

terpiece in which he shows a style of his own. This is the "Regents" in the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam, which was painted in 1649. It is a portrait group of great excellence, and has been ranked superior to Rembrandt's works in the truthfulness of its flesh-tones. It is a large canvas (eight feet long by six feet high), and represents the regents, or governors, of the Lepers' Hospital at Amsterdam,—an institution abandoned in 1862. There are four figures, clad in black, and wearing broad-brimmed hats, the solemnity of their attire being relieved by the rich Persian covering of the table at which they are seated, while an attendant leads in a poor child whose disfigured head tells the story and motive of the work. Charles Blanc mentions that on the occasion of an exhibition of paintings for some charitable purpose, this canvas, which had hung forgotten and unnoticed for two centuries in the old Leper House, created quite a sensation; and that during the exhibition Rembrandt was neglected for the sake of this fine work by his pupil.

Another life-size group by Bol in the Ryks Museum, representing the lady patronesses of the same institution, is equally fine; and, as

Bürger remarks, "When one has seen these two works, one places Bol above Van der Helst himself, and second only to his great master." The excellence attained by Bol at this later period is further shown by the fine "Portrait of an Astronomer," the only work of this artist in the National Gallery of London. It is dated 1652—the year in which Bol went to Amsterdam.

His works are scattered through a score of European museums. The subject which I have engraved—"Portrait of a Man"—is in the Louvre at Paris, and is dated 1659. It is a plain, matter-of-fact subject, agreeably varied upon the canvas, frankly disposed in all its parts, and its very careful and smooth finish bears evidence of a discreet hand. Its color is a simple scheme of rich warm tints, but neutral. From the deep, tender darks of the dress up through the browns of the background, and from the delicate greenish tints of the sky to the mellow tones of the flesh,—the culminating point of the harmonious whole,—all is sensitively bound together by a very subtle feeling for harmony. The canvas measures three feet three inches wide by three feet ten inches high.

*T. Cole.*

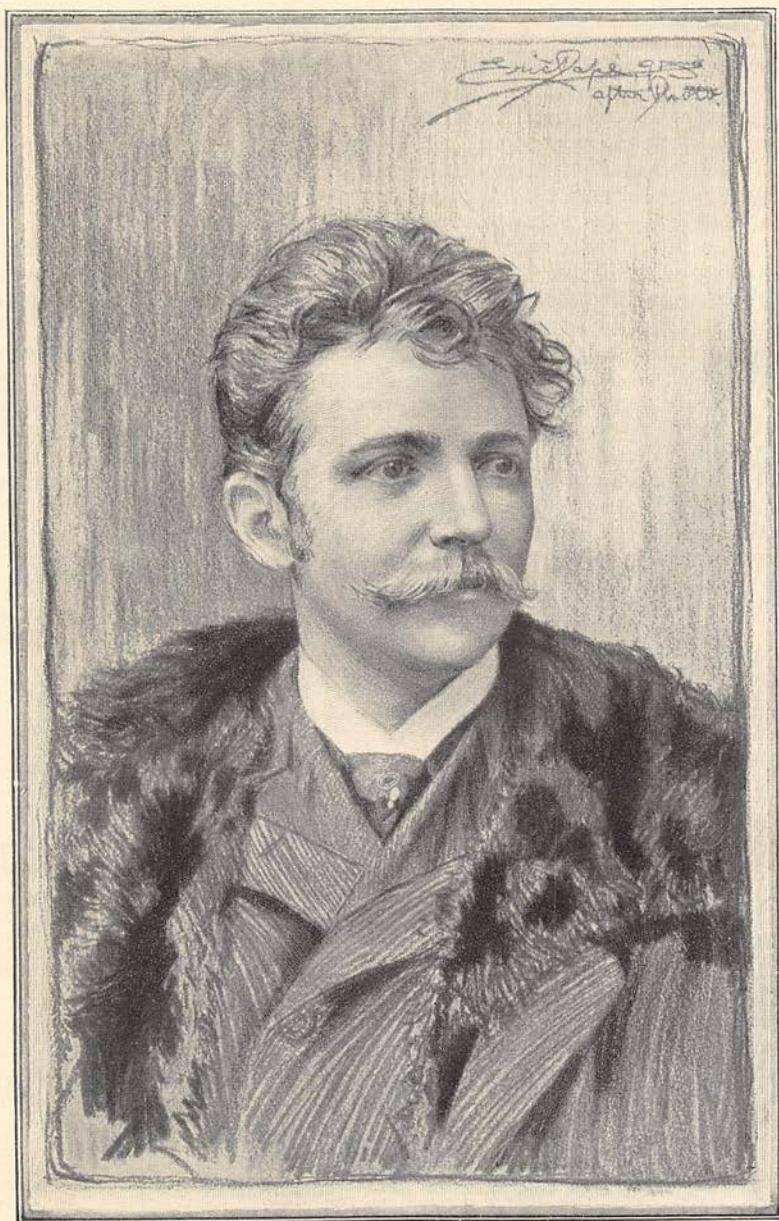
## BERNHARD STAVENHAGEN.



**V**HILE the modern pianoforte owes its perfection as an instrument chiefly to the acoustic ingenuity of Italian, German, and American inventors, the art of playing it might almost be called a Slavic-Hungarian specialty. The Polish Chopin, Tausig, Paderewski, Josef Hofmann, and Slivinski; the Russian Rubinstein and Pachmann; the Hungarian Liszt, Heller, Joseffy, have for decades almost monopolized this branch of modern music. Italy has never produced a pianist of the first rank, nor has France, nor England; while even the leading musical country had for a long time only Clara Schumann and Hans von Bülow, the latter a great teacher rather than a poetic interpreter like his Slavic and Hungarian rivals. About fifteen years ago there appeared on the concert stage a new pianist whose success was instantaneous while his nationality long remained a puzzle. Eugen D'Albert was born in Scotland; but his name is almost as French as that of his father—Charles Louis Napoleon D'Albert. Nevertheless he has declared authoritatively, in a recent autobiographic sketch, that he is of strictly German parentage; and he is certainly entirely German in his style of composition and manner of playing.

In 1880 another German pianist made his début in Berlin. His name was Bernhard Stavenhagen. He was then eighteen years old, having been born on November 24, 1862, at Greiz. His waiting so long before making his first public appearance indicates that he was not a youthful prodigy. Nevertheless there were indications of his musical talent in his childhood; and he was only eleven years old when his father decided definitively to make a musician of him. So he took young Bernhard to Berlin, where he studied first at Kullak's New Academy of Music, then at the Royal High School. At sixteen he decided to devote himself exclusively to the piano and composition, Friedrich Kiel being his instructor in that department, in which he soon attained such proficiency that in 1880 he was awarded the Mendelssohn prize.

It is worthy of note that Mr. Stavenhagen's unusual talent was recognized at once, and that among his musical sponsors were some of the most eminent German critics. Richard Wuerst credited him after his first Berlin concert with "good technique and taste." H. Erler discovered "the divine spark" in his playing, and admired especially his "bewitching piano and pianissimo, and his remarkably even trill." T. Krause predicted that if this young man did not rise to take his place among the leading



DRAWN BY ERIC PAPE.

BERNHARD STAVENHAGEN.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY SARONY.

pianists it would be his own fault. Alexander Moszkowski called attention in 1884 to the fact that Mr. Stavenhagen was the first pupil of the Berlin high school destined to establish its fame as a training-school for artists. Still there was a "but" in the critical approval. It was asserted that his cantilena was somewhat dry, his technic not infallible, and that his performance of a Liszt rhapsody lacked the pinch of "paprika," or red pepper. He probably realized his shortcomings more vividly than the critics,

wherefore he determined in the summer of 1885 to become a pupil of Liszt.

In one of his letters Liszt refers to the fact that concert-givers in remote localities often made unwarranted use of his name. A pianist named Listmann went so far as to drop the last four letters of his name, "for which he received a costly present from the Sultan Abdul-Medjid." That was an extreme case, but the label of "Liszt's favorite pupil" has been claimed by so many pianists of both sexes that it has

acquired almost a comic aspect. August Gölle-  
rich's biography of Liszt gives a list of 417  
names of men and women who were at one  
time or another among the great pianist's pu-  
pils. As this list includes such names as Anton  
Rubinstein, Hans von Bülow, Carl Tausig, Ra-  
fael Joseffy, Eugen D'Albert, Camille Saint-  
Saëns, and a dozen others almost equally well  
known, it takes some courage to assume such  
a title. Mr. Stavenhagen, however, might fairly  
claim that he was Liszt's "favorite" in the last  
years of his life; for Liszt chose him as his con-  
stant companion for eighteen months, and took  
him along on his last trip to Paris, London, Buda-  
pest, and Bayreuth. At Budapest Mr. Stavenha-  
gen had plenty of opportunity to catch the spirit  
which animates Liszt's Hungarian music; for  
there, as he says, "you cannot eat your supper  
without listening to a gipsy band." In taking  
him along to London, Liszt appears to have  
harbored the *arrière pensée* of passing him off  
as his pianistic *alter ego*. It is well known that  
during the last thirty-nine years of his life Liszt  
stubbornly refused to play in public except on  
rare occasions for an urgent charitable or ar-  
tistic cause. He had not been in England for  
forty-five years, and knew that every effort  
would be made to induce him to play with his  
seventy-six-year-old fingers. Instead of doing  
so, he put forward as his official interpreter Mr.  
Stavenhagen, who gave a special Liszt recital  
which the master attended, and which, accord-  
ing to the newspapers, was a brilliant success.

With such practical indorsement of his mas-  
ter's esteem, far more eloquent than written  
words, Mr. Stavenhagen began his career as  
concert pianist anew after Liszt's death, which  
came so very soon after his visit to London.  
It is almost pathetic to read the expressions  
of relief uttered by the German critics after  
once more hearing an artist of his caliber.  
These poor fellows, who have coined the word  
*Klavierkrankheit* (piano-sickness), analogous  
to our seasickness, found the new pianist a  
pleasant change and a tonic. "At last," ex-  
claims Gumprecht, "a piano recital that not  
only has done no damage, but has actually  
given us pleasure!" "It was," exclaimed Otto  
Lessmann on another occasion, "an evening  
which atoned for the tortures of a dozen ordi-  
nary recitals." These are expressions of North  
German opinion, which is not easily stirred to  
enthusiasm. In the more southerly Vienna,  
the leading critic—Dr. Hanslick—declared  
that Stavenhagen has "a hundred varieties of  
touch," and that he "sings, talks, tells stories,  
and gossips on the piano." After one of his  
Vienna concerts the audience absolutely re-  
fused to leave until he had added five extra  
numbers. At St. Petersburg even this record  
was beaten, the audience compelling him to

play seven extra pieces—not trifles either, one  
of them being the Moonlight Sonata. The  
adoption of Rubinstein's trick of sending his  
assistant to lock the piano had no effect; it  
had to be unlocked again.

It was, of course, only a question of time  
when Mr. Stavenhagen would be invited to  
make an American tour. He made his New  
York début on December 12, 1894. Carnegie  
Hall was not crowded on this occasion; here  
again, as in the case of Mr. Paderewski and  
other artists of foreign repute, it was shown that  
New Yorkers are skeptical, and like to wait for  
a verdict from local musicians and newspapers,  
before buying tickets. But the auditorium  
contained most of the leading professionals of  
the city, whose cordial applause was more elo-  
quent than that of a miscellaneous audience,  
in view of the proverbial jealousy and envy of  
professional musicians. Not a few were sur-  
prised that he should have introduced himself  
with Beethoven's third concerto, which belongs  
to the master's early period, and is not spe-  
cially interesting in itself or "grateful" (as the  
Germans say) for the pianist. It has been a  
favorite of his, it seems, for twelve years, and  
he may perhaps have chosen it originally by  
way of refuting the insinuation that he was  
merely a Liszt-player. It certainly enabled  
him to show that he understands the chaste  
simplicity of the old classical style quite as well  
as the brilliant modern style of Liszt. Its beau-  
ties were revealed with delightful clearness, all  
the phrases being as clean-cut and sparkling  
as the facets of a cut diamond. It is worthy  
of note—and rather amusing, by the way—  
that Mr. Stavenhagen is perhaps the only pi-  
anist that ever visited this country whose abil-  
ity to play Beethoven correctly was conceded  
by the "united press" from the beginning. It  
has always been a funny habit of the critics,  
beginning with Beethoven's own playing of  
his works and ending with Paderewski's, to deny  
that anybody could play Beethoven correctly.

Perhaps Mr. Stavenhagen chose the unfam-  
iliar third concerto instead of one of those  
more favored by pianists and audiences, by way  
of protesting against what is one of the most re-  
grettable of concert customs—the tendency of  
pianists to run in the same rut, to play certain  
sets of pieces for no obvious reason than because  
others have played them; the consequence be-  
ing that these pieces become mercilessly hack-  
neyed, while others, perhaps more beautiful,  
remain practically unknown. For instance,  
there are three or four of Chopin's nocturnes  
which every concert pianist plays, while the  
others are neglected. Mr. Stavenhagen seems  
to make it a point—and this is one of his great-  
est merits—to bring forward such neglected  
pieces. One of these is Chopin's alternately

dreamy and passionate C sharp minor nocturne, a superbly dramatic piece which might be called a five-minute opera. In a career of thirteen years as a professional critic I had never heard this favorite of mine played in public till Mr. Stavenhagen played it. I felt grateful for the innovation, even though I would not class him among the great Chopin players. No German pianist appears to have ever quite caught the subtle, capricious tempo rubato which is the soul of Chopin. Mr. Stavenhagen, like all his Teutonic colleagues, lacks it. It is a matter of temperament, and cannot be taught. In Schumann, too, Mr. Stavenhagen appears to me not entirely satisfactory. Schumann, it is true, was a German, but there is in the complicated rhythmic structure and habitual syncopation of his music something which assimilates it to the Slavic school. It takes Mr. Paderewski to bring out all the tone-wit and humor of the "Papillons."

In the music of Schubert there is a certain Viennese air of capriciousness, foreshadowing the rubato of the Strauss concert waltz. In this Viennese atmosphere Mr. Stavenhagen feels more at home; he evidently loves his Schubert, either in the original or in the garb of Liszt's arrangements. He is also fond of Bach as modernized by Liszt; and, what is more, he is able to rouse a miscellaneous audience to enthusiasm by his grand interpretation of Liszt's somber, majestic, and enormously difficult variations on the Bach theme from "Weinen und Klagen."

It is, however, as an interpreter of Liszt's own works that we can admire his art most unreservedly. He evidently plays Liszt by preference, and by no means as a mere act of apostolic gratitude toward his teacher. The Liszt missionary has a large field; few, even among professionals, realize how very large it is. The number of Liszt compositions exceeds 1230! Among these are 351 transcriptions for the piano of works by other composers, and 155 original compositions for the piano (two hands). Only a very small proportion of these pieces are known to the public; but they are gaining ground every year, in spite of the amazingly persistent opposition of the professional critics. It took some courage on Mr. Stavenhagen's part, in 1886 and 1887, to give special Liszt recitals in London, where prominent critics soberly informed their readers that "to play Liszt well requires little more than the necessary amount of physical force," or in regard to the superb variations on the theme from "Weinen und Klagen," "to attempt a description of this terrible infliction would be a waste of time." But Mr. Stavenhagen, like Mr. Paderewski, Mr. Friedheim, Mr. Pachmann, and others, pays no heed to

these attempts at critical intimidation, and continues to play Liszt to the delight of his audiences. He knows that even the critics, though belated as usual, will discover by and by that many of Liszt's works are as profound and as suggestive as Bach's.

At the present day almost every pianist of distinction is also a composer, and Mr. Stavenhagen is no exception to the rule. In early criticisms mention is made of a Spanish suite and a scena for soprano and orchestra; but these he seems to have discarded. The present list of published pieces is as follows: opus I, six songs; II, three piano pieces—"Presto," "Pastorale," and "Capriccio"; III, five songs; IV, concerto for piano; V, three piano pieces—"Capriccio," "Intermezzo," "Minuetto Scherzando." His opus VI will include two Norwegian songs for soprano and orchestra. This will be followed by a new collection of piano pieces, some trios for female voices, and a symphony, upon which the composer is now at work. Between opus II and opus III there was an interval of nearly twelve years, during which nothing was added to the list. In New York, his concerto has not been heard at this writing; but he has played the three pieces included in opus V, of which the "Intermezzo" is an original harmonic study, soft and dreamy in character, while the "Capriccio" begins somewhat in the style of Schubert, but soon assumes a character of modern sonority. The "Pastorale" of opus II is a dainty little piece, which only needs to be heard a few times to become popular. Mr. Stavenhagen has also introduced changes in a few of Liszt's compositions, which were approved by him, and at his request introduced into the new editions.

The unpublished Norse songs are charming; and when I first heard them I was so much struck by their genuine Northern atmosphere that I asked the composer if he had ever lived in Norway. This elicited the interesting information that his family had during the Thirty Years' War gone to live in Norway, where they remained some time. At present his domicile is Weimar, where, being well-to-do, he has for some years followed Liszt's example of giving free lessons to students of the piano. The number gradually grew to about forty, and as he found that some came out of curiosity rather than from a desire to study, he limited his list to those intending to choose a professional career. At the piano Mr. Stavenhagen is less moody than Slavic pianists are apt to be—Slivinski, for instance, who entrances one day, and disappoints the next. Nor is there a trace of mannerism or sensationalism about his actions and appearance.

Henry T. Finck.