

THE MUSICAL TIMES

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LISZT IN LONDON, 1886.

THE visit of a distinguished musician—pianist, conductor, and composer—after an absence of nearly half a century, has something more than the immediate surroundings of the case to invest it with interest. But when that visitor is a man like Liszt—the binding link which ties the music of to-day, not to the traditions, but to the reality of the great past—there is more reason than ever for the whole world to be “set by the ears,” and for the occasion to be turned into a time of universal rejoicing and hero-worship. That the Abbé should have yielded eventually to the solicitations of his disciples and admirers, foremost amongst whom stand Mr. A. C. Mackenzie and Mr. Walter Bache, and have come once more to these ungrateful shores, which welcomed him but coldly in the “forties,” is a matter upon which each and everyone concerned, directly or indirectly, has a right to congratulate himself. The illustrious musician has had the opportunity of finding that England is not so very inhospitable a country after all; he has seen his compositions received with boundless enthusiasm, and has won from the whole English people—from the Crown to the veriest plebeian—such a welcome as genius alone can command. Here, then, would be discovered the most direct refutation that we “insulars” possess neither eclecticism nor artistic appreciation, were such refutation necessary. Fortunately it is not, and Liszt will hardly hereinafter withhold from us the acknowledgment that our greeting has been sound, spontaneous, heart-whole, and thorough. Surely never before did any composer or executant enjoy such a succession of triumphs as have waited on the Abbé Liszt during his sixteen days’ sojourn in London. The record is a dazzling panorama of festivals, receptions, Royal favours, organised greetings, both public and private—in short, a never-ending array of ceremonials, in which the Hungarian virtuoso stood as the central figure. The ordinary round of musical entertainments has been pursued, notwithstanding the counter-attraction of the lion of the day; but, albeit we fortunately possess sufficient amateurs, with enough catholicity of taste to render every exhibition that is good of its kind secure of patronage, it must be felt that, so far as the heart of the nation was stirred, nothing quickened its beat but the all-absorbing and dominating presence of the famous musician. While dealing with the general aspect of his visit, it must be borne in mind that Liszt came over here more to gratify the desire and aid the ambition of the young British composer and conductor, Mr. Mackenzie, who was about to produce the Oratorio of “St. Elizabeth,” than to reap any advantage; the undertaking was undeniably prompted by the most disinterested motives, and Liszt, in quitting England, is burdened with nothing more material than the honours he has won, and the good will of the people. It was never intended that he should give any public display of those extraordinary talents which have crowned him King of the Keyboard, and though he has been frequently heard to play in private, these slight concessions to musical society are, after all, only graceful little acknowledgments of the courtesy which has been extended to him; the general public, therefore, who have followed him from concert-hall to concert-hall in hopes that at the eleventh hour the Abbé’s good nature or the force of persistent clamour would lead

him to yield compliance and sit down at the instrument, have no real cause for disappointment. It was no part of his bargain, and, in our opinion, he did very rightly to abstain from playing, under the circumstances. After the extraordinary amount of fatigue, endured without the least demur, which the venerable Abbé underwent during his recent stay, there is no saying what may be the limit of his potentiality. His frame is apparently of iron; his constitution that of a giant. It is possible, therefore, that Liszt might be tempted to come again to London next season, and to make this the *raison d’être* for a series of Concerts or Recitals; but it would not be wise to count too implicitly upon this, considering that he has now reached five years beyond the allotted term of man’s existence—three score years and ten—and may perhaps feel less inclined again to leave the retirement of Weimar to court anew the smiles of that shallow world in which his part is well-nigh played. Still, his visit to England in 1886 will be treasured up in grateful memory by all who have the interests of progressive art at heart; while, in the exceptional instance of his playing before the students of the Royal Academy of Music, he will have left behind him such a beneficent influence as only the presence of a master-hand can exert. To the young pianists who heard him, that one solitary afternoon was worth years of tuition.

Well, Liszt has been here, and Liszt is gone. The visit has been something more than a nine days’ wonder, and is indeed so momentous an occurrence in the annals of the musical history of this country that it cannot be permitted to pass by with only such cursory remark as might have been elicited by the sudden appearance of a less brilliant luminary in the artistic firmament. For the sake of those who come after, more than for the behoof of contemporaneous readers, we propose to give a full record of the proceedings which accompanied Liszt’s triumphal entry into the English capital or took place during his stay. It is a page in the calendar to which all will turn with interest: as a manifestation of feeling, it probably is unique; as an evidence of the higher development of hero-worship it introduces us to a new departure. Never before has such a thing been known as for any individual, save a Royal personage, to be received by the audience uprising. Yet this was one of the invariable forms of public etiquette adopted when Liszt entered any public place of entertainment.

LISZT’S ARRIVAL IN LONDON

was originally fixed for Thursday, the 1st ult., but the pressing solicitations of Parisian musical circles induced him to remain to witness the repetition of his “Graner Messe” on the 2nd. Hence the time got dangerously narrowed for him to keep his appointment with the notabilities invited to meet him on Saturday, the 3rd, at Westwood House, the residence of Mr. Henry Littleton (Novello, Ewer and Co.), whose guest the Abbé was to be while he stayed in England. Messrs. A. C. Mackenzie, Alfred Littleton, Walter Bache, and Dr. Waller set off by the early mail on the morning of the 3rd to meet the master at Calais, where he was encountered in company with Madame Munkacsy, Miss Beatty-Kingston, his young pupil Herr Stavenhagen, and attendants. A fair passage was enjoyed, and the run up to town from Dover was speedily accomplished, Mr. Littleton having, by the great kindness of Mr. Forbes, the Chairman of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway, arranged that the train should not proceed straight to Victoria, but stop at Penge (in the near vicinity of Westwood House) where the little party of musicians were to alight. Some of the Hungarian residents of London were

assembled on the platform, and a bouquet was presented to the Abbé, with a few graceful words of welcome, as he stepped from the train. Westwood House was reached within a few minutes of eight o'clock, and in less than half-an-hour the great virtuoso entered the commodious music-room, which by this time was thronged with all the celebrities of the musical and artistic world. There Liszt, bearing his years bravely, and conspicuous by his stature and the extraordinary profusion of snow-white hair falling in masses upon his shoulders, became the centre of attention and the object of an all-absorbing interest. This benevolent-looking, amiable, smiling patriarch was, then, the extraordinary individual whose personality had exerted for upwards of half a century so vastly dominating an influence over the fortunes of European music! This was the man who had taken Wagner by the hand when the fortunes of the latter were at their lowest, and had raised him and his art-works to positive eminence by dint of perseverance and good-fellowship. Had it not been for Liszt, the director of the Weimar Court Theatre, who can say but that the musical revolution in affairs operatic had never occurred. Only by the light of Weimar does Bayreuth become a possibility. Liszt, hale and hearty though he be, looks fully his age. Time has rounded the once stern lines in that commanding countenance; the inner strength of will is less expressed than in former years. We behold, in fact, not the champion ready to defy the world on behalf of the principles he espouses—not the proud spirit ready and eager to hurl defiance in the teeth of contending factions, but a noble old man in the vale of his years, well content to look back upon the part he has played in the world's active strife, consoled with the assurance that his efforts have not been misdirected, and wishful now for nothing better than to repose upon the laurels thus hardly won. The time of heated partisanship has passed by, the clamour of battle has ceased, and now comes the rich reward of rest.

The reception at Westwood House was unaccompanied by any set form of ceremonial. After a little while pleasantly spent in renewing old acquaintances and forming new ones, the Abbé took his place at the head of the room, and a short selection from his works was performed by Mr. Walter Bache—his enthusiastic disciple and pupil—and the representative of the Liszt element in England; Mr. Frederic Lamond, Mr. Winch, Mr. Whitney, Miss Hope Glenn, Mr. W. Coenen, &c., Liszt signifying his approval of the artists' endeavours in a most cordial manner. In this fashion, and with intervals of conversation, "the feast of reason and the flow of soul" continued until the Abbé retired for the night. The occasion was a memorable one, and will not speedily be forgotten by those privileged to be present.

A good many of the visitors had come fully prepared to hear the Abbé play, but to have urged him to do so would have been unreasonable, taking into account the fatigue of the day's journey, and the excitement of meeting old friends beneath Mr. Littleton's hospitable roof—to say nothing of the effect produced upon the nervous system by being the admired of all admirers in that enthusiastic assembly. To have seen and conversed with the distinguished virtuoso was surely gratification enough for the time.

LISZT'S FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE IN LONDON

since his last visit, forty-five years ago, took place at the full general rehearsal of the Oratorio "St. Elizabeth" at St. James's Hall, on the afternoon of Monday, the 5th. No rumour had been circulated as to the likelihood of the Abbé attending the preparation of his work—in fact, as late

as the Saturday night previous it had almost been decided that he would not go. But the public curiosity was thoroughly aflame with regard to the oratorio, which was to constitute the closing performance of the first season of Messrs. Novello's Oratorio Concerts; and as admission to the rehearsal was to be obtained at half the cost of the representation proper, there is little wonder that the room should have been crowded to the doors long before the hour announced for commencing. As the time to begin approached, anxious eyes were directed towards the upper end of the room, and when the sturdy figure of the venerable Abbé was observed advancing in company with Mr. Littleton and Mr. Bache, such a cheer went up as could have come alone from British throats. People stood on the benches to get a better sight of the art-hero; hats were wildly waved in the air, and for a time the recipient of these unexpected honours seemed fairly astounded. The members of the choir and orchestra all added their quota to the general vociferation, and it was some minutes before the cheering subsided sufficiently for Mr. Mackenzie to give the signal for the introduction to start. During the first part of the oratorio, Liszt remained seated on the front bench of the side-seats, but eventually moved to the first row immediately facing the conductor's desk, where he could communicate easily with Mr. Mackenzie or the principals. His greeting of Madame Albani and Mr. Mackenzie, at the termination of the first part, was hugely enjoyed by the spectators, who lost no possible opportunity of applauding the master with heart and voice, and were intensely gratified at seeing him bow in return. The scene at rehearsal was a sufficient earnest of what was to follow at the performance, and public interest was so powerfully stimulated that unheard of sums were offered for tickets—vainly, of course, as they had been all disposed of weeks in advance. What concerned the body of musical amateurs, and not the mere sensation-hunters, was whether the music of "St. Elizabeth" was worth all the "fuss" (to use a homely word) being made about it, and whether sufficient preparations had been made to render the performance worthy so auspicious an occasion. An unequivocal affirmative endorsed the efforts of Mr. Mackenzie and his excellently well-tutored forces, and a brilliant success was anticipated on all hands for the work when presented for critical judgment. A highly interesting episode took place during the practice of the choir at Neumeyer Hall in the evening. The Abbé had determined to go and hear how the singers got on after the arduous labours of the afternoon, and, accompanied by Mr. Alfred Littleton, he entered the room just as the choristers were going through the final number "Tu pro nobis." What followed speaks for the generosity of the man. How could he recompense all these young people for the exacting task they had undertaken solely on his account? There was but one way—to give them a taste of his quality at the pianoforte; so, without more ado he took his place at the instrument, and improvised, in the most masterly way conceivable, upon the theme which the vocalists had just relinquished, leading into his own "Ave Maria" for pianoforte solo. It was a spontaneous act, but a very gracious and memorable one. Need it be said that the Abbé was applauded until the roof rang again?

LISZT AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

The Abbé was deputed to take part in another ceremony, which can have given nothing but satisfaction to his generous instincts, the afternoon of Tuesday, the 6th, being set aside for the visit of our

honoured guest to the Royal Academy of Music, there to become the practical donor of the endowment of a Liszt scholarship for young composers and pianists, the funds for which, amounting to about £1,100, had been subscribed in a very brief period, thanks to the activity of Mr. Walter Bache, Mr. C. A. Barry, and other ardent partisans of the master. Liszt must have felt his old heart beat anew with fresh kindled fervour as he witnessed the wonderful enthusiasm of the young students of the oldest English training school. He must have thought of his own pupilage—though that did not extend far into his career, seeing that he was a public performer before he was ten years old—and his eager ambition for a glorious future. Would any of these succeed as he had succeeded? Would the glorious gift of youth, fired by the wondrous light of genius, help these strugglers up to the eminence to which he had climbed?

Maybe he thought nothing of the kind, and was merely interested in seeing to what condition of capacity Sir George Macfarren's pupils had attained. But the aged Abbé had a good taste of the heartiness of youth in his greeting, and if all the R.A.M. students had been in training for a shouting medal (or a medal for shouting), they could not have deserved better of their instructors. Sir George Macfarren and the Abbé Liszt were conducted to a central position on the floor of the Concert-room, and then a little lady, Miss Ada Tunks, presented Liszt with a beautiful floral lyre, arranged in the Hungarian colours. The little lassie was not only kindly greeted by the great old master, but was kissed by him on the forehead—this kiss forming almost an equivalent, historically speaking, of that which Beethoven administered to "Master Liszt" in 1823. Professor Macfarren had obviously intended that the occasion should be rendered worthy of the event, a highly interesting programme being set before the distinguished visitor, consisting of his own Goethe Festival March; Sterndale Bennett's Caprice in E, for pianoforte and orchestra (Op. 22); Mackenzie's Concerto, for violin with orchestra (Op. 32); Liszt's Concert-study in D flat, for pianoforte; and G. A. Macfarren's Overture to "John the Baptist"—his first oratorio. Viewed by the light of other days, this scheme becomes pregnant with meaning. Nearly the whole history of the Royal Academy seems to have been unfolded to the honoured guest—Sterndale Bennett representing the student of 1826, and Principal of 1866-75; Mr. Mackenzie appearing as the King's Scholar of 1862; Sir George Macfarren representing the student of 1829, and Principal of to-day; and the conductor, Mr. William Shakespeare, figuring on the list as the King's Scholar of 1866. Thus, all that was produced before Liszt was the outcome of those who had won worthy distinction at the Academy, and were well qualified to stand up for it. Miss Dora Bright played the Caprice in very brilliant style, Miss Winifred Robinson gave a most spirited rendering of Mackenzie's exacting Violin Concerto, and Mr. Septimus Webbe gave a finished reading of the Lisztian study. It must have been a gratifying thing for M. Saindon to behold in Miss Robinson the executant, and Mr. A. C. Mackenzie the composer-conductor, two artists who had attained to capacity and eminence under his tutelary guidance. The young performers having been duly presented to the master, applause arose on all sides and continued for some minutes, until at last the Abbé appeared to become conscious that the students wished to hear him play. With a self-deprecatory gesture he arose, and made his way on to the platform amidst uproarious excitement. His was, indeed, literally a "flowery path," for every girl had a posie to cast at the feet of the great pianist, and every youth who sported a "button-hole" willingly offered

his tribute. The consequence was that when Liszt reached the pianoforte, he found it half full of flowers—another Elizabethan basket, in fact—and had to wait some time until the strings were cleared. Then he began—with a tender caressing touch, such as no other pianoforte player ever possessed—his fingers stealing over the keys, until the melody merged in Chopin's "Chant Polonaise." The students, and audience too, were breathless with suspense until he had concluded, when a ringing cheer proclaimed how gratified all the listeners had been by so prodigious a display of subtle art. The Abbé was fain to rise from his seat, and bow repeatedly, but he good-naturedly resumed his place at the instrument, and played his own "Cantique d'Amour," sending the juvenile aspirants to the honours of the piano into the seventh heaven of delight. The short concert concluded, Sir George Macfarren came forward and addressed a few words of gracious welcome to his eminent brother-musician. It was his privilege, he said, to be able to offer the thanks of the Committee, members, and students of the Royal Academy of Music for the proud distinction the Abbé Liszt had conferred upon them all, by allowing them the great gratification of hearing him play. "You, sir, and Fame are twins," said the venerable Professor, who, continuing, reverted to the fact that Liszt had shown them that day that he had retired only when his powers were in their zenith, to pursue his calling in another direction. And this reminded the Professor of another illustrious man—our own Duke of Wellington, who, when he had no more battles to fight, proved himself as great a statesman as he had been a warrior. All honour was due to Mr. Walter Bache for having initiated the day's proceeding, and Mr. Bache, as Chairman of the Scholarship Committee, would have the pleasure of presenting the testimonial to his revered preceptor. The transfer of the envelope containing a short report on the Scholarship was anything but formal, and took but very few moments, Mr. Bache handing the enclosure to Liszt, who immediately passed it on to Sir George Macfarren—all, of course, to an accompaniment of sustained cheering. And thus the Liszt Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music became a *fait accompli*.

LISZT'S "ST. ELIZABETH" AT ST. JAMES'S HALL.

One has to go back a very long way to find anything so profoundly affecting the various centres of our musical organisations as the production of Liszt's Oratorio "St. Elizabeth," at St. James's Hall, under the auspices of Messrs. Novello's Choir, with Mr. A. C. Mackenzie as conductor and prime mover of the enterprise. It could hardly have been that there was a sudden accession of admiration for the music, since that had been but indifferently received when the work was first brought before London amateurs in 1870, or when, six years afterwards, it was revived at one of Mr. Bache's annual Liszt concerts. No, the public were quite contented to take "St. Elizabeth" on trust, but their special desire was to get a sight of the renowned composer—to behold for themselves that snowy head and beaming face, whose sunny smiles were the theme of universal comment. The audience, besides being as large as the capacity of the hall permitted, was a distinguished one, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duchess of Edinburgh, and Princess Louise being amongst the throng who attended to pay homage to the Hungarian virtuoso. The scene which ensued upon Liszt's arrival absolutely beggars description. Conceive people with their animal spirits at their highest, all shouting with one accord, and all eager to obtain a favourable

view of the hero of the day, and you have it. Those who were not tall enough to see over their neighbours' shoulders got upon the seats and stood there, the example being so generally followed that soon the floor of the Concert-room presented the extraordinary and somewhat absurd spectacle of an audience standing on the benches.

It was confidently anticipated, on all hands, that this, the final performance of the opening season of the Novello Choir, would prove a crowning glory for the young society and its indefatigable conductor, who in all things, great and small, is thorough; he himself is so zealous that he commands the sympathies of his fellow-workers at the outset, thus obtaining an incalculable advantage. It is a moot question whether a life so valuable from the creative point of view ought to be sacrificed to anything but the pursuance of its highest calling; but there can be no question that Mr. Mackenzie is an admirable conductor, and, as leader of a new enterprise, is precisely the right man in the right place, since he goes into the work unfettered by galling precedents and unhampered by traditional observances. There is no need for recapitulating the copious facts concerning the Oratorio "St. Elizabeth," which have already appeared in our columns; little indeed remains for us to add beyond the mere circumstances of the performance. It must be apparent to all sentient observers that Liszt permits himself to be bound by none of the conventionalities of the scholastic form of oratorio. Sufficient ecclesiastical flavour, in his estimation, is to be gathered from the incorporation in the work—woven into its very web—of the old church theme dating back to the sixteenth century and appointed for use "In festo sanctæ Elizabeth." In fact, "St. Elizabeth," from its continuous employment of *Leitmotive*, may be regarded as much in the light of a manifestation of the "Music of the Future" as "Tristan und Isolde" or "Der Ring des Nibelungen." Of independent melody, truly, the score is by no means barren, and the author has brightened up the scene of the welcome of the Hungarian child-princess at the Wartburg with a singularly fresh and piquant chorus of children, "Merriest games, with thee would we play." Again, the trio to the Crusader's March is a real bit of melody; but for this Liszt is not responsible, having adapted to his use an old Pilgrims' chant, said to have been in vogue at the period of the Holy Wars. If this be true, it is one to the early Christian composers, who at all events knew how to invent tune. The recurrence of the snatch of Hungarian melody whenever *Elizabeth's* proud descent is alluded to, undeniably adds picturesqueness and force to the situations, and *Elizabeth's* prayer contains some moments of exaltation, and her dying scene is decidedly pathetic. But, on the whole, the feeling produced by the work is not that of a purely abstract composition, but a theatrical production divested of its necessary adjuncts. All the entire scene between the *Landgravine*, *Elizabeth*, and the *Seneschal* is essentially dramatic after the Wagnerian style of opera-drama; while the "Storm" episode, fanciful and suggestive though it may be, seems to be altogether outside the domain of oratorio, pure and simple. Few will deny, nevertheless, the existence of many evidences of thoughtful workmanship and masterly ingenuity in "St. Elizabeth," and one of its principal recommendations is to be found in the fact that the music grows upon acquaintance. For the interpretation of the oratorio no praise could be too high—it formed one of those rare occasions when criticism is completely disarmed and the language of eulogy has to take the place. The band played splendidly, the choir sang faultlessly, and the

principal soloists covered themselves with glory. Madame Albani is always at her best when she undertakes a part fraught with deep religious sentiment. The fervour which she imparted into the music allotted to the saintly heroine was positively thrilling; while her rendering of the dying scene was as pure a piece of pathos as could well be imagined. No wonder that Madame Albani won golden opinions on all hands. Mr. Santley, as the *Landgrave Ludwig*, gave the music all the advantages of his fine voice and incomparable style; Madame Pauline Cramer displayed a very fine "dramatic" soprano voice in the part of the *Landgravine*; Mr. F. King did well as the *Seneschal*, though his was the thankless task of having to roar against the blasts of the Lisztian tempest; and smaller parts were filled by Mr. Whitney, Mr. Vaughan Edwardes, and Master Frank Peskett. A tremendous cheer went up on the conclusion of the first part, and the audience renewed their acclamations with redoubled energy, when the venerable composer was seen mounting the orchestra steps. The Prince of Wales went into the artists' room to congratulate the illustrious author, and returned to the Hall with the latter, to present him to the Princesses. When, after an eventful evening, the last chord of "St. Elizabeth" had sounded, more calls brought the Abbé on to the platform—this time led by Madame Albani—and still further cheers tended to the reappearance of Mr. Mackenzie, brought on by Liszt himself. If ever there was a fitting moment for mutual congratulation, this was the time. The record of the evening would be incomplete without the reproduction of Miss Constance Bache's happy lines of greeting to the master, printed in the book of words:—

"A MESTERNEK LISZT FERENCZNEK ISTEN HOZOTT."

We welcome thee, from southern sunnier clime,
To England's shore,
And stretch glad hands across the lapse of time
To thee once more.

Full twice two decades swiftly have rolled by
Since thou wast here;
A meteor flashing through our northern sky
Thou didst appear.

Thy coming now we greet with pleasure keen
And loyal heart,
Adding tradition of what thou hast been
To what thou art.

No laurel can we weave into the crown
Long years entwined,
Nor add one honour unto the renown
Already thine:

Yet might these roses waft to thee a breath
Of memory,
Recalling thy fair Saint Elizabeth
Of Hungary.

We welcome her, from out those days of old,
In song divine,
But thee we greet a thousand thousand fold,
The song is thine!

LISZT AT WINDSOR CASTLE.

On Wednesday, the 7th, the reverend Abbé was honoured by the command of Her Majesty the Queen to wait upon her at Windsor Castle, where he had the pleasure of performing several solos in Her Majesty's presence. On the same afternoon there was a

REPETITION OF "ST. ELIZABETH" AT ST. JAMES'S HALL,

under the auspices of the London Academy of Music, conducted by the principal, Dr. Henry Wylde. Dr. Wylde, it will be remembered, was the first to take cognisance of the work and to bring it under the notice of English musicians in 1870—barely three years after its original production at the Festival of the eighth centenary of the Wartburg. On the present occasion the students of the

London Academy formed the choir, while the soli parts were entrusted, with a very fair measure of success, to Misses M. Macintyre and Rose Moss, Mr. Lister and Mr. Albert Reakes. Miss Macintyre, indeed, shows promise of very high excellence, and the study of the part of the heroine was throughout intelligent, refined, and effective. Mr. Albert Reakes, the possessor of a beautiful baritone voice, is to be congratulated on his method; his singing of the music assigned to the *Landgrave Ludwig* was in all respects excellent. Taken on the whole, the performance, which, by the bye, only extended to the first division of the work, reflected credit upon the institution. The band found an able leader in Mr. Pollitzer. Before the oratorio Miss Florence Henderson (gold medalist) gave a careful and correct reading of Liszt's Concerto in E flat. *En passant*, it may be observed that "St. Elizabeth" was sung in German.

LISZT AT THE GROSVENOR GALLERY,

on the evening of the 8th, when he attended the reception organised in his honour by Mr. Walter Bache, was indeed a personality to be remembered. Mr. Bache, entering heart and soul into his task—as he always does whenever Liszt is concerned—had invited all the most prominent members of London musical society, with the result that a more brilliant, distinguished, or intellectual gathering could hardly have been assembled under one roof. As there was hardly any set form of observance, the proceedings partaking wholly of the nature of a friendly *soirée*, it is not necessary to dwell on details, beyond saying that a short programme was performed, consisting of Liszt's "Angelus" for stringed instruments, played by a capital band of our leading instrumentalists; the "Chor der Engel" from the second part of Goethe's "Faust," sung by students of the Royal Academy of Music, Mr. Shakespeare conducting, and Messrs. Wingham, Westlake, and Lockwood furnishing the accompaniments; the "Benediction de Dieu dans la Solitude," for pianoforte, performed by Mr. Walter Bache; together with songs from Schiller's "Tell," declaimed by Mr. W. Winch. Warmly received as were all these excerpts from the repertory of a great producer, the applause sank into insignificance before that which greeted the aged musician as, after bowing profoundly to the enthusiastic company, he made his way to the pianoforte, where he played firstly an arrangement of Schubert's four-hand "Divertissement Hongroise," and a section of his Hungarian Rhapsody in A. Once more the witchery of his skill charmed the instrument into the utterance of tones producible by no other fingers but his own; and once more was the full tribute of homage and appreciation laid at his feet.

LISZT'S BUST

has been modelled, life size, by the celebrated sculptor, Mr. Boehm, to whom the Abbé gave sittings on such occasions as he could manage to steal from his manifold engagements. The work will be exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery during the present and following months. On Friday evening, the 9th, a

LISZT CONCERT AT ST. JAMES'S HALL

was given by Chev. Leonard E. Bach. At this entertainment the illustrious Abbé had signified his intention of appearing, and the consequence was naturally a large and eager audience. The selection comprised Liszt's E flat Concerto, Fantasia Hongroise, and Grand Polonaise (d'après Weber)—all for pianoforte and orchestra—played with considerable effect by the Concert-giver; the orchestral episode from "Christus," "The Three Holy Kings," and "Orpheus" symphonic poem, Uhland's song "Die Vätergruft," scored for

this Concert by the composer, and other songs, safely placed in the charge of Mr. and Mrs. Henschel and Miss Liza Lehmann—a daughter of the well-known artist, Rudolf Lehmann, and a vocalist of the utmost promise. Between the parts Liszt was enthusiastically called to the orchestra, whence he bowed his acknowledgments. Mr. Randegger conducted. Subsequently, by desire of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, the Abbé attended the last

SMOKING CONCERT OF THE ROYAL AMATEUR ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY,

given by special desire in Prince's Hall. Being a semi-private gathering, the details of the performance need not detain us; suffice it to say that the selection comprised Beethoven's "Leonora" (No. 3) Overture; solos for violin by Liszt and Nachèz, rendered by M. Tivadar Nachèz; Rossini's gorgeous "Semiramide" Overture, pianoforte pieces by Henselt and Liszt, interpreted by M. Vladimir de Pachmann; Gounod's "Marche Religieuse"; and Liszt's first Hungarian Rhapsody. The vocalists were Mr. Barrington Foote and Mr. Ben Davies, Mr. George Mount conducting. The "lion" of the evening, who sat beside H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, was obviously pleased at the entertainment provided, joining lustily in the general applause. The audience throughout the evening had been on the tiptoe of expectation, thinking that the principal guest might have been tempted to play, but there was no intention upon his part to break through his general reserve, and so the amateurs went hungry away. It was, however, altogether a very jovial and pleasant gathering, and the Abbé showed himself thoroughly smoke-proof.

Probably one of the most memorable and notable episodes of the sojourn in London was the admirable

LISZT CONCERT AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE,

arranged by Mr. August Manns, for the afternoon of Saturday, the 10th. The composer promised to be present to assist at the *début* of his favourite young pupil, Herr Stavenhagen, and altogether the entertainment was provocative of much popular curiosity. The programme, to a large extent, speaks for itself. Of course it "goes without saying" that all the works performed were the compositions of the Hungarian master. This was the scheme:—

Rakoczy March.
Symphonic Poem, No. 3, in C major—"Les Preludes," after Lamartine.
Ballade—"Die Lorelei."

(Miss Liza Lehmann.)
Concerto for Pianoforte and Orchestra—No. 1, in E flat.
(Pianoforte—Herr Bernhard Stavenhagen. His first appearance.)
Symphonic Poem—"Mazeppa," after Victor Hugo.
Songs—"Es muss ein Wunderbares sein."
—"Angiolin dal biondo crin."

(Miss Liza Lehmann.)
Solos for Pianoforte {"Liebestraum," No. 1, in A flat.
Fantasie Dramatique sur "Les Huguenots."
(Herr Bernhard Stavenhagen.)
Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 4, in D minor and G major.

Nothing better than this selection could have been devised to exhibit the talents of the musician in his creative capacity, each phase of his artistic mannerism being represented. It is rather hard to reconcile the fact that the author of such gems of beauty as the "Lorelei" ballad, and the quaint little *lied*, "Angiolin dal biondo crin," and the very mystical orchestral "Poem" "Les Preludes," are one and the same individual. Whether Liszt, in his symphonic poems, by making music the handmaiden of poetry, and relegating it to a subservient position, is fulfilling the ideal of artistic fitness, is a matter which will inevitably form food for the discussion of the adherents of the old school and the new. Enough is said, however, for the immediate purpose, in admitting that the composer has certainly furnished some

very striking tone-pictures in "Les Preludes" and "Mazeppa," the force and energy of which cannot but be generally admitted. In his transcription of the famous Hungarian "Rakoczy" March, Liszt has hardly been so happy in his orchestration as Berlioz; but the warlike, soul-stirring (to the Magyar) melody is presented in an attractive form, and the material is wrought up into so-called symphonic shape. It appears that Liszt anticipated Berlioz in setting the national tune to orchestral purposes; but when he heard of his fellow-artist's intention of arranging the theme, he generously withdrew his own arrangement, and, during the French master's lifetime, would neither permit it to be published nor given to the world in any way. It was not until Berlioz had passed away that he consented to its publication in 1871. The programme books contain a very masterly disquisition upon Liszt's Symphonic Poems (*à propos* to "Les Preludes"), from the pen of Mr. C. A. Barry, in which the vexed question of classical form, and the method adopted by the Hungarian Abbé is nicely ventilated. For the benefit of those amateurs who have not yet dived into the depths of the matter, we quote what Mr. Barry has to say in defence of the new school:—"A comparison of the established form of the so-called classical period with that devised by Liszt . . . The former may be described as consisting of (1) the exposition of the principal subjects; (2) their development; and (3) their recapitulation. For this Liszt has substituted (1) exposition; (2) development; and (3) further development; or, as Wagner has tersely explained it, 'nothing else but that which is demanded by the subject and its expressible development.' Thus, though from sheer necessity, rigid formality has been sacrificed to truthfulness, unity and consistency are as fully maintained as upon the old system; but, by a different method, the reasonableness of which cannot be disputed." In the interpretation of the several works, Mr. Manns's splendid orchestra surpassed itself; the players, to a man, were thoroughly on their mettle, determined to let the Abbé know what an English orchestra could do, and the result was a magnificent performance. Even Liszt himself could but acknowledge this, and, from his place in the front row of seats, immediately beneath the conductor's desk, he more than once rose to shake Mr. Manns cordially by the hand, and to bow to the audience, whose cheers and applause reverberated throughout the enclosed area. Herr Stavenhagen made a very successful first appearance, and bids fair to become a highly popular artist. He has profited ably by his mentor's instructions, and in his delicate manipulation of scale passages and *grupetti* comes closer to his model than any other pianist with whom we are acquainted. This is high praise, but it is deserved. Herr Stavenhagen also has plenty of muscular power, but this, wisely, is kept in reserve as much as possible. The Concerto made an undeniable effect, and the young executant was loudly called back to the platform—where also, in response to continuous vociferations, the master himself appeared. It was rather a pity that Herr Stavenhagen chose the elaborate and lengthy fantasia on the "Huguenots," in addition to the "Liebestraum," for his second solo, since it unduly prolonged an entertainment which was already much more extended than usual. The Concert over, there was a repetition of the noisy demonstration in Liszt's favour, and he must have found it no easy matter to escape from the somewhat too pressing attentions of his admirers.

After this, it might be supposed that Liszt would have been left in peace for the remainder of the day; but no, the mercurial Abbé was speedily off again Londonwards to assist at a

RECEPTION AT THE GERMAN ATHENÆUM.

All the more distinguished members of the club were in attendance, and after a short programme of Liszt's music had been disposed of, the master seated himself at the piano, to the emphatic delight of his fellow *convives*, and played his arrangement of Schubert's "Frühlingsglaube" and Weber's "Momento Capriccioso."

The following day, Sunday, did not find the Abbé any the worse for his previous exertions. On the contrary, he was prepared for a day of extra fatigue. Early in the morning he left Sydenham to attend service at the Brompton Oratory, remaining afterwards to hear a special selection of organ music; in the afternoon he was the centre of an enthusiastic gathering at the residence of the well known *litterateur* and amateur, Mr. W. Beatty-Kingston, where he astonished and gratified his audience by improvising in the manner in which he is simply unapproachable. In the evening he was due at Marlborough House, where he had the honour of dining with the Prince and Princess of Wales, after which he was heard upon his favourite instrument.

A HUNGARIAN RECEPTION,

in honour of our illustrious visitor, was arranged for Monday afternoon, the 12th, at the town residence of Dr. Duka (President of the Hungarian Association of London), Nevern Square, Earl's Court, when there were present amongst the host of the invited the Duke of Teck, the Austrian Ambassador, the Netherlands Minister, the Portuguese Minister, M^{me}. d'Antas, the Countess de Bylandt, &c. It was altogether an opportunity to get rid of superfluous patriotism and to wax enthusiastic over the presence of the great Hungarian artist, who of course could not deny his compatriots the same gratification which he had already extended to his entertainers. His playing was listened to with almost greedy satisfaction. Later on the Abbé made his way to

THE MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS,

where his countryman and brother virtuoso, Joseph Joachim, was "leading" at the last performance but one of the season. The programme—all from Beethoven—comprised the first of the Rasoumowsky Quartets in F, and the Kreutzer Sonata, wherein Herr Joachim was associated with Mr. Charles Hallé. Mr. Hallé also played the Sonata in A flat (Op. 110) in a manner which called forth the complimentary approbation of his eminent auditor. As usual, Liszt was received with Royal honours on entering the Concert-room, and was obviously regarded as quite as much a part of the entertainment as the music itself.

On Tuesday, the 13th, the Abbé lunched with the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, and the following evening witnessed the ninety-ninth representation of "Faust" at the Lyceum Theatre. Mr. Henry Irving graciously placed the Royal box at the disposal of Liszt and his party—which included Mr. and Mrs. Littleton, Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Mackenzie, Madame Munkacsy, Mr. W. Bache and Miss Constance Bache, and Herr Stavenhagen—and the performance was keenly enjoyed, notably by the principal guest of the evening, who had little or no difficulty in following Mr. W. G. Wills's version of the famous original. The theatre was darkened when the Abbé and his retinue arrived, so that he was not at first observed, but at the fall of the act drop, when the lights were turned up, the conspicuous figure of the white-haired musician became the cynosure of all eyes, and a ringing cheer brought forth responsive salutations. After the performance Liszt supped with Mr. Irving in the old club room of the Beefsteak Club—a place of extraordinary tradi-

tions, with which, it is to be hoped, the master was duly regaled, as well as with creature comforts.

On Thursday afternoon, as will be found notified elsewhere, Liszt was present at

MR. FREDERIC LAMOND'S FOURTH RECITAL

at St. James's Hall, while on Friday evening he presided at the

RECITAL OF HIS PUPIL, HERR STAVENHAGEN,

at Prince's Hall. There was a numerous, though not an overflowing audience, the number of amateurs who had been hanging on to the heels of the Abbé during the previous ten days in hopes of witnessing a gratuitous exhibition of his exceptional powers evidently having cooled down in their ardour. Nevertheless, there were plenty present to greet the musician with perfect English good-will and heartiness, and to give a cordial welcome to the young pianist, whose abilities were put to the test for the first time in central London. We have already spoken of Herr Stavenhagen as a very accomplished player; indeed, for a very young man, he seems to be almost phenomenally good. But while the excellence of his method is at once to be recognised, the misfortune of appearing only as an expositor of Liszt's music prevents any accurate judgment being formed as to his calibre as an artist. The selection embraced the "Funerailles" in F minor, from the "Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses"; Sposalizio in E major, from the "Années de Pèlerinage"; Grand Fantasia and Fugue in B flat major, on the name of Bach; "Legendes" in A and E major—(a) "La Predication aux Oiseaux" and (b) "St. François marchant sur les flots"; Etudes in G sharp minor and E flat (after Paganini); Sonnetto di Petrarca in A flat; and Grande Fantasia sur "Les Huguenots," in B, specially rearranged by the composer for this Concert. Herr Stavenhagen obtained every possible encouragement from his hearers, and may be assured of a high place in our esteem whenever he thinks fit to revisit our shores.

"ST. ELIZABETH" AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

The overwhelming success of the production of "St. Elizabeth" by the Novello Choir, at St. James's Hall, led the Crystal Palace executive to reconsider their preconcerted arrangements for the final Saturday Concert of the season, the 17th, and to substitute the Hungarian composer's oratorio for Beethoven's Choral Symphony. The alteration was in all respects dictated by wisdom. There was the Novello Choir, ready to hand; there was Mr. Mackenzie, also ready to hand, to conduct the performance. Small wonder then that Mr. Manns vacated the conductor's chair in favour of the popular North Briton, while Beethoven was deposed for the nonce to make room for Liszt. Into the details of the performance it is by no means necessary to enter, inasmuch as the principals were the same that took part in the St. James's Hall representation—Madame Albani, Mdle. Pauline Cramer, Messrs. Peskett, Vaughan Edwardes, Whitney, King, and Santley—and that the work was given under the same auspices as before.

The concert-room was crowded in every part, and standing room would have been willingly paid for. The grand old composer was present, as usual, and doubtless was highly flattered by the encomiums lavishly bestowed on all hands. No element of an artistic triumph was lacking, and the public enthusiasm was, to all account, perfectly spontaneous and genuine. Of course there were calls for the author, and equally as a matter of course, he mounted the

orchestral steps, and made his obeisance from the platform. Be sure, also, that while all this enthusiasm was flying about, Mr. Mackenzie was not forgotten. The choir sang admirably, and the orchestral playing left nothing for the most fastidious taste to desire.

At the conclusion of the luncheon which preceded the Concert, to which Liszt was invited by the Crystal Palace Directors, Mr. B. L. Moseley, on behalf of the Committee, presented the Abbé with a "Valedictory Address," from the London Branch of the United Richard Wagner Society.

LISZT'S FINAL APPEARANCE IN LONDON

took place on the afternoon of Monday, the 19th, on the occasion of a Concert given at Prince's Hall by the Countess Sadowska—a lady and an artist new to London, as far as our experience extends. Only the compositions of the Hungarian musician were performed, but this was strictly in accordance with the eternal fitness of things. Messrs. Willem Coenen, Buziau, and Hollmann played Saint-Saëns's chamber arrangement of the "Orpheus" Symphonic Poem; Mr. Coenen and his clever young pupil, Miss Shaw, of Brighton, gave an effective rendering of the two-piano version of Weber's "Polonaise Brillante"; Mr. Hollmann and Mr. Coenen contributed violoncello and pianoforte solos respectively; and the Countess Sadowska, Mdle. Marie de Lido, and Mr. Arthur Oswald supplied the vocal music. Miss Shaw had the honour of being presented to the Abbé, who spoke a few sentences of congratulation and encouragement which will be, no doubt, treasured up by the young lady amongst her happiest reminiscences. At the end of the Concert, Mr. Charles Fry, the well-known elocutionist, came forward and delivered a

"FAREWELL TO LISZT,"

specially written for the occasion by Mr. W. Beatty-Kingston. The address appears in the current number of *The Theatre* magazine. The lines were listened to with the most sympathetic attention, and at the end there was one of the usual eruptions of popular sentiment. And thus did the grand old figure of the Abbé—humanitarian, executant, author, and composer—pass out of the public life of the year 1886!

Liszt left for Antwerp, *via* Dover, by the morning mail on Tuesday, the 20th, attended to the station (Herne Hill) by his hospitable entertainers, Mr. and Mrs. Littleton, and other members of the family. Amongst those present to bid the illustrious master "Farewell, and God speed," were Messrs. Walter Bache, A. C. Mackenzie, and Dr. Duka. As a parting souvenir, Mrs. Littleton presented her late guest with a splendid bouquet of Marechal Niel roses and lilies of the valley. On arriving at Dover, Liszt was presented with an address by the Mayor, and a bouquet by the Mayor's daughter. Messrs. Alfred and Augustus Littleton accompanied the Abbé as far as Calais, where they left him and his *compagnon de voyage*, Herr Stavenhagen, with reciprocal protestations of amity and good-will.

The year 1886 will long be remembered by the lustre thrown upon it by the presence of a truly great man, the most imposing figure in the musical world, not only of to-day, but for a generation past. And now that he has tested the warmth of English feeling, we can only express the hope—wherein we but re-echo the wish of thousands—that he may be long spared to put our friendliness again and again to the proof. We welcomed him with pleasure; we part with unfeigned regret from

FRANZ LISZT.