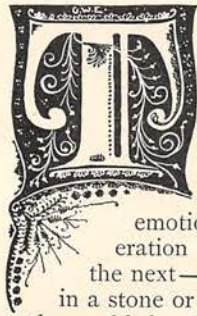


MOZART — AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMEN OF THE FRENCH SALONS."



HE changes of fashion are not limited to the cut of our clothes, the style of our houses, our manners, and our modes of living. We must have also new forms for our thoughts, new expressions for our emotions. The idols of one generation make way for the idols of the next—fortunate if a name carved in a stone or some faded memorial tells the world they have lived. It is only here and there that a commanding genius stands on a pinnacle so high that its divine light shines upon remote ages which point to it as a distinct landmark in its own sphere. And even these are not quite free from the inevitable caprices of taste. While we still burn incense at time-honored altars, we turn to new gods, and, fired with some fresh sensation, pronounce the old ones a little antiquated after all. It is the youngest of the arts that feels, perhaps, the most perceptibly these fluctuations. In this late nineteenth century we like our viands very much spiced, and music is the last expression of the complexity, the turmoil, the fever, the intensity of modern life. We no longer seek in it the repose that belonged to simpler conditions, a less artificial existence, but strain the nerves, the mind, the senses to scale some unknown heaven of thought and feeling; then falling back from this emotional delirium, we find nature tame, the old creations insipid, the masters of the past colorless. It is refreshing sometimes to step aside into a more serene atmosphere, to kneel once more before half-deserted shrines, to take refuge from the spirit of unrest, in the everlasting beauty, the inexhaustible charm of the poet-singers of a past generation.

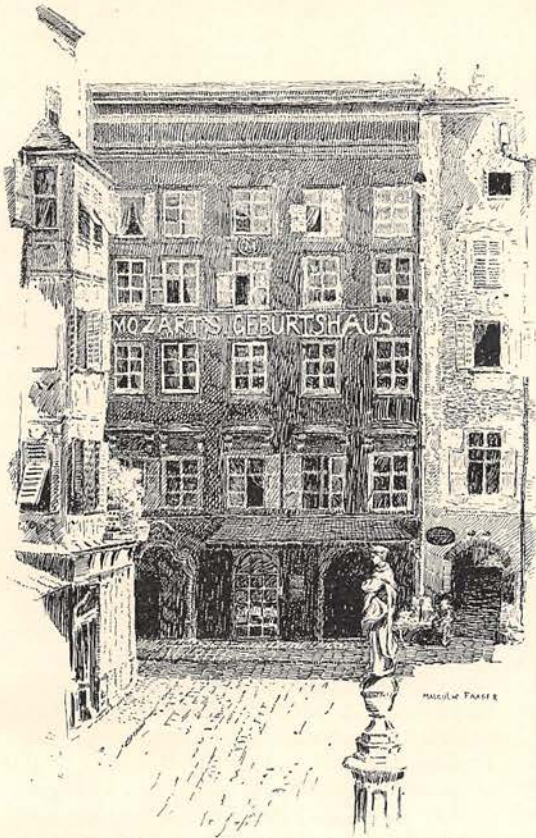
It may seem like repeating an oft-told tale to retrace the incidents of a career so well known as that of Mozart, nor is it possible that any written or spoken words can ever add to the luster of his fame. The world has long since made up its mind about him, compiled its records, reared its monuments, and assigned him a place among its great ones. But it is well from time to time to rub off the dust that gathers upon old monuments and old records, and to scatter fresh flowers upon honored graves. It brings more vividly before us the

men who have toiled and suffered, the men who have claims upon our love and sympathy as well as upon our admiration—a love and sympathy doubly due to those whose lives were marred and broken. The genius that delights the world seldom brings happiness to its possessor, and it is idle to speak of it as its own compensation. It has doubtless its hours of supreme joy, but no mortal dwells permanently in the sunlit heights of thought or imagination, and those who best interpret the subtle secrets of the soul are those who are born the most responsive to the variations of the world about them.

Among all the sad tales of struggling and disappointed genius, I know of none so pathetic as that of Mozart. In the place of recalling cold historic facts, one is tempted to chant a perpetual miserere. A childhood of wonderful precocity, a youth of rare triumphs, a brief, neglected manhood, an unhonored death, and an immortal fame—it is the old story of the coral-insect that toils to build itself a magnificent tomb to charm the world it has shut itself out of.

The tragedy of Mozart's fate does not lie in the simple combat with adverse circumstances, which falls more or less to the average lot of humanity, but in the strange disproportion between the promise of life and its fulfilment. No one ever hoped so much and realized so little. Nature, which was so lavish of its gifts, forgot to add the worldly talent to reap their fruits. We do not know to what height he might have reached had he lived to the allotted age of man. Cut off in his prime, his genius seems to have touched the highest altitude, to have been singularly rounded and complete. Variations in power there may have been, but we discover no backward step, no symptom of decline. That he should have had so small a return is among the inscrutable mysteries of a world whose caprices no one can follow.

An artist of transcendent gifts, a composer without a peer in his day, and in natural spontaneity without a superior in any day, a man of sunny temper and pure aspirations, genial, confiding, generous, and tender, he stumbled over the hardest places and broke down midway in his career, partly because he was in advance of his age and the untrodden path was too rough for him, and partly be-



HOUSE IN WHICH MOZART WAS BORN, SALZBURG.
(DRAWN FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LUDWIG HARDTMUTH.)

cause he did not know how to deal with the simple, every-day facts of existence. The little boy whom queens petted and savants praised, who saw life open before him so brilliantly, and "loving all the world, fancied all the world loved him," toiled through dreary days of poverty and neglect, saddened and discouraged, but hoping still because it was his nature to hope, and centering in a few short years the work and the suffering of threescore and ten.

If one were to choose a birthplace for its natural beauty, no lovelier spot could be found than Salzburg. Set in the midst of a smiling plain, with the green and wooded heights of the Capuzinerberg rising from a rocky and precipitous base on one side, the dark and somber Mönchsberg bounding it like a granite wall on the other, and an amphitheater of mountains towering behind them in solemn and picturesque grandeur, it is an ideal home for a poet and an artist. The old fortress still frowns from the rock-bound summit of the Hohen-Salzburg, guarding the narrow defiles through which the Salzach rushes swiftly down from the snowy peaks, that sweep away into the heart of the Tyrolese Alps. Beyond these

lie the sunny slopes of Italy. In this valley, which takes a half-melancholy tone from its mysterious legends and its capricious skies, was born in 1756 the fourth of the illustrious quintet of German masters which marked the golden age of music, and was completed by Beethoven. Bach had been dead six years. Handel died three years later, and Haydn was just struggling into fame. The place and the period were favorable for the peculiar gifts of Mozart. He was no less fortunate in his early surroundings.

It has been rarely accorded to the children of song to be so happy in their childhood. There is a pathetic tale of Handel at seven years of age, practising upon a dumb spinet in a cold attic to be out of the hearing of a violent father. Haydn made his way through poverty by the force of his own will. The young Beethoven was lonely and neglected. But Mozart had a pleasant home; limited in fortune it always was, and the family was compelled to practice the strictest economy; but love was there, and hope, with which no household can be quite desolate.

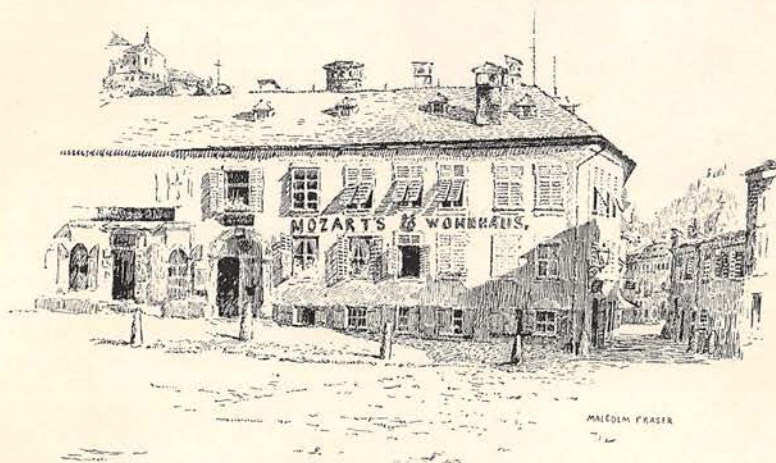
The father, who had been educated for the law, but afterward devoted himself to music and became violinist, then kapellmeister at the court of Salzburg, was a shrewd, prudent, judicious man, of fine literary tastes and much refinement. Wise and tender, as well as profoundly versed in his art, he seemed eminently fitted to mold the rich, pliant, spontaneous nature of his precocious son. His wife was a woman of great beauty and simple domestic tastes. In youth they were considered the handsomest couple in Salzburg. Only Wolfgang and the Nannerl, to whom he refers so often, survived out of a large family. To the training of these two gifted children the life of Leopold Mozart was devoted. "Next to God comes papa" was one of the son's childish sayings, and he never went to bed without kissing him on the tip of the nose after singing a little evening hymn of his own composition. He used to say that when his father was old he would put him in a glass case, that he might keep him always near and out of the dust. How touchingly the father refers to these happy days in the letters of after years! One can fancy a tear in his eye as he wrote them.

Every one is familiar with the marvelous stories of Mozart's childhood. We have been often told how the little boy of three years stood by the piano while his sister took her lesson, and astonished his father at its close by searching among the keys for a few moments with his baby fingers, then playing the exercise neatly

and correctly; how a year later he amused himself with writing minuets, and attempted a concerto which was free from errors, but so difficult that no one could play it; how he always insisted on carrying about his toys to the sound of music; how he covered the floor, the chairs, and the walls with figures in a fit of absorbing passion for mathematics—a talent which showed itself later in the remarkable precision with which musical ideas arranged themselves in his head, to be written down at a moment's notice. The exquisite delicacy of organization that made him shudder and turn pale at the sound of a trumpet, the fine ear that could detect the variation of an eighth of a tone in a

measured at less than his value, and the sad experience of his maturity was doubly hard when the wonted stimulus was withdrawn.

At six years of age the small, fair-haired child, with a delicate face and large expressive eyes, simple and gifted, loving and lovable, is the pet and delight of the greatest courts in Europe. But he is not at all dazzled by royal grandeur. Maria Theresa is only a kind and tender woman to him. He climbs into her lap and kisses her with an impulsive affection that touches her heart, while she smiles at his boldness and caresses him as any other woman would have done. He slips on the waxed floor, and the little Marie Antoinette helps him to



MOZART'S DWELLING IN SALZBURG.

violin from one day to another, the extreme susceptibility that could not bear a cold word from those he loved without tears—these were more or less essential parts of the outfit which nature bestows upon a musical artist. To a child so sensitive, so loving, so tremulously alive to the changing moods of those around him, an atmosphere of fostering warmth was a necessity. It left him free from the wear and tear of the emotions, and saved him from the morbid introspection that has darkened the lives of so many men of genius upon whom the world has pressed too heavily in their first years.

It was perhaps Mozart's misfortune to come before the world as an infant prodigy. Though his genius never suffered the deterioration which is the too frequent fate of precocity, the undue tension and excitement of his childhood inevitably consumed much of the physical vigor needed for prolonged and continuous effort. The wine of life was exhausted in the beginning. He received, too, the best the world had to give in praise and adulation. As the novelty wore off and he ceased to be a wonder he was

rise, upon which he promptly says, "You are good and I will marry you." Had she forgotten this childish incident when he was working and waiting so hopelessly for a ray of encouragement during those dark days in Paris? He tells the young prince that he plays out of tune, the same one who, as the Emperor Joseph II., might have assured him a fortune but did not. Fine words and cheering promises were about all the unfortunate composer ever received from the sovereign he loved and trusted to the end. Mozart had a vein of irrepressible humor, and we have an amusing picture of the boy in the gold-bordered lilac suit and moiré vest which the empress sent him, resplendent with his powdered curls, his bright knee-buckles, and his little sword, marching pompously about the room, in imitation of the dignified courtiers who had frowned upon his free sallies of wit. But the swift intuitions of the child go straight to the heart of things, and the approval of a simple man of science is worth more to him than the wondering applause of courts. As he sat down at the piano, he asked for Wagenseil and said to him, "I am going to play one of

your concertos; will you turn the leaves for me?"

He is petted also in the salons of Paris, at Versailles, and at the English court. He plays at sight the most difficult works of Handel, is equally master of the organ and piano, impro-



MOZART AT FOUR YEARS OF AGE. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH, OWNED BY THE MOZART MUSEUM, SALZBURG, OF THE PAINTING IN POSSESSION OF H. F. BAMBERG.)

vises with exquisite taste and the science of a kapellmeister, writes the base to given melodies without an instrument, and composes six sonatas for Queen Charlotte, whom he also accompanies with ease in the unfamiliar arias she sings for him. And he is not yet seven years old! The critical pen of Grimm grows eloquent in his praise. Gifts and caresses are showered upon him, and he finds himself altogether in a very rose-colored, happy world. This tour of more than three years, in which his sister, also a brilliant pianist, shared his successes, was a series of triumphs which might have turned an older head, but the little Wolfgang seems to have lost none of his childlike simplicity.

After a few more years of study his vision was still further deepened and broadened by a visit to Italy. He was then fourteen and was received with distinguished honors, being elected a member of the Academy of Bologna after a severe examination, and decorated by the Pope with the order of the Golden Spur. In spite of the excitement of seeing new places and new things, he writes motets and symphonies, composes the opera of "Mithridates," which he conducts with success at Milan, dashes off minuets and bits of dance-music for his friends, dallies with mathematics and the French classics, and studies with care the exquisite art of the Italian singers, as well as the theories and methods of the masters. He dines with Jomelli, whose operas he thinks too intricate and too antiquated for the stage, makes a lifelong friend of the learned Padre Martini, is pleasantly received

by the famous Farinelli, and praised by the "divine Hasse," who says, "This child will make us all forgotten." His letters to his mother and sister give us rapid sketches of his life at this time. They are an odd *mélange* in several languages, lively and dramatic, full of sparkling conceits and quaint comments upon men and things, mingled with affectionate inquiries after those he left at home; here a word of consolation to a sick friend for whom he has offered prayers in the cathedral, and there a message to the canary that sings in G sharp, or a kiss for "Miss Bimberl," his favorite dog. He is always running over with love and humor, but occasional light touches of mature criticism reveal a vein of serious thought, and give us swift glimpses of the treasures hidden in his young head. This side of his nature, however, usually finds vent in music, which conveys to the world so little of all there is behind it.

At Rome he accomplished the feat of copying Allegri's celebrated "Miserere" after a *single hearing*. This "Miserere" was a traditional heritage of the Sistine Chapel, and it was forbidden to copy it, under pain of excommunication. One can imagine the exaltation of the fine-souled boy hearing for the first time this sorrow-laden music, with the far-seeing eyes of Michelangelo's prophets and sibyls looking down from the vaults above, and the terrors of the "Last Judgment" before him, heightened by the deepening gloom as one after another the lights went out and the low chant filled the brooding darkness like a voice from the invisible world. "How I felt then! How I felt then!" he exclaimed long afterward in relating this memorable experience. A lesser genius would have been lost in the rush of overpowering emotions; and it is a striking proof of the remarkable balance between his sympathetic and artistic nature that he could carry away every note of the complicated music, to be put down on paper in his room, subject to a few trifling corrections on a second hearing.

One is always tempted to linger upon the childhood of Mozart. It was by far the happiest period of his life, the one in which his greatest personal triumphs were centered, the one in which his genius met the most cordial recognition. The severity of his studies was tempered by perpetual contact with the most distinguished artists of his time, while his observation of the great world, his intercourse with critical minds, and his familiarity with a wide range of musical tastes naturally counteracted all tendency toward a provincial accent.

But there was a reverse side to his early successes, which began to assume alarming prominence on his return to Salzburg. Musicians

there were little better than upper servants. Strictly speaking, their position was worse. The servants were fitted to their surroundings, and moved naturally among them, while artists of delicacy and education were cramped and humiliated. It must be said, too, that the Salzburg musicians were not as a rule of a character to please the Mozarts. It may be readily imagined that the young Wolfgang, fresh from a larger and more refined world, did not take kindly to these associations. "I detest everything that belongs to Salzburg," he said, "at least everything that is native here. The tone and manners of the people are insupportable to me." The new archbishop was a hard, tyrannical man, who made life still less tolerable to him. But places were the gift of courts, and independence of spirit was a quality few could afford. The elder Mozart had worn the fetters of practically forced servitude all his life, and felt that it was better to buy advancement at the cost of a few twinges of wounded pride than to starve in helpless freedom. His advice is always marked by worldly prudence, and there is, perhaps, a trace of servility in it. But this little weakness can be readily forgiven when we remember how much he did for the world by his untiring devotion to his son, and how poorly it repaid him in a lonely, disappointed age, doomed to a dire struggle with poverty even to the end, which brought him rest about four years earlier than it did his illustrious son.

It is to escape these humiliations and the irksome duties of a narrow sphere, in which, according to one of his biographers, he had worked five years for a trifle over a pound a year, that Mozart starts at twenty-one on the tour which is to leave such marked traces upon his genius as well as his destiny. His mother goes with him, while his father and sister are left alone by the desolate fireside.

HAD MOZART found the life of a court musician in a small German principality a little less hard, the world might have had another Palestrina, or perhaps another Bach, but it is not likely it would ever have known the Mozart it loves and reveres to-day. To understand the incalculable importance of his final visit to Paris from an artistic point of view, one must recall the musical conditions when he entered upon the scene. Nearly a century and a half had elapsed since a few Florentine dilettanti and composers, catching the echo of the Renaissance, had tried to revive the musical declamation of the Greeks, by introducing into the opera, recitatives which faithfully expressed the sentiment of the words. Their influence upon Italian music was slight and their names are mostly forgotten, except by the student who seeks them upon some remote

page of history. The opera was ruled by the singers, and these cared mainly to display the range and quality of their voices, while the indolent and pleasure-loving people of the south, wishing to be amused with the least effort, found the traditional arias strung upon a light dramatic thread most in accord with their taste and temperament. But, transferred to French and German soil, this germ of theory has developed by a series of evolutions into the magnificent musical drama of to-day. The two names which stand out most prominently in this dramatic reaction are Gluck and Mozart. The foundation of the richness of orchestration, which forms one of its chief features, was laid in the dim organ-lofts of Germany, where for



MOZART AT NINE YEARS OF AGE.
(FROM A PAINTING IN POSSESSION OF A. SANLLICH.)

more than a hundred years threadbare organists had been delving in the mysteries of counterpart and harmony—men who lived mostly in their own "palace of sounds," and died unknown, until one day Bach and Handel came before the world with their grand results. Bach was content to work all his life in his modest place for love of his art and a scant pittance, to go on weaving his incomparable harmonies until they were merged in the eternal harmony. But the web so "simple and subtle" was a web of gold on whose priceless treasures successive generations of artists have been nurtured. Handel wrote for thirty years according to the Ital-



MOZART, HIS FATHER AND SISTER—ALSO PORTRAIT OF HIS MOTHER. (FROM A PAINTING BY JOHANN NEPOMUK DE LA CROCE, IN THE MOZART MUSEUM.)

ian traditions, because he wrote for a world whose tastes had been molded upon them and because he must do so to live. When his colossal genius at last broke its fetters and he refused longer to subject his art to the vanity of singers or the caprice of fashion, the conflict began which has been waging ever since under slightly altered names and conditions. Handel and Buononcini divided London into parties as hostile as were the partizans of Gluck and Piccini in Paris a few years later. The classic and romantic schools which are merged in the Wagnerian and anti-Wagnerian factions of to-day have lost none of the old antagonism, though the point of divergence has moved along the changes of a century, and the iconoclasts of the past have become the conservative rallying-points of the present. The luminous point of perfection in all art that is reached but once and beyond which the divine ideal is lost in its mortal draperies—where does it lie? To-day asks this of yesterday, but to-morrow only can answer.

It was through the influence of Handel that Gluck, at fifty, changed his methods and worked out the theory that placed him at the head of the musical dramatists of his time, and made him the chief of a new school. It was Mozart's

mission to give permanent vitality to this school, and practically to found the national opera of Germany. That which Gluck had reached by long experience and carefully studied formulas Mozart grasped at once by the pure force of his native genius, and applied in his own way. What Gluck did for his generation Mozart transformed, expanded, and vitalized for all time. With the warmth and intensity of the south, tempered by the dreamy imagination of the north, he carried within himself the elements of dramatic power; but it was the circumstances of his life that led to their full development. The influence of Italy was still supreme in music, and he had been reared with Italian models always before him, though he had been familiar from infancy with Handel and other German masters. To a consummate gift of melody he added all the resources of science. He had perfectly mastered the language of his art, which was indeed his native language, and before reaching maturity had already tried his hand with more or less brilliant success upon every form of music. But thus far he had followed the old paths. Two things were yet needed to give his genius its final, distinctive, and original stamp—a deeper experience of life and a practical insight into the

possibilities of the lyric drama. The first was gained rapidly in the dark paths of adversity, and a fate that often shapes our ends more wisely than we know opened to him the last.

There is something inexpressibly pathetic in this tour of the young artist, of whom it had been said that monarchs would one day dispute the possession. He had always lived in a world of dreams and harmonies, free from care for the morrow. Now, for the first time, he finds himself adrift with no sage adviser to direct his steps. The education which had ripened his genius so rapidly began to cast its shadows over his life. His exemption from self-dependence to the years of manhood, the habit of being guided and protected that he might devote himself exclusively to the one end upon which the family counted so largely, were doubtless the source of irretrievable errors. Sheltered and petted as he had been, he naturally colored the world with the illusions of his own heart. At this point we begin to see that fatal defect of will, the "cloud no bigger than a man's hand," which gradually overspread the heavens until it blotted out the sun of his earthly existence. "My son," writes his anxious father, "in all your affairs you are hasty and headlong. Your whole character has changed. As a child you were rather serious than childish. Now, it seems to me, you are too quick to answer every one in a jesting way on the slightest provocation, and this is the first step toward familiarity which one must avoid in this world if he cares to be respected. It is your good heart's fault that you can see no defect in the person who pays you a clever compliment, that you take him into your confidence and give him your love."

True to these characteristics, we find Mozart perpetually turned aside from the end in view by the caprice of the moment. He lingers at Munich with a great deal of hope but very little encouragement, until his father, less trustful, bids him go on. At Augsburg he talks merry nonsense with his pretty cousin, lavishes gifts upon his friends, sends home sharp caricatures of the people he meets, asserts his independence with rather more spirit than discretion, but finds no prospect of a position. He fares little better at Mannheim. "They think because I am little and young that there can be nothing great and old in me," he writes. But he receives many pleasant words; meets the poet Wieland, of whom he makes a rapid but not altogether flattering pen-portrait; takes a violent prejudice against the learned Abbé Vogler, which he expresses rather too freely; gives a few lessons; and, finally, falling in love with Aloysia Weber, gravely proposes to his father to take her whole family to Italy for the sake of introducing this charming singer on the

Italian stage in an opera he wishes to write for her. His frank, generous nature leads him into a thousand wild schemes that are to benefit everybody but himself. He has no end of quixotic plans for his friends, and all must be happy in his Utopia. Genius is to be appreciated, and no one is to be poor or neglected. Blessed illusions of youth that keep always before the mind's eye the illuminated shadow of some happiness that is forever receding! But these visions are rudely dispelled by his father, who chides his long delay and sends him on to Paris. He leaves his heart behind him, and not in safe keeping, as the sequel proves.

It so happened that Mozart was led to the gay capital at the moment when the famous war between Gluck and Piccini was at its height, and Paris was divided into musical factions. Gluck was warmly supported by Marie Antoinette, and his battles were fought in the salons by Suard and the Abbé Arnauld. Piccini had on his side the old traditions, the patronage of Madame Du Barry, the wit of the Abbé Morellet, and the influence of La Harpe. Marmontel wrote librettos for him, and Rousseau ardently defended him, until, charmed and fascinated, he went over to his rival. Society ranged itself under these opposite banners. "Iphigenia" and "Armida" were the topics of the hour, and, in spite of a powerful opposition, Gluck was the fashion. In the midst of this excitement the public had little time to bestow upon a new aspirant for honors, and the artist who, in the judgment of posterity, was destined to eclipse Gluck upon his own ground had great difficulty in finding a hearing. Grimm introduced him in a few salons, but the young man of twenty-one had a very different reception from the boy of seven. French society and French manners had no charms for him; French morality repelled him. He disliked Paris as thoroughly as Mendelssohn did half a century later. Both were too serious and too earnest in their art, too delicate and poetic in their genius to please the light-hearted Parisians. If the tone of the great world was distasteful to him, he liked the musicians no better. His good nature is imposed upon, he is deceived with false promises, refuses the position of organist at Versailles as too obscure, gives a few lessons, hopes, and is disappointed. But he is not idle. His eager mind quickly divined the value of the new methods, as well as the superiority of the French drama. He studied with care the works of Grétry and of Gluck, omitting no opportunity to make himself familiar with French masterpieces. To some one who asked him if the study of the Italians would not be more profitable, he replied, "In all that regards melody, yes, but for truth of diction and dramatic expression, no." Mozart was be-



MOZART'S SPINET, IN THE MOZART MUSEUM.

fore all things a musician, and believed that "poetry in the opera ought to be absolutely the obedient daughter of music." He never accepted the theory of Gluck that the true function of music was to "add to poetry what vivacity of color, the happy accord of light and shade, add to a correct and well-composed design." But with his dramatic genius, his fine artistic sense, and his perfect mastery of the art of musical expression, he reaches simply and naturally a point which Gluck had touched from an opposite direction—a point where "the poem seems not less made for the music than the music for the poem." In the midst of this life, so unsatisfactory in its immediate results but so fruitful for his genius, the plans of Mozart were suddenly changed by the death of his mother. Alone in a foreign city, without experience and without consolation, he meets his first great sorrow. One is struck with the delicacy, the tender consideration for his family, the profound religious faith, and the unlooked-for worldly wisdom called out by the grave responsibility so suddenly forced upon him. In these dark days he turns to the only friend he has, and is for a time domesticated in the household of Grimm and the kind-hearted Madame d'Epinau. But the great critic is an ardent supporter of Italian music, and the innovating theories of the young composer do not please him. His interest, which from the first has lacked the enthusiasm he gave to the wonderful child, begins decidedly to cool. "Your son is too confident," he writes to Leopold Mozart, "not sufficiently active, too easily

imposed upon, too little occupied with the means that might lead to fortune. In order to make one's way here it is necessary to be shrewd, enterprising, bold. For his success I should wish him half his talent and double his tact; then I should not be embarrassed."

An offer of the position of court organist at Salzburg with a salary of five hundred florins, accompanied by a peremptory command from his father, at last turned Mozart's reluctant steps homeward. But a fresh grief awaits him. A change of fortune has come to the Webers, and the young girl whose image he has cherished so tenderly during those sad and dreary months is singing with brilliant success at Munich. She has tasted the intoxicating sweets of flattery, and, with her broadening horizon, she looks with different eyes upon the youthful lover from whom she had parted a short time before with so many tears. The picture we have of Mozart at this time was not one to strike the ardent fancy of a romantic girl. Success had not yet thrown about him its illusive aureole, and there was nothing in his personal appearance to indicate his superiority. It suggested delicacy rather than strength. He was small and slender, with a pale, thin face, fair hair, a nose that in later life became too prominent, and large, full eyes, which were dreamy and abstracted unless he was animated by music, when his whole countenance, so remarkable for mobility, lighted with inspiration. His head was too large for his fragile body, and he was vain of his small hands and feet. The beauty of his childhood was gone, and he had not the dignity of a well-poised maturity. A few months had sufficed to wear off the glamour of first love, and the boyish artist, in the red coat with black buttons he wore in mourning for his mother, stood divested of all illusions before the critical eyes of the capricious singer of scarcely more than sixteen. "I knew nothing of the greatness of his genius, I saw in him only a little man," she said long afterward. Mozart was at no time greatly given to brooding; his temperament was too elastic to be long weighed down. He had the heart of a child, that sheds a few bitter tears over its griefs and lets them pass. This disappointment was wept over and apparently forgotten, though it doubtless left its shadow. His fickle charmer married the actor Lange, but was not happy, and finally left him; her relations with the composer, however, were always friendly, and he seems to have cherished no resentment—indeed he congratulated himself in Vienna that her husband's jealousy saved him from the danger of seeing too much of her. His affections were transferred to her younger, less brilliant, and more domestic sister, Constance.

Mozart returns from his first mature venture

no richer in money or prospects and far poorer in heart and faith. He has won his little meed of applause from those who might have helped him, and been dismissed with a paltry gift, a watch, perhaps, of which he had already a superfluity, a snuff-box, or money enough to pay for a dinner. The extravagant hopes, the ardent expectations with which he left his home have had no realization, and he finds himself once more in the narrow cage against the iron bars of which he is beating out his life. He is constantly called upon for musical trifles to amuse the court, as well as for religious compositions, but the little leisure he can snatch from his daily duties is devoted to the dramatic studies which always had such an absorbing fascination for him. The first fruit of his Paris experience was given to the world in "Idomeneo," which was brought out at Munich early in 1781. The subject was taken from Grecian history, a field in which Gluck had won his fame. It is regarded by critics as a compromise between Italian and French methods. Mozart's gift of melody did not blind him to the larger possibilities of musical expression, and there is no more striking proof of the grasp of a genius so marvelously fitted to catch the inspiration of passing events and to portray life on its familiar and purely human side than the facility with which he could give natural and perfect voice to the conceptions of a heroic age.

In the midst of his triumphs he is summoned to take his place in the suite of the archbishop, who has gone to Vienna for the festivities that followed the accession of Joseph II. to the throne. This is the final turning-point in his career. The long series of humiliations that made life so intolerable to him in Salzburg reach their climax. He is forced to dine with cooks and valets, refused permission to add to his scanty income by playing at private concerts, and expected to wait in the antechamber, to be always ready for his tyrannical master's bidding. "At half-past eleven we take our places at the table," he writes,— "the two *valets de chambre*, the *controleur*, the pastry-cook, the two under-cooks of his Greatness—and my Littleness. The *valets de chambre* have the places of honor; I have the privilege of coming before the under-cooks." At last he can bear it no longer, and in a fit of anger and despair at some fresh outrage he resigns his position.

"A most self-sufficient young man," the archbishop thinks him. The world gossips about him. His father chides him and loses faith in him; but neither advice nor entreaties avail in the least to change his resolution. "It is the heart that ennobles the man," he writes in a burst of rage at being treated like a menial. This is an echo of the sentiment that breaks from the lips of the peasant poet who is toiling

and despairing at the same time among the bare and somber hills of Scotland. These children of song were both doomed to a hopeless struggle with adverse fortune, haunted by poverty, stung by the insults of patronage, and wounded by neglect. Both asserted themselves with the pride of genius and the dignity of conscious manhood, but the spirit of the coming age had found its voice too soon. Burns had a more combative temper, a stronger and more intelligible weapon to turn against the world that frowned upon him, though the shafts of his satire glanced from an impenetrable surface, and only crushed him in the rebound. The tragedy of Mozart's life has not been so clearly outlined in his work. It has found expression only in music that speaks from soul to soul, but tells no definite tale of wrong or suffering. The genius of these men was unlike, and they differed widely in character as well as education, but there is a certain kinship in the spirit that underlies the pathetic ballads of the one and the great tone-poems of the other. It is the spirit of love and humor, the intense humanity, the irrepressible sympathy with all living things that has brought them so near to the heart of the world. Both were poet-singers, both were clear, simple, tender, natural, and true. Both, toil-worn and unfortunate, died early, and it



MOZART'S GRAND PIANO, IN THE MOZART MUSEUM.

was left for another generation to shed its tears and cast its laurels over their graves. Nowhere is the bitter irony of fate more striking than in the stately mausoleums and magnificent statues reared over the dust or built in memory of these immortal singers. "I asked for bread and ye gave me a stone."

ALONE in a strange city, with necessity staring him in the face, a nature unfitted for the



STATUE OF MOZART BY BARRIAS, IN THE LUXEMBOURG, PARIS.

practical details of life, and without any resource but his genius, which had already made him the target for jealousy and malice, Mozart started at twenty-five on the brief, sad career of his maturity. The Vienna of 1781 was the musical center of Germany. Gluck was enjoying there the prestige of his Parisian fame and his seventy years of toil and success. Haydn was quietly living in luxurious ease in the pleasant service of Prince Esterhazy. Salieri, the great Italian master, whose history is so closely interwoven with the

misfortunes of Mozart's later life, but whose glory has long since been lost in that of his rival and victim, was at the height of his popularity. Numerous lesser lights clustered around these stars, shining with a paler luster or illuminated with a few rays of borrowed glory. The Emperor Joseph was himself a musician, as well as connoisseur, and took pride in the aid and encouragement he gave to artists. In this atmosphere, through the aid of a few sympathetic friends, Mozart establishes himself with a small capital of everything but genius and hope. In these he is rich. A little praise, a few fair promises are ample foundations for the most glittering of air-castles. On the strength of an encouraging word he even proposes to his father and sister to come and live with him, as he is sure to have enough for all. How sad seem these happy delusions by the light of after events! His main dependence for a time was his skill as a virtuoso. His facility in arranging popular dance-music brought him a small revenue, to which he added by giving a few lessons; but to the latter he had an unconquerable aversion, and his pupils were never numerous. It may be that his marvelous flexibility and flow of melody were favored by the pressure that compelled him to throw off a great number of unconsidered trifles on the spur of the moment; but it is impossible to estimate how many rare and serious masterpieces the world has lost through this sad necessity. He was literally forced to a daily struggle for existence. The money he was to send home, alas! never goes. He has very little for himself.

It was at this juncture of affairs, and on the basis of the prospects opened to him by a command from the emperor to write an opera, that Mozart took, with characteristic inconsequence, the most serious step of his life. After leaving the archbishop's service, he had found a home with his old friends, the Webers, who were then living in Vienna; but gossip soon began to connect his name with that of the daughter Constance, and he changed his abode. He had already lost his heart, however, though he vainly tries to conceal the fact from his suspicious father. There is a peculiar naïveté in his manner of introducing the subject at last. He preludes his confession with a long catalogue of reasons why he ought to marry. One is that he has never been in the habit of taking care of his linen. He thinks a wife desirable also to save superfluous expenses, referring to Constance as a sort of martyr who has to bear all the burdens of the family, and

dwelling upon the advantage of having a wife who is not at all extravagant. He touches lightly upon her personal attractions, which seem to have consisted mainly in a pair of bright black eyes and a pretty figure. "She makes no pretension to talent," he writes, "but has all that is necessary for the duties of a wife and mother. Her habits are simple, and she does not seek a fine toilet. She knows how to fit and make all that she needs, dresses her own hair, understands the care of a household, and has the best heart in the world. In fine, I adore her, and she loves me with all her soul. Frankly, could I dream of a better wife?"

But his little romance did not run smoothly. Not only did his father positively refuse his consent to the marriage, but Constance met with great opposition from her own family. She finally took refuge with the Baroness Waldstetten, under whose protection they were married in the summer of 1782. This generous friend took it upon herself to pacify Mozart's father, and paid the expenses of the simple wedding, advancing also the fifteen hundred florins required for the contract.

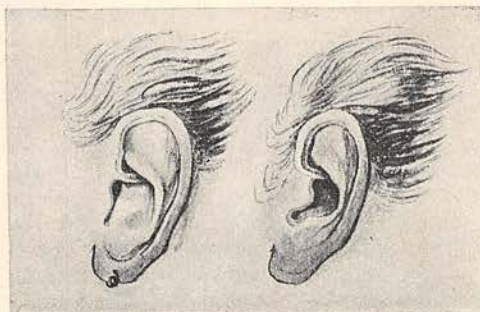
In spite of their poverty this marriage seems to have been a happy one. There was a strong effort at economy on the part of the young couple who had started on so small a basis. Mozart kept a careful account of his expenses for a while, and in his list of modest outlays there were some flowers for his wife, and a starling. He was always fond of animals, and kept a variety of birds. When this one died he buried it in the garden with a simple ceremonial, giving it a small monument and an inscription. But he was too little used to detail to continue this system, and their affairs soon began to go wrong. If the wife of eighteen was not eminently wise or judicious, she had much of her husband's careless gaiety of heart, which, in the inevitable perplexities of their *ménage*, was the best possible substitute. One morning a friend found them at an early hour waltzing in a rather vigorous fashion. To his surprised look of inquiry Mozart replied, laughingly, "It is an economical method of heating. We have no wood, and I thought a waltz might serve in the place of fuel." Constance sympathized with her husband's musical work without fully appreciating his genius. She sang very well, and the quality of her taste is shown in her passion for Bach's fugues. Mozart writes to his sister that she gave him no peace until he had composed something in the same style. She had also a talent for narration, which was often called into exercise in her husband's forced vigils. The evening before the performance of "Don Giovanni" not a note of the overture was written. At a late hour he asked his wife to make him a glass of punch

and to keep him awake. As the work went on she amused him with fairy tales, varied with original touches and interrupted with frequent bursts of laughter. At last the stories lagged and the master grew heavy. Throwing himself on a couch, he requested his watchful companion to call him in an hour. She let him sleep two. It was then five o'clock, and the copyists were to come at seven. It was only as the clock struck that the last note of this immortal masterpiece was written.

In all his family relations Mozart was the gentlest and tenderest of men. In his darkest moments he puts on a smile, for his adored wife. It is a sad smile, perhaps, with a trace of mockery in it, but if it saves her a care it has done its service. For years she was an invalid, and he used to write by her bedside while she slept, never permitting a sound to disturb her. When he went out in the morning for his early promenade he would steal softly into her room and leave a tender note to greet her waking. Here is one of them.

I wish you good morning, my dear little wife. I hope you have slept well and that nothing has disturbed your repose. Be careful not to take cold, not to rise too quickly, not to stoop, not to reach for anything, not to be angry with the servant. Take care also not to fall upon the threshold in passing from one room to another. Keep all the domestic troubles till I come, which will be soon.

Simple words, but they tell a story of unselfish devotion not too common. And this devotion endured as long as he lived. His last letters to his wife, written out of the depths of suffering and despair, glow with the warmth and tenderness of the most impassioned lover.



MOZART'S EAR. NORMAL EAR.
(FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY WÜRTHLE & SPINNHORN OF A
DRAWING IN THE MOZART MUSEUM.)

His nature was eminently a social one. He was naturally jovial, humorous, *insouciant*, and inclined to take the world on its sunniest side. He entered with great zest into harmless amusements, dressed well, danced well, was extravagantly fond of billiards, which permitted

him to pursue the thread of his musical thought, and personated characters in masquerades with inimitable talent. In such diversions he recovered himself after days and nights of toil. But his generous sympathy led him into perpetual trouble. He was always in debt, because he would borrow from one to relieve

a single word, "the wretch!" and his relations continued as amicable as before. Perhaps it was some late remorse that led the unscrupulous manager to say, after his friend's death, "I see the image of the dying man always before my eyes. His spirit follows me wherever I go and even haunts my sleep." So loyal



MOZART AT THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE.
(FROM A PAINTING IN POSSESSION OF THE HEIRS OF C. A. ANDRÉ, BY PERMISSION OF HERMAN KERBER.)

another, in his abundant hope never doubting his ability to pay. In his most pressing needs he was never too poor to help a friend. He pawned his watch to aid a worthless musician, who failed to redeem it, and put in his own pocket the money Mozart carelessly sent him for that purpose. If he had nothing else to give he would sit down and coin something from his fertile and overtaxed brain. In the depths of his distress, with a heavy debt hanging over him, an invalid wife, helpless children, and his own health rapidly failing, he wrote the "Magic Flute" for Schikaneder, a poor manager who betrayed his trust by disposing of the score which the generous composer had stipulated should remain in his own hands as sole payment for his work. When Mozart heard of this treachery he vented his indignation in

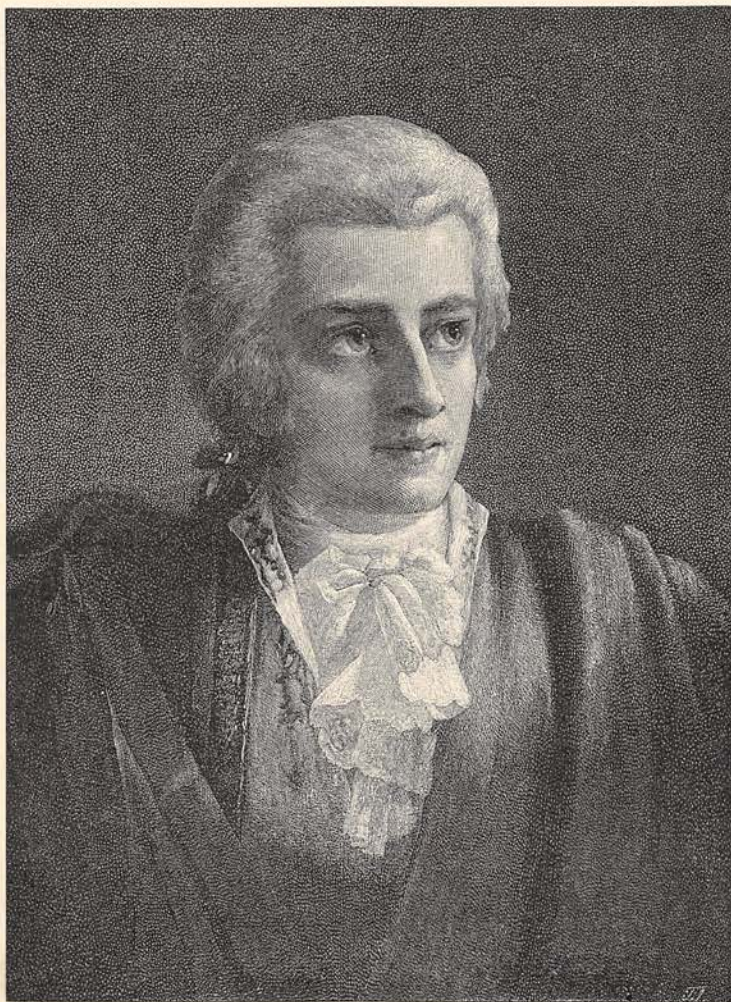
was Mozart's nature that he clung to his friends, in spite of neglect and injury. Near the close of his life he was offered the position of kapellmeister to the King of Prussia and a salary of three thousand thalers. "How can I leave my good emperor?" was his immediate reply. He was given a year to think of it, but a few kind words from the Emperor Joseph made him give up all thought of change, without even stipulating an improvement in his condition. This spirit of delicacy and self-forgetfulness is best appreciated in the abstract. In romances or on the stage the world applauds and weeps over it, in real life it shrugs its shoulders, offers perhaps a word of half-contemptuous pity, and passes by on the other side. It has small consideration for those who are in it but not of it.

Whatever Mozart may have suffered from his careless generosity, he seems to have been free from vice or dissipation. In his last days he was forced sometimes to sustain his flagging strength with stimulants, but we have the testimony of his wife that she never saw him intoxicated. The idle gossip of his enemies tried to make of him a Don Juan, and invented a startling little romance in which he was said to have played an unworthy part. But later investigations have proved this to be a myth, without even a foundation in fact. The whole spirit of his life, the internal evidence of his letters, his transparent truthfulness, as well as his rare and unceasing devotion to his wife, are living contradictions of such calumnies, and show him to have been a man of refined instincts and pure character. At heart he was profoundly religious. "Let not my papa be troubled," he wrote on his last Paris tour; "I have God continually before my eyes. I acknowledge his power and I fear his anger, but I know also his love, his pity, and his compassion. He will never forsake his servants. If things go according to his will, they will go also according to mine; so I cannot fail to be happy and contented." In his later life he became an ardent Freemason, and relaxed a little in the severity of his beliefs, but the beautiful spirit of trust in the Divine wisdom he cherished always. It was a religion of love that he craved and believed in, indeed it may be said that love was the keynote of his character.

That he was full of inequalities cannot be denied. It is impossible to make of him a symmetrical figure according to worldly models, or to present him as a perfectly poised man. His frank, open nature does not lend itself readily to idealization. There was none of the romantic mystery about him that cast such an illusive aureole over the more exclusive and self-centered Chopin, nor had he the fascinating personality of Mendelssohn. He does not pose in classical drapery, and his character was not commensurate with his genius. His judgment was the toy of his feeling and, excepting where his art or his honor was concerned, his will was weak and vacillating. But his very faults sprang from an unthinking nobility of soul. Without guile himself, he believed every one else was so. If he spent his last penny upon a moment's impulse, it was more likely to be for another's sake than for his own. If he plunged recklessly into pleasure, it was after days of ceaseless toil, when the tension must be loosened or the delicate strings would break. Excess in one direction was the momentary reaction from excess in another. If he lacked the tact of the courtier, his face beamed with truth and sincerity. He had the common heritage of artists, an organization fine and over-

wrought. If it ever led him astray the world can well afford to drop a forgiving tear, remembering how freely he gave to others of the best he had, and how little he kept for himself; remembering, too, the tender sensibility, the sweet simplicity of faith, the abounding sympathy, and the singular unworldliness that made him to the end a child in practical matters.

It is in his music that we must look for a measure of Mozart's intellectual power, which is shown nowhere else in lines proportioned to his greatness. But it is not so easy to catch the mental lineaments of musicians as of those who express themselves through a more definite and tangible medium. We may judge of their genius and their science, we may feel their strength, we may divine their spiritual complexion, but of the thoughts that furnish a definite key to their inner life we usually know very little. And of all musicians Mozart was the least personal in things pertaining to his art. We may often suspect that some profound experience has added a touch of vividness to his marvelous musical coloring, but we find nothing to suggest his own individuality. He traverses the entire gamut of human emotions, moves easily from romantic opera to the grandest forms of religious music, displays equal skill in broad comedy and an arrangement of Handel, constructs intricate fugues and massive symphonies with as much facility as the popular dance-music which was his surest means of livelihood. But he deals very little with formulas, and not at all with the psychological side of his work. He is not a singer of his own joys or sorrows. He is ruled by no dominant mood, lives in no narrow dreamland, cherishes no gloomy introspection. His soul is like an *Æolian* harp, which every passing wind wakens into melody. There is no more trace of his nationality than of his personality in most of his creations. He seems to have risen into a broader world, and it was this very breadth and universality that left him so alone in the great center of musical art. In his idyllic simplicity and the free, careless, sensuous spirit of the south, that runs like a thread of sunlight through so much of his music, he resembles Haydn; but he has greater breadth and spontaneity. He is finer, too, more delicate, more penetrating, and more passionate. If he did not reach the lonely grandeur of Beethoven, if his sensitive spirit did not find its inspiration in the eternal solitudes of a Titanic imagination, he had a warmer human sympathy, and the sunny healthfulness, the plastic beauty, the divine charm of the Greek ideals. His compositions have the symmetry, the lightness, the grace, the perfection of the Hellenic temples. His southern impetuosity is never violent, his de-



PORTRAIT OF MOZART.
(PAINTED BY LORENZ VOGEL, 1887. PHOTOGRAPHED BY FRANZ HAUFSTAENGL.)

lineations of passion are never exaggerated. "Music," he says, "ought never to wound the ear. Even in situations the most heartrending it should always please; in a word, music should always remain music." But he adds to the light-hearted *insouciance* and the unerring taste of the Greek something born of modern life—a voice from the great heart of a humanity that has become conscious of itself. He touches here the vein that Beethoven carried to its supreme point.

It is impossible in a brief essay that does not claim to be critical to consider the numerous and varied forms of composition left by this most prolific and versatile of masters. A single glance at the catalogue in which the seven hundred and seventy-nine of his known works are registered fills one with amazement at the gigantic results of his short life. In instrumental music he created no new forms, but he breathed

fresh spirit into the old ones. Preserving the symphonic frame of Haydn, he reveals new resources of harmony, opens wider perspectives, adds a warmer and more passionate coloring, and charms with his inexhaustible melody. In music for the church his deep religious nature finds its natural expression. How perfectly he enters into the mysteries of his faith is best shown in his own words. "Ah," he said one day to a Protestant friend, "you have your religion in the head and not in the heart; you do not feel the meaning of those words, *Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem*. When one has been, like myself, introduced from the tenderest infancy into the mystic sanctuary of our religion; when, with a soul agitated by vain aspirations, one has assisted at the Divine service where music translates these holy words, *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*—oh, then it is very

different. Later, when one is wearied with the void of a vulgar existence, these first impressions, ineffaceable in the depth of the heart, revive and rise to the mind like a sigh that expands." The tremulous prayer of a tender mother, the impassioned longing of a world in tears, the serene and pitying voice of Divine consolation, the anthem of joy and the hymn of sorrow—all these find a fresh and more poetic color in his inspired strains.

But it is in the musical drama that Mozart has won his most permanent fame. Here his special gifts, his clearness, his flow of melody, his knowledge of stage effects, his command of orchestral coloring, his dramatic genius have their fullest scope. If he had met in the Emperor Joseph as sympathetic a friend as Wagner found in the Bavarian king a century later, what might not have been accomplished by his fertile pen? But the music-loving emperor never at all comprehended the treasure within his reach. He recognized Mozart's talent for instrumental music and his gifts as a virtuoso, but did not appreciate his compositions for the voice. "Much too fine for our ears and too many notes" was his comment after hearing "Il Seraglio." "Precisely as many as are needed," replied Mozart, with more frankness than tact. Yet this work is regarded to-day as the germ of the national opera which it was the ambition of both to found. Weber, who was the legitimate successor of Mozart in this field, said that it represented the full maturity of his genius. "I find in this work," he remarked, "the reflection of his youth, that flower of life which blossoms no more when once it is closed." The fame of the composer rests more assuredly upon his later works; but "Il Seraglio" was written just before his marriage, the heroine bearing the name of his wife, and he has left upon it the stamp of the poetry born of youth and love.

He returns to his early ideals in the "Magic Flute," which marked his last triumph. When he wrote it youth and hope were gone; his wife, through the kindness of a friend, had gone to Baden to recruit her shattered health; poverty, sickness, and debt were pursuing him; and he was already a prey to the saddest presentiments. The shrewd manager, knowing Mozart's disposition to put off finishing the works that shaped themselves with such facility in his head, installed him in a small pavilion in a garden near the theater—the pavilion which now stands on the Capuzinerberg overlooking Salzburg—a late legacy from the city that gave him a pauper's grave to the city that gave him birth and rudely sent him adrift to his death. In this quiet spot, enlivened by the convivial stories of his friends who sought thus to drive away his melancholy, Mozart finished the ex-

quisite creation whose rich fruits he was destined never to reap, in the early days of the last summer of his life. "If I do not help you, my poor Schikaneder, and if the work does not succeed, you must not blame me, for I am not used to writing fairy tales." But what delicacy of imagination, what subtle delineations, what touches of humor, what wealth of fancy! Upon a weak and flimsy libretto he has constructed a fairy palace of harmony. Among Mozart's dramatic works, Beethoven preferred the "Magic Flute," because "here alone he has shown himself truly German."

But the dramatic gifts of Mozart reached their culminating-point in "Don Giovanni." This imperishable work, written in six weeks in a picturesque suburb of the quaint old city of Prague, where he had the inspiration of cordial sympathy and appreciation, illustrates better than any other the distinguishing traits of his many-sided genius. Its wide range of life, its artistic truth, its perfection of detail, its philosophical depth, its marvelous character-painting, combined with its richness of instrumentation and its inimitable musical coloring, give it a place apart in the history of the lyric drama. From the few weird and solemn modulations at the beginning of the overture, which foreshadow the tragical close, to the magnificent finale, which is in itself a masterpiece, it is a striking illustration of the power of music to paint the thousand varying shades of human emotion. Mozart was eminently the musician of humanity. His observation was of the keenest, and the rapidly changing phases of life mirrored themselves with wonderful distinctness in his clear intelligence. With a few notes, a few simple chords, he seizes an individuality. His characters do not speak in artificial formulas, which must be learned before they have a living significance. So perfectly is his language in unison with his thought that it seems but a more etherealized expression of it. Mocking humor, grief, outraged dignity, love, passion, fear, despair twine and intertwine in the texture of the music, like many-colored threads which may be traced with unerring clearness in the illuminated web of harmony. With what justness, what simplicity is each character defined against the ever-shifting background of a grand symphony! Nothing is exaggerated, nothing stilted, nothing artificial. It is the last touch of color given to a portrait that marks the mastery of the artist, the subtle insight of the poet. This touch adds the divine flame, the living soul. Here Mozart was supreme. He has portrayed the characters of the quaint old Spanish legend so naturally, so gracefully, so vividly, and so humorously that the world has laughed and wept over them for nearly a century, and, in spite of the inherent

vulgarity of the subject, the work is as fresh to-day as when it was written. It was said by Goethe that Mozart alone could worthily have interpreted his "Faust."

It is somewhat the fashion to contrast the work of Mozart with that of his great modern successor. In his own day he was subjected to much of the same criticism that Wagner suffers in ours, but the genius of the two men was essentially unlike. Wagner was first poet, then musician. With his fiery soul seething in revolt against the limitations of life as he found it, the wild legends of unrest, the savage freedom of a heroic age had a natural fascination for him. His colossal imagination reveled in the grand conceptions, the grand passions of a primeval world, and he called upon all the arts to serve him in the creation of a new art which should adequately represent them. This art is like a magnificent kaleidoscope which at every turn reveals a thousand fleeting forms, each more beautiful and more evanescent than the last. The genius of Wagner has something massive, virile, and superbly passionate, after the manner of the heroes of a twilight age. Mozart is the inspired singer in whose delicate imagination the sentiments and emotions of universal humanity are transfigured into forms of enduring beauty. Grace, melody, sweetness, healthfulness, simplicity are his dominant traits. Underlying all this are the subtle essence of poetry and the spirit of love. But his sentiment never degenerates into sentimentality, nor his delicacy into weakness. His lyre has many strings, and his song is clear and vigorous. It is the harmonious blending of all the colors that gives the pure white light. Wagner sought in music the supreme expression of his thought. In Mozart it was the simple and spontaneous incarnation of the thought. Both were creators, both poets, both artists unrivaled in their sphere. It is the Titanic force of a Michelangelo and the spiritual grace of a Raphael.

THE record of Mozart's life during its closing years is little more than a series of struggles for the bare necessities of existence, brightened by a few successes that brought him more fame than money. Grave responsibilities crowded upon him, and he had no means of meeting them. Night and day he toiled, but it was the hopeless effort to "climb the ever-climbing wave." These hours of unrewarded labor were claiming their penalty, and he was slowly dying, while fortune showered its favors upon inferior rivals. Some of his best works were killed by powerful cabals. "Figaro" was driven from the stage after a brief success by a work that is not heard of to-day. "Salieri and his set are moving heaven and earth to kill it," wrote Leopold Mozart, who was in Vienna on his first

and last visit to his son. Even "Don Giovanni" had a cold reception, except in Prague. "It is celestial music," said the emperor, "but, unfortunately, it does not agree with my Viennese." "Ah, well!" replied Mozart on hearing of this remark, "let them take time to digest it." To some one he said, "'Don Giovanni' was written for the people of Prague, but, before all, for a few friends and myself."

He was heavily in debt; he could borrow no more; his wife was ill, and his strength was gone. It is pitiful to read of the dire straits to which he was reduced. A letter to the kindly Puchberg reveals the depth of his distress:

You are right, my dear friend, to leave my notes without response. My importunity is truly very great; but consider my frightful position, and you will pardon my persistence. If you can still once more relieve me from a momentary embarrassment—oh, I pray you to do so for the love of the good God; I will accept with gratitude the least thing you can spare.

"Write in a more easy, popular style," said his publisher, "or I will not print a note nor give you a kreutzer." "Then, my good sir," replied Mozart, whose artistic conscience was incorruptible, "I have only to resign myself and die of hunger." After the death of Gluck he received the appointment of chamber-musician to the imperial court, with a salary reduced from two thousand to eight hundred florins. "Too much for what I do, too little for what I could do," was Mozart's comment upon an office that brought him few duties, small pay, and little honor. "I cannot contain my indignation," said Haydn, "when I think that this rare man is still in search of a position, and that neither prince nor sovereign has an idea of attaching him to his service." To Leopold Mozart he remarked, "I swear to you, upon my honor and before God, that in my opinion your son is the greatest composer in the world."

The last work of Mozart was a fitting close to the tragedy of his life. One cannot read the oft-told tale of the "Requiem" without a sympathetic tear. The light of subsequent facts has long since dissipated the atmosphere of mystery that hung over it for so long a time. We know now that it is to the vanity of a man willing to make his wife's death the occasion for posing before the world in borrowed plumes as a musical composer that we owe this immortal funeral-hymn. With Mozart's extreme susceptibility, heightened by his failing health and his dark outlook, it is not strange that the somber and unknown messenger who appeared before him to order a requiem for a nameless friend seemed to foreshadow his own doom. Haunted by this conviction, he rallied all his drooping energies for this final work. "I wish

to condense in it all my art, all my science," he writes to his wife, "and I hope that after my death my enemies, as well as my friends, may find in it instruction and a model." He was interrupted in the midst of it by an order to write an opera for the great festival at Prague. "*La Clemenza di Tito*" was written and put on the stage in eighteen days; then Mozart returned to his last task. He was pursued by the idea that he had been poisoned, and in order to divert his mind his wife took away his work. His spirits revived a little, and after a few days of repose he called for his music again. To a friend, probably Du Ponte, who tried to sustain his courage, he wrote a note in Italian, the last we have from his hand:

I would willingly follow your counsel, but how can I do it? My mind is struck, and I cannot dispel the image of that unknown man. I see him continually before me; he presses me, pursues me without ceasing, and urges me to composition in spite of myself. When I wish to stop, the repose fatigues and harasses me more than the work. Must I say it? I regard the future without fear or terror. I feel that my hour is about to strike. I touch the limits of my life. I am going to die before having enjoyed the fruits of my talent. Yet life is so beautiful! My career opened under such happy auspices! Alas! one cannot change his destiny. No one here is master of his fate, and I resign myself. It will be as it pleases God; as for myself, I must finish my funeral-hymn.

Into this exalted work he breathed the last flame of his divine genius. In the hymn of death the sorrows, the longings of his life found voice. Who can listen to the sublime and heart-rending strains of the "*Lachrymosa*" without feeling that beneath the prayer for pity is the cry of a suffering human soul? It is the prayer of the world translated into a form of everlasting beauty by one who adds to the divination of the poet a subtle something born of individual tears.

In the intervals of fever and delirium Mozart still works at the "*Requiem*," giving directions also to Sussmayer as to its completion. Just how much was left for this pupil to do can never be exactly determined; but it is well known that the master usually had every note of his compositions in his head before putting anything on paper, and it is not in the least probable that, conscious of the nearness of the end, he left the last touches of so important a work to be added by another without giving him the outlines and motives of the unfinished parts, together with his plan of instrumentation.

While the public of Vienna was wild with enthusiasm over the "*Magic Flute*" Mozart followed the nightly performance in his bare little room, with a watch beside him, counting the fast-fleeting moments as the play went on.

"Ah! Sophie," he said to his sister-in-law, whom he had thoughtfully asked to stay with Constance the last night of his life, "did I not tell you that I was writing the '*Requiem*' for my own funeral?" A few hours before the end he joined the friends at his bedside in singing the parts already finished. At the "*Lachrymosa*" he began to weep, and could sing no more. He died with the score beside him.

"As death, taken all in all, is the true end of life," he said in his last letter to his father four years before, "I have grown so familiar for a couple of years with this real and devoted friend, that its aspect, far from inspiring me with terror and fear, offers me only consoling thoughts and sweet hopes. I thank God for having accorded to me the favor of looking upon it as the key to our veritable beatitude."

These closing days brought him the certainty of a competence. After the brilliant success of the "*Magic Flute*" offers crowded upon him that opened a future of comparative ease. But it was too late.

His last act was one of love. Having received the appointment of kapellmeister at the cathedral, he requested that his death should be kept secret until Albrechtsberger had secured the succession to the place which was not yet vacant.

"It is indeed a pity for the great genius, but fortunate for us that he is dead," said Salieri. "If he had lived longer, no one would have given us a morsel of bread for our work." It is pleasant to recall in contrast the cordial appreciation of Haydn. "Oh, my friends!" he exclaimed with tears, when the tidings of Mozart's death reached him in London, "will the world ever find such an artist again?" Years afterward, when the conversation turned one day upon the unfortunate composer, he wept like a child. "Pardon me," said he, "but I can never hear the name of my gentle Mozart pronounced without breaking my heart."

The hand of a pitiless fate pursued the master even to the tomb. There was no money to buy a grave, and Van Swieten, a rich amateur for whom Mozart had done a great deal of gratuitous work, and who attended to the details of the funeral, did not think it worth while to expend a few florins to give him a respectable burial. No solemn requiem for one who had written the funeral hymn of the world! No stately service to mark the public regard for the illustrious dead! A poor bier in one of the small side-chapels of the cathedral, a handful of friends, a simple prayer—that was all. The little cortège went out into a driving storm. As if Nature wept over the pathetic scene, the rain fell in torrents, mingled with scattered snowflakes tossed about by the violent wind. One by one the straggling friends dropped off, and

at the gate of the cemetery only one faithful servant was left. So the greatest musical artist of his time was laid in a common trench, side by side with the nameless poor, without a friend to drop a tear or mark the place where he rested. His wife was ill, prostrated with grief. When she was able to go out the grave-digger, too, was dead, and no trace of the spot where Mozart lies has ever been found.

In one corner of the cemetery at St. Marx stands to-day a solitary monument surrounded by the little white crosses that mark the graves of the nameless poor for a few years, until they are taken away to make room for the newly dead. A pedestal of gray granite is surmounted by the bronze figure of a Muse sitting upon a pile of books bearing the names of Mozart's principal works. In her left hand she holds a harp, which rests upon a wreath of laurel hung carelessly over the books, while the right hand grasps the score of "Dies Iræ." The head

droops in pity, and the face is unutterably sad. The four corners of the base bear each a candelabrum twined with laurel. The front of the pedestal has a bronze relief of the composer, and the rear a wreathed harp. On one side is written "Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, born January 27, 1756; died December 5, 1791." Nearly seventy years after his death this tardy tribute was erected over his supposed burial-place.

But genius has left its own imperishable monument. The world still laughs and weeps over Mozart's divine creations, when he who would have been gladdened by its sympathy is no longer conscious of it. The inspired singer of Salzburg, who felt so keenly and voiced so perfectly the joys and the sufferings of humanity, sleeps in an unknown grave; but his sorrowful face looks back upon us to-day across the mists of a century crowned with a radiant immortality though veiled in eternal tears.

Amelia Gere Mason.



REMEMBRANCE.

(FROM A JAPANESE GARDEN.)

ONE year ago, a bleak November,
I walked along the chilly ways
Where through the gray, damp, misty haze
The Isis flows.

How well, how clearly, I remember
The drear homesickness for the sun,
There where the skies were always dun,
And life dull prose.

And now, this radiant November,
Where gold chrysanthemums upraise
A glory o'er my garden-ways,
And blooms the rose,

With some strange longing I remember
Gray Oxford, 'neath her skies of dun.
Alas, that I should be her son,
And love her prose!

William Sharp.