow array thyself in fine clothing and be happy with the rest of us." Ortrud pretended great happiness and gratitude upon hearing this.

"Ah! Who would betray so gentle and trusting a maid?" Ortrud sighed. "I pray that the glamour which surrounds thy knight who was brought hither by magic may never depart and leave thee miserable." She sighed again, as if she had some secret fear.

"Oh, I could not doubt him," Elsa cried. But the same moment a little seed of distrust entered her heart. It was true she knew nothing of whence he had come; and moreover was forbidden to ask.

"Nay. Thou must never doubt him," Ortrud said plausibly, "since thy lips are forever sealed and ye can never ask one of those questions which other maidens and wives

may ask their husbands and lovers. It would not do to doubt him. Thou must try to believe he is true and good, as he himself has said."

Elsa looked doubtfully at Ortrud, whose words had made a sad impression upon her, and yet she loved the knight so well she would not own it. But Ortrud guessed perfectly that already she had made Elsa suspicious and unhappy.

Trying to shake off the apprehension that was settling upon her because of the wicked woman's words, Elsa led the way into the palace, and the maids locked the door, and the day almost immediately began to break. Frederick came prowling back, like some bad animal, looking after the two women who had gone within. -447-

"There went a woman of darkness!" he murmured, "but I can trust her magic and her godless spirit to win back my fortunes." While he was thinking upon these things the day dawned and two warders blew a blast from the turret where they walked, which announced the wedding morning of the knight and Elsa. A warder in another turret answered with his trumpet, and soon people began to assemble from all the country round. Frederick looked about for some place to conceal himself from the crowd. Seeing some projecting ornamentation upon the porch of the place where he and Ortrud had sat, he slipped behind and waited.

Scene III

Trumpets began to sound back and forth, from all parts of the vast buildings of the palace. Soon the warders descended from their towers and unlocked the gates of the court. The servants of the castle entered, and went about their duties, some drawing water at the well, some passing on into the palace, where they were employed to wait upon knights and ladies. The four royal trumpeters went to the gates, and sounding their trumps to the four corners of the earth, notified the country round that it was time to assemble at the palace. Nobles and inhabitants of the great castle entered and peasants and knights living without the gates came from the road, till a magnificent host were gathered for the occasion of Elsa's wedding.

When all had assembled, a Herald mounted a high place before the palace.

"Now all listen," he cried. "By order of the King, Frederick of Telramund is laid under a ban, and whoever shall serve him or take pity upon him shall suffer his fate." The -448-
people cried curses upon the false knight. "Furthermore," the Herald cried, "I am to announce that the King has given to the brave knight who defended the honour of the Lady Elsa a sceptre and a crown. The knight does not consent to take the title of Duke, but he is willing to be known as the Guardian of Brabant, and as such he will defend his people." All hailed the knight joyously, and welcomed him as their guardian. "The knight bids me give a message. All of you are to come to the wedding, but as soon as it is over he bids ye take up arms, and to-morrow at dawn, he will go forth with ye to rout the invader who has so long troubled our King." Again all cried, "Hail!" They were delighted with the valour of their new defender.

"We shall follow where he leads!" all cried, and turned to speak enthusiastically with each other and to promise loyalty among themselves.

In the midst of this rejoicing and good will, four nobles of Frederick collected.

"Ye hear, do ye not, that we are banished?" one said; because they, as supporters of Frederick against the Lady Elsa, were under the ban. "What think ye? Are we too to leave home and country and fight a people who ne'er harmed us, because of this new comer?"

"I feel as bitter as ye," another said. "Yet who dares affront the King or resist his will?"

"I," said a cold and bitter voice, and as they turned, they saw Frederick himself, standing by their shoulders.

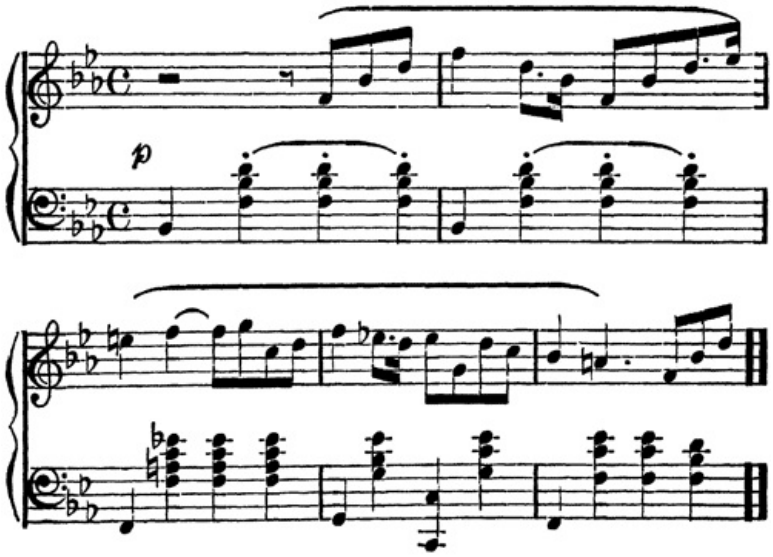
"Great heaven! If thou art seen, thy life will be in danger!" they cried.

"Do not fear. This very day I shall unmask this upstart knight!" He was about to say more, but some pages ran gaily down the palace steps and the Brabantian nobles -449-
pushed Frederick back into his hiding place, in haste. Every one crowded round the pages, who they knew came before Elsa and her ladies.

"Make way there!" the pages cried, forcing a way for the procession. When a wide passage was made, Elsa and all her retinue appeared at the door of the Kemenate.

Scene IV

A magnificent procession of great ladies and nobles, attended by train-bearers and pages, came from the palace and crossed the court to the Minster where Ortrud and Frederick had rested upon the steps the night before and the bridal procession marched to fine music:



[Listen]

While this march was being played, and the procession passing, all the nobles bared their heads. As Elsa was about to pass into the church, everyone cried long life and -450- happiness to her, and the air rang with shouts of rejoicing. But in the very midst of this fine scene, as Elsa stood with her foot upon the church steps, Ortrud rushed forward and confronted her. Her rage and jealousy had got the better of her cunning and judgment.

"Stand back!" she cried. "I will not follow thee like a slave, while thou art thus powerful and happy. I swear that thou shalt humbly bow thy head to me!" Every one stood in amazement and horror, because the sorceress looked very wicked and frightful, almost spitting her anger at the lovely maid.

"How is this, after thy gentleness of last night?" Elsa murmured. "Last night thou wert mild and repentant, why now so bitter?" She looked about her in bewilderment, while the nobles sprang forward and pushed back the raging woman.

All this passed as quick as lightning.

"Ye flout me! Ye who will have for a husband, one whom thou canst not name!" She laughed derisively. That hurt Elsa very much because it was true. Ortrud had remained with her through the night, and had continued to say so many things which had aroused her curiosity and fear, that she was thinking more and more of the fact that she knew nothing whatever of her knight.

"She is a slanderer! Do not heed her!" all cried to Elsa.

"What is his race? Where are his lands? He is an adventurer!" the sorceress continued to shout bitterly, each word sinking deep into Elsa's heart. But she roused herself and suddenly began to cry out against Ortrud, and to say how good and noble the knight was and how tenderly she loved him. -451-

"When he might have killed your husband yet he spared his life; that was a sign of his great nobleness of heart!" she declared, trying to forget Ortrud's words and to convince herself.

When the excitement was at its height and Elsa nearly fainting with fright and grief, and her ladies crowding about her, the palace doors again opened, the trumpeters came out, and began to blow their blasts, while the King, Lohengrin, and the Saxon nobles and counts came in a procession from the Palas as Elsa and her women had come from the Kemenate.

Scene V

All hailed Lohengrin as Guardian of Brabant, and Elsa threw herself passionately into his arms. At once he saw that something had happened.

"What is it?" he asked.

"What is all this strife?" the King demanded, looking about upon the scene. Then Lohengrin saw Ortrud.

"Horror! What is this wicked woman doing here beside thee?"

"Shelter me against her wrath!" Elsa pleaded. "I harboured her last night, because she was weeping outside my door, and now she has tried to drive my happiness from

me." Lohengrin looked fixedly at Ortrud and bade her begone.

"She hath filled thy heart with doubts, dear Elsa," he said, half reproachfully and full of fear, because he saw a change in the maid. She wept, and he drew her into the church, while the King and his train turned toward the church also. Frederick then confronted the King.

"O great King and deluded Princess! Ye have all done me a grievous wrong. I accuse -452-
this stranger of undoing me with magic. I confront him here and demand his name and land! If he has naught to fear or to be ashamed of, let him speak." Everyone was full of hatred for Frederick, but at the same time, the challenge had a kind of justice in it and all were troubled.

"It is not thou who can humble me, base knave," Lohengrin answered, looking contemptuously at Frederick. "It is not the doubts of evil men that can harm me."

"Thou, O King, command him to tell his place and name," Frederick implored.

"Not even the King nor any prince that rules the earth shall question me upon these things," Lohengrin replied proudly, facing them all, as they turned looks of inquiry toward him. "There is but one who may ask—and she has given her word. She will not break it," he declared, looking tenderly at Elsa, who still waited beside him at the entrance to the church.

"His secret is his own," the King declared; "so have done with this shameful scene! And thou, dear knight—no doubts shall disturb thy happiness." All the nobles crowded loyally about him as the King ceased speaking; but while they were taking Lohengrin by the hand, Frederick got close to Elsa, who, he and Ortrud could see, was troubled with womanish doubts.

"Let me tell thee something, Elsa of Brabant! If but one drop of thy knight's blood is shed—a finger scratched—his power and magic are gone. Give me leave to draw one drop of his blood, and all that he now conceals, he will at once reveal to thee."

"Ah, do not tempt me!" she cried, afraid to listen, because she had now become curious to learn Lohengrin's secret. -453-

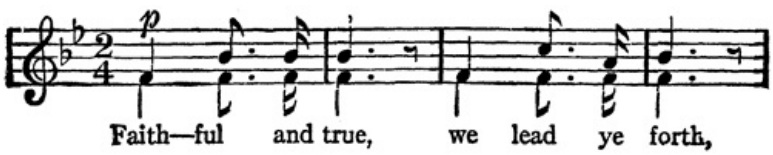
"I will say no more now, but this very night I shall be within call. And if thou dost only speak the word, I'll enter and prick his arm with my sword and instantly he will tell all, and can never more leave thy side." Lohengrin saw Frederick had got the ear of Elsa, and in a terrible voice told him to go, and chided Elsa gently for listening to such a man. As he spoke she sank at his feet, full of self-reproach.

Lohengrin lifted her and embraced her lovingly, while she swore eternal faith in him, and then all turned once more to the church. The King, the nobles, Lohengrin with Elsa—all were passing in at last; when Elsa, looking back just once, saw the arm of Ortrud raised in menace and with an expression of triumph upon her wicked face. Elsa turned terrified once more to Lohengrin, and they passed into the church.

ACT III

AFTER the ceremony and the festivities that had followed the marriage, came the peace and quiet of night. The door of the bridal chamber opened, and pages went in bearing lights, while the ladies of the court followed, leading Elsa, and the King and nobles in turn followed them, leading Lohengrin. It was a most beautiful room, with a great open casement at the right, through which the night-breeze swept.

The nobles and ladies sang in chorus the most beautiful of wedding songs:



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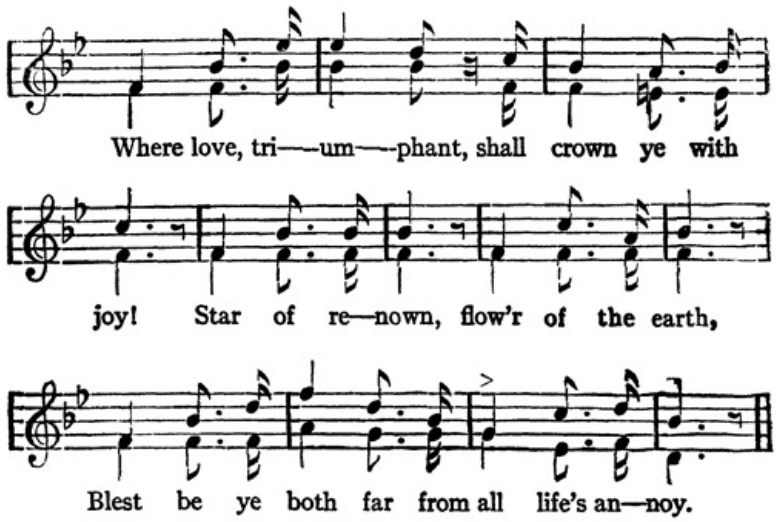

[Listen]

Faithful and true, we lead ye forth,
Where love, triumphant, shall crown ye with joy!
Star of renown, flow'r of the earth,
Blest be ye both far from all life's annoy.

The King embraced Lohengrin; and the ladies, Elsa. Then the pages gave a signal to go, and all passing before the pair went out in the same order as they came in.

Scene II

After all had gone Lohengrin sat upon the couch beneath the open casement and drew Elsa down beside him. He wished above all things to drive from her mind all thoughts of the suspicion which Ortrud had implanted. But even while he spoke most lovingly and reassuringly to her, her thoughts were upon the mystery of his name. When he spoke her own she looked at him reproachfully.

"Ah! my name sounds so beautiful to me from thy lips—if only I might speak thine!" she complained. "If thou wouldst only tell me thy name, it should never pass my lips." Lohengrin was sad upon hearing this. He spoke of other things—of how beautiful the night was, and of how they were to pass a long and happy life together; but still her thoughts, poisoned by Ortrud, returned again and again to the forbidden subject. -455-

"Oh! do not doubt me! Let me share thy secret whatever it may be," she entreated. "I feel that I am not loved by thee, since I am not trusted with thy story—not even with thy name." At last, after begging her to be silent, after reminding her of her promise, after all the persuasions he could think of, he rose and spoke sternly:

"I have given thee the greatest confidence, by believing thee free from every stain. With no proof but thy word, I fought for thy honour. I asked no word to prove thy innocence. In return, I desired only silence from thee about my name and birth and land. It was partly for thy sake that I asked even so much. Now I will tell thee. But—" He hesitated, begging her once more to let them live in happiness, and not to ruin all by her fatal curiosity. At that moment, Frederick and his false nobles broke through the door with drawn swords. They had come to draw his blood and thus to render him quite powerless.

But Elsa, though quite ready to ruin him herself by her curiosity, would not let him be hurt by another. Lohengrin's armour was laid off, but the sword was by the couch. Elsa snatched it, thrust it into his hand and with a single blow he killed Frederick. The nobles fell upon their knees before him, while Elsa fainted. Lohengrin looked upon the scene, feeling nothing but despair. If his blood had not been shed, yet to save his life he had been forced to shed the blood of another, and he had thus been rendered helpless, quite the same. After a moment he rang a bell which summoned Elsa's ladies, and bidding the four nobles rise, he confided Elsa to the care of the women. -456-

"Bear the corpse to the King's judgment hall," he said to the men, who then did as they were bid. "For you," he said to the women, "take your mistress into the presence of the King, and I will answer all that she desires to know. Nothing shall longer be hidden." He went out with his head bent and his thoughts very sad and melancholy. The day began to dawn, and the lights were all put out, and again the trumpets sounded in the courtyard.

Scene III

All repaired again to the river bank, where Lohengrin had first been seen, drawn by his swan. A count first entered, with his train of vassals. He came upon a horse, and was assisted from it by one of his train. Then he took his shield and spear from his pages who bore them, and then set up his banner, after which the vassals grouped themselves about it.

Trumpets were heard on all sides and counts continued to arrive in the same order as the first, all with their vassals, all setting up their spears and their people grouping themselves about them. Finally, the Herald who announced the coming of the King was heard, whereupon all the banners were unfurled and the trumpets of each noble and his people were sounded, and then entered the King and his Saxon men. As the King reached the royal oak, all struck their spears upon their shields, and cried:

"Hail!" The purpose of the gathering was to go forth against the foe that threatened the Germans, the Hungarian hordes. When all were beginning to wonder where the strange and brave knight was who had them summoned for the hour of dawn, and who was expected to lead them to victory, they saw the body of Frederick brought in -457- by the four false Brabantians. All stood aside in horror. They could not think whose corpse it was.

"They who bear it are Telramund's vassals," some cried, and at the same moment Elsa appeared, coming slowly and surrounded by her ladies. The King met her and conducted her to a seat opposite the royal oak.

"Art thou mourning because thou art sorry to lose thy Lord so soon, sweet Lady?" the kind King questioned. She tried to answer him, but her sense of guilt was so great that she could not. The fearful things that were about to happen and that had happened had been caused by her woman's curiosity, and now that it was too late, she was filled with remorse. Some one cried:

"Make way! make way! the Guardian of Brabant is coming." All looked and saw the shining knight, Lohengrin. They hailed him joyfully.

"I come not to lead ye to glory," he answered sadly, and uncovered the corpse of Frederick of Telramund. All shrank back. "Neither shall ye condemn me. I killed him, but he came to seek my life. Your judgment, O King!" he asked of Henry.

The King stretched his hand across the body of Telramund to clasp Lohengrin's.

"The saints would not shield him: he deserved thy thrust," Henry answered.

"Once more!—The Lady Elsa has betrayed her promise. I am undone. Ye all heard her give her word that she would never ask my name nor country; but her impatient heart hath broken that pledge, and her injurious doubts now compel me to tell ye all." Everybody groaned and cried out sorrowfully. They had entire faith in the brave -458- knight, and loved the Lady Elsa. All regretted that her curiosity had ruined a fair future, deprived them of their defender, and made her own life forever miserable.

"Now, mark well what I say," the knight cried, and while he spoke, his face became illuminated with a kind of splendid goodness and faith in his own integrity.

In distant land, by ways remote and hidden,
  There stands a burg that men call Monsalvat;
It holds a shrine to the profane forbidden,
  More precious, there is naught on earth than that.
And throned in light, it holds a cup immortal,
  That whoso sees, from earthly sin is cleansed;
'Twas borne by angels through the heavenly portal,
  Its coming hath a holy reign commenced.

Once every year a dove from heaven descendeth,
  To strengthen it anew for works of grace;
'Tis called the Grail; the power of Heaven attendeth
  The faithful knights who guard that sacred place.
He whom the Grail to be its servant chooses,
  Is armed henceforth with high invincible might;
All evil craft its power before him loses,
  The spirits of darkness, where he dwells, take flight.

Nor will he lose the awful charm it lendeth,
  Although he should be called to distant lands,
When the high cause of virtue he defendeth,
  While he's unknown, its spell he still commands;
By perils dread the holy Grail is girded,
  No eye, rash or profane, its light may see;
Its champion knight from doubtings shall be warded,
  If known to man he must depart and flee.

Now mark! craft or disguise my soul disdaineth,
The Grail sent me to right yon lady's fame;
My father, Percival, gloriously reigneth,
His knight am I, and Lohengrin my name!

When Lohengrin had ceased to speak, having told his story, all that Elsa wished to know, everyone spoke softly. They were enchanted by the knight's purity and goodness, and full of sorrow for the ruin which Elsa had brought about. She herself -459- cried out that all was dark; she could no longer see; she felt that she was dying. As she fell, Lohengrin caught her in his arms.

"Oh, thou wilt not leave me broken-hearted," she said when she could speak.

"Alas! I must go. Thou hast brought this ruin upon thyself," he said tenderly. "I was not free to tell thee, but if thou hadst been silent for a year, according to thy promise, two things would have happened to make thee happy. I would then have been freed from the bond and could have spoken—and thy lost brother would have been restored to thee." Hearing this the grief of all was insupportable. "I must return to guard the Holy Grail," he said sadly. At that moment those nearest the bank cried out that the swan was coming, drawing the boat.

Lohengrin handed his sword and horn and ring to Elsa.

"If thy brother ever returns after I am gone, give him these things in token of me. The horn will bring him help in battle, the sword will conquer every foe, and the ring will remind him of the one who most befriended him and who saved thee from suspicion and dishonour." He kissed her again and again in farewell, while even the nobles wept; but as he was about to enter the boat the wicked Ortrud entered, accused him of falsehood, declared that she had wound the golden band worn by the swan around its neck, and that the swan was the lost brother, enchanted by her. "If thy knight had remained here, his magic spells would have brought thy brother back in his rightful shape, but now he is lost to thee forever. The knight must go, and I will keep the swan under my spell."

Lohengrin, who had stood upon the bank listening to all this sank upon his knees in -460- prayer. All looked toward him, waiting in awe to see what would happen next. The white dove of the Holy Grail flew slowly down and hovered over the boat. When Lohengrin saw it his face shone with joy, he rose and loosened the chain from the swan, which immediately sank out of sight. Then from the river, rose a youth in shining silver garments, while Lohengrin stooped down and placed him upon the bank. It was Gottfried, the brother of Elsa, and the heir of Brabant.

"Behold thy ruler!" Lohengrin cried, affectionately looking at Elsa. At the sight of Gottfried, Ortrud shrieked and fell down in a fit, which might have ended in death. Lohengrin jumped into the boat and the dove seized the chain which had hung loose since the swan had gone, and drew it along. Elsa, roused from her stupor of agony, saw her dear brother, and as he and she rushed into each other's arms, the glorious knight slowly passed from sight, having brought joy to all, even if he had left sadness wrought by a woman's curiosity.

FOOTNOTES

[A] The quotations from "Cavalleria Rusticana" are from the English version by Nathan Haskell Dole, Copyright, 1891, by G. Schirmer.

[B] Her Majesty's Ship.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK OPERAS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW ***

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