

## ART. II. — MUSIC.

ONE class of persons seeks the soul of Music, and dwells in it; another, the laws which reign in its creations; and a third, the form in which it is embodied, the actual beauty as it charms the sense. To one it is a feeling, a sentiment, a passion; to another it is a science; to another, a sensible creation and enjoyment. The heart, the intellect, and the senses; the soul, the body, and the everlasting laws; the active prompting motive, the passive substance into which it pours its will, and the impersonal regulating reason mediating between will and action; — what more enters into our existence as a whole, or into any single experience or act of ours? At any moment, there is somewhat prompting us within; some thought, accompanying that prompting, to guide it to its end; and some passive instrument or object, endowed with motion or with form, in obedience to that prompting and that thought. We *will*, from inmost passion; we *see*, by light not our own; we *go*, as the world opens to receive us. Thus in life there are three forces: — Motives, which are first, and spring from within; secondly, guiding principles and laws, independent of us, yet involved in us and in every thing; thirdly, actions or expressions, which are the body or thing moved. And these are the three elements of music, as well as of our lives, presiding over all its grand and primary divisions.

In the history also of music, since music could be called an art, which is only in comparatively modern times, each of these three component elements of music has exercised ascendancy in turn. The scientific phase, that is, the learned style, came first in the order of development, with the Bachs; the music of expression, of sentiment, the grand deep poetry and soul of the art, came next, with Haydn and Mozart, Handel and Beethoven; the music of effect, the music of the senses, the age of Rossinis and instrumental virtuosos, has succeeded. Historic periods and scientific doctrine correspond part to part in a series of three terms.

To the three spheres of sentiment, of science, and of prac-

tice, conform three classes of character, in whom each respectively predominates. We feel the spirit of the first; we admire the intellect of the second; we deal only with the actions of the third. We turn to the first for inspiration and for influence; to the second for reasons and methods; to the third for execution, whether in the way of amusement or of use. The highest type of the first class is the saint; of the second, the philosopher; and of the third, the statesman. Their collective organizations, from of old, have been the Church, the University, and the State. A corresponding division holds in every department of life, in every art, in every subject of inquiry. Its keen blade passed through each and all, when Thought began. It is the primary analysis of the universe, which the mysteries of the church have carried even into the inmost nature of the Deity.

These analogies, accidentally started, lead directly into the inmost essence of the science and the art of music. The number Three is the number of science; and there is a certain poetry of science, which consists in tracing the presence of the same great laws, and detecting the same type in all things; so that one sphere becomes an expression and reflection, as it were, of every other; so that the passions and emotions of our soul read themselves acknowledged, and enjoy their own harmonies anew, in every kingdom of nature and the arts. So much it is necessary to glance at in the science of music, — that divine source of enthusiasm, that transcendent medium of expression, that homelike yet mysterious element of passion, of the love that yearns for the human, or that climbs in secret aspiration, flame-like, to the infinite Heart of hearts, centre of light and warmth, in whom all spirits seek their unity.

But science is not the essence of music. It is not the warm, glowing thing itself. It is only the measure of its heart-beats, the law that distributes the ramification of the innumerable ducts and channels through which that heart propels its life-blood. It is the principle of order in the system, the divider of the one into the many, which resent resemblance in each other, and wander off in every way from uniformity, only that they may be the more completely one; or, in other

words, that unity may become universality. Since, however, unity precedes variety, since it is only the whole which can explain the parts, we will not follow the spiral path of the restless analyzer and divider, Science, before we have characterized the whole, which in this case it divides.

Music is both body and soul, like the man who delights in it. Its body is beauty in the sphere of sound, — *audible beauty*. But in this very word *beauty* is implied a soul, a moral end, a meaning of some sort, a something which makes it of interest to the inner life of man, which relates it to our invisible and real self. This beauty, like all other, results from the marriage of a spiritual fact with a material form, from the rendering external, and an object of sense, what lives in essence only in the soul. Here the material part, which is measured sound, is the embodiment and sensible representative, as well as the re-acting cause, of that which we call impulse, sentiment, feeling, the spring of all our action and expression. In a word, it is the language of the heart; — not an arbitrary and conventional representative, as a spoken or written word is; but a natural, invariable, pure type and correspondence. Speech, so far as it is distinct from music, sustains the same relation to the head. Speech is the language of ideas, the communicator of thought, the Mercury of the intellectual Olympus enthroned in each of us. But behind all thought, there is something deeper, and much nearer life. Thought is passive, involuntary, cold, varying with what it falls upon like light, a more or less clear-sighted guide to us, but not a prompting energy; and surely not our very essence; not the source either of any single act, or of that whole complex course and habit of action which we call our character. Thought has no impulse in itself, any more than the lungs have. “Out of the *heart* are the issues of life.” Its loves, its sentiments, its passions, its prompting impulses, its irresistible attractions, its warm desires and aspirations, — these are the masters of the intellect, if not its law; these people the blank consciousness with thoughts innumerable; these, though involuntary in one sense, are yet the principle of will in us, and are the spring of all activity, and of all thought too, since they, in fact,

strike out the light they see to act by. The special moments and phases of this active principle we call emotions; and music, which I hold to be its natural language, has for its very root and first principle, and is actually born from, motion.

Sound is generated by motion; rhythm is measured motion; and this is what distinguishes music from every other art of expression. Painting, sculpture, architecture, are all quiescent: they address us in still contemplation. But music is all motion, and it is nothing else.

And so in its effects. It does not rest, that we may contemplate it; but it hurries us away with it. Our very first intimation of its presence is, that we are moved by it. Its thrilling finger presses down some secret spring within us, and instantly the soul is on its feet with an emotion. Painting and sculpture rather give the idea of an emotion, than directly move us; and, if speech can raise or quell a passion, it is because there is kneaded into all speech a certain leaven of the divine fire called music. The same words and sentences convey new impressions with every honest change of tone and modulation in the speaker's voice; and, when he rises to any thing like eloquence, there is a certain buoyant rhythmical substratum of pure tone on which his words ride, as the ship rides on the ocean, borrowing its chief eloquence from that. Take out the consonants which break up his speech, and the vowels flow on musically. How often will the murmur of a devout prayer overcome a remote hearer with more of a religious feeling, than any apprehension of the distinct words could, if he stood nearer!

Music is a universal language, subtly penetrating all the walls of time and space. It is no more local than the mathematics, which are its impersonal reason, just as sound is its body, and feeling or passion is its soul. The passions of the human heart are radically alike, and answer to the same tones everywhere and always, except as they may be undeveloped; and music has a power to develope them, like an experience of life. It can convey a foretaste of moods and states of feeling yet in reserve for the soul, of loves which yet have never met an object that could call them out.

A musical composition is the best expression of its author's inmost life. No persons in all history are so intimately known to those that live away from them or after them, as are Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Schubert, Bellini, and others, to those who enter into the spirit of their musical works. For they have each bequeathed the very wine of his peculiar life in this form, that it sparkles still the same as often as it is opened to the air. The sounds may effervesce in each performance; but they may be woke to life again at any time. So it is with the passions and emotions which first dictated the melodious creations.

Hence it is that great composers have no biography, except their music. Theirs is a life of deep, interior sentiment, of ever-active passion and affection, of far-reaching aspiration, rather than of ideas or events; theirs is the wisdom of love; their belief is faith, the felt creed of the heart; and they dwell in the peculiar element of that, in the wondrous *tone-world*, communicating all the strongest, swiftest, and most delicate pulsations of their feeling to the ready vibrations of wood or metal or string, which propagate themselves through the equally ready vibrations of the air, and of every other medium, till they reach the chambers of the ear, and set in motion chords more sensitive, that vibrate on the nervous boundary between matter and the soul; and there, what was vibration becomes sound, and the hearer has caught the spirit of the composer. Yes: the whole soul of a Beethoven thrills through your soul, when you have actually heard one of his great symphonies. There is no other communion of so intimate a nature possible, as that which operates through music. Intimate, and yet most mystical; intimacy not profaned by outward contact of familiarity, but a meeting and communing of the ideal, one with another, which never grows familiar. Why is it but because in sentiment the tendency always is to unity, while thought for ever differentiates and splits? Feeling communicates by sympathy, or fellow-feeling, the earth round; and music is its common language, which admits no dialects, and means the same in Europe and America. Light corresponds to thought; and light is changed and colored by every me-

dium through which it shoots, by every surface which reflects it. Sound, or, which is the same thing, measured motion or vibration, corresponds to feeling, and its vibrations are passed on through every medium unchanged, except as they grow fainter. Light is volatile; but sound is constant: so it is when you compare thought with feeling, which last comes more from the centre where all souls are one.

Music is religious and prophetic. She is the real Sibyl, chanting evermore of unity. Over wild, waste oceans of discord floats her silvery voice, the harbinger of love and hope. Every genuine strain of music is a serene prayer, or bold, inspired demand, to be united with all, at the Heart of all things. Her appeal to the world is more loving than the world can yet appreciate. Kings and statesmen, and men of affairs, and men of theories, would stand aside from their own over-rated occupations to listen to her voice, if they knew how nearly it concerned them, how much more it goes to the bottom of the matter, and how clearly she forefeels humanity's great destiny. The soul that is truly receptive of music learns angelic wisdom, and grows more childlike with experience. The sort of experience which music gives does not plough cunning furrows in the brow of the fresh soul, nor darken its expressive face by knitting there the tangled lines of Satan. Here, the most deeply initiated are in spirit the most youthful; and Hope delights to wait on them.

The native impulses of the soul, or what are variously called the passions, affections, propensities, desires, are, all of them, when considered in their essence and original unwarped tendency, so many divinely implanted loves. Union, harmony of some sort, is their very life. To meet, to unite, to blend, by methods intricate as swift, is their whole business and effort through eternity. As is their attraction, such must be their destiny; not to collision, not to excess followed by exhaustion; not to discord, chaos, and confusion; but to binding ties of fitness and conjunction through all spheres, from the simplest to the most universal accords. Through these (how else?) are the hearts of the human race to be knit into one mutually conscious, undivided whole, one living temple not too narrow, nor too fragmentary for the reception

of the Spirit of Good. Is not this foretold in music, the natural language of these passions, which cannot express corruption nor any evil feeling, without ceasing to be music; which has no tone for any bad passion, and translates into harmony and beauty whatever it expresses? The blending of all these passions harmoniously into one becomes the central love, the deepest and most undivided life of man. This is the love of God, as it also, from the first, is the inbreathing of God, who is love; to whom the soul seeks its way, by however blind an instinct, through all these partial harmonies, learning by degrees to understand the universal nature of its desire and aim. The sentiment of unity, the strongest and deepest sentiment of which man is capable, the great affection into which all his affections flow — to find, not lose themselves; which looks to the source when little wants conflict, and straightway they are reconciled in emulous ardor for the glory of the whole; which lifts a man above the thought of self, by making him in every sense fully himself, by reuniting his prismatic, party-colored passions into one which is as clear and universal as the light; the sentiment which seeks only universal harmony and order, so that all things, whether of the inner or of the outer world, may be perfectly transparent to the love in which they have their being, and that the sole condition of all peace and happiness, the consciousness of one in all and all in one, may never more be wanting; — that is what the common sense of mankind means by the *religious* sentiment, — that is the pure essence of religion. Music is its natural language, the chief rite of its worship, the rite which cannot lose its sacredness; for music cannot cease to be harmony, cannot cease to symbolize the sacred relationship of each to all, cannot contract a taint, any more than the sunbeam which shines into all corners. Music cannot narrow or cloak the message which it bears; it cannot lie; it cannot raise questions in the mind, or excite any other than a pure enthusiasm. It is God's alphabet, and not man's; unalterable and unpervertible; suited for the harmony of the human passions and affections; and sent us, in this their long winter of disharmony and strife, to be a perpetual type and monitor, rather say an actual foretaste, of that

harmony which must yet come. How could there be religion without music? That sentiment would create it again, would evoke its elements out of the completest jargon of discords, if the scale and the accords, and all the use of instruments, were forgotten. Let that feeling deepen in our nation, and absorb its individual ambitions, and we shall have our music greater than the world has known. There *was* an age of faith, though the doctrinal statements and the forms thereof were narrow. Art, however, freed the spirit which the priest imprisoned. Music, above all, woke to celestial power and beauty in the bosom of a believing though an ignorant age. The Catholic church did not neglect this great secret of expression and of influence; and the beautiful free servant served it in a larger spirit than itself had dreamed of. Where it could not teach the Bible, where its own formal interpretations thereof were perhaps little better than stones for bread, it could breathe the spirit of the Bible and of all love and sanctity into the most ignorant and thoughtless worshipper, through its sublime Masses, at once so joyous and so solemn, so soul-subduing and so soul-exalting, so full of tenderness, so full of rapture uncontrollable, so confident and so devout. In these, the hearer did, for the time being, actually *live* celestial states. The mystery of the cross and the ascension, the glorious doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, were not reasoned out to his understanding, but passed through his very soul, like an experience, in these all-permeating clouds of sound; and so the religion became in him an emotion, which could not so easily become a thought, which had better not become such thought as the opinionated teachers of the visible church would give him. The words of the Credo never yet went down with all minds; but their general tenor is universal, and music is altogether so. Music extracts and embodies only the spirit of the doctrine, that inmost life of it which all feel, and miraculously revivifies and transfigures the cold statements of the understanding with the warm faith of feeling. In music there is no controversy; in music there are no opinions: its springs are deeper than the foundations of any of these partition walls, and its breath floats undivided over all their heads. No danger to the Catholic whose head

is clouded by dull superstitions, while his heart is nourished and united with the life of all lives by this refreshing dew!

The growing disposition, here and there, among select musical circles, to cultivate acquaintance with this form of music, is a good sign. What has been called sacred music in this country has been the least sacred in every thing but the name, and the forced reverence paid it. With the superstitions of the past, the soul of nature also was suppressed; and the free spirit of music found small sphere amid our loud *protestings*. A joyless religion of the intellect merely, which could almost find fault with the sun's shining, closed every pore of the self-mortified and frozen soul against the subtle, insinuating warmth of this most eloquent apostle of God. The sublime sincerity of that wintry energy of self-denial having for the most part passed away, and the hearts of the descendants of the Pilgrims having become opened to all worldly influences, why should they not be also visited by the heavenly corrective of holy and enchanting music, which is sure to call forth and to nourish germs of loftier affection? Can the bitter spirit of sectarianism, can the formal preachings of a worldly church which strives to keep religion so distinct from life, can the utilitarian ethics of this great day of trade, give the soul such nourishment and such conviction of the higher life as the great religious music of Mozart and Haydn and Beethoven? The pomp and pageantry of the Mass we have not. But the spiritual essence lives in the music itself; and a mere quartette of voices, a social friendly group, bound alike by moral and by musical sympathies, may drink this inspiration, may pour it out on others. The songs and operas of the day, which take the multitude, become insipid in comparison with such music.

Greatest of all masters in this peculiar line was Mozart, — the *boy* Mozart we might say, — who wrote the major part of his eighteen Masses ere he had reached his twenty-second year; and yet they seem, the best of them, to have been wrung from the profoundest experiences of the long-tried heart of a man, as well as to pour forth the raptures of a bright seraph-soul, which has not yet buried any portion of its heavenly inheritance in the earth.

In music of this kind, there is somewhat that is peculiar to the individuality of the composer ; but there is more that is universal, true to the inmost meaning of all hearts. Every sentiment, if it is deep enough, becomes religion ; for every sentiment seeks and tends to unity, to harmony, to recognition of the one in all. And every sentiment in music is expressed in its purity, and carried up as it were to the blending point of all the emotions in one, which is the radical desire and feeling of the soul, its passion to be one with God.

If Mozart is perhaps the deepest in this order of composition, he by no means stands alone. The church afforded to genius that sphere, for its highest and holiest ambition, which it found not elsewhere. The Masses of Hadyn are more numerous, and more of them elaborate, great efforts, than those of Mozart, many of whose Masses were composed at so early an age ; and his genius steadily drew him towards that sphere of music, in which he was destined to reign supreme, — the opera. But, though to Hadyn we must grant the very perfection of artistic skill and grace, a warm and childlike piety, and a spirit of the purest joy ; and though at times he has surpassing tenderness ; still there is an indescribable atmosphere, an air of inspiration, a gushing forth as of the very warmest, inmost life-blood, in Mozart's religious music, which affects us, even when it is simpler than Hadyn's, with more power. Religion takes in Hadyn more the form of gratitude and joy. The mournfulness of a *Miserere* or a *Crucifixus* of his is a passive mood, often but the successful contemplation or painter's study of such a mood, where the subject calls for it, rather than a permanent and inherent quality in the whole music of his own being. His ground tone seems to be a certain domestic grateful sense of life, in which the clearest order and the sweetest kindliness and thankfulness for ever reign. In Mozart the ground tone is love, the very ecstasy and celestial bliss of the re-union of two souls long separated, at once romantic and Platonic, sensuous, and yet exalting the senses to a most spiritual ministry. In him we have what is nearest to the naked soul of music, — its most ethereal, transparent, thrilling body. One would scarce suppose, that the soul of Mozart ever

inhabited any other body than those melodies and harmonies in which it dwells for us. Something of a personal love, however, is felt in his most religious strains: it is the worship of the Holy Virgin; the music of that phase of the religious sentiment, which Swedenborg might call conjugal love.

To Beethoven's three or four great Masses, it comes most natural to add the term *solemn*; for, with him, all is a great effort. It is the very sentiment of the man, — aspiration, boundless yearning to embrace the Infinite. With him the very discontent of the soul becomes religion, and opens sublime visions, which are like a flying horizon of ever near, yet unattainable order and beauty. In the inexhaustibleness of the heart's cravings, he finds revelations; and out of those depths, with gloomy grandeur, with fire now smothered and now breaking out, and always with a rapt impetuosity, the worship of his nature springs, escaping like a flame to heaven.

Then, too, besides this captivating music of the Catholic church, we should think of the plain church, the voices of the united multitude, in simple, solemn, sublime strains, presenting themselves as one before the Lord. Even our modern psalm, as monotonous and artificial as it often is, satisfying scarcely more than the grammatical conditions of a musical proposition, has oftentimes an unsurpassable grandeur. Where thousands sing the same slow melody, the mighty waves of sound wake in the air their own accompaniment, and the effect is that of harmony. On this broad popular basis, Handel built. He is the Protestant, the people's man, in music. In him the great sentiment of a common humanity found expression. The individual vanishes: it is the mighty music of humanity; his theme, the one first theme, and properly the burthen of all music, humanity's looking-for and welcome of its Messiah. What a prediction and foreshadowing of the future harmony and unity of the whole race is that great Oratorio! What are those choruses, those hallelujahs and amens, but the solemn ecstasy, the calm, because universal and all-sympathizing, everywhere sustained excitement, which all souls shall feel;

when all shall feel their unity with all humanity, and with all to God.

And it is not alone in the music of the church of any form, whether mass or plainer choral, that this sentiment is strongest. Perhaps no music ever stirred profounder depths in the hearer's religious consciousness, than some great orchestral symphonies, say those of Beethoven. Even a waltz of his, it has been said, is more religious than a prayer of Rossini's. His symphonies are like great conflagrations of some grand piles of architecture, in which the material substance seems consumed, while the spirit soars in the graceful but impatient crackling shapes of the devouring element, and is swiftly lost in upper air.

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#### ART. III. — WAR.\*

IT has been a favorite study of modern philosophy, to indicate the steps of human progress, to watch the rising of a thought in one man's mind, the communication of it to a few, to a small minority, its expansion and general reception, until it publishes itself to the world by destroying the existing laws and institutions, and the generation of new. Looked at in this general and historical way, many things wear a very different face from that they show near by, and one at a time, — and, particularly, war. War, which, to sane men at the present day, begins to look like an epidemic insanity, breaking out here and there like the cholera or influenza, infecting men's brains instead of their bowels, — when seen in the remote past, in the infancy of society, appears a part of the connection of events, and, in its place, necessary.

As far as history has preserved to us the slow unfoldings of any savage tribe, it is not easy to see how war could be avoided by such wild, passionate, needy, ungoverned, strong-

\* Many persons will remember listening to the present article, delivered as a lecture in Boston, in March, 1838. It has been obtained for this publication at much solicitation, not having been looked at by the author since that time.