

"THE FATHER OF THE SYMPHONY": JOSEPH HAYDN.



THE eighteenth century has been called the "Genius Period" of musical history. It greeted the fifteen-year-old Bach and Haendel, and witnessed the development of their powers. It

gave us, in its thirty-second year, Joseph Haydn; in its fifty-sixth year, Mozart; in its seventieth year, Beethoven, and just three years before its close it lent us Schubert.

Truly a noble record!

Of these six masters, three were Germans—Bach, Haendel and Beethoven; the remaining three—Haydn, Mozart and Schubert—were Austrians. The Germans are thinkers, and the music which they have produced appeals primarily to the intellect. The Austrians, while less profound, are more graceful, and while less learned are more gay. Their music is lighter than that of their northern colleagues, and the gaiety which is so marked a characteristic of their lives, finds utterance in the brilliant harmonies and dancing rhythms of their compositions.

A true child of Austria we find in Joseph Haydn. Listen to one of his symphonies and, be you ever so sad, ever so sulky, it will tease you and coax you till all your ill-humour disperses like mist in the morning sunshine. When he was an old man a friend commented upon the peculiar cheerfulness of his church music. "I cannot help myself," answered the aged musician, "what I have, I give. But when I think of God, my heart jumps so for joy, that the notes run as if off a reel. And as God has given me a joyous nature, He will surely forgive me if I serve Him joyfully!"

It has been claimed for Haydn that he is the father of humour in music. This keen sense of humour must have served him well in his checkered life, for domestic happiness he had none. He was the second of twelve children. His father, who was a wheelwright, had built the little house at the end of the principal street in the village of Rohrau, which is still standing, and into it he moved on his marriage with the cook from a neighbouring mansion. Mathias Haydn and his wife had musical tastes. He played the harp by ear and they sang together. Little Joseph sat on a bench in the corner and took part in the performance, pretending to play on an imaginary violin, consisting of two pieces of wood with which he imitated exactly the gestures of the village schoolmaster. A distant relative, named Frankh, who was music director at the small neighbouring town, Hainburg, happened to hear him one day when he was six years old, and, pleased with the child's pure intonation, offered to undertake his musical education. The mother was strongly opposed to the idea, as she would have preferred to see her son a priest or a schoolmaster, but her prejudices were finally overcome, and master Joseph, or Sepperl as he was called in the Austrian dialect, was soon established at school at Hainburg. Frankh was a good teacher and Joseph an apt pupil. As he said himself, "learning came easy" to him. He became a good singer and learnt to play most of the instruments then in use, even including the drum,

for, on one occasion a drummer being wanted for a procession, Frankh pushed young Sepperl into the place, and showed him how to beat. A funny little figure he must have looked, for he was so small that the drum had to be slung on the back of a school-fellow of his own height, who happened to be a hunchback, and thus the curious procession moved on. Haydn always retained a fancy for the drum, which plays an important part in his "Surprise" and other symphonies, and he greatly astonished the band which he was engaged to conduct in London, when quite an old man, by a display of his skill in this branch of musical art.

Two years after his removal to Hainburg Sepperl was heard by Reutter, the music-director of the famous cathedral at Vienna, who, pleased with his "weak, sweet voice," and finding that he could sing a shake, proposed to take him back with him and finish his education. The little village lad could scarcely realise his good fortune, and happy indeed was he when he found himself among the scholars in the cloisters beneath the beautiful spire of St. Stephen's. Here he learnt singing and violin and piano-playing from good masters, as well as Latin and other subjects, but he received no instruction in harmony. Reutter only gave him two lessons during all the time that he was with him, but, as Haydn himself said, he had the gift, and by dint of hard work he managed to get on.

In 1745 his brother Michael joined him as chorister. Michael was the sixth of the twelve children and was very musical, though he does not seem to have gained much success. Some of his compositions are still occasionally performed, but there was as much difference between him and his brother Joseph as there was between Sebastian Bach and the best of his sons.

After Joseph and Michael had been at St. Stephen's for some years the elder boy's voice began to break. This angered Reutter most unreasonably, and he only waited for an excuse to expel the unhappy boy. An opportunity soon presented itself. Joseph, with that love of fun which distinguished him through life, was, as a lad, addicted to practical jokes, and seeing one day a little comrade's pig-tail bobbing in front of him and a pair of brand new scissors gleaming beneath his hand he could not resist the temptation to introduce them to one another. The pig-tail fell, and master Joseph was sentenced to a caning. In vain he begged to be let off and declared that he would rather leave than suffer such an indignity. He was told the thrashing was to come first and after that he could march.

It was on a cold, wet evening that he found himself turned into the streets of Vienna, without home or friends, but after wandering about half the night he met a poor actor who had pity on his forlorn condition and took him home to his humble lodging.

Joseph was now sixteen. He succeeded in getting a few pupils, and a kind Viennese having lent him a hundred and fifty gulden, he rented an attic, got an old, worm-eaten piano and set to work to study composition from books and from the Sonatas of Emanuel Bach, which he mastered completely. His friend, the actor, obtained a commission for him to compose a comic opera, for which he was fairly well paid and, having plenty of courage and perseverance, he managed to keep himself afloat.

In Germany and Austria most people live in flats, and thus it happens that a millionaire and a mechanic may be living beneath the same roof—only the mechanic will have rather

more of the roof. In the house which was topped by Haydn's attic there lived Metastasio, the greatest opera-librettist of the day, and the author of the clever but severe lines—

"Between a singer and musician
Wide is the difference of condition,
The one repeats, the other knows
The sounds which harmony compose,
And he who acts without a plan
May be esteemed more beast than man."

Metastasio was very wealthy and he had the guardianship of a rich, young Spanish girl. He was not long in discovering the genius up in his sky-light, and he engaged Haydn to teach music to his ward, who had singing lessons from the celebrated Porpora. In this way Haydn gained the friendship of the Italian *maestro*, who engaged him as accompanist to his pupils, and who took him with him to the baths of Mannersdorf in Hungary, where he gave him lessons in composition, in return for which Haydn had to act as valet as well as accompanist. In consequence of this connection with Porpora he became acquainted with the principal musicians of his time, including Gluck, who advised him to go to Italy. This, however, there was no possibility of his doing. He was also introduced to a very wealthy amateur named Fürberg, who invited him to his house and who encouraged him to compose his first string quartet—a style of composition in which he was destined to excel and to earn for himself the name of Father of the Quartet as well as of the Symphony.

The first quartet was soon followed by others, and Haydn's prospects began to brighten. He raised his terms for lessons from two gulden a month to five, and somewhat later Fürberg introduced him to the Bohemian Count, Ferdinand Morzin, who engaged him as music director and composer. The Count had a small but well-chosen orchestra, and Haydn, with his salary of twenty pounds a year, now bethought him of taking a wife. An old school-fellow at St. Stephen's had introduced him to his family, and Joseph's choice had fallen upon the youngest sister. As, however, she had determined to become a nun, and the father—a wig-maker—was unwilling to lose so hopeful a son-in-law, good-natured Haydn was easily persuaded to transfer his affections, or at least his attentions, to the elder sister, who was three years older than he. The wedding took place in 1760 at St. Stephen's, and a sorry marriage it proved for the bridegroom.

Disagreeable, bigoted, extravagant and bad-tempered, Maria Anna seems to have had scarcely any redeeming quality, and Haydn, whose nature was too kindly and too joyous to be warped or soured, soon made up his mind that domestic bliss was not his portion and that he must find happiness in himself. Not long after this marriage Count Morzin dismissed his band, but Haydn was immediately engaged by Prince Esterhazy, one of the richest princes in Austria and one whose family had been known for generations as devoted lovers of art and music.

This prince had a good orchestra at Eisenstadt, and Haydn was appointed second conductor, the first being an old man, Werner, who died a few years later. To please his prince, Joseph taught himself the baryton, an instrument on which his patron performed, and which was something like the violoncello, but, finding that this plan was quite unsuccessful, Prince Nicholas not at all appreciating the skill of his rival, Haydn quietly forgot his new accomplishment and confined himself

to composing music for the instrument—a much more pleasing compliment!

Not satisfied with his residence at Eisenstadt, Prince Nicholas later built for himself a magnificent place on a distant estate, which had, prior to this time, been very unhealthy. The improvements he made rendered it not only habitable, but transformed it into a most delightful spot, equalled only by Versailles for beauty and magnificence. Here he built a marionette theatre, and, having brought over his entire orchestra, received princely visitors, even including the Empress. He became so fond of this place of his creation, which he called Esterhazy, that he spent almost all the year there. Very few of the musicians were allowed to bring their wives, which, though a deprivation to many, must have been rather a relief to poor Haydn. Even he, however, felt the banishment from all artistic society, though, on the other hand, he acknowledged his advantages. "My Prince," he says, "was always satisfied with my works. I not only had the encouragement of constant approval, but as conductor of an orchestra I could make experiments, observe what produced an effect and what weakened it, and was thus in a position to improve, alter, make additions or omissions, and be as bold as I pleased. I was cut off from the world, there was no one to confuse or worry me, and I was forced to be original."

The whole band of musicians was devoted to Haydn. On many occasions he interceded with the Prince on their behalf, especially with the object of shortening the visit to Esterhazy, that they might rejoin their families. It was for this purpose that he conceived the droll idea of his Farewell Symphony, in which one instrument after another ceases to play, the performer slipping quietly away, until only two violins are left. At the first performance one of these was the Prince's favourite. His Highness took the hint, and, laughing, exclaimed—"If all go, we may as well go too!" Haydn's object was attained.

In the year 1779 the Esterhazy Theatre was burnt down. When the new one was opened an opera by Haydn was given under his direction. It was played later in Vienna, but none of his operas have lived. He judged them very fairly himself, when he said in answer to an invitation to perform one at Prague—"My operas are calculated exclusively for our own company, and would not produce their effect elsewhere."

If he had followed Gluck's advice and had gone to Italy they might have been better, but we should not have had the Haydn whom we love, and without Haydn, Beethoven would scarcely have been possible.

Prince Esterhazy occasionally took his musical company to perform at the large towns in Austria, and Haydn was by this time known all over Europe; even from Spain he received enthusiastic letters, and from

London he had several good offers both from publishers and concert managers. The latter offered him any terms if he would come to London, but nothing came of their attempts, and at length Salomon determined to try what personal influence would do. The music publisher, Bland, was sent to Vienna, but finding that Haydn was still at Esterhazy he followed him there. A funny story is told of their meeting. Bland arrived in the morning when Haydn was shaving, and at the door he overheard the irate composer abusing the bluntness of his razor in no gentle tones, exclaiming at last—"I would give my best quartett for a good razor!" Back to his

educated for the great world, and you speak too few languages."

"But my language is understood all over the world," answered Haydn smiling.

The visit to England was a grand success. Everywhere the composer was received with enthusiasm, although Haendel was then at the zenith of his fame. After he had been some months in London Haydn visited Oxford, where the degree of Doctor of Music was conferred on him. Three grand concerts were given in his honour; at the second one his Oxford symphony was performed, and at the third he conducted in his new doctor's robes.

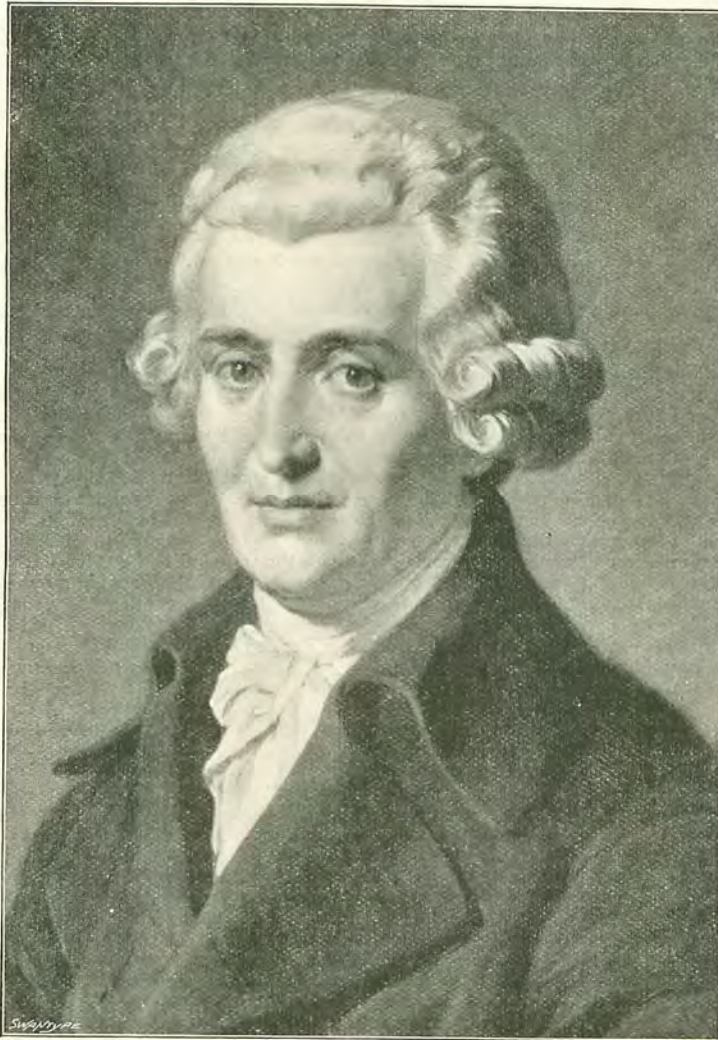
On his return to Austria his Grand Imperial Mass was performed. This work is called the "Nelson Mass" in Germany, because it was first given during Nelson's visit to Eisenstadt. Our great naval hero was so much impressed by its grandeur and beauty that at the end of the concert he begged Haydn to give him his pen, and handed him in return his own gold watch.

The first visit having been so successful Salomon persuaded Haydn to come to England again in 1794. Concerts were organised at which he conducted his works, the "Surprise Symphony" being an especial favourite. Among the costly or curious presents that were showered upon him before his departure were a talking parrot and six pairs of cotton stockings with themes from his compositions worked into them.

Whilst visiting England Haydn had often envied us our National Anthem, and one of his first tasks on his return home was the composition of the celebrated Austrian hymn, "God Preserve the Emperor!" This was one of his favourite works, and only a few days before his death he had his chair wheeled up to the piano and played it three times over. He has made use of it in one of his finest string quartetts—the one known as the "Kaiser Quartett."

The highest point of Haydn's fame as a composer was not reached until the composition of the two works of his old age—"The Creation," and "The Seasons." Salomon, the English concert agent, had offered him a text compiled from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, for the subject of an oratorio. This he took back with him to Vienna and gave to van Swieten, who altered it considerably. Haydn then set to work with the keenest delight. "Never," he says, "was I so pious as when composing the 'Creation.' I knelt down every day and prayed to God to strengthen me for my work." In 1800 it was engraved and then it was given everywhere. In England it was first performed by the Three Choirs; in 1800 at Worcester, in 1801 at Hereford, and in 1802 at Gloucester. Excepting "The Messiah" no work was ever so popular.

Stimulated by the success of "The Creation," van Swieten persuaded Haydn to compose a second oratorio, and provided him with a text which he had arranged from



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lodging rushed Bland, and returning presently with his own good English one, presented it in triumph to the master and received in return Haydn's newest quartett, which is still called the "Razor Quartett." Bland also obtained the copyright of several other works, but he could not persuade Haydn to come to London. It was not until 1790 that this object was accomplished. Then, Prince Esterhazy having died, and his conductor having settled down in Vienna, Salomon himself appeared on the scene. Haydn could no longer plead his other engagements, and the Englishman succeeded in making terms with him. Mozart, who was devoted to Haydn, was rather fearful of the experiment. He spent the hours prior to the master's departure with him and saw him off. "Papa!" he exclaimed, "you are not

Thomson's "Seasons." The new work was as well received as the first had been; opinions are still divided as to which is the finer, and no one hearing either would imagine that it was the work of a man of seventy years of age. But Haydn's muse never grew old. His last active appearance in public was in 1803 when he conducted a performance of his cantata, "The Seven Words of Our Lord on the Cross," for the benefit of the hospital fund.

He composed very little after "The Seasons." He was working on a string quartet in 1806, and two movements of it were completed, but in despair of ever being able to finish it, he added the first few bars of one of his vocal quartets. "All my strength has vanished quite, old and weak am I," and those words he had printed on a card to send to friends who inquired for him.

Once more he appeared in public, but it was as a listener in 1808. It was at a won-

derful performance of "The Creation" conducted by Salieri, at the university. Haydn was carried into the hall in a sedan chair and placed amongst the highest ladies of the land, and costly shawls and laces were brought to wrap about his feet and shield the old man from any possible draught. The oratorio begins with a weird confused murmur, intended to represent chaos; wilder and ever wilder grows the music till it seems to be one hopeless tangle, then suddenly there is a pause. One deep voice is heard—

"And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and God said—*Let there be light!*"

The whole chorus joins in the divine command, but hushed and in the minor key. Then follows—*And there was light.*

In glorious, full major chords the whole band and chorus proclaim the coming of the light. You can see it grow light, as the

music pours forth its joyous tones. The effect on the whole audience that night, with the aged composer in their midst, was electric. He, completely overpowered, called out—

"Not I, a greater than I has made it!"

At the end of the first part it was thought best to take him away. Many friends pressed forward to bid him farewell, amongst them, Beethoven, who threw himself upon his master and kissed his forehead. At the door Haydn turned round and lifted up his hands, as if he would bless those present.

He lingered for a year after this, but in March 1809 he passed away. Funeral services were held in the principal towns of Europe, when the news of his death was made known, and Mozart's beautiful "Requiem" was performed at his burial. He had no children, but to all the world of music he was "Papa Haydn."

ELEONORE D'ESTERRE-KEELING.

SWEET WILLIAM.

By the Author of "That Horrid Boy Next Door," etc.

CHAPTER III.

It was late when Betty came in. Her old step had lost its lightness; there was a little dejected air about her.

"Beastly thing," she said, flinging her cap to the other end of the room, and stabbing the leather arm of the chair viciously with her hat-pin.

"What is the matter," asked Meg.

"Matter?" echoed Betty—"why, everything's the matter! There's that old Murray gone off abroad, and he'll be away months; and he left no message for me, the woman said, no money and no work! But what is the matter with you? Has anything happened while I've been out? Has that old cat been at it again? How white you look, Meg—and you've been crying."

"It is Willy."

"Yes?" asked Betty anxiously.

"He is worse. The doctor has just been and he's left some medicine. It's all he can do for him. He says Willy ought to have been sent away from London long ago."

"But—he doesn't think he'll die?"

"He didn't say so; but his face was very grave. I can't get it out of my mind," she said shivering.

"Oh, Meg," said Betty, sitting up and looking frightened. "Oh, dear, what shall we do if he dies?"

"No, no; we must give him proper support and get him away from here."

"Yes, but how?" asked Betty, beginning to cry. "We've no money and no hopes of getting any. Oh, Meg, you are right, fortune is not good to us." She leaned her head on the table and sobbed aloud.

"Betty, we must hope and pray," whispered Meg. "God is good; He cannot desert us now we have most need of Him."

But the girl's sobs only grew wilder.

"Oh, no. Heaven can't see us shut up here in this miserable garret. If He could see us He wouldn't let us be poor like this; He wouldn't have let Lesley Murray go away as he did, and Caleb Stretton would have bought your picture. Oh, no—no—no! How can He hear us when everybody is clamouring at the same time?"

"Betty, darling"—Meg spoke calmly as she slipped down beside the younger girl and wound her arms tenderly about her—"where is your faith? Have you forgotten the 'still small voice'?" Betty, when we

thought we were all alone in this big, wicked city He was by our side, holding our hands, guiding our feet, shielding us in His strong, loving arms from the rough world's touch. Brave little heart, look up. Put all your trust in Him—till the end."

"Till the end," came softly through Betty's tears.

"And now I have thought of something. To-morrow I shall go to Caleb Stretton and tell him—everything. He is kind and will lend me some money on my picture. There is sure to be a letter from Emma with this morning's post, and we'll get Willy off straight away."

Betty looked more cheerful. Things were not going to be so very bad after all.

"That is right," said Meg. "You see, it is only for a little while."

But there was no letter next morning, and the girls wondered.

"She may be dead. Ten years is a long time," suggested Betty.

But Meg shook her head.

"I don't think so somehow," she said.

"We may hear yet. We must wait."

"She may come herself," said Betty.

"Wouldn't that be jolly?" She was standing looking in at Willy's door. "But, oh, she must be quick! Every moment is precious. Meg," she said hoarsely, catching the girl's arm, "I sometimes think, and I can't help it, that the country Willy sees is not ours, but that within the portals of Eternity, and the music he hears, which he calls singing-birds, are the harps of heaven, and they are not Emma's arms holding him so tightly, but the Good Shepherd's."

"Betty, dear."

"I can't help it, Meg. I try to be brave like you, but I can't—oh, I can't!"

"Poor little thing!" soothed Meg.

Later Meg set out on her errand. Caleb Stretton was in, attending to a customer when Meg entered the shop, timidly at first, but gaining confidence when the man's kind eyes found their way over to her. He left the old gentleman examining a portfolio of sketches while he went to speak to her.

Meg told her story and Caleb Stretton listened. When she had finished he laid five pounds on the counter and asked her if that would be sufficient.

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Meg gratefully, as her eyes filled with tears. "Thank you so much—oh, thank you so very much!" She turned her head away to hide her scarlet

cheeks, and, picking up the money with a last murmuring "Thank you," went out.

"Who is that young woman?" asked the old gentleman.

He was a tall, thin, old fellow, with a kind, honest face and yellow-white locks falling beneath the shabby silk hat. He bore marks of the country in his dress, which was old-fashioned and shiny about the seams. He wore a gay muffler and woollen gloves, and rubbed his spectacles on a bright-patterned cotton handkerchief.

"Her mother was a customer of mine. I bought a few pictures of her. A day or two ago the young lady brought me one of her own, which I am afraid I cannot accept."

"They are very poor," observed the old gentleman.

"Very. It is a marvel to me how they live."

"Large family?"

"Three. The girl you saw here just now, who seems to be the bread-winner, and a young sister and brother—a little sickly chap, always ill."

"Orphans? Dear, dear! You lent them money I saw."

"Five pounds. The doctor has given the boy up, but they imagine they can save him by sending him away into the country."

"I suppose it would come in useful—the money I mean—if the picture were sold?"

"Oh, yes! But it is a crude piece of work, poorly finished and lacking in breadth and general treatment. Then the subject—"

"May I see the picture?" asked the old gentleman, a queer light coming into his eyes. The painting was brought, and, putting his spectacles on his nose, he commenced to study it carefully. "Dear, dear!" he said suddenly, "what a likeness!"

"Yes—but the subject is poor, and the high lights—"

"Fiddle-sticks to your 'high lights'!" interrupted the old gentleman strangely, taking off his spectacles and cleaning them again. "It is like Polly—little Polly Morgan."

"A relative?" asked the man civilly.

"Relative!" thundered the old gentleman. "She was all that was left to me in the world—all I loved—little Polly Morgan. It killed my brother when his child went away to London with that man Merrick."

"Merrick?"

"Yes, sir. A scoundrel, sir, a ne'er-do-well—a scape-goat! He dragged her here.