

MOZART, LEOPOLD, in *Biography*, vice chapel-master to the prince archbishop of Salzburg, violinist, and director of his band, was born at Augsburg in 1719, and acquired this appointment in 1743. He was intended for the law; but his passion for the study of music was predominant, and he became early in life a useful musician, as author in 1757 of a treatise on the art of playing the violin, and a composer; but what did him most honour, and will endear his name to future times, is the being father of such an incomparable son as Wolfgan, and educating him with such care. In 1764 he set out on a trading voyage with his children, a son and a daughter; visited France, England, and Italy. During his travels with his children to the principal capitals in Europe, he used to accompany them on the violin, the daughter when she sung, and the son when he played on the clavichord or harpsichord. The daughter was the eldest, and when she sung she was not only accompanied on the violin by her father, but by her brother on the harpsichord, which he was able to do in a masterly manner at seven or eight years old. When this excellent father returned to Salzburg, after travelling with his children, he was appointed principal concert master to the archbishop, and became a voluminous composer; a list of his works is given in Gerber. This worthy professor died at Salzburg in 1778.

MOZART, JOHN CHRYSOSTOM WOLFGAN THEOPHILUS, the son of Leopold, was born at Salzburg in 1756. At seven years old he went with his father and sister to Paris, and the year following came to London; in 1769 he went to Italy. In 1770 we met him at Bologna, on his return from Rome and Naples, when he had astonished all the great professors by his premature knowledge and talents. At Rome he was honoured by the pope with the order of the *Speron d'Oro*. From Bologna he went to Milan, where he was engaged to compose an opera for the marriage of the principessina of Modena with one of the archdukes. Two other composers were employed on this occasion, each of them to set an opera; but that of the little Mozart, composed at twelve years old, was the most applauded.

During his residence in London we had frequent opportunities of witnessing his extraordinary talents and profound knowledge in every branch of music at eight years old, when he was able to play at sight in all clefs, to perform extempore, to modulate, and play fugues on subjects given in a way that there were very few masters then in London able to do. But there is in *Phil. Trans.* vol. lx. for 1770, a minute and curious account of the musical feats of this child in London, during 1765, when he was no more than eight years and five months old, to which we refer our readers. His progress in talents and fame, contrary to all experience, continued to keep pace with the expectations of the public to the end of his life.

He went again to Paris soon after his return from Italy. But on the death of his father in 1778, he was called to Salzburg, and appointed principal concert-master to the prince archbishop, in his stead; but he resigned this office in 1780, and went to Vienna, where he settled, and was admired and patronized by the court and city; and in 1788 he was appointed chapel-master to the emperor Joseph.

His first opera at Vienna was *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, or the Rape of the Seraglio, in 1782, to German words. The second, "*Le Nozze di Figaro*," in four acts. The third, the "*Schauspiel Director*," or the Manager at the Playhouse, in 1786. "*Il Don Giovanni*," in 1787. "*La Clemenza di Tito*," a serious opera. "*Cori Fan-tutti*," comic. *Die Zauber Flute*, or *Flauto Magico*. "*Idomeneo*," a serious opera, &c.

It was not till the year 1782, that he began to compose at Vienna for the national theatre; at first chiefly instrumental music; but on its being discovered how well he could write for the voice, he was engaged by the nobility and gentry first to compose comic operas, sometimes to German words, and sometimes Italian. His serious operas, we believe, were all originally composed to Italian words.

There is a chronological list of his latter vocal compositions till the year 1790, in Gerber's Musical Lexicon.

In England we know nothing of his studies or productions, but from his harpsichord lessons, which frequently came over from Vienna; and in these he seems to have been trying experiments. They were full of new passages, and new effects; but were wild, capricious, and not always pleasing. We were wholly unacquainted with his vocal music till after his decease, though it is manifest that by composing for the voice he first refined his taste, and gave way to his feelings, as in his latter compositions for the piano forte and other instruments his melody is exquisite, and cherished and enforced by the most judicious accompaniments, equally free from pedantry and caprice.

It should be known, that the operas of this truly great musician are much injured by being printed in *half scores*, with so busy and constantly loaded a part for the piano forte. Some of the passages, we suppose taken from the instrumental parts in the *full score*; but the editor, who, we are sure, was not the author, has such "a rage for saying something, when there's nothing to be said," (as was remarked of Dr. Warburton in his notes on Shakspeare and Pope, by Dr. Johnson), that there is no contrast: the piano forte has a perpetual lesson to play, sometimes difficult, and sometimes vulgar and common, which, however soft it may be performed, disguises the vocal melody, and diverts the attention from it, for what is not worth hearing. About the middle of the last century, Mondonville composed for the Concert Spirituel at Paris motets to Latin words for a single voice, accompanied by a very difficult and noisy part for the organ, *obligato*; and the effect was intolerable, though the organ part was well played by Balbastre; yet being a perpetual *roullement*, which said nothing to the heart, it was so loud, that it obliged mademoiselle Delcambre to scream to the utmost power of her lungs. There was neither taste, grace, solemnity, nor ingenuity to be discovered. These pieces abounded in notes, *et rien que des notes*, as Jean Jaques used to say of French music in general. Yet these performances were not only tolerated, but

admired by the friends of the old school at Paris. But let us not level the productions of Mozart with those of Mondonville.

In "Idomeneo," which is full of fine things, the air in E #, at the beginning of the second act, the chorus, "Alla Siciliana," in the same key, and the quartet in the last act, &c. are exquisitely beautiful, in different styles. But a commentary on the works of this gifted musician would fill one of our volumes. His reputation continued to spread and increase all over Europe to the end of his life, which, unfortunately for the musical world, was allowed to extend only to 36 years, at which period he died in 1791!

After his decease, when Haydn was asked in our hearing by Broderip, in his music-shop, whether Mozart had left any MS. compositions behind him that were worth purchasing, as his widow had offered his unedited papers at a high price to the principal publishers of music throughout Europe; Haydn eagerly said; "purchase them by all means. He was truly a great musician. I have been often flattered by my friends with having some genius; but he was much my superior."

Though this declaration had more of modesty than truth in it, yet if Mozart's genius had been granted as many years to expand as that of Haydn, the assertion might have been realised in many particulars.