



FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY.

#### THE MENDELSSOHN FAMILY.\*

THE Mendelssohns, viewed as a family, and followed back through three generations, or traced laterally in their branches, are without neither eminence nor interest. First of all there is he who may be called the founder of the house, Moses Mendelssohn, whose life was embraced between the years 1729 and 1786. It is a curious illustration of the comparatively modern origin of surnames among the Jews that his father is known to us as Mendel, or, better still, as Mendel Dessau—the last word being the name of the little German city in which he lived, and better

known to us as the home of the Old Dessauer, whose military tactics are still maintained in the Prussian army. This Mendel, a school-master and parish clerk in the Jewish community of Dessau, named his son Moses, and the name Mendel's son, or Mendelssohn, was gradually applied to him as what we call a surname. It is needless to say that it became illustrious, for this grandfather of Felix Mendelssohn was a leader in his day, and may be considered without disparagement of others the founder of the present liberal school of Jewish thinkers, to whom the obnoxious name rationalistic is freely applied. To the lover of literature he is still more interesting as the original of Lessing's Nathan, an open secret in that day, and well authenticated since. And according to the traditions of his character, Moses Mendelssohn was a

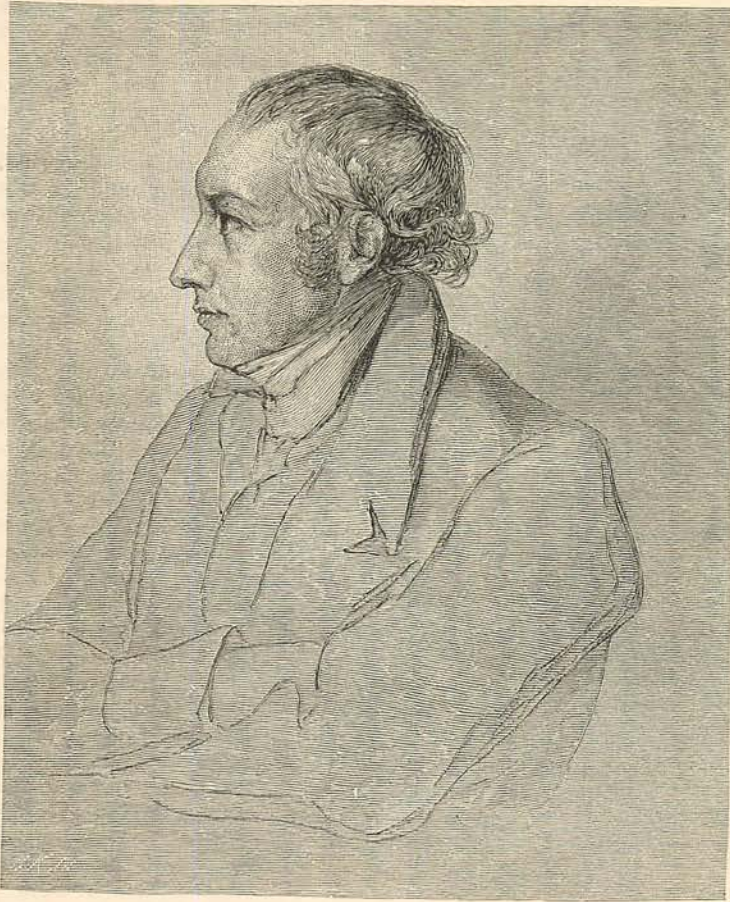
\* *The Mendelssohn Family*. (1729-1847.) From Letters and Journals by SEBASTIAN HENSEL: with Eight Portraits from Drawings by WILHELM HENSEL. Second Revised Edition. Translated by CARL KLINGEMANN and an American Collaborator, with a notice by GEORGE GROVE, Esq., D.C.L. Two volumes. New York: Harper and Brothers. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington.

man not unworthy to sit as a model for "Nathan the Wise."

A good share of his brilliancy passed to his daughter Dorothea, and a good share of his sound judgment to his son Abraham. These are the most conspicuous names among his children, although the whole family was uncommonly gifted. Dorothea is best remembered in connection with the life of the erratic, learned, impulsive, and wayward Frederic Schlegel, whose mistress she was for a time, and whose wife she subsequently became. It is she whom Schlegel has commemorated in a novel which was once talked of through Europe, but which is now happily mostly forgotten—*Lucinda*. It is she who, as the wife of Veit, the artist, had such a claim on Schleiermacher's sympathy, and so large a place in his interesting biography and letters. Her whole life was an unhappy series of mistakes, and her whole story the record of perverted moral sense in a singularly open, vigorous, and picturesque character. Of her romantic tendencies her brother Abraham does not appear to have had a trace. This man, who was accustomed to say of himself that he had first the misfortune to be known as merely the son of his father, and later as the father of his son, was so gifted and yet so balanced a man that had he not been dwarfed by the reputation of his son Felix, he would have been widely known for his own rare qualities. How much Mendelssohn loved him, revered him, and depended upon him, is known to every reader of Felix's letters. That he was inferior in brightness to his children is indeed true; for where is there in literature anything equal to the high strain of joyous and unflagging fun that we find in almost everything which Fanny and Rebecca and Felix have written? This will be more abundantly illustrated in the work on the Mendelssohn family which has been written by Sebastian Hensel, Fanny's son, and which in an English translation has just been laid before the public. It was perhaps in keeping with the habitual Jewish family training that Abraham should have been in his early life a rather severe man, and a not specially indulgent father; but the austerity wore away under the combined influences of financial success, happy family life, and artistic surroundings. He was not an old man when he died, but in his letters to Felix and to his own wife there is

a delightful playfulness which reminds one of the constant sallies of merriment in his children's slightest notes. But practical solid wisdom was his strongest point. He was not a musical man in any technical sense; he knew no instrument; yet he was so sensitive to harmonies, and so skilled in the art of mentally analyzing effects, and giving a reason for them, that he could make clear to Felix what the latter only dimly felt, and his taste was recognized by his gifted son as unerring.

An interesting episode in the life of Abraham Mendelssohn was the accepting of Protestant Christianity as the faith of his family. Two of his sisters—Dorothea, the wife of Frederic Schlegel, and Henrietta, who was never married—became Roman Catholics, but the step was not popular in the family. He himself was not a religious man in any sentimental use of the word; he was, on the contrary, one of those practical men in whom the religious sense comes to expression in the strict fulfillment of duty, rather than in public or private acts of worship. The father, Moses, had by his rather liberal tone of thought left his household somewhat unsettled in their creed, with a noble openness, but also with a good deal of Lessing's indifference to the details of theological opinion. Abraham's brother-in-law, the distinguished Bartholdy, of Rome, whose house is still shown in that city as one of the most beautifully painted of modern villas, strongly advised Felix Mendelssohn's father to adopt the Protestant faith. From a letter of his I quote a few words which are interesting for a double cause—because they led to Abraham's accepting of Christianity as the faith in which his children should be reared, and also the name Bartholdy as a specific family designation. He says, apparently combating his brother-in-law's unwillingness to abandon the faith of Moses Mendelssohn: "You say you owe it to the memory of your father; but do you think you have done something bad in giving your children the religion which appears to you to be the best? It is the justest homage you or any of us could pay to the efforts of your father to promote true light and knowledge, and he would have acted like you for his children, and perhaps like me for himself. You may remain faithful to our oppressed, persecuted religion, you may leave it to your children as a prospect of life-long martyrdom, as long as you believe it to be absolute truth. But when you



ABRAHAM MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

have ceased to believe that, it is barbarism. I advise you to adopt the name of Mendelssohn-Bartholdy as a distinction from the other Mendelssohns. At the same time you would please me very much, because it would be the means of preserving my memory in the family." I have heard it said that this brother-in-law eventually bequeathed his property, which was large, to his nieces and nephews of Abraham's family.

Abraham Mendelssohn's wife was a Jewess, Leah Solomon, trained in most orthodox principles, which, however, she held in silent abeyance in conjunction with her husband. The children were reared as Protestant Christians, but at first without the knowledge of the old grandmother, who had cursed and cut off her son Bartholdy on her learning of his abjuration of Judaism.

The study of Abraham and Leah Mendelssohn's faces is a most interesting lesson in heredity, the Jewish type of the mother being unmistakable in Felix, but in Fanny and Rebecca being qualified by the more cosmopolitan features of the father. Moses, the grandfather, had the infirmity of being slightly uneven in his shoulders; his enemies pronounced him humpbacked, but this term is an exaggeration. In Fanny this appeared very slightly, and had to be carefully hidden by her dress. Vivacity and intelligence were marked in all the children, but they were not generally spoken of as so beautiful as their mother, who, though Jewish in type, had small and regular features and great delicacy of figure. She was musical, but not in the eminent degree of her two elder children; yet she was Fanny's earliest teacher, and conducted her through the most difficult studies



LEAH MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

of Bach, so that while a mere child she was able to play from memory not only vast quantities of Beethoven's and Mozart's music, but twenty-four of Bach's fugues. Of her just at her birth, her mother writes, "The child has a Bach fugue hand"—a fact which her later development only confirmed. She was a lady of romantic temperament, quite unlike her methodical and austere husband. Her youth was spent in a pleasant half-country place in the outskirts of Berlin, and here she nursed her fancies in novel-reading, reveries, and music. Her one weakness appears to have been excessive nervous excitability, leading at times to peevishness and to unreasonable demands, but as a rule she held herself well in hand, and was a spring of delight to her household and friends. She was an excellent scholar for those times; she was familiarly acquainted with French, Italian, and English, and for the purpose of enjoying Homer in the original, she

learned Greek, but was so afraid of the title of pedant that she concealed this accomplishment. Her remarkable proficiency in languages was inherited by her daughter Rebecca, who was herself a good Greek scholar and lover of Homer. Leah Mendelssohn also drew beautifully—an accomplishment which Felix received from her, either by inheritance or otherwise, and which was through his life a source of constant pleasure to his friends.

Fanny Mendelssohn's great musical gifts and her intimate relations with her brother have made not only her name very familiar, but all the traits of her bright, inspiring, and enthusiastic character. Her husband's excellent sketch of her gives some idea of her open and expressive countenance, and of her large and lustrous eyes, which were celebrated throughout Berlin. She

was nearly four years the senior of Felix, and had been subjected to the same thorough musical discipline with him, first by the mother, and then by the grim and tyrannical Zelter, whose rare words of praise counted as gold. It must be remembered that Felix was not educated to be a musician by profession; that was a result to which his father reluctantly consented; it was simply as an amateur that he had his very thorough course in composition, piano and organ playing, and in all that relates to the theory and practice of music. Fanny was the inseparable companion of his studies, and his equal in skill. Her irrepressible love for composition continually broke out, and she is the unacknowledged author of some of his finest songs without words, among which may be named Nos. 2, 3, and 12 in Opus VIII., and Nos. 7, 10, and 12 in Opus IX. Doubtless there are others not yet identified as Fanny's. It is characteristic both of Fanny's genius and

of Felix's honesty that in the interview with Queen Victoria at Windsor, which has been often described, and which gives us almost the best glimpse that we have of the family life during the days of the Queen's happiness, she sang to him one of his own songs, as she supposed, "Fairer and fairer" ("Schöner und schöner"); but

author. For many years Fanny yielded to the opinions of her father and brother on this point; but at last her desire for an honorable fame, and the large inducements offered her by the first publishers of Germany, caused her to yield, and she set herself to the preparation of a set volume of songs. Felix made a laughing



FANNY HENSEL.

Mendelssohn acknowledged it to be his sister's. The Jewish notions were at war with the conception of a woman's public career as a composer, and Mendelssohn himself was never quite free from this prejudice. He admitted all the possibilities of his sister's mind, but he did not favor her having a career as an independent

surrender of his position, and in a characteristic letter admitted her to a place in the guild of musical literature. The date will show how near this concession was to the death of both Fanny and Felix:

LEIPZIG, August 12, 1846.

"MY DEAREST FANCE,—Not till to-day, just as I am on the point of starting, do I, unnatu-

ral brother that I am, find time to thank you for your charming letter, and send you my professional blessing on becoming a member of the craft. This I do now in full, Fance, and may you have much happiness in giving pleasure to others; may you taste only the sweets and none of the bitternesses of authorship; may the public pelt you with roses and never with sand; and may the printer's ink never draw black lines upon your soul!—all of which I devoutly believe will be the case, so what is the use of my writing it? But it is the custom of the guild, so take my blessing under my hand and seal.

L. S. "The journey tailor,  
"FELIX MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY."

The sudden and unexpected death of this glorious creature produced an effect on her brother which is well known. He never recovered from the shock, and in the stress of labors into which he plunged to relieve his grief, he caused the rupture of a blood-vessel in the brain, from which he soon died. All the Mendelssohns died suddenly, from Moses down. Even Leah, Felix's mother, was no exception. The death of Felix was of course mourned as a greater public calamity, but that of Fanny was the source of as great private consternation. Her son has been her most faithful biographer, and tells us of her that her movements were quick and decided, and her countenance full of life, faithfully reflecting every change of mood. She never could disguise her feelings, and everybody soon found out what she thought of him; for while she would show her delight immediately at seeing a dear friend, if anybody approached whom she did not like, wrinkles would at once form on her forehead and at the corners of her mouth. Few have the same faculty of enjoying anything beautiful, whether it were fine weather, a handsome face, distinguished talents, or beautiful scenery. She was very fond of fresh air, and used to call it one of her greatest enjoyments. Her disgust at anything ugly, and her wrath with anything bad, were equally intense. She could not bear dull, insipid, vain, or shallow people, and had a few *bêtes noires*, her antipathy to whom she could not get over. Luxury and creature comforts she was indifferent about, caring nothing for good eating and drinking, good accommodation, dress, or articles of luxury. What she did require was intercourse with a few refined and clever people, and the pleasures of art. She was the most faithful and constant of

friends to all whom she thought worthy of her intimacy, and capable of any sacrifice for their sake.

Her husband, Wilhelm Hensel, the distinguished painter, was in many respects so unlike her that the harmony of their wedded life is remarkable. The sketches which accompany this article, and which are but a trifling number out of the really enormous collection which he made, contained in forty-seven volumes, now in the possession of his son Sebastian, are a good specimen of his readiness in catching the light and salience of a countenance. Among those whose faces are in that great collection are the musicians Weber, Zelter, Paganini, Henselt, Gounod, Hiller, Ernst, Liszt, Clara Schumann, and many of Felix; painting is represented by Cornelius, Ingres, Horace Vernet, Magnus, Koppisch, Verboekhoven, Kaulbach, and Max von Schwindt; the theatre by Milder, Rachel, Seydelmann, Novello, Lablache, Grisi, Pasta, and Schröder-Devrient; literature is set forth in La Motte Foqué, Theodore Körner, Brentano, Bettina von Armin, Hofmann, Tieck, Varnhagen, Heine, Goethe, Steffens, Paul Heyse; Thorwaldsen, Kiss, and Rauch represent sculpture; Schinkel, architecture; while science is honored in the persons of Hegel, Gans, Bunsen, Humboldt, Jacob Grimm, Lepsius, Böckh, Quetelet, Jacoby, Dirichlet, Ranke, and Ehrenberg. They were almost all of them drawn while engaged in conversation, for Hensel had the happy faculty of studying faces and making studies while he was seemingly engaged in entertaining his and his wife's guests. Some were drawn from memory, for he carried faces very securely in his mind, and filled out his sketches unerringly from his recollections. He lived all this time at the spacious Mendelssohn mansion, No. 3 Leipzigerstrasse, in Berlin, in the garden of which Abraham Mendelssohn had built them a small summer-house and studio, and the many illustrious guests who came there had the freedom not alone of the mansion proper (now the session chamber of the Prussian House of Peers), but of Hensel's studio, of Fanny's music-room, and of the seven acres of garden which lay behind the house, and reached back as far as the grounds of Prince Albert, the King's brother. The story has been often told of the "Sunday mornings" at the Mendelssohns', when Fanny and Felix played, accompanied by an orchestra of their own

training, and the gradual development has been often told of those delightful concerts, from a simple and informal gathering of the family and a few friends at eleven o'clock, to an assembly into which pressed all that was distinguished in the Prussian

their hospitality was universally known. Into this circle Wilhelm Hensel, the son of a German village pastor, entered by the right of his eminent gifts as a painter. In America his works are not well known; in England and in Prussia they have long



WILHELM HENSEL.

capital, and all that was illustrious among passing guests. Perhaps no private residence of our time has witnessed gatherings at once so frequent and so select. Abraham Mendelssohn had now become a leading banker of Berlin, and his house and garden were commensurate with his wealth; Felix was a man of European renown, and Fanny of the most brilliant local reputation; Rebecca and Paul were not unworthy of their parents and their brother and sister; and the openness of

been prized. The visitor to the famous Museum in Berlin will certainly be struck with his beautiful fresco landscapes of Grecian scenes, and Buckingham Palace contains his "Miriam," one of his largest paintings, the product of nearly a year's labor. The Duchess of Sutherland wished him to copy it for her gallery, but he refused, consenting, however, to paint a new picture in which Miriam should have a leading place. For Lord Egerton, too, he executed an elaborate representation of

the famous ball before Waterloo. Other paintings of his, "Christ and the Woman of Samaria," and "Christ in the Wilderness," have a wide reputation. He showed his talent early, and went to Rome to gain a training which he could not have in Germany. This was when he was twenty-eight years old, poor, and without powerful friends. He was, however, a young man of quiet, engaging manners, of personal beauty, and of pure character. He was powerfully drawn to Fanny almost immediately after seeing her. She was then seventeen, a young girl most carefully secluded by her parents from any thoughts of love or marriage. On his applying to the father and mother for permission to pay court to their oldest daughter, they refused him, and indeed the whole family closed against him. Fanny seems to have had a certain quiet fondness for him, but it was not expressed to any one. With no encouragement, Hensel went to Rome, having permission to write to the mother, but not to the daughter, nor to receive any communication from Fanny during his absence. But his remarkable skill accomplished in a subtle method of persuasion what neither his presence could do when he was in Berlin nor his letters could have done. He sent them on their birthdays dainty little albums of family portraits, each one more beautiful than the one before, and this delicate homage not only won Fanny's complete loyalty, but the love and admiration of the household. There had been no well-grounded objection to him before he went to Rome: the father had naturally feared that his affection would be temporary; the mother and children were jealous of any one who threatened to deprive them of their pet. Hensel's quiet persistency and eminent skill triumphed at length, and his future fame as a painter gave him all the right that a man could desire to take his place at the Mendelssohn board. All of Fanny's letters to him are full of tenderness, trust, and admiration. His persistent and almost stubborn devotion was fully met by her intense and passionate eagerness of affection. Their marriage was an idyl, and their brief married life passed without a cloud. Their son Sebastian has become what it was once hoped that Felix's son Carl would be, the historian of the entire family.

The letter which Leah Mendelssohn wrote to young Hensel, in which she set

down her reasons for refusing him to write to Fanny, is peculiarly interesting, and merits a place here, for it is full of inherited Jewish prejudices, sound mother-wit, and general applicability.

"Seriously, dear Mr. Hensel, you must not be angry with me because I can not allow a correspondence between you and Fanny. Put yourself in fairness for one moment in the place of a mother, and exchange your interests for mine, and my refusal will appear to you natural, just, and sensible, whereas you are probably now denouncing my proceeding as most barbaric. For the same reason that makes me forbid an engagement, I must declare myself adverse to any correspondence. You know that I truly esteem you, that I have indeed a real affection for you, and entertain no objections to you personally. The reasons why I have not yet decided in your favor are the difference of age and the uncertainty of your position. A man may not think of marrying before his prospects in life are to a certain degree assured. At any rate, he must not blame the girl's parents, who, having experience, sense, and cool blood, are destined by nature to judge for him and for her. An artist, as long as he is single, is a happy being: all circles open to him, court favor animates him, the small cares of life vanish before him; he steps lightly over the rocks which difference of rank has piled up in the world; he works at what he likes and how he likes, choosing his favorite subjects in art, and roving poetically in other regions, the most delightful, happy being in the whole creation. As soon as domestic cares take hold of him all this magic disappears, the lovely coloring fades, he *must* work to sustain his family. Indeed I make it a point in my children's education to give them simple and unpretending habits, so that they might not be obliged to look out for rich marriages; but in the eyes of parents a competency, a moderate but fixed income, are necessary conditions for a happy life; and although my husband can afford to give to each of his children a handsome portion, he is not rich enough to secure the future prosperity of them all. You are at the commencement of your career, and under beautiful auspices; endeavor to realize them, use well what time and favor hold forth to you, and rest assured that we will not be against you when, at the end of your studies, you can satisfy us about your position. Above all, do not call me selfish or ambitious, my gentle tyrant. Otherwise I must remind you that I married my husband before he had a penny of his own. Fanny is very young, and, Heaven be praised! has hitherto had no affair and no passion. I will not have you by love-letters transport her for years into a state of consuming passion and a yearning frame of mind quite strange to her character, when I have her now before me blooming, healthy, happy, and free."



There is that in this letter, especially in the closing sentences, on which American mothers would do well to ponder. Perhaps her caution may have been excess-

laid the foundation for his subsequent short-sightedness by his night labors.

Rebecca, born in 1811, at Hamburg, two years later than Felix, is less known to us



REBECCA DIRICHLET.

ive, but the extremely humble origin of Hensel must be remembered; the fact, too, that his poverty had been so great that in his native village he had been compelled to make his colors out of roots and leaves, and that up to this time he had had to earn his living by all the devices to which a young artist is driven—the making of illustrations for diaries and almanacs and novels. His work was so arduous that he

in the Mendelssohn literature thus far published than Fanny or Felix, but in social qualities and in rare gifts she was worthy of her birth. Many of her letters remain, and in brightness they are not at all inferior to her brother's and sister's. Musically she was not their equal; yet in a less distinguished family she would have been eminent even in this regard. That she was dearly loved by Felix and by Fanny

is attested by a thousand tokens. She was the light and joy of every circle where she had a part. Her most distinguished aptitude was her skill in languages, and like her brother Felix, she was an excellent Greek scholar, and like her mother, read Homer in the original. Unhappily she was subject to physical weaknesses, and much of her life was spent in the pursuit of health. Her points of beauty were similar to those possessed by Fanny—fine eyes, fine teeth, and a most vivacious countenance. From a child she had been admired, and suitors began early to plead for her hand. Her choice was, however, made without difficulty and without wavering. A young Dirichlet, a teacher of mathematics, silent, bashful, but attractive and very learned, found his way into the hospitable Mendelssohn mansion, and won the favorable regard of the younger daughter. Like Hensel, he was poor, and was making his way in the world against great odds. He had been a private teacher in Paris, where his remarkable mathematical talents had been recognized, not only by distinguished French savants, but by Humboldt. It would have been easy for Dirichlet to have remained in Paris, for he was born in one of those border cities, near Aix-la-Chapelle, where French had been his language not less than German from infancy, and where Paris was naturally considered the place to which a scholar would gravitate. But the young man was an enthusiastic German. He was a quiet, straightforward, resolute character, extraordinarily reserved, but indomitable in his patriotism as well as in his own progress. Seeing his great desire to be employed in Germany, Humboldt at length secured him a post as Professor of Mathematics at Breslau, with a salary of four hundred thalers—a sum equivalent to three hundred dollars, or sixty pounds sterling. Nothing very magnificent in this, surely, for the husband of Abraham Mendelssohn's daughter. But his poverty was not the worst of his troubles at Breslau. It may be guessed from the brief hints which I have given of his character that he was a rather uncompromising type of man, not given to coterie-making, nor inclined to local gossip, but wholly devoted to study and to discovery. He was a man to lie under the trees and meditate. He had as little aptitude for letter-writing as for general conversation; and Felix and Fanny were wont to complain that

Dirichlet would not send them so much as an algebraic formula. But to his wife he was communicative enough, and their letters were full of confidences. Like the marriage of Hensel and Fanny, theirs was of unbroken felicity. And Dirichlet was a rising man too. The Breslau professorship was a stepping-stone to the post of Mathematical Professor in the War School at Berlin. The position was in every way honorable; his home was in the capacious family mansion, No. 3 Leipzigerstrasse, which generously expanded to allow the new household a place, and for years Fanny and Rebecca lived under their father's roof. Later, however, Dirichlet was promoted to be the chief of the mathematical department in the University of Göttingen, then in the full splendor of its renown. He chose this field rather than remain at Berlin mainly for the reason that in the War School all the cadets must pursue the same mathematical course, and he must necessarily have many students whose deficiency in this department was very irksome to him, whereas in Göttingen it was an optional study, and only those chose it whom it was a delight to teach. Dirichlet's name stood among the first mathematicians in Germany. Nor was his proficiency limited to this department. He was a scholar in a wide sense, largely conversant with languages, a proficient in the natural sciences, an original and courageous thinker. Hensel's sketch of him suggests the man as he was—thoughtful, quiet, but true and devoted to the little circle of souls that he loved. Rebecca's choice of a husband was a standing theme of wonder and amusement, but perhaps none who criticised the silent man could have suggested a more tender and appreciative husband.

The Mendelssohn family, which has been so happily augmented by the addition of Wilhelm Hensel and Gustav Dirichlet, had a new and charming addition in Cécile Jeanrenaud, who in 1837 became Felix's wife. In an earlier number of this Magazine (December, 1878), many details have been given of Mendelssohn's wedded life of ten years, of which it is not too much to say that in happiness and mutual helpfulness it was not exceeded by that of Hensel and Fanny, or Dirichlet and Rebecca. Felix was the idol of every circle, and there were multitudes who would have been honored by his preference, but he remained untouched

ed by love until in the daughter of a Protestant clergyman of Frankfort he saw the woman of his choice. He did not hesitate long. Very soon after meeting her he wrote to Fanny that he was desperately in love. How beautiful Cécile was, Hensel's sketch gives a suggestive impression. Her eyes, which were large and of deep blue, were spoken of as her chief charm. She was a rounded character, domestic, quiet, a little cold in bearing, and with the Frankfort aristocratic air, yet devoted to her friends, and perfectly adapted to calm the excitable temperament of Mendelssohn. For a long time he kept her at Frankfort and at Leipzig unknown by sight to any one of his own family, and Fanny in Berlin raged a good deal over this apparent discourtesy. At last in her blunt fashion she broke out in a letter to Cécile, complaining that they had heard a good deal about those wonderful blue eyes, but that eyes were to be seen, not heard, with a good deal more of such airy but not insignificant badinage, which when communicated to Felix brought him out of his temporary forgetfulness of the claims of the Berlin circle, and led to an immediate series of visits. Cécile at once became an established favorite in all their hearts. Four children were born rapidly to them, three of whom are still living—a son and two daughters. One son, who became teacher of history in the University of Heidelberg, and who in face and bearing recalled the dignity and calm, grave beauty of his mother, has passed away in the years of a rich promise.

The house still stands on the Königsstrasse in Leipzig where the happy years of Mendelssohn's married life were passed. The lower part has been transformed into a counting-house, and into the garden one of the busy industries of the city has forced itself, and a noisy concourse of active men have displaced the elastic fig-



GUSTAV LEJEUNE DIRICHLET.

ures of forty years ago. But flowers bloom in the upper windows of the house, and restore a sense of the old beauty and cheer. This place was Mendelssohn's true home, for although his father's mansion was always his, yet the family life consecrated the Leipzig house. With the publication of Felix's letters to Cécile, and of those which passed between her and Rebecca and Fanny, more and more of the ignorance which was long felt about Mendelssohn's home life is wearing away, and the suspicion shown to be utterly without foundation that his was a tame and joyless marriage, perhaps without bitterness, but also without comfort and helpfulness. The loss of his father was a very great blow, the loss of Fanny inconsolable, but so far as the living could make good the place of the dead, the gentle, devoted, and highly loved wife gave him what he needed above all things in his house—rest, appreciation, and constant love.

The face of Mendelssohn himself, as sketched by Hensel, is not unlike the other well-known portraits, but is more marked-

ly Jewish in its features. Hensel always idealizes; he softens all roughnesses away; and yet Felix had a face so refined that it would be difficult to make it more delicate than the original. Most of Mendelssohn's portraits are commonplace; this is not. It gives us a certain suggestion of his vivacity, his sympathy, and his intelligence, but no adequate measure of the greatness and breadth of the man. But

sohn, either in Germany, England, or America. Chorley little knew what a weighty sentence he was inditing when he penned the words, "There may come a day yet when the example of Mendelssohn's life yet more than that of his works may be invoked in Germany." In England there has always been a passionate admiration of him as a man; the fascinating presence, the stories of his remarkable



CÉCILE MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

it, and all that we have from Hensel the younger, from Madame Moscheles, and from Hiller, are interesting and valuable, for the time predicted by one who wrote the sentence years ago seems to have come, "when every line and every word from Mendelssohn's pen would be treasured by the world." Most great composers make their appeal for recognition to a comparatively small circle of admirers, and are rarely quoted beyond the domain of their art. It is not so with Mendels-

culture, his unselfishness, his moral purity, his entirely religious and Christian character, awaking an interest in everything pertaining to him, which found hardly an exaggerated expression in *Charles Auchester*, and which has not ceased yet. And within a few years the people of culture in America have begun to take as deep an interest in Mendelssohn as those of Germany and England: hardly any books have found more enthusiastic readers than *Mendelssohn's Letters*.



### DREAM-FOLK.

In Sleep's illimitable halls I strayed  
 Amid the picture-folk of many lands,  
 All rustling strangely, softly, in and out,  
 All murmuring in hushed cadence curious.  
 Embodied, moving with slow stately tread,  
 Down from their frames step Rembrandt's famous men,  
 And gently turn aside, ere they molest  
 Jan Steen's Dutch children laughing on the floor.

The quaint stiff girl saints of an earlier time  
 Pale 'neath their aureoles, with air demure,  
 White downcast lids, and wistful tender mien,  
 Follow unquestioning the men devout  
 Whose sad strong faces, full of suffering,  
 Watch with a longing rapt, ineffable,  
 The glorious archangel whose high might  
 Did trample Satan 'neath his sacred feet.  
 A cool and mystic fragrance doth reveal  
 That fairest angel with the lily stalk,  
 Near by he hovers, ever lingering, where  
 Murillo's holy maids and Raphael's  
 Walk side by side in meekest innocence;

And from their saintliness doth shine such  
 light

One needs must turn one's mortal gaze away,  
 And let it rest on Titian's human world:  
 Venetian women proud, with tawny hair  
 Falling o'er shoulders of rare loveliness.  
 Correggio's cherubs dear, Albani's Loves,  
 Sport airily above the motley throng,  
 And carol with a harmony divine,  
 Weaving rose garlands with their tiny hands,  
 Flinging them down in sweetest merriment  
 Upon the bowed head of a youthful monk,  
 Who broods apart in hopeless reverie,  
 While butterflies afloat in spring sunshine,  
 Birds calling to their mates, the breath of  
 flowers,  
 And all the glad earth's happy sights and  
 sounds  
 But mock his miserable loneliness.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 Yet most of all did sink into my heart  
 The grave, prophetic, haunting, fateful eyes  
 Of Andrea del Sarto's young St. John.