

Naples, January 1.

Naples, although not remarkable for beautiful architecture, is, from its situation and many peculiarities, one of the most beautiful cities of the world. On coming from Rome, one certainly misses the grander taste in architecture and other works of decorative art formed upon and refined by the study of the antique, which for ages has rendered that city the most interesting of all others to the architect, the sculptor and the painter; but one is compensated for that in Naples by other advantages that Rome has not. To an inhabitant of northern lands, the city presents from its amphitheatrical position a most imposing spectacle, and with its flat roofs covered with party-coloured and lacquered tiles, its cupolas and towers, it has a very novel and oriental appearance. It is moreover one of the most lively cities of the world, at least one of the most noisy; for although Vienna and Hamburg, the two most populous cities that I have yet seen, may have proportionately as many inhabitants as Naples, yet the latter, partly from its southern liveliness, and partly from the circumstance that here all classes idle away more time in the streets than they work at home, is much more animated than those cities. The noise in the streets is positively great beyond description, and until one has become somewhat accustomed to it, one is completely deafened by it. All the mechanics pursue their calling in the streets: blacksmiths, locksmiths, copper-smiths, car-

penters, tailors and shoemakers — all alike sit in front of their houses variously intermingled, and work. Added to that the rattling of the carts and vehicles, which in the principal streets almost always move on two lines, the wild cries of itinerant vendors, always endeavouring to undersell each other, and lastly the animated language and gestures of those who meet, or converse in the streets, who to a German seem as though they were in violent dispute, although they are perhaps merely talking of the weather or some unimportant piece of news or town gossip. But more striking than in any other city of the world is the contrast between the luxury in the equipages and dress of the higher classes, and the dirt and nakedness of the lower ones, particularly of the so-called Lazzaroni. Of these whole families are to be seen lying in the streets in the midst of the *beau monde*, looking for vermin upon their half-naked bodies. A more disgusting sight I never beheld! And yet before *Murat's* time, who made soldiers of all the able-bodied Lazzaroni, these vagabonds were far more numerous.

February 3.

Yesterday we made our first excursion. In company with our Silesian fellow-countrymen, *Herren von Raumer, von Latdorf, Hagen* and *Kruse*, we first drove out to Portici to see the museum. Here, in a suite of apartments, are preserved the paintings and interior-decorations found in Herculaneum and Pompeii, from whence they have been taken from the walls with the plaster, and are here hung up in frames with glass doors. Of the greater part of them the colours are in excellent preservation, especially a very fine red. The room or interior decorations, consisting of arabesques, small landscapes, and the figures of animals, are almost all well painted. The larger historical paintings taken from temples and public buildings have great artistic merit, and are remarkable both for drawing and colour. Some of these are in a wonderful state of preservation, and appear as though they had been painted

but recently. Besides these paintings, there is in another room a collection of a variety of metal utensils, a helmet, and some vases in pottery, with different kinds of grain, partly burnt by the glowing ashes, such as wheat, barley, Indian corn, beans, &c. &c. These different kinds of grain are readily recognised, and we found them quite similar to our own in size and form. All the other antiquities which were formerly preserved here have been transferred to Naples, and it is intended to transfer the paintings there also.

As the weather was extremely fine, we felt a great disposition to make the ascent of mount Vesuvius without loss of time. But as it was almost impossible for women and children to climb the last steep ascent, *Dorette* and the children returned to Naples, accompanied by Herr *Kruse*. We others hired some asses for the journey and return, at the extremely low charge of four Carlini (about $15\frac{1}{2}$ d.), and set out at 12 o'clock at noon. At first the road lies through vineyards for about the distance of an hour and a half's journey, and with but a gentle ascent only; but the road begins already to be difficult, being very uneven and stony. We saw several vineyards enclosed with large bush-aloes instead of hedges. After the lapse of an hour and a half we came to a plain which spread away before us like a desolate waste, as far as the proper base of the volcano. Not a vestige of vegetation met the eye; on every side nothing but masses of lava piled upon each other! Our path now turned leftward across the plain towards a mountain ridge, which rises like an island out of the midst of this fearful wilderness. On this stands the so-called hermitage, a building of two stories high, where we refreshed ourselves with bread, wine, cheese and fruits, and enjoyed the fine and now tolerably extensive view. After a short rest, in company with ten Englishmen whom we met here, we resumed the road, which still continues to run over the summit of the ridge as far as the crater. This part of the way is the least difficult, leading for some distance through bushes of sweet chesnuts, the plain covered with black lava

stretching away before the eye. After half an hour's progress we reached the steepest part of the ridge, at the foot of which we were obliged to leave the asses. Now began the difficult part of our work. Treading upon deep ashes without solid bottom, at every footstep one slips back so far, that one has often scarcely advanced an inch; and the mountain is here so steep, that one is obliged to use the hands as well for progression. Fortunately a ridge of solid lava extends downwards almost from the whole height, and rises like a ridge of rock from out of the ashes. When one has reached this, the toil is less, as the ground beneath has again become firm. But were one obliged, as at first, to wade always through the ashes, it would require a whole day to make the ascent of this height alone. Nevertheless it took a good hour to accomplish it, although we set out from our resting place with recruited strength, and with the hope of soon reaching the summit. On reaching the top, we saw again a small plain before us, from which in several places between the lava-rocks a white sulphurous steam ascended. The ground here was more or less hot and our footsteps produced a hollow sound. After we had passed rapidly over this we had to climb another though a lower height, and then beheld at a moderate distance before us the two craters, which were now vomiting fire. We sat down upon the ground between the lava-rocks and found ourselves as though sitting in a heated stove, for a great heat rose from the earth, which was nevertheless very agreeable to us. After we had rested here some time, some one of the company asked whether one could not ascend between the two cones close to the brink of the crater? All the guides replied in the negative, and assured us it was very dangerous to approach it nearer. We saw sufficiently well ourselves that it would be impossible to ascend direct from the place where we stood, as we should have run the risk of being stifled with the smoke of the crater upon our left. But it seemed to us that a way might possibly be found round the left side of one crater, from which we could ascend on the

windward side of the other; so we immediately proceeded to make the trial together; after some objections our guides followed also. We had scarcely proceeded a distance of two hundred paces, when one of the craters with a fearful report threw out a quantity of red-hot stones, some of which fell at no great distance from us. This soon brought the whole party to a standstill; but after some little hesitation the foremost proceeded onward and the rest of us followed. In this manner, after a toilsome passage, we reached the rear of the left-hand crater, and then began to ascend the cone. But this was the most laborious task of the whole day, for we had now to climb a very steep incline up to our knees in ashes. Nevertheless, after great exertion we reached the summit and stood on the narrow edge of the crater, which, in the form of a funnel, is about two hundred feet in diameter at the upper part of the opening. After we had taken breath here awhile, and contemplated the eruptions of the other crater, which lay before us to leeward, the one closeto which we were standing, became suddenly quite clear of smoke, and we could look down into the awful abyss. We there saw large cavernous fissures between the masses of rock forming the neck of the funnel, out of which flames burst at intervals; but as these were immediately followed by smoke, this sight was of short continuance only. One of the Englishmen of our party took it into his head, at a moment when the smoke of the crater upon the brink of which we were standing was somewhat less, to run across even to the other, in order to look down into it. But scarcely had he reached the brink, when an eruption, though fortunately not a very strong one, took place, from which he had barely time to save himself, and rush back again to us. At the same moment a third crater behind us began to make a noise, and it was now indeed high time that we should make our retreat. Though it was ashes merely that it threw up, yet by the timely fear with which it filled us, it was our saviour from utter destruction; for scarcely had we reached our old halting-place than the hitherto very quiet crater on the

brink of which we had stood, threw out such a mass of red hot stones, exactly in the direction of the place where we had stood, that we should all have been struck down and overwhelmed by them had we stopped there five minutes longer. After our daring party had recovered from the terror which had seized upon all, we were compelled to avow our extreme rashness in having ventured to ascend so high despite the warnings of our guides.

We now once more bivouaked upon our warm place, and recruited our spirits with the provisions we had brought with us. But with night drawing on, far away from every living creature, and surrounded on all sides by desolation, it was a fearful reflexion to think that we sat here suspended as it were over a sea of fire, upon a perhaps not very thick crust, which sooner or later might give way beneath us. Several of our party made the observation, that it was indeed a mad piece of folly to have risked life upon chances so eminently possible, for the mere gratification of an idle curiosity. But these reflexions nevertheless did not prevent us from enjoying with much relish the eggs our guides had brought with them and cooked in the hot ashes, and which we washed down with a draught of delicious *Lacrymæ Christi*.

We here awaited the approach of night; saw the sun sink below the sea, and the full moon rise behind the craters, her yellow light forming a beautiful contrast with the red flames that issued from them. On our right we saw at the same time the reflexion from the burning lava which poured from an opening in the side of the mountain, which however it was impossible to approach without the greatest danger.

About seven o'clock we set out upon our return, which at first, from our being obliged to descend on the shaded side of the mountain was on account of the darkness both very difficult and dangerous. But when we arrived at the precipitous places, our guides led back us by another way, where we slid down with giant steps over deep ashes. Below we found our asses, upon which we rode to Portici by a magni-

ficent moonlight. At ten o'clock at night we arrived once more at Naples, highly gratified with the extremely interesting day's adventures.

February 7.

During the constant fine spring weather we daily take a walk to see the immediate environs of the city. The favorite walk of the children is to the quay, on which is the lighthouse, partly because the busy life in the port itself, as well as the sight of the different kinds of vessels, from the ship of war mounting a hundred guns down to the fisherman's boat, affords them immense pleasure, and partly because the way leading to it presents the most lively picture of the habits and occupations of the lower classes. From the St. Carlo theatre to the harbour there is, next to the Toledo-street, always the greatest crowd; at a short distance from which are all the small hole-and-corner theatres, where performances take place all the day long and where, upon a platform outside, a couple of fiddlers and a merry-Andrew constantly invite the passers-by to enter. Between these are the booths of the itinerant vendors, who, perched upon a table, recommend their medicaments to their numerous listeners and purchasers. Upon the quay, where there is no noise from the carts and carriages, the puppet-show players pitch their portative theatres, and the *Improvvisatori* entertain the Neapolitans with the heroic feats of their ancestors. Sometimes one of these reads aloud to his auditory and then explains what he has been reading. But here also swarm the most impudent and disgusting beggars, and the most expert pick-pockets; so that one cannot be too careful how one gets mixed up with them. On my first walks into that quarter I lost my pocket handkerchief each time. If one waits here till the evening the Vesuvius, with its red fire, presents a singular and magnificent contrast with the white lights of the Pharos.

The Royal garden on the Chiaja is also another very interesting walk. It extends for a considerable length close to the

sea, and consists of three very broad alleys with small flowerbeds laid out in the English style. It is ornamented with several fine statues and groups in marble; in the centre stands the celebrated Farnesian Bull, a splendid antique by a Greek master; on both sides are several fine copies of ancient works of art, such as that of the Apollo of Belvedere, the rape of the Sabines, &c. &c. From eleven in the forenoon on fine days, the *beau monde* assembles here to look and to be looked at. If one proceeds still farther along the Chiaja, one soon comes to the road that leads through the Grotto of Pausilippo to Puzzuoli. This long gallery, extending at least for a thousand paces right through a mountain of considerable height, is very remarkable of its kind, for the galleries cut through the rocks in the road over the Simplon are but child's play compared to this work. The entrance on this side between towering rocks is exceedingly romantic; at a great distance off the noise of the carriages driving through resembles thunder, and it is said that at night, when all is quiet here, the sound of the vehicles in the streets of Naples, is echoed through this rocky gallery like that of distant thunder. The interior is lighted day and night with numerous lamps. At the entrance and in the middle are little chapels, at which the passengers are solicited for alms. Above the entrance high up on the rocks, a small grotto is pointed out, where the immortal poet Virgil lies buried.

A few days ago we visited also Fort St. Elmo, from which one has an extensive view over the whole city and of the expansive bay.

February 12.

Last evening we returned from a delightful excursion to the islands. On Sunday at noon, in company with our three Silesian countryman, we went across to Ischia in a hired boat. We were at first obliged to sail round the promontory of Pausilippo: Nisida and Procida lay quite close to us, Cape Micen somewhat in the background, and Ischia at a greater distance,

in a direct line before us. These islands and promontories with their steep, and towering rocks close to the sea, and the rich fertility of their interior, present every moment and on every side on which they are beheld new aspects of varying interest, now of a beautiful and now of a bolder and grander character. Procida, in particular, one of the most populated spots of the whole world, presents a magnificent view from the sea, the whole island having the appearance of a large city. As the wind blew tolerably fresh and against us, night came on before we could reach Ischia. But the beauty of the evening would not permit us to regret our having been delayed. The stars shone with a brightness such as in Germany at least they are never seen to shine with; and Venus in particular was resplendent with so clear a light that its beams were reflected in the sea like those of the moon, and one could plainly discern a shadow from any intervening object. The sea, also, at every stroke of the oar shone as with the light of myriads of glowworms. About eight o'clock we at length landed at the north shore of the island and found a comfortable night-lodging in the handsome house of a clergyman.

On the next morning we soon set out upon our way to see the interior of the island and to ascend the Epomeo. As at Ischia there are neither vehicles nor roads to travel on, we all mounted upon asses, which carried us more conveniently and safely over the rocky and uneven ground. After passing through several level tracts in the highest cultivation we came to the small but lively town of Ischia, on the sea-shore, and onward to the foot of the Epomeo between vineyards to the opposite side of the mountain, where it is more convenient to climb. After we had ascended about half-way by very bad roads, we halted for an hour to rest and refresh the animals, and then completed the other still more toilsome part of the ascent. Meanwhile the sky had unfortunately become overcast with clouds, and upon reaching the summit of the mountain we were enveloped in a thick mist. We then entered a hermitage of some size, consisting of several rooms and

passages, and of a chapel. It resembles that at Freiburg in Switzerland, and like that also is hewn out of the solid rock, by two industrians recluses. We waited here some time in the hope that the weather would clear up, and several times also we had a glimpse between the clouds over the level parts of the island, which lay like a map outspread in the distance before us; but Naples, Capri, and Sorrento were veiled from our sight. We were at length obliged to set out on our way once more, without having had the pleasure of enjoying the fine view from here, which is perhaps one of the finest in the world, and had already considered our toilsome journey as a labour in vain, when on a sudden, after we had descended somewhat lower and stood under the stratum of clouds, the magnificent view of the whole of the islands, promontories and bay, with Vesuvius smoking in the background, displayed itself to our enraptured eyes. Long we stood lost in admiration of the singular beauty of the scene, and at length, when the setting sun gave token of departure, we returned by the shortest but steepest road, where we could make no use of the asses, to our quarter of the previous night. The Epomeo, which 450 years ago was a volcano, exhibits on this side, which is much more wild and barren than the other, numerous traces of former eruptions. The road led now almost continually over weather-worn lava. Upon the rocks we saw at very frequent intervals the stock-gilliflower in bloom, which here and in the neighbourhood of Naples grows wild. On the way-side violets and other plants, several of which are not indigenous with us, were in full flower, and in the gardens, the almond tree. At length we came to a place where there are warm baths, which in summer are much frequented by the Neapolitans. At the house of our host we found a plentifully spread table awaiting us, which after all the fatigue of the day was exceedingly acceptable. A fiery white Ischian wine of the year 1811 we found especially agreeable to the palate.

We re-embarked the next morning at eight o'clock and landed first at Cape Micenus, where we visited the large sub-

terranean reservoirs of soft water from which the Roman fleets were supplied, and the *cento camere* of Nero, which were probably prisons for the detention of prisoners of war. We then sailed right across the bay to Puzzuoli, and there made another pilgrimage to some antiquities. On running into the harbour we sailed past the still standing piers and arches of the bridge of *Caligula*, which that Emperor designed throwing across the bay. Although built of bricks merely, such is the excellence of the cement used in their construction, that their remains, after the lapse of so many centuries, still bid defiance to the unceasing action of the waves.

Our cicerone led us first to the Solfatara, a round level field-like space enclosed on all sides with rocks, apparently a crater which at some remote period had fallen in. The subterranean fire still burns beneath, nevertheless, for in many places smoke issues out of the earth, and as on Mount Vesuvius, deposits sulphur. At those places the ground is burning hot, and the foot-tread sounds hollow. Our guide flung a large stone upon the ground, which made it vibrate for a considerable distance round us, and produced a very loud, hollow sound. Thence we proceeded to another subterranean reservoir of water similar to that at Cape Micenus; inspected the ruins of an amphitheatre and several temples, and at last reached the most interesting antiquity in the whole neighbourhood — the ruins of the temple of Serapis, close to the sea-shore. So much has been written respecting all these antiquities, that it would be superfluous to dwell upon them here, but the remains of the temple of Serapis are so remarkable, and afford such evidence of its former size and grandeur that to see them alone amply repays a journey here. Towards the evening we drove back to Naples through the grotto of Pausilippo.

February 15.

As I have now been several times to the St. Carlo theatre, I can with confidence put my judgment to paper respecting it. On the first visit I experienced the same feeling as in the church

of St. Peter: it did not appear to me so large as it really is, and it was not until I had been frequently told that it is four feet wider and I know not how many longer than the theatre at Milan, that I could believe it. But when the curtain drew up and I could compare the size of the human beings with the painted objects of the decorations, I readily observed that here also I had been deceived by the correct proportions of each gigantic object. Here for the first time the horses introduced on the stage did not appear out of proportion with the rest, and the people one saw at the extreme depth of the theatre, were still in just proportion with objects which surrounded them. For ballet and pantomime I know of no better adapted locality, and military evolutions of infantry and cavalry, battles, storms at sea, and such things can be produced without falling into the ridiculous and the paltry; but for operas the house is too large. Although the singers, *Madame Colbran* and *Signori Nozzari, Benedetti*, and others, have very powerful voices, yet one hears only the highest notes given out with the full strain of the voice; but all tender pathos in song is wholly lost. This is said not to have been the case before the fire, and the theatre was then quite as sonorous as *Della Scala* at Milan. This prejudicial change is ascribed to three causes first, the proscenium has been widened by several feet; secondly, the ceiling is not so concave as formerly; and thirdly, the high projecting decorations in stucco obstruct the sound and do not send it back. If the house was in reality so sonorous formerly, then they have greatly deadened that faculty in the new building, and they would do very wisely to eject (the sooner the better) all the unnecessary trumpery of ornament and gildings, which besides is exceedingly heavy and not in the best taste, and so regain the former advantages.

The first opera I saw was "*Gabriele de Vergi*," by Count *Caraffa*, who formerly was a dilettant merely, but now as a younger son without means, is become an artiste, and as such strives to earn a subsistence. The opera pleased me very much, but without being altogether particularly attractive for me. The

style is even and dignified, but the orchestra is too much overlaid, and the voice parts are too much obscured. The execution was very precise, both on the part of the singers and of the orchestra. The latter, under the correct and spirited but somewhat too loud direction of Signor *Festa*, had studied it well, but were somewhat wanting in *nuances* of *piano* and *forte*; the wind instruments in particular are always too loud in the *piano*. Of the singers nothing further can be said than that they have good and powerful voices. Whether they have a good execution cannot be ascertained in this theatre; for one hears them either singing at the top of their voices, or one cannot hear them at all. After the opera *Duport's* ballet of "Cinderella" was given, the decorations, costumes, &c., of which were of a very expensive character. Besides *Duport* and his wife, the dancer *Vestris* attracted much notice. The music was nearly the same as that we heard in Vienna in that ballet; a polonaise newly introduced by Count *Gallenberg*, the ballet-composer here, pleased greatly from its originality and sweetness.

Another opera, also by a dilettant, Signor *Carlo Saccenti*, was given a week ago, after a three months' study and rehearsal. The king, who is a great patron of the composer, had fixed on it for the opening of the San Carlo theatre, and *Mayer*, who had been sent for here by the impresario, to write a new opera for the occasion, was obliged to keep his back. But as it was afterwards found that it would be impossible to be perfect in it by the day appointed for the opening, *Mayer* was permitted to write a Cantata in all haste, with which on the 12th January the theatre was at length opened. This cantata, though written with great despatch, is said nevertheless, according to the opinion of connoisseurs to contain a good deal of fine music; but as the text or subject was the burning of the theatre, one little calculated for composition, it could not well have been other than a somewhat tame production. Nor could it be expected, with the little attention given to it by the public, more occupied with the brilliant illumination of the house and the splendour and Spanish etiquette which the

court displayed at the opening of the theatre, that the reception given by the public to the cantata should have been other than a very cold one. Nevertheless, it was not properly speaking a failure. After this had been brought out, the study of *Saccenti's* opera was again resumed. All that reached the public concerning these rehearsals was very unfavourable. His friends said he had composed a work which from its originality and excellence would produce a complete reform in operatic compositions: the singers and musicians, on the other hand, said that in all their lives they had never sung or played anything more villanous, tedious and incorrect than that unfortunate opera. The impartial conjectured that, as is usual with such conflicting opinions, the truth would lie in the mean; but I soon satisfied myself, after a few rehearsals which I attended, that the musicians were perfectly right in the judgment they had formed of it. It would indeed be scarcely possible to put together a more outrageous piece of music, even if one strove expressly, and with the greatest industry to act contrary to all the most approved rules of rhythm, structure of the periods, harmony and instrumentation. There was no trace of song or sensible carrying out of an idea; every third bar was something else, with the most incorrect modulations. In the very beginning of the introduction three ugly quints follow each other in quick succession. One of the musicians from recollection said that the composer justified it very ingeniously with the example of the English sailor who was brought before a magistrate for having married three wives, but whom the law could not reach as it forbade bigamy only, and made no mention of trigamy; in the same manner, said the composer, it is forbidden to have *two* quints in succession, but by having *three* the penalty contemplated by the law was evaded.

After rehearsals innumerable, the representation took place in the presence of the court and with a crowded house. Notwithstanding the here prevailing formal Spanish etiquette, which commands that the curtain shall be drawn up immediately the king enters the box and which constrains the poor

singers to exhibit themselves on the stage during the whole duration of the overture, without being able to move in the spirit of the characters they impersonate; and which moreover forbids every demonstration of applause or of disapprobation; despite this constraint, which impedes free judgment, the opera was hissed in *optima forma*. On the following night it had the same fate, without a single friend of the composer's daring to clap a hand. With this second representation, at which I was present, the opera was for ever consigned to the tomb. It is called "Aganadeca;" its author is Signor *Vincenzio de Ritis*. The subject, from *Ossian*, is said not to be without merit, and it is regretted that it did not fall into the hands of a better composer. The latter, however is not sensible of his own deficiency; he ascribes its failure to the little musical judgment of the Neapolitan public, and intends sending his work to Germany. May Apollo and the muses bestow their blessings upon it!

February 20.

The Carneval came to a close yesterday, and the fasts have begun. After the noise of the last day of the carneval, the quiet which has now succeeded does one really good, although the evenings are somewhat dull, as all the theatres are closed for four days. At the St. Carlo theatre instead of the customary oratorios this year operas will be given as usual, but without ballets, which are wholly forbidden at this season. At the *Fiorentino* theatre we saw an opera of *Guglielmi* (son), "*Paolo e Virginia*," which met with some success. But the music of the third act is quite Italian for insipidity, in which *Paul*, during a storm at sea, sings an air in the usual form, and with the usual insipid intermediate acting, exhausting himself in shakes and passages, when he would act much more sensibly if he hastened to the assistance of his loved one. This sea-storm without an appropriate music was therefore the most ridiculous thing I ever saw at a theatre, and solicited no sympathy for the whole affair from the spectators. It is true the machinery also at this theatre was most mean and childish.

Among the singers Mesdames *Chabran* and *Canonici* distinguished themselves greatly. The former has a fine soprano voice, great ease of execution and a good school; the latter the same qualifications with a powerful contralto voice. They had particularly well studied their duets. In this theatre we found for the first time in Italy, with a full house and a frequently repeated performance, a quiet and sympathetic audience. The house is roomy and prettily decorated, but the stage very small and narrow.

I had expected the end of the carnaval to have been far more gay than I found it. The whole amusement consisted in the crowding together of half Naples, masked and unmasked, in vehicles and on foot in the street of Toledo, where they moved up and down and pelted each other with little balls of gypsum. The masks of the carriages were provided for the purpose with whole baskets full of these little bullets, and with shovels, so as to enable them to throw them up to the balconies. They carried tin shields on the left arm, with which to ward off the missiles of other maskers. As these were frequently of a tolerable size and were thrown with full force, the fun frequently proved somewhat rough for those persons who were not masked, and many a lady must doubtless have taken home with her a few blue marks on her neck and arm. Nevertheless all was borne with good humour and without dispute, as the liberty conferred by the mask serves to excuse all impoliteness. The masqued balls at the San Carlo theatre are said to have been somewhat wearisome affairs; although there was no want of masks in character, yet there was very little wit and ability to personate the characters in accordance with the costume and manners of the period.

February 26.

I have been twice to the conservatory of music. The first time I was present at a practice concert of the pupils, in which several overtures, or first themes of symphony composed by one of them, who at the same is first violin also, were tried.

They were not devoid of fancy, but in form and instrumentation complete imitations of the overtures of *Rossini*, which certainly are not calculated to serve as models. The execution was but tolerable; the young folks, particularly the violinists, have no school at all; they know neither how they should hold the violin nor the bow, and play neither purely nor distinctly. Nor can it be otherwise with the bad instruction they receive. *Festa*, the only violinist here of a good school, is not employed in the conservatory of music. It is highly reprehensible that the young people are permitted to give their practise-concerts without the superintendence and guidance of their instructors; their first violin and director, who is himself still a pupil, is wholly wanting in self possession and judgment. He bungles the *allegro tempi* in such a manner that all distinctness is out of the question. Among the wind instruments, a hornist, a lad of eleven years of age, is very remarkable. On the occasion of the second concert at which I was present, two singers made their appearance, who had neither good voices nor a good method. All that I have yet heard, is far inferior to what the Milan musical students can perform. Signor *Zingarelli*, director of the conservatory here, and teacher of the theory of music and singing may possess many qualifications as a composer of operas; but it is generally said that since his appointment the conservatory has very much declined. That he at least does not know how an orchestra should be conducted or a symphony executed, he proves by allowing so quietly these things to take place in his presence. Of the merits of our German composers he has some very erroneous notions. One day, when I paid him a visit, he spoke for a long time of *Haydn* and other of our composers with great respect, but without even once mentioning *Mozart*; I therefore turned the conversation upon the latter, upon which he said: "Yes, he also was not deficient in talent, but he lived too short a time to cultivate it in a proper manner; if he could only have continued to study ten years longer, he would then have been able to write something good."!

March 3.

An opera has been again put on the stage written by *Mayer* several years ago. It is called "*Cora*" and is founded on the same subject as *Kotzebue's* "*Sonnenjungfrau*" (Virgin of the Sun). There are certainly some fine passages in the music, but taken as a whole it has not satisfied my expectations of *Mayer's* music. He is after all deeply tinctured with the Italian manner and almost wholly an apostate from the German. His method of carrying out the vocalisation and his instrumentation are thoroughly Italian. This certainly is not to be wondered at, for since the age of fourteen he has lived in Italy, and never wrote for any other than Italian audiences. I think, that apart from his natural talent, he has raised himself above the others alone by having always endeavoured to procure all the best German works, which he studied, and made use of, the latter indeed sometimes a little too much. Throughout Italy, and here in particular, he is very much admired and liked: he merits it also in very respect, and as a man is ever the upright, smooth-smoken unassuming German. He is much attached to his fatherland, and seems only to regret that it was not his fate to pursue his career as a composer in Germany. In Bergamo, where he is director of the orchestra, he now only desires to live in retirement, and write solely for his church. He assured me that nothing but the honour of writing for the reopening of the San Carlo theatre could have induced him to leave his retreat once more, but that the opera "*La vendetta di Junone*," which he had now completed, should certainly be his last work for the theatre. In "*Cora*" the favorite piece with the public is the finale, consisting of a theme in three variations in the old style of *Pleyel*; one of the singers sings the theme, *Davide* the first variation in quavers, then *Nozzari* the second in triplets, and in conclusion *la Colbran* the third in semiquavers. At it is well sung, it greatly pleases the public, and critics therefore must be silent.

March 6.

Last evening Signor *Pio Chianchettino* gave a concert in the *Fondo* theatre. He is a nephew and pupil of *Dussek*, and played two concertos of that master in his manner. Although his play was pure, distinct and even full of expression, yet here again, as every-where else, the piano-forte as concert-instrument proved itself insufficient to awaken the enthusiasm of an audience; and the more so is this the greater the size of the place. For that reason also upon this occasion, the song-pieces pleased far more than the concertos, although no one could find fault with his play. I myself felt this also; for although I am very fond of the piano, when a composer rich in ideas improvises upon it, yet as concert-instrument I am wholly unmoved by it; and a piano-forte-concerto in my opinion is only effective when written like those of *Mozart*, in which the piano is not much more thought of than any other orchestral instrument. The singers, Madame *Chabran* and the Signori *Davide*, *Nozzari* and *Benedetti*, all distinguished themselves, and were loudly applauded. One becomes more sensible of their merits when one hears them in a smaller place than the San Carlo theatre. *Davide* and *Nozzari* may be called almost perfect singers, they both have very fine voices; the former a very high tenor, the latter a high baritone, remarkable fluency of execution and much true expression. *Benedetti* has a very fine bass voice, but sings rather coldly.

March 7.

We have again taken some rather more distant and highly interesting walks. The object of one was the Camaldula convent, which is situated upon a hill above two hours' drive from the centre of the city. We rode as far as the foot of the mountain, where as the carriage road terminated, we were obliged to make the ascent on foot. The view from the convent garden is perhaps one of the most extensive and beautiful in the world. On one side are seen Ischia, Capri, Procida, Nisida and the promontories which we had visited in our previous

excursion, accompanied by the blue mirror of the sea; on the opposite side Capua, Caserta, and in the back-ground the snow-covered mountains; on the side of Naples a part of the city itself, the whole bay with the opposite coast, and on the left the smoke-emitting Vesuvius; lastly, on the fourth side, the shores and salient promontories near Gaëta, as far as Terracina. As the weather was very propitious for us, this was one of the most magnificent days we ever passed in the enjoyment of the beauties of nature. The monks, some of whom we caught sight of, did not appear in the same humour as we were; for they all wore a gloomy aspect.

We took a shorter but not less interesting walk on the new road to Rome, which was begun under *Murat*, but has remained unfinished since his dethronement. It leads over a mountain from which one has the most admirable view of the city, and it is much to be regretted that it is not complete; for then the traveller would be able to form a more worthy conception of the city before his entry into Naples, while now by the old road, which winds through a narrow mountain ravine, he sees nothing of Naples until he has entered the most dirty and least attractive part of the city; which leaves him long in doubt whether he actually is in the world-famed Naples.

We passed a very pleasant day at the villa of the banker *Heigelin*, which is situated also upon a mountain near the *Strada Nuova*, whence one has a beautiful view. Old *Heigelin*, an amiable, open-hearted German, has ornamented this place of his own creation with so many fine things, such as grottoes, ruins, temples, fountains, &c. &c., that it would be actually impossible to crowd any thing more together in so small a space. Although perhaps the whole is somewhat frivolous as regards the manner in which it is laid out, it has nevertheless many individual things worthy of attention. For us Northerners, for instance, the vast number of exotic plants, which were for the most part in full bloom, were objects of great interest.

March 11.

Last evening our concert took place. As the impressario of the court theatres, *Barbaja*, an extremely selfish man, asked me too much money for the hire of the theatres, for the *Fondo* for instance 100 Neapolitan ducats and for the *San Carlo* 200 even, I adopted his proposal rather to give my concert in the assembly-room of the San Carlo theatre, which he offered me lit up for nothing. This apparently disinterested offer was nevertheless calculated also for his advantage, for the assembly-room and the adjoining rooms were the places for the hazard-tables, which he had rented, and to which by means of my concert he hoped to attract the most fashionable and wealthiest company of the city. This use of my concert, which could in no way prejudice me, I could readily allow him. As the saloon is not very spacious, I fixed the price of admission, as at Rome, at one piaster, and although I had not a more numerous, yet I had a more susceptible public than there. Encouraged by this and supported most efficiently by the very accurate accompaniment under *Festa's* direction, as well as by the room itself, which was so advantageous for my instrument, I played better than I had done in many others town in Italy. Besides my compositions a duet by *Mayer* and a terzet of *Cherubini* were sung by Signore *Davide*, *Nozzari* and *Benedetti*. Even during the evening I was solicited on all sides to give a second concert in the theatre.

March 18.

This morning early we visited the "Studii," *i. e.* the building in which the treasures of art from Pompeii and Herculaneum are preserved, together with the collections previously made of statues and paintings. The library is situated also in the same building. As it is impossible to see all in one day, we chose for to-day the statues and the library. Among the former are some very celebrated statues from the Farnese collection, of which numerous excellents casts have been made, and two equestrian statues found in Pompeii, of great ar-

tistic worth. In one room are two glazed cases, full of antique bronzes, also from Pompeii and Herculaneum, consisting of lamps, small penates and all kinds of domestic utensils. These things, as well as the statues in marble are in the most perfect preservation, and appear scarcely so many days old as they are years; but every thing of iron is much eaten by rust, as for instance the handles and rings of various vessels of bronze.

The library is contained in a fine handsome and spacious apartment and several adjoining rooms. On the floor of the grand room the line of the meridian is drawn, on which, through a small hole pierced in the wall for that purpose, the sun's rays fall at noon. When a person claps his hands at a particular spot in this apartment, an echo repeats it more than thirty times in rapid succession. This arises probably from the position of the window-recesses, which are high up, near the ceiling.

Lastly we visited the room where the rolls of papyrus are preserved and unrolled. They have all the appearance of charcoal, and one might mistake them for that, were it not that one can easily distinguish the edges of the leaves. A manuscript fully unrolled, mounted upon linen, framed and glazed, hangs against the wall. As the paper is burnt quite black the letters are scarcely to be distinguished, and one cannot but admire the patience, the penetration, and the knowledge of languages of those who have known how to unravel its sense. It is a treatise on music: each side is divided into three columns. In the first is seen an engraved, accurate copy of the unrolled papyrus, with all its defects, and rents; in the second, the contents in modern Greek characters, in which the letters and words that are wanting in the original are filled in with red letters, and in the third, a Latin translation. They are now unrolling another manuscript, but do not appear to be hurrying themselves much, for we found one person only thus occupied. The method pursued is a very simple one. Small strips of fine parchment are stuck with gum close to each other or rather somewhat lapping over each other, upon the charred rolls, after

which the paper is gradually and carefully released and removed. The process is of a necessity a slow one, but considerably more might have been unrolled by this time. If these precious remains of ancient learning were in the possession of a German sovereign, they would all have been deciphered long since.

March 22.

As I did not like the trouble of making the arrangement for a second concert, I readily accepted the proposal of the *impresario* to play twice at the San Carlo theatre between the acts of the opera for the sum of 300 ducats. This I did the evening before last for the first time. I was very much afraid that the violin would not fill the immense house, but I was soon set at rest on that point on being told at the rehearsal that every note was distinctly heard in the most distant parts of the house. But of a necessity nevertheless I was obliged to forego every finer *nuance* in my play. Although the house was very full, yet the greatest silence prevailed whilst I was playing, and after the second piece of music I was called forward.

Last evening I played at the *Casino mobile*, in a very fine saloon, my concerto in the form of a *scena*, and a *pot-pourri* with *pianoforte* accompaniment. As the room is very favourable for music, both of these had a very sensible effect upon the audience. The remainder of the concert, consisting of symphonies and *pièces d'harmonie*, was not of importance.

I forgot to mention a concert given by Signora *Paravicini* at which we were present, at the *Teatro nuovo*, on Wednesday last. She played, between the acts of a comedy, the first violin-concerto of *Rode* in D minor, a *pot-pourri* by *Kreutzer*, and, at the end an *Adagio* and *Rondo* of the same composer. I have been accustomed to hear my instrument ill used by women, but I never saw it used so badly as by Signora *Paravicini*. I was the more surprised at this, as she has acquired some fame, and has a vast deal of pretension; as an instance of this, she told people here that she had heard *Rode* in Vienna, but that he had excited no other sentiment in her

than pity. Her turn had now come to excite pity if one can feel it at all for arrogance and unskilfulness. She has a very excellent violin, a *Stradivari*, and in the cantabile draws from it a tolerable tone; but that is her only merit. In other respects she plays in bad taste, with a profusion of meaningless ornamentations, and the passages indistinctly: her intonation is not pure and her bow stroke extremely bungling. The applause was very lukewarm and was elicited only when Prince Leopold her patron began to clap his hands. Much more interesting than *Paravicini's* play, was the comedy, which was capitally performed. Signor *de Marini* played remarkably well, and he is altogether one of the best actors of the day. The theatre, certainly, is smaller than the Fiorentino and Fondo, but quite as pretty.

At private-parties I have played my quartetts and quintetts a few times, which were exceedingly well accompanied by Messieurs *Dauner* and son, the young and talented violinist *Onario*, whom I have practised in some of my things, and by the accomplished violoncellist *Fenzi*, who lived formerly in Cassel. They afforded great pleasure, and *Mayer* assured me he had never enjoyed a greater musical treat. On the second occasion we played them at the house of Lady *Douglas*, who herself plays the piano very well and is said to have sung exceedingly well some years ago. She and her husband are the first English in whom I have found a real taste for music.

March 23.

On looking through this diary I observe that I have forgotten to mention the performance of two masses given at the expense of Prince *Esterhazy* of Vienna. The first by old *Umlauf* of Vienna, was remarkable for nothing in particular; but the second by *Haydn*, in D minor, which was performed with great solemnity and military pomp on the emperor's birthday, afforded much gratification. Mesdames *Chabran* and *Canonici*, and Signori *Nozzari* and *Benedetti* sang the solo parts very beautifully; the chorus and orchestra were also admirable.

Unfortunately, at the express desire of the Prince, almost all the *tempi* were taken too quick, and thereby much spoiled.


Milan, April 22.

Prevented from writing by the great press of business in the last days of our residence in Naples, and the hurry of our return journey, which was almost unbroken by a day of rest, I have got greatly in arrears, and have therefore much to fetch up, even respecting Naples.


Mayer's new opera was at length brought out a fortnight before Easter, after it had been once more re-christened, but it was a total failure, so that it lived through two and a half representations only, and probably is for ever at rest. On the third evening, in fact, the first act alone was given, with one act of *Paer's* "Sargino." Both the subject and the music of *Mayer's* opera are equally uninteresting and tedious. The latter especially is wanting in life and spirit; it is so common-place and so spun out, that one can hardly hear it without falling asleep. This actually occurred to me, to Count *Gallenberg*, and to several others, at the grand rehearsal. *Mayer* seems to have exhausted himself, which is no wonder with the enormous quantity of operas which he has written. It is certainly high time for him to retire as a composer of operas, that he may not entirely forfeit the repute he had acquired, and he would have done well if he had not accepted the last invitation to Naples. The evening after the first representation of his opera he set out on his return to Bergamo.

About this time the arrival of *Madame Catalani* set all the lovers of music in Naples in great commotion. She immediately took advantage of this enthusiasm and announced a few days afterwards a concert in the Fiorentino theatre, the prices of admission being seven-fold the usual ones. On the day before the concert, it was with difficulty that I got two pit tickets, and that because I had previously bespoken them, at 22 Carlini each. Never perhaps were the expectations of an audience at a higher pitch of tension, than were those of

the Neapolitan public on that evening. My wife and I, who for years had longed to hear this celebrated singer, could scarcely repress our impatience for the moment of her appearance. At length she did appear, and a deathlike silence pervaded the whole house. She came forward with a cold and pretentious air, and saluted neither the Court nor the public, which created an obvious unpleasant sensation. Perhaps she had expected to have been received with a burst of applause, which however is not the custom in Naples, and this perhaps put her out of humour. But when after her first song she was greeted with a storm of applause, she became more friendly, and remained so for the rest of the evening. She sang four times, two airs by *Pucitta*, *Ombra adorata* of *Zingarelli* (or, as the Neapolitans insist, of *Crescentini*, whose name also was down on the bills) and variations on the thousand times varied "*Nel cor non più mi sento.*" The airs by *Pucitta* were extremely poor; the famed *Ombra adorata* can only be considered fine, when all thoughts of the text are banished from the mind; the variations were common place, but become piquante from her manner of execution. She pleased us greatly, by the constantly pure intonation and the perfect finish with which she executes every kind of vocal ornamentation and of passages, and by her quite peculiar and characteristic style of singing; but she does not come up to that ideal of a perfectly accomplished singer, which we had expected to find her. Her voice

which has the extensive range of  to

is both full and powerful in the low and middle notes, but the

transition to the *voce di testa* at  very observable,

and from three to four notes in that region are much weaker, than the deeper and highest; for which reason she gives all

passages which occur in those notes, with half-voice, only in order to conceal the inequality. Her voice is wanting also in the youthful freshness, which, however, in a female singer of forty years of age, is not to be wondered at. Her shake is wonderfully beautiful; and equally pure whether in the half or whole notes. A peculiar style of run through the half notes, properly speaking the enharmonic scales, since every note was produced twice, is greatly admired as something quite her own. To me, nevertheless, it was more remarkable than beautiful; for it sounded to me like the howling of the storm in the chimney. Another kind of vocal ornamentation, which in itself is common enough, she gives, however, in a manner that imparts great charm to it. It would be expressed in notes somewhat in this manner:



but at the same time it must be observed, that she took breath at every sixteenth-pause, which gave to this part a very impassioned character. Among the variations was one with syncopated notes, which from her peculiar style of execution derives also a very characteristic and interesting charm; and another in triplets *legato* she gives in perfection. But what I most missed in her singing, was *soul*. She sings recitative without expression — I might say with carelessness, and in *Adagio* she remains cold. Neither were we even *once* deeply moved, but experienced merely that sense of pleasure one always feels when one sees and hears mechanical difficulties overcome with ease. This, also, was the sentiment of all those who sat in our immediate neighbourhood. Some unpleasant and prejudicial habits, which she is not likely now to correct, I must yet advert to. To these belong firstly, that in certain passages, particularly those which she gives with force, every note is delivered with a sort of see-saw movement of the lower jaw, as

in mastication, so that a dumb person, if he *saw her sing*, would have no great difficulty in distinguishing crochets from quavers and up and down running passages from one another. In the shake, more especially, the movement of the lower jaw by which every note might be counted, is very striking and disfiguring. Secondly, in impassioned passages her whole body partakes of a southern but highly unbecoming mobility, from which a deaf man would likewise of a certainty easily guess the subject.

A few days afterwards we heard her again in the rehearsal to her second concert, in which she sang five times, and exhibited the same qualifications, but also impressed no one at any time by a show of feeling in her execution. She seemed to me much less pretentious here and more amiable; and she was very polite to the orchestra and the persons who had gathered to hear her, so that I can readily believe what I was told — that her pretentious air when appearing in public, arose more from embarrassment than pride, and was assumed by her to conceal her fears. A young man who stood behind the side-scenes during her concert assured me, that upon first stepping forward on the stage she trembled in every limb, and could scarcely breath for nervousness. It is said that here in Milan she did not give general satisfaction; and her last concerts were much less numerously attended than the first. One part of the public was in favour of *Grassini*, whom we have now heard here also, but of whom I shall speak later. The admirers of the latter had played *Catalani* a malicious trick by distributing for sale at the entrance of the theatre at her first concert an Italian translation of the unfavourable opinions respecting her that had appeared in the Hamburg and Leipsic musical journals. *Catalani*, herself, expecting to find in it a sonnet or something of the kind in her praise, purchased a copy.

The day after *Catalani's* first concert in Naples took place, *Rossini's* "Elisabetta" was given at the San Carlo theatre, in which *Colbran* played the first part. As every body knew that it was her intention to compete with *Catalani*, the house

was more than usually crowded, both by partizans and antagonists of *Colbran*. The latter on the previous evening called *Catalani's* concert the exequies of *Colbran*, and people were therefore extremely curious to learn what would be the result of the evening. Immediately upon her appearance she was received with a concert of hisses, but simultaneously also with vehement applause. As, however, this time she really sang and played exceedingly well, the applauders increased in number and the hisses grew less, so that at last she was called forward almost unanimously by the audience. She is far behind *Catalani* in voice and every mechanical point of excellence, but she sings with true feeling and plays with considerable passion. The composition of this opera is one of *Rossini's* best, but with all the merits, it has also all the weak points of the others. — In the theatre, a ridiculous trait of pretentious magnanimity on the part of *Catalani* furnished subject of amusement. A few evenings before, when she first went to the theatre, she sent her secretary behind the scenes to express to *Colbran* and the other singers that “she was perfectly satisfied with their performances.”

Freiburg in Breisgau, June 20. 1817.

Previous to our leaving Naples, we devoted one whole day more to a visit to Pompeii. We were so fortunate as to have a clear and tolerably warm day, a real wonder throughout the whole of the month of March! While from the middle of January to the end of February the weather was almost without interruption the most beautiful spring weather, with the beginning of March winter suddenly returned. A cold and stormy rain fell in the vallies, and snow in the mountains to such a depth, that they were no longer accessible. On Vesuvius it was said to be from three to four feet deep. But March is generally very cold and the real winter month of the Neapolitans.

The ruins of Pompeii, which from having lain covered for nearly 2000 years with a light crust of dry ashes, are in far

better preservation than all the remains of that period which have been exposed to the air, made a deep and really solemn impression upon us. The ruins of the Colosseum and other ancient buildings in Rome, impress one with an idea of the artistic taste, the wealth, and love of grandeur of the ancients; but here the sight of simple small private dwelling-houses, which are as entire as on the day of the fearful catastrophe, makes one acquainted with the habits and ways of their civic life, and, by ocular evidence, with many customs unknown to our mode of living, and described to us by ancient writers.

On entering one of these houses, which may have belonged to a well-to-do individual in the middle class of society, one finds a row of small, neat rooms all painted *al fresco*, like the paintings cut out of the walls from Herculaneum, which are preserved at Portici. These chambers have rarely any window, and but one door to admit light and air, which opens upon a court yard, round which runs a covered gallery. In the centre of the court is a fountain, near this a circular marble table round which stand marble benches to recline upon at meal time, furnished with a somewhat higher projection to support the elbows; and on one side of the court is one or more tastefully decorated baths. All these houses had but one floor or story and were much smaller than our dwelling houses. It is greatly to be regretted that the domestic utensils which were found there could not be left in their place! One would then have had a perfect conception of the habits and mode of life of the former inhabitants of this remarkable city. The pavement of the streets is still in the same condition as it then was, and the impression of the wheels of the vehicles as also of the feet of the foot-passengers are still to be seen in the streets. Over the shops one still sees expressed in Greek characters painted on walls, the wares which were sold in each, and at the corner of a street an advertisement of that period. In the shops where oil was sold huge earthen-ware jars, let into the masonry of the front wall, are still to be seen, from which that

article was dipped out for sale. In many cellars in good preservation, similar tall jars, but with very narrow necks are to be seen, in which wine was kept. In one of these cellars the skeleton of a woman was found, and so completely imbedded in the ashes, that the form of her body could be distinguished as in a mould. A part of this form in which the impress of her breast is left, is preserved at Portici. In her hand was found a large leathern bag with coins in it.

The street which is in the best preservation is the street of the tombs, in which on both sides scarcely any thing is to be seen but tombs, some of which are built in the Egyptian pyramidal-form, and others in the Roman style. In these tombs, urns have been found in which the ashes and bones of the burned dead were preserved. The inscriptions upon these tombs are sometimes Greek, sometimes Latin, and begin very frequently with the exclamation: "*Siste viator!*" "Stop passer-by!" &c., which mode of arresting the attention of the way farer here in a frequented and busy street was much more in place than it is in our generally very retired churchyards, in which it has been imitated in a somewhat inappropriate manner.

The public buildings, theatres, temples, &c., which attract attention in Pompeii, are certainly neither so vast nor so grand and beautiful as those of Rome, Puzzuoli and other places; but they nevertheless exceed in importance everything that a modern provincial town can offer to the visitor. Where, for instance, would one find in any of these, a vast circus for public games, and two large theatres! Of the latter, one was roofed over, and served probably for the performance of comedies; the other, with a stage, an orchestra, and a circular, very lofty amphitheatre gives us an idea of the sort of place in which the Roman actors, provided with a mask to increase the volume of sound, performed their tragedies before an audience of from 10,000 to 15,000 spectators. But the temples also, the finest of which is now being dug out of the ashes, afford ocular

demonstration of the love of grandeur and of the good taste of the ancients in architecture.

The vineyards and cultivated land which lie above the yet unexcavated part of the city, have been already long purchased by the former king of Naples; hence if the work had been carried on with energy, which, however, is not to be expected from the present government, which prosecutes all such things very indolently, the whole of this highly interesting city would be laid bare in a few years, and from the high ground which surrounds it might all be surveyed at one glance. At present the different parts which have been excavated are still separated from each other by long strips of land under cultivation, which one is obliged to ascend like so many hills; and one is greatly surprised after having traversed one of this sort of fields to see beneath one another part of the city, which contrasts so strangely with the vines, trees, fields and peasant's huts upon the high ground.

The day before our departure from Naples we once more paid a visit to the Studii, and inspected the large collection of Etrurian vases of every imaginable form. We were greatly pleased also, with the fine collection of paintings, among which the pictures by *Raphael* recently brought back from Sicily were special objects of our admiration.

On the 29th March we set out on our return journey to Rome. The morning of our leaving was very stormy and unpleasant for me; for in the first place I had a dispute with the vetturino, who wanted to thrust a fifth person into the interior of the vehicle, in the shape of a dirty and ill-smelling Capucin friar, till at length after much desultory disputation we consented to his being accommodated in the cabriolet, and as a further incident of annoyance, my family was at first not permitted to pass out of the gate, because they had not been mentioned in the new Neapolitan passports which it is requisite to take upon leaving the country. It was in vain that I shewed my old passport, in which my wife and children were mentioned; and it was not until I had pledged my word to go back and

procure another passport that I was allowed to move from the spot. I therefore went back to the minister, while my wife and children proceeded without further hindrance on their way. Arrived at the minister's, I there found all still buried in sleep; but with fair words and that which with Italians is far more effectual, money, I at length succeeded in procuring a new passport. Furnished with this I jumped into a hired carriage, and drove with all speed to overtake my family, which I did about half-way to Capua and thus relieved them of a great anxiety respecting me. Among the annoyances with which travellers in Italy are almost worried to death, is the excessive strictness in regard to passports, which is frequently carried to a ridiculous extreme. We subsequently saw an instance in which a traveller who had already got beyond Parma on the Lombard frontier was sent all the way back to Leghorn because his passport had not been signed by the Austrian consul at that place.

In a second vehicle which accompanied us travelled an Englishman, who was possessed of an extraordinary skill in taking the fine views in a few minutes. For this purpose he made use of a machine which transmitted the landscape on a reduced scale to the paper. Between Velletri and Albano, where we went part of the way on foot in order better to enjoy the magnificent landscape and the mild air, we saw the whole method of his proceeding, which afforded infinite pleasure to the children. He shewed us afterwards his collection of views, of which he had upwards of two hundred of Naples and its neighbourhood alone. He gave me his address: Major *Cockburn*, Woolwich, nine miles from London.

Our re-entry into Rome filled us anew with wonder and admiration of the remains of the old Roman architecture, which we had not seen for three months. We were much amused also with the simple remarks of the Capucin friar, whose first visit this was to the mainland, and who was totally inexperienced in every thing. Apart from his dirt, he was really a good-tempered, simple sort of man, and quite endurable. He

was full of restless impatience to see the pope officiate. How various are the wishes and inclinations of men! He perhaps felt as we did the day before the concert given by the celebrated *Catalani*! I wish with all my heart that he may return to his convent, better satisfied than we returned home from that concert.

With great difficulty we procured a miserable apartment in a private house, for which nevertheless we were obliged to pay half a piaster per diem. Strangers from every part of Italy had poured into Rome to be present during the Holy Week, in addition to whom also, pilgrims, and the devout gathered together from all parts of the world, were now here to receive remission of their sins. The streets were thronged to that degree that we were frequently obliged to pull up as we drove through.

Our apartments had a look-out upon the Tiber from a wooden balcony; from here we could follow the course of the Tiber from the Porta Romana to the bridge in front of the castle of St. Angelo. The stillness of the quarter of the city beyond the Tiber, lit up by the ruddy evening sky and the moonlight, contrasted in a remarkable manner with the dense throng which poured to and fro across the bridge and then disappeared in the streets leading from the castle of St. Angelo to the church of St. Peter. High above all the houses and palaces which lay between us and the church of St. Peter, rose the latter, proudly and majestically, filling us with wonder and admiration of its gigantic proportions. Tired as we were, it was long before we could tear ourselves away from this magnificent sight, and we remained till a late hour in the mild evening air upon our balcony. When we at length lay down to rest, we called to each other once more: "To-morrow, to-morrow, then we shall hear the famous Miserere!"

Aix la Chapelle, Aug. 10. 1817.

Here at length, I find once more a few moments leisure to continue my narrative of our return journey from Italy.

On the 3rd April we at last heard the long-wished-for *Miserere* in the Sixtine chapel. We had been told that females were admitted by tickets, and that men were required to appear in shoes. But a ticket for *Dorette* was now not to be had, and I was therefore obliged to make up my mind to go alone. But when I recognised among the Swiss guard at the entrance of the church one whom I knew and whose good will I had won upon a former occasion by a present for accompanying us up to the dome of St. Peter's church; I enquired of him whether he could not assist to procure me an admission into the chapel for my wife without a ticket; and upon his assurance that he would do his best, I hastened home to fetch her. After some discussion with the other Swiss guards we were so fortunate as to be admitted, although several English ladies of rank who came unprovided with tickets were refused admittance and turned back. The Swiss cannot bear the English nor the French, and favour the Germans upon such occasions much more, particularly if one can talk to them in a few words of "*Schwizerdütsch*."

We yet arrived in good time, and only regretted that we were not allowed to remain together, so as to interchange at the moment the impression which the music would make upon us.

Before the commencement of the singing, nineteen psalms were chaunted alternately by high and low voices, in the same manner *unisono*, and in the form of prayer, as we had already found so tedious at Christmas; and we had to bear with the last eight or nine of these: after every one, which lasted for five long minutes, one of the tapers is extinguished that burns upon a gigantic pyramidal-shaped candelabra in front of the high altar. How one wishes that the last of them also was extinguished! At length the wished-for moment comes, and by degrees a silence ensues which not a little increases the expectation of that which now follows. To this sentiment

of expectation, the solemn twilight which now prevails in the church faintly illumined with the last gleam of the rosy tints of evening, and the repose felt at length by the ear after the hoarse bellowing of the psalms may be ascribed the delicious impression that I experienced from the first long-drawn chord of *C flat*, and which seemed to me like music from another world. But one was too soon reminded that it was an earthly music that fell upon the ear, and one indeed sung by Italians; for immediately after the second bar, the ear was rent by a horrid succession of quints! The theme was doubtless after this manner:



but was given by the singers in the following barbarous manner:



I could not have believed even my own ears, much more those of others, that they sing *in such wise* in the Sixtine chapel, had I not heard it subsequently repeated. Is this perhaps the mysterious method of executing these old compositions, of which it is related that it is known alone to this choir, and has been handed down traditionally? Impossible! *Modern* Italians only can sing in so barbarous a style, who may perhaps possess a feeling for melody, but who in all that is called harmony are grossly ignorant.

When however this first Miserere had been endured, I was soon attracted by something else. These simple sequences of harmony, consisting almost wholly of triads, this mixing and sustaining of the voices, at one time increasing to the most tumultuous *forte*, at another dying away into the softest *pianissimo*; the continual and lengthened sustaining of single tones to a degree attainable only by the lungs of a castrated person, and then especially the soft introduction of a chord, while that of other voices is still faintly sustained, give to this music, in spite of all its deficiencies, something so peculiar, that one feels irresistibly attracted by it. I can now therefore readily understand that in former times, when the choir was much better, this must have made an immense impression upon foreigners who had never heard pure vocal music and the voices of castrated persons. It might even now be made most charmingly effective, if the singers of the choir had only a director of more extensive knowledge. But as it is, they do not generally sing even with purity.

On this first day, two compositions of *Allegri* and *Baini* were given, and each of them repeated once. Between each of these ten not very long divisions a prayer was recited in a low tone by the cardinals, bishops, and other clergy, which from its resemblance to the roll of distant thunder had a good effect. At the conclusion of the ceremony however, the servants, scraping and treading upon the foot-boards, made a very unpleasant noise for musical ears, which greatly disturbed and then obliterated the impression made by the music, to which one would willingly have abandoned oneself a little longer. This noise they tell me is to represent an earthquake!

On the second evening I managed things in such a manner as to arrive at the chapel just at the commencement of the real singing, and on the extinguishing of the last taper. The crowd was so great, that I was obliged to remain standing some time at the entrance surrounded by Englishmen, who during the whole time of the music spoke to each other in a very loud tone of voice, and would not even allow themselves to be

restrained from it by any signs to keep silence. Besides this, the singers sang much more carelessly than the day before, and frequently very false, so that I was very glad when the earthquake came to put an end to the ceremony. Three new compositions were added to the two of yesterday, for which reason each required to be sung but once. In other respects everything was exactly the same as the first time.

At a later period I had an opportunity of seeing the *Miserere* collection published by *Kühnel* of Leipsic, but did not find a single one of those which we heard in Rome. The library of the Sixtine chapel must however be so rich in such compositions, that they are enabled to select different ones for many years in succession.

Both evenings after the *Miserere* we saw the illumination of the cross in the church of St. Peter. Upon entering by the grand entrance, whence one sees the illuminated cross at the farthest distance, it makes an imposing impression, but so soon as one approaches nearer, it loses greatly. The effect would be far greater if all the other lights in the church were extinguished. But as it is, not only hundreds of lamps burn round the entrance to the subterranean chapel, but innumerable other lights besides in every part of the church. The brilliant illumination in the cross casts therefore no prominent shadow. The Pantheon was also illuminated this evening, which must have had a magnificent effect. Unfortunately we arrived just as the lights were being extinguished.

On the previous evening prince *Frederick* took me to a party, at which the fiftieth psalm, or the *Miserere* of *Marcello*, was exceedingly well sung by dilettanti. But as the orchestral accompaniment was, as is usual in Rome, very bad, and the composition throughout monotonous, I soon got tired of it and was glad when it came to an end.

On Saturday forenoon we took a long walk to St. Paul to see the magnificent ancient pillars in that otherwise very ugly church. On our way back, we saw the pyramid of *Cestius* and the so-called mount of pot-sherds. At noon we met at the eating-

house at the sign of "The Ermine" a German drawer, Herr *Rösel*, who easily persuaded us to take another walk in his company. He first pointed out to us an arched, old Roman subterranean canal, the *Cloaca maxima*. I think; we then went to a small, insignificant church, but which contains many fine antiquities, in order to see the divine service of the Greek church, which is celebrated on this day only; but the crowd was so great, that we could not obtain an entrance. Upon this we went to see the temple of Vesta, and lastly ascended the mount Aventino, where our companion led us before the door of a garden and shewed us through the key-hole one of the most startling sights imaginable. Through a long arched gallery overgrown with wild strubs and verdure the dome of the church of St. Peters is seen magnificently lit up and gilded by the rays of the setting sun. We had then the door of the garden opened for us, in order to admire closely, a very large and beautiful palm tree which was just then in full bloom.

On the following morning the ringing of bells and salves of artillery from the castle of St. Angelo reminded us that it was Easter Sunday, and of the necessity of a speedy toilet if we would not lose the sight of the great ceremony in the church of St. Peter's. But the fearful crush of the crowd upon the bridge almost compelled us to turn back. Completely carried along by the throng, we at length arrived on the other side of the Tiber, and then hastened to get into a less crowded side street, which also led to the grand square in front of the church. We there found many thousand persons assembled, and among them many pilgrims, with their hats ornamented with shells collected from every quarter of the world, who were impatiently awaiting the moment when the Holy father should give his benediction from the balcony. But some time was to elapse before that would take place, and we therefore first took a turn through the church, where we found every part decorated just the same as at Christmas, and as we could hope to see very little of the ceremony, we preferred taking a walk in the open air as the weather was so fine. We got back again

about 12 o'clock, and found the populace still in a state of acute suspense. The balcony over the grand entrance to the church was decorated with crimson velvet, and to shield it from the rays of the sun a gigantic tent was stretched over it. In the gallery above the pillars on the left-hand side a box had been erected for the accommodation of the most distinguished foreign visitors. A number of pages bearing tapers first made their appearance on the balcony, then followed the cardinals, and lastly the Pope, borne upon a sedan, and having on each side of him the white fans of ostrich feathers. As soon as he appeared, all the people fell upon their knees and a solemn stillness took the place of the wild tumult which had previously prevailed. There was something exceedingly imposing in the reverential awe impressed by this moment upon the feelings. The pale old man then arose, and with a slow and dignified movement of the hands, blessed the assembled multitude. In the mean-time, two folded papers were thrown down from the balcony, one of which, as I was told, contained the damnation of all heretics, and the other the papal indulgence for all good believers then present. The damnatory-bull did not however reach the ground, but flew driven by the wind into a window that stood open, while the bull of indulgence was caught by the people who struggled for its possession.

On our way to the eating-house, we were joined by Herr *Kelle* of Stuttgard, whose acquaintance we had previously made in Dresden. He asked us among other things whether we were satisfied with our tour in Italy and with what we had seen. Upon which I complained that we had found many things which did not realise the expectation that had been raised in our minds by previous travellers. He found that very natural, and considered that it arose from the circumstance that not one of the travellers upon his return would confess, that he also had been made an April-fool of by his predecessors. It reminds me, he continued, of the well-known anecdote of a man who advertised that he had a horse in his stable which had its head where other horses had their tails. But the curious who went

to see it found nothing more than a horse fastened to the crib by the tail, yet took good care to conceal it from the others who were waiting outside the door — because they were ashamed. The application of the story is easy!

After dinner we took another walk in the villa Borghese, and then made our preparations for our departure, which was fixed for the next morning.

In company of two persons from Stuttgart and one from Munich, with whom we had collectively hired a vetturino, we this time performed the far more interesting return-journey by the way of Perugia to Florence, in six days. On the evening of the second day we arrived at Terni, and hastened before the sun had set, to visit the celebrated waterfall, about two hours' walk from that place. We proceeded as far as the foot of the mountain and then hired some asses already saddled for the purpose in the very romantically situated village, to which half Terni attracted by the mildness of the Sunday evening had repaired as a pleasant promenade. These soon and safely carried us up the ascent to the waterfall. The view from the mountain, before one turns into the valley into which the waterfall precipitates itself, is very varied and charming. The scene then, as one approaches nearer to it, becomes more and more wild and romantic. As the sun was now about to set, we did not tarry long but made all possible haste to reach the waterfall before nightfall, in part to see the imposing spectacle in a proper light, and partly for security's sake, as the country hereabouts has not a very good reputation. With the last declining rays of the sun we reached the rock which rises out of the dark foaming abyss opposite the fall, and where for the convenience of visitors a pavillon furnished with benches has been erected. The view of the majestic spectacle from this point of sight is beyond the power of language to describe. We were all riveted as it were to the spot with admiration and wonder. Certainly at no former period of my life did any of the beauties of nature, not even the first sight of the Alps, make so deep an impression upon

me. After we had stood here for full ten minutes and fully feasted our eyes with the magnificent sight, we returned to Terni without accident, on one of the mildest and finest evenings of spring, exceedingly delighted with our charming excursion.

On the fourth day of the journey it became suddenly very cold, so much so that towards evening snow even began to fall, and lay upon the ground till the morning. But when we entered the deep valley in which Florence lies, we found everything in bloom.

We remained one day only in Florence, which we nevertheless turned to good account. In the forenoon we visited the cathedral, the baptistery and the Boboli gardens. Unfortunately, as it was a holiday, we could not get admittance to see the tomb of the Medici and the Pitti Palace. In the afternoon we took a walk to the Cascini.

Next morning, the 14th April, we resumed our journey, to Bologna without our previous companions, who remained some time longer in Florence. We found a great deal of snow in the Apennines, and once more got into complete winter. In dismal Bologna we stopped one day only. The host of the "Pellegrino" had made out a somewhat shamefully long bill against us, in abatement of which I resorted to a means I had frequently put in practice; that is, I deducted a third from the account, which after some discursive wrangling, he was obliged to submit to. Subsequently I always resorted to this expedient, and found it answer better than the previous plan of pre-arrangement, which I had hitherto followed, but in which after all I always found that I was cheated.

We now proceeded by way of Modena, Reggio, Parma and Piacenza, to Milan. As we did not stop long any where, I can say nothing more of those cities than that we everywhere found similar crowds of ragged beggars, the same system of cheating among the hotel keepers, and the same dirt. On the market place of Piacenza, we saw the two gigantic bronze statues. Whether they have any artistic merit, I cannot take

upon me to say, as we saw them only in the evening twilight.

In Milan we put up at the *Pension Suisse*, which I recommend to all travellers for cleanliness and cheapness. We were again struck on our first going out by the magnificence and beauty of the exterior of the cathedral. It is without doubt the finest building that we ever saw, more noble and richer than the *façade* of the church of St. Peter's.

The celebrated *Grassini*, to the imitation of whose singing *Rode* is said to be indebted for his peculiar method of play, which differs from the school of *Viotti*, had announced six representations in the theatre *della Scala*. As they were however but thinly attended, three only took place, at the last of which we were present. It consisted of unconnected scenes from "the *Horatii* and *Curatii*" of *Cimarosa*, and some other airs, among which also *Ombra adorata*. *Grassini*, who in the flower of her age was without doubt a distinguished vocalist, is now somewhat *passée*. In that however which time could not steal from her she still stands alone; that is, she has a good style, and plays and sings with much intensity of feeling — in truth with far more feeling and expression than *Catalani*, but she is nevertheless greatly behind the latter in brilliancy of execution and as regards voice. — Hence whenever the production of a brilliant effect alone, was the desideratum, she did not altogether give satisfaction, but in impassioned recitative she charmed the audience by her truthful force of expression.

I found this time also, the *della Scala* theatre admirably adapted to give effect to music. I know of no place in which the voices as well as the orchestra sound so grandly, and so distinctly at the same time; it is therefore immeasurably preferable in an acoustic point of view to the *San Carlo* theatre.

As upon our first appearance at the theatre our speculation had been so unprofitable, we tried this time the music hall of the conservatorium, fixed the price of entrance at three francs, and on account of the theatre gave our concert in the

forenoon. Whether attributable to the unusual hour or to the already too advanced season of the year — suffice to say, it was again very thinly attended, and did not return much more than the expenses.

In the company of two Englishmen, the younger of whom was tolerably amiable, we set out from Milan on the 2nd of May, slept in Arona, and on the following morning were anew enraptured by the heavenly scenery round the *Lago maggiore*, which we now again found in the garb of spring, and arrived towards evening at the village of Simplon, at the foot of the Simplon pass. Here, upon taking leave of Italy, we were again cheated in real Italian style, being compelled, for instance, to pay two francs for each cup of coffee.

The next morning we commenced the at this season of the year somewhat difficult journey over the mountain pass, and reached the snow region one hour after leaving Simplon. Here it was necessary to take the carriage to pieces; the body was placed upon one sledge, the wheels upon another, and our luggage upon a third; and in this manner the caravan proceeded with several additional horses at a slow rate. In the higher regions of the pass, where the snow remained hard, there were not many stoppages, but further down, where the warmth was already considerable, and the snow not very deep, we came every moment to a standstill. Sometimes the horses sank in up to their bellies, at others the carriage would get jammed fast between walls of snow as high as a house, when it became necessary to clear a passage for it; and then again the road had to be cleared of the fallen avalanches that encumbered it and obstructed our progress. We therefore went on before, and arrived two hours earlier at the fourth refuge station, wet through up to the knees, it is true. At this place the snow had disappeared, and here we refreshed ourselves with a simple breakfast, and rested from the fatigues of our toilsome promenade. We heard many avalanches come thundering down, and were in constant fear that it might fare with us as with some travellers who had passed the day before. These, arrived near to one of

the galleries pierced through the rock, saw a fearful avalanche sweeping down upon them, and had but just time sufficient to take refuge in the gallery. To their horror, however, they found both exits had been blocked up by the snow, so that for three fearfully anxious hours they were shut in, until the inspector of the road had worked his way through to them.

When at length the carriage arrived, we drove on to Brieg, where we passed the third night, and for the first time again heard our mother-tongue spoken, which sounded right welcome to our ears. Our fourth day's journey brought us to Sion, where French is spoken. In the Valais we found the spring much less forward than on the other side. Here, the cherry-trees were scarcely in bloom, while in Lombardy and on the *Lago maggiore* they had long passed their bloom. We thus once more found ourselves in spring, in which we had constantly been since the beginning of February.

On our fifth day's journey we came to the celebrated Pissevache, which is close to the road. But our expectations were not altogether satisfied; for in comparison with the waterfall at Terni, this looked very insignificant in our eyes. We slept at Bex, a charmingly situated little village, which the inhabitants call not without reason *un paradis terrestre*. The inn here may compete with the largest hotels of many capitals.

On the sixth day we travelled continuously along the lake of Geneva through Vevay to Lausanne. This place, so much lauded, and also much resorted to in summer by the English, is not so beautiful as I expected. The views on the lake of Thun, and still more on the lake of Zurich, are far more varied; but all the Swiss lakes are in my opinion far behind the *Lago maggiore*. On the seventh day we arrived at length at Geneva.

* * *

In consequence of a severe cold I was confined for some days to my bed. During this time Herr *Dupont* and the Rev. Pastor *Gerlach*, with some other musical friends, took some pains

to make arrangements for a concert. But it was easy to see beforehand that it would not be a very brilliant affair, for in part the prevailing distress and dearth of provision were still too great; and partly because several concerts had taken place shortly before for the benefit of the poor. The season was also too far advanced, and the majority of the wealthy families had already retired to their country-seats. In fact it did not much more than cover the expenses. We also permitted ourselves to be persuaded to play at Herr *Piclet Rochemont's* and Herr *Dupont's* private parties; and the very numerous company assembled at both their tea-parties then thought it no longer worth while coming to our concert. The brothers *Bohrer*, who had been there a month before we came, did not meet with better success. Taken as a whole the Genevese have very little taste for art, and are always speculating how they can best squeeze the numerous foreigners who reside there summer and winter. At any rate they know very little of *German art* and *German artists*, and do not know our classical composers even by name. The foreign language, and the long French rule to which they were subjected, explains all this sufficiently.

Of all towns of Switzerland Geneva may boast the greatest number of distinguished artists, but who here, as almost everywhere else, are split into two or more parties, and live a regular cat-and-dog life among themselves. Of these the brothers *Hensel* and *Wolf* and Herr *Berger* (properly *Münzberger*) are the most prominent. I was so fortunate as to bring these gentlemen together at my concert, who otherwise never played together, and had thus for a Swiss town a really good orchestra. The Rev. Pastor *Gerlach* received us in the most friendly manner, and rendered us even many obliging services; he even gave up to us the Lutheran church for our concert, in which music has a very good effect. Without that we should have been compelled to give it in the dark and cheerless theatre, which would have occasioned considerable expense (300 Francs).

In Geneva I had the unexpected pleasure of meeting once

more my old teacher *Kunisch* of Brunswick. This worthy man had experienced every possible caprice of fortune. When a young man he was a first-rate hornist, but from its inducing at last a spitting of blood, he was obliged to abandon that instrument to save his life. By the most untiring application he then in three years attained to a considerable skill on the violin, and subsequently procured an appointment as first violin at the national theatre in Berlin. When after the battle of Jena the Prussian court was obliged to fly from Berlin and the royal orchestra was dispersed, he was driven from Berlin by the intrigues of Herr *Schick*, who much wanted to obtain his place. He then first went to Switzerland, when already advanced in years he learned the French language, and, afterwards went to Lyons, where he again procured an appointment as first violin at the theatre. Well pleased with his situation here, he had just begun to feel comfortably settled down, when by an unluckly fall he dislocated his left hand, which soon became perfectly rigid, so that he could no longer play the violin, and consequently was obliged to give up his situation. He was now for a third time compelled to learn another instrument, and thenceforth earned a scanty subsistence as a teacher of the piano-forte. He was exceedingly pleased to meet me again, and seemed very proud to be able to call me his pupil.

* * *

Upon perusing the here intercalated diary of the Italian journey I miss some incidents which even now (in 1847) are so vividly impressed on my memory that I cannot forbear appending them here in continuation.

Mention has already been made of the circumstance that I had alone to thank the exertions of the Austrian ambassador Count *Apponyi* for being enabled to give a concert in Rome during Advent, at which time all public music is forbidden. Count *Apponyi* undertook to represent my request for permission to the governor of Rome, but advised me nevertheless not to wait for the reply, but to make arrangements as quickly as possible

for the concert, while he would procure for me the necessary subscribers. I went to work immediately, but found my efforts impeded by very considerable difficulties. The salon in the Ruspoli Palace, which Count *Apponyi* had procured for me, was like every other part of that fine uninhabited building, in a very ruinous condition. It was necessary to re-glaze the windows in many places, to fill up the holes in the marble pavement with bricks, and to hire the necessary furniture, chandeliers, seats, music desks, &c. &c. But it was first of all especially necessary to cleanse the palace, from the entrance to the saloon, from the filth with which the esplanade and the handsome flight of marble steps ornamented with statues were filled in such a manner, that whole cart-loads of it required to be carried away. I was also first obliged to find one by one singers and musicians in the immense city, and to engage them for my concert, all of which occupied a great deal of time. Until the day of the concert, and even on that itself till the evening, I was in continual anxiety lest a refusal of my request should arrive and overthrow every thing I had done. But the police were so humane, that they did not forward this to me till the day *after* the concert when I had already in hand a satisfactory return in the shape of receipts. I was hereby relieved of great uneasiness and one which until then had greatly embittered my stay in Rome. My travelling funds had come to so low an ebb, from the hitherto scanty receipts from my concerts in Italy, that I saw with alarm they would in no manner suffice for an extension of our journey to Naples, and scarcely even for a direct return to Germany. To be so near to Naples, the most desired object of the whole journey, and now to turn back — that was a reflexion too fearful for me to bear with calmness! I therefore conceived the idea of applying to the *Beer* family, which had meanwhile arrived from Venice, for a loan. Intimate as was my friendship with the son *Meyer Beer* (afterwards *Meyerbeer*) I could nevertheless not overcome my reluctance to express my wish on the subject, and applied therefore in preference to a rich friend of mine in Alsace, who

however, as it frequently happens with such applications, paid no attention to it. But now, thanks to the handsome receipts which my concert had brought in, all prospect of pecuniary want was dissipated, and I could venture upon the further journey to Naples without anxiety. This was nevertheless delayed by the illness of my children till the latter end of January; and as *Dorette*, wholly occupied with attending to them, could now no longer accompany me in my excursions, I kept frequent company with the *Beer* family, and they having arrived later, I could now serve them as Cicerone. Of an evening, when the light no longer permitted anything more to be seen (for the theatres were still closed during Advent), the three sons accompanied me sometimes to my lodgings, and we then shortened the long evenings with a game at whist. As it was at that time, however, very cold in Rome, and there was no means of heating my room, we used to set ourselves down in my enormous bed with our backs turned to the four cardinal points, with the leaf of a table between us, and in that manner played our rubber in comfortable warmth and in the best humour.

Of my stay in Naples, the following incident is to be added.

On the day of my first concert, I received in the green-room of the San Carlo theatre, a visit from the celebrated singer *Crescentini*, whom I had already become acquainted with in Rome. After he had said many very complimentary things relative to my play and my compositions, he made the following proposition to me. The present director, *Zingarelli*, who, with his religious turn of mind, was very unremitting in praying with his pupils, but who practised them in music very little, was to be pensioned off, and he, *Crescentini* was applying for the appointment. But as he understood nothing of instrumental music, the Neapolitan minister contemplated appointing a second director for that, and had thought of me, as my play and my compositions had quite enchanted him at my concert on the previous day. If therefore I felt disposed to make an application for the place, I was to accompany him imme-

diately to the minister, where further proposals would be made to me. This took place. I returned to *Dorette* highly satisfied with the propositions of the minister, and we were not a little pleased at the thoughts of taking up our home in such a paradise as Naples. But week after week passed away, without any further communication from the minister, and we learned from *Crescentini* that the whole project had been abandoned by reason of the expense it would entail. We dared not therefore delay any longer the period of our departure, for I again found that my treasury was so decreased by our numerous excursions in the environs of Naples, which we had made in the company of our Silesian friends, and of which I was always obliged to bear half the expenses, that my means would scarcely suffice for the return journey to Switzerland.

This calculation proved indeed but too correct; for on our arrival at Geneva, my funds were completely exhausted. As my concert there also brought in but very little, and I knew beforehand that with the then (in the spring of 1817) prevailing famine in Switzerland, but very little was to be earned in the other Swiss towns, I for the first time in my life experienced the bitter anxiety arising from a want of the means of subsistence. It is true we possessed some valuables which had been presented to us at several courts; but the bare thought of being obliged to sell or to pledge these, was still much too painful to our feelings. Necessity, however, compelled us to do so. I was just on the point of looking for a place where money was advanced upon pledges, when *Dorette* suggested that it would be preferable to reveal our position to the most friendly of all our acquaintances there, the Pastor *Gerlach*, and offered to go to him herself, as I had not the courage to do so. She took with her her handsomest ornament, a diadem of brilliants, a present from the Queen of Bavaria, and proceeded to the reverend gentleman's house. Never in all my life did I pass such painful moments as those which elapsed during her absence. At length, after a seemingly never-ending half hour, she returned, and brought back the pledge — but with

it the sum necessary for the prosecution of our further journey. She was still in a state of excitement from a fright she had experienced there. While, with the greatest embarrassment and with faltering lips, she disclosed to the Pastor our momentary necessities, and made a request for a loan upon the pledge she proffered, he had suddenly burst into a loud fit of laughter and vanished into an adjoining room. But before she had time to reflect upon the meaning of this outburst of hilarity, which seemed to her so greatly out of place, he returned bringing the required sum, and said to her in the kindest manner: "I am delighted that the worthy pair of artists have afforded me so great a pleasure as to render them a service; but how could you think that a clergyman would lend upon pledges like a jew?"

Thus, then, our immediate wants were relieved and we could resume our journey. We now first went to Thierachern to fetch our carriage and the harp, which we had left there the previous autumn. As *Dorette* required a little time to get her hand again into play upon her instrument, and we did not moreover require to hurry, as the favorable period for concert-giving was passed, we stayed there a fortnight, practised again each forenoon our duets for harp and violin, and in the afternoons, favoured by the most beautiful spring weather, visited once more all our former favorite spots. At length, however, we were obliged to make up our minds to leave the paradise of Thierachern and proceed further upon our artistic tour. In Switzerland we met with very little success, for the permission to give public concerts was everywhere refused on account of the prevailing famine, and it was permitted in Zurich only because we there offered to hand over a part of the proceeds to the poor. I there played for the first time since my return to Germany my vocal *scena* and a solo-quartet (Op. 43) that I had begun in Italy and finished in Thierachern; both compositions were received with very great applause. But with that I was obliged to content myself; for the receipts from this concert were far below those of the previous year. I could not therefore

keep my promise as to time, in the repayment of the sum borrowed in Geneva, which gave me much uneasiness. But the Pastor *Gerlach*, upon my communicating to him the reason, in excuse for my failure, returned the most satisfactory reply, and I could thus proceed on my journey with a mind more at ease.

But even in Germany also, where we gave concerts in Freiburg, Carlsruhe, Wiesbaden, Ems, and Aix-la-Chapelle, the receipts were but middling, on account of the generally prevailing distress, so that they scarcely covered our travelling expenses; and not until we reached the last-named town, where our play produced a great sensation and enabled us to give three very numerous attended concerts, did sufficient remain to enable us to liquidate my debt to *Gerlach*.

From Naples to Aix-la-chapelle we had now travelled for four months continually in the direction from south to north, without stopping very long anywhere. We had therefore found everywhere beyond and on this side of the Alps, the trees in bloom, and thus enjoyed an extension of the spring season in a degree such as it has never since been our lot to know. At Aix-la-Chapelle we arrived in the height of summer, and in the middle of the bathing season. For our farther journey to Holland this was the most unfavourable time for concert-giving, and I therefore resolved to stop some weeks in Aix-la-Chapelle. We had there become acquainted with several zealous musical amateurs, at whose houses music parties were frequently given. I had also found some good quartet-accompaniers with whom I practised my Vienna quartets and quintets; and as they were greatly admired by all who heard them, I gave them frequently.

We thus passed the time of our stay in Aix-la-Chapelle in a very pleasant manner, equally divided between work and pleasure. The instruction of the children, which indeed had never entirely ceased during the whole journey, for we used to give them instruction even in the carriage as we travelled along, was now resumed with more earnestness and regularity.

I also began to compose again, and wrote there the first number of my four-voice songs for men's voices (Op. 44) of which *Gæthe's* "Dem Schnee, dem Regen" became afterwards a favorite table song.

Towards autumn we continued our journey to Holland, and on our way thither first gave some concerts at Cologne and Dusseldorf which were very well attended. Thence we proceeded to Cleves, where we made the acquaintance of the notary, Mr. *Thomae*, a zealous friend of art and a distinguished dilettante, who played several instruments. In his house we had music very frequently, and the two families, inclusive of the children, soon became so attached that they formed a life-enduring friendship. Through this circumstance our stay in Cleves became so attractive that we took leave of the friendly little town and, its charming environs with much reluctance.

The fame of the *Spohr* artist-couple had however not yet reached Holland, and we were therefore first obliged to break ground there. In this however we soon succeeded. In that wealthy land, favourably disposed towards German art and German artists, we made a great sensation, and consequent thereon also a flourishing business. We had already played at Rotterdam and the Hague, and had just arrived at Amsterdam, where we had also already made our appearance in *Felix meritis* and had afterwards given a concert upon our own account, when I received a letter from Mr. *Ihlée*, director of the theatre at Frankfort on the Main, in which, on the part of the shareholders of that theatre, he offered me the appointment of director of the opera and music, and in case of my acceptance thereof, added the request that I would enter upon it with all possible despatch. The terms, it is true, were not so brilliant as those of my Vienna appointment, but sufficient nevertheless to maintain a family. Certainly I should have liked to have continued my artistic tour, in which I took great pleasure, at least till the spring; but they were very pressing in Frankfort, and *Dorette* longed once more for domestic repose. I therefore consented without further hesitation and set

out immediately upon the return journey. At Cleves, where we alighted at the friendly house of the *Thomae* family, we were forced, despite the pressing urgency to accelerate our journey, to stop a few days. Although it was now mid-winter, every thing was again done to make our stay agreeable. Music parties, sledge excursions and other amusements succeeded each other alternately. On the evening before our departure, as we sat at the supper-table, cracking nuts and thinking regretfully of the approaching parting, my friend *Thomae* made the proposal that the *Spohr* family, as a memorial of their presence there, should plant one of the nuts in the garden. This proposition was received with general acclamation. Upon a spade being brought, both families, wrapped in warm cloaks, repaired in procession to the garden, in the very centre of which, after I had cleared away the snow, I dug a hole, in which the children planted the nut. In the following spring the appearance of the germ above ground was announced to us at Frankfort. This, carefully protected by a circular fence, grew by degrees to a fine tree, and even now (1852) the *Thomae* family, as one of the sons not long since informed me, thinks with pleasurable feelings of that evening and the absent friends.

In Frankfort I was received by the shareholders of the theatre and by the whole company of the theatre and orchestra in the most friendly manner. A dinner was given in my honour in the the saloon of the "*Weidenbusch*," at which the usual toasts were given and speeches made in due form. The orchestra, which, under the able direction of its previous leader Mr. *Schmitt*, had acquired the reputation of being one of the best in Germany, I found somewhat deteriorated, from his long illness. But as a ready disposition was shewn by all to meet my wishes and arrangements, and as they soon accustomed themselves to my method of directing, the former *ensemble* was soon re-established. My predecessor had led with the violin, and by the wish of the singers I began also in the same manner, indicating the time with the bow, and keeping

the violin ready at hand, in order to assist with that when necessary. But I soon accustomed them to so precise a practise of their parts that such assistance as that was soon no longer necessary. I now laid the violin aside and directed in the French style, with the bâton.

The routine of business on the Frankfort stage was at that time as follows: the managers chosen by the shareholders, met every week the technical directors (Mr. *Ihlée* for the drama and I for the opera) at a sitting at which the programme for the week was agreed upon and everything concerning the management arranged. The *præses*, or *senior* of this directory, was a merchant of the name of *Leers*, who liked the office and therefore always managed to be re-elected. In the course of time he had acquired a certain tact in the routine of managing the theatre, and spoke usually therefore in a very decided tone. His whole endeavour was directed to economy, in order to diminish the yearly recurring deficit of from 14 to 17,000 florins, which the shareholders were obliged to cover. He liked best the singers, performers and musicians, who engaged at the lowest salaries, and in the choice of the operas and plays which were to be given he always decided upon those which would entail the least expense. *Ihlée* and I had also an especial interest in getting rid of the deficit, as we had a share in any overplus secured to us by agreement: but we thought this would be much more surely attained if an endeavour was made to raise the character of the theatre by engaging distinguished talent and the representation of classical works. We were therefore frequently in opposition to Mr. *Leers* and his colleagues, and one of them only, Mr. *Clement Brentano*, entertained the same opinion as ourselves. But he seldom succeeded in obtaining the victory for it, as it was always his custom to defend it merely with light sallies of wit and sarcasm. The animosity which sprung out of this difference of opinion between Mr. *Leers* and myself was not perceptible, however, till a later period, for at first we agreed very well. It was therefore not

very difficult for me to obtain the consent of the managers to bring out my opera "Faust." I was very desirous of at length hearing this work, which I had written five years before at Vienna, and I hastened all the preparations as much as possible. As there was no baritone among the singers of the theatre who could satisfactorily take the part of Faust, I was obliged to give it to the tenor, Mr. *Schelble*, afterwards the founder and director of the society of St. Cecilia, who possessed in his *mezzo-tenore*, the necessary compass as also the requisite skill in execution. After the rehearsals had commenced, *Schelble* expressed the wish that I would write another air for him which would shew his voice off to more advantage than those which were in the opera. As I found a suitable place for its introduction immediately after the duet at the commencement, and Mr. *George Döring* (hautboy of the orchestra and subsequently a much admired romance writer) furnished me with appropriate words for it, I was very pleased to be enabled to satisfy *Schelble's* wish. This air: "Liebe ist die zarte Blüthe" (Love is the tender blossom), which was afterwards so frequently sung at concerts, and innumerable times in London by *Pischek*, is therefore the first thing I composed in Frankfort. Meanwhile the study of the opera had proceeded so well that it could be announced and performed for the first time in March (1818). At first, it is true, it pleased the great majority less than the connoisseurs, but with each representation gained more admirers; so that from that time it has remained almost constantly in the repertorium of the Frankfort stage, and has been studied anew after short intervals.

This success encouraged me to new dramatic compositions. I therefore looked about me for the materials for a work of the kind, and found one that suited me in *Appel's* book of ghost stories, in the tale called "Der schwarze Jäger" (the black huntsman). *Döring*, with whom I spoke upon the subject, offered to work it out as an opera. We devised together a plot which differed chiefly from *Kind's* text-book (which was at that time as yet unknown to us) in this, that we retained

the tragical conclusion of the story. As soon as *Döring* had written the first scenes, I immediately set about the composition. The introduction was already for the most part sketched out, when the celebrated tragedian Madame *Schröder*, and her daughter, the afterwards more celebrated *Schröder-Devrient*, came to Frankfort, and during her visit saw the work I was engaged upon on the piano. They then informed that *C. M. von Weber* was composing music for the same subject as an opera, and had already finished the first act. This induced me to lay my work aside, as I had reason to fear *Weber* would come forward with his opera much earlier than I. As it afterwards proved, however, such was not the case; for the “*Freischütz*” appeared first in 1820, and my opera “*Zelmira and Azor*,” which I began almost a year later, was already given on the 4th April 1819. Nevertheless I have not regretted that I abandoned the materials of *Appel’s* story, for with my music, which is not adapted to please the multitude and excite the popular enthusiasm, I should never have met with the unexampled success that the “*Freischütz*” met with.

As I was now again obliged to look about me for a libretto, I began meanwhile to write quartets. The chief reason for this was the solicitation of some lovers of that kind of music to institute public-quartet performances, which had not hitherto been given in Frankfort. At these I wished also to be enabled to bring forward some new compositions, and for that purpose I wrote in the course of the summer the three quartets (Op. 45). When I played the first of these at a musical soirée at *Schelble’s*, *Jean Paul* was one of the audience. He appeared to interest himself very much for this new composition and ascribed to it a highly poetical signification, of which while composing it I certainly never thought, but which recurred in a very striking manner to my mind at every subsequent performance of the quartet.

On the 29th July 1818 my family was again increased by the birth of a little daughter, who was christened by the name of *Theresa* after her godmother Mrs. *Thomae* of Cleves, and

was held over the font by my friend *Speyer*. *Dorette* now felt very happy at having a permanent-dwelling place, so as to be able to devote herself wholly to the care of the new visitor.

In the autumn began the first set of the public quartets in the little saloon of the "Rothes Haus." The assistants were: second violin the concertmaster Mr. *Hofmann*, viol Mr. *Bayer*, violoncello Mr. *Hasemann*, at that time bass-trumpet of the orchestra, and afterwards first violincellist of the Cassel orchestra. I brought forward some quartets of *Haydn*, *Mozart*, *Beethoven*, and some of my own, which we had practised in the most careful manner in two rehearsals. They made therefore a great sensation by the precision of their execution, and were so well received that in the course of the winter another set could be given.

In September 1818 I began also the composition of the new opera. Mr. *Ihlée* had proposed as subject the text of the formerly very much admired opera "*La Belle et la Bête*," by *Gretry*. As this at that time had wholly disappeared from the German repertory, and was wholly unknown to the younger generation, I readily assented to the proposition; for from my earliest youth I had a predilection for this tale, and even remembered an air of *Gretry's* opera, that namely of *Zelmira* with the echo, which as a boy I had frequently heard my mother sing, and also sung myself. Herr *Ihlée* offered to alter the text to the style of the modern opera, which, as he well understood stage business, he did greatly to my satisfaction. — At that time *Rossini's* music became then first known in Germany, and "*Tancred*" in particular brought down a very storm of applause in Frankfort. Almost at every sitting of the theatre I was obliged to hear from Mr. *Leers* the words: "That is an opera that pleases and attracts the public, you must bring out more of that kind!" — Little as I was an admirer of *Rossini's* music, as the severe criticism thereof in the diary of the Italian journey shews, yet the applause which "*Tancred*" had met with in Frankfort was not wholly without influence on the style of my new opera. I was further-

more induced to this by the considerable power of execution possessed by four singers (Miss *Friedel*, the sisters *Campagnoli*, and Mr. *Schelble*) who were at my command. This explains why the music to "Zelmira and Azor" has so much colouring and vocal ornamentation in the parts sustained by the three sisters, and that of Azor. The opera was studied most attentively by the singers and the orchestra, and met with great success at the very first representation, indeed a more general one than "Faust," which however, at a later period, both in Frankfort and the rest of Germany, reassumed the place in public estimation which its real merits as an opera more properly justified.

During the course of the winter I gave another concert with my wife, for which I had written a new sonata for harp and violin. As, since I had once more a fixed residence, pupils again presented themselves, both native and foreign, I was overburdened with work the whole winter. When spring at length came I was therefore very desirous of a little rest and I was well pleased when four of my earlier musical friends of Rudolstadt, Messrs. *von Holleben*, *Müller*, *Sommer* and *Methfessel*, came to Frankfort and urged me to accompany them to Mannheim, where a musical festival was to take place. I managed to get leave of absence for eight days, and joined the party. From Darmstadt, where the charming mountain-road begins, we went on foot to Heidelberg, and carried our necessary luggage in knapsacks, on our backs. Three of the Rudolstädter, *Müller*, *Sommer* and *von Holleben*, who were first-rate harmonists, had strapped their horns upon their knapsacks, and *Methfessel*, who accompanied our four-part songs with the guitar, carried his instrument slung by a band over his shoulders. In this manner our travelling-party, notwithstanding their respectable exterior, had completely the appearance of an itinerant music-band, and as, in high and jocund spirits, we always entered all the villages and small towns either playing or singing, we had always a long train of jovial listeners, and numerous applications to "strike up," which, to the great regret of the

applicants, were of course not complied with. We made short stages, and ascended the ruins of several castles which lay near our road. There we partook of the meal brought with us from the neighbouring inn and seasoned it with horn-music, song and mirthful jest. On the third day we arrived at Heidelberg, where we visited the castle. A flourish of horns soon brought a number of hearers around us, who were highly delighted with our four-part songs and *Methfessel's* comic lyrics. As we had inscribed our names in the visitors' book, it soon became known in the town that I and some musical friends were on our way to the festival at Mannheim, and in the evening a deputation from the Heidelberg musical society made its appearance at our inn with an invitation to make the passage to Mannheim the next morning on board the society's vessel. We consented with very great pleasure.

This voyage was the most brilliant episode in the whole journey. When I and my companions set foot on board the vessel, which was dressed out with festoons of flowers up to the top of the mast, we were welcomed in the most friendly manner by the already assembled male and female singers, with a choral-song. While the boat was passing directly afterwards between high rocky banks on either side, which threw back the echo, the Rudolstädter first returned the compliment with their horns, which had a fine effect there. Then followed our songs, and *Methfessel* again distinguished himself in particular by the execution of his humorous songs, which he accompanied in a masterly manner on the guitar. These put the whole company in the merriest mood. As we drew near the end of our journey we were met and welcomed by the Mannheim musical society on board several boats decorated with flags and flowers. My presence on board the Heidelberg boat was already known. The committee of the festival therefore saluted me and my companions, and presented us with tickets of admission to the rehearsals and performances. To me even apartments were offered in a private house, which I was however obliged to decline, as it would separate me from

my companions. As soon as we had landed, therefore, we sought for an inn. Unfortunately, however, we found it already so full of visitors that we were obliged all five to accommodate ourselves in one room, and the next day the crowd of applicants for lodging was so great that we had great difficulty in protecting our room from the invasion of yet more guests. In the evening, since, as may be readily supposed, beds were not to be had, we lay down contented beside each other on some clean straw, nor was our good humour in the least disturbed thereby.

As regards the musical performances, I now only recollect that I and my companions, who, together with me, had assisted at the festival at Frankenhäusen, were not so satisfied with the effect of the music here as there, which can alone be accounted for by the circumstance that the performance at Frankenhäusen took place in the church, a place sonorous and well adapted on account of its excellent acoustic qualities, while at Mannheim they were given in the theatre.

On the third day we set out upon our return journey. As the road from Mannheim to Mayence would have been too uninteresting to travel on foot, we hired a boat with two vigorous rowers, and went by water. But in this way also the journey was rather tedious. We had, moreover, passed the previous night at a ball, and felt very tired; it was therefore no wonder that we sought to make up for the lost night's rest, and passed the greater part of the time in sleep. On our arrival at Mayence we nevertheless met with a little adventure which put us in the merriest mood during the last hours of our being together. Evening was drawing in when, after our landing, we proceeded to look for the best inn in the town. Just as we were about to enter it, in the already described dress of travelling musicians, the host, who was looking out of the window, called out to us in an angry tone of voice: "Be off with you! we don't take in such people as you!" This style of address amused me amazingly, as I had frequently joked my companions upon their dress, and laughing, I called out to

Mr. von Holleben: “High warden of forests, did you hear that? they will not take us in here; we must look for another inn!” But the host, startled at hearing my friend addressed by such a grand title, darted down-stairs in a minute and made his appearance immediately in the street, and with bows innumerable entreated the gentlemen to walk in and graciously pardon his silly mistake!” As we followed him into the house and were all ushered by him into the well-lighted dining room, his embarrassment was ludicrous in the extreme: our highly respectable appearance seemed now to allay all his fears, when the unlucky horns strapped upon the knapsacks, and *Methfessel’s* guitar suspended from his neck, excited new doubts as to whether we were guests worthy of entertainment in his house. But when we ordered three rooms with wax lights (which latter I purposely mentioned), five beds and a good supper, all uttered in the curt imperative tone of persons of importance, his last lingering scruples vanished, and his whole demeanour became thenceforth cringingly servile. This specimen of the mean vulgarity of innkeeper-nature amused us long, and was subject of mirth up to the last moment of our being together. The next morning; as my leave of absence was expired, I returned to Frankfort and the Rudolstädter continued their journey down the Rhine, as they had proposed.

As I entered my house, the children ran joyfully to meet me, but my wife, who had been in very low spirits at our parting the week before, was now suffering extremely from the shock sustained from a fright. In order that the reader may understand the cause of this, I must advert to some previous incidents that had occurred while in Frankfort.

In the latter part of the autumn of 1818 *Turner*, a player on the hautboy, came to Frankfort. I had previously known him in Brunswick, where we were both members of the orchestra. Already at that time *Turner* distinguished himself greatly by his skill upon that instrument, as also by his talent for composition. Upon his subsequent travels, particularly while in Vienna, where he lived some time, he had acquired

the reputation of being the first of living hautboyists. At the same time, however, many strange stories were current of his residence there; of a *liaison* with a lady of rank, whom he afterwards accused of having given him poison in a cup of coffee. A criminal inquiry was instituted, whereat it was elicited that he had periodical fits of insanity, at which times he was possessed with the fixed idea of being poisoned. These relations concerning him, which passed from mouth to mouth, imparted to him a certain interest, and his concerts were on that account most numerous attended. I found him on his arrival in Frankfort — for he immediately paid me a visit — more earnest and reserved, it is true, than when I was previously acquainted with him in Brunswick, but otherwise remarked nothing whatever peculiar in him. As his play pleased very much, and as I knew moreover that his orchestral skill was very great, and as from *George Döring's* retirement from the orchestra (he had now thought of devoting himself entirely to authorship), a vacancy had occurred for a hautboy player — I proposed at the next sitting of the theatrical committee that *Turner* should be engaged as first hautboy. The salary he asked was not unusually high, and therefore the proposition met with no opposition, even Mr. *Leers* himself making no objection. *Turner* took his place therefore in the orchestra, and proved a real acquisition by the tasteful execution of his soli and by his fine tone. After some time, however, a remarkable melancholy was observed in him, which gradually increased so much, that at length not a word above a whisper was to be got from him. Nevertheless he always performed his orchestral duties with punctuality, so that I hoped these periods of sadness would pass off without further results. Soon however they assumed the character of complete aberration of mind, in which the fixed idea of the Vienna poisoning again evinced itself. It was now full time to remove him from the orchestra, to prevent the possibility of some unpleasant occurrence. *Döring*, a near relation of *Turner's*, undertook to provide for him and get him cured, and engaged also to temporarily

fill his place. The malady now soon increased with such violence, that it was necessary to have him constantly watched by keepers. One evening, nevertheless, he succeeded in escaping from them scarcely half-clothed. During a violent snow-storm he wandered about in the open fields half the night, nor did he return home till towards morning, covered with a thick crust of snow and ice. As he had immediately gone to bed in this condition, the doctor found him in the morning bathed in perspiration and in a violent fever. This perhaps, however, brought about a crisis, for from that day he got better, and he was soon enabled to resume his duties in the orchestra with fully restored sanity of mind. I remarked, nevertheless, that for about eight days in every month, and always with the moon's increase, he was visited by a slight return of his melancholy madness, which announced itself beforehand by a fixed look and a certain feverish restlessness. I then, with *Döring's* assistance, managed to keep him away from the orchestra for a few days, until his more cheerful look bespoke anew his recovery. In this manner *Turner* performed his duties up to the summer and it was hoped that by degrees he would also be cured of these slighter attacks also. In the latter part of this time he again, as formerly, called upon me now and then, and even spent the evening with me, and demeaned himself in a friendly manner towards my wife, and shewed much interest in the children. When therefore I went to Mannheim with my Rudolstädt friends, it did not at first appear at all strange to *Dorette* to see him walk one morning into the room; but as, without any salutation or uttering a word, he sat down opposite to her and gazed upon her with his eyes fixed, she began to feel uneasy, and was at length seized with fear. As she was quite alone with him (the children being at school) she was about to call in a needlewoman, who was sewing in the adjoining room; but scarcely had she risen than he also sprang up and clasped her in his arms. With a shriek of terror she tore herself from his grasp, rushed into the adjoining room, the door of which the sempstress had then

just opened, and she succeeded in closing and bolting the door before *Turner* could follow her. There was, however, unfortunately no further issue from this room, and the two terrified women found themselves besieged by the madman. His endeavours to force the lock they met by pressing against the door with their whole weight, and all the strength which terror imparted to them; and succeeded, for after a few vain efforts he abandoned his purpose, ran down the stairs and out of the house. *Dorette* now felt about to faint, was obliged to send for the doctor, and kept her bed for some days. After my return, her pleasure thereat and the assurance of again being under my protection, soon restored her, and thus this circumstance was fortunately attended by no worse results. For the unfortunate young man this last violent outbreak of his malady entailed his discharge by the directors of the theatre. After again recovering, he went to Holland, and at first gave there several concerts in which he was greatly applauded, and which were also very remunerative; but upon a fresh attack was put into a mad house, where he soon afterwards died. The world lost in him a very great musical genius, the full development of which was barred by the sad affliction that befel him.

Meanwhile the acrimony of feeling that existed between Mr. *Leers* and myself became constantly more apparent, and a sitting of the directors seldom passed over without a regular dispute. He asserted that I required too much time for the study and production of new pieces because I was too fastidious in the matter. He expressed the opinion, that a new opera ought to be studied every fortnight, or at least an old one completed in those parts that required to be newly filled up. In vain I represented to him, that it was impossible for an opera that was carelessly studied to go off well, and therefore that it never could give satisfaction; that once brought into discredit, it would draw no audience, and then the time and money expended upon it would be sheer waste. With this self-willed, obstinate man, who, moreover, before

my appointment had never met with any opposition in the management, every sensible representation was ineffectual; and as I would not allow any opera to be brought out until it had been studied thoroughly as far as the means and strength of the company allowed, our contest never ceased. This, together with an intimation made by Mr. *Leers* at a general meeting of the shareholders, "that for their theatre they did not require a musical artist of eminence, but merely a good indefatigable workman, who would devote his whole time and energies to the theatre," induced me to give in my resignation at the next meeting of the committee, to date from the end of September (1819). The news of this soon spread through the town, and excited general regret among the lovers of music. *Börne*, in his journal "The Balance" gave expression to his sentiments on the subject, and indeed in a by no means gentle manner towards the theatrical-committee of management. I left Frankfort with a light heart, for my summons to that town had only been an interruption to the gratification of my love of travelling; but my good wife was very grieved at it — she who looked forward to the consequent separation from the children, as these, from requiring now a regular school education, could no longer be taken with us on our artistic tours. But I consoled her nevertheless with the promise that she should always pass the summer months with her children, and only travel with me during a period of from four to five months in the winter. Before my departure from Frankfort I had accepted an engagement from the Philharmonic Society of London for the next season of the sitting of Parliament, which engagement was offered me by *Ferdinand Ries*, the celebrated pianist and composer, in the name of the society. This had been instituted but a few years before by from twelve to sixteen of the most eminent musical artists in London: *Clementi*, the two *Cramers*, *Moscheles*, *Ries*, *Potter*, *Smart*, and others, with the object of giving every year eight grand concerts during the season. Notwithstanding the very high price of admission, the number of subscribers was so

great, that many hundreds of those who had inscribed their names could not obtain seats at the commencement of the season, and could obtain them only by degrees in the course of the summer. The funds of the society were therefore so great, that they could not only engage the first artists and singers in London for the soi in their concerts, but the most reputed musicians on the Continent. — In this manner I was also engaged for the season of 1820, and for a considerable remuneration, which secured to me the expenses of the journey thither and return, and the expenses of a four months' residence in London, I undertook the performance of a fourfold duty. I was required, namely, to direct some of the eight concerts, to play soli in some, to assist in all of them as orchestra violinist, and lastly to leave in the hands of the society as their own property one of my orchestral compositions. At the same time a benefit concert was also insured to me in the rooms of the society, with the joint assistance of the orchestra. Although my wife was not included in this engagement, yet I could not make up my mind to leave her behind me for four long months. It was therefore resolved, on consulting with my family, that my wife should accompany me and make her appearance as artiste in London at least in my own concerts. As the season commenced in the middle of February, and therefore the sea-passage would be made at the roughest time of the year, we resolved, in order to shorten it as much as possible, to go by way of Calais; and in order to be enabled to give concerts on the journey in the Belgian and French towns, to set out six or eight weeks earlier. We first proceeded to Gandersheim to my parents, who had undertaken the care and education of the children during the winter, and then set out upon an artistic tour to Hamburg, where we gave two concerts with very great success. I played there, before highly respectable audiences, my new quartets, which had been previously published there: they were exceedingly well accompanied, and as violinist upon those occasions I made the most sensation with

my two solo-quartets. I played likewise a few times the two quintets, and I found the passion for this kind of music to be greater here than anywhere else, except perhaps in Vienna. In the catalogue of my compositions, *Goethe's* ballad "Wenn die Reben blühen" is enumerated as composed by me in Hamburg, but I do not now recollect the reason of its being so designated.

We then proceeded to Berlin, Dresden, Leipsic, Cassel, and other places, in all of which we gave concerts, but respecting all of them I now no longer remember anything particular. Of our performances in Berlin one of the newspapers gave a most favourable notice.

In Brussels we found another travelling artist-couple who, like ourselves, gave performances on the harp and violin. They were Monsieur *Alexandre Boucher* and wife from Paris. I had already heard a good deal about him and was therefore very desirous of making his personal acquaintance. *Boucher* had the reputation of being a distinguished violinist, but a great charlatan also. He bore a striking resemblance to *Napoleon*, both in the features of his face and in his figure, and did his best to turn this resemblance to account. He had acquired by study the deportment of the exiled emperor, his way of wearing his hat, and of taking a pinch of snuff with the greatest possible exactitude. When on his artistic tours he arrived in a town where he was unknown, he immediately presented himself with these acquired arts on the public promenade or in the theatre, in order to attract the notice of the public and to be talked about; he even endeavoured to spread the report that he was persecuted by the present sovereign and driven from France on account of his resemblance to *Napoleon*, because it brought back the recollection of the beloved exile to the mind of the people. In Lille, at least, as I there afterwards learned, he had announced his concert in the following manner: "Une malheureuse ressemblance me force de m'expatrier; je donnerai donc, avant de quitter ma belle patrie, un concert d'adieux," etc. That an-

nouncement had contained also some similar charlatanerie, as follows: "Je jouerai ce fameux concerto de *Viotti* en mi-mineur, dont l'exécution à Paris m'a gagné le surnom: *l'Alexandre* des violons."

I was just on the point of calling upon Monsieur *Boucher*, when he anticipated me by paying me a visit. He offered in a most friendly manner to assist me in the arrangements for my concert, and shewed himself in every respect, deduction made of his self-glorification, a very amiable man. He introduced us to several families who were lovers of music, who then by inviting us to their musical parties, procured for us the opportunity of hearing the *Boucher*-couple. Both shewed in their joint performances great skill; but all the compositions they played were poor and barren, and of those of Monsieur *Boucher* himself I no longer recollect anything. At first Monsieur *Boucher* played a quartet of *Haydn*, but introduced so many irrelevant and tasteless ornaments, that it was impossible for me to feel any pleasure in it. The manner in which *Boucher* allowed himself to be waited upon by his wife on these occasions was remarkable. When he had taken his seat at the quartet desk, she would ask him for the key of the violin-case, open it, bring him his violin, then the bow, which she had previously resined; she then laid the music before him and lastly seated herself near him, to turn over the pages. When we were then invited to play, the whole of this process was inverted; for I not only fetched my own instrument, but took my wife's harp out of the case also, led her to the seat where she was to play and then tuned up, all of which in the previous performance had been the business of Madame *Boucher*. But I took upon me the tuning of the harp upon every appearance in public, not only to save my wife the trouble, but also to bring the instrument to a perfectly pure and tempered pitch, which, as is well known, is not so easy a matter. We played one of our brilliant duets, and met with great applause. *Boucher* in particular seemed charmed with my play, and he may perhaps have meant it

with some sincerity; for in a letter of recommendation which he gave me to Baron *d'Assignies* in Lille, and which the latter shewed to me as a curiosity, after describing the characteristics of my play; he said: "Enfin, si je suis, comme on le prétend, le *Napoléon* des violons, Mr. *Spohr* est bien le Moreau!"

My concert took place in the new large theatre and met with marked approbation; but the receipts, after deduction of the very considerable expenses, were but small, for our fame had not yet reached Brussels. It is true we were invited by lovers of music and the public journals to give a second concert; but as a favourable day did not immediately offer, and our stay at the chief hotel where we had stopped was very expensive, we preferred setting out immediately on our journey to Lille.

Arrived there, my first visit was to Monsieur *Vogel*, who had been mentioned to me as the best violinist in the town and as director of the dilettanti-concerts. I did not find him at home, but Madame *Vogel*, who received me in a very cordial manner. When I told her my name, her face became animated, and she anxiously inquired whether I was the composer of the nonette, the theme of which she sang to me. As I smilingly replied yes, with an outburst of French vivacity she threw her arms round my neck, and exclaimed: "Oh how delighted my husband will be, *car il est fou de votre Nonetto!*" I had scarcely returned to the inn, when Monsieur *Vogel* appeared with a countenance lit up with pleasure, and welcomed me with the warmth of an old friend. In the house of this amiable couple we passed some very happy hours, and gave a concert in the saloon of the dilettanti society, the arrangements for which were made by Monsieur *Vogel*, the whole of the members of the society being desirous to hear the composer of the so frequently performed nonette play in person. The joint play of my wife and self was especially received with such enthusiastic acclamation, that the day was immediately fixed for a second concert. Some lovers of music from the neighbouring town of Douay, who had come over to the con-

cert, invited us in the name of the musical society of that place to give a concert in Douay also, and insured to us the sale of 400 tickets at five francs each. I had therefore the finest prospect of carrying from Lille plenty of money, when an unexpected occurrence quashed all my hopes. The carriage was already packed and we were on the point of starting for Douay, when the report was spread in the town that the telegraph had just announced from Paris the assassination of the Duke *de Berri*. It was not long before placards were posted at the corners of the streets by order of the mayoralty, announcing officially this mournful intelligence to the inhabitants of Lille. As all concert-giving was now necessarily suspended throughout France, but the period of my engagement in London not yet arrived, I was easily induced by Messrs. *Vogel*, *d'Assignies*, and other lovers of music, to remain yet longer in Lille. Private musical parties now took place almost daily, and I had thus an opportunity of performing all my quartets, quintets, and compositions for the harp to this circle of enthusiastic lovers of music. I found on these occasions a very sympathetic and graceful auditory, and therefore still recall with infinite pleasure the remembrance of those musical soirées. At these many other interesting things were related to me concerning *Boucher*. Among others, upon one occasion, in the midst of his play, when according to his idea something had gone wrong, he suddenly ceased playing, and without paying any regard to those who accompanied him, he again repeated the unlucky passage, addressing himself aloud with the words: "Cela n'a pas réussi; allons, *Boucher*, encore une fois!" The termination of his second and last concert was also of a highly comic character. As his concluding subject he played a rondo of his own composition which had at the end an impromptu cadence. At the rehearsal he had begged the gentlemen dilettanti to fall in right vigorously with their final tutti immediately after the shake of his cadence, and added that he would give them the signal by stamping with his foot. In the evening, when this concluding piece began,

it was already very late, and the dilettanti were growing impatient to get home to supper. But when the cadence in which *Boucher* as usual exhibited all his artistic *tours de force* seemed never likely to end, some of the gentlemen put their instruments into their cases and slipped out. This was so infectious, that in a few minutes the whole orchestra had disappeared. *Boucher*, who in the enthusiasm of his play had observed nothing of this, lifted his foot already at the commencement of his concluding shake, in order to draw the attention of the orchestra beforehand to the agreed signal. When he had now concluded the shake he was fully satisfied of what would follow, namely the most vigorous entry of the orchestra and the burst of applause it was to bring down from the enraptured audience. His astonishment may therefore be imagined when all that fell upon his ear was the loud stamp of his own foot. Horrified he stared aghast around him, and beheld all the music desks abandoned. But the public, who had already prepared themselves to see this moment arrive, burst out into an uproarious laughter, in which *Boucher*, with the best stomach he could, was obliged to join.

The time for our departure for London had now arrived. As I was desirous of purchasing in London a new *Erard* harp with the improved *double mouvement* for my wife, we left the old instrument in the care of Monsieur *Vogel*. The family were very pleased at this, as they now reckoned with certainty upon seeing us again on our return journey.

Arrived in Calais, I immediately went to the packet-boat office to take our berth for the passage. Thence I took a walk to the port, to look at the vessel in which we were to sail in the afternoon. As I now, however, remarked that the sea, even in the inside of the harbour, was very rough, and ran so high outside that the waves broke high over the pier head, I lost all inclination to cross with the sea so stormy, and hastened back to the office, to have the berths taken transferred for the following day. In the afternoon while taking a walk in the town I took good care not to take my wife near

the sea, so that, dreading the passage as she already did, she might not observe how rough it was. The thoughts of being obliged to cross at so stormy a season of the year with my delicate and nervous wife disturbed my rest throughout the night; as soon as day broke I hastened therefore again down to the harbour to see whether the storm had not abated. It appeared to me to have done so, and I therefore fetched *Dorette*, brought her on board, and advised her to lie down in the cabin. A good-natured German who served as seaman on board this English packet-boat, promised me to take every care of her and bring her all she might require. This enabled me to go upon deck, where in the open air I hoped to be somewhat enabled to resist sea-sickness. Meanwhile the preparations were made for departure, and the vessel was towed out with long ropes close along the left-hand side jetty of the harbour by from sixty to eighty men. Scarcely, however, had she reached this, when a gigantic wave seized her and in a moment hurled her to the opposite side of the harbour, so that she was almost thrown against the extreme point of the right hand-pier. Immediately upon this the waves broke over the deck, and the hatches and cabin doors were obliged to be closed. Of all the passengers I was the only one who remained on deck, and had seated myself on a bench near the mast, round the foot of which was piled a high coil of cable. Here I hoped to be protected from the water that poured in torrents over the deck; but the waves soon broke in over the bows to such a height, that to prevent being completely drenched by them I was compelled to stand up upon the bench. I had not done this many times, before I found my strength fail me to repeat it; and in a short time therefore in spite of my thick cloak I found myself wet through to the skin, which made my already wretched condition but more distressing. In addition to this I was then seized with such violent cramp in the stomach from the straining which follows when the stomach has nothing more to yield, that I thought I should expire under it. Fortunately, however, favoured by the storm, the passage

was an unusually quick one. Nevertheless, the three hours of its duration seemed to me an eternity; — at length we arrived at Dover, but another misfortune awaited us here; for on account of the tide being at ebb, we could not enter the harbour, and were constrained to disembark the passengers in open boats in the offing. For this purpose as soon as we had cast anchor, the boats were lowered, and we were called to get into them to be put on shore in the harbour. I now saw my suffering fellow-passengers come from below, pale and trembling like ghosts from the grave, and it was very evident that they had not fared better in the cabin than I upon deck. At length, supported by the kind sailor, my poor wife appeared also, in a most suffering condition. I was just about to hasten to her, when a young and beautiful girl, whom I had already remarked, it is true, when we came on board, but who then did not think me worthy of a look, suddenly threw her arms round my neck, and without uttering a word, clung close to me. I readily guessed the motive of this extraordinary conduct. The poor, terrified creature had been a joint spectator of the manner in which the first passengers had been put on board the boat, and how when it had been lifted by the still surging waves as high as the deck of the vessel, it then sank as it were into an abyss, and was again lifted up, which was the moment seized by the sailors to thrust another passenger or pitch another object of luggage into it. This rough method of proceeding had so terrified her, that she left the arm of the female who accompanied her, and clung to me, whom she may have considered the strongest of the passengers. There was no time for explanation; I bore her therefore in my arms into the boat, and then hastened back to my wife, to put her also into it. Scarcely had I effected this without accident, when the still terrified fair one clung close to me anew, and indeed so as to excite *Dorette's* extreme surprise. But the danger of the passage was too absorbing to permit of any remark on the subject, and upon landing the young girl had scarcely felt the firm ground under her feet than she left hold

of me without a word of thanks, and taking the arm of her companion walked away. That she was some young lady of rank accompanied by her governess, may be readily imagined from this truly English behaviour.

Arrived at the inn, I exchanged my thoroughly wet clothes for dry ones, and having satisfied our re-awakened appetite at the *table d'hôte*, and gained strength for the further journey, we immediately took places in the coach, which was to leave in the afternoon for London. The greater part of this journey was made at night, and when on the following morning we were set down in the yard of the coach-office with our luggage, I found myself in very great difficulty. In spite of every endeavour, I could not succeed in finding any one either there or in the office to whom I could explain myself, for I knew not a word of English, and none of all whom I addressed, understood either German or French. Nothing therefore remained for me but to hunt up some interpreter in the public street while my wife watched the luggage. But it was yet early in the morning, and I saw therefore none but people of the lower class, from whom I could hope nothing. At length a better dressed man approached, whom I first addressed in German, then, as he shook his head, expressed to him my wants in French; but the man shrugged his shoulders and went on his way. A second person, however, who had witnessed this scene, approached me, and asked me in good French what it was I wanted? He was one who hired himself out as day-interpreter, and out-door servant at hotels, and at my request immediately fetched a hackney-coach for me, to drive to Mr. *Ries*, whose address I fortunately remembered. We were now soon taken to the lodgings that had been engaged for us, where we could at length repose from the fatigues of our voyage and night journey.

The next morning, on which a meeting of the directors of the Philharmonic society was to assemble, I was to be introduced to them by Mr. *Ries*. I therefore made a careful toilette, and expressly for the occasion put on a bright red Turkish shawl-pattern waistcoat forming part of my ward-robe,

and which was considered on the Continent as a most elegant article and of the newest fashion. Scarcely had I appeared in it in the street than I attracted the general attention of all who passed. The grown-up people contented themselves with gazing at me with looks of surprise, and then passed on their way; but the young urchins of the street, were loud in their remarks, which unfortunately I did not understand, and therefore could not imagine what it was in me that so much displeased them. By degrees, however, they formed a regular tail behind me, which grew constantly louder in speech and more and more unruly. A passer-by addressed me and probably gave me some explanation of its meaning; but as it was in English, I could derive no benefit from it. Fortunately Mr. *Ries*' house was not very distant, and I reached it shortly after. His wife, a young amiable English woman, and who spoke French fluently, now soon solved for me the problem of my adventure. The death of George III. had but recently taken place and a general mourning had been officially ordered, and according to English custom no person durst appear in public otherwise than in a black suit. In all other respects it is true my dress was black, and therefore in accordance with the requisition, but the unfortunate red waistcoat contrasted with it but the more prominently. Mrs. *Ries* observed to me that I had doubtless to thank my imposing height and my earnest expression of countenance for having escaped from the rude licence of the boys in the street, and from their resort to its more open exhibition of pelting me with mud. In order to avoid all further offence, *Ries* then first drove with me to my lodgings, in order to exchange my red waistcoat for a black one.

After I had been welcomed in a friendly manner by the directors of the Philharmonic Society, some of whom spoke German and others French, a council was held respecting the programme of the first concert. At this I was required to play solo twice and to lead as first violin. To this I replied that I was quite ready to perform the first, but must beg that I might be permitted to lead in one of the subsequent

concerts, as my solo play would appear to less advantage if both were required of me on one and the same evening. Clear as this was acknowledged to be by some of the gentlemen who were themselves solo-players, yet it gave rise at first to a long and earnest discussion, as it was contrary to the custom of the society, but at length it was complied with. Still greater subject of offence, however, was my request to be permitted on this my first appearance to play my own compositions only. The Philharmonic Society, in order to exclude from their programmes all shallow and worthless virtuosi-concerti, had laid down the law, that with the exception of the pianoforte concerti of *Mozart* and *Beethoven* no similar musical pieces should be played, and that solo players had only to perform that which they should select. Nevertheless, after *Ries* had continued the discussion in English, and therefore unintelligibly to me, and represented to the gentlemen that my violin-concerts in Germany would therefore become excluded by their bann, they at length yielded in this also. I therefore at the first Philharmonic concert, came forward with my cantabile scena, and in the second part with a solo quartet in E major, and met with great and general applause. As a composer it afforded me an especial gratification that the whole of the directors now shared the opinion of Mr. *Ries*, and as a violinist the greatest pleasure, that old *Viotti*, who had always been my pattern, and was to have been my instructor in my youth, was among the auditory and spoke to me in great praise of my play. As I had thus so successfully passed through the ordeal of my first appearance in London, I devoted the next day to the delivery of my letters of recommendation. Not knowing a word of English this was for me by no means a pleasant business, and brought me into frequent perplexity. Not having been told that in London people announced themselves by knocking at the street doors, and gentlemen always by giving a succession of loud rapid knocks; I, in German fashion, rang very gently at the bell, which is done in London only by those who have business with the kitchen, and I

could not imagine why the servants who opened the door always looked at me with an expression of astonishment, and could not at all imagine that I wished my name to be announced to their masters. As those also for whom my visit was intended frequently understood as little as their servants either German or French, the most perplexing scenes were of frequent occurrence. I was however exceedingly amused by one at *Rothschild's*, to whom I brought a letter of recommendation from his brother at Frankfort, and a letter of credit from *Speyer*. After *Rothschild* had taken both letters from me and glanced hastily over them, he said to me in a more subdued tone of voice: "I have just read (pointing to the "Times") that you managed your business very efficiently. But I understand nothing of music; this is my music (slapping his purse), they understand that on the exchange!" Upon which, with a nod of the head, he terminated the audience. — But just as I had reached the door, he called after me: "You can come and dine with me, too, out at my country-house!" A few days afterwards also Madame *Rothschild* invited me to dinner; but I did not go, although she repeated the invitation. Nevertheless, the letter of recommendation to *Rothschild* was not wholly useless, for he took a whole box at my benefit concert.

As immediately on our arrival in London I was obliged to prepare for my appearance in public; and my wife was engrossed with our domestic arrangements, we had unfortunately delayed writing to apprise my parents at Gandersheim of our safe arrival, by which the old folks were thrown into a state of alarm from which they did not recover for a long time. The vessel in which we had designed to cross the channel on the day of our arrival in Calais, and for which I had at first paid the passage money, and had the tickets transferred for the next day's packet, on account of the roughness of the weather, had been driven completely down channel and was given up for lost, until it at length turned up again somewhere on the coast of Spain. A French newspaper had cited

our names among the passengers on board. What therefore could be natural, than that the French papers should collectively announce: "The artist-couple *Spohr* and wife have perished on the passage to England." This was soon copied into German papers, and to wit into the country paper taken in by my parents. Unfortunately, this first fell into the hands of my mother, who was already in a state of anxiety from the long delay of letters from England. A shriek of anguish and an immediate fainting of it were the result of this. The whole family was thrown into confusion, and when at length my mother recovered her senses, there began a general outburst of tears and mourning. My sister first recovered some calmness of mind, and urged as subject of hope and consideration how frequently newspaper reports were wholly false. She also entreated that no one should speak on the subject in the presence of my children, who were now seen returning from school, which request was faithfully promised. But my mother could not refrain from embracing those she believed to be now orphans with more than usual tenderness. This circumstance, together with the yet swollen eyes of the mourners, excited no small astonishment in the children, and when no reply was made to the inquiries they made respecting these incidents, and no one would sit down to supper, they also began to weep, without knowing wherefore.

At length the arrival of the postman put an end to this painful scene. All sprang up delighted, with the expectation of a letter from England. But the joy was but of short duration, for when they recognised the "Frankfort" post-mark and *Speyer's* hand writing on the address, they now indeed believed that they were about to read nothing else than the corroboration of the sad newspaper report. No one, therefore, had the courage to open the letter, until at length my sister summoned the resolution. Scarcely had she glanced her eyes over a few words than she exclaimed with joy: "They have arrived safe," and then handed the letter to my father, who read it aloud to them with great emotion. *Speyer* informed

them that he had just received the announcement from the house of *Rothschild* in London, that they had there made me a payment of money, and that therefore the newspaper report of the loss of Herr *Spohr* and his wife was unfounded, which he had therewith immediately communicated to allay all their alarm. A general exclamation of joy was now uttered by all, and the previously neglected evening meal was turned into a very feast of delight. Immediately after supper my father seated himself at his writing table, to thank Mr. *Speyer* for his kind attention, and to give the editor of the country paper a sound rating for having thrown a family into such grief by the heedless insertion of an unauthenticated report in his columns.

The following day my letter arrived also from London, and increased yet more by its good intelligence the joy of my family.

At the house of Mr. *Ries* I had made the acquaintance of Mr. *Erard*, the head of the London firm *Erard Brothers*, and accompanied by my wife had already visited his show rooms of finished harps. We could not however immediately make up our minds in the choice of one, as *Dorette* wished first to try which size would suit her best, and in particular whether she could be able to accustom herself to the new mechanism. Mr. *Erard* removed all hesitation from her mind in that respect, by kindly offering to lend her a harp for trial and choice, during our stay in London, which if it did not suit her, she could change for another or wholly return. This offer she thankfully accepted, and began immediately to practise on the new instrument; but at first she could not well succeed upon it. The new harp, though of the smallest pattern, was nevertheless considerably larger, as well as much more strongly strung, than her own, and therefore required a greater exertion of strength, and it was very difficult for her to acquire a mastery of the new mechanism *à double mouvement*, from being accustomed from her childhood to the single movement. She therefore soon felt convinced that it would require several months' practice on this harp before

could play upon it in public, and I accordingly resolved to allow her to appear once only, at my benefit-concert, in order that she might give an additional attraction to it. Meanwhile my turn had come to direct one of the Philharmonic concerts, and I had created no less sensation than with my solo play. It was at that time still the custom there that when symphonies and overtures were performed, the pianist had the score before him, not exactly to conduct from it, but only to read after and to play in with the orchestra at pleasure, which when it was heard, had a very bad effect. The real conductor was the first violin, who gave the *tempi*, and now and then when the orchestra began to falter gave the beat with the bow of his violin. So numerous an orchestra, standing so far apart from each other as that of the Philharmonic, could not possibly go exactly together, and in spite of the excellence of the individual members, the *ensemble* was much worse than we are accustomed to in Germany. I had therefore resolved when my turn came to direct, to make an attempt to remedy this defective system. Fortunately at the morning rehearsal on the day when I was to conduct the concert, Mr. *Ries* took the place at the Piano, and he readily assented to give up the score to me and to remain wholly excluded from all participation in the performance. I then took my stand with the score at a separate music desk in front of the orchestra, drew my directing baton from my coat pocket and gave the signal to begin. Quite alarmed at such a novel procedure, some of the directors would have protested against it; but when I besought them to grant me at least one trial, they became pacified. The symphonies and overtures that were to be rehearsed were well known to me, and in Germany I had already directed at their performance. I therefore could not only give the *tempi* in a very decisive manner, but indicated also to the wind instruments and horns all their entries, which ensured to them a confidence such as hitherto they had not known there. I also took the liberty, when the execution did not satisfy me, to stop, and in a very polite but earnest

manner to remark upon the manner of execution, which remarks Mr. *Ries* at my request interpreted to the orchestra. Incited thereby to more than usual attention, and conducted with certainty by the *visible* manner of giving the time, they played with a spirit and a correctness such as till then they had never been heard to play with. Surprised and inspired by this result the orchestra immediately after the first part of the symphony, expressed aloud its collective assent to the new mode of conducting, and thereby overruled all further opposition on the part of the directors. In the vocal pieces also, the conducting of which I assumed at the request of Mr. *Ries*, particularly in the recitative, the leading with the baton, after I had explained the meaning of my movements, was completely successful, and the singers repeatedly expressed to me their satisfaction for the precision with which the orchestra now followed them.

The result in the evening was still more brilliant than I could have hoped for. It is true, the audience were at first startled by the novelty, and were seen whispering together; but when the music began and the orchestra executed the well-known symphony with unusual power and precision, the general approbation was shewn immediately on the conclusion of the first part by a long-sustained clapping of hands. The triumph of the baton as a time-giver was decisive, and no one was seen any more seated at the piano during the performance of symphonies and overtures. On this evening also the concert overture which I had composed before I left Frankfurt was given for the first time. As it pleased very much the Philharmonic society accepted it as the composition which according to my contract I was to leave in their hands. I kept no copy of it and soon forgot it entirely, so that a few years afterwards when preparing a thematic catalogue of my compositions I could not recal to mind the beginning of it, for which reason the theme of it is wholly wanting in the text.

During the delivery of my letters of introduction in London, as also upon many other occasions, I had so much felt

the want of some one to serve me as interpreter that I was continually making inquiries for a person to accompany me who could speak German and English. At length Mr. *Ries* bethought him of an old servant of the deceased *Salomon** of the name of *Johanning*, who would be competent to fill that office. It is true, that he had retired from service, and as heir to his late master had bought a small country-house in the neighbourhood of London. Mr. *Ries* hoped nevertheless that the yet vigorous old man would consent to take the situation, for which purpose he sent for him to town, and the offer on my part was made to him. When he learned that it was to enter the service of a German and a musician, and furthermore of a violinist, as his deceased master had been, he immediately expressed his readiness, and even left it to my option what remuneration I should give him at the close of the season. Thenceforth he came every morning into town, and having first interpreted the wishes of my wife to the landlady respecting the dinner, he then accompanied me on my rounds of business. From his long residence in London, however, he had forgotten a great deal of his German, and his English doubtless was not very classic; for in his interpreting frequent misunderstandings would take place. When I had thus presented the remainder of my letters of introduction with less difficulty than before, I again found time and leisure for new compositions. I first wrote a symphony (the second D flat, Op. 49) and played it for the first time at one of the Philharmonic concerts, which I had to conduct, April 10. 1820. At its rehearsal, it met with very great approbation both from the orchestra and the numerous persons who were present; but in the evening it was received with real enthusiasm. I had in part to thank the numerous and particularly excellent stringed instruments of the

* It was this *Salomon*, who, as concert-giver, induced his friend *Haydn* to visit London and compose symphonies for his concerts; and to him therefore the musical world owes the twelve most beautiful symphonies *Haydn* wrote.

orchestra for this brilliant success, and in this composition I had given them a special opportunity of exhibiting their skill in playing with purity and precision of *ensemble*. In fact, as regards the stringed instruments, I have never since heard that symphony given with so much effect as on that evening. The next morning all the London newspapers contained reports respecting the new symphony that had been composed in their town, and vied with each other in their praise of it. Similar favourable notices of my play upon every occasion of my appearance soon spread my fame throughout the town, and pupils readily presented themselves to receive instruction from me on the violin, as well as ladies who were desirous of being accompanied on the piano. As all expressed their willingness to pay a guinea for each hour's instruction, I readily accepted their offers, as I considered that I owed it to my family to turn the good fortune I had met with in London as a musician to my pecuniary advantage. In this manner, after having first devoted a few hours to composition at home or to music with my wife, I was running or driving about all day in huge London, and frequently right weary of it; for the greater part of my pupils had neither talent nor application, and took lessons of me merely to be enabled to say that they were pupils of *Spohr*. I nevertheless call to mind with some pleasure several originals who amused me with their singularities, and therewith somewhat relieved the bitter trouble I had with them. One was an old general on half-pay, but who always made his appearance in full uniform, decorated with all his orders, and with the extreme of high military bearing. He, as an exception, came always to my house, but, nevertheless, required to play for three quarters of an hour only, as according to the custom there deduction was made of the quarter of an hour for the drive. He came every morning, Sundays excepted, in his old state carriage, precisely at 12 o'clock, ordered one of his belaced and powdered footmen to bring up his violin-case, and after a dumb greeting sat himself down immediately to his music desk. But previous to that he took out

his watch to see at what o'clock the lesson would commence, and then set it down close to him. He would bring easy duets with him, chiefly of *Pleyel*, in which I played second violin. Although there were many things in his play that indicated the unpractised pupil, I soon saw that it would not be wise to point them out to him; I contented myself therefore with accommodating my tones as much as possible to those of the old gentleman, and so we played one duet after the other in the best concord. As soon, however, as we had played the three quarters of an hour, the general would stop, though in the middle of the piece, take from his waistcoat pocket a one-pound note in which a shilling was wrapped up, and put it upon the table. He would then take up his watch, and take leave in the same taciturn manner as he had entered.

The other original was an old lady whom I accompanied on the piano. She was a passionate admirer of *Beethoven*, against which I had nothing to say, but she had the whim, moreover, never to play any other music than that of her favorite. She had all *Beethoven's* pianoforte-compositions, as also his orchestral works arranged for the piano. Her apartment was also hung with every portrait of him that she had been able to procure. As many of these differed greatly in resemblance to each other, she urged me to inform her which most resembled him of the whole. She possessed also some relics of him which had been brought to her from Vienna by English travellers, among others a button of his dressing-gown and a piece of music paper with some note marks and ink-blots from his hand. When I apprized her that I had lived for some time on terms of great intimacy with him, I rose greatly in her estimation, and she had then so much to ask that on some days we never played at all. She spoke French with tolerably fluency, and could even bring out a few words of German. Her pianoforte play was not at all bad, so that I was rather pleased to play the sonatas for piano and violin. But when she subsequently produced the trios also, and played with me *without* violoncello, and then even the piano concertos,

in which, with the exception of first orchestral-violin, which I played, all else was wanting, it became very clear to me that her enthusiasm for *Beethoven* was nothing but affectation, and that she had not the least perception of the excellence of his compositions.

I became acquainted with a third singular character in the following manner. One morning a servant in livery brought a letter to me, which my old *Johanning* translated in the following manner: "Mr. *Spohr* is requested to call at the house of the undersigned, at 4 o'clock precisely." As I did not know the name appended to the note, nor could ascertain from the servant the purpose for which my attendance was requested, I replied thereto in an equally laconic manner: "At the hour indicated I am engaged and cannot come." The next morning the servant reappeared with a second much more polite note: "Mr. *Spohr* is requested to honour the undersigned with a visit, and to appoint the time himself." At the same time the servant had been ordered to offer his master's carriage, and as I had been meanwhile informed that the writer was a celebrated physician, who frequently attended concerts, and interested himself especially in violin music, I no longer hesitated to go, but indicated the appointed hour to the servant and was duly fetched in the doctor's carriage. An amiable old gentleman with snow white hair received me at the foot of the stairs, but we now discovered to our mutual regret that we could not make ourselves intelligible to each other, for he spoke neither German nor French. We stood opposite to each other in great embarrassment, until he took me by the arm and led me into a spacious room on the walls of which a number of violins were hung. Others had been taken from their cases and placed upon tables. The doctor handed a bow to me and pointed to the instruments. I now comprehended that I was to give my opinion of the respective merits of the violins, and immediately began to try them and to arrange them in order according to their worth: This was no easy work to do; for there were a great number of them, and the old gentleman brought them all in succession, with-

out omitting one. When at length, after the lapse of about an hour, I had found the best six of them, and still played on these alternately to discover the very best of them, I observed that the doctor eyed one of them with looks of particular fondness, and his face lit up with pleasure every time I struck the strings. I therefore readily gave the kind old gentleman the satisfaction of indicating that instrument as the matador of the whole collection. Quite delighted with this announcement, he now brought a *viola d'amour*, and began to play a fantasia on this long-unused instrument. I listened to him with pleasure, as I had not heard the instrument before and the doctor played by no means ill. Thus terminated the interview to the satisfaction of both, and I had taken up my hat, to take my leave of him when the old gentleman, with a kindly expression of countenance and several low bows, handed to me a five-pound note. Astonished at this, I looked at the note and the donor, and at first knew not what he meant; when it struck me that he intended it as a remuneration for my testing his violins, and shaking my head with a smile, I laid the note on the table, pressed the doctor's hand with warmth, and hastened down stairs. He followed me out into the street, assisted me into the carriage and then spoke some words with evident emotion to his coachman. This had made so much impression on the coachman, that he immediately told it to old *Johanning*, who had come with the carriage, to open the door. He had said to him: "You are driving there a German who is a perfect gentleman; and I expect you will take him home to his house with the greatest care." — A few months afterwards, when I gave my benefit concert, the doctor sent for a ticket and forwarded to me at the same time a ten-pound note.

Meanwhile my wife had by unflagging industry acquired great proficiency on the new harp, but in doing so — on account of the greater stretch of arm it required and the stronger tension of the strings — she had exerted herself over much and now suffered greatly from the exhaustion it had induced. From

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former experience I had learned that nothing so quickly imparted fresh strength to her nerves as the frequent enjoyment of fresh air. I therefore availed myself of every moment of sunshine in the first days of spring to take gentle walks into Regent's Park, which was very near to our dwelling in Charlotte Street. On Sundays, when all music ceases in London, and when even without fear of giving offence we could not play in our own apartments, we used to make more distant excursions to Hampstead, and to the other parks. Our companion and guide was alternately the younger *Ries* and an old amiable man of the name of *Stumpf*, an instrument maker. I soon had the gratification of seeing my wife regain fresh strength and spirits from the mild influence of the English spring, but I adhered strictly to my previous resolution that she should appear once only at my own concert, and declined with firmness several offers that were made to her. But as for myself, I played at all concerts where they were willing to pay the price I asked, and as this according to English notions was not excessively high, I was in frequent requisition, and saw my name announced on almost all the concert-programmes of the season. But I never could make up my mind to play for remuneration at private parties, for the manner in which musicians were then treated there, was to me most unbecoming and degrading. They were not admitted to join the company, but were shewn into an adjoining room, where they had to wait until the moment arrived when they were summoned to the apartments where the company was assembled before whom they were to play; their performance over, they had to leave the room again immediately. My wife and I were ourselves once eyewitnesses of this contemptuous treatment of the first and most eminent artists in London. We had received letters of introduction to the king's brothers the Dukes of *Sussex* and *Clarence*, and as the latter was married to a German, a Princess of Meiningen, I paid them a visit accompanied by my wife. The Ducal couple received us in a very kind manner and invited us to a musical party they were to give in a few

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days and at which we were also asked to assist. I then thought in what way I could best extricate myself from this disgusting exclusion from the company, and resolved if I could not succeed to return home immediately. When therefore we entered the palace, and a lacquey was on the point of opening the door of the room where the other musicians were assembled, I told *Johanning* to deliver my violin case to him, and with my wife on my arm, immediately ascended the staircase before the lacquey had time to recover from his astonishment. Arrived at the door of the apartments where the company were assembled, I announced my name to the footman in waiting, and as he hesitated to open the door I evinced an intention of opening it myself. Upon this the lacquey instantly threw open the door and called out the names of the new-comers. The Duchess, alive to German usages, rose immediately from her seat, advanced a few steps to meet my wife, and led her into the circle of ladies. The Duke welcomed me also with a few friendly words and introduced me to the gentlemen around him. I now thought I had successfully achieved all; but I soon observed that the servants notwithstanding not did consider me as properly belonging to the company, for they always passed me by with the tea-tray and other refreshments, without offering me any. At length the Duke may also have remarked this; for I saw him whisper a few words in the ear of the steward of the household. After this the refreshments were also presented to me. When the concert was to commence the steward of the household sent a servant to summon the invited artists in the order in which their names appeared on the programme. They hereupon entered the apartment with their sheet of music or instrument in hand, saluted the company with a profound bow, and began their performances. They were the *élite* of the most distinguished singers and musicians in London, and the execution of their respective pieces was almost without exception charmingly beautiful. This, however, did not appear to be felt by the noble and fashionable auditory; for they did not cease their

conversation one moment. Once only when a very favorite female singer entered the room they became somewhat more silent, and a few subdued *bravas* were heard, for which she immediately returned thanks with profound curtsies. I was exceedingly annoyed by this derogation of art and still more so with the artists who submitted to be so treated, and I had a great mind not to play at all. When the turn came to me, therefore, I purposely hesitated so long till the Duke, probably at a sign made to him by his wife, invited me himself to play. I then requested one of the servants to bring up my violin case, and I then began to play the piece I had proposed to myself without making the customary bows to the company. All these circumstances excited no doubt the attention of the company, for during the whole time of my performance the greatest stillness pervaded the apartment. When I had concluded the ducal pair and their guests applauded. Now also I first expressed my thanks by making a bow. Shortly afterwards the concert terminated, and the musicians retired. If our having constituted ourselves part of the company had furnished matter of surprise, this was still more increased when they saw that we stopped there also to supper, and during the supper were treated with great attention by the ducal hosts. The circumstance to which we doubtless owed this distinction — one so unheard-of and repugnant to all English notions of that day — was the fact that the Duchess had known us while yet living in her paternal house, and had there witnessed the friendly reception which, at the time when we lived at Gotha, we had frequently met with at the court of Meiningen. The Duke of *Sussex*, to whom I had brought a letter of recommendation from the Duke of *Cambridge*, then regent of Hanover, received me also with great distinction and conversed with me a good deal. During a conversation we had upon the subject of English national songs, the Duke even sent for his guitar and sang to me some English and Irish national songs, which afterwards suggested to me the idea of working up some of the most popular of these

as a pot-pourri for my instrument, and of introducing the same at my concert.* When the company broke up, which was not till long after midnight, we returned home greatly pleased with the result of our daring and with the victory we had gained over the prejudices of London society.

Among those who solicited me to play solo at their concerts was Sir *George Smart*, one of the directors of the Philharmonic Society. During the season he gave a succession of subscription concerts which he called "sacred concerts," in which nevertheless a great deal of the music was "worldly" also. I played at two of them, in return for which Sir George undertook the arrangements for my benefit-concert — a by no means light task even for a native well versed in the matter, and which if I had undertaken in person would perhaps have occupied six weeks of my time, which I could employ in a much more advantageous manner. My concert took place on the 18th. June, and was one of the most brilliant and well attended of the whole season. Almost every person to whom we had brought letters of recommendation — and among them also the Dukes of *Sussex* and *Clarence* — had taken either boxes or reserved seats, and several of those wealthy personages had forwarded considerable sums for them.

A great number of the subscribers to the Philharmonic Society also retained their seats, and as the lowest price for a ticket was half a guinea, and the room held nearly a thousand people, the receipts were very considerable. I derived a great additional advantage from the circumstance, that the expenses which otherwise in London are enormously high, were greatly reduced on this occasion by the refusal of several of the members of the orchestra to receive any gratuity, from a friendly feeling towards me, and from the agreement previously entered into by me with the Philharmonic Society, that the use of the rooms should cost me nothing. On the other hand,

* This is the Op. 59, the second of my works written in London.

however, I had to pay all the singers, and I yet well remember that I was obliged to pay Mrs. *Salmon*, the then most popular female vocalist in London, and without whose presence my concert would have been considered not sufficiently attractive, the sum of thirty pounds sterling for a single song; and she made it a further condition of agreement, that she should not sing until towards the end of the concert, as she had first to sing at a concert in the city, six miles off. I must here mention also a singular custom which prevailed at all concerts in London at that time, which now, however, like many other strange practices of that period, has been discontinued. Namely, it was required that the party giving the concert should provide the auditory with refreshments during the pause between the first and second parts of the concert. These were accordingly supplied at a buffet in an adjoining room, and one was obliged to agree beforehand with the confectioner upon the sum for their purveyance, which at my concert was undertaken for ten pounds sterling. If the company consisted for the most part of persons of rank and fashion, with whom it was not usual to take any refreshments, the confectioner used to make a good thing of it, but if it was a very numerous and mixed company, and the heat very great, he might frequently be a loser. But he never did a better stroke of business than at my concert.

This took place on the very day that Queen *Charlotte* of England made her entry into London on her return from Italy, to make her defence before Parliament against the charge of infidelity brought against her by her husband. All London was divided into two parties, the larger of which, composed of the middle and lower classes, was on the side of the Queen. The town was in the greatest commotion, and it was a very fortunate thing for me that I had already disposed of the whole of the tickets for my concert, as otherwise by this unfavourable circumstance I might have incurred a very great loss. The bills announcing my concert, posted at the corners of the

streets, were quickly pasted over and covered with large placards in which in the name of the people a general illumination of the town was called for to celebrate the day; and *Johanning* brought me word that the populace threatened to smash the windows in every house, where this call was not complied with. As at that time the police force as well as the few military were not sufficiently numerous to protect the royal palaces from the threatened excesses of the populace, the partisans of the king, who were wholly unable to repress the tumult, were compelled to abide the worst, and contented themselves with making the best use of the short notice given by having their windows nailed up with boards, in order to save their costly mirrors and furniture. In this manner during the whole of the day the sound of the carpenter's hammer was everywhere heard, particularly in Portland Place, close adjoining where many of the nobility resided, and these preparations of defence were subjects of great derision and amusement to the young vagabonds of the street. While we were rehearsing at home the pieces to be performed in the evening, the people poured in crowds through the streets to meet the Queen upon her entry. As this took place in the direction of the city, it became perfectly quiet towards evening at the West-end. We found therefore, as we drove at half-past eight o'clock to the concert-rooms, the streets almost less thronged than usual, and met with no obstacle on our way. But we remarked everywhere active preparations for the illumination, in order that the sovereign will of the people might be immediately complied with. My wife, who was somewhat nervous respecting her first public appearance with the new harp, was in great trepidation as to what might occur from this excitement of the populace, and I was greatly afraid that the agitation in which I saw her would be prejudicial both to her play and to her health. I therefore endeavoured to soothe her by argument and persuasion, in which I happily succeeded. The concert-room filled by degrees with a numerous auditory and the concert began. I am able to give here the entire

programme, as Sir *G. Smart* upon my last visit to London (in the year 1852) made me a present of a copy of that which was handed at the time to the audience upon their entry into the rooms. It runs as follows:

**NEW ARGYLL ROOMS.
MR. SPOHR'S CONCERT.**

Thursday, June 18th. 1820.

P A R T I.

Grand Sinfonia (M. S.)	Spohr.
Air, Mr. T. Welch, "Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries"	Haendel.
Grand Duetto (M. S.), Harp and Violin, Mad. Spohr and Mr. Spohr	Spohr.
Aria, Miss Goodall, "Una voce al cor mi parla." Clarinet obligato, Mr. Willman	Pær.
Sestetto for Pianoforte, two Violins, Viola, Violincello and Contrabasso, Messrs.: Ries, Watts, Wagstaff, R. Ashley, Lindley and Dragonetti.	Ries.
Irish Melodies (M. S.), with Variations for the Violin, Mr. Spohr (composed expressly for this occasion)	Spohr.

P A R T II.

Nonotto for Violin, Viola, Violincello, Contrabasso, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon, Messrs. Spohr, Lindley, Dragonetti, Ireland, Griesbach, Willman, Arnall and Holmes	Spohr.
Scena, Mrs. Salmon "Fellon, la pena avrai"	Rossini.
Rondo for the Violin, Mr. Spohr	Spohr.
Aria, Mr. Vaughan "Rendi'l sereno"	Haendel.
Overture	Spohr.

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Leader of the Band . . . Mr. Spohr.
At the Pianoforte . . . Sir George Smart.

The new symphony, though already known to the orchestra, was again carefully rehearsed through with them, and was ex-

ecuted in a masterly manner, and it met with a more lively applause, if possible, than on its first performance. While the air that followed was being sung I tuned my wife's harp for her in the adjoining room and spoke some words of encouragement to her. I then led her into the concert-room and we took our places to begin the duet. Silent expectation pervaded the whole auditory, and our first tones were eagerly awaited, when suddenly a fearful noise was heard in the street, which was immediately followed by a volley of paving stones against the unilluminated windows of the adjoining room. Terrified at the noise of the breaking glass of the windows and chandeliers, the ladies sprang up from their seats, and a scene of indescribable confusion and alarm ensued. In order to prevent a second, volley of missiles, the gas lights in the adjoining apartment were speedily lighted, and we were not a little gratified to find that the mob after giving another uproarious cheer at the success of their demonstration went on their way, and thus by degrees the previous quiet was restored. But it was some time before the public resumed their places in the room and became so far tranquillized that we could at length begin. I was not a little fearful that the fright and the long pause would make my wife still more nervous and I listened therefore to her first accords in the greatest anxiety; but when I heard these resound with their usual power I became immediately tranquillized, and gave my attention wholly to the unity and ensemble of our play. This, which in Germany had always pleased so much, did not fail to make its effect upon an English audience also; the applause, indeed, increased with every theme of the duet, and at its conclusion seemed as though it never would cease. As we retired highly gratified with this success, we neither of us thought that it was the *last time*, that *Dorette* would play on the harp. But of that hereafter!

As regards the other items of the programme in which I took part, I was particularly pleased with the good reception which the nonette met with. I had already played it

with the same artists at one of the Philharmonic concerts, and was invited on many sides to repeat it at my concert. The accuracy of our *ensemble* was this time more complete, and therefore it could fail in its effect. The Irish melodies were generally well received. Thus, in spite of the disturbing intermezzo, the concert terminated to the general satisfaction of all. The interval after the first part and the promenade in the adjoining saloon were this time entirely prevented by the damage which it had sustained; the confectioner told me that, having had no demand for his refreshments, he was the ten pound in pocket, although he had had some things smashed on the buffet by the volley of stones. When at length, exceedingly fatigued, we got into our carriage, we were not able to drive straight home, as the mob in the neighbourhood of Portland Place still had it all their own way. The coachman was therefore obliged to take all manner of circuitous turnings, and it was past one in the morning when we at length drove up to our own door. With the exception of our floor we found the whole house lit up, and the landlady was awaiting our return in the greatest anxiety, in order to light up our windows also. And indeed it was high time; for the mob were heard approaching. But as in obedience to their sovereign will they found the whole of Charlotte-street brilliantly illuminated, they passed on without committing any excesses. But it was not safe to extinguish the lights, and not until the lapse of several hours, when the town had become quite quiet, did we at length get the rest we so much needed.

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Now comes a sorrowful period in my life, on which I now still think with grief. My wife felt so ill from the effects of the great exertions she had made in acquiring the mastery of the new harp and the alternate impressions upon her nervous system on the evening of the concert, that I was greatly afraid she was about to have a third attack of nervous fever.

It was therefore high time to come to some firm resolve as regarded her future well-being. Already after her second attack in Darmstadt, when she had become fully restored to health, I had endeavoured to persuade her to abandon her nerve-destroying instrument, but when I saw how much this proposition distressed her, I again immediately relinquished it. She was too much heart and soul the artiste, and had acquired too great a love for the instrument to which she owed so many triumphs, to be able to give it up readily; and it had always been a source of happiness to her to think that she could assist with her talent towards the maintenance of our family. But now, that she was but too convinced that her physical powers were not sufficient to conquer the new instrument, and a return to the old one would not satisfy her after having made herself intimately acquainted with the advantages of the new one in tone and mechanism, it became much easier for me to win her over to my way of thinking, particularly when I represented to her that as the artiste she could still be known, and in future appear at my concerts as pianiste, for which she had all the necessary qualifications. This tranquillized her very much, although she was obliged to admit to herself, that she would never be able to achieve upon the pianoforte the same success as on the harp, upon which in Germany at least she had not her equal. I moreover promised her, that in order to give her performances the charm of novelty, I would write some brilliant concert themes, and as it was very important for me to try my hand also at pianoforte compositions, I immediately set to work and finished before leaving London the first subject of the piano-quintet Op. 52. In order to remove the harp wholly from her sight, I sent it to Mr. *Erard*. When I informed him that my wife was compelled to abandon the harp entirely on account of the weak state of her health, he took it back very willingly, and refused a compensation for the use made of it up to that time. In a most gallant manner he said, the instrument had now acquired a real value, from having been played upon

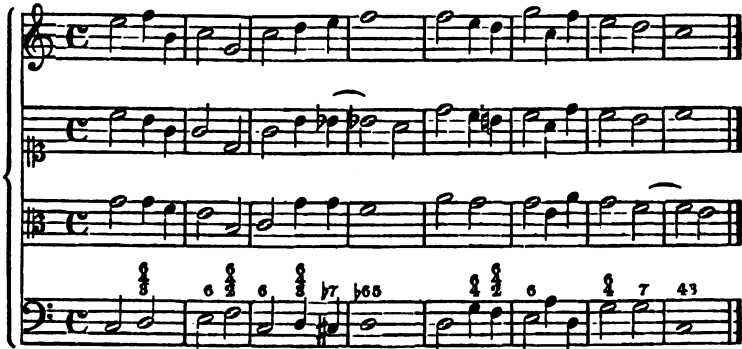
by so celebrated an artiste, and that too at her last public performance.

I now again took daily walks into the country with my wife and had soon the pleasure of seeing that she was gradually recovering her strength. The thought that she would soon see her children again contributed no doubt in a very great measure towards this improvement. I also longed to be home again with my family, and immediately the last Philharmonic concert was over, I made preparations for leaving.

I must here by way of appendix speak of the musical institution of Mr. *Logier*, which I visited several times with great interest, and respecting which I sent the following report to the *Leipsic Musical Journal* of August 1820: "Mr. *Logier*, a German by birth, but resident for the last fifteen years in England, gives instruction in pianoforte-play and in harmony upon a method of his own invention, in which he permits all the children, frequently as many as thirty or forty, to play at the same time. For this purpose he has written three volumes of studies, which are all grounded upon perfectly simple themes, and progress by degrees to the most difficult ones. While beginners play the theme, the more advanced pupils practise themselves at the same time in more or less difficult variations: one might imagine that from this manner of proceeding great confusion must ensue, out of which the teacher would be able to distinguish very little; but as the children who play these studies, sit near each other, one hears, according to whichever part of the room one may be in, either one or the other of the studies very distinctly. The teacher also frequently makes half of the pupils, at times all but one, cease playing, in order to ascertain their progress individually. In the last lessons he makes use of his *chiroplast*, a machine by means of which the children get accustomed to a good position of the arms and hands, and which so soon as they have progressed so far as to know the notes and keys, is removed first from one hand and then from the other, and then for the first time they put their fingers to the keys and learn

to play scales; but all this, in the respective studies, with all the children at once, and always in the strictest time. When they have then progressed to a new lesson they do not of course succeed in bringing out more than a few notes of each bar, in the quick movement which they hear being played near or around them; but they soon overcome more and more of them, and in a shorter time than might well be believed, the new lesson is played as well as the previous one. But what is most remarkable in Mr. *Logier's* method of teaching is, that, with the very first lessons in pianoforte playing he teaches his pupils harmony at the same time. How he does this, I do not know; and that is his secret, for which each of the teachers in England who give instruction on his system pay him one hundred guineas. The results of this method with his pupils are nevertheless wonderful; for children between the ages of seven and ten years solve the most difficult problems. I wrote down on the board a triad, and denoted the key in which they were to modulate it: one of the littlest girls immediately ran to the board, and after very little reflection wrote first the bass, and then the upper notes. I frequently repeated this test, and indeed with the addition of all manners of difficulties: I extended it to the most divergent keys in which enharmonic changes were required, yet they never became embarrassed. If one could not succeed, another immediately came forward, whose bass perhaps was corrected by a third; and for everything they did they were obliged to assign the reason to the teacher. At length I wrote upon the table a simple treble — the first that came into my head — and told each of them to put the other three voices to it, each upon her own slate. At the same time I said to them that the solution of the theme which the teacher and I should consider the best, I would inscribe in my musical album as a souvenir of their performance. All were now full of life and activity, and in a few minutes one of the littlest of the girls, who had already distinguished herself by her play and in working out the first problems, brought me her slate

to inspect, but in her haste she had omitted an octave in the third bar between the bass and one of the middle voices. No sooner had I pointed it out to her, than blushing and with tears in her eyes she took back the slate and rapidly corrected her error. As in her performance the bass was indisputably the best of all, the teacher wrote it in my album, and I subjoin it here with diplomatic accuracy.



The resolutions of the other children were more or less good, but all of them correct, and mostly written out in four different keys. Each also played her own immediately without any embarrassment on the pianoforte and without "fault," &c.

Upon my announcing our approaching departure to my old *Johanning*, tears came into the eyes of the kind and affectionate old man. He had become so fond of us that he would have even refused all remuneration for the services he had rendered us, and positively objected to take the sum I had reserved for him. But upon my insisting on his taking it he complied, on the condition that I would not refuse him a favour he wished to ask of me. I asked him what it was, and he did not keep me long in suspense, but stammered out in an embarrassed manner the request that I and my wife would do him the honour to take our dinner, the day before our departure, at his house. When we consented thereto without hesitation, his whole countenance immediately brightened up, and he could not find words to express sufficiently his gra-

titude. On the appointed day he made his appearance dressed as I had never yet seen him, in a full-dress suit of his deceased master's, with hair powdered, and in white silk stockings, and at our door stood a hackney carriage for four persons, which was to take us to his country house, and in which a musician whom he had also invited, and whose acquaintance we had already made, and who was the most intimate friend of his late master, was already seated. When we had got in, *Johanning* refused to take the fourth seat, saying that it would be unbecoming of him to do so, although I pointed out to him that he was now no longer my servant, but for this day my host and entertainer. But he was not to be persuaded, and took his usual place by the side of the coachman. On the way there our companion related to us many particulars highly creditable to *Johanning* — how he had shewn the most ardent attachment and fidelity to his master, and after his death had applied the greater part of the money he had left him, to the erection of a memorial to his master in Westminster Abbey, so that we felt penetrated with the highest respect for our recent servant. Upon our arrival he opened the carriage door and led us into his house. The property consisted of a small house with a small garden attached, and everywhere the greatest neatness and cleanliness. He led the way up one flight of stairs to his reception room, and did not fail to show us immediately the bell-pull near the mantle-piece, to which he forthwith gave a tug, although he kept no servant whom he could summon with it, since he and his wife were their own servants. We then took a turn through the little garden and then entered the parlour, where the table was laid for three persons. *Johanning* again refused to take a seat near us at table, and this time for the cogent reason that we should then have had no one to wait upon us. Upon this he brought up the dinner and as master of the house waited upon his guests, during which occupation his whole countenance wore an expression of the greatest pleasure. The dinner was exceedingly well dressed and served up on an elegant china dinner-

service which had belonged to his master, and the excellent Rhenish wine which he placed before us was no doubt derived also from the same source. The dessert, strawberries and cherries, was the produce of his little garden, and this he did not fail to announce to his guests. — When dinner was over he led the way once more to his drawing-room, where we found Mrs. *Johanning*, who till then had been engaged in the kitchen in dressing and sending up the dinner, in full Sunday attire. There at length, though only after repeated pressing, the worthy old couple allowed themselves to be persuaded to take seats at the table, on which coffee had already been placed. *Johanning* was now in the height of happiness, and interpreted with no little satisfaction to his wife the praises which we had expressed and still reiterated of the admirable manner in which we had been entertained. Towards evening the coach again drove up to the door to take us back to town. But *Johanning* could not be deterred from resuming his old place by the side of the coachman, to accompany us home, and open the carriage door. In fact, even on the next morning he presented himself again, in order to be of assistance at our departure. At the coach-office we found also several friends and acquaintance waiting to bid us farewell.

* * *

We returned again by way of Dover and Calais, in order to take our own carriage which we had left at Lille. Our passage across this time was a very calm one and the weather fine, so that not any of the passengers were sea-sick. Between Calais and Lille the diligence stopped at a so charming place to dine that even now, after so long a time, I recollect it with a feeling of pleasure. It was at the small town of Cassel, which is situated upon a high isolated conical hill that rises in the midst of an extensive plain. The weather being fine, dinner had been laid for the travellers in the garden of the inn under a bower of vines, and during the repast, from

this pleasant, cool situation we enjoyed an extensive view over the beautiful country round. In Lille we again spent some pleasant days in the society of the *Vogel* family and other of our friends there, and then without longer stay set out in our own carriage upon our further journey.

As a natural consequence of the painful ordeal of grief through which my parents had passed on our account, and after the first long separation from our children, our reception this time in Gandersheim was beyond measure one of heartfelt joy, and after our protracted exertions and fatigue we now indeed felt once more happy and freed from care in the calm repose of the country. This was just the time for me to set myself to new labours, and I there first completed the quintet for pianoforte, flute, clarinet, horn and double-bass which I had begun in London, and in which I proposed that my wife should make her appearance in the world of art as a pianiste on our projected winter tour. Indeed, it was high time to occupy her in its artistic study; for as she now felt quite re-established in health, she had the greatest desire to resume her harp. With the assistance of the new quintet, however, and supported by the medical counsel of my father, I soon succeeded in dissuading her from it. She therefore devoted her attention to the pianoforte with the greatest zeal, and in a short time had the gratification of finding she had reacquired her former technical skill upon that instrument. After the lapse of a few weeks she succeeded therefore in executing the new and difficult concert-piece to her and my satisfaction.

About this time we had a visit from two musical Hamburg friends, Messrs. *Fritz Schwenke* and *Wilhelm Grund*, the latter of whom brought his younger brother *Edward* with him, who was already a good violinist, to become my pupil. With the assistance of these three I now gave our musical friends of Gandersheim a quartet-party such as they had never heard before nor have since. In order to have my new quintet heard upon this occasion also, I quickly rewrote the accompaniment

of the four wind-instruments, for a stringed-quartet, and in this shape was highly pleased with its effect, as also with the brilliant play of my wife. From the great success this had met with, she felt much encouraged in her new studies and consoled in some measure for her relinquishment of the harp. To provide her still with new materials for practice, I rewrote also two former harp-compositions for the piano, a pot-pourri and a rondo with violin, which appeared later as Op. 50 and 51. We practised these together also with the greatest care, and they were destined for performance at private parties on our next winter tour. After the departure of the Hamburg visitors I commenced the instruction of my new pupil. By his talent and amiability he soon won the esteem of the whole *Spohr* family, from the old grandfather down to little *Theresa*, whom he always called in pure Hamburg dialect: "Du säute Deren." As he played well on the piano, he undertook the musical instruction of *Emilia* and *Ida*, and young as he was, he knew how to keep them assiduous to their studies. Himself as violinist he soon made so much progress, that I practised him in and played with him the three extremely difficult violin-duets which I wrote in Switzerland (Op. 39) and for which I had never yet been able to meet with a fellow-player. By the accurate, pure and spirited execution of this almost always four-voiced duets we made a great sensation, and musical amateurs from the whole country round came to hear us play them. We played one of them also with great success at a concert in Hildesheim, given there by the director of music *Bischoff*, the same who undertook the Frankenhause musical festivals. Towards autumn, just as I had begun to compose a new violin concerto (the 9th. D-minor. Op. 55, published by *André* of Offenbach) for the winter journey, I received an invitation from music-director *Rose* in Quedlinburg to conduct a musical festival which he was about to hold there. I very gladly accepted it, and made all haste to complete my concerto so as to be able to perform it there for the first time. While practising it I received great assistance from

Edward Grund, who was able to accompany through the score on the piano, an assistance, which I had never before experienced.

The musical festival took place on the 13th. and 14th. October 1820, and went off to the full satisfaction of the originator and the numerous auditory. Upon my proposition, *Schneider's* "Last Judgement" was given on the first day, at which the composer himself was present. On the second day, among other things my London symphony was performed, and, as well as my new violin concerto, was received with great approbation. I met in Quedlinburg many of my former friends and acquaintances from Sondershausen, Gotha, Leipzig, Magdeburg, Halberstadt and Brunswick, and passed several delightful days with them. After our return from this pleasant excursion, upon which my parents and *Edward Grund*, as well as my wife, had accompanied me, it became full time to set out upon our winter tour, the terminus of which was to be Paris. A new parting from the children, my parents, and the pleasant society of Gandersheim, was therefore necessary; and *Edward Grund* returned to Hamburg with the intention of coming again in the spring to prosecute his studies under my guidance.

We took Frankfort, Heidelberg, Carlsruhe and Strasburg on our way to Paris, and gave concerts in all those towns. In Frankfort, where we lived in the house of my friend *Speyer*, we still found a lively remembrance of our artistic talents; our concert in the salon of the "*Weidenbusch*" was crowded to overflowing, although the room could easily accommodate eight hundred persons. My new violin concerto, excellently accompanied, made a great sensation; Councillor *André* himself, who previously had always some fault to find with my compositions, seemed quite satisfied with my new work; for he repeatedly requested me, after the rehearsal even, to let him have the publishing of it. Although I declined this most positively, as I was bound by a promise to my then publisher *Peters* of Leipsic, to let him have all my new manuscripts, yet

in the evening at the concert *André* again pressed me, and so pertinaciously, that to get rid of him, and to prepare quietly for my solo-play, I at last called out to him "Yes." This precipitancy however cost me dear, for although I immediately informed *Peters* of all the circumstances, in order to exculpate himself with him, I was compelled to endure many bitter reproaches for my excessive pliancy towards Mr. *André*. The new piano quintet with wind-instrument accompaniment, which was now also performed, made likewise a great sensation, and *Dorette's* purity of piano-forte play, of which until then the friends of music in Frankfort had known nothing, was greeted with the loudest applause. I was more particularly pleased with this result, as of all others it was calculated to console my wife for the abandonment of her harp.

Of the other towns between Frankfort and Paris, and of the concerts given there I have forgotten everything; I must however advert to the acquaintance I made of Councillor *Thibaut* at Heidelberg on this occasion. That celebrated jurist conducted a choral society that he had instituted; but excluding all modern church music, he permitted *ancient* Italian music only to be sung, of which he had made a rich and rare collection. Until then I knew nothing more of this music than what I had heard in the Sixtine chapel at Rome, and was therefore very thankful to the Councillor for the permission he gave me to be present at the rehearsals of his society, at which I became better acquainted with several of those old works, which were carefully practised by them. *Thibaut's* opinion that this music *alone* represented the true ecclesiastical style, and surpassed all that had ever been written since, I cannot coincide with, for to me *Mosart's* requiem, incomplete as it passed from the hands of that master, who died during its composition, is alone worth more than all I ever heard of earlier church music; nevertheless, the simple-grandiose style of those works made then a great impression on me, and I begged permission to study their scores through. After some hesitation my wish was granted in such wise that I was

permitted to visit *Thibaut's* music-room at particular hours, and to go through the works on the piano, but was not permitted to take any home with me. I took daily advantage of this favour, and by that means made myself intimately acquainted with the vocal method and harmonic sequence of the old masters. While so engaged I was seized with the desire of trying for once an ecclesiastic piece *alla Capella* for several voices, and in the following summer I carried out my idea at Gandersheim with the composition of the mass for ten voices, Op. 54. I certainly did not strive to imitate the simple treble movements of the old masters; but on the contrary I did a good deal towards carrying out the rich modulation of the later Mozart method.

Respecting our stay in Paris I published at the time "Four letters to a Friend" in the *Leipsic Musical Journal* of 1821, which I here append.

FIRST LETTER.

Paris, December 15. 1820.

I trust, my dear friend, that you will give me credit for writing to you so soon on the eighth day after our arrival, at a time when so many novelties crowd upon my notice, that I find it difficult to collect my thoughts. But for my own sake I must not permit the materials to grow upon me too much, otherwise I shall be wholly unable to deal with them in their due order.

With a beating heart I drove through the *Barrière* of Paris. The thought, that I should at length have the pleasure of making the personal acquaintance of the artists whose works had inspired me in my early childhood, excited the emotion which I then felt. In fancy I reverted to the days of my boyhood, in which *Cherubini* was my idol, whose works I had had an earlier opportunity of becoming acquainted with in Brunswick, at the then permanent French theatre there, than even the works of *Mozart*; I vividly recollected the evening when the "*Deux Journées*" was performed for the first

time — how, intoxicated with delight and the powerful impression that work had made upon me, I asked on that very evening to have the score given to me, and sat over it the whole night; and that it was that opera chiefly that gave me the first impulse to composition. The author, and many other men whose works had had the most decided influence on my development as a composer and violinist, I was now soon to behold.

We had therefore scarcely got under cover, when I made it my first business to pay a visit to those artists. I was received by all in a friendly manner, and relations of friendship soon sprang up between me and several of them.

I was told of *Cherubini*, that he was at first very reserved toward strangers, repulsive even; I did not find him so. He received me, without any letter of introduction, in the most friendly manner, and invited me to repeat my visit as often as I pleased.

On the evening of our arrival *Kreutzer* took us to the grand opera, where a ballet of his, with pretty characteristic music: "Le carnaval de Venise," was performed. It is observable in the singers and dancers of the grand opera, that they have been accustomed to move in a more spacious place; in this one, where the space is much more confined as compared with the opera house that has been abandoned, they appear in a much too sharp relief. Several grand operas, those of *Gluck's* for instance, can no longer be represented at all, there being not even the necessary room for the whole orchestra. For this reason every one looks forward with hope for the early completion of the new opera house; but actively as they are working upon it, that will not be ready before the middle of next summer. Before the ballet the opera: "Le Devin du village," the words and music by *Rousseau*, was given. Is it a subject for praise or blame, that the French, notwithstanding the many excellent things with which their operatic repertoire has been enriched during the last twenty years, still give the oldest things of all? And is it indeed a proof of an advanced cultivated taste for art, when one sees them give

as enthusiastic a reception (if not more so) to the oldest operas of *Grétry* with their poverty of harmony and incorrectness, as to the master pieces of *Cherubini* and *Méhul*? I think not! How long have not the operas of *Hiller* and *Dittersdorf* and others of those days, disappeared from our repertoire, although these are far to be preferred for their real musical worth to the greater part of *Grétry's*. But on the other hand it is certainly very discouraging, that with us the new only, however poor and defective, finds a ready reception, and many excellent things of older date are set aside for them and forgotten. Nevertheless it must be said to the honour of the taste for art of the Germans, that *Mozart's* operas at least are the exception, and for the last thirty years have constantly been produced in all the theatres of Germany, which is a proof that the German people are at length impressed with the inimitable perfection of those master-pieces, and are not to be deceived on this head, however extensively the sweet musical poison may spread which flows in upon us so profusely from beyond the Alps.

The orchestra of the grand opera, as compared with the other orchestras, reckons among its members the most celebrated and distinguished artistes, but in *ensemble* is said to be behind the Italian opera. I cannot yet judge how far that may be correct, as I have only heard the latter as yet. In *Kreutzer's* ballet, which was played by the orchestra with the greatest precision, I was greatly pleased with a hautboy solo, which was executed in a masterly manner by Mr. *Voigt*. This artist has succeeded in giving to his instrument a perfect uniformity of tone and intonation throughout the whole range from *C* to the high *F*, an accomplishment which almost all hautboy players have failed in attaining. His execution is moreover full of grace and good taste.

For some days past I have been less edified at the grand opera than I was the first time. "Les mystères d'Isis" was performed. Too well indeed are justified the complaints of the admirers of *Mozart* of the disfigurement of the beautiful

"Zauberflöte" in this piece of workmanship, which the French themselves re-christened on its appearance "Les Misères d'ici"! One must blush that it should have been Germans, who so sinned against the immortal master. Everything but the overture has been meddled with; all else has been thrown into confusion, been changed and mutilated. The opera begins with the concluding chorus of the Zauberflöte; then comes the march in Titus, and then in succession some fragmentary piece from other operas of *Mozart*, and even a little bit of a symphony of *Haydn*; then between these recitatives of Mr. *Lachnitz's* own manufacture. But worse than all this is, that the transposers have applied a serious text to many cheerful and even comic passages of the Zauberflöte, by which the music of those passages becomes a parody of the text and of the situation. In this manner, for instance, Papagena sings the characteristic air of the Moor: "Alles fühlt der Liebe Freuden," &c.; and the pretty terzet of the three boys: "Seid uns zum zweitenmal willkommen," &c., is sung by the three ladies. Of the duet: "Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen," &c., a terzet has been made, and so on. Worse than all, however, they have taken the liberty of making alterations in the score: for example, in the air: "In diesen heil'gen Hallen," at the words: "So wandelt er an Freundes Hand," the imitating bass



is entirely left out, which is here indispensably necessary, not alone to the harmony, but because it expresses the act of wandering in so characteristic a manner, and the bass sound the *B* only a few times instead. You may therefore readily imagine how insipid and meagre this passage now sounds, which in Germany is so frequently admired. Moreover, in the terzet of the three females, where *Mozart* strengthens and supports the third voice with the violins only, the transposers have added both violoncello and double-bass; so that at these

tender passages, which are for three voices only, the bass lies in three different octaves, which to a cultivated ear is unbearable. Similar offences are of frequent occurrence. We must nevertheless do the French the justice to say, that they have always highly disapproved of this vandalic mutilation of a great master-piece (the extent of which from their ignorance of the original is yet not known to them); but how is it, that the "*Mystères*" have nevertheless kept their place undisturbed in the repertoire for the last eighteen or twenty years? — and here where the public moreover, as I see every day, rule so despotically in the theatre, and manage to have very-thing their own way! —

To me, as a German, the performance was not satisfactory. Even the overture was not executed so well as it should have been by so excellent a union of first-rate musicians. It was taken too quick, and still more hurried at the close, so that the violins instead of playing semiquavers could only play quavers. The singers of the grand opera, whose great merits may perhaps lie in declamatory song, are little qualified to render the soft airs of the *Zauberflöte* in a satisfactory manner. They sing them with a blunt roughness that deprives them of all tenderness. The getting-up in scenery, dresses and dancing is respectable, but not so handsome as I had expected. — Yesterday we went for the first time to the grand opera, and saw "*Clari*," a grand ballet in three acts, the music by *Kreutzer*. Little as I like ballets, and little, in my opinion as pantomime merits the aid of the resources of art, as these are lavished on it here, I nevertheless do not deny that the Parisian ballet may sometimes afford agreeable amusement, until one becomes wearied with the monotony of the mimic movements, and of the yet greater sameness of the dances. But with all the perfection with which it is given here, pantomime, from the poverty of its signs, which always require a printed explanation of their meaning, is, as compared to recitative drama, a mere outline by the side of a finished drawing.

However it may be embellished with golden ornament and decorated surroundings, as is the ballet here by magnificence of costume and decorations, it gives the outline only, and the life is wanting. In the same manner I may compare the drama to the opera — as a drawing by the side of the painting. From song, the poem receives its first colouring, and by it only, and the powerful aid of harmony, does it succeed in giving expression to the indefinable and merely imagined emotions of the soul which language must be content alone to hint at. The music to “Clari” is a great success, and in the second and third act especially the effect is most captivating. It facilitates greatly the comprehension of the subject by a correct delineation of the passions, and contains a treasury of pretty melodies which one regrets do not form part of an opera. Mademoiselle *Bigottini* played the chief character, and evinced a deep study of mime and action in her play. That in very impassioned situations she carried the expression of her features to the borders of grimace, may perhaps be imputed to the circumstance that hitherto she has always appeared in a spacious place, where on account of the distance it was requisite to give strong play to the features. Perhaps as a German this is my fancy only, for the applause was never more tumultuous than when (to my feeling) she overstepped the bounds of the beautiful and graceful.

Before the ballet, the one-act opera “Le rossignol” was given; from which *Weigl* took the subject of his German opera of “Nachtigall und Rabe.” The music of the French opera is of no account, and interested me only through the masterly execution of a flauto-solo by Mr. Tulou. It is impossible to hear a finer tone than that Mr. Tulou draws from his instrument. Since I heard him, it appears to me no longer so inappropriate, when our poets compare the pleasing sound of a fine voice to the tones of a flute.

SECOND LETTER.

Paris, December 31. 1820.

Since the despatch of my first letter, a fortnight has elapsed, replete with enjoyment, and since then we have both seen and heard much that is beautiful; but for the present I must content myself with writing to you upon that which most nearly concerns my art. I have now made my appearance before musicians and dilettanti, connoisseurs and a lay public, as violinist and composer, first at Mr. *Baudiot's*, primo violoncellist of the royal orchestra, on the day after at *Kreutzer's*, and since then at three private parties. At the soirées of the two first the company consisted almost wholly of musicians; at *Kreutzer's*, in particular, almost all the first composers and violinists of Paris were present. I gave several of my quartets and quintets, and on the second day my nonet. The composers present expressed themselves to me in very laudatory terms upon the composition, and the violinists upon my play. Of the latter, *Viotti*, both the *Kreutzers*, *Baillot*, *Lafont*, *Habeneck*, *Fontaine*, *Guerin*, and several others whose names are not so well known in Germany, were present; and you may imagine that it was then highly necessary that I should collect my faculties, to do credit to my countrymen. The wind-instrument parts in my nonet were played by the five artists of whose masterly execution of *Reicha's* quintets you will have so frequently read in accounts from Paris. I had the pleasure of hearing them play two of those quintets, but shall reserve to myself all detailed observations thereon till I shall have heard some more of them. At the request of all the musicians present my nonet was played again the same evening; and if the readiness with which the assistant players read à *prima vista* that difficult piece of music had surprised me, I was still more gratified, upon its repetition, by the manner in which they now entered into the spirit of the composition and re-executed it.

The young pianist *Herz*, of whom you have also doubtless read in the Parisian musical miscellanies, played twice

on that evening, at first his own variations on the theme from the "Schweizerfamilie," and then *Moscheles'* well-known variations on Alexander's march. The extraordinary execution of this young man is the astonishment of everybody; but with him, as with all the young artists here whom I have yet heard, it seems to me that his technical cultivation is in advance of that of his mind; otherwise, in a company composed of artists only, he would surely have given something different and more intellectual than the break-neck tricks of art he exhibited. But it is very singular, how all here, young and old, strive only to shine by mechanical execution, and individuals in whom perhaps the germ of something better lies, devote whole years and every energy to the study and practice of one single piece of music, frequently of the most worthless kind, in order to create a sensation with it before the public. That the mind remains torpid under such circumstances and that such people never become much better than musical automatons may be readily imagined.

Hence one seldom or never hears in the musical réunions here an earnest, well-digested piece of music, such as a quartet or quintet of our great masters; every one produces his show-piece; you hear nothing but *airs variés, rondos favoris, nocturnes*, and the like trifles, and from the singers romances and little duets; and however incorrect and insipid all this may be, it never fails to produce an effect, if it is executed right smoothly and sweetly. Poor in such pretty trifles, with my earnest German music I am ill at ease in such musical parties, and feel frequently like a man who speaks to people who do not understand his language; for when the praise of any such auditors extends even sometimes from my play to the composition itself, I cannot feel gratified by it, since immediately afterwards he bestows the same admiration upon the most trifling things. One blushes to be praised by such connoisseurs. It is just the same at the theatres: the masses, the leaders of the fashion here, know not positively how to distinguish the worst from the best; they hear "*Le*

Jugement de Midas” with the same rapture that they hear “*Les deux Journées*” or “*Joseph*.” It requires no long residence here, to adopt the frequently expressed opinion, that the French are not a musical nation.

The artists themselves here are of this opinion, and frequently reply, when I speak of Germany in this respect: “Yes, music is loved and understood there, but not here.” In this manner may be explained how good music wedded to a wretched theatrical piece, falls to the ground, and wretched music united to a good *pièce de théâtre*, may be highly successful.

This has deprived me of all desire to write for any of the theatres here, as I had previously much wished to do; for apart from the fact that I should have to begin *de novo*, like a young composer — since, with the exception of some of my violin pieces, they know little or nothing of my compositions — and further that I should have to work my way through a thousand cabals, which would rise up against me as a foreigner with fearful violence before I could get my work performed, so that at the end I should find, although I might have written good music, its success would be uncertain, as that depends, as I have said, almost wholly on the theatrical piece. This may be seen from the notices in the journals here upon recent operas, in which whole columns are devoted to a critique of the text, and the music is dismissed with a passing notice of a few words only.

Were it not so lucrative to write for the theatres in Paris, there would have been long since no good composer willing to do so. But from the considerable gain which a successful opera brings in during one’s whole life-time, new works are produced almost every day; authors and composers turn their mind constantly to the creation of new effects, but do not neglect at the same time, to ply the public for months together in the journals, and provide the necessary number of paid *claqueurs* in the pit on the evening of the performance, in order to ensure a brilliant reception for their work and

thereby an ultimate rich harvest from its frequent repetition. If only half as much were to be gained by an opera in Germany, we should soon be equally rich in good composers for the theatre as we now are in instrumental composers, and we should have no further need to introduce foreign pieces upon our stage, for the most part unworthy of the artistic culture of Germans.

After a residence of now three weeks it may be well imagined that we have repeatedly visited all the theatres. I am the more pleased at this as the circle of my acquaintance has become larger, and my engagements both for the morning and evening have so much increased that for the next fortnight we shall be able to devote but few evenings to the theatre.

Of the *Théâtre français*, the Odéon, and the four lesser theatres, I shall say nothing; as in a musical point of view they offer nothing worthy of notice. In the two first they give nothing but *entr'actes*, and in the four others almost nothing else but vaudevilles. That this last kind of theatrical pieces, which, thanks to Apollo and the muses, has hitherto been transplanted into no other country, is so much liked here that four theatres give almost nothing else, is the most striking proof that the French are not musical; for the sacred art cannot be more abused anywhere than in these kind of songs, which are neither sung nor spoken, but rattled out in intervals, and which are in most striking anomaly with the melodies, and the accompanying harmony. All Frenchmen of taste are agreed that the vaudeville, which formerly was given in one theatre only, has by its increase deteriorated more and more the taste for true music, and therefore had a prejudicial effect upon art here. We have been to each of these theatres once, to hear the celebrated comedians *Brunet*, *Pothier* and *Perlet*, but are not likely to go a second time, for the enjoyment one derives from the wit and inexhaustible humour of those performers is too dearly purchased by hearing such wretched music. I was particularly struck by the

skill with which the orchestra in those theatres follow the singers, who do not in the least adhere to the time, or the notes. But this is, also, their chief merit, for in other respects they are but middling musicians.

We have been frequently to the Italian opera, and much enjoyed ourselves there. Last evening we saw "Don Juan", there, at last, after it had been frequently announced. The house was again, as upon the previous performances, filled to overflowing, and hundreds of people could find no room, even half an hour before the curtain drew up. I was disposed to believe that the Parisians had at length understood the classical beauty of this work, and that they flocked always in greater numbers to enjoy it; but I soon relinquished that opinion when I saw that the finest parts of the opera — the first duet, the quartet, the grand septet, and several other things — passed off without making any impression upon them, and two subjects only received a storm of applause, which was given rather to the singers than to the composer.

These two subjects, which were each respectively encored, were the duet between Don Juan and Zerline: "Reich mir die Hand mein Leben" etc., and the air of Don Juan: "Treibt der Champagner" etc.; the first, because Signor *Garcia*, not having depth of voice sufficient, transposes it to B flat, and the last even a whole tone higher, to C. Madame *Fodor-Mainville*, who well knew that the song-pieces of Zerlina would please the Parisians more than all the rest of the opera, chose very wisely that part, and the result shewed that she had calculated rightly. What would she care, were the characters of the opera wholly transposed, so long as she meets with a storm of applause. The real connoisseur can only consent to this when he dismisses from his mind that she personates the role of a peasant girl, and when he wholly sets aside the true intention of the subject represented; for she decorates the simple songs of her part with a number of high-flown embellishments which, splendidly though she may execute them, are here wholly out of place; first because they do not at all

belong to *Mozart's* music, and secondly, because they are wholly incompatible with the character. With deduction of this, it certainly affords an unusual enjoyment to hear this part, which in Germany is usually played by a third-rate singer, impersonated by a first-rate one, and so distinguished a vocalist. Signor *Garcia*, as Don Juan, uses also too much ornamentation. Where this is only moderately admissable, he comes out with a *fioritura* a yard long; and these are most out of place in the serenade, where the supposed mandoline accompaniment forbids the most simple ornament. Nevertheless he gives full latitude in it to his fancy, and in order to do this more conveniently, he takes the tempo very slow. On the other hand, however, he sings his song incomparably "Treibt der Champagner" etc., and I acknowledge that I never heard that air so well sung. The pliability of the Italian tongue is of great use to him in this, and instead of losing his breath in it, as is usual with our German singers, his vocal power increases to the end.

The other parts are sung more or less well, but none of them badly, and one must gratefully acknowledge that each does his best to do honour to the work. One may also be very satisfied with the performance, when one loses sight of the claims one is justified in making upon so celebrated a combination of artists. But to a German it soon becomes very evident that these singers, who execute Italian music only, and that of *Rossini* especially, in the highest perfection, cannot give the music of *Mozart* with the same excellence; the difference of style is far too great. The effeminate, sweet execution which accords so well with the former, obliterates too much the energetic character which distinguishes Don Juan above all other of *Mozart's* operas.

The orchestra, which the Parisians always pronounce the first in the world, made some mistakes. Twice for instance the wind instruments were very obviously at fault, and they wavered several times so much, that the conductor was obliged to beat the time for them. I became confirmed but the

more strongly in my opinion, that a theatrical orchestra, however excellent it may be, on account of the great distance of the extreme ends, should not be conducted otherwise than by a continual beating of the time, and, that to mark the time constantly by motions of the body, and the violin, like Mr. *Grasset* does, is of no use. In other respects this orchestra is justly famed for the discretion with which it accompanies the singer, and in that might serve as a model for the other Parisian as well as many German orchestras.

The choruses are also excellent, and the effect particularly powerful and grand at the concluding allegro of the first finale. But why here, as well as almost everywhere else, is this allegro taken so unreasonably quick? Do then the conductors wholly forget, that by so doing they decrease instead of increasing the power, and that the triplet movement of the violins which must first give life and motion to the whole, cannot be brought out clearly and forcibly in a movement of such exaggerated rapidity, and instead of hearing the living whole, it becomes a mere skeleton sketch without fillings in?!

When one hears so beautiful a piece of music lose its effect by incorrectness of time, one wishes again that the marking of the tempi was finally and universally established either on *Mälzel's* or *Weber's* method, or still better upon both at the same time. But then of course orchestral conductors must follow them conscientiously, and not as now, follow their own fancy merely.

THIRD LETTER.

Paris, January 12. 1821.

With a mind greatly relieved, I write to announce to you, my dear friend, that I have made my public début and with success. It is always a hazardous undertaking for a foreign violinist to make a public appearance in Paris, as the Parisians are possessed with the notion that they have the finest violinists in the world, and consider it almost in the

light of arrogant presumption when a foreign considers he has talent sufficient to challenge a comparison with them.

I may therefore well be a little proud of the brilliant reception I met with the day before yesterday, and the more so that, with the exception of a dozen persons, the auditory was personally unknown to me, and there were none among them who had been admitted with free-tickets in purchase of their service as *claqueurs*. But I had prepared myself very carefully for the occasion, and was properly supported by the careful accompaniment of Mr. *Habeneck*. I was, however, not in the least nervous, which is sometimes the case with me when I appear for the first time in a strange country, and which occurred to me the year before in London. The reason why I did not feel so in this instance, was doubtless, that here I had already played before all the most distinguished musicians, previous to my appearing in public; but in London eight days only after our arrival, without having been previously heard by any person, I was constrained to appear at the philharmonic concert.

Before I enter into any details of the concert, I must first relate how I came to give it. It is at all times a tedious business to make arrangements for a concert in any town, but in Paris, which is so extensive, where so many theatres are daily open, where there is so much competition and so many obstacles to overcome, it is indeed a Herculean task. I think also that this is the reason why so many artists who come to Paris, decline giving a public concert, which, besides being attended with the enormous expense of nearly 3000 francs, is always an undertaking of great risk. If these matters have been extremely unpleasant to me in other places, you may readily imagine how I feared to attempt them here. In order to get over the difficulty, I bethought myself of making a proposition to the directors of the grand opera, to divide with me the expenses and the receipts of an evening entertainment of which the first half should consist of a concert and the second of a ballet. Contrary to the expectation

of all those to whom I had spoken on the subject, this proposition was acceded to.

The consent of the minister was however so long delayed, that the concert could not be announced till three days before it took place, and although the house was well filled, yet I ascribe to this delay that it was not so crowded as I had expected so novel and, from its novelty, so attractive an arrangement would have been for the Parisians. The half which came to my share, after deduction of the expenses, was therefore, as you may imagine, not very considerable: but as I had not calculated upon making much pecuniary gain in Paris, I do not regret this arrangement at all, as it saved me an immense deal of trouble, and yet gave me an opportunity of making my appearance in public. Of my own compositions I gave: the overture to "Alruna," the newest violin concerto, and the potpourri on the duet from "Don Juan." Between these a cavatine of *Rossini's* was sung by Mademoiselle *Cinte*, and a duet, also of the same master, by Messrs. *Bordogni* and *Levasseur*. At the rehearsal the overture was repeated three times, and in the evening therefore, although it did not go off quite so well as the last time at the rehearsal, the public nevertheless could not refuse their applause of its execution. In the concerto, as well as in the potpourri, some of the wind instruments failed twice, from a negligence in observing the pauses, which seems somewhat usual with the French, but fortunately it was not much disparaged by it. The satisfaction of the audience was unmistakably expressed by loud applause and cries of Bravo! To-day, however, the criticism of the majority of the journals is not so favourable. I must solve this riddle for you. Previous to every first appearance in public, whether of a foreigner or a native, these gentlemen of the press are accustomed to receive a visit from him, to solicit a favourable judgment, and to present them most obsequiously with a few free admission tickets. Foreign artists, to escape these unpleasant visits, sometimes forward their solicitations in writing only, and the free admissions at

the same time; or, as is of frequent occurrence, induce some family to whom they have brought letters of introduction, to invite the gentlemen of the press to dinner, when a more convenient opportunity is offered to give them to understand what is desirable to have said of them both before and after the concert. This may perhaps occur now and then in Germany; but I do not think, that newspaper critics can be anywhere so venal as here. I have been told that the first artists of the *Théâtre français*, Mlle. *Mars*, and even *Talma*, pay annually considerable sums to the journals, in order to keep those gentlemen constantly in good humour, and that the latter, whenever they wish to extricate themselves from any pecuniary embarrassment, find no method so sure as to attack some esteemed artist until he submits to a tribute of money. How the opinions of a press that are so purchasable, are at all respected, I cannot understand. Suffice however to say, I did not pay any of these supplicatory visits, for I considered them unworthy of a German artist, and thought that the worst that could happen would be, that the journalists would not take any notice at all of my concert. But as these have each a free pass to every performance at the grand opera, I found I was mistaken. They all speak of it; some with unqualified praise, but the majority with a *But*, by which the praise is more than sufficiently diminished. In all these notices, however, French vanity speaks with the utmost self-assurance. They all begin by extolling their own artists, and their artistic culture, above all other nations; they think that the country that produced Messrs. *Baillet*, *Lafont* and *Habeneck*, need envy no other its violinists; and whenever the play of a foreigner has been received here with enthusiasm, it is nothing more than a proof of the great hospitality which the French in particular shew towards foreigners. Apart from this vanity the notices are very contradictory: The "*Quotidienne*" says, for instance: "Mr. *Spoehr* aborde, avec une incroyable audace, les plus grandes difficultés, et l'on ne sait ce qui étonne le plus, ou son audace ou la sureté avec laquelle il

exécute ces difficultés.” In the “Journal des Débats,” on the other hand: “Le concert exécuté par Mr. *Spohr* n’est point surchargé de difficultés,” etc. These gentlemen differ also in opinion respecting the merits or demerits of my compositions. The majority think them good, but without saying why; but “Le Courier des Spectacles,” which altogether speaks most disparagingly of me, says: “C’est une espèce de pacotille d’harmonie et d’enharmoine germaniques que Mr. *Spohr* apporte, en contrebande, de je ne sais quelle contrée d’Allemagne.” But *Rossini* is his man, of whom he says further on: “Cet Orphée moderne a défrayé de chant le concert de Mr. *Spohr*, et il lui suffit pour cela de prêter une petite aria et un petit duo bouffo.” But as a violinist I found more grace in his eyes; he says for instance: “Mr. *Spohr* comme exécutant est un homme de mérite; il a deux qualités rares et précieuses, la pureté et la justesse,” but then winds up his phrase like a true Frenchman: “s’il reste quelque temps à Paris, il pourra perfectionner son goût et retourner ensuite former celui des bons Allemands.” If the good man only knew what the “bons Allemands” think of the musical taste of the French?!

This ridiculous vanity in the Parisians is shewn also in their conversation. When one or other of their musicians plays anything, they immediately ask: “Well, can you boast of anything like that in Germany?” Or when they introduce to you one of their distinguished artists, they do not call him the first in Paris, but at once the first in the world, although no nation knows less what other countries possess, than they do, in their — for their vanity’s sake most fortunate — ignorance.

You are doubtless astonished that I have as yet said nothing of the music of the royal chapel; but I delayed doing so intentionally, until I had first heard some of *Cherubini’s* masses. *Lesueur* and *Cherubini*, the two directors of the music of the royal chapel, assume the duties of their office every three months alternately; our arrival took place during the time of *Lesueur’s* directorship, and *Cherubini’s* did not begin till the first of January. But the musical directors of the

royal chapel do not conduct the music themselves, and preside only in their court uniform at the head of the vocal personnel, without taking any active part in the performance. The director *de facto* is *Plantade*; *Kreutzer* leading player of the first violin, and *Baillet* of the second. The orchestra is composed of the first artists in Paris, the chorus is powerful and good. Every mass is rehearsed once or twice, and under *Plantade's* sure and spirited direction, every thing goes exceedingly well.

Although previously prepared by Mr. *Sievers'* account, I was very far from expecting to hear music here of the style we call church-music in Germany; yet I was greatly taken by surprise by the brilliant theatrical style of a mass by *Plantade*, which I heard on my first visit to the chapel on the 17th of last month. There is not the least trace of the ecclesiastical style, not a vestige of the canonical management of the voices, and still less of a fugue. But apart from this, there were very pretty ideas, and much good instrumentation, which would be quite in place in a comic opera. The concluding allegro, probably upon the words: *Dona nobis pacem* (for I am not certain, since the French pronounce Latin in a manner very unintelligible to a German ear) was so completely in the style of the finale to an opera (like those usually with three or four times increased tempo) that at the end, forgetting completely where I was, I expected to see the curtain fall, and to hear the public applaud.

At midnight, on the 24th December, we heard a so-called "*Messe de minuit*" of *Lesueur's* composition. First of all we were obliged to endure a great trial of our patience, in which during two somewhat tedious hours, from ten to twelve o'clock, we heard nothing but psalms, sung off in the most monotonous manner, and interrupted at intervals with barbarous peals of organ-play. At length, at midnight, the mass began. Again the same frivolous theatrical style as in that of *Plantade*, but which at the solemn midnight hour was still more insufferable. But what most surprised me,

particularly from *Lesueur*, who is reputed here a first-rate harmonist, and was educated, if I am not mistaken, for a teacher of harmony at the *Conservatoire*, there was not even a four-part management of the voices! Though at times it may be effective in an opera, when writing only a two-part vocal distribution, to let the soprani go in octaves with the tenors, and the alti with the bass, partly with a view to facilitate the execution of the generally bad theatrical choruses, and partly to obtain by that means more material power; yet to me it seems quite barbarous to introduce this in the church, and I should therefore like to know what Mr. *Lesueur*, who must certainly be an artist of reflective powers, means by it. In the place of the offertory, variations by *Nadernann* for the harp, horn and violoncello were thrust in, executed by the composer and Mrs. *Dauprat* and *Baudiot*. You who know, that in Germany a serious symphony even appeared to me too mundane at this part, may therefore readily imagine what an unpleasant impression these frivolous, French variations on the harp must have made upon me in a mass at midnight; and yet I saw the people present in earnest prayer. How is it possible for them to feel a religious sentiment with such trivial music! This must be either a matter of no importance to them, or they know how to close their ears effectually; otherwise, like myself, they would of a certainty be reminded of the ballet at the grand opera, in which those three instruments are heard in a like manner in the most voluptuous dances. Although the harp in ancient times was the favorite instrument of a pious king, it should for all that be banished from the church, because it is wholly unfit for the severe style which is the only one suitable for that edifice.

But will you believe it, when I assure you that even the worthy master *Cherubini* himself, has allowed himself to be led away by this bad example, and his masses exhibit in many places a theatrical style. It is true that he makes amends for it in those places with superior music, full of effect;

but who can enjoy it, if he cannot wholly forget the place in which he hears it?

It would be less regrettable that *Cherubini* also should deviate from the true ecclesiastical style, if in some individual parts he did not shew in what a dignified manner he can move in it. Several separate subjects in his masses — particularly the scientifically conducted fugues, and above all his *Pater noster* up to the profane conclusion — afford the grandest proofs of this. But when one has once overcome the inclination to feel annoyed at this frequent, extremely digressive style, one feels then the highest enjoyment of art. By richness of invention, well-chosen, and frequently quite novel sequences of harmony, and a sagacious use of the material resources of art, directed by the experience of many years, he knows how to produce such powerful effects, that, carried away by them in spite of oneself, one soon forgets all pedantic cavil to give oneself wholly up to one's feelings, and to enjoyment. What would not this man have contributed to art, if instead of writing for Frenchmen, he had always written for Germans! —

FOURTH LETTER.

Paris, January 30. 1821.

The two months which I had allotted to our stay in Paris are drawing to a close. As I do not know whether circumstances may even permit us to come here again, we are exerting ourselves to find all the remarkable things we have not yet seen, and make daily excursions in Paris and into its environs. In order to devote my time wholly to this, I have given up the idea I had conceived of giving another *soirée* before our departure, and for which I had already made some arrangements. The fortnight which I should have been obliged to devote solely to that object, I can now therefore pass more pleasantly, and in greater freedom. I gave up with much more repugnance my project to give a second

public concert. since, from the reception given to the first, I had good ground to expect a successful result. But during this month there was not a day to be found favorable for such a purpose; for on a week day the administration will not give up the theatre, as there is either a grand or an Italian opera, and of the three yet remaining Sundays, the first was too near, the second, as the anniversary of the death of Louis XVI., not to be had, and the third, already pre-engaged by Mr. *Lafont* for a concert. To extend our stay over the middle of next month, we have no desire, for we are heartily tired of the noisy life and ceaseless night-disturbance here, and ardently long for a quiet place of residence.

On the other hand I have latterly played more frequently at private parties, and seen with pleasure that my compositions, upon every repetition, have been received with greater enthusiasm, especially by musicians. This has been particularly the case with a new quintet for pianoforte, flute, clarinet, horn and bassoon, which I have written for my wife, and in which, since by the advice of the physician, she has abandoned the harp, she has appeared several times. The chief object of my coming here, to make myself personally known to the most distinguished artists here, and to become more nearly acquainted with them, I have thus fully effected; and I cannot speak sufficiently in praise of the sympathy and kindness which the greater part of them have evinced towards me. They repeatedly endeavoured to persuade me to make a longer stay, and should I feel disposed to give a second concert, they would not only take all the trouble of the arrangements for it off my hands, but promised to get together for me the best orchestra in Paris, without the cost to me of a single sou. Although I am not likely to avail myself of this offer, yet it was very gratifying to me.

Another no less important object of my coming here has also been achieved; I have had opportunities of hearing the most celebrated violinists of, and at present in Paris. *Baillot* gave a soirée at his house for me, at my request; I heard *Lafont*

at his own concert; and the younger *Kreutzer* and *Habeneck* at morning concerts which were arranged expressly for the purpose. Should you wish to know which of these four Violinists has best pleased me, then without hesitation, in point of execution, I say, *Lafont*. In his play he combines beauty of tone, the greatest purity, power, and grace; and he would be a perfect violinist, if, with these qualifications, he possessed depth of feeling, and had not accustomed himself to the habit peculiar to the French school, of laying too much stress upon the last note of a phrase. But feeling, without which a man can neither conceive nor execute a good adagio, appears with him, as with almost all Frenchmen, to be wholly wanting; for although he dresses up his slow movements with many elegant and pretty ornaments, yet he still remains somewhat cold. The adagio appears altogether to be considered here, both by artists and the public, as the least important part of a concerto, and is only retained perhaps because it separates both the quick subjects and increases their effect.

To this indifference for it — as indeed the general insensibility of the French for everything that works upon the feelings — I ascribe also, that my adagio and the manner in which I played, made less impression here than the brilliant allegro subjects. Accustomed to the special applause which my manner of playing it had received from Germans, Italians, Dutch, and English, I at first felt hurt to see it thought so little of by the French. But since I have observed how seldom their artists give them an earnest adagio, and how little their taste for it is awakened, I became pacified on that subject. The practice of giving emphasis to the last note of a period, by an increased pressure and a rapid upward stroke of the bow, even when that note falls on a part where the time is bad, is more or less common to all French violinists, but with none so prominent as *Lafont*. To me it is incomprehensible how this unnatural accentuation has arisen, which sounds exactly as though a speaker endeavoured to intonate

the short final syllable of a word with particular force. If when executing a musical piece the cantabile of the human voice had always been kept in view as model (which in my opinion should be done by every instrumentalist) such errors would never have become confirmed habits. But the Parisians are so accustomed to this unnatural custom, that a foreigner who does not play in the same bizzarre manner, appears to them much too plain, or, as Mr. *Sievers* expresses it, "much too straightforward."

That *Lafont's* excellence restricts itself always to but a few pieces at once, and that he practises the same concerto by the year together before he plays it in public, is well known. Since I have heard the perfect execution which he attains by this means, I certainly will not cavil with this application of all his powers to the one object; but I could not imitate him, and cannot even understand how one can bring one's-self to practise the same piece of music for four or five hours daily, but still less how it is to be done without eventually losing every vestige of real art, in such a mechanical mode of proceeding.

Baillet is, in the technical scope of his play, almost as perfect, and his diversity of manner, shews that he is so, without resorting to the same desperate means. Besides his own compositions, he plays almost all those of ancient and modern times. On one and the same evening he gave us a quintet of *Bocherini*, a quartet of *Haydn*, and three of his own compositions — a concerto, an *air varié*, and a rondo. He played all these things with the most perfect purity, and with the expression which is peculiar to his manner. His expression, nevertheless, seemed to me more artificial than natural, and indeed his whole execution, from the too salient evidence of the means by which he gives that expression, has the appearance of mannerism. His bow-stroke is skilful, and rich in shades of expression, but not so free as *Lafont's*, and therefore his tone is not so beautiful as that of the latter, and the mechanical process of the up and down stroke of the bow is too

audible. His compositions are distinguished above almost all those of any other Parisian violinist by their correctness; neither can they be denied a certain originality; but being somewhat artificial, mannered, and out of date in style, the hearer remains cold and without a sense of emotion. You know that he frequently plays and takes great pleasure in *Boccherini's* quintets. I was desirous of hearing him in these quintets, with about a dozen of which I am acquainted, in order to see whether from the manner in which he executes them he could succeed in making one forget the poverty of the compositions. But well as they were given by him, the frequent childishness of the melodies, and the poverty of the harmonies (almost always three-voiced only) were no less unpleasing to me, than in all those I had heard before. One can hardly understand how a cultivated artist like *Baillet*, to whom our treasures in compositions of this kind are known, can bring himself to play those quintets still, whose worth consists only in the regard had to the period and circumstances under which they were written. But that they are here listened to with as much pleasure as a quintet of *Mozart*, is another proof that Parisians cannot distinguish the good from the bad, and are at least half a century behind in art.

I heard *Habeneck* play two *airs variés* of his composition. He is a brilliant violinist and plays much with great rapidity and ease. His tone and his bow-stroke are somewhat coarse.

Kreutzer junior, the brother and pupil of the elder, played to me a new, very brilliant and graceful trio of his brother's composition. The manner in which he executed it reminded me somewhat of the style of the elder one, and satisfied me that they are the purest players of all the Parisian violinists. Young *Kreutzer* is wanting in physical power, he is somewhat ill, and dare not play sometimes for months together. His tone therefore is weak, but in other respects his play is pure, spirited and full of expression.

Two days ago I heard two more quite new quintets of *Reicha*, which he wrote for the morning-concerts of the five

previously named artists. They were played at a rehearsal, which appears to me to have been given solely for the purpose of fishing for more subscribers to the morning-concerts, among the numerous persons who were invited. At least a list of them was handed round. It is sad to see what means artists here are obliged to resort to, in order to procure support for their undertakings. While the Parisians press eagerly forward to every sensual enjoyment, they must be almost dragged to intellectual ones. — I found the composition of these two new quintets, like those I had previously heard at *Kreutzer's*, rich in interesting sequences of harmony, correct throughout in the management of the voices, and full of effect in the use made of the tone and character of the different wind-instruments, but on the other hand, frequently defective in the form. Mr. *Reicha* is not economical enough of his ideas, and at the very commencement of his pieces he frequently gives from four to five themes, each of which concludes in the tonic. Were he less rich, he would be richer. His periods also are frequently badly connected and sound as though he had written one yesterday and the other to-day. Yet the minuets and scherzi, as short pieces, are less open to this objection, and some of them are real master-pieces in form and contents. A German soundness of science and capacity are the greatest ornaments of this master. The execution in the rapid subjects was again wonderfully correct, but somewhat less so in the slow ones.

I do not think I have yet spoken to you of the *Feydeau*. We have been less frequently to that theatre than to the other operatic theatres, because it so happened that on those evenings when we were at liberty pieces were generally performed that did not much interest us. Yet we were present at the first representation of *Méhul's* "Joseph," which, after a long repose was again put on the stage. The public however, did not seem very grateful for this to the directors of the theatre, for they gave it but a cold reception. In support of my assertion that the French take an interest only in the piece,

and know little how to appreciate the excellence of the music, I may adduce, that the tirades in the dialogue were far more applauded than the song parts. The singers succeeded in obtaining applause only when, in the superabundance of an artificial feeling, instead of singing, they began to sob. At the pieces of the opera — for instance, at the first chorus of the brothers — there was not a hand stirred. Many of the tempi were taken quite different from those in Germany, but not to the advantage of the music; for instance, the fine morning-hymn of the Israelites, behind the scenes, was taken so quick, that it lost all its solemnity. A screaming violin, also, that supported the soprani was far too prematurely loud. The orchestra played well, and was particularly remarkable for a delicate *piano*.

Moscheles has been here a month. He makes a great sensation with his extremely brilliant play, and wins the admiration both of artists and dilettanti, the former by his execution of his richly intellectual compositions, and the latter by his free fantasias, in which, as far as his Germanism permits him, he accommodates himself to the Parisian taste. The brothers *Bohrer* have also returned to-day from a tour in the provinces, but will remain here a few days only, and then leave on a new tour viâ Munich to Vienna. I regret that I shall not have an opportunity of hearing these artists, whom I have not met for ten years. They wanted to persuade me to accompany them from here upon a tour in the southern provinces, where they assure me some money is to be made. But I have not the least inclination to go. The bad orchestras in the provincial towns, the bad taste and the unpleasant negociations to lessen the amount to be given up to the theatre and the poor of the towns, would make a journey of the kind too disagreeable to me. In a few days we shall return to Germany by way of Nancy and Strasbourg, and therefore shall soon greet you again in dear Fatherland.

Till then farewell!

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To these letters regarding my sojourn in Paris, I have yet to add some few things from recollection. From the frequent opportunities I had of playing before *Cherubini* at private parties, I conceived a very ardent desire to have all my quartets and quintets so far as I thought them worthy of it, heard by that by me highly esteemed master, and to introduce them by degrees to his notice, in order to ask his opinion of them. But in this I succeeded with very few only, for when *Cherubini* had heard the first quartet (it was Nr. 1 of the Op. 45 written at Frankfort), and I was on the point of producing a second, he protested against it, and said: "Your music, and indeed the form and style of this kind of music, is yet so foreign to me, that I cannot find myself immediately at home with it, nor follow it properly; I would therefore much prefer that you repeated the quartet you have just played!" I was very much astonished at this remark, and did not understand it until I afterwards ascertained that *Cherubini* was quite unacquainted with the German masterpieces of this kind of *Mozart* and *Bethoven* — and at the utmost had once heard a quartet by *Haydn* at *Baillet's* soirées. As the other persons present coincided with *Cherubini's* wish, I consented the more readily, as in the first execution of it, some things had not gone altogether well. He now spoke very favourably of my composition, praised its form, its thematic working out, the rich change in the harmonies, and particularly the *fugato* in the last subject. But as there were still many things not quite clear to him in the music, he begged me to repeat it a second time, when we should next meet. I hoped he would think nothing more about it, and therefore at the next music party brought forward another quartet. Before I could begin, however, *Cherubini* renewed his request, and I was therefore obliged to play the same quartet a third time. The same thing occurred also with Nr. 2 of Op. 45, excepting that he spoke of it with more decisive praise, and said of the adagio: "It is the finest I ever heard." He was equally pleased with my pianoforte

quintet with the concerted accompaniment of wind instruments, and I was frequently obliged to play it on that account. The first time my wife played the piano part; but when *Moscheles* subsequently requested permission to study it and to play it once, she had not the courage to play it any more in Paris, after him. He remained therefore in possession, and entered more and more into the spirit of the composition. He executed the two allegro subjects especially with far more energy and style, which certainly greatly increased their effect. As the wind instruments of *Reicha's* quintet were excellent, I never recollect to have heard that quintet so perfectly rendered as then, although I have heard it played in more recent days by many celebrated pianoforte virtuosi. From the continual repetition of my quartets in Paris I could find no opportunity of giving even one of my two first quintets for stringed instruments which had been some time written. Nevertheless I found for them a very sympathetic audience at Strasbourg, on my return journey, to which the taste for quartet-music has more readily penetrated from its contiguity to Germany. The quintet in *G* major, with the half melancholy half merry finale, became soon an especial favorite with the friends of music there, and at their request formed the finale of every quartet-party. In Carlsruhe, where on a former visit I had already played quartets frequently, particularly in the house of that lover of art Mr. *von Eichthal*, my stay this time was very much saddened by finding the friend of my youth *Feska* dangerously ill: he shortly afterwards succumbed to his incurable malady.

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Returned to Gandersheim, I resumed again, immediately, the pleasant active life of the previous summer. *Edward Grund* soon arrived also, and devoted himself with his usual zeal both to his own improvement and to the instruction of my children. I myself first began with the composition of the already mentioned ten-voiced vocal mass, but

I was soon obliged to give it up for a short time. I received a letter from my old friend *Hermstedt*, in which he invited me on the part of the directors of the baths of Alexisbad in the Harz, to give a concert in the course of the approaching season. He offered at the same time to make all the necessary arrangements beforehand, so that I should not require to stay there longer than a few days. He also urgently pressed me to write a new clarinet concerto for him, and promised if he received it sufficiently early, to play it for the first time at the Alexisbad concert. As I liked to write for *Hermstedt*, who at that time was without doubt the first of all living clarinet virtuosi, I consented to his proposal, and set to work immediately. After despatching to him the new concerto *F* minor (the third for clarinet), I wrote for myself and wife another pot-pourri concerted for violin and pianoforte on two themes from the "Opferfest" — published afterwards as Op. 56, for which I worked out anew a former composition for clarinet with orchestral accompaniment which I had written in 1812 for *Hermstedt*, for the celebration of Napoleon's birthday, in Erfurt. I considered it one of my most successful pieces, and wished by this new elaboration of it, to make it more generally known. It may be readily understood that in this transfer from the clarinet and orchestra to the violin and pianoforte, very considerable modifications were requisite, and that I could adhere chiefly only to the form and modulations of the previous composition. By the time this piece of music had been studied by us in the usual manner, with the greatest care, the day fixed upon for our departure for Alexisbad arrived. Of this excursion I have now but very faint reminiscences. I neither know what we played at the concert, nor how the new clarinet concerto pleased, and the less so, that since that time I have not heard it again; for it has remained altogether in *Hermstedt's* hands, and has never been published. But I recollect very distinctly a natural phenomenon by which our concert was disturbed and for some time interrupted, as in London by the smashing of the windows. Just as the

music was about to begin, a storm, which had threatened since noon, broke out with such violence, that what with the rolling of the thunder and the noise of the rain that poured down in torrents, nothing could have been heard. In the over-crowded concert-room, which was suffocatingly hot, the closely packed auditory were compelled to await the passing over of the storm, and the concert could not be commenced until the air of the room had been renewed by the opening of the doors and windows. Owing to this the concert did not terminate till complete nightfall. The confusion and perplexity which ensued among the departing audience now first reached their climax; for it was found that the otherwise very modest rivulet which runs through the valley of Alexisbad had become so swollen, and had torn up and flooded the roads to such an extent, that the numerous company that had come in from the neighbourhood of the town found it impossible to return home in the darkness of night. All therefore first rushed to the dining-room of the baths, but there no provision had been made for such an influx of guests. As soon as the regular visitors of the baths had retired to their apartments previous to sitting down to dinner, the strangers seized upon their seats at the table, and upon the eatables also, so that when the former returned they were obliged to content themselves with what they could lay hold of. Upon this very naturally a good deal of ill-feeling was excited, and the host had enough to do and a hard time of it to pacify and keep the people in bounds. Now, furthermore, it was found that to pass the night there were neither rooms nor beds sufficient for their accommodation, and a great number of the strangers were *nolens volens* obliged to lie down indiscriminately beside each other upon a shake-down of straw. Many did it good humouredly, but others with ill-suppressed curses. For the unconcerned spectator it was indeed a highly comical and amusing scene.

During the same summer, I received an similar invitation to go to Pymont and give a concert there. I acquiesced, and proceeded thither accompanied by my wife and my pupil

Edward Grund, who conducted the orchestra and very much facilitated my solo-playing by practising the accompaniment beforehand, which alone enabled me to play my own compositions. *Grund* had in truth become a first-rate artist, and began now to make musical tours with much success; which led to his appointment as director of the court-orchestra at Meiningen, which office he now still (1853) fills, respected by his prince and by the members of the orchestra, and zealously exerting his energies to the advantage of art. As upon his leaving Gandersheim, in the autumn of 1821, the musical instruction of my daughters completely ceased, and as they gave evidence of vocal powers that appeared worthy of a further artistic cultivation, I determined to remove to Dresden with my family, in order to give the children the advantage of the instruction of a then celebrated teacher of vocal music of the name of *Miksch* in that city. To *Emilia* I had indeed, myself already begun to give instruction in singing, but soon found that I had neither the necessary perseverance and patience, and that it drew my attention too much from my work of composition. Besides this, also, I determined as soon as my family had become somewhat settled in Dresden, to proceed alone upon some short artistic tours in the neighbourhood. I wrote therefore to my former pupil *Moritz Hauptmann* in Dresden, and requested him to treat with Mr. *Miksch* or my behalf, and so soon as he should agree, to hire apartments for me; shortly after which I received a reply informing me that all my wishes had been carefully complied with.

My mass for ten voices had been meanwhile completed, and I longed very much to hear it. As on my journey to Dresden I contemplated giving a concert in Leipzig, and on that account should be obliged to make a longer stay there, I bethought myself of getting it sung during the time I was there by the grand choral-society of that town, with the Director of which I was acquainted. I wrote to him therefore to inquire if he felt disposed to have the work practised

beforehand, and as he replied in the affirmative, I sent the score to him to have the voice-parts immediately written out.

The parting from Gandersheim was this time a very sad one, as the children also, to whose society their grandfather and grandmother had become so much accustomed, were to part from them, and I was obliged to promise to return the next summer, even though for a short visit only.

On arriving in Leipzig, one of my first visits was to the Director of the choral-society, to ascertain something about my mass. But what I learned was not very satisfactory. The rehearsals it is true had been commenced; but the work had been found so enormously difficult, and was so imperfectly understood, that the director refused decidedly to let me hear it. At my urgent request, however, a trial was made, which went very badly, and as I did not nearly hear the effect which I had pictured to myself during the inspiration of the work, I concluded that I had produced a complete failure. After hearing it a few more times, I resolved to make some alterations in it, in order to facilitate its execution, and shortly after, the mass was published by *Peters* as Op. 54. A long time afterwards, when I had almost forgotten it, some parts of it were sung to me by the Berlin choral-academy under *Zelter's* direction. These had been so well studied, were intonated so clearly, and had so imposing an effect from the combination of so many voices, that I now became fully convinced that the work could be performed, and conceived the desire to have it studied by my choral-society in Cassel. This proved successful, as I did not lose my patience and the singers were indefatigable, and the entire mass, without any omissions, was performed in November 1827 on Saint Cecilia's day. The experience I had acquired during these rehearsals taught me, however, to avoid a too great abundance of modulations and difficult chords in succession.

Arrived in Dresden, we were conducted by *Hauptmann* to the lodgings he had hired for us, which were pleasantly situated in a quiet part of the town. Both my eldest girls imme-

diately began their singing-lessons with Mr. *Miksch* and I then went in search of my former acquaintances among the artists and amateurs of music, and, foremost of all, of the orchestra director *Carl Maria von Weber*. He received me in a very cordial manner, and by degrees introduced me into all the musical circles, where I not only heard much good music, but had the opportunity of playing my own chamber-music. As the musicians who accompanied me evinced great interest in my quartet-play, this induced me, with their assistance to give quartet parties every week at my house, to which I invited the most ardent lovers of music in the town. At these I brought forward, as I could not succeed in doing in Paris, all the quartets and quintets in succession which I had written up to that time, and as I soon got to the end of them, and they met with great approbation from all hearers, I was encouraged to write some new ones. In a short time, I finished two (the two first of Op. 58), and I took such interest in this work, as well as in the whole artistic life of Dresden, that I at once gave up my contemplated musical tour, and deferred it to the latter end of the winter.

Meanwhile *Carl Maria von Weber* had succeeded in obtaining the permission to have his opera of "Der Freischütz" studied in Dresden, after it had met with such brilliant success in Vienna and Berlin; and the private rehearsals were already begun. As up to that time I had not entertained a very high opinion of *Weber's* talent for composition, it may be readily imagined I was not a little desirous of becoming acquainted with that opera, in order to ascertain thoroughly by what it had achieved such an enthusiastic admiration in the two capitals of Germany. My interest in it was increased the more from my having worked also a few years before, when at Frankfort on the Maine, upon the same materials, from *Appel's* book of apparitions, for an opera; and only abandoned the composition upon accidentally hearing that *Weber* was already engaged upon it. The nearer acquaintance with the opera, certainly did not solve for me the riddle of its enor-

mous success; and I could alone account for it by *Weber's* peculiar gift and capacity for writing for the understanding of the mass. As I very well knew that this gift had been denied me by nature, it is difficult for me to explain how an unconquerable impulse should have led me nevertheless, to attempt dramatic composition anew. But so it was! Scarcely had I arrived home, than I took from my trunk, a half-forgotten work which I had begun in Paris. On a tedious rainy day which in that muddy city renders it impossible to go out of doors, I asked my landlady to lend me a book to read. She brought me an old, well-read romance: "La Veuve de Malabar." I found its interesting matter would well permit of being adapted to an opera, and I purchased it of her for a few sous, in order to make trial of it. While in Paris, and during the journey home I turned over in my mind the most favourable form for the composition of the opera, and began immediately after my return to Gandersheim to make the cast of a scene. In those hours when I did not feel disposed to work on the composition of the mass, I progressed with it, and by the time I removed with my family to Dresden, I had nearly completed it. I now reconsidered and worked over anew this sketch with renewed zeal, decided in the most precise manner everything that should take place in each scene, and then looked out for a poet who would feel disposed to write the opera according to this plan. Such a person I found in Mr. *Edward Gehe*, who readily entered into my ideas. In this manner originated the text of the opera "Jessoonda." I was just on the point of beginning its composition, when an event took place that took off my attention from it again for some time.

One morning, in the beginning of December, *Carl Maria von Weber*, called upon me, and informed me that he had just received an invitation to Cassel, with the offer of the appointment of conductor of the orchestra at the newly-built court theatre there, but had decided upon declining it, as he was fully satisfied with his present position. Should he, however, find me disposed to apply for that post, he would in his

reply to the letter, direct attention to me, and say that I was at present living in Dresden. As shortly before I had heard from a member of the Cassel orchestra who passed through Gandersheim much of the magnificence of the court theatre there and of the love of art of the elector *William II.* who had just entered upon the government, I could not doubt but that I should find there an important and pleasant sphere of action. I therefore accepted *Weber's* offer with many thanks, and before the lapse of a week, as a result of his reply, I received a letter from Mr. *Feige*, director-general of the Cassel court theatre, in which he offered me on the part of the elector the appointment of master of the court orchestra, and I was requested to send in my terms of acceptance by return of post. After I had consulted with *Weber* and my wife, I demanded: 1) the appointment for life, by rescript, at a salary of 2000 Thalers; 2) a leave of absence of from 6 to 8 weeks, every year; and 3) the assurance that the artistic direction of the opera should be made over to me exclusively. The whole of these stipulations were agreed to, but in return it was required of me that I should enter upon my post at the latest on the commencement of the new year. Overjoyed as we were at this new appointment, particularly *Dorette*, as she was thereby certain that she would be no more separated from her children for a long time, yet we were not altogether satisfied at having to leave our present residence so soon, where *Emilia* and *Ida* were making such progress, particularly in singing. We had besides taken our Dresden lodgings up to Easter, and a removal in the middle of winter was altogether very unpleasant. I therefore proposed that I should leave, to assume my place at Cassel, but that my wife and the children should remain in Dresden till the spring. Painful as was to her the separation from me for so long a time, she was compelled to admit the obvious convenience of my proposition. As the new year was now approaching, I therefore made the necessary preparations for my departure, and urged *Gehe* to work upon the matter for the second and third act of *Jessonda*, with all

possible diligence, while I took the first act, which was ready, with me to Cassel.

Meanwhile another new and startling offer was made to me. Count *Salisch*, my old patron in Gotha, wrote word to me that the duchess had been informed I was now living in private at Dresden, and she was therefore desirous to know whether I might not be disposed to resume my old engagement, which, since the recent death of *Andreas Romberg*, was again vacant? Count *Salisch* added furthermore that they would be enabled to grant me a considerable increase of my former salary. Had I not already accepted the offer from Cassel, I might possibly have given this one the preference, in order to afford my wife the pleasure of a reunion with her mother and family by a return to her native town. But the choice was thus not permitted to me, and I might consider this rather in the light of a fortunate circumstance, as my sphere of action in Gotha would have been a very circumscribed one, in comparison with that in Cassel. In a few years also I should have again been left without a home, for the duke, and his successor also, prince *Frederick*, the last heir, died soon after each-other, and the state was divided among the other Saxon duchies. The orchestra was then pensioned off, and as I could not have endured to live in complete idleness, I should have soon removed again to some other place.

The parting from my wife and children, although for a short time only, was nevertheless a very sad one. *Dorette*, who wept bitterly, could alone be somewhat comforted by my promise to write every week and inform her of everything that I was doing. In Gotha, when on passing through I paid a visit to my mother-in-law, I was urgently pressed by her and the other relatives of my wife, as also by the members of the orchestra, to settle there once more. The duchess, also, to whom it was requisite I should pay a visit, as she had always evinced so much interest and kindness towards me, resorted to every means to make me give up Cassel, and offered to induce her brother the elector of Hesse to release me

from my engagement. But as, since I had left Gotha, and looked about me in the world, the sphere of action in that place seemed to me too humble and restricted, I withstood every solicitation and made a speedy departure.

I had scarcely arrived in Cassel (New Year's Day 1822), than I was summoned to an interview with the elector, who received me with great kindness, and said many flattering things to me. Among other subjects he expressed the hope to see his opera become by my exertions one of the most celebrated of Germany, and requested me to make such propositions as were best calculated to effect that object. In order to do that I requested a fortnight's time, so that I might first make myself well acquainted with the means and materials at hand. After I had been present at a few rehearsals and performances, I then assumed my new post with the direction of *Winter's* "Opferfest." As the previous director of music, *Benson*, had from all accounts, been so much wanting in authority, that the singers and the orchestra did not hesitate to oppose his regulations, which indeed led to his dismissal, I considered it immediately necessary to somewhat tighten the reins of discipline. I therefore became very strict at the rehearsals of the "Opferfest," but did not find the least disposition to resist either in the singers, or in the orchestra; and already in the first opera which I directed, succeeded in producing a better ensemble than they had hitherto been accustomed to. This was also generally acknowledged, and immediately procured for me the confidence of the elector, as also of the whole theatrical personnel. As I already found some excellent voices among the singers, viz. the first tenor *Gerstückler* and the prima donna demoiselle *Dietrich*, and ascertained that *Feige* the director of the theatre was negotiating for the engagement of several other eminent artists, I limited for the present the proposals which I now sent in to the mere increase and improvement of the personnel of the chorus and orchestra. The latter consisted in part of civilian musicians, and partly of musicians belonging to the band of the body-guard, among

whom were several of great excellence. The elector had granted to the latter as well as to the civilian musicians a rescript of engagement for life, so that I could no longer carry out my notion of constituting the orchestra solely of civilian musicians, in order to avoid any collision between the military and the orchestral duties of the non-civilians. I hoped at least, however, to get rid of the objectionable regulations which obliged the military musicians to appear in full uniform, which upon my first visit to the theatre was a great eye-sore to me. But neither did I succeed in this, for upon my representing it to the elector he replied, "It is contrary to military etiquette for a soldier to appear before me otherwise than in full uniform;" and when I made answer that the close-fitting uniform made the orchestral duties more difficult, and that the high epaulettes in particular made it quite impossible for the violinists to hold their instrument in the proper way, he proposed to give the musicians a particular and convenient uniform without epaulettes, for the orchestral service, rather than give up his whim. He rejected also my then suggested proposal to give the civilian-musicians the same kind of uniform; and in this manner this party-coloured orchestra remained unchanged to the astonishment of all foreigners, until the year 1832, when the present elector became co-regent in the government.

But my propositions for the increase and improvement of the orchestra were all adopted, and I received instructions to engage some more good violinists, and some first-rate solo-players for the leading wind instruments. By this means the opportunity was afforded me of bringing my brother near to me once more, who, after the expiration of his engagement in Vienna had met with an engagement in the Berlin court orchestra. I was equally successful with my former pupil and friend *Hauptmann*, and both received a rescript of engagement for life. Some excellent musicians were soon found also for the wind instruments, and by this increase and by diligent study and exercise, the orchestra became one of the best in

Germany, and has so remained, in spite of all the personal changes until now (1853).

But I must revert to the year 1822. My accession to office was celebrated by the whole theatrical company, by a grand dinner, at which the two heads of the theatrical administration, the intendant Mr. *von Manger*, director of the police, and director-general *Feige* presided. Songs, speeches and toasts were sung and made in my honour, and I felt myself quite at home in a circle where I was met on every side with so much friendliness, and indeed in so hearty a manner. As the Elector, who in the first years of his rule was very generous, had made Messrs. *von Manger* and *Feige* grants of money for special performances for the relief of native and travelling musicians, this gave rise to brilliant and interesting soirées at both their houses. These meetings were enlivened by genius and wit, and there prevailed thereat a joviality which though somewhat free was yet decorous. I at first therefore frequented them with pleasure; but towards the time when I expected my family I gradually withdrew from them, partly because I was obliged to confess to myself that my wife would not quite approve of this circle, and partly because I was fearful of endangering my official authority by a too companionable intercourse with the singers.

A few days after my arrival in Cassel I was presented to the Electress and her daughters, the Princesses *Caroline* and *Marie*, and was invited to their evening parties. At one of these I was requested to play some of my quartets, which I expressly practised beforehand with the most distinguished members of the the court-orchestra. Messrs. *Wiele*, solo violinist, *Barnbeck*, first violinist, and *Hasemann*, first violincellist (my former quartetist in Frankfort, who had been engaged at Cassel shortly before). These music parties, which were much spoken of, were probably the reason why the Elector, who, separated from his wife, never joined her evening circle, gave me the order to give a court-concert, in order to afford an opportunity for himself and the Countess *Reichenbach* to hear me play. This

concert, for which I enlisted the services of all the talent among the singers and court-orchestra, was given in the grand saloon of the palace, before a brilliant company (in which of course the Electress did not appear, as the Countess *Reichenbach* occupied her place), and as it was the first at the new court, it made a great sensation. It was, however, the only one for a long time, as the Elector and the Countess took but little interest in concert music.

By the wish of the orchestra I assumed also the direction of the concerts which they gave in the new town-hall saloon, and appeared also at one of them as solo player. In the first years their receipts were divided, as they had previously been, among the members of the orchestra; but later, upon my proposition, they were appropriated to a relief-fund for the widows and the families of deceased members of the orchestra, and managed by a committee according to rules and regulations devised for that purpose. This relief fund, which from that period was supplied from the receipts from the concerts given every winter by the court orchestra and those from the performance of an oratorio on Good Fridays, is still in existence (1853), and in the course of years has alleviated the distress of many widows and orphans of the members of the orchestra. But for several years past the concerts have been no more given in the town-hall, but in the court theatre, from the time the former Elector became patron of the institution, who, as little as the present Elector, could make up his mind to be present at a concert given anywhere else than in the theatre.

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(Resumed in April 1858 after a pause of five years.)

(In this continuation, of the Journal, written in *Spohr's* seventy-fifth year, the manuscript would no longer permit of being printed *so verbally* as previously, and here and there, to avoid too much prolixity, it was necessary to make *omissions*. Some *gaps*, nevertheless, which required filling up have been so far completed only as the citation of *Spohr's own words* in letters written to absent friends, would permit of, — so

that the reader may rely upon the subject matter as faithfully given and that *only Spohr himself speaks, without any additions from the pen of others*, up to the mournful period (June 1858) when his biographical notes, which reach to the year 1838, break off altogether.)

Shortly after my arrival in Cassel, I was invited by the countess *Hessenstein* to a music-party. I there met several dilettanti of the town, who all sang, though in their own very bad style only. As nevertheless some of them had the gift of good voices, it suggested of me the idea of directing my exertions on that side also, and beginning by the institution of a choral society. I therefore formed an acquaintance with some of the singers, communicated my plan to them, and we immediately arranged to meet on an early day in order to consult further upon the steps necessary to be taken. As result of this meeting a code of regulations was draw up, and as early as the 22nd March following an invitation was sent round to the dilettanti of Cassel, signed by myself, Mr. *von Steuber*, and secretary *Knyrim*, to join the society we were about to establish under the name of the "Society of St. Cecilia," in order, "after the example of the majority of the larger towns of Germany, to strive here also towards the same noble aim, to awaken and cultivate a pure and correct taste for music of an exalted and earnest character." As the enterprise met with a cordial welcome, the society was soon formed, and upon its opening began first with the study of *Mozart's* incomparable *Ave Verum*, then with *Haydn's* Hymns of Thanks, and *Mozart's* first mass, followed by a *Salve Reginu* by *Hauptmann*, a charmingly beautiful composition in the real, pious ecclesiastical style. Meanwhile the number of members had increased to more than fifty, and such satisfactory progress was made in the weekly rehearsals, that already in the first year of its institution the society performed several times in the catholic church accompanied by the organ, during divine service, masses by *Hauptmann* and others.

In the theatre also, after I had got to know the singers and orchestra more intimately, my sphere of action began to

extend itself. The first quite new work studied under my direction was the opera "Zemira and Azor," which I had written at Frankfort, and which was first performed on the 24th March. A young, talented singer, Miss *Canzi*, who was just then on a professional visit to Cassel, sang the part of Zemira, and *Gerstäcker*, the then much admired first tenor of our stage, the part of Azor. As the other characters of the opera were also well represented, it could not fail to be as well received here as at Frankfort, so that not only was it repeated during *Canzi's* stay, a few days afterwards, but also immediately studied by her successor, Miss *Roland*, and given several times during the course of the year with great applause. But far more pleasure than from the enthusiastic approbation of the public, did I receive from the circumstance that the opera pleased me, who had not heard it for two years, and I was a still more severe judge of my later productions. I was also now more than ever convinced, that this, like many of my compositions required to be given in strict accordance with the spirit of the work to please the non-connoisseur as well; and that my music, if negligently played, can readily be so spoiled, that the connoisseur himself would be at a loss to understand it. Meanwhile, in the beginning of March 1822 my family arrived under the protection of my brother *Ferdinand*, who had fetched them from Dresden on his way here from Berlin, and we removed together to the house I had hired in the Bellevue. Once more settled down in the domestic circle I immediately began to compose the new opera "Jessonda," and finished it in December of the same year. [In a letter written to *Speyer* of Frankfort on 26th January 1823, he says: "I have been latterly so much engaged upon a new opera that I have somewhat neglected everything else. It is now ready, and I am right glad to have completed so important a work. If I expect more from this opera than from the earlier ones, it is because of my greater experience, and the inspiration I felt in the study of almost every 'number' of the successfully written libretto. In order to devote myself

to the work in my hours of inspiration only, I have allowed myself also more time with this than with all the former ones.”] Some “numbers” from it — the overture, an air of Jessonda’s, and the well-known duet between Amazili und Nadori — were performed the very same winter at the subscription concerts, and my daughter *Emilia* gained much applause in them. The entire opera was first represented upon our stage on the birthday of the Elector, the 28th July, in the following summer, and was received with general acclamation. [In a letter of the 2nd August 1823, appears, further: “You wish to hear from me something respecting the first representation of ‘Jessonda;’ it is a subject scarcely becoming me to write upon, for without wishing to do so, I must nevertheless speak in praise of it. The effect was great! It is the fashion here, upon birthdays to receive the court only with applause, and then the opera is listened to without any *loud* demonstration of approbation. It should also have been so now; but already before the end of the first act a storm of applause burst forth, and etiquette was forgotten for the rest of the evening. The performance was excellent. *Gerstäcker*, Miss *Roland*, *Hauser* were grand, Miss *Braun* was endurable at least, and better than in other characters. The chorus and orchestra, scenery, dances, spectacle combats, storm, decorations, costume, every thing, was excellent. . . . This work has made me very happy, and I have reason to hope that the opera will please much in other places.”]

From the windows of our house on the Bellevue we had a very fine view across the meadows into the valley, which is enlivened by the Leipzig high-road, and the beauty of the country induced us to take frequent walks in the charming environs of Cassel. In these walks we were mostly attracted by the numerous villas situated in gardens, outside the Wilhelmshöhe, and also of the Cologne gate; and as we began to like this part very much, we soon felt the wish, also, to have such a house with garden as we had already once rented in Gotha, that we might call our own property. When therefore

in our rambles any one of these particularly took our fancy. I often made enquiries whether the owner was disposed to sell it, but was frequently answered in the negative, until at length a small country-house outside the Cologne gate, close to the town and not far from the theatre, in a quiet neighbourhood surrounded on all sides by gardens, was offered to me to purchase. As the price asked for it did not exceed the amount of my small savings placed with the firm of *William Speyer* of Frankfort. I concluded the purchase of it at once, and already in the autumn we moved into the newly-acquired property and had the pleasure of gathering forthwith a good harvest of fruit and vegetables. The only thing I missed in the new house was a spacious music room. I therefore had a partition wall removed that separated two rooms on the first floor, and by that means gained a sufficiently roomy saloon for a quartet party, which, however, had the defect in an acoustic point of view, of being too low; for which reason I proposed to myself at a later period to erect a building with a music room.

Our pretty quiet country-house incited me anew to fresh compositions, and so I first wrote a third quartet to the two already begun in Dresden, which were published by *Peters* of Leipzig as Op. 58. In order to have this quartet heard and the former ones, I established here also a quartet circle, at which, in turn with some other families who were lovers of music, we gave three quartets every week, and concluded the evenings with a frugal supper. At first the quartet consisted of myself, Mr. *Wiele*, solo violinist, and subsequently concert-master of our court orchestra, of my brother *Ferdinand*, who took the viol, and of our excellent violincellist *Hasemann*. But as by degrees, both in the orchestra, and in this small circle, death made some vacancies, others were obliged to be substituted in their place, and then some time was always required until we obtained once more the old, customary ensemble again. In 1831 my brother was first snatched from us, then *Wiele*, and at last *Hasemann*; but their places were again filled by new members of our court

orchestra, so that the quartet parties, which only took place in the winter months, never ceased entirely, and I myself up to quite recently (1858) played two quartets in each of them.

After I had completed the third quartet of Op. 58, a fancy seized me to carry out an idea I had long conceived, and of which, if I am not mistaken, *Andrew Romberg*, when we played a quartet together for the last time before his death, first spoke of, viz. to try my hand at a double quartet. The circumstance that *Romberg* had entertained the idea for several years without ever attempting it, incited me to it yet more, and I imagined to myself the manner in which he had also comprehended it, and how two quartet parties sitting close to each other, should be made to play *one* piece of music, and keep in reserve the eight-voice play for the chief-parts of the composition only. According to this idea, I also wrote my first double quartet (*B minor*), began the theme of the first allegro with both quartets *unisono*, and *forte*, in order to impress it well upon the hearers, and then carried it concerted through both quartets in turn. Of the families who belonged to the quartet circle, the marshal of the court *von der Malsburg* had the most spacious place, for which reason I waited until the turn came to him to give the quartet party, at which I then with the assistance of my best pupils and of a second violin-cellist from the orchestra, gave the new double quartet to our circle, to hear. I was greatly pleased to find that its effect was far greater than that of simple quartets and quintets, and as this kind of chamber music excited also great sensation abroad*, as was proved by its frequent performance, I expected nothing less than that the composers of that day would soon imitate it and make it general. But this was as little the case, as with some other extensions of the forms of art, which I

* The "Vienna Allgemeinen musikalischen Anzeiger," of the 14th March, said among other things, in announcing the publication by *Peters* [Op. 65] of this work: "To waste words in praising this double quartet, which all unite in admiring, would be carrying coals to Newcastle."

have tried in later years, as for instance in the symphony for two orchestras: "Irdisches und Göttliches im Menschenleben." (The earthly and heavenly in human life, Op. 121) in the historical symphony (Op. 116), and the four-handed piano-forte accompaniment to some tenor songs. One single young composer only, of Lubeck, of the name of *Pape*, who was afterwards appointed violincellist in the orchestra of the theatre at Bremen, once sent me a double quartet in manuscript. He had great talent for composition, but found no opportunity of making his things known, and like so many young Germans, became desponding for want of the recognition of his talent. This has never been published, and thus my four double quartets remain the only ones of their kind. An octet for stringed instruments by *Mendelssohn-Bartholdy* belongs to quite another kind of art, in which the two quartets do not concert and interchange in double choir, with each other, but all eight instruments work together. This kind, although not so interesting as the double quartets, has been imitated; for the violincellist *Schuberth* of St. Petersburg published one of the kind at his brother's, the music-publisher's in Hamburg, which has been played by us in Cassel several times, and been well received.

At this time I was engaged besides on various other compositions: two pot-pourris on themes from "Jessonda" (Op. 64 and 66, at *Peter's* in Leipzig), one for violin, the other for violin and violincello, both of which I played in the course of the winter in our subscription concerts. I further composed a hymn to St. Cecilia, written by Miss *von Calenberg* for the festival of the 22nd November, which consisted of chorus with a brilliant soprano solo, the latter very well executed upon the occasion by my eldest daughter *Emilia*.*

For the celebration of this day, which our choral society did this year for the first time, a company of about 120 persons assembled, mostly friends of the members of the society.

* The manuscript remained unpublished for many years, and was only recently published bei *Luckhardt* in Cassel as Op. 97.

in the Austrian saloon, which had been handsomely decorated for the occasion, and ornamented with a life-size picture of St. Cecilia. The festival began with the hymn to St. Cecilia, after which a member delivered a discourse upon the musical art, and with the most flattering expression of the thanks and acknowledgements of the society, presented me with a valuable gift, consisting of two large bronze candelabra executed by the subsequently so celebrated sculptor *Henschel*, and ornamented with scenes from my three operas performed here. This was followed by a "Lord's Prayer" by *Feska*, the *Salve regina* by *Hauptmann*, and during the supper, some songs for male voices were sung. In the following year *Hauptmann* composed another hymn written Miss *von Calenberg* in celebration of the name-day of our holy patroness, and as this, together with my composition, met with the same general approbation, both these pieces of music were executed in turn upon all the subsequent celebratimes of the festival. The voluntary contributions which were collected upon these occasions were applied only to charitable purposes, and the celebration of the day although sometimes interrupted by some disturbances, continued to be observed up to a late period, sometimes on a more limited and at others on a more extensive scale.

In the following year (1824) I received an invitation from Councillor *Küstner*, who was then director of the Leipzig theatre, to bring out my opera of "Jessonda" upon that stage. [A letter of the 14th February furnishes an account of its successful performance there on the 9th of that month: "Upon entering the orchestra I was received with general acclamation, the overture was called for again with a loud and continued *da capo*. Every 'number' was received with lively applause, and four of them called for again, of which one was a chorus, the first of the 2nd act. The greatest, and really stormy enthusiasm, was created by the duet between *Amazili* and *Nadori*. After the conclusion of the first act a speaker stood up in a box on the first tier, and addressed me in a speech in which he characterised me as a *true master*

of *German art*, and called upon the audience to give me a "three times three"! This actually took place with a flourish of trumpets and kettle-drums in a tutti such as I thought would bring down the walls of the theatre. At the conclusion of the opera the same scene occurred, and the house rang with cries of "da capo Jessonda!" The day after the performance Councillor *Küstner* sent me double the amount of the honorarium agreed upon, and when upon my departure from the inn I was about to pay my bill, I found that it had been already settled. . . . *Peters*, the publisher of the selections from it for pianoforte, declared to me also, that after *such a success* of the opera, the honorarium I had fixed was too small, and that I must now permit him to fix one for it." On the 14th June of the same year, the opera was also produced at Frankfort, for the first time, and after that on the stage of all the principal theatres of Germany.

Some time afterwards I received the command from the Elector to write a new opera to celebrate the marriage of his daughter the Princess *Marie* with the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, which was to take place in the spring of 1825. The subject I had before proposed in Vienna to *Theodore Körner* to arrange for me, *Musäus's* tale of the "Rübezahl," now came into my mind, and I therefore applied to Mr. *Edward Gehe* in Dresden, who had written the libretto of "Jessonda" so much to my satisfaction. But as I could not send to him a clear outline of the scenes for the opera, not being myself as yet well decided respecting the working-up of the materials, his fancy could not assist him in the matter, and he sent me a libretto that did not all come up with my ideas, and to which I did not at all feel myself inclined to compose. I now called to mind my former kettle-drummer in the Frankfort orchestra, the already-mentioned *George Döring*, who was at the same time a literary man, and who since then had made himself known by several successful novels. I therefore addressed myself to him, and explained my views respecting the working-up of the "Rübezahl," particularly pointing out to him, that as I intended this to

be a grand opera, it would not be necessary to write it in rhyming verse. In *Gehe's* "Rübezahl" there were many things both shallow and inappropriate, and which appeared to me as caused by the shackles imposed upon the author by the rhyme, and this *Döring*, by my express wish, was to avoid altogether. Although this has been greatly objected to, I am nevertheless of opinion that the want of the rhyme in my opera "Der Berggeist," although it does not fulfill all that could be desired, is the least to be blamed for it. Although *Döring's* libretto was neither altogether to my mind, yet there was no time to be lost, and less so, since this was not the only work the elector had requested me to prepare for the celebration of the marriage. I had besides to compose a grand march with introduction of the melody of the old German ballad: "Und als der Grossvater die Grossmutter nahm," together with a torch-light-dance for fifty-three trumpeters, and two pair of kettle-drummers (for these were the numbers to be found in the music bands of the army of the Elector of Hesse); and as for the sake of the modulation I was obliged to take various tones of the trumpets, and the trumpeters of the bands not being very musical, I was obliged to practise them also beforehand in this torch-light-dance.

At the end of the year, nevertheless, I was ready with all these compositions, and could now proceed to the study of the "Berg-Geist." Our first tenor *Gerstäcker*, who had been ill for some time past, had meanwhile become worse, and his malady had taken so sad a turn, that all likelihood of his being able to sing was out of the question, and we were now without a first tenor. The Elector therefore gave orders to invite some foreign singer to perform for a series of nights in his place, and we were so successful as to engage for several weeks the services of the tenorist *Cornet* of Hamburg, who was then in great repute, together with his betrothed, Miss *Kiel* of Sondershausen, who undertook the first soprano part in the new opera. Scarcely, however, had I begun the study of the work by our own theatrical company, than I received from

Spontini an invitation that very much surprised me, viz. to proceed to Berlin, to direct the first representation there of the opera of "Jessonda," fixed for the 4th of February, and to preside myself at the two last grand rehearsals. *Spontini*, who must often have seen himself reproached in the Berlin newspapers, for giving nothing but his own operas, and withholding other meritorious works from that stage, might have come to the idea of meeting that reproach in the most signal manner by inviting the composer of "Jessonda." But in reality he did not seem to trouble himself much in furthering the representation of the opera; for as soon as, having obtained leave of absence, I arrived at Berlin, and waited upon *Spontini*, he received me in a very friendly manner, it is true, but informed me that the preparatory-rehearsals even had not yet been begun, and that he had sent me the invitation without the previous knowledge of the intendant of the royal theatre, Count *Brühl*. I now first sought to soften the sensitiveness of the latter on the score of such a neglect, and in order not to be obliged to return home without having effected anything, I then consulted with him on all that was necessary to expedite the representation of the opera.

In the preparatory rehearsals which now took place, I had the satisfaction of finding that the principal parts were in good hands: *Bader* and *Blume* as Nadori and Tristan, and *Mdmes. Schulze* and *Seidler* as Jessonda and Amazili, were excellent singers; the part of Dandau also was well filled by Mr. *Krause*, and that of Lopez, which had at first been given to a comic singer, by which the serious character of the opera would have been damaged, was taken by the baritone *Devrient*, after I had agreed to make some alterations in the recitatives. The opera could thus have been soon placed on the repertory, when *Bader* suddenly fell ill, and after his convalescence Mrs. *Seidler*, being seized with a hoarseness occasioned some obstruction. As the term of my leave of absence was nearly at an end, I made application for an extension of it. But the Elector had felt himself aggrieved by the obstacles thrown in

my way by *Spontini* and the Berlin intendance, and he allowed me but a few days more, after the expiration of which I was to return, whether the opera was brought out or not. Fortunately, *Mdme. Seidler* got better; I could now therefore direct in person the first representation of “*Jessonda*” in Berlin, and be witness to its very favourable reception. Immediately after, I left, and travelled three whole nights without resting, in order to regain the time lost.

The two singers from Hamburg had arrived in the meantime, and had already performed with great applause; I could therefore begin the stage rehearsals of the “*Berg-Geist*” at once. But between whiles I received furthermore the elector’s order to arrange choruses for the prologue to the opera, in which were to be introduced some popular Thuringian melodies. To effect this I applied to my pupil *Grund*, concert-master at Meiningen, who procured for me the desired melodies, which I then made use of in the work as well as they would admit of it.

On the 23th March 1825, the marriage took place in the palace of Bellevue. On the procession of the new-married pair and their suite from the dining-hall to the white saloon, the orchestra played my march, which had a good effect, and at the part where the “*Grossvater-Lied*” was introduced was very pretty. The Elector, and the Duke (who was decidedly more musical than his father-in-law) both congratulated me much upon the grand march, which, at their request, was played a second time. The reception of the married couple at the festive representation on the following evening in the theatre, was a very brilliant and noisy one; for I ordered the fifty-three trumpeters and the two pair of kettle-drummers whom I had placed up in the gallery to join in with the acclamations and vivats of the audience! The festive-prologue written by counsellor *Niemeyer* followed; then my new opera “*Der Berg-Geist*,” which in truth was received by the thronged and brilliantly lighted house with as much boisterous applause as “*Jessonda*,” but which neither pleased me so much, nor

was so popular on other stages as the latter. The Elector, who was very satisfied with all I had written for the occasion, sent for me the next-day, thanked me, and presented me with a very handsome snuff-box, upon the lid of which, though somewhat unsuitable for a musician, was a very artistic chasing representing a combat of cavalry, set and framed under glass. But — and that was the best part of it — it was filled with Friedrich's-d'or, and therefore a handsome and princely gift.

A few months afterwards Councillor *Küstner* sent for my new opera to Leipzig, and in September the first representation of it on that stage took place. [A letter of the 18th September speaks of it in the following manner: "The day before yesterday "Der Berg-Geist" was launched here with the greatest success . . . The *mise en scene* was more brilliant than was ever known before in Leipzig, and some of the scenes were more beautiful than any I had ever yet seen. The scene-painter *Gropius* is in a fair way to become the first in the world; neither in Italy, Paris nor London have I ever seen anything so charming as the closing-scene of the second act. . . . The reception the opera met with, was the most flattering I had ever yet experienced. . . . The performance may be said to have been a very successful one. With the exception of one error in the overture, and one obstinate rock which would not come up out of the earth, nothing went wrong. On the stage, almost all did better than in Cassel, particularly the Berg-Geist (*Köckert*) and Oscar (*Vetter*). . . . The orchestra, although far inferior to ours, was unusually good."]

In the summer of 1825 an aimable young man, *Frederick Curschman* of Berlin, came to Cassel to perfect himself under my guidance as a musician. Although he had begun the study of jurisprudence at Göttingen, he thought nevertheless of giving up the law, and had already tried his hand with success at various kinds of literature, particularly in songs, which he sung with a pleasing baritone voice, and thereby introduced himself into our musical circle. As his musical education was still

imperfect, I advised him to apply first to *Hauptmann*, who at my request had undertaken to instruct my violin pupils in the theory of music, and shown great skill in that capacity. *Curschmann* also immediately joined our society of St. Cecilia, and became a very valuable member of it, as he not only sang the bass soli very well at sight, but frequently took the pianoforte accompaniment, and did the duty of a librarian with great zeal. Together with some of our best dilettanti he formed also an opera circle, in which for the first time were produced several of his compositions which afterwards became such favorites, and parts of his little opera "Die Todten, oder Abdul und Erinnieh," which was brought out at a later period upon the stage here. He thus in many ways enlivened the culture of art in our town, and soon became the favorite of the musical world.

In the same year Councillor *Rochlitz*, the editor of the Leipzig Musical Journal, offered me the text of an Oratorio: "Die letzten Dinge," to compose for; which I received with great pleasure, as my previous attempt in that style of art, "Das jüngste Gericht," the oratorio performed at Erfurt, by no means pleased me any longer, and therefore I had not once been disposed to perform a single "number" of it at the meetings of our society. I now began with new studies of counter-point, and of the ecclesiastic style, and set zealously to work on the composition, in which I followed the prescriptions of the author which he had forwarded to me with the text, in respect to its treatment, and which I not only strictly adhered to, but found of assistance to me. The first part of the oratorio was thus soon ready, and as early as the end of November I could give it with the members of our choral society, at a concert in behalf of the sufferers from the fire that had occurred shortly before at Seesen; although it is true, with pianoforte accompaniment only. On that occasion, I observed with great pleasure, that it made a deep impression upon the assistants, as well as upon all the auditory, and this observation was of the more importance to me, as it convinced me

that I had found the proper style for this kind of work. I had in particular striven to be very simple, religious, and true in expression, and carefully to avoid all artistic trickery, all bombast and every thing of difficult execution. With increased zest I now proceeded to compose the second part, so that the whole work was finished by the following Good Friday (1826) and then first performed complete in the Lutheran church. [A letter of the 26th March speaks of it in the following manner: "Yesterday was a great day of festival for the lovers of music here; for never yet had so solemn a musical performance as my oratorio taken place in Cassel. It was in the evening, and the church was lighted up. My son-in-law *Wolff*, who had been long in Rome, proposed to illuminate the church as at Rome on Good Friday, with lights disposed overhead in the form of a cross, and carried out his idea. A cross fourteen feet long, covered with silver-foil, and hung with six hundred glass lamps, was suspended overhead in the middle of the church, and diffused so bright a light that one could everywhere clearly read the text-books. The musicians and singers, nearly two hundred in number, were placed in the gallery of the church, arranged in rows one above the other, and for the most part unseen by the auditory, which, amounting to nearly two thousand persons, observed a solemn stillness. My two daughters, Messrs. *Wild*, *Albert* and *Föppel*, together with an amateur, sang the soli, and the performance was faultless. The effect was, I must myself say, extraordinary. Never did I before experience such satisfaction from the performance of one of my greater works! I had always had to lament either an imperfect execution, an unsuccessful effect, or something else. This time it was quite different. The work, also, is simple and easy, and yet not less comprehensive in contents, than the others.] The visibly deep impression that the oratorio made upon the public may also have been yet further assisted by the solemn grandeur of the illuminated cross-which harmonized greatly with the religious sentiment inspired by the day. The elector only was not

pleased with the selection of the Lutheran church and its "catholic illumination," as he called the cross, and he ordered that the orchestra should give their future Good Friday concerts in the court and garrison church, lit up with chandeliers to be furnished from the electoral household lighting department.

Shortly afterwards I received an invitation from my London friend *Ferdinand Ries*, who had returned to Germany, and was then living in the neighbourhood of Godesberg on the Rhine, to direct personally my new oratorio at the Rhenish musical festival at Düsseldorf, the arrangements for which had been confided to him. Although the Rhenish musical festival was held at Whitsuntide, and therefore at a time when our theatrical vacation had not yet begun, and I therefore required to obtain an express permission to do so, I nevertheless succeeded in obtaining it immediately, for the Elector felt himself flattered when his director of music was invited to important musical performances, and thereby acquired honour and fame.

While therefore I prepared to set out with my whole family, except *Ida* who, in the meanwhile, had married Professor *Wolff*, four of the most ardent lovers of music here, Mr. *Curschmann*, the referendary *Charles Pfeiffer*, Mrs. *von der Malsburg* and her friend Miss *von Heister*, made up their minds to join us, and like us to travel by post, in order to be able to put up at dinner-time, and at night at the same places. Favoured by the finest weather, we set out on our journey on the 9th May 1826, and as the carriages always kept close together, we exchanged places in them sometimes, always took our meals together, and our pleasant and spirited conversation was not at all interrupted, so that I never recollect having made a more agreeable journey.

On the third day we were met three miles from Düsseldorf by the festival committee and the family of the State-Councillor *von Sybel*, at whose house I and the members of my family were to stop; and scarcely had we arrived at Düsseldorf, than we were welcomed by the choral-society with

a serenade. At the first general rehearsal, which was held on the following morning, I had the satisfaction of finding that my oratorio had been carefully and correctly studied by the different societies, and was sung with an enthusiastic feeling for the work. I could not feel so content with the orchestra, which had been gathered together from different places, and in which dilettanti assisted, and among others, my friend *Thomae* from Cleves, among the wind instruments. It was therefore a difficult matter to bring all the instruments to the same pitch, and it could only be effected by great patience and frequent repetitions. In the afternoon of the same day the rehearsal of the performances for the second day was held, which *Ries* conducted. At it were given a new symphony by *Ries* (manuscript *D* major), a Sanctus and a Credo from a mass by *Frederick Schneider*, the jubilee overture of *Carl Maria von Weber*, and lastly, a selection of the finest "numbers" from *Handel's* "Messiah." As Miss *Reinigen* of Crefeld, the solo singer, was taken suddenly ill, my daughter *Emilia* was obliged to take the soprano part also in the vocal performances. But so diligently did she study it, that already at the very first rehearsal she went through the business right well, and by her aid all derangement of the festival was obviated. But so much the greater was *Ries's* difficulty with the wind instruments in his symphony. He nevertheless displayed in the matter great patience, and dealt very leniently with the awkwardness of the dilettanti. On the following day were held two more rehearsals of the performances for the first and second day of Whitsuntide (the 14th and 15th May), which then, after such careful rehearsals passed off without a fault. My oratorio was received with such enthusiasm by those who played and by the auditory, that on the evening of the very first day, the prolongation of the festival was mooted in order to repeat once more "Die letzten Dinge" for the benefit of the Greeks. This was publicly announced on the second day of the performances, and the majority of the strangers present stopped in order to be present at its repetition. Thus

my work had the honour conferred upon it of a second performance, of which I might well be proud, as since then so far as I know of, such a thing has never happened to any work given at the Rhenish musical festivals. In the musical journals, also, there appeared several very favourable notices of my oratorio, and I therefore hastened to publish selections from it for the pianoforte. But the edition I issued was soon sold off, and a second was therefore published afterwards by *Simrock* of Bonn, who also brought out the song parts with it, by which the performances of the work in almost all the towns of Germany, Holland and Switzerland was very much facilitated. I could therefore be very content with the reception of this oratorio, and frequently as it was performed and spoken of, no voice was ever heard raised in condemnation of it.

In the course of this year I wrote besides a second quintet (*B* flat minor, Op. 69, published by *Peters*) and three quartets (Op. 74, also by *Peters*). But I now longed to begin a greater work, and particularly an opera, although the “*Berg-Geist*” acquired no extensive popularity, since, after the representations in Cassel and Leipzig, it was only given at Prague, where it met several times with a brilliant reception. As *Curschmann* at the same time entertained a similar desire, he had requested his fellow-traveller and friend, *Charles Pfeiffer*, who at that time had begun to make himself a name as a poet, to work up a novel of *Tieck*'s, “*Pietro von Abano*” as an opera text. He may however have felt himself not yet quite sufficiently advanced in his musical culture, and therefore when *Pfeiffer* had completed the first act of the libretto, he abandoned his project of attempting so soon a grand opera. He now offered me the composition of *Pietro*, and as the novel, as well as the manner in which it had been worked up, pleased me greatly, I soon came to an arrangement with both gentlemen respecting it, and in February 1827, set to work very assiduously upon it, and completed it in August of the same year. The opera occasioned me anxiety at first, on account of the immediate succession of two scenes — a funeral, and

the pranks of a band of merry students — so strikingly dissimilar and incongruous as to render their proximity unpleasant: neither did I as all like the speaking part of the bishop, without any singing. But as this part was taken by *Seydelmann*, who was then engaged at our theatre from pure interest he took in the work, and was performed in a very dignified manner, I became more satisfied with it, and had the gratification of finding that it made a deep impression upon the performers, the orchestra, and my musical friends who were permitted to assist at the rehearsals. On its first representation, on the 13th October 1827, it was also received by the public with a similar enthusiasm to “*Jessonda*,” and I had therefore reason to hope that like it also, it would soon obtain popularity beyond Cassel. But when at the request of the directors of some other theatres I forwarded the book to them, I soon found that not only did the catholic towns disapprove of the introduction of the bishop and the ecclesiastical forms on the stage, but the intendants of theatres in protestant towns, also, and among others, Count *Brühl* in Berlin, who rejected the opera, because they had some scruples about the contents. At that time it is true, many of the later operas and plays, which since then have hardened the public against all objectionable matter, had not become the fashion of the day. But *Meyerbeer*, who now wanted to hear the opera with all these circumstances of form, expressed himself in regard to it in the following manner in a letter of the 4. March 1828: “I cannot conclude my letter without thanking you for the pleasure that the perusal of the score of your master-piece “*Pietro von Abano*,” which Mr. *Schlesinger* lent to me, has afforded me, and I am happy to be able to say, that in particular the first act, the first finale (although only furnished by the poet with two personages), the scene between Antonio and the half-lifeless Cecilia in the second act, and the ingenious manner in which the stringed instruments, half *con sordini*, half *senza sordini*, shadow forth the dialogue between the living Antonio and the spirit-like Cecilia; the im-

posing finale of the second act; and besides these, numerous other features of splendid dramatic intention, excellent declamation, novel, picturesque instrumentation and harmony, have truly charmed me, and excited in me the most ardent desire to be present at a performance of your master-piece.”

In the year 1828, I wrote my second double-quartet, and endeavoured to bring it nearer to my first idea of the double choral style, than the first: in this I succeeded to my own satisfaction. I played it for the first time publicly in one of our winter-concerts of December, with great applause, and it soon found the same appreciation and publicity in other places as the previous one. Shortly afterwards I received an invitation to conduct my oratorio “Die letzten Dinge” at a musical festival that was to take place at Halberstadt on the 4th June 1828, and I set out this time accompanied only by my wife and my youngest daughter *Theresa*, as shortly before, my daughter *Emilia* had married a manufacturer of the name of *Zahn*, and could leave her domestic concerns as little as *Ida*.

My oratorio was excellently performed by the different choral-societies that had been invited for that purpose, as they were all enthusiastic admirers of it, and gave it the preference over all other works then performed.

At the second concert I played my new concertino in *A* major (Op. 79, published by *Schlesinger*), and I think that, upon the same occasion, also, my just finished third symphony in *C* minor (Op. 78, also published by *Schlesinger*) was then performed for the first time. One circumstance, the remembrance of which is still impressed upon my memory, and which relates to my daughter *Theresa*, then nine years old, I must yet relate. I took the child with me to all the rehearsals, as she would always attend those at Düsseldorf, and I augured from that, a great love for music. In Halberstadt *Theresa* expressed especial pleasure in the concluding “number” of the oratorio, and as that was a fugue on the words: “His is the kingdom, the power, and glory,” I furthermore concluded that she had not only a strong sentiment for music generally, but

also for its graver forms, and I even imparted to *Dorette* the pleasure I felt at the happy disposition of our child. But when I questioned *Theresa* more closely respecting her preference for the fugue, I was informed to my great surprise and to my shame, "that she only liked the piece of music in question better than all the rest, because she knew, that, as at Dusseldorf, the rehearsal would soon be over, and that then we should *go home to dinner!*" — Shortly afterwards I received from the parties who got up this musical festival a permanent, and more gratifying cause to remember the same; for they sent me, as a mark of their gratitude, a costly table-clock, ornamented with appropriate emblems, and bearing on the pedestale an inscription, with the date.

In the course of the year I wrote three more violin-quartets, which were published by *Schlesinger* as Op. 82, after which, as I was not very successful with my operas upon other stages, I turned once more to church music, and in the spring of 1829, wrote my "Lord's prayer," on the text of *Mahlmann*. The effect which this work produced at its first performance, although only with pianoforte accompaniment, on the festival of St. Cecilia the same year, was greatly increased, when a few months afterwards it was given at one of our winter-concerts with full orchestral accompaniment. It was not only received here in Cassel upon every repetition up to more recent times, with great approbation, but it soon found much approval in other places also.

On the 4th June 1829, another musical festival took place at Nordhausen, to which I was also invited. Of the first day's performance I have nevertheless, now no clear recollection; but on the second day I played with *Müller* of Brunswick, with *Wiele* of this place, and with *Maurer* of Hannover, a concertante for four violins, of the composition of the latter. For myself, I chose to play the fourth, on the occasion, as my Stradivari-violin had a particularly good tone on the *G* string, and as we had practised together that celebrated piece

of music very assiduously, the applause was quite extraordinary. My new clarinet-concerto in *E flat*, which I had written for *Hermstedt* for this musical festival, met with no less approbation, but it is no longer in my possession, neither do I now know whether it is still in existence. During our stay in Nordhausen, we lived in the house of a Mr. *Fleck*, a merchant, whose wife was a very amiable hostess. One day at dinner, *Edward Grund* my former pupil, was prompted to propose a toast to her, in doing which he introduced the observation that she "was anything but a *Fleck** in human society, but much rather to be called a gleam of light." I also remember still with pleasure the beautiful weather that favoured the dinner which the people of Nordhausen gave to their guests upon a neighbouring hill which commanded a view of the town. The collation was spread upon the greensward, and as good wine was by no means wanting, the company soon became very merry, and returned to town in the best possible humour.

In August 1829, I wrote a solo-quartet in *E major* (Op. 83, published by *Schlesinger*). But my desire to try my fortune once more with an opera gave me no rest, and I therefore persuaded my friend *Charles Pfeiffer* to work up for me the subject of a Spanish novel by *Washington Irving*, that seemed to me very attractive, and in every respect adapted for an opera. But as *Pfeiffer's* name could not be mentioned in the playbills, as in the electorate of Hesse it is not considered becoming for a servant of the state to occupy himself with poetical works together with his official duties, the indetectable name of *Schmidt* was chosen instead of his; just as when "Pietro" was brought out the author's name was not mentioned, as *Feige*, then the director of the theatre, did not like to be responsible to the Elector and the public for permitting a fictitious name proposed by me to be placed upon the playbill. — In October 1829, I, therefore, with my usual zeal, with

*) *Fleck*, in the German language, signifies, a spot, stain, or blemish.

every new work, set about the composition of the opera of the "Alchymist," completed it in April of the following year, and immediately distributed the parts, in order to perform it on the 28th July, the birthday of the Elector. It pleased here in Cassel quite as much as my previous operas, but out of Hesse was represented at Prague only, though with great approbation;* while the selections made from it for the piano-forte, arranged by my brother *Ferdinand*, found a more widespread publicity.

In June 1830 *Paganini* came to Cassel and gave two concerts in the theatre, which I heard with great interest. His left hand, and his constantly pure intonation were to me astonishing. But in his compositions, and his execution I found a strange mixture of the highly genial and childishly tasteless, by which one felt alternately charmed and disappointed, so that the impression left as a whole was, after frequent hearing, by no means satisfactory to me. As his visit took place just on Whitsunday, I took him the next day to Wilhelmshöhe, where he dined with me, and was very lively, indeed somewhat extravagantly so.

A few months afterwards the revolution of July broke out in France, and as a general excitement had extended itself to Germany also, symptoms of discontent with the public authorities showed themselves also here in Cassel. Just previously, the Elector had gone to Vienna, accompanied by the Countess

*) In the Vienna "Musicalischer Anzeiger" of the 23rd January 1834 is the following notice respecting it: "All who have had the opportunity of hearing and judging for themselves, know and feel that the esteemed maestro, in all his dramatic compositions, with the exception of the single, purely genial "Faust," introduces his hearers less into the wondrous realm of fancy, than he leads them like a true friend, by pleasant meandering paths through the charming and balmy groves of harmony. This work also, breathes the same calm, reflective spirit that speaks to the heart, the same pure taste, the same style, as noble as it is elegant, the same constancy, unity and well-sustained interior connection, that so particularly characterizes all the works of this perhaps most substantial of all living composers, and which distinguish also no less this musical creation."

Reichenbach, with the object, as it was believed, of effecting at the Austrian court the elevation of that personage to the dignity of a princess. He had afterwards repaired to Carlsbad, and from there came all manner of strange reports about his serious illness, resulting from some personal conflicts with the Countess *Reichenbach*, on account of which, his physician Mr. *Heräus*, proceeded to Carlsbad, but not having been admitted to an audience, returned to Cassel. A deputation from the members of the privy council was hereupon sent to Carlsbad; was received several times by the elector, and brought back intelligence that he would shortly return to his capital. Before this took place however, on the evening of the 6th September, disturbances broke out. I was at the moment with my wife at the theatre, where *Raupach's* comedy "Der Zeitgeist" was being performed, and I remarked on a sudden, that messengers had been sent to the officers who were present, informing them that "the alarm" had been sounded in the town, and upon this they all immediately left. This created so much sensation in the house, that the rest of the audience thought that nothing less than a great fire had broken out in the town, and they also left the house in the midst of the performance. Fearing for the safety of our own and our children's dwellings, we went out with the rest, and were at length informed that the excited people had riotously attacked several bakers' shops, and committed depredation in the houses of the owners, because, notwithstanding the fall that had taken place in the price of corn, they had raised the price of bread. In order to prevent further excesses on the part of the populace, a number of the citizens had, with the consent of the ministry, taken up arms, and the military occupied not only the electoral palace, but the Königstrasse and the Friederichsplatz, so that the people leaving the theatre could not pass through the closed streets. We were therefore compelled to make a circuit to reach our house and when arrived there, dared not retire to rest at the usual hour, as the commotion that prevailed in the town was still very great.

The Elector did not return till the 12th September, but at first unaccompanied by the Countess *Reichenbach*, and with the greatest privacy. He immediately proceeded to Wilhelmshöhe, whither, a few days after, the magistracy with chief-burgomaster *Schomburg* at their head, followed him, to express their pleasure at his convalescence and return; as also to petition him to assemble the estates, which had not been done since 1815, and to advise with them upon the alleviation of many existing grievances. The magistracy was nevertheless not admitted to an audience till the following morning in the electoral palace at Cassel, during which, half the town had collected on the Friedrichsplatz, in order to ascertain immediately whether the result of the deputation was successful, and if such should be the case the master-cooper *Herbold*, had agreed to make it known to the people by waving a white handkerchief from the window of the chamber of audience. When therefore the deputation in solemn procession from the Ober-Neustädter town-hall, approached the palace, and had crossed its threshold, all eyes were directed to the windows of the audience-chamber, and the decision was anxiously awaited.

The Elector, to whose ears doubtless many disquieting reports had come, and who could place no dependance on his troops (many of whom, as at a latter period was shown, desired a constitution) for the protection of his palace and the successful suppression of the revolution, gave, to the universal joy of the people a satisfactory reply. Scarcely had the waving of the white handkerchief announced this to the populace, than the assembled thousands upon the Friedrichsplatz rent the air with deafening cheers of Long live the Elector! upon which he shewed himself for a moment at one of the windows, and acknowledged them with several bows. In the evening the town was spontaneously illuminated, and at the theatre, instead of the previously announced piece of the "Ahnfrau" the "Barber of Seville" was chosen, and the public in their delight at the appearance of the Elector and his son before the beginning of the opera, greeted him with tumultuous cheers, and struck

up the "Hail to the elector Wilhelm." This was followed on the 19th of September by the promised summoning of the ancient estates of Hesse, consisting of deputies from the nobles, the towns, the universities and the peasantry, who assembled on the 16th October, and immediately promulgated a satisfactory report to the people. On the following day the opening of the assembly of the states was celebrated by the performance of divine service in the great church, and by command of the government by a solemn choral hymn sung by the society of St. Cecilia accompanied by the court orchestra. For this occasion I selected the last "number" of my cantata composed in Vienna, "Die Befreiung Deutschlands" (The emancipation of Germany), with its solo-quartet, and the concluding fugue: "Lasset uns den Dankgesang erheben" (Let us raise the the song of thanks), a four-voice choral piece which was alternately sung, with the congregation, and the Halleluja from *Händel's* Messiah."

The propositions brought forward by the estates, after several weeks' discussion between the electoral commissaries and the deputies, were with various additions and modifications, admitted as basis of the new constitution of the state as well as for the propositions made by the Elector respecting a fixed amount for a civil list, and division of the whole of the state revenues, which besides had been chiefly accumulated from the sale of the men taken into the pay of the English to fight against the revolted North-American colonies during the time of the Elector Friedrich II. The 9th January 1831 was the day fixed for the promulgation of the new constitution, and on the evening of the day before, the Electress came back with her daughter *Caroline* from Fulda, where she had been residing for some time past, in order to be present at this joyful event. The elector received her upon his arrival at her residence in the Belle-vue palace, and I received order from the officer of the lord marshal of the court, to give the reconciled couple a serenade with the court orchestra. After I had held the rehearsal in the course of the afternoon for

that purpose, I proceeded with the orchestra in exceedingly cold weather to the Belle-vue palace, and having ascertained the apartment in which the court was assembled we drew up outside and played as well as the extremely unfavourable weather would permit. Towards the end of the music the princely pair shewed themselves, the Elector embraced his wife at the window, and the inhabitants of Cassel, who in spite of the cold had collected in crowds, broke out into a loud cheer of joy. The next morning the public announcement of the new constitution was made, and the oaths were taken with due solemnity on the part of the civic-guard publicly upon the Königsplatz, on that of the military on the Friedrichsplatz, and by all the authorities, the court officials and the orchestra in their proper localities. In the evening the town was illuminated, and at the theatre, brilliantly lighted up, "Jessonda" was given as festive opera for the occasion, preceded by a play written for the occasion by counsellor *Niemeyer*. In the latter was introduced at the same time a hymn composed for it by me, "Hesse's song of joy on the establishment of its constitution;" and at the conclusion, the well-known and previously mentioned melody, which, with appropriate words, was sung also by the audience, after which the latter greeted the electoral family assembled in the state box with a storm of cheers. Everybody now looked forward to a happy future; but unfortunately the Countess *Reichenbach*, with her brother Mr. *Ortlepp*, returned the day after to Wilhelmshöhe. This had no sooner become known in Cassel, as also that the elector had visited her there, than the disturbances immediately broke out afresh. Citizens and peasantry gathered in crowds before the palace at Wilhelmshöhe, and threatened aloud to drive the countess out by force, until it was at length ascertained that she had left for Hanau, and a public announcement was placarded in Cassel: "that the *cause* for the disturbance had been removed." But a few weeks afterwards the Elector followed her, as it was thought to take up his residence altogether at Hanau.

Meanwhile at my house the construction of an additional

building which had been begun the previous summer from a plan drawn by my son-in-law *Wolff* was completed. By this, in addition to somewhat more house-room, I obtained more particularly a music room such as we had long felt the want of for our quartet parties, which although closely adjoining the house itself, had nevertheless a higher roof, in order to give it the desired height. In its decoration also, the chief endeavour was to obtain a favourable acoustic arrangement, so as to dispense with all drapery over the windows and doors, which is so obstructive of sound. On the 2nd February 1831, we consecrated the newly-acquired space with the celebration of our "Silver Wedding"; at which my parents from Gandersheim were come to assist, and had brought with them as a present a porcelain vase richly ornamented with silver, upon which, besides the names of the donors, was engraved the inscription: "May the silver of to-day be one day gold!" This fete, properly speaking was got up by my children, in conjunction with our musical friends, and was opened by the torch-light dance from my "Faustus" executed by the guests, with appropriate words to the choral parts. This was followed by a succession of "Tableaux vivants," in which the chief incidents of my life were ingeniously represented. Among many other poems both of comic and serious import, which were recited at table, my friend *Pfeiffer* had also contributed a composition with the view, that all the persons present should appear in the costume of the characters in my operas, and that *K. Pfeiffer* himself should recite the poem. This poem gave me great pleasure at the time, and its recital, with all its allusions, excited general merriment, and no one would have dreamed that its youthful author would be snatched in a few months by death from our circle. Early in the morning of the 31st July, while bathing in the river Fulda, he was struck with apoplexy, and his beautiful and diversified labours in literature were suddenly arrested for ever. For his obsequies I composed a solemn dirge for several voices, and subsequently, when the civil guard of this place had a monu-

mental memorial erected over his early grave, upon its consecration the chorus from "The last things," "Selig sind die Todten," was sung by the St. Cecilia society with the assistance also of its female members, a circumstance which upon no previous occasion of the kind had ever taken place in Cassel. Dr. *B. W. Pfeiffer*, the father of the deceased, who previously had been known to me only in his official capacity as chief advocate of the court of appeal, visited me upon the occasion to thank me for my attention, and in this manner I first became personally intimate with him, to whom I was at a later period to be more nearly allied as son-in-law.

Unhappily that was the last family rejoicing which my brother *Ferdinand* lived to see. He shortly after fell so seriously ill that the physicians immediately pronounced him irrecoverable, and I was present a few days afterwards when he breathed his last. As his widow, in spite of all her solicitations, received no pension from the bureau of intendance, and was therefore reduced to the small income paid to her from the relief-fund which I had instituted a few years before, I set aside for her subsistence a yearly allowance, with the aid of which she was enabled to give a good education to both her children and to allow her son *Ludwig*, my godson, to prepare himself for his collegiate studies. After some years of diligent study, with a view of going to the university of Marburg, the young fellow returned to his earlier expressed desire to devote himself entirely to music. Upon a closer examination, however, this did not seem to me advisable, as it was now too late for him to acquire the necessary thorough musical education, and by my advice he adhered to his chosen profession of the law, passed a brilliant examination in 1847, and entered into the official service of the electorate of Hesse.

In the month of April in pursuance of the new constitution, the first assembly of the estates upon the basis of the new election law was summoned, and held its sittings in a saloon of the Belle-vue palace. *Schomburg*, the burgomaster of the capital, was unanimously chosen as its president, and

the government did not dare oppose his nomination. As the sittings were public, this awakened immediately an active political vitality in the town, and the debates were followed up to the conclusion of the session with great interest by all classes. Professor *Sylvester Jordan*, the deputy from the Marburg university, soon distinguished himself by his eloquence, and he almost always succeeded in carrying through his liberal motions in the assembly.

In order to extend these liberal sentiments among the inhabitants of Cassel, some men well known for their liberal opinions considered it requisite to form a political club, under the name of the "reading museum," and I willingly joined my exertions to theirs. At this place every afternoon during the session, the various subjects which had been discussed in the chamber were made known. The sittings of the deputies were often very stormy ones, though the chairman reprimanded the non-members every time they applauded a speaker, and threatened to have all disturbers turned out by the civic guard, yet the daily visitors at the sitting did not much care about it and still endeavoured to influence the voting. But the administration of public affairs suffered considerable detriment from the circumstance that the Elector had quitted his palace at Cassel since March, and taken up his residence permanently, at Hanau. As the assembled estates had failed in all their repeated efforts to persuade him to return to Cassel, they resolved towards the end of August, in conjunction with the town council of Cassel, to send a deputation to Hanau, with the proposition that the Elector should either return without delay to the capital or adopt means for the undisturbed administration of affairs. The deputy from Rinteln, *Wiederhold*, president of the high court of judicature, was one of the deputation, and he succeeded in inducing the Elector to take his son as co-regent with him in the government, and to transfer the administration of affairs to him exclusively so long as he himself remained away from Cassel. Thus the young Prince, after a long residence at Fulda, returned to Cassel as co-regent,

together with the Countess *Schaumburg*, with whose morganatic marriage with his son the Elector now expressed himself reconciled. The Prince delivered to the estates a deed of agreement concerning the solemn maintenance of the constitutional laws, and was at first received at Cassel with satisfaction, particularly as he nominated the mediator, *Wiederhold*, minister of justice. But as it was soon observed that the Electress, on account of her refusal to acknowledge the Countess *Schaumburg* as her daughter-in-law, experienced many annoyances and affronts, considerable disapprobation was displayed in the town, and all classes generally sided with the amiable Electress, who by her kind sentiments and mild manners had for long years acquired the love and respect of the people of Hesse. As for me, I had, however, to congratulate myself on being in favour with the Prince at that time; and he requested me to make arrangements for giving him some court concerts at the palace of Wilhelmshöhe. Upon his returning shortly to the town he even requested me in a very courteous letter, to afford him and the Countess the pleasure of hearing some of my quartets, and to arrange for that purpose a quartet party at the palace. It would seem, however, to have been a somewhat tedious affair for them, for I never received a second invitation.

In the autumn 1831 I finished my "Violin-Schule" (course of instruction for the violin) a work which I had undertaken at the solicitation of many persons, and on which I was engaged for more than a twelvemonth, having always begun between-whiles some other compositions which had more attraction for me.*

* It was published by *Haslinger*, in Vienna, and the "Wiener Theater-Zeitung," conducted by *Ad. Bäuerle*, speaks of it in the following manner: A fit companion to *Hummel's* 'Clavier-Schule' (pianoforte school); for in the same way that that opens a new department of education in pianoforte play, this embraces the whole art and science of violin play, and lays down clear principles for an art which hitherto has been taught more by oral precepts, or, at the utmost, by small fragmentary pamphlets.

I afterwards wrote three quartets, which were published as Op. 84, by *André* of Offenbach, and later for the St. Cecilia society three psalms of *Moses Mendelssohn's* translation for two four-voice chorals and four solo-voices, which were published by *Simrock* of Bonn [Op. 85], and had an extensive circulation.

In the summer of 1832 I was ordered by my physician to proceed to the well-known warm sulphur baths of Nenndorf, to cure a stiffness in one of my knees, and which I had contracted the preceeding winter from a cold caught while skating. My wife, who accompanied me, had taken with her

It required the penetrating, searching mind of a *Spoehr*, who surpasses in complete scientific culture the authors of every existing school, to condense in systematic order so important a branch of art, which has been two centuries in acquiring shape; so that the *violin*, so prominent in all music, may be cultivated upon sure and proper principles, and its study carried out with certain success. How well the great maestro *Spoehr* goes to work to effect this we shall shew in a subsequent clearer exposition of the contents; for he has not only copiously treated the scientific musical culture of the pupil by the clear outspoken method of the instruction in the explanatory text, assisted by the excellent and appropriate pieces which he supplies for practice, but also, in the mechanical part of the instruction, in which the mechanism of the human body is so beautifully and appositely shewn in all its bearings on the mechanical structure of the instrument. The excellent preface to the work presents rules of conduct both for the instructors and parents of pupils for the obviation of a host of evils which have hitherto arisen from false and erroneous modes of proceeding, from the circumstance that few lovers of music, and few teachers of music even, are sufficiently acquainted with these arcana of the art. Well and clearly does he enumerate the means of encouragement by which the industry of the pupil may be incited. How generous is the invitation of the *famed master to the students of the violin*, that they should impart to him their experience in the progress of their studies of his code of instruction for violin-play, for the further extension of his own knowledge! In this the *great earnestness* of the true artist for the attainment of the one great object is made conspicuously evident." The notice concludes with the following words: "The world-famed master, *Spoehr*, has by this *excellent work alone* ensured an undying celebrity, and thereby added but a new and beautiful leaf to the laurel wreath that encircles his brows."

among other books, a volume of the poems of my friend *Pfeiffer*, which were not published till after his decease; and as I had long wished to set something from it to music in memory of him, I chose one of them: "Die Weihe der Töne," which pleased me very much, and appeared to me particularly well suited for the composition of a cantata. But when I was about to begin the work, I found that the text of this style of poem did not lend itself altogether well to it; and I felt much more disposed to represent the subject matter of the poem in an instrumental-composition; in this manner originated my fourth symphony, under the title: "Die Weihe der Töne." [In a letter to *Speyer* of the 9th October 1832, this is adverted to in the following words: Although I have now no duties to perform at the theatre,* and have had leisure sufficient for composition, I have nevertheless been but little disposed latterly, to set to work. From the great interest which I took and still constantly take in the political regeneration of Germany, the recent retrograde steps have too much annoyed me to permit of my giving myself calmly to any work of deep study. Nevertheless I have again lately completed a grand instrumental composition, and that is a fourth symphony, but which differs greatly in form from the previous ones. It is a musical composition inspired by a poem of *Karl Pfeiffer's*: "Die Weihe der Töne," which must be printed, and distributed in the music room, or recited aloud before it is performed. In the very first part, I had for task, the construction of a harmonious whole from the sounds of nature. This, as indeed the whole work, was a difficult, but a highly attractive problem," &c.]

My musical friends in Hannover, and friend *Hausmann* at the head of them, had no sooner become informed of my presence in Nenndorf, than they apprised me of their intention to pay me a visit, and to bring their instruments with them, so that I had an opportunity of giving the lovers of music

* The court theatre was closed at this time.

then in Nenndorf a music-party, at which I played my recently written quartet. Meanwhile my cure was successfully completed, and I was relieved of my lameness of the knee, chiefly by a powerful but very painful douche upon the suffering part. Returned to Cassel, I first of all finished my new symphony, and let my friends hear it at a rehearsal, and subsequently at a subscription concert. I still recollect with pleasure the great effect it produced upon all who heard it. It was afterwards given with great applause at the Gewandhaus concert in Leipzig, and *Rochlitz* wrote a very animated notice of the work in his *Musical Journal*. None of my symphonies can boast of having achieved so wide a circulation in almost all the towns of Germany; it is still a favorite work, and in most permanent concerts is played at least once every year.

In April 1832, by order of the Prince, the court theatre was closed "for an indefinite period," all the singers and comedians, with the exception of those who had contracts of engagement for a longer period, having previously received due notice of dismissal. Two singers only, messieurs *Föppel* and *Rosner* (whose wife was the *prima donna*) could not be comprised in this decision. Together with the orchestra, I was also summoned to attend; all who had no rescript from the elector received notice of dismissal, and we others were asked whether we were disposed to resign our places for an indemnification to be agreed upon with each individual separately. I, who had first to give my answer to this proposal on the part of the administration, immediately declared that I was not disposed to agree to it, but would abide by my engagement, and, should it become necessary, would maintain my right before the proper tribunal. The other musicians also at once pronounced their adhesion to my declaration, and we thus lost one hautboy player only, whom I had at an early period engaged at Prague by the authority of the elector, to make up the complement of the orchestra, and who upon his joining, had unfortunately neglected to have his rescript made out. The first bassoonist, who was in a similar predicament,

succeeded nevertheless in maintaining his place, being enabled to produce a letter from me in which I had engaged him in the name and by the authority of the elector, that the letter would guarantee his engagement until the rescript was prepared; by this circumstance he was saved to the orchestra. We others were then not called forward any more, and all remained upon the old footing.

In the autumn of 1832, my brother *William* wrote to me from Brunswick to apprise me that in the ensuing November would be the "goldene Hochzeit" (the golden wedding) of our parents; and he proposed to me that all their children should meet in Gandersheim, to congratulate our parents, and present them with a musical-clock. That it would be a source of still greater pleasure to my parents, if I combined a musical entertainment with the festival, I could readily imagine, and I therefore urged *William Wolff*, the brother of my son-in-law, to write a poem for me, to set to music, at the performance of which my wife and I with the piano and violin should represent the orchestra, my three daughters take the solo parts, and my brothers with their wives, and my sons-in-law sing the chorus. So soon as I had received the words in the form which I had suggested, I immediately went to work, wrote a cheerful polonaise (in the execution of which I gave my wife and self the opportunity of shewing our skill as virtuosi on our respective instruments); this I followed up with a general chorus, after which I brought in the three soli of my daughters, who at the conclusion sang a trio; and then lastly I added a general chorus finale. While I was practising this festal cantata with my wife and children, I sent to my brothers their chorus parts also, for the same purpose, and we all met at Gandersheim a few days before the fête-day, which was on the 26th November. As our parents could not accommodate all of us with bed-rooms, I hired for myself and my numerous company, the whole accommodation of an inn, and then consulted with my brothers and sons-in-law as to the best and most effective manner of celebrating the day. *Wolff* suggested

above all things to hire the handsomest and largest room in the whole town; to decorate it with festoons of evergreens and artificial flowers; to display there our presents, and give our cantata before our parents and the families of our friends. We were not long in finding a room, for there was but *one* at all suitable in the whole place, and that moreover scarcely large enough to hold all the invited guests. From the neighbouring wood we procured in abundance the necessary branches and evergreen for the decorations, and were then all employed for several days together in making the festoons and in preparing garlands of paper-flowers, as also with drawing and painting transparencies. When we would get tired of all this work, I began the rehearsals of the cantata, and could not but admire the industry of the fair sex among us, who had practised their husbands so well in the tenor and bass parts of the chorus, although they were almost utterly unmusical (though gifted with good voices), that their performances were creditable enough to hear. In this manner the time passed very quickly till the festival, and we then had the gratification of seeing our parents deeply moved by our entertainment, and our presents greatly admired by our Gandersheim friends. Besides a musical-clock, which in particular was an object of great attraction, the presents consisted of a very handsome and convenient foot-stool embroidered for my father by his Brunswick daughter-in-law, and in numerous specimens of work executed for my mother by the Cassel ladies. The banquet, which was in part brought from my parents' house and part furnished from a restaurant, was a very profuse one, at which the wines and liquors brought by us brothers met no less with great approval, so that the festival of the *Spöhr* family went off very satisfactorily, and was long a topic of conversation in Gandersheim. The general interest exhibited on the occasion by the townspeople and those of the neighbourhood was very gratifying, and this among other things was exhibited by the contributions sent to my mother to entertain the numerous guests, for she received a complete house-

ful of provisions, in the shape of game, pies, pastry, flour, eggs, fruit &c. This gave the whole affair a complete patriarchal character; and every body did his or her utmost to evince their friendship for the worthy and venerable pair, and their respect for the man, who for so many years had stood by them as the faithful physician with help and with advice, and who, wherever he could, had always relieved the necessities of the poor.

After my return I received the command of the Prince to give a succession of concerts during the winter, in place of the theatrical performances, which had been suspended since the spring. These concerts were to take place every Sunday for the benefit of the treasury of the theatre, and the singers who remained with us were to be employed therein. The public, however, greatly displeased at this, and that the receipts from the concerts were thus to be diverted from the relief fund for the widows of the members of the orchestra, came to the determination not to subscribe to them, and thus the receipts were almost null. Few of the concerts only, and that in which the "Weihe der Töne" was first given, were well attended, but in the others the house looked very dreary and empty. Meanwhile it would seem that the Prince and the Countess *Schaumburg*, had found the winter tediously long with a closed theatre; for towards the spring I received orders to proceed to Meiningen to engage for the months of March, April, and May, a company of travelling performers who were there at that time, under the direction of *Bethmann* from Berlin. As I expressed the wish to take my wife with me, the Prince ordered his master of the horse, *von der Malsburg*, to furnish me with a convenient court carriage from the electoral stables, and we proceeded to Meiningen with post horses. But there were other obstacles to be overcome on this mission, besides the negotiations with *Bethmann*. The latter, for instance, had accepted an engagement for the whole summer from the court of Meiningen, and it was necessary to prevail upon the duke to part with the services of the company earlier

than he had intended. To this, however, the duchess notwithstanding her differences with her brother, on account of his quarrel with the mother, rendered me her assistance. Shortly after my return, *Bethmann* and his company arrived, and for the re-opening of the new theatre gave the "Freischütz," with much applause. Miss *Meisselbach* pleased especially by her performance of *Agatha*. The former director of the theatre, *Feige*, and I were then appointed in superintendance over Mr. *Bethmann*, with instructions to place at his disposal, the three singers whose engagements were yet unexpired, the orchestra, and the whole of the company of the scene-painters and workmen of the theatre, the extensive wardrobe, decorations, &c. We now worked out together the order of the repertory, *Feige* and *Bethmann* for the plays and I for the operas, and were soon enabled to represent once more all the operas that were previously performed on our stage. At this time I wrote my third double quartet [*E minor*] and another concertante for two violins, which were soon after published by *Simrock* in Bonn as Op. 87 and 88.

In June of the same year another grand musical festival took place at Halberstadt, which was undertaken by the minister *Augustin* and his son, as the sixth musical festival of the Elbe, to direct which concert-master *Frederick Schneider* of Dessau and myself were invited. It differed chiefly from the previous ones in the erection of an enormous tent, or rather of a large booth constructed of planks, upon the square in front of the cathedral, for the refreshment and social entertainment of the visitors, as well as of the auditory and assistant artists, and in which all strangers could assemble at any hour of the day. The musical performances took place on three successive days, and began with *Händel's* oratorio of "Samson" under *Schneider's* direction. The next morning the objects most worthy of notice in Halberstadt were visited, particularly the collections of paintings belonging to the Canon *von Spiegel* and Dr. *Lucanus*. It was intended to have given a concert at the theatre, but as it was not sufficiently spacious to hold

the numerous auditory, a second concert was given simultaneously in the large room of the "Golden Angel," and the non-resident virtuosi and singers were divided equally to perform at both places. The tickets which were distributed admitted to the rehearsals also, so that each person could hear one of the concerts at the morning rehearsal, and the other at the evening performance; and one single piece of music only was given at *both* concerts, which was the favorite duet from "Jessonda" between Amazili and Nadori, sung by Mrs. *Schmidt* and Mr. *Mantius*, because neither party would permit this piece to be taken from it by the other. — I conducted at the concert given in the room at the "Golden Angel," and played my new concertante in *H minor* with concert-master *Müller* from Brunswick. On the third day the last concert took place in the forenoon, and under my direction, upon which occasion I found upon my conductor's desk a present of a red velvet coverlet bearing an inscription embroidered in silver. At this concert were performed *Mozart's* symphony in *C major*, and that of *Beethoven* in *C minor*; my Lord's prayer and a *Te Deum* by *Schneider*, and I had the satisfaction of observing that at this musical festival my three compositions met with the most general applause. At noon a grand banquet in the large tent terminated the festival, at which the proceeding were of a very noisy character.

We were obliged to devote the remainder of the vacation to a journey to Marienbad in Bohemia, where it was hoped my wife, who constantly suffered from nervous debility, would regain some strength from bathing and drinking the waters, as well as from the enjoyment of the fresh air from the mountains. Among the visitors at the baths we met *Raupach* of Berlin, with whom I took frequent long walks, during which he related to me many things relating to his approaching theatrical labours. He was at that time full of a new drama which he was going to write immediately upon his return home, in which he intended to lash the ill-natured and hypocrites, and the scene of which he had laid in China. But he probably

never completed it, or perhaps the ill-natured ones of Berlin found means to prevent its representation, for so far as I know, no piece of the kind from the pen of *Raupach* was ever made public. The society of music at Marienbad, whose director was a linen manufacturer in the neighbourhood, had much pleased and surprised me with a very successful performance of *Cherubini's* overture to "Medea," with which, by way of serenade, he had greeted my arrival, and for which I the more readily complied with his wish to write a waltz for them *à la Strauss*, to which also my inclination to try every sort of composition, had long predisposed me. At first, when I had practised their orchestra in it, the waltz pleased me very well; but afterwards I found it wanting in that freshness and originality which distinguish most of the waltzes of *Strauss* and *Lanner*. Nevertheless, by the desire of my publisher *Haslinger* of Vienna, he brought it out as Op. 89, not only in the original form as an instrumental piece, but also arranged for two and four hands.

On my return to Cassel I next wrote six four-voice songs for men's voices, which *Schuberth* of Hamburg published as Op. 90, and began my fourth quintet in *A minor*, finished in February of the following year, and which *Simrock* of Bonn published as Op 91.

On the 5th April 1834, my children and friends took me by surprise with an unusually grand fete in celebration of my fiftieth birthday. For that very evening I had announced an opera and could not at all understand, why the intendance had suddenly countermanded it, but this had been solicited by my folks unknown to me. My wife and I now availed ourselves of the evening thus left at our disposal to accept an invitation to my son-in-law *Zahn's* and we were both not a little surprised to find the apartments brilliantly lighted up with candelabra, and ornamented with ingenious transparencies and flowers, with my bust crowned with a wreath, and a brilliant company assembled to celebrate the day with music (a cantata composed by *Hauptmann*) and with speeches.

This was unhappily the last festivity of the kind that my good wife lived to see. Our stay at Marienbad had not given her any permanent relief, and as her sufferings returned once more with the commencement of the winter, it became necessary for her to resume the attempt at cure in the next vacation. This time we met at Marienbad the brothers *Bohrer*, and after I had renewed my former acquaintance with these talented artists, we had frequent quartet parties together, in which we also prevailed upon the old linen-weaver, who was a good violin player, to join us. These music-parties enlivened my wife as well, who benefited so much by the waters that we returned to Cassel with the mostly lively hope of her ultimate recovery. But soon afterwards her condition again became worse, and I now felt but little disposed to proceed with my new oratorio which I had begun in April. Already the year before, on our return journey through Leipzig, Councillor *Rochlitz* had offered me an oratorio of the passion written by him: "Des Heilands letzte Stunden" [the last moments of the Saviour] to set to music. Although it had already been once set to music, under the title "The end of the just," by *Schicht*, I nevertheless took it with pleasure, as he assured me that although the previous composition had been played and with some applause, yet it had not produced sufficient effect; for which reason he had again remodelled the text and had made it more suitable to the object proposed. As, however, I became informed that he had proposed this new text to *Mendelssohn* also for composition, before proceeding with the work I first wrote of the latter, requesting him to inform me whether he had the intention of composing the oratorio? As he replied in the negative, and informed me that he himself intended to put a text together from scripture ("Paulus"), I began my work in the spring of 1834, which was subsequently interrupted by our journey to the baths. As I nevertheless remarked that my wife, notwithstanding her suffering condition, interested herself as much in my present work as she had done in my previous ones, I soon forgot every thing in the inspiration

with which I devoted myself to it. Although upon my return home from the rehearsals at the theatre *Dorette* received me always with sad looks and anxious observations respecting her health, she nevertheless evinced again so great an interest in the progress of my work, and listened with such lively attention to that which when ready I rehearsed at the St. Cecilia society, that again I always resumed the continuation of the work with new courage. Frequently nevertheless she would interrupt me with the melancholy question: "What will become of our *Theresa*, should I sink under my illness?" — for her anxiety for *Theresa* had at that time become her fixed idea — and when I made reply to her: "A happy wife, as our other children have become," a radiant smile overspread her face, for she had also doubtless remarked, that *Theresa*, in spite of her youth, had already many aspirants for her favour, and she herself received with no displeasure the attentions of a member of our St. Cecilia society. In this manner I got to the end of the first part of my oratorio, and my wife had the pleasure of seeing the interest and enthusiasm with which it was sung by the society; but after that her strength quickly declined and she was obliged to take to her bed. When I saw the thoughtful expression of face of our physician and family friend Dr. *Bauer*, I called in also the most reputed physician of our town, Dr. *Harnier*, to consult with him. But he also shook his head and could give me little hope to save her. As my daughters *Emilia* and *Theresa* took upon them the closest care of their mother, I was enabled to comply with *Dorette's* wish to continue my work during the day upon the completion of the oratorio, in which she greatly interested herself, but was obliged to watch by her bed at night in turn with *Emilia*. I had scarcely got to the third "number" of the second part, when her malady assumed the form of a nervous fever, which carried her off, and to the present day I think with bitter sadness of the moment when I pressed the last kiss upon her forehead.

My son-in-law *Wolff* took upon himself all the mournful

preparations for the funeral, for which in my despair I was wholly incompetent, and by that means I was enabled to leave the town for a week with my youngest daughter, who was quite beside herself for grief at the death of her mother, and who moreover had passed the last day by the side of her sister *Ida*, who was likewise ill. I hired apartments at an inn at Wilhelmshöhe, and we strove to regain the necessary self-possession by long and fatiguing wanderings in the neighbouring bare and wintry woods. When we were at length obliged to return into town we felt the solitude of our house but the more intensely. It was therefore long before I could find resolution sufficient to continue the score upon which I had inscribed a memorandum of the day of my wife's decease, the 20th November; until at length the disposition to work returned, and I finished the oratorio by the end of the winter. On Good Friday 1835 I gave an entire performance of it. The thought that my wife did not live to witness the completion and performance of the oratorio diminished greatly the satisfaction I experienced at this most successful of my works, and I did not attain a full conception of its effect until in its later performances. An opportunity for a repetition of the oratorio presented itself the same summer on Whitsunday, on which day the Prince, contrary to custom, had granted us permission to give a concert in the church. The theatrical vacation coming soon after this, I was obliged to seize the opportunity, and comply with the advice of my physician to proceed to a sea-bathing place, and I selected for the purpose Zandford, a newly-established and as yet not much frequented watering-place about 3 miles* from Haarlem. Besides *Theresa*, my sister-in-law, *Minchen Scheidler*, who for some years since the death of my mother-in-law had resided with us, and who during our former journeys was accustomed to visit her brother professor *Charles Scheidler* at Jena, accompanied me on this journey, and both were exceedingly pleased with it. We de-

* English.

scended the Rhine to Dusseldorf, were I had projected staying for a few days, as *Mendelssohn*, who had accepted the situation of director of music in the new theatre built by *Immermann*, now lived there. The wife of Councillor *von Sybel*, at whose house I lived during the musical festival, had heard of our intention to make a short stay in Dusseldorf, and urged me to take up my lodging in her house, which I did the more readily as I had heard that *Immermann* was a visitor in her house and generally spent his evenings there.

I took my violin with me, and my last works also, among which a second recently finished concertino, *E major*, Op. 92, published by *Breitkopf* and *Härtel* of Leipzig. We first went to Frankfort, stopped there one day only at *Speyer's* house, and then continued our journey from Bieberich by the steam-boat. At Dusseldorf we were received at the house of Mrs. *von Sybel* in a very friendly manner, and already on the first evening had the pleasure of making *Immermann's* acquaintance, who to the special delight of my sister-in-law read to her his charming "Tulifantchen." Of *Mendelssohn*, who was not there, I heard, that he also was one of the friends of the house, but never appeared there on those evenings when *Immermann* came, because with him, who devoted his whole attention to the spectacle only, he had disagreed about the opera.

The next morning, when I paid a visit to *Mendelssohn* and met his sister there, he played to me the first "numbers" of his oratorio "Paulus," with which I was not altogether quite pleased because it was too much in the style of *Händel*. He and his sister, on the other hand, appeared greatly pleased with my concertino in *E major*, in which there occurred a characteristic *staccato* in one long stroke, by way of novelty, such as he had never before heard by any other violinist. Accompanying me then in a very clever manner from the score, he could not hear this *staccato* often enough, and repeatedly requested me to begin with it again, saying the while to his sister: "See, this is the famous *Sporish staccato*, which no violinist can play like him!" Thence I went to see *Immermann*,

who proposed to me to pay a visit to *Grabbe*, who at that time, at *Immermann's* invitation, was staying at Dusseldorf, and I thus on the same day made the acquaintance of that strange being. When, upon my entering his lodging, the little fellow set eyes upon a giant like me, he drew back timidly into a corner of the room, and the first words he spoke to me were: "It would be an easy matter for you to throw me out of that window." I replied: "Yes, I certainly could, but I am not come here with that intention." This comical scene over, *Immermann* then first introduced me to the foolish yet interesting creature.

In the house of our hospitable hostess we passed some pleasant days alternately in *Mendelssohn's* and *Immermann's* society, and then resumed our journey on board the Dutch steamer to Cleves, where I was desirous of visiting my old friend *Thomae* for a few days. We found him a widower also; for he, too, had recently lost his wife. The nut-tree in his garden, of which we had set the nut in 1818 with such solemnity during our stay with his family, was in full leaf and flourishing amazingly. *Thomae's* children, who were now all grown up, and of whom the eldest son had now taken his father's place as notary, were all in good health, but he himself seemed low-spirited and ill. Our visit nevertheless afforded him great pleasure, and upon our departure he presented *Theresa*, as god-daughter of his deceased wife, with a gold watch, and entreated us to visit him again on our return. In this manner, after quitting the steamboat at Rotterdam, we arrived safely at Zandford, by way of the Hague, Amsterdam and Haarlem. When we had hired apartments at the bath-house and looked out of our windows upon the sea for the first time, my sister-in law uttered the ominous words: "Here I could wish to remain for ever!" After I had arranged with the physician of the bathing-establishment, who came from Haarlem daily to visit the bathers, respecting the terms for his attendance during my bathing cure, and had immediately begun to bathe, I soon went into the sea with real pleasure, and took great

delight in swimming about in it. Our fellow inmates of the bath-house and guests at the dinner-table were some puritan families from Elberfeld and Barmen, whose religious notions I had soon sufficient opportunity to learn by their conversation at table, but which by no means inspired me with a wish to make their nearer acquaintance. After dinner we used to take our walks in the wood, which, beginning immediately behind the downs, extended almost as far as Haarlem, and in this manner we passed the fine weather with which we were favoured in the summer of 1835, very happily in our retirement. This was, however, soon to be interrupted by an unexpected artistic enjoyment; for the lovers of music of Amsterdam, who had been informed of my presence in Zandford, invited me and my fellow travellers to a concert which they had arranged in my honour. We proceeded therefore by omnibus to Haarlem, and thence by the canal boat to Amsterdam, where we alighted at the house of Mr. *Tenkate*, a former acquaintance of mine. In his company we went to the concert given in the concert room of *Felix Meritis*, at which several of my compositions were given; first one of my symphonies, then the duet from "Jessonda," sung by Mr. *de Vruecht* of Haarlem and the prima donna of the German theatre; after which Mr. *Tours* of Rotterdam played a violin-concerto of mine, and Mr. *Vruecht* terminated the concert with some songs. After we had supped at the house of our host, and were on the point of going to bed, a serenade was given me, which we listened to from the balcony of the house.

My sister-in-law, who during the concert had complained of a head-ache, now probably caught cold, for despite my warning she would stand out also in the chill night air on the balcony to hear the serenade; and upon our return to Zandford, upon consulting the bath-physician next morning, he found that a cutaneous eruption had made its appearance in the night, which, however, he did not consider dangerous. The vacation meanwhile was drawing to a close, and the physician was of opinion that after the invalid had kept her

bed for a few days, we should soon be enabled to set out upon our return journey. But on the evening of the same day, while I was sitting at the bed-side of my sister-in-law, as the sun was going down, and speaking with her of our return home, she requested in a tone of anxious and nervous agitation to be allowed to get up, and while exerting my utmost strength to prevent her from rising, she fell back suddenly upon the pillows, and losing all consciousness, breathed her last. Both *Theresa* and I, seized with alarm, called for assistance, upon which a young man, a medical student whose apartment was contiguous to ours, came in with all his instruments and immediately proceeded to open a vein. But it was without success. No blood would flow, the surgeon pronounced her dead and was now using every effort to bring *Theresa* to her senses, who had fainted away with fright. Thus was sadly realised the ominous desire of my sister-in-law: "Here I could wish to remain for ever!" What we felt as we followed her a few days afterwards to her last resting-place, and how sadly this scene resuscitated the mournful recollection of that we had witnessed the year before in Cassel, I need not attempt to describe.

We now proceeded with all possible speed on our return journey, and at the landing-place of the steam-boat near Cleves met our friend *Thomae*, who, when he learned our new loss, persisted no further in his desire that we should again stay a few days at his house. As my leave of absence was moreover expired, we continued our journey to Cassel without further delay. But I there felt the lonesomeness of our home yet more keenly, deprived of the one whom we had left behind, and I therefore began to experience the want of a partner through life who would also take an interest in my musical labours. The meetings of our society of St. Cecilia were near at hand, where at our weekly rehearsals the opportunity might present itself to me to make unperceived such observations as would perhaps enable me to select a lady in whom I might hope to find a solace for the remainder of my life, and one

fitted to restore to me my lost happiness. I there bethought me especially of the sister of my deceased friend *Karl Pfeiffer*, whose serious tone of mind and warm interest for high-class music I had observed during her constant punctual attendance for several years at the concerts of the society, and who, moreover, as I knew through her brother, had a particular predilection for my music. Besides this, in my almost daily walks on the Cologne Alley, which took me past the garden of Chief Councillor *Pfeiffer* of the court of appeal, I had for a long time past the opportunity of witnessing at a distance the happy and unpretentious manner of life of the family. As at that time (September 1835) the electoral troops were concentrated for the autumn manœuvres, and had formed a camp in the neighbourhood of the castle of Wilhelmsthal, whither the Casselers now resorted as their chief promenade, I bethought me of making a party thither, and through my daughter *Theresa* requested the parents *Pfeiffer* to permit both their daughters to accompany us.

During this little excursion, I had the opportunity in the course of conversation to become acquainted with the high and varied intellectual culture of the two sisters, and so I became fully confirmed in my resolve to sue for the hand of the eldest sister, *Marianne*, whose knowledge of music and skill in piano-forte play I had already observed, when she sometimes gave her assistance in accompaniment at the concerts of the St. Cecilia society. As I had not the courage to propose for her by word of mouth, there being more than twenty years difference in our ages, I put the question to her in writing, and added, in excuse for my courtship, the assurance that I was yet perfectly free from the usual infirmities of age. I now awaited the answer with the most anxious expectancy. To my great joy it proved one of assent, upon which I hastened to her parents, and in due form asked her in marriage. They wished every happiness to our union, and we now daily learned to know each other better. As at my age there was not much time be lost, I urged that the wedding should take place im-

mediately after the new year, which after some opposition from the relations and the bride, was consented to. Our wedding was fixed for the 3rd of January 1836, and I asked my parents to become witness to my new happiness. Yet, on the appointed day our wedding nearly failed to take place, for the required permission of the co-regent Prince had not yet been received, notwithstanding all the exertions of my friend *Mr. von der Malsburg*, whose office it was, as marshal of the court, to have it made out.

My father-in-law, who in former years had given private readings in public law to the Prince, and then did not stand very high in his favour, had totally lost it since, as a member of the first parliament (from 1831 to 1832), he had effected by his able and convincing report to the assembled states a great diminution of the disproportionate amount of the military expenditure. The Prince bore this doubtless in mind, and therefore delayed granting his permission for the marriage of his daughter. Neither did we receive this until my bride had signed a bond, which was expressly required of her, whereby she waived all claim to a future pension. As I, in case of my death, was enabled to provide for my wife by other means, we consented to this requisition; and in this manner our wedding did yet take place on the day which had been appointed. The nearest relatives of the family of my parents-in-law, to the number of three and thirty, together with my own parents, my daughters and their husbands, were assembled on the occasion. The marriage ceremony, at the request of my bride, was performed by her favorite preacher *Asbrand*, whom she knew personally and highly esteemed.

I now lived again in my former and accustomed domestic manner and felt unspeakably happy with my wife! As we frequently played together, I became more and more acquainted with her high sentiment for the noble in the science of music, and from her great ability for reading at sight, was enabled in a short time to play with her not only all that I had

previously written for the violin with pianoforte accompaniment, but many new things in that style of art, and which I had not previously known, were suggested to me by her. This inspired me with a great desire to try something for once in duets especially written for pianoforte and violin. The first I wrote for ourselves was the duet in *G minor* (Op. 95 published by *Breitkopf* of Leipzig). Thus engaged I frequently observed with great pleasure the lively interest she took in my works, in the same manner as my departed wife had afforded me so much happiness and stimulated my labours. When I had written out a passage, upon playing it with her I could immediately hear its full effect, which interested and made us both equally happy. Besides the above I composed at this period six songs for a counter tenor voice, published by *Simrock* of Bonn as Op. 94.

When the summer and the season of vacation drew nigh, we resolved upon a journey to visit our respective relatives. But as there was no railway at that time, we were obliged as formerly to travel with post horses, and proceeded by way of Eisenach to Gotha, where we visited a step-sister of my late wife, who had married a tradesman of the Name of *Hildt* of that place. We found them in their flower-garden, spent a pleasant evening with them, and left the next day for Erfurt. As the musical amateurs of that place had heard of our coming beforehand, we were immediately received at the hotel of "The Roman Emperor" by a deputation, who invited us in a most flattering address to the festive entertainments which had been prepared for us. At the banquet which was given on the first day, I was welcomed in a poem composed for the occasion, after which my health was drunk with an enthusiasm which afforded great gratification to my wife and daughter. In the evening we drove to the "Steiger," the favorite place of resort of the citizens of Erfurt; but as it shortly afterwards began to rain, we could not much enjoy the beautifully laid out gardens, and were compelled to take refuge in the saloon itself. Fortunately they had taken care to provide a

good pianoforte and I could therefore let the company hear my new duet for violin and piano, and also my concertino in *E sharp*, both of which I played with my wife. After that, *Theresa* sang some of my newest songs, and by some of the ladies and gentlemen of Erfurt my bass duet from "Faust" and several songs were sung. This improvisated musical party appeared to please the company greatly, and thus, despite the rain, we returned to town very satisfied with our day's pleasure. Early on the following morning we were taken by surprise with a serenade performed in our honour by the military-band drawn up on the square in front of the hotel. It began with the well-known sounds of one of my symphonies, which was followed by several other pieces, and lastly by the first finale from "Zemira and Azor." We then went to see objects of note in the town, particularly the fine cathedral, upon entering which we were greeted by the pealing notes of the celebrated organ, and afterwards, the introduction to the "Last moments of the Saviour," as also several other melodies, chiefly from my earlier oratorios, were executed in a very impressive manner. After we had partaken of a magnificent repast at the house of Major *von Rommel*, whose wife was a cousin of Mrs. *Spohr's*, we drove to the theatre, where preparations had been made for a grand concert, at which, with a brilliantly lighted house, the "Weihe der Töne" and my "Lord's Prayer" were performed in a very satisfactory manner.

The next morning we continued our journey to Leipzig, and there again attended several interesting musical parties, which my old friends *Rochlitz* and *Weiss*, as also the distinguished pianiste Mrs. *Vogt*, gave at their houses in our honour, and where I played some of my more recent quartets, which were as yet unknown to the Leipzickers, particularly the *Quatuor brillant* in *A major*, which I had composed in the previous autumn (Op. 93, published by *Haslinger* of Vienna). In Dresden, at the hotel of the "Stadt Gotha," we met the family *Kleinwächter* of Prague, father, son and daughter — as also my friend *Adolph Hesse*, the celebrated organist of Bres-

lau, whom I had personally known since 1828, when he first visited me in Cassel, and who entertained a great friendship for me. With him we proceeded on a preproposed tour through Saxon Switzerland, and performed the first distance, to the entrance of the Uttewalder Ravine, in the carriage, which, when we became tired of climbing the steep heights which offered the chief points of view, always took us again and carried us conveniently from one magnificent rocky aspect to the other. We had nevertheless some long and fatiguing pedestrian trips, for instance that of the ascent of the great Winterberg, when the heat was very oppressive. From Hirnskretsch, the limit of our journey, we descended the Elbe to Schandau, partook of a pleasant dinner there, during which we rallied each other mutually upon our fatigue, which we endeavoured as much as possible to conceal from the visitors at the baths, who sat with us at table, and which gave rise to many comical incidents.

In Dresden we went to a very interesting quartet party at the house of the court musician *Franz*, a former pupil of mine, for which occasion it was festively decorated with wreaths and flowers. We there met the three directors of orchestra *Reissiger*, *Morlachi* and *Rastrelli*, and I played one of my double quartets and my newest concertino. As we purposed leaving Dresden the next morning it was now necessary to take leave of our amiable fellow travellers *Kleinwächter* and *Hesse*, in whose society we had passed so many pleasant hours, and who during the time of our being together, had really heaped upon us every demonstration of affection and attention. They parted from us with tears in their eyes, and we continued our journey through Leipzig and Halle to Brunswick, where we were desirous of visiting my brothers *William* and *Augustus*, and at the same time of assisting at the musical festival which was then about to be held there. This took place in the Ægydian church, and opened with *Händel's* "Messiah." Although that noble work was long since well known to us from previous performances of it, we were

nevertheless again truly charmed by the grandeur of the choruses, the powerful cast, and *Mozart's* instrumentation. On the two following days mixed concerts of vocal and instrumental music were given; but the pieces performed being for the most part operatic music, they appeared to us not altogether suited for the church. At all the grand dinners which took place daily at noon under the large tent that had been erected on the wall promenade, the hilarity was generally somewhat tumultuous; and one scene that occurred on the last day was of a very comical nature.

Mantius, the tenor singer of Berlin, who had already sung some songs with great applause, was at last requested to sing the favorite one of "Fair Annie."* This song has an apparent termination, which is followed by a yet more brilliant finale. It so happened that the auditory always broke out into a loud applause before *Mantius* had got to the end. After this had occurred to his great annoyance at some verses, he at the following verse mounted upon a bench, and at last even got upon the table, in order at length to obtain a complete hearing for the brilliant point of the song, but again his efforts were fruitless! The apparent termination was always too irresistible, and although *Mantius* previous to the last verse again implored his hearers both earnestly and piteously to restrain their applause until he had really come to the end, one of them nevertheless allowed himself to be carried away by his feelings and to shout bravo at the wrong time, and that was quite sufficient for the rest to join in. The expression of despair with which, though overwhelmed with applause, the singer now jumped down from the table, was indescribably ludicrous.

Upon our leaving Brunswick we were pressingly invited by Councillor *Lüder*, who had also been present at the musical festival, to spend a few days with him at his country seat

* "Schön Hannchen."

at Catlenburg, upon our way back; and this formed a worthy termination to this interesting journey.

On our return to Cassel I found a letter from my former pupil *Gercke*, director of music at Paderborn, in which we were invited to the millenium jubilee of St. *Liborius*, which was to take place there on the 21st July. The celebration of this festival was to commence on the first day with church solemnities, and on the second with the production of my oratorio: "Des Heilands letzte Stunden" (The last moments of the Saviour). As my holidays were not quite expired, we quickly made up our minds, and in a few days again took our seats in the travelling carriage, in which this time my sister-in-law *Caroline Pfeiffer* filled the fourth place. We slept at Lichtenau and set out from there so early the next morning, that we arrived at Paderborn before eight o'clock, but we found nevertheless the town so full, that we could not be accommodated at either of the two hotels there. The host of the second hotel seemed however to regret his inability to accommodate us, and hired for us a couple of rooms in a private house opposite. But we could there procure two beds only, so that he was obliged to arrange a sleeping place for me and my wife for the night in the hotel, and that indeed in a room occupied by a hair-dresser during the day in the pursuance of his calling, and for the sale of his wares. We had scarcely entered our unseemly apartment than we received a visit from the dilettanti of the town, and from the artists who had come to take part in the musical performances. We were then conducted to the house of one of their friends, where the best places were given to us at the windows, to see with more convenience the brilliant procession which accompanied the relics of St. *Liborius* in their golden shrine, to the cathedral. When the immense crowd of the population had somewhat dispersed we also proceeded to the cathedral, where we admired the richly decorated and beautiful structure, and heard *Carl Maria von Weber's* mass in *D major*, the too worldly style of which however did not altogether please us. On the

following evening my oratorio was performed in the church of the Jesuits, brilliantly lighted up, whither we were accompanied and a passage made for us through the thronged aisle up to the front places assigned to us on cushioned seats close to those of the bishop of Paderborn, chief president *Vincke* and the commandant of the town. I remarked with pleasure that here also a great enthusiasm was felt for my oratorio; *Gercke* directed exceedingly well, the choruses had been well studied, and among the solo-singers, who were for the most part dilettanti, the well-known concert singer Mrs. *Johanna Schmidt* particularly distinguished herself in the part of Mary. Scarcely had we retired to rest after this busy day, than we heard a torch-light serenade under our windows, consisting of instrumental music and four-part songs. When on the repeated loud calls on my name I went to the window with the intention of returning thanks, I found in front of it so high a pile of pasteboard boxes belonging to my co-occupant of the room as to impede my efforts to open it, and I was therefore compelled to convey my deferred oral thanks in a written shape the next morning previous to our leaving.

In this manner we returned to Cassel from this excursion also very gratified, after which, inspired with improved health and in very happy domestic circumstances, I began a new period of industrious composition. Already on the return journey from Dresden I had constantly thought of a new composition, and sketched out the programme of it. This was another sonate for me and my wife, which was afterwards published as a duet for piano and violin "Nachklänge einer Reise nach Dresden und in die sächsische Schweiz" (Reminiscences of a journey to Dresden and through Saxon Switzerland) Op. 96, by *Simrock* of Bonn and dedicated to our amiable fellow travellers of Prague and Breslau. In the first theme I endeavoured to describe the love of travel, and in the second the journey itself, by introducing the winding of the postillions' horns, customary in Saxony and the neighbouring part of Prussia, as the dominant in the scherzo, played by the violin

upon the *G* string in a horn-like manner as chief theme, worked out with striking modulations on the pianoforte, and then I depicted in the trio a fanciful dreaming-like sentiment, such as one so willingly yet unconsciously gives oneself up to in the carriage! The subsequent adagio represents a scene in the catholic royal-chapel at Dresden, which begins with an organ-prelude on the pianoforte alone; after which the violin plays the intonations of the priest before the altar, which are followed by the responses of the chorister-boys in the same tones and modulations as they are given in catholic churches and that of Dresden. This is followed by a air for *castrato*, in which the violinist has to imitate the tone and that style of singing. The last theme of all describes in a rondo the journey through Saxon Switzerland, in which it endeavours so recal the recollection of the grand beauties of nature and to represent the merry strains of the Bohemian music, which one hears resound from almost every rocky glen; to effect all which in so compressed a limit could of course be but imperfectly realised.

In the course of the year 1836 I wrote also a number of songs, six of which, in one book, were published by *Breitkopf & Härtel* as Op. 101, and among the rest "Sangeslust" (The love of song) given in *Breitkopf & Härtel's* musical album, with four-handed accompaniment; furthermore a Psalm for chorus and soli with orchestral accompaniment, and a fantasia in the shape of an overture to *Raupach's* mythical tragedy "Die Tochter der Luft" ("The Daughter of the Air") which was shortly afterwards performed at one of our subscription concerts. But as in this shape it did not altogether please me, I afterwards worked it up as the first theme of my fifth symphony, which I composed for the "*concerts spirituels*" at Vienna and which was shortly afterwards published by *Haslinger* as Op. 102.* In the beginning of the following

* Its first performance in Vienna produced there a great sensation, as several gratifying reports, accompanied by a costly silver cup with suitable inscription, testify. The Vienna Musical Journal said in a very

year (1837) I wrote my third duet for pianoforte and violin in *E major*, which was afterwards published by *Paul* of Dresden as Op. 112.

About this same time I made earnest preparations to carry out an idea which had long occupied my thought, namely to give a musical festival, for which Cassel seemed to me in many respects exceedingly well adapted. My plan of this was as follows, on Whitsunday afternoon to give *Mendelssohn's* oratorio of "Paulus" (St. Paul) in the church of St. Martin; on Whitmonday evening, with the church lighted up, to perform my symphony "Die Weihe der Töne" and my oratorio of "Die letzten Dinge;" an Whittuesday in the forenoon, at the theatre, a concert of foreign and native singers and virtuosi, and on the same evening, as was usual on the second festival day, a new opera.

The invitations abroad, the assembling of the musicians, and the rehearsal of the oratorios by the choral-society had already begun, when to my application to the Prince

enthusiastic review, among other things: It is again a work, that speaks its own master's praise in elegant language; a pure whole, a thing apart of itself, all of one casting. The introduction, andante *C sharp*, breathes a cheerful repose which gradually assumes an impassioned character and prepares the hearer for the transition to the allegro, *C minor*, which, replete with treasures of harmony bears in itself the germ of an imposing effect. . . . The second theme, Larghetto, *A major*, is a conglomerate of deep feeling, warm fantasy, and of song replete with sentiment etc.; in this again each note speaks to the heart with irresistible force. . . . The scherzo, *C sharp*, opens with a bold freshness of appeal to life and cheerfulness, the sharp rhythms, the unceasing and restless competition of the wind and stringed instruments, the impetuous bursts of tonic power as opposed to the soft clear flowing cantilene of the alternative, — and, all these effected in a manner so original and striking as to defy expression in words. . . . For the *presto* finale, the poet of sound appears to have husbanded as much as possible the sum total of his creative powers. . . . Not one of the numberless beauties were lost upon the hearers, each theme in succession received the merited tribute to his mastery; and indeed the richly fantastic scherzo electrified all so unanimously, that a *da capo* was imperatively called for." . . .

for permission I received the following authoritative decision from his private secretary: "The days of performance must be changed, as the evening of Whitsunday could not be granted without disturbing those who had prepared themselves to receive the holy sacrament on that evening; neither could any concert be allowed on Whitmonday (on account of the church service and the opera); nor could any scaffolding be erected in the large church for the chorus, as it would be unbecoming in the locality of the burial vault of the electoral family. His highness must await other proposals, before he could graciously condescend to grant his permission."

To this I replied that a musical festival in Cassel could alone prove successful, and the risk of the very considerable expense could alone be safely incurred if it were permitted, as at other places, and as is the custom at the musical festivals on the lower Rhine, to take place in the Whitsuntide holidays, when a great number of strangers would flock to the town and the lovers of music of the neighbouring places would not be prevented by business from attending. That if Whitsunday evening could not be granted, no other two succeeding evenings of that time could be found for performances in the church. As, furthermore, no other appropriate place was to be found in Cassel, than the large church, and that the erection of seats therein could not be allowed, I found myself compelled to abandon totally the projected musical festival.

Unpleasant to all parties as was this complete failure of the plan, I was compelled to abide by it, despite the somewhat considerable expense I had already incurred, and of which I could reimburse myself but a very small part only by the re-sale of the procured song-parts to the choral society. As meanwhile, however, we had industriously practised *Mendelssohn's* oratorio, and become more and more delighted with it, I proposed to give it on Whitsunday at the concert which had been permitted for the benefit of the relief fund; but this was refused also by the Prince, so that we were obliged to content ourselves with gratifying the lovers

of music with two private performances of the oratorio upon the pianoforte at the society of St. Cecilia.

In the summer of 1837 I received an invitation to go to Prague to direct the performance of my opera "Der Berg-Geist" (The Spirit of the Mountain) and for that purpose I thought of proceeding thither at the commencement of the holidays. But as the permission had not been received at the treasury of the theatre on the evening before, I addressed myself to the Prince between the acts of the opera, and enquired of him, Whether he had any orders for me to execute upon the journey. In the somewhat indistinct answer I received from him I understood, it is true, something about my permission not having been made out; but as I had no time to lose, I found myself under the necessity of setting out without it at 4 o'clock the next morning. Seeing *Feige*, the director of the theatre, walking in the neighbourhood of my house at that early hour, I thought he might have been sent to ascertain whether I really had the boldness to set out on my journey without the written permission. On the first day's journey indeed, I was not without some uneasiness lest a mounted messenger might be sent after us to order our return. I therefore hastened as much as possible at every post-station the putting-to of fresh horses, and we thus crossed the frontier without molestation. After a journey of six days we at length reached Prague, where *Marianne* and *Theresa* were greatly struck by the beauty of the city and had moreover the gratification to learn from the theatre bills placarded at the corners of the streets, that my opera *Jessonda* was to be given that evening, in which a foreign singer was to make her debut. That the opera was a great favorite here was evident from the fact that immediately after the performance of the overture, the public encored it. The "Blumenduet" (flower duet) and the duet "Schönes Mädchen" (lovely maiden) were also encored. But I was very much annoyed at several omissions, for which however the director of the Prague orchestra was not to blame, being omissions which were customary in Vienna,

from whence the score had been supplied. The principal singers were very good, so that a favourable result was also to be anticipated for the "Berg-Geist."

On the following morning I was taken by surprise by a visit from a zealous lover of music, Dr. *Hutzelmänn*, who had been informed that I was fond of swimming, and had for that reason come to take me to the military school of natation on the Moldau; the officer attached to that establishment, who accompanied me, soon remarked that I was a practised swimmer, and proposed a swimming excursion outside the school, in which he ordered me to be accompanied by two soldiers in a boat. They took my clothes with them, and after I had swum for about half an hour with the stream, they assisted me into the boat, in which I dressed myself while the soldiers rowed us back to the town. While I was swimming near the boat, our conversation turned more and more upon my compositions, with which the musical instructor in swimming was almost as well acquainted as myself. He proposed to me a similar enjoyment every day in the Moldau, and next morning found him already waiting for me with his boat near the swimming-school. Meanwhile the rehearsals of the "Berg-Geist" went on exceedingly well. The director of the orchestra had very carefully managed the private rehearsals, and studied everything so well, that in two performances which I myself conducted the opera was eminently successful. Upon my entering the orchestra I was not only received by the public in the most enthusiastic manner, but loudly called for each time at the conclusion of the opera. The singers who supported the chief characters were madame *Podhorski* as Alma, Messrs. *Pöck* and *Emminger*, as Berg-Geist and Oskar, who sang and performed exceedingly well, and the opera maintained its place in the repertory of Prague theatre for a long time. We remained a few days longer in Prague, and I played at several private parties not only quartets but also my sonatas and solo-music with my wife's accompaniment, who likewise played some quite new composition of *Kittl* and *Kleinwächter* for four hands,

in which she displayed great ability and quickness in reading at sight. The *Kleinwächter* family made several excursions with us into the beautiful environs of Prague, by which means we became intimately acquainted with all the attractions of that fine city. At length however we were obliged to tear ourselves away from these enjoyments and resumed our journey. Now also came the most fatiguing part of our tour, that to Vienna, in which we suffered exceedingly from the heat and dust, as also from the dirty and wretched accommodation of the inns where we passed the night. On the fourth day we arrived half dead at Vienna and put up at the "Erzherzog Carl" hotel. After I had called upon my former friends, we passed some very pleasant days there, for which we had to thank my Cassel friends *von Steuber*, the ambassador from the Elector of Hesse, the Baron *von Lannoy*, and particularly my Viennese publisher, *Haslinger*. The latter took us every evening to some new gardens, where *Strauss* and *Lanner* gave their concerts, and where we supped exceedingly well *à la carte* at the little tables spread for the entertainment of the guests. Sometimes, also, we went to the theatre, to see the real Viennese popular farces, but my female companions were not sufficiently acquainted with the Viennese dialect, to relish them thoroughly.

After the lapse of a fortnight, in which we participated in all the amusements of Vienna, we took leave of our kind friends and resumed our journey towards the beautifully situated Salzburg, which is one of the finest possible, particularly the first half, the way across the lake to the Ischl baths. In Salzburg, which as the birth-place of *Mozart* was to me sacred ground, we first of all visited his widow, the present wife of Privy Councillor *von Nissen*, who was very pleased at our calling upon her, and in whose house we made the acquaintance of her two sons. In the excursions we made into the neighbourhood in one of the customary light, one-horse vehicles of the country, we were most pleased at the celebrated Gollinger waterfall, and with a sliding trip through

the rock-salt-works at Hallein, which was something quite new for my female fellow travellers. From Salzburg we now went on to Munich, where I learned to my great surprise, that the Prince of Hesse had just arrived there. As it was now necessary for me to apologise to him for my departure from Cassel, I addressed myself for that purpose to the Marshal of the court, *von der Malsburg*, and at the same time informed him that I had been requested by the intendant of the Munich theatre to conduct there the performance of my opera "Jessonda," but for which I would first request the Prince's permission. On the following morning the Prince sent word to me that it would be very agreeable to him that I should direct the opera, and in that case he would prolong his stay to hear it. Adorned with a hat lent to me by Mr. *von der Malsburg* and a little bit cut off from the ribbon of his order, I repaired the next day to the appointed audience, and was received by the Prince with the following words: "Why, you disappeared from Cassel all at once." To which I replied: "I thought I had taken my leave in the form prescribed," and as he said nothing further on the subject, the matter was so far settled for this time. But the contemplated representation of "Jessonda" did not take place during my presence in Munich, as the king expected some days after a visit from the Prince, and had deferred the opera till then, and in the meantime my leave of absence had expired. We therefore left Munich before. On our way back we paid a visit to my uncle Professor *Adolphus Hencke* in Erlangen, where we made the acquaintance of the present Councillor *Rudolph Wagner* of Göttingen, and returned to Cassel before the Prince arrived.

Shortly afterwards, I received a letter from *Hermstedt*, wherein, by request of the Princess von Sondershausen, he commissioned me to write some soprano songs for her with pianoforte and clarinet accompaniment. As this task was much to my liking, I composed in the course of a few weeks six songs of this kind (Op. 103, published by *Breithkopf & Härtel*

of Leipzig) which by the express desire of the Princess I dedicated to her, and for which I received from her the present of a very costly ring.

I began the year 1838 with the composition of the "Vaterunser" [Lord's Prayer] of *Klopstock* (Op. 104, *Breitkopf & Härtel*, Leipzig) which I wrote with a double chorus for men's voices; at first only for pianoforte accompaniment, and afterwards instrumentated for orchestra, as it was intended to be performed at the singing festival for the benefit of the *Mozart* institution at Frankfort, where though I was obliged to decline directing in person, it was first performed on the 29th July, and having been well studied, produced, according to the reports from there, a very solemn and imposing effect.

In the succeeding months I again composed several songs for soprani or tenori, which appeared as Op. 105, at *Hellmuth's* in Halle.

Meanwhile the first public performance of "Paulus" took place at last on Good Friday in the garrison-church, and we were looking forward with pleasure to its repetition on Whitsunday, when our good *Theresa* fell suddenly ill of a malignant nervous fever, which in a short time brought her blooming life to a close. On the Tuesday before Ascension Day we had, chiefly at *Theresa's* own wish, made a pleasant excursion to *Wilhelmshöhe*; there she first complained of indisposition, and on our return home she was immediately obliged to take to her bed. As *Dr. Ludwig Pfeiffer*, our then attendant physician and second brother of my wife, was just then absent from Cassel, we called in once more her uncle, *Dr. Harnier*, who although no alarming symptoms as yet shewed themselves, visited the patient several times daily, until after the lapse of a week, to our great terror he pronounced her complaint to be nervous fever. This now constantly increased in vehemence, and as in her fits of delirium she spoke continually of a journey we had contemplated to *Carlsbad*, the idea of which had greatly pleased her, I promised her that she should go thither as soon as she recovered. This greatly

soothed her, but nevertheless did not diminish the fever, and on Whitsunday morning the blooming maiden of nineteen succumbed to the fearful malady. The loss of the talented amiable girl plunged us in such misery that we looked forward with earnest longing to the approaching theatrical vacation, in order to leave immediately the mournful surroundings of our home, and seek far away from Cassel some respite from the constant remembrance of our anguish.

After we had been delayed another eight days in Cassel by the reiterated retarding of my leave of absence, we were enabled to set out for Carlsbad on the 23rd June, accompanied by my mother-in-law, to whom the use of the waters had also been recommended, which was exceedingly welcome to me, particularly on account of my wife, who had taken very much to heart the loss of our *Theresa*. No sooner were we arrived in Carlsbad than we met with *Hesse* of Breslau, and in our walks to the springs soon made the acquaintance of other warm lovers of music, with whom on dull days, when the weather would permit of no excursions together to the charming environs, we made up small music parties at our lodgings. As a young lady from Breslau, Miss *Ottilia Schubert*, sang most charmingly, my wife practised her in my new songs with clarinet accompaniment, at which a first-rate clarinet player, Mr. *Seemann* from Hannover, took the clarinet part; in this manner our hearers became acquainted with a new style of songs which they had not known before, and which interested them exceedingly. Somewhat later, *De Beriot* also arrived with his sister-in-law *Pauline Garcia*, in Carlsbad, and the concert which he gave at the theatre afforded us very great enjoyment. He played with great purity, brilliancy and execution, but his compositions did not altogether please us, and Miss *Garcia*, afterwards the so-celebrated Mrs. *Viardot-Garcia*, sang with a voice of great compass, though not exactly a very fine one, and with great artistic skill. She especially delighted her hearers with the execution of her Spanish romances and ballads, in which she accompanied herself very well on the pianoforte.

[Here, unfortunately, *Spöhr's* own narrative of his life closes for ever! — To the subsequent encouragements of his relatives to resume it he used to reply: "I take no pleasure in writing now; and there are sufficient materials for the continuance of the Biography at any time, in the diaries and papers of my wife." — Hereupon, this latter, mindful of this express indication of her husband's, resolved to place notes, journals, and letters of every kind, and even memoranda jotted down for her sole private use and edification, at the disposal of those members of the family who undertook by means of extracts, without any pretence to literary skill — in simple, unadorned truthfulness, after *Spöhr's* own example — to carry out the history of his life to the end.]

* * *

After a beneficial use of the waters, *Spöhr* left Carlsbad, and on his way back stopped at Leipzig, where some musical parties quickly got up by the families of his acquaintance enabled him to pass some very agreeable days, and at which he played his favorite quartet in *A minor*, with his newest concertino, to the great delight of his hearers. Upon this occasion, it was a source of great pleasure to him to make the long desired acquaintance of *Robert Schumann*, who though in other respects exceedingly quiet and reserved, yet evinced his admiration of *Spöhr* with great warmth, and gratified him by the performance of several of his interesting fantasias.

Mendelssohn was at the time unfortunately absent, and in his next letter to *Spöhr* expressed his great regret thereat; and requested him at the same time to send him his last symphony (No. 5, *C minor*), as it was intended to perform it at the opening of the approaching season in the first concert of the Leipzig Gewandhaus. While expressing his thanks for it beforehand, he says at the same time, in reference to a song of *Spöhr's* with which he had just previously become acquainted: "As I am now on the subject of thanks, I must thank you many times and with all my heart for the beautiful song in *F sharp* with clarinet accompaniment, the "Zwiesengesang," which pleases me exceedingly and has so completely charmed

me with its prettyness, that I both sing and play it every day. It is not on account of any one particular feature that I admire it, but for its perfectly natural sweetness as a whole, and which from beginning to end flows so lightly and gratefully to the feelings. How often have I sung it with my sisters, and each time with renewed pleasure! And for that I must now also thank you. . . .”

The first work with which *Spohr* occupied himself after his return to Cassel, was a fourth quartet for stringed instruments (*G minor*), which was published by *Paul* of Dresden as Op. 106, both in its original form and as arranged by *Spohr* himself for the pianoforte for four hands. — About the same time he received the very unusual order to make arrangements for a concert at court, which after frequent and long deliberations, at length took place on the 19th. September at the palace of Wilhelmshöhe. The instrumental pieces were performed by the members of the electoral chapel, but the vocal subjects were at *Spohr's* recommendation confided to *Firnhaber*, a distinguished dilettant professor from Hildesheim, who himself had a court appointment, and had been for some years tutor to Baron *Scholley*, stepson to the Prince. With a very fine high tenor voice, he combined a good musical education, and a lively sentiment for art, and *Spohr's* compositions, with the manifold beauties of which he had made himself more and more acquainted during his residence in Cassel, soon inspired him with real enthusiasm. As *Spohr* also took as much pleasure in his society as in his charming style of singing, he was a constant assistant at all music parties, and his presence in Cassel suggested to *Spohr* many of his most pleasing and favorite songs, of which were: the book of songs from Op. 101 to 105; the duet for soprano and tenor Op. 107, (both published by *Simrock*) and *Franz Dingelstedt's* “Mitternacht” (midnight), which song was published by itself by *Paul* of Dresden. Respecting the last, the author of the words, who had then an appointment at the gymnasium of Fulda, wrote to *Spohr* at a subsequent period, expressing the greatest

satisfaction: "Yesterday evening I heard your song 'Mitternacht' sung, and still deeply impressed by it, I hasten to thank you, and to express both my delight and my pride therein. I will not say that you have entered into the spirit of *my words* — for what are they after all? No, it is you who have caught the long, low, solemn whisperings of midnight. For the first time I regret that I am not sufficiently acquainted with music to understand and express the enthusiasm of the initiated in matters of change of tempi, tone &c.; in your art I am a naturalist merely, but I enjoy this production of it yet more deeply and intimately than they all; for I feel as a poet in the matter! — Not a word more now of common-place praise and song of thanksgiving! You have afforded me an hour of delight, and stirred within me emotions such as alas! I can feel here but seldom: a reward for my aspirations, an incentive to future efforts! You, I am sure, understand me!" . . . ,

In October 1838 *Spohr*, following the example set by many of the larger towns of Germany, succeeded at length in carrying out his reiterated proposition to give a concert at the theatre in aid of the funds for the erection of the testimonial to the memory of Mozart. The first part of the concert comprised among other things *Mozart's* symphony in *D minor*; and in the second, tableaux vivants, with appropriate music, from *Mozart's* operas, in which at the conclusion, the last chorus of the requiem resounded, and the bust of *Mozart*, placed in the foreground of the stage, was crowned by genii with wreaths of laurel. — A similar festival took place the following spring in aid of the fund for the memorial to *Beethoven*, but with this difference, that the programme contained besides the choicest selection from the works of that honoured maestro, a composition of *Spohr's* also, his most recent concertino: "Sonst und Jetzt," which he had performed for the first time shortly before at one of the regular winter concerts, and upon this occasion reproduced at the express desire of the Prince. The success upon both occasions was extremely great.

At the commencement of the same year, several other remarkable concerts took place, and among others, *Ole Bull* performed twice in the theatre, to overflowing houses, notwithstanding the increased prices of admission, and filled the public with astonishment and admiration of his play. *Spohr* himself took the warmest interest in the wonderful play of his colleague in art, and gave a musical party at his own house in his honour, in which he first played one of his own quartets, but in the following he resigned the first place to *Ole Bull*, and even took the second violin. His opinion respecting *Ole Bull's* play may here be given in his own words, when writing to his friend *Speyer* upon the subject: "*Ole Bull* has lately given two concerts at the theatre and greatly charmed the public. His many-toned strokes and the accurate certainty of the left hand are remarkable, but like *Paganini*, he sacrifices too much to the tricks of the art. His tone on the weak strings is bad, and he can only use the *A* and *D* string on the lower part and *pianissimo*. This gives to his play a great monotony when he cannot bring in his tricks of art. We found this in two of *Mozart's* quartets, which he played at my house. On the other hand, he plays with much feeling, but not with a cultivated taste." With every acknowledgment made by *Spohr* of the extraordinary performances of *Ole Bull*, certain features of charlatanism, so foreign to his own *simple* nature, did not escape him, and he frequently related at a subsequent period with a good-natured smile to his own friends, and to others, how *Ole Bull* at a passage which offered him an opportunity of shining in one of his incomparable *pp*, kept his bow hovering over the strings for several seconds, so that the public who listened in breathless silence for the last sound of his constantly decreasing tones, might believe they still continued dying away in *ppp*.

About this time also, the representation of a small opera: "*Der Matrose*," in the composition of which *Spohr* had assisted, was frequently repeated. The text, adopted from the French, was written by the admired comedian *Birnbaum*, and at his

wish set to music by four composers of this place, *Spohr*, *Hauptmann*, *Baldewein* (director of music), and the song-writer and teacher of music *Grenzebach*, collectively. Besides the overture, *Spohr* had undertaken the song of a home-returning mariner, together with the finale and all these "numbers," and the whole operetta met with lively approbation from the public. Unfortunately *Spohr*, at a later period, was no longer in possession of these, as they remained in the hands of Mr. *Birnbaum*, for whose benefit the first representation of the opera was intended. The highly characteristic mariner's song only appeared some time afterwards, arranged by himself with four-handed accompaniment for the pianoforte, and was published by *Paul* of Dresden.

In April 1839 *Spohr* received a pressing invitation from England to direct the performance of his oratorio "Des Heilands letzte Stunden" at the grand musical festival which was to take place in September at Norwich. After he had succeeded in obtaining the requisite leave of absence from the Prince, the customary tour during the summer holidays was this time limited to a shorter excursion, in which he made visits to his relatives and friends. He next proceeded to Holzminden — where *Spohr's* younger brothers *Augustus* and *Charles* resided with their families, the former, as a fiscal assessor, and the latter a law official of the duchy of Brunswick. Thence he went on to Gandersheim to visit his venerable parents, and lastly to Catlenburg, to Councillor *Lüder*. As a matter of course on this journey he was not without his violin, and wherever *Spohr* came he found grateful hearers, who considered themselves superlatively happy in listening to his play. More than any of the other pieces that he executed, his newest, charming composition, a Spanish rondo for pianoforte and violin, afforded them delight; this soon became one of the most favorite pieces of music in Cassel also, and remained so up to a very recent period. At a later period, when it was published by *Mechetti* in Vienna as Op. 111, there appeared simultaneously a pianoforte arrangement of it

for four hands by *Czerny*, which was certainly most welcome to all who had not the advantage of hearing the original composition executed by a distinguished violinist.

Returned to Cassel, *Spohr* finished his "Historical Symphony in the style and taste of four different periods" which he had begun before he set out on his journey. (Theme the first: The period of *Bach-Händel*, 1720. Adagio: *Haydn-Mozart* 1780. Scherzo: *Beethoven* period 1810. Finale: The most modern period 1840) a work, which afforded him not only during its creation, but also upon the occasions of its closely following performances in Cassel, the greatest satisfaction. Abroad also, and first in London, where he sold it to the Philharmonic Society for the term of one year, and subsequently in Germany, where he was permitted to make it known after the lapse of that period, it met with the most lively reception. Many voices were, however, raised in blame, and of these that of *Schumann*, in his musical journal, was the severest in tone. On the other hand Baron *Lannoy*, in Vienna, reported that the work had been received with great favour: *Mendelssohn* sent in a most flattering account of its reception at Leipzig; and many letters full of praise arrived from England.

In the beginning of September *Spohr* set out upon the journey to England, accompanied by his wife and his friend Mrs. *von Malsburg*, with whom he had been many years acquainted.*

After an exceedingly rough passage, which delayed his arrival in London by six hours, *Spohr* was very agreeably surprised in the midst of the confusion incidental to such circumstances, on being addressed by a gentleman, a stranger to him, exhibiting an order from the custom-house authorities, to deliver *Spohr's* luggage without examination, and who then took

* As *Spohr* himself always considered this English musical festival (the Norwich festival) and the flattering reception given to him and his works in that country, as the most brilliant period in his active life, its description may reasonably find a place here in a somewhat more detailed form.

him and his female fellow-travellers speedily and safely to land in a boat, where a coach was in waiting to take him to the hospitable house of professor *Edward Taylor*. In the amiable family-circle of that gentleman and surrounded by the genuine English usages and comforts which had so many charms for the guests, they soon found themselves at home, and a few days sufficed to lay the foundation of a life-long friendship. As their farther journey permitted but a short stay in London, it was necessary to make the best use of the time to see the objects most worthy of notice in the metropolis, which filled the travellers with wonder and admiration. The visit to Westminster Abbey made a deep impression upon all, and this was expressed in the letters they sent home: * “The very entry into this majestic structure, which is certainly the finest of all the objects of note in London, makes an impression so deep and solemn upon the mind, that we could scarcely repress our emotion; and in reality one seems to move no longer among things of this world. The tones of a splendid organ may have contributed to this feeling, — for divine service was just being performed, — and this was followed by sacred psalmody sung in double chorus so pure, so sweet and executed with such feeling, that they seemed like the voices of angels from the realms of bliss. We had neither of us ever heard any thing like it before. Now again the notes of the organ pealed forth, and we distinguished harmonies of *Spohr’s*, and soon recognised the touching sounds of his mass for ten voices; and then the grand overture to “Des Heilands letzten Stunden” was splendidly performed by the celebrated organist *Turle*. . . .”

But the time pressed for the departure to Norwich, where

* The extracts given here and subsequently from the letters of *Spohr’s* relatives, may find their excuse in the circumstance that he himself had neither leisure nor inclination to write letters during this journey, but was greatly pleased when his female companions wrote home frequently (which of course was always in harmony with his own sentiments), — and he seldom allowed such a letter to leave without having expressed his full concurrence with the contents.

professor *Taylor*,* the chief director of the whole musical festival, had already made the necessary preliminary rehearsals of *Spohr's* oratorio, and now received the travellers to accompany them to the mayor of Norwich. On the following morning the mayor took his guests to hear divine service in the cathedral, which is of immense size and considered one of the finest in England. In a letter upon the subject *Spohr's* relative thus expresses herself: Of *such* a celebration of divine service, though it lasted nearly three hours, one is not readily weary; the heavenly music with which it is interspersed in various ways, I cannot describe, and it is performed with a purity and finish such as made great impression also on *Spohr* himself. The congregation did not sing at all, but always followed in their hymnbooks and prayer-books, the text of which (all taken from the Bible) I certainly could understand better than the *sermon*. The choir robed in white, with their tender tones, made an irresistible impression; words, music, and execution, all were in such perfect unison, that I could scarcely imagine a finer worship of the deity in heaven itself. When at the conclusion we passed through the spacious nave of the magnificent building with the whole congregation, the masses of people arranged themselves on either side to permit our passage, and looked at *Spohr* as something wonderful; many also, requested to be introduced to *Spohr*, and our kind mayor, who accompanied us and conducted *Spohr*, was quite happy, and proud of the whole scene. His daughter *Mary*, a charming

* As a member of the committee he had conducted the correspondence with *Spohr* relative to his coming, concerning which the following remarks appeared in the "Spectator": "It is highly to the credit of the great master, that to the question what compensation he required for the time and exertions required of him during the journey, and for direction of the oratorio, he simply replied: 'The committee will doubtless have no objection to pay my travelling-expenses?' We are glad to learn that the modesty of this reply and *Spohr's* coming to England without any further negotiation on the matter with the committee, was duly recognised by the latter, who thereupon came to the resolution to present Mr. *Spohr* with a sum of 100 guineas over and above the account of his expenses.

maiden of fifteen, is also enthusiastically fond of music and particularly of *Spohr's*; she plays herself very nicely on the piano, and when her father informed us that it would make her exceedingly happy to play a few notes with *Spohr*, he accompanied her in one of his favorite sonatas of *Mozart*. . .”

If *Spohr* had understood the English language, the impression made upon him by the divine service would perhaps have been greatly disturbed by the circumstance that the sermon preached upon the occasion was in a great measure levelled against his oratorio. Already before his arrival in Norwich, several persons of the puritanical party had raised their voices against its performance, and endeavoured in every way both in print and in the pulpit to shew that it was profane and sinful to make so sacred a subject as the sufferings and death of Christ, a theme for music. It thus so happened that on the Sunday morning on which *Spohr* visited the cathedral a zealous clergyman considered it his duty to hurl a crushing discourse against his oratorio: The “*Calvary*,” as it is rendered in English, and at the conclusion implored his hearers not to surrender their souls for one day’s pleasure, but to stop away from its performance. The “*Monthly Chronicle*” further observes on the subject: “We now see the fanatical zealot in the pulpit, and sitting right opposite to him the *great composer*, with ears happily deaf to the *English* tongue; but with a demeanour so becoming, with a look so full of pure good will, and with so much humility and mildness in the features, that his countenance alone spoke to the heart like a good sermon. Without intending it, we make a comparison, and cannot for a moment doubt in which of the two dwelt the *spirit* of religion, which denoted the true christian!”

On the day after the performance of the oratorio the same journal says: “This day was to decide the fate of the oratorio “*Calvary*,” and had the decision been unfavourable the fame of Norwich was for ever departed. The public mind was therefore on the greatest stretch, for many persons feared the powerful influence of an adverse clergy. But a better spirit,

a sentiment of right feeling triumphed, and hours before the opening of the doors the matter was decided. From far and near the auditory flocked in thousands, evincing a powerful feeling of excitement, and an enthusiasm which increased continually during the performance; and beyond all expectation, a complete triumph was achieved. It may justly be said of this oratorio, that a heavenly inspiration breathes throughout; more than any other work of modern times it is one sprung from the genial source of a warm heart, and cannot be heard with a tearless eye. . . .” — The bishop of Norwich, who in accordance with his religious bias belonged also to the party of the opponents of the oratorio, and was therefore on a footing of reserve with the mayor, was nevertheless desirous to make the personal acquaintance of his celebrated guest, and sent him repeated notes of invitation to dine with him; as these however were written in English, they of necessity were handed to the mayor as interpreter of their contents, who each time transmitted to him in the name of *Spoehr* a reply excusing his inability to accept it. At length it was proposed that he should be introduced to the bishop at one of the concerts, and to this the mayor assented on the condition that *Spoehr* should promise him to meet the bishop half way only, and not move a step farther towards him, when he rose from his distant seat to approach *Spoehr*.

This adherence to the stiff formality of English ceremony, which was a special and prominent feature in the grandiose arrangements of the mayor, was frequently the source of a variety of ludicrous scenes and discussions. Thus it was that *Spoehr*, on the first day that he had gone to the rehearsal of his oratorio, sent thence in haste home to his female fellow travellers, who had remained behind, two gentlemen, strangers, with the invitation that they also should proceed thither, to share in the impressive sight which the magnificent St. Andrew's Hall had presented to him immediately upon entering it. As may readily be imagined the ladies acceded to the invitation, and accepted unhesitatingly the attendance of the “gentlemen as

yet un-introduced to them in the house," by which they excited the astonishment of every one there, even to the very domestics; but they had the satisfaction of witnessing themselves, upon arriving at the hall, the enthusiastic reception with which the whole assembly greeted *Spohr* upon his entering the orchestra. Of this the "Monthly Review" speaks as follows: "I would have wished all the world had heard the thunders of applause, the very storm of greetings with which *Spohr* was received by the whole orchestra, down to the very boys of the choir. This reception of the great man, which drew tears of emotion from the eyes of his wife, must also have deeply moved him." On the following evening the first concert was to take place, and *Spohr* was to perform in it his concertino "Sonst und Jetzt" ("Then and Now"); but as there were some difficult passages for the drum in it, he had requested the attendance of the young drummer-boy at his residence in the forenoon, in order to give him personally the necessary instructions concerning his part. When the neat little fellow made his appearance, it was however found that he understood no language but English, and in this predicament he was obliged to have recourse to the assistance of the mayor's amiable little daughter, who then, although astonished at all the unusual doings in her father's house, willingly endeavoured to explain in English to the strange boy the remarks made by *Spohr* in the French language, with many scientific expressions which were quite unintelligible to herself; but which at length she effected with a result so accordant with *Spohr's* wishes, that for years afterwards he always recalled to mind with real pleasure the ludicrous but interesting scenes of that charming effort at inter-communication.

In the evening on which the first of the six monster-concerts took place in the spacious hall filled with nearly 3000 persons and 500 assistants, a symphony of *Haydn* and several song pieces were first given, among which also, the duet from *Jessonda*: "Schönes Mädchen": but then as the "Times" expressed it, "all eyes were turned with expectancy

towards the orchestra in order to greet *Spohr* upon his appearance with an enthusiastic applause. . . .” “A deep silence of suspense and expectancy reigned at the commencement of his concertino, which he has called “*Sonst und Jetzt*,” in order to express the opposite character of the themes which therein denote the different style of the more ancient and modern compositions.” The opinion upon *Spohr*’s play then follows in terms of the highest praise, and concludes with the words: “His instrument speaks as eloquently to the heart as the finest melody. The accomplished mastery of his bow as of his fingers, is yet surpassed by the wonderful power of his *mens divini*or. The concertino, after a short but beautiful prelude, begins with a charming minuet of the old school, adorned with a whole wealth of harmonies, which seem to flow of themselves from *Spohr*’s pen; then follows a Turkish allegro, replete with fancy and overflowing with the brilliant lustre of modern execution.”

A letter written home and others describe the succeeding concerts: “The first sacred concert on Wednesday morning was wonderful; it lasted from half-past 12 to 4 clock, and comprised in the first part many fine old things of *Purcell*, *Pallästrina* and others; and in the second and third parts the magnificent oratorio of *Händel*: “*Israel in Egypt*,” in which the choruses were executed with immense power, and the soli by the English church-singers in the most perfect manner. *Spohr* was inexpressibly delighted with it, and said, “English church-singers only are capable of rendering *Händel*’s sublime music in all its grandeur.” A peculiar custom which pleases me greatly is, that every time a chorus expresses the praise of God, or in any way adverts to God or Christ, the whole mass of people rise from their seats, and listen to it *standing*. — The order of the musical pieces in the evening concert was very much the same as in the previous one. It began with *Mozart*’s symphony in *E flat major*, which was followed by twenty other different subjects, among which were some pieces from operas by *Mozart* and *Weber*, and *Spohr*’s terzet from “*Zemira and Azor*,” which is never omitted at any English

musical festival. *Spohr* played with his former pupil *Blagrove* his charming concertante in a surpassingly fine manner, and the effect was if possible greater than yesterday. Our hospitable host, who is exceedingly assiduous in his attentions, and accompanies *Spohr* every time on going and returning, seems also extremely happy to be near him, and to joy in his high repute. To-day is, in the opinion of everybody, the grand and most important day, on which *Spohr's* oratorio is to be given. You all know that music, and how grand it is, but no one who was not present, can picture to himself what it was *here*, heard in such a place, faultlessly executed by such a mass, and listened to with such religious attention and enthusiasm. At and after the first part one remarked several exclamations of delight and wonder, but at the second a solemn emotion seemed to reign throughout the whole auditory, and more and more eyes became suffused with tears; not the women only, but strong men were deeply moved. And such an effect I consider as the highest and purest praise. They were happy moments for me also when afterwards crowds of gentlemen and ladies who did not like to intrude upon *Spohr*, came to me, to congratulate me, and assured me with much emotion, that this was the most sublime and beautiful thing that was ever composed, with many other similar expressions. The third part, which *Spohr* listened to with us with the greatest delight, comprised the requiem of *Mozart* and other pieces of sacred-music by *Mozart* and *Bach*. . . .”

The public papers gave a detailed account of the deep impression made by *Spohr's* oratorio, and among others the “*Norwich Mercury*” said: “The beautiful hall was crowded, nevertheless, even before the commencement, a breathless silence prevailed; a solemn religious sentiment reigned throughout the assembly. The inspired composer raised his staff — the staff descended — and mournful tones, low and faintly heard like distant wailings felt upon the ear, and made a powerful impression on the feelings: the brilliant hall seemed as though changed to a solemn temple — and every worldly thought was in an

instant dissipated. — The overture reveals the character of the whole; the succeeding introductory chorus of the most agreeable softness and purity seems to foreshadow a peace momentarily withheld from us by a characteristic sentiment of sadness. The ensuing recitative of St. John relates the treason of Judas, and this is immediately followed in striking contrast by the aria of the betrayer, in which the disorder of the mind induced by the reproofs of conscience is expressed with great power and truth by the accompaniment. Now begins the part of Mary, with a charming air accompanied by the female chorus, and which, replete with tenderest devotion, appeals to our inmost feelings. In a difficult but very expressive recitative St. John prepares us for the entry of St. Peter, who has denied his master, and in the air sung by him, replete with intensity of expression, the composer in good taste and with correct judgment expresses the distinction between the reproving conscience of the erring apostle and the preceding hopeless agony of spirit in the betrayer. In the succeeding chorus reigns a simple majesty, a confident reliance upon the justice of God, the expression of which is eminently successful. — In the scene which follows, in which the judgment hall is opened to us and Christ denounced before Caiphas, the inspiration of the composer has reached its culminating point: the manifold contending passions — the fiendish excitement of the populace, the humble resignation in the sorrow of the disciples, the exalted resignation of the saviour — all these are brought by him with such painful truthfulness of expression before the mind, that we feel it impossible to approach in music nearer to reality and truth than *Spohr* has succeeded in doing in his treatment of this pre-eminently tragic moment of the Redeemer's life,

The second part begins with an introductory funeral march, and a striking chorus of the disciples expressive of their sympathy with and lamentations for the fate of their master. The ensuing chorus of the priests and people, who wildly and savagely taunt the redeemer upon the cross, is in

our opinion almost the most powerful and wonderful passage in the whole work. The moving recitative of John and Mary is, moreover, intense in its effect, and their aria full of melody and grace, close upon which follows the gem of the whole oratorio, the unsurpassable terzet for two soprani and an alto, "Jesus, himmlische Liebe" (Jesus, heavenly love), with its sweetly soothing harmonies. This terzet is a master-piece of the purest finish; *Spohr* himself never wrote any thing more beautiful. The solemn earnestness of the chorus: "Allgütiger Gott," with the canonic entrata at the words: "In seiner Todesnoth," is indeed in conception and form the most original. In masterly recitatives John prepares us for the concluding scene, and after the last words of Jesus: "It is fulfilled," the low sound of distant thunder is heard, which continues as though warningly during the fine and truly pious quartet. And now the orchestra seems to burst all bounds, and to contend in one wild storm, which the powerful hand of the composer can alone direct and allay. We have already heard many musical representations of storm and tempest, but as yet nothing at all like this; and we think that this immense effect is derived from *Spohr's* seizing the powerful phenomena of nature more in their general grandeur than in their detail. We are struck with awe at the overpowering effect itself and with wonder at the mind that could so apply and direct all the resources of art. A recitative with splendid modulations leads to the short choral passage of the disciples, in which the divinity of the Redeemer is proclaimed, simply, firmly and powerfully. The final chorus, a prayer of the disciples full of sorrow and hopeful faith, is simple, melodious and elevated; a poetical outpouring in music, which must excite the sympathy of every human being who has a trusting belief in a future life. — When the last accord died away in its tragic grandeur, we looked around us — not a breath was to be heard, deep silence everywhere — all were impressed with feelings more powerful than they could express. It was a moment of holy reverential ecstasy — no noisy outburst of rapture, — the impression was too overpowering for

earthly utterance, — but it was a lasting one, and will assuredly never be forgotten.”

The English newspapers spoke also respecting *Spohr's* manner of conducting, and the “Spectator” said on the subject: “It is truly delightful, wonderful in precision and firmness of tact, and at the same time accompanied by motions plainly indicative of the effect proposed.” And again: “We see in *Spohr*, a man who has a clear comprehension of his object, and knows his work as thoroughly in all its details as in the whole. At the rehearsal, whenever a note was missed, he sang it, in whatever harmony it might chance to be, and in doing so his voice was very melodious.”

The letter previously referred to says further, in reference to the following days, under the date of September 20th: “Yesterday, before the commencement of the evening concert, a deputation from the committee waited upon *Spohr* with the request to play his concertino once more; this, however, he decidedly begged to be excused compliance with, and the more so, as he had already agreed to direct in person the overture to and air from “Faust,” with which the second part of the concert began. Immediately he entered the orchestra for that purpose, he was again greeted with loud and long continued applause, in which doubtless the audience expressed, besides, their sense of admiration of his oratorio, which, according to English custom, could not be applauded at the time of performance. To-day *Händel's* splendid “Messiah” was given for finale, which here also never fails to make its constant impression. And now at length the grand festival has terminated with all its pleasures and magnificences! It indeed required an inspired and corporeal strength of frame such as *Spohr* fortunately possesses, to hear in the short space of so few days the ordeal of six concerts of four and a half hours' duration each, besides rehearsals and daily dinner parties, with unimpaired freshness of spirit — not to speak of all the visits paid him and the strangest requests from far and near, with which he complied as far as he could. The last day with its scenes of

leavetaking, was also a very trying one to the feelings, and cost me I must confess, many tears. — The parting from all the kind people who, although we were strangers to them, had received us with such great heartiness, was very painful. When next I see you I will relate many wonderful instances of the amiability of these Englishmen, and of their admiration of *Spohr*, which even extended itself to me. But the estimation in which *Spohr* is held here in England, and the manner in which this is evinced on all sides is almost incredible". . . .

After so brilliant a success of *Spohr's* oratorio, and after he had himself witnessed, as the "Spectator" expresses it — "How the orchestra and singers competed to shew him that England was the country of all others best fitted for the performance of his oratorio," nothing could be more agreeable to him than the proposal made to him during his stay, to compose especially a new oratorio for the next Norwich musical festival, which would take place in 1842.

Scarcely was he returned to Cassel than professor *Taylor* sent him the English text of "The fall of Babylon," of his composition, the text of which, though much to *Spohr's* liking, it was necessary first to have translated into German, as he had not confidence sufficient in his knowledge of the English language to undertake the composition from the original text. Though the translation did not so completely succeed in a truthful rendering of the expressions and rhythm of the English text, as that this could subsequently be adapted to the composition without much alteration, it nevertheless sufficed so well for the desired object that *Spohr* could proceed at once upon a work which so greatly interested him. Filled with real inspiration for the task, he devoted thereto every leisure hour that remained to him from his numerous professional duties, nor did he rest until he had completed the whole and satisfied himself with its performance on the piano-forte at the St. Cecilia festival of 1840, that he had fully succeeded in it. In pursuance of an understanding with the Norwich committee a public performance of it with full or-

chestra was to take place in Cassel on the ensuing Good Friday of 1841 and a second at Easter 1842, but with these exceptions the work was to remain unused and in abeyance until the Norwich festival in the autumn of the latter year, and then first be made public simultaneously in England and Germany in both languages. —

But to return to the year 1840, which *Spohr* entered upon with great activity in the preparatory studies for the representation of the opera "The Lovers' Duel," which till then had never been performed in Cassel; for the principal characters of which he had just then found suitable performers. The first representation took place for the benefit of the relief fund, and with a very full house brought unusually good receipts, which however unfortunately were extracted from the treasury of the theatre on the following night in the most incomprehensible manner, and despite the well-secured locality in which the money was deposited. But a very small amount could then be collected to replace this loss to the relief fund, a circumstance which greatly marred the satisfaction *Spohr* had derived from the success of his opera, which had met with a most gratifying reception from the public.

About this time *Spohr* received an invitation from Aix-la-Chapelle to direct the musical festival of the district of the Lower Rhine, which was to be held there; on which occasion a very pressing solicitation for his leave of absence was addressed to the Prince on the part of the committee. This memorial had the desired effect; for shortly afterwards the Prince sent for *Spohr*, and tendered him of his own accord in the most friendly manner the leave of absence he had not yet solicited.

As every obstacle was now smoothed away, *Spohr* set out upon his journey at the end of May, and was not only received upon his arrival in Aix-la-Chapelle with serenades of welcome, but also on his putting up for each night at Frankfort and Cologne on his journey through. In the splendidly furnished house of the notary *Pascal*, in which Mr. and Mrs. *Spohr* found

a most hospitable reception, the succeeding days devoted to the necessary rehearsals passed quickly and agreeably. On Whitsunday, in the theatre, which had been converted into a music saloon, *Händel's* "Judas Maccabeus" was performed, of which some epistolary notices spoke as follows: "When *Spohr* entered the orchestra to conduct the oratorio he was received with enthusiastic applause; we had the best places in the first row reserved for us, exactly opposite to where the very prettily arranged mass of five hundred and forty-seven co-operators, brilliantly illuminated, presented a very charming coup d'œil. The music, which had already greatly pleased us by its splendid effect in the rehearsals, was now naturally heard to yet greater advantage. The solo singers — Mrs. *Fischer-Achten*, *Albertazzi* and *Müller*, Mr. *de Vrucht* from Amsterdam and Mr. *Fischer* — good as they were on the whole, did not make upon us the same impression of *finished* excellence as did the choruses, which completely charmed us." In the second concert also, in which besides *Spohr's* "Lord's Prayer," the overture to "Medea," the *A major* symphony of *Beethoven*, and *Mozart's Davidde penitente*, were performed, *Spohr* upon every entry and exit was greeted with unbounded applause, and at the termination a wreath of laurel was presented to him by two young ladies. In the third concert, of a mixed character, Mrs. *Fischer-Achten*, and *Albertazzi*, with the celebrated *Staudigl* of Vienna, were respectively heard and excited general admiration. The singing of all three, was each in its kind what may be termed of the most perfect finish. As worthy finale to the whole, the repetition of the last magnificent chorus from *Spohr's* "Lord's Prayer" followed, which again drew from the audience the most enthusiastic bursts of applause. . . ."

As on the following forenoon the brothers *Müller* of Brunswick gave a quartet concert in the "Redoutensaal," *Spohr* delayed his departure, at their urgent entreaty, in order to play his third double quartet with them, which was again also rewarded with its usual rapturous ovation. In this manner was this grand festival brought to a successful termination,

and the general satisfaction which it had elicited was but little detracted from by the reproving voice of Mr. *A. Schindler*, whose *cartes de visites* made him known as “*ami de Beethoven*,” and who in previous musical festivals had begun to distinguish himself by his disputes with *Mendelssohn* respecting his slow tempi in the conducting of works of *Beethoven's*, and now also in a similar manner found fault with *Spohr* for his manner of conducting the *A major* symphony. This — with the exception of the general disapprobation that it elicited — had no further result than that *Spohr*, at the urgent and reiterated desire of the committee, replied to *Schindler* in a short but decisive letter, but which, couched in *Spohr's* usual mild language, did not disturb the personal understanding of either during the festival.

After a few week's return only, to Cassel, and during the theatrical vacation, *Spohr* set out upon another journey and proceeded first to Gandersheim, where all his brothers with their families were assembled, to pay a last visit to their mother, who was dangerously ill, and who, in spite of her suffering condition, felt extreme pleasure in seeing them round her. Although she had not left her room for several weeks, and had therefore been unable to go up stairs to the upper story of the house, yet when she heard that *Spohr* was going to play something with his wife in the music-room there, she requested to be assisted to get up there, “to hear her loved son for the last time, and in fancy to dream away in listening to his tones;” and upon that occasion, seated in the midst of her children, listened to him with joyful emotion and interest. As on the days immediately ensuing a visible improvement in her condition seemed to have taken place *Spohr*, in full hopes of greeting his mother once more upon his return, continued his journey to Lübeck with a mind more at rest. But alas! his hopes were not realised, for before he returned to Gandersheim he received the lamentable announcement of her death!

From Lübeck *Spohr* proceeded to Hamburg, where he

arrived just in time to undertake the direction of his opera "Jessonda." The performance of the opera, in which Mrs. *Walker* as Jessonda, and Mr. *Reichel* as Dandau, especially distinguished themselves, was in every respect a great success, and there were immense applause and loud demonstrations in honour of *Spohr*. As it took place immediately after the close of the performances of the Italian operas, the "Hamburger Zeitung" gave a comparative notice in its next issue of these two different kinds of musical entertainment. It began with the words: "On Saturday the whole song-loving company of Italian operatic performers departed in high spirits; on Sunday, *Spohr* the German master took the director's chair in the town theatre to conduct his splendid "Jessonda" in person. With the *former*, abundance of noise, merriment, and somewhat of dissension, to-do, and submissive politeness — but *here*, calm, noble dignity, honest thanks, becoming demeanour, and permanent merit &c." Further on it adds: "The lovers of music in Hamburg celebrated on Sunday a real musical festival in the theatre; they were not only enabled to express aloud their recognition of the German master, but they had the opportunity also of drawing a comparison between 'Jessonda' and 'Lucretia Borgia.' In 'Jessonda' all is tender yearning, and sweet hope, the golden age of fond first love: in "Lucretia Borgia" Hyena-like cunning in the poison-venomed breast; nothing of love's purity, loves grosser passion alone; and in the same relative characteristic proportion is the poesy of the music." No one experienced more delight at this new triumph of *Spohr* than his enthusiastic admirer *Julius Schuberth*, the well-known music publisher, under whose hospitable roof *Spohr* and his travelling companions spent most agreeably the four days of their stay in Hamburg, which their kind host strove by every possible means, to render a series of festive pleasures and of distinguishing attentions. Among others a brilliant musical party was got up in which *Spohr* performed some of his quartetts, and was greatly charmed with Miss *Unna's* beautiful execution in his quintet for the pianoforte.

Upon this occasion *Schuberth* expressed so great a wish to publish some similar grander pianoforte pieces of *Spohr's* composition, that the latter was induced to write shortly after his return from Hamburg, his first trio for pianoforte, violin and violincello, and therewith at the same time fulfilled a wish that had been for years reiterated by Mrs. *de Malsburg*, the distinguished dilettante pianiste, to whom he then dedicated the work. This first trio by *Spohr* (Op. 119) was welcomed with great satisfaction by the musical world, and numerous journals far and near expressed their delight and thanks upon its appearance. The "Leipzig New Musical Journal" speaks of it in the following terms: "Although the great master has never written any thing of this kind until now, he nevertheless moves in this new *genre* with true artistic consciousness of power, and with genial freedom. The trio is one of the finest productions of the genius of *Spohr*, in which together with the greatest possible finish in form, a profusion of beauties of the first class, and master strokes of genius stand out in prominent relief. As the gem of the whole the scherzo and its trio must be mentioned. Here, as though at the stroke of the magician's wand, a fairy island of the blessed rises to the imagination, — we are environed as though by a garden of wonders, a blooming oasis of sound full of the deep glowing splendour of oriental colouring! . . . It is moreover exceedingly remarkable how *Spohr* here understood the way to unite two elements which are otherwise strangers and indeed usually antagonistic to each other: the *humoristic* and the *impassioned, elegiacally tender* element of *feeling*. . . ."

At the commencement of the year 1841 *Spohr* wrote a fantasia for pianoforte and violin on themes from his opera "Der Alchymist" (The Alchymist), the charming melodies of which were especially favourable to such a reconstruction (Op. 117, Vienna, published by *Mechetti*); an English psalm for soli, with chorus and organ accompaniment (Op. 122, published by *Simrock* of Bonn); and a song,

“Schill,” for men’s voices, with accompaniment of military music, written for the inauguration of *Schill’s* asylum for invalids at Brunswick, and which was next publicly given by the Casseler glee society at a concert for charitable purposes, and met with such general approbation that *Spohr* conceived the idea of sending it to Frankfort and therewith fulfil his promise of a contribution to the “Collection of small compositions to the *Mosart* institution.” Upon the same occasion he replied to a question which had been put to him concerning a qualified candidate to the first stipend paid by that institution, by recommending *Jean Bott* of Cassel, although but 14 years of age, and wrote of him in the following terms: “*Bott* is a virtuose on the violin and pianoforte and even now displays so remarkable a talent for composition, that I anticipate for him a brilliant future. He has been a pupil of mine on the violin for the last six months, and I never yet had one so clever. *Hauptmann* (his instructor in composition) says the same of him.” Supported by such distinguished recommendations the young musician, after the works which he had sent in had been submitted to the test, received the desired stipend for one year, followed up his studies under *Spohr* and *Hauptmann* with great zeal, and while yet a boy received an appointment in the Cassel “Hofkapelle.”

As *Spohr* had proposed to himself to pass the theatrical vacation this time in a trip to Switzerland, he determined upon going thither by the way of Stuttgart and Hechingen, in order to make the personal acquaintance of the reigning Prince of Hohenzollern-Hechingen, who at various times had written to him, and shown himself to be an enthusiastic lover of music by expressing his admiration of *Spohr’s* “*Weihe der Töne*” in terms of great praise.

As *Spohr’s* intended visit at Hechingen was known beforehand he was welcomed there upon his arrival in the most heartfelt manner. What took place during their stay here was thus described in a letter written home: “On the very first evening Kapellmeister *Täglichsbeck* and Court-Councillor *Schil-*

ling came to fetch us from Stuttgart, to drive us about the town, and for the purpose, as they said, of showing us the new concert-hall. But on our arrival there, to our surprise we found a numerous company assembled, and we were received by the Prince in the most gracious and friendly manner. After a short conversation, he led *Spohr* to an elevated platform, upon which the whole orchestra were assembled, and in front the *head Pastor*, *Reiners* (who was also contrebassist in the orchestra), who then addressed *Spohr* in a solemn and very impressive speech of welcome, at the conclusion of which the hall resounded with such an outburst of enthusiastic greetings, accompanied by music, that one might have thought it was filled with thousands of spectators. After this the Prince seated himself near *Spohr*, and to our great surprise and pleasure his splendid fifth symphony (*C minor*) fell upon the ear, and was performed throughout with the greatest finish and inspiration. During its performance the Prince evinced feelings of delight such as we had never yet witnessed, he could scarcely control himself; held *Spohr* constantly by the arm or hand, and not only whispered to him his admiration at every passage, but frequently gave expression to his feelings aloud. . . .

When the Prince had ascertained whether *Spohr* would sup or not in the dining-room below, he gave orders for a place to be reserved for him next to *Spohr*, although, as sovereign Prince, he had never yet partaken of a meal in a tavern. This supper was most remarkable and amusing: besides the Prince, who sat between me and *Spohr*, and was very lively, the whole *beau monde* of Hechingen was assembled to see *Spohr*, and each ordered supper according to his own fancy. Gentlemen of the chamber, clergymen, councillors, and their wives, mingled *pêle mêle*, did and said a thousand humorous things, and evinced an extraordinary musical enthusiasm. *Spohr* also was greatly pleased to have made the acquaintance of this happy, music-mad little spot of Germany. Music, particularly that of *Spohr*, is everything here, and ladies and gentlemen know his symphonies and quartets in a

manner such as very few in Cassel know them. If at eleven o'clock at night we had not risen to depart, in spite of the Prince, he would not have done so, for he is quite in love with *Spohr*. On the following morning before eight o'clock some one knocked again at our door, and his serene highness entered to enquire how we had slept in Hechingen. He then took us into the palace gardens and into the very pretty little palace itself, where we were to rehearse our trio for the music party that had been agreed upon for the evening. When we had played through the first part, he availed himself of the short pause to fetch his wife also, that she might share his pleasure, and thus we were saved the already arranged formalities of a court presentation. . . . We were invited to dinner at *Täglichsbeck's*; but scarcely was the dinner over, than the Prince came again with two court carriages, in which the whole company drove to the charming country palace "Lindig," the beautiful view round which filled us all, and *Spohr* especially, with the greatest delight. . . ." Of the evening court-party that followed, the same letter says: "In a vaulted saloon built especially for musical performances a double quartet was first played by *Spohr* in a manner quite wonderful, then the Prince sang several songs with much expression, and at last came our trio. The company, consisting mostly of officials and of but few musicians, was in raptures of delight, and gave evidence in their remarks of much musical intelligence. At last supper was served up at small separate tables each accommodating four persons; at the chief table *Spohr* was shewn to a seat next to the Princess, who evinced great amiability and kindness towards him, while the Prince in the best of spirits was my neighbour.

Our departure was fixed for the following morning, but the Prince declaring that he could not yet part with *Spohr*, expressed the intention of accompanying him one post, and then of dining with us once more, and "not to appear egotistical, to enjoy the pleasure alone," invited a whole party, who were to accompany us in his carriage. Two gentlemen

were sent on in our carriage, to order a dinner for sixteen persons at the small town of Balingen three leagues distant. . . . During the dinner, which consisted of a great number of excellent dishes, and at which also the champaign, brought from the Prince's cellars, was not wanting, the conversation was extremely lively and seasoned with many witty sallies, but always intermingled with the prominent sentiment of that musical enthusiasm, in which the Prince is really imbued to a singular degree.

At length however the long-deferred parting moment arrived! The cheerful voice grew silent, and a mournful stillness came over all; the Prince was quite beside himself; he embraced *Spohr* repeatedly, and when we had at length taken our seats in the carriage, he was once more surrounded by the company, and the Prince declared in the name of all that these days which had brought such happiness to Hechingen should be commemorated the following year by a festival."

Carrying with him the most agreeable recollections of the time they had passed there, *Spohr* and his wife now resumed their journey to Switzerland, the chief object of which was to enjoy the beauties of nature; but they were also enabled to combine therewith a visit to the musical festival which was about to take place at Lucerne. Although *Spohr* had declined the invitation which he had received at Cassel to direct at the festival, it afforded him nevertheless much pleasure to be present at it among the auditory. On the first day his oratorio: "Des Heilands letzte Stunden," was performed in the fine church of St. Xavier, in which the solo parts were sustained chiefly by dilettanti, with the exception of that of Mary, by Mrs. *Stockhausen*, who had already acquired great celebrity in it at the Norwich festival, and all of whom sang "with truly angelic voices." The choruses also, were excellent, and the orchestra only did not quite satisfy *Spohr's* artistic expectations. The oratorio excited here also general enthusiasm, but the travellers missed here "the deep devotion, the christian-like comprehension and pious mental resignation,"

which they had remarked in the English auditory of the year before. The oratorio was followed by a brilliant festal overture by *Lindpaintner* and another oratorio, the "Christi Himmelfahrt" (the Ascension), by *Neukomm*, at which the composer was also present, and was greatly gratified by *Spoehr's* approbation, who praised the choruses and the fugues. In the second concert, which was a miscellaneous one, the songs sung by Mrs. *Stockhausen* (mother of the recently celebrated baritone) were the points of attraction; but two distinguished dilettanti, doctor *Ziegler* and his sister, from Winterthur, were likewise much applauded in the duet from "Jessonda."

On the return journey from Switzerland, *Spoehr* stopped for a few days in Frankfort, in order to be present at the performance of *Gluck's* "Iphigenia in Aulis." The chief characters, Iphigenia and Agamemnon were ably represented by Miss *Capitän* and Mr. *Pischek*, and it afforded the more pleasure to *Spoehr* to hear the noble simplicity of this fine music rendered in a satisfactory manner, as his repeated endeavours to introduce an opera of *Gluck* into the repertory of the Cassel theatre had been always unsuccessful, and he could not hope for any better success for the future.

Scarcely was *Spoehr* returned to Cassel than he began with great zeal a new work, the plan of which he had conceived upon the journey, while in view of the magnificent Swiss mountains and lakes. When once more seated with his wife in the carriage, on his return from the Lucern musical festival, he told her with the greatest joy, that, inspired and refreshed with all the beautiful and pleasing impressions made upon him by nature and art combined, — he felt the strongest impulse to write a truly grand orchestral work, and if possible in some new and more extended form of the symphony. On the half-sportive reply which she made to him: "If the simple symphony does not give sufficient scope to your creative faculty, then write a double symphony for two orchestras, in the style of the double quartet," he seized the suggestion immediately with much warmth and thereupon sank into a deep reverie,

as though he were already beginning the composition, but soon after, added: that, exceedingly attractive as the problem was, it could only be successfully carried out if made subservient to the expression of a determinate idea — and that two orchestras should have given to them respectively the expression of a meaning and sentiment in strong contrast with each other. After long reflection and study; and after successive rejection of many self-proposed formulæ, he at length, as though by inspiration, seized the idea: to represent the two principles of good and evil in the human heart by the two orchestras, and to give the name to the double symphony of “Irdisches und Göttliches im Menschenleben” (the earthly and the divine in the life of man). The first subject should be called “Kinderwelt” (the world of childhood); the second “Zeit der Leidenschaften” (the age of the passions); the third “Endlicher Sieg des Göttlichen” (the final victory of the divine principle); besides which a special explanatory motto was to be given to each theme. After this manner the plan was conceived with a heart overflowing with pleasure, and then carried out with real enthusiasm. As regards the opinion respecting the degree of success with which he achieved the performance of so extremely difficult a task — that was of course a matter to be left entirely to the individuality of the hearers; but in the first performance of the work in Cassel under his own direction and in the spirit of its composer, it excited the greatest admiration in an attentively listening auditory; for while connoisseurs acknowledged the excellence of the music, apart from its special motive or subject, the feelings of the uninitiated were in a high degree moved and satisfied. Such is the report of it contained in one letter out of many written at that time: “Last evening *Spohr's* new double symphony for two orchestras took place; the larger and more numerous filled orchestra represented the evil principle, the small one, consisting only of eleven solo instruments represented on the contrary the principle of good. In the subject “The world of childhood” the latter orchestra maintains the superiority in a

marked and especial manner; sweet, innocent melodies bring back to us in the most enchanting manner the joys of childhood — its pretty sports, and wiles seem to rise before our vision, and we feel ourselves wholly wrapped in the bright dreams of the past; but the tones of the great orchestra remind us sorrowfully of the reality, and of the struggles of an earthly life scarcely yet begun. This subject, although gaiety is the prominent characteristic, yet speaks to us with a peculiar purity and tenderness of sentiment; and of a surety only a soul as pure and loving as that of our *Spohr* could so depict in tones the tenderness of the world of childhood.

The second subject: "The victory of the passions," begins with a very beautiful soft duet between hautboy and clarinet (depicting the first awakening of love), then soon the two orchestras mingle, as it were, wildly and stormily, a true picture of the human heart in the contests of this life; now here now there, the small orchestra is carried away with it, but even then it does not wholly cease to intervene as the good genius with moving and at times warning tones of tenderness. This subject, which is very rich in ideas and harmonies, appeared most to carry away the mass of the public, but the deepest impression made upon every sensitive heart was that made by the third theme: "Eventual victory of the divine principle." In this, the warning voice of the small orchestra becomes continually more impressive, the earthly passions for the most part become gradually subdued, one almost seems to feel how their force is broken, and then again at frequent intervals they seem to rally, until the solemn moment, in which after a general pause both orchestras at length, in solemn unison of accords announce the victory achieved by the good genius in all its power. From that point nothing but pious, pleasing sounds, as though from the realms of bliss, are heard, now alternately and now from both orchestras in unison, leading as it were the strangely-moved feelings of the auditory to the soft consolatory finale."

Notices of a similar character — sometimes estimating

the work from a purely human, at others from an artistic point of view were received from all sides after the appearance of the symphony, published as Op. 121, by *Schubert* of Hamburg; and then it soon became extensively circulated in the larger towns of Germany and England. This sufficed to afford *Spohr* the personal satisfaction, that in whichever way his intentions were considered, they were upon the whole rightly understood and estimated.

In November of the same year the Cassel musical world was thrown into a state of joyful excitement by the arrival of *Liszt*, who had gained the most enthusiastic applause in two concerts, which he gave in the theatre. Previous to his appearance in public, the more restricted circle of the lovers of music, had been greatly gratified by hearing him execute *Spohr's* quintet for the pianoforte at a music party given by *Spohr* for his entertainment, at which he played also several of his own compositions in an insurpassibly masterly style. *Spohr* took the liveliest interest in the performances of his colleague in art, but he paid him the tribute of his highest admiration for his wonderful playing *at sight*; and in after years, as a proof of *Liszt's* eminent talent in this respect also, he would cheerfully relate, how at a private soirée at Mrs. *von der Malsburg's*, accompanied by *Spohr* on the violin, *Liszt* played his "Reisesonata" and his only just then published fantasia from the "Alchymist," which was therefore *wholly unknown* to *Liszt*, but which to the great astonishment of all the auditory he played at sight with the most perfect finish.

On the 5th. December of this year the fiftieth anniversary of the death of *Mozart* was everywhere solemnized by the lovers of music; but as no public festival could be held in Cassel, *Spohr* got up a private performance of the society of St. Cecilia for the benefit of the poor, which was of a most solemn and impressive character. In the centre of the saloon the bust of *Mozart*, crowned with a laurel wreath, surmounted an altar hung with black drapery; on one side of the altar

was assembled the numerous auditory, and on the other the singers in deep mourning. The "*Ave verum*" of *Mozart* was first sung; then a short oration *in memoriam* followed, and the conclusion was formed by the swan-song of the departed master, his immortal requiem.

In the beginning of the year 1842, *Spohr* composed six four part-songs, for soprano, alto, tenor and bass (Op. 120, published by *Appel* in Cassel), then his second trio for pianoforte, violin and violincello, which in the course of the year was followed by a third. These were published by *J. Schubert* as Op. 123 and 124.

As during the winter *Spohr* had felt returning symptoms of his former liver-complaint, he availed himself this time of the summer vacation to go to Carlsbad, to drink the waters; but on the journey thither, at the pressing invitation of Mr. *von Holleben*, an acquaintance of his youth, and now, grand-master of the hunt at Rudolstadt, he paid him a visit. In the amiable family circle of his early friend the hours passed quickly and pleasantly in the retrospect of their youthful associations, and in the interchange of narratives and incidents of their later life; but amid all these, music was not wanting; and to hear it each time, an increased number of the lovers of music were invited. At these parties *Spohr* willingly played several of his newest compositions, and more especially afforded universal pleasure with the two trios, in which his wife took the pianoforte part. Upon these occasions he had more especially an enthusiastic auditress in the Princess von Bückeburg, who then resided in Rudolstadt, and who was very desirous of giving a fête at her own house in honour *Spohr*, had not Mrs. *von Holleben*, as she afterwards related with much triumph, following the example of the mayor of Norwich (whose comical proceeding towards the bishop of that place *Spohr* had previously narrated with much humour), declined in the name of her guests, although without previously enquiring of them, every invitation that they received.

During the succeeding month's stay in Carlsbad, *Spohr*

followed up most conscientiously the prescribed use of the baths and waters, and, besides the enjoined morning walks of several hours' duration, he after dinner made more distant excursions into the beautiful and by him already previously so much admired environs. Between whiles, however, he managed to devote many hours to the study and practice of his noble art, playing assiduously with his wife, and charming the circle of his more immediate acquaintance with his play. He was forbidden, while taking the waters, to indulge even in a slight degree his constant impulse to the composition of something new; nevertheless during this time he composed a song: "Tears," by *Chamisso*, which afterwards appeared in the "Album of Song" of *Rudolf Hirsch* (published by *Bösenberg* of Leipzig).

On his return to Cassel, *Spöhr* was painfully moved by the intelligence of the approaching departure of his friend *Hauptmann*, who had accepted the proffered appointment of Cantor at the *Thomas School* in Leipzig. However heartily he might have rejoiced to see *Hauptmann* exchange his place in the court orchestra of Cassel for one so much more befitting and worthy of him, yet for the moment the sentiment of sorrow was the prominent feeling, he that would thenceforth be bereft of the society and intercourse of a man, who through a period of twenty years had stood so near to him both as friend and as colleague in art. As *Hauptmann* was an active and highly esteemed member of the St. Cecilia society, upon *Spöhr's*, proposition, a farewell festival in his honour was given, at which the musical part of the entertainment consisted chiefly of *Hauptmann's* compositions. But as *Spöhr* was desirous of contributing at least one musical piece having especial reference to the occasion, he made choice of the pretty cantata composed by him for the "Golden Wedding" of his parents, which, with altogether new and appropriate words, inspired all hearers with the more interest as *Spöhr* took upon himself the violin obligato part that formed the accompaniment to the pianoforte.

Towards the end of the year *Spohr* wrote a "concert overture in the serious style" (Op. 121, at *Siegel's*, in Leipzig), which was performed at the first of the Casseler subscription concerts, and shortly afterwards at the Gewandhaus concert in Leipzig, and at both places produced the earnest and grandiose effect which the composer had in view. He next, at the repeated solicitations of publisher and friends, tried his hand at a species of composition which he had never till then tried, a sonata for the *pianoforte alone*, which after having accomplished to his satisfaction, he resolved to dedicate to his friend *Mendelssohn*. The latter having been made acquainted with it, wrote to him immediately and accompanied the expression of his thanks "for the high and distinguishing honour" with the following words: "If I could but express to you, how deeply I feel what it is to be thus able to call one of your works one's own particular property, and how my heart joys not alone in the distinction conferred, but equally in your friendly thought of me, and your constant desire for my welfare. A thousand thanks to you for it, dear Mr. Kapellmeister, and rest assured that to the best of my ability I will endeavour to make my now obstinate fingers bring out the beauties of the sonata properly. But that is again only a pleasure that I shall be doing myself, and I should so like to render you one in return for it," &c. The "obstinate fingers" must nevertheless have soon succumbed to the will of the master, for when upon a subsequent visit to Leipzig, *Spohr* had the gratification of hearing him play the sonata, it was everything he could have wished, and he recognised in such an execution the ideal which when composing it his fancy had conceived. Shortly afterwards, when it was brought out by *Mechetti* of Vienna, as Op. 125, and thereby became more widely known, *Spohr* received many gratifying notices of it from all sides. But he was especially taken by surprise on the receipt of a letter from Hungary, enthusiastic in admiration of the sonata, from the to him wholly unknown director of the choir, *Seyler*, of the Cathedral of Gran, in which he says among other things:

"Times innumerable, in the hours when my duties permit me some relaxation, do I charm myself at the piano with that sonata you dedicated to Mr. *Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*. Carried away by the magic of its tones I now take up the pen, in behalf of all pianists of feeling who may not always have the opportunity to be enchanted by your greater musical productions, to render you the warmest thanks for this beautiful work. . . . I would moreover earnestly entreat you to let me know whether we pianists may encourage the hope of having such another composition, with which with two hands alone, we may discourse with the spirit of the world-famed German hero of musical science?" &c. Although this and many other similar testimonies might have fully removed *Spohr's* former doubts as to whether he could contribute anything sufficiently satisfactory as a composer for the pianoforte, yet as may be readily imagined it was more in his interest to give his sole attention to the violin as concerted with pianoforte music; and his next works were six duets for pianoforte and violin (Op. 127), but which he could not finish and send in to his publisher *Julius Schubert* of Hamburg, who awaited them with much impatience, till after the lapse of several months, as just at that time he was more than usually occupied in perfecting his orchestra in the study of several larger works. He first of all wished to give *Bach's* "Passion" on the coming Good Friday, and although, with the same intention he had previously rehearsed it several times with all the musical strength he could enlist in Cassel, yet years had since then elapsed; and it cost him a very great exertion of his patience and perseverance to bring his orchestra and singers up to such a pitch of excellence as to ensure the public performance of that extremely difficult music in a creditable and worthy manner.

After *Spohr* had toiled for long months in practising the choruses and the long-wished-for day of performance was drawing nearer and nearer, the required permission of the Prince was suddenly refused, without any reason being assigned for it; and it was not until a second application had been sent

in, accompanied (to meet all eventualities) by a certificate of the clergyman, that he considered "the music selected for performance perfectly fitted for the church and for the day," that the desired permission was granted; and that to the great satisfaction of *Spohr* and every lover of music in Cassel, it could be performed on the day appointed. But these obstacles repeatedly thrown in the way of its production were very nearly the cause of *Spohr's* total departure from Cassel, for at that very time he again received from Prague a very advantageous offer of appointment there, respecting which he wrote as follows to his friend *Hauptmann*: "I am so weary of all the vexations I meet with here that even at my time of life I could almost make up my mind to leave this place, were not my wife so much attached to her family, and that she would be unhappy away from her friends. The opportunity now presents itself in an offer from the states of Bohemia of the post of director of the Prague conservatory of music vacant by the death of *Dionys Weber*, as an indemnification for the salary I should throw up here. Such a field for exertion and a residence in musical Prague would suit me well. But under the circumstances adverted to above I must of course decline it. . . ." In *Hauptmann's* very explicit reply to this he says among other things: "By *Spohr's* leaving under the pressure of such existing circumstances, Cassel will become a desert as regards music," but he nevertheless advises him to leave it without hesitation, and "will not yet relinquish the thought to see him move away from good, beautiful but *oppressed* Cassel, to majestic Prague."

But as *Spohr* in the meanwhile had come to a decision, and of his own impulse allowed his kindly consideration for his wife and her parents to prevail with him, their daily intercourse having become with him also a pleasurable habit, he wrote back in his reply the following few but characteristic words: "The interest and sympathy, which breathes throughout your kind letter was most gratifying to me also in regard to the Prague business. But I had already made up my mind

in the interim, and I am glad that my answer declining the offer had been sent to Prague, before my father-in-law knew anything about it, or with tears in his eyes could have to thank me for my decision. . . ." — In this manner *Spohr* remained in Cassel, to which he had become attached as to a second home, and he continued to discharge his duties with his customary zeal.

He now again gave his attention to the study of a difficult work: "The flying Dutchman" of *Richard Wagner*, which *Spohr* proposed to himself to bring out as a festival opera for Whitmonday, having heard much in its praise from Dresden, and upon perusal of the libretto, which had been sent to him, had found the subject so satisfactory in every respect, that he pronounced it a little master-piece, and regretted, "not to have met with a similar and as good a one to set to music, ten years before." When at the rehearsals he had become more closely acquainted with the opera, he wrote to *Lüder* respecting it, and invited him to the approaching performance in Cassel: "This work, although somewhat approaching the new-romantic music à la *Berlios*, and although it has given me immense work on account of its extreme difficulty, interests me nevertheless in the highest degree, for it is written apparently with true inspiration — and unlike so much of the modern opera music, does not display in every bar the striving after effect, or effort to please. There is a great deal of the fanciful therein; a noble conception throughout, it is well written for the singer; enormously difficult it is true, and somewhat overcharged in the instrumentation, but full of new effects, and will assuredly, when it once comes to be performed in the greater space of a théâtre be thoroughly clear and intelligible. The theatre rehearsals begin at the end of this week, and I am exceedingly desirous to see how the fantastic subject and the still more fantastic music will come off *en scène*. I think I am so far correct in my judgment, when I consider *Wagner* as the most gifted of all our *dramatic* composers of the present time. In this work at least his aspirations are noble, and that

pleases me at a time when all depends upon creating a sensation, or in effecting the merest ear-tickling," &c. Notwithstanding the apparent almost insurmountable difficulties, *Spohr* succeeded in giving one performance, which left nothing to be desired, and the work was most favourably received by the public. In full satisfaction to the author he felt impelled to write to *Wagner* to make him acquainted with it; upon which the latter in the fulness of his joy replied: "My very esteemed sir and master, I was really obliged to recover myself somewhat from the joy — from the rapture I may say — which your extremely kind letter afforded me, before I could undertake to write, and express to you the gratitude of my heart. . . . In order to enable you to understand the extraordinary emotion your intelligence produced in me, I must first calmly explain what were my expectations in regard to the success of this opera. From the unusually great difficulties which it presented I could expect but little from it, however good the musical and dramatic strength with which it might be put upon the stage, unless there was a man at their head who, endowed with peculiar energetic capacity and goodwill, would espouse my interests with predilection and in the face of every obstacle. That you, my highly-esteemed master, possessed beyond all others the qualifications for so energetic a direction, I well knew, — but whether you would consider my work sufficiently worthy of your attention to take so decided an interest in it, that was certainly the very natural doubt that made me despair more and more, the nearer the day of its announced performance approached; so that I confess I had not the courage to go to Cassel, to become personally a witness to my shame and to the realisation of all my fears. But I now see indeed that a lucky star has risen over me, since I have gained the sympathy of a man from whom an indulgent notice only would have been sufficient fame for me: — but to see him take the most decisive and crowning measures in my behalf, is a piece of good fortune which assuredly distinguishes me above many, and which really for the first time fills me with a sentiment of

pride, such as hitherto no applause of the public could have awakened in me" &c. With equal gratitude and kindness *Wagner* acknowledged the correctness of the omissions made by *Spohr* in the opera, in the which he "recognised but further proof of the true interest he had evinced for him," and this he reiterated in all his subsequent letters with the warmest expressions of attachment and esteem.

With the commencement of the theatrical vacation, *Spohr* made preparations for the journey to London, where he hoped to receive satisfaction for the disappointment of the refusal of leave absence in the previous autumn, to proceed to Norwich to conduct the much-talked-of performance of his oratorio, "The fall of Babylon." For months previously the committee had applied to that effect through the embassy at Cassel, to the Prince, but had met with a summary refusal, upon which *Spohr* received several letters from England, expressing how much they felt aggrieved by it, and lord *Aberdeen* especially, who had authorised the application to the Prince through the medium of the English embassy. Upon this the committee met in Norwich and sent a deputation to London to the duke of Cambridge, who expressed himself willing to write personally to the Prince in the most pressing terms. But without avail; after a lapse of two months his application was refused also, and both he and the whole royal family were not a little hurt by it. In Norwich, meanwhile, it was thought that every means had not yet been exhausted, and to *Spohr's* extreme surprise he suddenly received an enormous petition signed by a considerable number of the inhabitants of Norwich, beseeching the Prince in the interests of that city to allow *Spohr* to direct his oratorio there. Although he himself had now little hope of a favourable issue to this prayer, he was nevertheless greatly moved by the receipt of so imposing a document, and awaited a reply with the greatest anxiety. This however did not come; but the Hessian minister for foreign affairs, *von Steuber*, wrote the following letter to the wife of Mr. *von der Malsburg*, grand marshal of the court, by whom the petition

had been presented: "I have to announce to your Excellency that I delivered the petition in question, and urged personally all the circumstances detailed therein, but as you yourself feared, there is no hope of a successful result" &c. —

Although *Spohr* could not personally share in the triumph which this new oratorio achieved for him in England, he nevertheless received almost daily detailed epistolary accounts of the success of the festival, and at length also a whole box full of newspapers of every shade of politics, which seemed almost to vie with each other in expressions of admiration of his work. Of these, some few of the most conspicuous and characteristic in style of comment may here be cited: "The Times" says among other things: "The gem of the festival was *Spohr's* oratorio. The text is written with especial regard to the nature and the character of an oratorio, and the subject which *Spohr* has illustrated by the exercise of his talent is especially favourable to its exhibition. Three nations are represented: the captive Hebrews, the luxurious Babylonians and the Persians in their pride of conquest: these furnish materials for the most varied musical treatment by the composer, of which he has availed himself in the most admirable manner, and thoroughly understood how to adhere throughout the music to the identity and nationality of the different nations. His peculiar genius for the invention of beautiful melodies, and his power to enrich these with appropriate harmonies is also preeminently conspicuous in this splendid work." After a detailed analysis of the separate "numbers" it is further said: "The general opinion of the oratorio is this: It is a master piece of art, worthy to rank with "Die letzten Dingen" and "Des Heilands letzten Stunden." Emphatic as this praise may be, it is nevertheless just. Though from the same hand, the work is nevertheless essentially different from these. The former excite feelings of deep devotion and christian piety, in the latter we distinguish the character of the deity more in its majesty and omnipotence; Jehovah displays himself to us in acts of power by dooming the ungodly to punishment. The work

fulfils all the conditions of a true oratorio, and its performance was a triumph of English art. One thing only was deeply and generally deplored, that *Spohr* was prevented from being present at this triumph." In the Morning Chronicle, after similar enthusiastic expressions of opinion, follows: "In a word, the music is characterised by the whole power and peculiarity of *Spohr's* genius, and we may boldly assert that it is the grandest work written since the days of *Händel*." — The immense crowd that pressed forward to the hall to witness the performance is adverted to by all the papers, and the Morning Herald especially, speaks of it thus: "Although to hear *Spohr's* oratorio an unusually numerous auditory was to be expected, yet no one could have formed an idea of what actually occurred. From an early hour in the morning carriages arrived in numbers, filled with the rank and beauty of the county. . . . The whole interior of the building was immediately filled; where a resting-place could be found for one foot only, fool-hardy individuals were to be seen located in the most dangerous situations, and every one seemed determined to endure the greatest inconvenience rather than forego the pleasure of hearing *Spohr's* oratorio. Many persons clambered up to the roof, and from thence in at the window, but numbers were compelled to remain outside, and content themselves with looking down from their dizzy height upon the crowds below. This is no exaggeration, but strictly true; and that such a degree of interest should have been evinced for a new musical work, is certainly an event that stands alone in the history of music," &c. While *Spohr* found at home a cheering distraction in these gratifying accounts, his admirers and friends in England were considering how to make him some compensation for his loss, and before the close of the year he received an invitation to London during his next vacation, to conduct his oratorio.

Upon *Spohr's* arrival in London in June 1843, Professor *Taylor*, who had conducted his oratorio at Norwich, in his stead, and who had discharged that difficult task most credit-

ably, had so far made all the preliminary preparations that after a few rehearsals, its performance could take place at the Hanover Square Rooms to his full satisfaction. The public also gave vent to their enthusiasm, with the most reiterated and demonstrative applause, and at the conclusion greeted him with three cheers. Nevertheless all those who had been present at the festival in the fine St. Andrew's Hall at Norwich, were not by any means satisfied that *Spohr* had not been permitted to hear his work under equally favourable circumstances, in all its grandeur, and he received the invitation to direct a second grander performance, which the Sacred Harmonic Society were desirous of giving with their chorus of five hundred voices in the large concert-room of Exeter Hall. But as he had proposed to himself to devote the yet remaining week's leave of absence to a journey to Wales, of the scenery of which he had heard so much spoken in praise, and as the time moreover appeared to him much too short for a careful study of his oratorio, he returned an answer declining the invitation. Upon subsequent pressing solicitation, nevertheless, and repeated conferences, he at length yielded, and it was then agreed that the requisite rehearsals should be made during *Spohr's* absence, so that he would have nothing more to do than to take upon himself the direction of the performance, and meanwhile he could proceed undisturbed upon his projected journey. Highly necessary to him, also, was such a refreshing change of scene after the almost overwhelming fatigues of the musical entertainments and dinner-parties of the preceding weeks, at the greater part of which he himself took an active share in the performances. At the last concert of the Philharmonic Society, in which he directed the performance of several of his compositions: "Die Weihe der Töne," the overture to the "Alchymist," and the flower duet from "Jessonda," but first himself executed his concertino in *E major* upon the violin, he was, as recorded by the "Spectator" — "welcomed like a Prince, the whole company rising spontaneously from their seats to salute him" . . . and when he

had concluded his artistic and indescribably charming play, the irrepressible outbursts of delight shewed how completely he had touched the heart-strings of his auditory. At the end of the concert the directors conveyed to him moreover the wishes of the queen, that he would play once more in an extra-concert to be given for that purpose. As he could not well refuse this, the concert took place a week afterwards, and comprised in its compendious programme among other things a symphony of Mozart, the ninth symphony of *Beethoven*, with the choruses, and three of *Spohr's* compositions: concertino in *A major*, the overture to "Macbeth," and Tristan's air in "Jessonda," in which *Staudigl* was twice encored.

Respecting the further circumstances of the concert a letter written home contains the following: "The extra-concert of yesterday was a very brilliant success, and afforded us high enjoyment. The appearance there of the Queen was an event of which all the newspapers and everybody also spoke beforehand with much interest; as since her coronation she had never yet appeared at one. When she entered the room, dressed in a plain black robe, but wearing a good many diamonds, the public clapped their hands and rose from their seats, upon which the soli and chorus sang "God save the Queen" with great effect. During the entre-acte, the Queen sent for *Spohr* to the adjoining apartment, where she discoursed with him for some time in a very flattering manner, and advised him during his further journey in England to travel *incognito*, otherwise in every town he would be annoyed and intruded upon in the same manner as in London. Prince Albert and the King of the Belgians entered also into conversation with him, and he was much edified by their remarks. Several persons whom we knew, who sat near the Queen, laid great stress upon the circumstance that upon *Spohr's* appearance in the orchestra, she and her husband bowed very profoundly, and clapped their hands very warmly," &c. At further music parties he experienced great pleasure in hearing his trios, quartets, airs and duets from his operas, and songs, executed

with the most perfect finish, and was always much delighted with the wonderfully pure execution of the favorite English glees. Upon these occasions he was not at all disturbed by the enormous quantity of musical pieces which were brought forward, for with his inexhaustible nerve and power of endurance he was fortunately enabled to compete with the English.

As a curiosity of the kind the following programme may be adduced, of a musical festival got up by Mr. *Alsager*, then co-editor of the Times, in honour of *Spohr*:

**Queen Square Select Society.
Musical Festival in Honour of the arrival
of Spohr in London.**

Sunday July 2, 1843.

Act. 1.

Double Quartet No. 1	Spohr.
Quintet-Pianoforte, Flute, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon	Spohr.
Double Quartet No. 2	Spohr.
Nonetto	Spohr.

Déjeuner à la fourchette.

Act. 2.

Quintet	Spohr.
Ottetto	Spohr.
Double Quartet No. 3	Spohr.

To commence at 2 o'clock — Déjeuner at 5 —
Second act to commence at 7.

This festival, which was in every respect successful, and got up with princely magnificence, must have been the more gratifying to *Spohr*, when he saw how the company, consisting of fifty persons, listened until late in the evening with admirable perseverance and wrapped attention to his tones, without evincing the least sign of weariness. When gratified beyond measure by a festive testimonial so unusual, he felt called upon to express his very great thanks to Mr. *Alsager*, he found to his great surprise on the following day among the mass of letters which he constantly received, one also from him expressing his heartfelt thanks, which concluded as follows: "May you

enjoy all the happiness that can result from the consciousness that you are a benefactor to the world and communicate happiness to others in a circle still increasing and never ending.”

Upon their pleasure trip on the 12th July *Spohr* and his wife were accompanied by Professor *Taylor*, in whom they found both a well-informed and amiable guide and companion. They visited Winchester, Portsmouth, Southampton, Bath, Bristol and Wales. With the natural beauties of the latter *Spohr* was so much charmed that in many parts he considered them to surpass Switzerland, and all that he had ever seen. On the return journey to London, he was loud in his expressions of admiration of the beauties of Cheltenham, and of the fine university of Oxford. Though in accordance with the advice of the Queen he had thought to make this little journey *incognito*, nevertheless his arrival soon became known in each town, and the composer of “*Die letzten Dinge*,” the piano-forte arrangement of which he found in almost every house, was received by every one after his own manner, with the highest honours, upon which occasions many incidents occurred that either greatly amused or moved him. Meanwhile, in London, every possible exertion had been made, and upon his return, *Spohr* found that his oratorio had been studied with such faultless precision, that as he wrote word in a letter home “at the grand rehearsal he was really much moved both with its excellent execution, and the conviction that such a number of persons totally stranger to him, and for the most part engaged in business (who in London have indeed but little leisure time) should have devoted their evenings to a late hour, during his absence of eight days, to the study of this difficult work, from pure love of it, and to afford him an agreeable surprise.”

The performance itself is then thus described: “Imagine a gigantic hall with places for 3000 persons, crammed full, head above head; in a balcony apart, as the bill expresses it

'Madame *Spohr* and Friends' looking down upon the scene. Opposite the magnificent and stupendous organ and on all sides around it, an orchestra and choir of singers numbering five hundred persons, grouped in the most charming manner; in that orchestra *Spohr* enters, and at the same moment the whole public and orchestra rise from their seats, all waving handkerchiefs and hats and shouting long and loudly altogether "Bravo, Hurrah!" But no sooner did *Spohr* lift his *baton* than all sat down, and a deep silence of anxious attention reigned. Then resounded through the spacious hall the first moving accords of the overture, like music from another sphere. The whole performance proceeded now grandly and as though with one impulsive inspiration in all. A solemn thrilling emotion pervaded us, and at many powerful passages, such as "Er regiert auf ewig (he rules for ever) Hallelujah!" — "Du nur allein bist Gott" &c. (Thou, and Thou only art God), — then it was as though all mankind had assembled to praise God with the purest harmony. But doubly wonderful at such outbursts of powerful grandeur is the ever-recurring entry at the right moment of the tenderest shades of expression. . . . Three airs and the grand chorus of the Persians were encored with vehement acclamation. At the conclusion the people, at a loss to find a new and further way of expressing their rapture, demonstrated it more prominently by mounting at once upon the benches. When at length *Spohr* had made his way through the mass of those who pressed forward to shake hands with and congratulate him as he passed on to the door of the hall, I observed with astonishment that the whole company remained behind, and whispered to each other, which induced me to think something important was still to take place; when after a time the noise broke out anew and *Spohr* was again vehemently called for. Upon this two gentlemen led him back once more, and having informed him that the public much wished him to address a few words to them, he at length determined to do so, and made a short speech in German, which although they did not understand, was very gratefully

received by the assembly. Hereupon the President stepped forward, and having delivered a long address to *Spohr* in English, which was repeatedly interrupted by applause and cries of "Hear! hear!" he presented to him in the name of the company a large silver salver with a beautifully engraved inscription commemorative of the evening festival," &c. — This solemn concluding scene crowned all that *Spohr* had yet experienced, and the sad moment of parting from hospitable England now approached. *Spohr* himself was painfully moved by it, although the earnest solicitations of every kind which poured in upon him, gave him little time for calm reflection. Daily from various quarters did he receive the blank sheets of albums with the request for some souvenir from his own hand, many of which yet awaited their execution and kept him occupied at his writing-table up to the time of his departure. After he had satisfied these last requests even, and at length embarked on board the steamer, he good humouredly remarked to the crowd of friends and admirers who had collected to bid him farewell: "There is now indeed scarcely a lover of music in England who has not my autograph," — the steamer was hailed from the shore, and on looking in that direction he saw a boat rowing fast towards them, and shortly, several gentlemen came on board, bearing numerous albums that had arrived too late, with the entreaty that *Spohr* would write something in each during the journey down to Gravesend, whither they would accompany him with that view! Actually also, did *Spohr* comply, and writing, he left the shores of England, and so made the parting moments somewhat less painful to him!

Early in the month of October 1843, a meeting of the Philological Society was to take place in Cassel, and the generally expressed wish to honour the same with some musical performances was the more natural, from the means

necessary thereto being more especially at command there. Upon *Spohr's* recommendation the president of the society and Gymnasial-Director *Weber* proposed the performance of "Antigone" at the theatre, with *Mendelssohn's* choruses; and *Spohr* expressed himself ready to comply with the wishes of the magistracy to give a performance of his oratorio: "Der Fall Babylons" in the church, for the benefit of the poor of the city. As, however, the permission of the Prince could not be obtained for both, the foreign guests were obliged to content themselves with a private performance of "Antigone" in the spacious hall where they held their sittings, upon which occasion Councillor *Niemeyer* read the tragedy, and the choruses were sung with accompaniment of two pianofortes by the singers of the men's choral society under *Spohr's* direction. In this manner all went off very effectingly, and the strangers were so well content that they not only expressed their most heartfelt thanks to *Spohr* for his exertions, but at their next sitting, (at which he assisted with much interest) unanimously voted also a letter of thanks to *Mendelssohn*. *Spohr* himself was also so much pleased with the spirited and truly original music "that he now exceedingly desired to hear it also with full orchestral treatment. But as under the present overruling circumstances in Cassel this was not to be achieved, he shortly afterwards gave a repetition of the reading of the tragedy in the same manner, for a charitable purpose, but in a more spacious building, by which means a wider circle of the lovers of music were enabled for the first time to become acquainted with the interesting work.

About this time *Spohr* began to turn his mind seriously to the composition of another opera, which probably arose from the frequency with which the libretto of operas were sent to him. But as none of them satisfied him, and as upon a closer examination, either the treatment of the subject or the form of the musical pieces did not suit him, he conceived the idea of writing with the assistance of his wife the text of a libretto, and chose for subject the once favorite drama

of Kotzebue: "The Crusaders," which seemed to him particularly adapted to the object he had this time in view, namely, an entire deviation from the customary form, as well as from the style, of his own previous opera music; in composing the whole throughout as a musical drama, without unnecessary repetitions of the text and ornamentations, and with a constantly progressing development in the treatment. As soon as the libretto was completed, he set to work with great spirit, and in a short time completed the first act, which he immediately arranged for the pianoforte, and had performed in his house by a select number of the best dilettanti, in order to convince himself of the success of his work, before he proceeded further with it. When he became satisfied how clearly and intelligibly, even without the aid of scenic representations, the lifelike expression of his music depicted the different characters and situations, and how powerfully both singers and auditory were impressed by it, he proceeded with confidence with the next act, and finished that also, all but the instrumentation, before the commencement of the theatrical vacation.

As object of his customary summer journey *Spohr* had selected Paris, in order to shew his wife the grandeur of that brilliant capital, and to visit at the same time the international exhibition of industry, which, as the first of its kind, had so greatly excited public attention, that strangers from every quarter of the globe flocked to it to behold the endless treasures in every department of manufacturing industry, and to admire the products of art. With the daily concourse of the visitors it was however almost impossible to obtain an undisturbed and attentive view; it was therefore matter of no small self-congratulation for *Spohr* and his wife to receive a ticket of admission procured by especial favour upon a day that had been set apart for the King's visit to the exhibition, when exhibitors only were permitted to be present. By this means they were also furnished with the rare opportunity of seeing the venerable *Louis Philippe*, accompanied by his wife, his sister *Adelvide*, and the then still very youthful Duke *de*

Montpensier, pass close before them, and to hear distinctly the King's remarks upon the various manufactures displayed.

At a season of the year so unfavourable for musical performances of any consequence, *Spohr* could scarcely hope to enjoy that gratification, but there, in a foreign land he had the un hoped-for satisfaction of an enjoyment he had vainly endeavoured to obtain at home, that namely of assisting at a performance of "Antigone" with *Mendelssohn's* choruses, which on that evening had been given for the thirty-second time in succession at the Odéon theatre to constantly crowded houses, and *Spohr* was deeply impressed with the excellence of the music and of the scenic arrangements.

But although the best musicians were for the most part absent from Paris, he nevertheless passed some very pleasant hours in the society of Mr. *Habenec* (director of the conservatory), *Panseron*, *Halevy*, *Auber*, *Berlioz*, *Adam*, &c. On the part of the conservatory it was also greatly wished to shew him some mark of attention, although under the circumstances some difficulty was experienced in doing so, as appears from a notice in a Parisian journal, in the following words: "Mais que faire pour prouver à l'auteur de 'Faust' et de 'Jessonda' que la France sait apprécier dignement ses belles compositions et leur auteur? Une idée vient soudain à un ami de Mr. *Habenec*: 'L'époque des magnifiques concerts du Conservatoire est passée! dit-il; eh bien! écrivons partout, réunissons une partie de nos artistes, et essayons de tresser une petite couronne à *Spohr*, en exécutant devant lui un de ses plus beaux morceaux.' Le projet est approuvé, on n'avait que quelques jours pour le mettre en œuvre. Des circulaires sont adressées à vingt, trente lieues de Paris. Des hommes d'un talent supérieur, qui n'auraient pas quitté leur *dolce far niente* à prix d'argent, se hâtent d'accourir, et la Société des Concerts, à l'exception de deux de ses membres qui sont maintenant en Italie, se trouve réunie à Paris comme un seul homme. La salle du Conservatoire est ouverte, tous les exécutants s'y rendent, et *Spohr* y est amené comme spectateur

unique; c'est pour lui seul que soixante-dix-huit musiciens sont là, c'est aux pieds de sa gloire qu'ils viennent se prosterner, et lui font entendre son chef-d'œuvre symphonique: 'La création de la Musique' ('Weihe der Töne')."

Upon *Spohr's* entry into the room he was greeted with loud applause, and addressed in a speech by Mr. *Habenec*, who invited him to direct his symphony in person, as at the next winter concerts, the society intended to perform it, and it would therefore be of the utmost value to all, to be initiated by the personal direction of the composer himself into its mode of performance. In reality, also, many indications and repetitions were necessary upon the occasion, until every thing, went satisfactorily; but *Beethoven's* pastoral symphony, which followed, and had been frequently played, was executed with that masterly precision for which that orchestra was so celebrated.

On the following day *Spohr* set out on his return to Cassel, which he again left after the lapse of a few weeks, to comply with an invitation from his native town of Brunswick, where they had long desired to give a grand musical festival in his honour, and had therefore made arrangements to have a performance of his oratorio the "Fall of Babylon," at the end of September.

On his way thither he received a foretaste of the Brunswick festivities, at Seesen, where he slept the first night, and where he had passed the first years of his childhood; the inhabitants of that place having been thereby induced to believe that it was really his birth-place. He was greatly surprised at being welcomed immediately upon his arrival here with a kind and most hearty address and ushered with much ceremony into the handsomely decorated grand room of the hotel, where he found disposed in a wide semicircle, symmetrically arranged, a selection from all the musical talent of the young folks of Seesen, with the members of the choral society of that place; who, besides singing several songs, executed a chorus from "Die letzten Dingen" and a pleasing poem composed especially for the occasion, addressed to *Spohr*, and arranged for four voices.

Brunswick was no less demonstrative in celebrating the presence of its illustrious guest, and detailed notices of an impromptu festival given to *Spohr* are furnished by several letters, in which the brilliant external display, as well as the expressive and appropriately arranged musical entertainment, appealed with equal force and charm to the heart and mind. A cantata set to music by *Methfessel* for female voices and chorus, "Welcome to *Spohr*," was first sung, with a soft accompaniment of wind instruments placed out of sight in the background, and executed by them in the most finished manner. But scarcely had the guest so honoured time to express his thanks at the conclusion of this pretty song, when quite unexpectedly, and in striking contrast with it, a powerful chorus of male voices from the opposite side of the hall began a second "festive song to *Spohr*," which prepared the minds of all for the enjoyment of the subsequent more exhilarating festivities.

On the following day *Spohr* directed the performance of his oratorio: "The fall of Babylon," in the Ægydian church, which was here also executed with great spirit, and was well received. The circumstance that its performance took place in the same church in which more than 60 years before he was baptised as an infant greatly increased the interest of the day, and gave occasion to several other poetic effusions.

A grand concert of a mixed kind concluded the festivities of the day; the first part of which comprised the overture to "King Lear" by *Berlioz*, directed by Kapellmeister *Müller*, airs from "Oberon" and "Jessonda" an adagio for violin by *Spohr*, executed by concert-director *Müller*, and *Maurer's* concertante for four violins (played by *Müller*, *Zimmermann*, *C. Müller jun.* and *Jean Bott* of Cassel); the second part consisted of *Spohr's* fifth symphony, *C minor*. Thus ended this pleasing festival, the heartfelt pleasure at which was alone saddened to *Spohr* by thoughts of his beloved father, who, up to the few months preceeding his death in Brunswick had passed the last years of his life in Seesen, but who, after watching for years at a distance the career of his son with pleasurable pride, could now no longer

be a witness of the high esteem and honour shewn to him by his native town.

At the end of the year *Spohr* received an invitation to a grand musical festival at New-York — the first from that side of the Ocean, to the direction of which he had been unanimously selected at a general meeting of the society of music of that city, “as the first of all living composers and directors of music.” There were to be two performances of sacred and two of secular music, and above all his oratorio of the “Fall of Babylon” — “the fame of which had spread from England to the new world,” was to take precedence. Although such a proposal might have had great attractions for *Spohr*, and have yet more incited his constant love of travel; and although in New York he would have moreover the pleasure of seeing again his daughter *Emily*, who with her husband and child had emigrated there some years before, yet he soon made up his mind to decline it, as a residence there of the few weeks only which the duties of his place would have perhaps permitted, would scarcely have compensated for the fatigues of a long voyage.

On New Year's Day 1845, *Spohr's* new opera, “The Crusaders,” was performed for the first time; and not only upon the first night, but upon the quickly succeeding further performances, it met with an unexampled brilliant reception for Cassel. *Spohr*, who had looked forward with particularly anxious expectation to the success of this work, was much gratified at this result, and wrote to his friend *Hesse* as follows: “That my opera should have made so deep and lasting an impression upon the public, the lesser number of which only consisted of musically educated persons, I ascribe to the truthful character of my music, which aims only at representing the situation perfectly, and discards all the flimsy parade of modern opera-music, such as florid instrumental soli and noisy effects.* And I was furthermore exceedingly pleased

* To similar observations in a letter to *Hauptmann* he adds: “I could not make up my mind to write *one* unnecessary note for the sake of brilliancy.”

that the singers, who did not find in their parts anything of that which usually gains for them the applause of the crowd, evinced nevertheless at every rehearsal a greater interest in it, and a zeal to study such a I never before observed in them. But the result shews also, that this style of song, which is so convenient for every one, and affords the opportunity of displaying the best tones, and the degree of feeling and expression which each is capable of, is a very grateful one; for never were our singers so applauded, and after the second performance they were all called for together on the stage." The newspapers having circulated a great deal in praise of the new opera, and it having become more extensively known by the piano-forte arrangement which was shortly afterwards published by *J. Schuberth*, it was soon announced for performance at other theatres in Germany, viz. at Berlin, Dresden, Brunswick and Detmold; but in other (catholic) cities, like Munich, Vienna &c., objection was taken to the libretto, which had been asked for examination, and therefore the performance was abstained from.

As *Spoehr* was invited to direct personally the first performance of his "Crusaders" at Berlin, he was desirous that this should take place during his theatrical vacation; and although he was apprised from there that it was the most unfavourable season of the year for it, as the chief characters of his opera could not be satisfactorily represented till after the return of the absent principal singers, he nevertheless though it more advisable to do without their assistance, than by a longer delay to make the possibility of his coming a matter of uncertainty.

At the beginning of the holidays he therefore set out on the journey, but first to Oldenburg, to direct a grand concert there, the receipts from which were destined for the institution of a pension fund for the members of the orchestra there.

The programme had been previously cast by *A. Pott*, the resident director, his former pupil and enthusiastic admirer, and consisted wholly of *Spoehr's* compositions, viz.

concert overture in the serious style; latest violin concerts in *E minor*, executed by the composer; duett from "Jessonda" sung by Mrs. *Schmidt* of Bremen and Mr. **; clarinet concerto, played by Mr. *Köhn*, member of the ducal orchestra; grand symphony in *C minor* (No. 5); the "Lord's Prayer," for solo, chorus, and orchestra.

Upon *Spohr's* arrival he found the whole of the musical pieces (the last two of which he himself directed) so well practised under *Pott's* direction, that at the rehearsal he was greatly pleased by it. At the public performance, also, every thing went off so well, that Mrs. *Spohr* expresses herself in a letter home as follows: "We felt as though we had been suddenly transported to England. The music, the finished execution, the spacious, densely filled, and splendidly acoustic building, the enthusiastic applause and admiration — all were in truth *grandly English*. And all this was doubly surprising and gratifying when one thinks that this took place in a small town with a population of only 12,000. Orchestra and singers, three hundred persons in all, worked together with wonderful harmony. Every piece of music was excellent, but the impression made by the 'Lord's Prayer' was *quite indescribable*, and the words in which *Pott* shortly before expressed himself to *Spohr*, after a rehearsal of it: 'Happy is the man who can pray with such intense devotion; peace must indeed dwell in his soul,' presented themselves here in their full import to my mind. *Spohr*, also, was of my opinion that he had never heard the piece so well played, for even in the finest shades of the expression there was nothing more to be desired. The whole platform from which *Spohr* led the orchestra, and the steps leading to it, were strewn with the finest roses; the whole front of the orchestra was decorated with wreaths; and beneath his bust, crowned with laurel, were the words '*Louis Spohr*' in gigantic letters, composed of roses and laurel artistically interwoven. While the assembly were listening with the deepest attention to the splendid tones, it was little imagined by any one how every enjoyment was embittered to *Spohr*, by a sudden seizure with

cramp in the stomach, which soon became so intense, as he himself afterwards related, that when conducting the symphony and the 'Lord's Prayer' he had great difficulty in keeping himself erect. After the concert we were to have assisted at another *fête*, given by the minister *von Beaulieu* at his house, in honour of *Spohr*; but under the circumstances this became impossible, and we hastened home with all speed, where, having arrived, *Spohr* went immediately to bed, and was obliged to resort to sedatives; but the cramp would not yield to them, and the doctor who was called in, vainly endeavoured to afford him relief, so that the pain became intense. At this very moment when *Spohr* lay in such a sad condition of suffering that he expected every moment would be his last, a singular and striking contrast was presented to his position, by a monster torch-light procession followed by a large concourse of the inhabitants of Oldenburg, which halted under our windows, and began a grand serenade with the overture and several choruses from 'Jessonda,' performed by all the native and foreign musicians then in Oldenburg, together with three choral societies. Many other pieces were to have been performed, but by *Spohr's* wish, *Pott* availed himself of the opportunity when a loud cheer was raised by the crowd, to address them in his name from the window in a speech of thanks, which, although improvised, was as well put together and delivered as though he had long previously studied it. But when he acquainted them with *Spohr's* illness also, a general depression spread immediately through all present, and the previously so joyous assembled serenaders, withdrew in silent sadness. In our house, meanwhile, all was remarkably lively: the hostess, Mrs. *Oppermann*, wife of the Councillor *Oppermann* of the high court of appeal, was entertaining two carriage-loads of guests who had come to the concert, together with all her acquaintance, who had assembled below to be enabled to hear the serenade music better. In strange contrast with these intervened the various attendances to the necessities of our

patient, the messages to the apothecary, my agony of mind — in fact, it was a situation singular indeed of its kind.

“At midnight the physician came again, wrote some new prescriptions, and gave fresh instructions, but all in vain; the attacks of the cramp lasted till near 3 o'clock, when they became at length less violent, and by degrees entirely ceased. But as the doctor was of opinion this morning that the motion of the carriage might be prejudicial to the invalid, we have deferred our departure, and the more so, as we could be nowhere better off than here, where we receive the kindest attention and care from the whole household, and everything that the heart can wish is at our service. To-day, *Spohr* received from the Grand-duke a splendid diamond ring as a 'souvenir of Oldenburg,' which greatly surprised and pleased him. The Grand-duke had intended to place the ring himself on his finger at the dinner to which he had invited him, but this also was defeated by the illness that overtook him,” &c.

Spohr having determined by the advice of the physician to proceed as soon as possible direct from Oldenburg to the baths of Carlsbad, and devote the remainder of his vacation to the re-establishment of his health by drinking the waters, he thought he should no longer be able to fulfill his promises — to direct his “*Jessonda*” at Bremen, and the first performance of the “*Crusaders*” at Berlin — wherefore with a heavy heart he sent off letters announcing his inability to proceed to those places.

Meanwhile, however, the remarkable efficacy of the Carlsbad waters, which he had already several times experienced, evinced itself again upon him in so satisfactory a manner, that in the very first week of his stay the idea suggested itself to him, to remain for the present but a fortnight only in Carlsbad, and defer following up the cure of its waters to the following summer, so that his so unwillingly abandoned purpose of proceeding to Berlin might yet be carried out. In this hope he continued the course of baths with such un-

wearied perseverance and unswerving confidence that he was enabled to reach Berlin in sufficient time to assume personally the direction of his "Crusaders."

At the first grand rehearsal, in which he was introduced by *Meyerbeer* and Councillor *Küstner* to the assembled company of the theatre, he became convinced that his work had been studied with particular pleasure and predilection, and the song parts, although not filled by stars of the first magnitude, were nevertheless impersonated, as regarded the chief and secondary characters, in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. On the evening of the performance he was received upon his appearance with the greatest enthusiasm by the public, and loudly called for after every act. On the following night the opera was repeated with the same brilliant success. The public papers contained also the most favourable notices of each, and the "Vossische Zeitung" especially gave an article from the pen of *Reilstab* to this effect: "We have to speak of an event in art that will occupy one of the most prominent and honourable places in the history of our stage — the first performance of *Louis Spohr's* new opera, "The Crusaders." The merits of the master have already made themselves so prominently conspicuous, and the worth of that which we possess in him is so fully acknowledged, that it is not necessary even to speak of the character of his music nor of its effects upon the development of art in the present day What we had to expect as a whole, every body knew who knows the artistic direction of *Spohr's* genius — and who does not know it? That we should hear a work that might be ranked with the noblest of the kind to which the composer has adhered throughout his whole life, was to be expected. But we must frankly confess, we had not dared to hope for so much freshness, so many instances of fiery power, as the now more than sexagenarian master actually gives us! Throughout the whole, he is the same we have long known; but in many circumstances of the detail he presents us with numerous gifts of new and finished excellence — and also of

frequent brilliancy. His muse has never addressed herself to the crowd; she never sought to seduce by coquettish and alluring advances; her language, her movements have been alone animated by a noble spiritual inspiration, and sought to win the heart by purity and dignity. We had at first intended to indicate the most prominently beautiful passages, which we consider it just to particularise; but we soon found them so numerous, that we were compelled to content ourselves with a selection. In the first act we recall to mind the singular freshness of Baldwin's greeting; Emma's devout song: "Dass ich die Braut des Himmels bin," the effective and ominous mingling of the tolling of the funeral bell in the discourse with the porteress; the first strong physiognomic delineations of the abbess Celestina, in the words: "Ich kenne Dein Geschlecht — Dein Schicksal führt Dich her;" we remember some features that designate the same character and its impassioned ebullition, as: the soft transition of the orchestra after the words: "Ihr sollt das Mädchen lieben;" and the subsequent words: "Gerichtet hat ihn Gott! — die Mutter weint, — die Tochter büsst, — dem Todten sei verziehen;" which are of the deepest and most impressive effect from their musical treatment. — The march of the Saracens in this act is also of most original colouring, and recurs again in the third act, where it is connected with that which has gone before, and is handled in so startling and beautiful a manner in the orchestra, that the public expressed their delight at the return to it there by a general outburst of applause. — If we cite fewer passages in the subsequent acts, it is not that these were poorer, but not to weary the reader's patience with the enumeration of individual parts; and indeed the power of the music increases with the interest of the subject treated. The recognition scene between Balduin and Emma, Balduin's threat at its conclusion, and the whole finale of the second act, form striking moments, which always ensure the admiration of the hearer. In the third act, the duet between Balduin and Bruno

is a fine master-piece of music, and the conclusion, the despair of Balduin, replete with energetic force, and instrumented in a truly powerful manner. The battle chorus of the Turks, from its prominent difference of colouring, excited the enthusiasm of the auditory, who followed the conformity of the opera well sustained throughout from that part to the end, with the most lively interest. We must also acknowledge the zeal of all the performers But no less are thanks and honour due to the public! They have this time shewn themselves fully sensible of their office of judge and reward-giver, and gave that unremitting attention to the work throughout which is most expressive of the admiration and interest it awakened. Scarcely any fine passage passed unnoticed by more or less warm demonstrations. . . . The day thus terminated in a triumph for long years of meritorious services, and in a day of honour for this particular work, which bears witness to the wealth in artistic riches possessed by the composer, and in what sure keeping and governance they are in the hands of our highly esteemed master;" &c. — Passing over other similar notices, a criticism (signed H. T.) may be adverted to here, for its strikingly harsh contrast with the former; overflowing with dissatisfaction and every kind of reproach of this opera, and which although not among the other papers now before us, is still remembered by the family as one that greatly surprised them by its contents. In cases of this kind *Spohr* always laughed at the angry zeal of his friends, affirming that every one had a right to express his personal opinion freely, but at the same time with the remark: "When a piece of music is really good, no reviling critic can take from it an atom of its merit!" —

Though the brilliant success of this opera, which *Spohr* had written under circumstances of particular predilection, constituted the most important moment of his eight days' visit to Berlin, he passed the previous and subsequent days in the

most agreeable manner in the amiable family circle of Professor *Wichmann*. But not alone in the hospitable reception accorded him and his wife, which afforded them all the delights of a charming domesticity, did *Spohr* experience the highest gratification; for from other quarters also marks of attention were shown him yet more demonstrative of the honour in which his genius was held.

Especially gratifying as were to him the attentions of his colleagues in art, *Meyerbeer*, *Taubert*, *Hub. Riess*, and others, he was not insensible to the tribute of acknowledgment paid to him by the King; and the honour of an invitation to the royal table was yet more enhanced in worth to him, from its being communicated to him at the King's request in a personal visit from the celebrated *Alexander v. Humboldt*. Of this royal dinner party, at which, besides *Humboldt*, *Tiek*, *v. Savigny*, and other personages of note were present, who emulated with each other in pleasing and intellectual conversation with the King and Queen, *Spohr* always spoke with much pleasure in later years. More especially, however, he would recur to the following amusing incident:

Between the King and *Spohr*, who was seated opposite to him, rose an ornamental centre-piece of considerable height, in the shape of a costly flower-vase, which whenever the King was desirous of addressing his conversation to *Spohr*, greatly interfered and prevented him from seeing his face. Upon each occasion, the King was obliged to stoop in order to look round the inconveniently intervening object, until growing impatient, after having made several signs to the servants to remove it, which they appeared not to have understood, the King seized it with his own hand, and removing the obtrusive ornament procured for himself an unimpeded view across the table to *Spohr*. — On the last evening, while the *Wichmann* family and their guests were seated in the illuminated garden saloon in friendly chat, they were greatly surprised by the sudden entry from the obscurity of the garden of several dark figures, which were followed by a constantly increasing number, until

the whole of the members of the royal orchestra, with *Meyerbeer* and *Taubert* at their head, assembled, upon which the senior member presented *Spöhr* with a beautifully executed golden laurel-wreath, while *Meyerbeer*, in a speech of much feeling, thanked him "for all the grand and beautiful things which in his enthusiastic love of true German art he had hitherto created, and especially for this his excellent work, "The Crusaders," &c. This discourse upon the evening of his taking leave, spoken with warmth and sincerity by such a man, could not fail to make a deep impression upon *Spöhr* and every person present, and it was followed by a silence the most profound; until professor *Wichmann*, who was the first to recover his self-possession, approached *Meyerbeer*, and to the just praises conveyed in his excellent speech, replied with much humour in the words: "Positively, *Demosthenes* was a mere stump orator in comparison to you!" at which the cheerful tone of the company was magically restored, and *Spöhr* then returned thanks in a concise yet feeling manner. Besides this handsome present from the royal Berlin orchestra, he took back with him to Cassel another souvenir of his stay there, viz. his own bust executed by professor *Wichmann*, which on account of its speaking resemblance and artistic excellence has always been greatly admired both by connoisseurs and the general public.

Scarcely had *Spöhr* returned to Cassel than he was again upon the move, and this time to Bonn, where on the 11th. of August the inauguration of the monument to *Beethoven* was to be celebrated. To the invitation that had been sent to him many weeks before, to conduct a portion of the musical performance upon the occasion, he had at first, it is true, replied declining it, as a special leave of absence would have been necessary for him to proceed thither, and after having already applied for one the year before to direct the Brunswick musical festival, he did not like to make a similar application so soon. It was however shortly announced to him in a second letter, that the committee of the festival having been informed that the

Prince was then staying at Cologne for a few days, they had despatched a deputation thither to invite him and the Countess *Schaumburg* to the approaching ceremony in her native town of Bonn, and to solicit at the same a leave of absence for *Spohr*, which had been graciously granted. As no further obstacle now intervened, *Spohr* lost no time in proceeding thither, to lend his personal assistance at the grand festival, which had drawn together from far and near the musical youth of Germany, to do honour to the great master whose memorial was to be inaugurated.

Of the festivities preceding and subsequent to the uncovering of the statue — the launching of the steam-boat "*Ludwig van Beethoven*," the excursion to Nonnenwerth, the grand procession, the pyrotechnic display, illumination, banquet and ball — all these things have been so frequently described verbally and in writing by many who were present at the festival, that we will here only concisely advert to its musical features.

In the first grand concert *Beethoven's* mass in *D major* and the ninth symphony were performed under *Spohr's* direction, and as the published accounts of the festival express it, "both these works, which present very great difficulties, were performed with the most finished execution, so that this concert alone, combined with the sight of the hall in which it took place, was well worth the journey to Bonn." On the following day, *Beethoven's* grand mass in *C major* was performed at the celebration of divine service in the minster church, and upon the uncovering of the statue a festive cantata by *Breitenstein* was performed under his direction. At the second grand concert in the hall *Spohr*, by the desire of *Lisst*, again directed a part, while the services of the latter, as an active member of the committee, being continually required in various departments, with the exception of his performance of *Beethoven's* piano-forte concerto in *E major*, he confined himself to the direction of the *C minor* symphony and some "numbers" of the *Fidelio*. The third, so-called musicians' concert, was subjected of a necessity to many changes of the fourteen pieces of which

its programme consisted, as, besides the Princes who were already arrived, the King and Queen of Prussia, the Queen of England with her consort, and other exalted personages were expected at the solemnities of the inauguration of the statue, and *Liszt* did not like to begin his festive cantata before their arrival. But it became at length necessary to make a beginning, and scarcely was the first "number" of *Liszt's* cantata concluded, than the royal personages made their appearance, and the assembled company saluted them with the national-hymn: "Heil Dir im Siegerkranz;" after which *Liszt* had the whole cantata repeated; upon the conclusion of which it was left to the two Queens to make the selection of the next musical-pieces which were to be performed in their presence. It was thus, that not only the pieces of the programme were changed from their announced order of succession, but several of the pieces were necessarily wholly omitted on account of the delay that had thus occurred; and the musical part of the festival was brought to a termination in a somewhat unsatisfactory manner, and without a real and proper conclusion in the opinion of a majority of the auditory. A chosen few, however, among whom was *Spohr*, received an invitation to the grand court concert, given by the King of Prussia in honour of his exalted guests at his palace of the Brühl, in the neighbourhood. *Meyerbeer* directed, and the programme consisted, with the exception of some pianoforte-pieces performed by *Liszt*, of song-pieces only, sung by the most eminent vocalists, Messrs. *Mantius*, *Pischeck* and *Staudigl*, with Mmes. *Lind*, *Garcia* and *Tucsek*.

After a summer so busily occupied, and in which *Spohr* was deprived of all leisure for composing, the impulse to write something new was awakened but the more strongly upon his return to Cassel, and several instrumental compositions followed each other in quick succession, to which style of art, since the termination of his opera, his whole mind again more especially addressed itself. About this period he wrote his 15th. violin-concerto (*E minor*, Op. 128, published by *Schubert*),

which he first played at the subscription-concerts in Cassel, and in July 1845 at the previously mentioned musical festival at Oldenburg, and then in commemoration of that event dedicated it to *Poll* the music director of that place. This was followed by the sixth quintet for stringed instruments (*E minor* Op. 129, published by *Breitkopf & Härtel*); and in the course of the winter by a quintet for pianoforte, two violins, viola and violincello, in *D minor* (Op. 130, published by *Schubert*); the 30th. quartet for stringed instruments (Op. 132, published by *Breitkopf*); and a quartet concert for two violins, viola and violincello, with orchestra — the latter of which was played at the next subscription concerts, and by the addition of the rich instrumental accompaniment proved especially adapted as a simple quartet for performance at a concert in a spacious building. Before it had appeared in print (Op. 130, at *Schubert's*), it was sent for from London and Vienna, and especially asked for at Leipzig, at which place the directors of the Gewandhaus concerts were always extremely desirous of being able to announce in their programme a new composition in manuscript by *Spohr*. Such upon this occasion was also the sentiment of *M. Hauptmann* in a letter to *Spohr*: "Everything coming from you, old or new, always finds the most favourable reception here: one can easily judge from the applause whether a thing merely pleases, or whether it makes a deep pleasurable impression, and that is always the case with your things. Either song or instrumental music of yours is always listened to with real predilection, the concert-loving public finds itself then in an atmosphere that suits it; and in this manner also the quartet concerto (with the execution of which I was not altogether satisfied) met with a very warm approval. To my mind it is perfectly *Spohrisch*, i. e. as masterly, as it is replete with feeling: the great difficulties attending such an undertaking are not in the least perceptible when listening to it, and as in your double quartets, the greatest clearness is always apparent in the most scientific combinations, which cannot always be said of other compositions that overstep the limits of the ordinary;

that is, what the initiated understand and consider as high art, but which the mere hearer of feeling finds pleasing and which put him in good humour," &c. The correspondence upon these subjects was chiefly conducted by *Mendelssohn*, who also made the proposition to introduce the third act of the Crusaders as a whole, in one of the concerts there, and afterwards announced to *Spohr*, who was of opinion that *this* opera in particular was not very suited to the purpose, his entire satisfaction: "The first time I saw your work in Berlin, the third act appeared to me the most spirited, and finest in the whole opera, and I was convinced that it would be very effective in a concert. You seemed to doubt it, and therefore I am the more pleased that yesterday's performance of it made so great an impression, which, to judge from the attention of the auditory, the applause and their observations, appears to me very evident. . . The chorus was about two hundred strong, and the hymn in *H major*, the chorus for male voices in *C major*, and then the scene in the convent, sounded wonderfully fine. A thousand hearty thanks for this enjoyment, and for all the many beautiful things for which we are indebted to you. . . . Unfortunately I was not able so to manage that the direction of this concert would fall to me; but it went so well under *Gade*, and he had made himself so well acquainted with the whole work, that even you would scarcely have desired more," &c.

In striking contrast with these friendly words of acknowledgment from so competent a judge, a circumstance occurred about the same time, which from being considered by *Spohr* himself as the only one of the kind throughout his long musical career, may not be undeserving of special mention here. Though the opera of the Crusaders had been sent by special request to Dresden for performance there, upwards of a twelvemonth, it had never yet been put upon the stage; and during that time the directors *Reissiger* and *Wagner*, as also the celebrated tenor *Tichatscheck*, for whose splendid voice the part of Balduin seemed almost purposely written, had repeatedly expressed by letter their pleasure with the work, and their

regret at the constantly recurring delays, which deprived them of all hope of *Spohr's* proceeding there to direct it — when suddenly, to his great astonishment, the score, not a little worn and defaced, was sent back from Dresden, without honorarium, and even without the libretto, to which *Spohr* had with much trouble appended many remarks and directions in writing; accompanied only with a letter from the manager, Mr. *von Liättichau*, the very unsatisfactory contents of which may be inferred from the following accidentally preserved copy of *Spohr's* reply:

“Your Excellency’s letter of the 15th. inst. has very much surprised me. I never could have believed, after my long, and I think I may say honourable, career as a musician, that I should have lived to experience the indignity to have the score of one of my works — not sent in as the first essay of a beginner for examination and trial, but *ordered* by previous application — sent back to me in such a manner. What you are pleased to assign by way of explanation or excuse for so strange a proceeding, I cannot possibly accept; for it was no fault of mine that the opera was not brought out at the appointed time, and both soon enough and frequently enough had I drawn attention to the circumstance that I could obtain no leave of absence out of my vacation time. How the opera, which is known by nobody in Dresden, should now have lost the charm of novelty I can as little understand, as that the contents of the opera, which were already known to you when you ordered it, should now all at once be found objectionable, while here and in Berlin, it has not met with the least objection in its present form, nor formerly, when performed in the shape of a play throughout Germany. Had your excellency felt any anxiety lest the opera would not remunerate for the time given to its study, and the expenses it might entail, you could assuredly have found some relief for your doubts in the many numerously attended performances which have already taken place here, in Berlin, Brunswick, &c. It is difficult for me also to conceive how the work of an old experienced com-

poser should be rejected by a theatre which does not disdain the rapid works of beginners and dilettanti such as and The insult that has been offered to me is therefore wholly inexplicable, and I must console myself with the reflexion, *that it is the only one of the kind offered to me during my long career as a composer*, and I congratulate myself that I am not under a theatrical directorship which so little understands how to respect the feelings of a veteran artist," &c. To this a reply was received from the vice-manager, *K. Winkler*, who at the request of *Mr. von Lüttichau*, expressed his regret that the return of his score, which had become necessary, should have so much offended *Spohr*, assuring him furthermore, that the chief reason for it was the words and subject of the opera, during the ecclesiastical excitement.

But that *Spohr's* view of the matter was not much changed by this attempt at exculpation is evident from a letter he wrote to *Richard Wagner*, in which he opens his whole mind to him, and having first expressed his disappointment that *Wagner's* opera "Tannhäuser," which he had proposed to the Prince to have performed in celebration of his birth day, had not received the official sanction, he avails himself of the opportunity to detail fully to him the incomprehensible conduct of the Dresden theatrical directorship. *Wagner*, who then first was made acquainted with all the particulars, gave expression to his anger thereat, in so plainspoken a manner, that the publication of his letter, highly interesting as it is, would perhaps be unadvisable. After the prospect of a meeting with *Wagner* in Dresden had been dispelled in so vexatious a manner, *Spohr* proposed to him a *rendez-vous* at Leipzig, where he intended making a stay of a few days on his contemplated journey with his wife to Carlsbad. As *Wagner* seized the idea with much pleasure, the long desired personal acquaintance was at length made with the greatest mutual satisfaction, and letters addressed to the family at home speak among other things of this meeting, and other interesting circumstances that occurred during their stay there:

“We are passing our time here most delightfully, and enjoying a very feast of the finest music. On the very first evening we had a music party at *Hauptmann's*, where trios by *Mendelssohn* and *Spohr*, in which each master took part, were played; and the company, consisting chiefly of connoisseurs in art, were highly delighted indeed. On the following day a very charming dinner-party was given at *Wagner's* suggestion, who has himself no means of entertaining friends at Leipzig, by his brother-in-law, Professor *Brockhaus*, in honour of *Spohr*. We there made the acquaintance of his sister and several others of his relatives, all of them most intellectual creatures, and enjoyed ourselves greatly. Besides the members of the family, *Heinrich Laube*, the author, and his very learned wife, were present, who gave a yet more lively impress to the conversation. We were most pleased with *Wagner*; who seems every time more and more amiable, and whose intellectual culture on every variety of subject is really wonderful. Among other things he gave expression to his sentiments on political matters with a warmth and depth of interest that quite surprised us, and pleased us of course the more from the great liberality of feeling he displayed. We passed the evening most delightfully at *Mendelssohn's*, who did his utmost to entertain and please *Spohr*. This family has for me something very idealistic about them, they present a combination of inward and external features, and withal so much beautiful domestic happiness, that one seldom sees the like of in actual life. In their establishment and whole manner of living there is so much unassuming modesty amid all the obvious luxury and wealth around them, that one cannot but feel at one's ease. And to me most gratifying is his unmistakable attachment to and esteem for *Spohr*. He himself played a most extremely difficult and highly characteristic composition of his own, called ‘*Siebenzehn ernste Variationen*’ (seventeen serious variations), with immense effect; then followed two of *Spohr's* quartets — among them the newest (the 30th.) — on which occasion *Mendelssohn* and *Wagner* read from the score with countenances

expressive of their delight. Besides these, the wife of doctor *Frege* sang some of *Spohr's* songs, which *Mendelssohn* accompanied beautifully; and in this manner the hours passed rapidly and delightfully with alternate music and lively conversation, till midnight drew on unobserved, and at length gave impressive warning to break up. *Wagner*, who was obliged to return to Dresden the following day, came to take leave of us, which both to us and to him was a sad moment. But after he had left, he was frequently the subject of our conversation, for he left us the words of a new opera which he had written (*Lohengrin*) to read, and which is exceedingly original and interesting. . . . Yesterday at the dinner-table we made another agreeable acquaintance, that of the poet *Robert Prutz*, who being seated exactly opposite to us, introduced himself, sustained a very lively conversation, and appeared quite charmed at meeting with *Spohr*. After dinner a performance was arranged in the church by the pupils of the Thomas School, where, without any accompaniment *Spohr's* psalm with double choir, 'Aus der Tiefe' (out of the deep) and his favorite motet by *Bach*: 'Ich lasse Dich nicht' (I will not leave thee) were sung. . . . Last evening an extra concert was given for *Spohr* in the well-known Gewandhaus, which, under *Mendelssohn's* direction, was in every respect a brilliant entertainment. The programme consisted wholly of *Spohr's* compositions, of which we had not been apprized before hand, and which was on purpose to take us by surprise. It comprised: 1stly. The overture to *Faust*; 2dly. An air from *Jessonda* sung by the prima donna, Mrs. *Meyer*; 3dly. Grand violin concerto played to *Spohr's* complete satisfaction by the wonderful boy *Joachim*; 4thly. Songs with clarinet accompaniment, by the wife of doctor *Frege*, *Mendelssohn*, and a first-rate clarinetist, so wonderfully executed that it went to the very heart; 5thly. 'Weihe der Töne,' which for years has been a bright-shining star with the Leipzig orchestra. At the request of *Mendelssohn*, *Spohr*, although he would rather have remained a hearer only, took the direction of the two last

subjects, on which occasion he was greeted by the orchestra and the auditory, which consisted of about two hundred select guests, with a storm of applause, as he had also been saluted with upon his entrance. The whole was a grand elevating festival, and for *Spohr* a deeply-felt gratification. *Mendelssohn* was extremely amiable, and the whole evening as though intensely happy, which proved how foreign to his mind is every feeling of jealousy. This evening the last music party will meet at *Vogt's*, where *Mendelssohn* proposes to himself an especial pleasure, not only in taking part in *Spohr's* first trio as pianist, but as *viol* in his splendid third double quartet."

In this manner up to the last moment was *Mendelssohn's* thoughtful and kind attention evinced to *Spohr*, and upon his departure on the following morning, when the numerous friends who had accompanied us to the railway-station had taken leave of him, he was, as the further accounts of the journey express it, "the last of all, who, as the train at first proceeded slowly, ran for a considerable distance by the side of the carriage, until he could no longer keep up with it, and his kindly beaming eyes were the last that left their expression on the minds of the travellers from Leipzig," little anticipating indeed that it was to be their last meeting on this side of the grave!

Scarcely had *Spohr* arrived in Carlsbad, than he received a pressing invitation from the Landgrave of *Fürstenberg*, president of the society of music of Vienna, to direct there two grand performances of his renowned oratorio, "The Fall of Babylon," upon the occasion of a festival at which 1000 singers would assist. But as this was to take place in November, and it would be necessary to ask for another "extraordinary" leave of absence to comply with the invitation, this was applied for through the Austrian embassy. But notwithstanding the signature of "*Metternich*" gave its imposing weight to the application, the Prince refused compliance, and thus not only was *Spohr* prevented going, but the performance of his oratorio was necessarily deferred to a more favourable opportunity.

Among the various incidents which this time occurred in agreeable relief and interruption to the daily routine prescribed for taking the baths, was first a concert given by the violinist *Ernst*, of which a letter speaks as follows: "The concert of so celebrated a virtuoso was quite an event for Carlsbad, and afforded us much pleasure. Besides the song scene of *Spohr*, he played several of his own things, some of which were very beautiful, curious compositions replete with all manner of difficulties and wonderful artistic resorts for display, and which he executed with great precision and ease; but although he played *Spohr's* concerts with much care and great expression, yet we have not only heard it played by *Spohr* himself, but by his talented pupil *Jean Bott*, much more correctly. The overcrowded house presented a curious spectacle, for not only was the space allotted to the spectators, but the whole stage also, occupied by the public, which sat round disposed in a large semi-circle," &c. But amusing scenes of another kind also occurred at Carlsbad. One day a good-natured invalid visitor of the baths took it into his head to give a little treat to the fifteen young serving-women attached to the baths, at which several hundred spectators were present; and above all, *Spohr*, with his characteristic good humour, took great pleasure at the sight of the assembled girls, dressed in their uniform (white gowns, green spencers, and pink aprons), each with a fresh-gathered rose in her hair, seated at a long table, and looking around on all the spectators with eyes beaming with pleasure as they partook of their treat of coffee and cake. At another time, by a similar but anonymous kind-hearted individual a parcel was sent to *Spohr* containing two enormous herrings, remarkable samples of their species, with the laconic inscription appended to them: "I love *Spohr's* music! The great German *Spohr* will not despise the accompanying quite fresh herrings, a very rare, but permitted dish here. Carlsbad June 6." Though *Spohr* had always been used to receive a great variety of presents, and frequently of the strangest kind, as tokens of

esteem and admiration, yet he had never before received one of so surprising and comical a kind, at which, with *Ernst*, who happened to be present at the moment he received them, he laughed very heartily, and then without much speculation or care as to who the anonymous donor might be, ate with much relish the delicious fish, as a change from the scant prescriptive supper permitted to the bath patients. As the greatest moderation not only in physical but mental exertions and enjoyments formed part of the bathing cure, *Spohr*, as a conscientious patient, had at first considered it a duty to refrain from every musical excitement, particularly from that of composing, until the impulse became so strong within him that he thought it more prejudicial to suppress by force than to give some form to the vivid ideas that floated across his fancy; and thus with unforced readiness flowed from his pen the last part yet wanting to complete the fourth pianoforte trio which he had already begun in Cassel; and it being as it were the bubbling and overflow of the gaiety of his spirits, he was accustomed to call it by way of souvenir of the benefit he derived from the bubbling springs of Carlsbad, "*Der Sprudelsatz*" (The bubble piece). As however there was no good player on the violincello in Carlsbad, he thought he should be obliged to wait till his return to Cassel for a thorough performance of the trio; but during a short stay at Meiningen on his return journey, *Edward Grund*, the already frequently mentioned music director, with incredible diligence took all the requisite measures for getting up a quartet party on the same evening in his house, where *Spohr* had the unexpected opportunity of hearing his trio, with the aid of his wife and the distinguished violincellist *Metzner*, for the first time, which afforded also no little delight to the company present. As it also soon became a favorite piece with the musical circles of Cassel, *Spohr* kept it by him for a long time in manuscript, before he sent it to his publisher, *Schuberth*, who looked forward with truly restless impatience to the appearance of this trio of *Spohr's* in order to make it public. (Op. 135.)

In the beginning of the year 1847 the day drew near at length, the celebration of which had for weeks beforehand set the natives of Cassel on the tip-toe of pleasurable expectation, that, namely, of his twenty-fifth year's jubilee as director at the court theatre of Cassel. The lively interest taken far and near in this festival evinced itself in so many demonstrations of attachment and esteem towards the individual thus honoured, that a published account of them written by Dr. *Frederick Oetker*, the proceeds of which were devoted to charitable purposes, formed a complete pamphlet, for a short extract from which we have alone room here:

“Early on the morning of the 20th. January, the recipient of the day's honours was awakened from his slumbers by a serenade played by his pupils *Jean Bott* and *A. Malibran*, who, assisted by musicians of the court orchestra, performed his second double quartet. This was followed by a long succession of congratulatory visits from relatives, friends, pupils, and admirers of all classes and from every quarter, who came to express their wishes for his health and happiness. From the society of St. Cecilia there came a well selected deputation, composed of representatives of soprani, alti, tenori and bass, in whose name the secretary *Knyrim*, the only remaining original member, expressed in hearty words their grateful acknowledgement of the many services rendered to art, and to the society in particular, by the honoured jubilant. These were succeeded by the postmaster-general *Nebelthau*, as member of the council of state, who presented *Spohr* a congratulatory address in writing from the chief magistrate of Cassel, and then the music director from Göttingen, Mr. *Wehner*, delivered a wreath of laurel from that place, accompanied with a congratulatory poem, and with a diploma nominating *Spohr* an honorary member of the singing association of Göttingen. Accompanied with a most obliging letter the King of Prussia sent to him the order of the red eagle, third class, and the Prince, who had some years before already conferred upon him the Hessian order of the lion, forwarded to him upon this occasion a

further mark of distinction, nominating him music director-general, with grant of official character at court. The rescript of this patent was personally handed to *Spohr* by the chamberlain *von Heeringen*, who the previous year had been nominated intendant-general of the court theatre, in order at the same time to express both his good wishes and the high esteem he felt for *Spohr* as a man and as an artist, which he moreover proved upon this occasion by the splendid festal performances he had ordered at the theatre in celebration of this day. This consisted in a musical-dramatic production "of scenically connected music-pieces from the operas of *Spohr*," the tickets of admission to which, besides those to the extra standing places, had been issued many days before, so that the house was actually crammed. When *Spohr* made his appearance in the box in the first tier, which had been appropriated to him and his family, he was received with the most tumultuous demonstrations of joy, with which the strains of his overture to the opera of "Alruna" soon mingled. This was followed by a tableau from "Zemira and Azor," representing the union of the lovers. After the conclusion of this tableau, as also after each of the following scenes from *Spohr's* operas: "Zemira", "Zweikampf," "Jessonda," "Berggeist," "Pietro von Abano," "Alchymist," and "Kreuzfahrer," the fairy with her golden magic wand came upon the stage and introduced the succeeding scene each time with appropriate verses. After each piece of music the outburst of applause was repeated, and at its conclusion redoubled in energy, to be again resumed with equal perseverance as in succession the two overtures to the "Mountain Sprite" and to "Faust" were executed with remarkable precision under the direction of *Bochmann* the military band-master. Then followed an appropriately conceived festal-play called "Die Huldigung" (The Homage). The scene represented a handsome park ornamented with statues, vases and garlands; in the back ground a modest dwelling, but richly decorated with garlands of flowers: *The house, in which Spohr was born*, in Brunswick. Gardeners and maidens are

busied in decorating the garden; to their question as to the purpose and occasion of the festival the steward informs them, telling them the name of the honoured jubilant, and in citing his works speaks also of 'Die letzten Dinge' and 'Der Fall Babylons.'

"All now set up a shout of joy, and from every part of the house rang the enthusiastic cheers of the excited assembly. Upon this the orchestra struck up the polonaise in "Faust," while the committee of the fete waited on *Spohr* to conduct him to a throne of flowers, where he was again greeted with a poetical address, and a crown of laurel placed upon his head "as Apollo's favoured son," amid the joyful vivats of the public. After the fete at the theatre was over, and he proceeded to partake of a family supper at the house of his son-in-law *Wolff*, he received late in the evening a brilliant serenade from the members of the lyrical association, who had assembled before the house by the light of numerous coloured lamps. The singing being concluded they then sent up a deputation to present the diploma of an honorary member of the society to the jubilant. Thus terminated this eventful day, but not the festivities; for the following day brought further congratulatory addresses in prosa and verse with honours of every kind, among which the presentation of the freedom of the city from the chief magistrate of Cassel, and as also worthy of mention, the gift of a costly silver vase from the joint members of the orchestra and theatrical company, presented by the committee of the festival."

On the twenty-second of January another grand fete took place, given as a surprise to their friend and master by the members of the quartet circle, so frequently adverted to. After *Spohr* had been conducted with great ceremony into the presence of the company, composed of about seventy persons, a congratulatory poem composed by Dr. *Oetker* was read.

The musical part of the fete which now followed consisted of *Spohr's* third double quartet, executed under the direction of his pupil *Jean Bott*; of two of his incomparable songs with

clarinet accompaniment, sung by a distinguished dilettante; and the pianoforte quintet with wind-instrument accompaniment. After the conclusion of these extremely successful performances, all adjourned in the best spirits to the supper-room, where, seasoned with toasts both of earnest and mirthful import, the happy evening was brought to a close in an appropriate manner.

The account of this jubilee published shortly after by *Fr. Oetker* gave occasion at the same time to *Spohr* for the commencement of his autobiography. The author of that pamphlet having at the same time expressed the intention of following it up with a detailed account of his life, requested *Spohr* to furnish him first with the necessary notes; but he himself, while making the necessary sketch of it, took so much pleasure in recalling the varied events of each year as they presented themselves to his memory, that he conceived the idea of preferring to undertake its full detail himself.* With a lively interest he now immediately set himself to this work, which nevertheless proceeded but slowly, when the impulse for musical composition assumed again its mastery. He then first wrote six *pièces de salon* for violin and pianoforte, distinguished by the titles: *Barcarole*, *Scherzo*, *Sarabande*, *Siciliano*, *Air varié* and *Mazurka*, collected in one volume as Op. 135, published by *J. Schubert*; these were followed by his fourth double quartet, and some months later, at the express wish of the Philharmonic Society of London, by the eighth symphony (*G minor*), which appeared at Leipzig as Op. 137 (*Peters*), in score and arranged for four hands for the pianoforte.

* From this somewhat accidental origin of *Spohr's* autobiography it may be readily inferred, that it contains nothing more than a faithful picture of his eventful life, interesting to the majority of those who take a warm interest in his musical compositions; and that it was not his intention in any manner to have it considered in the light of a contribution to the history of art, nor as a critical opinion of the works of his colleagues in art, which has been here and there erroneously expected from this biography.

Subsequently also, *Spohr's* activity was unusually taxed at the theatre, as he was required for the approaching Whitsuntide holidays to prepare not only the usual opera but also (an exceptional case) a grand concert, in which among other things his double symphony and his first concertante were executed by himself and his pupil *Jean Bott*. For Whitmonday a new opera, "Arria," by *Hugo Stähle*, had been selected, which as the maiden-work of a young composer who had grown up amid them had greatly awakened the interest of all lovers of music in Cassel. Already when a boy the young musician had exhibited such prominent talent, that *Spohr* was induced, at the wish of his father, Major *Stähle* of Cassel, to take him as a pupil in composition. With constantly increasing interest he now watched the progress of his talented pupil, who, already a good pianist, soon tried his hand at greater pianoforte-compositions, among which a quartet in *A major* (Op. 1, published by *Schubert*) is especially remarkable as a success. Encouraged by this, he then, though not yet one and twenty years of age, ventured under *Spohr's* guidance upon the composition of music to the opera above named, written by his friend *Jac. Hofmeister*, and that so fully satisfied *Spohr*, that upon his pressing recommendation its performance was determined upon and soon put in process of execution. Though *Spohr* experienced real satisfaction at the highly favourable reception this opera met with from the public, and looked forward hopefully to a brilliant future for the young composer, this first triumph was unhappily his last; for after the lapse of a year, he was seized with an inflammatory fever, which arrested his career of promise by an early death!

After *Spohr* had several times deferred his last visit to England to direct according to invitation the performance of some of his works, he at length resolved in the summer of 1847, to yield once more to the reiterated invitations he had received, and to direct the three grand concerts, in which the Sacred Harmonic Society proposed to give the whole of his sacred pieces — oratorios, psalms, &c. At the commencement of the

theatrical vacation he therefore set out, accompanied on the journey to England by his wife and sister-in-law, and this time by way of the interesting cities of Brussel and Ghent to Ostend, where he proposed to embark. A letter written home adverts as follows to their stay in Ghent: "On our way we had been informed that upon the very day of our arrival a grand singing festival was to take place, of the united Flemish and German lyrical societies; but as we did not arrive here before 7 o'clock in the evening, some time after the chief part of the concert had begun, we thought to avail ourselves of the fine summer evening to take a walk through the town, which we found large and handsome beyond our expectation. Scarcely however had we proceeded above a hundred yards when *Spohr* was recognised by some gentlemen, who hastened towards him with the greatest surprise, and compelled us almost by force to go with them and hear the second part of the concert, the first part being just finished. In this manner we were all three hurried into a fine building, the 'Palais de Justice' and stood suddenly in the immense hall filled with several thousand persons, when at the same moment one of the gentlemen who brought us in, a member of the committee of the festival, with a loud voice called out: 'Messieurs, le grand compositeur *Spohr* vient d'arriver dans notre ville, le voici!' At this announcement the whole assembly rose from their seats, and clapping their hands cried: 'Vive *Spohr*, le grand *Spohr*!' and a perfect shower of flowers in the shape of bouquets large and small were showered upon him from all sides. It was long before the tumultuous applause ceased; meanwhile seats were yielded to us in the best places, and there we sat somewhat out of countenance in our dusty travelling costume in the midst of handsomely dressed ladies. But the whole scene, from its very unexpectedness, had something extremely original and almost overpowering about it. We then heard, with the rest, the second part of the concert, in which the different lyrical associations sung in part with, and partly without, orchestral accompaniment. They all met with the

most lively applause, which their execution in reality also deserved.

"It lasted until past 9 o'clock, and then a crowd of persons pressed forward to salute *Spohr* and to speak to him, so that it was late enough before we got home to supper, and retired to rest. But this was again to be of short duration, for between 11 and 12 o'clock we heard all manner of noises and preparations for a grand serenade, which the Ghent society 'Des Mélomanes' had resolved upon giving to *Spohr*. *Nolens volens* he was obliged to get out of bed and dress anew not only in acknowledgement of the fine music and tremendous vivats of the assembled crowd, but also to receive a deputation, which at the solemn midnight hour announced to him his nomination as honorary member of the society," &c.

Upon *Spohr's* arrival in London he and his travelling companions were again hospitably received in the friendly family of Professor *Taylor*, and for them now began in every respect a period of great enjoyment. The oratorio performances in Exeter-Hall appointed for every Friday, went off with their usual finished perfection; but the programme that had been previously determined upon had suffered from the alteration, that in place of the "Calvary," which it was feared would here also excite objection on the part of the clergy, a second performance of the "Fall of Babylon" was announced; while in the third concert, as it had been previously determined, "Die letzten Dinge," the "Lord's Prayer," and *Spohr's* recently composed 84th. Psalm after *Milton's* metrical translation, were given. The enthusiasm at all the three concerts, which was scarcely susceptible of increase on all that had previously been shewn, was evinced this time more particularly by rapturous encores of a great number of choruses and solo pieces. The intervening days were passed in a no less satisfactory manner, in which all emulated in affording some enjoyment, or in testifying their respect for *Spohr* in various ways. In varied and constant interchange, invitations, festivities, promenades and railway excursions succeeded each other, one of

which extended as far as 70 English miles, to the celebrated university city of Cambridge, with its grand and peculiar style of architecture; and another to the city of Ely, remarkable for its situation upon a beautiful and fruitful hill rising from the midst of a low moorland, and yet more for its beautiful cathedral, considered one of the finest specimens of Gothic architecture in England. In this, as a remains of its former splendour, the finest ecclesiastical psalmody is still chanted during divine service by sixteen singers especially maintained for that purpose, and seldom in that solitary place could perhaps be found hearers so devoutly attentive and edified as were *Spohr* and his travelling companions.

In pleasant reunions with the *Horsley*, *Benedict* and *Taylor* families, his most intimately known friends, *Spohr* especially passed many happy hours, in whose circles allied so intimately to art and artists, fine music was a never-failing enjoyment, and in which frequently, to the delight of his hearers, *Spohr* contributed his personal aid. The more decidedly however, did he decline every request to perform in public, and in one exceptional instance only consented to assist at a concert given in his honour by the *Beethoven* quartet society. The programme of this concert, which displayed the heading "Homage to *Spohr*," comprised however on this occasion nothing of *Beethoven*, and three compositions of *Spohr* only, selected from different periods of his life, viz: 1st. A quartet (*G minor*), a production of his early youth; 2dly. A duet composed about 20 years later, played by *Joachim* and *Sainton* in a masterly manner, and 3rdly. The third double quartet (*E minor*), in which *Spohr* took the first violin part, and by his play and by the whole composition, the first "number" of which alone had kindled the admiration of the public, drew down a very storm of applause. The newspapers adverted in terms of the highest praise to the selection of the three compositions and to their separate beauties. Upon this occasion, respecting the duets the "Times" said as follows: "These duets for two violins belong to the greatest productions of *Spohr's* richly inventive genius:

Out of seemingly small materials the great composer has achieved harmonic effects scarcely inferior in richness and fullness to the quartet. The duet in *E flat* is positively overflowing with beauties of melody and counterpoint, a perfect masterpiece." . . . And added further on: "The double quartet in *E minor* is one of *Spohr's* most surpassingly rich compositions. . . . Every separate theme bears the stamp of genius, and is worked out with a perfection of finish that displays the highest degree of intelligence." . . . "If *Spohr* had never written anything else, his fame would have been established by this work alone, as one of the greatest composers in the world." . . . "*Spohr* plays now but seldom in public, but both musicians, and the general public alike, eagerly seize the rare opportunity of hearing the greatest violinist of the present day. His style is a pattern of purity and taste. . . . He not alone produces difficulties of every kind, and handles them with the ease of mere play toys, — but in his execution displays moreover the full energy and inspiration of youth." . . .

The end of the vacation was now rapidly drawing near, and with it once more the hour of parting; and on the last days of his sojourn so manifold were the demands made upon his time and attention that all his habitual calm self-possession was taxed to the utmost. With heart and mind impressed with happy and elevating reminiscences he returned to his native country, where with his accustomed cheerfulness and zeal he was soon re-engaged in the performance of the duties of his post.

In the beginning of November he was plunged into grief by the sudden intelligence of the death of his friend *Mendelssohn*, deeply lamenting whose loss both as a man and a musician, he expressed himself as follows in a letter to *M. Hauptmann*: "What might *Mendelssohn* in the full maturity of his genius not have written, had fate permitted him a longer life! For his delicate frame the mental exertion was too great and therefore destructive! His loss to art is much to be lamented, for he was the most gifted of then living composers, and his

efforts in art were of the noblest!" — His next thought was to institute a festival *in memoriam* of the too early departed one, but as he received for answer to his proposal to that effect, from the intendant of the court theatre, that: "the proposed festival in memory of the deceased could not be permitted at the concerts of the court theatre, as it did not find approval in the highest quarters," he determined to give it on a smaller scale at a private concert in celebration of the 25th. anniversary of the St. Cecilia society on the 22nd. November, and upon the occasion to inaugurate the fete with a poem composed for the occasion with a chorus from *Mendelssohn's* "Paulus." But after everything had been arranged for the best and the grand rehearsal been held, intelligence was suddenly received of the dangerous illness of the Elector Wilhelm II., who resided in Frankfort, which was followed by that of his death, and the order for a general mourning throughout the Electorate and a desistance from every kind of music on the following days. Hereupon, after a delay of a month, the performance of the projected festival was again about to take place, and *Spohr* had once more fixed the day for it, when death once more intervened — this time afflicting his own family with a very painful loss. On the 18th. December *Spohr's* mother-in-law was seized with illness, and after a few days' suffering was snatched from the disconsolate family to which she had been bound by ties of the tenderest affection. The Christmas holidays, which had usually been with them a period of happy festivity, were now changed to days of gloom and mourning, and the more so from the circumstance that Mr. *Pfeiffer* (father) was laid on a sick-bed by the unexpected blow, and the happy reunion in the paternal house, where *Spohr* always felt so happy, and so well knew how to make others so, seemed to be interrupted for a long time, if not for ever! The subsequent weeks passed amid cares and anxieties, and not until his father-in-law's convalescence could *Spohr* think of celebrating the long-prepared-for festival.

The programme was so arranged, that it presented in chronological order twelve music pieces of *Bach*, *Händel*, *Haydn*, *Mozart*, *Beethoven*, *Hauptmann*, *Mendelssohn* and *Spohr*, as specimens of the style of each of those masters, to whose works the St. Cecilia society during its existence of twenty-five years had especially devoted its efforts. After the last song piece but one: "Wir preisen selig die" &c., from "Paulus," a poem was recited, entitled: Feeling of sorrow upon the early death of *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*.

This was followed by the presentation of a double breast-pin set with diamonds, accompanied with a poetical address to *Spohr* — the subject represented by the pin being a violin, and bass-clef. A "Hymn to *Spohr*," composed by *H. Stähle*, was then sung; and in conclusion, at the banquet which followed, a discourse was delivered relative to the origin and services of the society for the prosperity of which the speaker himself (*Mr. Weinrich*), in the triple character of singer, librarian, and treasurer, had laboured with unwearied zeal for many years.

In 1848, shortly after the outbreak of the disturbances in France, *Spohr*, somewhat under the influence of ideas of liberty, &c., composed his sextet for two violins, two viols and two violincellos (Op. 140, published by *C. Luckhardt* of Cassel), on making entry of which in the list of his compositions, he appended the words: "Written in March and April, at the time of the glorious revolution of the peoples for the liberty, unity and grandeur of Germany." And this composition, so rich in freshness of melodies, in genuine ætherial harmony, that scarcely any other of *Spohr's* works surpasses it, furnishes an eloquent testimony to the state of his feelings and his aspirations, which, soaring above the storms of the present, speak only of peace, hope and concord, as in spirit he beheld them spring out of the momentary struggles. Satisfied as *Spohr* might feel with this composition — the first since the dawning of the new æra upon Germany — he nevertheless for some time wholly abandoned all further composition, feeling, as he complained

in a letter to his friend *Hauptmann*, that “the excitement of politics and the constant reading of the newspapers incapacitated him from giving his attention to any serious and quiet study.”

On the 6th. August a grand popular festival took place in Cassel, which kept the whole of the inhabitants in a state of joyous mobility for the day. It commenced early in the morning, with the public recognition of the imperial administrator by the garrison assembled upon the “Forst.” This was followed by the consecration and presentation of colours to the newly-formed corps of body-guards, combined with a grand church service in the presence of the Electoral family upon the Bowling-green in the Karlsaue, and in the afternoon there was a people’s festival, in which the whole population of Cassel — a mixed troop of all classes — flocked to the Aue, either as participators in, or spectators of, the popular games, the dancing and the music. Towards evening, to the surprise of everybody the Elector, in plain black dress-coat, was seen threading his way among the joyous crowd, with looks expressive of the cheerful interest with which he acknowledged the cheers of the people who thronged every part of the park. The festivities of the day were terminated by a concert under *Spohr’s* direction, executed by the singers and members of the choral societies of Cassel in front of the orangery, at which also the Elector appeared, and after a lengthened conversation with *Spohr*, asked him expressly for the song “Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland.”

In June 1849 *Spohr* set out for Carlsbad, and stopped on his way thither a few days at Leipzig, where in the circle of his musical friends, he again passed many happy hours devoted to his noble art. On the first evening, at the house of his friend Mr. *Vogt*, two of his latest and as yet unpublished compositions — the fourth double quartet (*G minor*) and the but recently finished 31st. quartet (*C major*) — both of which were subsequently published by *C. Luckhardt* in Cassel as Op. 136 and 141. The double quartet was received more especially with such warm admiration, that *Spohr* gratified

the wish expressed by several of his auditors to repeat it once more on the following day at the conservatory before a large circle, among whom were the teachers and pupils of that institution. On the last evening, his old friend *Moscheles* prepared for him a brilliant fête, and embellished the musical part of it by his own masterly performance of *Spohr's* first trio, and his pianoforte quintet with wind instruments, after which the strains of a choral song, "Honour to *Spohr*," were suddenly heard from the garden in front of the house, and some of his four-part songs, some of *Mendelssohn's* and some of *Hauptmann's*, were executed in a most effective manner.

The now ensuing stay in Carlsbad, extending to several weeks, was upon this occasion particularly pleasant in many respects. In the intercourse with several distinguished men well known for their public activity, *Spohr* took great pleasure. Among these especially were *Hansmann* of Berlin and *Simson* of Königsberg, to the latter of whom, from the thorough community of sentiment in their mutual political creed, he was especially attracted. As both men evinced at the same time a warm love of music, they, together with their families were soon admitted into the small circle of the elect who had the *entrée* to the musical performances of *Spohr* and his wife. With these and other charming families the afternoons were then passed in excursions on all sides into the beautiful environs, in which *Spohr*, although long since well acquainted with every spot, always experienced a new delight and one equally shared by his wife.

From his stay in Carlsbad *Spohr* also experienced the most desirable benefit to his health, resulting in so complete and permanent a relief to the liver complaint which had recurred at previous frequent intervals, that, grateful as he felt for the pleasant and health-restoring time he had passed there, he had now no further necessity to resort to the wonderful efficacy of its waters.

Strengthened and refreshed in body and mind, he returned to Cassel, and shortly afterwards began the composition of his

fifth pianoforte trio (*C minor*, Op. 141, published by *Schubert* in Hamburg); which was followed by three duets for two soprani, published by *Peters* of Leipzig, which for their sweetly expressive melodies and their ease of performance, like those which had previously appeared from the pen of *Mendelssohn*, soon became favorite pieces in musical circles.

Towards the end of the year 1849 *Spohr* was afflicted by a heavy sorrow, in the sudden illness that befell his wife the day after Christmas Day, and which increased so much in severity as to imperil her life at the entry of the new year. At length, however, her good and unimpaired constitution, aided by the most unremitting care, overcame her malady, and *Spohr* hailed once more with delight the day when she could again resume her accustomed seat by his side at the dinner-table. But on the next day (January 22) an untoward accident befell himself. While on his usual daily way to the theatre rehearsal, a sharp unexpected frost having set in during the night, he slipped, and fell with such violence as to inflict a very severe blow on his head, from the consequence of which the unremitting care of his experienced medical attendant Dr. *Harnier* did not re-establish him till after the lapse of several weeks. Shortly after his recovery, he wrote his ninth symphony, "Die Jahreszeiten" (The Seasons), the plan of which had much occupied his mind during his illness, and as he himself complained, "regularly haunted him during the long sleepless and feverish nights." He gave in so far a new form to it, that he divided it into two grand themes, with the designations: Part I.: Winter, transition to spring, spring. Part II.: Summer, transition to autumn, autumn. Although *Spohr* wrote the symphony in the dull cold days of winter, the result nevertheless was just the least characteristic of his *winterly* intentions. While in the *spring* theme every note rings joyous with the glad awaking of nature, — in that of *summer*, the sultry heat is expressed in tones the effect of which is such, that the astonished hearer positively seems to *feel* it — and lastly the *autumn*, with its exhilarating music of the chase,

and the masterly interwoven Rheinweiniied (vintage song of the Rhine) — can scarcely fail in inspiring the hearer with the most lively enthusiasm.

About this time *Spohr*, with every lover of music in Cassel, experienced great pleasure from the visit of a young female artiste nearly related to him. This was *Rosalie Spohr*, the second daughter of his brother *William*. From early childhood she had evinced a passionate love of music, and subsequently devoted herself with unwearied zeal to the study of the harp. Although at first it was not the wish of her parents that their daughter should perform in public, yet when they had subsequently become convinced of her real artistic talent, they could no longer oppose her ardent wishes, and at the age of 22 she proceeded, accompanied by her father, upon her first musical tour. After she had given proof of her abilities in several public performances at Hamburg and Leipzig, she visited Cassel, where she played several times in private circles, and at one concert at the theatre under the direction of *Spohr*, on which occasion she not only earned the warmest approbation of a delighted auditory but a yet more gratifying reward in the commendatory words of her highly-esteemed uncle. The young musician subsequently achieved many a brilliant triumph in her further visits to the larger cities of Germany and Holland; but her promising artistic career was shortly brought to an unexpectedly early termination, first by deaths in her immediate family circle, and afterwards by her marriage with count *Xavier Sauerma*.

During the summer vacation, in order at length to pay his long-promised visit to Breslau, *Spohr* proceeded thither by way of Leipzig in the hope of hearing *Schumann's* new opera of "Genoveva;" but to his great regret, upon his arrival there, he was informed of the delays that had intervened to defer its performance, and was obliged to content himself with attending several rehearsals, but which, on account of the frequently interrupting repetitions, could naturally afford him but a very imperfect conception of the whole work. Although by no

means an admirer of the compositions of *Schumann* so far known to him, in which he had frequently found a want of euphony and melodious breadth of harmonies, he formed a very favourable opinion of the opera, and it especially pleased him to observe that the same method of treatment which he had resorted to in the composition of the "Crusader" had been followed, in that *Schumann* did not permit the unnatural interruption of the action by a wearisome and constant repetition of words. It was no less interesting to *Spohr* to become acquainted with some of his larger pianoforte compositions, the desired opportunity for which was afforded him at the musical parties given to him, at which Mrs. *Clara Schumann* played a trio and pianoforte-concerto of her husband's with the most finished excellence, with which exception all the rest were compositions of *Spohr's*, among which the sextet he wrote during the March revolution: and at an extra-concert at the Gewandhaus his newest symphony, "The seasons," was performed to the great delight of all who heard it.

The remainder of his stay in Breslau, which was there expressively designated as a "fortnight-long *Spohr* festival," was a continuous round of entertainments, musical soirées, &c. The "Neue Oder-Zeitung" describes *Spohr's* advent as "an event, that had set all the educated classes of the town in commotion," and further adds: "Everybody crowds forward to see the German master — all are anxious to say that they have at least had the satisfaction of a personal meeting. There is a peculiar gratification in standing opposite to the man who, though his eye rests upon us with the coldness of the stranger, has been long known to us in spirit as one of our best and dearest friends — whose works have recalled to us the golden dreams of our youth, and whose noble creations purify our souls. All in Germany who love music and who play, recognise the master to whom as musicians they are indebted for a great part of their culture, for many elevating feelings, many hours of happiness. Is it then to be wondered at that every

one crowds around the master — that all are ready to acquit part of that debt to him by loud and honourable acknowledgements?"

His festive reception, which commenced at the very railway station, was followed in the evening by a grand serenade and procession by torch-light, for which all the musical and choral societies of Breslau had met to execute the choicest pieces of music, chiefly selected from *Spohr's* operas, and which at intervals they gave singly, or executed in combination and *en masse*. At the grand concert that took place under his own direction at the spacious and handsome Aula, his own compositions alone were given: Overture to and air from "*Faust*," the third symphony, with the "Lord's Prayer;" and the "Breslauer Zeitung" designates it as "a musical festival singular in its kind in the city of Breslau, for that *Spohr* at the present time was the *only* one who had so much distinguished himself in very kind of composition, that the church, the concert room, and the theatre, could equally boast of his works; and that such a performance by such united powers (singing academy, theatrical orchestra, society of musicians, &c.) had never yet taken place there." At the different banquets that were given to *Spohr*, his music in various ways formed part of the entertainment, and the songs that were written in his honour for the occasion had been adapted to appropriate melodies of his, which greatly increased their effect and frequently took the company by surprise.

At the express wish of the friends of music of Breslau, he determined to assist personally at a concert given in the smaller saloon of the Aula, before a great number of musical amateurs who had been invited; in his sextet and third double quartet, of which the "Breslauer Zeitung" speaks with much enthusiasm, and after dwelling upon the generally acknowledged specialities of his play, says further: "that the master at his *present age* still possesses all those specialities; that he plays with the fire and energy of a young man, and throws off the greatest difficulties with a power and boldness that are aston-

ishing — that it is a thing quite *unusual* and was never seen there before.”

On the part of the directors of the theatre the happy selection of *Spohr's* opera “*Zemire und Azor*” was made in his honour, which, with its charming melodies, never fails to make the most pleasing impression on the public on the first time of hearing; and with its music so truly appropriate to its subject, opens to us as it were the bright world of fairy land, which although more than ever fading away from the materialistic age in which we live, yet idealised by such sweet sounds, can never lose its fascination for the mind. This effect was produced on this occasion in Breslau also, as demonstrated by the brilliant reception with which it was welcomed, and the generally expressed wish for its speedy repetition under *Spohr's* direction, who then also experienced great pleasure in those two fine performances of his work. — He was no less gratified by the organ concert given him by his friend *Hesse* in the fine church of St. Bernard, in which he exhibited his great mastery of that grand instrument in every possible manner. Devoted admirer and adherent of *Spohr* as he was, he was still loathe to part from him, when after a fortnight passed in Breslau he departed with the purpose of making an excursion in the Riesengebirge with his wife. As a guide intimate with the localities *Hesse* accompanied them, and was not a little gratified in witnessing the feelings of delight with which *Spohr* was impressed by the natural beauties of his Silesian fatherland. Neither was music, loved music forgotten, for it was not only the subject of daily discourse, but in the Riesengebirge itself the powerful serenades of the music chorists of Warmbrunn and Hirschberg greeted their master, *Spohr*. — The return journey to Cassel was made *viâ* Berlin, where *Spohr* found an invitation from the conservatory, which, although but thinly composed in summer, performed nevertheless a part of his oratorio “*Calvary*” and his psalms with double chorus in a brilliant manner, by way of compensation both to themselves and him for his inability to comply with

the invitation they had given him almost every winter to come and either personally direct or hear his oratorio.

Meanwhile the political state of Germany, and more particularly of Hesse greatly grieved *Spöhr*, and as the best consolation he abandoned himself to his musical studies, the zest for which did not leave him even in this time of trouble and sorrow. In the course of the months of October and November he composed his seventh quintet for stringed instruments (*G minor*, Op. 144, published by *Peters*), and three songs from "One thousand and one days in the East," by *Bodenstedt* (also published by *Peters*).

It was in the summer of this year that *Spöhr* experienced the malice and chicanery of the court. He had intended to start the first day of his vacation for a tour in Switzerland and upper Italy. He accordingly sent in his request to the Elector, which he considered a mere pro-formâ matter. To *Spöhr's* great surprise the answer was in the negative — no leave of absence would be granted. Hereupon *Spöhr* set off without leave. He passed through the *Via Mala*, over the Splügen to Milan and Venice, and returned over the St. Gothard pass to Lucern, and so back to Cassel, where he arrived before the vacation had expired. After a short repose he availed himself of the remaining time to pay a long-promised visit to *Wehner* the director of the orchestra at Göttingen, who, conjointly with all the lovers of music at that place, used every exertion to do honour and afford gratification to their esteemed guest. A serenade given by the members of the choral society on the first evening of his arrival was followed on the next morning by a musical greeting performed by the band of the regiment lying at Nordheim in the immediate neighbourhood. At a grand concert given at the Aula *Spöhr* directed in person his symphony "Die Weihe der Töne," which was followed by his potpourri on themes from *Jessonda*, performed by one of his most distinguished pupils, *Auguste Kömpel*, who when a boy had awakened the warmest interest on the part of *Spöhr* by his remarkable talent, and after having studied under him for several

years with the greatest success, was first appointed a member of the court orchestra at Cassel and subsequently Kammermusicus and member of the royal orchestra at Hanover.* As finale to the concert *Mendelssohn's* music to *Athalia*, combined with a melodramatic poem, was executed by the members of the Göttingen choral society; and thus *Spohr*, who had been present at its grand rehearsal with the greatest interest, had the much desired opportunity of becoming acquainted with the only one of the grander lyrical compositions of *Mendelssohn* which he had not yet heard. On the following day there was also some excellent music.

Wehner had made arrangements for quartet music at his own house, and previous to a large dinner party, which he gave as a mark of respect to *Spohr*, some exceedingly fine music was performed with the most finished excellence, and to the delight of all present *Spohr* himself took part in his own sextet. The dinner was seasoned by a succession of appropriate toasts and piquante speeches, the chief subjects of which were music and politics, and lastly also "*Spohr's* bold stroke" — the journey without leave — was drunk amid the clang of glasses and the enthusiastic cheers of the company, who highly approved of the spirit he had shown. But the "bold stroke" was, as may be imagined, considered with much less approbation in Cassel, and a few weeks after *Spohr's* return he was officially required by the general-intendant to explain and justify "his absence from Cassel without leave." His explanation was considered unsatisfactory, and he was condemned to pay a fine of 550 thaler (82 l. 10 s.). He went to law; but the end of it was that he paid the money, which was handed over to the pension fund instituted by him.

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* To him, as a true representative of the *Spohr* school was the preference given over all the competitors who bid in emulation of each other and at very high prices for the highly coveted Stradivari violin of his honoured master; and which became his property one year after the decease of the latter.

It was in the midst of these troubles that he wrote a series of six *pieces de salon* for violin and piano and the 32nd. violin quartet (Op. 145 and 146; Leipzig, *Peters*).

In the beginning of the year 1852 *Spohr* received a visit from the director of the Italian opera in London, Mr. *Gye*, who proposed to him to direct there his opera of "Faust" during his summer vacation, and for that purpose to write a connecting recitative instead of the dialogue in the original, by which means alone the urgent wish of the Queen for the performance of the opera on the Italian stage could be gratified. As *Spohr* at first considered that such a change would be impossible in many of the scenes, he felt compelled to decline the proposal; but they were not so easily to be pacified in London by so unexpected an answer, and after receiving several further pressing letters upon the subject, *Spohr* set himself to work, and, contrary to his own expectation, with such satisfactory results, that after its completion he expressed himself upon the subject in a letter of the 21st. May to *Hauptmann* in the following words: "You have no doubt already heard that at the express wish of the Queen of England and of Prince Albert I have remodelled my opera "Faust" for the grand opera. This work has afforded me great pleasure, and agreeably engaged me for a period of three months, in which I have been as it were transported completely back to the happy days of my youth in Vienna. At first, with the assistance of my wife, I had to alter the dialogue scenes in such a manner as to adapt them to composition. In doing this I have endeavoured to impart more interest to them than they previously possessed, and to make elision of those things which from the first had displeased me at many performances I had seen of this opera. I think and hope that I have succeeded in both. I had then to replace myself as it were in the same mood, and style in which I wrote Faust, and I hope that I have succeeded in this also, and that no one will observe a difference of style between the old and the new. The opera consists now of three acts; the second concludes with

the wedding scene, and the third begins with a new entr'acte, which depicts with reminiscences from the trio of the torch-dance and the witches' music the night of debauch passed by Faust, and then passes into a grand recitative by Mephistopheles, to which his air in *E major* is connected. After the disappearance of the witches a recitative by Faust follows, blended with intonations of former and later conception, and hereupon a shorter one between him and *Wagner*, which is succeeded by the concluding finale. My curiosity is now intense to hear the opera in its new form! Should nothing come of the journey to London, I hope to hear it soon at Weimar, as *Liszt* has asked for it in its new form for the court theatre there." — The new recitatives thus reached London so early, that weeks before *Spohr's* arrival there the study of the parts could be commenced; but at the first rehearsal he remarked that the in every other respect so greatly distinguished Italian singers, were not all he could have desired in their comprehension of this to them wholly foreign style of music, for which reason he immediately ordered daily thorough rehearsals under his own direction, in which he soon had the satisfaction of seeing that the whole of the singers entered more and more into the conception and spirit of his musical intentions, and submitted with the greatest willingness to his every nod, until every thing went so faultlessly that after the four last grand rehearsals which took place, and the lapse of three weeks, it was possible to give a perfect public performance.

To avoid all seeming reiteration of the numerous musical events and marks of respect, that in the interim were shewn to *Spohr* on this visit, it will suffice to mention one agreeable surprise only of which *Spohr* used to speak with delight in after years. This was the magnificent performance of his oratorio "Calvary" (des Heilands letzte Stunden) at Exeter Hall, under the excellent conducting of *Costa*; and which, performed by greater masses of assistants than at the memorable Norwich festival (700 singers and musicians), completely overpowered *Spohr* himself, as well as the enthusiastically delighted

public; in so much, that he was obliged to agree in the remark of his friends, that the effect in many parts, especially that of the powerfully imposing choruses, was more immense than the composer himself had even conceived.

On Sundays, on which days, according to English custom, the theatres are closed, there are no concerts, and even all private music is hushed, *Spohr* gladly availed himself of the invitations he received to make excursions far away from the gigantic town, to recruit his energies somewhat in the fresh air, from the daily musical fatigue and excitement. Sometimes it was to Clapham and Kensington, on a visit to the *Sillem* and *Horsley* families; sometimes farther by railway to Sir *George Smart's* pleasant country-house at Chertsey, which *Spohr* always called "the little paradise;" or to Professor *Owen's* in Richmond-park; from which he always returned requickened in mind and body to the wear and tear of London life. *Owen's* charming residence and his amiable manners were always subjects of agreeable recollection to *Spohr*, and he would often relate how the celebrated naturalist, in his kindly unassuming manner, would come out to welcome him on a hot summer's day, clad in a light summer jacket and a broad-brimmed straw hat, but in honour of "his welcome renowned guest," decorated with the Prussian order "pour le mérite," and then till late in the evening devise every possible means of affording him pleasure and entertainment.

Meanwhile the rehearsals of *Faust* had prospered so well, that on the 15th. July the first public performance took place under *Spohr's* direction, and a letter written home refers to it in the following manner:

"The opera went off incomparably well, and made a wonderfully powerful effect upon everybody. Indeed to us also it appeared in quite a new light — everything was so grand, so splendid! The new additional themes blend charmingly with the whole, and present singularly fine effects. Decorations, scenery, all are new, exceedingly brilliant and got up at great expense: orchestra, singers, and chorus, did their best, so that

the Londoners say, that they have not seen so splendid an operatic performance for many years; and it was received throughout also with the most enthusiastic applause. That the foreign (almost all Italian) singers would have sung this German music with so much zest and pleasure, we could scarcely have believed possible. Those who most distinguished themselves were Mrs. *Castellan* (Kunigunda), *Ronconi* (Faust), *Formes* (Mephistopheles), and *Tamberlik* (Hugo). The latter charmed every body, for he has a splendid tenor voice with immense power, and he executed the beautiful air, accompanied by a magnificent chorus of forty male voices, with such fire and irresistible power that a *da capo* was called for by general acclamation. And *Formes* also, in his song in *A major*, which had greatly gained by the newly composed exceedingly beautiful introduction and recitative scene. . . . The whole house was in ecstasy, and in the intervals between the acts, and at the end, *Spohr* was warmly congratulated by a host of friends and admirers." With similar success and with yet more perfect execution, the second and third performance of *Faust*, under *Spohr's* direction, took place within a few days; after which he once more left England, accompanied to the place of embarkation by numerous lovers of music, who up to the last moment projected the most inviting plans for the next summer.

Agreeably impressed with the successful issue of his journey, he returned to Germany, picturing to himself the happy hours in which, as was his custom, he should again relate amid the expectant circle at home the interesting incidents of his visit. But this time the pleasure of once more meeting the members of his family was but too soon overshadowed, and *Spohr* beheld with much alarm the suffering constitution of his father-in-law, whose declining bodily strength had for some time past excited the utmost anxiety; but which assumed appearances so threatening during the last few weeks, that the anxious members of his family, despite their tender care and hopefulness, could no longer deceive themselves as to the near approach of his dissolution. With sorrowing hearts they beheld with every day

the nearer approach of the long-dreaded moment; till on the 4th. October 1852, the loved and honoured parent breathed his last. This sad event cast an enduring shadow over *Spohr's* life, for with his wife he not only lamented the loss of the beloved father, but mourned thenceforth that of the truthful friend whose feelings and sentiments had been so congenial with his own.

* * *

In the autumn of 1852 the duties of *Spohr's* office were unexpectedly much alleviated by the nomination of a second director; an appointment which indeed, with his great activity and as yet unimpaired powers, he had never contemplated as a thing to be desired; but which was nevertheless the more agreeable to him from the circumstance that the newly-created appointment was given to his favorite pupil, concert-master *Jean Bott*, in order to secure his rejection of the post of musical director at Hanover, which had been offered to him under very favourable circumstances. By this means the Cassel court orchestra was saved the loss of so distinguished a member, and his services were fully secured. *Spohr* consented also very willingly to the requisitions of the managers of the theatre to abandon to the direction of the new co-director the operas proposed, and suggested but few modifications in this arrangement. By this means *Bott* assumed the direction of a number of light operas, chiefly French and Italian, but undertook as heretofore to lead as first violin in the orchestra under *Spohr's* direction in all grand German operas, which were reserved to the latter. The repertory of the new and zealous co-director soon received an interesting addition, for in the beginning of the year 1853 *Shakspeare's* "Midsummernight's Dream," with *Mendelssohn's* music, was performed on the Cassel stage for the first time; on which occasion *Spohr* expressed himself in the following words in a letter to *Hauptmann*: "The most charming music that I know

of *Mendelssohn* is indeed his music to the "Midsummernight's Dream," which has at length been performed here also, and right well. *Bott* practised the orchestra in the music most assiduously, and for me it was a great enjoyment to be enabled for once to listen as auditor to the performance of good music." In regard to *Spohr's* own labours the same letter then speaks further: "We are now studying 'Tannhäuser,' (which the Elector has at length permitted), and we shall give that opera for the first time on Whitmonday. It will be put on the stage with the greatest care and both decorations and costumes will be rich. There is much that is new and beautiful in the opera, but much also that is most distressing to the ear. For the violins and basses it is more difficult than anything I ever yet met with," &c.

After the first performances of this difficult work had passed off in the most successful manner, *Spohr* wrote again respecting it to his friend *Hauptmann*: "'Tannhäuser' was performed last night for the third time, and again to a full house. The opera has gained many admirers, by reason of its earnestness and its subject-matter, and when I compare it with others produced of late years, I am also of their way of thinking. With much of what was at first very disagreeable to me I have become familiarised from frequent hearing; but the want of rhythm, and the frequent absence of rounded periods is still to me very objectionable. The manner in which it is performed here is really very fine, and in few places in Germany can be heard with such precision. In the enormously difficult 'ensembles' of the singers in the second act, not one single note was omitted last night. But with all that, in several parts these assume a shape which make a downright horrifying music, particularly just before the part previous to where Elizabeth throws herself upon the singers who rush upon Tannhäuser. — What faces would *Haydn* and *Mozart* make, were they obliged to hear the stunning noise that is now given to us for music! — The choruses of pilgrims (but which are here supported by clarinets and bassoons *p.*) were in-

tonated so purely last night, that I became somewhat reconciled for the first time to their unnatural modulations. It is astonishing what the human ear will by degrees become accustomed to!" &c.

Although, as may be inferred from the above remarks, *Spohr*, with his preminent sentiment for harmony and beautiful, regular forms in music, could not readily reconcile himself to the tonic creations of more modern times, which so frequently deviate from them, he nevertheless took a lively interest in them, and was so anxious to become acquainted with *Wagner's* newest opera "Lohengrin," that while awaiting the as yet withheld permission of the Elector for a full theatrical performance, he determined upon giving some scenes from it at the ensuing winter concerts, and wrote to *Hauptmann* on the subject as follows: "If you wish to afford us a pleasure by sending something for our winter concerts, let me ask of you the music to 'Lohengrin.' I was in correspondence with *Wagner* this summer, and he knows that I am exerting myself to put that opera upon the stage here, also. He will therefore have no objection to a performance of some scenes beforehand. I shall write to inform him of it also upon a fitting occasion, but I do not like to renew the correspondence on the subject, without being empowered to ask at the same time for the score for our theatre, which will not be before next summer, for the birthday of the Elector." This expectation was nevertheless not realised, for the Elector's permission was neither granted for the day appointed, nor upon a subsequent reiterated solicitation; and in this manner *Spohr* was never enabled to hear this opera, which both in Cassel and other places he had repeatedly striven to do.

With the approach of the vacation of the summer 1853 *Spohr* made preparation once more (for the sixth and last time) for the journey to England, whence in the month of January he had received, (and as chance would have it upon the same day) two letters of invitation from two wholly different parties. One, from the theatre-director *Gye*, contained

a recapitulation of the plan formed in the previous summer, of bringing out an Italian translation of *Spohr's* "Jessonda" during the approaching season; the other, from Dr. *Wylde*, the director of the recently instituted New Philharmonic Society, contained a pressing invitation to *Spohr*, to undertake the direction of the grand concerts which the society contemplated giving during the summer months. The latter attractive invitation was the one that decided his yet wavering resolution, since it was of the greatest interest to him to procure a hearing for his grander orchestral compositions, which would there be performed with all that power which was already known to him, before a public who, like all the performers, understood so thoroughly the spirit of his music.

Scarcely had he arrived in London than an agreeable musical surprise awaited him, for on his first visit to Dr. *Wylde* he was pressed by him to proceed immediately to a morning concert then about to take place, and arrived there just in time to hear an excellent performance of his nonett, and at the conclusion was warmly greeted by the audience, to whom the announcement of the presence of the composer was both an agreeable and sudden surprise. Under similar circumstances he was present the next evening at the last Philharmonic concert in the Hanover Square Rooms, where he was greatly gratified by the very successful performance of his historical symphony, which was enthusiastically applauded. A few days afterwards the first of the concerts of the New Philharmonic Society took place under his personal direction, of which mention is made as follows in a letter written home: "Last evening *Spohr* consummated the first of his great achievements; the direction of the fine New Philharmonic concerts in Exeter-Hall, where he was again received with the same enthusiasm as formerly, and which was manifested throughout the whole performance. We found our exalted expectations of this gigantic orchestra, wholly composed of musicians of high standing, fully realised, and the impression made by the immense mass in the spacious and densely crowded hall was

truly grand and imposing. Even the ninth symphony of *Beethoven*, abnormal as are many things therein, and especially the last subject, with the 'song to pleasure,' executed in the finished manner it was, afforded a real enjoyment. *Spohr's* 'Overture in the severe style' opened the concert, and had a grand effect; as also that of 'Jessonda,' which was even encored. This was followed by the tenor song in 'Jessonda,' splendidly sung by *Th. Formes*, and received with tumultuous applause," &c.

Not less interesting also was the programme of the last concert directed by *Spohr*; it comprised besides his own compositions — a quartet concerto, a double symphony, and the overture to the "Mountain Sprite," — the *D major* symphony of *Beethoven*, the overture to "Fidelio," the duet for two pianofortes of *Mendelssohn* and *Moscheles* (executed by Miss *Claus* and Miss *Goddard*), and some other pieces. The performance of the whole of the pieces of music was all that could be desired, and in regard to the fine effect of *Spohr's* symphony, a letter specially remarks: "The double symphony seemed as though it had been written expressly for such orchestral powers and for this place. The lesser orchestra was, in accordance with several trials made at the rehearsal, placed high up above, and apart; and sometimes between the powerful and imposing masses of tone of the larger orchestra it sounded really like music from another sphere."

The chief object of *Spohr's* journey to London was thus once more fully achieved: but on the other hand the projected performance of "Jessonda" during the same time, met with numerous unexpected obstacles. In order to allow *Spohr* the number of rehearsals he considered necessary for the study of the work, another opera, also a newly studied one, "Benvenuto Cellini," by *Berlioz*, was selected for performance during the intervening opera nights; and as is the custom, was to be repeated several times without further rehearsal. But upon the very first night of its performance, it met with a very unfavourable reception from the public, and *Spohr* himself,

interested as he felt to hear this much-talked-of music, respecting which opinions were so conflicting, was not much edified thereby, as appears from a letter written to his friend Mr. *Lüder*: "In the opera of *Berlioz*, which I heard in London this summer, there are some fine things, but scarcely has one begun to feel interested in it, than there comes a something so bizarre and harsh, that all the pleasure one has felt is destroyed. I have a special hatred of this eternal speculating upon extraordinary instrumental effects, for his opera contains without doubt many really happy conceptions both melodic and dramatic, and these are always marred by them. This it was also that displeased the London public, which was at first very favourable disposed towards him, and received him upon his entering the orchestra with loud applause; but as the opera proceeded their dissatisfaction increased, until at length, upon its conclusion, the audience broke out into one general storm of hisses and whistling; a circumstance never known to have occurred before at the Italian opera in London in presence of the Queen! — It is with *Berlioz* as with all the other coryphées of the music of the future; they do not abandon themselves to their natural feelings in their work, but speculate on things which have never yet been. That is the reason why these gifted musicians seldom write anything that is enjoyable, particularly for people who in the last century grew up in the knowledge of *Haydn*, *Mozart* and *Beethoven*," &c. With so explicit an opinion as that pronounced by the London public, the theatrical direction did not dare risk a second performance of the opera, and other operas were obliged to be substituted, which required also several rehearsals, and "Jessonda," which was as yet only in the first stage of study, was still farther postponed. This, nevertheless, was no great source of uneasiness to *Spohr*, and the time thus gained was agreeably occupied by him in other musical enjoyments.

On this visit indeed *Spohr* and his wife found a home replete with every domestic comfort in the house of Dr. *A. Farre*, who emulated with his kind lady in his attentions to-

wards them, and kindly devoted every hour that his professional engagements permitted to the entertainment of his guests; in this manner a warm friendship was soon established between the two families, and the weeks passed under his roof were ever recalled by *Spohr* as among the most pleasing of his recollections. As Dr. *Farre* and several of his medical colleagues were very musical and good singers, they had formed themselves, in conjunction with some other families devoted to the art, into a musical circle, in which music of a high class was zealously cultivated, and that of *Spohr* was more especially the favorite. In a soir e of this kind he had one evening the agreeable surprise to hear his oratorio "Die letzten Dinge" performed by eight and twenty dilettanti with faultless precision, a production which, in rare contrast with the habitual English taste for massive instrumentation, appealed to the feelings in the most pleasing manner by the *perfect purity* and intensity of its expression. At a brilliant musical soir e given by Dr. *Farre* himself, in compliment to his guests, a succession of pieces selected from *Spohr's* different operas was also given in the most efficient manner, and was subject of no small surprise and gratification both to him and the assembled company.

Meanwhile, the rehearsals of "Jessonda" had slowly proceeded, it is true, but there had arisen so many causes for a delay in its production, that before this could take place, the period of his vacation expired, and *Spohr* was obliged to leave London for Germany; but in doing so he had the satisfaction of leaving his opera in charge of a worthy representative, Mr. *Costa*, under whose direction, a fortnight afterwards, it was performed several times with the most brilliant success.

Upon his landing at Calais *Spohr* was warmly received by the amateurs of music of that town, who had become apprised of the day of his arrival, and he was invited by them to a grand entertainment given in his honour. Its chief feature was a luxurious banquet, but of which also an agreeable musical surprise formed a part; for at the conclusion of the dinner

the pleasing notes of *Spohr's C minor* quartet were heard in the adjoining apartment, which was followed by the execution of several other pieces, and continued up to the departure of the delighted guests at a late hour. This day, so unexpectedly passed in Calais in the midst of musical and festive enjoyments, was a subject of special gratification to *Spohr*, as he had least of all expected, here, upon the soil of France, to have met with such proofs of esteem and so much admiration for his music.

On the return journey he was much occupied with an idea which he had conceived in England of a new grand composition for the pianoforte with instrumental accompaniment, and which upon his arrival home he forthwith began with zest and spirit. Thus was produced — in the seventieth year of *Spohr's* age — one of his finest masterpieces, the septet for pianoforte, two stringed and four wind instruments, replete with the freshness of youthful thought in every part, with a *larghetto* which has scarcely its equal in bewitching harmony and beauty of modulations. While yet in manuscript it was publicly performed at the next subscription concert, on which occasion both the composition and the excellence of the execution met with the most favourable reception and acknowledgement. The pianoforte part, which was as grateful as it was difficult, was taken by *J. Bott*, and the audience testified yet more warmly their just appreciation of his execution from his having displayed also on the same evening his brilliant talent as violin player in *Spohr's* 15th. violin concerto. By the desire of the lovers of music of Cassel, a repetition of the new septet was given at the next concert; after which, while yet in manuscript, it was performed at one of the quartet soirées in Leipzig, and the fullest justice done to the pianoforte part by the truly artistic execution of *Moscheles*, and received there by the public with the most gratifying applause.

For the next summer vacation (1854) *Spohr* had contemplated another journey to Switzerland; and so great this time was his desire to pass once more the most pleasant

summer month in the undisturbed enjoyment of the beauties of nature, that the numerous invitations he had received to the musical festivals in England and Holland were powerless to induce him to relinquish his long previously projected plan. As he was on the eve of departing, he received by telegraph a farther pressing entreaty from his grand-daughter *Antonia Wolff* at Ratisbonne, who had there married a collegiate professor, a Mr. *Schmitz*, and who besought him to go by way of the old imperial city, where a visit from him had long been anxiously desired by all lovers of music, and to pass a few days with his grand-children and great-grand-children. Attractive as was this invitation, *Spohr* with regret felt compelled to decline it, his holidays being so strictly limited; and no railroad existing at that time to Ratisbonne, it would have led him too far out of his projected route. — After a short sojourn at Marburg, Heidelberg, and Baden-Baden — so famed for the beauty of their respective environs — he proceeded to the south of Switzerland, and especially enjoyed the voyage by steamboat upon the magnificent lakes. After a few days' stay at Lausanne, Geneva, and Vevay, further excursions were then made into the more easily accessible neighbourhood, where all around smiled in summer's rich attire, while beyond the lake rose in majestic contrast the lofty chain of the Alps, with its snow-capped summits.

Leaving the lake of Geneva the travellers continued their journey to Freiburg and Bern, at both which places quite unexpectedly calls were made upon the interest they took in music. At Freiburg, as soon as they had alighted at the hotel, *Spohr* was invited to join the other strangers present in a subscription towards the honorarium which it was there customary to tender to the organist of the church of St. Nicholas, for the performance of a piece of music upon its so much celebrated organ. At the appointed hour, just as the shades of evening closed around, the small party assembled, and solemnly pealed the tones of the mighty organ through the spacious and empty aisles of the stately church, producing their

wanted powerful effect upon *Spohr*. The organist, either not aware of the high musical authority before whom he was playing, or thinking to impose on him like the other strangers present by the exhibition of his wonderful artistic skill, struck up suddenly in the most inappropriate manner sundry things from modern operas, and then concluded with such a thundering peal on the instrument that the first exalted impression was wholly obliterated and *Spohr* could not forbear the undisguised expression of his disapproval of such a profanation of the grand fabric of sounds, which, with its inscription: "*In majorem gloriam dei*," seemed rather to him in a more exalted degree worthy alone to intonate the praises of God.

Scarcely arrived in Bern, *Spohr* was surprised to see notices stuck up at the corners of the streets announcing two concerts of sacred music in which his oratorio "*Die letzten Dinge*" formed the chief feature of each, though preceded on the first evening by a cantata by *Sebastian Bach*, and on the second by four of *Marcello's* Psalms. The first concert had already taken place the evening before, but as a great number of hearers as well as performers had come in from the neighbouring towns to the second concert, Mr. *Edele*, the director of the "Society of Ancient Classical Music" at Bern, had made arrangements to give a repetition of the oratorio on the next evening, so that at this second performance of it *Spohr* was enabled to hear it executed with the greater precision. As the news of *Spohr's* presence soon spread through the church, the opportunity was seized of giving the composer of the work which had just been performed with such devout inspiration, a public mark of the great esteem in which he was held in Bern; and in the later part of the evening he was suddenly greeted by a quickly improvised serenade, and addressed in several animated speeches. On the following morning *Spohr* left Bern, and after spending several pleasant days with his female fellow-travellers in the Bernese Oberland and on the shores of the Vierwaldstädter Lake, he continued his journey across the Lake of Constance to Bavaria and its capital,

Munich, where the much-talked-of grand exhibition of industry had just been opened. Though the one week spent there may have been found scarcely sufficient to see all the treasure of art and manufacture which had been collected partly for permanent and partly for a short exhibition only, the travellers do not appear to have thought a longer stay desirable, for they soon experienced also the prejudicial influence of the bodily and mental over-exertion, which, combined with the still more injurious climatic influences which during that disastrous summer carried off so many of the visitors to that then overcrowded city. Under such circumstances nothing could be more desirable than a visit to Alexandersbad, where Dr. *Theodor Pfeiffer*, a near relative, and proprietor of the cold-water-cure establishment, had long kindly invited them. A short stay in that place, with its healthful mountain air, sufficed to restore their depressed animal spirits, and *Spohr* gladly joined in all the social parties in their excursions to the romantic environs, and shared in all the cheerful parties of the company at the baths, which in kindly social spirit lived as one family. All this, together with the whole arrangements and rules of life, which were simple and in accordance with nature, were so much to *Spohr's* taste, that from that time he always considered Alexandersbad as the beau-ideal of an invigorating summer residence, and after another visit there he firmly maintained that opinion for the rest of his life.

Spohr commenced the following year (1855) with the composition of six four-voice part-songs for soprano, alto, tenor and bass, which were soon after excellently sung at a private concert of the St. Cecilia society with double vocal support, under his own conducting, and aided by his own powerful bass. They made an unusual sensation among the lovers of music present, above all one entitled "Man's Consolation" (the words by *von Müller von der Werra*), which went home to all hearts.

In the spring of the same year, *Spohr* obeyed an invitation from the king of Hanover to direct his double symphony,

and several other of his compositions, at a grand concert. Upon his arrival at the railway terminus he was met by music-director *Wehner*, at the head of a numerous body of musicians and friends of the art, and in the evening at the hotel he was saluted with two serenades, by the military band, and the members of the choral society. On the subject of the pleasant days he passed in Hanover upon that occasion both in a musical and festive point of view, *Spohr* wrote to his friend *Hauptmann*: "I enjoyed myself much on my little excursion to Hanover. I played a quartet at the King's, and it seemed to me that his musical culture went so far as to like that kind of music. At a morning concert got up by the chapel royal to let me hear two of my compositions which they had very carefully practised, I played also my quartet (*E minor*). The compositions adverted to were the 7th. violin concerto, executed in a very masterly manner by *Joachim*; and the first double quartet, of which *Kömpel* played the first violin in the first, and *Joachim* in that of the second quartet. This also, was played in the most finished manner. On the second day the chapel royal gave a first rehearsal of my symphony, "The Terrestrial and Divine in human Life," which was followed by a grand dinner, which lasted five hours, and during which the speeches, songs and toasts were numerous and varied. Although much exhausted I was obliged to go to a musical party in the evening given by my old friend *Hausmann*, where I played two of my quartets, and as on the previous evening, did not get to bed till two o'clock. On the third day there was a grand rehearsal in the forenoon, and in the evening the concert for the benefit of the poor, for which the King had sent me the invitation to come to Hanover. I conducted the first half, consisting of the overture and duett from 'Jessonda' and my symphony. All these, executed in a masterly manner, particularly the double symphony, which I never heard better played, not even in London. The small orchestra led by *Joachim* was composed of the élite of the chapel royal and was very conveniently placed on the stage, so that it was

advantageously separated from the large one. The latter was composed of twenty violins, six viols, five violincellos and five counter-basses. It contrasted well therefore by its imposing power, in the sonorous and not too spacious theatre, with the solo orchestra upon the stage. The effect was very satisfactory. But in fact the orchestra is a very superior one, particularly in the stringed instruments. The harmony comprises certainly several distinguished virtuosi, but in ensemble, it is neither so even in tone, nor so pure in intonation as ours. The second part of the concert was conducted by *Fischer*; it consisted of the overture to "Euryanthe," *Beethoven's* violin concerto (with new, superfluously long, very difficult and ungrateful, cadences by *Joachim*), and some 'numbers' of 'Lohengrin.' The concert was crowded and must have brought in a round sum to the poor-box. — On the morning before I left a deputation from the chapel royal presented me with a leader's bâton more rich and tasteful in design than anything of the kind I ever saw. As I afterwards learned, it was made by order of the king, to be presented to me by the chapel royal. It consists of a beautifully grooved ivory staff with a golden handle richly set with coloured stones, with a similar gold ornamentation at the top, ending in a knob set likewise with small stones. The whole thing is extremely tasteful, and has upon the handle in raised letters: 'The Royal Hanoverian Chapel to Music-director-general Dr. *Spohr*, March 31st. 1855.' The Elector, who sent for the work of art to inspect it, expressed himself, as I am told, upon returning it, with very unreserved dissatisfaction that the inscription did not express 'Director-general of Music to the Elector,' and said, "who will know hereafter whose director general of music he was!"* &c.

* The leader's bâton here described with such evident satisfaction, formed a worthy companion to a scarcely less costly and tasteful one that *Spohr* had been presented with by his faithful pupil *F. Böhme* of Holland. He was always very proud of such appropriate and artistically executed presents, and it was always his custom to take them out of their respective cases with his own hands, and to replace them after use with equal care.

The first impression experienced by *Spohr* on his return from Hanover, was also an agreeable one, for he found at home a telegraphic message that had arrived during his absence, to the following effect: "Inspruck, March 27th. 1855, 10 m. p. 10 at night. One hundred and fifty dilettanti of Inspruck, who have just performed the music of "Jessonda" with rapturous applause, send to the master their heartfelt greetings." The letters which subsequently arrived from Inspruck informed him in a more detailed manner, "that the opera had been three times performed there in the national theatre to crowded houses, for the benefit of the fund for the relief of the poor, and in a manner surpassing all expectation, by musical and vocal dilettanti;" and expressed at the same time "the hope that the friends of music in that place would have the gratification of greeting the honoured and veteran composer in their own mountains in the course of the year, and hear again that classic opera under his own personal direction."

That hope however was not realised, for the journey contemplated this year was in the opposite direction, towards the north; first to Hamburg, where *Spohr* had not been since the great fire in 1842, and was therefore greatly interested to see the magnificent manner in which it had been rebuilt. Fully satisfied in that expectation, he had at the same time the pleasure of seeing again several much-loved friends (among whom the family of the *Grunds*), and to hear many successful musical performances, both in private and public circles. — Being so near to the sister town Lubeck, to which his wife was still fondly attached, and for whose kind-hearted inhabitants he himself, since his visit in the year 1840, had a predilection, it was natural that both should much desire to make a trip thither, upon the railway which had since then been opened to connect the two towns. Although it is true that during the fifteen years which had elapsed, many former friends had gone to their last rest, yet the venerable old instructor was still living, and met his former lady pupil and her renowned husband with the same warmth of heart.

Verging upon eighty years of age, he had recently retired from professional life, but the institution he had so long successfully directed flourished still, conducted in the same spirit by his worthy son Dr. *Adam Meier*; and *Spohr* and his wife, deeply moved by his touching kindness, took up their abode beneath the hospitable roof that was so endeared to them by past recollections. — As the interests of music were also well represented by Kapellmeister *Hermann*, a former pupil and a warm partizan of *Spohr*, the days passed agreeably in social intercourse with old friends and new acquaintances.

In the course of the year 1855 *Spohr* wrote his 33rd. violin quartet (Op. 152, published by *Siegel* of Leipzig) and three grand duets for two violins (Op. 148, 150 and 153, published by *Peters* of Leipzig) which last he dedicated to the brothers *Alfred* and *Henry Holmes* of London. Neither could he have commended his work to better hands to ensure a performance and publicity worthy of them, for although those young artists never had the advantage of his personal instruction, yet by dint of a diligent study of his „Violin School,“ they had become so penetrated with the spirit of his composition and his style of play, that *Spohr* during his last stay in England had been exceedingly gratified to hear his older violin duets executed by the two talented youths in a really masterly manner; and when a few years afterwards, upon an artistic tour on the continent, they visited Cassel, they caused, as *Spohr* himself remarks in a letter: “everywhere the greatest sensation by their splendid play, and especially excited admiration by the highly finished and surprising performance of his duets and concertantes.”

In the spring of 1856 *Spohr* received a letter from a former pupil, the director of music *Kiel*, of Detmold; where upon, at the desire of his Prince, he proposed to *Spohr* the composition of some songs for a baritone voice, with pianoforte and violin accompaniment. Although doubtful at first that such a combination would be suited to a deep male voice, he nevertheless interested himself in the trial, and in a short time

he wrote a collection of six songs of the required kind, with which he himself felt highly satisfied. He then gave a hearing of them in manuscript to his musical friends in his own house, in which he himself took the violin part, which had proved of a somewhat difficult nature, and gave the voice part to *Heinrich Osthoff*, an ex-concert-singer, who for some years past had been settled in Cassel as a teacher of music, and who from his particularly excellent and expressive execution of all *Spohr's* song pieces, sacred and otherwise, was a welcome guest in all musical circles. In Detmold also, the new songs dedicated to the Prince were very favorably received, and the Prince, as his director of music informed *Spohr*, sang them every day with increased satisfaction. When *Spohr* shortly afterwards forwarded the first printed presentation copy (published by *Luckhardt* of Cassel, Op. 154) to the musical prince, the latter in an autograph letter of thanks thus expressed himself: "that the great pleasure the fine songs already gave him would be yet increased when he should have the opportunity of singing them with *Spohr's* own accompaniment." The obliging letter was at the same time accompanied by a valuable souvenir, in the shape of a shirt-pin with the appropriately selected emblems of an oak-leaf in green gold, with an acorn of pearl set in gold, presented to *Spohr* as an honourable acknowledgement "of his true *German* worth as musician and as man."

The first weeks of the summer vacation were passed by *Spohr* in a very pleasant and recreative journey to Dresden, Saxon Switzerland and Prague; after which, having reposed a short time in his own beautiful flower-garden, he undertook a journey into the Harz, at the solicitation of an enthusiastic musical friend, the juriconsult *Haushalter* of Wernigerode.

The increased leisure time gained by *Spohr* in consequence of the appointment of his new colleague he now devoted to composition, for which, despite his advanced age, the impulse and love had not yet diminished. Though his musical ideas may no longer

have flowed so copiously, and assumed as readily the form he wished, as in former years, and though he himself at times expressed doubts as to whether his later works would take equal rank with his earlier compositions, yet he frequently received an enthusiastic recognition of the merit of his newest compositions from quite unexpected quarters, which always gave him fresh courage to continue his musical creations.

Spohr now determined to write another quartet (his 34th.), upon terminating which he immediately opened the winter series of his still continued quartet circle with it. Although this new composition was considered extremely fresh and charming by both co-operators and auditory, yet he himself was so little satisfied with it, that after repeated alteration, which were rejected as soon as made, he laid aside the whole quartet as a failure; nor did he write another until a whole twelvemonth had elapsed: this differed in every respect from the former, and he substituted it for it under the same number. Upon its first performance at the quartet meeting this piece of music pleased him right well; but shortly afterwards it seemed to him to require many improvements, and as these did not turn out to his satisfaction, sorrowfully, but resigned to the consciousness that he could no longer carry out in a satisfactory manner the ideas which floated before his fancy, he associated the new 34th. quartet with that which he had previously rejected, and expressed the wish to his wife that neither should at any time be made public.

He came to a similar decision in respect to a symphony which he had composed shortly before, which was performed once only in the presence of a few only of his most intimate musical friends, at a rehearsal by the court orchestra of Cassel. Notwithstanding the numerous beauties and novelties in thought which it contains, to him nevertheless it did not appear worthy of being placed in the fine catalogue of his earlier written symphonies, and in this manner by himself was this — his tenth — symphony condemned. not to destruction it is true, but to eternal concealment.

In the summer of 1857 *Spohr* availed himself of the vacation to go to Holland, his former visit there being still borne by him in pleasing recollection, he had therefore long been desirous of proceeding thither with his wife to shew her that country, as yet unvisited by her, and remarkable for so many peculiarities. Little as he had calculated upon any musical enjoyments there at such a season of the year, his pleasure was great to hear on the very first evening at *Verhulst's*, in Rotterdam, in a numerous circle of musicians and lovers of music, several quartets both of his own and of *Verhulst's* composition, upon which occasion the violinist *Tours*, whose acquaintance he had formerly made, proved himself a great virtuoso, as first violin. The director of music *Böhm*, of Dortrecht, who had shown from his youth a strong attachment to the honoured master, exhibited it anew by the unwearying attention with which he strove to alleviate all the cares and difficulties of travel in a foreign country, and took them wholly upon himself. Willingly following the arrangements of the excellent "travelling marshall," as *Spohr* was wont playfully to call him, the travellers were now enabled to see the many remarkable objects in the chief cities of Holland in a comparatively much shorter time, after which a further journey was undertaken from Amsterdam to that part of North Holland lying beyond the Y. The singular topographical feature of the whole country, the meadows intersected by innumerable canals and lakes, meadows covered with grazing cattle, the hundreds of gaily painted windmills, the cheerful blue sky, and the easy travelling upon the smoothly paved highroads, more like the parquettèd floors of an apartment — in short, the whole delightful journey, with its interesting final objects, the celebrated places Saardam and Broek, presented a succession of charming pictures that surpassed all expectation and put *Spohr* in particular in the most cheerful possible mood.

Their kind "marshall" *Böhm* accompanied the travellers on their return as far back as Utrecht, but placed them there in good hands, under the hospitable roof of one of *Spohr's*

grateful pupils, the director of music *Kufferath*, with whom they passed some exceedingly pleasant days. As the country round Utrecht abounds with handsome country-seats and parks, these furnished occasion for frequent delightful walks with the family of their host; and the musical entertainments given to *Spohr* — a quickly arranged organ-concert got up by *Nieuwenhuisen*, the organist of the cathedral, and a grand serenade by torch-light in the evening — made the memory of those days worthy of being associated with the pleasing reminiscences of his former visit.

On the return-journey *Spohr* stopped a day at Cologne, where *Hiller*, the director of music, quickly improvised a brilliant dinner-party in his honour, and afterwards gratified him with the performance of some highly interesting musical pieces in his own house. *Hiller* himself played with great spirit a recently composed sonata for the pianoforte of extreme difficulty of execution, some numbers of the comic opera composed by him called: "Jest, cunning and revenge," which was received with universal satisfaction, and by *Spohr* in particular with lively applause. This was succeeded later in the evening by a musical surprise; the celebrated Cologne choral society, wholly composed of male voices, had assembled in all silence in the hotel, and at the door of their honoured guest sang their finest songs in the most masterly manner, which, together with a spirited address, spoken by professor *Bischof*, afforded him very great pleasure.

Gratified in every respect with his journey, *Spohr* returned to Cassel, where, reinvigorated and refreshed, he devoted himself with his usual zeal and interest to the materially lightened labours of his office, shared now with his young and active colleague.

Meanwhile, at that time was heard here and there the report that it was contemplated to pension him off; but when he was apprised of this by a friend, and it was put to him whether he would not rather anticipate such an intention by proposing himself to retire upon his pension, he

replied with decision, that: his duty and inclination impelled him alike to remain in the performance of his official engagements so long as he could fulfil them satisfactorily. Thus things remained on the old footing, until on the 14th. November, both contrary to his wish and expectation, he received the following rescript from the Elector:

“In pursuance of our most gracious will and pleasure, we have granted to the director-general of music and court Kapellmeister at our court-theatre, Dr. *Louis Spöhr*, by reason of his advanced years, permission to retire into private life, and have been further pleased to grant him a yearly pension of 1500 Thalers from our court treasury from the date of the month next ensuing. The department of our lord high marshall of the palace will make the further dispositions to that effect. Cassel, November 12, 1857. *Friedrich Wilhelm.*”

Painfully affected as *Spöhr* was upon the receipt of this, he with his usual good sense soon overcame the shock of the first impression and contemplated the matter on its brighter side; in which sense he then gave expression to his sentiments in his letters to distant friends, and among others, in replying shortly afterwards to the director of music *Bott* respecting other affairs, he wrote as follows; “You do not appear to have yet learned that the Elector, without my solicitation, has placed me in retirement, and although the terms of my engagement specified that my salary should be paid so long as I lived, he has pensioned me off on 1500 Thalers per annum. It has nevertheless appeared in all the newspapers, together with the account of the festive form in which I directed for the last time the opera of *Jessonda* at the theatre. At first it gave me very great pain, for I felt still perfectly competent to conduct the few operas which latterly fell to my share. But I soon learned to estimate my present freedom at its real value, and now feel very glad that whenever I choose I can get away by rail whithersoever my fancy takes me! I have submitted also to the deduction from my salary, having been informed that I should not be able to compel the payment

of the full salary without a new law-suit, and because it was repulsive to my feelings to take the whole amount without performing any service for it, and I can live very well with three-fourths of it by means of my savings!"

Thus terminated *Spohr's* personal co-operation at opera and concert. But that he still cherished as warm an interest in the latter his letters to distant friends attest, and in this spirit he wrote on December 22nd. to Mr. *Lüder*: "Since we were at your house, we have had here the second subscription concert! It was the first concert that took place in Cassel without my co-operation, and at which I was present from beginning to end as an auditor. It consisted of carefully rehearsed music: the two finales from "Zemire and Azor" and "Euryanthe;" of instrumental music *Mozart's C major* symphony with the fugue (called Jupiter); of concert things *Beethoven's* violin concerto with *Joachim's* cadences, and a concert piece by *Moscheles* for two pianofortes, called *Hommage à Händel*, very correctly and effectively played by Messrs. *Reiss* and *Tivendell*. The concert opened with the overture to "Rosamunda" by *Schubert*, one of his youthful works, but which is very pleasing, and was quite new to me. *Reiss* has again achieved great praise both by his arrangement and by his careful rehearsal and study of the music." In the same letter he farther says: "We have also had again two quartet parties, and I am happy to say, that I am still all right at the violin, only I must always prepare myself a few days before, which was not necessary some years ago!*"

* These quartet evenings in the society of a few of the families of his most intimate friends, were always a source of great pleasure to *Spohr*. Every year, on the approach of winter, he took early steps for their re-arrangement, and generally opened the series in his own house. Painful as it was to him whenever the death of one of the members of the circle caused a vacancy therein, the loss of his two oldest and most faithful friends, chief director *von Schmerfeld* and Lord marshall *von der Malsburg*, who had died in the two previous years, was long and deeply deplored by him.

The at this time still powerful impulse to compose, on the one hand, and the dread of being no longer capable of producing anything good and new on the other, gave rise to many painful struggles in the mind of *Spohr*, — till one morning he entered his wife's apartment, and with a cheerful countenance announced to her that he had found the right way to get out of the difficulty. He had resolved upon writing a requiem, and had already conceived some fine ideas for it; he had the greatest hopes that he would be able to complete it, and produce a worthy conclusion to his numerous works. In happy and inspired mood he now immediately went to work; and in a few days wrote the first subjects, but this pleasure, like that which he had shortly before boasted of in his quartet play, was soon dissipated. On the second day after Christmas Day, while on his wonted way to the reading room of the museum in the evening twilight he had the misfortune to fall over the stone steps at the entrance, and to break his left arm. Beyond all expectation, nevertheless, the fractured limb was happily healing fast, and when, after a lapse of several months, with anxious fear of the result, he once more took up his violin, to draw the first tones from it, the trial seemed quite satisfactory. But after several days' practice, followed up with great perseverance, he nevertheless became convinced to his great sorrow that his arm would never recover its lost strength and elasticity; upon which, as in this also he could no longer satisfy himself, deprived of another of the most precious elements of his existence, with a grieving heart he laid by his beloved violin!

Meanwhile, notwithstanding, many wished-for opportunities presented themselves elsewhere to *Spohr*, to keep alive his interest in musical enjoyments and to cheer him with the performance of his greater works. Scarcely was he recovered from the fracture of his arm, than he accepted an invitation to Magdeburg, to hear the performance of his oratorio, "Des Heilands letzte Stunden," which was to take place there on Good Friday. With this performance he expressed himself

highly pleased, in a letter to Mr. *Lüders*: "Orchestra, choruses, and solo-singers were alike excellently practised in their respective parts, and the effect, in the church of St. Ulrich, which is so favorably constructed for sound, was indeed heavenly. The solo-voices, for the most part belonging to the *Seebach* choral society, were particularly fine, harmonious and powerful dilettante singers, and led by their director *Mühling* they were so penetrated with the true spirit of the composition, that I was quite taken by surprise, and delighted!

The accompaniment also of the solo instruments in the grand air of Mary in the second part was very fine; for *Grimm* the harpist had been sent for from Berlin, and the other solo instruments — violin, violincello and horn — were played by members of the present orchestra of the Magdeburg theatre, who are, as luck would have it, virtuosi."

In a similar letter of the 6th. April to *Hauptmann*, in speaking of his further contemplated plans of journey, he says: "Whether all these excursions will be carried into effect, is not yet decided; but for the rest of my life my artistic enjoyments are limited to them; for I am now perfectly convinced, that I cannot accomplish any great work more. I regret to say, that my last attempt of the kind failed, and my requiem remains a fragment; nevertheless, as the subject as far as the *Lacrimosa dies illa*, at which I stuck fast, pleases me well, and seems to have much that is new and ingenious in it, I shall not destroy it, as I should like to take it up again, and will make another attempt to complete it."

This attempt, to which with much perseverance he devoted half a day, proved however a failure, and brought him finally to the avowed painful determination to relinquish composition entirely; as he did not feel capable of putting his musical ideas into a distinct shape. At the conclusion of the letter adverted to, he says further: "I thank you heartily for your kind wishes upon my birth-day! Notwithstanding my present low spirits on account of my artistic impotency, I nevertheless passed it agreeably enough. That may have arisen

from my happily performed journey." Scarcely three weeks afterwards, *Spohr*, again full of pleasurable anticipation, set out anew, and this time to Bremen, where the director of music *Engel* purposed to open his recently established choral society with the public performance of *Spohr's* oratorio, "The Fall of Babylon," a great undertaking, but so worthily executed that *Spohr* himself was greatly surprised and deeply moved.

For the beginning of July *Spohr* had been invited to Prague, where the half-centennial anniversary of the Conservatory of that city was to be celebrated by three grand musical performances — among which was his opera "Jessonda." The celebration of divine service in the cathedral on the first morning was followed in the evening by a grand concert in the theatre. It began with a new Symphony by *Kittl*, the director of the conservatory, which, like the other *Pièces d'Ensemble*, was performed by the pupils of the institution; while the solo-pieces were executed by foreign resident musicians who had received their education there; among these, the celebrated violinists *Dreyschock* and *Laub*. "On the second evening," in the words of the "Tagesboten aus Böhmen," "not only in honour of the great musician present, but in order to give every true lover of art a right festive evening, the 'Jessonda' of *Dr. Louis Spohr* was selected, and Prague had this time the satisfaction of seeing the inspired and still vigorous veteran conduct the performance of his work himself As *Spohr* took his place at the conductor's desk, which was hung with wreaths of laurel and ornamented with a crown of the same, he was received by the densely crowded house, which comprised all the leading artists and lovers of music of Prague, with long and enthusiastic applause. At every moment of interest, of which the fascinating "Jessonda," (the not yet surpassed model of German lyrical opera) is one uninterrupted beautiful chain, the most gratifying acclamations were first directed to the master, and then to the singers. After the second act, the venerable poet of sweet sounds was vehemently called forward upon the stage, as also after the last act, when another crown of laurel was

thrown to him. . . . The conducting of the honoured master *Spohr* is still marked by unimpaired vigour, and attention to every detail; his stroke of the baton has its usual characteristic stamp" &c. The *concert spirituel*, which had been arranged for the third evening, as the finale to the musical part of the festival, comprised as chief subject, the ninth Symphony of *Beethoven*; but at the grand dinner given on the following day, a series of select musical pieces was performed, and the opportunity seized, both by loud calls for the repetition of the overture to "Jessonda," and every possible mode of demonstration, to honour *Spohr*, the Nestor of the numerously congregated musicians, as the king of the feast. Not less however than by all these demonstrations was he gratified by the kind anticipation of his wishes with the invitation to visit the country-house in the neighbourhood of Prague which had been hallowed by *Mozart's* lengthened residence; to which the present proprietor Herr *Popelka* himself accompanied him, to shew him the room, which *Spohr* also looked upon as sacred ground, where *Mozart* had composed his "Don Juan."

Spohr was less fortunate upon his return journey in realising a long-cherished and ardent wish. He had for several years vainly endeavoured to hear upon a foreign stage *Mozart's* opera "Idomeneo," which he had never been able to give a performance of in Cassel, and which was known to him only in the pianoforte selection. With this object also, already in the beginning of the summer, apart from and independent of his subsequently promised visit to Prague, he had projected a journey to Dresden, for the reason, as he then expressed in a letter to his friend *Lüder* — "that with the constantly increasing dearth in the repertory of modern operas, an as yet unheard opera of *Mozart* was too important an event, and for him an artistic necessity too great, that he should not joyfully undertake even a much longer journey to hear it." Long previously he had written on the subject to his friend the director of music *Reissiger*, and at length thought to see his hope realized in Dresden, either before or after the Prague musical festival.

Unfortunately, however, owing to the absence of the chief singers of the opera, it could not be carried out, and so, consoling himself meanwhile till the autumn, he took the road to Alexandersbad, where during a pleasant sojourn of a week, he reposed from the exertion of the previous journey in the enjoyment of the quiet relaxation he so much desired.

Greatly gratified, and visibly refreshed as *Spohr* again returned from this pleasant excursion to Alexandersbad, yet from that period he exhibited a constantly increasing low-spirited and thoughtful mood, which was so opposite to his former manner. To his wife, who vainly tried every means to cheer him, he would then reply after a protracted and earnest silence, that he was weary of life, as he could no longer be doing; that he had enjoyed to exhaustion all that mortal life could give, and lived to see a more widely spread recognition and love for his music than he even could have hoped for, — that now he ardently wished for death, before the infirmities of old age completely prostrated him. Nevertheless he always felt cheerfully moved again by invitations to new journeys, and musical enjoyments, of which several presented themselves in the autumn. In September namely, the journey to Wiesbaden to the musical festival of the Middle-Rhine, and in October to Leipsic, to the performance of his own and other works which particularly interested him, at the Gewandhaus concert, at the conservatory and at the church, — on which occasions he at both places followed the musical performances with persevering interest and pleasure, and received with lively satisfaction the various ovations of which he was the object. Although upon this journey to Leipsic, and lastly also to Dresden, he found no opportunity to realise his *most ardent expectation* to hear the “*Idomeneo*,” he nevertheless was somewhat compensated for the disappointment by the kindness of the Frankfort theatrical Intendant, who on his previously expressed wish, announced *Cherubini’s* opera of “*Medea*” for the evening of his arrival there, on his way through to Wiesbaden, and thus afforded him the high enjoyment of hearing that classically beautiful music.

As with the decrease in the length of the days and with the gloom of winter, the sleeplessness and nervous excitement which had affected him so prejudicially at Leipsic also, increased during the long nights, and from that time slowly but obviously augmented; leaving as their result a still greater debility and uneasiness during the day; his cheerfulness abandoned him entirely. — Shortly after his visit to Leipsic, where the orchestral pieces under the excellent direction of *Rietz* gave him especial pleasure, he wrote among other things to *Hauptmann* “I cannot express to you how this time all the music I heard in Leipsic pleased me. . . . From the devotional sentiment which your motette raised in me on Sunday, I envy you not a little the energy with which you still continue to work, while with me it is all over with composing and with violin play! Yesterday I received from *Zellner*, the musical critic at Vienna, the intelligence that one of my oratorios is to be performed there, and he invited me on the part of the originators of the design, to come and direct it myself. For several years the Austrian society had contemplated giving my ‘Fall of Babylon’ as a musical festival in the Imperial Riding School; but then, even with the aid of *Metternich*, I could not get permission to go there. Now, when I could get away, as I am an invalid, and the journey too far and fatiguing, I am obliged to renounce it. I shall therefore decline the invitation and content myself with shorter journeys in the fine season of the year. But on such occasions, struggles with my inclinations and low spirits always follow! and so one is induced to envy the lot of several who were personally known to me, who of late died suddenly. . . .” Impressed with similar painful thoughts and not without many inward struggles, *Spohr* wrote the letter to decline the invitation that he received at that time to Königsberg, to the centenary *Händel* Festival, where he had been chosen to direct the magnificent “Messiah” and one of his own works; and where it was intended to pay to him, as sole worthy representative of the great *Händel*, all the homage

and honours which could not be rendered to *Händel* personally, in all the overflowing fulness of their warmth.”*

As *Spöhr* for many years had been considered by the whole musical world as the highest authority in everything that pertained to his art, a day seldom passed without bringing applications or requests of some kind, frequently from the most distant localities, which his ever-ready disposition to oblige never permitted him to leave unnoticed, but to which, now although with a heavy heart, he was more and more compelled to waive replying. One application nevertheless may here be mentioned, which, coming at a particularly favourable moment, rekindled his zest to make a last essay at composition, and which in reality also was his last! For many years he had been repeatedly solicited in the most irresistible words by Mr. *Chr. Schad*, the publisher of the Almanack of the German Muses, to write a few little songs for it, and *Spöhr* had each time the satisfaction to learn that those willingly bestowed little contributions were received with a more than usual approbation. In the autumn of 1857, when with considerable timidity he had endeavoured to satisfy Mr *Schad*'s urgent wish for a composition for the words of the old ballad of *Walter von der Vogelweide*, “the silent nightingale,” he received a very poetical letter of thanks expressing the writers “admiration of the musical sentiment and depth of feeling with which the beautiful ballad had been rendered by the composer,” and that “it is a great satisfaction for a German heart that two masters of his nation, although separated by an interval of six hundred years, should have exhibited the rich treasures

* To the many marks of honour which *Spöhr* still received in the latter years of his life must be added also his nomination to the honorary membership of the “Musical Society,” which had just previously been instituted in London. Upon the occasion of his presentation with this diploma, an enumeration of the various diplomas which he had already been presented with gave an amount of *Thirty-eight*, among which was one from New York, from Buenos-Ayres, St. Petersburg, and Stockholm, with two from Rome and two from Holland.

of their inmost feelings, in so noble, so simple and so harmonious a form of words and tone." &c. Now at length, in October 1858, six months after having laid aside his incomplete requiem as his last composition, he received another letter, beginning with the words: "Your silent nightingale which built her harmonious nest in the thick verdure of last year's Almanack of the Muses, has met with the loudest approbation of the German nation for the very eloquence of that silence. And who better than the loved great master *Spohr* would know how to utter sounds more replete with the soul's harmony, — who know how to move more deeply and purely a German heart! No wonder is it that I again knock at your door to-day. I come in the name of, and at the request of, more than eighty of the best hearts and heads in Germany, who have chosen me as their standard-bearer for a noble patriotic object. . . . I lay before you three of the most beautiful of *Goethe's* songs for your unrestricted choice, and resign myself to the pleasing hope of seeing one or the other enveloped in a melodious garb by your master-hand." And, indeed, already on the following morning his wife heard with joyful emotion the sound of the long-silent keys of the piano-forte, in his room, and his still pleasing voice as he sang in accompaniment. A few hours afterwards he came also with a look of pleasure to fetch her, to sing to her forthwith the new music he had composed to *Goethe's* "Herz, mein Herz, was soll das geben," having already completed it as regarded the chief thing; though the rhythm and conclusion not being yet to his fancy, would require a longer time to finish. When however, his wife, greatly pleased with the lively, pretty melody, could not refrain from making the observation that it had a very striking resemblance to *Beethoven's* composition to the same words, he assured her that he had no knowledge of it, or at least no recollection of it at all, but expressed the wish to have it procured, in order to satisfy himself of the resemblance. — With his own song he was now tolerably satisfied, and said, with truth also, that it would have a very good

effect, if those who sung it did not *spoil it by too slow a Tempo*, as was so frequently the case with his compositions, a remark which is in so far characteristic, as *Spohr*, so often as he heard his works performed abroad, or not under his own immediate direction, always felt annoyed by the time being taken frequently *too slow*, but scarcely ever complained of one taken *too fast*. When at length the new song was studied under his superintendance by his niece *Emma Spohr*, who, gifted with a fine voice, always sung songs of the kind in the family-circle, he sang to her himself with the most lively emotion, and with almost breathless rapidity, the three closely following strophes, without interlude, to encourage her to a similar execution. But a few weeks afterwards, when he again caught sight of the manuscript, he said, with a sorrowful expression of face, that the song was worthless, and regretted that he had sent it for publication in the Almanack of the Muses!

As evidence of his restless impulse to be usefully active, one instance may here be adduced:

When, after breaking his arm, he was compelled to give up violin playing himself, he thought also that he could no longer give satisfaction as a *Teacher* of his instrument; he had dismissed his last violin pupils, young persons without pecuniary means whom he instructed from a humane feeling and zeal for the art. — But now, in December 1858, he again resumed his labours as a beneficent instructor, and expressed himself to *Hauptmann* upon the subject in the following words: “In order still to be somewhat actively engaged in the cause of art, I have commenced giving pianoforte lessons gratis to a young lady who wishes to qualify herself for a teacher of that instrument. But when it is requisite to play anything to my pupil, I am of course obliged to call my wife or sister-in-law to my assistance.”

In this manner, the this time especially dreaded winter, — his last — had come! On New Year’s morning 1859, after a sleepless and restless night passed in a state of painful nervous excitement, he received in earnest silence the wishes of the

season from his family and friends, — but still looked forward with hope to a “fine spring and summer,” which he contemplated passing happily once more, partly at home among his favorite flowers, and partly in little journeys. For such journeys, which his friends always designated as “little triumphal excursions,” the most alluring invitations had again long been received from all sides, but of these of course he could only accept those which were to places most easily accessible. When upon such occasions with an effusion of grateful satisfaction he gave utterance to his feelings in the words: “It often seems to me as though all the world thought only of conferring upon me a very feast of pleasure before I die,” it was unfortunately always followed by the sad addition: “but no one knows how miserable I feel, and no one can relieve me of my sufferings.” — With almost morbid impatience he now looked forward to the next spring, when he had proposed to himself, at the special request of *John J. Bott*, who was now appointed director of music at the court orchestra of Meiningen, to proceed thither, to direct the concert which was then to be given for the benefit of the widow’s relief fund. The few hours occupied by the journey on the newly-opened Werra railway were easy and comfortable to him, and upon his reception at the terminus of Meiningen *Spohr* was particularly gratified at meeting once more both his favorite pupils *Grund* and *Bott*, who greeted their honoured master with expressions of the heartiest welcome, and who the next day were unwearied in showing their grateful attachment to him in every possible manner. Immediately on the first evening, as a further festive welcome, a grand serenade by torch-light was given to him, in which under *Bott’s* conducting (in the *Spohr* style), male choral and four-part-songs interchanged alternately with the music of the full orchestra; and at the close, at the moment when the cheers of the assembled crowds were loudest, the whole living mass was suddenly illumined by the coloured fires of a brilliant sun, which disclosed also to view, as though by magic, the fine parks opposite the house. At the rehearsal for the concert

on the following evening, *Spohr* found all the musical pieces so carefully studied and in accordance with all his intentions, that he could look forward with pleasing certainty to its performance on the next evening, and the more so, as the two directors of music, *Grund* and *Bott*, felt an especial pleasure in resuming their former places under the direction of their master, as co-operating violinists in the orchestra, and in thus giving him the most powerful support.

The "Meininger Tageblatt" makes mention of the concert in the following terms: "Upon the stage, between branches of palm and laurel, was placed a colossal bust of *Spohr*. The conductor's desk had been decorated by female hands with ingenious devices and garlands of flowers. The house, filled to overflowing, awaited in breathless suspense the appearance of the famed old master. 'He comes!' . . . was whispered through the spacious house, and a thousand-tongued welcome of joy greeted the honoured man. In a few minutes afterwards he had lifted the conductor's baton — a solemn silence immediately ensued; and in a few moments the first notes of the symphony "Die Weihe der Töne" resounded. The eyes of all were directed to the Nestor of the science of music, who brought to our mind the Olympian Jove — *omnia supercilio moventis*. All the orchestral assistants felt the importance of the moment, and lent their most efficient aid. The same calm which everywhere breathes through the works of this musician was seen also in his conducting. Not the least fraction of a beat was thrown away — in all and everywhere, were seen the director of orchestra and the musicians, as a grand impersonated whole, achieving in every part a fresh triumph. The honoured poet of sweet sounds directed besides his grand symphony, five other of his works, and with so steady a hand, that the crowded house was filled with admiration." . . . This part of the concert in which *Spohr* wielded for the last time the conductor's baton, comprised among the rest, his concertante in *H minor*, which was executed by director of music *Bott* and concert-master

Müller in a masterly manner. and gave him great pleasure. In appropriate choice followed the overture to the "Mountain Sprite." with which thirty-four years before he had opened the festive celebration of the marriage of the ducal pair. As upon that occasion the exalted couple listened with pleasure to the tones of the master, and exhibited a warm interest not only by their presence at the rehearsal and performance, but by the most marked attentions; and the duke, who many years previously had presented *Spohr* with the cross of knighthood of the order of the house of Saxe-Ernest, changed it upon this occasion for the grand cross of the order. — The last evening in Meiningen was further celebrated in honour of *Spohr* by a grand masonic fête, which afforded him no less gratification; as also a hearty written testimony of thanks addressed to him by the intendant of the court orchestra, Mr. *von Liliencron*, from which, as it refers to *Spohr's last appearance as conductor*, we may here cite some words, which will perpetuate the memory of that day: "The house filled to the very utmost, — the enthusiastic acclamations, — the flowers and wreaths, testified to you yesterday, how fascinated we all were by your tones, how deeply moved at the sight of the loved and highly honoured master. If the recollection of that delightful evening will remain indelibly impressed upon all who were present, so will the benign purpose of that concert impress the recollection of your appearance among us; for in future years, when it shall be read what was presented on the 12th. April 1859 to the widows and orphans by the court orchestra of Meiningen, it will be said: that was the day on which *Spohr*, the master, wielded the conductor's baton in our midst."

A second journey undertaken shortly after by *Spohr*, was to the pleasant little princely residence of Detmold, where he was again welcomed by a grateful pupil, the director of music *Kiel*, and its art-loving prince, in a similar manner as in Meiningen, with two successive days of festivities in his honour. The proffered direction of a grand concert solely embracing

his own compositions he had firmly declined, and as auditor could therefore give himself up more completely to the enjoyment of his own excellently performed music, two numbers of which in particular afforded him exceeding pleasure; the performance namely by his former pupils *Kiel* and concert-master *Bargheer*. who together executed his *A minor* concertante, and the symphony "Die Jahreszeiten" — a favorite and prominent point of excellence with the court orchestra of Detmold — and which he had especially chosen by a previously communicated request.

Returned once more to Cassel after a week happily passed in the midst of the enjoyment of art and nature, *Spohr* unhappily could no longer conceal from himself, that even these short journeys were now followed by many painful results, in the shape of a yet more increased nervous restlessness at night — yet his spirit soon yearned again for diversity and change of place. and especially towards his favorite Alexandersbad, where he confidently hoped a longer stay in the fine air of that locality would again induce an improvement in his health, and particularly restore his sleep at night. Strengthened in this belief by the opinion of his ever-sympathising and watchful medical attendant Dr. Ad. *Hurnier*. he set out for Alexandersbad, where he remained some weeks. His health improved, and he passed better nights. But on his return he visited Würzburg. and was present at the performance of his "Letzte Dinge;" and this. and his reception, and the leave-taking, made such an impression on him, that it went far to neutralize the improvement in his health that had taken place at Alexandersbad.

His pleasure at hearing good music remained with him to the last, for which reason he never missed a concert, and even frequently went to the theatre, where above all things the music so dear to his heart — the operas of *Mozart* — ever filled him anew with the fresh transports of a youthful joy. — At home he passed the greater part of the day in reading, but no longer as formerly in that of political journals and

instructive scientific works, which had excited and absorbed his interest, — he now delighted rather in entertaining moral works, simple novels that appealed to the heart, and the like, which for the time distracted his attention from his suffering condition. — At frequent intervals he would request his wife to play something to him, and herein he would shew a preference for the pianoforte music of *Bach* and *Mendelssohn*, yet without withdrawing his interest from the productions of more modern composers.

A pleasing diversion in the uniform sameness of his everyday life, was afforded to him in the first days of October by a visit to the princess *Anna*, wife of prince *Frederick*, the heir apparent to the Hessian throne, at the express invitation of that princess, during a residence of some days at Cassel in the Bellevue palace. Upon his return he related with feelings of pleasure the amiable anticipatory attentions of the princess, who, in consideration of *Spohr's* greater convenience, had descended with her husband and child, prince *Wilhelm*, then five years old, to an apartment on the ground-floor, where he was received, and where after a lengthened pleasing conversation with the princely pair, she, at the conclusion, besought him with the most winning kindness of manner, to write a few lines by way of souvenir in her album. In satisfaction of this request, on the 7th. October, he wrote, though indeed with a weak and tremulous hand, yet with his usual readiness, a particularly requested passage of the well-known duett in "Jessouda," in the costly album that had been forwarded to his house.

On Sunday the 16th. October, a change, at first scarcely observable, evinced itself in his condition: an expression of calm contentment such as not had been seen for a long time, settled on his features; in spite of the preceding restless night, of the obvious continual bodily sufferings and increasing debility no more complainings were heard to fall from his lips; yet he was more than usually silent, and though he replied in a kind tone to every inquiry adressed to him, it

was as short as possible. In the afternoon, on rising from the dinner-table, he stood for a long time at the open door of the house, musing as he gazed upon the rich autumnal beauties of his flower-garden, — but upon the proposition of his wife to take his coffee outside under the bower, he replied, that he wished to take it that day in his room, and that she with her sister would play something to him. This of course was with pleasure immediately complied with. After he had listened to some symphonies arranged for four hands, -- apparently as though half-lost in a dream, yet as might be inferred from many remarks that fell from him, with much attention, he requested further by way of conclusion, his newest quintet (Op. 144, *G-minor*) with the piano-forte arrangement of which for four hands he had but shortly before become acquainted; to this also he listened with full interest and obvious satisfaction. After the last theme he inquired: "How long ago may it be that I wrote that?" and when his wife, who could not immediately remember the year, replied it might be perhaps three or four years ago, — he said with a sigh: "Then *there* I did still succeed in effecting it! and now I can no longer do so!" With these words he rose from his chair, to prepare for his customary evening walk to the reading rooms, which, despite all his weakness and some admonitions from his wife, he nevertheless slowly, and supported by her, still persevered in. But feeling exceedingly anxious at home respecting him, she despatched a devotedly attached servant to see after him, much earlier than he had been ordered to bring him back: upon which, in a condition of extreme debility, he immediately permitted himself to be led home, and shortly after his frugal supper to be put to bed. After the usual parting evening kiss, he said to his wife: "he hoped from being so tired he should at length have a *good night's rest*," — and thereupon sank into a soft slumber from which he did not awake till the next morning and then with a cheerful mien. He had found the much-desired repose, he felt no longer any bodily suffering, the serene expression of his coun-

tenance betokened it from that moment to his last breath! To rise he refused; neither would he take breakfast; but requested his wife to sit on the bed beside him; took her hand, and kissed it tenderly, with an affectionate expression in his kindly beaming eyes that spoke to her more eloquently than could a thousand words. Shortly afterwards his attentive physician arrived, and immediately perceived that a higher power had granted to him the long-desired rest. His family was already prepared for the approaching heart-rending separation. His children and nephews, near and distant friends, hastened to his couch, all desirous to look as long as possible on his loved and honoured face. each glad to snatch one look more from his truthful loving eyes! In this manner he lay, surrounded by all that were most dear to him in life, in calm repose; from day to day with decreasing consciousness of existence; in spirit mayhap, already appertaining to a higher world, — until the evening of the 22nd. Oct. (1859), when at half-past ten his weary eyes closed for ever! — —

The pious tones which once with a holy inspiration had gushed from the pure fount of his soul — tones to which he had himself listened in silent devotion but a few weeks before, — resounded now in mourning over his grave; and sad and sorrowful, though at the same time sweetly consolatory, still echo far and wide to the hearts of all:

“Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord, now and for ever. They repose from their labours, and their works follow them!”

F i n i s.





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