
Beethoven

By Richard Wagner

Translated by William Ashton Ellis



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About this Title

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[58]

Translator's Note

Originally published by E. W. Fritsch, Leipzig, in the autumn of 1870, the essay on Beethoven reached a second edition before the end of the same year.

[59]

Preface

AS the author of the accompanying work felt a longing to contribute his quota to the celebration of the hundredth birthday of our great BEETHOVEN, (01) and as no other opportunity worthy of that event was offered him, he has chosen a literary exposition of his thoughts, such as they are, on the import of Beethoven's music. The form of treatment came to him through the fiction that he had been called to deliver a speech at an ideal feast in honour of the great musician; as that speech, however, was not to be delivered in reality, he might give it the advantage of a greater compass than would have been permissible in the case of an address to an actual audience. Hereby it became possible for him to conduct the reader through a more searching inquiry into the nature of Music, and thus to submit to the consideration of men of serious culture a contribution to the Philosophy of Music; as which the following treatise may be regarded on the one hand, whilst the fiction that it is being read to a German audience upon a given day of this so uncommonly significant year, on the other, made natural a warm allusion to the stirring events of the time. The author having been enabled both to draft and execute [60] his work under the immediate stimulus of these events, may it also enjoy the advantage of bringing the German heart, in its present state of higher tension, into closer touch with the depths of the German Spirit than could ever be effected in the national life of everyday.

[61]

Beethoven

DIFFICULT as it must always appear to the, thinker, to satisfactorily define the true relation of a great artist to his nation, that difficulty is enormously increased when the subject is neither a poet nor a modeller (*Bildner*), but a musician.

In judging the poet and plastic artist it certainly has ever been kept in eye that their mode of grasping the world's occurrences or forms is governed in the first place by the particularity of the nation to which they belong. If the tongue in which he writes has a prominent share in determining the thoughts the poet utters, no less strikingly does the nature of his Folk and country betray itself in the plastic artist's forms and colours. But neither through language, nor through any form wherein his country or his people greets the eye, does the musician reveal his origin. It therefore has been generally assumed that Tone-speech belongs to the whole human race alike, that Melody is an absolute tongue, in power whereof the musician speaks to every heart. Upon closer examination, to be sure, we recognise that it is very possible to talk of a German, as distinguished from an Italian music ; and for this difference one may even assign a national physiologic ground, to wit the Italian's great advantage in point of voice, giving just as definite a direction to the development of his music as the German's lack in this regard has driven him to his special province of the art of tone. Yet as this difference does not touch the essence of Tone-speech at all, but every melody, be it of German or Italian origin, is equally intelligible, that 'moment' may surely be neglected as a mere external, and cannot be conceived as exerting an influence to be compared with that of his native tongue in the case of the poet, or the physiognomic aspect of his country in that of the plastic artist: for even in the latter cases we [62] may regard those outward differences as favours granted or withheld by Nature, without our allowing them any bearing upon the artist's spiritual organism.

The idiosyncrasy that marks the musician as belonging to his nation must in any case be seated deeper than that whereby we recognise Goethe and Schiller as Germans, Rubens and Rembrandt as Netherlanders, even though we must take it that both have sprung, at bottom, from the selfsame cause. To follow up that cause, might be every whit as attractive as to explore the depths of Music' s nature. On the other hand it may prove easier to obtain a glimpse of what has hitherto eluded the grasp of Dialectics, if we set ourselves the more definite task of inquiring into the connexion of the great musician, whose hundredth anniversary we are now about to celebrate, with the German nation which has lately undergone such earnest trials of its worth.

Were we first to examine this connexion from the outer side, it might be none too easy to avoid deception by appearances. If it proves so difficult to account for a poet that we have been treated by a famous German literary-historian (02) to the most idiotic statements as to the evolution of Shakespeare's genius, we need not be surprised to find still greater aberrations when a musician like *Beethoven* is taken for subject in a similar strain. Into Goethe's and Schiller's evolution it has been granted us to look with greater sureness, for they have left us certain definite data in their conscious communications: but even these reveal the course of nothing but their æsthetic culture, which more accompanied than led their artistic work; as to the latter's material basis (*realen Unterlagen*), and in particular the choice of their poetic 'stuffs,' we merely learn in fact that accident surprisingly preponderated over purpose; an actual tendence in step with the march of outer world- or national history is the very last thing we discover there. Even as to the part played by purely personal life-impressions in the choice and moulding of these poets' stuffs we [63] can only argue with the greatest caution, lest it escape us that any such influence never shewed itself directly, but so indirectly that its operation on their true poetic fashioning is quite beyond all positive proof. One only thing we

know for certain from our researches in this quarter, that an evolution observable in this wise could pertain to none but German poets, to the great poets of that noble period of German rebirth.

But what conclusion is there to draw from the surviving letters of *Beethoven* and our uncommonly scanty store of information anent the outer, to say nothing of the inner life of our great musician, as to their relation with his tone-creations and the evolutionary course displayed therein? If we possessed the most microscopic data of all conscious incidents in this connection, they could yield us nothing more definite than is contained in the story of the master having originally sketched the "*Sinfonia eroica*" in homage to young General Bonaparte and written his name on the title-page, but afterwards crossed out that name when he heard of Bonaparte's having made himself Emperor. Never has any of our poets defined the tendency of one of his most important works with such precision: and what do we gain for our judgment of one of the most wondrous of all tone-works from this distinct enunciation? Can we make it explain a single bar of that score? Must it not appear sheer madness, even to seriously engage in the attempt?

I believe that the most positive fact we shall ever ascertain about Beethoven the man, in the very best event, will stand in the same relation to Beethoven the musician as General Bonaparte to the "*Sinfonia eroica*." Viewed from this side of consciousness, the great musician must always remain a complete enigma to us. At all to solve this enigma, we undoubtedly must strike an altogether different path from that on which it is possible, up to a certain point at least, to follow the creative work of Goethe and Schiller: and that point itself becomes a vanishing one exactly at the spot where creation passes from a conscious to an [64] unconscious act, i.e. where the poet no longer chooses the æsthetic Form, but it is imposed upon him by his inner vision (*Anschauung*) of the Idea itself. Precisely in this beholding of the Idea, however, resides the fundamental difference between poet and musician; and to arrive at a little clearness on this point we first must proceed to a deeper examination of the problem touched on.—

The said diversity comes out quite plainly in the plastic artist, when compared with the musician; betwixt them stands the poet, inclining toward the plastic artist in his conscious fashioning (*Gestalten*), approaching the musician on the mystic ground of his unconsciousness. With *Goethe* the conscious leaning toward plastic art was so strong that at a momentous epoch of his life he actually deemed himself intended for its practice, and, in a certain sense, his whole life through he preferred to regard his poetic labours as a kind of effort to make up for a missed career as painter: on the side of consciousness he was a thorough student of the visual world. (03) Schiller, on the contrary, was far more strongly attracted to an exploration of the subsoil of inner consciousness that lies entirely aloof from vision (*Anschauung*), to that "thing in itself" of the Kantian philosophy, whose study so engrossed him in the main period of his higher evolution. The point of lasting contact of these two great minds lay precisely where the poet, journeying from either extreme, alights on his self-consciousness. They met, too, in their presage of the *essence of Music*; only, with Schiller it was accompanied by a deeper insight than with Goethe, who, in keeping with his whole tendency, regarded more the pleasing, plastic symmetry of art-music, that element which gives the art of Tone an analogy with Architecture. Schiller took a deeper grasp of the problem, giving it as his opinion—to which he obtained the assent of Goethe—that the Epos leans toward Plastic art, the Drama, on the contrary, toward Music. And quite in harmony with our foregoing [65] judgment of both these poets, Schiller was actually the happier in drama proper, whilst Goethe shewed an unmistakable preference for the epic style of treatment.

But it was *Schopenhauer* who first defined the position of Music among the fine arts with philosophic clearness, ascribing to it a totally different nature from that of either plastic or

poetic art. He starts from wonder at Music's speaking a language immediately intelligible by everyone, since it needs no whit of intermediation through abstract concepts (*Begriffe*); which completely distinguishes it from Poetry, in the first place, whose sole material consists of concepts, employed by it to visualise the *Idea*. (04) For according to this philosopher's so luminous definition it is the Ideas of the world and of its essential phenomena, in the sense of Plato, that constitute the 'object' of the fine arts; whereas, however, the Poet interprets these Ideas to the visual consciousness (*dem anschauenden Bewusstsein*) through an employment of strictly rationalistic concepts in a manner quite peculiar to his art, Schopenhauer believes he must recognise *in Music itself an Idea of the world*, since he who could entirely translate it into abstract concepts would have found withal a philosophy to explain the world itself. [66] Though Schopenhauer propounds this theory of Music as a paradox, since it cannot strictly be set forth in logical terms, he also furnishes us with the only serviceable material for a further demonstration of the justice of his profound hypothesis; a demonstration which he himself did not pursue more closely, perhaps for simple reason that as layman he was not conversant enough with music, and moreover was unable to base his knowledge thereof sufficiently definitely on an understanding of the very musician whose works have first laid open to the world that deepest mystery of Music; for *Beethoven*, of all others, is not to be judged exhaustively until that pregnant paradox of Schopenhauer's has been solved and made right clear to philosophic apprehension.—

In making use of this material supplied us by the philosopher I fancy I shall do best to begin with a remark in which Schopenhauer declines to accept the Idea derived from a knowledge of "relations" as the essence of the Thing-in-itself, but regards it merely as expressing the objective character of things, and therefore as still concerned with their phenomenal appearance. "And we should not understand this character itself"—so Schopenhauer goes on to say—"were not the inner essence of things confessed to us otherwise, dimly at least and in our Feeling. For that essence cannot be gathered from the Ideas, nor understood through any mere *objective* knowledge; wherefore it would ever remain a mystery, had we not access to it from quite another side. Only inasmuch as every observer [lit. knower, or perceiver—*Erkenner*] is an Individual withal, and thereby part of Nature, stands there open to him in his own self-consciousness the adit to Nature's innermost; and there forthwith, and most immediately, it makes itself known to him as *Will*." (05)

If we couple with this what Schopenhauer postulates as the condition for entry of an Idea into our consciousness, namely "a temporary preponderance of intellect over will, or to put it physiologically, a strong excitation of the [67] sensory faculty of the brain (*der anschauenden Gehirnthätigkeit*) without the smallest excitation of the passions or desires," we have only further to pay close heed to the elucidation which directly follows it, namely that our consciousness has two sides: in part it is a consciousness of *one's own self* which is the will; in part a consciousness of *other things*, and chiefly then a *visual* knowledge of the outer world, the apprehension of objects. "The more the one side of the aggregate consciousness comes to the front, the more does the other retreat." (06)

After well weighing these extracts from Schopenhauer as principal work it must be obvious to us that musical conception, as it has nothing in common with the seizure of an Idea (for the latter is absolutely bound to physical perception of the world), can have its origin nowhere but upon that side of consciousness which Schopenhauer defines as facing inwards. Though this side may temporarily retire completely, to make way for entry of the purely apprehending 'subject' on its function (i.e. the seizure of Ideas), on the other hand it transpires that only from this inward-facing side of consciousness can the intellect derive its ability to seize the Character of things. If this consciousness, however, is the consciousness of one's own self, i.e. of the Will, we must take it that its repression is indispensable indeed for purity of the outward-facing consciousness, but that the nature of the Thing-in-itself—inconceivable

by that physical [or "visual"] mode of knowledge—would only be revealed to this inward-facing consciousness when it had attained the faculty of seeing within as clearly as that other side of consciousness is able in its seizure of Ideas to see without.

For a further pursuit of this path Schopenhauer has also given us the best of guides, through his profound hypothesis (07) concerning the physiologic phenomenon of Clairvoyance, [68] and the Dream-theory he has based thereon. For as in that phenomenon the inward-facing consciousness attains the actual power of sight where our waking daylight consciousness feels nothing but a vague impression of the midnight background of our will's emotions, so from out this night *Tone* bursts upon the world of waking, a direct utterance of the Will. As dreams must have brought to everyone's experience, beside the world envisaged by the functions of the waking brain there dwells a second, distinct as is itself, no less a world displayed to vision ; since this second world can in no case be an object lying outside us, it therefore must be brought to our cognisance by an *inward* function of the brain; and this form of the brain's perception Schopenhauer here calls the Dream-organ. Now a no less positive experience is this: besides the world that presents itself to sight, in waking as in dreams, we are conscious of the existence of a second world, perceptible only through the ear, manifesting itself through sound; literally a *sound-world* beside the *light-world*, a world of which we may say that it bears the same relation to the visible world as dreaming to waking: for it is quite as plain to us as is the other, though we must recognise it as being entirely different. As the world of dreams can only come to vision through a special operation of the brain, so Music enters our consciousness through a kindred operation; only, the latter differs exactly as much from the operation consequent on *sight*, as that Dream-organ from the function of the waking brain under the stimulus of outer impressions.

As the Dream-organ cannot be roused into action by outer impressions, against which the brain is now fast [69] locked, this must take place through happenings in the inner organism that our waking consciousness merely feels as vague sensations. But it is this inner life through which we are directly allied with the whole of Nature, and thus are brought into a relation with the Essence of things that eludes the forms of outer knowledge, Time and Space; whereby Schopenhauer so convincingly explains the genesis of prophetic or telepathic (*das Fernste wahrnehmbar machenden*), fatidical dreams, ay, in rare and extreme cases the occurrence of somnambulistic clairvoyance. From the most terrifying of such dreams we wake with a *scream*, the immediate expression of the anguished will, which thus makes definite entrance into the Sound-world first of all, to manifest itself without. Now if we take the Scream in all the diminutions of its vehemence, down to the gentler cry of longing, as the root-element of every human message to the ear; and if we cannot but find in it the most immediate utterance of the will, through which the latter turns the swiftest and the surest toward Without, then we have less cause to wonder at its immediate intelligibility than at an *art* arising from this element: for it is evident, upon the other hand, that neither artistic beholding nor artistic fashioning can result from aught but a diversion of the consciousness from the agitations of the will.

To explain this wonder, let us first recall our philosopher's profound remark adduced above, that we should never understand even the Ideas that by their very nature are only seizable through will-freed, i.e. objective contemplation, had we not another approach to the Essence-of-things which lies beneath them, namely our direct consciousness of our own self. By this consciousness alone are we enabled to understand withal the inner nature of things outside us, inasmuch as we recognise in them the selfsame basic essence that our self-consciousness declares to be our very own. Our each illusion hereanent had sprung from the mere *sight* of a world around us, a world that in the show of daylight we took for something [70] quite apart from us (08) first through (intellectual) perception of the Ideas, and thus upon a circuitous path, do we reach an initial stage of undeception, in which we no

longer see things parcelled off in time and space, but apprehend their generic character; and this character speaks out the plainest to us from the works of Plastic art, whose true province it therefore is to take the illusive surface (*Schein*) of the light-shewn world and, in virtue of a most ingenious playing with that semblance, lay bare the Idea concealed beneath. In daily life the mere sight of an object leaves us cold and unconcerned, and only when we become aware of that object's bearings on our will, does it call forth an emotion; in harmony wherewith it very properly ranks as the first æsthetic principle of Plastic art, that its imagings shall entirely avoid such references to our individual will, and prepare for our sight that calm which alone makes possible a pure Beholding of the object according to its own character. Yet the effector of this æsthetic, will-freed contemplation, into which we momentarily plunge, here remains nothing but the *show* of things. And it is this principle of tranquillisation by sheer pleasure in the semblance, that has been extended from Plastic art to all the arts, and made a postulate for every manner of æsthetic pleasing. Whence, too, has come our term for *beauty* (*Schönheit*); the root of which word in our German language is plainly connected with Show (*Schein*) as object, with Seeing (*Schauen*) as subject.—

But that consciousness which alone enabled us to grasp the Idea transmitted by the Show we looked on, must feel compelled at last to cry with Faust: "A spectacle superb! But still, alas! a spectacle. Where seize I thee, o Nature infinite?"

This cry is answered in the most positive manner by *Music*. Here the world outside us speaks to us in terms intelligible beyond compare, since its sounding message to our ear is of the selfsame nature as the cry sent forth to it [71] from the depths of our own inner heart. The Object of the tone perceived is brought into immediate rapport with the Subject of the tone emitted: without any reasoning go-between we understand the cry for help, the wail, the shout of joy, and straightway answer it in its own tongue. If the scream, the moan, the murmured happiness in our own mouth is the most direct utterance of the will's emotion, so when brought us by our ear we understand it past denial as utterance of the same emotion; no illusion is possible here, as in the daylight Show, to make us deem the essence of the world outside us not wholly identical with our own; and thus that gulf which seems to sight is closed forthwith.

Now if we see an art arise from this immediate consciousness of the oneness of our inner essence with that of the outer world, our most obvious inference is that this art must be subject to æsthetic laws quite distinct from those of every other. All Æsthetes hitherto have rebelled against the notion of deducing a veritable art from what appears to them a purely pathologic element, and have consequently refused to Music any recognition until its products shew themselves in a light as cold as that peculiar to the fashionings of plastic art. Yet that its very rudiment (*ihr blosses Element*) is felt, not seen, by our deepest consciousness as a world's Idea, we have learnt to recognise forthwith through Schopenhauer's eventful aid, and we understand that Idea as a direct revelation of the oneness of the Will; starting with the oneness of all human being, our consciousness is thereby shewn beyond dispute our unity with Nature, whom equally we recognise through Sound. (09)

Difficult as is the task of eliciting Music's nature as an art, we believe we may best accomplish it by considering the inspired musician's *modus operandi*. In many respects this must radically differ from that of other artists. As to the latter we have had to acknowledge that it must be preceded by a will-freed, pure beholding of the object, an act [72] of like nature with the effect to be produced by the artwork itself in the mind of the spectator. Such an object, however, to be raised to an Idea by means of pure Beholding, does not present itself to the musician at all; for his music is itself a world's-Idea, an Idea in which the world immediately displays its essence, whereas in those other arts this essence has to pass through the medium of the understanding (*das Erkenntniss*) before it can *become* displayed. We can but take it that the *individual will*, silenced in the plastic artist through pure beholding, awakes

in the musician as the *universal Will*, and—above and beyond all power of vision—now recognises itself as such in full self-consciousness. Hence the great difference in the mental state of the concipient musician and the designing artist; hence the radically diverse effects of music and of painting: here profoundest stilling, there utmost excitation of the will. In other words we here have the will in the Individual as such, the will imprisoned by the fancy (*Wahn*) of its difference from the essence of things outside, and unable to lift itself above its barriers save in the purely disinterested beholding of objects; whilst there, in the musician's case, the will feels *one* forthwith, above all bounds of individuality: for Hearing has opened it the gate through which the world thrusts home to it, it to the world. This prodigious breaking-down the floodgates of Appearance must necessarily call forth in the inspired musician a state of ecstasy wherewith no other can compare: in it the will perceives itself the almighty Will of all things: it has not mutely to yield place to contemplation, but proclaims itself aloud as conscious World-Idea. One state surpasses his, and one alone,—the Saint's, and chiefly through its permanence and imperturbability; whereas the clairvoyant ecstasy of the musician has to alternate with a perpetually recurrent state of individual consciousness, which we must account the more distressful the higher has his inspiration carried him above all bounds of individuality. And this suffering again, allotted him as penalty for the state of inspiration in which he so unutterably entrances us, might [73] make us hold the musician in higher reverence than other artists, ay, wellnigh give him claim to rank as holy. For his art, in truth, compares with the communion of all the other arts as *Religion* with the *Church*.

We have seen that in the other arts the Will is longing to become pure Knowledge (*gänzlich Erkenntniss zu werden verlangt*), but that this is possible only in so far as it stays stock-still in its deepest inner chamber: 'tis as if it were awaiting tidings of redemption from there outside; content they it not, it sets itself in that state of clairvoyance; and here, beyond the bounds of time and space, it knows itself the world's both One and All. What it here has seen, no tongue can impart (10) as the dream of deepest sleep can only be conveyed to the waking consciousness through translation into the language of a second, an allegoric dream which immediately precedes our waking, so for the direct vision of its self the Will creates a second organ of transmission,—an organ whose one side faces toward that inner vision, whilst the other thrusts into the reappearing outer world with the sole direct and sympathetic message, that of Tone. The Will cries out; and in the countercry it knows itself once more: thus cry and countercry become for it a comforting, at last an entrancing play with its own self.

Sleepless one night in Venice, I stepped upon the balcony of my window overlooking the Grand Canal: like a deep dream the fairy city of lagoons lay stretched in shade before me. From out the breathless silence rose the strident cry of a gondolier just woken on his barque; again and again his voice went forth into the night, till from remotest distance its fellow-cry came answering down the midnight length of the Canal: I recognised the drear melodic phrase to which the well-known lines of Tasso were also wedded in his day, but which in itself is certainly as old as Venice's canals and people. After many a solemn pause the ringing dialogue took quicker life, and seemed [74] at last to melt in unison; till finally the sounds from far and near died softly back to new-won slumber. Whate'er could sun-steeped, colour-swarmed Venice of the daylight tell me of itself, that that sounding dream of night had not brought infinitely deeper, closer, to my consciousness?— Another time I wandered through the lofty solitude of an upland vale in Uri. In broad daylight from a hanging pasture-land came shouting the shrill jodel of a cowherd, sent forth across the broadening valley; from the other side anon there answered it, athwart the monstrous silence, a like exultant herd-call: the echo of the towering mountain walls here mingled in; the brooding valley leapt into the merry lists of sound.—So wakes the child from the night of the mother-womb, and answer it the mother's crooning kisses; so understands the yearning youth

the woodbird's mate-call, so speaks to the musing man the moan of beasts, the whistling wind, the howling hurricane, till over him there comes that dreamlike state in which the ear reveals to him the inmost essence of all his eye had held suspended in the cheat of scattered show, and tells him that his inmost being is one therewith, that only in *this* wise can the Essence of things without be learnt in truth.

The dreamlike nature of the state into which we thus are plunged through sympathetic hearing—and wherein there dawns on us that other world, that world from whence the musician speaks to us—we recognise at once from an experience at the door of every man: namely that our eyesight is paralysed to such a degree by the effect of music upon us, that with eyes wide open we no longer intensively see. We experience this in every concert-room while listening to any tone-piece that really touches us, where the most hideous and distracting things are passing before our eye, things that assuredly would quite divert us from the music, and even move us to laughter, if we actively saw them; I mean, besides the highly trivial aspect of the audience itself, the mechanical movements of the band, the whole peculiar working [75] apparatus of an orchestral production. That this spectacle—which preoccupies the man untouched by the music—at last ceases to disturb the spellbound listener, plainly shews us that we no longer are really conscious of it, but, for all our open eyes, have fallen into a state essentially akin to that of hypnotic clairvoyance. And in truth it is in this state alone that we immediately belong to the musician's world. From out that world, which nothing else can picture, the musician casts the meshwork of his tones to net us, so to speak; or, with his wonder-drops of sound he dewes our brain as if by magic, and robs it of the power of seeing aught save our own inner world.

To gain a glimpse of his procedure, we again can do no better than return to its analogy with that inner process whereby—according to Schopenhauer's so luminous assumption—the dream of deepest sleep, entirely remote from the waking cerebral consciousness, as it were translates itself into the lighter, allegoric dream which immediately precedes our waking. We have seen that the musician's kindred glossary extends from the scream of horror to the suave play of soothing murmurs. In the employment of the ample range that lies between, the musician is controlled, as it were, by an urgent impulse to impart the vision of his inmost dream; like the second, allegoric dream, he therefore approaches the notions (*Vorstellungen*) of the waking brain—those notions whereby it is at last enabled to preserve a record, chiefly for itself, of the inner vision. The extreme limit of this approach, however, is marked by the notions of *Time*: those of *Space* he leaves behind an impenetrable veil, whose lifting needs must make his dream invisible forthwith. Whilst *harmony*, belonging to neither *Space* nor *Time*, remains the most inalienable element of *Music*, through the *rhythmic* sequence of his tones in point of time the musician reaches forth a plastic hand, so to speak, to strike a compact with the waking world of semblances; just as the allegoric dream so far makes contact with the Individual's wonted notions that the waking consciousness, albeit at once detecting [76] the great difference of even this dream-picture from the outer incidents of actual life, yet is able to retain its image. So the musician makes contact with the plastic world through the *rhythmic* ordering of his tones, and that in virtue of a resemblance to the laws whereby the motion of visible bodies is brought to our intelligence. Human *Gesture*, which seeks to make itself intelligible in *Dance* through an expressive regularity of changeful motion, thus seems to play the same part toward *Music* as bodies, in their turn, toward *Light*: without refraction and reflection, *Light* would not shine; and so we may say that without rhythm, *Music* would not be observable. But, at this very point of contact between *Plastique* and *Harmony*, the nature of *Music* is plainly shewn to be entirely distinct from that of *Plastic* art in particular; whereas the latter fixes *Gesture* in respect of space, but leaves its motion to be supplied by our reflective thought, *Music* speaks out *Gesture*'s inmost essence in a language so direct that, once we are saturated with the music, our eyesight is positively

incapacitated for intensive observation of the gesture, so that finally we understand it without our really seeing it. Thus, though Music draws her nearest affinities in the phenomenal world into her dream-realm, as we have called it, this is only in order to turn our visual faculties inwards through a wondrous transformation, so to speak, enabling them to grasp the Essence-of-things in its most immediate manifestation, as it were to read the vision which the musician had himself beheld in deepest sleep.—

As for Music's standing toward the plastic forms of the phenomenal world, and toward abstractions derived from things themselves, nothing can possibly be more lucid than what we read under this heading in Schopenhauer's work; so that it would be quite superfluous for us to dwell thereon, and we may turn to our principal object, namely an inquiry into the nature of the Musician himself.

However, we first must dwell on a crucial point in the æsthetic judgment (*Urtheil*) of Music as an art. For we find that from the forms wherein Music seems to join hands [77] with the outer world of Appearance there has been deduced an utterly preposterous demand upon the character of her utterances. As already mentioned, axioms founded simply on a scrutiny of Plastic art have been transferred to Music. That such a solecism could have been committed, we have at any rate to attribute to the aforesaid "nearest approach" of Music to the visual side of the world and its phenomena. In this direction indeed the art of Music has taken a development which has exposed her to so great a misapprehension of her veritable character that folk have claimed from her a function similar to that of plastic works of art, namely the susciting of our *pleasure in beautiful forms*. As this was synchronous with a progressive decline in the judgment of plastic art itself, it may easily be imagined how deeply Music was thus degraded; at bottom, she was asked to wholly repress her ownest nature for mere sake of turning her outmost side to our delectation.

Music, who speaks to us solely through quickening into articulate life the most universal concept of the inherently speechless Feeling, in all imaginable gradations, can once and for all be judged by nothing but the category of the *sublime*; for, as soon as she engrosses us, she transports us to the highest ecstasy of consciousness of our infinitude. (11) [78] On the other hand what enters only *as a sequel* to our plunging into contemplation of a work of plastic art, namely the (temporary) liberation of the intellect from service to the individual will through our discarding all relations of the object contemplated to that will—the required effect of *beauty* on the mind,—is brought about by Music at her very *first entry*; inasmuch as she withdraws us at once from any concern with the relation of things outside us, and—as pure Form set free from Matter—shuts us off from the outer world, as it were, to let us gaze into the inmost Essence of ourselves and all things. Consequently our verdict on any piece of music should be based upon a knowledge of those laws whereby the effect of Beauty, the very first effect of Music's mere appearance, advances the most directly to a revelation of her truest character through the agency of the Sublime. It would be the stamp of an absolutely empty piece of music, on the contrary, that it never got beyond a mere prismatic toying with the effect of its first entry, and consequently kept us bound to the relations presented by Music's outermost side to the world of vision.

Upon this side alone, indeed, has Music been given any lasting development; and that by a systematising of her rhythmic structure (*Periodenbau*) which on the one hand has brought her into comparison with Architecture, on the other has made her so much a matter of superficialities (*ihr eine Ueberschaulichkeit gegeben hat*) as to expose her to the said false judgment by analogy with Plastic art. Here, in her outermost restriction to banal forms and conventions, she seemed e.g. to Goethe so admirably suited for a standard of poetical proportion (*zur Normirung dichterischer Konzeptionen*). To be able in these conventional forms so to toy with Music's stupendous powers that her own peculiar function, the making known the inner essence of all things, should be avoided like a deluge, for long was deemed by æsthetes the

true and only acceptable issue of maturing the art of Tone. But to have pierced through these forms to the innermost essence of Music in such a [79] way that from that inner side he could cast the light of the Clairvoyant on the outer world, and shew us these forms themselves again in nothing but their inner meaning,—this was the work of our great *Beethoven*, whom we therefore have to regard as the true archetype of the Musician.—

If, retaining our oft-adduced analogy of the allegoric dream, we mean to think of Music as incited by an inner vision (*Schau*) and endeavouring to convey that vision to the world without, we must subsume a special organ for the purpose, analogous to the Dream-organ in the other case, a cerebral attribute in power whereof the musician first perceives the inner In-itself close-sealed to earthly knowledge (*das aller Erkenntniss verschlossene innere An-sich*): a kind of eye, when it faces inwards, that becomes an ear when directed outwards. For the most speaking likeness of that inmost (dream-) image of the world perceived thereby, we have only to listen to one of those famous church-pieces of *Palestrina's*. Here Rhythm is nowhere traceable save through the play of the harmonic sequences; as a symmetrical succession in time, apart from them, it does not exist at all. Here, then, Succession (*Zeitfolge*) is still so rigidly bound to that timeless, spaceless essence, Harmony, that we cannot as yet employ the laws of Time to aid us in the understanding of such music. The sole idea of Succession in such a piece is expressed by wellnigh nothing but the gentlest fluctuations of one ground-colour, which presents us with the most varied modulations within the range of its affinity, without our being able to trace a line in all its changes. As this colour itself does not appear in Space, we here are given an image almost as timeless as it is spaceless, an altogether spiritual revelation; and the reason why it moves us so indicibly is that, more plainly than all other things, it brings to our consciousness the inmost essence of Religion free from all dogmatic fictions.

Let us turn from this to a piece of dance-music, to an orchestral symphonic movement modelled on the dance-motive, or finally to a downright operatic *pièce*: we find [80] our fancy chained forthwith by a regular order in the recurrence of rhythmic periods, the *plastic* element that forms the chief factor in Melody's insistence. (12) Music developed along these lines has very properly been given the name of "secular," in opposition to that "spiritual." Elsewhere I have expressed myself plainly enough upon the principle of this development, (13) and here will merely touch upon its already-noted aspect of the allegoric dream; whence it would seem that the musician's "eye," now woken to the phenomena of the outer world, attaches itself to such of them whose inner essence it can understand forthwith. The outer laws which he thus derives from the gestures of life, and finally from its every element of motion, become the laws of Rhythm in virtue whereof he constructs his periods of contrast and return. The more these periods are instinct with the true spirit of Music, the less will they be architectonic emblems diverting our attention from the music's pure effect. On the contrary, wherever that aforesaid inner Spirit of Music—sufficiently described above— tones down its surest manifestment for sake of this columnar ordering of rhythmic parts, there nothing will arrest us but that outward symmetry, and we shall necessarily reduce our claims on Music herself to a prime demand for regularity.—Music here quits her state of lofty innocence; she loses her power of redeeming from the curse of Appearance: no longer is she the prophetess of the Essence of things, but herself becomes entangled in the illusive show of things outside us. For to *this* music one wants to *see* something as well, and that something to-be-seen becomes the chief concern: as "Opera" proves right plainly, where spectacle, ballet and so forth make out the [81] lure, the main attraction, and visibly enough proclaim the degeneracy of the music there employed.—



We will now illustrate the above by an inquiry into the *evolution of Beethoven's genius*;

and here, to abandon generalities, we have first to consider the practical maturing of the master's own peculiar style.—

The qualification, the predestination of a musician for his art, can only be shewn in the effect produced upon him by the music going on around him. In what manner his faculty of inner vision, that clairvoyance of the deepest world-dream, has been aroused thereby, we do not learn till he has fully reached the goal of his self-development; up to then he obeys the laws of reaction of outward impressions, and for him, as musician, these latter are chiefly derived from the tone-works of masters of his time. Here we find Beethoven roused the least by works of Opera, whereas he was more alive to impressions from the church-music of his age. The *métier* of pianoforte-player however, which he had to adopt in order "to be something" in the profession, brought him into lasting and most familiar contact with the pianoforte-compositions of the masters of his period. In this department the "*sonata*" had become the model form. We might say that Beethoven was and remained a Sonata-composer, for in the great majority and the most eminent of his instrumental works the Sonata-form was the veil through which he looked into the realm of tones, or—to put it another way—through which he spoke to us from out that realm; whilst other forms, and notably those of 'mixed' vocal music, despite the most extraordinary achievements with them, were merely touched by him in passing, as if tentatively.

The laws of the Sonata-form had been established for all time by Emanuel Bach, Haydn and Mozart; they were the product of a compromise between the German and [82] Italian spirits of music. Its external character was conferred on it by its employment: with the Sonata the pianoforte-player made his bow to the public, which he was to regale with his dexterity as such, and at like time to entertain agreeably as musician. Here we no longer had Sebastian Bach, who gathered his congregation in the church before the organ, or thither called the connoisseurs to a contest twixt himself and colleagues; a wide gulf divided the wondrous master of the Fugue from the cherishers of the Sonata. By them the art of Fugue was learnt as a means of fortifying their musical study, but employed in the sonata by way of nothing but artifice: the rugged strictness of pure Counterpoint yielded to pleasure in a set Eurhythmy; to fill whose ready-made mould with the nearest approach to Italian euphony, appeared to answer every claim on music. In Haydn's instrumental works we seem to see the genie (*Dämon*) of Music playing with its fetters, with the childishness of a greybeard born. Not incorrectly have the earlier works of Beethoven been attributed to Haydn's example; nay, even at a riper period of its evolution, his genius has been rated more akin to that of Haydn than to that of Mozart. Into the peculiar nature of this kinship, however, we gain a striking insight from Beethoven's personal attitude toward Haydn, whom he absolutely refused to recognise as his teacher, even allowing his young arrogance to indulge in positively insulting remarks about him. It seems that he felt the same relation to Haydn as the born adult to the man in second childhood. Far above and beyond the formal resemblance to his teacher, the genie of his inner music, indomitable by those fettering forms, was driving him to a demonstration of his force; and that, like every outward act of this prodigy of a musician, could only take the shape of inconciliable brusqueness.—Of his interview with Mozart [1787] we are informed that the petulant youth sprang up from the clavier after playing a sonata by the master's desire, and, to shew himself in his true colours, requested permission to improvise; which being granted, [83] he produced so marked an impression on Mozart that the latter told his friends: "from *this* one the world will get something worth hearing." That would be about the time when Mozart's own genius, till then held back from following its inner bent by the untold tyranny of a musician's wretchedly toilsome career, was consciously ripening toward its full expansion. We know how the master faced his all too early death with the bitter consciousness that at last he would have been able to shew the world what music there was in him.

Young Beethoven, on the contrary, we see daring the world from the first with that defiant temper which kept him in almost savage independence his whole life through: a stupendous sense-of-self, supported by the proudest spirit, armed him at every hour against the frivolous demands addressed to Music by a world of pleasure. Against the importunities of an etiolated taste, he had a treasure of inestimable price to guard. In those same forms, in which Music was expected to merely shew herself a pleasing art, he had to proclaim the divinations of the inmost world of Tone. Thus he is at all times like a man possessed; for to him in truth applies what Schopenhauer has said of the Musician in general: he speaks the highest wisdom in a tongue his reason (*Vernunft*) does not understand. (14)

The "Vernunft" of his art he found in that spirit which had built the formal framework of its outer scaffolding. And what a scant Vernunft it was that spoke to him from that architectonic poise of periods, when he saw how even the greatest masters of his youth bestirred themselves with banal repetition of flourishes and phrases, with mathematical distribution of loud and soft, with regulation introductions of just so many solemn bars, and the inevitable passage through the gate of just so many half-closes to the saving uproar of the final cadence! 'Twas the Vernunft that had formed the operatic aria, dictated the stringing-together of operatic numbers, the logic that made Haydn chain his genie to an everlasting counting of his rosary-beads. [84] For Religion had vanished from the Church with Palestrina's music, and the artificial formalism of Jesuit observance had counterformed Religion and Music alike. So the thoughtful visitor finds venerable Rome disguised beneath the Jesuit architecture of the last two centuries; so glorious Italian painting turned to slops and sugar; so, and under the selfsame lead, arose French "classic" poetry, in whose spirit-slaying laws we may trace a speaking likeness to the laws of construction of the operatic Aria and the Sonata.

We know that it was the "German spirit," so terribly dreaded and hated "across the mountains," that stepped into the field of Art, as everywhere else, to heal this artfully induced corruption of the European race. As in other realms we have hailed our Lessing, Goethe, Schiller and the rest, as our rescuers from that corruption, to-day we have to shew that in this musician Beethoven, who spoke the purest speech of every nation, the German spirit redeemed the spirit of mankind from deep disgrace. For inasmuch as Music had been degraded to a merely pleasing art, and by dint of her ownest essence he raised her to the height of her sublime vocation, he has set open for us the understanding of that art which explains the world to everyone as surely as the profoundest philosophy could ever explain it to the abstract thinker. *And herein lies the unique relation of great Beethoven to the German people*, which we now will try to follow through the special features of his life and work, so far as known to us.—

Nothing can yield us a more instructive answer as to the relation borne by the Artist's modus operandi to the synthetic operations of the Reason, than a correct apprehension of the course pursued by Beethoven in the unfolding of his musical genius. For it to have been a logical procedure, he must consciously have changed, or even overthrown the outward forms of music; but we never light upon a trace of that. Assuredly there never was an artist who pondered less upon his art. The aforesaid brusque impetuosity of his nature shews us how he felt [85] as an actual personal injury, almost as direct as every other shackle of convention, the ban imposed upon his genius by those forms. Yet his rebellion consisted in nothing but the exuberant unfolding of his inner genius, unrestrainable by those outward forms themselves. Never did he radically alter an existing form of instrumental music; in his last sonatas, quartets, symphonies and so forth, we may demonstrate beyond dispute a structure such as of the first. But compare these works with one another; compare e.g., the Eighth Symphony in F with the Second in D, and marvel at the wholly new world that fronts us in wellnigh the identical form!

Here is shewn once more the idiosyncrasy of German nature, that profoundly inward gift which stamps its mark on every form by moulding it afresh from within, and thus is saved from the necessity of outward overthrow. Thus is the German no revolutionary, but a reformer; and thus he wins at last a wealth of forms for the manifesting of his inner nature, as never another nation. In the Frenchman this deep internal spring seems silted up: wherefore, when troubled by the outer form of matters in his State or art, he fancies he must dash it into atoms, as though the new, the pleasanter form would thereafter leap into existence of itself. Thus, strange as it may sound, his mutiny is really directed against his own nature, which never displays an inch more depth than already in that troubling Form. On the contrary it has not harmed the German spirit's evolution, that our poetic literature of the Middle Ages drew its nurture from the adaptation of French chivalric poems: the inner depth of a Wolfram von Eschenbach shaped eternal types of poesy from that selfsame 'stuff' whose primal form is stored for us as nothing but a curiosity. (15) So, too, did we adopt the classic Form of Greek and Roman culture, followed their mode of speech, their metres, and knew to make our own the antique view of things (*Anschauung*); but always giving voice therein to our own inmost spirit. Thus we took over [86] Music, with all its forms, from the Italians; and what we poured into them, we have before us in the unfathomable works of Beethoven.

To attempt to explain those works themselves, were an act of folly. As we follow their order of succession, with ever growing distinctness must we perceive in them the permeation of the musical form by the Genius of Music. 'Tis as though the works of his forerunners were a painted transparency seen by daylight, a quite inferior type of art, obviously beneath comparison in drawing or colour with the works of the painter proper, and therefore looked down upon by all true connoisseurs as a pseudo-artwork: erected for the embellishment of feasts, at princely banquets, to entertain luxurious company and so forth, (16) the virtuoso placed the candle of his art-dexterity in front of it, instead of at its back, to light it up. But Beethoven comes, and sets this painting in the hush of Night, between the world of semblance and the deep interior world of all things' essence, from whence he brings behind the picture the light of the Clairvoyant: and lo! it shimmers into wondrous life, a second world now stands before us, a world whereof the grandest masterpiece of Raphael himself could give us no foreboding.

Here the might of the musician is conceivable as nothing but Magic. It certainly is an enchanted state into which we fall while listening to a true Beethovenian masterwork, when in every particle of the piece—which our sober senses would tell us was merely the technical means of exhibiting a given form—we discern a supernatural life (*geisterhafte Lebendigkeit*), an agency now soothing now appalling, a [87] pulse, a thrill, a throb of joy, of yearning, fearing, grief and ecstasy, whilst it all appears to take its motion from the depths of our own inner being. For in Beethoven's music the factor of so great moment for the history of Art is this: each technical accidentia of art, each convention employed by the artist for sake of making himself intelligible to the world outside him, itself is raised to the supreme importance of a direct outpouring of his spirit. As I have remarked elsewhere, we here have no subsidiaries, no more foiling to the melody, but the whole is melody, every voice in the accompaniment, each rhythmic note, ay, e'en the pauses.

Since it is quite impossible to discuss the essential substance of Beethoven's music without promptly falling into the tone of rhapsody, and since we have already sought by the philosopher's aid to gain some clearer knowledge of the true essence of Music in general (and consequently of Beethovenian music in particular), if we are to abstain from the impossible we still must rivet our attention to the personal Beethoven, the focus of all the rays of light that issue from his wonder-world.—

So let us ask whence Beethoven derived this force, or rather—as the mystery of Nature's gifts must needs remain close-veiled to us, and the very existence of this force we can but

unquestioningly infer from its effect—let us seek to ascertain by what peculiarity of personal character, and through what moral bent, the great master was enabled to concentrate that force upon this one stupendous effect that constitutes his deed for Art. We have seen that we must here dismiss all assumption of a reasoning process (*Vernunftkenntniss*) that haply might have guided the development of his artistic bent. No: we shall have to abide by that virile force of character to whose influence over the unfolding of the master's inner genius we have already had to allude.

That reference itself brought Beethoven into comparison with Haydn and Mozart. Upon considering the outer lives of these last two, again, we find Mozart standing [88] midway between Haydn and Beethoven. *Haydn* was and remained a prince's musical officer, with the duty of catering for the entertainment of his pomp-struck master. Temporary respites, such as his visits to London, effected little alteration in the practice of his art; for there, too, he was always the musician recommended to, and paid by noble lords. Docile and devout, the peace of his kind and cheerful temper stayed unruffled till advanced old age; only the eye, that looks upon us from his portrait, is suffused with a gentle melancholy.—The life of *Mozart*, on the other hand, was one continuous struggle for a peacefully assured existence, against the most unequal odds. Caressed as a child by the half of Europe, as youth he finds all satisfaction of his sharpened longings made doubly difficult, and from manhood on he miserably sickens toward an early grave. To him the musical service of a royal master became unbearable forthwith: he seeks to support himself on the plaudits of the larger public, gives concerts and "academies a'; the fugitive wage is squandered on the joys of life. If Haydn's *prince* demanded constant change of entertainment, Mozart no less had to plan something new from day to day to tempt the public; hastiness in conception and execution, given an acquired routine, will mostly explain the character of their works. His truly noble masterworks Haydn did not write until already an old man, in enjoyment of a competence insured by foreign fame. Mozart never arrived at comfort: his loveliest works were sketched between the elation of one hour and the anguish of the next. Thus again and again his hopes are set on a handsome royal pension, as guarantee of a mode of life more favourable to artistic production. What his Kaiser withholds is offered him by a King of Prussia: he remains true to "his Kaiser," and perishes in destitution.

Had *Beethoven* reflected on the lives of his two great predecessors, and taken cold Reason for the chooser of his own, it could not have guided him more safely than in fact was done by the naïve dictates of his inborn character. It is amazing to see how everything here was determined by [89] the potent instinct of Nature. Quite plainly is this expressed in Beethoven's abhorrence of a life like Haydn's. One glance at the youthful Beethoven, indeed, must have sufficed to turn any Prince from the thought of making *this* one his Kapellmeister. Still more strongly does his complexion come out in those features which preserved him from a fate such as that of Mozart. Thrown like him upon a world where the Useful alone can pay itself, the Beautiful only gets paid when it flatters the senses, but the Sublime must go without all manner of return, Beethoven found himself debarred in advance from propitiating the world with beauty. That beauty and effeminacy must rank as one and the same to him, his physiognomy declared at once with overpowering distinctness. The world of Appearance had but a poor approach to him. The wellnigh unearthly poignance of his eye saw nothing in the outer world but plaguing perturbations of his inner world, and to hold them at arm's length made out his almost only rapport with that world. Thus paroxysm (*Krampf*) becomes the expression of his visage: the paroxysm of defiance holds this nose, this mouth at strain, a strain that never can relax to smiles, but only to gargantuan laughter. Though it has been an axiom of physiology that, for high mental gifts, a large brain must be set in a thin and delicate brain-pan—as if to facilitate immediate recognition of things outside us,—yet upon examination of the dead man's remains some years ago it transpired that, in keeping with an

exceptional strength of the whole bony skeleton, the skull was of quite unusual density and thickness. Thus Nature shielded a brain of exceeding tenderness, that it might solely look within, and chronicle the visions of a lofty heart in quiet undisturbed. (17) What this fearsomely rugged strength surrounded and preserved, was an inner world of such tenuous delicacy that, given defenceless to the rough fingering of the outer world, it must straightway [90] have melted into air,—like that radiant spirit of light and love, Mozart.

Now say, how such a being would look out upon the world from so close-barred a dwelling!—Assuredly the inner promptings (*Willensaffekte*) of such a man could never, or but impalpably, affect his conception of the outer world; they were at once too ardent and too delicate, to cleave to any of the semblances his eye but grazed in timid haste, and finally with that suspicion of the ever-unappeased. Here nothing drew him with those fleeting fetters of illusion which still could tempt Mozart to sally from his inner world in quest of outer enjoyment. A childlike pleasure in the distractions of a lively capital could scarce so much as appeal to Beethoven, for the promptings of his will were far too strong to find the smallest satisfaction in such superficial pastimes. Whilst this encouraged his bent towards solitude, the latter coincided with his destiny to independence. A marvellously certain instinct led him here, and became the mainspring of each utterance of his character. No reasoning could have directed him more plainly, than this peremptory dictate of his instinct. What induced Spinoza to support himself by glass-cutting; what filled our Schopenhauer with that care to keep his little heritage intact — determining his whole outer life, and accounting for otherwise inexplicable traits in his character—namely the recognition that the sincerity of philosophic research is always seriously imperilled by a dependence on the necessity of earning money by scientific labours: that selfsame thing determined Beethoven in his defiance of the world, his love of solitude, the wellnigh boorish tastes displayed in his choice of a mode of living.

Beethoven too, to be sure, had to earn his living by his musical labours. But, as smiling comfort had no charms for him, he had the less need either to engage in rapid, superficial work, or to make concessions to a taste that naught but sweets could capture. The more he thus lost touch with the outer world, the clearer-sighted did he turn his gaze upon his world within. And the more familiar he [91] becomes with the administration of his inner riches, the more consciously does he propound his outward requirements, actually requesting his patrons no longer to pay him for his works, but to ensure his being able to work entirely for himself without one thought for all the world. And so it happened, for the first time in the life of any musician, that a few benevolent persons of high station pledged themselves to maintain Beethoven in the desired state of independence. Arrived at a similar crisis in his life, Mozart, too soon worn out, had gone to ground. This great boon conferred on Beethoven, albeit not continued without break and undiminished, yet formed the base of that peculiar harmony which shewed itself henceforward in the master's still so strangely-fashioned life. He felt himself victor, and knew that he belonged to the world but as a freeman. As for it, it must take him as it found him. To his high-born patrons he behaved as a despot, and nothing could be got from him save what and when he pleased.

But never and in nothing had he pleasure, save in what henceforth engrossed him: the play of the magician with the figures of his inner world. For the outer now had faded out completely, not because its sight was reft from him by blindness, but since *deafness* held it finally far off his ear. The ear had been the only organ through which the outer world could still disturb him: to his eye it was long since dead. What *saw* the spellbound dreamer when he wandered through Vienna's bustling streets, with open eyes fixed hard on distance, and animated solely by the waking of his inner tone-world?—The advent and exacerbation of his aural malady distressed him terribly, and moved him to deep melancholy: about his total deafness, and especially the loss of all ability to listen to performances of music, we hear no serious complaint from him; merely the intercourse of life was rendered difficult, an

intercourse that in itself had never any charm for him, and which he now avoided more and more emphatically.

A musician sans ears!—Can one conceive an eyeless painter?

[92]

But the blinded *Seer* we know. Tiresias to whom the world of Appearance has closed itself, and whose inner eye beholds instead the ground of all appearances: his fellow is the deaf musician who now, untroubled by life's uproar, but listens to his inner harmonies, now from his depths but speaks to that world—for it has nothing more to tell him. So is genius freed from all outside it, at home forever with and in itself. Whoso could then have seen Beethoven with the vision of Tiresias, what a wonder must have opened to him: a world walking among men,—the In-itself of the world as a living, moving man!—

And now the musician's eye grew bright within. Now did he gaze upon Appearance, and, illumined by his inner light, it cast a wondrous reflex back upon his inner soul. Now speaks but the essence of things to him, and shews them in the tranquil light of Beauty. Now does he understand the woods, the brook, the fields, the clear blue sky, the merry throng, the loving pair, the song of birds, the flocking clouds, the raging of the storm, the happiness of rhythmic rest. And all his seeing and his fashioning is steeped in that marvellous serenity (*Heiterkeit*) which Music first acquired through him. Even the cry, so immanent in every sound of Nature, is lulled to smiling: the world regains its childhood's innocence. (18) "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise"—who has not heard these words of the Redeemer, when listening to the "Pastoral Symphony"?

Now thrives apace that power of shaping the unfathomable, the never-seen, the ne'er experienced, which yet becomes a most immediate experience, of most transparent comprehensibility. The joy of wielding this new power turns next to humour: all grief of Being breaks before this vast enjoyment of the play therewith; the world-creator Brahma [93] is laughing at himself, (19) as he sees how hugely he had duped himself; guiltlessness re-won disports it with the sting of guilt atoned; freed conscience banter with its torment overpassed.

Never has any art in the world created aught so radiant (*etwas so Heiteres*) as these Symphonies in A and F, with all their so closely allied tone-works from this godlike period of the master's total deafness. The effect upon the hearer is precisely that deliverance from all earthly guilt, as the after-effect is the feeling of a forfeited paradise wherewith we return to the world of semblances. Thus do these glorious works preach penitence and a contrite heart with all the depth of a divine revelation.

Here the only æsthetic term to use, is the *Sublime*: for here the operation of the Radiant at once transcends all pleasure in the Beautiful, and leaves it far behind. Each challenge of self-vaunting Reason is hushed forthwith by the Magic mastering our whole nature; knowledge pleads confession of its error, (20) and the transport of that avowal bids our deepest soul to shout for joy, however earnestly the spellbound features of the listener betray his marvel at the impotence of all our seeing and our thinking to plumb this truest of all worlds.—

What of the human being of this world-rapt genius could there be left for observation of the world? What could the eye of earthly man behold in him when now it faced him? Nothing, surely, but the misunderstandable, just as he himself had no communion with our world save that of misunderstanding: our world as to which the naïve greatness of his heart set him in constant contradiction with himself, only to be harmonised again upon the loftiest footing of his art. Whenever his reason tried to comprehend the world, his mind was set at rest by the [94] teachings of Optimism, such as the maudlin (*schwärmerisch*) Humanistic tenets of last century had raised into a commonplace of the bourgeoisly religious world. Each mental doubt his own experiences of Life advanced against the correctness of this doctrine, he combated with hard-and-fast religious maxims. His Inmost told him: Love is god; and so he

wrote down: God is love. In the works of our poets, only what laid emphatic stress upon this dogma could meet with his approval; though "Faust" had a powerful and lasting fascination for him, his special reverence was paid to Klopstock and many a shallower preacher of Humanity. His moral principles were of the strictest bourgeois stripe; a frivolous tone would make him foam. Certainly he thus offered to the most observant company no single sign of breadth of intellect, and, for all Bettina's gushings over Beethoven, Goethe may well have had a heart-ache in his conversations with him. But just as, caring naught for luxury, he frugally kept watch on his finances, nay, often with a miser's parsimony, so in his rigorously religious morals is expressed that surest instinct in power whereof he guarded his noblest of possessions, the freedom of his genius, against the subjugating influence of the world around him.

He lived in Vienna, knew no place but Vienna: that says enough.

The Austrian, brought up in the school of the Roman Jesuits after the uprooting of every vestige of German Protestantism, had even lost the proper accent for his speech; like the classic names of the antique world, it was taught him now in nothing but an un-German latinisation. German spirit, German character and customs, were explained to him from class-books of Spanish and Italian origin; on the soil of a falsified history, a falsified science, a falsified religion, a populace by nature prone to mirth and gaiety had been nursed into a scepticism which—as every fibre of the true, the free, the sterling, was to be plucked out with all despatch—could only take the form of rank frivolity.

'Twas the same spirit that had imposed on the only art [95] still practised in Austria, on Music, that development and truly humbling tendency which we have already passed in review. We have seen how Beethoven warded off this tendency by the strength of his own nature, and now we see an equal force at work in him to vehemently ward off a frivolous tendency of life and mind. A catholic baptised and bred, the whole spirit of German protestantism breathed in this bent of his. And as artist, again, it led him to the path whereon he was to meet the only comrade in his art to whom he could pay obeisance, the only musician he could take to his heart as revealer of the deepest secret of his nature. If Haydn passed as teacher of the youth, for the mightily unfolding art-life of the man our great *Sebastian Bach* became his leader.

Bach's wonder-work became his bible; in it he read, and clean forgot that world of clangour, heard no longer. There stood inscribed the answer to the riddle of his deepest dream, that answer the poor Leipzig Cantor erst had penned as everlasting symbol of the new, the other world. The same mysteriously inwoven lines and wondrous scrolls wherein the secret of the world of light and all its shapes had dawned upon great *Albrecht Dürer*, the spell-book of the necromantist who bids the macrocosmic light to shine upon the microcosm. What none save the eye of the German spirit could look on, none but *its* ear perceive; what drove that spirit's inmost conscience to irresistibly protest against all bonds imposed upon it from without: that Beethoven deciphered in his holiest of books, and— himself became a holy one.—

But how could *this* "holy one" (*gerade dieser Heilige*) conform his life to his hallowedness? For it was given him indeed "to speak the deepest wisdom," but "in a tongue his reason did not understand." Must not his commune with the world resemble nothing but that state of the awakened out of deepest sleep, the toilsome effort to recall the blissful vision of his inner soul? A similar state may be imagined in the case of the religious saint when, driven by the most inevitable life-need, he turns to some [96] measure of rapprochement with the practices of common life: saving that in that Want itself this saint distinctly recognises the penance for a mortal's life of sin, and in his patient bearing of it he makes his very burden the inspired means of his redemption; whereas that hallowed seer simply grasps the penance' meaning as a torture, and drags his portion of all Being's guilt as nothing but a sufferer. (21)

And so the optimist's error avenges itself by heightening both that suffering and his resentment. Each sign of callousness that meets him, every trace of rigour or self-seeking that he ever and again observes, revolts him as an incomprehensible perversion of that original Goodness of man to which he cleaves with a religious faith. Thus he is perpetually hurled from the paradise of his inner harmony to the hell of an existence filled with fearful discords, and only as artist can he finally resolve them into harmony.

If we would set before ourselves the picture of a day from our "holy one's" life, we scarce could gain a better than from one of those marvellous tone-pieces themselves; though, not to deceive ourselves, we must follow the course we adopted when referring the genesis of Music as an art to the phenomenon of the Dream, that is to say, employing it as a mere analogy, and not identifying one thing with the other. In illustration of such a veritable day from Beethoven's inmost life I will choose the great *C-sharp minor Quartet* (22) and what we scarce could do while listening to it, as we then are forced to leave behind all cut-and-dry comparisons and give ourselves entirely to the direct revelation from another world, we may find attainable in a measure when conjuring up this tone-poem in our memory. Even thus, however, I must leave the reader's phantasy to supply the living details of the picture, [97] and therefore simply offer the assistance of a skeleton outline.

The lengthy opening Adagio, surely the saddest thing ever said in notes, I would term the awaking on the dawn of a day "that in its whole long course shall ne'er fulfil one wish, not one wish!" (23) Yet it is alike a penitential prayer, a communing with God in firm belief of the Eternal Goodness.—The inward eye then traces the consoling vision (*Allegro* 6/8), perceptible by it alone, in which that longing becomes a sweet but plaintive playing with itself: the image of the inmost dream takes waking form as a loveliest remembrance. And now (with the short transitional *Allegro moderato*) 'tis as if the master, grown conscious of his art, were settling to work at his magic; its re-summoned force he practises (*Andante* 2/4) on the raising of one graceful figure, the blessed witness of inherent innocence, to find a ceaseless rapture in that figure's never-ending, never-heard-of transformation by the prismatic changes of the everlasting light he casts thereon.—Then we seem to see him, profoundly gladdened by himself, direct his radiant glances to the outer world (*Presto* 2/2): once more it stands before him as in the Pastoral Symphony, all shining with his inner joy; 'tis as though he heard the native accents of the appearances that move before him in a rhythmic dance, now blithe now blunt (*derb*). He looks on Life, and seems to ponder (short *Adagio* 3/4) how to set about the tune for Life itself to dance to: a brief but gloomy brooding, as if the master were plunged in his soul's profoundest dream. One glance has shewn him the inner essence of the world again: he wakes, and strikes the strings into a dance the like whereof the world had never heard (*Allegro finale*). 'Tis the dance of the whole world itself: wild joy, the wail of pain, love's transport, utmost bliss, grief, frenzy, riot, suffering; the lightning flickers, thunders growl: and above it the stupendous fiddler who bans and bends it all, who leads it haughtily from whirlwind into whirlpool, to the brink of the [98] abyss (24);—he smiles at himself, for to him this sorcery was the merest play.—And night beckons him. His day is done.—

It is impossible to keep Beethoven the man before us for an instant, without at once re-calling Beethoven the wonderful musician to explain him.

We have seen how the instinctive tendency of his life ran parallel with the tendency to emancipate his art; as he himself could be no lackey in the pay of Luxury, so should his music, too, be freed from every token of subjection to a frivolous taste. And of how his optimistic creed went hand-in-hand with an instinctive tendency to enlarge the province of his art we have evidence, of the sublimest naïvety, in his *Ninth Symphony with Choruses*; into whose genesis we now must look, to make clear the marvellous connexion of these two

root-tendencies in the nature of our "saint."—

The same bent that led Beethoven's reasoning faculty to frame for itself the *good* human being, guided him in the construction of this "good man's" *melody*. Melody having lost its innocence at the hand of our art-musicians, he wished to restore to it this purest innocence. One has only to recall the Italian Opera-melody of last century, to recognise in that singular scarecrow the abject servant of the Mode and its ends: through Fashion and its uses Music had been brought so low that wanton taste demanded of it only something new, and new again, because the melody of yesterday was past all listening-to to-day. But Melody was also the sheet-anchor of our Instrumental-music, whose employment for the ends of a by no means noble social life we have already mooted above.

Here *Haydn* had soon laid hands on the blunt but cheery folk-dance, whose strains he often quite recognisably borrowed from the dances of Hungarian peasants in his immediate neighbourhood; but he thus remained in a lower sphere with a strong impress of narrow provincialism. From what sphere, then, was this Nature-melody to be [99] derived, to bear a nobler, an eternal character? For even that peasant-dance-tune of Haydn's had its chief attraction as a piquant curiosity, in nowise as a purely-human type of art for every age. Yet it was impossible to find that type in the higher spheres of our society, for that was just where reigned the patched and powdered melody of the opera-singer and ballet-dancer, a nest of every vice. So Beethoven went Haydn's way; only, he no longer served up the folk-dance tune at a prince's banquet, but, in an ideal sense, he played it for the Folk itself to dance to. Now it is a Scotch, now a Russian, now an old-French folk-tune, in which he recognised the dreamt nobility, of innocence, and at whose feet he laid his whole art in homage. But one Hungarian peasant-dance (in the final movement of his Symphony in A) he played for the whole of Nature, so played that who could see her dancing to it in orbital gyrations must deem he saw a planet brought to birth before his very eyes.

But his aim was to find the archetype of innocence, the ideal "good man" of his belief, (25) to wed him with his "God is love." One might almost think the master had already seized the clue in his "*Sinfonia eroica*": the unusually simple theme of its last movement, a theme he worked again elsewhere, seems meant as a scaffold for this purpose; but the wealth of exquisite melos he built upon it still pertains too much to the sentimental Mozartian cantabile, so characteristically developed and expanded by himself, to rank as attainment of the aforesaid aim.—The clue is plainer in the jubilant closing section of the C - minor Symphony, where the naïvety of the simple march-tune, moving almost exclusively on tonic and dominant in the nature - scale of horns and trumpets, appeals to us the more as the whole symphony now seems to have been nothing but a straining of our attention for it; like the bank of clouds, now torn by storm, now stirred by gentlest breezes, from whence the sun at last breaks forth in splendour.

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At like time (and this apparent digression has an important bearing on our subject) the C-minor Symphony appeals to us as one of those rarer conceptions of the master's in which a stress of bitter passion, the fundamental note of the commencement, mounts rung by rung through consolation, exaltation, till it breaks into the joy of conscious victory. Here lyric pathos already verges on the definitely dramatic, in an ideal sense; and though it might be doubted whether the purity of Musical Conception would not ultimately suffer by the pursuance of this path, through its leading to the dragging-in of fancies altogether foreign to the spirit of Music, yet it cannot be denied that the master was in nowise prompted by a truant fit of æsthetic speculation, but simply and solely by an ideal instinct sprung from Music's ownest realm. (26) As shewn when we started on this last inquiry, that instinct coincided with the struggle to rescue from every plausible objection raised by his experience of life the conscious belief in human nature's original goodness, or haply to regain it. Those conceptions

of the master's which breathe wellnigh throughout the spirit of sublimest gladness (*Heiterkeit*) belong pre-eminently, as we have seen, to the period of that blessed seclusion which seems upon arrival of his total deafness to have wholly rapt him from this world of pain. From the sadder mood that reappears in certain of his most important works we perhaps have no need to infer a downfall of that inner gladness, since we undoubtedly [101] should make a grave mistake if we thought the Artist could ever conceive save in a state of profound cheerfulness of soul. The mood expressed in the conception must therefore belong to that world's-Idea itself which the artist seizes and interprets in his artwork. But, as we have taken for granted that in Music the Idea of the whole World reveals itself, the inspired musician must necessarily be included in that Idea, and what he utters is therefore not his personal opinion of the world, but the World itself with all its changing moods of grief and joy, of weal and woe. The conscious doubt of *Beethoven the man* was included in this World, as well; and thus his doubt is speaking for itself, in nowise as an object of his reflection, when he brings the world to such expression as in his Ninth Symphony, for instance, whose first movement certainly shews us the Idea of the world in its most terrible of lights. Elsewhere, however, this very work affords us unmistakable evidence of the purposely ordaining will of its creator; we are brought face to face with it when he stops the frenzy of despair that overwhelms each fresh appeasement, and, with the anguished cry of one awaking from a nightmare, he speaks that actual Word whose ideal sense is none other than: "Man, despite all, *is good!*"

It has always been a stumbling-block, not only to Criticism, but to the ingenuous Feeling, to see the master here falling of a sudden out of Music, in a manner, as if stepping outside the magic circle he himself had drawn, and appealing to a mental faculty entirely distinct from that of musical conception. In truth this unprecedented stroke of art resembles nothing but the sudden waking from a dream, and we feel its comforting effect upon the tortured dreamer; for never had a musician led us through the torment of the world so relentlessly and without end. So it was with a veritable leap of despair that the divinely naive master, inspired by nothing save his magic, set foot on that new world of Light from out whose soil the long-sought godlike-sweet and guileless-human melody bloomed forth to greet him with its purity.

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Thus with even what we have styled the ordaining will that led him to this melody, we find the master still abiding in the realm of Music, the world's Idea; for it is not the meaning of the Word, that really takes us with this entry of the human voice, but the human character of that voice. Neither is it the thought expressed in Schiller's verses, that occupies our minds thereafter, but the familiar sound of the choral chant; in which we ourselves feel bidden to join and thus take part in an ideal Divine Service, as the congregation really did at entry of the Chorale in S. Bach's great Passions. In fact it is obvious, especially with the chief-melody proper, that Schiller's words have been built in perforce and with no great skill; (27) for this melody had first unrolled its breadth before us as an entity *per se*, entrusted to the instruments alone, and there had thrilled us with the nameless joy of a paradise regained.

Never has the highest art produced a thing more artistically simple than this strain, whose childlike innocence as though breathes into us a holy awe when first we hear the theme in unaccented whispers from the bass instruments of the string-orchestra in unison. It then becomes the *cantus firmus*, the Chorale of the new communion, round which, as round S. Bach's own church-chorales, the harmonic voices group themselves in counterpoint. There is nothing to equal the sweet intensity of life this primal strain of spotless innocence acquires from every new- arising voice; till each adornment, every added gem of passion, unites with it and in it, like the breathing world around a final proclamation of divinest love. (28)—

Surveying the historical advance which the art of Music made through Beethoven, we may define it as the winning [103] of a faculty withheld from her before: in virtue of that acquisition she mounted far beyond the region of the æsthetically Beautiful, into the sphere of the absolutely Sublime; and here she is freed from all the hampering of traditional or conventional forms, through her filling their every nook and cranny with the life of her ownest spirit. And to the heart of every human being this gain reveals itself at once through the character conferred by Beethoven on music's chiefest Form, on *Melody*, which has now won the utmost natural simplicity, the fount whereat in every age, for every need, it may renew itself and thrive to richest, amplest multiplicity. And this we may sum in a single term, intelligible to everyone: Melody has been emancipated by Beethoven from all influence of the Mode, of shifting taste, and raised to an eternal purely-human type. Beethoven's music will be understood throughout all time, whereas the music of his predecessors will for the most part stay un-understandable save by aid of art-historical Reflection.—

But, on the path whereon Beethoven arrived at this memorable ennoblement of Melody, there is yet another advance to note: to wit, the new meaning gained by *Vocal music* in its relation to purely Instrumental music.

This meaning was previously unknown to 'mixed' vocal-and-instrumental music. The latter we first meet in compositions for the church, and need have no scruple in calling it vocal music spoilt, inasmuch as the orchestra is here employed as mere accompaniment or reinforcement to the singing voices. The church-compositions of great S. Bach are only to be understood as works for a vocal choir, saving that this choir itself is already handled with the freedom and mobility of an instrumental orchestra,— which naturally suggested the latter's introduction for reinforcement and support. Then, concurrently with the greater and greater decline of the spirit of church-music, we find added to this mixture the Italian operatic song with orchestral accompaniment, in fashions varying with the times. It was reserved for Beethoven's genius to [104] employ the resulting compound purely in the sense of an Orchestra of increased resources. In his great *Missa solennis* we have a strictly Symphonic work, of the truest Beethovenian spirit. Here the vocal parts are handled quite in that sense of human instruments which Schopenhauer very rightly wished to see alone assigned to them: when presented as a musical artwork, the text to which these great church-compositions are set is never seized by us according to the letter, but simply serves as material for the singing; and it has no disturbing effect on our musical impressions for simple reason that it starts no train of inductive thought (*Vernunftvorstellungen*), but affects us solely through well-known symbolic formulae of faith, as indeed is conditioned by its churchly character.

Moreover the experience that a piece of music loses nothing of its character even when the most diverse texts are laid beneath it, shews the relation of Music to *Poetry* to be a sheer illusion: for it transpires that in vocal music it is not the poetic thought one seizes—which in choral singing, in particular, one does not even get intelligibly articulated—but at most the mood that thought aroused in the musician when it moved him to music. (29) The union of Music and Poetry must therefore always end in such a subordination of the latter that we can only wonder above all at our great German poets returning again and again to the problem, to say nothing of the attempt. They evidently were instigated by the effect of music in *Opera*: and here, at any rate, appeared to lie the only field whereon the problem might be solved at last. Now, whether our poets' hopes were directed more to music's formal symmetry of structure, or more to its profoundly stirring effect on the feelings, they obviously could have only proposed to use the mighty aids it seemed to offer to give their poetic aim alike a more precise expression and a [105] more searching operation. They may have thought that Music would gladly render them this service if, in lieu of the trivial operatic subject and opera-text, they brought her a poetic conception to be taken seriously. What continually held them back from serious attempts in this direction may have been a vague, but legitimate doubt whether

Poetry would be noticed at all, as such, in its co-operation with Music. Upon careful consideration it cannot have escaped them that in Opera, beyond the music, only the scenic goings-on, but not the explanatory poetic thought, engrossed attention; that Opera, in fact, merely arrested *hearing* and *sight* in turn. That a perfect æsthetic satisfaction was not to be gained for either the one receptive faculty or the other, is fully accounted for by the circumstance noted above, namely that opera-music did not attune us to that devotional state (*Andacht*)—the only one in keeping with Music—in which vision is so far reduced in power that the eye no longer sees objects with the wonted intensity; on the contrary, as found before, we here were but superficially affected, more excited than filled by the music, and consequently desired to *see* something too,—by no means to *think*, however, for our whole faculty of thought was stolen from us by just that shuttlecock desire for entertainment, thrown hither and thither in its distracting battle with tedium.

Now the foregoing considerations have made us sufficiently familiar with Beethoven's specific nature, to understand at once the master's attitude toward *Opera* when he categorically refused to ever set an opera-text of frivolous tendency. Ballets, processions, fireworks, amorous intrigues etc., to make music for such as these he declined with horror. His music required a whole, a high-souled, passionate plot, to search it through and through. What poet could have offered him the needful hand? One solitary trial brought him into contact with a dramatic situation that at least had nothing of the hated frivolity about it, and moreover quite harmonised with the master's leading dogma of Humanity through its glorification of [106] wifely troth. And yet this opera-subject embraced so much that was foreign to Music and unassimilable, that in truth the great Overture to *Leonora* alone makes really plain to us how Beethoven would have the drama understood. Who can ever hear that thrilling tone-piece without being filled with the conviction that Music includes within itself the most consummate *Drama*? What is the dramatic action of the librettist's opera "Leonora" but an almost repulsive watering of the drama we have lived through in its overture, a kind of tedious commentary by Gervinus on a scene of Shakespeare's?

But the feeling that here occurs to everyone can only be made a matter of clear knowledge by our returning to the philosopher's explanation of Music itself.

Seeing that Music does not portray the Ideas inherent in the world's phenomena, but is itself an Idea of the World, and a comprehensive one, it naturally includes the Drama in itself; as Drama, again, expresses the only world's-Idea proportionate (*adäquat*) to Music. Drama towers above the bounds of Poetry in exactly the same manner as Music above those of every other art, and especially of plastic art, through its effect residing solely in the Sublime. As a drama does not depict human characters, but lets them display their immediate selves, so a piece of music gives us in its motive. The character of all the world's appearances according to their inmost essence (*An-sich*). Not only are the movement, interchange and evolution of these motives analogous to nothing but the Drama, but a drama representing the [world's] Idea can be understood with perfect clearness through nothing but those moving, evolving and alternating motives of Music's. We consequently should not go far astray, if we defined Music as man's qualification *a priori* for fashioning the Drama. Just as we construct for ourselves the world of semblances through application of the laws of Time and Space existing *a priori* in our brain, so this conscious representment of the world's Idea in Drama would thus be foreordained by those inner laws of Music, operating in the dramatist equally unconsciously [107] with the laws of Causality we bring into employment for apperception of the phenomenal world.

It was a presage of precisely this, that occurred to our great German poets; and perhaps in that guess they gave voice withal to the hidden reason of the impossibility of explaining *Shakespeare* by other methods. This prodigy of a dramatist in fact was comprehensible by no analogy with any poet you please; for which reason, also, all æsthetic judgment of him has

remained as yet unbased. His dramas seem to be so direct a transcript of the world, that the *artist's* intervention in their portrayal of the Idea is absolutely untraceable, and certainly not demonstrable by criticism. So, marvelled at as products of a superhuman genius, they became to our great poets a study for discovery of the laws of their creation wellnigh in the same manner as the wonders of Nature herself.

With that extraordinary sincerity of his every touch, the height to which Shakespeare towered above the Poet proper often comes out ruggedly enough; in the scene where Brutus and Cassius fall a-quarrelling (*Julius Cæsar*), for instance, we find the poet positively treated as a "jigging fool." Nowhere do we meet the "poet" Shakespeare, save in the inmost heart of the characters that move before us in his dramas.—Shakespeare therefore remained entirely beyond comparison, until in *Beethoven* the German genius brought forth a being only to be explained through his analogy.—If we take the whole impression left by Shakespeare's world of shapes upon our inner feeling, with the extraordinary relief of every character that moves therein, and uphold to it the sum-total of Beethoven's world of motives, with their ineluctable incisiveness and definition, we cannot but see that the one of these worlds completely covers the other, so that each is contained in each, no matter how remote may seem their orbits.

To make this operation easier, let us cite the instance where Beethoven and Shakespeare join hands over the same subject, the *Overture to Coriolanus*. If we recall to [108] mind the impression made upon us by the figure of Coriolanus in Shakespeare's drama, and from all the details of the complicated plot first single that which lingered with us through its bearing on the principal character, we shall see one solitary shape loom forth: the defiant Coriolanus in conflict with his inmost voice, that voice which only speaks the more unsilenceably when issuing from his mother's mouth; and of the dramatic development there will remain but that voice's victory over pride, the breaking of the stubbornness of a nature strong beyond all bounds. For his drama Beethoven chooses nothing but these two chief-motives, which make us feel more surely than all abstract exposition the inmost essence of that pair of characters. Then if we devoutly follow the movement developing solely from the opposition of these two motives in strict accordance with their musical character, and allow in turn the purely-musical detail to work upon us—the lights and shades, the meetings and partings of these two motives,—we shall at like time be following the course of a drama whose own peculiar method of expression embraces all that held our interest, the complex plot and clash of minor characters, in the acted work of the playwright. What gripped us there as an action set immediately before us, almost lived through by ourselves, we here receive as inmost kernel of that action; there set forth by characters with all the might of nature-forces, it here is just as sharply limned by the musician's motives, identical in inmost essence with the motives at work in those characters. Merely in the one sphere *those*, in the other *these*, laws of movement and dimension take effect.

We have called Music the revelation of the inner vision of the Essence of the world, and Shakespeare we might term a Beethoven who goes on dreaming though awake. What holds their spheres asunder, are the formal conditions of the laws of apperception obtaining in each. The perfect art-form would therefore have to take its rise from the point where those respective laws could meet. Now, what makes Shakespeare at once so incomparable and so inexplicable, [109] is this: those Forms which bound the plays of great Calderon himself to prim conventionality, and made them strictly artist's-works, he saturated with such life that they seem dissolved away by Nature: no longer do we think we see fictitious men, but real live men before us; and yet they stand so wondrous far from us, that we cannot but deem material contact with them as impossible as if we were looking at ghosts.—Seeing, then, that Beethoven is the very counterpart of Shakespeare even in his attitude towards the formal laws of his art, his fulfilling abrogation of them, we perhaps may gain the clearest notion of that point where their two spheres would touch, or melt into each other, if we take our philosopher

once more for guide, and proceed to the goal of his Dream-theory, his hypothesis of ghostly apparitions.

Here our business would lie less with the metaphysical, than the physiologic explanation of so-called "second sight." We have already cited our philosopher's theory that the Dream-organ is situate in that portion of the brain which responds to impressions received from the operations of the inner organism in profound sleep, and responds in a manner analogous to the effect produced by waking impressions from the outer world on the portion of the brain immediately connected with the organs of sense, now completely at rest. We have also seen that the dream-message received by this inner organ can be transmitted [to the waking consciousness] only through a second type of dream, a dream that directly precedes our wakening, and which can render in none but an allegoric form the contents of the first; and the reason was, that, even in the preparatory stage of the brain's awaking to external objects, the forms of perception pertaining to the phenomenal world, such as Space and Time, must already be brought into play, and thus construct an image akin to the experiences of daily life.—Further, we have compared the work of the Musician to the clairvoyante's hypnotic vision (*dem Gesichte der hellsehend gewordenen Somnambule*), as the direct transcript of the inmost dream [*Wahrtraum*—lit. [110] "true-dream"] beheld by her and now imparted, in her most active state of clairvoyance, to those outside; and we have found the channel for this message by following the genesis and evolution of the world of Sound.—Still pursuing our analogy, with this physiologic phenomenon of hypnotic clairvoyance let us couple its fellow, that of ghost-seeing, and borrow from Schopenhauer, again, his hypothesis that it is a state of clairvoyance occurring in the waking brain; that is to say, it results from a temporary reduction in the waking power of sight, whose clouded eyes are now made use of by the inner impulse to impart to the form of consciousness most near to waking the message of the inmost veridical dream. (30) This shape, projected before the eye from within, belongs in nowise to the material world of Appearance; yet it appears to the ghost-seer with all the signs and tokens of actual life. With this projection of the inner image before the waking eye— an act the inner will can accomplish only in rare and extraordinary cases—let us now compare the work of Shakespeare; and we shall find him to be the ghost-seer and spirit-raiser, who from the depths of his own inner consciousness conjures the shapes of men from every age, and sets them before his waking eye and ours in such a fashion that they seem to really live.

As soon as we have fully grasped the consequences of this analogy we may term Beethoven, whom we have likened to the clairvoyant, the hidden motor (*den wirkenden Untergrund*) of Shakespeare the ghost-seer: what brings forth Beethoven's melodies, projects the spirit-shapes of Shakespeare; and both will blend into one being, if we let the musician enter not only the world of Sound, but at like [111] time that of Light. This would be analogous to the physiologic occurrence that on one side becomes the cause of ghost-seeing, on the other produces somnambulistic clairvoyance; in respect of which it is to be conjectured that an inner stimulus travels through the brain in a similar but inverse fashion to the outer impressions received when awake, and, ultimately arriving at the organs of sense, makes them regard as an external object what has really thrust its way from within. But we have already recorded the indisputable fact that, while we are lost in the hearing of music, our sight is so far paralysed that it no longer perceives objects with any degree of intensity; so this would be the state induced by the innermost Dream-world, the blinding of the eye that it might see the spirit-shape.

This hypothetical explanation of a physiologic phenomenon, otherwise inexplicable, we may apply to the solution of our present artistic problem from various sides and arrive at a like result. For instance, Shakespeare's spirit-shapes would be brought to sound through the full awaking of the inner organ of Music: or Beethoven's motives would inspire the palsied sight to see those shapes distinctly, and embodied in those spirit-shapes they now would move

before our eyes turned clairvoyant. In either case, identical in essence, the prodigious force here framing appearances from within outwards, against the ordinary laws of Nature, must be engendered by the deepest Want (*Noth*). And that Want presumably would be the same as finds vent, in the common course of life, in the scream of the suddenly-awakened from an obsessing vision of profoundest sleep (31); saving that here, in the extraordinary, the stupendous event which shapes the life of manhood's genius, that Want awakens to a new, a world laid open by such awaking only, a world of clearest knowledge and highest capability.

This awaking out of deepest Want we witness in that redoubtable leap from instrumental into vocal music—so offensive to ordinary æsthetic criticism—which has led us from our discussion of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony to [112] the above prolonged digression. What we here experience is a certain overcharge, a vast compulsion to unload without, only to be compared with the stress to waken from an agonising dream; and the important issue for the Art-genius of mankind, is that this special stress called forth an artistic deed whereby that genius gained a novel power, the qualification for begetting the highest Artwork.

As to that Artwork itself; we can only conclude that it will be *the most perfect Drama*, and thus stand high above the work of Poetry. This we may conclude after having recognised the identity of the Shakespearian and the Beethovenian Drama, whilst we may assume, on the other hand, that it will bear the same relation to "Opera" as a play of Shakespeare's to a literature-drama, a Beethovenian symphony to an opera's music.

That Beethoven returns in the course of his Ninth Symphony to the 'choral cantata with orchestra,' must not mislead our judgment of that eventful leap from instrumental into vocal music; we have already gauged the import of this choral portion of the symphony, and found it pertaining to the strictest field of Music: beyond that said ennoblement of Melody, we have in it no formal innovation; it is a Cantata with words, to which the music bears no closer relation than to any other vocal text. For we know that it is not the verses of a text-writer, and were he a Goethe or Schiller, that can determine Music. *Drama* alone can do that; and not the dramatic poem, but the drama that moves before our very eyes, the visible counter part of Music, where word and speech belong no more to the poet's thought, but solely to the action.

It is not the *work* of Beethoven, then, but the unparalleled artistic *deed* contained therein, that we must stamp on Our minds as climax of the musician's genius, when we declare that an artwork founded and modelled throughout on this deed must afford withal the perfect *art-form*: that form wherein, for Drama as for Music in especial, each vestige of conventionality would be entirely upheaved. And this Form would also be the only one to throughly [113] fit the German Spirit, so powerfully individualised in our great Beethoven: the new, the Purely-human art-form made by it, and yet originally immanent in it; the form for which, when likened with the antique world, the new still goes a-lacking.



Whoever allows himself to be influenced by the views I have here expressed in regard of Beethovenian music, will certainly not escape being called fantastic and extravagant; and this reproach will be levelled at him not merely by our educated and uneducated musicians of the day—who for the most part have seen that dream-vision of Music's under no other guise than Bottom's dream in the *Midsummer's-night*—but in particular by our literary poets and even our plastic artists, so far as they ever trouble their heads with questions that seem to lie entirely beyond their sphere. We must make up our minds to tranquilly bear that reproach however, even should it take the form of a high and mighty, nay, a deliberately insulting snub; for to us it is manifest, firstly that these people are downright incapable of seeing what we see, and secondly that any glimmer they may get thereof is only just sufficient to shew them their own unproductiveness: that they should recoil in horror from the sight, we need no pains to understand.

If we review the general character of our current public art and literature, we are struck by a notable change, which dates from about a generation back. Here everyone not only looks quite hopeful, but in a certain sense quite sure that the great period of the German Rebirth, with its Goethe and Schiller, is falling into disesteem—of course well-tempered. A generation ago it was somewhat otherwise: then the character of our age proclaimed itself; without disguise, as essentially critical; folk called the spirit of the time a "paper" one, and believed that even plastic art must renounce all idea of originality and content [114] itself with a merely reproductive use and combination of existing types. We cannot but think that people then saw more clearly, and expressed themselves more honestly, than is the case to-day. Whoever is still of that earlier opinion, despite the confident demeanour of our literary writers, literary painters, builders and other artists conversant with the spirit of the times, with him we may hope to come to readier terms if we try to set in its proper light the unparalleled importance won by Music for the [future] evolution of our Culture; in conclusion we therefore will rise from our plunge into the inner world, with which the preceding inquiry has chiefly concerned us, and take a glance at the outer world in which we live and under whose pressure that inner essence has acquired at last the force to react without.

Not to get lost in a maze of "culture-history," we will take one characteristic feature of the public mind in the immediate present.—

With the victorious advance of the German arms to the centre of French civilisation, a feeling of shame at our dependence on that civilisation has suddenly appeared among us, and steps into publicity as an appeal to lay aside the Parisian mode of dress. So! at last the sense of patriotism rebels against what, not only the nation's æsthetic sense of seemliness has borne so long without a murmur, but our public mind has striven for in hottest haste. What, in fact, could a glance at our public life have told the modeller? It simply furnished our comic papers with food for caricature, on the one hand, while on the other our poets continued undeterred their compliments to the "German woman."—Upon an illustration of this singularly complicated situation we surely need not waste our breath.—But some might haply regard it as a passing evil: they might be expecting that the blood of our sons, our brothers and husbands, shed for the German Spirit's sublimest thought on the deadliest battlefields in history, at least must redden the cheeks of our daughters, sisters and wives, and a sudden noblest Want must wake in them [115] the pride that no longer could stoop to present themselves to their males as the most ridiculous of caricatures. For the honour of all German women we too will gladly believe that such a proper feeling is at work in them; and yet each man must have smiled when he read the first appeals to them to clothe themselves in a novel style. Who cannot have felt that the thing would end in a new, and presumably a very unbecoming masquerade? For 'tis no mere accidental whim of our public life, that we stand under rule of the Mode; just as it is in character with the whole history of modern civilisation, that the whims of Parisian taste dictate to us the laws of Mode. In truth it is French taste, i.e. the spirit of Paris and Versailles, that for two hundred years has been the sole productive ferment in European culture; while the spirit of no single nation could evolve an art-type any more, the spirit of the French at least laid down the outward form of society, and to to-day the cut of clothes.

However paltry these affairs may seem, they are original to the French spirit: they express it quite as definitely and vividly as the Italians of the Renaissance, the Greeks, the Egyptians and Assyrians expressed their spirit in their art-types; and nothing yields us clearer evidence of the French being the ruling race of to-day's Civilisation, than the fact that our fancy promptly falls into the ridiculous if we try to imagine ourselves emancipated from their Mode. At once we recognise that a "German Mode," set up as rival to the French, would be something too absurd; and since our feeling nevertheless revolts against that reign, we can only conclude that we are stricken with a veritable curse, from which nothing but a

profoundly radical new-birth can ever redeem us. Our whole root-nature, to wit, would have so thoroughly to change, that the very term *the Mode* would lose all meaning for the outward fashion of our life.

In what this new-birth must consist, we should have to argue with the greatest caution, after first discovering the causes of the deep decline of public art-taste. And as we [116] have already found the employment of analogies of some service for elucidating the otherwise difficult subject of our main inquiry, let us once more betake ourselves to a seemingly distant field of observation, but a field whereon we at any rate may hope to win an addition to our knowledge of the plastic aspect of our public life.—

If we would conjure up a paradise of the human spirit's productivity, we must transfer ourselves to the days before the invention of *Writing* and its preservation on parchment or paper. We cannot but hold that here was born the whole of that Culture which now maintains a halting life as mere object of study or useful adaptation. Here *Poesis* was nothing other than the actual invention of Myths, i.e. of ideal occurrences in which the various characteristics of the life of man were mirrored with an objective reality like to that of ghostly apparitions. This faculty we see innate in every Folk of noble blood, down to the point when the use of written letters reached it. From then it loses its poetic force; Speech, theretofore in a living flux of natural evolution, now falls into the crystallising stage and stiffens; Poetry becomes the art of decking out the ancient myths, no longer to be new-invented, and ends in Rhetoric and Dialectics.—Let us picture next the leap from Writing into Printing. From the rare hand-written tome the father of the household read before his guests: now everyone reads dumbly to himself the printed book, and for the readers writes the scribbler. To obtain an inkling of the storm of madness that followed in the wake of printed letters, we must resummon the religious sects of the Reformation era, with their polemical tracts and disputations. One may presume that only Luther's glorious hymn saved whole the spirit of the Reformation, and that because it touched the heart and thereby healed the lexicomania (*Buchstaben-Krankheit*) of the brain. Yet the genius of a race might come to terms with the book- printer, however painful it might find the intercourse; but with the invention of the Newspaper, the full unfolding of the flower of Journalism, this good angel of the Folk could [117] not but fly away from life. For now reigns nothing but Opinions, and "public" ones at that; they're to be had for pay, hike the public strumpets: who buys a paper, has procured not only the printed sheet, but its opinion; he needs no more to think, or yet to ponder; there stands all ready-thought for him in black on white what folk are to think of God and the world. And so the Paris fashion-journal tells the "German wife" how she must dress; for the Frenchman has earned a perfect right to dictate to us in things like that, as he has soared to the undisputed position of the colour-illustrator of our Journal-paper world.

If by side of this metamorphosis of the poetic world into a journalistic-literary world we set the transformation of the world of Form and Colour, we shall find a precisely similar result.

Who could have the presumption to say he was able to form a true idea of the grandeur, the divine sublimity of the Plastic world of ancient Greece? Each glance at a single fragment of its ruins makes us feel with awe that we here are standing in presence of a Life for whose judgment we have not even the first beginning of a scale. That world had earned the right to teach us by its very ruins how the remainder of man's earthly life might yet be fashioned into something bearable. We may thank the great *Italians* for having revived for us that lesson, and nobly put it into practice for the newer world. This people, gifted with such abundant Phantasy, we see consume itself away in passionate adoption of that lesson; after one marvellous century it melts from history like a dream, and History erroneously takes up a kindred-seeming nation, as if to see what she could make of that for form and colour of the world. A crafty statesman and prince of the Church endeavoured to inoculate Italian art and culture into the *French* folk-spirit, after Protestantism had been completely rooted out

therefrom: it had seen the fall of its noblest heads; and what the Paris Feast of St Bartholomew had spared, had finally been carefully burnt down to the lowest stump. The remnant of the nation [118] was treated "artistically"; but as it had never had, or had lost all Phantasy, productiveness would nowhere shew itself; and particularly not in the creating of a work of Art. The attempt to make the Frenchman himself an artificial being was more successful; the artistic idea (*künstlerische Vorstellung*) that failed to find a home in his imagination, could be turned into an artificial exhibition (*künstliche Darstellung*) of the whole man in and to himself. Indeed this even might pass as Antique, if one only granted that man must be an artist in his person before he thought of producing artworks. If a "gallant" worshipped King but set the good example of a highly elegant demeanour in every act and situation, 'twas easy to descend the climax through the courtier lords, and at last induce the whole nation to put on the gallant manner; with whose growth into a second nature the Frenchman might end by fancying himself superior to the Italians of the Renaissance, inasmuch as these had merely brought forth artworks, whilst he had become a work of art himself.

One may describe the Frenchman as the product of a special art of expressing, behaving and clothing himself. His law for this is "*Taste*,"—a word transferred from the humblest function of the senses to a tendence of the mind; and with this taste he savours himself; precisely as he has dressed himself; as a highly flavoured sauce. Beyond cavil, he has turned the thing into a virtuosity: "modern" is he out-and-out, and if he thus exhibits himself for all the civilised world to copy, it's not *his* fault that he is copied inexpertly; rather is it a constant source of flattery to him, that he alone should be original in a thing which others feel compelled to copy. — And then the man is wholly "journal"; plastic art, no less than music, is an object for his "feuilleton." As a thorough modern, he has trimmed the former just as much to his liking as the cut of his clothes, in which he is governed purely by the principle of Novelty, i.e. perpetual change. Here the furniture is the chief affair; for it the architect constructs the house. The tendence displayed herein in earlier times, down to the [119] great Revolution, was still original; in the sense that it fitted the character of the ruling classes of society as admirably as the dress their bodies, the coiffure their heads. Since then, this tendence has fallen in exact degree as the superior classes have timidly withdrawn from the leadership of *ton*, and left the Mode's initiative to the emerging broader strata of the populace (we are speaking of Paris throughout). And here the so-called "*demi-monde*," with its entrepreneurs, has taken the lead: the Paris dame seeks to attract her husband by copying its dress and manners; for on this side, again, things are still so original that dress and manners belong to and complete each other. This side, however, abjures all influence over plastic art; which consequently has fallen into the hands of the fancy dealer, under the shape of quincaille and hangings, wellnigh as in the first beginnings of the arts among nomadic races. With the constant demand for novelty, and seeing that itself can never produce a thing really new, the Mode is left with no resource but a constant changing of extremes: indeed it is to this tendence that our oddly-counselled plastic artists tack themselves at last, to bring noble forms of art—naturally not of their own invention—once more to daylight with the rest. Antique and Roccoco, Gothic and Renaissance, take turn and turn about; the factories put forth Laocoon-groups, Chinese porcelain, copies of Raphael and Murillo, Etrurian vases, Medieval curtain-stuffs, meubles à la Pompadour, stuccos à la Louis XIV.; the architect frames the whole in Florentine style, and sets an Ariadne-group atop.

Thus "modern art" becomes a new principle in Æsthetics too: its originality consists in its total want of originality, and its priceless gain in the exchange of every style; all which have now been brought within range of the commonest observation, and can be adapted to the taste of every man.—Also, it is credited with a new humanitarian principle, the Democratising of artistic taste. They tell us to have every hope of the education of the people; for art and its

products, you see, are no longer reserved for [120] the privileged classes, but the smallest citizen has now the opportunity of placing the noblest types of art before his eyes upon his chimney-piece, whilst the beggar himself may peep at them in the art-shop windows. One certainly should rest content; for, everything being already laid in a heap at our feet, it would really be impossible to conceive how even the most gifted brain could manage to invent a novel style in either plastic art or literature.—

Yes, we may fully concur with that opinion; for here we have an outcome of history as consequent as our civilisation itself. 'Twere thinkable that these consequences might be blotted out, namely in the foundering of our civilisation; an event to be conceived if all History went by the board as result, let us say, of social Communism imposing itself on the modern world in the guise of a practical religion. At any rate our civilisation has come to the end of true productiveness in respect of its Plastic form, and we shall do well to accustom ourselves no longer to expect anything at all resembling the unapproachable model bequeathed us by the antique world in that domain, and haply to accept this strange result of modern civilisation—so very comforting to many persons—with the same conviction as makes us now regard the suggestion of a new German mode of dress for us men, and especially for our women, as a vain attempt to kick against the spirit of our civilisation.

Far as our *eye* can roam, the *Mode* commands us.—

But coevally with this world of Mode another world has risen for us. As Christianity stepped forth amid the Roman civilisation of the universe, so *Music* breaks forth from the chaos of modern civilisation. Both say aloud: "our kingdom is not of this world." And that means: we come from within, ye from without; we spring from the Essence of things, ye from their Show.

Let anyone experience for himself how the whole modern world of Appearance, which hems him in on every side to his despair, melts suddenly to naught if he but hears the first few bars of one of those godlike symphonies. How [121] were it possible in a modern concert-room (where Turks and Zouaves would assuredly feel at home!) to listen to music with even a modicum of devotion, if our visual surroundings did not vanish from our optic range in manner said above? And, taken in the most earnest sense, it is this effect that Music has on our whole modern civilisation; she effaces it, as the light of day the lamplight.—

'Tis hard to form an adequate notion of the way in which Music from of old has exerted her own peculiar might in face of the material world. To us it would seem that the music of the Hellenes steeped the world of semblances itself; and blended with its laws of sense. The numbers of Pythagoras are surely only to be understood aright through Music; by the laws of Eurhythmy the architect built, by those of Harmony the sculptor seized the human figure; the laws of Melody made the poet a singer, and from out the choral chant the Drama was projected on the stage. Everywhere we see the inner law, only conceivable as sprung from the spirit of Music, prescribe the outer law that regulates the world of sight: the genuine ancient Doric State which Plato tried to rescue for philosophy, nay, the order of war, the fight itself; the laws of Music led as surely as the dance.—But that paradise was lost: the fount of motion of a world ran dry. Like a ball once thrown, the world span round the curve of its trajectory, but no longer was it driven by a moving soul; and so its very motion must grow faint at last, until the world-soul had been waked again.

It was the spirit of Christianity that rewoke to life the soul of Music. And Music lit the eye of the Italian painter, inspiring it to penetrate the veil of things and reach their soul, the Christian spirit, fast decaying in the Church. Almost all these great painters were musicians, and when we lose ourselves in contemplation of their saints and martyrs, it is the spirit of Music that makes us forget we here are seeing.—But there came the reign of Mode: as the spirit of the Church fell victim to the [122] artificial nurture of the Jesuits, so plastic art and music each became a soulless artifice.

Now, in our great Beethoven we have followed the wondrous process of emancipating Melody from the tyranny of Mode; and we have seen that, while making unrivalledly individual use of all the material which his glorious forerunners had toilsomely recovered from the influence of this Mode, he restored to Melody its everlasting type, to Music her immortal soul. With a godlike naïvety all his own, our master also stamps upon his victory the seal of that full consciousness wherewith he won it. In the poem of Schiller's which he chose for the marvellous closing section of his Ninth Symphony he recognised the joy of Nature liberated from the rule of "Mode." But observe the remarkable reading given by him to the poet's words:

"Deine Zauber binden wieder
Was die Mode streng getheilt."

"Thy blest magic binds together
What the Mode had sprung apart."

As we have seen before, Beethoven simply laid the words beneath his melody as a vocal text, a poem whose general character was in accord with the spirit of this melody. What is customarily meant by correct declamation, especially in the dramatic sense, he leaves almost entirely out of count; so—as with the singing of the whole first three strophes of the poem—he lets that verse: "Was die Mode streng getheilt" pass by us without any particular stress on the words. Then however, as the strain of dithyrambic inspiration reaches a climax never heard before, he gives to the words of this verse at last their full dramatic value, and repeating them in a *unisono* of wellnigh frantic menace, he finds the "streng" inadequate to signalise his wrath. Remarkably enough, this milder epithet for the operation of the Mode is also due to a toning-down on the part of the poet, who in the first edition of his Ode to Joy had printed:

[123]

"Was der Mode *Schwert* getheilt."

"What the fashion's *sword* had cleft."

But this "sword," again, to Beethoven did not appear to say the right thing; allotted to the Mode, it seemed to him too noble and heroic. So of his own sovereign power he substituted "*frech*," and now we sing:

"Was die Mode *frech* getheilt."

"What the Mode had *dared* to part." (32)

Could anything be more speaking than this vehement, this passionate artistic act? We might be looking on a *Luther* in his rage against the Pope!—

As for our present Civilisation, especially insofar as it influences the artistic man, we certainly may assume that nothing but the spirit of our Music, that music which Beethoven set free from bondage to the Mode, can dower it with a soul again. And the task of giving to the new, more soulful civilisation that haply may arise herefrom, the new Religion to inform it—this task must obviously be reserved for the German Spirit alone, that spirit which we ourselves shall never rightly understand till we cast aside each spurious tendency ascribed thereto.

Yet how hard of gain is true self-knowledge, above all for an entire nation, we now have learnt to our genuine horror from the case of our once so powerful neighbours the French; and we thence may derive a serious call to self-examination, for which we happily have but to pursue the earnest efforts of our own great poets, with whom, both consciously and unconsciously, this self-examination was the root-endeavour.

To them it must needs have seemed questionable, how [124] the uncouth and heavy-footed German nature could take rank at all advantageously beside the light and supple Form of our neighbours of Romanic descent. As the German spirit possessed, however, an undeniable advantage in the depth and inwardness of its conception of the world and all that moves therein, with them it was a constant question how this advantage could best be employed in the refining of the national character, and thence exert a beneficial influence on the mind and character of neighbouring peoples; whereas it was manifest that influences of this kind had taken hitherto the opposite route, and wrought on us more harm than good.

Now if we rightly judge the two poetic schemes that ran through the life of our greatest poet like two main arteries, we gain an excellent clue to the problem which presented itself to this freest of German men from the very commencement of his unparalleled career as poet.—We know that "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister" were both conceived in the same period of the first exuberant blossoming of Goethe's poetic genius. The fervour of the deep idea that filled his mind first urged him to the execution of the earliest parts of "Faust": as if terrified by the vastness of his own conception, he turned from the mighty project to the more tranquillising treatment of the problem in "Wilhelm Meister." In full maturity of man's estate he completed this light-flowing novel. His hero is a German burgher's son who goes out in quest of sweet and stable Form, and journeying across the stage, through the heart of aristocratic society, is finally conducted to a life of usefulness as citizen of the world; to him is appointed a genie whom he understands but superficially: much in the same way as Goethe then understood Music, is "Mignon understood by Wilhelm Meister. The poet lets us feel distinctly that an appalling crime has been committed against "Mignon"; yet he helps his hero over such a feeling, to lead him to a sphere set free from heat of passion and tragical intensity, a sphere of beautiful [125] culture. He takes him to a gallery, to shew him pictures. Music is made for Mignon's death, and Robert Schumann actually composed it later.—It appears that Schiller was aghast at the last book of "Wilhelm Meister"; yet he surely knew no way of helping his great friend out of his strange aberration; especially as he could but assume that Goethe, who had created Mignon and therewith called a wonderful new world to life for us, must have inwardly fallen into a profound distraction, beyond all power of his friend to wake him from. Only Goethe himself; could wake himself; and—he awoke: in advanced old age he finished his *Faust*. Whatever had distracted him, he here assembles in one archetype of beauty: *Helena*, the full antique ideal, he conjures from the shadow-realm and marries to his Faust. But the shade will not stay banned; it melts into a radiant cloud, and floats away while Faust looks on in brooding but painless melancholy. *Gretchen* alone could redeem him: from the world of the blest that early sacrifice, still dwelling in his inmost heart unheeded, extends to him her hand. And if as sequel to the analogies we have drawn from likenesses between philosophy and physiology we now may venture to give the profoundest work of poetry an application to ourselves, the "Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichniss" ("All things terrestrial are but a likeness") we will interpret as the spirit of Plastic art, which Goethe so long and ardently had striven for; whilst "Das ewig Weibliche zieht uns dahin" ("The Eternal-womanly beckons us hence") we will read as the spirit of Music, which mounted from the poet's deepest consciousness, and, soaring over him, led his footsteps on the pathway of redemption.—

And by this path, commencing in the inmost of experiences, must the German Spirit lead its Folk, if it is to bless the nations in due measure with its calling. Scoff at us, who will, for attributing to German music this unbounded significance; we shall as little let ourselves be led astray thereby, as the German nation allowed itself to be misled when its enemies presumed to insult it on the ground of a [126] too well reasoned doubt of its unanimity and staunchness. This also our great poet knew, when he sought a consolation for the Germans appearing so empty and foolish to him in their badly-copied airs and manners; his consolation was: "*The German is brave.*" And that is something!—

So let the German Folk be brave in peace as well; let it cherish its native worth, and cast the false show from it: let it never seek to pass for what it is not, but recognise the quality in which it is unique! To it the art of pleasing is denied; in lieu thereof its veritable deeds and thoughts are heartfelt and sublime. And beside its valour's victories in this wondrous 1870 no loftier trophy can be set, than the memory of our great *Beethoven*, who was born to the German Folk one hundred years ago. Whither our arms are urging now, to the primal seat of "shameless Mode" (*der "frechen Mode"*), there had *his* genius begun already the noblest

conquest: what our thinkers, our poets, in toilsome transposition, had only touched as with a half-heard word, the Beethovenian Symphony had stirred to its deepest core: the new religion, the world-redeeming gospel of sublimest innocence, was there already under stood as by ourselves.

So let us celebrate the great path-breaker in the wilderness of a paradise debased! But let us celebrate him worthily,—and no less worthily than the victories of German valour: for the benefactor of a world may claim still higher rank than the world-conqueror!

Notes

Note 01 on page 7

Born December 17, 1770.—TR.

Note 02 on page 9

Gervinus.—TR.

Note 03 on page 10

"Er war mit seinem Bewusstsein ein durchaus der anschaulichen Welt zugewendeter schöne Geist."

Note 04 on page 11

"Zur Veranschaulichung der *Idee*." The word "*Anschauung*"—derived from "*Schauen*," "to look"—presents the English translator with one of his greatest difficulties, as I once before have pointed out: from its original meaning, "the act of looking at," it has passed to the metaphorical "view" and even to "intuition," which latter word, in ordinary parlance, expresses the very reverse of a physical inspection; in this essay, however, Wagner adopts the Schopenhauerian meaning of the term, i.e. a simple outward operation of the senses, without any analysis or synthesis by the reasoning faculty on the one hand, and without any disturbance of the emotions on the other. The present participle "*anschauend*" and the adjective "*anschaulich*" may be rendered, for lack of a better term, as "visual," since vision is the principal sense by which we take cognisance of the outer world: an old proverb tells us that "seeing is believing," while the opposite mode of knowledge, that by which we take cognisance of the inner world, is suggested in the words of the most esoteric of the Evangelists, "blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." As Wagner in *Opera and Drama* has used the expression "the eye of hearing," it is easy to understand the difference between what he here calls "art-music," the music of mere sound-patterns, and that veritable music which passes through "the *ear* of hearing" to the seat of the emotions.—Tr.

Note 05 on page 11

"*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*" II. 415.—R. W.

Note 06 on page 11

Ibid. 418.—R. Wagner.—In the edition of 1879 the corresponding pages are 417 and 419-20.—Tr.

Note 07 on page 12

In the original we have the words "durch seine hiermit verbundene tiefsinnige Hypothese" &c.,—literally "through his profound hypothesis linked herewith," or perhaps "allied hereto." This "dream" hypothesis does not appear in the "*Welt als W. u. V.*," however, but in a lengthy essay on "Ghost-seeing" in Vol. I. of the "*Parerga und Paralipomena*," written after the publication of the larger work; so that the "connection" must be regarded in a purely subjective light, that is to say, as Wagner's own discovery. In fact our author, partly by re-arranging the "material supplied [elsewhere] by the philosopher," partly by his independent

observations, has carried Schopenhauer's Theory of Music infinitely farther than its originator could ever have dreamt.—Tr.

[Note 08 on page 12](#)

Cf. "In lichten Tages Schein, wie war Isolde mein?" and in fact the whole love-scene in *Tristan und Isolde*, act ii.—Tr.

[Note 09 on page 13](#)

Cf. Vol. II.—*Opera and Drama*— [page 219](#).—Tr.

[Note 10 on page 14](#)

Cf. *Tristan und Isolde*, act iii. "Die Sonne sah ich nicht, nicht sah ich Land noch Leute: doch was ich sah, das kann ich dir nicht sagen."—Tr.

[Note 11 on page 16](#)

"Die Musik, welche einzig dadurch zu uns spricht, dass sie den allerallgemeinsten Begriff des an sich dunklen Gefühles in den erdenklichsten Abstufungen mit bestimmtester Deutlichkeit uns belebt, kann an und für sich einzig nach der Kategorie des *Erhabenen* beurtheilt werden, da sie, sobald sie uns erfüllt, die höchste Extase des Bewusstseins der Schrankenlosigkeit erregt."—A very difficult sentence to render justice to, even in a partial paraphrase, without appealing to Schopenhauer's convincing theory of the Sublime (*Welt als W. u. V. I. § 39*). As an element of that theory is formed by the recognition that in the Sublime, whether in Nature or Art, we are brought into direct contact with the *universal Will*, our author's argument as to the nature of Music is really far more strongly supported by his present paragraph, to the ordinary mind, than by Schopenhauer's assumption of a "dream-organ" ; which latter, however, Wagner explicitly has adopted by mere way of "analogy"—a purpose it admirably serves, though it has given offence to those who have been misled by the oft-repeated *illustration* into considering it a main factor in the *exposition*, whereas each several reference to "dreams" might be omitted without in the slightest degree affecting the philosophic basis of Richard Wagner's remarkable contribution to a much-needed Science of Music.—Tr.

[Note 12 on page 17](#)

"Eindringlichkeit"—literally "penetrative quality," for which there really is no better equivalent than "catchiness."—Tr.

[Note 13 on page 17](#)

To specify, I have done this in brief and general terms in an essay entitled "Zukunftsmusik," published at Leipzig about twelve years ago, without, however, finding any manner of attention; it has been included in the seventh volume of these *Ges. Schr. u. Dicht.* [Vol. III of the present series], and may here be recommended to fresh notice.—R. WAGNER.

[Note 14 on page 19](#)

Welt als W. u. V., I. § 52.—Tr.

[Note 15 on page 20](#)

Chrétien de Troyes' twelfth-century poem, *Perceval le Galois*.—Tr.

[Note 16 on page 20](#)

Cf. Schopenhauer's *Welt als W. u. V.* vol. I. § 38: "Light has become the symbol of all good and salutary things. . . colours directly rouse in us a lively pleasure, which reaches the highest pitch when they are transparent," and, on the other hand, Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, [Book III. cap. vi.](#) (Carlyle's translation): "These virtues were to advance together, to recite the Prince's praises, and finally to encircle his bust with garlands of flowers and laurels; behind which a transparency might be inserted, representing the princely Hat, and his name illuminated on it. . . . But how can it flatter any reasonable man to see himself set up in effigy, and his name glimmering on oiled paper?"—Tr.

[Note 17 on page 22](#)

"So schützte die Natur in ihm ein Gehirn von übermässiger Zartheit, damit es nur nach innen blicken, und die Weltschau eines grossen Herzes in ungestörter Ruhe üben könnte."—

[Note 18 on page 23](#)

"Die Welt gewinnt ihre Kindesunschuld wieder." Cf. *Tannhäuser*, act i.: "Ha, jetzt erkenne ich sie wieder, die schöne Welt, der ich entrückt! Der Himmel blickt auf mich hernieder, die Fluren prangen reich geschmückt," and *Parsifal*, act iii.: "Das dankt denn alle Kreatur, was all' da blüht und bald erstirbt, da die entsündigte Natur heut' ihren Unschulds-Tag erwirbt."—Tr.

[Note 19 on page 23](#)

Cf. Wotan in *Siegfried*; "my jovial god who craves his own undoing" (*Letter to A. Röckel*, Jan. 1854).—Tr.

[Note 20 on page 23](#)

"Die Erkenntniss flieht mit dem Bekenntniss ihres Irrthumes." Cf. *Parsifal*, act. ii.: "Bekenntniss wird Schuld und Reue enden, Erkenntniss in Sinn die Thorheit wenden."—Tr.

[Note 21 on page 24](#)

"Nur dass dieser in der Noth des Lebens selbst deutlich die Sühne für em sündiges Dasein erkennt, und in deren geduldiger Ertragung sogar mit Begeisterung das Mittel der Erlösung ergreift, wogegen jener heilige Seher den Sinn der Busse einfach als Qual auffasst, und seine Daseins-Schuld eben nur als Leidender abträgt."—

[Note 22 on page 25](#)

Cf. Vol. IV., p. 323.—Tr.

[Note 23 on page 25](#)

Goethe's *Faust*.—Tr.

[Note 24 on page 25](#)

Cf. Lenau's *Faust* as cited in Liszt's *Mephisto-Walzer*.—Tr.

[Note 25 on page 26](#)

Cf. *Parsifal*, act i.: "Wer ist gut?"—Tr.

[Note 26 on page 26](#)

"Hier betritt das lyrische Pathos fast schon den Boden einer idealen Dramatik im bestimmteren Sinne, und, wie es zweifelhaft dünken dürfte, ob auf diesem Wege die musikalische Konzeption nicht bereits in ihrer Reinheit getrübt werden möchte, weil sie zur Herbeiziehung von Vorstellungen verleiten müsste, welche an sich dem Geiste der Musik durchaus fremd erscheinen, so ist andererseits wiederum nicht zu verkennen, dass der Meister keinesweges durch eine abirrende ästhetische Spekulation, sondern lediglich durch einen dem eigensten Gebiete der Musik entkeimten, durchaus idealen Instinkt hierin geleitet wurde."—A somewhat difficult sentence to translate, as our author in this essay has studiously avoided all direct reference to post-Beethovenian composers, and yet the key to the present generalisation would appear to lie in the remarks upon Berlioz contained in his *Letter on Liszt's Symphonic Poems*, Vol. III.—Tr.

[Note 27 on page 27](#)

"Ganz ersichtlich ist es, dass namentlich der eigentlichen Hauptmelodie die Worte Schiller's, sogar mit wenigem Geschicke, nothdürftig erst untergelegt sind."—

[Note 28 on page 27](#)

"Nichts gleicht der holden Innigkeit, zu welcher jede neu hinzutretende Stimme diese Urweise reinster Unschuld belebt, bis jeder Schmuck, jede Pracht der gesteigerten Empfindung an ihr und in ihr sich vereinigt, wie die athmende Welt um em endlich geoffenbartes Dogma reinster Liebe."—

[Note 29 on page 28](#)

"Denn es bestätigt sich, dass, wenn zu einer Musik gesungen wird, nicht der poetische Gedanke, den man namentlich hei Chorgesängen nicht einmal verständlich artikulirt vernimmt, sondern höchstens Das von ihm aufgefasst wird, wss er im Musiker als Musik und zu Musik anregte."—

[Note 30 on page 31](#)

"Zu diesem, hier analogisch angezogenen, physiologischen Phänomene der somnambulen Hellsichtigkeit halten wir nun das andere des Geistersehens, und verwenden hierbei wiederum die hypothetische Erklärung Schopenhauer's, wonach dieses em bei wachem Gehirne eintretendes Hellsehen sei; nämlich, es gehe dieses in Folge einer Depotenzirung des wachen Gesichtes vor sich, dessen jetzt umflortes Sehen der innere Drang zu einer Mittheilung an das dem Wachen unmittelbar nahe Bewusstsein benutze, um ihm die im innersten Wahrtraume erschienene Gestalt deutlich vor sich zu zeigen."—

[Note 31 on page 32](#)

Cf. Kundry's awakening in *Parsifal*, acts ii. and iii.—Tr.

[Note 32 on page 37](#)

In Härtel's otherwise so admirable Complete Edition of Beethoven's Works a member of what I have elsewhere styled the "Musical Temperance Union," entrusted with the "critical" supervision, has effaced this speaking feature from pages 260 *et seq.* of the score of the Ninth Symphony, and on his own authority has substituted for the "frech" of Schott's Original Edition the decorous, the moral-moderate "streng." Pure chance disclosed to me this falsification, whose motive is calculated to fill us with grave anxiety as to the ultimate fate of the works of our great Beethoven if they are to be subjected to a revision progressing along such lines.—R. WAGNER.