

Charles Villiers Stanford

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## THE MUSICAL TIMES

AND SINGING-CLASS CIRCULAR.

DECEMBER 1, 1898.

### CHARLES VILLIERS STANFORD.

THE Stanfords are an old Co. Cavan family. Charles Villiers Stanford, the most distinguished scion of the house, was born at No. 2, Herbert Street, Dublin, on September 30, 1852. He can trace his descent from David Verner, the ancestor of Sir William Verner, who fought at Waterloo, and of Lords Chief Justices Doherty and Bushe (from the latter of whom Mr. Plunket Greene is also descended); and, on his mother's side, from the Spring-Rices (Lord Monteagle) and William Henn, his maternal grandfather, who was a Master in Chancery. His father's brother was the Rev. Dr. Charles Stuart Stanford, rector of St. Thomas's, Dublin, who married Pamela

Campbell, daughter of Sir Guy and Lady Campbell, a granddaughter of the famous Pamela, Lady Edward Fitzgerald.

Professor Stanford's male ancestors, both on his father and mother's side, were learned in the law, in which profession they rose to great eminence. His father, John Stanford, was Examiner in the Court of Chancery (Dublin) and Clerk of the Crown, Co. Meath. Mr. John Stanford was a highly cultivated musical amateur, and a very genial, kind-hearted man to boot. His house in Dublin was the rendezvous of the many distinguished musicians who visited the Irish capital. He played the violoncello; but his chief claim to musical distinction was the possession of a magnificent bass voice of unusual compass—"one of the best bass voices I ever heard," recalls his distinguished son with pardonable pride. On one occasion Lablache coached him in "Don Giovanni," when the great basso complimented the Dublin amateur with the remark: "Your *Leporello* is my second self!" Mr. Stanford sang the music of the *Prophet* in Mendelssohn's "Elijah," Dublin, December 9, 1847, upon the first performance of the oratorio in the Emerald Isle. "Mr. Stanford," records *Saunders' News Letter*, "was the Staudigl of the evening, and his fine voice and clear enunciation told admirably in the part of *Elijah*." But Mr. Stanford had received an invaluable lesson. In company with Mr. Joseph ("old Joe") Robinson he was present at the first performance of Mendelssohn's oratorio at Birmingham in August, 1846. Moreover, during the Festival week, he and Robinson entertained Mendelssohn and Sterndale Bennett at supper at the Woolpack Hotel, on which occasion they spent a very jolly evening. Villiers Stanford's mother was an excellent amateur pianist, and on one occasion she played Mendelssohn's G minor Concerto at a concert of the Dublin Musical Union. His parents very wisely made his general education a matter of supreme importance. He was sent to H. Tilney Bassett's school in Dublin, where, amongst his schoolfellows, were Conyngham Greene, C.B., Dunbar Barton, Q.C., Alfred Godley, a Fellow of Magdalen, and Woulfe Flanagan, who was so prominent in the Parnell letter business.

#### EARLY COMPOSITIONS.

Charlie Stanford began to compose at a very early age. It is interesting to peruse his first book of boyish compositions, written down in his mother's hand. The earliest specimen of the young composer's talent in this book is a double chant, dated "September, 1858," the only original portion of which is the fourth section!

Can it be credited that Professor Stanford's first appearance in public as a composer was in a pantomime? "Shure," as his countrymen would say, "and it's a fact." It is said



*C. H. Stanford*

that the pantomime, in which he first publicly demonstrated his muse, was "Puss-in-Boots." In September, 1860 (*ætat* eight), he had composed a March—designated *Opus 1* in the MS. book!—and this March, being pressed into the service of the pantomime, was duly performed at the Theatre Royal, Dublin. No apology is needed for printing it in full:—

## MARCH.

C. V. STANFORD,  
September, 1860.

The remaining compositions in this book consist of hymn-tunes, songs, a Lied for the pianoforte (of twelve bars only), an unfinished anthem, "My heart is fixed," and—dated "March 25, 1866"—an unaccompanied part-song to Longfellow's familiar words "O glad-some Light." Two "rotten" operas, to use their composer's designation, were also products of his boyhood.

## EARLY TEACHERS.

The year 1860 was a memorable one for the juvenile composer, as, at his father's house, he first saw his friend Professor Joachim; but he was then so terribly frightened at being asked to play before the great violinist that he cried! A valuable pianoforte lesson from Thalberg is also a recollection of his childhood. And this naturally leads to an enumeration of the teachers who had a hand in his musical training during those early years. He learnt the violin from Mr. R. M. Levey, now in his eighty-eighth year, the father of the late W. C. Levey, of "Esmeralda" fame, and of the violinist known as "Paganini Redivivus." Mr. R. M. Levey, recalling Charlie Stanford's boyhood, writes: "He studied the violin with me, at which he made rapid progress, and mastered the technicalities of the instrument, as the violin parts of his works show." He was a pianoforte pupil of Miss Meeke (who had studied under Moscheles), Mrs. Joseph Robinson, Miss Flynn (a pupil of Moscheles and Mendelssohn), Sir Robert Stewart, and Michael Quarry. He also took lessons from Sir Robert Stewart in composition and organ, and he sometimes deputised as organist at St. Stephen's Church, where his anthems were frequently sung.

## A PRODIGY PIANIST.

Master Stanford gave a private pianoforte recital at his father's house when he was only nine years old. The date was May 13, 1862, and the programme was as follows:—

## PART FIRST.

Andante Cantabile (No. 2, Op. 51) ..... Beethoven  
The Harmonious Blacksmith ..... Handel  
Lieder ohne Worte—No. 4, 3rd Book;  
No. 6, 5th Book ..... Mendelssohn

## PART SECOND.

Study—No. 4, Book I. (Op. 70) ..... Moscheles  
Air, with variations, in A ..... Mozart  
Fuga Scherzando, in A minor ..... Bach

Two years later, when he was eleven years old, he gave another recital that attracted considerable attention. An account of it appeared in the now defunct *Orchestra*, and this was probably the first appearance of Professor Stanford's name in an English newspaper, now thirty-six years ago. Here is the notice, duly *Orchestrated*:—

A most interesting and delightful "Pianoforte Recital" took place at the house of John Stanford, Esq., Herbert Street, on Tuesday last. Mr. Stanford is well known as a most accomplished amateur in music both vocal and instrumental, a liberal patron of all that is good in art, and a kind and genial friend of artists. The pianist on this occasion was Master Charles V. Stanford, his son, a youth aged about 10 years, of rare talent, who is doubtless destined for a great position in the musical world should

it be his choice to follow the "divine art" as a profession. Here is the program:—

PART I.	
Sonata in c minor (Op. 10).....	Beethoven
Trois Études.....	Wesler
Song, "A Venetian Dirge".....	C. V. Stanford
La Contemplazione.....	Hummel
Prelude and Fugue in c minor.....	Bach
PART II.	
Sonata in c major.....	Dussek
La Gaieté.....	Weber
Song, "Serenade".....	Gounod
Waltz in e flat minor.....	Heller
Trio in G major, Pianoforte, Violin, and Violoncello ..	Haydn

When it is considered that all the above pieces were performed by Master Stanford from memory, it will be admitted as no mean proof of talent and industry, but it must be recorded in addition that a listener alone of whatever experience, not knowing of the youth, or seeing the performer would suppose an artist at the instrument who had passed through years of mature study. Neatness and precision, classic and elastic touch, expression and finish seem to have been bestowed by nature in this case, for Master Stanford plays with his head as well as with his hands. His performance of prelude and fugue was absolutely faultless, and Weber's "*La Gaieté*" quite enraptured his audience. The premature "aplomb" and steadiness displayed in the trio of Haydn were nothing short of wonderful, and such as many of riper years might take example from. In addition to his talent "comme executant" Master Stanford already displays a very high class feeling for composition, as evidenced in the song, "A Venetian dirge," one of many of equal merit from his pen. It only remains to wish him a great future and "may we live to see it." Mr. Lévey played the violin part, and Herr Elsner that of the violoncello in Haydn's trio.—*Orchestra*, June 11, 1864.

To return to the compositions of this youthful period; and in this connection there is a curious incident to relate. A friend of the Stanford family knew Mr. Gambier Parry, of Highnam Court. Upon one of his visits to Dublin, this friend said to Stanford *père*: "Ah! there's a boy in Gloucestershire who will put Charlie's nose out of joint." Little did the young Irish boy think that in after years he would be so closely associated with the Highnam youth at the Royal College of Music. Need we say that Charlie Stanford's boyish "bogey" was Hubert Parry? He met him first in 1877.

Two letters of this period may appropriately find a place here. The first, addressed to Mr. John Stanford, is from the poet, B. W. Procter ("Barry Cornwall"):

32, Weymouth Street,  
Portland Place, W.  
8 Decr. 1865.

Dr. Sir,

The verses you refer to are quite at your service. I hope that your son will turn out a Mozart.

I am, Dr. Sir,  
Yours sincerely and obediently,  
B. W. PROCTER.

J. S. Stanford, Esq.

The second, from a fellow countryman—the genial, warm-hearted George A. Osborne—is highly characteristic of his Hibernian wit. The letter is addressed to "C. Stanford, Esq.," who was then thirteen years of age:—

22, Dorset Square, N.W.  
March 7, 1866.

Brother Composer,

I received your Piano Forte piece, which is very pretty, and I have already played it to an admiring audience. I am not perhaps the best judge of

your works, for I like you, and the rural tree, of which you are the fruit. Trying, as I do, to divest myself of my partiality, and merely considering you as a German celebrity—let us suppose for instance one Herr Knickerbockerfaustholder—I can *really* say, I am very much pleased with the composition.

As regards the song, "We bear her home," I have a stand up fight with F—, as I will keep it for myself; it suits my voice and as for the expression I throw into it, I should not mind singing it before any number of undertakers, tho' you, with a due appreciation of my powers, might consider it a bold undertaking.

I am,

Dear Brother in Apollo's bonds

Yours very sincerely

C. Stanford, Esq.

G. A. OSBORNE.

"ROTTEN OPERAS."

Young Stanford cannot say that he was without honour in his own city of Dublin. At a concert given by the University of Dublin Choral Society (for the particulars of which we



MASTER CHARLIE STANFORD. AGED 12.

are indebted to the kindness of Mr. Charles F. Draper, the Hon. Librarian), on February 15, 1867, a baritone solo with chorus, from one of the early "rotten" operas, was performed. Here are the words:—

SONG AND CHORUS . . . C. VILLIERS STANFORD.

Heroes and Chieftains brave,  
Whose warlike deeds with triumph crowned,  
Are far throughout the world renowned,  
Fill high, the brimming goblet drain,  
Drink to the mighty Northman's fame,  
Hurrah!

CHORUS.

Fame to the hardy Sons of the North,  
Dauntless of heart and strong of hand,  
Like the wild storms of their native land—  
Resistless in their might.  
Onward they rush to the battle field,  
Conquer or die—to none they yield—  
Proudly their standard still shall wave,  
Fame to the Northman brave,  
Hurrah!

Firm as the sea-beat cliffs,  
That bear unmoved the tempest's shock ;  
Danger we seek—at fear we mock ;  
Drink to the hour of victory,  
Drink to the Northman proud and free !  
Hurrah !

A contemporary criticism of the above composition may be quoted :—

The Kermesse chorus [from "Faust"] was followed by "Heroes and Chieftains brave," a song also sung by Mr. Kelly (and also with chorus), composed by Master Charles Villiers Stanford, a little boy of tender years, who continues to manifest not less remarkable talent as a composer than as a pianist, but who is, we are credibly informed, by no means to be ranked among "enfants terribles," those impossibly precocious children, those infant Mozarts, who are such a bore to everybody. Master Stanford, with all his ability, is a lively, natural, and utterly unaffected boy. His song consists of an *Allegro maestoso* in A major, relieved by episodes in the relative minor keys, and capped, as it were, by choral refrains of tenor and bass voices in unison, breaking forth into bold harmony at the conclusion.

At another Dublin concert in the sixties Tietjens sang a setting by him of Mary Queen of Scots' "O Domine Jesu," which had a violoncello obbligato played by Elsner, an excellent violoncellist in the Irish capital.

In 1862 Professor Stanford first crossed the Irish Channel. Upon his arrival in London he became a pupil of Mr. Arthur O'Leary for composition and of Mr. Ernst Pauer for piano-forte. He also made the acquaintance of H. F. Chorley and his red waistcoat, and, two years later (in 1864), he first met Sir Arthur Sullivan, Sir George Grove, and the late Frederick Clay at John Scott Russell's house at Sydenham.

#### CAMBRIDGE.

But the most eventful period of his life began in the year 1870. He tried for a Classical Scholarship at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, but failed. But he obtained an Organ Scholarship at Queen's College, and matriculated in October, 1870, winning a classical scholarship in the following June. He took his B.A. degree in 1874, and he is not ashamed to say that he came out at the bottom of the list! His musical abilities seem to have been discovered very soon, as he appeared at a concert of the Cambridge University Musical Society—for which he was afterwards to do such great things—on November 30, 1870, in the capacity of a pianist, his solos on that *début* occasion being a *Nachtstück* of Schumann's and a waltz of Heller's. He speedily found an opening for his conducting skill as conductor of the Cambridge Amateur Vocal Guild, which he founded in order to introduce ladies into the chorus.

In the spring of 1873 Stanford migrated to Trinity, upon becoming organist of that College after the death of Dr. John Larkin Hopkins. He also became conductor of the Cambridge University Musical Society, the duties of which he discharged with conspicuous ability for twenty years. His first innovation was to admit ladies into the chorus of the Society, the fair sex having hitherto been kept

beyond that pale. The first concert under the new conditions was given on May 27, 1873, when the then Professor of Music, Sterndale Bennett, conducted a performance of his "May Queen."

#### CAMBRIDGE RECOLLECTIONS.

The following recollections of Professor Stanford at Cambridge, kindly contributed by Mr. E. S. Thompson, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, may appropriately find a place at this point :—

Stanford came to Cambridge in the year 1870 as Organist Scholar of Queen's College. The plan of attracting to a college a young man of musical ability who desires to proceed to a degree, and is willing for a consideration amounting to a scholarship to perform the duties of organist, has been tried at various colleges with various success. Queen's was, I believe, the first College at Cambridge to try the experiment. Probably the authorities did not at first realize how big a fish they had caught. At any rate, to them belongs the credit of bringing to Cambridge the man who did so much for the cause of music there.

He soon attracted attention. Occasional special services and performances of sacred music in the Chapel gave evidence of his energy and ability as a choir-trainer and conductor. Presently, owing to the illness and subsequent death of Dr. John Larkin Hopkins, a vacancy occurred in the post of organist at Trinity College. The place was offered to Stanford, and to Trinity he migrated, and from that College took his degree. He at first held the post as an interim appointment; but before long was confirmed in it as a permanent office with the full stipend. The principal characteristic of his influence was its extraordinary stimulating power. He waked up musical enthusiasm wherever there was any latent. Some may have thought that he took a somewhat liberal view of the range of effects admissible on the organ. The late Master of Trinity, at a College Commemoration Dinner, is understood to have said, with carefully punctuated emphasis: "Mr. Stanford's playing always charms, and occasionally astonishes; and I may add that the less it astonishes, the more it charms."

His rooms in Trinity were in the staircase near the corner to the right, as you enter the Great Gate, and on the first floor. Professor Jebb, then one of the tutors who lived on the same staircase, was a truly sympathetic neighbour. Stanford had elected to compass a degree by means of the Classical Tripos. He knew a fair amount of Latin and Greek when he came up; but as time went on, and he felt more and more the exacting nature of his profession, the work began to gall, and during his last undergraduate year threats were heard more than once by his friends that he would throw the whole thing over. Fortunately other counsels prevailed. He was a candidate for the Tripos in 1874. No doubt, when the trial came, his real literary tastes served him in good stead, and his name will be found in the class list published in that year.

But Stanford's most important work at Cambridge was in connection with the University Musical Society. During the time before he became conductor the chorus consisted of men and boys. There were no ladies; and this, of course, much circumscribed the list of works performable by the Society. There was, however, another Society, the "Fitzwilliam Musical Society," established some years before, of which ladies were members. Stanford became a committee-man of this some little time before he succeeded, in 1873, to the command of the University Society. Very soon after this a bloodless revolution was effected. Ladies were admitted as Associates of the University Society, and the Fitzwilliam Society was merged in it. This commenced a new era. The conductor was ambitious, and the chorus did their best to rise to the occasion. Sometimes, no doubt, they did—to borrow an expressive phrase—"cut off a bigger chunk than they could chew"—possibly, for instance, when they attacked Schumann's "Faust." But the chorus knew their conductor, and knew that if anybody could pull them through, he would; and so somehow things went. The first important work of

Stanford's performed by the Society was his setting of the 46th Psalm ("God is our Hope and Strength"), which was given on May 22, 1877,\* with the Prelude to "Die Meistersinger," Brahms's "Rhapsodie" (Op. 53) for alto solo and chorus of male voices, and Schumann's D minor Symphony. It was noticed more than once, when a composition of Stanford's was to be performed with some other choral work, how ready he was to risk the success of his own work rather than suffer imperfect preparation of the other.

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY.

The above interesting reminiscences may be supplemented by some further information, more especially in regard to the Cambridge University Musical Society and its enthusiastic conductor. The local interest was speedily extended to the metropolis. A professional orchestra from London was engaged in order to contribute to a worthier rendering of the important works performed. Moreover, the musical critics of the great London dailies went "up" on occasions of special interest duly to chronicle certain Cambridge concerts. It is impossible within the limits of the present article to give a detailed list of all the important works performed at the concerts of the Society. An enumeration of many of the works presented will be found in Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," iv., 205b and 806b. The following is a record of works which had their first hearing in England at the Society's concerts:—

BACH.—Halt im Gedächtniss.	LEO.—Dixit Dominus.
BRAHMS.—Symphony in C minor, No. 1.	PARRY.—Symphony in F. — "Lotos Eaters."†
— Rhapsodie. Op. 53.	SCHUMANN.— "Faust." Part III.
COWEN.—Symphony in F.†	—Fest Ouverture. Op. 123.
JOACHIM.—Elegiac Overture.†	GORING THOMAS.—Suite de Ballet.
KIEL.—Requiem.	

Amongst important revivals should be mentioned Handel's "Semele" and "Hercules" and Astorga's "Stabat Mater."

## HONORARY DEGREES AT CAMBRIDGE.

Other important events of the Stanford régime were in connection with the conferment of honorary degrees upon distinguished foreign musicians. The first of these functions took place on March 8, 1877, when Joseph Joachim was duly capped. In the evening of that day he conducted his Elegiac Overture and played Beethoven's Violin Concerto. At this concert Brahms's C minor Symphony (No. 1), then in MS., was performed for the first time in England. Fourteen years later, on June 16, 1891, Antonin Dvorák became a Doctor in Music in the University of Cambridge; and in June, 1893—as a fitting conclusion to Professor Stanford's unwearying and efficient labours on behalf of the Cambridge University Musical Society—similar distinctions were conferred on Max Bruch, Arrigo Boïto, Camille Saint-Saëns, and Peter Iljitsch Tschaiïkowsky—Edvard Grieg, who was prevented from being present on that occasion, received his honorary degree in the following year. Two native composers were

\* Published by Messrs. Novello at the same time.  
† Composed for the Society.

also similarly honoured—Sir Hubert Parry, in 1883, and Sir Alexander Mackenzie, in 1888. It is impossible to estimate the value of Stanford's services to the cause of music during the twenty-three years of his residence at Cambridge. His influence on the progress of music in the University itself was not only unique in the annals of any University, but it had far-reaching results in furthering the progress of the art beyond the confines of his Alma mater.

## STUDIES IN GERMANY.

Cambridge, even with its rarefied atmosphere of culture—musical and otherwise—offered no facilities for those musical studies necessary to the complete equipment of either graduates or undergraduates as professional musicians. Their technical training had to be acquired beyond the confines of the University. Having taken his B.A. degree, the clever young organist of Trinity College Chapel obtained leave of absence from his organist duties for a portion of the years 1874-5-6, in order that he might reap the musical and linguistical advantages which a residence abroad affords by further studying the art in Germany. He had previously been abroad in the autumn of 1873, when, at the Schumann Festival, held at Bonn, he met Brahms, who became his idol. For two years (1875-6) the Cambridge graduate studied composition with Carl Reinecke, at Leipzig, and in 1877 with Friedrich Kiel, at Berlin—Kiel, by the way, making his tenth and last teacher of music.

In 1878 he married Miss Jennie Wetton, fourth daughter of the late Champion Wetton, of Joldwynds, Surrey, took his M.A. degree, and settled down at Cambridge, where for the next sixteen years he was a prominent figure in 'Varsity life. His popular Service in B flat first saw the light in 1879, and year in and year out he poured forth one composition after another—most of them of large dimensions—with remarkable rapidity. He first became widely known as a composer in 1876, when he obtained the second prize in a symphony competition initiated by the Alexandra Palace Company. Here are the particulars as recorded in THE MUSICAL TIMES of that year:—

The authorities of the Alexandra Palace offer two prizes of £20 and £5 respectively, together with a certificate, for the best two Orchestral Symphonies to be written by British composers. . . . The work which gains the first prize is to be performed at one of the Saturday concerts, and the second, if of sufficient merit [!] will also be presented to the public. Manuscripts must be sent in to Mr. H. Weist Hill, Alexandra Palace, on or before March 13th [1876].

At the Alexandra Palace Symphony Competition, the first prize has been awarded to Francis Davenport, and the second to C. Villiers Stanford. Judges: Professor George Alexander Macfarren, Mus. Doc., and Professor Joseph Joachim. There were 38 Symphonies submitted.

## OPERAS.

The domain of opera has always had a strong fascination for the subject of this sketch.

He composed his first important opera in 1877, to a libretto after Moore by his Cambridge friend, Mr. W. Barclay Squire, entitled "The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan." This opera was produced at Hanover, under the conductorship of Ernst Frank, on February 6, 1881. Moreover, it was the first *première* of any English opera abroad. Three years later (1884), Professor Stanford enjoyed the unique experience of having two operas produced within ten days of each other! The first was "Savonarola" (libretto by Gilbert à'Beckett), first performed at the Stadt-Theater, Hamburg, and the second, "The Canterbury Pilgrims" (libretto also by Gilbert à'Beckett), produced at Covent Garden by Carl Rosa—these two operas had their initial representations on April 18 and 28 (1884) respectively. "Savonarola" met with an undoubted success in Hamburg, where it was performed four times within a fortnight. Moreover, several of the leading musical critics of Germany wrote in enthusiastic and appreciative terms of the Irish composer's work. Unfortunately, however, the London performance of the opera proved to be terribly disappointing. It was given—and in the German language too!—by the German Opera Company, under Hans Richter, at Covent Garden, on July 9, 1884. One adverse circumstance after another, like unknown rocks in a stormy sea, conspired to wreck the opera that had been so favourably received in Hamburg. This biographical sketch of its composer provides an opportunity of placing on record the true fact of the case, obvious from Riccius' criticism at Hamburg—that it was not the opera itself, but its deplorably inadequate representation in London that proved its ruin. "The Canterbury Pilgrims," under Carl Rosa's vigorous direction, fared differently. It "was produced," recorded THE MUSICAL TIMES of June, 1884, "with a success which adds one more to the many recent proofs of the talent existing amongst our native artists, and the readiness of English audiences to acknowledge it." "Shamus O'Brien" (Opera Comique, London, March 2, 1896) provided its composer with a fine opportunity for the display of his native humour in sparkling, characteristic music.

"Incidental music" to plays has provided Professor Stanford with some notable opportunities for the exercise of his talents in descriptive music. His first effort in that direction was the music to Tennyson's "Queen Mary," produced at the Lyceum in 1876, of which more anon. Seventeen years later (1893) the same poet's "Becket" was similarly treated, also at the theatre so closely associated with Sir Henry Irving. What more natural than that he should compose music to two Greek classics—the "Eumenides" of Æschylus and the "Œdipus" of Sophocles, produced at Cambridge in 1885 and 1887 respectively? Another composition calls for special mention, by reason

of its close connection with Cambridge—the "Installation Ode" of 1892, to greet the newly-made Chancellor of the University, the Duke of Devonshire. The curious part of the music is that not a single bar of it was upon original themes. In fact, from a musical point of view, the Ode might be regarded as a series of variations on "Gaudeamus igitur." A critic, in describing the work, said:

Two points in the score call for special notice. The first is where, after an allusion in the poem to the Vice-Chancellor of the University, the composer has introduced, as a counterpoint to the "Gaudeamus" melody, the tune of "D'ye ken John Peel," the appropriateness of which lies in the fact that the present holder of that office is a namesake of the disciple of Nimrod immortalised in the ballad. This is as effective as it is ingenious, but it is equalled by a remarkably clever orchestral "Quodlibet," consisting of the combined melodies, "Rule, Britannia," "Auld lang Syne," and "Let Erin remember the days of old," and provoked by a reference to "the triple realm bound to the British Crown." The Ode being intended to follow immediately the Academic Festival Overture of Brahms, the last bars of that work (which, it will be remembered, are founded on "Gaudeamus igitur") are, with the German composer's readily-accorded permission, employed by Dr. Stanford in his final chorus, with the addition of vocal parts.

#### EVENTS.

The more recent events of Professor Stanford's life are so familiar to the public that it is only necessary to record some of the more outstanding incidents, especially as these will be supplemented by a reference to his festival works and a complete list of his important compositions. In 1883 he was created an Oxford Doctor in Music, a compliment by the sister University as graceful as it was merited. The same year witnessed his appointment as Professor of Composition and Conductor of the Orchestra at the Royal College of Music on the occasion of its opening. Amongst his pupils at Kensington have been Hamish MacCunn, Charles Wood, Walford Davies, R. H. Walthew, S. P. Waddington, S. Coleridge-Taylor, W. E. Hurlstone, and others whose works have brought honour to themselves and redounded to the credit of their teacher. As conductor of the orchestra at the College, Stanford exercises an important influence on the young people over whom he so ably presides. He not only fires them with his own enthusiasm—and how tremendously enthusiastic they are—but he has brought the performances of those boys and girls to a very high pitch of excellence; in fact, they would put many experienced orchestral players to shame in technique and especially in throwing themselves heart and soul into their work.

Oddly enough, the odd years seem to have been eventful years to him. In 1885, upon the resignation of Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, he was appointed conductor of the Bach Choir, where he found, and still finds, splendid scope for his musical sympathies and technical attainments. In 1887 he was appointed Professor of Music in the University of Cambridge, in succession to Professor G. A. Macfarren, deceased; in



1892 he was elected corresponding member of the Société des Compositeurs de Musique, Paris, and an honorary member of the Beethoven Haus at Bonn; and in June, 1897, he was appointed conductor of the Leeds Philharmonic Society. He is a member of the Athenæum Club, having been elected under Rule II. (persons distinguished in literature, science or art), and a Director of the Philharmonic Society.

The same year (Richter concert, May 27, 1887) saw the production of his most popular symphony—that in F minor, known as the "Irish" Symphony, in which he introduced touches of those delightful melodies of his native land that he loves so well. This symphony has, it is scarcely necessary to say, found its way across the seas—to Germany, Italy, and America—where it has been received with gratifying appreciation of its composer's genius. The Jubilee Ode ("Carmen Sæculare"), to which we shall refer later, also belongs to this year. In 1888 he was made a Doctor in Music (*honoris causâ*) of his own University; and his "Irish" Symphony was introduced by Hans von Bülow in Hamburg and Berlin. In the following year (on January 14, 1889) he gave an orchestral concert in Berlin, consisting entirely of his own compositions, when the programme included his fourth Symphony and his Suite in D for violin and orchestra, the solo part being played by the same violinist the sight of whom, thirty or so years before, had made him cry—his friend, Professor Joachim. In 1896, in conjunction with his fellow countryman Plunket Greene and with Leonard Borwick, he gave concerts of native music at various places abroad, and last Christmas he further upheld the claims of English music at concerts both in Brussels and Amsterdam.

## FESTIVAL WORKS.

As a festival composer Professor Stanford has been in frequent request. Here is a complete list of his provincial commissions:—

- 1877. Gloucester, Festival Overture in B flat.
- 1882. Birmingham, Serenade for orchestra.
- 1884. Norwich, Elegiac Ode (Walt Whitman).
- 1885. Birmingham, "The Three Holy Children."
- 1886. Leeds, "The Revenge" (Tennyson).
- 1889. Leeds, "The Voyage of Maeldune" (Tennyson).
- 1891. Hereford, "The Battle of the Baltic" (Campbell).
- "    Birmingham, "Eden."
- 1895. Cardiff, "The Bard."
- 1896. Norwich, "Phaudrig Crohoore."
- 1897. Birmingham, Requiem.
- 1898. Leeds, Te Deum (Latin words).

## COMPOSITIONS.

An attempt at a complete list of Professor Stanford's works here followeth:—\*

## ORCHESTRAL.

*Symphonies*.—No. 1, in B flat (prize), 1876; No. 2, in D minor ("Elegiac"), Cambridge, 1882; No. 3, in F minor

\* Acknowledgment is due to Messrs. Brown and Stratton's "British Musical Biography" for much valuable assistance in preparing this list of works.

("Irish"), Richter concert, 1887; No. 4, in F ("Thro' youth to strife: thro' death to life"), Berlin, 1889; No. 5 ("L'Allegro ed il Pensieroso"), Philharmonic, 1895.

*Serenade and Overtures*.—Serenade, Birmingham, 1882; Overtures, in B flat, Gloucester, 1877; "Queen of the Seas," Armada Tercentenary, 1888.

*Concertos, &c.*—Violoncello and orchestra (MS.), Pianoforte, in G, Richter concert, 1895; Suite in D, violin and orchestra, Berlin, 1889.

*Incidental Music*.—Tennyson's "Queen Mary," Lyceum, 1876; Tennyson's "Becket," Lyceum, 1893; Æschylus' "Eumenides," Cambridge, 1885; Sophocles' "Œdipus," Cambridge, 1887.

## ORATORIOS, CANTATAS, MASSES, &amp;c.

"The Resurrection" (Klopstock), Cambridge, 1875; Psalm xlvii., Cambridge, 1877; Elegiac Ode, Norwich, 1884; "The Three Holy Children," Birmingham, 1885; "The Revenge," Leeds, 1886; "Carmen Sæculare" (Jubilee Ode), 1887; "The Voyage of Maeldune," Leeds, 1889; "The Battle of the Baltic," Hereford, 1891; "Eden," Birmingham, 1891; Installation Ode, Cambridge, 1892; Ode, "East to West" (Swinburne), London, 1893; "The Bard," Cardiff, 1895; "Phaudrig Crohoore," Norwich, 1896; "Awake, my heart" (Klopstock), Choral Hymn, St. Paul's Cathedral, 1881; Psalm cl., Manchester, 1887; Mass in G (*In memoriam*, Thomas Wingham), Brompton Oratory, 1893; Requiem Mass, Birmingham, 1897; and Te Deum, Leeds, 1898.

## CHAMBER MUSIC.

Sonatas in A and D minor, pianoforte and violoncello; in D, pianoforte and violin; Three Intermezzi, pianoforte and clarinet; Pianoforte Quintet in D minor; Pianoforte Quartet in F; String Quartets in D minor, G, and A minor; Trio in E flat; Six Irish Pieces, violin and pianoforte; Pianoforte Sonata in D flat; Three Pieces and Toccata for pianoforte, &c.

## CHURCH AND ORGAN MUSIC.

Morning and Evening Services in B flat, A, and F; Communion Service in G; four Anthems; Hymn-tunes and carols; Prelude and Fugue in E minor, for organ.

## VOCAL MUSIC.

Various songs and part-songs, including Six Elizabethan Pastorales, three sets (four voices); Three Cavalier Songs, to Browning's words; Fifty Irish melodies (edited); Irish songs and ballads; The Irish Melodies of Thomas Moore (edited); A song-book for schools (edited), &c.

## LITERARY WRITINGS.

Musical literature has had its attractions for our composer. His contributions to the various magazines—the excellence of which would justify their being made permanent in book form—may thus be stated:—

- "The Golden Legend" (Sullivan), *National Review*, November, 1886.
- "Judith" (Parry), *Fortnightly*, October, 1888.
- "The Wagner Bubble: a reply," *Nineteenth Century*, November, 1888.
- "Ernst Frank," *Murray's Magazine*, February, 1890.
- "Tennyson," *Cambridge Review*, October, 1892.
- "Falstaff," *Fortnightly*, April, 1893.
- "Some Aspects of Musical Criticism in England," *Fortnightly*, June, 1894.
- "Local Orchestras in England," *Saturday Review*.

## BRAHMS, BROWNING, AND VON BÜLOW.

It would be quite possible to fill many columns of THE MUSICAL TIMES with letters that Professor Stanford has received from various distinguished persons. Here are four specimens. The first is from Brahms,

acknowledging the receipt of a copy of the Professor's "Irish Songs and Ballads:—

[Translated.]

Postmark: Vienna, 15. 3. 95.

Honoured Sir,

Your parcel has given me extraordinary pleasure, and I thank you from my heart.

I immediately looked up my beautiful old edition of Moore, to enable me to make comparisons, and thus better to compare and judge your work.

I had not forgotten my promise; but, unfortunately, I no longer possess the desired portrait, and in place of it I send you two others. I trust that this substitution will satisfy you.

Heartfelt thanks,

Yours,

J. BRAHMS.

The next, from Robert Browning, speaks for itself:—

19, Warwick Crescent, W.  
Nov. 24th, 1884.

My dear Dr. Stanford,

I beg to thank you heartily for your setting of my little poem ["Prospice"] never was poem more honoured than by your admirable music; which, though I have as yet only "tried it over" by my eye and in my mind, I satisfy myself is entirely original and characteristically true to the feeling the words are meant to convey. The whole of my poetry should be at your service—"to serve myself, my cousin!"—were you able to illustrate it so happily.

Pray believe me, dear Dr. Stanford,

Yours very sincerely,

ROBERT BROWNING.

The two following letters from Hans von Bülow lose none of their characteristic comicalities by reason of their being written in the English language, or some approach thereto:—

Hamburg. 13th March, 1888.

Dear Sir,

Illustrissimo!

A few hours after your kind note I received also the three piano scores you announced. Accept my heartiest thanks for the friendly record you kept of the German conductor of the Irish Symphony.

In spite of the general funeralism\* I must start to-morrow morning for Berlin to prepare the next Philh. concert. Accordingly to the exceptional circumstances whilst travelling I shall read your melodramas which most highly excite my interest.

As for my trip to London nothing as yet is definitely fixed. In no case I could come before the 1st of June, the month of birds, cats and poets being devoted to the cure of my neuralgias at Wiesbaden. I should feel most happy if during my stay in London I could be of any use to the ears of your residence. Please dispose of my ten fingers—and do not mind your treasurers' nightmares. A visit to Cambridge would not be "matter of business" for your most sincere admirer

HANS V. BÜLOW.

Will you kindly excuse the involuntary laconisms of this line?

Hamburg. 5th December, 1889.

Dear Master!

Fancy—but to-day I discovered your kind letter and the magnificent "garter"† you have bestowed upon me. Both got astray in the depths of the trunk which my last tournée (alla Sir Charles) had been accompanied by. Please accept my heartiest thanks for the honor you judged myself worthy of. United with Brahms' Op. 108, certainly this Trio of yours is the best music the poor would not be composer's name has been adorned with. Good gracious! what wonderful progress your country is making owing to your genius since the days of . . .

\* The death of Emperor William I. of Germany.

† Alluding to the design of the title-page.

Of course I shall avail of the next good (not best) opportunity of playing your work in public, be it here or elsewhere.

The enclosed scraps are telling of my *πολυπραγμοσύνη* [bustling activity], apologising for the brevity of my wits.

"Faute de mieux"—please accept for your album the best the last likeness of our Hector [Berlioz]: it has been made at his last journey in Petersburg. As the "cast" (how ought I to call it) was exhausted, I had it reproduced in Jonathan's Continent.

Once more—with heartiest thanks and best wishes or your health, the brain's as well as the soul's health,

I remain, dear Sir,

Your truly devoted admirer,

HANS V. BÜLOW.

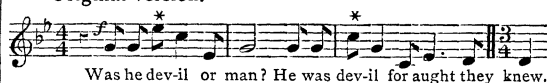
Please don't shoot the organist: he is "doing his best"—alias: excuse my bad English; I lack leisure for consulting the "Antibarbarus."

TENNYSON.

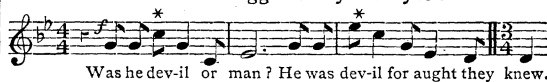
It is always a gratifying feature in recording—be it ever so briefly—the life-work of one of our representative musicians when his work has brought him into contact with representative men in other spheres of artistic production. This has been the case in a marked degree in regard to Professor Stanford's intercourse with Tennyson. He first came into pleasant relations with the late Laureate as far back as 1874, through Tennyson's sons, Hallam and Lionel, who were then undergraduates of Trinity College, Cambridge. At the poet's own request, Stanford composed the incidental music for the production of "Queen Mary" at the Lyceum, under Mrs. Bateman's management, in 1876. When Tennyson heard that the music would not be performed because the necessary space for the orchestra would necessitate the removal of two rows of stalls, he himself offered to pay for the said two rows of stalls for two or three nights, in order that the music should not be sacrificed. But his offer was refused by the management.

Tennyson, although he knew nothing about the mere technicalities of the art, had a great instinct for music. He used to say that most people who had set his songs to music made the notes go up when they should go down! Declaration in music was a very strong point with him. For example, in his setting of "The Revenge," in the phrase "Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew" (pp. 40 and 41 of Novello's octavo score of the work), Stanford originally wrote a high note (E flat) for the first "devil," and a lower note (C) the second time the word occurred; but Tennyson asked him to invert the order of notes, and to give the higher note to the second "devil" of the phrase!—

Original version.



Present version as suggested by Tennyson.



He was also very particular—and rightly so—about a clear enunciation of the words in singing. In order that he might hear the quartet from “The Voyage of Maeldune” (“The undersea isle”), the composer arranged for four amateurs to sing the music to the poet. When they had finished their performances, Tennyson complimented(?) them with the remark: “I couldn’t hear a word you said from beginning to end.” His appreciation of music was evidenced in the following remark he made to Professor Stanford in reference to the same quartet, he said: “I like the way your music rippled away at the end.”

Professor Stanford has so long held a distinguished and acknowledged place as a representative native composer that any re-statement of an accepted truism would be superfluous, if not, indeed, presumptuous at this time of day. But it is interesting to know that Tennyson also held this opinion, and the incident, with its gratifying sequel, may fitly conclude this biographical sketch of Charlie Stanford, to use the familiar designation of his intimate friends.

It was at Tennyson’s special, if not urgent request that Stanford should compose the music to his Ode “Carmen Sæculare,” written in 1887 to commemorate the Jubilee of Queen Victoria. This he did, and the Ode was duly performed, with great *éclat*, at Buckingham Palace, in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen, on May 11, 1887. Her admiration of the work found appreciative expression in a letter Her Majesty afterwards wrote to Lord Tennyson,\* in which she said: “We greatly admired the music, which was very descriptive and well adapted to the words.”

## SOME RECOLLECTIONS.

### V.

#### MUSICIANS AT PLAY.

ONE day in almost the latest of the “sixties” three men—the Tenor, the Bass, and the Critic—might have been seen to meet in the large hall of Euston Station, and afterwards to take tickets for a point in North Wales. The object of their journey was not entirely unconnected with business. The Tenor and the Bass, for example, were under engagement to sing at a certain Eisteddfod; the Critic, on his part, hoped to make some “copy” out of the excursion in more ways than one. All were in high spirits; the London season had closed; there were fair autumn days ahead, and due leisure in which to enjoy them. Under such circumstances, although, according to the teaching of Mark Tapley, there was no credit in being jolly, the trio of travellers, credit or not, felt somewhat like boys just loosed from school, ripe for any extravagance. According

\* “Alfred, Lord Tennyson: a Memoir by his Son.” London, Macmillan, 1897. Vol. II., p. 448.

to some authorities, there is always a tendency in nature to revert to the original type. The cultivated rose, if left to itself, goes back to its pristine wildness, and I have heard that the primitive nigger, educated to teach his kind and to be among them a “pioneer of civilisation,” has been known to cast off the garments of the white man, assume the next-to-nothing of his old state, and worship the god of his people with the rest. However this may be, there are certainly conditions under which man relapses into boyhood, forgetting the gravity of years. Thus did Mr. Pickwick, at Dingley Dell, when he went down the slide prepared by Sam Weller and the Fat Boy, and was told by the inimitable Cockney servant to “keep the pot a-bilin’.” Wherefore, should it turn out in the course of this paper that the Tenor, the Bass, and the Critic followed Mr. Weller’s advice, though not on ice, they, or such of them as survive, can point to the universality of their experience, and be unashamed.

The whole significance of that laughing tour turned upon a question regarding the whereabouts of a certain Brass Tap, and the legend of the Brass Tap originated a year earlier at the Caermarthen Eisteddfod, as to which I have already had something to say in the course of these recollections. I regret that, at the meeting in question, a pretended candidate for Gorsedd honours sent in as an exercise some absurd doggerel, in which a brass tap figured. The lines, because of their ridiculous character, which was, moreover, not devoid of humour, “caught on,” remained in memory, and suddenly broke out again as the Tenor, the Bass, and the Critic journeyed onward. Exactly where they came to the top I do not recollect, nor does it matter. Enough that the process of evolution, to which every thought becomes subject in the human mind, resulted in an overwhelming desire to know where the Brass Tap could be found. The craving in question first took possession of the Tenor; then making itself evident in a mild form, as when, for example, he would put his head out of the carriage window and question railway officials, or any people on the platform. The Tenor had wonderful command of his features, the perfect gravity of which deceived the stranger and led to the most ludicrous scenes. Not that he succeeded everywhere. On one occasion the Tenor fixed upon a rustic standing opposite the carriage, and demanded, in what he thought to be the vernacular: “Th’ ’asnt seed a brass tap about here anywhere, ’ast?” The yokel was by no means taken in, though the Tenor’s head was as his country friend fiercely exclaimed: “I’ll brass tap thy yed if thee geest me any of thy jaw.” This incident led to a cessation of efforts in local dialect, which is apt to vary and to betray. But enquiry for the Tap only took safer forms, and the holiday fun went on. Here and there stationmasters were called for and anxiously required to say whether a brass