

My dear Mr. Johnson,

Your request for the reasons for the opinions with which Mr. Grieg takes issue has not been forgotten. I waited to think over, not the matter, but the manner of my reply.

To Mr. Grieg's first proposition that he is a Norwegian, I reply that the whole is equal to the sum of all its parts. The blood of the Goths is the blood of all these Scandinavian nations. If Mr. Grieg wishes to restrict his talent to the expression of Norwegian peculiarities rather than stand forth as the finest fruit of Gothic genius, that is quite his own affair. I make no such limitation. I have always known that much of the rhythmic and melodic contents of his work is reminiscent, and therefore local,— the tonalities, for instance, that he delights in, and that lend such a strong color to his compositions. But genius is more than scales.

The second count in the indictment, that he is opposed to the Wagnerian propoganda, turns on a difference in the use of the word. Mr. Grieg uses the term as an equivalent for dissemination. He disseminates a taste for Wagner wherever he can. I borrowed it from the "Propoganda Fides," to distinguish the cult of Wagnerians whose manner and method Mr. Grieg himself admits that he has criticized. There is no issue either of fact or opinion between us.

I may add that I am warranted in my use of this epithet by the fact that the Wagnerian faction is always talking about what they are pleased to call the "gospel of Wagner," of

which works like "Thus spake Zathrustra," are the logical outcome.

The last statement, that Grieg's estimate of Mozart is not more sympathetic because the latter did for German music what he himself did for his native land in awakening the spirit of music, is of course autobiographical. With regard to the critical side of the question, however, I submit that neither Bach, Beethoven nor Wagner awakened anything. The position of Bach is closely analogous to that of the poet Spenser. Spenser slept unread during the literary epoch of Pope, Swift and their school, and emerged to be the poet's poet with the return of romanticism. Bach slept in cupboards unpublished till the Bach Gesellschaft, in 1850, was organized to print his works. He is now the musician's composer. Beethoven and Shakspeare offer a similar parallel. The genius of their respective countries was wide awake when they were born. Moreover these men expressed the same poetical and dramatic ideas and occupy the same unapproachable heights, and the effect of each on their successors was practically the same. English poetry worked to Browning and philosophic poetry, and German music worked out to Wagner and philosophic music also. Wagner fulfilled the instinct of German temperament and gathered in himself all that it had been groping for for a century. I have a suspicion that the tree that produced him will be barren for a long while after the effort.

The influence of Mozart, however, it seems to me, quickened the imagination and stimulated the creative faculty

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of the Teutonic family. After him came song writers, opera composers, symphony writers and chamber music composers, each so allied to him that his works are as fresh in the memory and heart of our generation as of his own. After Mozart music blossomed; since Wagner it has been dying. ~~in~~