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Mozart's Symphony in C (The Jupiter)

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No wonder that Sir Edward Elgar complains that his lectures are misreported. In a *Birmingham* newspaper (!) he is actually credited with a reference to 'Brahms's Symphony,' a work doubtless inspired by the death of Nelson, though Sir Edward appears to have been silent on that point. This reminds us of the tradition that when the Requiem of Brahms was first performed in this country some (surely not so many as 'some') of the musical critics referred to the work as 'a forgotten composition by Braham'!

'So, gentlemen, I hear you are thinking of putting an organ in our Chapel; if you do, I beg leave to say, I'll put a stop to it.' Thus spake Warden Berdmore, of Merton College, Oxford (1790-1810) to his Fellows.

'Rocked in the cradle of the deep,' sung by Mr. Bunker. A correspondent in sending the above information from a concert-programme, remarks: 'How very appropriate!'

'Overemployed' suggests that some one should compose an 'apathetic symphony.'

Owing to the notices of the very large number of concerts and various music-makings that have recently taken place in different parts of the country, THE MUSICAL TIMES is this month increased to seventy-six pages.

MOZART'S SYMPHONY IN C (THE JUPITER).

BY SIR GEORGE GROVE, C.B.

The *sobriquet* of 'Jupiter,'* whether bestowed on this noble work by the late John Cramer or any other individual, well expresses the estimate of a former generation of the position which in its calm, lofty, god-like beauty it held in the then world of instrumental music. That it has been dethroned from that position by the 'Eroica' and other symphonies of Beethoven is as much a part of the regular order of nature as that Jupiter himself should have been dethroned—that the Greek religion and Greek art should have given way before Christianity. Jupiter is still the head of Olympus, the Parthenon is still the noblest building of the ancient world, notwithstanding Rheims Cathedral and Westminster Abbey; and the 'Jupiter' Symphony is still the greatest orchestral work of the world which preceded the French Revolution. It may not have the sweetness of the E flat Symphony, or the passion of the G minor, but it is larger, broader, grander than either of them. And as it is the greatest, so it was the last of that great trilogy with which Mozart immortalised the months of June, July and August, 1788.

We may be pardoned for fondly recalling once more the extraordinary fact that the three masterpieces which crown Mozart's labours in the composition of symphonies, the 47th, 48th, and 49th of the list, were written within a period of seven weeks. The E flat was completed (the dates are taken from Mozart's own autograph catalogue) on June 26, the G minor on July 25, and the 'Jupiter' on August 10. The mere length alone of these great works would suffice to make the fact astonishing, but when their contents are remembered—especially those of the third—it is

truly extraordinary. Why, after this memorable feat, Mozart should have relinquished the highest form of orchestral composition, during the three years and four months that elapsed between the date just quoted and December 5, 1791, on which he breathed his last in this world, nothing is known to explain. It can hardly have been because he was too busy, for he never seems to have been prevented by *that* cause from creating any work, great or small, that he had a mind to. Such intervals, however, are to be found in the career of other composers. Thus Beethoven, after producing his first eight symphonies in twelve years with tolerable regularity, rested from that part of his labours and did not complete the ninth until ten years later. With Schubert too it was much the same. His first eight symphonies belong to the years between 1813 and 1822; then there is a gap from 1822 to 1826, in which year *his ninth* was completed at Gastein, and handed over to the Austrian Musical Society, though by a curious freak of fortune the manuscript has for a time disappeared.

The 'Jupiter' appears in the catalogue compiled by Dr. Ludwig Ritter von Köchel as No. 551 of the complete works. The autograph is written on oblong paper, ninety-one pages of twelve staves to a page.* The orchestra is that usually employed by Mozart in Symphonies, without clarinets or trombones.

Allegro vivace. C major.

Andante cantabile. F major.

Menuetto e Trio—Allegretto. C major.

Finale—Allegro molto. C major.

The 'Jupiter' Symphony has no introductory movement, but commences at once with the principal theme of the first *Allegro*. This theme contains two distinct features, the first (a very familiar one in Mozart's openings—compare the Symphony in D without Minuet, and the Overtures to 'Idomeneo' and 'Titus') bold and eager, the second soft and questioning, so strongly contrasted that it would be easy to attribute some dramatic intention to them if there were any chance of Mozart's having so conceived them:

No. 1. *Allegro vivace.*



This is immediately succeeded by a *stiff* passage, in which the wind and strings support each other, and to which we shall have to make a further reference:

No. 2. Wind.



This, or something like it, continues on the chord of C for fifteen bars. Then the first theme is repeated

* Mozart is in no way responsible for the name any more than Beethoven is responsible for the names of 'Moonlight,' 'Pastoral,' and 'Appassionata,' which are familiarly attached to his Sonatas.

* See Köchel's 'Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichniss,' a work which no student of musical literature can be without.

with a new accompaniment in flutes, oboes, and horns, thus :

No. 3. Flute & Oboe.

And this is worked until the 'second subject' is reached. The first portion, with which we have hitherto been engaged, though in the same *tempo* as the rest of the movement, has a more pompous character, and conveys the impression of its being an Introduction. With the new key, however, the movement seems to assume a more suave *Allegro* character. The second subject is as gay as gay can be, just as if intrigues and cabals, and debt and illness and disappointment—poor Mozart's daily bread—had no existence whatever. It is in the orthodox key of the 'dominant,' or G, and in two halves, of which we quote the first only, noting as we do so the charming effect produced (at *b*) by the happy repetition in the bass of the phrase which has just been heard in the treble :

No. 4. Strings.

The second half closes on the key-note of G, and is followed by a further melody by way of codetta :

No. 5.

and this again calls us to notice the fragment of the first theme (No. 1) which appears in the bass (at *a*).

One of the characteristics of this Symphony is its remarkable use of counterpoint and imitation, not to stiffen but to enrich and adorn the work, and the above examples show how early in the piece and how easily Mozart introduced his learning.

The character of the second subject is kept up after the passage last quoted, notwithstanding a momentary change into C minor ; and is further heightened by a third melody of the brightest nature, by way of episode or coda ; its gay turns, its staccato notes, its pizzicato bass, all combining to make it exhilarating. It starts forth in the strings after a bar's rest as follows :

No. 6. Vns. 1 & 2, in octaves.

This charming tune is almost identical with an air which Mozart had composed in the previous May, to words beginning 'Voi siete un po tondo,' to suit a bass singer who was not satisfied with his part in Anfossi's opera of 'Le Gelosie Fortunate.*' An episode of this kind is a rare innovation with Mozart, and it is rarer still to find him employing an existing air for the purpose. The character of hilarity, so remarkable in the last three quotations, is kept up to the end of the first portion of the *Allegro*.

The repetition of the first portion completed, the 'development' begins by a sudden change into E flat, in which the episode last quoted is worked with great ingenuity. As Mozart proceeds, a group of notes in the latter part of the air (see *a* in No. 6) seizes his fancy, and he gives it in close imitation between the violins and basses, bringing in the *stiff* chords out of No. 2 as an accompaniment :

No. 7. Flute & Oboes.

After a few bars he abandons this, and uses a modification of the same group in a 'canon' which is almost 'strict' :

No. 8.

Thus, in a dozen bars or so, we arrive at the key of E major, and thence again by a masterly transition of four bars into F, in which key the first theme appears as quoted in No. 3, first with the accompaniment in double counterpoint (below, in the bassoons, instead

* Otto Jahn's 'Life of Mozart,' English translation, ii., 334.

of above, in the flutes), and then in its former shape. The semiquavers and demi-semiquavers of Nos. 1 and 3 are then employed in the violins as a melody to cover a great deal of fine, bold modulation, and at last by a recurrence of the imitative passage, quoted as No. 7, the key of C major is regained, and the *réprise* of the original theme is thundered forth as at first.

In the recapitulation of the first section there is a great deal of change, very remarkable considering the date of the composition. Amongst the rest the passage No. 3 returns, not in C major as before, but in C minor, leading at once into E flat, and we remain in flat keys for some little time, as if the previous working out had not satisfied the wandering propensities of Mozart's soul—as if he had more to say than he had yet found opportunity to express. And not only the keys, but the instrumentation and the forms of the accompaniment are changed, to a degree which, to say the least, is very unusual in Mozart's recapitulations, and at that date was very much of a novelty. But here, for this movement at least, the erratic proceedings of the master cease. The second subject (No. 4) is brought back in C, and the episode (No. 6) in the same key, and a short *Coda* of four bars (added to the real *Coda* of the episode), ends this noble movement.

II. The form of the *Andante cantabile* is much the same with that of the G minor and Mozart's other Symphonies. It opens (with muted violins) with a lovely melody of ten bars' length in F, beginning as follows :



The first four bars of this are repeated by the basses in the same key, with a figure of exquisite embroidery in the fiddles, thus :



and then a new melody is heard in the oboes and bassoons :

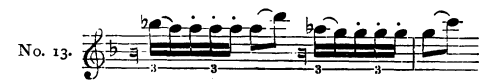


(of which there are two employed throughout the *Andante* with consummate art and effect) accompanied, in the violins, by a syncopated arpeggio figure and broken triplets.

Then comes the 'second subject' proper of the movement, in the oboes in C, introduced by a beautiful figure of which Mendelssohn was surely thinking—or not thinking—when he wrote the *Con moto* of his Italian Symphony, and breathing the very soul of peace and repose :



Then the fiddles have this delicious little figure :



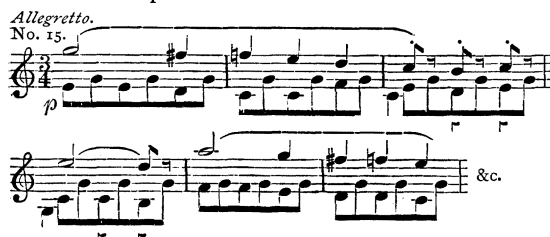
and next these two phrases, alternating in violins and flute :



with which delicious melody we reach the end of the first part of the movement.

Such is a bare catalogue of the materials of this beautiful *Andante* : but the art with which they are woven together, and the long stream of lovely melody, produced by the union of phrase and instrument, can best be appreciated by attentive listening. In the next portion of the movement these materials are worked out, and many an artifice of double counterpoint, contrivance, and modulation employed in the process, but without even a passing cloud of obscurity, or a momentary interruption of the beauty and grace which were so native to Mozart's pen. The conclusion has profited by one of those afterthoughts which, though frequent in Beethoven and Mendelssohn, are rarely met with in Mozart, probably owing to the quantity he wrote, and the rapid rate at which his works followed one another, so as not to allow him time to go back after he had once finished them. The last eleven bars of the movement were originally seven ; the first four of them were struck out by Mozart, and replaced by eight, containing that beautiful last return of the original subject (No. 9) which is so fascinating. The new passage is written on a separate leaf, and wafered into the MS. (like Handel's grand afterthought, 'All the inhabitants of Canaan,' in 'The people shall hear'), and the fact is certified by Mendelssohn, in a letter to Moscheles, dated March 7, 1845. There are few who will not join with him in saying, 'Is not this a happy alteration ?'

III. The gaiety so prominent in portions of the opening movement returns in the *Minuet*, though in a different style. Mozart's Minuets are always lively, and this is no exception to the rule. It is in the key of C, though with a chromatic characteristic inwoven into each of its phrases, from the opening theme to the lovely and ingenious *Coda* with which it closes, and which has always been a favourite point with the listener. It opens as follows :



In its treatment it is more extended than the Minuet of the G minor Symphony, though it is unnecessary to say that it is perfectly symmetrical in form.

The *Trio* is likewise in C (happy simplicity of a great genius!), going to E in the second part; and the ingenious and quiet manner in which the return to the original key is managed, as if nothing whatever was being done, has for long been one of the well-known and favourite points in Mozart's works. The opening of the *Trio* is a delightful instance of question and answer :



and the return from the *Trio* to the *Minuet* is one which even Mendelssohn might have envied.

IV. But it is for the *Finale* that Mozart—as if aware that he was writing his last Symphony—has reserved all the resources of his science, and all the power, which no one seems to have possessed to the same degree with himself, of concealing that science, and making it the vehicle for music as pleasing as it is learned. Nowhere, perhaps—not even in his greatest Quartets or in the immortal Overture to the 'Zauberflöte'—has he achieved more.

The *Finale* is in the most regular symphonic form—as much so as the first *Allegro* of the work—and is constructed on four perfectly distinct and individual themes. First, a well-known phrase of the older ecclesiastical music, treated by Mozart himself with evident affection in several other places, and more recently used by Mendelssohn, as was pointed out in the remarks on the opening themes of both the 'Reformation' Symphony and the 'Hymn of Praise.'*

* This old succession of notes was originally a part of the 'intonation' of a Gregorian tone. Mozart was very fond of it. The whole *Credo* of his Mass in F is founded on it; and he uses it also in a Symphony of 1759, in B flat, published as 'No. 11'; in a Violin Sonata, in E flat (1785), and elsewhere. Mendelssohn was especially attached to it, and it may be traced in 'St. Paul,' 'For so hath the Lord,' and 'For all the Gentiles'; in the 42nd Psalm, 'Why my soul'; in the openings of the 'Lobgesang' and 'Reformation' Symphonies, and the *Finale* of the 'Scotch' Symphony. Bach's Fugue in E in 'the 48' is known to every one. Handel makes a splendid effect with it in his chorus, 'Then round about the starry throne,' where the basses lead off with 'and triumph over death.' Schubert makes it the subject of the 'Cum Sancto' in his Mass in E flat; and even Beethoven has brought it in in the Piano-forte Sonata, Op. 110, bars 5 to 8, in the left hand. In the English school we need only point to the 'Glory be' in Purcell's Jubilate in D, to Croft's 'God is gone up,' to Sir John Goss's fine chorus, 'As the mountains,' and to Sullivan's Tempest Song, 'Come unto these yellow sands.' An attempt to trace the persistent use of this phrase down to modern times (Brahms delights in it) was made by the writer in the *Musical World* from October, 1886, to May, 1887.

The phrase itself consists of but four notes: and although on its first appearance (as quoted) it is garnished with a gay melody to connect its repetition and to finish it off, still this latter is but little employed afterwards, and the real theme is the phrase of four semibreves.

No. 17. *Allegro molto.*
Vn. 1.



This is the 'first subject' proper of the movement. How gay it is! How fresh the old church theme sounds on the modern fiddles! And how pretty the little flourish in which Mozart lets off his steam in the eighth bar!

The second theme commences immediately on the conclusion of the foregoing quotation; it consists almost simply* of the descending scale of the key :



and forms the material for a passage of sixteen bars in the tonic, such as Mozart usually introduces after he has given out the first theme of his movements. The announcement of these two themes is followed by a short treatment of the first as a fugue subject, in five parts, by the strings alone, in the following style, as if to show what a sweet thing a fugal passage could be :



After the answers have all been regularly made, the third theme is heard in the violins, with rapid response from the basses, the other strings and the whole of the wind keeping up sustained harmonies :



* This is the phrase which M. Oulibicheff accuses Beethoven of stealing in the *Finale* of his first Symphony. It is extraordinary what party spirit will make people say! He might just as well accuse Mozart of having stolen it from the 'Hailstone Chorus,' where it occurs almost note for note, or from the bass aria in Jomelli's Oratorio of 'Betulia liberata,' where, as the late Sir W. G. Cousins pointed out, it is used in actual connection with a phrase of four semibreves, thus :



Then No. 2 bursts forth afresh, with swift canonic answer, and leads into the key of G, in which the fourth theme appears, doing duty as the 'second subject' proper of the movement—a graceful flowing phrase, though short :

No. 21. Vn. 1. *p* *&c.*
Vn. 2. *p*

Flute. *f*
Fag. *tr* *&c.*

followed sharp, as will be observed in the quotation, by No. 18 and No. 20, eager to engage in their contrapuntal work.

Having thus brought his materials into the field, Mozart proceeds to elaborate them in the form usual to the first *Allegro* of a symphony ; and the way in which he does this has long been recognised as a marvel for its union of counterpoint and fancy. The manner in which these phrases, apparently so unconnected, fit into each other and into themselves, and at the same time lend themselves to the 'form' of the Symphony, which was contrived to suit quite a freer style of composition, is a curious study. And as if the four were not enough sufficiently to fetter him, he inverts the second of his themes (No. 18 above), taking it up the scale instead of down, in the same intervals ; and then these five are combined and treated with the most extraordinary variety of close imitation, canon and accompaniment ; always with effect and spirit, and with a continual flow of melody and astonishing freedom of modulation. In the middle portion of the movement—the working out, after the double bar, which is devoted mainly to the elaboration of No. 18—it is most interesting to observe the artifices by which Mozart, while keeping up all this strict contrapuntal treatment, has added warmth and variety to it by making the flutes and oboes answer the strings ('like linnets in the pauses of the wind') with phrases of different rhythm and character, while at another time the brass (a modest pair of trumpets and a pair of horns, used for colour and not for noise) and drums reiterate the phrase :

No. 22.

(taken from the opening of theme No. 18) now in tonic, now in dominant, now before and now after the starting of that theme. When, after the conclusion of the 'working out,' the original first subject (No. 17) is returned to, we find the same licence which we noticed in the same spot in the *Allegro*. Mozart is not content, as in the E flat and G minor Symphonies, with a mere textual repetition of the former passages, but for eight-and-twenty bars after the *réprise*, that fruitful phrase of four semibreves is harmonized, and modulated, and extended in a manner perfectly different from that of its original occurrence, a licence which has few if any parallels before this Symphony, and opens up a startling vista of the bold innovations which this great genius might have made in Symphony writing had his life been prolonged, but which seem to have first occurred to him in his last work of that kind.

Another new feature, equally an innovation as to its length and importance, and, like that just spoken of, anticipating a principal characteristic in Beethoven's treatment of the Symphony, is the *Coda* with which this *Finale* concludes, in which all the learning and contrivance of the former portion are summarised and condensed, and, if possible, surpassed. The *Coda* is no less than sixty-eight bars long. It starts with a quasi-inversion of the first subject as follows :

No. 23. Violins.

which is first worked by itself for twelve bars. And then begins—what is not to be found in the body of the movement, notwithstanding all the contrivances employed there—a regular strict fugue, lasting for exactly thirty bars, in which the four subjects (with a fifth till now subordinate) are brought into different relations and closer combinations than before, the effect being as it were to weld the whole structure firmly together into one everlasting monument of symmetry and beauty. For such was the force of genius of this wonderful man and such his habitual mastery over the technicalities of the art, that these elaborate contrivances never obtrude themselves to the injury of the poetry and spirit of the composition, but all is as brilliant, as graceful, and as forcible as if the composer had been quite unfettered. Think what a union of invention, skill, practice, and resolution must have been required to imagine such a work as that we have now before us ; and to put it on paper, once for all, in the state in which it is now played—for Mozart rarely, if ever, made 'sketches' of his music—in the fifteen days which elapsed between July 25 and August 10 !

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