

**A MUSICAL TOUR
THROUGH THE
LAND OF THE PAST**

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A musical tour through the land of the past by Romain Rolland

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BY
ROMAIN ROLLAND

TRANSLATED BY
BERNARD MIALL



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PREFACE

THIS collection of essays is a sequel to my first series of *Musicians of the Past*.* The greater number of these papers are devoted to an age of transition, in which the feeling, the æsthetic and the forms of our modern music were taking shape. In accordance with a phenomenon common enough in history, they are not, as a rule, the greatest artistic personalities who become the pioneers of the future. The Johann Sebastian Bachs tower too high above their time to influence it directly; they stand outside their age; they shed their beams only at a distance. It is the Telemanns, the Hasses, the Mannheim symphonists who launch new movements. I have tried to make Telemann live again in these pages. I shall speak later on of my love and admiration for Hasse.

The world has been extremely unjust to these masters. In their life-time their fame was perhaps excessive; but the oblivion into which they have since fallen is surely much more so. Those who originate ideas, the Telemanns, for instance, and the "Mannheimers," have rarely the leisure to be profound. They sow to the four winds; let us be grateful to them for the fruits which we gather

* The majority of these papers appeared in the *Revue de Paris* (1st July, 1900, 13th August, 1903, 13th February, 1906, 15th April, 1910). The article on "Pepys's Diary" was included in a volume of *Mélanges Hugo Riemann*, published 1909. The study of "Telemann" is published for the first time.

to-day. Do not demand of them the perfect plentitude of autumn, for these were the capricious and fertile spring. To each his reward! That of the musicians who were the innovators of the first half of the eighteenth century was ample enough, since they prepared the way for Mozart and Beethoven.

R.R.

NOTE BY TRANSLATOR

THE numerous quotations from *Pepys's Diary* in the essay upon the genial Carolean amateur are taken from Mr. H. B. Wheatley's admirable edition (in eight volumes, 1913), published by Messrs. G. Bell & Sons. For various reasons, including the absence of references, the far more numerous quotations from the works of Dr. Burney have been re-translated from the French of the version employed by the author.

B.M.

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
PREFACE - - - -	V.
I. A HUMOROUS NOVEL BY AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MUSICIAN - -	I
II. AN ENGLISH AMATEUR (PEPYS'S DIARY)	21
III. A PORTRAIT OF HÄNDEL - -	45
IV. THE ORIGINS OF THE "CLASSIC" STYLE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MUSIC -	69
V. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A FORGOTTEN MASTER: TELEMANN, THE SUCCESSFUL RIVAL OF J. S. BACH - -	97
VI. METASTASIO: THE FORERUNNER OF GLUCK - - - -	145
VII. A MUSICAL TOUR ACROSS EUROPE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY -	163
I. ITALY	
II. GERMANY	

I

A HUMOROUS NOVEL BY AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MUSICIAN

Two centuries ago the Germans were already filling Naples, Rome and Venice with their princes, their merchants, their pilgrims, their artists and their tourists. But Italy was not then passive, as she afterwards became. She exported fourfold what was imported across her frontiers; and she did not fail to repay to Germany the visits which she received. She profited by the exhaustion caused by the Thirty Years' War to flood Bavaria, Hesse, Saxony, Thuringia and Austria with her works of art and her artists. Music, above all, and the theatre were left to her. Cavalli, Bernabei, Steffani and Torri reigned in Munich; Bontempi and Pallavicino in Dresden; Cesti, Draghi, Ziani, Bononcini, Caldara and G. Porta in Vienna; Vivaldi was *Kapellmeister* in Hesse-Darmstadt and Torelli in Brandenburg-Anspach. Multitudes of libretto-writers and scene-painters, of sopranos, contraltos and *castrati*, of violinists and harpsichord players, of players on the lute, the flute, the guitar and instruments of every kind, followed these leaders. Their great engine of war was the Opera, the supreme creation of the Renaissance in its decline; and their centre of propaganda was