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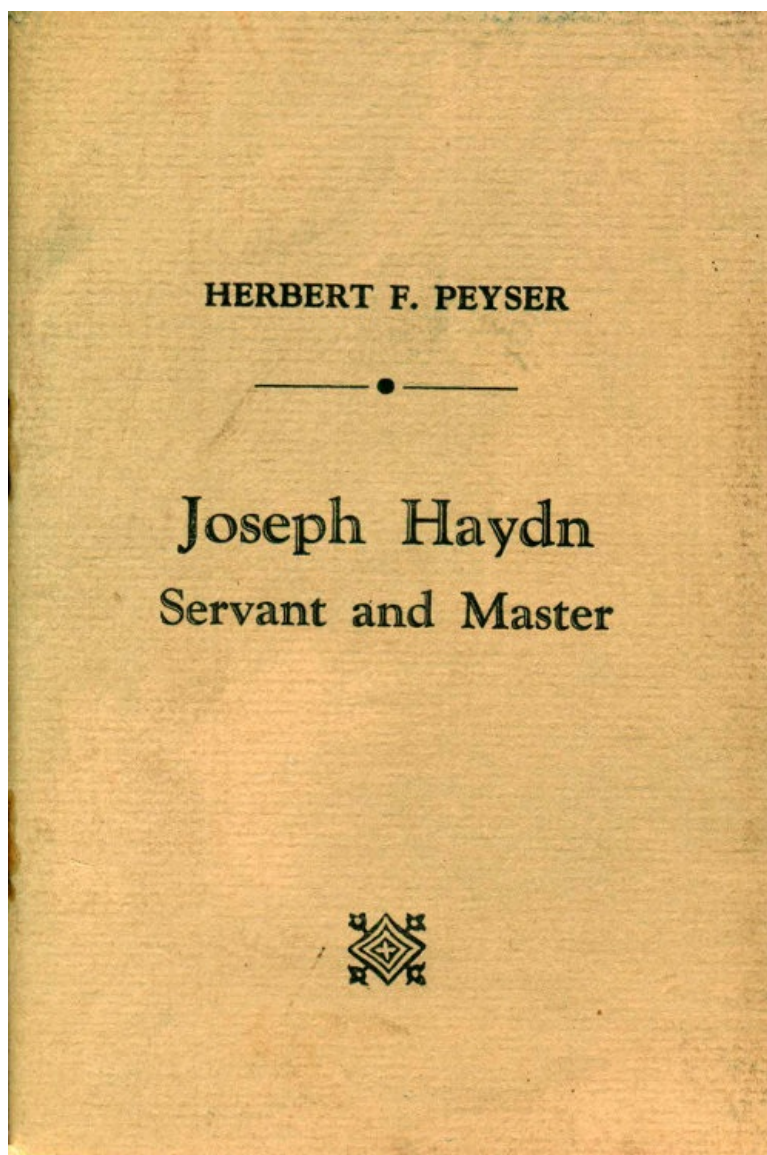
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK JOSEPH HAYDN: SERVANT AND MASTER ***



HERBERT F. PEYSER

Joseph Haydn

Servant and Master



Written for and dedicated to
the
RADIO MEMBERS
of
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of NEW YORK

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Haydn at 33, in the gold embroidered uniform of the Eszterházy.

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FOREWORD

In this sketchy and unpretentious booklet the reader must not expect to find any thoroughgoing or penetrating discussion of Haydn's works or, for that matter, more than a hasty and superficial account of his career. Haydn wrote an appalling quantity of music, some of which has to this day not been finally catalogued. In a pamphlet of

this brief and unoriginal sort the reader will look in vain for anything more than the titles of a handful of compositions. About the vast number of symphonies, the magnificent string quartets, the clavier works, the songs there can here be no question. Nor can one do more than allude to a few of the stage pieces though these operas, composed for the most part for the festivities arranged by the Eszterházy princes, do not pretend to fill a role in the history of the lyric drama comparable to those of Mozart or even to the *intermezzi* and the *buffas* of the 18th Century Italians or the *Singspiele* of men like Dittersdorf and Hiller. Neither is there room to consider the technical advancements achieved by Haydn in the sonata or symphonic form. Yet, even a rapid glance through the following pages will, none the less, make it clear that Haydn, barring a few hardships in his youth, lived an extraordinarily fortunate life and had abundant reason for the optimism which marked every step of his progress. Not even Mendelssohn was so unendingly lucky, whether in his spiritual constitution or in his year by year experiences. That Haydn was a master by the grace of Heaven and a servant only by the artificial conventions of a temporary social order must become clear to anyone who follows his amazing development in the biography of Pohl and Botstiber, or the briefer but no less deeply perceptive accounts of a scholar like Dr. Karl Geiringer, on whose writings and analyses the present little account is chiefly based.

H. F. P.

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JOSEPH HAYDN

Servant and Master

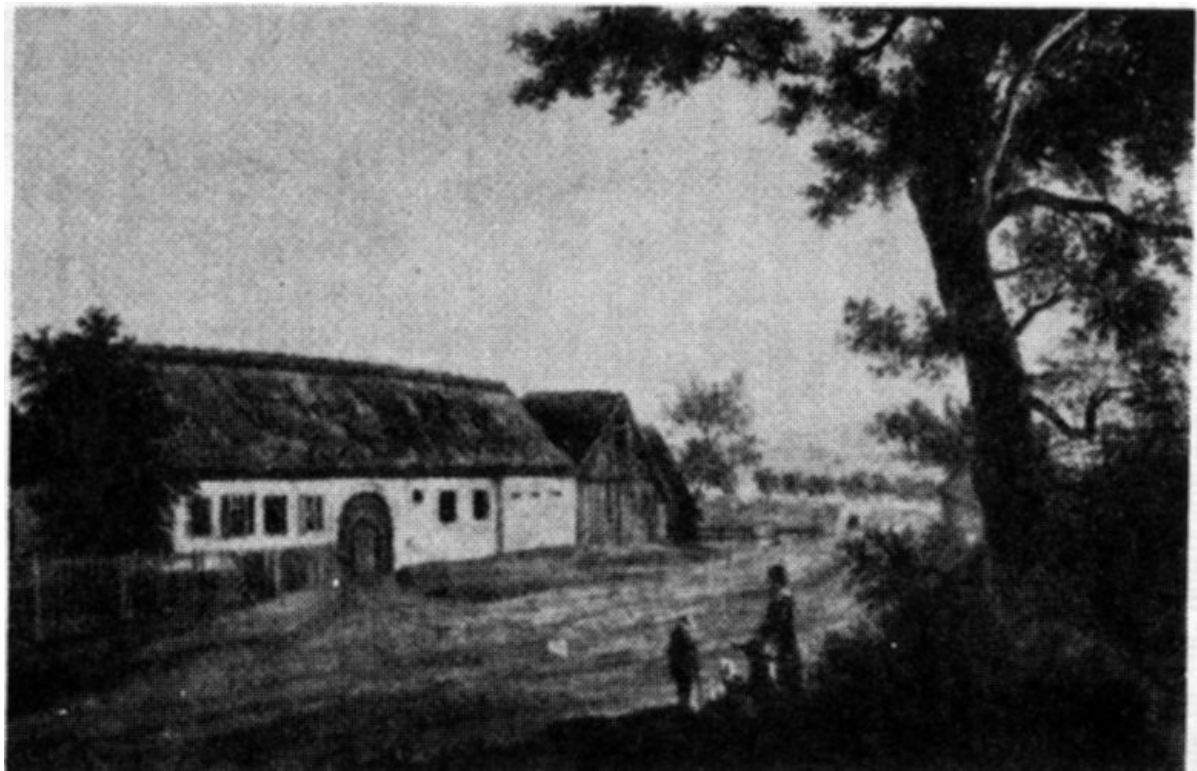
By
HERBERT F. PEYSER

When Mendelssohn first heard Haydn's "Grand Organ Mass" he found it "scandalously merry." Now, this work, composed at Eszterháza in 1766, was by no means a mature effort and it might have been reasonable to ascribe its exuberance to the high spirits of a young man of uncommonly slow artistic development. But the fact is that, virtually to the end of his days, Haydn did not outgrow a joyfulness rooted in an unfaltering optimism of soul. This is not to say that his creative inspiration and originality did not enormously deepen and ramify and, particularly in his later years, foreshadow in startling fashion some of the most influential romantic devices of the nineteenth century. Yet his heart preserved unchanged that serene geniality of his youth. As much as anything else his churchly compositions disclose this trait, and even his later masses are distinguished by a good deal of that "merriment" which shocked Mendelssohn and not a few others.

"I don't know how to do it otherwise," he once told his friend, the poet Carpani, when the question of his treatment of the mass came up. "I have to give what is in me! When I think of God, my heart is so full of joy that the notes fly from me as from a spindle. And as God has given me a joyful heart He will surely pardon me if I serve Him cheerfully!" With these words he set about revising that selfsame "scandalously jolly" Mass of 1766, making it even more "scandalous" by the addition of some cheery wind instrument parts. Having finished a work and signed it, he would almost unfailingly add a pious inscription, such as "Soli Deo Gloria", "Laus Deo" or "In 5 Nomine Domini".

One of the outstanding authorities on Haydn today, Dr. Karl Geiringer, alludes to the "deep religious sense, stubborn tenacity of purpose and a passionate desire to rise in the world" as qualities which could be found in all Haydn's ancestors, "combined with a great pride in good craftsmanship, a warm love of the soil and a healthy streak of sensuality." Certainly, his boyhood was not calculated to make of him an incorrigible optimist had not this quality been bred in his bones. Rohrau, the little town in which he was born, is an unattractive place in a flat and marshy country, where the frequently overflowing Leitha River forms a border between Austria and Hungary. The houses are low, built of clay and roofed with thatch, which often catches fire in the hot, dry summers. Dr. Geiringer tells that Haydn's house was burned in 1813, 1833 and 1899, but always restored so carefully that few but specialists could tell the difference. The place was probably no worse than other neighboring cottages and farms; yet we are told that Beethoven, in his last illness, being shown a picture of it, exclaimed: "To think that such a great man should have been born in so poor a home!" while some years later, Liszt, on catching sight of it, burst into tears.

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Haydn's birthplace at Rohrau-on-the-Leitha, on the Austro-Hungarian border.

Haydn's father, Mathias Haydn, was born in the nearby town of Hainburg; his antecedents were hard-⁷working, honest men, farmers, vinegrowers, millers, wheel-wrights. Of musicians or artists there was not one among them. Mathias was a wheel-wright and wagon-builder, like his forebears. When he finished his apprenticeship he set out on a trip, after the tradition of a journeyman, and went, we are told, as far as Frankfurt-on-the-Main. On his wanderings he bought himself a harp. Someone taught him to play it (he could not read a note of music) sufficiently to accompany himself in his favorite folk-tunes, which he sang "in a pleasant tenor voice". In 1727 he settled in Rohrau, though he remained a member of the Hainburg guild of wheel-wrights. It is possible that he chose the unattractive market town in place of the more imposing and picturesque Hainburg because Maria Koller lived in Rohrau. Maria was a cook in the employ of the Counts of Harrach, the lords of Rohrau. She appears to have been a clever culinary artist (Dr. Geiringer says she "had to handle such delicacies as turtles and crayfish and had an abundance of material at her disposal." We are told for example, that something like 8000 eggs, 200 capons and 300 chickens were delivered annually to the castle by the inhabitants of Rohrau as part of their duties to their patron.) At any rate, in 1728, she married the wagon-maker, Mathias Haydn, and brought her husband a dowry of 120 florins and an "honest outfit." The couple was by no means what could be called "poor" (in spite of Beethoven's pathetic exclamation and Liszt's tears!), but Maria Haydn saw to it that ends met, as they had to, considering there were twelve children (of whom half died in infancy). Moreover she was a model housewife and had inherited a deeply religious strain. It was her fondest wish to see her great son become a Catholic priest rather than prefer "the irresponsible life of a musician." She, alas, did not live to witness his first artistic successes. As for Mathias, who was very adequately paid for doing all sorts of odd jobs for the Counts of Harrach, his wife had the satisfaction of seeing him succeed her father in the judicial office of "Marktrichter." He was "responsible for the good conduct of the population, kept a sharp look-out for adultery and gambling; saw that people went to church and did not break the Sunday rest ... while every Sunday morning at 6 he had to report to the steward of Count Harrach" (Geiringer). He had a wine cellar, farmland and cattle. He and his wife were of Austro-German origin, not Hungarians or Croats.

Franz Joseph Haydn (his family called their children by their second names—hence the famous brother, ⁸Johann Michael, has come down into history as Michael Haydn) was born on March 31, 1732, the second child of the Haydn couple. In only one respect did he show himself different from his paternal and maternal ancestors—at an astonishingly early age "Sepperl" (Austrian diminutive for Joseph) manifested musical talent. This talent took the form of a gift for singing, a lovely voice and an amazingly correct intonation, not to mention a sense of rhythm which disclosed itself in various ways. If he had no skill in playing any kind of instrument (though he greatly wished to imitate his father's performances on the harp) he would find himself a couple of sticks and by means of these try to "play" the violin, as he had seen the Rohrau schoolmaster do. The wonder of the neighbors became aroused, and the more "Sepperl" gave signs of other than simply manual abilities the more ardently his mother prayed that heaven might make him a teacher or, better still, a priest. For the last, the boy actually displayed a predisposition. The child had a streak of piety in him which remained with the man to the end.

* * *

One day a cousin of Mathias, a certain Johann Mathias Franck, came over from Hainburg. Franck seemed a person sent by Providence to further Maria Haydn's wishes. He was a school official, as well as precentor of the Church of St. Philip and St. James. At once he noticed "Sepperl's" musical inclinations and told the parents they would be wise to allow him to take the boy to Hainburg, where he could be more thoroughly schooled than in Rohrau. Naturally, he was ready to supply the youngster's bed and board (for which, he assumed, his cousin Mathias would be willing to pay). The good Maria hesitated. "Sepperl" was not yet six and though he would not be far away she felt uncertain how soon or how often she might see her boy. And what of those holy orders? Franck

brushed the objections aside; the boy should have care and understanding, not to forget an education unobtainable in a village. Moreover, if “Sepperl” were eventually to take holy orders his musical training would be most helpful. 9

The die was cast! The barely six year old lad left his father’s roof, never to return, save for a most brief and infrequent visit. “Sepperl’s” mother was right. To all intents, the boy had left his family forever. Yet throughout his life Haydn harbored the tenderest feelings for his mother and never reproached her for permitting him to leave her. “She had always given the most tender care to his welfare”, he told his intimates when he was an old man. And Karl Geiringer, in his beautiful Haydn biography, recounts how, in 1795, “when the then world-famous composer visited Rohrau to see the monument erected in his honor by Count Harrach, he knelt down and kissed the threshold of the humble cottage he had shared with his parents for less than six years.”

Impressions crowded on “Sepperl” in Hainburg. He had numerous opportunities to assist Franck in his miscellaneous and seemingly unending tasks in the school house, on the organ bench, in conducting the singers and instrumentalists at church services. One of the duties of Franck (and to some extent, no doubt, of the boy Haydn) was to keep the church register, look after the church clock and ring the bells for services “and for special occasions, such as thunderstorms”. In an autobiographical sketch which Haydn wrote in 1778 he said, among other things: “Our Almighty Father had endowed me with so much facility in music that even in my sixth year I stood up like a man and sang Masses in the church choir and I could play a little on the clavier and violin.” And his biographer, Georg August Griesinger, tells that Haydn studied “the kettledrum as well as other instruments.”

“Sepperl” was kept at work without respite, but he apparently threw on all this learning, all this musical practice and all the household chores which Franck’s wife heaped upon him. Juliana Franck was not at all like his mother. If she expected the boy to help in the household she did not worry about his increasing untidiness. “I could not help perceiving”, said Haydn in his old age when he talked of his Hainburg experiences “that I was gradually getting very dirty, and though I thought rather highly of my little person, I was not always able to avoid stains on my clothes—of which I was dreadfully ashamed; in fact I was a regular little ragamuffin!” Like Schubert at the “Konvikt” he was grossly “undernourished”. He wore a wig “for cleanliness’ sake”. Yet his education, both musical and otherwise, was greatly furthered by his sojourn in Hainburg. Even if he was hungry and dirty, nothing embittered him. And in after years he said of Franck: “I shall be grateful to that man as long as I live, for keeping me so hard at work.” And he had a picture of his early master wherever he lived, besides remembering Franck’s daughter in his will. 10

* * *

Now, however, occurred another of those strokes of good fortune which punctuated Haydn’s life from his cradle to his grave. Just as Franck turned up in Rohrau to take him to Hainburg, so now there appeared in Hainburg a young man from Vienna who set “Sepperl’s” feet squarely on his further path. Karl Georg Reutter, composer and choirmaster at St. Stephen’s in the capital, was on a trip looking for good choristers. At Hainburg Reutter stayed at the home of the pastor, Anton Palmb, who immediately called his guest’s attention to a boy from Rohrau who had “a weak but sweet voice.” Haydn’s friend, the Italian Carpani, has left us the story of the meeting in some detail: “Reutter gave him a tune to sing at sight. The precision, the purity of tone, the spirit with which the boy executed it surprised him; but he was especially charmed with the beauty of the young voice. He remarked that the lad did not trill, and smilingly asked him the reason. The boy replied promptly: ‘How can you expect me to trill when my cousin does not know how to himself?’ ‘I will teach you’, said Reutter; ‘mark me, I will trill’; and taking the boy between his knees, he showed him how he should produce the notes in rapid succession, control his breath, and agitate the palate. The boy immediately made a good shake. Reutter, enchanted with the success of his pupil, took a plate of fine cherries and emptied them into the boy’s pocket. His delight may be readily conceived. Haydn often mentioned this anecdote to me and added, laughing, that whenever he happened to trill he still thought he saw those beautiful cherries.” Reutter offered to take “Sepperl” to Vienna to be a choirboy at St. Stephens as well as to give him a much more thorough musical education than he had received so far. The matter having been put up to his father and mother, they agreed instantly and with delight, the more so as Reutter promised “to look after their boy.” It was agreed that the lad should start for Vienna when he was eight. His new master gave him some exercises in scale-singing and sight-reading to work at in the meanwhile and, while waiting for the great day to arrive, the youngster diligently worked by himself to develop his voice. 11

Installed at the Cantor’s house, next to St. Stephen’s, in Vienna, “Sepperl’s” illusions presently suffered a chill. Reutter suddenly turned into a hard taskmaster and an unsympathetic disciplinarian. He was responsible for the education, feeding and clothing of his choirboys, but the meals were wholly insufficient, indeed skimpier than what he had in Hainburg. A. C. Dies writes: “Joseph’s stomach had to get accustomed to continuous fasting. He tried to make up for it with the musical ‘academies’ (concerts given by the choir in the houses of the Viennese nobility), where refreshments were offered to the choristers. As soon as Joseph made this discovery, so important for his stomach, he was seized with an incredible love for ‘academies’. He endeavored to sing as beautifully as possible so as to be known and invited as a skilled performer, and thus find occasions to appease his ravenous hunger.” Moreover Joseph’s musical education was rather one-sided and apart from singing and a little violin and clavier playing Reutter did not bother about his young charge’s training in musical theory. Dr. Geiringer relates that when, on one occasion, Reutter found Joseph working on a twelve-part “Salve Regina” he asked with a sneer: “Oh, you silly child, aren’t two parts enough for you?” But that was about as much as the instruction amounted to. Reutter was actually a composer of no inconsiderable distinction, whose teaching could have been of great help to the aspiring youngster. But in after years Haydn said that he had only two lessons from this master. All the same, he had priceless chances to hear much of the best contemporary sacred music. To Johann Friedrich Rochlitz he once confided: “Proper teachers I have never had. I always started right away with the practical side, first in singing and playing instruments, later in composition. I listened more than I studied but I heard the finest music in all forms that was to be heard in my time, and of this there was much in Vienna. Oh, so much! I listened attentively and tried to turn to good account what most impressed me. Thus little by little my knowledge and my ability were developed.” 12

The boys from St. Stephen's sometimes had a chance to perform at the Empress Maria Theresia's newly built palace of Schönbrunn. When the choir was on one occasion commanded to sing there Joseph, in a burst of boyish exuberance, climbed some scaffolding and appeared suddenly before the Empress's window. Unawed by the imperial threats the boy repeated the exploit a little later until Maria Theresia ordered the choirmaster to give this "fair-haired blockhead" a proper thrashing. However, being extremely musical herself, and a singer of uncommon merits in the bargain, the Empress could appreciate Joseph's execution of various church solos. And he was happier than ever when Michael Haydn joined the St. Stephen's choir and added his exceptionally beautiful soprano voice, of three octaves range, to the ensemble. Joseph was given the duty of instructing his younger brother in a number of matters. Before long Michael's talents were such as to make him outshine Joseph's. The latter does not appear to have openly displayed any feelings of jealousy. Yet it might be inquiring too closely to ask if the older boy was wholly pleased when his solos were taken away from him and given to his brother, whose singing so delighted the Emperor and Empress that they once accorded him a special audience, congratulated him and gave him a substantial money present. The good Michael promptly sent half of the money to his father, who had lately lost a cow, and gave the rest to Reutter to save for him. Reutter took such care of it that poor Michael never saw a penny of it! 13

* * *

Suddenly Joseph's luck seemed to turn against him. His voice cracked. Maria Theresia began to complain, about 1745, that the boy was "crowing like a cock." Joseph was keenly distressed, a fact which was not lost on Reutter. He summoned Joseph and intimated that there was a means of doing something about it. *Castrati* had well-paid positions in the imperial chapel. Joseph seems to have been wise enough to notify his father. Mathias Haydn went post-haste to Vienna and the scheme was dropped. Reutter now waited for his next chance to be rid of a useless chorister. He soon found it, for some imp of mischief provoked Joseph to cut off the pig-tail of another boy. "You will be caned on the hand", shouted Reutter to the seventeen-year-old Joseph; "of course, you will be expelled after you have been caned", he went on. And on a chilly November morning in 1749, Haydn found himself on the street, penniless, with exactly three torn shirts and a threadbare coat! If he still remembered his mother's wish that he should take holy orders he might presently have had a roof over his head. But he had a deep assurance that his destiny lay elsewhere; neither did he appeal to his father for help, because he knew the little household at Rohrau was at the moment passing through a financially difficult time.

As he wandered irresolutely, uncertain where he could spend the night and where his next meal would come from, he met a certain Joseph Michael Spangler, a singer from St. Michael's Church, near the Hofburg. 14 Haydn knew Spangler very slightly but he poured his tale of woe into sympathetic ears. Spangler was himself all but a pauper. He lived in a garret with his wife and a nine-months-old baby. Nevertheless he instantly begged his distressed young friend to follow him home. Joseph might sleep in the garret, which was a trifle better than the cold street. About food Spangler could not guarantee, since he and his little family had themselves barely enough to subsist on.

Little by little Haydn set about making connections. He played the violin at dances, he found a few pupils (at absurdly low rates, it is true), he arranged for sundry instruments some trifling compositions by musically illiterate amateurs; or he participated in street serenades, which were vastly popular in Vienna. Such "Nachtmusiken" were more elaborate affairs than the love songs with guitar accompaniment customary in Italy. Here trios, quartets and even ensembles of wind-instruments performed compositions of some length and diversity. Crowds gathered, windows were filled with listeners and the players earned money and applause. Haydn not only played in these street performances, he wrote pieces for use at them. The folk music of Vienna served him well for this purpose, as did the melodies from those border regions where he was born and which were tinged with foreign strains and even exotic influences. In some incredible way he made enough for several months to keep body and soul together. Then a new problem developed. The Spanglers expected a new baby and now the wretched garret was definitely too small to house Haydn any longer. The young musician got around his difficulties temporarily by joining a party of pilgrims traveling to the wonder-working shrine of the Virgin at Mariazell, in one of the loveliest recesses of the Austrian Alps. His voice having returned to him Haydn made 15 an effort to secure a position in the Mariazell church and appealed to the choirmaster. That worthy was not impressed by the newcomer's appearance and suspected a swindler masquerading as an itinerant musician. Thereupon, the story goes, Haydn resorted to a bold stratagem. He returned to the church, made his way to the choir, suddenly snatched a piece of music from an astonished singer and sang it so beautifully that, as Geiringer relates, "all the choir held their breath to listen". As a result Haydn was invited to stay a week as the choirmaster's guest and actually earned a sum of money from the delighted musicians of Mariazell. And luck, as he found, begets luck. For soon afterwards, a certain Viennese tradesman, Anton Buchholz, resolved to help the young man carry on his studies and loaned him "unconditionally" a sum of money which may well have seemed extraordinary at this stage.

Haydn came back from his pilgrimage to Mariazell rich enough to look for a garret of his own. He found one, partitioned off from a larger room, on the sixth floor of the old Michaelerhaus, adjoining St. Michael's Church, at the south end of the Kohlmarkt. Both house and church are still standing, looking to all intents as they did in 1750. Haydn had plenty of neighbors in his attic. Among them were a cook, a journeyman, a printer, a footman, and a man who tended the fires in the house of some rich man. Haydn had six hard flights to climb, besides which there was no window, no stove, no conveniences of any sort. If he wanted to wash in the morning he had to get water from a nearby spring and by the time he brought it up it had often turned to ice. But he had a slight degree of privacy, enough quiet to study and even to play on a ratty old clavichord which, somehow or other, he had managed to drag upstairs. He got hold of a number of theoretical books—Johann Joseph Fux's "Gradus ad Parnassum," Mattheson's "Vollkommener Capellmeister," Kellner's "Unterricht im Generalbass"—and 16 figuratively devoured them. And on his clavichord he played the first six piano sonatas of Philipp Emanuel Bach. "Innumerable times", he afterwards related, "I played them for my own delight, especially when I felt oppressed and discouraged by worries; and always I left the instrument gay and in high spirits."

At that time, however, he established two important ties. One was the famous harlequin, Kurz-Bernardon, who enjoyed an immense popular vogue by his clever clowning and who managed the Kärntner Theatere. Kurz-Bernardon had an unusually beautiful wife, whose blandishments justified numerous serenades. On one occasion, when Haydn performed in one of these, the comedian, struck by the music he heard, appeared at his door to ask who had composed it. "I did", answered Joseph; whereupon the actor bade him "Come upstairs!" Not only was he rewarded with an introduction to the lady but, according to Carpani, Joseph left with an opera libretto in his pocket and a commission to compose it at once. The opera was called "Der krumme Teufel" ("The Limping Devil"). Haydn wrote the music in a couple of days, but as some nobleman imagined the piece a lampoon on himself, the work was forbidden before it was ever presented. One effect in the score the composer admitted had given him more trouble than "writing a fugue with a double subject." This was a musical description of a storm at sea which the play called for. Now, neither Haydn nor Kurz-Bernardon had ever seen the sea, let alone a storm on it! Carpani's tale is most amusing: "How can a man describe what he knows nothing about? Bernardon, all agitation, paced up and down, while the composer was seated at the harpsichord. 'Imagine', said the actor, 'a mountain rising and then a valley sinking, and then another mountain and another valley....' This fine description was of no avail and in vain did the comedian add thunder and lightning. At last, young Haydn, out of patience, extended his hands to the two ends of the harpsichord and bringing them in a *glissando* rapidly together, he exclaimed: 'The devil take the tempest!' 'That's it, that's it', cried the harlequin, springing upon his neck and almost stifling him." [17]

The second acquaintance proved vastly more influential than Kurz-Bernardon. In the same house—though considerably further downstairs lived the great Pietro Metastasio, author of innumerable opera librettos and poet laureate to the Habsburgs. Metastasio, who may have heard Haydn's improvisings from afar, was apparently struck by them. He was interested in the musical training of a friend and suggested the young pianist up in the garret as a suitable teacher. Haydn was not paid for his teaching in cash, but he enjoyed free board and a cultured atmosphere. He became acquainted with Metastasio, whose courtliness and sensibility could hardly have failed to exercise a most advantageous effect upon a youth so predisposed to benefit by genteel contacts. Moreover, Haydn was equally fortunate in meeting his pupil's singing master, the great voice teacher and famous composer, Niccolò Porpora, who spent some years in Vienna. Haydn acted as accompanist in these lessons and soon begged to be taken into Porpora's employ as pianist and pupil in singing and composition, in exchange offering to do the now old and testy Italian every kind of menial service. Surely it was worth an occasional cuff and kick, he figured, even seasoned with a few "blockheads", if the great Porpora would take the trouble to correct his musical exercises, give him an insight into the deep secrets of singing and show him how best to write for the voice. So he cheerfully brushed the old gentleman's clothes, cleaned his shoes and saw that his wig was on straight. For three months Haydn served his peppery master. And in that time the young man made inestimable progress of all sorts—one of which was to acquire a fluent command of Italian.

* * *

Joseph, for all his ambition and diligence, may yet have tasted a drop of bitterness when he reflected how his brother, Michael, seemed still to outstrip him; and when their mother died in 1754 she must have gone to her grave persuaded that the truer musician of the Haydn family was Michael who, at 17, was writing masses of exceptional quality. Joseph was, indeed, gradually gaining admission into noble circles. The Countess Thun, for one, was so pleased by some of his sonatas that she asked to make his acquaintance. Then, when he confronted her face to face, she decided that this homely and badly-dressed individual, could hardly be anything but an impostor. Little by little the unfavorable impression wore off and in due course the distinguished and extremely musical lady was taking clavier and singing lessons from the man she had mistaken for a hopeless booby. Through her family Haydn met the very musical Karl Joseph von Fürnberg, who had a steward, a pastor and still another friend, all very proficient players. And it was for Fürnberg and his intimates that Haydn wrote his first string quartets. He was as industrious as ever. Carpani said: "At daybreak he took the part of the first violin at the Church of the Fathers of the Order of Mercy; thence he repaired to the chapel of Count Haugwitz, where he played the organ; at a later hour he sang the tenor part at St. Stephen's; and lastly, having been on foot all day, he passed a part of the night at the harpsichord." Then, in 1759, Fürnberg brought him to the attention of the Bohemian Count Ferdinand Maximilian von Morzin, who promptly engaged him as music director and *Kammerkompositor*. Socially, financially and otherwise Haydn had made a great step up the ladder, from which he was destined never again to descend. [18]

One of Haydn's duties at Count Morzin's was to accompany the Countess Morzin when she chose to sing, which was frequently. Once, according to Griesinger, the lady was trying over some songs with Haydn when her scarf became loose, exposing her bosom. Instantly, Haydn stopped playing. The lady, irritated, asked the reason. "But, your Highness, who would not lose his head over this?" he replied. This was only one of the occasions he began to develop an eye for feminine beauty. He was now maturing, physically, and his fortunes were improving. This conjunction of circumstances made him conclude that the time was ripe for him to marry. It turned out to be one of the most unfortunate inspirations of his life. Not that Haydn would have failed to make a good husband, but for the reason that it was his fate to pick the worst possible wife. [19]

He gave lessons to the two daughters of a Viennese hairdresser named Keller. It was not long before the composer fell in love with the younger girl, whose name was Therese. But Therese was afflicted with something of a religious mania and, about 1760, she entered a convent, as Sister Josepha. The hair-dresser, though a religious man, wanted to keep the promising young musician in the family, and before long he prevailed upon him to consider his other daughter. The latter, Maria Anna Aloysia Apollonia, offered the vilest imaginable combination of qualities. She was hopelessly unmusical, poisonously jealous, bigoted, ill-favored, slatternly, a bad housekeeper and, as such women frequently are, outrageously extravagant.

Haydn got nothing he had bargained for—neither affection, home comforts nor children. So little regard did Maria Anna Aloysia have for her husband's musical eminence that she cheerfully used his manuscripts for curl papers or

else to line pie plates and cake pans. Furthermore, said Haydn, "my wife was unable to bear children and for this reason I was less indifferent to the attractions of other women" (Griesinger). Some have claimed that this Xantippe actually loved her husband, on the grounds that she obstinately refused to give up a certain picture of him. Dr. Geiringer says the composer was so little deluded by this seeming show of affection that he insisted his wife prized the portrait so highly only because a lover of hers had painted it.

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Haydn about 1770, composing at his clavier, in the palace at Eszterháza.

At Maria Anna's invitation the house was overrun with numberless priests, who were liberally entertained at the Haydn residence and given orders for innumerable masses, which were straightway charged to the composer's account. She could never forget that her husband had originally preferred her younger sister and she was violently jealous of the attraction he never failed to exercise on fascinating women. In his fluent Italian Haydn once remarked to the French violinist, Baillot, as he pointed out his wife's picture: "E la mia moglie; m'ha ben fatta arrabiare!" ("That is my wife; she has often infuriated me!"). To an Italian singer, who held a firm place in his heart, Haydn spoke many years later of "my wife, that infernal beast", who had plagued him with such malicious letters that he had to threaten he would never return to her. Geiringer believes that Haydn "must have felt a diabolical pleasure when he came across the following Lessing poem for which he composed a canon:

21

*If in the whole wide world
But one mean wife there is,
How sad that each of us
Should think this one is his!"*

Maria Anna Aloysia was further annoyed that her husband should have spent so much on various poor relations; in return, she gave considerable sums to the church. When in 1800 she died while taking a cure at Baden, Haydn seems to have received the news with complete indifference.

* * *

Haydn composed his first symphony for the household orchestra of Count Morzin. As a kind fate would have it one of the guests who listened to the work was Prince Paul Anton Eszterházy, of the powerful and enormously wealthy Hungarian family. He was charmed by the symphony and reflected what a priceless acquisition this young composer would be for his court at Eisenstadt. Here was a man reared in the grand tradition of the Eszterházys, always noted for their encouragement of music and other arts. Prince Paul, a talented composer in his own right, collected numberless pictorial masterworks, kept a small but trained orchestra and for years had employed a now aging conductor, Gregorius Joseph Werner.

22

It was only a short time after Paul Eszterházy had visited the Morzins that the last-named noble found himself in monetary straits. Among the first luxuries sacrificed were the expensive orchestra and its conductor. But instantly

Haydn found a safer haven. Prince Eszterházy, remembering the composer and conductor of the enchanting symphony, acted at the first news of the Morzin debacle to secure him for himself. Haydn, offered the post of assistant conductor, accepted with delight.

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On May 1, 1761, Haydn received a contract, of great length and elaborate detail, which is too extensive to reproduce in all its particulars. Here, however, are a few of its specifications:

“Joseph Heyden shall be considered and treated as a member of the household. Therefore his Serene Highness is graciously pleased to place confidence in his conducting himself as becomes an honorable officer of a princely house. He must be temperate, not showing himself overbearing toward his musicians, but mild and lenient, straightforward and composed. It is especially to be observed that when the orchestra shall be summoned to perform before company, the Vice-Capellmeister and all the musicians shall appear in uniform, and the said Joseph Heyden shall take care that he and all the members of his orchestra follow the instructions given and appear in white stockings, white linen, powdered and with either a queue or a tie-wig....”

“The said Vice-Capellmeister shall be under obligation to compose such music as his Serene Highness may command, and neither to communicate such compositions to any other person, nor to allow them to be copied, but he shall retain them for the absolute use of his Highness, and not compose for any other person without the 23 knowledge and permission of his Highness....”

“The said Joseph Heyden shall appear daily in the antechamber before and after midday, and inquire whether his Highness is pleased to order a performance of the orchestra.... The said Vice-Capellmeister shall take careful charge of all music and musical instruments, and be responsible for any injury that may occur to them from carelessness or neglect.... The said Joseph Heyden shall be obliged to instruct the female vocalists, in order that they may not forget in the country what they have been taught with much trouble and expense in Vienna; and since the Vice-Capellmeister is proficient on various instruments he shall take care himself to practice on all that he is acquainted with.... A yearly salary of 400 florins to be received in quarterly payments is hereby bestowed by his Serene Highness upon the said Vice-Capellmeister. In addition, the said Joseph Heyden shall board at the officers’ table, or receive half a gulden per day in lieu thereof.

“His Serene Highness undertakes to keep Joseph Heyden in his service for at least three years; and should he be satisfied with him, he may look forward to being appointed Capellmeister....”

* * *

Eisenstadt was to be Haydn’s home for the next thirty years, and in the service of the Eszterházys he was to do much—though by no means all—of his greater work. The palace of Eszterháza was a modest place when the composer first joined the Eszterházy staff compared with the gorgeous domain it became not very long afterwards. Haydn was, if you will, a servant. He wrote music to order and went, properly attired, at certain times of day, to receive the prince’s directions. Dr. Geiringer says: “To await the commands of so exalted a personage as Prince Eszterházy ... was not humiliating for a man who had only recently risen from the depths of poverty.” Even the fact of having to wear livery did not irk him. We are told that old Mathias Haydn (who died in 1765) still lived “to experience the joy of seeing his son in the princely blue uniform braided with gold.”

Prince Paul Eszterházy was gathered to his fathers in 1762. Haydn became the servitor of an Eszterházy 24 who artistically was greatly the superior of Paul Anton. This one was Prince Nicholas, surnamed “the Magnificent”, because of his love of splendor and the wealth which enabled him to indulge his most luxurious tastes. He now undertook to erect a palace which rivaled Versailles and which, in fact, was a glorified imitation of the French model. Eszterháza became a vast dream palace compared to the one where Haydn had first assumed his new post. It is impossible to give here even the faintest idea of the splendor and sumptuousness of this “Hungarian Versailles”. An opera house and a theatre for puppet shows formed part of this superlative show-place; and concert rooms suited whatever kind of musical performances might be commanded by the prince. When distinguished guests arrived the brilliancy of the festivities arranged for their enjoyment knew no limits. The Empress Maria Theresa visited the Eszterházy estate in 1773 and a special booklet published in Vienna gives an account of the festivities on that occasion, which reads like something out of the Arabian Nights. One of the musical works performed was Haydn’s little lyric comedy, “L’infedeltà delusa”. The Empress was so delighted that she is said to have remarked: “If I want to enjoy good opera, I go to Eszterháza.” On the same evening there was a superb masked ball, following which, in the Chinese Pavilion, the orchestra, in brilliant uniforms, played a number of pieces under Haydn’s leadership, one of them the conductor’s new “Maria Theresa” Symphony. The ball continued all night, though the Empress—understandably enough—had retired. Next day she heard another Haydn opera (for marionettes), “Philemon and Baucis”, which Maria Theresa enjoyed so much that she had the whole production sent to Vienna for her entertainment. Haydn received the usual snuff-box filled with gold pieces. He, in return, presented the imperial lady with three grouse he had shot down; the Empress “graciously 25 accepted them” and took them home for dinner!

But all this is anticipating. When Haydn settled at Eszterháza he found at his disposal a competent orchestra, but one much smaller and less capable than it soon became. The newcomer, though the aged and desiccated Gregorius Joseph Werner remained nominally chief Capellmeister and railed at Haydn as “a mere fop” and a “scribbler of songs”, lost no time reorganizing his forces, yet very tactfully and without ruffling any feelings. He infused new blood into the personnel, by acquiring a number of young and greatly talented players. One of these was a youthful violinist, Luigi Tomasini, whom Prince Paul Anton had found in Italy and taken to Eszterháza as his valet, and whom Haydn instantly secured for his orchestra and treated as a brother. Still another was a cellist of uncommon gifts, Joseph Weigl. Haydn obtained the musical results he wanted, but always with the discretion of a born diplomat. Never had he to fight his “superiors”, after the manner of such stormy petrels as Bach, Handel,

Beethoven. His musicians (he always referred to them as his “children”) idolized him and, because they respected him, strove to satisfy his demands, which were by no means slight. His duties were staggeringly heavy. Dr. Geiringer recounts that, on one occasion, the exhausted Haydn became so sleepy while writing a horn concerto that he “mixed up the staves for oboe and violin, and noted in the score as an excuse ‘written while asleep.’”

* * *

It was not long before the musicians fell into the habit of calling their conductor “Papa Haydn”, on account of his solicitude for their well-being and his musical knowledge which they recognized as remarkable. But nothing could be more misleading than the age-old convention of using “Papa Haydn” as a nickname for this master as if to imply that he was an artist of outworn, discredited sympathies and of unprogressive attitude. The antique “Papa Haydn” idea was neatly scuttled on one occasion by Anton Rubinstein—of all people! When someone of his acquaintance alluded contemptuously to “Papa Haydn” the great pianist retorted: “Let me assure you that long after I have become ‘great-grandfather Rubinstein’ he will still continue to be ‘Papa Haydn’.” Yet Haydn at the time of which we speak was still some distance from the master who created the greater symphonies and chamber music, the finest clavier sonatas and certain other memorable keyboard works, let alone the six most inspired masses and the two oratorios (“The Creation” and “The Seasons”), the ripest fruits of his old age. If physically Haydn developed late, the same is true of his creative genius. Musically and otherwise it appeared for some time as if his brother, Michael, would surpass him; and if Joseph had died soon after entering the Eszterházy service it may be seriously questioned if the world would have felt it had been deprived of an irreplaceable master.

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In more ways than one the sumptuous palace of Eszterháza was the best possible home for Haydn’s art. Prince Eszterházy, great as were his demands on Haydn, did his art a service by allowing him to experiment and thus “forcing him to become original”. He would hardly have become “original” in the way he did had he been obliged to earn his bread wandering about Vienna, for he was differently constituted than, let us say, such an unmistakably Viennese soul as Schubert. Haydn’s early masters (let us rather say “models”) were not men of imposing creative dimension. Johann Sebastian Bach died while Haydn was still a youth, his work had gone out of fashion and was unobtainable in Vienna for years to come. But the influence of Philipp Emanuel Bach was vastly stronger at the time than that of his father and Haydn, as we have seen, felt its impact. Guido Adler, for one, names as Haydn’s early masters minor composers like Georg Reutter, Georg Christoph Wagenseil and Georg Matthias Monn. There is evidence that he knew the music of Ignaz Holzbauer, Johann Stamitz and the Sammartini brothers. Basically more important for Haydn’s early style was the changed taste which pervaded the musical world, supplanting the intricate polyphonic style by homophony and the decorative pleasings of the so-called *style galant*.

It was some time before he can be said to have earned the title of “father of the symphony” (or, in the deepest sense, of the sonata or the string quartet). The early symphonies of Haydn seem much closer to the concerto grosso of the Baroque period than to the later “Paris” and “London” symphonies. The musical form which occupied Haydn perhaps most of all was the string quartet, of which as many as 83 were enumerated in a catalogue of his works Haydn prepared in 1805. “We do not know the exact number of Haydn’s string quartets,” declares Karl Geiringer, who also adds “the composer was in his early twenties when he wrote his first quartet and he had passed his 70th birthday before he began to work on his last.”

* * *

In 1766 Gregorius Werner died and Haydn was officially appointed Capellmeister of the Eszterházy orchestra. He had by now brought the ensemble to a high state of perfection. Besides the cellist Weigl (who later joined the Vienna court orchestra) Haydn could boast, in addition to “brother Luigi” Tomasini, as concertmaster, the fine cellists, Franz Xaver Marteau and Anton Kraft. Prince Eszterházy, who paid even higher salaries than the imperial court at Vienna, could have his pick and choice of any artist he wanted. The schedule at Eszterháza called for two opera performances a week, two weekly concerts and, in Prince Nicholas’ private salon, plenty of chamber music. The prince greatly enjoyed playing the baryton, a now obsolete form of viola da gamba. It was uncommonly difficult and the Prince enjoyed it all the more for that reason. Haydn had his work cut out for him supplying his employer with new music for the instrument. Once he thought he would give Prince Nicholas pleasure by learning to play the baryton himself and declared he was ready to play it for his Serene Highness. This time he had miscalculated—his Highness returned no more than a glacial stare! Nicholas, moreover, insisted he must have *all* the most difficult passages in anything Haydn might write for him. The cellist, Kraft, was once given a particularly easy part in a baryton duet to perform with the prince, who cut short any possible argument with the words: “It is no credit to you to play better than I do; it is your duty.”

The normal schedule of the artists was, of course, far heavier and more complicated, when distinguished visitors arrived for longer or shorter sojourns. Under the circumstances, neither Haydn nor anyone else, had a chance to be bored at Eszterháza. Now and then, however, these birds in a golden cage longed for a little freedom. Haydn himself once wrote in a letter: “I never can obtain leave, even to go to Vienna for twenty-four hours. It is scarcely credible, and yet the refusal is always couched in such polite terms as to render it utterly impossible for me to urge my request.” This is the place to speak of the so-called “Farewell Symphony”, a piece of music with a definite purpose (if not exclusively an artistic one) in which Haydn got the better of his prince. In 1772 Nicholas ruled that none of the musicians might bring his wife or children to Eszterháza. In only three cases was an exception made. Prince Nicholas, having paid his musicians an extra fifty florins to provide for the families they were not permitted to visit, considered that he had no further obligations. Finally, the players who had to pass the greater part of the year without seeing their wives, rebelled. In Griesinger’s words: “The affectionate husbands appealed to Haydn to help them. Haydn decided to write a symphony in which one instrument after the other ceases to play. The work was executed as soon as an occasion presented itself, and each player was instructed to put out his candle when

his part was ended, seize his music and leave with his instrument tucked under his arm. The prince instantly understood the meaning of pantomime and the next day he gave the order to leave Eszterháza." 29

All the same, the advantages of Haydn's life at Eszterháza, even when it threatened to grow dull, were inestimable. He once told Griesinger: "My prince was always satisfied with my works. Not only did I have the encouragement of constant approval, but as conductor of an orchestra I could make experiments, observe what produced an effect and what weakened it, and was thus in a position to improve, to alter, make additions or omissions, and be as bold as I pleased. I was cut off from the world; there was no one to confuse or torment me...."

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Prince Eszterházy, in 1779, engaged an Italian violinist, Antonio Polzelli, and his wife, Luigia, a mezzo-soprano. Polzelli was a sickly man and not particularly competent. Still less was Luigia, who needed much help from Haydn to fit her for minor musical duties. What moved the Prince to pick this misfit pair for his establishment is a problem. They were not a happy couple, scarcely more than were Haydn and his "Infernal Beast"! Luigia was nineteen, lively, graceful—an adorable type of Italian beauty. The Prince soon decided that the imported couple represented a needless expense, though the two were pathetically underpaid. But this time Haydn was resolute. The Polzellis must stay in Eszterháza under *any* conditions! Eszterházy, being a man of the world, realized that in certain things an irreplaceable orchestral conductor must be allowed his way, whatever the conventions.

Luigia was attracted to Haydn as were numerous other women whose path he crossed. He himself often admitted it could not have been for his beauty. Dr. Geiringer says that we know "practically nothing about Luigia." At any rate Haydn never made any secret of his love for her or she for him—not, at any rate, till much later, when new interests entered his life. At Eszterháza the affair was an open secret. Doubtless they would have married. But the invalid Antonio and the venomous Maria Anna Aloysia settled that. There are no letters extant dealing with those first years of their love. But in 1791 he wrote Luigia: "I love you as on the first day, and I am always sad when I cannot do more for you. But be patient, perhaps the day will arrive when I can show you how much I love you." When Antonio Polzelli died, not very long afterwards, Haydn wrote Luigia: "Perhaps the time will come, for which we have so often wished when two pairs of eyes will be closed. One is shut already but what of the other? Well, be it as God wills." Luigia had two sons, the first born in 1777, the second six years later, in Eszterháza. Haydn was devoted to both, and gossip insisted he was the father of the younger. He taught the two boys music and, irrespective of the question of paternity, he made no distinction between them. Singularly enough, "the Infernal Beast" who abominated Luigia, showed herself exceptionally kind to Pietro Polzelli when he visited her in 1792. 30

* * *

About 1781 Haydn established a friendship which was to grow increasingly profound and more influential. He made the acquaintance of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who had come from Salzburg to settle at last in Vienna. The sympathy was mutual, though the two masters were in many ways the absolute reverse of each other. Mozart was from his childhood a genuine virtuoso, such as Haydn had never pretended to be. Neither had Haydn matured artistically with anything like the speed of the sensitive and mercurial genius from Salzburg, nor possessed anything like the universality of the latter's gifts. Be these things as they may, the pair seemed to have come into the world to complement one another. Their friendship is one of the most beautiful and productive the history of music affords. "Haydn was fascinated by Mozart's quicksilver personality, while Mozart enjoyed the sense of security that Haydn's steadfastness and warmth of feeling gave him." And it was as if the two kindled brighter artistic sparks in their respective souls. The two played chamber music together whenever Haydn made a trip to Vienna. When Leopold Mozart visited his son, in 1785, Wolfgang, Haydn and several friends performed some of Mozart's new quartets for Father Mozart. It was on this occasion that Haydn made to Leopold the oft-quoted remark: "I tell you before God and as an honest man that your son is the greatest composer known to me either in person or by reputation. He has taste and, what is more, the most profound knowledge of composition." Wolfgang was delighted, but declared at the same time that it was only from Haydn that he had learned how to write string quartets. And the half-dozen he issued in 1785 and dedicated with moving phrases to his "beloved friend Haydn" are doubtless among the finest he composed. On the other hand, Mozart never permitted a derogatory word to be said in his presence about Haydn. And when the Bohemian composer and pianist, Leopold Kozeluch, once said to Mozart on hearing a boldly dissonant passage in a Haydn quartet: "I would never have written that," Mozart instantly retorted: "Nor would I! And do you know why? Because neither you nor I would have had so excellent an idea.... Sir, even if they melted us both together, there would still not be stuff enough to make a Haydn." When some years later Haydn was asked his opinion about a debated passage in "Don Giovanni" he answered with finality: "I cannot settle this dispute, but this I know: Mozart is the greatest composer that the world now possesses!" And hearing an argument about the harmony in the beginning of Mozart's C major Quartet Haydn put a stop to the controversy then and there by saying: "If Mozart wrote it so he must have had good reason for it." And when someone in Prague invited Haydn to write an opera for that city he declined on the ground—among other things—that he "would be taking a big risk, for scarcely any man could stand comparison with the great Mozart. Oh, if I could only explain to every musical friend ... the inimitable art of Mozart, its depth, the greatness of its emotion, and its unique musical conception, as I myself feel and understand it, nations would then vie with each other to possess so great a jewel.... Prague ought to strive not merely to retain this precious man, but also to remunerate him; for without this support the history of any great genius is sad indeed. It enrages me to think that the unparalleled Mozart has not yet been engaged by some imperial or royal court. Do forgive this outburst but I love that man too much." 31

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It should not be imagined that the various operas of Haydn have anything like the vitality, the dramatic life or the quality of "theatre" we find in the stage works of Mozart. The greater part were composed for the play-house at

Eszterháza and in certain cases for marionettes. Sometimes they were slender comedies, on the "Singspiel" order, sometimes masques, intermezzi, scenic cantatas. Possibly the two operas which in modern times have experienced most frequent revival are the comedy, "Lo Speciale" ("The Apothecary") and "Il Mondo della Luna" ("The World of the Moon").

His life at Eszterháza had the advantage of preserving Haydn from the intrigues and jealousies that ran riot in Vienna and from which even a Mozart had to suffer so bitterly. Yet without traveling far from Eisenstadt Haydn was now rapidly becoming widely famous. One of the first countries where he gained glory in distinguished circles was Spain. In 1779 his music was already becoming a subject of high-flown poetic praise. In 1781 King Charles III sent the composer a gold snuffbox. The secretary of the Spanish Legation went to Eszterháza in person to convey his sovereign's esteem to Haydn, whose princely employer must have swelled with pride at such a lofty distinction so ceremoniously conferred upon his "servant". The composer, Luigi Boccherini, a protégé of the Spanish king's brother, strove so successfully to imitate Haydn's style that someone called him "Haydn's wife". Perhaps the most important Spanish honor of all came from a canon of Cadiz for a work called "The Seven Last Words of Our Saviour on the Cross". Let us cite Haydn's own words which preface the score published by Breitkopf und Härtel in 1801:

"About 1786 I was requested to compose instrumental music in 'The Seven Last Words.' It was customary at the Cathedral of Cadiz to produce an oratorio every year during Lent, the effect of the performance being not a little enhanced by the following circumstances. The walls, windows, and pillars of the church were hung with black cloth, and only one large lamp hanging from the center of the roof broke the solemn obscurity. At midday the doors were closed and the ceremony began. After a short service the bishop ascended the pulpit, pronounced the first of the seven words and delivered a discourse thereon. This ended, he left the pulpit and prostrated himself before the altar. The pause was filled by music. The bishop then in like manner pronounced the second word, then the third, and so on, the orchestra following on the conclusion of each discourse. My composition was subject to these conditions, and it was no easy matter to compose seven adagios to last ten minutes each, and succeed one another without fatiguing the listeners; indeed, I found it quite impossible to confine myself within the appointed limits."

Haydn looked upon the composition as one of his most important and, as a matter of fact, it widely exercised a profound impression. It was even performed in the United States in 1793. When it came to paying Haydn for his work the Spanish ecclesiast presented the composer with a large sum of money concealed in an enormous chocolate cake! The "Seven Last Words" were, in the course of years, done by a string quartet, by an orchestra, as an oratorio. Today the work is hard to listen to with patience, impressive as it once seemed. A series of adagios, one much like the other, it has precisely the effect that the composer at first feared: the various movements as they succeed one another end by sorely "fatiguing the hearers".

France and England, in their turn, presently developed unmistakable signs of Haydn worship, which progressed increasingly. In Italy the composer steadily won favor. The Philharmonic Society of Modena made him a member as early as 1780. Ferdinand IV, of Naples, a few years later ordered concertos for an instrument called the lira organizzata. The king wanted Haydn to visit Italy; the composer would have loved to do so, but could not leave Eszterháza. Frederick William II, of Prussia, who played the cello, sent Haydn a superb and costly diamond ring. We are told that he put on the ring whenever he began an important work because "when he forgot to do so no ideas occurred to him". He also received a costly ring from his pupil, the Russian Grand Duchess Maria Feodorovna, whom he taught in 1782 in Vienna and for whom he composed numerous songs more than twenty years later. Then, in 1781, Haydn informed the Viennese publisher, Artaria, that "Monsieur Le Gros, director of the Concerts Spirituels in Paris, wrote me a great many nice things about my 'Stabat Mater' which had been given there four times with great applause.... They made me an offer to engrave all my future works on very advantageous terms." In 1784 a Paris society, the Concerts de la Loge Olympique (patronized by French royalty, and where audiences were required to pass a kind of examination before they were admitted to its functions) commissioned Haydn to write six symphonies for them, to which solicitation we owe the composer's great series of "Paris" Symphonies. Not only did French publishers now make profitable proposals to Haydn; in Luigi Cherubini, meanwhile, he had one of his most impassioned advocates in Paris.

Haydn could probably have gone to England and become associated with the musical life of that country much sooner than he did. When in 1783 the Professional Concerts were founded in London an attempt was made to secure him to take over their direction. The composer, not feeling that Prince Eszterházy would have given his consent, had to refuse and the English public contented itself with listening to a Haydn symphony as the opening offering of the series. By that time Haydn's music was so well known and stood so high in British favor that his works had gained a preponderant place in the musical life of the country. The Prince of Wales, an excellent cellist, caused Haydn's quartets to be performed continually at the palace musicales. And invitations to come to England poured upon Haydn from every corner of the Island Kingdom. For all that, he remained as simple and unspoiled as ever. He never forgot his humble origin. To Griesinger he once said: "I have had intercourse with emperors, kings and many a great personage, and have been told by them quite a few flattering things. For all that, I do not care to be on intimate terms with such persons and prefer to keep to people of my own station."

In Vienna the number of Haydn's intimates steadily increased. As the years of his sojourn at Eszterháza passed pleasantly, but monotonously, the composer strove increasingly to widen his Viennese circle of friends. He was able to accomplish this without unusual effort. The publisher, Artaria, who had close business connections with Haydn, was only one of the master's cronies. Then, of course, there were Mozart and his friends Michael Kelly, Stephen and Nancy Storace, the merchant Michael Puchberg (who immortalized himself by lending Mozart money). And Haydn, following the suggestion of Mozart and Puchberg, became a Freemason and joined the lodge Zur wahren Eintracht. But in some ways the closest friends of Haydn's in Vienna were Peter L. von Genzinger and his wife, Marianne. Von Genzinger had long been Prince Eszterházy's doctor. Both he and his wife were to the highest degree cultured and musical—Frau von Genzinger, for that matter, was an uncommonly gifted

pianist and singer. Haydn was so welcome a guest in that hospitable dwelling that, among other things, his hostess never tired of preparing for him his favorite dishes. The only drop of bitterness the lovely Genzinger home brought him was the poignant contrast it sometimes furnished to the growing monotony of Eszterháza, to which place he returned with a pang. "Well here I sit in my wilderness, like some poor orphan, almost without human society, melancholy, dwelling on the memory of past glorious days", he wrote to Marianne von Genzinger, in 1790, after he had mournfully returned to Eszterháza. His letters to Marianne have a freedom and a spontaneity not to be found in Haydn's usually stilted correspondence. As time passed it became fairly evident that Haydn deeply, if hopelessly, loved her. To be sure, he wrote that "she need be under no uneasiness ... for my friendship and esteem for you (warm as they are) can never become reprehensible since I have always in my mind my respect for your elevated virtues, which not only I, but all who know you must reverence.... Oh, that I could be with you, dear lady, even for a quarter of an hour, to pour forth all my sorrows, and to receive comfort from you! Well, as God pleases! This time will also pass away and the day return when I shall again have the inexpressible pleasure of being seated beside you at the pianoforte, hearing Mozart's masterpieces, and kissing your hands from gratitude for so much pleasure."

Between the lines it is possible to read that for all his honors and distinctions Haydn was not growing happier at Eszterháza as the years elapsed. By 1790 we find him writing: "I am doomed to stay at home. It is indeed sad always to be a slave." He was growing restive amid all this Eszterházy luxury. He had his orchestra, his palatial little theatre, the unending festivities at Eszterháza; he had Luigia Polzelli and he had little occasion to 37 bother about the "Infernal Beast", who, though she still walked the earth, scarcely existed for him. But it irked him that he could not accept those invitations to visit foreign countries which were piling in upon him. The truth, as Dr. Geiringer keenly observes, was that "Haydn had outgrown Eszterháza.... Even his attachment to his beloved prince had somewhat diminished. Haydn, now a man of nearly 60, like a person of half his age, craved for a change, new tasks, new experiences. With the sure instinct of genius he felt that the immense creative forces still slumbering in him could be released only by a clean-cut break with the way of life that for nearly 30 years had been dear to him."

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At the psychological moment destiny came to Haydn's aid somewhat as, decades later, it invariably came to Wagner's. In the fall of 1790, Prince Nicholas the Magnificent died suddenly. His successor, Prince Anton Eszterházy, who was unmusical and otherwise unlike his father, instantly dismissed the orchestra, retaining only Haydn, Tomasini and a few others to take care of the church music. He did not, indeed, discharge Haydn and even paid him well to keep him nominally in his employ. But he gave the master leave to travel wherever he wanted. Instantly Haydn dashed to Vienna, where fate took charge of his interests once more. A relative of the Eszterházy's wanted him for another princely post at Pressburg; the king of Naples repeated his earlier invitation to Italy. Then, while the composer deliberated, a stranger burst into his room with the words: "My name is Salomon. I have come from London to fetch you; we shall conclude our accord tomorrow." Haydn was bowled over and almost before he realized the truth, Johann Peter Salomon, of Bonn, superintended everything. Haydn was to be paid 300 pounds for an opera, 300 more for six new symphonies, 200 for the copyrights, 200 for twenty smaller pieces, 200 more for a benefit concert in London. He had, then and there, to consider whether it was to be 38 Pressburg, Italy or England. One reason he decided against Italy was because he appreciated that he was not a born opera composer, like Mozart. But though Haydn spoke Italian and knew not a word of English (besides which the Channel crossing worried him), he decided—most fortunately as it proved—on England. For one thing, he realized that England was at that time a leader in the orchestral field; in the second place Haydn was surfeited with nobility and the courts of princes. And he longed for the personal freedom which England assured him. So London it should be! His friends—among them Mozart—were frightened. "Oh, Papa, you have had no education for the wide world, and you speak so few languages," protested Wolfgang. "But my language is understood all over the world," gently replied Haydn. Just the same, he found parting from Mozart harder than from any of his other friends. And when they took leave of one another the younger man exclaimed prophetically: "I am afraid, Papa, this will be our last farewell." Mozart's death was one of the sorest blows Haydn ever suffered, and the pain of it actually sharpened with the passing of time.

Ten days before Christmas, 1790, Haydn set out on his journey with Salomon. They took ship at Calais, January 1, 1791, at 7:30 A.M. ("after attending early Mass"). As he wrote Marianne von Genzinger, he was "very well, although somewhat thinner, owing to fatigue, irregular sleep, and eating and drinking so many things". In spite of a choppy sea he stood the crossing admirably, probably because "I remained on deck during the whole passage, in order to gaze my fill at that huge monster, the ocean." Only once or twice was he "seized with slight alarm and a little indisposition likewise". Yet he arrived at Dover "without being actually sick", even if most of the passengers did "look like ghosts." Doubtless he recalled with amusement his boyish attempts to portray a storm at sea on the harpsichord in the days of Kurz-Bernardon!

Haydn's first impressions of London were overwhelming. He was as struck and delighted with the size and grandeur of the British metropolis, its crowds, its teeming traffic and the "strangeness" of English life as 39 was even the worldlier Mendelssohn, several decades later. Nevertheless, he was not a little frightened and found the street noise "unbearable". He had not a little trouble with the language and was much confused about the right thing to do when people drank his health. He wrote to Frau von Genzinger that he was trying to learn English by taking morning walks alone in the woods "with his English grammar." Salomon did not spare him any of the customary social engagements and amenities. Before he had been in London three weeks he was invited to a court ball and welcomed by the Prince of Wales, who, so Haydn decided, was "the handsomest man on God's earth". The Prince (the future George IV) "wore diamonds worth 80,000 pounds." Haydn eventually managed to secure a recipe for the Prince's brand of punch; it called for "one bottle of champagne, one of burgundy, one of rum, ten lemons, two oranges and a pound and a half of sugar."

On March 11, 1791, occurred Haydn's first concert in the Hanover Square Rooms. The function in every respect exceeded the composer's fondest hopes. Its outstanding feature was the D major Symphony (No. 93). The

orchestra surpassed both numerically and otherwise the one Haydn had commanded at Eszterháza. The master conducted from a harpsichord, as had always been his custom. The concertmaster was the worthy Salomon, who played on a superb Stradivarius. Dr. Burney spoke of “a degree of enthusiasm such as almost amounted to frenzy.” The Adagio of the symphony had to be repeated. The *Morning Chronicle* wrote: “We cannot suppress our very anxious hope that the first musical genius of the age may be induced by our liberal welcome to take up his residence in England.” It was a wish which speedily spread. Even the King pressed the composer to make his home there and when, with the best grace in the world Haydn assured him his Continental obligations would not permit him to do so, the monarch was more or less offended. One reason the master gave for his refusal was that “he could not leave his wife”—though the “Infernal Beast” was probably farthest from his thoughts! What really stood in the way of a permanent English residence was the fear of the tremendous drain on his creative powers his popularity might entail. He was, indeed, on the threshold of his greatest achievements and he was strong and healthy. All the same he was not growing younger. And he knew what the strain of being incessantly lionized would do in the long run. 40

For the time being, however, British adulation only had the effect of making Haydn more splendidly productive than ever. The twelve Salomon symphonies (six composed for Haydn’s first visit to London, the remaining set written for his second a few years later) are indisputably Haydn’s greatest symphonic creations. Let us mention a few of them: There is the so-called “Military” Symphony (Haydn’s symphonies are more easily distinguished by their sometimes fanciful titles, than by keys or opus numbers); the “Clock”, with its Andante, marked by a persistent tick-tock rhythm; the symphony “With the Kettledrum Roll”; the “Surprise”, with its folk-like melody and its title derived from a wholly unexpected fortissimo (which Haydn believed would “wake up the old ladies”) following a placid folk-like phase—yet actually more of a “surprise” from the astonishing harmonies heard just before the close of the variation movement.

The London Symphonies, together with “The Creation” and “The Seasons” as well as certain of the great string quartets, parts of which so astoundingly foreshadow the idiom of the Romantic period, are, in reality, the summits of Haydn’s inspiration. It is a question if his genius would have unfolded itself so magnificently without the stimulus which came to the master from his two visits to England. In July, 1791, he was invited to the Oxford Commemoration to receive from the University the honorary degree of Doctor of Music. The occasion proved to be a love feast. Three concerts were given in Haydn’s honor, at one of which he conducted his G major Symphony (No. 92), written several years earlier, but henceforth called the “Oxford” Symphony. As his “exercise” he wrote for the University a three part crab canon, “Thy Voice, O Harmony is Divine”. For three days he went about in “cherry and cream-colored silk”. “I wish my friends in Vienna could have seen me”, he wrote, remarking in his diary “I had to pay one and a half guineas for the bell peals at Oxford when I received the Doctor’s degree, and half a guinea for hiring the gown. The journey cost six guineas.” By no means a cheap honor! At the same time it is worth-while mentioning a statement of his to Dies, his biographer: “I owe much, I might say everything in England to the Doctor’s degree; for thanks to it I met the first men and was admitted to the most important houses.” 41

One of Haydn’s greatest and most fruitful experiences in London was his attendance in 1791 at a huge Handel Commemoration in Westminster Abbey. It was a prodigious affair with more than a thousand participants. Handel’s masterpieces may not have been intimately familiar to Haydn, though the Baron Van Swieten in Vienna made a cult both of Handel and Johann Sebastian Bach. In Westminster Abbey, however, with such a gigantic array of performers and a public brought up in the reverence of Handel’s masterpieces the effect of a creation like “Messiah” was no less than shattering on Haydn. When he heard the “Hallelujah” chorus he burst into tears with the exclamation “Handel is the master of us all!” And it seems to have been the impact of Handel which moved him to contemplate an oratorio of his own. The outcome of this Handelian experience and of the great British tradition of massive choruses became, in due time, “The Creation” and “The Seasons.”

Haydn was immensely busy in England but he was thoroughly enjoying himself. He was entertained for five entire weeks at the home of a rich banker who lived in the country and who asked Haydn to give music lessons to his daughters, yet tactfully left the composer as much alone as he wished to be. So he was able to rest a little from the noise of London. Another time he went by boat from Westminster Bridge to Richmond and had dinner on a lovely island in the Thames; or he went to a dance at the home of the Lord Mayor of London, leaving when he found the room too hot and the music too bad; then he remained for three days at a castle where the Duke of York and his bride were spending their honeymoon. “Oh, my dear good lady”, he exclaimed in a letter to Marianne von Genzinger, “how sweet is some degree of liberty! I had a kind prince, but was obliged at times to be dependent on base souls. I often sighed for release and now I have it in some measure. I am quite sensible of this benefit, though my mind is burdened with more work. The consciousness of being no longer a servant sweetens all my toil.” 42

At a concert given in York House, where Haydn played, Salomon led an orchestra and the King and Queen were present, the composer was formally presented by the Prince of Wales to George III. The monarch talked for some time to the former “servant” of the Eszterházy and said, among other things, “Dr. Haydn, you have written a good deal.” Whereupon Haydn answered: “Yes, Sire, a great deal more than is good.” The King had the last word, however, and replied: “Oh, no; the world contradicts you.” There can be no question, however, that on both his visits to England Haydn was called upon to subject his creative powers to a terrific strain. The strangest part of it was that the artist, whose years were now accumulating, seemed actually to be making up for the slow development of his genius in his young manhood. Not only were the works he produced greater and greater, but his assimilation of great and new musical influences was progressing steadily. 43

Apart from his other English activities there was no end of sight-seeing to be done, complicated with a considerable amount of teaching. At the end of the music season the “worn out” master, went to Vauxhall Gardens, was delighted with the place where, among other things the music was “fairly good” and where “coffee and milk cost nothing”. However, he did have a few twinges of the “English rheumatism” and almost submitted to an operation for his nose polypus—though when they tied him to a chair and prepared to operate he “kicked and

screamed so vigorously”, that the surgeon and his assistants had to give it up.

Not even a Haydn escaped intrigues and baseless slander. A rival concert organization, unable to win him away from Salomon launched rumors that the composer was showing signs of exhaustion and then sought to play off against Haydn the aging master’s devoted pupil, Ignaz Pleyel. Another thing he seems not to have managed avoiding was a love affair. “There were certainly quite a few innocent friendships with beautiful women”, relates Dr. Geiringer, “but they did not prevent the inflammable master from enjoying a more significant romance as well”. Strangely enough, we know about it only from the letters of the lady in question, which Haydn carefully copied because, presumably, she wanted her correspondence back! So far as we have this interchange it is quite one-sided and none of Haydn’s letters to her remain. The lady in the case was a widow, a Mrs. Schroeter. Dr. Burney referred to her as “a young lady of considerable fortune”. Later, Haydn spoke of her to Dies, as “an English widow in London who loved me. Though 60 years old, she was still lovely and amiable, and in all likelihood I should have married her if I had been single.” Like Marianne von Genzinger, Mrs. Schroeter was musical and did copyist work for the composer. Actually, she seems to have been much younger than Haydn’s estimate. Here are a few extracts from the letters he received from her in London: “... Pray inform me how you do, and let me know my Dear Love: When will you dine with me? I shall be truly happy to see you to dinner, either tomorrow or Tuesday.... I am truly anxious and impatient to see you and I wish to have as much of your company as possible; indeed my dear Haydn I feel for you the fondest and tenderest affection the human heart is capable of, and I ever am with the firmest attachment my Dear Love, most Sincerely, Faithfully and most affectionately Yours...”. Another time, the devoted Mrs. Schroeter is concerned about his health: “I am told you was (sic!) at your Study’s yesterday; indeed, my D.L., I am afraid it will hurt you.... I almost tremble for your health. Let me prevail on you my much loved Haydn not to keep to your study’s so long at one time. My dear love if you could know how precious your welfare is to me, I flatter myself you wou’d endeavor to preserve it, for my sake as well as your own.” Another time: “... I hope to hear you are quite well, shall be happy to see you at dinner and if you can come at three o’clock it would give me great pleasure, as I should be particularly glad to see you my Dear before the rest of our friends come.”

44

All the same, Haydn amid his numberless duties, found time to write to Luigia Polzelli, who was now in Italy. She was not a little jealous and the composer found it wise to placate her with extravagantly ardent letters and money. He would have been happy to see her son, Pietro, in London but he was much less anxious to have Luigia. Meantime, the “Infernal Beast” again stirred up trouble by sending notes to her detested rival hinting at Haydn’s infidelities!

Let us herewith end the story of Luigia. Haydn had once promised to marry her when he should be free. When, at long last Maria Anna Apollonia died in 1800, the Polzelli chose to remind him of his promise. But he solved the difficulty by giving her black on white, his solemn word to marry “no one else” and he also promised her a substantial pension for the rest of her life. Having pocketed that “promise” Luigia promptly married an Italian singer! Her son, Pietro, died in 1796. Haydn sincerely mourned him but turned his attention to another pupil of his, Sigismund Neukomm.

45

The wanderer came back to Vienna in midsummer, 1792. After the exhilaration of the first English trip the return to Vienna, for all his honors and distinctions, was chilling. No one seemed to care greatly. Moreover, there was one irreplaceable loss; Mozart was no more; and early in 1793 another blow struck Haydn—Marianne von Genzinger died at 38. Here was a calamity in its way rivaling the tragedy of Mozart. Haydn’s resilient nature recovered even from the death of Marianne. But a certain sweetness departed with her and never returned. Singularly enough, there entered into his musical life about this time a force one might assume would have fortified him to bear the burden of his poignant losses. Beethoven arrived in Vienna from Bonn bearing the following message from Count Waldstein: “Dear Beethoven, you are traveling to Vienna in fulfillment of your long-cherished wish. The tutelary genius of Mozart is still weeping and bewailing the death of her favorite. With the inexhaustible Haydn she has found refuge, but no occupation, and now she is waiting to leave him and associate herself with someone else. Labor assiduously and receive Mozart’s spirit from the hands of Haydn.”

* * *

Haydn was the wrong teacher for Beethoven and Beethoven the wrong pupil for Haydn. The young man’s relations with the old master were kind and friendly (Beethoven, according to his diaries, treated Haydn to “chocolate twenty-two times” and to “coffee six times”). But there was a spiritual gulf between them of which they both became aware. Haydn, indeed, foreshadowed musical romanticism, yet he did not, like his new pupil, arrogantly identify himself with it. Beethoven had none of that soul of a servitor which Haydn had acquired through his long career; so it was not without reason that the teacher used to allude to the hot-headed pupil as “the Grand Mogul”. Moreover, Beethoven wanted to be instructed in counterpoint the hard way; and he was greatly irritated when Haydn did not carefully correct his technical exercises. Therefore, though the relationship remained outwardly amicable and the lessons went on, Beethoven changed teachers. He placed himself in the hands of the composer, Johann Schenk, and of the contrapuntist, Johann Albrechtsberger. As Schenk had told Beethoven in looking over some of his technical work, Haydn was now too busy composing great masterworks to be occupied by the needs of a particularly obstreperous student.

46

In 1794 Haydn started out a second time for London, but this time not in Salomon’s company. Yet as he did not wish to make the journey unattended he decided on one of his young friends for an escort—Polzelli, Beethoven or some other. His usual luck attended him when he picked Johann Elssler, whose father had copied music at Eszterháza. Johann was Haydn’s godson and in the fullness of time he became the father of the famous dancer, Fanny Elssler. He idolized Haydn, served him hand and foot, was secretary, copyist and the first to assist Haydn in cataloguing his works. On this English visit Haydn traveled rather more extensively than the first time. He went to the Isle of Wight, to Southampton, to Waverly Abbey, to Winchester. He went to Hampton Court, which reminded him of Eszterháza. He heard “miserable trash” at the Haymarket Theatre and even worse at Sadler’s Wells. In Bath he met a Miss Brown, “an amiable discreet person”, who had the additional advantage of “a

beautiful mother"; he saw the grave of "Turk, a faithful dog and not a man"; and he composed music to a poem by the conductor of the Bath Harmonic Society, "What Art Expresses".

In August, 1795, Haydn was back in Vienna, and although the heart-breaks of the previous return were spared him he found plenty of new organizational labor awaiting him at Eszterháza, where a new prince, Nicholas II, a grandson of "The Magnificent" now held sway. His artistic tastes, though pronounced, did not run primarily in the directions of music. He gave Cherubini a gorgeous and costly ring, he liked the music of Reutter and Michael Haydn more than that of the great Eszterházy Capellmeister, and then insulted Beethoven with a stupid remark about the latter's C major Mass. He even criticised Haydn's management of some detail at an orchestral rehearsal, whereupon the now thoroughly irascible master turned on his patron with a wrath: "Your Highness, it is my job to decide this!" He felt now that a Doctor of Music at Oxford should be addressed more respectfully than simply as "Haydn".

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In London the composer once said: "I want to write a work which will give permanent fame to my name in the world." After his numberless symphonies, his masses, his clavier works, his vast store of chamber music, his concertos, his operatic miscellany, his songs and arias—after all these what could remain? England had given him one unrivaled experience from which he could nourish his genius—the mighty Handel Commemoration, in Westminster Abbey. Haydn had experimented in countless forms, but one. That was the oratorio and in this he could undertake new flights.

Where should he find a subject? Some say that a musical friend of Haydn's answered the master by opening a Bible standing handy and exclaiming: "There! Take that and begin at the beginning!" Others maintain that Salomon gave him a libretto which one Lidley had pieced together from Milton's "Paradise Lost" for Handel. Dr. Geiringer believes that both accounts may be true. At all events, Haydn returned to Vienna with the text. It was, however, in English, which Haydn understood imperfectly. It was necessary, consequently, to find an accomplished translator. As usual, good fortune attended him. Gottfried van Swieten, a litterateur, prefect of the Vienna Royal Library, friend of Mozart, worshipper of Handel and Bach, who thought highly of Haydn, was wealthy even if despotic, yet still after a fashion musical—this man was able to furnish Haydn what he required. Nay, more, "he got together a group of twelve music-loving noblemen and each guaranteed a contribution to defray the expenses of performance and pay an honorarium to the composer." And Haydn set jubilantly and, withal, reverently to work. He "spent much time over it, because he intended it to last a long time."

The labor gave him extraordinary happiness. It answered his inmost wants. Here he could give the freest possible rein to all that inborn optimism of his nature. Always profoundly religious, as free from doubt and skepticism as a child, his reverence was as sincere as it was sunny. Here he walked, literally, "hand in hand with his God". There came to the surface, moreover, all those springs of folk-song influence which were either remembered or subconsciously wrought into the fabric of his being. And he was now working on a newer and larger scale than hitherto. "Never was I so devout as when composing "The Creation"" he afterwards said. "I knelt down every day and prayed to God to strengthen me in my work." If his inspiration ever threatened to grow sluggish "I rose from the pianoforte and began to say my rosary". This cure, he insisted, never failed.

The curious aspect of "The Creation" is that, though composed to a German translation of the English text, it is one of those rare masterpieces which actually sound better in a translation than in the original. The answer to this springs probably from the circumstance that "The Creation" is, in point of fact, an Anglo-Saxon heritage. An examination of numerous details of its setting and declamation make it clear that, almost subconsciously, Haydn has set and accompanied the English words in more subtly revealing fashion than the German. Similarly, Haydn achieved in the whole work that effect at which he was aiming. Writing to her daughter, the Princess Eleanore Liechtenstein said of the oratorio, "One has to shed tears about the greatness, the majesty, the goodness of God. The soul is uplifted. One cannot but love and admire."

The first performance of "The Creation" was given at the palace of Prince Schwarzenberg in Vienna on April 29, 1798. Only invited guests attended this and the second performance, though the mobs outside were so great that extra detachments of police had to be summoned. Haydn conducted, not from a keyboard, but in the modern way, with a baton. The rendering was superb, the audience enraptured. Haydn himself said later: "One moment I was as cold as ice, the next I seemed on fire. More than once I was afraid I should have a stroke." "The Creation" promptly spread over the world. In England it "was to prove so unfailing an attraction that proceeds from it, mostly given to charitable institutions, by far surpassed even the receipts from the London benefit concerts that once had seemed so extraordinary to Haydn". In Paris Bonaparte was on his way to hear a performance of it when a bomb exploded in the street through which he was passing, narrowly missing his carriage. In America it took root in short order.

The score deserves, in reality, a much more detailed scrutiny than can be given here. The introduction, the "Representation of Chaos", does not receive the attention it actually merits. There is a warmth of color to the writing, particularly to the woodwind, which is something new in Haydn. And the closing bars of the amazing page are the more startling because they provide a foretaste of one of the most striking passages in Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde". It may be mentioned, in passing, that this is by no means the only time when Haydn affords an amazing Wagnerian presage.

The great and even more celebrated moment in the opening choral number of the oratorio is the passage "Let there be Light and there was Light". From a thin, gray C minor we are suddenly overwhelmed with a sudden and mighty C major chord—an unmistakable sunburst in tone. In all music this tremendous moment has not its like unless it be a similar episode—also a sunrise and by curiously related means—at the opening of Richard Strauss's "Thus Spake Zarathustra". From the very first this moment in "The Creation" overpowered the listeners and after a century and a half it has lost not a vestige of its glory. At his last appearance in a concert hall, Haydn, only a few

weeks from his end, was taken to a performance of his work. At this episode the old master pointed upwards with the words "Not from me—from there, above, comes everything!"

The strain of unending toil was beginning to tell on Haydn, though the amazing aspect of it is that these latest works of his do not betray the slightest diminution of freshness or inventive powers. Yet on June 12, 1799, he wrote to Breitkopf und Härtel a letter which deserves attention: "My business unhappily expands with my advancing years, and it almost seems as if, with the decrease of my mental powers, my inclination and impulse to work increase. Oh God! how much yet remains to be done in this splendid art, even by a man like myself! The world, indeed, daily pays me many compliments, even on the fervor of my latest works; but no one can believe the strain and effort it costs me to produce them, inasmuch as time after time my feeble memory and the unstrung state of my nerves so completely crush me to earth, that I fall into the most melancholy condition. For days afterwards I am incapable of formulating one single idea, till at length my heart is revived by providence, and I seat myself at the piano and begin once more to hammer away at it. Then all goes well again, God be 51 praised. I only wish and hope that the critics may not handle my 'Creation' with too great severity and be too hard on it. They may possibly find the musical orthography faulty in various passages, and perhaps other things also, which for so many years I have been accustomed to consider as minor points, but the genuine connoisseur will see the real cause as readily as I do, and willingly ignore such stumbling blocks. This, however, is entirely *entre nous*; or I might be accused of conceit and arrogance, from which, however, my Heavenly Father has preserved me all my life long."

Haydn had still a prodigious amount of work before him. Chief of all was another full length oratorio, "The Seasons", based on James Thomson's didactic poem. Here again the Baron Van Swieten edited and translated, though he made use of several German poems in addition to Thomson's (of which he altered the "unhappy" ending). The composer worked for three years on "The Seasons", not completing it till 1801. It seems to have tested his powers sorely. It was no less optimistic a document than "The Creation", but by and large an outspoken Nature piece (conceived in Rousseau's "Back to Nature" philosophy), yet with only transient religious undertones and without the genuinely Biblical quality of "The Creation". Still, the truly amazing part of "The Seasons" is its incessant vitality, the charm of its pictorial aspect and the unending freshness of its inspiration. All the same, the magnificent work made unmistakable inroads on Haydn's vitality. He paid for its success with his health and was in the habit of saying, from now on, "'The Seasons' has given me the death blow!" Actually, he had suffered a physical breakdown of a sort shortly after one of the productions of "The Creation". He had to take to his bed and, intermittently, the flow of his inspiration threatened to halt. But invariably he would recover, both physically and mentally. He revised his earlier "Seven Last Words" as an oratorio; he arranged 250 Scotch folksongs for the Edinburgh publisher, George Thomson; the number of his string quartets increased. Performances of "The 52 Creation" multiplied everywhere. Honors poured in upon him from all quarters. He was warmly invited to come to Paris and his old pupil, Pleyel, was dispatched to fetch him. Fortunately, Haydn spared himself the exertions of such a trip. Still, France struck a medal in his honor, which gave the master no end of pleasure; and he received the warmest expressions of affection from the inhabitants of the little Baltic island of Rügen, where a performance of "The Creation" was given. He even strove to be his own publisher and sought subscriptions for the score of the oratorio. His friends rallied magnificently to his aid—the English royal family, the Empress of Austria, the innumerable friends from his native country and from Britain (England as much as Austria now claimed him as one of her very own!). Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton visited Eszterháza and it is said that for two days the Lady "would not budge from Haydn's side", while Nelson gave him a gold watch in exchange for the master's pen!

The great composition of this later period of Haydn's life is beyond dispute his patriotic anthem, "Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser"—the Austrian hymn, as, through thick and thin, it has remained. That, too, was indirectly a product of his English experiences! He had always been stirred in London by "God Save the King" and it became his ambition to provide something similar for his own nation. The great melody that resulted bears a distinct resemblance to a Croatian folksong of the Eisenstadt region, "Zalostna zarucnica", which certain musicologists maintain served as the inspiration for Haydn's melody, though the derivation has not been definitely established. But others than Austrians have made the song their own. The Germans, for instance, consorted it to a poem by Hoffmann von Fallersleben and thereby it became "Deutschland über alles"; the English-speaking nations 53 put it to churchly uses and made of it the hymn "Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken".

While he was still engaged in exacting creative work he set a schedule for himself which he appears to have followed rigorously. A daily plan of activities (written by Elssler, Dr. Geiringer surmises) furnishes a picture of "Herr von Haydn's" routine. He was living in a house he had bought in the "Gumpendorfer" district of Vienna. We read that "in the summertime he rose at 6.30 A.M. First he shaved, which he did for himself up to his 73rd year, and then he completed dressing. If a pupil were present, he had to play his lesson on the piano to Herr von Haydn, while the master dressed. All mistakes were promptly corrected and a new task was then set. This occupied an hour and a half. At 8 o'clock sharp, breakfast had to be on the table, and immediately after breakfast Haydn sat down at the piano improvising and drafting sketches of some composition. From 8 o'clock to 11.30 his time was taken up in this way. At 11.30 calls were received or made, or he went for a walk until 1.30. The hour from 2 to 3 was reserved for dinner, after which Haydn immediately did some little work in the house or resumed his musical occupations. He scored the morning's sketches, devoting three to four hours to this. At 8 P.M. Haydn usually went out and at 9 he came home and sat down to write a score or he took a book and read until 10 P.M. At that time he had supper, which consisted of bread and wine. Haydn made a rule of eating nothing but bread and wine at night and infringed it only on sundry occasions when he was invited to supper. He liked gay conversation and some merry entertainment at the table. At 11.30 he went to bed, in his old age even later. Wintertime made no difference to the schedule, except that Haydn got up half an hour later."

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But despite this pleasant and comfortable routine Haydn was now beginning to age rapidly. On December 54 26, 1803, he conducted for the last time and, characteristically, for a hospital fund, the work he directed

being the "Seven Last Words". He wrote two movements of a string quartet, but by 1806, he had given up all idea of finishing it and, as a conclusion, added a few bars of a song he had written in the past few years, "Der Greis", which begins "Hin ist alle meine Kraft, alt und schwach bin ich" ("Gone is all my strength, old and weak am I"). Friends and admirers in ever increasing numbers sought him out to pay their respects. There came Cherubini, the Abbé Vogler, the violinist Baillot, Pleyel, members of the Weber family, Mme. Bigot—a friend of Beethoven and afterwards one of the piano teachers of Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn; Hummel, the widow of Mozart, the Princess Eszterházy, the actor, Iffland.

In 1805 a rumor gained currency that Haydn had died. The world was shocked. Cherubini even composed a cantata on Haydn's passing; Kreutzer a violin concerto based on themes from Haydn's works, while in Paris a special memorial concert was arranged and Mozart's Requiem was to be given. Suddenly there came a letter from the master saying that "he was still of this base world." And he thanked his French admirers for their well-meant gestures adding "had I only known of it in time, I would have traveled to Paris to conduct the Requiem myself!" Johann Wenzel Tomaschek told how Haydn greeted any visitor who might drop in: "He sat in an armchair, very much dressed up. A powdered wig with sidelocks, a white neckband with a bold buckle, a white richly embroidered waistcoat of heavy silk, in the midst of which shone a splendid jabot, a dress of fine coffee-colored cloth with embroidered cuffs, black silk breeches, white silk hose, shoes with large silver buckles curved over the instep, and on a little table next to him a pair of white kid gloves made up his attire."

He made one last public appearance. It was at a performance of "The Creation" given at the Vienna University in celebration of the master's 76th birthday. About the only person of prominence not present was Prince Eszterházy; but he at least sent his carriage to bring the master to the concert! At the hall were assembled not alone the high nobility but all the most distinguished musicians of the capital, among them Beethoven, Salieri, Hummel, Gyrowetz. Salieri conducted. The concertmaster was Franz Clement, for whom Beethoven wrote his violin concerto. The French ambassador, seeing Haydn wearing the gold medal of the Parisian Concerts des Amateurs, exclaimed: "This medal is not enough; you should receive all the medals that France can distribute!" The Princess Eszterházy not only sat next to the master but wrapped her own shawl about him. It was on this occasion that Haydn made his historic remark when the audience burst into applause at the sublime passage "And there was Light." As the concert progressed he became visibly excited and it was thought advisable to take him home. As Haydn left the auditorium Beethoven knelt down before him and reverently kissed his hand and brow. Before the old man finally vanished from view he turned one last time and lifted his hand in blessing on the assemblage.

* * *

By the spring of 1809 the Napoleonic wars were again devastating Austria. The bombardment of the western suburbs of Vienna brought the battle uncomfortably close to Haydn's home. Nevertheless, the master refused to leave and when a bomb fell close to the Gumpendorfer house the old man reassured his frightened servants with the words: "Children, don't be frightened; where Haydn is, nothing can happen to you!" But the continuous noise and excitement shook the invalid's nerves so severely that he took to his bed and left it only once. This was to be carried to his piano, there to play three times in succession and with the deepest possible feeling his own Austrian hymn, as if to defy those hostile powers unwilling to let him die in peace. On the same day, however, he was visited by a French officer, Clément Sulémy, who called to pay his respects to the composer of "The Creation" and who, before he left, sat down at the piano and sang the aria "In Native Worth" "in so manly and so sublime a style, with so much truth of expression and musical sentiment" that Haydn embraced him and said he had never heard the air delivered in so masterly a fashion. Sulémy fell in battle the same day, a fact which the composer, fortunately, never learned.

But his strength was now quite gone. He could only whisper to those about him: "Children, be comforted, I am well." Then he lapsed into unconsciousness and shortly after midnight, May 31, 1809, he passed. Napoleon saw to it that a military guard of honor was stationed at his door. At his obsequies not only the cultural world of Vienna but also the highest French military officials were present. And Mozart's Requiem was sung.

* * *

The story cannot be ended without an allusion to its macabre epilogue. Haydn was laid to rest in the Hundsturm Cemetery. But soon afterwards Prince Eszterházy received permission to reinter the master in Eisenstadt. There were lengthy delays, however, and in 1814 Sigismund Neukomm was shocked to find the tomb in a state of dilapidation. He placed on it a marble slab with Haydn's favorite quotation from Horace, "Non omnis moriar" ("I shall not wholly die"), set as a five part canon. Six years later the Duke of Cambridge remarked to Prince Eszterházy "How fortunate was the man who employed this Haydn in his lifetime and now possesses his mortal remains!" The Prince said nothing, but experienced a sharp twinge of conscience. So he gave orders for the exhumation and the reburial in the Eisenstadt Bergkirche, where Haydn had conducted a number of his masses. When the coffin was opened the officials were appalled to find a body without a head! It developed that a certain Carl Rosenbaum, once a secretary to Prince Eszterházy, and a penitentiary official, one Johann Peter, had bribed the Viennese gravedigger, to steal the skull which they wanted for phrenological experiments. Peter had made an elaborately decorated box (with windows and a satin cushion) for the gruesome relic. The outraged Prince sent the police to Peter, who, meantime had given the skull to Rosenbaum. The police were quite as unsuccessful at the Rosenbaum house, for the singer, Therese Gassmann Rosenbaum, promptly hid the skull in her mattress and went to bed, pretending illness. The hideous farce went a step further, when Rosenbaum, expecting a bribe, substituted the head of some unidentified old man. When Rosenbaum died he left Haydn's skull to Peter, obligating him to bequeath it to the museum of the Society of the Friends of Music, in Vienna, where it was preserved since 1895.

It was reported that the Nazis, after the Austrian Anschluss in 1938, proposed to bury the head in Haydn's coffin at Eisenstadt. Whether they carried out this plan is not known to the present writer.

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