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VOLUMES ISSUED

FIFTY MASTERSONGS Edited by Henry T. Finck

11

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Ш

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN
FORTY PIANO COMPOSITIONS
Edited by James Huneker

I

ROBERT FRANZ: FIFTY SONGS
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٧

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TWENTY ORIGINAL PIANO COMPOSITIONS
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VI

FRANZ LISZT
TWENTY PIANO TRANSCRIPTIONS
Edited by August Spanuth

VII

FRANZ LISZT TEN HUNGARIAN RHAPSODIES Edited by August Spanuth and John Orth

VIII

ROBERT SCHUMANN: FIFTY SONGS

Edited by W. J. Henderson

IX

WAGNER LYRICS FOR SOPRANO
Edited by Carl Armbruster

X

WAGNER LYRICS FOR TENOR Edited by Carl Armbruster

ΧI

MODERN FRENCH SONGS, VOL. I BEMBERG TO FRANCK Edited by Philip Hale XII

MODERN FRENCH SONGS, VOL. II GEORGES TO WIDOR Edited by Philip Hale

IIIX

SONGS BY THIRTY AMERICANS

Edited by Rupert Hughes

XIV

FRANZ SCHUBERT: FIFTY SONGS

Edited by Henry T. Finck

ΧV

SELECTIONS FROM THE MUSIC DRAMAS
OF RICHARD WAGNER
Arranged for the piano by Otto Singer

YVI

ROBERT SCHUMANN
FIFTY PIANO COMPOSITIONS
Edited by Xaver Scharwenka

XVII

TWENTY-FOUR NEGRO MELODIES

Transcribed for the piano by S. Coleridge-Taylor

XVIII

SEVENTY SCOTTISH SONGS

Edited with accompaniments by Helen Hopekirk

XIX

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL VOL. I, SONGS AND AIRS FOR HIGH VOICE Edited by Ebenezer Prout

XX

GEORGE PRIDERIC HANDEL VOL. II, SONGS AND AIRS FOR LOW VOICE Edited by Ebenezer Prout

XX

FIFTY SHAKSPERE SONGS

Edited by Charles Vincent

XXII

Edited by M. Esposito

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# FIFTY MASTERSONGS

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# MASTERSONGS BY TWENTY COMPOSERS EDITED BY HENRY T. FINCK

(AUTHOR OF "SONGS AND SONG WRITERS," "WAGNER AND HIS WORKS," ETC.)

FOR LOW VOICE



**BOSTON: OLIVER DITSON COMPANY** 

NEW YORK: CHAS. H. DITSON & CO.

CHICAGO: LYON & HEALY

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# CONTENTS

MOZART, WOLFGANG AMADEUS (1756-17) The Violet (Das Veikhen)	791) 1	Golden at my Feet (Gelb rollt mir zu Füssen). Op. 34, No. 9	109
BEETHOVEN, LUDWIG VAN (1770-182 Adelaide. Op. 46	(7) 5	BRAHMS, JOHANNES (1833-1897) My Queen (Wie bist du meine Königin). Op. 32,	
SCHUBERT, Franz (1797-1828)		No. 9	112
The Erlking (Der Erlkönig). Op. 1	15	Love Song (Minnelied). Op. 71, No. 5	116
The Wanderer (Der Wanderer). Op. 4, No. 1	24	A Thought like Music (Wie Melodien zieht es	
Death and the Maiden (Der Tod und das Mädchen).		mir). Op. 105, No. 1	119
Op. 7, No. 3	28	JENSEN, Adolf (1837–1879)	
My Peace thou art (Du bist die Ruh). Op. 59,		Press thy cheek against mine own (Lehn' deine	
No. 3	30	Wang' an meine Wang'). Op. 1, No. 1	123
Hark, hark, the Lark (Horch, horch, die Lerch).		When through the Piazzetta (Wenn durch die	_
Posthumous	34	Piazzetta). Op. 50, No. 3	126
The Inn (Das Wirthshaus). Op. 89, No. 21	39	Row gently here, my Gondolier! (Leis' rudern	
My Abode (Aufenthalt). "Schwanengesang," No. 5	42	hier, mein Gondolier!) Op. 50, No. 4	131
My Phantom Double (Der Doppelgänger). "Schwanengesang," No. 13	47	TCHAÏKOVSKY, PIOTR ILVITCH	
CHOPIN, Frédéric (1809–1849)		(1840–1893)	
My Delight (Meine Freuden)	50	Why? (Warum?). Op. 6, No. 5	135
The Parted Lovers (Zwei Leichen)	54	None but the lonely Heart (Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt). Op. 6, No. 6	139
SCHUMANN, ROBERT (1810-1856)	•	Disappointment (Déception). Op. 65, No. 2	143
Dedication (Widmung). Op. 25, No. 1	56		-73
The Lotus Flower (Die Lotosblume). Op. 25, No. 7	60	DVOŘÁK, Antonín (1841–1904)	
In the Forest (Waldesgespräch). Op. 39, No. 3	62	As my dear old Mother (Als die alte Mutter).	_
I'll not complain (Ich grolle nicht). Op. 48, No. 7	66	Op. 55, No. 4	146
		MASSENET, Jules (1842-)	
LISZT, Franz (1811–1886)	٤.	Elegy (Elégie)	148
The Loreley (Die Lorelei)	69		•
The King of Thule (Der König von Thule)	77	GRIEG, EDVARD (1843-)	
Wanderer's Night Song (Wanderers Nachtlied)	83	From Monte Pincio (Vom Monte Pincio)	150
WAGNER, RICHARD (1813-1883)		The First Primrose (Mit einer Primula veris)	158
Dreams (Träume)	85	A Swan (Ein Schwan)	160 162
FRANZ, ROBERT (1815-1892)		At the Brookside (An einem Bache) The Old Mother (Die alte Mutter)	165
Request (Bitte). Op. 9, No. 3	89	The Mountain Maid (Das Kind der Berge). Op.	103
For Music (Für Musik). Op. 10, No. 1	91	67, No. 2	168
Dedication (Widmung). Op. 14, No. 1	93	••	
Now welcome, my Wood! (Willkommen, mein		GODARD, BENJAMIN (1849–1895)	
Wald!) Op. 21, No. 1	95	Florian's Song (Chanson de Florian)	171
Delight of Melancholy (Wonne der Wehmuth). Op.		PADEREWSKI, IGNACE JAN (1860- )	
33, No. 1	99	Ah! the Torment! (Ach! die Qualen.) Op. 18,	
The Rose complained (Es hat die Rose sich beklagt).		No. 5	174
Op. 42, No. 5	101	_	7.
CORNELIUS, Peter (1824-1874)		MacDOWELL, Edward A. (1861-)	_
The Monotone (Ein Ton). Op. 3, No. 3	103	The Sea. Op. 47, No. 7	178
RUBINSTEIN, Anton (1829-1894)		STRAUSS, RICHARD (1864-)	
The Asra (Der Asra). Op. 32, No. 6	106	Serenade (Ständchen). Op. 17, No. 2	180

# INDEX OF AUTHORS

BJÖRNSON, Björnstjerne (1832-)	HEINE, HEINRICH (1799–1856)	
Vom Monte Pincio (From Monte Pincio). GRIEG 150	Der Asra (The Asra). RUBINSTEIN	106
BODENSTEDT, FRIEDRICH VON (1819-	Der Doppelgänger (My Phantom Double). SCHU- BERT	47
1892) Es hat die Rose sich beklagt (The Rose com-	Ich grolle nicht (I'll not complain). Schumann Lehn' deine Wang' an meine Wang' (Press thy	66
plained). FRANZ  Gelb rollt mir zu Füssen (Golden at my Feet).  RUBINSTEIN	cheek against mine own). JENSEN Die Lorelei (The Loreley). LISZT	123 69
CLAUDIUS, MATTHIAS (1743-1815)	Die Lotosblume ( <i>The Lotus Flower</i> ). Schumann Warum? ( <i>Why?</i> ) Tchaïkovsky	60 135
Der Tod und das Mädchen (Death and the Maiden). Schubert 28	HEYDUK, Adolf (1835- )	-33
COLLIN, PAUL	Als die alte Mutter (As my dear old Mother). Dvořák	146
Déception (Disappointment). TCHAÏKOVSKY 143	HÖLTY, H. (1828–1887)	
CORNELIUS, PETER (1824-1874)	Minnelied (Love Song). BRAHMS	116
Ein Ton (The Monotone). CORNELIUS 103 DAUMER, G. F. (1800–1875)	HOWELLS, WILLIAM DEAN (1837-) The Sea. MacDowell	178
Wie bist du meine Königin (My Queen). BRAHMS 112		-,0
EICHENDORFF, Joseph von (1788- 1857)	IBSEN, HENRIK (1828-) Ein Schwan ( <i>A Swan</i> ). Grieg	160
Waldesgespräch (In the Forest). SCHUMANN 62	LENAU, Nikolaus (1802–1850)	
FLORIAN, J. P. CLARIS DE (1755-1794)	Bitte (Request). FRANZ	89
Chanson de Florian (Florian's Song). GODARD 171	MATTHISSON, FRIEDRICH VON (1761-	
GALLET, Louis (1835– ) Elégie ( <i>Elegy</i> ). Massenet 148	1831) Adelaide. Beethoven	5
GARBORG, ARNE (1851- )	MICKIEWICZ, ADAM (1798-1855)	
Das Kind der Berge (The Mountain Maid). GRIEG 168	Ach! die Qualen. (Ah! the Torment!) PADEREWSKI Meine Freuden (My Delight). CHOPIN	174 50
GEIBEL, EMANUEL VON (1815–1884)	MOORE, Thomas (1779–1852)	,
Für Musik (For Music). FRANZ 91	Row gently here, my Gondolier! (Leis' rudern hier,	
GOETHE, Johann Wolfgang von (1749– 1832)	mein Gondolier!) JENSEN When through the Piazzetta (Wenn durch die	131
Der Erlkönig (The Erlking). Schubert 15	Piazzetta). Jensen	126
Der König von Thule (The King of Thule). LISZT 77  Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt (None but the lonely  Heart). TCHAÏKOVSKY 139	MÜLLER, WILHELM (1794–1827) Das Wirthshaus ( <i>The Inn</i> ). Schubert	20
Das Veilchen (The Violet). Mozart 1		<b>3</b> 9
Wanderers Nachtlied (Wanderer's Night Song). Liszt 83	MÜLLER, Wolfgang (1816–1873) Widmung ( <i>Dedication</i> ). Franz	93
Wonne der Wehmuth (Delight of Melancholy). FRANZ 99	PAULSEN, J. (1851-)	0
GROTH, KLAUS (1819– )	Miteiner Primula veris (The First Primrose). GRIEG	158
Wie Melodien zieht es mir (A Thought like Music). BRAHMS 119	RELLSTAB, LUDWIG (1799–1860) Aufenthalt (My Abode). SCHUBERT	42

# INDEX OF AUTHORS

ROQUETTE, Otto (1824-) Willkommen, mein Wald! (Now welcome, my Wood!) FRANZ	95	SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM (1564-1616) Hark, hark, the Lark (Horch, horch, die Lerch). SCHUBERT	
RÜCKERT, FRIEDRICH (1788-1866) Du bist die Ruh (My Peace thou art). Schubert Widmung (Dedication). Schumann	30 56	VINJE, A. O. (1818–1870) Die alte Mutter (The Old Mother). GRIEG An einem Bache (At the Brookside). GRIEG	16 <u>:</u>
SCHACK, Adolf Friedrich von (1815-)		WESENDONCK, MATHILDE Träume ( <i>Dreams</i> ). WAGNER	8
Ständchen (Serenade). STRAUSS  SCHMIDT, GEORG FILIPP (1766–1849)  Der Wanderer (The Wanderer). SCHUBERT	180	ZALESKI, BOGDAN (1802-1886) Zwei Leichen (The Parted Lovers). CHOPIN	54









SCHUMANN











# FIFTY MASTERSONGS



FEW years ago it was the fashion to print lists of the best hundred books. Naturally, no two of these lists were alike, for men differ widely in taste and judgment. The same result would follow if a number of experts and amateurs were asked to make a list of the best hundred songs—or let us say fifty—which is as many as can be conveniently printed in one volume.

The editor of the present collection of Fifty Mastersongs has made a special study of this branch of music for more than a quarter of a century; and while writing his recent volume, Songs and Song Writers, he had to go over the whole ground once more carefully. He therefore realizes vividly the difficulty of making the wisest possible choice. The chief perplexity arises from the superabundance of good things. Among Schubert's songs alone, for instance, there are more than fifty which clamor for admission; but only a few can be inserted, because room must be left for other masters.

The aim has been to secure as much variety as possible without falling below a certain standard. For this reason Mozart, Beethoven, and a few other composers are represented, even though none of their songs quite equal the best by Schubert, Schumann, Franz, or Grieg.

While, for the reasons given, it cannot be claimed that the songs in this volume are absolutely the best fifty ever written, it may be confidently asserted that they are fifty of the best. They are all mastersongs, bearing the hall-mark of genius and originality, and each one is characteristic of its composer. Familiarity with them will breed more and more admiration; and if you come across one that you do not like at first, you may be sure that the fault is yours: either you do not interpret it correctly, or your pianist is a bungler, or you need to hear it half a dozen

times before you can fathom its charms; for the beauty of these songs is more than skin-deep.

Fashionable songs please only for a few weeks, while mastersongs are among the things of beauty which are a joy forever. It is sad to think how much time and money are wasted on trashy music. Singers go into music-stores and buy pebbles and glass beads when for the same money, or even less, they might get genuine diamonds and pearls. One of the objects in issuing this collection is to so train the taste of amateurs that they will be able henceforth to tell real diamonds and pearls from their worthless imitations.

Some surprise may be caused by the fact that there are no Italian and only two French songs in this collection. The editor has searched far and wide for an Italian song worthy of being included, but without success, for reasons which cannot be given here, but which may be found in Songs and Song Writers, pp. 218-227. Liszt has remarked justly that the lyric art-song, or Lied, is "poetically and musically a product peculiar to the Germanic muse." Nevertheless, of our fifty mastersongs only twenty-nine are by German composers - Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Wagner, Franz, Cornelius, Brahms, Jensen, Strauss. The Norwegian Grieg contributes six; the Russian Rubinstein and Tchaïkovsky five; the Hungarian Liszt three; the Polish Chopin and Paderewski three; the French Massenet and Godard two; the Bohemian Dvořák and the American MacDowell one each. So that from the national point of view, too, we have considerable variety. America, it may be added, would have been represented more liberally had it not been for copyright difficulties.

Special attention has been given in this volume to the translations. Most translators sacrifice sense, accent, and everything else to the foolish effort at securing rhymes. Wherever this had been done in the case of songs here used, new versions have been specially made for this collection, in pursuance of the publisher's determination to make this volume first-class in every detail.

#### HINTS TO SINGERS

REMEMBER that the public likes good music as well as good singing, and that those vocalists are most likely to succeed in the long run who combine the two. What is wanted to-day is not simply songs but mastersongs.

A singer may have ever so beautiful a voice, and phrase with ever so much taste; if he does not enunciate the words distinctly, he is no better than a flute-player or a violinist. Most singers produce nothing but what has been aptly called "inarticulate smudges of sound," comparable to the illegible figures on a worn coin.

Technique is important, but expression is even more so. The one thing which to-day has artistic and financial value in the musical world is temperament—the power to stir an audience with emotion. To do so, the singer must enter into the spirit of the poem, just as if he were going to speak it on the stage without music.

The pianist should neither drown the voice

nor act as if he were a mere accompanist; for his part is usually quite as important as the singer's. He should study the text as carefully as the vocalist does; because in the songs the piano part is often descriptive and highly emotional, and the player is at sea unless he knows what the poem is about.

Careful attention to the poetic text also makes it easier to get the right tempo—a matter of vital importance, as a trifle too fast or too slow may utterly mar a song. Nor is it enough to have the general pace right. There are constant modifications of tempo, and of loudness, and special accents, which are the very life of the music. Take, for instance, that superbly emotional song, Grieg's The Swan. Unless both singer and player heed the expression marks—andante ben tenuto, poco animato, crescendo, agitato, ritenuto, tranquillo, lento—the song becomes like a rose without perfume, like a bird of paradise without feathers.

# WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791) AND

#### LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

While simple folk-songs have always existed, the lyric art-song, in which the pianoforte part is as important as the vocal melody, is practically a product of the nineteenth century. Bach and Handel wrote no such songs but devoted themselves, after the fashion of their time, to bigger things—cantatas, operas, oratorios, and passions. Their successors, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, did write a considerable number of *Lieder*; but unfortunately they, too, reserved their best melodies for their larger works. Hence it is no injustice to this period to admit only two of its songs to our limited collection.

Das Veilchen—The Violet. This is by far the

best of the three dozen or more songs written by Mozart. Goethe's plaintive and dainty poem evidently interested him, and he took pains (as he did in the best pages of his operas) to adapt his music lovingly to the changing moods of the text—the story of the loving violet crushed by the foot of the beloved.

Adelaide. Beethoven was twenty-five years old when he composed this song. It became popular at once—so popular, indeed, that he was annoyed and sometimes wished he had never written it; just as Wagner used to be angered when he had to listen, for the thousandth time, to his Lohengrin or Tannhäuser march. Adelaide, never-

theless, remains by far the best of Beethoven's songs. From a strictly formal point of view it is a solo cantata in the old Italian sense of the word rather than a *Lied*; but that need not trouble anybody. The music always reflects the spirit of

the poem, which Beethoven considered "heavenly"; the melody is charming, and no song written up to that time had had such an interesting and varied pianoforte part.

#### FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

SCHUBERT was the first of the great masters who gave his very best in his Lieder, and for this reason he is justly regarded as the father of the art-song. He was the most spontaneous and inexhaustible melodist of all times and countries; and whereas the operatic arias of Rossini, Donizetti, and Bellini are now for the most part faded, because they were written to gratify a transient fashionable taste, Schubert's melodies, written simply for his own satisfaction, are as fresh and fragrant as on the day when they burst into bloom. The best of his songs have never been equalled, not only in melody, but in harmonic modulation, dramatic realism, and power to stir the emotions. Liszt confessed that they often moved him to tears; and many others are affected by them in the same way.

Der Erlkönig-The Erlking. Schubert was only seventeen when he wrote that beautiful song, Margaret at the Spinning Wheel. In the following year he composed what many judges consider the greatest of all songs, The Erlking, the 178th of his Lieder. Spaun relates that one afternoon he went with a friend to call on Schubert. They found him all aglow reading Goethe's ballad, The Erlking, aloud. He walked up and down the room several times, book in hand, then suddenly sat down and, as fast as his pen could travel, put the superb ballad on paper, nearly in its present form, though he subsequently made some changes. This ballad by the boy Schubert is as splendidly and realistically dramatic as anything Wagner wrote in his most mature years. The incessant galloping triplets in the piano part not only impersonate the horse but conjure up the storm. The coaxing Erlking, the terrified child, the soothing father, have all a language of their own, different from the narrative, and the singer must modify his tone and style accordingly. The dissonance of the child's shriek was something new, thrilling, terrible, epoch-making in music.

Der Wanderer—The Wanderer. This is another one of the early songs that reveal Schubert's genius full-fledged. Think of such a song being written in a paroxysm of inspiration in one evening, by a youth of nineteen! In popularity and merit The Wanderer is almost on a level with The Erlking.

Der Tod und das Mädchen — Death and the Maiden. No song ever written has so much genius and emotion condensed into such a few bars as this. Certainly there is none that conjures up a sombre mood with such simple means. "After the poor girl has begged the 'skeleton man' to pass her by because she is so young, how full of gloomy foreboding are the two bars leading over to the second speaker—Death! And while he asks her in soothing words not to dread him, since he has come not to punish but to let her sleep gently in his arms, his monotonous, cavernous tones and the strange modulations tell us his real intentions." Note the simple but wonderful modulations from the words "bin nicht wild" to "schlafen."

Du bist die Ruh—My Peace thou art. This song belongs to the same year (1823) as the famous cycle of the Müller-Lieder. It is simple and melodious—"one of the most spiritual flights in all song literature," as William Arms Fisher has aptly characterized it.

Horch, horch, die Lerch—Hark, hark, the Lark. Schubert set to music verses by eighty-five different poets. Of his three Shaksperian songs the serenade, Hark, hark, the Lark, is the

most famous, although Who is Sylvia? is also deservedly popular. The circumstances under which the serenade was written admirably illustrate the spontaneity of Schubert's genius. One afternoon, as he was sitting with some friends in the garden of a tavern near Vienna, he saw a volume of Shakspere on the table. He took it up and turned over the leaves till he came to Hark, hark, the Lark (in Cymbeline). After looking at it a few moments he exclaimed: "A lovely melody has come into my head; if I only had some music paper!" One of his friends drew a few staves on the back of a bill of fare, and Schubert, undisturbed by the tavern noises, jotted down his delightful song.

Das Wirthshaus—The Inn (Cemetery). Schubert once wrote in his diary that those of his songs which were born of sorrow alone, appeared to give the world the most satisfaction. In the autumn of 1827, a year before his death, he was for a time unusually depressed and melancholy. One day he said to his friend Spaun: "Come to Schober's to-day. I'll sing you a cycle of weird songs. They have affected me more deeply than any others I have written." When the time came, he sang his new cycle, The Winter Journey. His friends were dumfounded by the gloomy mood of these songs, and at first did not quite appreciate them. But Schubert said: "I like these songs better than any of the others I have written, and you will come to like them too." He was right, for they all soon became enthusiastic over these melancholy songs, which prove once more that the best in art is usually the ineffably sad. Ineffably sad is Das Wirthshaus, the twenty-first of this cycle of twenty-four songs; and what makes this the more remarkable is that it is written in a major key. It must be played with deep expression, and poignant but not exaggerated accents.

Aufenthalt-My Abode. The last fourteen songs composed by Schubert were issued in a collection to which the publisher gave the appropriate title of "Swansong." It includes seven of his very best Lieder, beside the most popular of them all, the Serenade, "Leise flehen meine Lieder," which is not so poor as its excessive popularity might lead one to suppose. But the one following it—Aufenthalt—is much better. It is one of those songs which made Rubinstein exclaim rapturously: "Once more and a thousand times more, Bach, Beethoven, and Schubert are the three highest pinnacles of music." Vocalists who know how to build up a climax will delight in the high Gnear the close; and the pianist has a part as superbly energetic as in The Erlking. The bass is delightfully melodious, in an imitative way, and the interludes are of incomparable beauty and eloquence.

Der Doppelgänger-My Phantom Double. This, the last but one of Schubert's songs, makes his death at the early age of thirty-one seem the greatest calamity that ever occurred in the realm of music. It is not only one of the most wonderful songs ever written, but it opens up a new epoch in the history of the Lied. In its vocal recitative, its weird, expressive harmonies, the close correspondence of the music with the text, word by word, it anticipates nearly everything that Schumann, Liszt, Grieg, and the other great songwriters did after him. "The singer's task here is, first of all, to represent and interpret the poet, while to the pianist are intrusted chords as weird, as thrilling, as modern, as those which accompany the music of Erda and Klingsor in Wagner's Siegfried and Parsifal. . . . It is the most thrilling, the most dramatic of all lyrics, and in penning it Schubert helped to originate the music of the future." When it was written Wagner was a boy of fifteen.

## FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1809-1849)

THE people of Poland sing many songs which they attribute to Chopin. The only ones, however, which are certainly known to be his are contained in the collection of seventeen published after his death as Opus 74. Rubinstein called Chopin "the soul of the pianoforte," and it is true

that he devoted himself to that instrument almost exclusively. These songs are, however, a notable exception. Amateurs will find most of them full of charm. They were written in the years 1824 to 1844, and they are for the most part as quaintly exotic and orchidean as his mazurkas.

Meine Freuden—My Delight. This is one of the six Chopin songs of which Liszt made such free and poetic transcriptions for the pianoforte alone. It is even more charming in its simpler, yet equally impassioned, original form. The rapture of a kiss has never been more ecstatically portrayed than in this song about the lips and their uses.

Zwei Leichen—The Parted Lovers. A more dismal text has perhaps never been set to music than this poem about two corpses—one that of a soldier, dying in the forest amid the croaking of crows and the howling of wolves; the other that of his sweetheart, dying at the same time in the town to the booming sound of the church bell. It is no disparagement to the music in this case to say that it does not quite equal the poem in grewsomeness. It is simply melancholy and melodious.

#### ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Love was the chief inspiration of Schumann's songs, as it has been of so many other works of art. In the year of his marriage (1840) he wrote more than a hundred Lieder, whereas before that he had devoted himself to the pianoforte alone. He wrote to his fiancée Clara Wieck that he "laughed and wept for joy" in composing these songs; and in other letters: "Without such a bride no one could write such music." "I could sing myself to death, like a nightingale." It is under such conditions that immortal songs are created. Unfortunately, Schumann did not, after 1840, write any more songs till nine years later, when the brain disease to which he succumbed in 1856 had already begun to reduce his genius to mere talent and routine. This explains why his later songs are not equal to the earlier ones. The four here presented rank with the best ever written.

Widmung—Dedication. This is one of the most popular of the Schumann songs. Through an accidental oversight it was omitted from the list of "starred" songs in Songs and Song Writers; but it is one of the best of all—full of that buoyant rhythmic swing and animation so characteristic of Schumann.

Die Lotosblume—The Lotus Flower. This, like Widmung, belongs to the group of twenty-six songs called "Myrtle Wreath" and dedicated by the composer to "his beloved bride." Heine's poem about the lotus flower which dreads the

scorching sun and loves the pale moon is so exquisitely perfect that to add music to it seems like painting the lily. But when you hear Schumann's music, you realize that Wagner was right in maintaining that poetry and music are more potent in combination than singly.

Waldesgespräch-In the Forest. The legend of the beautiful sorceress Loreley (which was invented by Brentanoin 1800) is known to most persons through Heine's poem wherein she is represented as a golden-haired maiden sitting on a rock overhanging the Rhine and luring the fisherman to destruction by her singing (see Liszt's song in this collection). Eichendorff's poem, used by Schumann, makes her roam the forest on horseback and inform the knight who wooes her, before he recognizes her as the witch, that he shall never more get out of the forest alive. The mystic and grewsome suggestiveness of such a scene appealed irresistibly to the romantic temperament of the German Schumann and enabled him to reproduce its spirit admirably in his music. As sung by Lilli Lehmann, or Lillian Nordica, this song sends the cold shivers down one's back.

Ich grolle nicht—I'll not complain. Of Schumann's two hundred and forty-five songs this is at once the most popular and the most inspired. It forms number six of Dichterliebe, a group of sixteen songs from Heine's Buch der Lieder. In

these songs the union of the music with the poems is so intimate that, as has been aptly said, "it is sometimes impossible to rid ourselves of theimpression that they are the work of one man."

This is particularly so in the case of *Ich grolle nicht*—a superbly effective outburst of woe and despair which proves once more that the best in art is the ineffably sad.

#### FRANZ LISZT (1811-1886)

WITH the exception of opera and chamber-music, there is no branch of the divine art in which Liszt did not do original—in fact, epoch-making—work. Next to this versatility his most remarkable trait is his cosmopolitanism. He was equally at home in Paris, Weimar, Budapest, and Rome; a wanderer, like the gypsies whose melodies he adopted. Hungarian, German, Italian, and French traits and influences can be traced in his music; but all have suffered

"a sea-change
Into something rich and strange;"

—so rich and strange that it has taken the world half a century to learn to appreciate this new art; the difficulty being increased by the fact that his forms were novel as well as his harmonies; and new forms and harmonies are but slowly accepted in music. Of his songs, half a dozen are French, and two of them, *Isten Veled* and *The Three Gypsies*, are Hungarian. The other fifty-one were written to German poems, and have the romantic and emotional qualities of German *Lieder*.

Die Lorelei—The Loreley. Before Liszt set Heine's famous poem to music the Germans had always sung it to Silcher's simple tune, which has the character of a genuine folk-song. It is a pretty melody and adapts itself well enough to the general mood of the poem. But it is always the same, in all the successive stanzas—the same whether the poet talks about his own melancholy mood, or about the calmly flowing Rhine at sunset, or about the maiden on the rock above, combing her golden hair, or about the enchanting lay she sings,

or about the wild longing which seizes the fisherman in the boat below, or about his heedlessness of the dangerous rocks, and the turbulent waters which finally engulf him. Liszt, on the contrary, saw here the possibilities of a miniature musicdrama in which the melody and the expressive harmonies continually change with the text, as in a Wagner opera. The result is one of the most enchantingly realistic and dramatic songs in existence, replete with seductive melody, and agitated by a storm worthy of the composer of the Flying Dutchman. But let no bungling singer or pianist attempt it!

Der König von Thule—The King of Thule. Like the Loreley, this famous and effective ballad was composed by Liszt in 1841, on the quiet Rhine island Nonnenwerth, in the romantic region near the seven peaks of the Siebengebirge. It has all the beauty and eloquence of a Chopin ballad, with the added advantage of Goethe's emotional poetry. It occurs in his Faust.

Wanderer's Nachtlied—Wanderer's Night Song. The charm of this song lies in its harmonies rather than its melody; but if the pianist is a genuine artist the effect is enchanting. Note the molto tranquillo and the sotto voce called for to express the lull in the tree-tops, when the breezes are at rest, the birds silent, and the nearness of death is suggested. Concerning the wonderful harmonies of this song, Dr. Hueffer has well said: "Particularly the modulation from G major back into the original E major, at the close of the piece, is of surprising beauty."

#### RICHARD WAGNER (1813-1883)

EVERYBODY knows that Wagner was a specialist of the opera, as Chopin was of the pianoforte. Yet he, too, wrote a few songs—ten in all. Four of them—Dors, mon enfant, Attente, Mignonne,

and The Two Grenadiers—were written in Paris (1839) as potboilers (he got about four dollars apiece for them!). In the following year he wrote Der Tannenbaum. The best of his songs, how-

ever, are *Träume* and *Im Treibhaus*, two of five which he composed in 1862. These two are studies to *Tristan and Isolde*, like the preliminary sketches which great artists make of their paintings and which sometimes surpass, in details, the paintings themselves.

Träume-Dreams. Singers who have never

heard Tristan and Isolde, the most characteristic and inspired of Wagner's operas, will get, through this song, a glimpse into an entirely new world of harmonic delights—the thrilling love-music of what may be aptly called the German Romeo and Juliet.

#### ROBERT FRANZ (1815-1892)

Schumann was the first who discovered the genius of Franz as a song-writer. "Were I to dwell on all the exquisite details in his songs," he wrote, "I should never come to an end." Manuel Garcia, the most eminent teacher in the nineteenth century of the best Italian method (Jenny Lind was one of his pupils), declared that of all German songs Franz's were the best adapted to the voice. Though usually of the declamatory order, they can be sung as smoothly as the bel canto of the Italians. The secret was indicated by Franz himself: "It is easy to sing my songs if the vocalist saturates himself with the poem and thus endeavors to reproduce the musical content." Liszt repeatedly referred to Franz as the best of the lyric composers. But the greatest compliment was paid to Franz by Wagner, in the days of his exile in Switzerland. When Franz visited him in 1857, he took him to his bookcase and showed him his collection of music. It consisted of some works of Bach and Beethoven and the songs of Franz—nothing more. He also sang some of the Franz songs for the composer in a very dramatic way, and to the end of his life had them sung frequently in his family circle at Bayreuth. This is the more remarkable, because Wagner, while worshipping the old masters, had little love for his contemporaries.

Bitte—Request. Ambros called this song "the prayer of a deep soul." It must be sung rather slowly, but with the religious fervor of a hymn—for it is a hymn to love, to a woman's dreamy, soulful black eyes.

"For where is any author in the world
Teaches such beauty as a woman's eye?"

An American woman, to whom Franz showed

a picture of the wife he had just lost, while the tears were rolling down his cheeks, said to her companion: "Now I understand why his blackeyed song is so beautiful."

Für Musik - For Music. Mendelssohn (whose own songs are now so stale that none of them was deemed worthy of inclusion in this volume) once found fault with the songs of Franz because "the melody could not be detached from the piano part." As if that were not one of their greatest merits! Franz's songs are melodious not only in the vocal part but in every part of the "accompaniment." Harmony and melody became inseparable, as in the polyphonic works of Bach. Of the two hundred and seventy-nine songs written by Franz, none illustrates this peculiarity better than Für Musik, which is like a thicket in which a nightingale sings on every bush. The pianist must heed the directions: il canto molto espressivo -the melody to be brought out with deep feeling.

Widmung — Dedication. Another love-song, inspired, like Bitte, by a pair of eyes. "Oh, thank me not for these songs. They are yours, not mine. I read them in your eyes and simply copied them." This was one of Wagner's two favorites among Franz's songs.

Willkommen, mein Wald—Now welcome, my Wood! The majority of Franz's songs are slow and sad—andantino and larghetto being his favorite tempi. Of the lively and energetic ones Willkommen, mein Wald is a stirring example, with the exhilarating atmosphere of the forest. Oddly enough, Franz once remarked to a friend that he considered this one of his poor songs, and that he had hesitated to print it. Beethoven, in the same way, used to wish he could destroy his Adelaide,

which is unquestionably the best of all his songs. These are eccentricities of genius.

Wonne der Wehmuth—Delight of Melancholy. Goethe was not the first poet to dwell on the delights of sadness. Fletcher wrote, long before him, "There's naught in this life sweet... but only melancholy"; and whole books have been written on "the ecstasy of woe." Milton coined the expression "melodious tear," and Franz's song is

such a tear.

Es hat die Rose sich beklagt—The Rose complained. This has always been one of the most popular of Franz's songs, and deservedly so. If played with tenderness and delicacy the music is as fragrant as the rose it immortalizes. Use the pedal, and notice the exquisitely plaintive effect in the pianoforte part of the C following the word "beklagt."

#### PETER CORNELIUS (1824-1874)

Cornelius was an intimate friend of Liszt and Wagner. He composed several operas, one of which—The Barber of Bagdad—had considerable success, though its failure at Weimar so disgusted Liszt that he resigned his post as conductor. Some of the songs of Cornelius are admirable. Like Wagner, he wrote his own poems. He also published a volume of poems without music.

Ein Ton—The Monotone. This song is one of the greatest curiosities in all musical literature. The singer has only one tone throughout the forty-two bars of the composition, and the strangest thing about it is that very few persons realize this fact on hearing it the first time. But while the song is a monotone, it is anything but monotonous. So ingeniously varied is the piano part, and so interesting the harmonies, that the piece deserves to be classed with the mastersongs. Note that the poem suggests the peculiar treatment of the vocal part.

#### ANTON RUBINSTEIN (1829-1894)

RUBINSTEIN was one of the most fertile and original melodists of all time, and nowhere does the fount of his melody flow more freely than in his songs, most of which were written to German poems. Not a few of them are trivial and will share the fate of Mendelssohn's. But the best of them have a unique charm. Amateurs will find them easier to sing than most modern songs.

Der Asra—The Asra. Schubert himself might have been proud to have written this, one of the most truly vocal, original, and charming songs in existence. What a swing to the melody! and how quaint and exotic are its Oriental intervals at the

words "welche sterben wenn sie lieben"—so appropriate to the romantic story of the Arabic slave, who grows paler every time he sees the princess, because he belongs to the tribe of the Asra, who die when they love.

Gelb rollt mir zu Füssen—Golden at my Feet. The quaint Oriental intervals which occur in Der Asra characterize also the whole group of Persian songs (Opus 34) which Rubinstein composed to twelve of Bodenstedt's Songs of Mirza Schaffy. The most spontaneous, buoyant, and popular of them is this love-song, sung on the banks of the river Kura.

#### JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

EXPERTS are not agreed as to the rank of Brahms. All, however, admire his chamber-music and some of his songs. In Germany and England the songs of Brahms are at present almost as popular as Mendelssohn's were at one time; nor can it be denied that some of them, notably the three here presented, are very good, and likely to endure.

Wie bist du meine Königin - My Queen. There

is a languor and a sweetness in this song of ecstatic love that suggest the rich fragrance of a tuberose. In studying this and the other Brahms songs, remember that, as Mrs. Wodehouse has well said, in them the accompaniment stands in the same relation to the voice part as the pianoforte part stands to the violin in a sonata written for those two instruments.

Minnelied — Love Song. It may seem odd that the best two of Brahms's songs should have been

inspired by poems of love, for he was never married; but love exercises its creative spell even over bachelor composers. The *Minnelied* (*Minne* is the old German word for *Liebe*, or *love*) seems to the editor the most inspired and delightful of Brahms's compositions.

Wie Melodien zieht es mir—A Thought like Music. Groth's poem seems to demand a musical setting, and Brahms has given it one which is both appropriate and beautiful.

#### **ADOLF JENSEN (1837-1879)**

ALTHOUGH Jensen wrote some admirable pianoforte pieces, he may nevertheless be classed with the song specialists, for the best products of his genius are to be found among his one hundred and sixty songs. In America he has never received the attention he deserves, but in Germany he is popular, and some of the experts rank him as high as Franz, or even higher. His idols were Schumann and Wagner.

Lehn' deine Wang' an meine Wang'—Press thy cheek against mine own. This is the first of his songs which Jensen considered good enough to print. It is a splendid setting of Heine's famous lovepoem, full of emotion, with a touching melody and stirring voluptuous harmonies. Few songs are at the same time so good and so popular.

Wenn durch die Piazzetta—When through the Piazzetta. While Press thy cheek is one of those songs with which every one falls in love at first hearing, this and the following one are of the kind which must be studied with devotion before their ravishing beauty becomes apparent and haunts

the memory. When his genius was in its full maturity, Jensen became enamoured of English poetry and he set to music seven poems by Burns, seven by Moore, four by Cunningham, six by Scott, and six by Tennyson. So anxious was he to preserve the spirit and fragrance of these poems that in composing them he consulted several translations beside the originals. He considered these, justly, the best of his lyrics, and referred to them, in 1877, as "my last and grandest excursion in the land of song."

Leis' rudern hier, mein Gondolier! — Row gently here, my Gondolier! Of the innumerable Venetian boat-songs this is surely the most delightful. Arnold Niggli, in his book on Jensen, writes regarding these two songs, that "in When through the Piazzetta, in which the guitar-like accompaniment emphasizes its character as a serenade, the singer's love ardor is touched by a breath of melancholy; while the second serenade, Row gently here, floats dreamily on the waters like the soft light of the moon."

## PIOTR ILYITCH TCHAÏKOVSKY (1840-1893)

In London concert halls the two most popular composers at the beginning of the twentieth century are Wagner and Tchaïkovsky. So far, however, Tchaïkovsky is known chiefly as a writer for the orchestra. Of his one hundred songs only a few have been brought forward, although there are many gems among them. Their day will come.

No poet has inspired so many first-class songs

as Heinrich Heine. The highly concentrated feeling in his poems makes them specially suitable for musical setting. Warum sind denn die Rosen so blass? — Why so pale are the roses? is an excellent example. Note how the poet himself leads up to the splendid climax in the music, when the absence of the beloved is made responsible for all the sadness in nature and life.

Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt—None but the lonely Heart. Though one of the earliest of Tchaïkovsky's compositions (Opus 6), this song displays the ripest musicianship, and is one of the best settings of Goethe's oft-composed poem. "Written with tears at his heart," as James Huneker says, "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt is fit to keep company with the best songs of Schubert, Schumann, Franz, and Brahms. In intensity of feeling and in the repressed tragic note this song has few peers. It is a microcosm of the whole Ro-

mantic movement."

Déception—Disappointment. With the possible exception of Germany, no country has so many of the fragrant wild flowers we call folk-songs as Russia. The majority are of a melancholy cast. Tchaïkovsky's Disappointment has the characteristics of a genuine Russian folk-song, and its sadness is intensified by the poignant harmonies with which the composer of the Pathetic Symphony knew how to express the "ecstasy of woe."

#### ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

The engagement of Antonín Dvořák as director, for several years, of the National Conservatory of Music in New York, by Mrs. Jeannette M. Thurber, is a good illustration of the influence women have so often exerted on musical affairs; for it led to the composition of the greatest symphony and the finest chamber-music ever written in America. It is in the several branches of instrumental music that Dvořák has done his best work; yet some of his vocal pieces—notably his Gypsy

Songs—are very beautiful too.

Als die alte Mutter—As my dear old Mother. Every one who has heard the slow movement of the New World symphony knows that Dvořák is a man of deep feeling. This song about the aged mother gives further proof of that fact; it doubtless owes some of its fervor to reminiscent filial devotion. Bohemian musicis particularly rich and varied in its rhythms, and the rhythms of this song are difficult and need careful study.

#### JULES MASSENET (1842-)

France has produced no song specialists comparable to Schubert, Franz, or Jensen; and, while Gounod, Bizet, Saint-Saëns, Berlioz, and other masters wrote a considerable number of romances, they hardly ever put their best melodies into them, reserving these, as the Germans did before Schubert, for their operas and other large works. Massenet's fame, too, is based chiefly on his operas and choral works; yet he wrote several excellent songs.

Elégie—Elegy. Of all the songs ever written in France this is probably the best. It is one of

the few Parisian productions to which one cannot apply Liszt's criticism that French chansons and romances lack the Sehnsucht and Gemüth—the sentimental yearning and romanticism that are essential to the genuine Lied. Massenet's Elégie is not only a beautiful "mélodie" as he calls it, but it has the true elegiac Innigkeit, or soulfulness. The piano part, also, is made exceptionally interesting by imitative touches; that is, bars in which it echoes the melody. These must be played with fervent expression.

#### EDVARD GRIEG (1843-)

Just as every European country has its own picturesque national costumes and customs, so it has its peculiar folk-music, which an expert easily recognizes. Grieg's wonderful melodies have some of the rugged, sombre, irregular, abrupt qualities

of Norwegian folk-song. But they are, with very few exceptions, of his own invention. Even more exotic and individual are his harmonies, which are as novel, daring, and fascinating as those of Schubert, Chopin, and Wagner. Grieg has, indeed, created the latest harmonic atmosphere in music. His harmonies are "caviare to the general," but musical epicures delight in their freshness and piquancy, their surprises, and their avoidance of commonplaces. Grieg's songs are like Wagner's operas inasmuch as they open up an entirely new world of musical enchantments.

Vom Monte Pincio - From Monte Pincio. The Pincio, in Rome, used to be known as the "hill of gardens." Here two thousand years ago were the famous gardens of the millionaire Lucullus, and many memories of mediæval events are associated with the place, too. At present it is a fashionable resort and drive, and in the evening, when there is music, it presents a gay scene. Björnson touches on the various points of view which occur to a poet's observant and reminiscent mind on a visit to this picturesque place; and Grieg's music, with a realistic art worthy of both Schubert and Liszt, reproduces all these aspects in his music—the glowing sunset, the swarming people, the domes of the city below, the mists calling up dim memories of the past and prophecies as to a future awakening of Rome to her former glory. Note how the opening chords conjure up the sunset mood; how the music grows funereal at the words "face of the dead"; note the echo-like sounds of the mountain horns; the fine contrast provided by the recurring gay melody (vivo); and many other exquisite details.

Mit einer Primula veris—The First Primrose. This is perhaps the best song for a first introduction to Grieg. Its ravishing melody enraptures the senses at a first hearing, and every one will agree that it is the loveliest of spring songs. All the tenderness of a flower, the fragrance of spring, the buoyancy of youth, are in this song of a lover who offers the first primrose of spring to his sweetheart in exchange for her heart.

Ein Schwan—A Swan. This is not only one of the most popular songs in modern concert halls, but is also one of the grandest ever composed. No one should attempt to sing it unless endowed with sufficient dramatic feeling to bring

out the deeper meaning of Ibsen's poem, the varied expression, and, especially, the superb climax where the swan, after a life-long silence, sings at last. Grieg, in a letter to the editor, has called particular attention to the fact that the words "Ja da, da sangst du" should be sung "sempre fortissimo, if possible even with a crescendo, and by no means diminuendo and piano."

An einem Bache-At the Brookside. When Grieg became acquainted, in 1880, with the poems of Vinje, he was "all aflame with enthusiasm," to use his own words, and in less than a fortnight he wrote a group of more than a dozen songs, to which this and the following one belong. In both of them we have Grieg at his very best, and in his most characteristic Norwegian mood. Here we come across melodic intervals and harmonic progressions so strange that at first they may seem to some persons almost like misprints; but after the ear has become habituated to them they assume an unearthly beauty. The charm of this original musical physiognomy grows on one like the expression of a face that indicates character as well as beauty.

Die alte Mutter—The Old Mother. A charming song of filial love and gratitude, which shows, like Dvořák's, that the romantic infatuation for a beautiful girl is not the only kind of love that inspires immortal music. Here the music is not so inseparably associated with the poem as in Monte Pincio and A Swan; but what a glorious melody, and what quaint, original harmonies!

Das Kind der Berge—The Mountain Maid. Grieg did not write much music in the last decade of the nineteenth century, because of his poor health. A few years ago, however, there appeared a group of eight songs, as Opus 67, under the general title of The Mountain Maid. It includes several gems, and the one selected for this volume is one of his most delightfully melodious and harmonically quaint and original Lieder, combining the freshness of youth with the depth of mature genius, and a touch of the Norwegian melancholy.

#### BENJAMIN GODARD (1849-1895)

Just as, in Germany, Franz and Jensen wrote better songs than Mozart and Beethoven, so, in France, Godard and Delibes were better in this line than men of bigger calibre, like Berlioz, Gounod, and Saint-Saëns. Among the hundred or more songs written by Godard there is an unusual proportion of good ones,—songs that bear repetition well,—including the fine dramatic ballad The Traveller and the quaintly exotic Arabian Song.

Chanson de Florian—Florian's Song. The great popularity of this song is entirely deserved; for although it is somewhat less weighty than the other songs in this collection, it has a masterly melody, rising in "c'est mon ami" to a splendid emotional climax.

#### IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI (1860-)

The greatest of living pianists has heretofore devoted himself chiefly to composition for orchestra and pianoforte. His opera Manru, which has been produced so successfully in European and American cities, contains melodies (like "Einsam bin ich" and the Cradle Song) which would have made fine lyrical songs. His only Lieder, so far, are the six published as Opus 18. They deserve to be more widely known than they are at present.

Ach! die Qualen—Ah! the Torment! At first sight this seems almost like a cheerful song written to a plaintive, sentimental text; but if the singer and the player understand the Polish rubato, and the Polish zal,—a mixture of tenderness, agitation, humility, regret, resignation,—the composition will appear in its true light. It might be called a mazurka for the voice. The meno mosso part is enchantingly Paderewskian.

#### EDWARD MACDOWELL (1861-)

EDWARD MACDOWELL has placed American music, so far as the art-song is concerned, on a level with the best that is done in Europe. Among his forty-five songs there are only a few (the earliest ones) that do not in every bar betray his genius for creating original melodies and harmonies. He is intensely modern, and "a regiment of soldiers could not make him write a stale melody or a platitudinous succession of chords, such as constitute the stock in trade of most song-writers." All singers will remember the day of their first acquaintance with MacDowell's songs as one of the most delightful in their experience. The best collection to begin with is the one entitled Eight Songs, which includes The Robin sings in the Apple Tree, The West Wind croons in the Cedar Trees, and others that have become favorites in the home and the concert hall.

The Sea. One advantage possessed by the Mac-Dowell songs is that they were written for the most part to English or American poems, some of the best ones being by himself. His setting of W. D. Howells's The Sea has been aptly called by James Huneker "the strongest song of the sea since Schubert's Am Meer." The rare poetic art with which Howells brings before our eyes the picture of the lover sailing away to sea, while the beloved stands on the shore and cries; followed by the picture of the wreck, and the lover lying asleep, far under, dead in his coral bedis duplicated in the music, which shows a marvellous gift of emotional coloring in its harmonies, and is, in all other respects, a perfect song; the best, with the possible exception of his Menie, ever written in America. It is thanks to the kindness of the most famous of German music publishers, Breitkopf and Härtel, that it is possible to insert this copyrighted composition in this collection of mastersongs.

#### RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-)

RICHARD STRAUSS (who is not related to the "waltz-king") is the best-praised and the best-abused of contemporary German composers. The dispute is chiefly over his symphonic poems; his songs are admired by all. There are more than half a hundred, and while most of them are difficult to sing and play, they are worth careful study.

Ständchen—Serenade. Within the last few years this serenade has become one of the most popular pieces in our concert halls. If played by a nimble and intelligent pianist and sung by a vocalist of the dramatic type, it never fails to produce a fine effect, and to arouse a desire for further acquaintance with the works of this gifted young composer.

Henry T. Fince

New York, March, 1902.

#### THE MYSTERY OF SONG

The sound of music that is born of human breath, Comes straighter from the soul than any strain The hand alone can make.

As he sang—
Of what I know not, but the music touched
Each chord of being—I felt my secret life
Stand open to it, as the parched earth yawns
To drink the summer rain; and at the call
Of those refreshing waters, all my thought
Stir from its dark and secret depths, and burst
Into sweet, odorous flowers, and from their wells
Deep call to deep, and all the mystery
Of all that is, laid open.

ANON.

# FIFTY MASTERSONGS

# THE VIOLET

#### (DAS VEILCHEN)

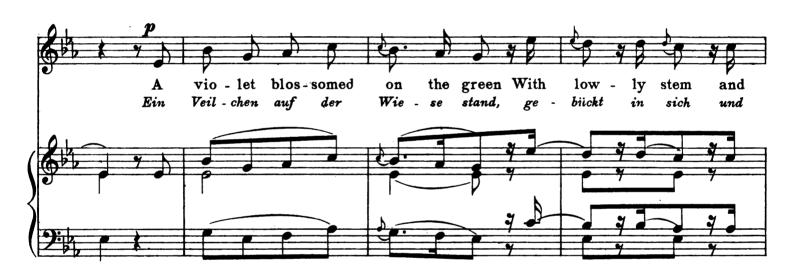
(Composed in 1785)

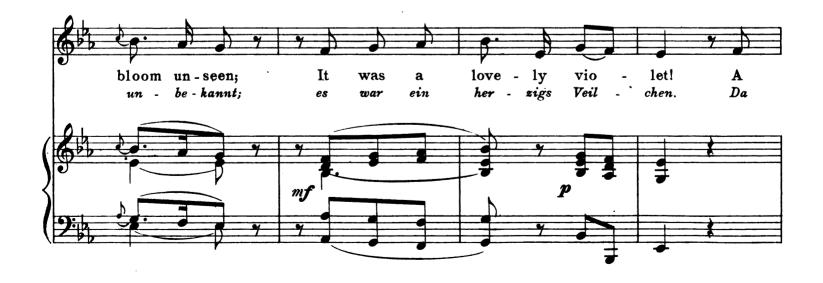
(Original Key, G)

JOHANN WOLFGANG von GOETHE (1749-1882)

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART







Oliver Ditson Company







### ADELAÏDE

(Composed in 1795)

(Original Key, Bb)

FRIEDRICH von MATTHISSON (1761-1881)

Translated by John S. Dwight

LUDWIG van BEETHOVEN, Op.46 (1770-1827)







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# THE ERLKING (DER ERLKÖNIG)

(Composed in 1815)

JOHANN WOLFGANG von GOETHE (1749-1822)

Translated by Arthur Westbrook

(Original Key, G minor)

FRANZ SCHUBERT, Op.1 (1797-1828)









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## THE WANDERER (DER WANDERER)

(Composed in 1816)



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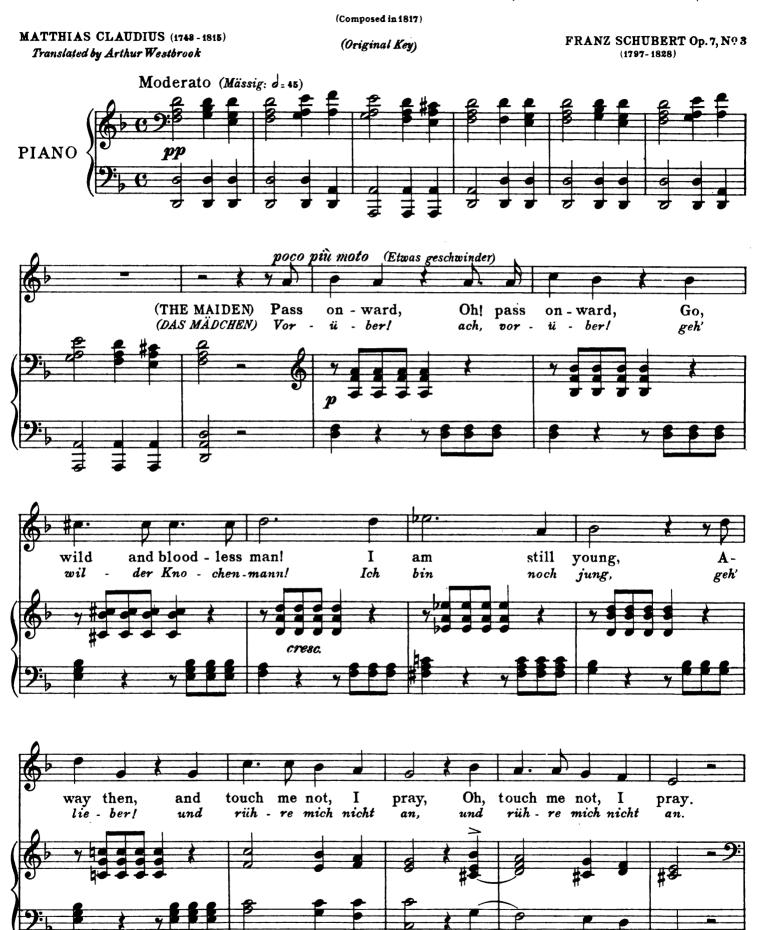






### DEATH AND THE MAIDEN

### (DER TOD UND DAS MÄDCHEN)



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# MY PEACE THOU ART (DU BIST DIE RUH)

(Composed in 1828)

(Original Key, Eb)

FRIEDRICH RÜCKERT (1788-1866)
Translated by Edward Rowland Sill

FRANZ SCHUBERT Op.59, Nº 8
(1797-1828)









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#### HARK! HARK! THE LARK

(HORCH, HORCH, DIE LERCH!)

(Serenade from "Cymbeline")



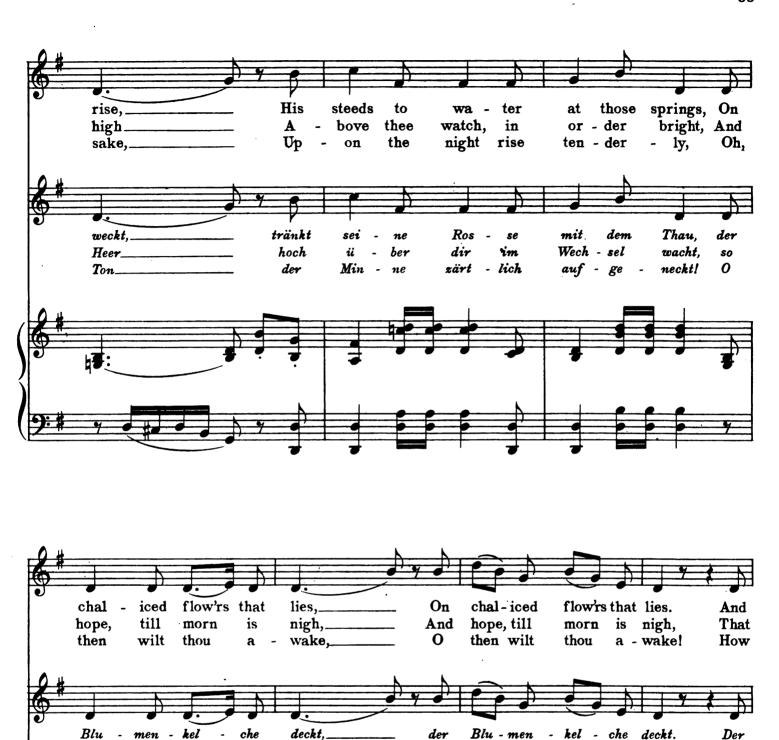
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564 - 1616) German of first verse by A.W. Schlegel

(Original Key, C)



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hof - fen

dann

so

0

sie

- wachst

fen

hof

dann

noch

du

mehr,

schon,

Der

dass

Wie

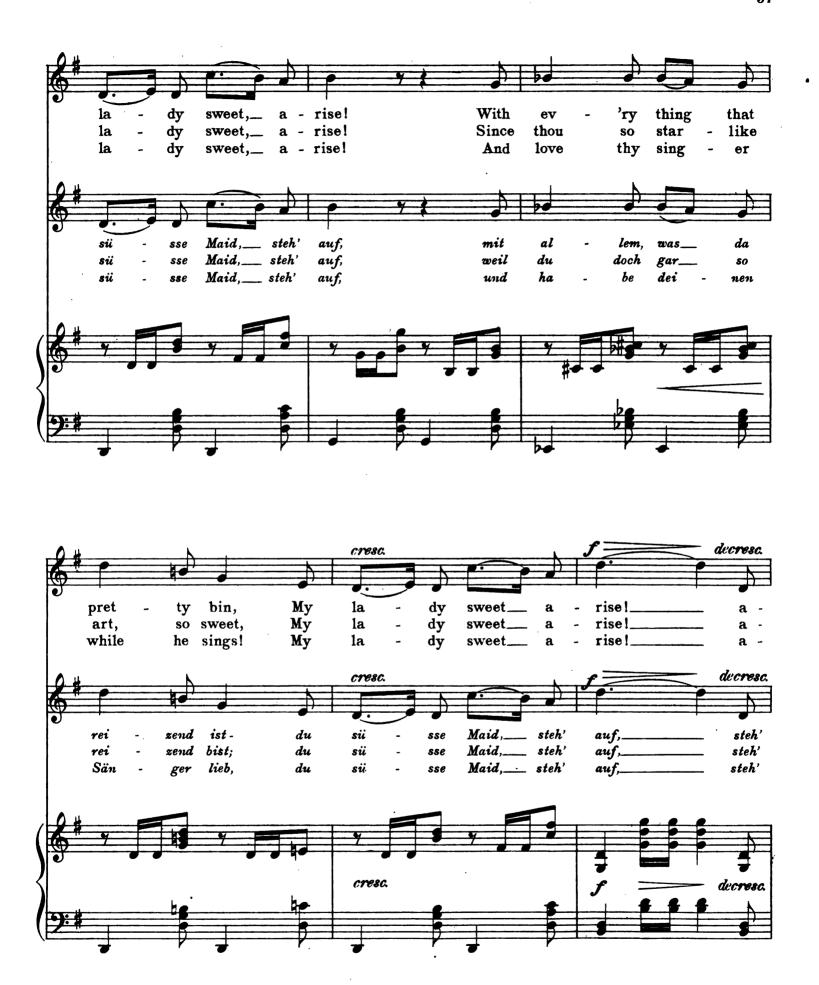
deckt.

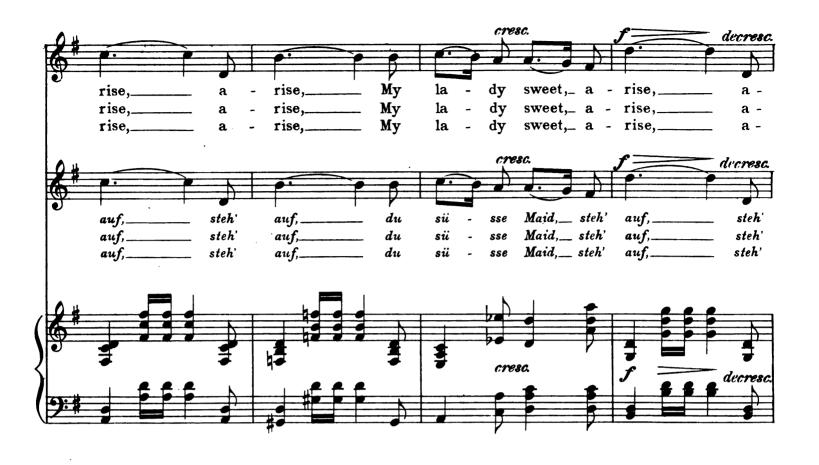
sie\_\_ noch mehr,

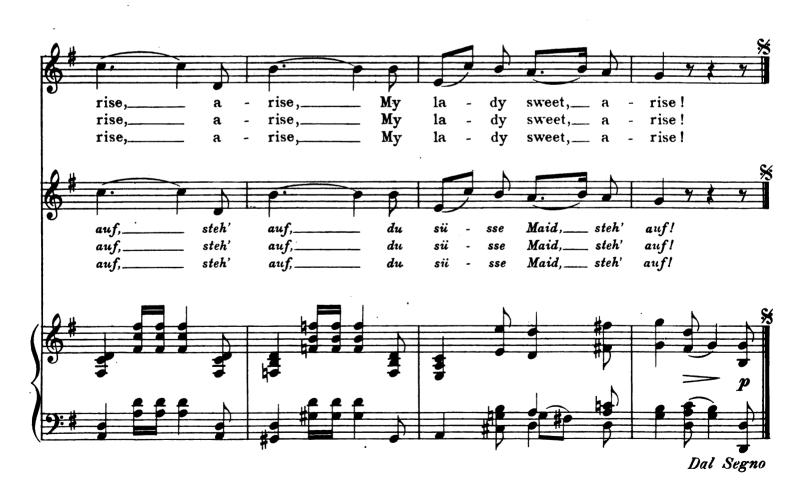
wachst du schon!











M L-57-5

# THE INN (DAS WIRTHSHAUS)

(Composed in 1828)

WILHELM MÜLLER (1794 - 1827)
Translated by Alexander Rines

(Original Key,F)

FRANZ SCHUBERT, Op 89, Nº 21







### MY ABODE

#### (AUFENTHALT)

LUDWIG RELLSTAB (1799 - 1860)

Translated by Louis C. Elson

(Composed in 1828)

(Original Key, E minor)

FRANZ SCHUBERT
"Schwanengesang," Nº 5



M L-59-5









## MY PHANTOM DOUBLE

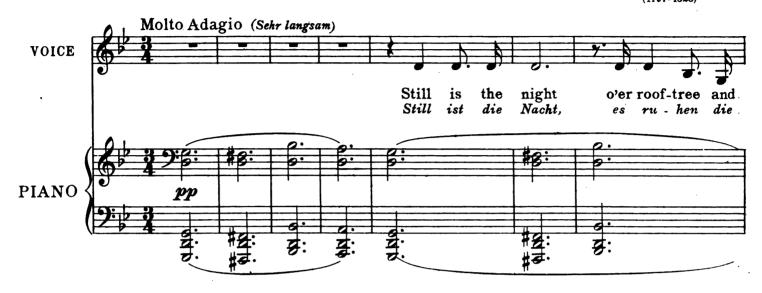
(DER DOPPELGÄNGER)

(Composed in 1828)

(Original Key, B minor)

HEINRICH HEINE (1799-1856)
Translated by Arthur Westbrook

FRANZ SCHUBERT "Schwanengesang" Nº 13
(1797-1828)







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### MY DELIGHT

#### (MEINE FREUDEN)

(Composed in 1837)

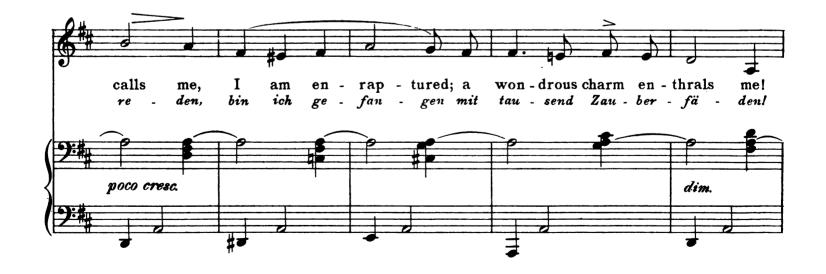
ADAM MICKIEWICZ (1798-1855)
Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole

(Original Key,Gb)

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1809-1849)

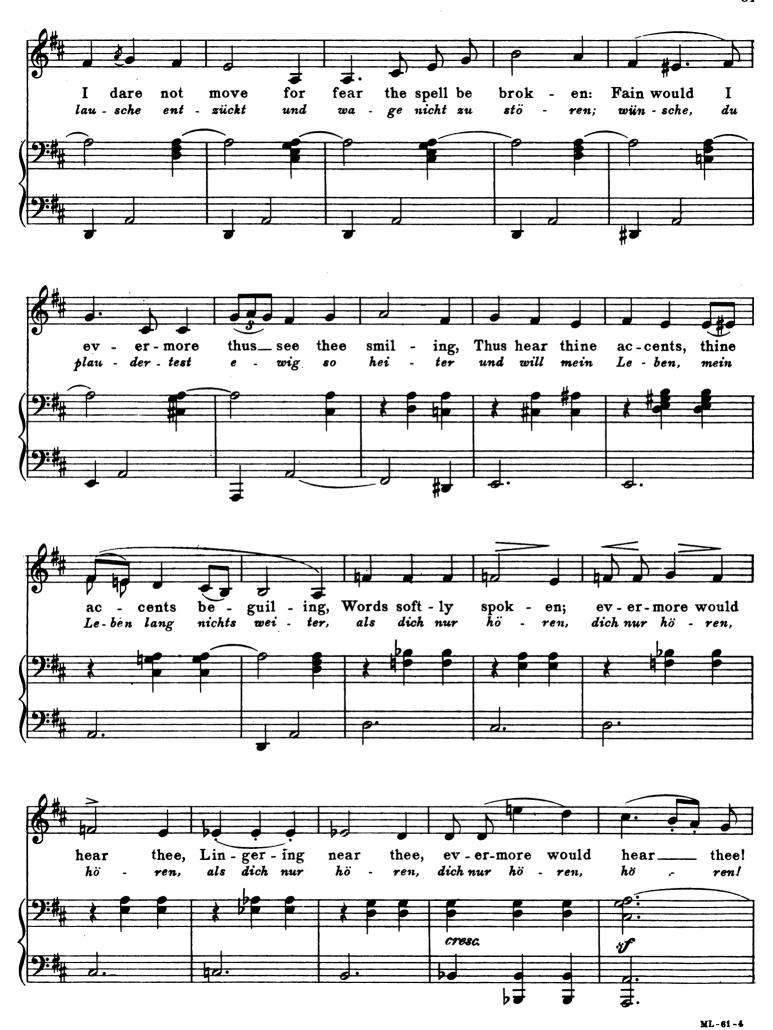






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#### THE PARTED LOVERS

(ZWEI LEICHEN)

(Composed in 1845)



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#### DEDICATION

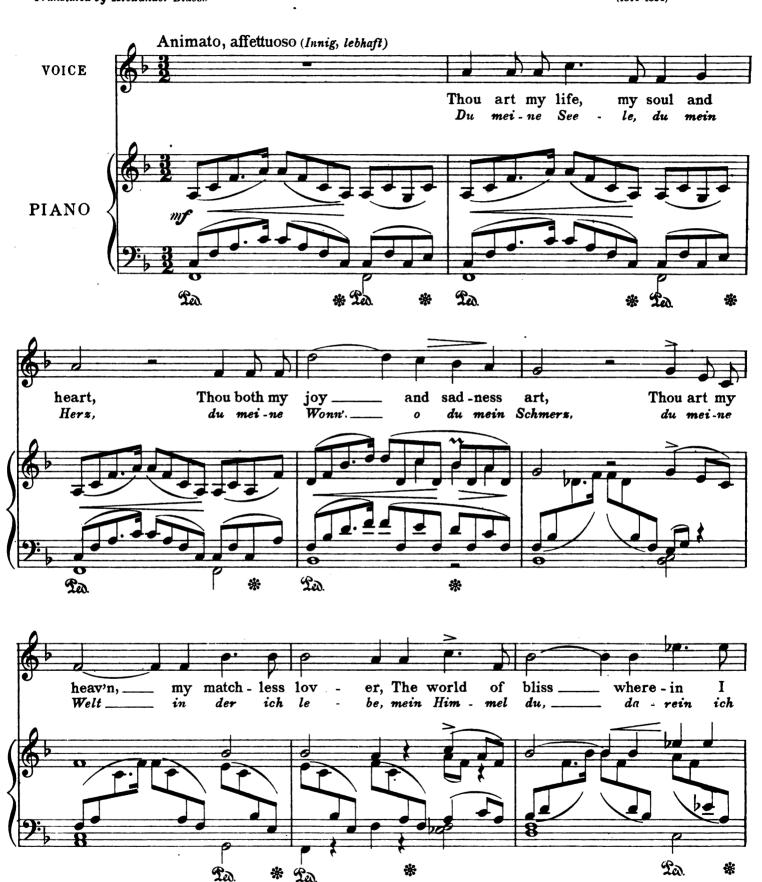
(WIDMUNG)

(Composed in 1840)
(Original Key, Ab)

FRIEDRICH RÜCKERT (1788-1866)

Translated by Alexander Blaess

ROBERT SCHUMANN, Op.25, Nº 1 (1810-1856)



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# THE LOTUS FLOWER (DIE LOTOSBLUME)

(Composed in 1840)



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## IN THE FOREST

(WALDESGESPRÄCH)

(Composed in 1840)

(Original Key, E)

JOSEPH von EICHENDORFF (1788-1857)

Translated by Alexander Blaess

ROBERT SCHUMANN, Op. 39, Nº3









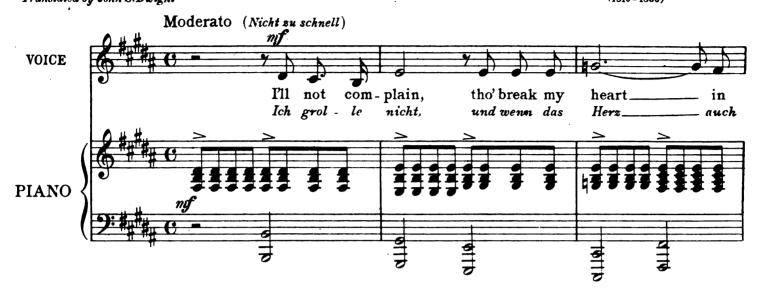
# I'LL NOT COMPLAIN (ICH GROLLE NICHT)

(Composed in 1840)



HEINRICH HEINE (1799-1856)
Translated by John S. Dwight

ROBERT SCHUMANN, Op. 48, Nº 7
(1810-1856)







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ML - 66 - 3







### THE LORELEY

#### (DIE LORELEI)

(Composed in 1841)

HEINRICH HEINE (1799-1856)

(Original Key,G)

FRANZ LISZT















M L-67-8



### THE KING OF THULE (DER KÖNIG VON THULE)

(From "Faust")

(Composed in 1841)

JOHANN WOLFGANG von GOETHE (1749-1882)

Translated by Arthur Westbrook

(Original Key, F Minor)

FRANZ LISZT (1811 - 1886)









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### WANDERER'S NIGHT SONG (WANDERERS NACHTLIED)

(Composed in 1848)





#### DREAMS

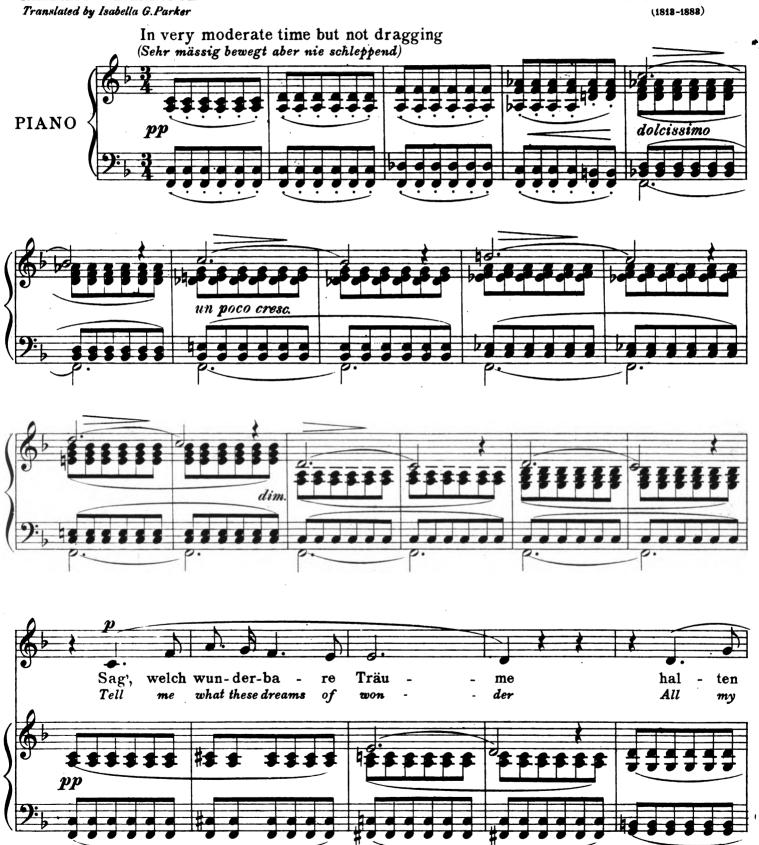
(TRÄUME)

Study for "Tristan and Isolde", Composed in 1862

(Original key Ab)

MATHILDE WESENDONCK"

RICHARD WAGNER









To Joseph Fischhof

# REQUEST (BITTE)

Original Key, Dh

NIKOLAUS LENAU (1802-1850)
Translated by Arthur Westbrook

ROBERT FRANZ, Op 9, Nº 3
(1815 - 1892)





#### FOR MUSIC

(FÜR MUSIC)



Oliver Ditson Company

Da.

ML-72-2



#### DEDICATION

(WIDMUNG)

(Original Key, Ab) WOLFGANG MÜLLER (1816 - 1878) ROBERT FRANZ, Op.14, Nº1 (1815 - 1892) Translated by Arthur Westbrook Andante espressivo (Innig) VOICE for sing Oh, thank me not what I thee; Thine are the dan - ke nichtfür die - se Lie - der, mir ziemt es **PIANO** gift οf Ι songs, no mine. Thou gav'st them me; but re Dir sein; Duichdank - bar gabst sie nur,\_ ge be thee What will thine. is and be turn wie - der, jetzt und einst und Dein. was wig mf

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### NOW WELCOME, MY WOOD! (WILLKOMMEN, MEIN WALD!)







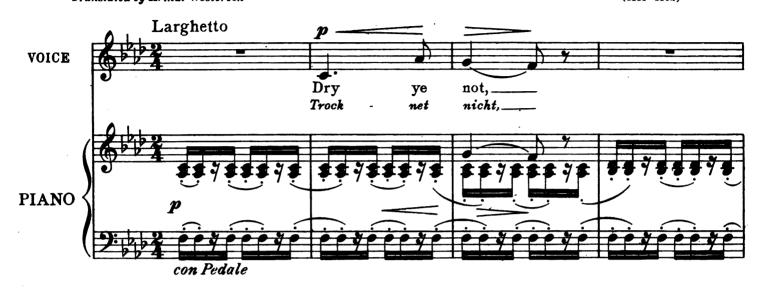


#### DELIGHT OF MELANCHOLY

(WONNE DER WEHMUTH)

(Original Key, Bb minor) JOHANN WOLFGANG von GOETHE (1749-1882) Translated by Arthur Westbrook

ROBERT FRANZ, Op.88, Nº 1 (1815 - 1892)







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ML - 75 - 2



#### THE ROSE COMPLAINED

(ES HAT DIE ROSE SICH BEKLAGT)

FRIEDRICH von BODENSTEDT (1819-1892) (From the Persian of Mirza Schaffy)

(Original Key. Dh)

ROBERT FRANZ, Op.42, Nº5' (1815-1892)

Translated by George L.Osgood



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#### THE MONOTONE

(EIN TON)

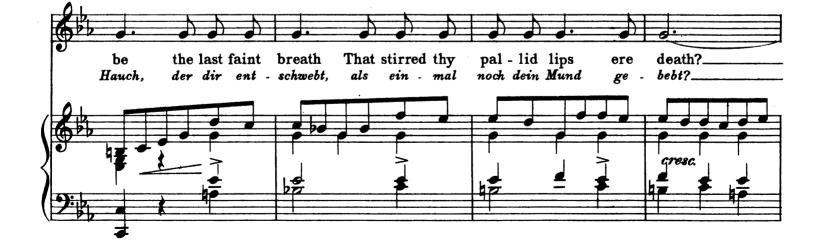
(Original Key, E minor)

Translated by C. Hugo Laubach

Words and Music by PETER CORNELIUS, Op. 3, Nº 3 (1824-1874)







Oliver Ditson Company











# THE ASRA (DER ASRA)

HEINRICH HEINE (1799 - 1856)
Translated by Arthur Westbrook

Original Key, G minor)

ANTON RUBINSTEIN, Op. 32, Nº 6
(1829-1894)



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# GOLDEN AT MY FEET (GELB ROLLT MIR ZU FÜSSEN)



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# MY QUEEN

# (WIE BIST DU MEINE KÖNIGIN)

(Composed in 1864)



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# LOVE SONG

#### (MINNELIED)

(Composed in 1877)

(Original Key, C) H. HÖLTY (1828-1887) JOHANNES BRAHMS, Op.71,Nº 5 Translated by Arthur Westbrook (1888 - 1897) With much tenderness, but not too slowly (Sehr innig doch nicht zu langsam) **PIANO** Sweet - er When she the mead sounds the song of birds roams gel gel Hol - der klingt der Vo wenn die Enrei sang, wood - land ows, When she light, 'Mid the comes with step so deltdurch die die Jüng lings - herz bezwang, mein wan shad ows. Hai

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## A THOUGHT LIKE MUSIC-

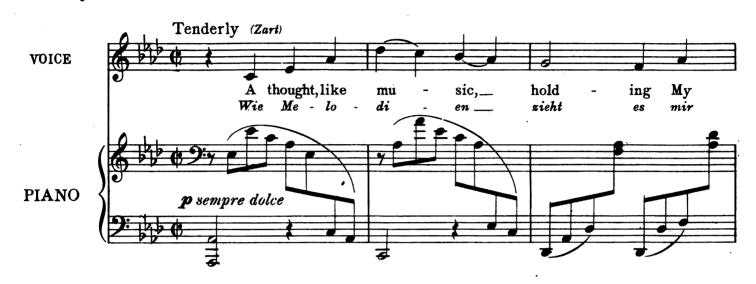
## (WIE MELODIEN ZIEHT ES MIR)

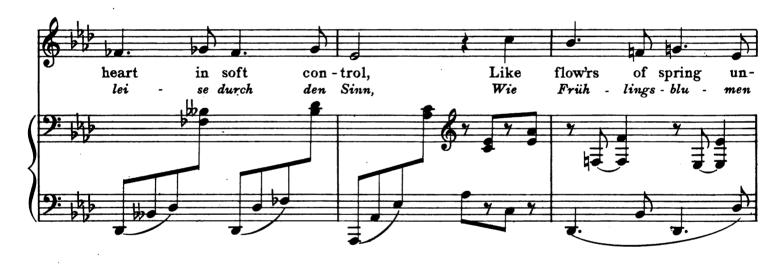
(Composed in 1889)

(Original Key, A)

KLAUS GROTH (1819 - )
Translated by Isabella G. Parker

JOHANNES BRAHMS, Op.105,N91 (1888-1897)







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# PRESS THY CHEEK AGAINST MINE OWN

(LEHN' DEINE WANG' AN MEINE WANG')

(Composed in 1856)







## WHEN THROUGH THE PIAZZETTA

#### (WENN DURCH DIE PIAZZETTA)

(Composed in 1874)
(Original Key, D minor)

THOMAS MOORE (1779-1852)
German translation by Ferd. Freiligrath

ADOLF JENSEN, Op. 50, Nº 8 (1887-1889)







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ML-84-5





# ROW GENTLY HERE, MY GONDOLIER!

(LEIS' RUDERN HIER, MEIN GONDOLIER!)

(Composed in 1874)



Oliver Ditson Company

Da

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## W H Y ??

#### (WARUM?)

(Composed in 1869)

(Original Key, D)

HEINRICH HEINE (1799-1856)

Translated by Natalia Macfarren

PIOTR ILYITCH TCHAÏKOVSKY, Op.6, Nº5
(1840 - 1893)







The retention of Heine's original text is not possible as the composer used a Russian translation in a different metre.

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# NONE BUT THE LONELY HEART





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#### To Frau Désirée Artot-Padilla

# DISAPPOINTMENT

### (DÉCEPTION)

(Composed in 1888)







# AS MY DEAR OLD MOTHER

#### (ALS DIE ALTE MUTTER)

(From the Gipsy Melodies)





# E L E G Y (ÉLÉGIE)



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# FROM MONTE PINCIO

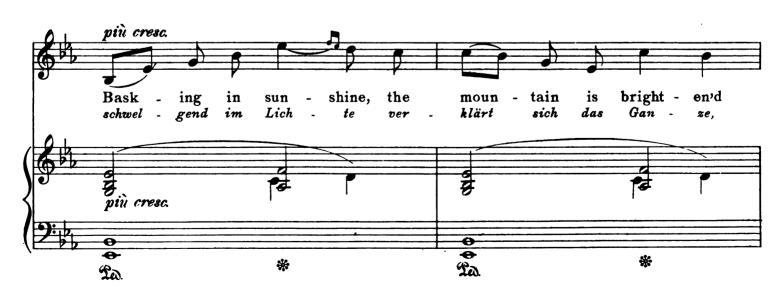
(VOM MONTE PINCIO)

#### NOCTURNE









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### THE FIRST PRIMROSE

#### (MIT EINER PRIMULA VERIS)





# A SWAN (EIN SCHWAN)

(Composed in 1876)





### AT THE BROOKSIDE

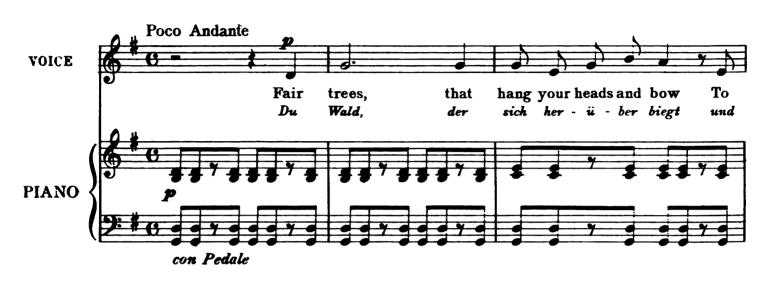
(AN EINEM BACHE)

(Composed in 1880)

(Original Key, A)

A,O.VINJE (1818-1870)
Translated by Frederic Field Bullard

EDVARD GRIEG







ML-94-8



ML-94-8



# THE OLD MOTHER (DIE ALTE MUTTER)

(Composed in 1880)



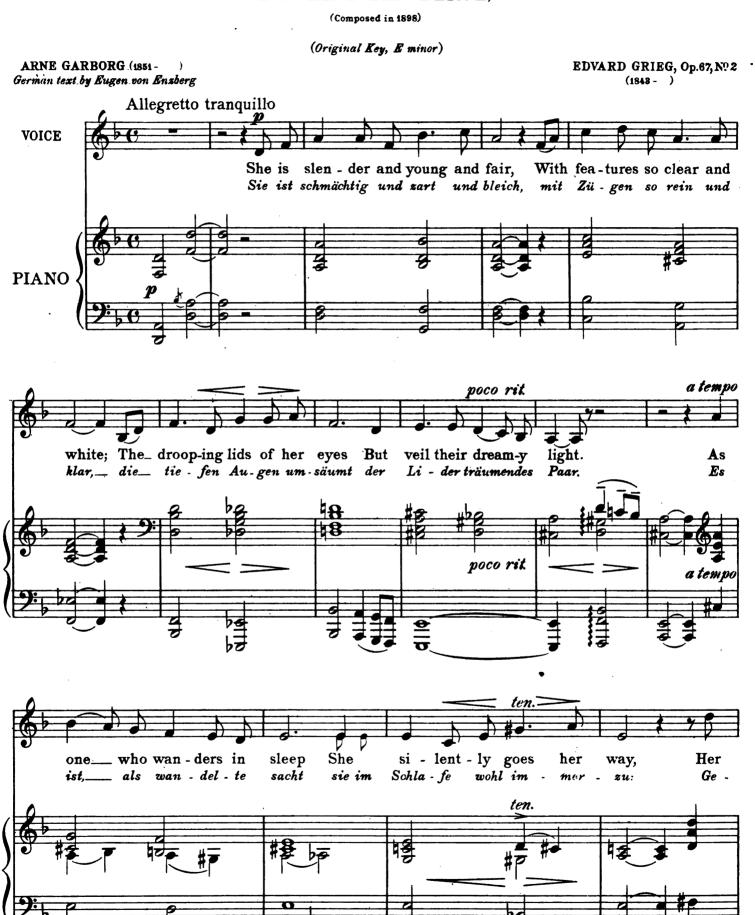
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# THE MOUNTAIN MAID (DAS KIND DER BERGE)



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VOICE

ARNE GARBORG (1851 - )

German text by Eugen von Enzberg

# THE MOUNTAIN MAID

(DAS KIND DER BERGE)

(Composed in 1898)









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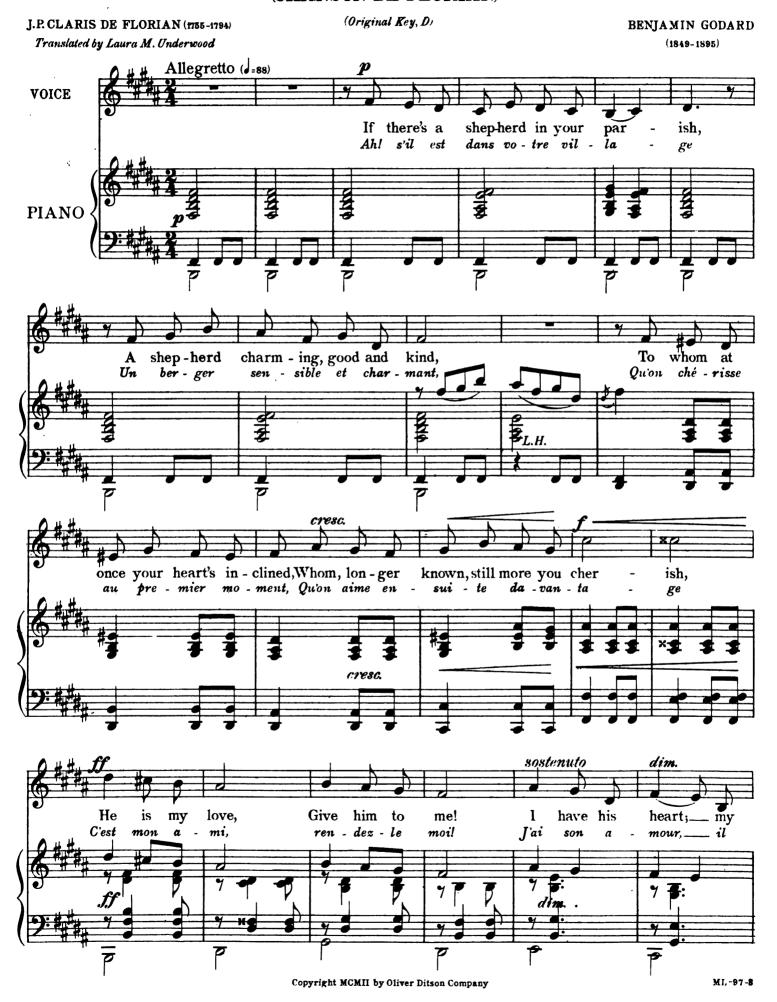
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# FLORIAN'S SONG

#### (CHANSON DE FLORIAN)







## AH! THE TORMENT!

(ACH! DIE QUALEN)

(Original Key, B)

ADAM MICKIEWICZ (1798-1855)
Translated by Isabella G. Parker

IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI, Op.18, Nº 5
(1859- )







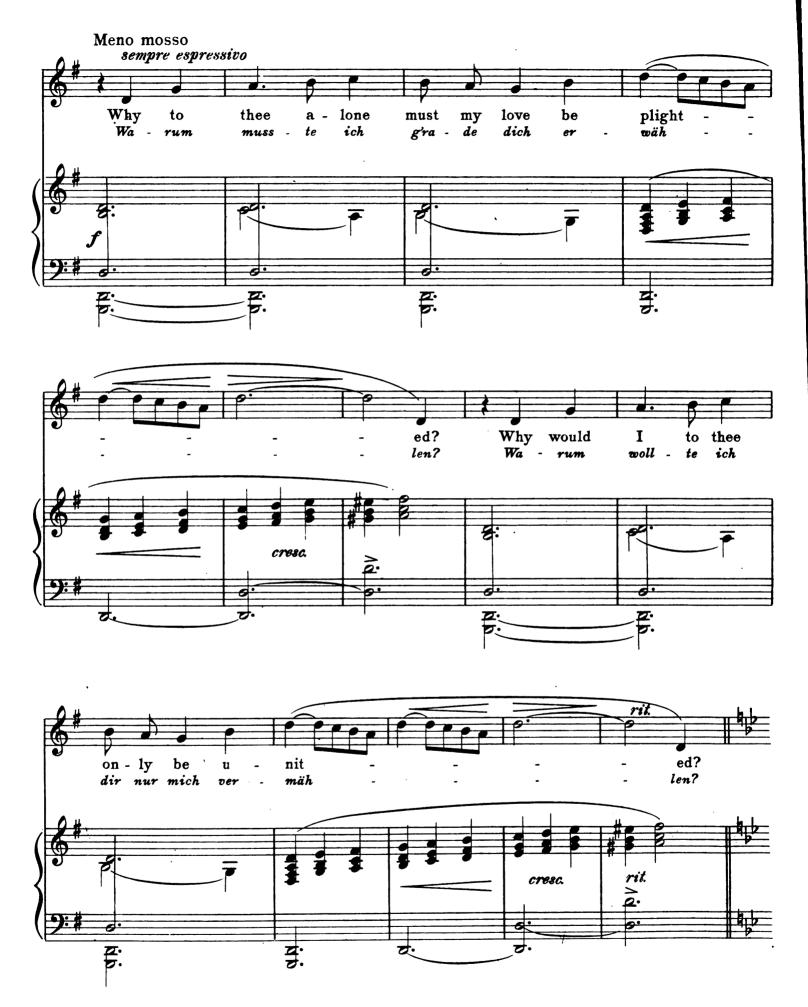
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MI. - 98-4

## THE SEA

(Composed in 1892)





## SERENADE

(STÄNDCHEN)



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